Interns’ ingress

DON’T forget to tell any interns you come across to take a look at the London Freelance Branch campaign to help them claim at least the minimum wage for their work. Find out about it at www.londonfreelance.org/1011.html.

We’ve already had a score of responses from interns interested in pursuing this – following up an Industrial Tribunal win for Nickolas Vetta, a member of sister union BECTU, a year ago. You could also show interns the ad in the Guardian’s FP and publicise the campaign in the journal. And suggest they email the branch.

How to survive Xmas

With commissioning editors away on the ski slopes and not commissioning anything from you, how does a freelance survive over the Christmas period?

For a start, you could spend those inactive days by signing up with the Authors’ Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS) and filling in the forms listing the articles you’ve written. This will result in you getting money for photocopying licences, and a little bit for some scanning and digitisation rights too.

We’ve heard of freelances spending a day over Christmas filling in ALCS forms for the first time and getting up to £600 as a result. Details are at www.alcs.co.uk. Payments for photocopying licences of UK newspaper articles in Belgium and other countries are beginning to come in to authors, so claim for these too.

Photographers can do a similar thing to get money for photocopying of their work via the Design and Artists’ Copyright Society (www.dacs.co.uk).

While you’re at it, if you’ve had a book published, sign up for Public Lending Right and send details of your books via www.plr.uk.com to get a little something in payments coming your way as a result of public libraries lending your work.

The British Library are moving another huge stack of books out of St Pancras to Boston Spa, Yorks, which means they will soon take at least 48 hours to arrive once you order them, instead of the 70 minutes we’ve all been accustomed to. So if you’ve been meaning to look up any of the BL’s collection for a while, do it now. The BL is closed 24-29 December and 1-3 January.

If you haven’t yet sorted out your entry for the NUJ’s freelance directory, do it in the Yulestle downtime. Go to www.freelancedirectory.org.

Or why not be one of over 200 people annually who spend Christmas Day filling in their tax return, according to HMRC logs? (The deadline for your 2009/2010 return is 31 January.)

And we commend to you Humphrey Evans’ guide for freelances on how to survive the Xmas period: read it at www.londonfreelance.org/fil/survive.html.

One way of surviving Xmas: Tending children at the orphanage in Haarlem by Jan de Bray (1663; d 1697).