
News from member libraries

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

New look Main Library reception area

The Main Library reception area has undergone a refurbishment over the summer and now boasts an impressive modern entrance. As one of Information Services flagship buildings, the refurbishment has been designed to be sympathetic to the 1950's architecture, whilst providing a welcoming entrance.



The new design allows for a functional reception space, with a new specially designed reception and information desk. This will be the first point of contact for all visitors to the building, welcoming visitors to the library and providing answers to enquiries about library facilities and services. To finish off the new look, lights have been installed and walls painted to provide a brighter feel to the reception area.

The refurbishment is part of recent changes within Library Services, where the physical environment compliments these changes enabling the service to respond to users in both a productive and functional way.

On the move

The summer saw one of our libraries, the language and media resource centre (LMRC) which was located on the Edgbaston campus, close.

Over the summer, staff having been working hard to re-locate the material. Foreign language material is now located in the European Research Centre (ERC) and English videos and DVDs are now in the Main Library. New video and DVD playback facilities have been installed in the Main Library which provides a complete service to students.

Two new digital language labs in the ERC will be opening in the spring term, a 23 seater and a 17 seater facility. These will replace the existing, outdated facility in the LMRC. These two new up to- date modern digital language labs will improve the speed, flexibility and availability of facilities. Initially the rooms will be used for teaching and

–being digital and network based– this will allow for interaction, utilising the digital audio files and video file text exercises. It is hoped that in the future that there will be open access to the labs when not being used for lectures.

Freshers marketing activities

Information Services have been involved in a number of freshers' activities, which were co-ordinated across the corporate services. These included:

IS talk – 'Accessing learning resources', which provided an overview to learning resources, computing facilities and support services. The session proved very popular with about 200 freshers attending. We even had students waiting outside the door before the allotted time – that's true dedication to information gathering!

Main Library tours – Tours took place over a two week period and were conducted by library services staff and Academic Liaison teams. These lasted approx 45 minutes. This consisted of a brief introduction to using the library catalogue and accessing electronic resources, followed by a tour of facilities and services in the Main Library.

School induction sessions - Academic liaison teams undertook subject specific induction sessions in collaboration with schools. The sessions highlighted the learning resources available to students including: IT facilities and applications; the library's services and relevant collections available in print or online; where to go for subject specific help, including information clinics; and web-based support.

A publication called *Vision* has been produced specifically for freshers. *Vision* is a complete guide to Information Services, providing information on services and facilities to support students. The publication was made available at the IS Talk, Main Library tours, School induction sessions, all site libraries and resource centres, computer facilities and on the IS website.

My.bham

This summer saw the arrival of a brand new internet service for all students at the university with the launch of the new university portal – *my.bham*

my.bham is built to provide a single integrated space on the web to meet the growing expectations of students for online administration

of their courses and to help develop online communities for academic and social interests.

my.bham will, over its development, provide students with access to many different services (ranging from access to their virtual learning courses, their email, calendars, library resources) and the ability to manage their own 'account' details for their studies at the university, as well as collaborating with other students on the same course. Students will be able to use a single-sign-on to gain access to the portal and will be able to customize and add to the channels of information seen on screen.

One of the most important services available for the launch of the portal was online registration for new students and ALL returning students – replacing the huge, time-consuming queues for registration and the associated form filling.

Students were sent a 'Student guide to registration', which gave them the instructions they needed regarding how to conduct registration on-line as well as information about how to pay tuition fees.

Digital library

The autumn term saw a new generation of library catalogue. The digital library is a rolling programme of projects that will deliver new library services like Talis Prism, and integrate these and existing services into the web-enabled campus through the institutional portal. The result will be flexible services available anytime, anywhere.

New services from Altis

The Resource Discovery Network (RDN) is a cooperative network consisting of a number of individual service providers or hubs. These hubs provide subject specific gateways to internet resources in their area.

The Altis hub aims to provide a trusted source of selected, high quality Internet information for students, lecturers, researchers and practitioners in the areas of hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism. Altis is created by a core team of information specialists and subject experts based at the University of Birmingham, in partnership with key organisations throughout the UK.

Two new services launched:

- 1 *Sport and leisure index* - a searchable database of references to papers in sport and leisure research – visit www.altis.ac.uk/sli/
- 2 *Itis news round-up* (<http://altis.ac.uk/altisnews/>): This is an RSS newsfeed containing a selection of topical news items related to hospitality, leisure sport and tourism. Agencies used include *BBC news*, *Guardian online* and *Google news*.

Altis has also undergone a facelift with a redesigned logo and new colour scheme. These changes and new services are a response to feedback received from Altis users and form part of an ongoing review of the service.

For further information visit www.rdn.ac.uk

Special collections extended opening hours

Special collections have extended their opening hours till 7pm on Thursday evenings.

The extended hours should prove popular with researchers, students and distance learners who need to fit visits to special collections around other study commitments during the daytime and for our national and international users who travel to use the library.

For opening hours visit www.special-coll.bham.ac.uk/info_ML_open.htm

The library of James Rendel Harris

Special collections at the University of Birmingham has recently been presented with a collection of books belonging to James Rendel Harris, the first Principal and Director of Studies at Woodbrooke College from 1903 to 1918.

The collection was generously donated to the university's special collections by the Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust, who purchased the collection from the Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre.

James Rendel Harris (1852-1941), was a biblical scholar, orientalist and folklorist. His library is an important one for the study of early Christianity, containing a large number of early editions of the new testament, including the first edition by Erasmus (printed in Basle in 1516), the first to be printed in Germany (1521), the first Syriac version (Vienna 1555) and the tiny Elzevir of 1628. The new testament textual research interests, for which Rendel Harris was famous, are an important element in the university today. Our Centre for the Editing of Texts in Religion is an internationally recognised centre, where the

study of the new testament text is particularly strong. The books collected by Rendel Harris will significantly underpin the Centre's research.

Archive Awareness Campaign 2004

The university's special collections department is taking part in this year's Archive Awareness campaign to celebrate the wealth of archive treasures within the UK and Northern Ireland, by organising two exhibitions on this year's theme - 'Routes to Roots' - to raise awareness of the internationally important collections held at the university.

