

Malcolm Holmes

Worker

b 1944, Gateshead but lived in London his whole life.

Prefect in school in charge of the library. Thought about a career in accounting but decided on the library - 1963 started in Holborn as an assistant.

Started work in Wealdstone Library in 1960, unpaid to get job experience to see what it would be like and because that was thought odd to work unpaid was put in that library, as others thought they were misfits who were there, but really actually people who had interesting lives before working there and they sold him on the idea of a library career.

Did a two-year course in Newcastle on librarianship. Met wife on the course. Libraries were a place for everyone. 1965 got a job in Highgate Library - kept being asked about the cemetery so became a local expert and did tours. Moved to Holborn Ref library in 1970. Three local history collections merged in 1974 and he got job collected material. Occupied various parts of the building . 10 staff in his section. Library was home to Camden Arts Depot which did great things. Strong views on the building and how it does not work well as a library. Camden very innovative - arts dept, gallery space, printed computer catalogues (not hand written), incredible mix of people working there, very busy building, founded The Camden History Society. Camden Library Service recognised internationally. Had lots of money from business rates. Stories of haunted building and music and vents.