

IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?

Welcome to the sixth issue of the FIL Newsletter. When the Forum began, the original intention was to encourage and provide a platform for discussion on all aspects of interlending. The Newsletter obviously plays a major role in this objective. However, there does seem to be a lack of feedback from our readers. Perhaps we have not been provocative enough for you - if so please write and let us know. Any items received will be considered for publication. It would be good to have a letters page!

In this Newsletter, we are delighted to include an article from Maurice Line - a name not unfamiliar in the interlending world - on our favourite topic of charging. I think you will find that there is plenty of food for thought. The debate is bound to continue as long as people request interloans, but it is refreshing to hear some clear 'no nonsense' views on the subject.

Also in this issue we have our FIL Treasurer, David Kenvyn, relating his 'rags to riches' experiences in the London Borough of Redbridge; a paper originally presented at the Exchange of Experience workshop last year. The British Library also explain their new approach to help avoid stress over copyright infringement. Is this the answer to all our worries?

At the end of May, FIL presented a workshop on the use of e-mail for interlending. There is also the possibility of another Exchange of Experience workshop, in Edinburgh.



Whatever the current debate in the world of politics, there will be an election in July. No, it won't be a chance to vote Green at last, but it could be your opportunity to make a major contribution to the FIL Committee. Some of the original members of the Committee will be standing down, and there will be an election at the AGM in July. FIL would not exist without your support and contributions, so please don't be shy. This could be your chance to make a mark on the world of interlending! I look forward to meeting you all at Interlend '91, in Norwich.

Paul Jeorrett
Chair of FIL

Contents

- ★ Charging
- ★ Copyright
- ★ Viscount

- ★ JUGL
- ★ Automation
- ★ Membership

Edited by Thelma Goodman and Jacqui Weetman.
Printed by the British Library Document Supply Centre.

INTERLENDING AND DOCUMENT SUPPLY

- to charge or not to charge?

Judging from messages circulating over e-mail, and the enquiries received by the FIL Committee, the subject of charging is an even hotter topic now than it was in 1989 when it was the FIL conference theme. All too often charges are imposed from on high, with little consultation between ILL staff.

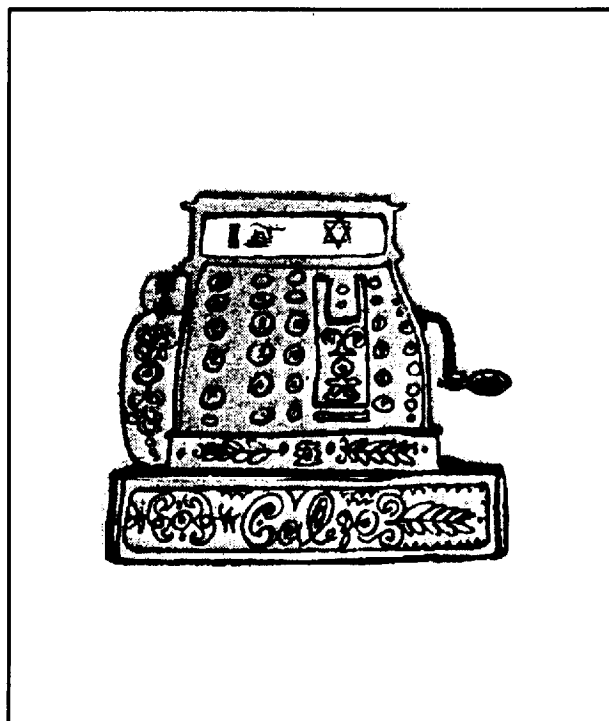
Maurice Line (former Director General of the then British Library Lending Division) is a member of one of those higher echelons but he, fortunately, thinks along the same lines as many ILL staff.

Professor Line writes:

"Of all the long running debates in the library world, the one on charging for ILLs puzzles me most. There are in fact two debates, which often get mixed up: whether to charge libraries, and whether to charge users. In both cases the solution seems to me clear cut.

