

Interlend 2008

Managing the Gateway:

Redefining interlending for
the 21st century



Peebles Hydro Hotel,
Peebles, Scotland

30th June to 2nd July
2008

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Editorial

We have a bumper issue this time, thanks to all the contributions. Thanks and please keep them coming.

Betty Lowery is a familiar figure to front-line ILL staff. However, she has recently joined that band of people who virtually overnight look ten years younger—I mean the retired. We wish Betty all the best and thank her for all her support of FIL. Read on for her “nostalgic look back” to her career in BLDSC.

For those of who still have to work, have a look at Marian Hesketh’s account of a typical day’s work. Is this you? Please send us your “day in the life of...”.

This editor sometimes feels slightly frustrated that when problems arrive no-one else in the Library or the University who can either help or even understand what we mean. Stephanie Taylor has recently launched The Skills Exchange which she hopes will be a forum for discussion for anyone in the Library and Information Sector. Rose Goodier has compiled a brief guide to this service.

This sense of isolation which ILL staff sometimes experience can be alleviated by interacting with other people of like minds. This is where Conferences are so valuable. In the past few months FIL has been very fortunate to have had 2 representatives at international conferences—Rose Goodier at the IFLA Conference in Durban, and Avril Patterson at the ILDS Conference in Singapore. Read about their experiences. However we must not forget our own Annual conference. As you will see on Pages 10 and 11, booking is now open for Interlend 2008 to be held in the splendid surroundings of Peebles in the Scottish Borders. Don’t delay—it’s an opportunity not to be missed.

Finally, I asked in the previous issue for experiences with new ILL systems. Erica Childs from Derbyshire Libraries kicks off with her thoughts on implementing UnityUK.

The next issue will probably be in late summer, reporting on Interlend, but I desperately need your contributions. See you in Peebles.

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Front cover and pages 10-11:
Courtesy of McMillan Hotels Group

A Nostalgic Look Back

by

Betty Lowery

*Betty recently retired from her position as
Management of Customer Services in BLDSC
at Boston Spa*

FIL has played an important role in my life since probably the beginning of the 1990s when I became Manager of Customer Services at Boston Spa. I had already got to know many of the members a decade earlier when I had been part of the team on the phones dealing with customers’ enquiries. I’ll never forget my first day on the phones, when I took a call from Lancaster University. The lady at the other end of the phone must have been in regular contact with the BL, as she instantly realised I was ‘the new girl’. She then proceeded to ask various questions, which I answered to the best of my ability, after which she said, ‘You’ll do’. I’d just been tested by Thelma Goodman, one of the founding members of FIL and now a good friend.

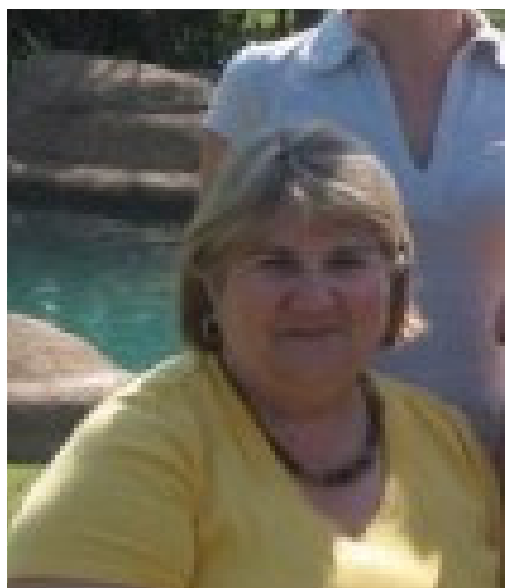
It had become the tradition for the Customer Services Manager to take on the role of BL Observer at FIL Committee meetings. Rightly or wrongly, I never saw my role as being particularly passive so enjoyed contributing to the many discussions of issues that had arisen over the years. The Committee has changed several times, so enlarging my circle of colleagues and friends whom I have been lucky enough to see each year at the FIL Conference. One advantage of getting to know so many people well at such events is that customers of Document Supply have felt comfortable telling me what worked and what didn’t with the service, what you liked and what you didn’t like. In this way, many of you have contributed positively to the development of the service and the way it is today. I offer a special word of appreciation for Stephen Prowse, a self-styled thorn in my side, for the way he has challenged me (as representative of the BL) from the time when he was FIL Chair. There has always been something very

rewarding in our sparring sessions!

