

# FIL

*Forum for Interlending*

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# NEWSLETTER

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## CHAIR'S REPORT 1993-94

The past year was one of consolidation of the previous year's activities in which FIL continued to liaise with other co-operative bodies on areas of mutual concern and to campaign on behalf of the interlending network.

Charging for interlending is still a thorny problem. We have voiced our disquiet to BLDSC and questioned the use of the BLDSC standard voucher for differential charging. BLDSC has effectively sanctioned this practice by the introduction of differential rates for premium services and although it is recognised that the declining value of government funding has increased pressure on BLDSC's prices, the role of BLDSC as 'honest broker' between libraries has been undermined. A survey on charging for interlending is currently being undertaken by FIL and it is hoped to publish the results shortly. The reluctance by libraries to publicise details of individual charges will be respected in the final report.

LINC is to address the issue of charging and analyse the organisational health of co-operative bodies as part of its Review of Library and Information Co-operation. FIL will collaborate with LINC in both areas of the Review and has already contributed to the LINC Workshop on the Interlending of Performance Sets. FIL will also liaise with CONARLS on a project to assess the reasons for the failure of ILL requests.

A response was made by FIL to the Department of National Heritage on the consultative document which recommended the establishment of the Library and Information Commission. The text of the response was published in the FIL Newsletter Issue 16.

Workshops have continued to gain popularity. An Exchange-of-Experience Workshop was held in the south-east of England in November 1993 and was well-received by the 25 delegates who attended. Suitable venues are often a problem though a plea in the Newsletter attracted welcome offers and these are receiving consideration. The first 'JANET for ILL' Workshop was staged in Manchester in September 1993. 32 delegates enjoyed a very useful hands-on training session only made possible by the superb facilities of UMIST Library. Plans are now underway to repeat the exercise at Warwick University

and we would wish to extend the programme if libraries with large computer clusters could be found. David Kenwyn was appointed as the FIL representative to the VISCOUNT Users' Group and assisted in the VISCOUNT/FIL Workshop in the south-east of England. We would not wish to extend this programme of workshops from LASER to other library regions at present.

This is merely a basic summary of the major activities of FIL during the previous year. Believe me, there are more! My tenure on the Committee comes to an end this year but I have the undoubted confidence that the combined strengths of new and old Committee members will see current projects and initiatives to fruition. I am grateful that I have had the opportunity to serve on the FIL Committee for the past four years, to extend the range of my professional involvement and knowledge and to make many dear friends and valuable contacts. I wish, therefore, to record my thanks to the Committee and all FIL members, my previous and present employers – Cleveland County Libraries and the National Library of Scotland – and for the positive support and encouragement given to me by Miss Christian Wright and Dr Alan Marchbank.

*Maureen Ridley (Chair), National Library of Scotland; July 1994.*

## CHANGES AT FIL

Life moves on, but I think I speak for the FIL committee when I say we all felt a little sad after the AGM. The constitution lays down a total length of continuous service of 4 years and consequently Maureen Ridley (Chair) and David Kenwyn (formerly Treasurer and latterly Vice-Chair) stood down; both will be missed at future committee meetings.

Maureen has been an excellent chairperson, very hard working for FIL while at the same time an understanding leader who has, I think, drawn the best from us all. She made us a happy team and treated us as her friends. When she took on her new post in Scotland it would have been so easy for her to resign, but she coped admirably with both jobs; we are grateful to the National Library of Scotland for allowing and encouraging her to continue.

David, as treasurer had an unrewarding task, collecting money from our various institutions, who, in some cases, do anything to avoid paying, while maintaining a cheerful front. He too worked hard for FIL, particularly with VISCOUNT and on the vexatious problem of 'charitable status' and we will miss his company too.

I am sure the membership join the committee in wishing them both well in the future and we look forward to seeing them at forthcoming conferences.

Two new committee members were elected to take their places at the AGM and we hope they will enjoy working with us. FIL officers will be elected at the first committee meeting following the AGM and are listed at the end of this newsletter.

*Ann Illsley, U.C.N.W., Bangor.*

## FIL CONFERENCE 1994

We feel the conference this year was better than ever, to some extent due to the superb venue of Warwick University. The food was very good, with no restrictions on quantity, the weather excellent and not even a fire alarm to disturb the proceedings! The presence of the gophers made a great difference to the running of things, one was unlikely to be lost, they were available to help with such things as projectors, display boards etc. not to mention conjuring up the raffle prize bottle of wine at very short notice! We also feel that the experiment of starting the proceedings at lunch-time has worked well and we shall continue with it – any other opinions on the format will be gratefully received.

## W(H)ITHER INTERLENDING? — INTERLEND '94 CONFERENCE REPORT

I have attended almost all of the FIL conferences and I have come to look forward to this annual event. However, I must admit that it was with some trepidation that I made my way to Interlend '94 at the University of Warwick. The advance programme promised an interesting and stimulating meeting and

the University has earned an excellent reputation as a conference venue so why the misgivings? In a rash moment I had agreed to lead a workshop on Interlending in Special Libraries and on top of that I had the pleasure of being driven to the University by the Director of our Institute who was also attending a meeting there. However, on arrival, I discovered that being a speaker did have some advantages – I merited a green stripe on my ID badge and an ensuite bathroom.

