

FIL NEWSLETTER

FORUM FOR INTERLENDING

ISSUE NO 1 JUNE 1989

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CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

FROM COVENTRY TO LANCASTER: A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF F.I.L.

Paul Jeorrett, Oxford Polytechnic, Chairman F.I.L.

I would like to welcome you all to the very first issue of the F.I.L. Newsletter. We hope this will be a regular feature of the new Forum for Interlending, and we would welcome any comments or contributions for inclusion in future issues. One of the main aims of the Forum is to provide a means of communication for all those interested and involved in interlending, the Newsletter is obviously a key element in this and we hope you enjoy reading it.

In this first Chairman's note I would like to outline some of the history behind the formation of F.I.L. and then review our present situation with a glimpse at what the future holds. Just occasionally in the library world a new idea emerges which surprises its originators by the amount of interest it generates. This is certainly true in the case of the Forum for Interlending.

Initially the idea of a group catering specifically for people involved in interlending was nothing but a vague thought circulating in the inter-loans departments of Oxford Polytechnic and Coventry Polytechnic. With considerable help and encouragement from the Council of Polytechnic Librarians (COPOL) the original idea was brought to fruition in the form of a seminar, Interlend '88, which was held at Coventry Polytechnic in June 1988. This seminar was a great success and although it was only attended by delegates from academic libraries it was clear that there was a very large gap to be F.I.L.'d!

From Interlend '88 a small Steering Committee, very ably led by Barry West (Deputy Librarian at Coventry Polytechnic) was sent away with the challenging task of investigating the possibilities of setting up a national forum for interlending. For several months after Interlend '88 the Steering Committee met at regular intervals and sweated over creating a draft constitution, setting up another one day seminar and preparing the proceedings of Interlend '88 for publication. Eventually everything came to a climax in November 1988 at a one day seminar held at King's College, London, where the Steering Committee reported back on its work. It was at this point that the Forum for Interlending came into being with the election of a committee and the agreement of a constitution.

The Forum is now more than six months old and I am very happy to report that it is thriving. As I write the number of members exceeds 100 from a wide variety of libraries public, academic and special and from places as far apart as the Shetland Isles and Ireland. Interest in the Forum is even becoming international with enquiries from places such as Philadelphia and South Africa. So as you can see what was only a concept less than a year ago has grown into something of substantial proportions which has commanded interest from many different people and organisations concerned about interlending.

I felt from the beginning that the importance of interlending had increased in recent years with the information explosion and that this trend is likely to increase in the future. Therefore it seems obvious that the people involved in this exciting field should have some means of exchanging ideas and being recognised as a significant body in the information world. The initial success of F.I.L. seems to support this theory and I am sure that the future is going to be both challenging and rewarding.

So what is the future for F.I.L.? The most imminent event is a two day seminar to be held at Lancaster University on 7th-8th July called 'Interlend '89: Who pays'. Apart from including our first annual general meeting this promises to be a very lively event which will address the potentially emotive issue of costs and charging in interlending. The speakers will include, amongst others, David Bradbury (Director, BLDSC), Mieke Hinchcliffe-Wood (Director, Library Campaign) and Bob Norton (British Institut of Management). We hope this will generate some interesting discussion on a subject which affects all of us. Equally it will give us a chance to exchange ideas and most important of all enjoy ourselves. We hope this will be the first of many such seminars.

One of the main aims of F.I.L., as I have already said, is to provide a forum for discussion of interlending and document supply policies and practices. The work of the committee in the last few months has hopefully laid the foundations which will make this possible, with the forthcoming seminar, the newsletter and a directory of members. From this basis we hope that the interchange of ideas will flourish in our area of specialisation. In the future F.I.L. will address the problems of promoting and gathering information relevant to developments in interlending and perhaps from this even instigate some new ideas ourselves. With the magic number of 1992 becoming ever more present we hope to investigate the pressing questions of international developments and co-operation in interlending, an area that would appear to have escaped too much attention at present. Already F.I.L. has gained some recognition as a representative body for interlending in this country, we hope to promote this by publicising ourselves widely and making sure that interlending isn't seen as the second cousin of the information world but as a vital and increasingly important part of it!

