

FIL Newsletter

Forum for Interlending

Issue 32

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CHANGES IN THE BRITISH LIBRARY'S DOCUMENT SUPPLY SERVICES

Many readers will have heard about the changes the British Library is making to its document supply services. Malcolm Smith, Director of Public Services at the Library explains the thinking behind the changes.

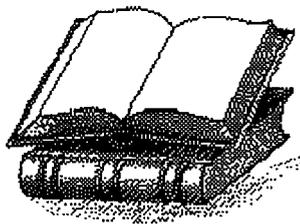
We are making two, rather important, changes to the document supply services provided by the British Library. The first change is to the billing and payment systems, which is being phased in throughout 2000. The second is a restructuring of the price list which is being introduced in October. Because the changes are complex, in an area where systems and procedures have been stable for many years, we began writing to our customers late last year in order to provide adequate time to prepare and adjust. We are very grateful for the opportunity to use the FIL Newsletter as another means of communicating with customers over the reasons for these changes.

The first set of changes affects the way customers pay for document supply services. Most of the libraries in the UK have been used to paying by purchasing pieces of paper in advance, which, up to now, have been valid indefinitely. In the early days the piece of paper was the request form itself, but the great majority of requests are now sent to the British Library over the networks (saving time and expense all round), and the "piece of paper" is a voucher with a unique number which has to be included with each request.

We are replacing this with statements of account, which will be sent to customers at regular (monthly) intervals. Libraries now have a choice of paying on the receipt of each statement or of depositing money with us in advance, and there are incentives to encourage the latter. There are several reasons for the change, but the primary one is to enable us to introduce greater flexibility into our prices. With a system of forms each priced at £4.67, it has been difficult to price services in intermediate steps e.g. 1½ forms, or to accommodate copyright fees set by publishers for certain requests, and we have wanted to move away from a paper-based system. An important secondary consideration has been the need to improve the accuracy of the financial accounts of the Library. With the forms being valid indefinitely, and also being used for payment in third party transactions, we have lost track of the total liability outstanding on the British Library, and immediate action was required to put this to rights. Incidentally, we have introduced a new system for payments for ILLs between other libraries which in its interim form is paper based, but which we hope to automate over the next few years.

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The second change is the restructuring of the tariff which comes into effect in October. While we have had special prices for services such as doctoral theses, Worldwide Searches and the Urgent Action Service for sometime, the BL "form" has been valid for one request regardless of whether it was supplied as a photocopy or loan from our stock or supplied from one of our back-up libraries. However the cost of each of these outcomes varies considerably – the loan is more expensive than the photocopy and the back-up requests are more expensive still. The British Library Board's policy is that the standard UK loan/photocopy service has to recover its costs, so our price has been set as an average of all the various outcomes. It is easy to appreciate that this policy makes us vulnerable to "cherry picking", i.e. alternative providers can supply at a cheaper price and still recover their costs, if they only handle straightforward requests for photocopies. Over the last decade this has been happening on an increasing scale, and we can only expect it to happen more in the future as the opportunities to offer material electronically mushroom. The problem with this is that it alters the mix of requests coming to the British Library. We get a higher proportion of requests which cost more to handle and, because we have to achieve cost recovery, we have to increase our prices further. If we are not careful this will lead into a downward spiral, as we know many libraries only have a certain amount to spend on interlibrary loan.

The Final Solution

Our solution has therefore been to separate out the prices we charge for the different services. While loans and the back-up service become more expensive, the photocopy becomes cheaper. Our pricing policy of only recovering costs for the UK service will be retained but, because every library uses us differently, the impact will vary. However, we believe that, even for those who will see an increase in their bills from October because they use the back-up or loan services heavily, we have done the right thing in the long run. Our most popular service will be cheaper. We will maximise the chances of retaining the high volumes of requests which are essential if libraries in the UK are to make efficient use of the unique resource at Boston Spa. This will help us keep future price rises to a minimum. And it will allow interlibrary loan staff to exercise greater control over their spending – in future you will only pay for what you need.

Malcom Smith
Director of Public Services
BLDSC

FIL SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING WEDNESDAY 5 APRIL 2000

A Special General Meeting of the Forum for Interlending was held on 5th April 2000 at the Franklin Wilkins Building, Kings College London, Waterloo Campus. The building had only officially been opened two weeks earlier by the Princess Royal.

The meeting was chaired by Stephen Prowse and was attended by nearly 80 FIL members from public, academic and special libraries, and companies supplying ILL products and support. Representing the British Library Document Supply Centre were Mike McGrath, Head of UK Marketing and Betty Lowery, Head of Customer Services.

80 FIL Members attend

The meeting was convened in response to recent changes in ILL procedures and price structuring announced by the British Library.

Stephen opened by outlining the aims of the meeting and explaining changes already in place, and those to be implemented in October. Since 1st April sales of British Library vouchers have ceased. Customers holding stocks of ARTtel and postal forms can continue to use them until they are exhausted. It is possible to set up a deposit or a billing account at any time between now and October and some of those attending confirmed that they had already done so. Postal customers will be issued with valueless forms for requests to BL; prepaid forms for loans and photocopies between other libraries, each marked with the appropriate price, will also be available.

All change at BLDSC



Stephen also reminded us of the new differential charges which come into force on 1st October 2000:

Prices from 1 October

Loan from BLDSC stock	£6.20
Photocopy from BLDSC stock	£4.46 (inc.VAT)
Renewal of loan	£2.00
Location search	£4.58 (inc.VAT)
Backup request – loan	£10.10
Backup request – photocopy	£7.70
Backup failure	£4.58 (inc.VAT)

He concluded his introduction by turning to the question of consultation, or lack of it, between BL and FIL, and the ILL community at large, prior to the announcement of these new charges.

1997 Questionnaire

Since the 1997 questionnaire on differential charging, no further discussion between BL and FIL had taken place before the announcement of the new pricing structure in January. Stephen felt that this was most unfortunate and had perhaps contributed to the highly charged response which BL has faced in recent weeks. He invited Mike McGrath to reply to this point and to justify the British Library's position.