It was great meeting up with friends made at previous conferences and there was quite a bit of catching up to do before settling down to hear Malcolm Smith, Deputy Director of BLDSC, speak about the future role of the Document Supply Centre. Malcolm described the DSC's current position as 'transitional', with changes in technological and environmental factors, in combination with copyright considerations, all having a major impact on the future of document supply.

After tea, came a departure from the usual format as we were treated to what was scheduled as a debate on contracting out. In the event it was surprising how much Royston Futter of the Library Campaign and Peter Cox of the BBC had in common. Royston held that access to information is one of the basic rights and that it shouldn't be available only to those who can afford to pay for it. He felt that Compulsive Competitive Tendering (CCT) doesn't always save money and that because there is no security of tenure, CCT is morally wrong. Peter on the other hand said that to make CCT work, there is a need for a willing partnership of equal partners and CCT shouldn't be used to

hide predetermined cuts i.e. downgrading the service in the specification. While Royston took a moral stance, and Peter had a more pragmatic approach, both speakers agreed, however, that the greater evil is actually Local Government Reorganisation. I found this session interesting even though it didn't turn out to be a debate as such, it was useful to get two points of view on the subject. Perhaps we could try this idea again at future conferences?

Since two of the workshops dealt with the Follett Report and Local Government Reorganisation, both very topical subjects, I was gratified by the number of delegates who showed up for my workshop on Interlending in Special Libraries. I am Assistant Librarian at the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC) based in South Mimms in Hertfordshire and Interlending is one of my responsibilities. In the workshop I described the features which make ours a special library, including our clients, our source libraries and our procedures for Interlending. I followed with a look at the changes which have occurred in these procedures and examined the internal and external reasons for those changes. I concluded by looking ahead to possible future developments in the ILL service at NIBSC before throwing the discussion open to the floor. One thing that came across very clearly is that the feature common to most special libraries is their size (small) and staffing levels (usually one to two members of staff). Perhaps we should be thinking more in terms of Small Unit Libraries rather than Special Libraries?

You will find a fuller report on all three workshops elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Friday morning saw us heading off on visits to OCLC or the West Midlands Regional Library HQ. I went on the OCLC visit and was very impressed with the presentation. (I was even more impressed when I discovered that the wine at dinner was to be donated by OCLC!) After lunch we heard from Alastair Allan from the University of Sheffield who spoke about Electronic Interlending. Alastair said that Electronic Document Delivery was perceived as a panacea but in fact there is no quick electronic fix. Electronic journals are available

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**This will cover photocopying, when we don't have any originals, and postage**

**Please contact either of the editors**



NATIONAL ACQUISITIONS GROUP

## **FROM OVER THERE TO OVER HERE: OBTAINING BOOKS FROM ABROAD**

A Seminar to be held at  
**The George Hotel, The Square,  
Solihull, West Midlands B91 3RF**

on Wednesday 16 November 1994

Cost (excluding VAT): NAG members: £75.00; Non-members: £85.00

Closing date for applications: 9 November 1994

*Education and Research Officer*  
Jenny Varney

*Organiser*  
Martin Underwood

*More information available from:*

NAG, Westfield House, North Road, Horsforth, Leeds LS15 5HG; tel/fax: 0532 591447

but they are not perfect – you lose image and graphics, and the coverage is not very extensive. Publishers of electronic journals tend to choose certain core, mainstream titles. Alastair fears that we are being forced ahead too quickly – the technology is ready but our users are not. He emphasised that as well as training users, we must make time to train our library staff in IT, even if it means other library work piles up.

Paul Bolt of the Department of National Heritage (DNH) gave a very entertaining talk in which he discussed the proposed new Library and Information Commission. There have been positive responses to the Consultative Document which was published in the Spring, so they plan to go ahead. Paul pointed out that one of the functions of the Commission would be to influence and advise Government rather than represent libraries – it would not be a library lobby. It would pick up issues that needed to be dealt with and it all sounded rather wonderful until Paul was forced to admit that its membership would be elitist

– representing library users would be **not** the man in the street but leading businessmen and academics, none of whom could be described as average library users!

The AGM took place immediately after Paul Bolt's speech and being so timed, was well attended though perhaps not so controversial as last year's!

The Conference Dinner that evening was excellent as was the wine kindly donated by OCLC – many thanks! During the evening I had the opportunity of speaking to Ross Shimon and Matolo Kanduru who were to address the Conference on Saturday morning. Ross Shimon, Chief Executive of the Library Association, was due to give a paper on the theme of 'Competition, Cooperation and the Commission'. He chose the novel approach of dealing with his subject in the format of an open letter to the new Secretary of State for National Heritage, Stephen Dorrell. In this letter he urged the Secretary of State to go ahead with the proposed Library and Information Commission, and felt that the Commission should turn its

attention to recent government policies (local government reorganisation, changes in the health service, copyright and freedom of information included) which have a great impact on the provision of Library Information Services. He hopes the government will not abandon the principle that core public library service should be free at the point of delivery.

