



Newfoundland and Labrador Library Association Bulletin

The Newfoundland and Labrador Library Association

ISSN: 1480-3178 Volume No.29
November 1, 2000

Fall 2000

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Advertising rates as follows: \$35.00 for full page
 \$20.00 for half page

If you want further information about the NLLA and its activities, please contact Colleen Field at the above telephone number or e-mail address. You can also write to the NLLA at:

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You may also visit our webpage at: <http://www.infonet.st-johns.nf.ca/nlla/>

Words from the new NLLA President, Colleen Field

I am delighted to welcome everybody to a new year with the NLLA. Last year ended on such a high note - how do we ever top it? I am speaking of course of our first annual conference. Dianne Cmor gives a report of the conference in this Bulletin but I just wanted to say how rewarding it was to be a part of the planning process. I believe everyone felt buoyed by its success and the executive is determined to not let such enthusiasm wane. Hats off to Dianne for leading the way.

We are a small association that has been in existence for over thirty years, mainly because of dedicated and committed individuals who give freely of their time whenever possible. This year should be no different. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people:

Lenora Furey who stepped in so quickly and effectively when Chris Dennis decided not to continue as editor of the Bulletin (something he has done since 1990!).

Dianne Taylor-Harding and Kate Collins from the Dr. C.R. Barrett Library (Marine Institute) who completed the latest Directory of Libraries in Newfoundland and Labrador which accompanies this Bulletin.

Jewel Cousens who chaired the Library Week Committee this year and pulled it off despite facing financial challenges.

Stephen Field who has volunteered to chair next year's Library Week Committee. With a \$1000.00 grant coming from the Literacy Development Council of Newfoundland and Labrador, planning looks promising. Please let the executive know if you are interested in joining the Committee.

Adriana Popescu who has volunteered to chair the AGM/Conference Planning Committee. We are in search of program ideas - don't be shy!

Pam Morgan who maintains our listserv.

Dianne Cmor and Lenora Furey who look after our web pages.

Ronotta Thomas who is our events coordinator and is mulling over several ideas. Stay tuned for news of a Christmas social.

Thank you to everyone who contributed articles to this Bulletin, now in its 15th year of publication!

This edition of the Bulletin was sponsored by the Health Sciences Library at Memorial University of Newfoundland. The NLLA Executive would like to thank George Beckett for making this possible.

If your organization would like to sponsor an edition, please call the editor.

Winners of the 2000 NLLA Award



Photo submitted by Carolyn Hawkins

In photo: left to right
Tina Lawlor, Colleen Field, Gillian Robinson

The Newfoundland and Labrador Library Association Award is given annually to the graduate from the Certificate in Library Studies Program with the highest grade average. This year there was a tie between Tina Lawlor and Gillian Robinson. Tina works with the Dr. C.R. Barrett Library at Memorial University (Marine Institute). At the time of the award, Gillian was working with the National Research Council's St. John's Information Centre. She has since moved to York, England. Both winners attended the graduation ceremony in May and were presented with certificates and cheques for \$100.00 by NLLA President, Colleen Field. They will each receive the NLLA Bulletin for one year. Congratulations to both Tina and Gillian.

Margaret Williams Trust Fund Award Winner



Photo Submitted by: Barbara Mulloy

The Trustees of the Margaret Williams Trust Fund are pleased to announce that the trust has made its 2000 award to Lisa Wilson in the amount of \$2000.

Ms Wilson, a native of Topsail, Newfoundland, holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English with a minor in Classical Studies (1998) from Memorial University of Newfoundland. She is currently pursuing a Master of Library and Information Studies degree at Dalhousie University.

Added Entries

by Karen Lippold

Academic

College of the North Atlantic

Bonnie Morgan is the new librarian at the Seal Cove Campus of the College of the North Atlantic. Bonnie just graduated from Dalhousie University's School of Library & Information Studies combined MLIS/LLB program.

The new librarian at the Topsail Campus of the College is **Stephen Green-Dowden**. Stephen is a graduate of the University of Alberta School of Library & Information Studies. He joined the College in August.

Congratulations are due **Janet Fraser**, Librarian at the Prince Philip Parkway Campus. Janet recently had a collection of her poetry, *Long Girl Leaning Into the Wind*, published by Killick Press.

Sandra Hallett who was at the Torbay Public Library is now the library technician at the College's Prince Philip Parkway Campus Library.

Memorial University of Newfoundland

There have been a number of temporary changes in the Ferriss Hodgett Library at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College. **Louise McGillis** is back from her sabbatical leave in Halifax. Louise is now acting Associate University Librarian (Sir Wilfred Grenfell College).

Elizabeth Behrens, Associate University Librarian (Sir Wilfred Grenfell College), is on sabbatical leave. Elizabeth is working on her Ph.D. dissertation in Religious Studies

Bringing Grenfell's complement of librarians up to its normal two is **Gillian Byrne** who has been hired as public service librarian. Gillian is a 2000 graduate of the School of Library & Information Studies at Dalhousie.

There have been a large number of changes in the libraries on the St. John's campuses of the University. **Chitra Paranjape** has taken a leave of absence from the Dr. C.R. Barrett Library at the Fisheries and Marine Institute. Chitra is spending her leave in Toronto.

Lindsay Glynn has returned home to Newfoundland via the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia. She has been hired on contract in the Health Sciences Library. Previously she was the Manager Clinical Archives with QLT PhotoTherapeutics in Vancouver.

Chris Dennis is back from sabbatical leave and is the new head of the Collections Development Division in the Queen Elizabeth II Library.

On sabbatical at the moment in the Queen Elizabeth II Library are **Angela Lonardo** and **Suzanne Sexty** from the Information Services Division. Angela spent some time in Paris honing her French. She presented a paper at the recent Access conference and she is working on French Canadian literary and journalism prizes for a new reference work. Suzanne is also spending some of her sabbatical overseeing English Canadian literary prize listings for the same book. In addition, she has done a number of presentations of her film collage *Everything I Need to Know I Learned at the Movies*. She is also working on a history of the Atlantic Provinces Library Association, plus writing a book chapter on distance education and pedagogy.

Susan Fahey is now working in Information Services as a sabbatical replacement. Prior to her appointment in the Queen Elizabeth II, Susan was a librarian at Centennial Academy in Montreal.

Also, new in Information Services is **Penny Cairns**. Penny is doing her co-op education placement for the University of Western Ontario's graduate program in Library and Information Science in the Division.

Dianne Cmor, Information Services Division, has been selected to attend the Northern Exposure to Leadership institute. It is an acknowledgment of Dianne's demonstrated leadership potential. Mazel to Dianne.

Mary Chalker, Associate University Librarian, took early retirement in June. Happy sailing Mary!

The Lending Services Division of the Queen Elizabeth II lost **Barbara McDonald** to the Mills Memorial Library at McMaster University. Barb started her new position in June.

The new head of Lending Services at the QEII is **Patrick Warner**. Pat, who had been the Provincial Resource Library - Arts & Culture Centre, took over Lending Services at the end of August.

The Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archivist, **Bert Riggs**, is on leave working on his MIST with a specialization in archival studies at the University of Toronto Faculty of Information Studies.

Public Libraries

The new Executive Director of the Provincial Information and Library Resources Board is **David Norman**. His appointment began in June. Prior to this he was Staff Relations Specialist at the Treasury Board Secretariate.

Victoria Murphy, Lending Services Librarian in the St. John's Public Libraries, has been seconded to conduct staff computer training as part of the Gates Library Initiative. Vicky's secondment is until December.