"No" to change

Mike McGrath, in his reply, confirmed that he had been responsible for the formulation of the 1997 questionnaire on differential charging and for the evaluation of the responses. Whilst most academic and special libraries had responded that they would in principle find differential charging acceptable (as in many cases it would be to their advantage) the majority of public libraries (except 10 who were surprisingly in favour) strongly resisted the idea of increased loan charges. The majority of requests from the public library sector are for loans, whereas this balance is reversed in academic and special libraries. Consequently, it was obvious that public libraries would be most disadvantaged by a change to the status quo. (It should be mentioned that the question of an additional charge for a location search and a backup loan was not an issue in the questionnaire). However, the overall response of libraries was to maintain the status quo, in some degree, because they felt differential charging would increase their administrative burden.

The British Library decides

Mike expressed his personal embarrassment at the recent decision to ignore the majority response expressed in 1997, as his overall aim was to satisfy the needs of the British Library's customers in an equitable manner. He set out to explain the rationale behind the decision. The British Library is in the position of having to function on 100% cost recovery and has a responsibility to the British taxpayer. He said that the Department of Culture, Media and Sport has spent a great deal of money over the past 2 years on various projects in the field of library resources and Lifelong Learning but BLDSC has received no extra funds. Under current non-differential charging, the customer is actually paying more for a photocopy than it costs the BL to provide. Modern technology and increasing electronic journal storage have lowered the actual cost of article provision. However, the cost of loan provision continues to rise, and is greater than is currently recouped via the single unit charge. The British Library had a responsibility to act on this and lower photocopy charges, particularly to retain their position in a competitive market, with other UK providers such as Lamda and Seren increasing the volume of their services. These services do not have to subsidise a loan service as BL has been doing.

Mike's response to the question of consultation was logical if not popular. He stated that the British Library Board was aware that further consultation would only have produced a response similar to the 1997 survey, but that BL was not in a position to resist the necessary changes required to remain at 100% cost recovery. 79% of all provision to customers is in photocopy form so the price had to be driven down for BL to remain competitive. Pressure was also being placed by HM Customs and Excise over the precise calculation of VAT on the undifferentiated requests, the loans being exempt from VAT, and the copies being liable for most customers. He stated that rationally it was the only decision that could be made and he wished to defend it on the basis of the preceding argument. The charges had been precisely calculated to attain a cost neutral situation. Should BL find that they were obtaining an advantage from the increased charges, adjustments would be made to rebalance this.



The floor was opened to comments and questions; Alison Wheeler of East Midlands Regional Library System disputed the fact that investment by the DCMS had as yet led to much extra money benefiting public libraries, to the detriment of BLDSC. She said that the new charges would definitely not be "cost neutral" for public libraries.

Questions and answers

Margaret Hodgkinson of Essex Libraries echoed this thought and felt that the British Library's strategy seemed to be targeting the public library sector. Mike McGrath replied that the BL had calculated that an average public library would be paying £200 - £300 a year more for document supply services, but realised that larger libraries would obviously carry a greater burden. He admitted that the ratio of 65% loans to 35% copies supplied to the public library sector did mean that they were more disadvantaged than academic and special libraries, but that there had been no deliberate strategy which had led to this.

A representative from Gloucestershire Libraries queried the charge for backup locations and asked why the British Library would make this charge even if the requester has checked for locations and specified this on the request. Annette Moore (University of Sussex) and David Palmer (University of East Anglia) also felt this was bad value. The charge was to be made even if it was only a case of giving permission to apply to the backups. Betty Lowery explained that location searching was more complicated than might appear on the surface. In the case of backup libraries, BL also had to examine loan criteria; an item appearing on a catalogue quoted by a requester might not necessarily be available for general loan, in which case BL would look for

Backup locations

other locations. Several attendees felt that the quality of location searching did not justify a charge – readily available locations are sometimes missed. Betty agreed that the current free location service is not always good and relies in many cases on out of date information. There is a new training programme which specifically includes location searching; this should bring the service up to scratch by October. She said that if the new service provided incorrect information on locations, the £4.58 charge may be refunded. There will be a standard list of locations to be checked, which will be made known to customers, so they will know which resources have been utilised by BL staff at the appropriate search level.

Betty Lowery described the new streamlined information pack, which is to replace the old handbook. Not only will it lay out clearly the new charges and procedures, but there will also be a list of “backup” libraries who will be prepared to accept direct applications, thus cutting out the “middle man” if requesting libraries wish to do their own location checking. We were also assured that the British Library in London would not be treated as a backup library under the new charges, but as a stock location.

Discussion continued on location searching – there was a debate over whether libraries would bear the cost of the new location charge or increase their own staffing costs by doing their own searching. David Palmer said he had done an exercise on this concept and that at UEA they would be trying to avoid use of BL’s searching facilities in favour of in-house searching. Angela Fauch of UKC said she had been using COPAC for some time to search for post-1980 items not shown on the BLDSC catalogue, and would continue to do so. This currently saved time overall and would save money from 1st October. UMIST, Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Derby and the University of Portsmouth also intended to increase levels of checking.

Several university and public libraries had calculated that the new pricing structure would increase their costs considerably – Reading University for example estimated a rise of £8,000, the University of East Anglia around £5,000. Most of these were high volume requesters who currently rely on BL locations as they do not always have sufficient staff to do extensive checking. Peggy Eccles (Lancashire County Libraries) said their policy was to use BL as their first choice, but that for financial reasons, they would now have to search elsewhere first. She foresaw that the standard of service offered to readers would fall, which she very much regretted but the pressure to balance cost against standard of service was likely in the end to govern policy.

Among other contributions, Julie Pethick of the Open University recommended the Cairns Clump as a good source of locations and Joan Lowe of John Rylands Manchester, a member of the Research Libraries Group, recommended the RLG loan service, as fast, efficient and reasonable, for items from abroad.