Thanks are due to all those who have supported us in this new venture, particularly COPOL, without whose initial support F.I.L. would never have existed, especially Peter Jackson (Librarian, Oxford Polytechnic) who acted as treasurer until our committee was elected and Barry West (Deputy Librarian, Coventry Polytechnic). We are very grateful to William Dawsons and Sons Ltd whose kind donation helped F.I.L. to financial stability. Last but definitely not least thanks to all the committee, especially Malcolm Smith (BLDSC), Jean Rowles (National Committee for Regional Library Co-operation) and Ann Hobart (Library Association) whose encouragement, advice and sometimes accommodation as observers on our committee has been invaluable.

INTER-LIBRARY LOANS: A NATIONAL FORUM.

King's College, Chelsea, 8th November 1988.

Ann Knock, King's College, London

Back in June I attended a meeting of Polytechnic and University Library Interloans staff at Coventry where the setting up of a national forum for Interlibrary Loans Librarians was first mooted. The proceedings of Interlend '88 have now been published by the Council of Polytechnic Librarians (COPOL). The idea was the result of an initiative within COPOL, and bore its fruit on Tuesday 8 November 1988 with the ratification of the constitution of the Forum for Interlending (F.I.L.).

The meeting which was hosted by King's College and held in the Upper Refectory, Manresa Road, attracted an audience of sixty, mostly drawn from Polytechnic and University Libraries but including representatives of national and special libraries, systems suppliers and a single "token" public librarian.

The two guest speakers presented an interesting contrast. Professor Nick Moore of Birmingham Polytechnic inspired us to look to the future with confidence that interlending and document supply would occupy an increasingly prominent position, and encouraged us to start thinking about the implications of 1992 and the free European market. He stressed the importance of presenting an alternative to the BLDSC as the official voice of British interlending.

The afternoon speaker, Jean Rowles of the South Western Region, spoke of the mammoth task she faced in her one-year half time secondment to the National Council on Regional Library Co-operation. So much consultation, so much detail, so much negotiation.

What will the new forum for Interlending offer the Library community? Despite qualms among the more conservative that it might be over-reaching itself, the meeting agreed to open membership to institutions and individuals with an interest in interlending and document supply - hence the dropping of the term 'librarians' which formed part of the title originally proposed. For an annual subscription of around £15 (probably £30 for institutions) it plans to provide a directory of inter-Library loans contacts, a quarterly journal and an annual conference.

The 1989 conference will be held in the northern half of the country, over two days in July. Looking to the future it hopes to become involved in co-operative training schemes, possibly at the regional level, and to offer research and market survey opportunity as well as an opportunity for suppliers to target an audience. One day seminars on specific topics and subgroups with particular interests lie in the future.

PICK UP: LANCASTER'S SYSTEM

Ian Stuart, Library, University of Lancaster

The University of Lancaster Library has developed an Inter Library Loans package to run on IBM compatible microcomputers. The system is being marketed by the University of Lancaster Library Computing, and can be supplied as a complete package including all hardware and software, or just the software for customers who wish to use their own hardware.

BACKGROUND

The system developed by the University of Lancaster Library is a stand alone multi-user system designed for operation on an IBM PC AT or XT (or compatible) with the PICK operating system.

The University of Lancaster Library has had a computer based inter-library loans operation since October 1985. The first system was based on an IBM PC/XT, and was single user written in dBASE III. In November 1986, in order to achieve multi-user capability, the dBASE III system was replaced with the present PICK system.

MULTI-ACCESS

The system can be used simultaneously by up to 17 users, depending on the hardware and the version of PICK selected. It is possible, for example, with three terminals attached to the PC, to check off incoming items, enter requests, deal with incoming reports and transmit E-mail requests simultaneously.

CAPABILITIES

Because of the very efficient utilisation of disk storage, PICK systems are able to handle quite large files. The number of records which can be stored without offline storage will depend on the record size, and the size of the fixed disk available to PICK. Experience at Lancaster indicates that with a 20 Mb. PC, and with no other PICK systems present, 50,000 records can be held on the system without offline storage.

HARDWARE

The inter-library loans system will operate on an IBM PC/XT or AT (or compatible) with the PICK operating system. The standard XT or AT can be fitted with two serial ports (3 user system). Typically one of the serial ports would be devoted to communications and a terminal would be attached to the other serial port, making a two keyboard system. However, one serial port can be replaced with a four port extension, converting the two keyboard system into a five keyboard system. A printer will be required for the printing of letters and reports.