Matolo Kanduru of the Tanzanian Library Service (TLS) was the final speaker of the Conference. He painted a very vivid picture of the problems facing the TLS in their struggle to provide a library service in the face of lack of funding and other resources. Matolo explained that although it is a public library, the TLS performs some of the functions of a National Library in that it is a deposit library for printed material produced in the country, it publishes the Tanzanian National Bibliography and also runs the School of Librarianship. Librarians in Tanzania are fully aware of the benefits of Interlending and Resource Sharing, but in practice, Interlending is extremely difficult given the shortage of funding, limited stock and lack of telephone links, transport and decent roads. Much of the library stock has been donated via organisations such as Book Aid International in London. If you would like to help, you can contact Book Aid International on 071-733-3577 for more information, but please **do not send material without their prior approval.**

Once again, I left Interlend full of enthusiasm and ready to tackle another year at the sharp end of Interlending. FIL's Annual Conference is a good opportunity to meet up with others involved in Interlending – I find this especially important as I work in a small unit and I **am** the Interlending Department at NIBSC! The Thursday lunchtime to Saturday lunchtime timetable continues to work well and the mix of formal seminar sessions, workshops and social events all contribute to make the FIL Conference a very popular as well as a practical event. If you didn't make it this year, look out for the Interlend '94 Conference Proceedings and plan to join us at Interlend '95 in Glasgow – I can guarantee it will be worth your while!

*Denise Lawrence, Assistant Librarian, NIBSC*

## WORKSHOP ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (BANHAM REPORT)

Guy Daines, from the Library Association, gave this workshop a detailed account of the plans submitted by the Banham Committee, so far, for local government reorganisation. The major thrust of the Banham review is to divide existing counties into unitary authorities. Counties such as Cleveland, Avon, Somerset, Buckinghamshire and many others are scheduled to be divided into at least two and possibly three or four different authorities. There are different recommendations for each county which have been subject to review.

The workshop concentrated on the effect that this would have on inter-library loans. Concern was expressed that the existing union catalogues in the regions and at BLDSC would need to be updated and that there would not be any new money available from the Department of National Heritage to do this. Similarly, databases such as VIS-COUNT and LIBRIS, would need to be altered in order to reflect the stock of the new library authorities, rather than the existing ones.

Representatives from libraries involved raised concerns about the allocation of existing stock such as the special collections. There were also fears that these collections would not be maintained to the present standards because of the smaller funds available to the new authorities for the purchasing of stock.

The workshop felt that the Banham report would damage public library provision in this country, and that this would have a knock-on effect to other sectors of the library community. For instance, if there is a decline in the purchase of undergraduate textbooks, as seems likely, this will increase demands upon the academic libraries to purchase this kind of material.

The workshop concentrated people's minds upon the problems ahead. It remains to be seen if we will be able to resolve them.

*David Kenwyn, Westminster Library and Information Service*

## WORKSHOP ON FOLLETT REPORT

It will be no surprise to academic librarians that a large audience gathered on the first night of the conference for a workshop on the Follett Report. The workshop was led by Elaine Dean of Sheffield University, who began by outlining the findings of the report.

One of the themes touched on by Elaine was the 'just-in-time' or access approach to library holdings, whereby material is obtained when requested, rather than the 'just-in-case' philosophy of buying stock for future, as yet unspecified use. The 'just-in-time' approach clearly has considerable significance for ILL services; although there are advantages there is also the question of payment, since the cost of ILLs would be bound to escalate. This point led on directly to a discussion on the charging methods for ILLs in academic libraries. Not surprisingly there was considerable variation, from those libraries with devolved budgets which charged back the cost of the loans to faculties, to those that charged users directly. Where this is the case the most common charge was a pound per item. The other method of controlling costs by restricting the number of ILLs was also touched on – the most popular method being to limit the number in progress, with figures ranging from eight to thirty and above.

Discussion of the methods of charging and restricting loans led inexorably on to the issue of copyright legislation and the ways in which this was interpreted by different institutions. Elaine noted that it was illegal to supply an article to a user without some form of payment.

The final and most topical issue raised was that of performance indicators for ILLs, and the practical means of acquiring this data, one method being the use of a paper slip to record the dates of request, receipt etcetera. One interesting issue raised in relation to the use of performance indicators for ILLs is the distortion of figures by unusual requests. An example was cited of an ILL obtained after much hard work from South America several years after the initial request. Although this represented a success for the ILL section involved, it would not be reflected in any performance indicators produced.

Our thanks are due to Elaine for leading a very interesting and successful workshop.