The other major topic of discussion was lending between third parties. There will be prepaid forms available for interlibrary requests, but some favoured abandoning the use of BL unit prices. Betty Lowery said that this was quite acceptable to the British Library which would continue to fulfil the function of banker if libraries wished it to do so. Libraries borrowing/lending between themselves can charge any price that they have agreed; BL would recommend that they send details, with customer code of borrowing library, loan number, and the price to be charged, once a month on separate transaction slips or better still in the form of a statement. If they prefer to adhere to the BL prices they can submit the ‘C’ copies of the new

prepaid loan and copy forms as before. BL will then include such transactions as debits/credits on the statement issued on all customers billing or deposit accounts. Some librarians felt that a "free for all" in charging could lead to certain libraries being targeted and might upset the overall balance. Others felt that there would be even more scope for reciprocal agreements which already exist between libraries, thus partially excluding the participation of the British Library in certain geographical areas, and for particular categories of material.

Another area of concern was the role of suppliers of ILL management systems. The British Library was aware from the outset that the new procedures, particularly the more complex sequence of search options and the concept of deposit accounts would cause problems in certain systems. Some time ago they had informed such suppliers of impending changes but Betty Lowery felt that response was slow and promised to contact manufacturers again to be assured that they would try to remedy any problems by October.

It was evident by the end of the meeting that some areas of confusion had been clarified by Mike McGrath and Betty Lowery. Whilst the rationale behind the prices changes was accepted by many of those present, it was obvious that the task ahead - to balance budgets and to continue to provide a good service - would prove difficult for some.

Stephen Prowse promised that FIL would continue to monitor reaction to the changes and to communicate closely with BLDSC and other library bodies. FIL will also try and provide, through the Newsletter and the Web pages, information to help ILL practitioners who find that their routines and practices will be changing in the coming months, such as information on searching tools and lending policies of universities and other institutions.

Angela Faunch
University of Kent

FIL WEB PAGES

For the latest news on FIL events,
FIL Conference, Newsletter articles
and more, access the FIL Web Pages at:

www.la-hq.org.uk/fil.htm

SCOTTISH ILL EVENT

FRIDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 1999

This full day 'Event' was a jointly organised by FIL and Inter-Library Services, National Library of Scotland (NLS). Held in NLS' Causewayside Building, the 'Event' was attended by 54 people. The full range of Scottish libraries was represented (although academic, medical and special ones were predominant), as was the British Library Document Supply Centre and one English academic library.

Stephen Prowse, Chair, FIL, and Chair for the 'Event', started proceedings with a few words about FIL itself and pointed out that the day's programme was designed to be cross-sectoral in its emphasis. Ian McGowan, Librarian, NLS then officially welcomed the delegates, stressing that all collaboration, including cross-sectoral, was fundamental to ILL with increasing technological advances providing both opportunities and threats.

The first speaker was Helena Gillis of CAIRNS¹ which, she explained, was a two year, E-Lib JISC 'clump' project² for Scottish academic libraries although one local authority library, East Dunbartonshire, was also involved because, in an environment of collaboration, the Higher Education (HE) sector needs to consider the local authority library and vice versa. CAIRNS had reached a point where the participating libraries wanted to examine the possibility of an ILL mechanism for the system. Feedback on this from ILL practitioners was necessary and she hoped to explore this further in the afternoon's discussion group. Helena then proceeded to give an on-line demonstration of CAIRNS, explaining that the existing author/title/subject searching (the latter based on Conspectus work) had been established for some months and they were looking at extending the types of search as well as add on new catalogues such as The Robert Gordon University. When libraries changed their systems - there are number of them involved overall - as was happening with Edinburgh University and NLS, problems of 'recalibration' with CAIRNS searching might arise but they should be manageable. Unless, however, cataloguing gets past the differing practices of the libraries involved, CAIRNS won't achieve searching strategies that fully meet a user's needs. CAIRNS is, therefore, questioning all working practices, including how it might affect ILL: in these days of electronic document delivery, does CAIRNS need to be part of ILL or just provide holdings information?

The second speaker was Stuart James, Librarian, University of Paisley who has been heavily involved in setting up a series of partnership schemes with libraries in South West Scotland. The impetus for these were *The People's Network*, the *Opportunity Scotland* lifelong learning initiative, the concept of enabling seamless access and an assessment of the role of universities in all of them. The idea is to take education out to a wider access, to promote lifelong learning and social inclusion by providing education locally rather than having people coming to a particular area to study. As an example, Dumfries & Galloway colleges now offer degrees from Paisley University. In the background there is also the development of the Scottish University for Industry. The Library and Information Commission's *Issues in focus*, 16 raised an enormous range of issues concerning cross-sectoral collaboration which the partnerships are also trying to address. There was now a climate of 'cyberculture' with branch libraries being regarded as learning centres. Since public libraries have been shown to be the most popular public service, it made sense to use them for the delivery of lifelong learning as, for example, the University of Paisley predominately recruits its students from South West Scotland and

1 <http://cairns.lib.gla.ac.uk>

2 The other three projects are the M25, Ridings and Music On-line

Ayrshire libraries have 3,000 post coded registered borrowers in their areas. Effectively, the scheme is trying to provide HE outreach services to a scattered population. It had developed fastest in Ayrshire with Renfrewshire, Dumfriesshire and Lanarkshire also becoming involved whilst Argyll and Bute were 'in talks'. The question is, 'What's in it for both parties?'. The University of Paisley Library has a duty to support all of the University's students, no matter where located, so is offering public libraries a service in exchange for allowing students in. Whilst its catalogue was not on CAIRNS, it is searchable remotely and will lend to public libraries free of charge and students could also make requests for material via their public libraries. All this had led to setting up of the Ayrshire Libraries Forum (ALF)³ for 'public sector partnerships for information and learning opportunities' which, amongst other activities, was looking at collaborating in the networking of electronic journals. Transportation of material is by commercial carrier, using plastic boxes, as this was more cost effective than using a dedicated van as there was not enough traffic, as yet.

