

## EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE WORKSHOP IN WALES

South Glamorgan County Library Headquarters in Cardiff was the venue for a FIL Exchange of Experience Workshop on Thursday 30th April - the first such event to be held in Wales.

The thirty five participants, representing various sectors of the profession, were welcomed by Ieuan Edwards, the County Librarian. Then, three speakers presented their I.L.L. policies and procedures, one each from an academic, special, and public library.

Emma Cusworth (Chairman of FIL) from Aston University Library was first to speak, followed by John Kenyon of the National Museum of Wales. Finally, Helen McNabb of Cardiff Central Library presented the public library viewpoint. Both the differences and the similarities in practice between the institutions were quite surprising, and each speaker illustrated their talk well with statistics, to indicate, for instance, the percentage of monograph and periodical requests handled, and

the extent to which BLDSC is used as a source of supply.

In the afternoon we broke into discussion groups, at which issues of common interest to I.L.L. librarians were raised. These included charging for interlibrary loans, and how best to obtain certain categories of expensive and not widely stocked materials. Throughout the day we were fortunate to have the presence of two BLDSC representatives to answer our queries - Mick Osborne and Helen Parnaby.

FIL Workshops are, above all, a place at which people can exchange ideas, and an enjoyable day was spent with I.L.L. colleagues from near and far. Roll on next year, and hopefully we can have another one in this part of the world!

Jane Sparks  
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# Interlibrary loans in academic libraries

Interlibrary loans in academic libraries are very important, it is no longer true to say that any library is self sufficient and can supply all its readers requirements, not even the universities which are also copyright libraries. So having admitted that we are not self sufficient we are obviously going to have to obtain the material from other institutions in this country or abroad.

## Special features peculiar to academic libraries

What are the special features that interlibrary loans in an academic institution have, after all everyone here is involved in supplying interlibrary loans whether they are in a public library, a special library or an academic library. One thing that is important is that we are a part of a small community in comparison to a public library and therefore we know our readers and become very much more aware of their needs for interlibrary loans as part of their overall library needs. It has also to be borne in mind that our demand is much more seasonal, although the research students and staff are always with us this is not the case for many undergraduates and we have a much higher volume of requests during term. In addition we have to bear in mind the need for speed of response bearing in mind project deadlines or submissions for new funding but in addition our readers will be willing to wait to obtain material from abroad, yes they want it yesterday but they will often give us quite long periods of time for obtaining material so we can contemplate exhaustive searches overseas which might take anything up to a year.

## Why is ILL important

Generally speaking universities make heavy use of the services of DSC and don't use the Regional Library systems in the way that a public library does. This may change with the advent of systems such as Viscount, when we might find it easier to locate material, but even so a large proportion of our requests will continue to be channelled to DSC because we have a high proportion of journal and conference material requests and this is the strength of DSC.

However, a traditional university with a large arts faculty will be satisfied by DSC stock holdings less frequently.

There are certain types of material that universities require more than public libraries such as theses, report literature, etc. So often our readers tell us that the only thing on their subject is a report from an obscure research institution, and this sort of material can take an inordinate amount of time to trace, not always with success, hence perhaps the fact that we do tend to talk about grey literature.

## ILL at Aston

### What sort of university is Aston

Aston is a University with 3 faculties the Business, Science and Engineering. Within the business school there is a large and very active department of modern languages but they are not the traditional literature based courses. Within the science faculty we have departments of pharmacy and vision sciences both of whom have very high research ratings and large undergraduate courses. We have no humanities faculty and this has a bearing on the type of material we request in interlibrary loan, our reasons for using interlibrary loans instead of purchase and the sources that we use for obtaining interlibrary loan requests.

Currently we undertake some 9000 requests a year.

We aim for the journals we take as core material for the research interests and teaching requirements of our current staff, but still some 60% of our requests are for periodicals, while a further 20% of our requests are for grey literature - conference, theses and reports. The number of monograph requests is not high, the majority being in the area of business and modern languages.

Interlibrary loans are important at Aston, as we are not a library which accumulates but rather we have core collections reflecting up current needs. This means that we pursue an active policy of collection development involving not only adding to stock but also weeding. If we therefore have someone doing research in a fringe area, (this can particularly happen with projects for masters degrees) that person could be heavily reliant on interlibrary loans.

### How are ILL requests received & who can make requests

We allow all our readers to make interlibrary loan requests, in some academic libraries requests are not normally accepted from undergraduates or some years of undergraduates. In our case we accept requests from all members of the university but we ask undergraduates to have their requests countersigned by the project tutor. All readers are limited to 10 requests in process at any one time, a limit of some sort is found to be regrettable but necessary in view of the high costs involved in the service, however we do try to be flexible especially for staff and research students, for most of the time the limits work well and it does mean that people have to prioritise their requests.

Requests are received at the interlibrary loan counter in the library or sent in by post. The interlibrary loan counter is staffed by all library assistants on a rota basis not just the

ILL staff, and the assistants at this counter check requests on receipt to make certain that the required information is given and perhaps more basic that we can read the requests and they have remembered to put their names and sign the copyright declaration. We have written some short guidelines saying what elements are necessary for each type of request, and staff are able to follow these. In addition all staff are able to use our automated ILL system to check on the progress of requests, a terminal is networked to the counter from the section, this terminal is in a look at only mode so no one needs to feel nervous of using it in case they accidentally edit a record. As this counter is an integral part of our loans counter the assistant on this counter can help at other counters but mostly their additional duty is running the fax bureau service that we run from the library.