There was only one occasion when I felt like public enemy number one and that was when we changed the pricing structure, separating out the cost of loans and photocopies, as well as charging for the locations search. I remember standing at the front of a packed hall in Kings College alongside Mike McGrath, as we tried to answer questions and explain the rationale behind the changes. Fortunately, you all listened and, with the reduced cost of SED, hopefully now understand more clearly the reasons for charging the actual cost of the service, rather than an averaged cost over several services. From our point of view, it meant the Customer Services department being buried for several months under request forms in their thousands that had been submitted for refund/putting into your account.

We've now introduced the annual FIL@Boston Spa day, which has been a great success and ensured that you are all aware of any new developments within Document Supply. It is also an opportunity to ask questions about any aspect of our services and for you to see those members of staff that you ring on a regular basis.

I've been to some wonderful conferences with fire alarms regularly sounding, the heavens regularly opening – the weather was so bad at one Conference that Elaine Dean and I were forced to go and comfort ourselves with a Devon cream tea -, steep walks to conference sessions – who can forget Exeter's wonderful but steep grounds and the way we were all confused about the way round the site in Guildford –great papers (some more than others), great visits and tours and wonderful 'networking sessions' in the bar later in the evening. Angela Faunch's after dinner quizzes became an institution, where FIL members suddenly found their competitive streak, and no-one could have failed to be impressed by Jean Bradford's in depth knowledge of cricket. The millennium conference at Trinity College in Dublin was as special as we had hoped, with the wonderful literary tour in the evening (basically a pub crawl following in the steps of famous Irish authors), but I think my favourite was that held in Cambridge where the weather was perfect, the accommodation was excellent and the atmosphere ideal for both networking and learning. The punting sessions at the end, organised by Ros Doig, all added to the atmosphere.



There have been three further advantages to being part of this great organisation. It was a great bonus that, when I was elected onto the Document Delivery and Resource Sharing Committee of IFLA, I had the comfort of already knowing Penny Street, the Secretary of the Committee and FIL representative. This year, unfortunately mine and Penny's last, Rose Goodier joined us in Durban, and we were able to introduce her to friends on the Committee and provide the same role for her as Penny did for me. Secondly, as my library career started at Leicester University (yes – I was once a real cataloguer), it has been good to keep up-to-date with all the news about 'old' colleagues there from Linda Clark. And finally, I have to mention the Chandos publication 'Interlending and Document Supply in Britain Today' which Jenny Brine and Jean Bradford put so much work into editing and of which I was proud to be a part.

As the whole nature of document supply changes and librarians have an increased role in facilitating access to material, I shall continue to take an interest in the interlending environment and obtain regular updates from colleagues at the BL. Peter Robinson has taken over my role as BL Observer as retirement now beckons, but I've had a fantastic time in the library world and wish fellow FIL members equal enjoyment and challenges in the future.

What do you do all day?

by

Marian Hesketh

Marian is Assistant Librarian (Requests) with the Lancashire County Library & Information Service, based in Preston



Lancashire County Library and Information Service is one of the biggest public library authorities in Britain, serving a population of over a million. I work in the central Bibliographical Services department, which is housed in a former grocery warehouse hidden down a back street in Preston, and as we are not a public service point, we are lucky enough to be able to work flexitime. I usually arrive at the office about 8 a.m. and once I have cooled down (or warmed up) from the bike ride to work and changed into my “Miss Pringle” outfit, I switch on the computer and work through the emails which have arrived overnight.

My main job is to organise the borrowing side of interlending, and with our ILL request figures running at about 13 000 a year, there’s plenty to keep me busy. Long gone are the days when the daily postal delivery brought most of our replies. Now we’re slaves to the tyranny of the inbox, with a constant stream of replies from libraries all around the country. One good thing about it is the opportunity to learn the names of our opposite numbers in other authorities, and sometimes have an electronic conversation about missing books or the weather. It makes the whole thing much more personal. Increasingly, my time seems to be taken up with overdue and renewals. There is a certain amount of tension between the understandable desire of lending libraries to see their books again within a reasonable time scale and the equally understandable desire of our borrowers to hang on to the books for as long as possible. Sometimes it’s a delicate balancing act, and it keeps me pretty busy.