*Jill Lambert, University of Central England, Birmingham.*

## WORKSHOP ON INTERLENDING IN SPECIAL LIBRARIES

As the Document Supply Centre representative at the FIL Conference held this summer at the University of Warwick, I opted to attend the evening workshop on Special Libraries, not being directly involved in 'Follett and Interlending' or 'Coping with Local Government Reorganisation', (the other choices) and given our wide scope of specialist materials.

The workshop was led by Denise Lawrence from NIBSC – National Institute for Biological Standards and Control to give it its full title. The participants came from a diverse range of libraries covering pharmaceuticals, forestry, electrical engineering and island technology.

Denise gave a very informative presentation which began with a brief overview of the Institute and its work. She went on to describe the features which make it a special library, including its clients, source libraries and procedures. The presentation concluded with a look ahead at possible new developments within Inter Library Loan Services at NIBSC.

There was time at the end for discussion and experience sharing; this covered aspects such as speed of service, (in some cases a vital element) cost, (DSC was seen to be expensive by some participants) sources of supply, ease of access, internal holdings and the role of FIL in supporting special libraries.

DSC is in the position of being a unique specialist library so it is very difficult to draw comparisons and share experiences on the same scale, but from a personal point of view I felt that everybody gleaned some information about our services that was unknown at the outset.

The workshop drew to a close at 9.30 and we all retired exhausted to the University bar.

*Helen Parnaby, British Document Supply Centre*

## VISIT TO WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL LIBRARY BUREAU

Eighteen delegates chose the option of a visit to the WMRLB at Birmingham Central Library.

We were met on arrival by Director, Geoff Warren and taken for an introductory talk and overview to the Shakespeare Room. The Shakespeare Collection housed here is worthy of a separate visit by anyone interested in the works of The Bard, and includes foreign editions as well as folio and illustrated texts. The Room itself features fine woodwork with period book-cases and ceiling. One's attention tended to wander whilst the Director outlined the scale and scope of regional services – understandably so.

The Bureau itself operates from the 3rd Floor of the Central Library complex, having recently moved to a smaller area (courtesy of further computerisation). Public, academic, industrial and special libraries across the region (37 at present) comprise the membership of WMRLB, and these are linked via a transport system using three vans daily. The VISCOUNT database provides the information link and highway, and common services for bibliographical co-operation, training and special materials (eg. music, and European literature).

We were introduced to staff at WMRLB, and given an exposition on proposed developments to widen services and attract new members. In the midst of this progressive, computerised and business-like environment we noticed, pride of place, the original Regional Sheaf Catalogue, still in use! – the past, the recent past, and the future, side by side, which, I suppose, is the epitome of any library.

Incidentally, we did have tea and biscuits, even if some had more biscuits than others!

*Brian Else, Wakefield Met. District Libraries*



## FIL CONFERENCE 1995 — GLASGOW

Your FIL Committee never rests – we are already planning the 1995 conference! Please note in your diaries –13-15 July 1995 – at the Kelvin Conference Centre, The Science Park, University of Glasgow. The 1994 conference at Warwick was exceptionally good value; unfortunately inflation has had a hand in the charges for the next conference and, having surveyed a number of venues, we find that all costs have increased quite considerably during the past year. We will keep the costs down where we are able and hope you will all still be able to come.

## REPORTS ETC

The editors of this Newsletter would be very pleased to publish any reports from Library Systems User Groups or meetings of relevance to ILL.

It is not always possible to send a committee representative to all meetings, even if we know of them, so please send us information on any meetings, etc attended so that it can be disseminated.

## CHARITABLE STATUS

The purpose of applying for charitable status would be to save the organisation money in the payment of taxes. In the case of VAT our turnover is not great enough to warrant us paying anything; we would be able to reclaim all monies paid. It is possible for an organisation to apply for income tax rebates without being a charity.

There is no doubt, however, that charitable status would give us tax benefits but it is not the case that we will automatically be granted charitable status. The Charity Commissioners refused such status to the Library Campaign. Their activities in seeking to influence central or local government policy may have been the reason for this refusal. We too may seek to influence government policy in relation to libraries, and charitable status would determine what we can and cannot do. This was made very clear when Oxfam's campaign on Frontline Africa was investigated by the Commissioners.

Our understanding of the current position is that if FIL had charitable status then it could only put forward a view relevant to its aims and drawn directly from its experience. General campaigns on the ethics of co-operative provision of services may be deemed illegal while we could only argue for the efficacy of co-operative services if such a campaign was based on FIL's direct experience. It is possible that FIL's ability to put forward opinions and views on behalf of its members would be severely restricted. Motions at AGMs conflicting with FIL's charitable status would have to be ruled out of order, or they may be overturned for us by the Commission. It would not matter if the support for them had been unanimous, or that the matter was considered fundamental to interlending.

Given these restrictions, the Committee would have to put much time and effort into ensuring that FIL's actions stayed within the charity laws.

The above is not a legal opinion. It is, however, based upon the experience of other organisations. The rules governing charitable status are under review, and it is possible that they will be tightened up considerably.