### **Staff organisation of ILL section**

The interlibrary loans section consists of four people, 3 assistants and a senior library assistant and is a part of the document supply section which includes all loan and reservation activities as well as interlibrary loans. The 3 library assistants also undertake counter duties for on average 2 hours a day and the senior library assistant undertakes duties at the Information point. The overall management of the section is the responsibility of the document supply manager which is myself and I would also have some involvement in day to day activities, particularly to cover for the senior library assistant.

### **How are the requests processed**

#### **Checking procedure on receipt**

Requests have their initial checks done at the counter where they are received, the first check being one to see that it is not in fact in our stock, the number of requests found in stock seems to be remarkably constant at 10% of requests. I am not certain why it is so high laziness, inability to check the catalogue or just a conviction that they know what we have in stock and therefore it's not worth looking for it; but anyway that is our first check. We then check the DSC list of serials for the full title since we don't use abbreviations, why I will explain later and in addition we add the shelfmark.

Monograph and conference requests are checked by the senior library assistant. We use BOSS the online version of BLCMP for checking material as this gives us proper bibliographic details, although Aston is a Geac library we use BLCMP for the supply of catalogue records in the same way another library might use OCLC, in addition we note down at this point any locations although our policy is always to try DSC first but if you need another location you don't have to go back and look up the item a second time.

Our interlibrary loans use an automated system in our case Tinlib which you may have seen advertised on the

front of the last issue of the LAR, we only have the ILL package it used to be called Tinlend but has now been integrated into the other library applications. At present we are the only site with this version as we have been the alpha site for the new release. We have been using this software package since 1988.

The requests are keyed in by the library assistants in interlibrary loans, an interesting aspect of having the requests keyed in in the section is that we have a lot less queries than we used to when they were keyed in by a telex operator. The requests are keyed in using templates which mean that you are prompted for all the different aspects of the record you are creating eg in conferences the name of the conference and the title of the conference proceedings which are so often different.

We do accept requests for Urgent Action and in this case the reader has to pay the difference between a standard request and the urgent action request in advance.

### **Transmission**

Almost all our requests are initially sent to DSC and are sent via ARTtel, a file being created from the records we have input for transmission. Like all academic libraries using automated methods we transmit our requests via JANET and PSS. Although we can use PSS as a backup and in a few cases we would be using post for requests such as theses where a copyright declaration is required. Post is still the most usual means of sending requests between libraries other than DSC although some use is made of EMail but not all libraries will accept this. At Aston we tend not to use EMail at present for the simple reason that we are in the process university wide of upgrading our EMail facilities. We do accept requests from other libraries by EMail.

### **Receipt**

In the West Midlands we have a transport scheme which gives us a delivery every other day in other words one week a delivery on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and the next week on Tuesday and Thursday. This does mean that you have to think in terms of clearing a delivery in 2 days not each day, we tend to work by giving priority to loans. All requests are checked for correctness of supply including photocopies though we may change this in the future and not check photocopies, just send them out as received from DSC and the odd one that is incorrect is dealt with when the reader returns it. All receipt and notice production is dealt with by the use of automated system. We are able to send photocopies out direct to the reader since a copyright declaration was signed when the reader submitted the request.

Items are issued and returned at the loans counter using a manual system as the number of requests for loan is small. Reference only items are also dealt with from the loans counter. The advantage to the section is that work

can continue with fewer interruptions, Queries will only be referred when the staff at the loans counter are unable to answer them. Items are mostly via the transport scheme. Automatic renewals are dealt with by the loans counter extended renewals are passed to the interlibrary loan section and we charge the reader for the further renewal.

### Chasing and queries

Obviously not everything is supplied by DSC and we have to apply to other libraries mostly academic libraries and in this case at Aston we use postal application to send the requests rather than EMail though maybe we will change that in the future. If DSC give us locations we will use these or we will use BLCMP or on occasion we will speculate. Some requests will go abroad and I am sure that if supply was faster in this area we would be sending a lot more applications overseas particularly for French material if supply was faster. I think that the fact we always go back to our readers asking if they wish to pursue the request and pointing out how long it may take is positive discouragement to the reader to continue with the request.

Our policy with queries is that we pursue where the reader has given us a source of reference but we normally return requests which have not given the source of reference and ask the reader to supply. We try by asking for the source when the request is submitted to limit the number needing to be returned but there are always some requests which are incomplete. The increase in the number of requests where the source is a CD rom or BIDS is a help in that the requests are more accurate. An interesting side light on automating ILL requests is that we now have less queries which is I suppose partly that the ILL section staff are more accurate in keying in the requests than someone who does not understand the System but also that we transmit somewhat more of the request.

### Loans to other libraries

We do of course supply material to other libraries, currently we are lending approximately a thousand items a year but we receive as many requests a year which we are unable to supply. Like many academic libraries there are a number of classes of books which we will not lend, obviously reference items but also books which are in high demand for our own students, if you were looking at our catalogue over JANET these would be in our medium and short loan categories. Hopefully of course as access to Viscount becomes more general it will be easier to then go to the individual catalogue over JANET to see if the item would be available. At present it is more than a little time consuming to go through large numbers of individual catalogues.

### Automation

I have only mentioned automation in passing because we use just one of a number of systems on the market. However we have used an automated system since 1988 and one of the reasons for automating was to aid us in our collection of management data. For this reason we do record the statistical category of the reader making the request, we give all requests a rough subject code and we also note the type of material requested. To aid us in analyzing our requests we have bought the report generator package for Tinlib called Tingen.