An exhibition of travel diaries featured an array of diaries and journals kept by people who have travelled in Europe. Included in the exhibition was the diary of Frances Lyall of Cheltenham and Joseph Dixon, a mercer and haberdasher of Birmingham.

A monumental brasses exhibition featured on the special collections website. This included a selection of images deposited with special collections by the Monumental Brass Society in 1995. More information about this collection can be found in the 2003 edition of the Heslopian.

University of Birmingham Press

The University of Birmingham Press has published nine new titles in the last twelve months. The creators finishes a series of books by late Victorian and early modernist women's writers. Other English literature collections include Ernst Dowson – collected poems. Local Birmingham history has been enhanced by Birmingham: bibliography of a city and The Feeneys of the Birmingham Post. And the German series has been enhanced by the addition of three new titles: German Literature – in the age of globalisation; On their own terms- the legacy of national socialism in post 1900 German fiction and Economic transition unemployment and active labour market policy. The final two titles published are Free time – towards a theology of leisure and ICT and language learning intergrating pedagogy and practice.

To view all titles published by the University of Birmingham Press and to order visit www.ubpress.bham.ac.uk

BRITISH LIBRARY

Research Libraries Network appoints to top jobs

Dr Michael Jubb has been appointed as Director of the Research Libraries Network (RLN) based at the British Library, with Professor Robert Burgess taking up the role of Chair of the Advisory Board.

The RLN will bring together the UK's four higher education funding bodies, the British Library, the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales and the eight members of Research Councils UK, to develop the UK's first national framework aimed at addressing the information needs of researchers. The RLN will run initially for three years and start operating in February 2005. It will be led by an executive unit, based at the British Library, and take strategic guidance from the advisory board. More key executive unit and advisory board positions will be appointed in the near future.

Michael Jubb comes to the RLN from the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB), where he has been director of policy and programmes and deputy chief executive since its establishment in 1998. He has played a leading role in developing the Board and its activities, and in its transition to full research council status.

Professor Burgess is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leicester and a member of the British Library Board, the Council of the Institute for Employment Studies and an Academician of the Academy of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences. He was previously Director of CEDAR (Centre for Educational Development, Appraisal and Research) and Professor of Sociology at the University of Warwick. He was also president of the British Sociological Association, and founding chair of the UK Council for Graduate Education.

Colin Beesley
British Library Press Office
E-mail: colin.beesley@bl.uk

BRUNEL UNIVERSITY

A lot seems to have happened at Brunel since we last reported in SCONUL Focus. Some of our developments, while by no means unique to the sector, may nevertheless be of interest and we are always willing to share experiences and ideas!

Library extension

Our library extension project is drawing to a close and the new foyer, to quote our students' union web site, has the 'cool industrial finish reminiscent of the much-loved London Bridge Jubilee Station.' As the words 'cool' and 'library' rarely appear in close proximity we are choosing to take this as a compliment. You may form your own views on the exterior from the accompanying photograph. It is to the considerable credit of the staff that, despite the presence of contractors in the building and the cordoning off of sections of the library, we stayed open for business throughout the summer.



The extension provides not only additional space to house collections being moved from other campuses but also, outside the library perimeter: a new student centre, the placement and careers service, the cash office and a café. So, we are having to learn how to share a building with a bunch of newcomers and, through a 'tenants group' chaired by Liz Annetts (assistant director: user services and staff development), devise collective procedures for monitoring use of shared space, locking-up, health and safety and so forth.

Within the library we will shortly have an assistive technology centre with work spaces for about 15 users/PCs and support workers, managed by a new ATC officer (Louise Lotz) who is based in the library but is a member of the university's disability/dyslexia team. A range of hardware and software will be offered, including software that helps with reading and study skills, a support package for visually impaired students including braille embossing and tactile diagram production, CCTV magnifiers to enable text and journal articles to be enlarged, and support for hearing-impaired students with portable induction loops available for one-to-one consultations. An official opening for the centre is planned for January.

Another of the enhanced features of the new space is a collection of group study rooms – to

enable students to collaborate on work projects and –hopefully– take the noise away from the open floors. One of the interesting features of any building project is the law of unintended consequences: having carefully drawn up procedures for issuing keys to these rooms and ensuring that someone in the group takes responsibility, we found that some clever students were booking rooms individually, pretending to be part of a group, to give them a personal silent study area to work in ...

Inappropriate behaviour

... which is understandable in a way. With wide-open floor spaces and magnificent acoustics, sound does travel through the building remarkably easily. In addition to improved facilities for group study, we have been trying to address this issue through patrols and a code of conduct. Faced with the sad but undeniable truth that mere persuasion alone is not enough, this year we backed this up with a series of fines for inappropriate behaviour – talking on mobile phones, food and drink and excessive noise. We have recruited a member of security staff to patrol the library issuing ‘yellow cards’ to offenders. Somehow, the presence of a person in uniform does make a difference ...

Liaison and information skills

On a more strategic note, the university’s learning and teaching committee has endorsed the proposal that information skills should be embedded in all programmes of study. Implementation has been remitted to an informal group of deputy heads of School responsible for undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and – in keeping with Brunel’s pluralist philosophy – practice will no doubt vary between Schools. Nevertheless this is a significant step forward and recognition of the work that subject liaison librarians have been doing in forging improved links with academics and developing a template of information skills that can ensure consistency across subject areas and permit scaling up. We hope to report on these activities in more detail in the next issue of *SCONUL Focus*.

Work has also continued on developing information skills modules through WebCT, with the detailed work being carried out by a Brunel work placement student, working jointly for us and the university’s learning and teaching development unit (which takes forward the e-learning strategy).