The third speaker was Stephanie Taylor of the LAMDA⁴ Support Office who explained that the organisation, now in its fourth year, effectively supplies paper articles in an electronic format employing software (Ariel) which is widely used in the USA, Canada and Australia. There are ten supplying libraries, plus customer libraries, making a total of c. 90 institutions involved with LAMDA. All are from the HE sector for which the Ariel software, under funding from JISC, is free, although others have to pay. The target response time for supplying is 48 hours, which is achieved in 97-98% of cases. The Support Office is the hub of the organisation, co-ordinating the network, providing training and a help desk, etc.. The 'spirit' behind it all is to develop in line with user needs and offer efficient services. Using the software is easy but those new to it must be happy and comfortable in that use. There is a central invoice system with monthly, itemised bills. In liaison with COPAC, the LAMDA union list of serials has been put on the Web and work to improve it is ongoing. It could be incorporated into other search clients. LAMDA also liaises with the Research Libraries Group (RLG) in the USA which is the originator of the Ariel software. There is a LAMDA User Group with plans to start an e-mail discussion list and to look at end user delivery, although there are a number of technical and copyright issues involved in the latter. There are now pilot libraries outwith the original HE sector thus making LAMDA more cross-sectoral. Stephanie then gave an on-line demonstration of the LAMDA serials database, including receipt of an electronic document. She stressed that the documents were of good quality, even for medical purposes. All documents are separated / preceded by a page giving details of the item sent and articles should be deleted from the system as soon as they are printed. For copyright purposes, the documents are treated as faxes. In response to questions, Stephanie advised that the database is updated every 6-8 weeks with the latest issues held by the supplying libraries and the holdings information is pretty accurate. 80% of the amount charged per document (£4.20) goes to the supplying library and 20% to the LAMDA Support Office to cover its costs, including the centralised accounting and billing system; effectively it is a non profit making, cost recovery service. There is no charge for unsatisfied requests. Copyright signatures are obtained by the requesting library, as usual. There can be 'firewall' problems in some libraries.

After lunch, James Beaton, Librarian, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, spoke about SHINE (Scottish Health Information Network), indicating that it operates in a fluid environment, being affected by changes in the National Health Service (NHS) - and, indeed, governments. With Trusts splitting and / or merging services, delivery and location problems as to where titles are stored are regular occurrences. The public health side is also changing: a doctor can go from a patient's record to a service such as Medline for the most

3 <http://www.slainte.org.uk/alf/alfohome.htm>

4 <http://lamdaweb.mcc.ac.uk>

up-to-date information. A review of health care provision in the 1980s had shown there was no strategic control in the NHS libraries in Scotland (unlike England) and their services had a low status but the new NHS education strategy does now recognise the need for the libraries. The Union List, which is voluntary, meets a gap in provision and provides a good use of resources. Currently the List comprises c. 2,800 titles and there are 81 libraries involved in the scheme, mainly from NHS but some private ones, plus academic libraries. There is no central SHINE secretariat, just a part time administrator. For requesting purposes, ILL forms have been in informal use since the 1970s but in 1983 the situation was formalised. Libraries order photocopies on a quid pro quo basis. A library buys 50 forms, which works out at c. £1.00 per form, plus an administration fee; when new supplies are required it can buy more or exchange the forms for items they have supplied, for new ones (like DSC 'C' copies). It is a cheap and cheerful solution which works reasonably well with, in 1998, some 4, 500 articles being supplied. The sale of forms also provides some income for SHINE. The advantages of ILL via SHINE lie in the savings to individual libraries, its low tech approach and that it supports the organisation's remit to promote networking for isolated staff, thereby creating savings in the NHS as a whole. The disadvantages are the variable response times due to staffing levels, etc., and the fact that it adds to the burden of photocopying by staff - libraries have dropped out of the scheme because of it. The Union list itself has gone onto the Web⁵ and a closed e-mail list established. Electronic journals are also being investigated but there are problems of technology levels and resistance to allowing people WWW access as well as electronic and structural problems therefore there is likely to be a paper version of the Union list for some time. SHINE hopes to expand and hopes other libraries will join. In response to questions, James advised that, whilst it is possible to be just a requester, it is not encouraged as the Network was supposed to be a two-way set up. Requests could be sent by any method as long as is accompanied by the SHINE form so that a supplier can recoup its costs. Most journals in the Union list are held by BLDSC but the attraction of the organisation is in the cost savings.

Following the SHINE presentation, delegates split into three discussion groups, (a) CAIRNS and LAMDA, led by Jill Evans, Edinburgh University; (b) ALF, led by Stephen Prowse; and (c) SHINE, led by Maureen Ridley, National Library of Scotland. The speakers also participated in these groups, answering more detailed questions and exchanging views.

Stephen drew the proceedings to a close by briefly summing up points brought up in the discussion groups and throughout the day: it was clear that a very wide range of issues had been raised. He then thanked everyone, especially the speakers for their participation.

The day concluded with 26 of the delegates visiting Inter-Library Services where ILL, Scottish Union Catalogue procedures and the contents of the Pool Lending Stock of c. 140,000 items were explained / demonstrated.

All in all, the 'Event' passed smoothly (*all* the on-line technology worked !) and comments received indicated participants had found it both interesting and enjoyable. Indeed, one person asked when the next one would be!

Pat McKenzie
Head, Inter-Library Services
National Library of Scotland

5 ⁵<http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/shine>

**FORUM FOR INTERLENDING
INTERLEND 2000**

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN 4 – 6 JULY 2000

Looking Ahead

TOPICS

Document Delivery in the private sector
Co-operation in prison libraries
Future of library regions
Results of the FIDDO project
Document supply at the BBC
Co-operation: present and future trends

SPEAKERS

Alan MacDougall, Kings College London
Andrew Wood, Glaxo Wellcome
Katie Birch, Documents Direct Project
Jean Naylor, BLDSC
Christine Almond, Bury Libraries
Cathy Evans, Prison Libraries Group
Michael Long, Information North
Ann Morris, FIDDO
Kate Arnold, BBC
Finnuala Hanrahan, Co. Wexford Libraries

WORKSHOPS

Documents Direct
Distance Learning
Homework Heaven

ACTIVITIES

Book of Kells and Dublin Experience
Guide walking tour of Dublin
Pre-dinner speaker: Terry Caffrey, poet and writer
Conference Dinner and Quiz

If you haven't already received details and a booking form please contact:

Susan Walsh

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AWADAY TO PRESTON



Widening
understanding

University of Central
Lancashire

British Library changes

Watching the minutes tick by... this was not how I spent the recent FIL Awayday to Preston, but the station clock as my train got later and later! On my eventual arrival, I was soon nattering to fellow ILL colleagues on all matters interlending. The day consisted of touring round Preston, on visits to the County Bibliographic Services Unit, the University of Central Lancashire and the Harris Library.