What I really like about interlending in a big

public library authority is the immense variety of material requested. We deal with requests for high level academic material, often from students who, for whatever reason, prefer to use the public library rather than their academic library. Professional development needs bring in requests from teachers and health workers. Local authors also have research needs, as do people delving into their family trees. Often, borrowers don’t understand the references they’re using, and disentangling muddled requests can take up a lot of our time. Then there are the people who just want to read particular books – the elderly lady who only reads “true crime”, others who ask for particular fiction titles (and what a nightmare they can be to supply), or large print fiction, or talking books for visually impaired borrowers. Requests for every type of book and journal article come across my desk. Only a minority of our registered borrowers use the interlending services, though I’m sure there are many more who could benefit from it. Those who do use it tend to make a lot of requests and the same names crop up over and over again. Our star borrower has had over 1100 items issued on his ticket during the past 2 years, and about a quarter of these were interlibrary loans. He’s certainly making good use of the library service.

Once I’ve checked the emails and dealt with the British Library Inray, it’s time to decamp to the basement. It’s cool and peaceful down there among the dusty volumes of the reserve stock, and it’s part of my job to consider the “last copies” which come in from our branch libraries and decide what to keep. Over the past few years, we’ve done a lot of work on our basement stock and we’re trying hard to develop a useful collection of older material which is still in demand but a little shabby for

the open shelves. In this game, you soon get to know which libraries have a good reserve stock and an accurate catalogue, and who's a good bet to supply that obscure tome. With city centre real estate becoming increasingly valuable and pressure on libraries to have only new, attractive books on display on their shelves, certain material is becoming hard to find. We're starting to hear about plans for a system where borrowers can request their own inter library loans via the Internet, without bothering their local library at all. It's an exciting idea and I'm sure something like this will develop, but I just hope that the punters don't want a Biggles book, or an early Barbara Cartland, or any of those books from 20 or 30 years ago which every public library would have had at the time and no-one has kept for posterity. As a random example, take "Harry Secombe's Diet Book" (yes, there really is such a book and someone did really ask for it). Talis Source and Unity UK both list more than 50 locations for it, and between October 2006 and July 2007, I trawled round more than 30 libraries in a vain attempt to borrow it. Not one of the listed locations could come up with the goods, and the massive inaccuracy of the databases could prove to be the Achilles heel of DIY inter library loans.

Another regular job of mine is "subject requests", and anyone who thinks that everyone googles nowadays so librarians aren't needed any more should take a look at some of these. Any subject can be covered, but some patterns emerge. Medical requests are usually easily answered, because there are so many good sites on the Web, but the information supplied won't always be welcome or good news. Wikipedia often proves a good starting point, if only to give me an idea of what the subject is all about. These types of request increase my general knowledge in strange directions, so that I've now become an expert on car manuals and a closet train spotter. Nowadays, we're asked for more and more material in foreign languages. Computer books in Chinese, management books in Russian, love poems in Czech – all have been supplied. I wasn't entirely sure if the love poems were quite what was wanted, but I didn't have any complaints so they must have worked. We often rent foreign material from Brights Books to supplement our own collections, and we also have a purchase card in the department so that we can buy material online. Wrestling with foreign websites is another way to enhance our language skills.

After dealing with the few pieces of paper which have come by "snail mail" and another stream of emails, it's time for lunch and a run round the park to recharge the brain cells.

During the afternoon, my attention turns to preparing the requests for inputting the next day. Since 1990, we've used the ILLOS interlending package, but we're about to take the plunge and join the Unity UK community, which will mean big changes in the way that we work. I won't be sorry to see the back of the endless and pointless mechanical typing in of requests. If I have any time to spare, I'm also responsible for sending books for binding. There are also some ongoing projects in the basement, and various housekeeping tasks such as running the "file tidy" and sending chasers. If I'm really short of something to do, I can check the British Library monthly statement, which usually runs to 20-30 pages. I know that many people don't check it closely, but I always find some mistakes in it. Whether the money saved is worth the time spent checking is another matter.

At last it's 4 p.m. and I've worked myself to a standstill. Time to check the last few emails before braving the city centre traffic on the way home.