During summer 2004 the university carried out a major restructuring exercise to take forward the Vice-Chancellor’s vision of Brunel as a research-led university. A faculty/department structure was replaced with seven broad-based schools. Library representation was secured, as a matter of course, on the new School boards. Of course, much of the important work is done in committees and staff/student groups and here our membership is patchy, but the recognition, at a senior university level, of the strategic importance of liaison between academics and librarians represents a significant advance compared with just a few years ago. The school reorganisation is being further mirrored in the library by a review of the formula used to allocate the information resources budget among different subject areas and between teaching and research. This review is being led by Malcolm Emmett (assistant director: systems and resource management).

Responsibility for copyright

This financial year the university approved funding for a new post of copyright and digital resources officer, which will be based in the library. This represents an expansion of the library’s role as we will take on responsibility not only for managing and ensuring adherence to the copyright licences but also for facilitating the inclusion of digital resources on our WebCT platform by providing copyright advice and support. At the time of writing (mid-November) we have yet to fill this post. During this interim period before the post is filled, Philippa Dolphin (well-known to many in the SCONUL community) will be with us for one day a week to provide copyright advice and consultancy.

Campus closures

Summer 2004 saw the closure of our Runnymede campus library and the move of staff and stock to Uxbridge. The site will remain with the university, however, and the library building will now house university archives and special collections including our transport history collection. The Brunel campuses at Twickenham and Osterley have both been sold and departments and libraries will move over to Uxbridge in summer 2005 and summer 2006 respectively. The concentration of staff on one site will provide us with an opportunity to extend service hours and review staff structures – and we will shortly be commencing the change management process. Again. So, no change in that respect.

Nick Bevan
Director of Library Services

Patience rewarded

The library's copy of volume 32 of *The proceedings of the Classical Association* was recently found in the Amnesty International Book Shop and returned to the library. It had been officially missing since the Inspection of 1960. This, and the recent occurrence of this year's Inspection, prompted an informal survey of returning bibliographic vagrants. The result gave some cause for optimism about the long term fate of missing books, however irritating their absence in the intervening period. While most books found to have returned to the shelf at the annual Inspections have been declared missing in the recent past, a study of twenty Inspection reports showed that, for the found item which had been missing the longest in each year, the average time lapse was just under 43 years. The Rip Van Winkle of the survey was an item lost in 1886 and returned 110 years later in 1996, while 1993's Inspection revealed books missing since 1887 and 1892. Distance in space as well as time can be noteworthy. One book was returned after 37 years from the shelves of the Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne, provoking speculation on the exact route of its illegal transportation and happy return; of the few UL books to circumnavigate the globe this must have taken the longest to achieve it.

Library services coordinator appointed

A new half-time post has been created to promote greater coordination among the university's libraries (faculty and departmental, as well as the university library and its dependent libraries) and possibly including the colleges. Lesley Gray of the university library's electronic services and systems division has been appointed for nine months from January 2005. She will continue to devote the rest of her time to her responsibilities as union catalogue project administrator.

Between January and September she will review and investigate current schemes and services, hold consultations and prepare recommendations for future planning and coordination of Cambridge library services. Her concerns will include acquisitions, services and potential areas for savings. Some specific investigations will be into coordination of subscriptions to, and cancellations of, journals and electronic resources, sources of funding for additional electronic resources, coordination, between libraries on adjacent sites, of services such as lending and

access, possible space savings through relegation or disposal of duplicate or little used material and improved library support for teaching and learning. Information on national schemes and initiatives will be gathered and disseminated.

The Vanneck and Arcedeckne Papers from Heveningham

The university library has recently purchased the substantial archive of the Vanneck and Arcedeckne families. These papers, formerly kept at Heveningham Hall in Suffolk, were deposited on loan in the university library in 1973. Their owners offered them for sale to the library through their agents Christie's in 2004, and the library has been able to acquire them using the Commonwealth Library Fund. In this way, an important archive will remain intact and be permanently available for research in Cambridge.

One section of the archive consists of papers of the Vanneck family, including manorial and estate papers concerning their properties in Suffolk going back to the Middle Ages. The second section of the archive concerns the Arcedeckne (normally pronounced 'Archdeacon') family. Here the most interesting material is undoubtedly the papers concerning the management of the family's estates in Jamaica, which were worked by slaves and where the main crop was sugar. Extensive correspondence with the agents looking after the estates has been described as 'the most important collection of private correspondence on the political history of Jamaica in the period they cover'.

The development and implementation of a programme of Library Services research exercises

There has been a substantial amount of activity in this area in the last few months and the information below provides an update on the various tasks we have been undertaking. Evidence base is playing a central role in this work. Their involvement includes designing questionnaires, providing advice on how the surveys should be carried out and analysing the results.

- Pilot surveys of the business school, art and design and media and communications students

The library management group now has the final versions of the reports from evidence

base and is going through them with a fine tooth comb to extract action points.

- Survey of UCE academic staff

We received 182 completed questionnaires; this represents a response rate of around 23% which is quite good for this type of survey. One of the areas we asked academic staff to comment on was their perceptions of why students do not use the library service. We received some very interesting responses and as a result a series of 'Brown bag lunches' have been organised to discuss these findings with academic staff. It is intended that these sessions will provide opportunities to explore ways in which we can work with academic colleagues to develop information skills training even further. Again we have the final report and we will be going through the report to identify other action points.

- Review of library induction

Library Services' first contact with first year students is very important as it sets the tone for their interaction with us throughout their course. With this in mind it was decided that we would carry out a survey of first year inductions. A questionnaire was designed and agreed with the faculty and subject librarians. This questionnaire was handed out in all induction sessions and a substantial number have been returned. Colleagues in Academic Support are entering these questionnaires onto a database ready for analysis by evidence base.

One other potentially valuable outcome of this survey is that a large number of students provided their addresses to indicate that they would like to participate in further library research. This address information will be extracted and the students will be contacted to confirm this interest. Those students who respond will provide a valuable pool of contacts for further research and the opportunity to monitor their opinions throughout their course. This type of longitudinal tracking of students in relation to their use of library services has rarely been carried out and therefore this could be quite an important piece of research.

- Completion of survey of student opinions about the library service

Building on the experience gained from the pilot surveys described above, the original questionnaire was revised slightly to improve the clarity of a couple of questions. The new questionnaires have now been printed and distributed.