It is our analysis of requests for particular journal titles that led us to decide not to use abbreviations. Abbreviations are, I am sure you will agree, inclined to become individual if not peculiar. If you wish to be consistent when you interrogate your system about the use of a particular title then you need to be consistent in what you put into your system. We decided that the best way to ensure this was not to use abbreviations. Why do we want this information? For one thing it is an extra piece of information when deciding whether we should purchase a title. Yes we do still buy new titles. At Aston, profiling our journal stock to meet our current needs is an on going process, we do not want to have journals no longer mainstream to our requirements, and we do want to buy those titles of most use to our researchers and staff.

I am not going to talk about our use of performance measures as there is a paper on this from one of my colleagues at Interlend 92 so come and find out about this along with many other issues concerned with quality of service provision. That's my commercial plug for this session.

We hope that within the next year we shall be able to use Viscount to aid us in searching particularly for monographs and undoubtedly we shall make use of the messaging facility available. We are one of the libraries that is interested in taking part in Project Ion, which fits in particularly with our own OS1 network project.

Perhaps I could end with a quick look at what might be our future, will we still be sending requests? Probably yes but some of our readers may choose to buy offprints direct from electronic data suppliers. Equally we may transmit requests but only ever receive an indication that it has been sent and the paper transmitted direct to the readers PC. But the expertise built up in the ILL section will still be required for tracing material and I suspect in just handling the requests themselves for some time to come.

Emma Cusworth  
Document Supply Librarian  
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## INTER LIBRARY LENDING IN SOUTH GLAMORGAN COUNTY LIBRARIES

To begin I would just like to say a little about South Glamorgan Libraries. There are 32 branches throughout the County, two mobiles and the Central Library, about 200,000 registered borrowers, issues of over 4 million last year, with the Central Library having passed the million issues on its own.

I have been the Inter Library Loans librarian for slightly over a year and just prior to my arrival the department acquired a PC with a basic integrated office software package which included a simple database. The staff were quick to realise that this would have distinct advantages over the boxes of paper which were the existing ILL system, and put everything onto the PC. We are still currently using this database and by comparison to the boxes of paper it is a marvel of efficiency. However it is very limited and was not designed to cope with the quantity of information which we would like to keep on it, and also does not have preset routines for chasing overdues and so on. These can be and are done by manipulating the information available, but we realised that we wanted to get a specific ILL system which will speed up and rationalise the somewhat cumbersome methods in use at the moment.

The library mainframe is McDonnell Douglas which does not as yet have an ILL module, so the easy option was not available. As I set about finding which systems were available I was lucky that the comparison of systems by Juliet Leeves was shortly due for completion, so I had only to wait for it to be published to have the bulk of my research work done for me. Since then we have looked at the various systems which might be suitable for us and are planning to go ahead with getting the Lancaster University system, and hope to have it fully running in under a year.

Looking through some references during the thinking process of putting this paper together, the number of ILL loans with which we deal seems low by comparison to academic libraries. During the last year we processed just over 3000 requests and satisfied 2333, but the amount of work involved with those relatively low figures is high. My department deals with internal requests as well as external and does all the searching for the non computerised branches in the County (about half at the moment), either forwarding the request to another branch or else going downstairs in the Central library and getting the book off the shelf.

The main difference between public and other libraries is the nature of the material requested. The 1985 survey on Interlending in the UK by Brenda White confirms that our pattern is typical of public library use in that the vast bulk of items borrowed are monographs. In 1985 serials represented only 13% of public library borrowing, and public libraries are the only significant borrowers of music and fiction in English as well as being by far the heaviest

users of monographs. Of the items outstanding on our database 3% are for serials, 4% are for music scores, which leaves 93% for monographs, of which 15% are fiction and 4% local history.

Serial items are easy because they can almost all come straight from the BLDSC, practically by return of post, and require almost no effort on my part at all. Music is generally fairly simple because the BLDSC have a very good music department for single scores, and the various regional centres have details on fiche for multiple scores that are available. We do not deal with play sets in South Glamorgan because the Drama Association of Wales library is based in Cardiff and specialises in plays and play sets. Local history items are generally sent off to the local County library and frequently are satisfied without much more work on our part. If the local library does not have an item they can often suggest another location.

Of the items we borrowed last year 34% came from the Welsh Region, 45% from the BLDSC and 21% from other libraries. Our database does not provide for working out the length of time each item takes to be satisfied so I have no real figures, except that for the 21% from other libraries you are probably talking about a 3 month wait for the borrower, and in some cases considerably longer. There is probably much less pressure for speed from the majority of public library borrowers, the items they are requesting are not usually work related and not usually needed urgently for research purposes as is more likely the case with other libraries. If we are asked for an item urgently we will do our best to supply it quickly and will cut across the usual channels to find the quickest source of supply, but if it is a book and the book is not on the shelf of either the libraries we approach or the BLDSC then quick is not something we can be.

The 1985 survey found that in almost all respects the situation was worse than it had been at the time of the 1977 survey. The percentage of satisfied requests was lower and the speed with which they were satisfied was slower. If another survey is done in the next few years it will be very interesting to see what the results are. In some ways many advances have been made. In 1985 the use of computer networks was just beginning, whereas now they are spreading much more widely with the use of Viscount and Janet for instance. The availability of more online systems and the use of CD Roms should make location of items much quicker and more comprehensive, as well as speed up the supply of requests. Providing the items are actually there.

Shortage of money is not a problem confined to public libraries. Academic libraries get fewer serials, the BLDSC buys fewer items in all areas as cuts are made, and the public libraries in an effort to keep going cut down on less popular items and their archival role is seen as less urgent.