Special Libraries

Kim Hammond was recently appointed the Director of Information Management for the House of Assembly. Prior to this Kim had been on secondment with the Lower Churchill Project from her position

as Archivist with the Newfoundland Department of Justice. She may be reached at the Legislative Library at 729-3604 or at kimberleyhammond@mail.gov.nf.ca.

Duane Spracklin who had been with the Labrador Hydro Project is now working with a pharmaceutical company in British Columbia.

Mona Pearce, Director of Legal Information Management with the Department of Justice, has taken a leave of absence to work in Alberta.

The Acting Director of Legal Information Management with the Department of Justice is **Susan Duke**. Susan was previously with Newfoundland Power

Annette Anthony who was the librarian at the Seal Cove Campus of the College of the North Atlantic is now Client Services Officer at the National Research Council St. John's Information Centre.

In case you have not found it, here is the URL for the **Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador's** catalogue: <<<http://www.lawsociety.nf.ca/library/cat.htm>>>.

The Salvation Army's College for Officer Training has a new librarian. **Karen Hutchens**, Dalhousie University MLIS'99, began at the College in August.

Gone But Not Forgotten

Karen Halliday, who was at the College for Officer Training, has moved to Kingston, Ontario.

Janice Adlington who was with the Information Services Division, Queen Elizabeth II Library, has recently accepted a position with Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN.

Alexandra Hartmann, formerly at the College of the North Atlantic in Labrador City, has been promoted to Director of Libraries for the Lakeland District of Saskatchewan.

Words to live by

A library is not a luxury but one of the necessities of life.

CC Henry Ward BEECHER

The old man was peering intently at the shelves. "I'll have to admit that he's a very competent scholar." "Isn't he just a librarian?" Garion asked, "somebody who looks after books?" "That's where all the rest of scholarship starts, Garion. All the books in the world won't help you if they're just piled up in a heap."

King of the Murgos, 1998 Del Rey.

CC David EDDINGS

Records of the NLLA

by Colleen Field

Have you ever wondered what became of those boxes of NLLA "stuff" that you, as a former executive member perhaps, carted from car trunk to office to home to someone else's car trunk, etc.?

It turns out these boxes have found a home in the Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives. In 1995, Linda White created a finding aid for the collection. It has recently been made available on the CNS Archives web page. <<<http://www.mun.ca/library/cns/archives/nla.html>>> There will soon be a link to it on the NLLA web page. Should you ever need to consult these papers, just call the Archives at 737-4349. More boxes have been deposited since 1995 but have not yet been sorted.

Members may be interested in knowing some of the history of our Association, so here is an extract from Linda's finding aid:

INTRODUCTION

The papers of the Newfoundland Library Association comprise a small collection that was generated during the years 1969 to 1994. It consists of minutes, correspondence, financial records, membership lists, constitutions, and material relating to special projects such as a directory of Newfoundland libraries, the Margaret Williams Trust Fund, and Newfoundland Library Week activities. In particular, there is original submissions (prose, poetry and art work) from the children who participated in the NLA's project for International Year of the Child in 1979: the publication of *My Inside Self*: writings and pictures by children of Newfoundland and Labrador. The collection should be of interest to researchers in the library profession, the history of libraries and their activities in Newfoundland.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The inaugural meeting of the Newfoundland Library Association took place at the Act III Restaurant in the St. John's Arts and Culture Centre on December 6, 1969; twenty-three librarians attended. According to the 1973 Constitution the purpose of the Association was "to stimulate and foster interest in the use of libraries" with membership open to librarians and other persons interested in the aims and objectives of the Association. Over the years the Association has been involved in various public events to promote the use of libraries and the importance of literacy, the most notable of which is the activities for library week each year.

The Newfoundland Library Association, like most volunteer-based organizations, has had periods of high activity and periods of inactivity. It has survived for over twenty-five years because of a dedicated group of volunteers who are committed to the development of libraries and the enhancement of the library profession in Newfoundland.

PROVENANCE

The records of the Newfoundland Library Association are deposited in the Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives on a periodic basis. Accruals date from March 5, 1991, November 9, 1994, December 12, 1994 and May 10, 1995.

NLLA Conference 2000 Report

by Dianne Cmor

The day was packed with excitement, the evening peaked with elegance, the morning after provided the perfect end!! A little inflated to describe the first NLLA conference? Perhaps. But not by much, according to the positively glowing feedback we received from those in attendance.

Our first conference was held on May 5 & 6 with over 40 people taking in the fine line-up of presenters. Starting the day, Diana Deacon, from Memorial's School of Continuing Education, provided an overview of the recently updated Certificate in Library Studies Program. Dr. Katherine Gallagher, from Memorial's Faculty of Business, opened our eyes to some of the "Do-s" & "Don't-s" of survey design. Recent examples of library surveys were provided by Gillian Robinson, National Research Council, and Linda Barnett, Dianne Cmor and Pamela Morgan, Health Sciences Library.

Following lunch and the Annual General Meeting, we were treated to an inside view of a system librarian's world by Su Cleyle from the Queen Elizabeth II Library. Finally, the lights were dimmed and Suzanne Sexty, also from the QEII, gave us a look at our profession through the Hollywood lens!

This informative and entertaining day was completed with a wonderful dinner at the Memorial University Club. The conversation, the view, and the food, all made for a splendid evening.

Finally, the following morning, a hands-on paper repair workshop was given by Dr. Brian Roberts. It was a rip-roaring success with participants ripping lots of paper and then learning techniques to repair the tears!

The NLLA Executive, also acting as the inaugural Conference Committee, was extremely pleased with the conference. We were impressed (though not surprised) with the quality of our speakers, and thrilled with the turnout of our members and guests. And we were not the only ones pleased with the day. Feedback from the survey we distributed was overwhelmingly positive. Conference attendees were very satisfied with the speakers, the social opportunities, and the overall event. In fact, it looks like we're simply going to have to make this an annual event - that's what 93% of our survey respondents suggested!

Thus, it's time to start thinking about NLLA 2001!! Are you a conference committee natural? Do you have ideas for sessions? Do you have an interest or expertise that you could share with colleagues? Any and all talents that could add to the success of NLLA 2001 welcome! Contact any member of the Executive and volunteer your services!

Library Week 2000 April 9 - 15, 2000

by Jewel Cousens

Library Week was celebrated from April 9 -15, 2000 with the theme of **READ YOUR WAY AROUND THE WORLD**. Library Week 2000 was a success in that schools and libraries held many activities that were well-attended but the financial side was dismal.

Schools and libraries received two packages of materials which consisted of posters, bookmarks, Reading Passports, puzzles, proclamation, lists of suggested activities, and map contest poster. The website was hosted by the Provincial Information & Library Resources Board and was designed and maintained by Catherine Barrett.

A province-wide map contest was held and there were only ten entries and the winners were:

- < Jason Pittman and Aaron Wells from Hampden Academy, and
- < Dylan George from Glenwood.

The entries were judged by Karyn Butler of the Mun Geography Department. The prizes included a world flag puzzle, a mouse pad and memo cube.

The Library Week Committee consisted of Jewel Cousens, Vicki Murphy, Derek Bussey, Annette Anthony, Diane Cmor, Catherine Barrett and Lenora Furey. We thank you for your help especially on the days we stuffed envelopes.

The expenses consisted of:

- < \$1937.98 for printing of posters, bookmarks, maps etc.;
- < \$2196.50 for promotional products
- < \$11.94 for banking expenses

Financial support was received from the following:

- < NLLA Seed Grant \$500
- < Johnson Inc. \$375
- < Johnson Family Foundation \$375
- < APLA \$300
- < New Tel \$275

for a total of \$1275.