As I work in a university library, I felt that my knowledge was restricted to the academic sector and I hoped to widen my understanding of the interlending world. I found the visit to the University most helpful, probably because the set-up was more familiar to me, but it was interesting to see how the public library sector operates as well.

Comparing interlending policies and how the University Library is set up was really interesting, ranging from the newly installed self issue system to how users place their ILL requests. The University has a partially converged service, with ICT staff and Information Officers moving towards all being housed together. The help desk deals with enquiries ranging from "How do I print from the Internet?" to "Where can I find Chemical Abstracts?"

The forthcoming British Library changes were naturally a matter for discussion. In discussing how different libraries work, it made me realise how the changes will affect libraries in different ways, depending on their current practices. It was really useful spending time chatting about different approaches to ILLs, as it puts your own practices into context, and makes you question the way you operate. To look beyond your own institution is both helpful and healthy in developing your own systems, and I appreciated the opportunity to meet with other interlending colleagues.

Suzie Kitchin

Education Library, University of Leicester

Ed. The Awayday concept seems to have proved a success and FIL hopes to organise more of these events in areas where there is the opportunity to offer visits to a group of varying libraries, for hands-on exchange of experience.

LASER LAUNCHES V3.ONLINE



V3.Online is the new networked service from LASER, the Development and Networking Agency, for resource sharing and interlending requesting. The internet-based service was launched on 31st March 2000 by Linda Perham, MP, at the Imagination Gallery in London.

V3.Online is a new kind of resource sharing service that will make the vast stocks of libraries available easily to everyone, whether for lifelong learning, economic and business development, community information or leisure. It is in fact a large 'clump'. Speakers at the launch included Neville Mackay, Chief Executive of the Museums Libraries and Archives Council; Rachel van Riel, Director of Opening the Book, the company she founded in 1991 and which has grown to be the UK's leading agency in reader development; Professor Bob Fryer, Director of Policy and External relations at Ufi; and Bamber Gascoigne. The Master of Ceremonies was David Whitaker OBE.

V3.Online consists of:

- A comprehensive database of relevant bibliographic information
- A unique location service giving access to over 40 million library holdings against titles
- Full transaction management facilities for lending and borrowing resources
- Full management information and accounting for use
- Internet access via the latest 'thin-client' Web technology
- Backed by UK public libraries, national, academic and special libraries and international partners

V3.Online, fully in use since January 2000 by approximately 100 library authorities follows on from the Viscount system which laser ran successfully for many years. Continuing product development will ensure that *V3.Online* maintains its status as the primary electronic ILL tool of choice. *V3.Online* allows them to be found via the Internet and immediately requested for loan through a local library. Whether the library materials you want are in public libraries, the British Library or other specialist libraries *V3.Online* allows them to be found via the Internet and immediately requested for loan through a local library. *V3.Online* allows library staff to manage the whole process of lending and returning items as appropriate to the type of material.

V3.Online

Features

100 Library authorities

V3.Online has been developed from scratch to support the latest technical standards and meet demanding client requirements. The current service is intended for library staff use, but development are planned for Autumn 2000 that will enable library users to search the extensive catalogue and place their own requests, which will then be managed for them by information professionals.

Further information on *V3.Online* is available at
<http://www.viscount.org.uk/laser/v3online.html>

LASER Press Release
March 2000

WORKING TOGETHER

A seminar which explored current collaboration in the UK between libraries, museums and archives was held at the British Library in London last December. Entitled "*Working Together: Covering the Nation's Resources*", the seminar discussed collection development, discovery, access to and retention of resources, and the potential for improvement through better and more effective co-operation at national and regional level. The event was organised with LASER and the Library and Information Co-operation Council (LINC under the auspices of the BL's Co-operation and Partnership Programme.

Chaired by Chris Koster, Chair of LINC, the seminar was attended by over 80 invited participants from various sectors of the library and information community, the museums and archives sector and from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

In his keynote address, Derek Law, University Librarian and Director of Information Strategy, University of Strathclyde said, "There is a substantial lack of dialogue between public, university, college and other kinds of libraries; such divisions do not reflect the way users actually manage their information needs.."

David Bradbury, Director General, Collections and Services at the British Library, reinforced the message by saying, "Working together is vital for all our futures. If we fail, selective private sector information providers could begin to dominate, while the publicly-funded sector as a whole will languish."

Other speakers outlined the range of collaborative initiatives currently taking place and highlighted issues to be addressed. A major theme emerged during the day related to the need for more activity in the fields of: collection mapping, collection description, and retrospective catalogue conversion. In addition there was a call for a national information policy to ensure standards and for consideration of the need for a National Collection Development Office.

The proceedings of the seminar will be posted on the BL website at <http://www.bl.uk>
Paper copies will be available from Stella Pilling, British Library Co-operation and Partnership Programme. Email: stella.pilling@bl.uk Tel: 01937 546023

BRITISH LIBRARY MANUSCRIPTS CATALOGUE GOES ONLINE

The successful completion of a three-year project to automate the printed catalogues of manuscripts and to make them available remotely via the Internet was announced at the end of March. This innovative conversion project was developed and executed with financial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation.