The 'Brown Paper Bag Lunches' mentioned above are where members of academic staff bring along their sandwiches, and we supply the hot drink and biscuits. We are trying to start a debate about how we can work in collaboration with academic colleagues to encourage students to use the resources on which we spend so much. We have been able to analyse the responses staff have already given us about why they think students do not use the library, and to categorise their responses about how they encourage the students to use the library. Only 16% of respondents actually claimed to involve the librarians, and even then some of the participation is rather 'hands off': by recommending to the students they contact their subject specialist, rather than directly involving them in delivering sessions.

The first lunch has taken place. A small but enthusiastic group of staff turned up and we had a wide-ranging discussion. When the rest of the lunches have taken place (four more are planned), we will see if common themes emerge and we will do what we can to try to encourage the students to use the services – as well as improve liaison and our profile in the university as a whole.

In the past we decided to concentrate our efforts in information literacy on the academic staff. We reasoned that academic staff are the key to students, as we can reach the more motivated individual students but many others are much more strongly influenced by information provided by their lecturers. So, if we could make sure the lecturers were properly informed about our resources, this would filter through to the students.

We have been running annual electronic resources awareness days (ERAs) for academic staff since May 2001. They are usually well attended (if by a number of the same people), and we have reached our maximum capacity as regards the facilities and library staff available. We want to see if our theory about the role of academic staff in the communication of library resource information is valid. We are now trying to follow up with those staff who have attended our ERA days in the past whether they have actually used any of the services in connection with preparation for

teaching, research, or advising students better. This year we will ask those attending if they have been on a previous occasion, and what, if anything, they now use from learning about it at that event. We would also like to establish if they did start using any resources new to them, if they have found it of use to their teaching, academic research, or in their dealings with students.

The BIG Draw at UCE Libraries

UCE Libraries took part in the BIG Draw in October and many people both inside and outside the Library Services wondered why on earth we were doing it. Well, it should be known by all staff that the library is working hard to promote itself to the whole UCE community and beyond. We want to raise our profile for a number of reasons:

- To make people aware of the services and resources we offer
- To keep ourselves in people's consciousness (important when funding is being allocated)
- To break down barriers so that other staff will collaborate effectively with us
- To encourage reluctant users to cross the threshold

This last is particularly important when it comes to retention of students. If students have not properly engaged with the learning process, including using the library and its resources, they are more likely to drop out or fail.

Taking part in activities such as the BIG Draw was a fun way to break down barriers, encourage new users to join the library and to promote ourselves generally.

The events that took place at four of our libraries were all very different but they all fulfilled the criteria above. We had Musical Pictures at the conservatoire (where else?), Nursing Pictionary at our nursing library, a Pictorial Visitor's Book at one of our art and design libraries and a Giant Still Life at our main site library.

Despite fears that no one would take part, we had a good turnout at all of them with the nursing library having the greatest number of participants (101). The Nursing Pictionary was great fun and the results have been displayed in the lending library for all to see. While no great works of art were produced from this particular event (that wasn't the intention), people who were anxious about drawing took part and thoroughly enjoyed expressing the words in pictures.

The conservatoire could only have three participants at a time but a wonderful effort on the part of all the staff meant that the event took place all day and a total of 72 people participated in what one student called 'Another of those weird things our librarians do'. There are clearly some very talented folk at the conservatoire. It was really interesting to see the images evoked by the three different styles of music, world, jazz and classical.

The art and design library's Pictorial Visitor's Book produced some interesting work. Being at an art and design library meant that we expected less resistance to the idea of drawing and we were right but the surprise of that event was the enthusiasm of the cleaner and security guard to take part. (The cleaner now wants to do an art course.)

The Giant Still Life at our largest library resulted in at least two new members of the library and some very good art work. Two members of staff did a sterling job encouraging and supporting people as they sought to express themselves in drawing. This event involved the most setting up but the results must surely have been worth it. A group from art and design came over to take part and this was the first time some had visited the Kenrick Library.

We hope that next year we will be able to do something again. It seems unfortunate that it happens just when we are very busy in the autumn term but we consider it to be an opportunity to reach out early in the term to those people who might otherwise miss us.

UCE Libraries go 'Moodling'

UCE Libraries are working with academic and other colleagues within the university to implement Moodle, chosen by UCE as its course management system. Library Services actually has a member of staff seconded to work one day a week on Moodle development.

Moodle is an Open Source software tool for producing internet-based courses and web sites. It is Australian in origin. The word Moodle is an acronym for *Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment*. Moodle allows us to present a course containing information resources (textual and tabular information, photographs and diagrams, videos, audio recordings, web pages, acrobat documents and many others) and student activities such as uploadable assignments, quizzes, user polls, forums and others. Courses developed

and delivered in Moodle are not a replacement for real-life lessons and interaction with teaching staff, but an enhancement that supplements those traditional teaching methods.

We are currently developing and adapting our already extensive range of resources and preparing to introduce a range of new services designed to enhance the learning experience to ensure equality of access to all students, particularly the growing number of part-time and distance learners. The library believes that Moodle will deliver added value to Library Services because (amongst many other things) it:

- Overcomes limitations of time and location
- Can help support, engage and motivate learners
- Allows for shared ownership and participation in the course delivery
- Allows for course content which is relevant, novel and up-to-date
- Encourages students to adopt new approaches to learning
- Can be used to develop information retrieval and critical analysis skills
- Encourages collaboration between the library, academic and IT staff both in course planning and input into resource selection
- Helps to promote the wide range of electronic and other resources currently provided by the university

First steps...

As a first step, we envisage the production of a suite of Moodle-based information skills materials, based on one generic tutorial *UcefulLibSkills*.

This will, in the initial phase at least, essentially provide an alternative to face-to-face teaching, taking advantage of the interactivity offered by the Moodle medium by including exercises, quizzes, live links etc. As the project progresses, we will adapt and develop material linked to the particular needs of individual courses. This is obviously an organic process and over time material and resources will evolve as a result of close collaboration between faculty librarians and academic staff to provide a tailor-made range of resources that combine the specialist knowledge of both.