The problem for ILL librarians is not the difficulties of these libraries in the short term. It is the difficulties we will face in the long term. If the archival role of libraries is seriously undermined and neglected then the books which are out of print will not be there to borrow in the future. In addition to providing a full range of basic services in languages other than English public libraries are expected to provide a range of other services, such as audio visual items, toys, pictures etc which the public are beginning to wish to borrow more widely. All during a period of recession when all services are under pressure.

To conclude I would like to air one area which varies enormously, and that is length of loan period. For a public library the 6 week loan is just enough time to satisfy the request. Allowing for the post, the processing through the ILL department, the posting of the card notifying the borrower, the borrower collecting the book, reading and returning it, and posting it back then if you are lucky it can

be done in 6 weeks. Public library users are not accustomed to the short loan periods which academic and special libraries can impose, they are used to being able to renew almost any item that they borrow, and there is a time lag inherent in the fact that they only visit the library every two or three weeks. In practice loan periods of less than 6 weeks are extremely difficult to comply with.

I have not mentioned loans to other libraries, statistics, staff training, and the specific routines, which we use, which are all part and parcel of the department, but I hope you will find some food for thought in what I have said.

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## INTER LIBRARY LOANS AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WALES-CARDIFF

The National Museum of Wales was founded by Royal Charter in 1907. The first stage of the building was formally opened in 1927, but it was in 1922/23 that the library moved into the premises now occupied by what is generally termed as the Main Library at Cathays Park in Cardiff. At the Cathays Park site, besides the Main Library, the library staff are responsible for five departmental libraries: Art, Archaeology, Botany, Geology and Zoology. There are also departmental libraries in the Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum situated at Cardiff docks, and in Llanberis, North Wales. The Roman Legionary Museum in Caerleon forms part of the Museum's Archaeology Department and has a small library of its own. The Welsh Folk Museum, part of the National Museum of Wales has had a separate library with its own librarian for a number of years.

There are four full-time members of library staff based in the Main Library with the Assistant Librarian being responsible for the day to day running of the ILL service. The library houses 150,000 books and bound journals and takes 1200 current periodicals. The total number of journals, including dead and incomplete runs etc., is approximately 3,700. The library is open to all members of Museum staff, and members of the public are allowed reference facilities only, at the discretion of the Librarian. In total approximately 50 curatorial staff are eligible to use the ILL service, but we tend to cater for a much smaller number on a regular basis. For example, during the year 1991/92 staff requests totalled 165 items. Of these 18 were abandoned, BLDSC provided 99 and 48 came from elsewhere. During the same period we sent out a total of 89 loans and declined to lend 110.

As you can see from the above statistics our ILL service is on a very small scale. In an average week we probably send three or four requests off to the BLDSC. Our requests do tend to be seasonal though, and when all

departments are working on exhibitions, research etc. we can average as many as ten per week! Alternatively, during the summer months many members of staff are involved with field research, archaeological excavations etc., so requests can dry up totally.

The fact that we have so few requests to deal with means that our current manual system of processing loans works very well. However, we do encounter problems with the library stock being scattered throughout the main building and outstations. These problems mainly arise from items that we are sending out to other libraries. Most of the time spent on processing external loans goes on the actual searching for items within departmental libraries and offices, where access to library stock may not be ideal.

As I have already mentioned, the ILL system is totally manual. Requested items are submitted on a standard form, developed in-house, and details are transferred to standard BLDSC forms. Completed forms are sent to BLDSC at the end of every week. We keep the original request forms, filled in by members of staff, because they contain the copyright declaration. Prior to dispatch all requests are checked against our own catalogues, BLDSC and local holdings (e.g. The University of Wales, College of Cardiff). We then add a shelf number, if relevant, and attach a photocopy of the source of reference. It was quite difficult to persuade some readers to provide this photocopy, but once they understood that it could speed up their request most were willing to comply.

All requests are entered into a book in order of BLDSC form number; this is then used as the main record which is updated as we receive items and all reports on the progress of loans is noted against the entry for that item. Departments are not charged for using the ILL service under normal circumstances. However, should a member of staff be working on a particular project that stimulates a higher than average number of ILL requests, the library will ask their department to contribute a one off payment towards financing the cost of purchasing extra forms.

We record the loan of our books to other libraries in the same way; a simple entry in the ILL book annotated as necessary. Again, the number of items we are likely to send out each week is relatively small and four items is about average. A high percentage of these requests comes from the local ILL network, the Wales Regional Library Scheme (WRLS). Due to the small amount of requests the turn around time for dispatching items is very quick. If an item is located easily, and not in an outstation, they are usually sent out the same day. The normal loan period is one month, but extensions are available on request.

One problem that relates specifically to the use of the local WRLS scheme is the time delay created by using the scheme's own transport network. This means relying upon the Welsh Books Council van to collect and deliver items for distribution to the other Welsh libraries that subscribe to the scheme. The van only calls at the Museum once a week so items that we could send via WRLS frequently get posted to avoid further delay. We also find that as the transport network saves member libraries the cost of postage many of our ILL items are returned by van, some of them taking over a week to arrive. Consequently, if we require the urgent return of an item we have to specify that the lending library uses the post and not the van service.

We decline to lend a high percentage of requests, even when we are the only location listed, mainly because of

the specialised nature of our book stock which includes many expensive and irreplaceable items. The library is very much a working collection for the Museum staff, so we always give them priority over outside institutions. If an item requested on ILL is needed within the museum, for reference purposes or in connection with an exhibition for example we will decline to loan. However, such material is always available for consultation within the library so if the requester is local they can make an appointment to come in person to see the item.

We have no immediate plans for altering our ILL service as it seems to work well enough with current demand. The library is due to be computerised within the next five years and we feel that it would be more appropriate to re-evaluate the service during this phase of development. Looking to the more immediate future the library does hope to purchase a CD-ROM workstation and we are currently looking at the bibliographical tools available in this format. We feel that the introduction of CD-ROM and easier access to catalogues on the Museum's computer network will, ultimately, lead to an increase in ILL requests. If this is indeed the case, the ILL service at the National Museum of Wales will change to suit demand, taking into account all the available resources in interlending.

Louise Carey  
Assistant Librarian  
National Museum of Wales

## 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:



## INTER-LIBRARY LOANS AT CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Unlike the other Copyright Libraries in Britain, Cambridge University Library has always been a lending library. Our borrowing records go back to 1487 when Thomas Rotherham, Archbishop of York, borrowed a book, although admittedly it was one which he had donated to the Library previously. Also unusually it has been, and remains, primarily an open access library and most open-shelf material and some from the closed shelves) is available for borrowing by members of the University from 3rd year undergraduates upwards. When inter-library loans were first considered in the 1960s it didn't require as great a conceptual leap for us as it might have done if we had always been a reference-only library. We became a Back-up Library in 1974 and at that time made a deliberate decision that our extensive holdings, both of British material received under the Copyright Acts and of foreign material built up over the years, should be made more widely available through the inter-library loan system. The detailed arrangements of the back-up system were negotiated with the British Library and the intention was that the operation would be self-financing, that income received from the British Library would cover the costs of providing the service. Broadly speaking this has worked successfully over the last 18 years and remains the case today. The income generated covers all the photocopying and postage costs and most of the staff costs involved, since all the staff engaged full-time on our lending activities are paid out of this revenue. I myself have a number of other duties elsewhere in the Library and the proportion of my time devoted to Inter-Library Loans is not financed in this way. One of the conditions of the Back-up system is that we accept only requests sent from Boston Spa, not direct requests from other libraries. This is a necessary policy since it is obviously better for the British Library to satisfy as many requests as possible from their own stock and for us (and other Back-up Libraries) to deal exclusively with requests which cannot be satisfied in this way. We place no limit on the number of requests we receive and the number does fluctuate. This fluctuation inevitably affects our speed of response and major fluctuations cause changes in the number of staff employed. (Staff are not made redundant when demand declines but are absorbed into vacancies which occur elsewhere in the Library!) In the early years as a Back-Up Library the number of requests received increased rapidly, from 21,000 in 1974/75, topping 30,000 in 1978 and reaching 52,00 in 1979/80. Many of these were speculative monograph requests for material which we did not hold and since then the number has settled down in the range 28,000 - 35,000. During this period the satisfaction rate has risen from c.44% and is currently running at c.61%, mainly because monograph requests have been targeted more discriminately and because of minor changes in our lending policy. No categories of printed material are automatically excluded from the scope of

Inter-Library Loans but we do not deal with requests for manuscripts, a category which includes Cambridge theses. No original copy of a Cambridge thesis is available for loan, but microfilms are available from BLDSC for most theses from 1968 onwards.

Our main priority each day is to check in our catalogues the daily batch of requests received by post from Boston Spa, typically 30 monographs and 100 serials. If it is clear from our catalogues that we do not hold the item then the requests are returned to Boston Spa on the same day. This applies mainly to the speculative monograph requests but to only a handful of the serials. The requests for items which we do seem to hold are then sorted according to their location within the Library and fetched in batches, usually 4 or 5 items at once, when time allows. The length of the delay at this stage depends on the number of staff available and on the level of demand. When the request forms are taken to the shelf more problems arise. Some forms have to be returned because we do not hold the part required or because our copy is temporarily unavailable. More frequently the information on the form does not correspond to what is on the shelf. There can be a variety of explanations for this and a good deal of bibliographical checking is done in order to resolve problems at this stage. Significant numbers of requests are satisfied as a result of this checking but we cannot always identify with certainty what is required and we write about 900 CRF notes each year. Some of the serial requests are passed on to a range of departmental libraries scattered across Cambridge in various University departments. About 40 libraries co-operate in this scheme, only 2 of them being dependent libraries of the University Library, and most of them cannot give priority to I.L.L. requests because of pressure from their own readers. Some of them do not even have any full-time staff. Of the items which we do locate in the Library we lend or photocopy as much as possible - we do like to say yes. Each case is judged individually and as a Copyright Library we have to bear in mind long-term preservation as well as short-term use. The balance between the two is not always an easy one: all books are potentially at risk whenever they are used but, although we do not wish to subject our books to unnecessary risk, there is little point in preserving a book if it cannot be consulted. Inevitably we have many books which are not available for loan (within Cambridge as well as on I.L.L.), because of their age, value, size or, most frequently, physical condition. We do not lend books, received under the Copyright Act while they are still in print (although this doesn't arise very often) because it might disturb the delicate relationship between the Copyright Libraries and the publishers. There is a small amount of material which we are reluctant to lend because it is heavily used by our own readers but we are flexible in this area. Despite these restrictions we do lend several thousand volumes each year and about 500 volumes are on loan at any one time. We lend to the whole range of libraries in the U.K., academic, public and special, to libraries in industry,



government departments, hospitals, schools and prisons. We also lend abroad, mainly within Europe, but on a smaller scale to countries outside Europe. All loans are sent through the post and, although occasional accidents occur, our experience of the Post Office is overwhelmingly favourable. When items are damaged or lost in the post it is usually the result of inadequate packing by the borrowing library. In extreme cases, where libraries are known to have lost or ill-treated our books, we reserve the right to refuse all future loans and there is a small number of libraries which we do not lend to at all. In border-line cases we judge libraries individually since by now we know which libraries always return books late, do not respond to recall notices, or return books in thin envelopes rather than padded bags. All our loans are for reference only, never for home reading. We follow the basic BL system over the length of the loan period - 3 weeks with 3 weeks automatic renewal. If asked we will consider further extensions and almost always grant them unless the item is required by another user. We lend extensively from our Copyright Act material, much of it precisely the material not available from anywhere else. Sometimes for example, we lend a novel from the 1890s which has never been read before - we cut the pages before sending the book out! To my mind the frequency with which this occurs helps to justify Cambridge's position as a Copyright Library and also our participation in the national I.L.L. network. Photocopies are supplied all over the world, subject only to the law of copyright, and, occasionally, constrained by the physical size or condition of the item. We expect to satisfy between 13,000 and 16,000 photocopy requests each year and all the photocopies are made in the department itself. The department is self-contained within the Library, operating its own photocopying and franking machines, so all

the packing and posting is also kept separate from the rest of the Library, both physically and financially.

Of course we do borrow as well. One member of staff (not financed out of income from BLDSC!) is engaged full-time on the borrowing side of the department. Our readers submit about 1800-2000 requests a year, a small number compared with other university libraries, which reflects our extensive holdings and our willingness to purchase most material which is still in print. Many of the requests are for British or American theses or for articles in foreign serials which we do not hold. Most of the rest are for obscure items which are difficult to identify bibliographically or to locate. About 20% of our requests are never satisfied. Charges were introduced as long ago as 1977, mainly to keep demand down to a level which could be dealt with by one member of staff, originally at 50p, and from April 1992 at £2.00 for each BL form used. Refunds are made for failed requests. A considerable proportion of our requests turn into Z searches, although since the trebling of the Z search charges in 1989 more of our readers cancel rather than pay extra, thus pushing up our overall failure rate to 35% last year. Of those requests which do succeed approximately 2/3 are satisfied by loan and 1/3 by photocopy.

We are anxious to provide a good service to other libraries and I am always ready to consider suggestions for improvements. Perhaps the Forum for Interlending will provide a suitable opportunity for some constructive criticism.

Stephen Lees  
Under-Librarian, Cambridge  
University Library  
May 1992

## Trinity College Dublin Back-up Scheme

In October 1972 the BLL decided to try using the Copyright Libraries as a back-up to their own library as part of a proposed development of their services.

For an experimental period between January - April 1973 requests were sent to Cambridge University Library for serials not held at Boston Spa and also for monographs not in stock and not recorded in their catalogues.

In 1974 all Copyright Libraries agreed jointly to take part in the ILL system run by BLL. Each library undertook to carry out a trial run before the scheme went into full operation.

The trial run for Trinity was to be from February 18th until the end of March 1974.

The purpose of the scheme was:-

1) To cost it. 60p proposed for satisfied loan and 5p for unsatisfied request. These sums were refunded to the respective copyright library by the BLL to help pay staff etc.

2) To check percentage of refusals for whatever reason. From experiments carried out by some of the other copyright libraries the proportion of satisfied to unsatisfied requests was 1000 to 4000.

3) To check the speed with which we could deal with requests.

This proved quite successful and from the following statistics we can trace the development of the Trinity Back-Up Scheme.

## Statistics 1974-75

Total no. of requests received	2,059
Satisfied requests	531
Unsatisfied requests	1,528

Total sum of money received      £586.10 stg

## Statistics 1986-87 (Peak time)

Total no. of requests received	3,022
Satisfied requests	347
Unsatisfied requests	2,675

Total sum of money received      £2,083.90 stg

## Statistics 1990-91

Total no. of requests received	663
Satisfied requests	207
Unsatisfied requests	456

Total sum of money received      £1,066.21 stg

During the seventies and eighties the BLL sent all the requests that they could not satisfy to all the back-up libraries even though most of these libraries, including ourselves, had strict regulations governing loans. Many of the requests we received were for home reading and for loans of journals even though our lending policy as stated in the User's Handbook has always been "For Use in the Library Only" and "Decline to lend Periodicals". Also many of the references for periodical articles were incorrect, so that though the total no. of requests received during this period was high, the satisfaction rate was low.

Towards the end of the eighties, however, the requests were more carefully monitored and though the total no. of requests received dropped, the satisfaction rate was comparatively higher.

## Procedures for Lending

Before lending a book we check:-

- 1) If it is in good condition.
- 2) If it is not a private press publication
- 3) If it is not a limited edition.
- 4) If it is not a pre-1850 publication in which case the Rare Books Library must be consulted.

## Irish Publications

A certain number of our requests are for Irish publications. Generally, however, we do not lend Anglo-Irish material (i.e. Irish published material in English) because it is being kept for archival reasons.

## 4th September 1989 New Back-Up Procedures

A new system was introduced by the BLDSC which applied to requests being passed on to all the back-up libraries except Cambridge University. This entailed requests for bibliographically verified items not held at the BLDSC, being returned to the customer with the BLDSC authorization stamp on the reverse of the C copy giving back-up locations. Customers, therefore, now have more control over where their requests are sent to.

At first we, in Trinity College Dublin, had reservations about this. We felt that the time taken to obtain requests through the back-up service would be increased. The cost to us for unsatisfied requests would also be increased as we now had to send the requests back separately to the individual requesting libraries rather than in batches to the BLDSC. However the BLDSC increased the payments from 40p to 60p per unsatisfied request to cover this.

The BLDSC now supplies us with coded reports on the back of the BL form and we find that a more efficient way of dealing with the requests.

At present we find that the number of requests received is increasing slightly again and we hope that this trend will continue. We would like to point out that there is little difference in postal delivery time from Ireland to England compared with time taken for interlending between British libraries. So please don't be put off by our position on the map.

Rosemary Gleeson  
Inter Library Loans  
Trinity College Library Dublin

## REGIONAL AND INTER-REGIONAL TRANSPORT SCHEMES

1991 was the 20th anniversary of the event that led to the establishment of the transport schemes and the 10th anniversary of the inauguration of the Inter-regional Transport System that linked all the schemes together in a national network.

It was the 1971 postal strike that provided the impetus for the development of regional transport schemes. An emergency van delivery service for loans and photocopies was set up by the NLLST in conjunction with the National Central Library and public and academic libraries. This was highly successful and the idea of using an alternative to the postal service was born. A pilot scheme in Yorkshire and Humberside, following a LGORU feasibility study in 1973, led to the founding of the first fully-fledged Regional Transport Scheme. This was soon followed by one in the Northern Region.

A second LGORU report, commissioned by the newly formed British Library, suggested that a national network of schemes was a practical possibility and recommended the setting up of further pilots to test the viability of the idea. Pilots in the North West Region and LASER were set up in 1976 and 1977 with the cooperation of the then BLLD. Both were immediately successful in bringing savings over postal costs, both to participating libraries and to the BLLD.

In May 1979, after a detailed study, a fifth scheme was started in the West Midlands Region, centred on Birmingham. This was followed by studies for Scotland, Ireland and the South West, but in these cases the geographic area covered and the low volume of inter-library loan traffic were considered to make any similar schemes non-viable. A further study, on the East Midlands, came to the same conclusion but an enthusiastic group of librarians succeeded in setting up a restricted scheme in May 1981 to serve only Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Loughborough. The East Midlands Transport Scheme has expanded considerably in the last 10 years despite the doubts raised by the initial survey.

The last scheme to be set up, also defying the doubts of the 1979 survey, began business in July 1991. This was the Bristol based South West Scheme, run by SWRLS. The seven schemes together now have a 'membership' of nearly 2,000 libraries and organisations. In reality many more are included if one takes into account all the branch libraries that are served in turn by their headquarters. The LASER scheme, however, accounts for over 70% of all participating libraries.

Following the establishment of the first six schemes it was decided, after much discussion between BLLD and the regional operators, to set up an Inter-regional Transport System based on Boston Spa as the switching point. This

was launched in the Sprint of 1981 and to a large extent fulfilled the hopes expressed by the second LGORU report six years earlier.

All the schemes are run on strict economic grounds and it is important that they are self-supporting while giving users, including BLDSC, considerable savings compared with the post. Most operate a voucher system to cover the cost of sending and returning loans within the region, and returning loans to Boston Spa.

The price of the vouchers varies from scheme to scheme but is significantly lower than postal rates. BLDSC, as the largest single customer of the schemes, pays a regularly negotiated and equal contribution per item to each scheme. This is calculated to ensure that the Document Supply Centre also makes savings over the cost of sending the same items on its postal contracts. The contribution is charged to DSC on an item by item basis, which means that no batching is possible. Batching of items is a way in which DSC can, of course, make savings through the postal service.

The Inter-regional Scheme also operates on a voucher system, the price in this case being higher to cover the costs of the two schemes involved in any one transaction and of the transfer operation at DSC. The Document Supply Centre currently charges the regional schemes 65 pence per Inter-regional voucher and these are sold on at a higher price in the regional schemes in order to cover the cost of the first part of the journey, to the switching point at Boston Spa. The Document Supply Centre is, in turn, charged the going transport scheme rate (47 pence per item is the current DSC 'contribution' to the Transport schemes) by the scheme that collects the item for onward transit to the final destination. The item will be counted at the other end and along with DSC's own traffic going into that particular region. The 18 pence difference between the price DSC charges for the Inter-regional vouchers and the charge it incurs from the receiving scheme is intended to cover the costs of the switching operation at Boston Spa, including the handling of many problems of misdirection. As more and more traffic moves on the Inter-regional Scheme so these problems increase, the commonest being inadequately addressed packages or packages arriving for onward transit to destinations not actually served by any scheme. Music scores present a particular problem as they frequently arrive at Boston Spa in packages too large to fit into the containers used by the British Rail link to some of the receiving schemes. The rail link from Boston Spa (via Leeds station) is used by four schemes (LASER, East Midlands, West Midlands and South West). An Inter-regional Transport Directory and User's guide is published biennially by the Document Supply Centre to help the customers of all schemes get the best out of the system and reduce the problems that can occur in this fairly complex switching operation.

From their birth out of necessity during a prolonged postal strike the individual schemes and national network have become firmly established, providing a service generally as fast as the postal alternative and bringing significant savings to the library community. The schemes now carry nearly one million loans and photocopies annually from the Document Supply Centre to its customers and it is estimated that since their inception have carried over 3 million returned loans to Boston Spa and over 4 million

items locally, within the regions. The Inter-regional Scheme is now carrying in excess of 70,000 items annually. When it was set up 10 years ago it was estimated that it would carry 12,500 items per year.

M RAE  
Despatch  
BLDSC  
5 June 1992

## FIRST LETTER

This is The FIRST LETTER! lets have more please!