Marian tackling slightly quieter roads well away from the centre of Preston

The Skills Exchange

An information sheet by Rose Goodier

The Skills Exchange has been set up to provide a space where the Library and Information Sector can meet to discuss developments and exchange ideas. The original idea was conceived by Stephanie Taylor from Critical Eye Communications. Stephanie has been thinking about starting a forum like this for some time and she has now developed it to the point where everyone is invited to join in and use it.

The basic structure of The Skills Exchange is now up and running. You can access it at: <http://www.the-skills-exchange.org>

Registration is free. You will find full instructions on how to register on the site, and it is up to you whether you wish to use your own name or an anonymous “handle” when you register.

Stephanie has suggested some topics which people may wish to discuss and these include the following list :

- The changing role of Public Libraries – what are they for in the modern world?
- Has the Public Lending Library become redundant in the age of Amazon and Waterstones?
- Electronic content and resource-sharing. Are e-journals stopping you supplying articles via ILL to other libraries?
- Linking up – are you in a local or regional consortium? If you are, is it well-used? If you aren't, would it be helpful?
- What happened to books? The modern library
- LibraryThing – has a group especially for librarians who use it. What is your opinion of LibraryThing? Do you use it?
- Library Elf is a third-party free service that offers to track return dates and overdues across multiple libraries in one interface for users. Users can set up reminders via email, text and RSS feeds. Libraries have to actively participate. Should libraries be promoting this kind of third-party service? Or should they be promoting it themselves? More information at <http://www.libraryelf.com>
- Do you provide best use/online safety guidance for people using PCs in the Library?
- Do you charge users for inter-library loans? How is this decision reached? And, linked to this, do you promote inter-library loans as a service to your readers?
- Who is archiving your electronic journals? Paper copies are the responsibility of the library, but with electronic journals subscriptions you are often buying access to content

on a server owned by the publisher – so who is ensuring archiving and preservation of e-journals into the future?

- Keeping up or leading? Should the library be leading users in new technologies such as social networking sites, blogs, wikis and RSS feeds? Or should the library look to support what users initiate themselves? Or is this not the business of the library at all?
- A rose by any other name – do you work in a library? Or are you now in a resource centre, information centre, discovery centre? There is even a move within the sector to revert back to the “retro” name of “The Library”! What do you think about these changes? Do they help to redefine the profession and the service in the 21st Century, or do they just confuse users?
- Walking the line – Copyright in the commercial library. How do you deal with the balance of material used for personal use/research and embargoes on using resources in a commercial situation? In an age of a search engine on every desktop, how do you educate your users about responsible use of online resources?
- Corporate Portals: Managing commercially – sensitive material and open-web resources in a single environment is possible. Is it good to merge them or is it better to keep them apart?
- Do you need a Repository? The academic world is currently in the throes of implementing both institutional and subject repositories for research output. Is this something that could be usefully adapted to the commercial sector?
- Web 2.0 tools and closed access – the tools of universal sharing can be used within a closed environment. Is anyone experimenting with blogs, wikis or other web 2.0 tools in commercial information management?

Everyone is encouraged to bring their own ideas to the Forum and to initiate some interesting discussions. Bearing in mind that this is an ongoing project, any suggestions or advice would be extremely welcome at this stage.

One of the features is Blog Watch, a round up of the best posts from relevant blogs which have been made each week. There will also be a list of blogs of interest to the community, and suggestions of which blogs to include would be welcomed.

Another feature is Peer Review. In this section, if you are writing an article, or even just thinking about it, you will be able to get feedback from colleagues with similar interests before you submit.

There is also a section for general chat and a bit of fun.

Please come along and join in the conversation, and encourage any of your colleagues who may be interested in participating as well.

If you have any suggestions or ideas, Stephanie will be pleased to hear from you. You can contact her at this email address:

Stephanie.t@criticaleyecommunications.co.uk

Resource Sharing for the Future : Building Blocks to Success Report of the 10th Interlending and Document Supply Conference National Library Singapore, 29-31 October 2007

by

Avril Patterson

*Avril is Principal Library Assistant in the Interlibrary
Loans Department of the James Joyce Library,
University College Dublin*

It was my privilege to attend this conference on behalf of the Forum for Interlending, and my thanks to FIL for affording me this opportunity. This was an impressive conference in both content and organization. Attended by almost three hundred delegates from 34 countries, the programme was a full one, and the spread was such to sustain interest across the three day conference period. All papers were delivered in English, and a paper copy of the proceedings was made available to all delegates on registration. This assisted those for whom English was not their first language, but also alleviated the need for copious notetaking. The programme comprised a series of keynote papers, complemented by papers and case studies on the strands of Resource Sharing and Tools and Enablers, some of which were parallel sessions.

As the first keynote speaker, Mike McGrath provided an insightful review of the rapid change that has occurred in document supply in recent years, and identified key agents of change and their impact in the context of changing demand for document supply. The complexities of the current environment were explored, particularly the interrelationship of the "Big Deal" model, the digitization of journal back files, e-books and mass digitization of books, open access publishing, copyright and digital rights. This paper also presented

challenges, not least in the definition of document delivery services, and in conclusion suggested that ILDS services should broaden their scope to "search and find" rather than "fetch and carry".

Mat Pflieger, the British Library's Head of Sales and Marketing, acknowledged McGrath's contention that the attraction of immediate access to material and easy browsing had been underestimated by the British Library. This paper quantified the decrease in BLDSC's document delivery services at 11-15% per annum since 2000, and predicts that while this decline has slowed, the end of the drop has not yet been realized. BLDSC's response has been to adopt a strategy focusing on access and financial sustainability. Therefore the aim is to develop and enhance existing platforms with limited investment, and also to develop partnerships, such as that with Google, PubMed and ETHOS, thus making BLDSC's collection more accessible to remote users.

In his very interesting paper on legal problems of document delivery by libraries, Dr. Harald Muller noted the changed relationship between document delivery services and publishers in the electronic environment. Because there is no loss in quality in reproduction, libraries' document supply services can be viewed by publishers as competition. While document

delivery is usually enshrined in copyright law, legislation has generally failed to accommodate electronic document delivery, largely because of uncertainty regarding its implications. The complexities of document delivery in the electronic age are compounded by the fact that most licences are governed by the law of the country most favourable to the publisher rather than the law of the country in which the library is situated. The need to uphold freedom of information was stressed, and it was suggested that those engaged in ILDS should be proactive to achieve and maintain transparency in this area.

The need for ILDS practitioners to broaden their scope was again the main thrust of Ngian Lek Choh's and Chan Ping Wah's paper, the fourth keynote. They argued for the role of the library as an agent to connect users to resources, and that ILDS should be positioned to connect the users seamlessly to the resources at the point of need, and in the user's preferred manner. ILDS should therefore be embedded within the value chain of enquiry and resource discovery service, whether mediated or unmediated.

The requirement to re-engineer ILDS services was highlighted in the final keynote, which concentrated on the U.S. based Rethinking Resource Sharing (RRS) initiative. This is not just a reassessment of current mediated interlibrary loan, but encompasses all the ways libraries can work together to serve users. The initiative seeks to explore the possibilities of the user-centric Web 2 technologies, which contrasts with existing resource sharing practices and policies which are library and systems centric. This takes into account the expectations of today's information consumers: i.e. it must be convenient – users expect to get it as easily as they found it; it must be self sufficient – service must be available rather than needed; and it must be a seamless process. The adaptation of models from outside libraries is recommended, and services from outside libraries should be offered if appropriate. That services should be vendor neutral was stressed, as effective services require support from many providers. This paper stressed that by resource sharing and harnessing the conjunction of collections and expertise, libraries can offer more than any single library or commercial service can, and that no library is too small to share, or too large to gain.

The five keynote papers were complemented

by a wide range of papers and posters which focused on resource sharing in particular geographic domains, and in particular products and services. Many of these papers provided detailed examples of the suggestions and pointers made in the broader sweep of the keynote papers. Partnership is the principal strategy envisaged for the survival of document supply services. The need for the development of user centric services, borrowing from other consumer media service models, was reiterated. That libraries must also consider alternative services to supplement or even replace traditional services was argued, with purchase rather than loan a suggestion. Case studies demonstrated the leverage of technology to improve and streamline ILDS services.

Systems suppliers were well represented in the Sponsors and Exhibitors' area. Library visits were also arranged, and the social programme was enjoyable and beneficial as it allowed more informal communication, both with the speakers and with fellow delegates.

Attendance at this conference was a worthwhile and very valuable experience. The variety and quality of the papers, augmented by poster sessions, which emanated from across the globe, nevertheless had as a common theme the necessity for those engaged in ILDS to broaden its horizons and deliver services to readers as and when they need them, and in a manner convenient to them. Information is global in nature, and ILDS is an increasingly global activity. This conference provided a global perspective, which emphasized the benefits to all of resource sharing, and that its efficacy is dependent on minimizing restrictions as far as possible.

I am indeed indebted to FIL for this wonderful opportunity. Thank you.

Interlend 2008: Managing the gateway: redefining interlending for the 21st century

**30th June to 2nd July 2008
Peebles Hydro Hotel, Peebles, Scotland**



A packed programme including lectures, seminars and workshops will ensure plenty of content for both residential and day delegates.

We are pleased to announce the following confirmed speakers:

Robert Krall (University of Pennsylvania)

Derek Law (University of Strathclyde)

Phil Bradley (Internet Consultant and well-known author)

Karen Blakeman (RBA Information Services)

Antony Brewerton (University of Warwick)

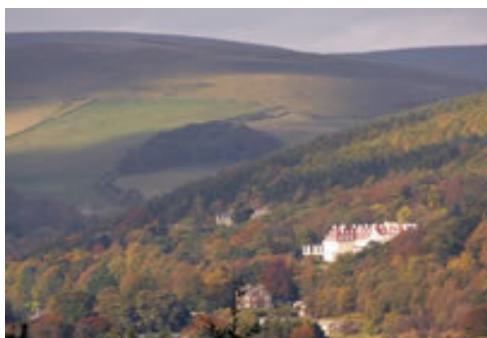
Graham Titley (University of Plymouth)

Genevieve Clavel (Swiss National Library)

Tim Padfield (National Archives)

Liz Hart and Graham Muncy (IAML)

Ian Landles (Local Historian and After-dinner speaker)



Programme:

- 30th June:** **Keynote speaker**
 Wine reception
 Conference dinner
 After-dinner speaker
- 1st July:** **A packed programme of seminars, lectures**
 An opportunity for one-to-one discussion with our
 speakers
 After-dinner quiz
- 2nd July:** **FIL AGM**
 Workshops and panel discussions

Information regarding the venue's excellent facilities can be found on the hotel's website at www.peebleshydro.co.uk.

FIL Conference Wiki

A Wiki is also now available at <http://interlend.pbwiki.com>. The password/invite key is fil (in lower case)

You'll find details of the programme, venue and speakers, as well as a Delegates' page for your comments, questions and ideas about the conference. If you have any difficulty accessing the wiki, please use the "Contact Wiki Owner" link on the login page

Booking forms

Forms can be found on the FIL website at <http://www.cilip.org.uk/groups/fil/conferences.html>

There is a special offer allowing delegates to book at 2007 conference rates if registration is made before 18th April 2008.

For further information , please contact:

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Conference Sponsors



Progress, Partnerships and Developments. The 73rd IFLA World Library and Information Congress: Libraries for the Future: 19th – 23rd August 2007, Durban, South Africa.

By

Rose Goodier

Rose is Head of Document Supply and Academic Liaison Librarian for English and American Studies at the John Rylands University Library, University of Manchester.

She is also the FIL representative on the IFLA council

General Overview

The 2007 IFLA World Library and Information Congress was held this year in Durban, at the sparkling and impressive International Conference Centre (known to all as the ICC). The theme was "Libraries for the Future: Progress, Partnerships and Developments". Glancing through the conference programme, it quickly became apparent that a huge variety of topics relating to all types of libraries would be addressed during the five days of the conference. There was truly something for everybody, ranging from talks on the virtual cultural heritage of Lapland, to presentations on manuscript co-operation in Timbuktu! In my role as FIL's official representative, however, I duly elected to attend the sessions organized by the Document Delivery and Resource Sharing Section. I also had a great opportunity to attend various other presentations which were relevant to my English and American Studies subject work.

Durban is a fascinating city and I was particularly bowled over by the architecture - a mix of tropical deco hotels, modern apartment blocks and ornate nineteenth century municipal buildings. It is located in the beautiful province of KwaZulu Natal, and you don't have to venture very far out of the city to discover a wealth of remarkably stunning scenery. The hospitality was wonderful, and attending the Congress enabled many of us to learn a great deal about South African history



and current affairs.