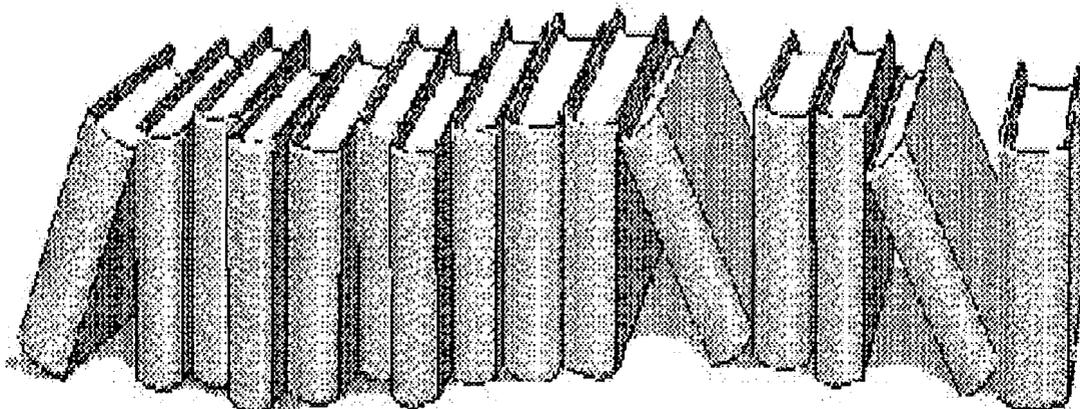
Compiled over nearly two centuries, the scholarly catalogues of the Department of Manuscripts, cover all types of handwritten material in western languages. These range from notes written on papyrus in the pre-Christian era to contemporary literary and political papers, and include manuscript music and maps, wax seals, drawings photographs and illuminated manuscripts.

Sixty-two volumes hitherto only available in the Manuscripts Reading Room at the British Library or in a few specialist research libraries, have been converted from print to database. In addition, all the new cataloguing prepared on computer since 1986, some of it not yet published, has been merged into the system. For the first time, users can encompass most of the mainstream catalogues in a single search, rather than having to refer to a series of consecutive volumes. They can also retrieve keywords in context or combinations of index terms which could not be targeted in the print text.

The catalogues were converted by scanning the printed pages into computerised image files, using optical character recognition to produce text, and then splitting the data into its component parts with an automatic parsing programme to populate the database. The methodology was developed and the conversion implemented in-house. The web-based user interface was custom-built to meet specialist search requirements.

The online catalogue can be accessed using a standard browser at:
<http://molcat.bl.uk> or via the British Library's Website at <http://www.bl.uk>

*British Library Press Release
March 2000*



THE WORK OF THE FIL COMMITTEE



“Ask not what FIL can do for you, but what you can do for FIL.” Famous words. Of course, what FIL has done for you can be gleaned from the pages of this very Newsletter – a glance through annual reports over recent years will give an idea of the activities the Executive Committee has been up to on your behalf. However not everyone knows the full ins and outs so this article is by way of elucidation. For a fuller picture and a history of FIL going back to the time when it was just a gleam in someone’s eye, consult the excellent article by former Committee members Elaine Dean and Rose Goodier. (1)

Committee Duties

The Executive Committee currently has the following officers:

CHAIR – chairing committee meetings (about 4 a year), chairing the annual conference, making sure FIL does all the things it should be doing

VICE CHAIR – organizing the annual conference

TREASURER – invoicing, keeping tabs on expenditure, handling expenses, budgeting

SECRETARY – keeping minutes of meetings, organizing elections

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY – organizing, updating and maintaining membership lists

NEWSLETTER EDITORS – commissioning and editing articles and producing the Newsletter

Other committee members are assigned to the following tasks:

PROCEEDINGS – editing and preparing the conference papers for publication

PUBLICATIONS – maintaining FIL’s publications and servicing orders

WEBPAGES – design and maintenance of FIL’s pages

PUBLICITY – publicising events and FIL itself.

Library links

This is just a brief guide and simply covers the basics. When there’s an event on there’s a whole lot more that needs doing. Invaluable help is provided by colleagues from the British Library and the Library Association. Additionally, we maintain close links with bodies and services such as CONARLS, LINC, Unity and Viscount. The committee is made up of individuals involved in interlending from all types of libraries. Members can serve on the committee for a 4-year period but must seek re-election after 2 years.

Which brings me to the main point of this piece. FIL needs the support of its members – in continuing membership, attendance at events, articles for the Newsletter etc. and also to take on the mantle of committee membership, driving FIL forward to new heights and greater glory. What's in it for you, you wonder? Well there's all sorts of skills you can acquire or practise for that much needed career development – organising a conference for example would no doubt look pretty good on a CV; or how about researching, writing and publishing reports? public speaking? or any of the myriad requirements demanded by the roles outlined above. Plus, networking with interlending colleagues, finding out about different sectors, mixing with the movers and shakers of the library world as a FIL rep. Don't forget that one of our committee members attends the annual IFLA conference. In short there's stuff by the bucket load that you can use to further your career and your institution can bask in the reflected glory of having you as a FIL committee member. Yes - it will involve extra work - there's no point getting involved if you don't want to do things, and you're probably too busy as it is, but it's a great opportunity nevertheless. For me it's been one of the best things I've ever done. Now that my time has come and, along with some colleagues, I'll be leaving the committee and heading off into the sunset, I want to ensure that FIL is strong enough to continue the great leap forward. Think about it. Your country needs you!

Stephen Prowse
FIL Chair

- (1) 'Meeting of minds : an account of the history, development and work of the Forum for Interlending', *Journal of Interlibrary loan, document delivery and information supply*, vol.10 (2) 1999.

Acquiring new skills



A nomination form for the FIL Committee accompanies this Newsletter

If you are interested in standing for the committee or wish to nominate another FIL member (please ask their permission), the form must be signed by two FIL members and returned to the FIL Secretary by 16th June 2000, so that a list of nominees can be drawn up before the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 4th July 2000

NEWS FROM THE BRITISH LIBRARY

Finance System Update

The BL's new finance system went live in December. The main impact of the new system means that from April 2000 customers will be charged actual monetary values for transactions instead of units. Customers will start to be transferred to new style accounts from January 2000. The monetary value of any service used will be charged to customers' accounts and they will receive a monthly transaction listing itemising all satisfied requests with their individual charge. UK customers who wish to continue to pre-pay for services will be able to open deposit accounts.

Documents supplied via Medline

Users of the National Library of Medicine's PubMed and Internet Grateful Med can now use Loansome Doc to request articles from DSC. To send requests, users must contact the BL for the unique NLM identification number (LIBID), which serves to identify to which library the Loansome Doc system should send the request.

Customers who are registered with DSC will be able to use their existing account or pay by using a credit card.

Copyright Explained

The British Library Copyright Office is preparing a series of workshops to unravel the mysteries of copyright for those with little or no knowledge of copyright issues. The workshops aim to give participants a good grounding to enable them to be confident with concepts such as fair dealing and library privilege. The workshops will be held in a number of locations throughout the UK. For more information contact Pauline Connolly on Fax: 01937 54678 or email: pauline.connolly@bl.uk

Electronic journal store

Since the signing of the agreement with Elsevier in March 1999, for access to all Elsevier titles in electronic format, over 60% of requests for articles from these titles are now printed directly from the electronic file.

The software has recently been upgraded to allow content from other publishers to be loaded. Another 12 publishers have agreed in principle for this to be done and their content will be loaded over the course of 2000. The full text will be stored both on the local system and on remote servers. The automated request processing system will automatically route the request to the relevant store, local or remote, and retrieve the required item.

The inside database is also being developed to allow for instant electronic document delivery for those publishers who will allow it. The electronic journal store will also be linked to other methods of electronic document delivery including Ariel. The exact date of these developments will be announced later in the year.

Ariel

The Document Supply Centre now scans and transmits over 120,000 articles a year, using RLG's Ariel software. The take-up of this option, which is available on all document supply services and for which there is no additional charge, is increasing at the rate of 10% per month. Both speed of delivery and copy quality is improved. Customers interested in receiving articles by this route need to register their Ariel

address with BLDSC. Further details about registering for Ariel Delivery are available from Customer Services. Information about Ariel is available at RLG's web page at www.rlg.org/ariel/index.html

British Thesis Service

The BL provides access to doctoral theses awarded by UK universities. Microform copies of all theses are available for loan. Copies of most theses may also be purchased as microform or paper enlargement. More than 130,000 doctoral theses are currently available, mainly from the 1970's to the present day. Several university sector colleges have begun to make their recent doctoral theses available through the British Thesis Service.

Holding information may be found on the British Library catalogues on the Web or in the *SIGLE database* available online through STN International and on CD-ROM from Silver Platter. Recent additions are included in the monthly print publication *British National Bibliography for Report Literature*. For further information contact the British Thesis Service on Tel: 01937 546229 Fax: 01937 546286 or email: dsc-british-thesis-service@bl.uk

Customer Contact

DSC Link-Up events and contact days run by the National Bibliographic Service have been combined in events known as *Access and Awareness*. The new format gives more hands on demonstration time. The programme of events has been finalised for 2000 and venues booked. Customers in the surrounding geographical areas will automatically receive invitations in due course.

Union Catalogue of Books

Retrospective conversion of BLDSC's card catalogue of books, published prior to 1980 and available for loan, is now underway. The catalogue contains records for about 1.3 million stock items published between the 17th century and 1979. The project is being split into two phases, which will run in parallel. Phase one will see all records for titles published between 1950 and 1980 converted to MARC (Machine Readable Catalogue). Phase two will tackle the remainder of the catalogue. It is anticipated that the work will take a minimum of two years to complete. It is the British Library's intention to make the records of this considerable collection available to the library community as soon as possible.

BL Reproductions

BL Reproductions provides a remote paper copying, photographic and microfilming service from the material in the collections at St Pancras in London. The service supplies over 15,000 orders per year to customers in the UK and overseas, producing copies from the whole collection including modern printed books, manuscripts, maps, music and India Office collections. From 1 April 2000, BL Reproductions is introducing a new simpler tariff which will enable customers to calculate the cost of an order in advance and pay by credit card, or if necessary, by cheque. In the case of corporate customers, billing account facilities will be available.

For more information on the BL Reproductions service contact Tel: 0207 412 7614, Fax: 0207 412 7771, email: bl-repro@bl.uk

British Library Net

British Library Net is the first Internet Service Provider set up by a public sector body in the UK. It provides local call access from anywhere in the UK, with a full range of Internet services, including personal Web space, unlimited email addresses and technical support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. British Library Net is devoted to providing access to British Library services and to other library, cultural and museums and art collections, and educational resources in general.

Copies of the free installation CD-ROM can be obtained by contacting Tel: 01937 546585 or Email: britishlibrary-net@bl.uk Alternatively, registration can be carried out online at: <http://www.britishlibrary.net>

LETTERS

From John Wickenden, Librarian, Eli Lilley & Co Ltd

I read with interest Martin Rae's article in the December 1999 issue of the FIL Newsletter on the BLDSC and Transport Schemes. Below are some comments on my experience since use of the Transport schemes has ceased.

I work as a librarian for Eli Lilley & Co. Ltd., a pharmaceutical company, in their Research Centre at Windlesham, Surrey. We were part of the LASER Transport Scheme and we had a daily delivery of items from BLDSC at about 12 noon. Since use of the Transport Scheme has ceased we have been receiving items from BLDSC by post (Royal Mail). We have found that it sometimes takes up to three days for us to receive some consignments. About 70% come the next day, 25% take two days to arrive and 5% three days. I know this is nothing to do with the British Library, it is the poor service of the Royal Mail between Yorkshire and Surrey, but we can no longer rely on a next day delivery of items.

The only advantage I can see is that the items are received first thing in the morning rather than at lunchtime. There is also a handling advantage – with the Transport Scheme every item was individually wrapped and had to be opened separately. With the current arrangement the items are wrapped in batches, cutting down the staff time needed to open them.

From Peter Smith, Deputy Director, LASER

In response to Martin Rae's article "Transport Schemes – Why BLDSC has stopped using them", we would like to comment from LASER's perspective. The article generalises on "the regional transport schemes" as if they were part of a consortium arrangement. This was not so, the regional schemes were costed and managed independently. The effect of the generalisation is to provide in some instances an inaccurate view of the LASER Transport Scheme.