Moodle will also allow students to develop their information seeking skills and check their understanding of library systems and services via self assessment at a time and pace that suits them, unconfined by the availability of library staff, time within the curriculum or opening hours. Moodle

is also intuitive, and easy to use, and has been favourably received by users so far. We hope to have the first phase of *UcefulLibSkills* complete by Easter 2005.

Library services such as the TalisList Reading List module can be directly integrated into a course structure providing both the academic staff and students with a level of interactivity that will enhance both the teaching and learning experience; in fact, library staff expect that Moodle will provide us with many of the tools we need to achieve that end for our users. We often don't have time to develop ideas with a class in a one-hour library induction or at a busy enquiry desk: but if the discussion continues online, we have a starting-point for further development!

Being Open Source software, you are free to download Moodle, modify and even distribute it (under license),. Moodle runs without modification on Unix, Linux, Windows, Mac OS X, Netware and any other system that supports PHP, including most webhost providers. For further information, please point your browser at <http://moodle.org>.

Sharon McIntosh

Technical Services Librarian

E-mail: sharon.mcintosh@uce.ac.uk

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY

Library collaboration to support Chinese studies in Scotland

In 1999 the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC) decided to provide funding over a five year period to develop Chinese studies in Scotland, in particular by supporting a postgraduate conversion course for the degree of Master of Chinese Studies (MCS). The strategic decision was taken in response to the findings of the review of Chinese studies in the UK in 1997 that identified an increase in demand for people with Chinese language skills and knowledge of China. The SHEFC funding has also included support to build up library and information resources for the MCS programme. The degree programme itself has been jointly offered by Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities, but the library component of the programme also involves two more institutions - the University of Aberdeen and the University of Abertay Dundee.

The library collaboration, led by Edinburgh University Library, is based on a sharing of several kinds of resources: library material (and to some extent library facilities through reciprocal borrowing), funds, management, and expertise. Within the consortium, the level and method of involvement of each member institution depend upon its role in the corresponding MCS programme, or the expertise it can offer. Collaboration in bibliographical services such as material acquisition and cataloguing of vernacular language material has been set up between Edinburgh and Glasgow. Aberdeen's involvement has been limited to a share of the supplementary funds and library information service, which corresponds to its limited involvement in the MCS teaching. Although Abertay does not contribute to the teaching of the MCS courses, it has played a major role in setting up and maintaining the project web site with its excellent IT expertise.

Over the past four years, significant progress has been achieved in providing library support for the MCS course, disseminating information through the project web site (www.sino-cs.ac.uk) for current and prospective students, and developing library collections for modern Chinese studies at Edinburgh and Glasgow universities. The latest development is focusing on the acquisition of full-text Chinese online resources, namely the Apabi Chinese e-book library and the e-journals from Wanfang Data in China.

The resources built up as a result of the SHEFC funding and the input from the member institutions will continue to benefit Chinese studies in Scotland in the longer term. The consortial approach, with its extensive resource sharing, has been an interesting and productive experiment, which may well provide a model for future collaboration beyond the area of Chinese studies.

Shenxiao Tong
Chinese Studies Librarian

Edinburgh: City of Literature

"We cultivate literature on a little oatmeal..."

Edinburgh University Library has been much involved in the application to Unesco for Edinburgh to be designated as the first Unesco City of Literature. The success of the application was announced in Paris in October, to the delight of the steering committee, of which I was a member.

The dossier handed over to Unesco was entitled 'We cultivate literature on a little oatmeal...', quoting from the Rev. Sydney Smith's proposed motto for the Edinburgh Review in 1802. The City of Literature concept is about many things, past and present: writing, books, reading, libraries, literacy, publishing, bookselling, teaching, and celebrating literature. It is also about sharing its literary success with other cities worldwide.

Edinburgh University and the university library played an important part in the bid, and both are described in the dossier. Many organisations are involved in the project, and each has been asked to make specific commitments to making the project successful. The university has looked at what it can contribute, and I have been involved in looking at the literary activities which are carried out in the University. The result is a remarkable, vibrant tally which contributes to the literary life of Edinburgh. The university teaches literature and creative writing and carries out research in a wide range of subjects including Scottish and Gaelic literature, the history of the book, and the influence of Scottish literature throughout the world. It publishes much of relevance to Scottish literature through Edinburgh University Press, supports contemporary literature through the James Tait Black award, and holds many lectures and symposia which are open to the public.

The library has excellent holdings of Scottish literature, with an internationally renowned collection of books and manuscripts of pre-1800 and modern Scottish authors. The dossier mentions recent initiatives in the library to develop electronic resources to support Scottish literature, including the Sir Walter Scott Digital Archive (www.walterscott.lib.ed.ac.uk) which is one of the main sources of information about Scott on the internet. The Britain in Print website (www.britaininprint.net) contains information about the early printed heritage of Britain, and is developing e-learning materials to support the school and university curriculum, with one project based around a fifteenth century Scots poem, *The testament of Cresseid* by Robert Henryson.

Sheila Cannell
Director of Library Services

Artificial Intelligence Library fire

In December 2002, our Artificial Intelligence Library was destroyed by a major fire in a complex of buildings in Edinburgh's Old Town

with the event receiving much media interest. The library had been established in the mid-1960s, when the university's long association with artificial intelligence and related subjects really began to develop. It was re-established in South Bridge in 1985 and, although the actual space occupied was small, the library contained a world-renowned collection of material in all areas of AI and served the current teaching and research needs of the School of Informatics. Its stock encompassed the intellectual output of the School and its many predecessors over a period of some 40 years. The destruction of the library therefore represented a significant loss of the knowledge base of the university.

In all, some 5750 books, 1400 conference proceedings, and journal holdings going back to the 1970s were lost. In addition, over 1000 PhD theses, MSc dissertations and undergraduate dissertations from the School were destroyed, together with some 28,000 research reports from 100 universities and other research institutions around the world.