Section on Document Delivery and Interlending WLIC Conference 2007 Open Programme

This year's theme was "Using Technology to Improve Interlending and Resource Sharing Services". The Open Programme was scheduled to last for the whole of the Monday afternoon, and was divided into two separate sessions. The first session was attended by 210 people, with about 100 people attending the second half. Presentations in the first half included a talk by Janet Teresa Zambri (University of the Witwatersrand) and Heidi Visser (University of Pretoria) on dealing with unfilled Interlibrary Loan requests; a paper by Jacqueline Gillet (INIST-CNRS France) on secure electronic delivery services offered by INIST in Nancy; a discussion about the convergence of technology and resource sharing by Lucina Fraser and Ophelia Cheung (Ryerson University, Canada) and a talk by Ching-Chih Chen (Simmons College, Boston) on using cutting-edge technology for innovative global resource sharing, with particular reference to Global Memory Net and World Heritage Digital Memory.

During the second half we listened to a talk on the OCLC-Amical Respond project by Jeff Hiroshi Gima (American University of Paris); a comparative study of library resource sharing in China by Tim Jiping Zhou and Elaine Xiaofen

Dong (University of Arkansas) and a talk on ALIAS, a full service interlending aid which connects users with non-English resources, by Lynne Rudasill and Kit Condill (University of Urbana Champaign, Illinois)

I personally found Jeff Hiroshi Gima's talk particularly interesting. The OCLC-Amical Project involves leveraging Worldcat to facilitate resource sharing between member libraries of the AMICAL Consortium. The Consortium consists of twenty American Universities situated outside of the USA, including such locations as Kuwait, Rome, Sharjah and Budapest. It was interesting to hear how OCLC had worked with the Consortium to develop their resource sharing services, and it was noteworthy that interlending workflow had increased as a result.

I was also very impressed with the concept of ALIAS, connecting users to non-English resources. The Slavic Reference Service at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign has teamed up with the Centre for Global Studies to develop and implement ALIAS – the All-Language Interlending Assistance Service. Having spent several years at UMIST battling with the complexities of bibliographic references to Russian journals, I would have very much welcomed the help provided by a service such as ALIAS. This very useful service goes a long way towards helping to unravel problematic ILL requests relating to the languages and intellectual output of Eastern Europe, the Russian Federation, Central Asia, the Caucasus and Turkey.

The full text of Jacqueline Gillet's very interesting paper appears in the latest IFLA Section Newsletter, where you will also find

abstracts of the OCLC-Amical Respond project talk, and the ALIAS presentation.

Pre-Planning for 2008 IFLA Congress in Quebec

Open programme

The theme of next August's Canadian IFLA Congress will be "Libraries without borders: Navigating Towards Global Understanding". With this title in mind, a decision was made to choose "Global Resource Sharing Across Borders" as an appropriate theme for our Section's Open Programme. It was agreed that the call for papers would go out in November 2007, and that the term "borders" would be interpreted broadly to enable a wide variety of presentations to be selected. The Quebec Conference will take place on 10th – 15th August 2008.

Satellite

It was decided that a pre-conference satellite event should be held in 2008, and Boston, USA was the agreed venue. The event will be held on August 6th and 7th, 2008, immediately before the Quebec Conference. "Rethinking Resource Sharing" will be the theme, and a variety of international speakers will be invited to present papers at the event.

IFLA web site

I would strongly recommend colleagues to take a look at the IFLA web site where many of the papers from the Durban Congress can be accessed in full – text form. The web address is: <http://www.ifla.org/>



UK delegate enjoying the sun in Durban

Far right: Penny Street (University of Liverpool).

Front row left to right; Betty Lowery (BL) Penny Street (University of Liverpool) and Linda Ashcroft (John Moores University, Liverpool)



Implementing Unity UK, The Derbyshire Libraries Perspective 2 years on.

By
Erica Childs

Erica is the Requests Manager for Derbyshire County Council Libraries

The Initial Challenge

The first few days with Unity UK were a bit of a blur. I remember in the days just before going live a mild panic began setting in as the enormity of the challenge ahead of us started to sink in. We were about to go from a completely paper based filing system with a basic Excel sheet index, to a fully computerised system, and there was no going back! The training had been two weeks earlier at the OCLC offices in Birmingham and it seemed an eternity ago, we had had no way to practise, and therefore it was difficult to prepare new workflows. In the end we had to accept that things would be a bit messy at first. We decided not to worry about perfect work routines at first, and went for a trial and error approach using the basic principles we had learnt in the initial training. It wasn't an easy situation to live with: as library staff we were used to set routines we had followed for years, and being fairly sure that the action we were taking would end in the desired result (most of the time anyway). Some days we would come into the office and never do more than clear the emergencies and deal with the notes that had accumulated since we were last in. And of course as with all new systems the first weeks were full of niggling issues, you would solve one only to find another. This was not helped by the short lead in time given to OCLC to implement the system, with the knock on effect that pre-live testing was limited.