*David Kenwyn, Westminster Library and Information Service, London and Mark Perkins, Overseas Development Institute, Regents Park, London.*

## BOOK REVIEW

*A Review of Future Developments in Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery* by David J. Brown. Information UK Outlooks, 1993 December No 3

Information UK Outlooks are a new series published five times a year by the Library Information Technology Centre on behalf of the British Library Research and Development Department. Each issue is written by an individual expert and reflects the views of that person. The 1993/4 subscription price in the UK is £80.00 and an individual issue costs £10.00.

This issue covering interlibrary loan and document delivery is specifically looking at

the provision of individual articles. With the increase in the number of suppliers in the field of article delivery in the last few years this review is a timely publication, providing an overview of the major issues.

This work does not evaluate the services that are at present available, so there is no information from an independent source regarding the ability of the various players in the market to meet their quoted supply times. It does, though, provide a review of the different types of organization that are becoming involved in the document delivery market. Some attention is given to the issue of copyright and to the impact that these services will have on librarians, as well as the ways end users of the future will have to search the literature.

This is a useful addition to the large amount of literature being published on document delivery. References to other major work on document delivery in the last 2 years would have been an advantage, especially as this review provides a good introduction to the wide variety of sources now available for document delivery.

*Emma Cusworth, Document Supply Manager, Aston University Library and Information Services.*

## INTERLIBRARY LOAN SURVEY

The number of interlibrary loan requests for items which turn out to be already in our stock has remained constant over the last few years, in spite of resources spent on cataloguing and user education. Why is this, and can we do anything about it?

An analysis of over 500 such requests in the last year show that the balance is evenly spread between academic staff (48%) and postgraduate students (45%) with final year students, few of whom use the service, at 7%. All of these are experienced academic library users.

66% of the material requested is journal articles, 28% books and 6% conference papers. 59% of the superfluous requests come from Social Sciences departments, 24% from Science/Engineering and 17% from

Arts/Humanities departments. (Main Library users only.) 20% quoted BIDS or CD-Rom as a source of reference.

All forms are returned to readers stating that the items required are in the Library. We sent out a survey to approximately one-third of these in the last year, asking if they had used the catalogue and if they could identify why they had failed to locate the item. In order to avoid embarrassment to readers they were allowed to return questionnaires anonymously; however, there was still a low return rate of less than 20%.

Of these readers, one-third had not used the catalogue – reasons ranged from being too busy, to asking a colleague instead, to assuming they knew what we had in the library and where. Some readers gave no explanation and one reader explained that he could not use the computer at all and was too embarrassed to ask at the Information desk, so he put in Interlibrary loan requests instead.

Of the two-thirds of respondents who **had** used the catalogue, all except one had used the OPACS. (The exception was one student who used the printed journal list – inaccurately, she said, because she was in a rush.) About two-thirds of respondents were looking for journal articles, which failed, they said, because they misread the information given by the computer, thinking that journal issues listed individually were all that were held. Others were tripped up by journal abbreviations, mis-keyings or spelling mistakes – ‘**the computer is inaccurate**’, as one student wrote! Of the one-third of respondents who failed to find books, half complained that they had never been told about the card catalogue (for books added to the Library before 1981).

This was a useful survey, if somewhat tedious and tricky to undertake. How many more books and journals are these researchers failing to find, which do not end up as Interlibrary loan requests? They are not making the best use of our resources. The only recommendations we can make are obvious ones; that the computer catalogue should be complete and more user-friendly, particularly for journals, and researchers should be offered more guidance in how to

use our own library resources, in addition to tuition on BIDS and CD-Rom.

This will still not help some people, who put in superfluous requests time after time. You cannot change human nature, and other academic libraries have a similar problem. By intercepting these requests, each year we save over £2,500 of departments' money – not that we get any thanks for that. In the end researchers are only interested in getting hold of that book/article, not where it comes from, even if it is here right under their noses.

*Hazel Pember, University College Swansea;  
Reprinted by kind permission from the Swansea  
Library staff magazine 'ad lib'.*

## **DEAR EDITOR,**

Thank you for a meaty FIL newsletter. I felt I wanted to reply to Brian Else's letter concerning chasers.

He brings up a number of issues.

In the first place the only reason chasers are sent are because the original slips (and hence the answers) are not. If everyone was able to send the original requests on in a reasonable length of time, say three weeks, then there would be no need to send chasers at all. Chasers are sent usually because a request is sitting on someone's desk for months at a time, and then may subsequently be lost entirely. If everyone would make some sort of response in a reasonable time period then no one would ever need to send chasers at all. I send them when I have heard nothing of a request for months, and I need to know what, if anything has happened to my original request.

In an ideal world perhaps it would be best to send to one location at a time, but the staff time such a course demands is more than many places can cope with. I personally do NOT want my original slip returned from each location on a rota of 3 or 4 locations. If I did that I would spend all my time writing out envelopes. If people want the slip returned after each location I expect them to put only one location at a time on the slip. If they put a rota of a few on I assume that they

want it sent to the next on the list. Brian is not doing anyone any favours by sending them back to the home library if that is not what is wanted.