Soon after the fire, the loss assessors gave us the go-ahead to start buying books and enhancing online journal access and, during the first year, around 1000 books were ordered, although many were subsequently found to be no longer in print. The AI collection was gradually re-established in the Main Library in a separate collection, although the decision was taken a year later to fully integrate it. A considerable amount of staff time was spent dealing with donated material following the School's appeal to former staff and students.

We were pleased to receive funding from the Elsevier Foundation in response to a bid that we had made soon after the fire and decided to use it to create a temporary post of Digital Library Officer, whose role would be the development of an informatics portal. The intention was to create a test portal and a core informatics collection comprising library resources, research activities such as pre-prints, reports, theses, and course resources, as well as recommended external resources. This work was undertaken from January 2004 and it is now our intention to continue the project in conjunction with the library's developing Collections Gateway.

While staff were busy re-establishing the services and the collections, I was asked to compile the insurance claim. There were three elements to the claim: shelving, furniture, equipment; staffing;

and collections. We had been advised to compile the claim as quickly as possible and it was submitted to the university's finance department at the end of May 2003. A series of meetings was held with the loss assessors over the next six months to clarify issues in the claim and two further supplementary papers were produced. At the time of writing (November 2004), we are waiting for confirmation that the claim has been settled, and we are starting to consider how to use the funding most effectively.

I have written an article on the AI fire and its aftermath and hope that it will appear in CILIP Update in the first half of 2005.

*Richard Battersby, Librarian
College of Science and Engineering*

UNIVERSITY OF GLAMORGAN

Après le deluge

On 12 August – oh, it seems like a distant dream (nightmare?) – the heavens decided to open with a vengeance and a substantial area of the LRC was flooded. Something to do with blocked pipes and other technical stuff that passed over my head (literally!). Although when you put it into words it sounds fairly innocuous, in reality it had a great effect on the staff and students, although there were few of the latter around at the time. Media rooms, IT labs, silent study areas, bookable rooms and the staff room were all adversely affected. Luckily, the bookstock avoided most of the damage and much redecorating and recarpeting took place as a result. The only silver lining is that we managed to get a brand spanking new staff kitchen.

Seek and ye shall . .

The LRC acquired a new OPAC last year, TalisPrism. The new OPAC offers a number of significant enhancements over the previous service. These include enhanced searching capability, cross-searching of external databases, search-engine-type results display, three request options (reservations, short loan, interlibrary loan) and a comments/suggestions facility. The new service has generally been welcomed by the students.

DVD, video and PCs for all university teaching rooms

The Audio-Visual Service (AVS) reached a significant milestone last year in upgrading

facilities in centrally-booked general purpose teaching rooms. All such rooms with a capacity of 20 or more are now equipped with permanently installed networked PCs, video and DVD playback, and ceiling mounted data projectors. So for the first time staff could prepare Powerpoint and other presentations in the knowledge that they could show their material in any room they are timetabled to use. The wide availability of these facilities opens up opportunities to bring into the classroom any networked resource such as Blackboard, or a range of online resources accessible through the LRC's FINDit gateway. It's even possible in the teaching rooms to operate and display software that is actually installed and running on office PCs.

So how was it for you? LRC service standards 2003/04

Every year we monitor service standards (seven standards; nine commitments) and publicise the results. During last year some standards were achieved and others fell short. Here are some examples:

Queuing: During the autumn term queuing at loans desks sometimes took longer than the standard of 5 minutes. This was the result of staff shortages and problems with the self-service facilities.

Interlibrary Loans: Taken across the whole year this standard (to provide 90% of requests within 10 days) was met.

Book orders: Our standard of adding 90% of books within 8 weeks was met. However, it was recognised that these figures excluded the time taken before the order was created and after the item was received in Purchasing.

Suggestions/Complaints: Around 70% of these were answered within the standard time of 7 days.

Better access

Following a physical access audit of the university campus, the LRC was identified as a priority area for a programme of works to improve the accessibility of the building. This was a significant investment in excess of £200,000 and was essential in order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. There were several key aspects of the programme:

- installation of an external lift from ground level up to the level of the Treforest LRC entrance
- replacement of the Treforest LRC entrance doors with ones which slide open and shut
- upgrading of internal doors including automatic opening.

Further developments are taking place at the Glyntaff LRC.

LRC training hour

The training hour for LRC staff continued in the autumn term. These sessions are held on a fortnightly basis (Wednesdays) between 8.30 and 9.30. They are organised by a small staff development group and the aim is to supplement the staff development and training programmes provided through university or external courses. The topics covered during the term included: refresher training for frontline staff; training on the new TalisPrism facility; briefing on the implications of the Freedom of Information legislation and its implications for the LRC; and awareness raising of Help and Support facilities provided by our colleagues in the Information Systems and e-learning Services department.

Change of store

Following the news that we had to vacate our off-campus store we sought an alternative location on campus and succeeded in finding one. However, the new facility contained only 60% of the off-campus store and a fairly ruthless editing process got under way. The aim is to install the material in the new slimmed-down facility during the spring term.

Staffing changes

We welcomed the following new staff during the year:

Paul Aitken, media support officer
Natalia Costa, learning resources assistant
Ryan Danahar, systems support officer
Claire Flay, learning resources assistant
Mark Palmer, media support officer
Sally Skym, PA to the senior management team

Linda Graves became the new information librarian supporting humanities and social sciences following the retirement of Bill Newman.

Steve Morgan

Deputy Head of Learning Resources Centre

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Members of the JISC-funded DAEDALUS project attended the SPARC Workshop on 'Institutional repositories: the next stage' in Washington, D.C. Morag Greig presented a paper on copyright issues relating to populating institutional repositories with content, while William Nixon

gave a paper on choosing an IR platform. Nearly 300 delegates attended the workshop, which took place between 18 and 19 November 2004. Other sessions included presentations on formulating policies and business models for institutional repositories, in addition to updates on moves by major funding bodies to mandate open access. Workshop presentations are available at <http://www.arl.org/sparc/meetings/ir04/ir04speak.html>

Peter Asplin retires after 40 years at Glasgow University Library

In September, the longest serving member of GUL staff retired after a full forty years of valued and committed service. Peter Asplin, who for the past twelve years played a key role pushing forward the major developments in special collections, joined the library staff in November 1964.