Users need documents. Libraries provide them mostly either by buying them from (mainly commercial) suppliers, or by obtaining loans or photocopies from elsewhere, either other libraries or commercial suppliers. ILL is thus a form of acquisition, differing from purchase for stock in two respects only: it is more precise (that is, it is known to be wanted, not bought in the prospect of use, as most purchases are); and it has to be returned in the case of a loan or passed to the borrower in the case of a photocopy. Supplying institutions incur costs, just as publishers and booksellers do. It passes my comprehension why publishers and booksellers should be paid but not libraries. Costs are incurred; why should suppliers rather than requesters pay them?

There may be pragmatic arguments against charging. The charging system may be so cumbersome that the cost of making a charge is greater than the cost of supply. The solution in such a case is to simplify the method of charging, preferably by introducing some kind of system whereby coupons are bought in



quantity. Another argument is that libraries are often in balance with one another, so there is no need for money to change hands. But in reality few libraries are in balance, and it requires some effort (and therefore cost) to see whether they are in fact in balance or to distribute requests so as to achieve a balance".

Positive arguments for charging are much more powerful. Since it costs money for libraries to supply items, they may become unable to handle demand beyond a certain point. This situation was reached some years ago in several American libraries, which imposed charges either to deter demand or to recover their costs and so enable them to continue to supply. Without charges the system can break down. Moreover, payment imposes obligations; a library that is being paid is more likely to provide a decent service than one that is running a grace-and-favour operation. The higher the charges, the greater the obligation.

>>>

As for charging users, libraries exist to serve them. They buy material in anticipation of their demands, but selection cannot be a precise activity; many items acquired are unused, while many not acquired are wanted. To charge users in effect for not having what they want is to penalize them for the inadequacies of the library's selection. There is no more reason why users should be charged for items obtained on loan or in photocopy than for items they use that have been acquired for the library. If users are charged there is no incentive for libraries to select carefully; indeed, to make a *reductio ad absurdum*, it would pay the library to spend little on selection or select poorly and charge users for the large numbers of items they would subsequently have to get from elsewhere.

It may be argued that items selected for stock are for everyone's use and may be used many times. But some are suggested by individuals, or are bought in anticipation of their interests

especially in academic or industrial libraries; and in most libraries much of the stock is not used at all, let alone by many people. It may also be argued that items acquired on ILL do not become the library's property, as purchases do; indeed, photocopies become the user's property. Users pay for photocopies of items in stock; why should they get photocopies of items obtained from elsewhere free? However, in most cases it is cheaper to supply a photocopy than a loan, and the requesting library saves money because it does not have to be returned; if photocopies but no loans were charged for users would tend to ask for loans, and so waste everyone's money.

If and when libraries charge users for borrowing from stock, it will be appropriate to charge them also for ILLs. The same principles should apply, as they do at present in libraries that have external users, who are charged for consultation and loans from stock, and also for ILLs."

THE BRITISH LIBRARY
DOCUMENT SUPPLY CENTRE

ART Tel REPLIES INTRAY

The REPLIES INTRAY allows customers to access replies to their requests online via ARTTel instead of having them printed out onto Request Status reports and returned by post. The INTRAY file is updated continuously thus providing the fastest possible response. INTRAY is available only via ARTTel, to customers who have registered to use it.

If you are interested in using the REPLIES INTRAY, or would just like to know more about it, please contact Customer Services for a copy of the brochure giving full details. If you are at present sending requests by other methods, but would be interested in finding out more about ARTTel, Customer Services staff can provide you with the appropriate information.

CUSTOMER SERVICES
THE BRITISH LIBRARY DOCUMENT SUPPLY CENTRE
BOSTON SPA, WETHERBY, WEST YORKSHIRE LS23 7BQ
TEL: 0937 546060 FAX: 0937 546333

Any of you who were at last year's FIL Conference and attended Graham Cornish's session on copyright will know just what a minefield the whole issue of copyright is. Even if you weren't there, some of you probably feel a bit uneasy sometimes when the pen hovers over a BLDSC request form, or the fingers tentatively tap out an automated request on the computer terminal; and you wonder a little about the probity of what your reader is asking for. But now, you need worry no more.