The only other source of income was the sale of promotional products. The memo cubes were sold for \$8.00 and the mouse pads for \$5.25 which included taxes and shipping. At the end of Library Week there were 146 cubes and 185 mouse pads left over. In September, these items were offered to NLLA members and to the Public Libraries for a reduced price of \$5.00 for the cubes and \$3.50 for the mouse pads in an effort to sell the stock and recover money.

NLLA covered the outstanding expenses of \$959, which could be recouped if all the cubes and mouse pads are sold.

If you want some of these items, please send an email to: jcousens@publib.nf.ca

ANLA News

by Greg Walsh

The 2000-2001 year for the Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives began at the Annual General Meeting held on 7 July, 2000 at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Centre in St. John's. The event was well attended by members and invited guests and elections held at the meeting saw almost a complete renewal of faces for the Executive. Since then, the Executive has again seen some changes in personnel and is now made up of:

- < Greg Walsh - President
- < Larry Dohey - Vice-President
- < Jessie Chisholm - Professional Development and Education Officer
- < Anita Best - Director
- < Mark Ferguson - Director
- < Mary Ellen Wright - Secretary
- < Angela Hoddinott - Treasurer

ANLA will be hiring two employees this fall. The position of ANLA Conservator will allow member institutions to have global preservation assessments done for their institutions. In addition to this, this position will allow members and member institutions to obtain solid advice and instruction on conservation and preservation matters when needed. The CAIN Coordinator position should also be filled in the near future. This position will allow the Association and its members to contribute to the growing momentum of the Canadian Archival Initiative across the country. The successful candidate will be the coordinator for the project, tasked with disseminating information to ANLA members about the CAIN initiative, to advise members on funding and technical requirements for CAIN implementation, to expand on links with CAIN coordinators across Canada and other duties related to this new and exciting development in the nation's archival system.

ANLA Committees are also getting off the ground but some still have empty spaces on them. ANLA committees include Preservation, IT Committee, Membership, Education, Public Awareness and Advocacy, Finance, and possibly a committee to handle the organization and release of the ANLA Bulletin, the quarterly publication of the Association. Thus begins a new year for ANLA in the new millennium. The association welcomes any inquiries and correspondence. Please contact us at the address below.

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New CISTI Regional and National Programs in Atlantic Canada

by Adriana Popescu

On June 29, 2000, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien announced the Atlantic Investment Partnership (AIP), a federal initiative, which provides that:

The National Research Council will expand its existing facilities and begin development of new community innovation clusters. It will forge links among key players and build the innovation infrastructure needed to support growth in leading-edge technology sectors.

NRC's initiatives in the Atlantic Investment Partnership will expand and strengthen the Council's network of research and innovation centres in Atlantic Canada. As a core element of NRC, CISTI will contribute to the innovation cluster initiatives by supporting the new strategic R&D thrusts and by expanding its service base to support the new NRC Institutes and centres in Atlantic Canada.

In addition, CISTI will contribute to AIP by operating new elements of its national infrastructure and programs: develop and operate information programs; initiate and promote a national electronic journal collection; and, build a national electronic archive in scientific, technical and medical literature.

The CISTI investment will be made in Atlantic Canada to support and encourage existing and potential capacity for innovation. Infrastructure for the majority of the initiatives will be built in St John's, in partnership with an excellent university program in computer science and, a large and active university library. The vibrant NRC community (IMD, IRAP and CTN) is well linked to an industrial community ready and eager to profit from the cluster linkages and commercial opportunities that will occur.

The new CISTI initiative involves a wide range of information/knowledge-based program elements. From St. John's, the Atlantic Region will be able to exploit the recent extension of Canada's cross-country high-speed electronic network (CA*3Net) and introduce, for the first time, Atlantic delivery of a world-class technical information service infrastructure. Highlighted below are the major components of CISTI's program under the AIP.

Program Elements

A. Information Services to Clusters

CISTI will meet the challenge to provide information services to support the new innovation clusters. CISTI will set up two new NRC Information Centres (NICs) in New Brunswick and PEI and expand existing NICs in Halifax and St. John's. The new resources in New Brunswick and Halifax will also serve NRC's new research initiative in Cape Breton.

NIC St. John's will enhance its presence through an expanded library building and an extended collection. The library will continue to support the research activities of the Institute of Marine Dynamics (IMD) and the activities of IRAP's Industrial Technology Advisors (ITAs) in Newfoundland and Labrador. In addition to serving the NRC community, the library will also serve the incubator facility, which will be located at the expanded IMD facility and which will support young entrepreneurs with ocean technologies ideas and innovations.

B. National STM Electronic Infostructure

Electronic Collection and Archive:

CISTI currently purchases the rights to use more than 3,000 scientific journals in electronic form, and makes them available across the country to NRC members through a virtual library on each researcher's desk. Availability of these essential resources depends on the signing of annual agreements and on the long-term stability of publishing houses and societies that own the journals. In order to guarantee ongoing access, CISTI will now retain the electronic copies of journals in a national mirror site in St. John's and establish a national electronic scientific/technical/medical archive. This site will evolve into the new e-generation of the CISTI collection. NRC will then be positioned to integrate with Canada's universities and federal science and technology-based departments and agencies to implement national site licenses for STM information resources.

Current Awareness:

To exploit the anticipated increased demand for new information tools, CISTI will seek new partners in Newfoundland and Labrador, including educational and research institutions and local companies. Together we hope to develop a new National Alerting Service based on the new product, CISTI Source. The new service will purchase and integrate abstracts and other related data for the Source database and make them available to both NRC and other Canadian clients.

Knowledge Management:

CISTI is a key player in NRC's drive for knowledge management. In this program, private sector partners will be invited to join CISTI staff located in St. John's to digitize the results of NRC research from the past and present and to facilitate its availability through the Internet. Private partners will assess the opportunity to offer a similar service to other research and government organizations.

We at CISTI are very excited about these new opportunities for partnering, collaborating and working with our vibrant local library community in achieving these goals. We welcome any comments, suggestions or expressions of interest in any of the programs described above from the NLLA Bulletin readers. For additional information, please contact the NRC Information Centre in St. John's at 772-2468.

New Information Resource to Assist Offshore Safety Research

by Annette Anthony

The Escape, Evacuation and Rescue (EER) database and web site is a conjoint undertaking of the National Research Council - Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information, Transport Canada, Natural Resources Canada, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and Transportation Development Centre. The need for such a resource was determined by participants of a recent Institute for Marine Dynamics sponsored workshop in EER held locally at Memorial University of Newfoundland. If research into the field of offshore oil safety was to flourish, researchers would need access to timely and pertinent information in the research area.

Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI) was chosen to develop and maintain both the online and physical information collection. A collaboration of the staff in St. John's and Ottawa developed the database and web page during the spring and summer of 2000; in August 2000, the database and web site responsibilities were turned over full scale to the NRC Information Centre in St. John's.

The EER project consists of two components. First, DB Textworks, a database which houses records of a collection of both physical and multi-media items, and second, a searchable web site linked to the database. This software package was chosen due to the fact that its database could be fully linked to and searchable via a web interface. Currently, this web page provides access to the records within the database listing bibliographic and location information. In the near future it will also contain other resources such as links to other EER sites, information about conferences/meetings, chat room, news, and presentations in the area of offshore oil safety. Plans are also in the works to have physical documents digitized in order to be more accessible to the users of the EER database and web site. Users include researchers in the EER area, offshore workers, government, operators, regulators and the general public.

Physical documents are housed at the NRC Information Centre St. John's. Documents that are available electronically may be accessed via a link. The records for the database were initially obtained from Antonio Simoes Re, research officer at IMD, however, the staff at the NRC Information Centre St. John's will be involved in collection development for future acquisitions for the EER collection and database.

All are invited to visit the EER web site at http://www.nrc.ca/imd/eer/home_e.html. Comments and suggestions for improvement are welcome and invited; please contact Annette Anthony or Adriana Popescu by phone (758-2468) or email (Annette.Anthony@nrc.ca or Adriana.Popescu@nrc.ca).

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New Books in Library Science

by Pamela Cline Howley

The following is a selection of new books in library science now available in Memorial's Queen Elizabeth II Library:

- ± **The future of classification** / edited by Rita Marcella and Arthur Maltby. Aldershot, England : Gower, 2000. -- 144 p. Z 696 A4 F88 2000

In this book, twelve international specialists in the field of classification present their views on the place and continuing importance of classification in the library and information environment of today and the future.

- ± Hannah, Stan A. **Inventing the future : information services for a new millennium**. Stamford, Conn : Ablex Publishing, 1999. -- 170 p. Z 692 C65 H35 1999

A sequel to the author's 1998 book, *Into the future*, this book attempts to present a "blueprint" to guide librarians in re-visioning the future of library and information services in a way that allows for the introduction of new and innovative approaches while not abandoning our existing legacy.

- ± Kovacs, Diane. **Building electronic library collections : the essential guide to selection criteria and core subject collections**. New York : Neal-Schuman, 2000. -- 217 p. Z 692 C65 K58 2000

This publication is intended to provide a collection planning guide for Web-based information resources. In addition to recommended criteria for evaluating and selecting Web resources in a number of different specific subject areas, the book also provides a recommended core collection for each subject focus.

- ± **Librarians as learners, librarians as teachers : the diffusion of Internet expertise in the academic library**. Chicago : Association of College and Research Libraries, 1999. -- 296 p. Z 675 U5 L443 1999

This work, although aimed specifically at academic librarians, should be useful to librarians in all kinds of environments who are making the transition from traditional library orientation and bibliographic instruction to information literacy instruction.

- ± **The Mirage of continuity : reconfiguring academic information resources for the 21st Century** / edited by Brian L. Hawkins and Patricia Battin. Washington, D.C. : Council on Library and Information Resources and Association of American Universities, 1998. -- 301 p. Z 675 U5 M546 1998

This book addresses the fundamental changes that the editors believe will be necessary for academic institutions to make in order to take full productive advantage of digital information technology.

- ± Paling, Stephen, 1965-. **A hardware and software primer for librarians : what your vendor forgot to tell you.** Lanham, Maryland : Scarecrow Press, 1999. -- 181 p. Z 678.93 M53 P34 1999

This book is intended to provide those working in libraries with a general overview of the basic terminology and concepts of computer technology and use. It begins with a discussion of important hardware components, then moves on to considerations of software, the Internet and the issues surrounding computer networking. A useful glossary is also provided.

- ± **People come first : user-centered academic library service** / edited by Dale S. Montanelli & Patricia F. Stenstrom. Chicago : Association of College and Research Libraries, 1999. -- 194 p. Z 675 U5 P44 1999

This book points out that although technological standardization has become the norm for many library functions, there nevertheless are ways that libraries can become more sophisticated in their approach to satisfying user needs. Individual library functions are analyzed in the context of how the technology can promote responsiveness to user needs.

- ± Willis, Mark R. **Dealing with difficult people in the library.** Chicago : American Library Association, 1999. -- 195 p. Z 711 W64 1999

This is a practical guide for managing the problems that library workers may face dealing with both patrons and staff. The suggested approaches are specific and emphasize communication skills, the development and enforcing of behavior policies and the ability to distinguish between the difficult encounter and the serious security risk.

Passport to Adventure:

A Report on Fall 2000 Bookfairs and the Writers=Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador= AGM/Conference

by Janet Fraser

This article began as a library conference presentation, became a library newsletter article, and was revised for the Writers=Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador= newsletter, WORD. In my experience it= not often a report can be so efficiently recycled!

A recent *Express* article on me and new book of poetry that ran the headline **A** librarian by Day, Writer at Heart= pretty much sums up my adult self. As a poet, fiction writer and freelance journalist (on top of my day job!) I am still savouring my memories of attending Word on the Rock, Word on the Street, and the AGM/Conference of the Writers=Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador (WANL).

Word on the Rock

The inaugural **A**Word on the Rock=bookfair was organized by the Newfoundland and Labrador Publisher= Association and ran on September 17 in the parking lot of the Breakwater Books building on Water Street in St. John=. While the idea was inspired by the **A**Word on the Street=bookfairs that run concurrently in several major cities in Canada, **A**Word on the Rock= was scheduled on its own day and operated independently from **A**Word on the Street=.

The **A**Word on the Rock= exhibitors and visitors were protected from the elements by a strong canvas Big Top, but unfortunately on September 17 the dregs of a hurricane hit St. John=. (I could write more about this but don= want to sound like the local weather woman.) I arrived just after the fair opened at 12:00 when conditions under the tent were fairly dry and comfortable. Aside from the provincial publisher= association, the major Newfoundland publishers, the public libraries, and bookstores such as Bennington Gate and Chapters were represented.

I was the second Reader in a series of 15-minute readings that ran continuously from 1:00 and featured high-spirited performances from Bernice Morgan, Gordon Rodgers, Robin McGrath, and Boyd Chubbs among many others. The Readings venue, located at the front of the bookfair, was spacious and it appeared that an adequate number of chairs had been set out. I was introduced by name only and for most of the other readings no information on the writer reading was provided. The sound system was good and there seemed to be an interesting mix of writers, friends of writers, and general readers among the listeners.

I left at 4:00, at a time when the ground was muddy and full of pools, the sound of heavy rains competed with the featured readings, and my pity for the water-damaged books was overwhelming me. However, despite the exceptionally lousy weather, the bookfair seemed to be a successful event. The exhibitors were enthusiastic and kept busy; the crowd of visitors appeared to be enjoying themselves and buying books.

Word on the Street

Another wet, windy and wordy day! With my Calvinist Presbyterian training, I couldn= help feeling that the Fates were punishing me once again for my sinful nature. On a sunny day in September 1999 an estimated 40,000 people had attended Halifax= Word on the Street. On September 24 of this year the number must have been much smaller.

As a native of Halifax I've long been impressed by this city's pride and energy and the Word on the Street celebration ably demonstrated it. Five blocks of Halifax's premiere downtown street, Spring Garden Road, were closed to traffic from 11 to 6. Arriving around noon at the Information Booth in order to gather up my guides and identification badges, I enjoyed the first of several warm receptions that made me feel like a valued participant in the event.

My three readings at WANL's tent were good experiences. WANL's Executive Director Pat Warren provided excellent introductions to the readers who also included Jean Young, Joan Clark, Bernice Morgan, Carmelita McGrath and Janet McNaughton. Early on I was cornered by a group of male high-school writers for whom I gave an impromptu taped interview. Naturally the guys stayed for my first WANL reading and I thoroughly enjoyed the rapt attention of these young men in black! Later on I was sandwiched in between Joan Clark and Bernice Morgan and was grateful for the large spill-over audience.

Being part of Atlantic Books Today's Poets' Corner was a wonderful experience. Weeks before the event, ABT's managing editor Elizabeth Eve, had written to me welcoming me to the family of great Atlantic Canadian poets! I loved reading to and listening to poetry by greats like Don McKay, Sue Goyette, Lynn Davies, Heather Pycz, Deirdre Dwyer, and Harry Thurston. The Poets Corner was overflowing with wonderfully intense listeners and the excitement was palpable.

The list of WOTS exhibitors is too long to review but it is worth noting that a large number of Canadian publishers, Atlantic Canadian organizations, and Nova Scotian bookstores and libraries were represented. Major Canadian writers including Bernice Morgan, Joan Clark, Janet McNaughton, Carmelita McGrath, Alistair MacLeod, Carol Bruneau and Budge Wilson read at various tents.

The WANL AGM and Conference

This year's conference was held at the School for the Deaf on Topsail Road in St. John's from September 29 to October 1. After registration, WANL's featured reader and workshop leader, the critically acclaimed poet Don McKay, gave an animated and charming performance to a large number of enchanted writers. The reception afterwards was lively and more partying followed at a downtown location.

On Saturday morning I attended a workshop on the pros and cons of employing a literary agent. Joan Clark and John Joy made an interesting and informative presentation and answered a series of lively questions. Later in the morning I tackled a challenging case study that workshop leader Carmelita McGrath had devised in order to illustrate the pitfalls involved in editing an author's work.

In the afternoon I attended Don McKay's poetry workshop. I marvelled at Don's ability to entertain and enlighten us with his gently humorous and provocative views on poetry. His sensitive, carefully considered comments on the poems that participants presented stirred in me an admiration for his exquisite ability to read poets and poetry.

On Sunday morning Gordon Platt of the Canada Council provided a really good overview of the Council's policies and programmes for Canadian writers. This was followed by WANL's AGM, which like most organizations' AGMs was a long and gruelling experience.

The Provincial Information and Library Resources Board: Up the Creek Without a Paddle?

by Patrick Warner

The year began optimistically for the Provincial Information and Library Resources Board (PILRB) with the announcement by the Minister of Education, Judy Foote, of a \$1,000,000 allocation to buy books. By late summer, however, the public library system found itself back in more familiar waters. On July 27 the now ex-Premier, Brian Tobin, announced a plan to regionalize government services. As part of this move toward regionalization, two hundred and seventy-five positions with nine provincial government departments, including thirty-one positions falling under the PILRB are to be relocated to various parts of the province.

As a general rationale for the move, Tobin offered the following, **N**ot only does this regionalization of service make government more accessible in different parts of the province, it also helps to more evenly distribute the economic benefits of government to more communities. **C**oncerning why specific departments were chosen, the ex-Premier had this to say, **A**ve examined the function of various departments, and have determined that certain services can be operated as well in any number of locations around the province. **@**

Reaction to the news was swift on both sides of the island. *The Western Star* reported that legislative member for St. George's-Stephenville East, Kevin Aylward, was pleased with the announcement. Echoing the general rationale offered by the ex-Premier, Mr. Aylward went on to say, **A**his is in addition to the jobs created by locating the College of the North Atlantic Headquarters in Stephenville two years ago. This further augments Stephenville's position as an important educational hub for the province. **@**Major Cecil Stein of Stephenville was also jubilant about the announcement. Placing the announced move of positions in the context of recent economic growth in St. John's, Mr. Stein argued, **A**he loss of these jobs won't hurt them. We send children to St. John's to get an education, so basically this is a win-win situation. **@**

Predictably, reporting in the *Telegram* was less enthusiastic. Major Andy Wells of St. John's described ex-Premier Tobin's plan as **A**n attempt to curry favour west of the overpass. **@**NAPE's Tom Hanlon questioned the reasoning of the government, **A** suspect that there is no rationale behind this arbitrary, unilateral, decision. **@**his sentiment was echoed by CUPE's Wayne Lucas as reported in *The Western Star*, **A**nce again we have a situation where government had needlessly proceeded to disrupt the livelihood and family life of some 31 government employees. **@**NAPE's Tom Hanlon also expressed concern for those affected and accused the Premier of **A**reating needless stress **@**y failing to notify employees or their union prior to making the public announcement.

As an employee of the PILRB at that time, I can report that the initial reaction was one of disbelief. The announcement was so unexpected, and came with so few details, that it took several days for the organization to fully grasp just who would be affected. For the PILRB, this new government directive will affect PILRB administration, technical services staff and systems staff (25 positions), as well as the entire staff at Western Regional Headquarters (6 positions), currently located in Corner Brook.

It is worth noting the careful language used by ex-Premier Brian Tobin and his cabinet in discussing their move toward the regionalization of services. Tobin stressed that the initiative constituted a **A** transfer of positions, **@**ot people. The ex-Premier also acknowledged that **A**ome employees would not be able to move, in which case the government will sit down with them and their union. **@**n the days and weeks after the announcement, most of the affected library staff had to weight up whether it would be possible for them to make the move. Many employees have spouses working in St. John's, have children at school or in university, and so have had to consider the financial and social cost of relocating from St. John's. A good number of people I spoke with in the month following the announcement had already made the decision not to be

transferred with their positions—while an equal number were still weighting their options, some hoping that the government would come up with a more reasonable compromise. In fact, only one person I spoke with said they would be willing to make the move, but only if an active employment search, over the next years, failed to secure a reasonable alternative.

The government is right to assert that it is not necessary for PILRB offices to be located in St. John's. Theoretically, once adjustments to the new working environment have been made, the PILRB should be able to operate effectively from any part of Newfoundland with adequate office space, phone lines, a high-speed connection and, of course, accommodation for families who decide to relate. The situation is coloured a little differently, however, if it happens that few, if any, PILRB staff decides to follow their positions. The likelihood of this scenario unfolding seems even more probable since government, with the consent of the union, has agreed to allow bumping to take place. Bumping, when it occurs, will be as per the collective agreement. This is an unusual turn of events given that bumping is usually only allowed when positions are being eliminated. Indeed, the ex-Premier was careful to point out that no positions were being eliminated, that the initiative constituted a transfer of positions not people. @

The PILRB has many tough decisions to face over the next few years. First and foremost among these is the actual timing and handling of the move. Dave Norman, the current PILRB director, says the organization is actively planning for the move and will be in Stephenville, as directed by June 31, 2001. The PILRB is presently looking for office space in Stephenville, though as of October 13, 2000, no appropriate site had been selected. While the move in itself is daunting, it seems to me that the most serious problem facing the public library system will arise after the move to the West Coast and that will be a crisis in expertise. If early indicators are correct, and a high percentage of PILRB employees do not follow their positions, then who exactly is going to run the organization? The public library system in Newfoundland and Labrador is a far-flung operations, with more than 90 public libraries in four regions. Providing overall management, as well as technical services and systems support to such an organization is no small task. Are the necessary skills to be found in the Stephenville area? If not, will the government be able to attract workers with the necessary skills? Whatever the answers, the PILRB is certainly facing some difficult challenges.

St. Jerome

Submitted by: Stephen Nolan

It was a typical day in my life as a professional librarian, a middle-aged woman had just entered my library looking uncertain and distressed. She told me that her husband had been informed that he had prostate cancer and she had come to me seeking some knowledge on this subject. For the next sixty minutes I played the role of counselor as well as librarian, helping her spiritually as well as becoming her source of information on this hideous disease. Now, as the tapping of her footsteps faded down the hall, I bowed my head in physical and emotional fatigue.

One of the plethora of things that were not mentioned in library school was the fact that librarians are frequently called upon to be **Confessors**. The past few months I ~~we~~ had many distraught people literally cry on my shoulder. It had begun to take its toll upon me and I wished I could leave this aspect of the job to someone more hardened to the plights of mankind than myself. This is just one the troubles with being a one-man library. You are its Atlas. You alone must hold high the weight of your world.

It was in this frame of mind that I decided to seek out some ethereal guide to make my yoke easy and my burden light. I decided to seek out the Patron Saint of Librarians, St. Jerome, and ask his help, but first I would have to find this spiritual guardian of all librarians. I found him, within the confines of a book in a cold, dark library. What follows is his story.

St. Jerome: Patron Saint Of Librarians

No firm date of birth has been set for Jerome. It can be said with some confidence that he was born in what is now Yugoslavia around the year 342. His was a fortunate childhood; his family had wealth, which they used to educate young Jerome by sending him off to Rome where he mastered Greek and Latin. He familiarized himself with the authors of both cultures, kindling a life-long love of the Classics.

It was during this time that he began the collection of his beloved library. This was to become his most precious possession and he was later to confess that when he abandoned everything else for the religious life he could not bring himself to surrender ~~the~~ library, which I had collected at Rome with immense zeal and labour. ~~It~~ was also during this time that Pope Liberius, adult baptism being common during this period, baptized him.

After three years of studying in Rome Jerome decided that he could best continue his education by travelling. He and a friend, Bonosus, wandered through Italy, Dalmatia and Gaul. In Trier, he experienced a vision and decided to take up the monastic life.

After spending a few years translating the works of Virgil and Cicero into Latin Jerome decided to take himself and his library to the desert of Chalais near Antioch for a spiritual retreat. In the desert he hoped to find peace away from the crowded city life of Rome but found that even in the desert heat there was one thing that he could not escape from, his neighbours.

An object of suspicion because of his classical literary background and abrasive personality, Jerome found himself under attack from his fellow hermits, principally for refusing to completely accept the belief in the Divine Trinity.

After four years Jerome finally left the not-so-deserted desert and returned to the city of Rome. In Rome Pope Damasus asked Jerome to work on translating the books of The New Testament into Latin. His work transformed a morass of divergent textual readings into what is known as The Vulgate or Common Tongue.

The work of Jerome continued for many years, however he became unpopular for his scathing attacks on his fellow brethren on issues such as paganism and chastity. People admired his learning and his obvious integrity, but many found his unnecessarily blunt outspokenness and biting sarcasm difficult to take. While he worked as secretary for Pope Damasus he was untouchable. However, when Pope Damasus died in 384 attacks on him increased. An accusation that he was having improper relations with a group of wealthy Christian widows who were living a monastic life in Rome led him to leave the city.

Angered over the false rumours, he decided not to fight, but instead moved to the city of Antioch where he wrote a letter to the women that were defamed saying, **T**ell them that we shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ, and then the spirit in which each of us has lived will be plain for all to see. **@**

Nine months later Jerome was joined by several of the Roman women and they all decided to move to Jerusalem, settling in Bethlehem. It was here that they set up a monastery. Jerome himself lived within a cave hewn from a rock near the traditional birthplace of Jesus.

During his time at the monastery a lion limped in an open door and frightened off the monks. Jerome walked over to the lion, it lifted up his paw revealing a large splinter. Jerome removed the splinter and put ointment on the wound, in gratitude the lion became the guardian of the monks = donkeys. This is why most paintings of Jerome have a lion somewhere in the picture.

In 416 a mob, possibly sent by a former friend of Jerome over a quarrel about the Virgin Mary, set upon the monasteries at Bethlehem. The buildings were destroyed by fire; their male and female inmates were brutally assaulted and a deacon was murdered. Jerome was able to escape only by fleeing to a fortified tower built as a refuge from Bedouin raids.

His library was not as fortunate, however, and a library that in his time had become one of the most famous in the world had been completely destroyed. It was a mere four years later in September 30, 420 that he died, some say with his head resting in the manger where Jesus Christ was born.

St. Jerome was an interesting human being. There is no doubt that his works still have influence in the modern world. In 1942 The Vulgate was officially recognized as the authoritative Latin biblical text of the Catholic Church.

It is conceivable that he could have become Pope. However, compromise was foreign to his nature and he assumed that his view and the actual truth were the same. He cared for the sick and poor—yet he thought little of disregarding age-old friendships in order to prove a point.

Saint Jerome was a complicated individual and it is this that makes him so appropriate to be chosen as the Patron Saint of Librarians. He was perceived by some as a bad-tempered individual who cared more for his books than people. Certainly this description has been used as one of the stereotypical images of the librarian.

What have I learned about Saint Jerome? A good deal. I learned that the Patron Saint of my chosen profession is indeed worthy of the title. Personally, I can now think of Saint Jerome when I walk into my library and appreciate a little more how lucky I am to work in a field where the entire object is to bring more knowledge into the world.

Soon, my next patron will walk through my door and I will, perhaps, be asked to perform the role of counselor as well as librarian. I now can take some solace in the thought that a man 1680 years ago performed the same role and did so admirably. It is this last thought, no matter what personal beliefs you may have, that makes Saint Jerome relevant to the librarian of today.

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So You Want to Be a Systems Librarian: What's It All About?

by Susan Cleyle

The Great Debate¹ held at the 1998 Canadian Library Association conference was convened on the question Be it Resolved There Should be a Librarian in the Systems Office. Frank Winter (University of Saskatchewan) and I debated the negative position. Up against Brian Owen (University of British Columbia) and John Richardson (Gaylord), we argued our side valiantly.

We stated that non-librarian computer professionals could handle the computers and technological direction of a library easily and did not require a library background. Offering evidence, we questioned why other professions don't place their colleagues in their systems departments. Are there systems lawyers, systems doctors or systems dentists? Computer specialists are able to administer the technology without an understanding of those professions. Surely these professions are in the same situation as ours. These professions are unique and they use technology to deliver services, yet they don't use professionals in their systems departments.

Although I almost had myself convinced there was no need for a librarian in the systems office, I was not surprised that we lost the debate. The audience voted not only for the affirmative side but also for a long tradition of librarians who have moved our profession into the technological age. So what is this techno-sect of librarianship all about?

What is systems librarianship?

Libraries believe in systems librarians for three simple reasons: systems librarians understand libraries, they can translate computer jargon into library terminology, and they are on an equal footing with the other professional staff.

Early systems librarians often migrated from other library departments, usually those areas first to be automated. That is still the case today. Many librarians ease into systems librarianship via other areas of the profession.

I was a public services librarian in another life. When I moved into systems, I was able to bring the skills and public services philosophies with me. As a result, systems librarians like myself are fluent in both library and computer issues and we can translate computer jargon into library terminology.

Although such service provides obvious benefits to the rest of the library, this multifaceted ability does have a down side. By serving as a buffer between librarians and technology, systems librarians provide certain professionals with a reason for not learning technology basics.

To some degree, systems librarians nurture that buffer, and this must stop. If we as professionals use technology as our main tool for service delivery, then we all need to understand the tools. Heck, we all know the basics of the Library of Congress classification scheme, so why not the basics of computer hardware? Eric Lease Morgan recently asked, "In today's world, why would anybody trust a librarian, whose profession is about information and knowledge, who hasn't mastered a computer?"²

Eventually I believe we will become a profession of computer-literate librarians. Whether this comes about via a computer certification program or just plain evolution doesn't matter. Systems librarians have a responsibility to be better mentors and to help our professionals work towards computer literacy. As 'translators,' we must convey the meaning of the words along with the words themselves.

Another less obvious advantage of having a librarian in the systems office rather than a non-librarian systems manager is that systems librarians enjoy the same status as the other professional librarians on staff. This is particularly true in academic libraries. A non-librarian in most libraries is not considered part of the professional staff, and a non-librarian systems manager might not be able to participate in library decision-

making activities. We may not agree with this policy, but this is a reality for many non-librarian systems managers.

Whatever the reason for having systems librarians - their combined fluency in computers and librarianship, being in the same union as the other professional library staff - many libraries do have them. Library schools are starting to train for this career specialty. But what are the daily tasks of a systems librarian? What do they do really?

What defines systems librarianship?

I believe that the single most important item that defines systems librarians is the organization itself. Where does the systems office sit in the organization chart? Does it report directly to the library head? Is it a division like public services or is it a department under another division, like technical services?

These very different models reflect an organization's technological expectations. Technological planning may be the emphasis of a systems office that reports to the library head, while technology maintenance may be the priority for the other two models. The primary role of the systems librarian is governed by the place occupied by the systems office within the organization.

In his recent book *The Systems Librarian: Designing Roles, Defining Skills*, Thomas Wilson concluded that all systems librarians, regardless of which role is primary, serve libraries in the following ways: planning, implementing, designing, consulting, representing technology, and facilitating³. I would add one role to Wilson's list: teaching.

I believe very strongly that systems librarians need to serve their organizations in a teaching capacity. Systems librarians are in the best position to train staff to be computer literate. Training can be delivered via formal means or on a one-on-one ad hoc basis.

Systems librarians have an opportunity to analyze and solve problems and to teach staff about their computers every time a systems problem is fixed. No good comes from walking up to a computer, banging on some keys, indicating the problem is fixed, and walking away. Nothing is learned by the experience. Computer literacy is everyone's responsibility, but within the library its logical origin is with the systems librarian.

Skill sets

All the roles of a systems librarian equate to many skills. Skills can be divided into the following areas:

Library skill set Includes knowledge of organizational structure, the ability to follow a book from ordering to shelving via workflow, knowledge of the duties of everyone in the library, integrated library systems, reference skills (bibliographic instruction), circulation procedures, and MARC tags.

Computer skill set Includes technical knowledge (parts of the PC), knowledge of networking (management, server, operating system, protocols, wiring), programming (Perl scripting, C++), troubleshooting, Internet technologies, database design, operations (back-up/ power), and training and teaching.

Service skill set Includes knowledge of client services, product delivery skills, project management, telephone reference skills, and ethics.

Problem-solving skill set Involves knowledge of progression thinking ($A+B = C$), lock-jaw dedication, time-management skills, the ability to formulate questions ("describe step by step how you broke your computer"), and crisis-management skills, including flight attendant eyes (the ability to remain calm under pressure).

General qualities These involve the ability to work within the strategic plan/organizational mandate, sound judgement, curiosity/risk taking, resource management skills, creativity, firmness and cooperation, a non-judgemental approach, skepticism, fire in the belly, and resiliency.⁴

A skill essential for effective systems librarianship is the ability to communicate and work with people. Thomas suggests that "Systems administration is not about computers. It is about people."⁵ Eventually, even the most cloistered of systems librarians must deal with areas outside the systems office, whether to solve a problem, participate in a committee, or implement a new technology. When that happens, it is essential that they communicate well.

Acquiring the skills and knowledge

Systems librarians, as you can see from the skill sets outlined above, are a hybrid of the library and computer professions. Obviously, an organization would love to hire the 'ideal' systems librarian, one who has both a computer degree and a library degree. Information technology is a booming business, and computer graduates often go to the highest bidder. If the computer skills are acquired first, a graduate program such as the MLIS may not be considered, for it is possible for the IT professional to obtain lucrative employment without having to go any further. Those who get a library degree first no doubt hope to find employment without having to pursue more education.

Systems librarians with computer degrees are rare. This situation results in systems librarian positions being filled with librarians who do not have a formal computer education. Homegrown systems librarians make a lot of sense because they learn the ropes on the technology being used by the organization. This may require a long learning curve, but the result is a systems librarian who has acquired the computer skills specific to that organization.

Is systems librarianship for you?

There are many opportunities for new systems librarians in the profession. Do you have some or all of the systems librarian skill sets? Do technology and its potential applications in libraries excite you? If you answered yes to these questions, then do not ignore adverts for systems librarian positions. Organizations may be interested in what you can bring to their systems office.

Libraries and technology

Systems librarians love applying technology for use in libraries. I see a twinkle in the eyes of many when they talk about web advancements, ejournals and other cool library technologies. Ebooks (see below) give me that twinkle. I think of all the space a library could save. I think about patrons signing out books from their desktop and having the book 'expire' electronically when it is due. I think of patrons highlighting, footnoting, and annotating books without mutilating the book for the next patron. I think about multiple patrons signing out one item. And finally, I get a twinkle in my eye when I think about the possibility of working with ebook technology!

I predict that by the year 2010 paper books will be purchased by academic libraries only for archival collections. Perhaps my prediction will be proven wrong, or, then again, maybe it won't. I guess time will tell us the answer. With or without ebooks, we know one thing for sure about our future: technology has a strong foothold and it is going forward, taking libraries with it. This will result in the continued need for specialists to manage technology, and this need will provide a continued and even stronger role for systems librarians. In fact, they could be the last ones to turn off the lights and call it a day! But hey, that's another prediction.

I love librarianship and I love being a systems librarian. I get to test drive new methods of information delivery via computers, the web and other non-traditional means. On a daily basis, technology and what it can do for libraries amaze me. And it is only going to get more exciting! All in all, I think the audience voted correctly when it supported librarians in library systems offices. It's one of the best gigs around!

Su Cleyle has been a systems librarian with Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's, Nfld., since 1992.

The Future of Library Technology

Predictions about the future of library technology are tenuous at best (Clifford Lynch predicted in 1995 that it would be unlikely that public libraries would ever offer free access to the web¹), but the future does not bode well for print media.

When I first discussed the demise of the paper book for libraries during a talk I gave in March of this year, response indicated I was way off base. Each year I ask the students in my computers in libraries course to comment on the statement "paper books will die."

In four out of the five years that I have asked for comment, only one or two students have believed this will

happen. Collectively, they reflect a society that doesn't think paper books are going anywhere. People, I have learned, value paper books. Yet I believe strongly as a systems librarian that electronic books (ebooks) and ebook readers (palettes) will change this.

Ebooks

Vendors working on the development of ebooks and palettes understand that ebooks need to be 'curl-up-able,' and I am confident they will be able to make them work. Just like VCRs and microwaves, palettes used to read ebooks will take hold. Paper books may still be published, but I doubt academic libraries will collect them. Space, decay, and the cost of paper alone will drive us in this direction. The technology is there; all that is required is public opinion.



I believe that in 10 years, when the elementary students of today finish high school, we will have it. Microsoft is even supporting the ebook future. In a recent article discussing the launch of Microsoft's Reader ebook software, Dick Brass, vice-president of technology development at Microsoft, claims, "By the year 2010, [electronic reading] devices will be lightweight, have flexible screens and run off 24-hour batteries."²

Academic libraries will devour ebooks, mark my words. And when they make palettes waterproof for reading in the bathtub, public libraries will embrace them too!

For more information about ebooks, consult netLibrary at www.netlibrary.com and eBookNet at www.ebooknet.com.

Examples of vendors include NuvoMedia Inc., maker of the Rocket eBook (www.rocket-ebook.com), and SoftBook Press, maker of the SoftBook Reader (www.softbook.com).