1. The contract agreed between LASER and BLDSC in 1995 was below the price of other commercially available services. LASER was the only regional transport scheme which was competitive with other commercial suppliers.
2. The reasons given by the British Library for its decision not to award the contract to LASER were that the British Library weren't convinced that our bid could provide

- special insurances and special timed delivery service which BLDSC now wish to offer their users. (We were told that our price was very competitive)
3. LASER was achieving a 98-99% next day delivery service for material sent from BLDSC which is higher than the 95% currently being achieved. Again this wasn't so with all the regional schemes – but averaging and generalising across all the schemes does not reflect LASER's individual performance.

LASER totally accepts BLDSC's reasons for going to competitive tender, but please, no more generalising across "the regions" – we are all very different in geography, volume, number of users, etc

From Angela Faunch, University of Kent

In company with, I am sure, many others we were a little apprehensive at the prospect of the change in delivery arrangements from the British Library which came into force last October. However, we have so far been pleased with the standard of service provided by the British Library's nominated carriers.

If our delivery is reasonably modest, we receive two or three padded envelopes containing books and articles. These arrive with the first delivery by the Royal Mail and are in the post tray at 9.00am on our arrival at work. They frequently contain items which have been ordered via ARTtel the previous day. If we have a larger consignment it is delivered by the carriers, UPS, around midday. Either way, we have plenty of time to process received items and inform readers that the material is available by mid-afternoon.

However, the decision by the British Library to stop using the transport schemes has had a dramatic effect on the process of returning material to the British Library, receiving books from other regions and despatching loans from our stock to other libraries. Prior to October 1999 LASER provided a daily delivery and collection service which covered four educational institutions and a large pharmaceutical company, just in our particular corner of East Kent. Within days of the change, we were informed that the van would only be calling twice a week. This has caused inconvenience over the past few months, and the necessity of explaining to borrowers why items were taking longer to arrive.

At the beginning of April we were told by the LASER driver that his delivery area had once again been increased and that he would only be calling here on Wednesdays. At no point have we received any official communication from LASER explaining the reasons for this dramatic cutback in the level of service. We are now waiting even longer for books from other regions. We received a recall notice by post this week from Leeds University, for a book we have not even arrived! When I inquired, I was told that the book had been sent off to us 10 days earlier via transport scheme arrangements. Our returns to the British Library are also severely delayed, inconveniencing other borrowers who are waiting and resulting in a rash of "Due" notices on the Intray. If this situation continues, we will seriously have to consider making alternative arrangements. I realise that we are rather "out on a limb" here but I would be interested to know if libraries in other areas have experienced a similar cut in services.

FULL DISCLOSURE OF KNOWLEDGE

Imagine if, with a single computer search, you could find details of the whereabouts of every Wordsworth manuscript or artefact held in a UK collection, discover who holds the finest collection of first editions and track down all the books written about the author.

A new report and strategy called "*Full Disclosure*" aims ensure that anyone carrying out research can gain far better access to the wealth of educational and cultural resources which are currently housed in libraries, archives and museums across the UK. In the first phase of implementation, the British Library, working with partners from key bodies in the library, archive and museum sectors, is helping to make that idea a reality.

At present, millions of items in UK libraries, archives and museums are inaccessible through the Internet – making them invisible to most people. Over 50 million records are still held in card catalogues and are accessible only to personal visitors. Without funding from external sources most institutions could not afford to upgrade their catalogues – the cost of converting all the UK's existing card catalogues is currently estimated at over £80 million.

Full Disclosure aims to identify funding sources and help co-ordinate the development of comprehensive digital catalogues which will 'unlock' these resources and sets an ambitious target for digitising up to 80% of existing card records within 10 years.

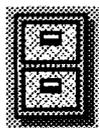
Key tasks to take forward *Full Disclosure* include:

- Working with funding bodies to put together an enabling framework document to guide both applicants and funding bodies.
- Monitoring and co-ordinating existing catalogue digitisation activities.
- Promoting the strategy and creating wider awareness of the issue.
- Building a register of collections.
- Developing and promoting standards and best practice guidelines.

David Bradbury, Director General, Collections and Services at The British Library said: "The report provides a framework for delivering an exciting programme to get information that is currently dispersed across the four corners of the UK brought together on-line to enable better access to our rich cultural and intellectual heritage."

The Minister for the Arts, Alan Howarth MP commenting on the report said: "The government welcomes this initiative as a major step towards making the vast collections held locally across the UK accessible to everyone for lifelong learning and research. I look forward to seeing this report realised in positive action and congratulate the British Library for spearheading this on behalf of the library and museum community."

For further information on *Full Disclosure* contact Stephanie Kenna at the British Library
Tel: 020 7412 7126 Email: stephanie.kenna@bl.uk



The *Forum for Interlending* is an organisation designed to enable those library staff involved in interlending and document supply to exchange ideas and views. FIL is run by an elected committee of members who are themselves involved in interlending.

Activities include:

1. Annual conference
2. Exchange of experience workshops
3. Liaison with regional and national organisations involved in interlending
4. Membership of / representation on national bodies (e.g. LINC, CONARLS)
5. Newsletter, reports and publications covering matters of importance to ILL staff

Our webpage is <http://www.la-hq.org.uk/fil.htm>

MEMBERSHIP

- Both institutional and individual members are welcome.
- Subscription for both categories is £20.00 per annum.

If you are interested in joining FIL please complete the form below and return to:

Susan Walsh
NWRLS
Central Library
St Peter's Square
Manchester M2 5PD
Tel: 0161 234 1947 or 0161 228 7524
Fax 0161 234 3813
email: susan@nwrlshq.bdx.co.uk

- *Please register me as a personal / institutional* member of Forum for Interlending*
- *I enclose a cheque for £20.00 made payable to: Forum for Interlending*
*Please invoice my institution.**

* Delete as appropriate.

Name _____

Position _____

Institution _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Please also use this form to keep FIL up to date with any alterations or new information about yourself or your organisation

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