Following an agreement with the Copyright Licensing Agency, BLDSC have introduced a copyright cleared service, which will run in parallel with our existing service. For a moderate fee, you can make requests which avoid most of the restrictions imposed by the present copyright legislation. For example, your readers do not need to fill in a copyright declaration. They can request multiple copies of journal articles, or copies of more than one article from the same journal issue. Non-prescribed libraries can acquire copies to add to their own stock, or circulate as part of an information or current awareness package. The only major restriction that remains is that copies supplied through the new service cannot normally be recopied (with the exception of faxed copies on thermal paper

for preservation purposes only).

BLDSC are pretty pleased with the CLA agreement and the new service. Not only does it bring to an end the uneasy relationship we have had with major publishers for many years, but it also gives us the opportunity to broaden the scope of our services and to seek new markets in countries where fears over the copyright issue have inhibited use of BLDSC.

All our customers should have received a leaflet giving details of how the new service works. Getting it up and running has required a major effort. We think/hope/pray that we have got it right. If you encounter any minor hitches please be gentle with us.

If you have not received your leaflet or require further information or help, please contact Customer Services on 0937 546060.

Mick Osborne
Customer Services
BLDSC

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Interlend '89 - "Who Pays?" £10

Interlend '90 - "The Interlending Network: 1992 and all that"
£12 (FIL members); £15 (non members)

Copies of either of the above can be ordered from:

Andrea Seed
BLDSC
Boston Spa
Wetherby
LS23 7BQ

THE IMPACT OF VISCOUNT:

an early user's observations

In May 1990, **David Kenvyn** of Redbridge Libraries "exchanged" his experience of Viscount with FIL members, at one of our workshops. Since many more libraries are now turning to Viscount as an interlending tool, we felt it was an experience worth sharing with a wider audience, and a shorter version of his paper is reproduced here.

"In many ways this paper is going to be a report from the front line, on how the introduction of new technology, especially Viscount and Blaise, transformed the life of the interlending department in Redbridge Libraries. This was not the only transformation that had taken place in the last few years - Redbridge had been the first public library in London to install the Geac computer system.

It was in December 1986 that Redbridge was also the first London borough library to go live on Viscount.

In short, Viscount allows you to identify bibliographical information, to find locations, and then to send an application to the library concerned. This process takes a matter of minutes. Redbridge decided to use Viscount as a bibliographical tool. There was no point in performing laborious searches using hard copy, when all the information required was available on Viscount anyway. This changed our search strategy completely. The old search strategy used to be:- in print bibliographies; BNB; British Museum catalogue; London Library Catalogue; specialist bibliographies...etc. All of this took a very long time. The use of Viscount was a decisive change. Our new search strategy became:- in print bibliographies, and then Viscount.

We found that the use of Viscount enabled us to deal with approximately 60% of all requests for out of print materials, without having to engage in an extensive bibliographical search. The entries on Viscount allowed us to record the fullest possible bibliographical information required for inter-library loans, i.e. author, title, place of publication, publisher, date of publication, and ISBN, BNB, LC or EMMA number, as appropriate.

This level of accurate hits on the database reduced the number of items that had to be checked against the out of print bibliographies.

One problem was that a database is only as accurate as the information recorded on it, and it is well-known that some libraries have not been as diligent as they should have been in notifying LASER of additions and withdrawals. There have been good reasons for this, connected to the compatibility of the various computers being used by libraries throughout the LASER region. Fortunately, this problem is being slowly overcome.

A second problem was that the checking for items not found on Viscount still involved a very long and cumbersome search of out of print bibliographies. However, it occurred to us that the equipment for accessing Viscount could also be used to search Blaise. All we needed was to acquire the passwords and to be trained in the use of the databases.

