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# Sylvia McGregor

## 1954-2002

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Sylvia McGregor died suddenly on 27 July 2002. She had started her career as a Library Assistant in Reader Services at the University of Lancaster in 1975 and moved to the Sydney Jones Library at the University of Liverpool as a Senior Library Assistant in 1979. She joined the University of East Anglia Library in 1981 as the Principal Library Assistant in charge of the Education Library and remained at UEA until her death. During her twenty-one years with us she broadened her remit on several occasions. Her final promotion in April 2002 was to the role of Director of Services (Library), with responsibility for the full range of library service delivery in the main and branch libraries, and for service level agreements with a whole host of other organisations in the region. This included representing the library on the HELIN (Health Libraries Information and Network). Her role was pivotal – bringing together so many disparate people and aspects of the library service.

Sylvia was an unfailingly cheerful and caring colleague and a true professional. She was the ultimate organiser, who paid attention to the detail which underpins service delivery, ensured that staff knew what was expected of them and who kept the documentation up-to-date. She was a supportive colleague and a valued friend, acting as a uniting force, good at creating teams, tolerant of human error and a mentor who encouraged her staff. She also had a telling sense of humour and a love of food, which was well known by all who worked with her. Her warmth, humour and relish for life meant that she always established good working relations with those she met and this often developed into real friendship. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Jean Steward  
Director of Library Learning and IT Services  
University of East Anglia

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# Ian Mowat

## 1946-2002

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While this issue of the SCONUL Newsletter was at the printers came the news of Ian Mowat's sudden death in a hill-walking accident on 6 September. SCONUL's community immediately found itself in a state of shock. Ian was amongst the best known, most respected and well liked of British academic librarians. He was a key figure in the library profession in Scotland, and one of the most familiar librarians from the United Kingdom amongst our colleagues overseas. His enthusiasm and energy were legendary.

Ian Mowat was a highlander, born in Wick (not quite the most northerly town in the UK) and educated in Aberdeen. After a degree in history at the University of Aberdeen he studied librarianship at the University of Sheffield. His subsequent career took him through many SCONUL member libraries: the university libraries of St Andrews (1970-72) and Heriot-Watt (1972-75), followed by the National Library of Scotland (1975-78), and the university library at Glasgow, where he was Sub-Librarian, 1978-86. His first post as University Librarian was at Hull (1986-91), whence he moved to Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1992-97) and then back to Scotland as University Librarian at Edinburgh.

Ian was early recognised as a clear thinker and planner by his colleagues, and almost as soon as he had achieved his first post as head of a university library he was elected to SCONUL's Council (as the Executive Board was then called). At the end of his term (1990-92) he was immediately appointed a member of the Advisory Committee on Health Services (1992-94). He gave his time willingly to committees such as the Non-Formula Funding Committee of the JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee), the members' council of OCLC (Online Computer Library Center), and the board of CURL (Consortium of University Research Libraries).

Ian was particularly keen on international collaboration, and although he would not have expressed it thus, he shared his own expertise generously with librarians on the mainland of Europe, especially in central and eastern Europe. His travels were frequent enough for two Secretaries of SCONUL to have the pleasant experience of meeting Ian abroad by chance. Gillian Pentelow ran across him in Stockholm in 1990 and Toby Bainton met him in a hotel lobby in Warsaw in 1997. His assistance to librarians in central and eastern Europe was warmly recognised.

At the time of his death Ian had just visited and assessed, on behalf of SCONUL's advisory committee on buildings (to which he was appointed in 2000), all the new library buildings in Scotland that had been nominated for the SCONUL Library Design Award. From time to time, always with that charming twinkle in his eye, Ian would express his slight skepticism of the value of SCONUL to its Scottish members. But this was simply a healthy reminder to us to keep our services relevant to librarians north of the border. In practice he gave wholeheartedly of his time to many of SCONUL's activities, and he was amongst the warmest in his words of appreciation of our successes. It is sad to have lost such an energetic and congenial colleague.

Toby Bainton