PICK does not run on all IBM compatibles. When considering the purchase of a PC to run PICK you are advised to consult the University of Lancaster which can supply complete systems including all hardware and software.

CUSTOMER BASE

Existing customers include University College of North Wales, Bangor, University of Bradford, University of East Anglia, University of Leeds, University of York and Huddersfield Polytechnic, Dundee Institute of Technology.

PRICES

Prices range from £1390 (+ VAT) for software, and from £2000 (+ VAT) for hardware and software.

TRIAL SYSTEMS/DEMONSTRATIONS

Free copies of the PICK operating system and the ILL Management System are available for evaluation purposes. In addition, demonstrations either on site or at the University of Lancaster can also be arranged. For details call 0524 65201 (ext. 289,293,298).

Or write to : Library Computing
University of Lancaster Library
Bailrigg
LANCASTER
LA1 4YH

INTERLENDING AND DOCUMENT SUPPLY: An international conference organised jointly by the IFLA Office for International Lending and the journal Interlending and Document Supply, 14th - 16th November 1988.

Ann Knock, King's College, London.

Two and a half information-packed days in the Connaught Rooms; 21 speakers; 220 delegates (130 from overseas) to talk to during breaks in the formal sessions - I'm still assimilating it all and not in the least looking forward to the piles of paper which will certainly be awaiting me at Kensington tomorrow.

As befitted a conference associated with IFLA most of the famous names of interlending and document supply were there. Maurice Line, clearly enjoying the role of elder statesman, set what was to prove the keynote for the whole conference in the opening speech when he argued that libraries should pay each other for loans, instead of regarding them as a cheap alternative to acquisitions, but without passing costs on to the end user who is in no way to blame for our acquisition policies.

Hope Clement (Associate National Librarian of Canada) spoke on the different national models for interlending in a fact-filled way which reminded me irresistably of the densely-printed pages of the Canadian protocols for E-mail requests.

Each time I hear Jean Plaister expounding Laser's VISCOUNT project I wonder whether those Universities who are not members of the regional schemes are missing out as much as she suggests. She is now seeking links between VISCOUNT and JANET - and I hope SCONUL will be watching carefully to make sure that academic libraries gain from any such arrangement!

The suppliers were there in force, with speakers and demonstrations. The prototype CD-Rom jukebox used by the ADONIS project was on display (a commercial version is still some way off), and we learnt that this experiment which involves using CD-Rom full text copies of 219 biomedical journals to meet requests at Boston Spa and several other centres, had proved its cost effectiveness but would be held back for a year awaiting multi-user access CD's. It would be interesting to know whether any of our requests had been supplied by ADONIS - they can be identified by the smart envelope they arrive in.

We learnt about Group 4 fax (currently under trial at University College) and about the economic and efficient overseas mail service offered by remailing agencies. Not surprisingly, the speakers representing commercial concerns gave some of the best performances (and, like it or not when you listen to 21 talks, performance matters). Georgia Finnigan of the Information Store achieved the near impossible by demanding and getting rapt attention to her expose of the role of the information broker given in the last slot on the second day.

The single most important issue, and one to which at least two-thirds of speakers alluded - was the question of recompensing lending libraries for the staff time taken by interlending. In this country we are very fortunate - the BLDSC fields the vast majority of requests and the BLDSC form functions as a form of currency, although coming nowhere near the real cost, however that may be calculated. In most other countries academic libraries contribute far more to the interlending network than they receive, and are expected to do so for the greater good of the library community. In effect this means that when time and staff are short, incoming ILL requests are put to one side until the work for one's own institution has been done. This phenomenon is not unknown here. Introduce a payment mechanism, the argument runs, and a library receiving a lot of requests could take on extra staff. Market forces would shift pressure to those libraries who responded to it best. It may seem simplistic, and it begs many questions (notably consistency of demand if salaries are to be met from the income) - but there were virtually dissenting voices. Some form of international payment system will come and, with increasing use of direct access because of JANET, a national one must follow.