In 1998 the Open eBook Initiative was announced at the world's first electronic book conference, sponsored by the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, Maryland. For more information about the Open eBook Publication Structure Specification (based on HTML and XML), see www.openebook.org.

For more information about Microsoft's Reader, please see www.microsoft.com/READER/default.htm.

Notes

¹ "Reality Check - the Future of Libraries," *Wired Magazine* 3, no. 12 (December 1995), available online at www.wired.com/wired/archive/3.12/reality_check.html.

² "A World without Paper," Reuters New Agency - Frankfurt, appeared in *The Telegram* (Oct. 16, 1999): 23.

Notes

¹ The Great Debate has been sponsored by the Canadian Association of College and University Libraries for the past two years. The format is formal debate style, complete with a moderator, timekeeper and four debaters. This debate allows for comments from the audience and ends with the audience voting the winner. The style of session is very popular and allows a thorough examination of both sides of an issue.

² Eric Lease Morgan, "Computer Literacy for Librarians," *Computers in Libraries* 18, no. 1 (January 1998): 39.

³ Thomas Wilson, *The Systems Librarian: Designing Roles and Defining Skills* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1998), p. 42-43.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 44-51. Wilson covers many of these individual skills in more detail.

⁵ Susan Thompson, *Computers in Libraries* 19, no. 3 (March 1999): 15.

Boldly Bookish

INTRO

At a time when technology is being accused of threatening the future of books, governments the world over are spending fortunes on the construction of new public libraries. Is it a coincidence or is there some kind of link? To find out, Gary Lawrence visited Denver's new library, a good example of the latest in libraries.
by Gary Lawrence

TEXT

The Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges used to say that he imagined heaven as a sort of library. Well, he would have loved Denver. In a city that's not known for its architecture, the boldest building by far is the Denver Public Library, which prides itself on being the biggest public library between Chicago and Los Angeles. Seen from the outside, architect Michael Graves' modern structure looks nothing like a traditional municipal building. The central section is cylindrical and topped by a large level surface, evoking a graduation cap or, more poetically, a mesa, one of those mountains with flat summits found throughout Colorado.

Inside, cheerful and helpful librarians, a far cry from the stern and forbidding ones of caricature, jump from their chairs as soon as visitors appear. In the stacks, clerks equipped with cellphones will happily read aloud the tables of contents of potentially interesting books and then arrange for them to be delivered right to the borrower's door. This personalized service extends to the entire 78 kilometres of bookshelves in the seven-storey library, which attracts 5,000 people daily. Five years ago people who telephoned us were still surprised to get the slightest response. Now they expect first-rate service, says Rick Ashton, the chief librarian. To get to this point, we had to train our staff so they can help users find exactly what they're looking for among our 5 million documents.

The Denver Public Library and others have also invested hundreds of millions in the construction and renovation of their buildings, challenging the image of the library as a dusty warehouses for books. Over the past few years, imposing and even magnificent edifices have sprung up the world over. In Tallinn the opening of a new library marked Estonia's independence, in Copenhagen it honoured the monarchy, and in Paris, it fulfilled the cultural ambitions of President François Mitterand along with the pyramid at the Louvre. Since 1987, France has added a total of almost 70,000 square metres a year to its libraries, while the United States has expanded its libraries by an annual average of 185,000 square metres since 1992.

The rate of growth of today's libraries is unprecedented and it's happening in the age of the computer, the Internet and the electronic book. Libraries have always tried to bring order to the chaos of knowledge, and with the explosion of information, this chaos has never been greater, explains Lise Bissonnette, administrative head of the future Grande Bibliothèque du Québec à Montréal. Her Denver counterpart, Linda Cumming, agrees. With the mess of data circulating, no one knows what to pay attention to anymore.

Whether they're called learning centres, *médiathèques*, *öffentlichen Bibliotheken* or *grandes bibliotecas*, libraries are, as always, dedicated to the preservation and dissemination of knowledge. More and more, however, they also offer practical training and education, including literacy courses, help for recent immigrants, Internet workshops and free access to expensive databases. Today's libraries are also less intimidating and austere. In Vancouver, Rotterdam and Phoenix the light shines in through large windows, a long way from the musty gloom of yesterday. We have been influenced by bookstores like Barnes & Noble or Chapters, which also passed along their sense of hospitality, says Eleanore Rodger, director of the American Urban Libraries Council. The new libraries have sofas, cafés and exhibition areas along with lecture halls and conference rooms. When the G7 summit was held in Denver in 1997, it took place at the

library, which locals had voted **D**enver's most beautiful building. **T**he movement to expand and modernize libraries has also proved a boon to architects and designers. **P**articipating in the design of a major library is the hottest thing an architect can do today, **s**ays Lise Bissonnette.

While books are still the focus of most libraries, collections have changed tremendously over the past couple of decades. Gone are the days when all you could find along with the books was the odd magazine. In Denver, 12,000 videos and compact discs are now offered on loan. As for documents, more than 11 million were borrowed last year. There are no limits to the number of items you can take out or how long you can keep them provided no one else has put in a request for the same items. Clearly, Denver's 506,000 citizens appreciate this system since some 70 percent of them have become library members.

Public libraries are also reaching out to young people. In Denver, youngsters were even invited to sit on the committee in charge of the building's design. The result is the children's pavilion with its collection of videos, compact discs and books not to mention special heated floors. Teenagers have a special room of their own, where they are taught the ABCs of surfing the Net and there is also the Kids Catalogue, a computer database, where users have only to click on an icon to find their books of choice. One third of all borrowed material now comes from the children's pavilion. **B**etween books and computers we can reach everyone, including young people, **s**ays Eleanore Rodger. **I**nitially attracted by technology, a kid often leaves a library with a book under his arm.

Another of the Denver library's claims to fame is its Western History Collection including 600,000 digital photographs which can be accessed on the Web. Among other amusing oddities, virtual visitors can check out a photo of Buffalo Bill slumped beside an Indian chief in a Venetian gondola.

Denver isn't a lone rider on this road to digital knowledge. The Websites of the Library of Congress in Washington and of the Bibliothèque National de France in Paris already offer access to thousands of paper documents. Their Russian counterpart, the Leninka, will soon do the same. Along with democratizing these vast repositories of culture, digital technology also assures the preservation of priceless manuscripts and incunabula (works printed before the year 1500). According to Rodger, **C**omputer science is to the evolution of libraries what the discovery of bacteria was to the advancement of medicine. **S**he believes that the Web complements rather than competes with public libraries. Thanks to the Internet, library branches can be linked so easily and that research can be done and books borrowed or renewed on-line, a service especially useful for isolated areas. Soon, she predicts, people will be able to borrow the latest John le Carré or Homer's *Odyssey* by telephone.

But by putting our faith in computers, **d**on't we risk creating a digital Frankenstein that might relegate paper texts to the basements of museums? Not yet, apparently. Canada, one of the most connected countries in the world, has 275 million books in its libraries. **T**here are more public libraries in Canada than there are McDonald's, **s**ays Vicky Whitmell, director of the Canadian Library Association, asserts with pride. Denver's Rick Ashton is equally optimistic. **R**adio, theatre and cinema continue to thrive in spite of the advent of television and videos. The Internet will simply give us more choice and variety. **H**e

dreams of the day when every library in the world will become part of a single network of networks. **I**t's just a question of time and money, **s**he says. In fact, the first steps are already being taken. **A**thom.com will soon unite the contents of six major libraries, including the Smithsonian Institute and the British Library, on the Internet. **I**t's a comforting reminder that globalization is more than just an economic phenomenon.