As for chasers, yes, they do take time, but the request is just as valid the second time as the first. The borrower is still waiting for the item. It is not the fault of the requesting library that somewhere on the line the original slip fell into a black hole. Binning the chasers helps no one, not even Brian, because if there is no response from the first chaser a second will be generated. In my case I alter the rota to try to miss the black hole, but if Brian bins the chaser before it gets to the black hole I will never find out where it is.

He is imposing his preferred work routine onto others which is unreasonable, nor is it helpful or constructive, nor does it, in the long run, save time and effort for any staff other than himself, and most of all it still does not get the item requested to the borrower who wanted it, which is what we are all supposed to be concerned with.

*Helen McNabb, South Glamorgan County Library, Frederick Street, Cardiff.*

## NEW LOOK

We have had some favourable comments about our 'New Look' Newsletter which is now being typeset at Reading University, overseen by Janet Moulton.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere thanks to Thelma Goodman of the University of Lancaster for past Newsletters. Following the completion of her term of office as Editor, she kindly offered to continue supervising the Newsletter through their Graphics Department, on our behalf, until we were able to make alternative arrangements. Her help, advice and co-operation has been very gratefully accepted.

*Ann Illsley, U.C.N.W., Bangor.*



## LASER/VISCOUNT: RECENT ADVANCES IN INTERLIBRARY LENDING, NETWORKING AND RESOURCE SHARING

LASER has been reviewing the current status of interlending services, networking and the present state and future needs of resource sharing for libraries and during the last year enormous strides have been made in furthering many of the goals identified, these include:

- improving notifications to the Union Catalogue and seeking more advanced technical ways of achieving this;
- seeking closer links with the academic, special and government library sectors in the South East of England;
- the promotion of open systems and networking interlending services between libraries in-house systems and VISCOUNT;
- seeking network links with JANET;
- providing a gateway to European resources including the use of ION (interlending open systems network) between the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and France;
- monitoring the use of LASER services, by improved supply times and providing statistical data to show usage, success rates, supply times and reasons for non-supply;
- assessing and promoting other cooperative services such as LASER's non-fiction subject specialisation scheme, LASER Joint Fiction Reserve, CILLA (Indic Language Acquisition and Cataloguing Scheme);
- identifying the requirements for co-operatives and networking including access to the Internet;
- assisting members who will be affected by local government re-organisation and adapting VISCOUNT to reflect new library authorities and provide accurate up-to-date holding information;
- working with bodies concerned with co-operation and assisting in the formulation of future policies;
- document delivery: the relationship of the LASER Van Transport Scheme to Electronic Document Delivery;
- developing an access strategy.

#### BOSTON SPA SERIALS

Contains records of over 500,000 serial titles together with details of the holdings of the Centre. The earliest holdings date from c1650.

#### BOSTON SPA CONFERENCES

The collection of published conference proceedings held by the Centre is recognised as the largest and most comprehensive in the world. The number of published proceedings exceeds 335,000, the earliest dating back to 1787.

#### BOSTON SPA BOOKS

Contains records of over 700,000 books from all over the world which have been added to the collections since 1980.

#### INSIDE INFORMATION

Contains details of articles from the contents pages of 10,000 of the most frequently requested journals held at the Centre. It is published monthly as a cumulating CD-ROM containing details of around 1,000,000 articles on each December cumulation.

#### INSIDE CONFERENCES

This is the latest CD-ROM title to be produced by the Centre. It contains details of conference papers from the 15,000 conference publications collected by the Centre and each December cumulation will contain records of 500,000 papers.

THE BRITISH LIBRARY

DOCUMENT SUPPLY  
CENTRE

## CD-ROM *Publications*

All of the CD-ROM publications are available for trial and evaluation prior to purchase.

For further details please contact:

**Mike Curston or Andrew MacCalman.**  
CD-ROM Development

The British Library Document Supply Centre,  
Boston Spa, Wetherby, West Yorkshire,  
LS23 7BQ United Kingdom

Tel: (44) 01937 546061 or Tel: (44) 01937 546457  
Fax: (44) 01937 546288



E-mail: [mike.curston@bl.uk](mailto:mike.curston@bl.uk) or [andrew.maccalman@bl.uk](mailto:andrew.maccalman@bl.uk)

THE BRITISH LIBRARY

*The world's leading resource for  
scholarship, research and innovation*

The practical results of these endeavours are:

#### Union Catalogue Maintenance

1.35 million notifications of additions and withdrawals were made by LASER members during 1993-94. This represents an increase of over 800,000 ISBN additions and deletions over the previous year. In addition 154,104 UK MARC records, 87,177 extra MARC, and 504,551 BLDSC serial records were added during 1993-1994.