What did I get out of the conference? A far better understanding of the policy issues involved in inter-library loans and reaffirmation that the inter-library loans department should not operate out on a limb - it should be feeding the unique information it gathers about the failures in collection development policy back into the acquisitions system. Above all, the conference gave me the opportunity to discuss problems, both common and local, with people working within different national systems, and thus to see much in a new perspective.

INTERLEND '89: WHO PAYS?

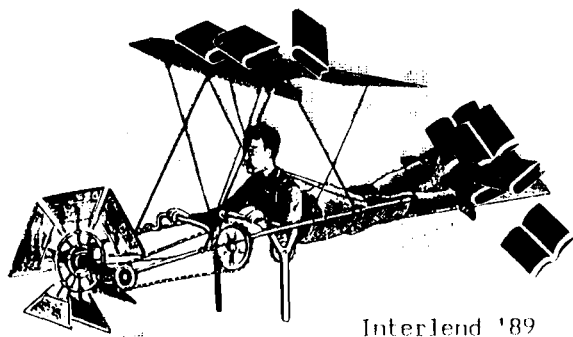
Two Day Seminar and A.G.M.
University of Lancaster
Friday 7th and Saturday 8th July

The seminar will consider the implications and future effects of costs and charging in libraries with specific reference to interlending.

Speakers will include Lynne Brindley (Aston University), Miece Hinchcliffe-Wood (Library Campaign), David Bradbury (BLDSC) and Ian Winkworth (Information North).

The cost will be £60 for FIL members including all sessions, meals and accommodation. Book now for what promises to be a stimulating 2 day event in pleasant surroundings.

Contact: Christine Hardwicke, Issue Counter, The Library, University of Southampton, University Road, Highfield, Southampton, SO9 5NH. Tel. 0703 592412.



Interlend '89

DATA PROTECTION

FIL membership information and the Directory of Members (in preparation) will be held on computer, and will be divulged only to other FIL members. Any FIL member objecting to the (very restricted) personal information held about them on computer should contact me as soon as possible.

Contact: Robin Green, Deputy Librarian, Westwood Library, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 8EE. Tel. 0203 523523

RESERVED

FOR

YOUR

NEWS

YOUR NEWS IS WELCOME

This page has been reserved for "News & Notes" concerning interlending. If you have an announcement please submit it by 30th September, 1989 to be included in the next issue of the newsletter, and send to Susan Wilson, Library, Anglia Higher Education College, East Road, Cambridge CB1 1PT.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Dear Colleague,

FORUM FOR INTERLENDING

You are invited to join the newly-established Forum for Interlending, the only national group to welcome everyone interested in interlending and document supply. We aim to include information officers and suppliers, as well as librarians from every type of library.

Interlending specialists build up considerable expertise in locating difficult material through the highly organised worldwide interlending network. Some have valuable experience of automated systems and telecommunications. Until now there have been no opportunities on a national basis for them to meet to exchange ideas. The prime aim of the new Forum is to provide formal and informal channels of communication, the desire for which was amply demonstrated by the enthusiastic conversation which occupied every spare moment at the inaugural meeting.

High on the Executive Committee's agenda is the compilation of a completely new directory of interlibrary loans and document supply contacts giving the fullest and most up-to-date information with the names of the people actually working in inter-library loans and all available addresses including e-mail. There will be a Newsletter which will concentrate initially on exchange of experience, with a substantial NEWS & NOTES section. The Annual General Meeting planned for this summer will be a two-day residential event with a mixture of speakers and plenty of opportunity to chat.

As membership grows, the Forum hopes to offer seminars dealing with specific topics, and to produce a series of occasional publications. It is also hoped in future to become involved in training schemes.

All these benefits are offered for an annual subscription of £15. Institutional members will be able to send as many representatives as they wish to seminars and the AGM, but will have only one vote.

If you wish to be among the founder members of this exciting new venture, return the slip below with your cheque for £15 to Robert Cooper

Membership Secretary
Forum for Interlending
Hugh Owen Library
University College of Wales
Penglais
Aberystwyth
DYFED SY2 5DZ

FORUM FOR INTERLENDING

Please register me as a personal*/institutional* member of the Forum for Interlending for 1989. I enclose my cheque for £15 made payable to Forum for Interlending*/Please invoice my institution.

*delete as appropriate Signature

NamePosition

Institution

Address

..... Postcode

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY