FIL

Forum for Interlending

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APOLOGIES

We, the Editors, wish to apologise for two unfortunate occurrences with the last Newsletter. Firstly, it was much later than we had anticipated; this was due to problems with our software extracting addresses from our database – we had just introduced new software and encountered an unexpected hiccup. Secondly, after solving the software problems, some of the Newsletters were sent out with a blank page 2. If you were the unlucky recipient of such a faulty copy, please contact one of the editors and we will send you a photocopy – we don't have enough spares to replace the whole issue.

RETIRING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Five members of your FIL committee will be retiring at the July AGM and we decided we would each write a short resumé of our work for FIL while on the Committee, to appear in this and the next newsletter.

Ann Illsley, University College of North Wales
I have been the joint Newsletter Editor for the four years I've been on the Committee, firstly with Thelma Goodman and latterly Janet Moult. It has been hard work, chivvying authors to submit their copy, seeking articles and, the most arduous part, reading and re-reading for clarity, spelling and punctuation! We often find ourselves editing the longer submissions and ensuring such editing doesn't change the meaning in any way can be rather frustrating. However, I can't deny that I have enjoyed doing it! Perhaps the best part of being on the Committee, for me, has been getting to know the other members, visiting their libraries and realising how much we are 'all in the same boat' whether we come from Public, Special or Academic libraries and this has been reinforced when I have helped in workshops and at the Conferences. I am sorry my term of office has come to an end; it has seemed a very brief four years indeed, and I wish the next Committee good luck for the future and hope they have as much out of it as I have.

Jill Evans, Edinburgh University Library
A few years involved with the FIL Committee have been most rewarding and interesting but the most challenging position to date is assisting with organising the annual conference in July in Glasgow. FIL has produced a number of

documents and reports but the most useful and relevant is a month by month guide entitled 'Conferences – Guidelines for Organising A Conference' which highlights the numerous checklists one should follow to reach the conference date in complete control of all aspects.

Other highlights include assisting with projects commissioned by FIL on topical aspects with changing policies which we felt would be of use to the wider ILL community. The publications were "Theses Interlending In The UK" and in 1994 a "Survey On Charging" which sought to establish the routes used to pay for the cost of ILL provision within academic libraries. Both documents were researched and prepared with Elaine Dean and Rosemary Goodier.

In November 1994 I was invited to attend the LIBRIS UNITY National Users Group meeting in Berwick–Upon–Tweed as an observer and representative from FIL and I learnt much of the initial history of this co–operative project amongst different regions throughout the UK. It was a fascinating day with much enthusiasm in evidence for an exciting venture.

The most rewarding aspect of serving on the FIL Committee has been the friendships gained with the other members of the Committee. I feel the changing membership and their respective strengths and knowledge of different type of libraries has allowed me to develop some skills and with the experience of committee work I know I have gained much, with enjoyment and humour shared with fellow Inter Library Loan Librarians.

I wish FIL and the new committee every success in the future and I look forward to attending the 1996 Annual conference – without the "Conferences. Guidelines ..." at my side!

Denise Lawrence, Assistant Librarian, NIBSC
As I am expecting my first baby later this year, I will be leaving the FIL Committee after only one year in office, and as a retiring Committee member have been asked to write a short piece about my experiences. My connection with FIL goes back to the early years and I have been attending the annual conferences since the one held at the

University of Lancaster in 1989. Since I work in a small special library, I felt it was important to establish contact with other library and information workers and since Interlibrary loans take up a large percentage of my professional duties FIL was an appropriate organisation to join. The conference topics and workshop sessions were of practical value in my work – a fact acknowledged by my employers who continue to authorise my attendance! On a more personal level, being at the conferences allowed me to get away from the work situation, talk to colleagues (as the chap in the advert says "It's good to talk.") and come back refreshed and eager to try new things.

FIL also organises workshops and are continually looking for new venues, so at one conference I volunteered NIBSC as a venue for an Exchange of Experience workshop. I looked after the arrangements at our end, booking the rooms and working out equipment and catering, while FIL organised the speakers, publicity and bookings. There were to be three speakers, one each from the public, academic and special library fields as well as representatives from BLDSC. I was rather taken aback when I was asked to be one of the speakers, especially as I hadn't attended an Exchange of Experience Workshop before, but in the event the whole thing went rather well, and my nightmare scenario of booking the rooms and catering for the wrong date didn't materialise.

After that experience, it was a short step to thinking about joining the Committee, especially as there appears to be a shortage of prospective candidates from special libraries. I was duly elected to the Committee at last year's AGM for a two–year term of office, but fate decreed otherwise! Each member of the Committee is allocated certain responsibilities and I was appointed Interlend '94 editor and Vice Chair. My duties as Vice Chair have not been demanding, but I put in considerable work on editing the Conference Proceedings. I did enjoy the work, and travelling to Committee meetings meant seeing more of the country than before – notably Doncaster, which I seemed to pass through on a number of occasions!

My term of office will come to an end at the AGM at the forthcoming conference in

Glasgow in July, but that will not mean the end of my connection with FIL. I hope to continue attending the annual Conference and such workshops and seminars as I can, so as to maintain my contacts and keep up to date on professional matters.

INTERLEND '95

July 13–15 1995, Glasgow University

The Workshops: a profile.
1: The INTERNET
Following the presentations earlier in the programme by John Lindsay and Chris Batt we have asked both speakers to extend their presence by leading the **practical** workshop on the InterNet.

It is anticipated that their different perspectives will provide different emphases on access methods and priorities.

John Lindsay is the Reader in Information Systems Design at Kingston University since 1991. He lists an extensive CV with details of his previous service, recent teaching, his range of research and consultancy, and his extensive list of publications on the InterNet itself. He specialises in strategic information systems, information science, and information systems design.

Chris Batt is Borough Libraries and Museums Officer for the London Borough of Croydon. Over fifteen years he has written extensively on the use of information technology in public libraries, and is presently preparing the 5th edition of the annual survey "Information Technology in Public Libraries". He also writes a column in the Public Library Journal.

He especially wishes to speak about the InterNet in relation to public libraries.

2: Copyright.
Ray Wall has chosen the title "Squaring the circle: a workshop on copyright issues" to indicate the seemingly intractable problems that face all librarians, publishers and information specialists when they come up against the demands of copyright observance.

Ray has over 40 years experience in librar-

ianship and information science, but his particular involvement with copyright began when he served as LA Copyright Officer in the run up to the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. He represents Aslib on the JCC Working Party on Copyright, and serves as a spokesman on the subject.

He has written "Copyright made easier" (1993) and contributed to the Aslib Guide to Copyright. Since 1989 he has acted as an independent consultant and continues to write extensively on the matter.

[FIL itself has entered the debate on the issue of copyright, believing that its members would welcome clarification and assurance on the problems involved.]

**PLEASE NOTE: Ray has asked that those delegates intending to be at the Copyright Workshop should submit examples of their questions in advance, so that he can prepare his response.

A CLEAR IDENTITY: A NEW CONSTITUTION

Writing and revising constitutional documents can be seen as one of those jobs best left to the experts. The practical relevance of such an activity is not easily appreciated, but there comes a time in the life of most institutions when it has to be tackled.

Last year we reported to the AGM at Warwick University on our progress towards settling our legal status, – namely, that there had not been any. (For background see the report by Dave Kenvyn and Mark Perkins – FIL Newsletter no 17 pp7-8.)

FIL Constitution (revised 1991) specifically refers to the Charity Commissioner's role in safeguarding FIL's charity status and aims, yet no–one could confirm that (despite the clear and original intent) FIL had been granted such status! No correspondence has been found to confirm this; no charity number has ever been assigned or quoted. So what had happened?

The committee deputed our previous Treasurer (Dave Kenvyn, Westminster) to re–open talks with the Charity Commissioners on this point, and some exploration was under-

taken which hinted at necessary changes to tighten up certain provisions of the present Constitution, – but nothing was ever officially communicated.

At this point we began to question not only the time–scale likely to be faced (bearing in mind the pressures and priorities of the Charity Commissioners) but also the reasons for following this route.

Those who follow such things will know that throughout the '80's the Government of the day continually pushed the role of charities in providing socially useful services and support in areas where both national and local government were withdrawing support. At the same time conditions and criteria for becoming and operating as a charity were defined much more strictly: charities were to be doers and providers, but not campaigners or questioners. What would this mean for FIL?

Since our foundation we have provided an educational and informational role through the series of workshops, conferences, surveys, publications etc. Obviously charitable as intended. But we have, more recently, taken on a questioning and campaigning role over key issues in the library sphere, such as library charging; the role and function of the Library Commission; the effects of local government reforms etc. We try to use connections with other bodies (BLDSC, LINC, CONARLS) to provide views reflecting the concerns of ILL librarians.

Charity status would not necessarily effect this, overall, but it may make us more careful, more circumspect and less immediate.

We on the Committee began to question whether, given what we do , and how we do it, status as a charity was necessarily the right way. A clear majority thought not.

There are some advantages in being a charity if you expect to make a regular profit from your activities, and wish to obtain tax exemptions, but FIL is not profit–oriented, and seeks to provide services 'at cost', and recycles any surplus into further provision. Perhaps there were other forms of legal identity that expressed FIL's style and operations, and yet still protected the corporate

body that is the Executive, and the individuals and organisations that comprise the membership.

Following my proposal at the AGM, we approached the **INDUSTRIAL COMMON OWNERSHIP MOVEMENT (ICOM)** to find out.

ICOM (based in Leeds) has a long and honourable tradition of support and advice to co–ops, charities, community groups, voluntary bodies etc. and provides legal and registration services (I had dealt with them some years ago when considering the founding of a worker co–op in Wakefield).

Initially, having asked for advice on options, we submitted details of our operations, services, and style of organisation, and following analysis it was confirmed that we could, more accurately be described as "an Unincorporated Association". We then asked for assistance in redrafting the Constitution to reflect this style of organisation.

Following initial drafts and changes, we finally arrived at the finished revision. Surprisingly, we did not have to make wholesale changes, but really build in standard features to clarify our obligations; to supply protective measures re. financial liability; and to balance the system of rights between officers and members.

There are specific points of change as highlighted by ICOM, such as:

*   Objects
    In the current constitution 'benefit to the public' is only mentioned in the fifth of the listed 'aims'. In order to emphasise the public benefit and not–for–profit nature of the organisation the objects clauses have been redrafted to bring both these terms into prominence.

*   Not-For-Profit
    Although the concept of being 'not–for–profit' does not have any status in British law, there may be problems with FIL making any payments to its members without the specific powers to do so.

*   Cessation of membership
    These important provisions are omitted

altogether from the current constitution.

- Notice of General Meeting:
  FIL must announce the date of its AGM a year beforehand. ICOM have suggested a 30 day period of notice for both AGM and any SGM as being suitable for a national organisation.

- General Meeting on members requisition:
  As the Executive Committee are agents of the members, it is important to give members the power to demand a GM if they want one.

- Custodian Trustees:
  These are important powers in an unincorporated association yet are omitted in the present constitution.

[This last item allows us to vest assets or property in the care of Trustees, away from the regular Executive, where officers could resign, depart, or face expiry of term close together, or turnover could be rapid. Long term interest and stability require a more stable solution. As yet we do not have such reserves, but in future we possibly could.]

As ICOM advise us: "adopting this constitution in place of the current one will not alter the current legal status of FIL: it will remain an unincorporated association ineligible for charitable status. However, it will have a more comprehensive and appropriate legal structure".

They also add, by way of explanation: "someone may query the ability of FIL to adopt this new governing document in the light of the 'Amendments' clause in the present constitution. This clause implies that the Charity Commission's permission is required and that 'no amendment may be made which shall have the effect of causing the Forum to cease to be a charity in law'. Well, FIL is not presently a charity, and thus no change will cause it to cease to be a charity. Meanwhile, as FIL is not registered with the Charity Commission, they do not have 'charitable jurisdiction' over FIL, would not have an opinion on the matter, and therefore do not need to be consulted.

We (the Executive) are recommending this revised Constitution to the Membership. It will be circulated to everyone in plenty of time. Please read it; discuss it; consider it; and come to the SGM on 14th July 1995 to vote on acceptance.

We are running a one-issue SGM ("To approve and accept the revised constitution') immediately after the usual Annual General Meeting, held during Conference. One member; one vote, so come prepared.

Brian Else, (FIL Chairman), Wakefield.

ELECTRONIC COPYRIGHT — A TIME TO ACT

In 1993, the LA/Joint Consultative Committee Working Party on Copyright (representing Aslib, IIS, the Library Association, Sconul and the Society of Archivists) produced a Statement on Electrocopying to raise the issues with regard to using electronic information. The statement was intended to encourage discussion with rights owners. Although there has been much debate very little has happened. The problems for our profession have scarcely been addressed. It is now time to state what we want in order to redress the balance.

Copyright protects works of the mind. It gives authors and creators exclusive rights to control how their works are exploited. Copyright is also about trying to balance the interests of the rights owners with the needs of the users of works. The Berne Convention – the main international copyright convention – gives signatory nations scope for making exceptions to the exclusive rights to allow users to gain access to copyright works, in order to learn from and build upon the ideas contained within. In the UK, these exceptions come in the form of fair dealing, the allowances for education and the special privileges given to librarians. In the electronic environment the balance, at least legally, is all on the side of the rights owners. There are no exceptions to the exclusive rights for works in digital form, which is causing frustration among users and information professionals.

We have the technology, why can't we use it? Is a constant cry, Why can't we use it to improve services to our users? Why shouldn't we be able to create a database of

particular articles? Why shouldn't we be able to send inter–library document requests electronically? Why shouldn't we be able to send copyright works around a network for students to use? Although technology has brought many benefits, at present we are not allowed to take full advantage of them. Copyright legislation in the UK makes it clear that storing a work in an electronic form is a restricted act, one of the acts which only the rights owner can perform. We are not allowed to copy electronically, not even for research or private study, without permission from the rights owner. Any copying that takes place is therefore controlled by some contractual and therefore priced arrangement, such as downloading from an online database. (See the LA Electronic Copyright leaflet for further details.)

If and when the copyright equation is solved, the likelihood is that the privilege of being able to copy digitally will come with a hefty bill. Copyright, when accompanied by technology, may therefore be preventing intellectual development rather than furthering it.

Other nations have similar copyright laws to ours, but each differs in subtle ways depending on how the government sees copyright and whether the laws are relatively recent or not. If a government feels that it has an intellectual property industry which is essential to a healthy economy, it may be more biased towards rights owners than one which has more cultural and educational aims. Some national copyright laws may be so old that they have not caught up with computers let alone digital information. Therefore electronic storage and copying may not be expressly forbidden in other countries. French copyright law, for instance, does not prevent the electronic copying and storing of information (although it does prevent electronic delivery to third parties). In the digital environment, it is important that we all have the same rules. Unequal copyright laws affect international trading, an important consideration in these days of global planning of information infrastructures.

International legislative solutions need to be found to solve the disparity in national laws and to tighten up the digital environment in order to make it safe for creators, prevent piracy and encourage use. At present, the law is no longer a sufficient deterrent against piracy when faced with the might of technology so it is likely that technical solutions, such as encryption devices, will be found, with the law used to back them up. However, this will bring yet another barrier to information access. Other areas being explored are:

- electronic tagging devices. Cited (Copyright in Transmitted Electronic Documents), a project in the European Commission's Esprit programme, is devising a theoretical model of controlling, policing and offering remuneration for works stored in digital form;

- systems to 'digitally fingerprint' works, that can track usage;

- digital headers with bibliographic and copyright information, akin to a barcode system, to accompany the text;

- electronic licensing and copyright clearing systems;

- a standard agreement between librarians and publishers. Eblida is holding workshops in member states on this.

- pilot electronic document delivery schemes such as the BLDSC/University of East Anglia project.

Copyright was not designed to prevent access to information and ideas. However, if in the future many of these ideas reside in information which is in digital format, only those privileged enough to be able to afford to pay will be granted access.

Librarians and information professionals must therefore negotiate electronic copyright privileges which do not come with a price tag attached. There are legitimate non–commercial reasons for electrocopying. We need to convince rights owners and persuade legislators. What can we bargain with in order to waylay their fears about information let loose in the electronic environment?

We are information gatekeepers and could control access. We are law abiding and respect copyright. We can use the goodwill we have with rights owners and legislators, built up

since the 1988 Copyright, Designs and Patents Act. We educate our users. (What other profession is as well-placed as us to instil respect for copyright to the public?)

Librarians in the USA are also campaigning. Their working document for discussion (downloaded from the Copyright listserv on the Internet) is called Fair Use in the Electronic Age and outlines the rights we should expect as lawful users. Although the document refers to US copyright law (which is more liberal than ours towards the user), we can build on the same principles and start lobbying the UK government and the European Commission. We should, at least, be able to have the same allowances as we already have for print–based material, e.g. some kind of fair dealing arrangement. For instance, we should be able to:

- read or browse electronic information without having to pay for it;

- preserve, in digital format, copyright material held in our collections;

- fulfil inter–library document requests electronically.

Sandy Norman, Library Association.
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STATEMENT ON LAWFUL USES OF COPYRIGHTED WORKS

The following statement, "Fair Use in the Electronic Age: Serving the Public Interest", is an outgrowth of discussions among a number of library associations regarding intellectual property, and in particular, the concern that the interests and rights of copyright owners and users remain balanced in the digital environment.

The purpose of the document is to outline the lawful uses of copyrighted works by individuals, libraries, and educational institutions in the electronic environment. It is intended to inform ongoing copyright discussions and serve as a reference document for users and librarians. It is our goal that this Working Document be circulated widely and spark discussions on these issues. Thus

the statement will continue to be a work in progress.

The governing bodies of the association noted below are expected to consider endorsing this Working Document over the next several months. The associations welcome feedback on the statement.

Working Document 18/1/95

Fair Use in the Electronic Age: Serving the Public Interest

The primary objective of copyright is not to reward the labor of authors, but "[t]o promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts". To this end, copyright assures authors the right to their original expression, but encourages others to build freely upon the ideas and information conveyed by a work... This result is neither unfair nor unfortunate. It is the means by which copyright advances the progress of science and art.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor (Feist Publications, Inc. v. Rural Telephone Service Co., 499 US 340, 349 (1991)

The genius of United States copyright law is that, in conformance with its constitutional foundation, it balances the intellectual property interests of authors, publishers and copyright owners with society's need for the free exchange of ideas. Taken together, fair use and other public rights to utilize copyrighted works, as confirmed in the Copyright Act of 1976, constitute indispensable legal doctrines for promoting the dissemination of knowledge, while ensuring authors, publishers and copyright owners appropriate protection of their creative works and economic investments.

The fair use provision of the Copyright Act allows reproduction and other uses of copyrighted works under certain conditions for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship or research. Additional provisions of the law allow uses specifically permitted by Congress to further educational and library activities. The preservation and continuation

of these balanced rights in an electronic environment as well as in traditional formats are essential to the free flow of information and to the development of an information infrastructure that serves the public interest.

It follows that the benefits of the new technologies should flow to the public as well as to copyright proprietors. As more information becomes available only in electronic formats, the public's legitimate right to use copyrighted material must be protected. In order for copyright to truly serve its purpose of "promoting progress", the public's right to fair use must continue in the electronic era, and these lawful uses of copyrighted works must be allowed without individual transaction fees.

Without infringing copyright, the public has a right to expect:

- to read, listen to, or view publicly marketed copyrighted material privately, on site or remotely;

- to browse through publicly marketed copyrighted material;

- to experiment with variations of copyrighted material for fair use purposes, while preserving the integrity of the original;

- to make or have made for them a first generation copy for personal use of an article or other small part of a publicly marketed copyrighted work or a work in a library's collection for such purpose as study, scholarship, or research; and

- to make transitory copies if ephemeral or incidental to a lawful use and if retained only temporarily.

Without infringing copyright, nonprofit libraries and other Section 108 libraries, on behalf of their clientele, should be able:

- to use electronic technologies to preserve copyrighted materials in their collections;

- to provide copyrighted materials as part of electronic reserve room service;

- to provide copyrighted materials as part of electronic interlibrary loan service; and

- to avoid liability, after posting appropriate copyright notices, for the unsupervised actions of their users.

Users, libraries, and educational institutions have a right to expect:

- that the terms of licenses will not restrict fair use or other lawful library of educational uses;

- that U.S. government works and other public domain materials will be readily available without restrictions and at a government price not exceeding the marginal cost of dissemination; and

- that rights of use for nonprofit education apply in face-to-face teaching and in transmittal or broadcast to remote locations where educational institutions of the future must increasingly reach their students.

Carefully constructed copyright guidelines and practices have emerged for the print environment to ensure that there is a balance between the rights of users and those of authors, publishers, and copyright owners. New understandings, developed by all stakeholders, will help to ensure that this balance is retained in a rapidly changing electronic environment. This working statement addresses lawful uses of copyrighted works in both the print and electronic environments.

This statement was developed by representatives of the following associations:
American Association of Law Libraries
American Library Association
Association of Academic Health Sciences Library Directors
Association of Research Libraries
Medical Library Association
Special Libraries Association.

Mary Jackson, Association of Research Libraries, Washington DC 20036

'Fair Use in the Electronic Age' has been published in College and Research Libraries News, 56 (1), January 1995, pp.24–26. It is also available on the ARL (the US Association of Research Libraries) gopher (arl.cni.org).

FIL EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE WORKSHOP

Almost 40 participants attended the most recent FIL workshop, held at the University of Central England (UCE) in January. After a welcome by Judith Andrews, UCE's Deputy Director of Information Services, and once an ILL librarian herself, the workshop began with an overview by Marion Leyden of Birmingham Public Libraries. Marion provided a useful insight into the operation of an ILL service in a large public library authority, an area unfamiliar to many of the delegates present. Celia Swann then gave an interesting account of ILL activities at Nottingham University – a talk which raised many questions, not least because of the use of the LIBERTAS ILL module, with its facility for the public entry of request data. From an operation requesting many thousands of ILLs a year, the session then moved on to hear Denise Lawrence discuss services at the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (previously reported in an earlier newsletter), where each request is dealt with individually. Helen Parnaby and Bob Pickering from the British Library wound up the morning's programme with a question and answer session about the Document Supply Centre services.

After a vegetarian lunch, which received many compliments, the participants divided into three "exchange of experience" groups, the lead being supplied by Rose Goodier and Elaine Dean with a list of discussion topics as a starting point. After a break for tea the final session of the day was given by Sandra Radmore from the West Midlands Regional Library System, who gave an informative talk on the role of WMRLS and the way it responds to its members needs.

Our thanks are due to all the speakers for a very interesting and enjoyable day.

Jill Lambert, University of Central England.

INTER-LIBRARY LOANS IN THE GEORGE GREEN LIBRARY, NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY

I would like to start by saying a few words about Nottingham University itself. It was founded in 1948 and was the first new university after the second world war. Today the University has over 10,000 full time students and a reputation as a centre of high quality research.

The Nottingham University Library System consists of a network of large and small branch libraries whose total stock exceeds a million volumes. Interlibrary loans are handled separately by the largest of these branches and the statistics attached should give you an idea of the number of requests dealt with.

I am responsible for the Interlibrary Loans Department in the George Green Library so I will be talking to you about procedures in that library alone, although there are few differences between the branches. I will also be concentrating on requests from our readers as opposed to requests from other libraries as this makes up the bulk of our work-load in the George Green Library.

Our own Stock covers all subjects taught in the faculties of Science and Engineering, this amounts to around 100,000 books and pamphlets and 65,000 periodical volumes. In recent years there has been a movement towards access to materials rather than holdings so the role of ILLs is becoming increasingly important. We also have vast collections of CD Roms and databases such as BIDS ISI which more and more readers are making use of and this, undoubtedly, has an effect on our workload in the ILLs Department. In the last academic year 17,000 ILL applications to BLDSC were made from The George Green Library alone. This amounts to around 150 requests per day during term–time and between 50 and 100 during the vacation. We also have to consider that items are often required fairly quickly as student project deadlines have to be met and academics require information for lectures or for submitting papers to journals so we work to a fairly tight schedule.

In the ILLs Department there is one full-time Senior Library Assistant which is myself. Several other Library Assistants spend an hour or so each day in the Department performing a variety of different tasks. This arrangement works very well for us as they all gain some ILLs experience and can answer queries and deal with customer enquiries. There is also another Library Assistant who spends part of each day in the ILLs Department and devotes most of her time to dealing with incoming requests from other libraries. She also provides me with invaluable assistance during busy times and deputizes whilst I'm on leave.

In 1990 the library moved to LIBERTAS. As many of you know LIBERTAS is a fully integrated library management system incorporating Circulation, Cataloguing, Acquisitions and Interlibrary Loans. In 1992 we implemented the ILLs module and one of it's most attractive features was the facility to allow readers to key in their own requests from library OPACs or from terminals outside the library using the Nottingham University campus network. I'm sure you'll all appreciate what a blessing this was for ILLs and clerical staff who would spend many long hours at a keyboard. It was a very monotonous and time-consuming task, typing in request after request and often having to read the most appalling handwriting.

Readers seemed to adapt to the OPACs fairly well and they are generally better at typing requests onto a computer screen than filling in forms, though inevitably there are those who struggle and need a member of staff to prompt them at the keyboard.

All the requests are carefully edited before they are transmitted to BLDSC so any spelling errors or obvious mistakes are corrected.

When a request is completed a record is created on the User Activity File so there is immediate access, for both staff and reader, to the details of the request and subsequently its progress.

The most common types of material requested by George Green Library users are articles from journals and conference papers. Other items such as patents, technical reports, standards and dissertations are also regularly requested.

The LIBERTAS system can generate a printout, either on demand or automatically overnight which lists all the requests that have been created on public terminals over a defined period. In the George Green Library this file is printed off each day so we get a comprehensive list of all the latest requests.

The printout is arranged in order by category of borrower, so if a reader has created several requests they will appear adjacently on the printout. This way it is easy to see if a reader has duplicated a request or has asked for more than one article from an issue of a journal. We prefer to manually rule lines between each request on the printout to facilitate checking, as it can be quite difficult to separate one from the other.

Each day the requests are checked against our catalogues to make sure they are not in stock and contain adequate information. This is the limit of our checking procedure. No bibliographic checks are made due to the sheer volume of requests. An average of 10% of requests keyed in are found to be in stock in one or other of the branch libraries and we can't be sure whether this is due to the readers' inability to check the catalogues correctly or their reluctance to do so. When the printout has been checked, the requests are allocated voucher numbers by ILLs staff, approved and transmitted automatically by ARTtel 2 to BLDSC.

We usually apply to BLDSC first and they satisfy about 80% of requests. If they are unable to help we check the SLS database of LIBERTAS users for locations, otherwise it's a case of trial and error. Unfortunately, we cannot transmit requests automatically to other libraries, but a notice can be produced by the LIBERTAS systems which is sent out by post with the BLDSC form.

The major obstacle we came up against when we started using LIBERTAS was copyright. Our readers used to fill in an ILL form and sign the copyright declaration on it. However, when they started keying in their own requests they were no longer able to do this so we had to find a viable alternative. Around 70% of our requests are for photocopies of articles from journals or

conference papers so it had to be something good. The idea we had was to send a printed copyright declaration form to the reader as we approve the request and prepare it for transmission to BLDSC. The reader sends the signed declaration form back to the ILLs Department while the request is being dealt with by BLDSC. When the photocopy arrives we send it out to the reader. If we receive the photocopy from BLDSC before we receive the signed declaration form the reader has to collect the photocopy from the library and sign on collection. On the whole this system is successful and we are able to comply with the copyright law and make full use of the LIBERTAS system.

We use the BLDSC 'Replies Intray' to keep us updated on the progress of each request and, in turn, we inform readers via the User Activity File which stores information about their ILL requests. These progress reports appear on the OPACs but are also sent out as notices to the reader in the same format as the copyright declaration form.

When an item arrives from the lending library it's receipt is recorded on the system. At this stage it is allocated a loan status, a due date and an item number, equivalent to our circulation barcode numbers. An item record is created in the circulation system and a notice is automatically generated. The item can then be issued to the reader and will appear on their loans file with items on loan from our own stock. When the loan period has elapsed the item can be returned at the issue desk and passed on to the ILLs Department for dispatch to the lending library.

Nottingham University has always maintained a policy of free interlibrary loans and in the past we have imposed no limits on the number of items requested. However, when we started using the LIBERTAS ILLs Module the system required us to set limits so we did, but they were very high – 50 active requests for undergraduates and 100 active requests for staff and postgraduates. For the moment, we feel these limits are appropriate for our users.

Statistics for 1993–1994 showed a 20% rise in ILLs and the last semester saw a rise of a staggering 50% , a considerable increase in expenditure and workload. In view of this, I

think we will have to look at the possibility of making some charge, or imposing lower limits in the near future.

This is just a brief insight into how our ILLs department operates. I feel we are very lucky at Nottingham to have a system such as LIBERTAS which has eased our workload tremendously and helped us to deal with the large increase in ILL requests in recent years.

Items supplied to Nottingham University 1993-4	
George Green Library of Science and Engineering	16,581
Hallward Library (Arts and Social Sciences)	9992
Greenfield Medical Library	7358
James Cameron Gifford Library (Agriculture and Food Science)	2385
Law Library	912
Total	37,228

Celia Swann, ILL, Nottingham University

THE WORK OF WMRLS

To begin I need to explain a little of the history of the RLSs and how WMRLS has evolved. In the 1930's, following the Kenyon report in 1927 and the establishment of the National Central Library (NCL) in 1930, the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust instigated with grant aid the formation of the Regional Library Bureaux which together with the NCL formed a national interlending network.

There are seven English regions which work with the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales and the Irish Library Council to cover the whole of the UK. The English Regional systems are funded by subscriptions from their members and are governed by representatives of their member libraries.

WMRLS cover the 7 West Midlands Metropolitan Boroughs: Birmingham, Coventry , Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton; and the four Counties which surround them: Hereford and Worces-

ter, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Warwick-shire. The public library subscriptions are based on population and the subscriptions from these 11 public library authorities forms the major part of our income. We also have eight university libraries and about 20 other college and special library members who all pay flat rate subscriptions.

All member libraries are represented on the Regional Council which meets twice a year to take major policy and financial decisions. An Executive Committee which meets quarterly is elected from the Council to support and oversee the Director and staff in the management of WMRLS. We have four full-time staff (2 professionally qualified and 2 support staff) and one part-time support post.

From the earliest days the mainstay of regional interlending has been the union catalogue. It began as a sheaf catalogue, where the entries are mostly very brief and are filed in author order. The members were very conscientious and much work was put in on retrospective cataloguing so that these old catalogues, which are still in daily use in almost all the regions are a valuable source for tracing and locating older material. Alas libraries have never been as quick to notify deletions, so some of these locations are now very suspect and indeed some of the libraries included no longer exist, but others are renowned for not discarding stock. Copies of the Regional Union Catalogues were kept at NCL to facilitate lending between regions.

In 1950 when BNB began, the Regional HQs were able to subscribe to sets of union catalogue slips and this immediately improved the standard of the catalogue entries. From this point the slips were filed in BNB number order.

Around 1970 when ISBNs had become common it became possible to produce the Regional Union Catalogue by automated means and member libraries could submit their additions and deletions as lists of control numbers either in hard copy or on tape, which were processed into one tape and used to produce the Regional union fiche, essentially a list of ISBNs with location codes attached. This is still in production, is updated quarterly and copies are sold to members who are then able to check and

forward their own requests within the region. These regional tapes are also forwarded to BLDSC who use them to produce the combined regions fiche which gives locations for all the regional and national systems except LASER. When you apply to DSC for an item and they do not supply, but instead send you locations, this is where the locations come from, or for older material from the old NCL copies of the Regional catalogue which are now at DSC, though not updated. So that even libraries who never consciously use the regions are still benefiting from their work. I should point out here that interlending between public libraries within the region is "free" so that if a BL form is used the C copy is returned by the supplying library and can be reclaimed. Requests supplied by other libraries in the region are "paid" for with a BL form in the same way as out of region requests.

From 1991 WMRLS regional locations have also been loaded onto the VISCOUNT database run by LASER and the HQ has had online access to the database for bib–checking and location finding. This now acts as our current union catalogue and gives us access to locations. Subsequently four of our larger public library members have gone online to VISCOUNT with the major benefit of individual libraries being able to message their requests (including those to BLDSC) and chasers, etc, instantly through the system at the touch of a key. After much debate, consultation with members and negotiation with LASER it has been decided that from the beginning of April 1995 all the public library members will have access to VISCOUNT included in their subscription services from WMRLS. This will have obvious advantages because they will then be able to conduct all their regional interlending and requests to BLDSC by automated means, with the backup options of applying online to LASER, the National Library of Scotland, Yorkshire and Humberside and some libraries in the East Midlands and Wales.

We are, of course, keeping a close eye on developments with the UNITY system, which at the moment doesn't have a messaging facility, and the regions are all anxious to ensure that they continue to have access to each others' locations.

Our major union catalogue problem at present, as it has been for many years, is that of members unable to supply us with details of their holdings, additions and withdrawals because their automated systems cannot produce the data in a way that can be used. This is being worked on constantly at what sometimes seems a very frustratingly slow speed, but it is being reduced as members update their systems and suppliers are made aware of the needs.

As far as the day-to-day work with requests is concerned, WMRLS processes about 300 first requests a week plus about 150 second requests/chasers and 50 faxed location or bib-checking queries. Of the requests received by post and VISCOUNT more than half come from outside the Region. All requests are checked in the appropriate sections of the union catalogue for West Midlands locations and the members requests are bib checked if necessary and checked for out-of-region locations. We also use the BLCMP database as an alternative source of bibliographic information and locations, and as the search strategies and the mix of libraries are slightly different from those on VISCOUNT we feel that the combination enables us to give a comprehensive service. When in-region locations are found the requests are sent around them on a rota. We aim to get all the requests received in the morning post out again on the same day.

WMRLS also has a card catalogue of West Midlands playset holdings and the WMRLS vocal sets catalogue on microfiche is available for purchase.

Our other main contribution to the interlending scene is of course the transport scheme. BRS are contracted to run the scheme for WMRLS and three vans are used covering six routes, giving an "every other day" service. Items from BLDSC are collected daily using a large BRS van which is shared between WMRLS, the East Midlands and LASER and drops off at Leicester, Birmingham and London, returns to BL and inter-regional items are taken to Boston Spa in the same operation. We have about 225 registered users of the scheme and operate a differential pricing system for vouchers so that members of WMRLS buy their vouchers cheaper than non-members, this alone

justifies membership for most of the members who are paying flat-rate subscriptions.

There is a marked difference in perception of the role of the RLS between public and academic library members which reflects the different patterns of their requests and consequent sources of supply. Briefly, the majority of the universities' requests are for journal articles which are supplied by BLDSC, public libraries traditionally borrow far more monographs and a large proportion of these will be out of scope for BLDSC and be supplied by other libraries in their own or other regions.

Interlending was the reason the Regional systems were formed and it is still their main raison d'etre, but because of their coverage and contacts with all types of library in their area they have also become the base for other types of co-operative activity.

WMRLS most high-profile activity is SEALS which began as a PLDIS project to set up collections of European language fiction to circulate round the region. The PLDIS bid was the result of a suggestion from one of our Chief Librarians who suggested that this could be a cost-effective way to counter the effects that bookfund cuts were having on this area of provision. A project officer was employed for 12 months to research the methodology for the SELECTION, ACQUISITION AND LOANS SYSTEMS (SEALS). The scheme began to operate in April 1993 with collections of French, German, Spanish and Italian paperback fiction going to all 11 public library members. It has been highly successful and as a result, from March this year we shall have 16 collections in circulation with some of the public libraries subscribing to two collections and Wolverhampton University becoming our first academic library subscriber. While saving money for our members, SEALS is now raising money for WMRLS which we are able to use to improve our interlending services.

A number of umbrella groups exist to co-ordinate other aspects of co-operation within the region. There is a **User Group of Inter-library Loans Librarians** which meets twice a year and the **Bibliographic Services Managers** also meet intermittently when matters require them to confer. **WMRLS**

VISCOUNT Users have also been meeting twice a year and this will continue.

The Newsplan project, instigated and part funded by the BL Newspaper Library lead to most of the regions undertaking to list the holdings of local newspapers, report on their condition and make recommendations for their preservation. The **WM Newsplan Implementation Committee** formed from representatives of member libraries is following this up by co-ordinating the programme of microfilming which follows from the recommendations in the report.

The **WMRLS Training Officers Group – TOG** exists to promote effective training in the region, by responding to the training needs of local libraries and information units. Quarterly open meetings are held to discuss training matters and an annual Forum is held on a topic of current interest.

SPICE is the group for librarians engaged in the provision of stock in community languages and English. It co-ordinates the CILLA book displays which are held at Coventry and meets regularly to discuss relevant issues.

The **Music Librarians** of the region have just applied for PLDIS funding to establish a vocal sets database leading to the production of a new edition of the WMRLS vocal sets catalogue and also act as a base for a projected national vocal sets catalogue.

WMRLS also represents the interests of the Region in various matters with BL and especially BLDSC and is also represented on CONARLS and LINC and is (of course!) a member of FIL.

All WMRLS areas of involvement have arisen as a result of demand from our members and we try always to be responsive to their needs, we must – they pay us.

Sandra Radmore, WMRLS, Central Library, Chamberlain Square, Birmingham.

PRESS RELEASE

West Midlands to Lead National Project on Access to Vocal Sets
Part funding from the Department of National Heritage (through the Development Funding in Public Libraries Scheme) has been announced to support an 'Access to Vocal Sets' project. Work over the next two years will include construction of an improved regional database of vocal sets held in public and university libraries. In conjunction with Berkshire Libraries and the London and South East Region, WMRLS will develop appropriate file formats and seek UK–wide agreement on suitable bibliographic standards for vocal sets union catalogues.

All UK regional and national library systems have already agreed to participate in the consultation over standards and the project also has the support of the Music LIP and IAML (UK). This will open up the possibility of an exportable national database of catalogue records and holdings which will be transferable between regions.

Libraries holding sets in the West Midlands will be inputting data on to a portable version of the database and the final product could be published in CD–ROM as well as printed format by 1996.

Geoff Warren, Project Director, believes this is a very significant initiative in inter–regional co–operation.

"Interlending of sets is one area of public library service where **national co–operation is vital**. Music societies and performing groups right across the UK need the widest possible access to sets if their valuable contribution to making music is to be effectively supported."

Further information from: Geoff Warren, WMRLS 3rd Floor, Central Library, Birmingham B3 3HQ

THE IFLA VOUCHER SCHEME

We have been pleased with the initial response to the launch of the pilot stage of the Scheme, and we now have 23 libraries which have either purchased a supply of vouchers,

or have agreed to accept them as payment: a list of these follows. We have so far had no feedback on the actual use of the vouchers but the Scheme has only been running since January. We will continue to increase the number of participants during the next two years, while monitoring the development of the Scheme in order to refine it. It is envisaged that, if the Scheme is successful, we will be able to launch it properly after the two year trial period, and will be in a position to allow it to continue with far less monitoring by our Office.

We are also hoping to establish several separate trials of the Scheme involving libraries in less developed countries which find it difficult if not impossible to find the resources to pay for ILL services. Unfortunately, the Scheme itself cannot subsidise poorer libraries to allow them to participate, so any trial has to find funding before we can begin.