In 1968, Peter played an important role in planning the move of books from the old library to the new building. He then went on to work as an arts & humanities subject librarian until 1992, when a vacancy arose in special collections. Within two years of joining special collections, Peter became involved with the planning and implementation of the various retro-conversion projects supported from the SHEFC non-formula funding for specialised collections in the humanities.

Peter was once again able to demonstrate his prowess in managing stock re-location in 1996 when the Hunterian Library and all the other special collections were moved from static shelving to mobile shelving ranges on the newly created level 12.

In tandem with his library duties, Peter has published a bibliography of secondary literature to accompany the Royal Irish Academy's *A new history of Ireland*.

GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY

Synergy, the inhouse magazine of the Learning Services department of Glasgow Caledonian University, has won an award.

At the annual conference of the Publicity and Public Relations Group of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) held on 11-13 November Synergy was highly

commended in the Printed Publicity Material category. The citation stated.

'Careful attention has been paid to the development of an appropriate design and format which would appeal to the target audience. The copy is readable but has the integrity required for this type of publication...

We are pleased to Highly Commend Glasgow Caledonian University and wish the editorial board continued success.'

In achieving this award the support of the editorial board has been essential. Special thanks are due to Darren Jewell a designer in the University's Print Design Services Unit who produced such an effective design.

Anyone interested in being put on the Synergy mailing list should contact John. Synergy is also available on the web at; <http://www.learningservices.gcal.ac.uk/synergy/index.html>

The current issue is a special one on information literacy.

New Information Literacy Project begins

Expressions of interest are invited for a new project on information literacy skills - looking at the link between secondary and tertiary education. The recently completed Drumchapel Project set out to examine ICT skill levels among school pupils in a deprived area of Glasgow. The outcomes, however, focused very much on information literacy skills or the lack of them in the secondary sector and whether these skills, taught in the secondary sector, should be linked with the tertiary sector.

Initially a pilot, the Project has concentrated on a literature review to get a picture of activity in both the secondary and tertiary sectors with a view to identifying common themes and ideas. This will lead to applications to major funding bodies to undertake a major policy study in the area. Expressions of interest in participating are already coming in from schools and expressions of interest from the tertiary sector are also welcome.

Enquiries to

Dr John Crawford, Library Research Officer
Glasgow Caledonian University,
Room 302 (3rd floor)
6 Rose Street
Glasgow G3 6RB
Tel: 0141 270 1360
E-mail jcr@gcal.ac.uk

or

Ms Christine Irving, Project Officer
Glasgow Caledonian University,
Room 304 (3rd floor)
6 Rose Street
Glasgow G3 6RB
Tel: 0141 270 1360
E- mail: christine.irving@gcal.acuk

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Appointment of Librarian

Margaret Coutts has been appointed Librarian and Keeper of the Brotherton Collection at the University of Leeds. Previously Director of Information Services and Librarian at the University of Kent at Canterbury, she will join Leeds early in 2005. Margaret has held posts at Glasgow and Aberdeen university libraries and her particular areas of interest have been the development of ICT and applications for university libraries, staff development and the introduction of digital collections to university activity. She has played an active role in professional organisations including SCONUL, JISC and the M25 consortium of higher education libraries.

Margaret Coutts is successor to Jan Wilkinson, who left the University last July to become the British Library's first Head of Higher Education.

Head of Public Service Strategy

Leeds University Library has welcomed Liz Waller as the new Head of Public Service Strategy. Liz has over 17 years experience in higher education libraries and joins Leeds from Leeds Metropolitan University.

Successful JISC bid: Developing Virtual Research Environments

Leeds University Library has been successful in a bid to JISC for a project under their 'Developing Virtual Research Environments' strand. The library is leading the EVIE [Embedding a VRE in an Institutional Environment] Project, which will run for two years. A virtual research environment [VRE] is an online environment to support researchers, which might include access to a range of services such as online collaboration tools, library services, and access to key research support systems. EVIE will develop a VRE by bringing together a range of tools and services, including library resources, and the tools provided by the university's existing Virtual

Knowledge Park and VLE [Bodington], into a single web environment. It will build on the work currently being undertaken at Leeds on developing a University institutional portal, and will use the portal platform for delivery of the integrated environment. External project partners include the British Library and the White Rose e-science Grid.

Rosemary Campbell-Blair
Edward Boyle Library
University of Leeds

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

The National Library of Scotland is one of the world's top research libraries and Scotland's largest library. It serves as both a general research library, is a legal deposit library, and is also the world's leading centre for the manuscript and printed collection of material on Scotland. This year the NLS set up a new development and marketing department to cover online development, strategy, and marketing of its services. It has now appointed One World Design to develop its corporate identity and give the NLS a design makeover.

Martin Budd, the creative director of One World Design is looking forward to creating a new image for the NLS aimed at raising the profile of the NLS brand.

One World were appointed after a four-way pitch. Alexandra Miller, director of development & marketing at the NLS said: 'We have chosen a design agency who understand our complexity and our role as a twenty-first century resource for people in Scotland and beyond.' She stated: 'We have an exciting new strategy of access and partnership and we want to reflect that in all of our corporate materials. NLS has great resources. We have fantastic modern and historical collections, as well as the latest scientific and business materials, both in print and electronic formats'.

Diane Lindsay

By Royal Appointment: HRH The Princess Royal launches new archive web site

On 8 November 2004, HRH The Princess Royal formally opened the new School of Health and Social Care at Oxford Brookes University, and launched the university library's Dorset House archive web site.

Dorset House was the first school of occupational therapy in the UK, founded in Bristol in 1930 by its visionary medical director Dr Elizabeth Casson (pictured). During the second world war the school was forced, after heavy bombing, to move to Bromsgrove. With an increase in demand for occupational therapists during these years, the school expanded and soon outgrew its temporary home.