The emphasis LASER has placed on Union Catalogue maintenance and the provision of automated and networked services is reflected in comparing the holdings and availability of LASER locations with other Regions using VISCOUNT. Some 29.16% of MARC records and 98.74% of extra MARC records are unique to LASER libraries.

Other Regions have recognised that there have been major shortfalls over many years in Union Catalogue maintenance and improvements in this area must be made if a successful access strategy for resource sharing is to be developed. EMRLS have propos-

als ready to be implemented and WMRLS improved its location notifications by constructive action during the year, resulting in a further million notifications of additions and deletions to VISCOUNT. Major problems remain for Regions other than LASER in notifying deletions and in processing additions and withdrawals of extra MARC material.

LASER has also provided batch and online facilities to enable members to do total replacements of their holdings to the LASER Union Catalogue from their local in-house system. Libraries such as Essex have already completed the exercise and other members are planning to do so.

#### CD-ROM Product and Viscount 3 (V3)

LASER's access strategy is based upon an up-to-date knowledge of the location of materials, allied to a networking strategy. The identification of book, serial and other categories of materials is done via the VISCOUNT online system. LASER has been examining with its users the search requirements for both bibliographical data and

locations or holdings displays. There has been a growing awareness that libraries who are developing access strategies require more flexible searching tools and need the knowledge of materials available via the interlending service close to reader services and the issue desk. In response to these needs LASER is:

- 1 Developing a CD-ROM/Hard Disk Product with enhanced searching facilities, including keyword(s), subject terms, authors, titles, series – searchable in any combination. For holdings or locations the CD-ROM product has the flexibility of being able to display the library's own locations by region or any combination of regions, as well as BLDSC stock locations. This product will also provide off-line ILL message formulation and uploading facilities to VISCOUNT's central message transaction store. It is to be released towards the end of this year, and will be available to any library or organisation interested in VISCOUNT's interlending service.
- 2 The search facilities available from the CD-ROM are to be incorporated and made consistent in usage and design with the planned VISCOUNT 3 system, which is currently being designed and based upon current users specified requirements.

### **Electronic Messaging for Interlibrary Lending**

LASER is the only Region where all major members use the VISCOUNT interlending messaging system to request and to respond to those requests via a central message transaction store, saving time in requesting and responding. Users can monitor and control the ILL request at all times. The system enables users to message other member libraries in the Region, other Regional Headquarters, libraries in other Regions and BLDSC. LASER has implemented ARTTel 2 and IN-TRAY services. The VISCOUNT message transaction store provides essential statistical/management information on the nature of requests, volume of requests within a Region, between Regions and to BLDSC, supply times and the reasons for non-supply.

The future of electronic messaging for interlibrary loans is a subject which requires more thought, discussion and agreement on standards, services and functions. VISCOUNT has built a system for its users which provides transparency between the VISCOUNT ILL system, BLDSC's ARTTel and the European service ION. However LASER in the course of designing VISCOUNT 3 will review the requirements for:

- Offline ILL message creation and uploading to VISCOUNT from LASER's CD-ROM/ Hard Disk product;
- Users on the other networks, e.g. JANET;
- Users local systems: the requirements for linking an ILL request facility from the local system to VISCOUNT;
- The relationship of international standards such as the ISO ILL protocol to future interlibrary lending request and documentary delivery process.

### **LASER's networking strategy includes:**

#### *London Link*

The London link project, funded by BLR&DD, is seeking to improve the knowledge of availability of items and speeding up supply times. The project is looking at the feasibility of linking the BLCMP system at the City of London Public Libraries, the DYNIX system at Kensington and Chelsea, the DS system at Wandsworth and the GEAC system at Westminster to VISCOUNT.

#### *JVP (JANET-VISCOUNT-Public Libraries Project)*

JVP is a pilot project which will link six public library authorities – Aberdeen, Berkshire, Birmingham, Croydon, Islington and Sheffield and the VISCOUNT databases and services to JANET to explore:

- a) public libraries use of the library and information resources available on and via JANET (including the INTERNET)
- b) academic libraries use of public library resources and information services

The JANET and VISCOUNT e-mail services are being made compatible and will be interlinked. The project is being financed by the Department of National Heritage (DNH) and the BLR&DD and commences in live mode from September 1994 and will last a year.

### *Project ION*

Access to European resources and the development of an open systems interconnection (OSI) strategy has been the concern of Project ION between the UK, the Netherlands and France. The user service began in November 1993 with 28 test sites in the UK and formal evaluation was undertaken in May 1994; the response from users was good.

Requests received from the Netherlands and France number just over 800; of 500 completed requests, 267 items were supplied and for 233 no locations were traced in the UK. This represents a success rate of over 50% for completed requests. 304 requests are still 'in process'.

The request service to the Dutch interloans service has been popular with UK libraries. Berkshire reported a success rate of over 70%. West Sussex delighted a reader by locating a book which their reader had been trying to get for 43 years!! Over 200 items have been supplied by Dutch libraries.

This project has been extended to the end of December 1994 for further evaluation and to draw up a business plan. It is hoped to extend to other European countries.