We had been hoping to develop a trial in a number of libraries in French speaking West Africa (following on from the UAP Seminar there which the Office ran last year), but unfortunately we were unable to obtain Unesco funding last year, so this has had to be postponed. We are also in the process of applying for funding from the Organisation of American States for Latin America, to run a similar project in Latin America, and there may also be the chance to test the use of the Voucher between libraries in Eastern Europe and Germany in a further project. However, these projects are all in the initial stages, and we have not yet obtained the funds for any of them.

Enthusiasm for the Scheme generally has been very encouraging, but I am aware that it is out of the financial reach of so many libraries in developing countries. Even if we manage to obtain funding to set up a number of pilot studies, the participation of these libraries is likely to last only as long as the funding. Once the supply of reduced–price or free vouchers had run out, then it is unlikely that the libraries would be able to continue to participate.

However, for the time being we are pleased that the Scheme has got off to a good start, although we are only too aware that all the participants so far are from developed

countries.

Details of the scheme
The IFLA Voucher Scheme is a new payment method for interlibrary transactions. The Scheme aims to reduce the number of financial transactions involved in paying for interlibrary loan and document supply services, through a reusable voucher system.

What are the benefits of the Scheme?
Apart from the initial purchase and final redemption of vouchers, the Scheme eliminates all financial elements when paying for international transactions. Benefits include:

* No bank charges for either requesting or supplying library.

* No money lost in international exchange rates.

* No need for invoices, therefore reduced administration costs.

* Libraries can retain vouchers for reuse at a later date.

* Libraries are encouraged to offer an effective ILL service in order to "earn" vouchers.

The information which follows is divided into two sections:

1 **Terms for supply and reimbursement of the vouchers.**
   These are the binding terms under which the Scheme will be run. We will be refining the Scheme during the length of the pilot, and we reserve the right to change any aspect of it.

2 **Guidelines for the use of the vouchers.**
   The vouchers are available to be used in the way which best suits the requesting and supplying library. While the IFLA Office for UAP offers guidelines in using the vouchers, we cannot accept any responsibility for their use or misuse after we have supplied them.

1 **Terms for supply and reimbursement of the vouchers**
   1A Purchasing the Vouchers
   1 Vouchers can be purchased from the

IFLA Office for UAP (Universal Availability of Publications) at the address below.

The IFLA Voucher Scheme, IFLA Office for UAP, c/o The British Library, Boston Spa, Wetherby LS23 7BQ, United Kingdom.

2   There are two vouchers available: a full voucher and a half-voucher.

3   Full vouchers cost 8 US dollars each. Half vouchers cost 4 US dollars each.

4   Prepayment is required in US Dollars drawn on a US Bank. Proforma invoices are available from the Office for UAP if required; alternatively, payment can be sent with the order.

In exceptional cases, if you cannot pay in US Dollars drawn on a US Bank, alternative arrangements may be made. Please contact the Office for advice.

5   Cheques should be made payable to: The IFLA Voucher Scheme. There is no administration fee.

6   To control administration costs, orders should have a minimum value of 100 US Dollars.

7   Please send your order with payment to the above address. Vouchers will be dispatched as soon as possible and no later than 21 days after receipt of payment, and will be sent by normal airmail service.

8   The Office for UAP will not pay your bank charges. If the cheque received is not for the full amount, fewer vouchers will be issued.

1B Redeeming the Vouchers
1   There are two reasons for redeeming vouchers:

(a) Purchaser has not used them and would like a refund.

(b) A supplying library accumulates more than it can reuse, and wishes to redeem them for cash.

2   Unused vouchers redeemed by the purchaser may not be returned within six months of purchase. The purchaser will receive the original purchase price for returned vouchers, even when the purchase price has subsequently been increased.

3   Used vouchers accepted by supplying libraries may be redeemed for the full purchase price which is in force at the time the vouchers are received as payment. This will normally be the current purchase price, but at the time of a price increase, libraries will be asked to submit separately those vouchers received before the date of the increase and those received after that date, so that the correct reimbursement may be made.

4   All refunds will be paid by cheque in US Dollars. Refund cheques will normally be issued within 30 days of receipt of returned vouchers.

5   A Voucher Redemption Form giving Payee details must accompany all vouchers returned for refunds. The forms are available from the Office for UAP. Please do not send vouchers without a Redemption Form.

6   To allow the Scheme to become established, vouchers will not be accepted for redemption during the first 6 months of the pilot project. Please do not send vouchers to the Office for redemption until August 1995. You may redeem vouchers at any time after that date. For net-lending libraries which receive a large number of vouchers in the first six months which they wish to redeem, alternative arrangements may be made. Please contact the Office for advice.

7   For administrative reasons, we would prefer that the total value of vouchers submitted for redemption is not less than 100 Dollars.

2   Guidelines on the use of the vouchers
2A Using the Vouchers
1   Vouchers should be used to pay for interlibrary transactions with other participating libraries.

2   The Office for UAP recommends that one full voucher is accepted as far as possible as a standard charge forone transaction. This means one standard loan, or a photocopy of up to 15 pages.

3   The half–voucher is available for use as additional payment over and above the full voucher for photocopies of more than 15 pages, (e suggest one half–voucher pays for up to 10 extra pages) or where supplying libraries feel they cannot accept a single full voucher for the service provided.

4   Supplying libraries are not obliged to accept the voucher as payment, any more than any other form of payment. Also, while the Office for UAP recommends a scale of charges based on the voucher, supplying libraries retain the right to set their own level of charges.

5   Whenever possible vouchers should be attached to the request form when it is first forwarded to the supplying library, so that payment is received in advance of supply and the need for invoices is eliminated.

6   If the supplying library cannot supply the item, the voucher should be returned to the requesting library, or forwarded to the next supplying library.

7   If the supplying library does supply the item, the voucher should be retained for

(a) further use .... See 8 below or

(b) redemption ... See Section 1B.

8   Further Use
Vouchers which have been accepted as payment can be reused as payment at any other participating library. Vouchers can be reused any number of times. If they wear out physically, please return them to the IFLA Office for UAP for exchange.

2B *Some questions answered*
Can we use the vouchers between libraries within one country?
Yes. Although they are designed mainly to pay for international transactions,

there is not reason why libraries in the same country cannot use them as a payment method.

Which libraries will accept them as payment?
For the time being, participating libraries are limited to those listed below. As the Scheme expands, we will open it up to other libraries too. If you are not already participating but would like to, or if you have bought some vouchers and your main supplying libraries do not yetaccept them, please let us know, so that we can extend the Scheme to other interested libraries when we are ready.

Will the British Library Document Supply Centre accept the vouchers?
Yes. The BLDSC has agreed to accept the vouchers from their overseas customers as payment for packs of International Photocopy Coupons or International Loan Forms, on a trial basis. Please note the BLDSC is unable to accept vouchers as payment for individual transactions. For further details contact BLDSC Customer Services.

How do we get involved in the Scheme?
The Scheme will eventually be open to any library who wishes to buy the vouchers, but the first two years are seen as a trial period. During this time the Office for UAP will limit the number of participants, and expand the Scheme gradually. Contact the Office to let us know you are interested.

What if the supplying library charges us more than one voucher for providing a photocopy of 15 pages?
Although the IFLA Office for UAP recommends that one voucher is accepted as a standard charge, supplying libraries can still choose to set their own charges. As with other payment methods, it is up to you to confirm what the charges will be before making a request. We stress that we cannot become involved in the settlement of charges between two libraries.

Should we keep any records?
Once the Scheme is firmly established

there will be no need to keep records. However, we have included a record sheet with your vouchers and would ask you to make a note of the voucher numbers, who you send them to and who you receive them from, both as a security measure for you and for information for us.

Should we tell you our views on the progress of the Scheme?
Yes please! The first two years will be a learning period for users, but also especially for us. We would like all your comments, on all aspects of the Scheme, however small.

How do we contact you?
Please contact us by any of the following methods if you have any queries or comments about the Scheme.

By post:The IFLA Voucher Scheme, IFLA Office for UAP, c/o The British Library, Boston Spa, Wetherby, West Yorkshire, LS23 7BQ, United Kingdom
By fax:++44 1937 546478
By telephone++44 1937 546254
By E-mailsara.gould@bl.uk

Participating Libraries
The following libraries have purchased a supply of vouchers (or if a supplying library only, have agreed to accept the vouchers as payment):
Arizona State University Libraries, Tempe, Arizona, USA.
Boston University, Mugar Memorial Library, Boston, MA, USA.
University of New Hampshire, Dimond Library, Durham, NH, USA.
University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA.
University of Missouri–Rolla, USA.
York University Libraries, North York, Ontario, Canada.
Deakin University Library, Geelong Campus, Victoria, Australia.
La Trobe University Library, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia.
Central Queensland University, Australia.
University of Sydney Library, Australia.
University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa.
Linkoping University Library, Sweden.
Uppsala University Library, Sweden.

University of Oslo, Norway.
Central Technical Library, Ljubljana, Slovenia.
Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Netherlands.
Kings College London, UK.
University College London, UK.
National Library of Scotland, UK (supplying library only)
Bristol University Library, UK.
University of Reading, UK.
University of Sheffield, UK.
The British Library Document Supply Centre (for purchase of forms and coupons).

Sara Gould, IFLA Office, BLDSC

FIL INTERNET TRAINING SESSION

Greennet HQ, London 21 February 1995
FIL arranged a series of hands–on training sessions earlier this year, specifically directed at ILL/Document Supply Librarians. These sessions took place at Greennet HQ, 4th Floor, 393–395 City Road, London EC1V 1NE, and I attended one of the first. The sessions were scheduled to begin at 12.00 noon and run to 3.00 pm, so that people would be able to attend during work time. I must admit that I found the timing inconvenient as it meant that I had to take half a day's leave in addition to the half a day I was allowed from work. Even though I had to come up from Hertfordshire, I was quite used to arriving in plenty of time for a 9.00 am start for other meetings. I suggested that perhaps future seminars could run in the mornings (beginning at 9.30 or 10.00 am and going through to 12.30 or 1.00 pm), and/or afternoons beginning at 2.00 pm. What do others think, perhaps you would prefer a noon start?

The session was led by Viv Kendon from Greennet, who is very experienced in searching the Internet – I am loath to use phrases like 'surfing the net' but that's just a personal prejudice! There were four of us attending the training session and as none of us had any great experience of using the Internet. Viv aimed her presentation at a basic level. She guided us through the use of gophers and the world wide web, showing us how the same databases can be accessed just as easily by gopher, though this is text–based, while the www browser with its

graphics is more user–friendly especially to those who are used to a windows environment.

As we went along, Viv showed us how to e–mail interesting information to ourselves – as I was the only one who had an e–mail address, I had quite a few messages waiting for me when I got back to the office. It was then a simple matter to save the messages as files on my wordprocessor. One part of this information was how to join various discussion groups via mailbase – I signed up for the lis–ill group, which is the discussion group for ILL staff. After Viv's demonstration we had a short break before having some hands–on experience.

When I got back to work the next day, I decided to have a go myself, and following the instruction in Viv's handouts, soon found myself if not quite surfing, then at least having a quick paddle! The training session gave me the courage to have to have a go, and even if my work load hasn't allowed me time to search extensively, at least I know how to get in, find what I need, download it and get back out again. My system only allows me to access the Internet using a gopher, but the Librarian does have access to the world wide web with all its pretty pictures, which I must admit looks much more fun! Do go along to one of these training sessions if you can – its a good introduction for beginners, is geared to ILL/ Document Supply Librarians and at £15.00 plus VAT is extremely good value for money.

Denise Lawrence, Assistant Librarian NIBSC

TRANSPORTS OF DELIGHTS, OR VAN AND VOUCHERS

It is now eighteen years since the first BRS driver, working on LASER's pilot Transport Scheme, put his van into gear and reached for the steering wheel. Since that time many millions of miles have been covered and many millions of packages carried by vans travelling within LASER, between regions and to and from BLDSC.

The area covered by LASER is wide, comprising Greater London, Essex, Hertford-

shire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Surrey, East and West Sussex and Kent. Within this one region in 1994–95 over 400,000 miles were travelled by the vans, the 1,500 users of the scheme receiving or returning more than 860,000 packages containing books, photocopies or periodicals. Traffic between regions, although not so extensive, has seen an increase ever since the introduction of Viscount with its identification of inter–regional locations.

The origins of the various transport schemes – not all regions have one – go back to a national planning exercise carried out with the assistance of the British Library Research and Development Department resulting in the creation of separate schemes, steered by a national group. From these beginnings has grown a service in which the ready co–operation of its members is reflected in the high degree of satisfaction given to its users. This achievement is the more remarkable in that another co–operative venture – that of setting–up a United Kingdom Library Database System – was proving unsuccessful during this period.

One of the reasons why the LASER Transport Scheme has succeeded so well lies in its financial basis, BLDSC makes a contribution for each item carried and users within the Region pay for intra–regional returns to BLDSC and inter–regional loans – thus making the scheme self financing. The saving made on postage through the use of the voucher scheme is a very tangible benefit. During 1993–94 for LASER users this amounted to over £240,000.

It is not surprising that a survey carried out by BRS during 1994–95 among approximately 150 users revealed almost 100% of satisfied customers among the respondents. Though reliability, and helpful, courteous drivers received favourable comment, cost–effectiveness was very frequently cited. Voucher–value really counts!

When the speed of delivery – 98% of LASER items arriving the day after dispatch – is taken into account it seems that the Transport Scheme will hold its own should rival ventures challenge it in the future, particularly as ways of improving and extending the service are under review. The process of

monitoring is continuous and takes place by means of a regular meeting held between BRS and LASER to discuss day to day matters as well as long term developments. In the case of customer queries daily contact is maintained between BRS and LASER. BRS has run the LASER Transport Scheme from the beginning and the potential increase in the cost of using British Rail after privatisation has meant that the road service has now been awarded the contract for the entire journey. This is proving a very satisfactory arrangement.

Technology is now leading us into a future featuring electronic document delivery and the wheels of the Transport vans may one day therefore be, at least to some extent, superseded by digital pulses for non-returnables, although it is hoped that the scheme will be viable for many years to come for books and other returnable items. Whenever and however it comes about that information travels the electronic rather than the Queen's Highway, the Transport Scheme will still have furnished a commendable example of co-operative achievement – one that other fields of librarianship in Great Britain might well consider emulating.

Yvonne Puttee, LASER

PARCELFORCE COMPENSATION FEE AND ILL ITEMS

You may have been aware of a mini storm raging over the discovery recently that Parcelforce compensation fee does not insure items over 25 years old. FIL, along with the LA and secondhand bookdealers, wrote to Parcelforce to raise the concerns of members. They included the fact that, for many years libraries have been paying the compensation fee, in good faith, believing that if an item is lost, an appropriate payment will be made by Parcelforce.

The reply from Parcelforce, part of which is reprinted below, still seems rather ambiguous but it would seem that items which cannot be valued, but which you consider to be "valuable", may need to be insured separately.

Elaine Dean, FIL Membership Sec., University of Sheffield

Relevant sections of letter from Parcelforce in reply to FIL's complaint:

"...It is correct that Parcelforce changed the levels of compensation offered for the loss and/or damage of parcels in its care. This primarily was to bring Parcelforce in line with the distribution industry standards with which we were adjudged to be out of step.

Since those changes were made, Parcelforce have received a number of approaches from Book Dealers in the second hand book market and consequently we have agreed the following:

Item 1
Parcelforce will pay compensation for the loss and/or damage of a Standard UK parcel to the limit of £20 without you having to pay additional moneys vis. £20 is inclusive in the price you pay when sending a Standard parcel.

You have the option of increasing the value of compensation cover by paying an additional fee at the time of despatch.

Item 2
You **must** provide Proof of Posting in the case of having to make a claim and therefore I would strongly recommend that you obtain a free Certificate of Posting when you despatch your books.

Item 3
You will be required to provide proof of the value of the claim acceptable to Parcelforce possibly by using a recognisable catalogue or perhaps a copy of the supplying book seller's commercial invoice for a replacement book.

Item 4
We will pay compensation for loss and/or damage up to £500per parcel for parcels despatched by our Standard service, provided the additional fee has been paid in advance.

Item 5
Parcelforce will pay compensation on both new and second-hand books and in the case of the latter, books over 25 years old will be

covered for compensation with the exception of item no. 6 below.

Item 6

Parcelforce will not pay compensation on any book which by virtue of its scarcity and/or condition has an arbitrary value assessed only by speculation and/or auction. We would advise that such books are separately covered by "in transit" insurance, commercially available in the insurance market place...

In conclusion, I very much believe that these terms are amongst the most favourable in the distribution industry and I hope that the above conditions meet with your requirements. Parcelforce are always looking to improve services to its customers and I am therefore most grateful to you for your enquiry.

Paul Dowell, Marketing Manager,
PARCELFORCE

BOOKFLOW

It is possible a number of you heard an awful lot about the new delivery and ILL system, due to come into production last January and be everything ILL staff ever dreamed of. I have spent a lot of phone time trying to find a library using it, to hear and report for the Newsletter – everyone had heard of another library reputedly "signed up". I was still phoning when I heard there was to be no 'Bookflow', it never actually started, largely, I am told, because everyone waited for everyone else to sign up first!

PROJECT ION (INTERLENDING OPEN SYSTEMS NETWORK)

Update and Results of the Pilot Demonstration Project

The article "LASER/VISCOUNT: recent advances in interlibrary lending and networking" published in the FIL Newsletter No.17 in October 1994 provides a status report of Project ION up to the user evaluation phase.

The pilot/demonstration funded under the European Commission IMPACT programme interconnected the interlending infrastructures of the UK (VISCOUNT, BLDSC and back-up), the Netherlands (Pica and the Royal Library) and France (SUNIST and PEB Pret entre Bibliotheque service) and was used by over fifty libraries in the three countries.

The live service ran from January 1994 – January 1995 and included:

- a user evaluation of the ION system and service
- a technical/system evaluation
- a business case evaluation for continuing the service
- a survey of interests in other parts of Europe and North America

It was used by libraries to locate and obtain materials which were not available within their respective countries, in other words "the difficult stuff" in interlendinbg parlance. Although the overall volume of international loan is not large, there was a remarkable willingness on the part of the test-site libraries in the UK to try out this new networked service. The statistics for the Netherlands and France show that between November 1994 and November 1995, UK libraries sent 1,984 requests, and 635 (32%) were supplied. 584 (575 monographs, 9 serials) came from the Netherlands, a 32.9% success rate and 51 (50 monographs, 1 serial) from France. It should be remembered that the Pica database has a large number of English language titles and also the search/retrieve service between the LASER and Pica database enabled UK libraries to identify materials before making ILL requests. Amongst the successes highlighted was the reader in West Sussex who had been trying to obtain a book for some 42 years and obtained it via Project Ion in four weeks.

The success rate of individual libraries varied eg. Berkshire County received 300 items which represented a 64.79% success rate, Westminster 26.12% (93 items). They were very pleased with the opportunities ION afforded them as a service. Most UK test-site libraries average 25% – 35% success rate on a varying number of applications.

The test-site library evaluation exercise provided useful information on ION as a system, ION as a service, recommendations

for expansion to other countries and advice on expanding the range of services available from the ION product. The results are summarised as follows:– UK users found the system was easy to use and user friendly with the VISCOUNT and ION systems well integrated. They found it hard to evaluate the French system but thought the Pica and Dutch ILL service infrastructure worked well. Regarding the network linked services and international access one UK user commented "European Systems should be just one more location rather than totally separate systems". There was general agreement that this was how ION appeared – another source of locations, rather than a remote international service. Nearly all UK users felt they required more information on the Dutch and French interlending services and some data on the content and level of materials held by the Dutch and French libraries.

The services which ION supported from the ILL (interlibrary loan) protocol were the ILL–request, the ILL Answer (results unfilled) the SHIPPED (ie. supplied), ILL–message and STATUS or ERROR Report services. UK users felt that the following additional services needed to be added for future use:

• Retry service

• Return to address
• Cancellation service
• Status query service

The ION service did not show individual Dutch and French locations, it used the intermediary services of Pica and SUNIST to forward the requests to an appropriate location or service. UK users felt that more direct communications between UK, Dutch and French libraries would be desirable in the future.

The search and retrieve services between the VISCOUNT and Pica database based on the ISO search/retrieve protocol was implemented in a more experimental way than the ILL messaging service, which was the prime concern of the project. The Pica and VISCOUNT databases are obviously of very different technical designs and search capabilities and it was decided to implement only the search keys common to both systems ie.

author (personal, corporate, conference), title, book number (ISBN, ISSN). UK users requested KEYWORD in any future implementation. LASER's new system, VK.Online, planned for 1996 will incorporate KEYWORD, BOOLEAN operands and subject searching. The data conversion which the ION and VISCOUNT systems did in the background was impressive. Thus, apart from seeing a slightly more limited set of data elements, an ION search of the Pica database had a very similar feel to retrieving data from a VISCOUNT search.

The user evaluation also asked for comments on the level of charges proposed for the service. All respondents agreed that the cost of international ILL services should not be prohibitive and that the cost of the 5 Ecus (c.£3) was acceptable, although special provision should be made for the postal costs of supplying large or multiple works. In a later business case analysis many of the 37 academic respondents who expressed interest in ION stated that they would be prepared to pay up to c.£10 as long as the service provided them with a faster, more efficient service than their current experience of international inter–library loans.

With regard to the future, UK users of ION hoped that the service would continue in some form or another. They also hoped that a future service could be extended to Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Italy, Spain, Portugal and North America (USA and Canada).

The user evaluation exercise was only one of the methods of assessing future actions. The technical evaluation of the ION system undertaken by the Dutch partner concluded:

1 The ION ILL and JR products met the functional and performance requirements expected of the system and were capable of the range of services requested in the user evaluation.

2 The major issue affecting the viability of the product in the future was the huge market swing towards the Internet and its protocols and easily available products. It was therefore likely that the ION software and products would need to be re–defined and re–developed to reflect this.

These conclusions although accurate were disappointing in terms of the future expansion of the ION products and service to other parts of Europe and/or North America.

In addition, the ION partners also undertook a business case analysis.

This involved working out the costs of:

- maintenance of the ION hardware and software
- personnel
- telecommunications
- estimated income from the ION service
- expanded client bases in the three countries
- providing access to national search and ILL message services
- expanding or changing the ION FEP or national systems
- future technical strategies

The ION partners undertook individual business case analyses and the following opinion emerged.

1 Pica considered that the results of the ION pilot in terms of volume of requests, satisfaction rate, costs of future maintenance and personnel costs could not justify a business case for the future. Pica also indicated that like OCLC and the Research Libraries Group (RLE) in America, it would wish to charge for searching the Pica bibliographic database. The existing ION charges for ILL requests were far too low to enable the network supplier to re-coup any additional income to off-set the costs associated with continuing the service.

2 LASER carried out a national survey of academic libraries which resulted in 37 university libraries in the UK being interested in a future ION service, with a more immediate international service than is currently available. LASER also had reservations about the funding of a future ION service and with access to JANET and the Internet in the UK and via Project EARL (electronic access to resources in libraries) was examining taking public libraries onto the Internet and enhancing UK public libraries information and resource sharing networking

ability.

A major goal for LASER is to interconnect its members in-house automation systems to VISCOUNT in order to improve information on the availability of an item for interlending purposes.

LASER is mindful that ION has achieved a lot and in conjunction with several of the ION Reviewers held a 'brainstorming' meeting at the end of 1994 which indicated that:

- the ION product was capable of being adapted
- a range of products, could be developed
- the investment was not likely to be huge ("tens of thousands of pounds")
- that the market required products which could be implemented quickly and easily.

LASER's position on ION is:

- they would like an international service to continue in the future
- that the investment put into the product and service should not be lost
- that it is not at the present time economic to fund low volume international services
- international services would be more economic and acceptable if they rode on the back of well financed and used national developments
- in the last year much interest has been expressed by public chief librarians and policy makers in developing national strategies with international connection in the area of networking, the inter-linking of systems and resource sharing
- that further discussions on these areas is still required

3 France, also mindful of the market trend to Internet services, has indicated that::

- the national ILL service is being redeveloped towards a micro application which will respect part of the standards studied in ION.
- it would like to continue the ION

service in one form or another, using TCP/IP protocols and is prepared to discuss matters further.

- it should be noted that the ION project has brought an important "know-how" in ILL systems in terms of protocols and services. National developments achieved during the ION project have enabled the development of other applications.

Thus ION has provided the essential experience necessary for the development of interconnected bibliographical/interlending systems. LASER intends to build on this experience within Project EARL which will incorporate both developments within the UK and provide the means of international connectivity and services.

Peter Smith, Deputy Director, LASER

PRESS RELEASE

DNH Development Funding Award 1995–96 to LASER

The Department of National Heritage (DNH) has granted LASER an award from the Development Funding in Public Libraries Scheme 1995–96. The award will be used to study the effect of Local Government Reorganisation in the Shire Counties on interlending services.

The work, which will be undertaken over two years, is being done in conjunction with Berkshire County Library, Essex County Library, Surrey County Library and LIBPAC Computer Services Ltd.

The purpose of the Project is to produce a 'blue-print' for ensuring the continued viability of interlending services following Local Government Reorganisation. It will assess the requirements of public library systems and their respective Regional Library Systems. It is intended to analyze the expected effects of change and identify technical options, services, products and costings required to answer the problems identified.

The Project will also share experience, information and comparative data with an independent parallel study which will be under-

taken in Clwyd and Gwent, in Wales.

For further information contact: Peter Smith, Deputy Director, LASER. Tel no.: 0171 702 2020

WHY VISCOUNT IS RIGHT FOR WMRLS ...

Recent months have seen remarkable changes in the interlending sector. Rapid technological advance has opened up many new possibilities for the Regional (and National) Library Systems in their role as managers of the Union catalogue infrastructure. PCs with powerful hard disks and CD-ROM have both become much more affordable and their potential for interlending support has increased correspondingly. Within WMRLS careful consideration was given to the possibility of opting for the UNITY (LIBRIS) system chosen by some regions as an alternative to VISCOUNT. However, after extensive consultation with our public library members, it was unanimously agreed not only to continue with VISCOUNT, but to move rapidly to full implementation.

In suggesting that a VISCOUNT strategy has advantages for the West Midlands, there is no intention to demean the alternatives. In a changing environment decisions about computer systems must always be under review. And we respect the right of others to make their decisions just as we are entitled to be given that understanding ourselves. However, there were several compelling reasons for the eventual choice:

Firstly it represented continuity with the original decision to participate in VISCOUNT (following a review of our whole operation by Diana Edmonds in 1990). Having begun to set up a regional interlending network (and having spent time and money on it), we needed a lot of convincing about the advantages of beginning all over again.

Secondly we were enthusiastic about the VISCOUNT model pioneered in London and the South-East. A regional interlending network – integrating bibliographic verification/searching and locating with direct messaging to BLDSC and other parts of the

country – seemed to us to hold the key to efficiency as well as improved speed of supply for library users.

Thirdly the relationship between VISCOUNT and SEALS (our regional European language fiction project) had become significant. The VISCOUNT database had proved a valuable host for (and a useful source of supply of) SEALS catalogue records, and it integrates well with the PC based BookMarc system which we have now acquired.

Fourthly we were very concerned not to get caught "changing horses". When we were shown the prototype VISCOUNT 3 and CDROM products and told about LASER's plans for E-Mail and Internet access, this convinced us that if VISCOUNT had got a little way behind in one or two areas (this is often the fate of the pioneer), it would very soon catch up. This has indeed proved the case in relation to the search and retrieve functionality.

Notwithstanding all this, the desirable is not always affordable. Larger authorities in the region had invested in VISCOUNT use as an optional extra to the regional package of services, but partial implementation had robbed them of the full advantages. Smaller authorities (equally enthusiastic about the concept) had found it harder to justify the costs. It was here that we foundthe flexibility of LASER in offering a regional package (rather than individual authority subscriptions) very helpful. With some subsidy from the WMRLS budget (made possible in part by the success of SEALS), it has been possible to integrate all VISCOUNT costs for 1995–6 (apart from hardware and telecommunications) into the subscription package. But there are further advantages. An on–line approach to interlending between public libraries in the region saves WMRLS HQ time, just as it does the ILL section in each authority. And the inclusion of the newly available CD–ROM version of VISCOUNT in our regional "deal" will allow us to tackle more efficiently the task of automating extra–MARC material using some of the staff time we have saved.

By September 1995 all 11 authorities should be happily settled on the system. But this is not the end of the story. Interlending is not only a regional business. Even with the strategic alliance we have forged with LASER we are not self–sufficient. There will be unique items in the West Midlands needed outside the VISCOUNT grouping just as there will inevitably be items that only the UNITY grouping will have locations for. It would be quite unforgivable if legitimately diverse decisions about automation led to restricted networks, thereby putting barriers in the way of supply to those who ultimately use the services we provide. So WMRLS is anxious to explore ways of linking two regions who have chosen alternative paths, seeking to maintain inter–regional co–operation as well as pursuing what we believe is the right choice for WMRLS. We must never forget that co–operative activity supports a **national library service locally delivered** and interlending (especially in such difficult times as these) is the necessary guarantee of that comprehensiveness.

Geoff Warren, Director WMRLS

V3.CD FROM LASER – A REVIEW

The new V3.CD from LASER, the London and South Eastern Library Region, is at once rather behind the times and one of the most innovative CDs on the UK library market.

It is designed for bibliographic checking and interloans work. It holds LASER's complete catalogue of almost 4 million bibliographic records for items most likely to be of interest to UK libraries and their users. It includes all records in the British National Bibliography and Document Supply Centre monograph files as well as over 1.2 million Extra-MARC Materials (EMMA) records contributed by LASER members and members of its partner regions over many years. Most interestingly, however, it also contains location access to some 40 million actual copies held in the UK in public libraries, the British Library Document Supply Centre, the National Library of Scotland and some other libraries which are members of the regions covered. V3.CD even includes telephone numbers of the interloans departments against each location.

Content
As its title suggests, this set of three compact discs is not based on a completely new set of

bibliographic records, instead deriving from LASER's VISCOUNT system, which has been in existence in card-catalogue, microfilm, microfiche and two online system versions over more than sixty-five years. This is just the first time that LASER has ventured into the CD-ROM format, intending that this offering will complement the forthcoming revised online VISCOUNT system.

All in all, the VISCOUNT online system has saved an enormous amount of time and money over the years by reducing the need for speculative bib-checking and enabling direct interlending of monographs. Whilst it can be argued that serials are adequately dealt with by submission direct to BLDSC, there is no doubt that LASER's database offers access to many monographs which are not available from BLDSC, particularly for public libraries, as well as providing an alternative which can be cheaper. Recent analysis of the contents of V3.CD by Philip Bryant has shown that over 900,000 titles are only available from a single library, and the LASER region alone has over 690,000 such titles.

The LASER VISCOUNT database has always been probably the most comprehensive single database for bibliographic checking and record supply of monographs in the UK, but until now has been accessible largely only to inter-library loans staff in public libraries, and most of these were the members of the LASER region, who have a very long-standing and creditable history of interlibrary cooperation. V3.CD is intended by LASER to complement the online service by allowing use of the records at enquiry desks and offline branches or in smaller libraries. Its competitive pricing allows librarians to use this single product, which holds records in full UKMARC format, instead of purchasing separate discs from all the British Library departments. One might well ask why such a disc has not been available before, and the answer would no doubt illuminate the problems inherent in high quality library cooperation as well as the scale of achievement this new set of discs represents.

Form
V3.CD is unfortunately too large to be held on a single disc at present, so Disc 1 contains material pre-1980, Disc 2 1980-1989 and Disc 3 1990 to date. Disc 3 also contains new EMMA material of whatever date and the latest file of location information. Discs 1 and 2 are produced annually, and distributed in April. Disc 3 is produced quarterly and will be dated April, July, October and January.

The location file shows when a library has at least one copy of a title in stock and is over 50Mb in size by itself. This means that the minimum installation requires more than 50Mb of space on the hard disk, so that locations can be displayed quickly for any disc. A single CD-ROM drive can be used. More practical would be a system using three drives or better still a 2Gb hard disk onto which all three discs are copied. This gives the fastest access to data, and would be recommended in a heavily used network environment. The system runs fast even from CD-ROM drives, however, partly because it is a text-only application at present. A Windows version is being developed, which LASER will have available in time for the Autumn issue.

Installation
Installing the system is an easy, if somewhat lengthy process, because of the size of files involved. The instructions do request patience! In fact, this will depend heavily on whether data is placed on a hard disk drive or left on the compact discs, and the procedure only needs to be done once each quarter, so should not be a problem. The installation program is admirably clear, with full instructions and help on screen in split windows and clear opportunities to abandon the installation if mistakes are made. The only problem is knowing how long the installation is likely to take, and this depends particularly on the type of CD-ROM drive used. A slow single speed CD-ROM (no longer found much outside libraries!) could take almost two hours to load the 50Mb locations file, but this is not the fault of the software authors, and in any case the operation can continue unattended. A quad-speed drive would much less time-consuming and highly cost-effective.

Configuration
The simplicity of the system is aided by the ways it can be configured for local purposes. A Student mode removes access to the MARC display and offers a less sophisti-

cated catalogue entry display than the Professional mode. Both these modes can be operated either as a Beginner or an Advanced user. Beginners have extra help text on screen and can only browse the system. Advanced users can create and save full search sets and apply Boolean operators to refine search sets further.

The program can default to any of these modes by use of a command line parameter at startup. Another such parameter allows a library to specify their location code so that a special message appears when a copy of the book is present in the local library. In addition it is possible to set timeouts, default startup disc (for single drive installations), and very usefully a list of region letters plus location codes that cause the location display to be pre-sequenced in a preferred fashion. Thus it is possible to set the system to show preferred interlending partners' locations before others.

Searching
V3.CD is remarkably straightforward to use. Searches are conducted by selecting words from index browse lists, which show number hits against each entry term, reviewing a Short Title Browse list of matching titles and moving to a full display of labelled or MARC format titles, with or without locations shown in a window at the foot of the display. Searching can be via Keyword (from main title, subtitle and series title), Title, Author, Name Subject, General Subject, Publisher, Series Title, Dewey Classmark, Book Number (BNB, ISBN, ISSN), Language and Date. All of these can be browsed or searched by typing the stem of a word to be positioned correctly in the index, where one or more terms are selected by pressing the spacebar, or entries matching a single term can be found by just pressing the Enter key after moving the highlighting cursor up or down to the term. The number of hits shown against the index terms can help greatly in identifying the most appropriate terms to search, making it obvious, for example, that many items are catalogued under 1800 in the Date index rather than under specific nineteenth-century dates. User of LASER's online service will already be familiar with the cataloguing practices employed.

Output
Records once found can be printed or sent to a file, either from a Short Title browse list, or from a Bibliographic Record display, with or without locations. Output to file allows records to be appended to an existing file or to a replacement file if the file already exists. The V3.CD can therefore form the basis of sophisticated interloans handling using additional software.

First impressions
A brief trial of the system showed it to be easy to use, reasonably fast, especially compared with many online systems, and with very clear displays. The differences between the various modes are slightly confusing at first, but soon become clear with practice. The help screens seem clear and full enough, although many professionals will not need to use them much.

My only minor criticisms are of the rather awkward Boolean search feature and lack of access via name references.

The Boolean search function, admittedly not likely to be heavily used by interloans staff searching for known items, requires saving of single term results as sets before allowing sets to be combined instead of accepting direct statements such as "term1 AND term2". The forthcoming Windows version will make this much easier.

A search for LITC found no match in the Author index, because the name references field 9xx is not indexed, for space reasons. New compression techniques now developed mean that future issues of the discs will take less space and include access to this field, which can occasionally be important. Searching for inverted name forms also needs care, as spaces are significant for filing reasons, although punctuation is ignored for filing and search purposes. Note that Yeates, A.R. (Robin) can be searched for as Yeates, A R (!)

Finally, LASER has done a commendable amount of tidying up of the catalogue headings recently and greatly improved consistency.

Recommended!
It has certainly taken a long time for LASER to bring its database to the CD-ROM market,

but it does offer a very practical tool at an affordable price, and it is likely to become a common sight in many libraries. The inclusion of comprehensive publication records, stock records, locations and telephone numbers means that this is the first true UK library networking tool on a CD-ROM. At £450 per annum for a single user licence for LASER members, and £550 for other VISCOUNT members it is a snip, and at £650 per annum for others it is still a bargain and should be tried by all libraries which perform a significant amount of bibliographic checking and interloans work. It would also be of some interest to libraries in Europe. It will be fascinating to monitor its effect on libraries, and to see how many competing products are launched in the UK and Europe in future.

Review: V3.CD, April 1995
Details: Kirsten MacGillivray, LASER, Fourth Floor, Gun Court, 70 Wapping Lane, London E1 9RL. Tel. 0171 702 2020

Review by Robin Yeates, Senior Researcher, Library Information Technology Centre (LITC) South Bank University, London, 1 May 1995

WHAT IS FIL?

The Forum for Interlending is an organisation designed to enable those library staff involved in interlending and document supply to exchange ideas and views and to express new ideas.

FIL is run by an elected committee of members who themselves are involved in interlending.

Activities include:
- annual conference;
- exchange of experience workshops;
- liaison with regional and national organisations involved in interlending and co-operation between libraries (eg BLDSC, LINC);
- membership of/representation on national bodies (e.g. LINC, CONARLS);
- production of newsletter, reports and publications covering matters of importance to ILL staff;
- production of reports and publications covering matters of importance to ILL staff;
- facilitating the expression of views on national issues.

Recent areas of concern addressed by FIL include:
- charges between libraries;
- thesis interlending;
- Impact of CD-ROM;
- local government reorganisation;
- National Library Commission;
- copyright;
- networking;
- ILL computer systems & user groups;
- internet;
- LINC & BLDSC.and declaration forms.

MEMBERSHIP

Anyone interested in joining FIL is invited to complete the form below and return it to Elaine Dean, Membership Secretary, FIL, Inter-Library Loans Department, University of Sheffield, Western Bank, Sheffield, S10 2TN. Both institutional and individual members are welcome. Subscription for both categories is £20.00 per annum.

Please register me as a personal/institutional* member of the Forum for Interlending.
I enclose a cheque for £20.00, made payable to the FORUM FOR INTERLENDING/Please invoice my institution.*

*Delete as appropriate.

Name: _____

Position: _____

Institution: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

FIL MEMBERSHIP

FIL now has over 220 members and is still growing. I receive at least six membership applications per week at the moment. As FIL gets a higher profile in the profession, we get more opportunities to express the opinions of members at national level. The courses we run seem to help recruit members, many of whom have not heard of FIL previously.

One of the problems seems to be getting information and particularly the FIL Newsletter, to Inter-Library loans people. Very often it seems to come to a stop at the periodicals section or the Director/Chief Librarian!

At present we are embarked on a campaign to try and ensure that the FIL Newsletter gets to the right person. Letters have been sent to each member asking them to indicate whether they wish to change the contact to the ILL person (where this is not already the case).

If you are organising an event we can supply FIL publicity, please contact:
Mark Perkins, Publicity Officer, FIL, Overseas Development Institute, Regents College, Inner Circle, Regents Park, London NW1 4NS.

FIL MEMBERSHIP — UPDATING FORM

We endeavour to keep membership records as up-to-date as possible. For this reason we would appreciate your help in ensuring that your own details are correct. If any of the details listed below have changed recently at your organisation, can you please fill in the new information and return it to me?

Contact name: _____ _____

Job title: _____ _____

Name of organisation: ____ _____

Address: _____

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Tel no: _____

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Thank you.

Please return to:
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