Meeting the Challenge

We took steps to minimise the pressure; such as calling people back when they phoned rather than trying to deal with enquiries there and then, and stopping incoming requests via the Talis system. Then with the excellent assistance provided by the OCLC Helpdesk staff, and the library workers overwhelming instinct to organise information, within days we were adapting our workflows and finding work rounds. As we got to know the system we

realised that in order to maximise its potential we needed to be prepared to adapt our workflows around the system rather than bend it to fit our current workflows, in some cases completely revising the way we worked. This did take time, but the pay offs in efficiency and improvements in service (described further below) have made the effort more than worth while. The key for us was learning to let go of old practices, accepting that for a while a bit of a mess is ok and that routines are not set in stone.

As our experience grew a two way dialogue between OCLC and ourselves began. We learned from their knowledge of the software, and they learned from our understanding of the Inter-lending processes and needs specific to the UK and to Derbyshire. From early on we saw OCLC reacting to ours and other authorities' needs, and the service beginning to develop as a partnership. This can be seen in their commitment to regional and national user groups, and the developments and upgrades that have come as a result of these and individual customer feedback. Also Key to our successful implementation of UnityUK has been the positive attitude, hard work and determination of the Inter-library loans staff. This was achieved by supporting each other, listening and acknowledging peoples concerns, addressing them where possible, but not dwelling on them, and constantly reminding ourselves of what we had already achieved and the potential on offer. The reactive and supportive approach of OCLC also acted as a motivational factor.

Service Improvements

Previously once we emailed a request we had no clue as to its progress. We therefore limited rotas in order to keep track of a request. Because UnityUK tracks each response individually and then automatically

sends to the next location if necessary, we are not only better able to track the progress and responses to a request, we are able to use long rotas which significantly cut down the number of times a location search has to be carried out and a request resent. By setting up our supplier preferences we are also able to let the system order the rota, removing the time consuming process of ordering a long rota to ensure use of the cheapest supplier.

UnityUK has also brought together the key location databases of Unity, LinkUK and the British Library into one search. The large amount of work undertaken by OCLC to clean up and obtain new and updated data is showing in the much improved quality of the data.

The work queue system has made identifying requests that need action much easier, this has allowed staff to better prioritise their work, with all staff dealing with all work routines as needed rather than sticking to personal pre-set tasks. As a part time manager this has been invaluable.



Julie Jones from the Derbyshire County Council Request Unit

We have been able to use the extra functionality in UnityUK to remove a very large filing and data entry burden. A large proportion of staff time was spent purely retrieving and adding information to and from emails and request records. We now find that we are able to spend much less time dealing with the administrative aspects of processing requests and much more on the added value activities which allow us to supply hard to find items.

Certainly in Derbyshire this very important; it is by supplying these items that customers perceive the value of the inter-lending service. When comment is made by the public about the Inter-lending service either via comments forms / letters or via surveys such as CIPFA, it is most often in my experience about supplying those difficult items.



Jeanette Beedall from the Derbyshire County Council Request Unit

We still have a list of things I would like the system to do (when don't you), but in using UnityUK and working with it rather than against it we have been able to achieve efficiencies which have allowed us to significantly improve our average supply time and increase the amount of time spent on value added activities.

In the future

UnityUK has the potential to help deliver a national vision of inter-lending that goes beyond pure holdings statements and email. There are of course technical and political issues to overcome, and we have to recognise that implementing one system, with complex functionality, to fit with the myriad of systems and workflows we have nationally, will not happen over night. It will be a continual process and the path won't always be smooth. It requires participation by all if we are to make the most of the potential on offer. Only time will tell if the OCLC and Combined Regions partnership can make the potential a reality, but I feel the last two years show it is possible.

The views expressed in this article are personal and do not necessarily represent that of Derbyshire County Council.

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