I read with interest the article by Kate Godsell on Inter-library Loans at Lancashire County Library. We have been fortunate to maintain our bookfund at a consistent level and in line with inflation, despite the usual political pressures such as rate-capping. This year, however, saw an increase in requests from 77,723 to 88,191, a rise of 13.5%. This has been the most dramatic rise in over 15 years and seems to be reflected in Lancashire's 10% increase. A number of reasons could be suggested: that bookfunds are not keeping pace with the rising price of books; that the "publishing explosion" has resulted in libraries stocking a smaller proportion of new titles available; or that inter-library loan departments are getting it right and are victims of their own success.

Have any other public libraries experienced similar increases in numbers of requests? I would be interested to know, if only to reassure myself that I am not the only one slowly sinking under a flood of request forms!

Maureen Ridley  
Cleveland County Library  
Central Library  
Victoria Square  
Middlesbrough  
Cleveland TS1 2AY



## NEWS FROM BLDSC

### **PREMIUM SERVICES ; 10 years of growth and success**

BLDSC's Premium services - Urgent Action later to be joined by LEXICON - celebrated their 10th anniversary in May. Over these 10 years use of these services increased steadily and recently quite dramatically. During the year April 1991 to March 1992 revenue from the Premium Services leapt by 60% to well over £1 million.

Whilst most customers are quite happy with the speed of BLDSC's standard loan/photocopy, the success of the Premium Services show that a significant number are willing to pay for the additional work involved in providing a very quick response or a service tailored to their own requirements; Urgent Action provides this speed, LEXICON the flexibility. If you would like to know more, please contact Sue Walker (ext. 6164) for Urgent Action or Wendy Sernezuk (ext. 6137) for LEXICON.

### **PRICE INCREASE FOR U.K. AND NORTH AMERICAN THESES**

Unfortunately BLDSC has had to increase the price of loans of U.K. and North American doctoral theses, from 1 to 2 request forms. The increase is due partly to pressure on this year's acquisition budget but also to only limited success in reducing the cost of providing the thesis service. The Centre is continuing discussions with U.K. universities on proposals to extend coverage, to simplify requests (by removing the need for users to sign special declaration forms) and reduce the costs of filming.

### **AUTOMATED REQUESTS FOR WORLDWIDE SEARCHES AND PATENTS**

If you require a Worldwide Search or a patent you can help us speed up identification and routing of your requests by putting the relevant message (WWS or PATENT) after your request numbers on the TX line. For example

TX AB12345 AB12346 AB12347WWS

TX BC54321 BC54322 PATENT

### **COPYRIGHT AND THE COPYRIGHT CLEARED SERVICE**

As many BLDSC customers are aware copyright is a very important but a very thorny issue. It is also very often misunderstood (or conveniently ignored). The Centre introduced the Copyright Cleared Service just over a year ago in an attempt to help customers where copying requirements could often not be met under the existing legislation and to give libraries and other organisations concerned about the legal complexities a worry-free option.

We are aware that some customers are still unsure about the implications of the copyright law for them and how the Copyright Cleared Service can help. Therefore, if there is sufficient demand, we are considering organizing a seminar at Boston Spa on the issue. Please let me know if you might be interested.

Mick Osborne  
Customer Services

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

## Report of JUGL

### (JANET USERS GROUP for LIBRARIES)

1. When the new British library opens at St. Pancras, as many of you will know, the OPAC is not going to be available on JANET. A meeting between JUGL and the British Library has reported that lack of resources has meant this is not a priority. However it is not impossible to have it in the future. There is currently a mail survey being conducted to try and ascertain what is required for this future service and what, if any, charges will be borne by the libraries. Suggestions so far are that it may be a subscription system and that Pilot Libraries could be used initially. Comments on the fact that it might raise libraries' expectations are regarded as a positive factor in ensuring something will have to be done.
2. The setting up of SUPERJANET is going ahead now with definite funding for the first year and

contractors are being shortlisted. It is hoped the Pilot Project will be set up in 5 libraries early in 1993.

3. The proposed setting up of an electronic journal by JUGL, to be called PLANET is going ahead and a number of volunteers are being sought to help. This is proposed as a proper journal, not a newsletter, with articles of reasonable length and to be available on BUBL.

Dr A Illsley

*As this is my last issue as an editor I would like to thank the Librarian of Lancaster University library and staff for their help without which I could not have managed. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the BLDSC for their continuing cooperation.*

*Thelma Goodman  
Lancaster University*

## Requests for theses

AS YOU MAY BE AWARE, THE BLDSC REQUIRE TWO FORMS TO BORROW A THESIS. (CUSTOMER UPDATE MAY 92/4)

OTHER LIBRARIES NOW APPEAR TO CHARGE THE SAME.  
THE FOLLOWING HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION.

Bradford University  
Brunel University  
University of Leicester  
University of London  
University of St Andrews  
Strathclyde University

ARE THERE ANY OTHERS? PLEASE CAN YOU INFORM DR ANN ILLSLEY, EDITOR AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:-

**DR A ILLSLEY**  
INTER LIBRARY LOANS  
THE MAIN LIBRARY  
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF NORTH WALES  
BANGOR  
GWYNEDD  
LL57 2DG

## YOUR NEW COMMITTEE

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## FIL DIRECTORY

This has now been printed and sent out to all libraries who were members before April 1992.

Please would all libraries check and update their entries, particularly those where a name change has occurred or is imminent. Completed, updated proformas to Ms P. Beech, Bibliographic Services, Shropshire County Library, Column House, SHREWSBURY, SY2 6NN.

We are planning a revised reprints of this Directory in about 12 months.