In 1946 Dorset House moved to Oxford, firstly to Nissen huts on the Churchill Hospital site and then (in 1964) to more permanent accommodation on the London Road in Headington. 1992 saw the school become part of Oxford Polytechnic. Later in that year, the polytechnic became Oxford Brookes University.

The Dorset House archive provides a unique perspective on not only the history of the School, but also the history of the Casson family and the wider story of occupational therapy, both nationally and internationally. Alongside the books and papers of Dr Casson and the school's principals and staff, the real jewels of the collection are photographs, scrap books and ciné films charting developments in this field.

To make some of these items more widely accessible, photographs and promotional films from the 1940s have been digitised and mounted on the Dorset House archive web site (www.brookes.ac.uk/services/library/speccoll/dorset.html). Work on the rest of the archive continues thanks to a generous grant by the Elizabeth Casson Trust.



Pictured is Antony Brewerton, the librarian in charge of the Dorset House archive, demonstrating parts of the web site and collection to The Princess Royal, Patron of the College of Occupational Therapists.

UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

E-resource development

As part of a wider service re-organisation we have established an e-resource development team, led by Fiona Greig who took up her post in October. The team of six will be involved in developing services and systems that will help underpin changes required deliver a modern and proactive, user-centred information service. As part of this we have purchased the EnCompass resource management tools from Endeavor and are currently working on a small pilot project to develop federated searching of resources in two subject-focused collections. The pilot project will be used as a 'demonstrator' and we will seek customer feedback to inform a wider implementation, the OpenURL resolver LinkfinderPlus will also be introduced for the demonstrator enabling not only federated searching but also single-click access to full-text items. At the same time we are using the EnCompass for Digital Collections system to migrate our past exam papers from an older and less flexible system, while important in its own right this work will enable us to explore the software and its capabilities for a number of other projects we have in development.

Extended Plymouth library

We opened the new extension to the Plymouth library in September – the builders were still completing the lower ground floor but we were determined to get in before induction week. At the same time we implemented self-issue and self-return for the majority of our stock at Plymouth, using a system produced by a Finnish company, P.V.Supa. The students tell us that the self-service

machines are cool – the ultimate compliment, and the extension itself has been well received by the university. Some students are less admiring of our choice of carpet. We are still trying to get the final snagging items dealt with, and delayed moving forward with opening the new 24x7 open access computing and media area until this week, when we could be sure that everything was ready.

The new extension is designed to provide a variety of quality study space – from the new library café, and its associated casual study area, to group study areas and sofas around the atrium, to quiet and silent study areas designed with the help of an acoustic engineer to deaden sound. The ‘old’ library now mainly houses the book-stock which was totally rearranged over the summer, and 900 boxes of stock from our other libraries incorporated.

2004 has been a challenging year for library staff at the university. In December 2003 we were still using Libertas, working in a building that had had much of one outer wall demolished, and about to implement a new staffing structure. Twelve months later we have successfully implemented Voyager (including the inter-library loan module this September), made a good start at building the new teams, and are beginning to plan for next summer when more stock is transferred to Plymouth. Our library at Seale Hayne then closes as teaching ceases at that campus.

Penny Holland
Head of Customer Services

UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH

‘Fit for work?’ staff development day

Each summer vacation we try to stage an event for library personnel on a general staff development topic, such as careers or the work of other areas of the university. These events usually rely heavily on the input of staff from across the university who seem to be happy to give a presentation in return for free refreshments. This summer on 16 June we held a day on various aspects of health entitled ‘Fit for work?’. All staff are invited to these events, with the enticement of a free buffet lunch (can you spot a common theme here?), and this was the most popular ever with 34 attending (about 40% of the total).

The aim of the day was to increase awareness of the health services available to university

staff and awareness of preventative measures to avoid ill-health. After a welcome from the university librarian, the morning programme concentrated on aspects of stress and relaxation with presentations by the occupational health nurses on their work in the university; by Student Services counsellors on the counselling process; and by pharmacy lecturers on medical herbalism and relaxation. The afternoon was rather more physical with a representative from the Health & Safety Unit presenting on correct IT workplace layout and two sports assistants getting everyone exercised (literally) with their session on exercise and diet (with a section on exercising at the desk for the less active). The day ended with a question and answer session by a ‘Health Forum’ of speakers and other advisers. Although we weren’t able to be as ambitious as Oxford University Libraries with their ‘Well being week’ (Merrett 2003)¹, we offered yoga and tai chi taster sessions during the coffee breaks and over lunchtime a sports science technician brought various machines for testing our fitness. In addition, Portsmouth City Council Health Development Team displayed a wide variety of leaflets for participants to take away with them.

The event was evaluated with a ‘happy sheet’ which 29 staff completed. Overall the ‘brilliant’ day was very well received and participants felt its aims had been achieved giving them ‘reassurance of support’; the ‘confidence to use [university] facilities’; and ‘lots of information’. Criticisms concentrated mostly on practical aspects such as the limited space available for exercise sessions and limited time for the most popular presentation, medical herbalism. The crowded seminar room was also a problem on what must have been the only hot day of the summer.

Participants were asked what other aspects of health and safety they would like to hear about as a result of this event so that we could use their suggestions in planning our training programme this year. Consequently, we are hoping to repeat a manual handling workshop we have held in the past and to invite relevant speakers from across the university to our ‘coffee mornings’. These are short weekly development sessions open to all library staff (bring your own coffee), which are presented by speakers from the library or elsewhere in the university. The programme this term will include one of the pharmacy staff returning to expand some aspects of their medical herbalism presentation and next term the student mental health advisor to talk about her work.

In the words of one participant, this was 'an enjoyable stress-free day' which brought staff together; informed and entertained in equal part; and provided a relaxing prelude to the summer vacation.

- 1 Gail Merrett, 'A healthy bod? Creating wellbeing in Oxford University Library Services', *SCONUL Newsletter* (29), summer/autumn 2003, p64.

Jane Paine

Assistant Librarian (Staff Development)

E-mail: jane.paine@port.ac.uk