Our search strategy now became:- in print bibliographies; Viscount; Blaise; followed by out of print bibliographies, for the really difficult items. The use of the Blaise files gave us access to a much wider range of bibliographies. For instance, we had never been able to either afford or accommodate the National Union Catalog. The availability of the Library of Congress files from 1968, on Blaise, enabled us to improve our bibliographical coverage enormously. The cost of accessing Blaise has been offset by the cancellation of subscriptions to hard copies of bibliographies.

It does have to be said that when you receive your first telephone bill for online searching costs, it can be a considerable shock. The cost is enormous, but it can be justified by assessing the amount of staff time that is saved, and how this can be best put to the use of the library service.

The net result of these changes has been a considerable improvement in our performance as a department. We are still, of course, dependent on co-operating libraries for the efficiency of our performance, not to mention booksellers and library suppliers. But our performance indicators now show that we supply 90% of all requests within four weeks, and a further 8% within six weeks.

The combined use of Geac, Viscount and Blaise has changed interlending in Redbridge beyond all recognition. We are still looking for ways of improving the service, but I think that we can be proud of our achievement."

News from JUGL

JUGL (the JANET User Group for Libraries) has recently produced updated versions of their OPACS and LIBMAIL guides, which list the JANET addresses of libraries, their staff and their OPACS. There are now 67 OPACS accessible over JANET in the UK alone. Copies of the OPACS directory can be ordered from the University of Sussex Library, Brighton BN1 9QL, costing £1.60 each, with discounts for bulk purchases. However, both publications are kept as files which are freely accessible (and can be downloaded with ease) over JANET. See JANET.NEWS for details.

Email for I.L.L. - a workshop

More and more libraries are using JANET to request material from the BLDSC (using ARTTel). A growing number are also logging-in to other libraries' OPACS to check the availability of items then making requests to these libraries by email.

A one-day workshop 'Introduction to using Email for ILL' was held at the University of Aston at the end of May, and the feedback from participants has been positive. If there is sufficient interest the workshop will be repeated - contact Robin Green (Westwood Library, University of Warwick Coventry CV4 8EE; Tel. 0203 523523 x 2427; JANET: Lyaas @ Warwick.Sky) for further details.

Automated Systems

- a guide

LINC (Library and Information Co-operation Council) have commissioned a report on the state of the art regarding ILL housekeeping systems. The report is being produced by library consultant Juliet Leves, with guidance from various bodies, including FIL. Juliet has been visiting suppliers of automated systems, and also talking to ILL staff in libraries. It is hoped that this valuable guide will be available later in the summer.

- a survey

Some of you may remember responding to a LINC questionnaire on automation, at the end of last year. The results shed interesting light on how fast ILL departments are automating. A summary, prepared by Alastair Allen of LINC, will appear in the next FIL newsletter.

"Please supply more information....."

One of the aims of FIL (as stated in our Constitution) is "to gather information about, to promote knowledge and understanding of, and to influence developments in Inter-Library Loans and Document Supply". We want to gather this information from you - the FIL members - and promote the knowledge gained in this - the FIL Newsletter.

So, please, let us know what your ILL departments are doing about charging. How are you coping with automation? Are you happy with your staff gradings, or do you wonder about the scales on which your ILL counterparts are working?

Please supply any information (a photocopy of your source of reference is not needed!) to either:

Thelma Goodman or
Lancaster University
The Library
Bailrigg
Lancaster
LA1 4YH

Jacqui Weetman
Nene College
The Library
St George's Avenue
Northampton
NN2 6JD

Membership

Anyone interested in joining FIL is invited to complete the form below and return it to: Pat Beech (Membership Secretary, FIL), Bibliographic Services, Shropshire County Library, Column House, Shrewsbury SY2 6NW

Both institutional and individual members are welcome. The subscription rate for both categories is £15

Please register me as a ☐ personal/☐ institutional* member of the Forum for Interlending.

I enclose a cheque for £15 made payable to the FORUM FOR INTERLENDING/☐ Please invoice my institution*

* Delete as appropriate

Name: Position:

Institution:

Address:

FIL NEWSLETTER

Forum for Interlending

Designed by the Lancaster University Graphics Unit