### *Project EARL (Electronic Access to Resources in Libraries)*

Although LASER's primary service is interlending, it has always had a co-ordinating role for co-operative activities. LASER organised a workshop sponsored by UNIPALM/PIPEX in Cambridge in May this year on Public Libraries, Networking and the INTERNET. One of the proposals outlined was to undertake a major project – EARL to examine the services, technical infrastructure and application/communication software required to network public library information and resources services and for providing public libraries with a link to the INTERNET.

A preliminary study, funded by some public authorities, will be undertaken by CDW Associates and it is hoped that a full study by BLR&DD will follow.

### *Project LIRN (Library and Information Referral Network)*

LASER's other major project is concerned

with the provision of a networked directory, reference enquiry and referral system in the field of business information but applicable to any discipline. Project LIRN is being developed under the Libraries Plan of the European Commission. Project participants are LASER, BIN (the Business and Information Network) and University College, London in the UK, University of Aveiro in Portugal and the University of Brussels (ULB) in Belgium.

The project will construct networked directories of library services, resources, information lists and interlending services in the field of business information with an accompanying thesaurus. The Directory and Thesaurus will comply with the X.500 Directory standard and be multi-lingual (English, French and Portuguese). The project which started in February 1994 will run for two years.

### **Local Government re-organisation and Interlending**

The future composition of local government will have a major impact on interlending and access services. LASER is formulating plans for assisting authorities who will undergo re-organisation.

These include:

- the revision and up-dating of holdings on LASER's Union Catalogue;
- producing if required, machine readable catalogues for newly constituted authorities;
- tailoring the CD-ROM product to show the new authorities holdings, surrounding authorities holdings, regional and national resources and providing stand-alone or linked OPAC's if required.

The size and resource budgets of some re-constructed library authorities could lead to greater reliance on efficient access to external resources to satisfy the requirements of their users. LASER will endeavour to produce practical services and products to ensure the continuing development of access and interlending.

### **Silver Jubilee and future services to Libraries**

LASER is celebrating its Silver Jubilee this year. In 1969 the South Eastern Regional

Library System and the London Union Catalogue which had served libraries since 1928 were merged. A special celebration is to be held in October in conjunction with the AGM when Paul Bolt of the DNH is the guest speaker. LASER has been undertaking a Quality of Service exercise in addition to the developments listed above in order that LASER and its members may **continue** to develop and improve a co-operative service which holds many challenges and opportunities in the future. That future is felt by the LASER Board and Advisory Panel to be a networked future, and the strategic planning process LASER is pursuing, enables its members and VISCOUNT users to take full opportunity of leading edge and practical developments in this arena. Increasingly users are putting resource sharing, cooperation, interlending and information at the centre of their services, with LASER playing a key role.

*Peter Smith, Deputy Director, LASER.*

## BRITISH LIBRARY NATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHIC SERVICE

### BLAISE-LINE: ITS USE IN INTERLENDING

#### Introduction

You may well be surprised to find an article about the National Bibliographic Service's BLAISE-LINE database in a journal devoted to inter-lending. However, if you read on you will discover that NBS and DSC's co-operation in ensuring that the British Library remains the world's leading resource for scholarship, research and innovation extends to the provision of a useful direct ILL facility within BLAISE-LINE.

BLAISE-LINE serves information professionals, publishers, booksellers, researchers, academics – in fact anyone who needs accurate up-to-date details about world-wide publications including government and official publications and EEC reports, or access to the vast resources of The British Library. There are 21 database files in total on BLAISE-LINE, including three files with DSC stock locations; DSC's Monographs file (1980 onwards), DSC's Conference Proceedings file (1964 onwards), and the SIGLE database of grey literature to which DSC contributes reports and theses information (1981 onwards).

#### BLAISE-LINE and ILL

With the BLAISE-LINE Order facility inter-library loans librarians can check a bibliographic reference, find out whether the item is in stock at DSC, and then order it online in one simple operation without leaving BLAISE-LINE. In addition it is also a straightforward matter to order material falling outside the above date spans or located in searches of other BLAISE-LINE database files, as well as journal articles from DSC's vast collection. For materials located on BLAISE-LINE you simply use the **ORDER** facility, and for items not found, such as journal articles, use the **ORDER INPUT** facility in the BNB Training File which has a lower connect time charge. If you are unlucky enough to request an item that is out on loan, DSC staff will automatically place your request on a waiting list and inform you of its progress.

#### How to use BLAISE-LINE Order

In order to make use of this facility it is a simple matter of following a few basic procedures. A sample search is outlined below, together with an explanation of the actions taken.

---

SEARCH 1?

USER  
**file dsc**

*to change files to the dsc monographs file*

SEARCH 1?

USER:  
**private and life**

*free text search for a book*

SEARCH 1 FOUND 1 ITEM(S)

---

SEARCH 2?

USER:

**prt br**

*browse (ie free) display format may provide  
enough information to check the item*

\*1

TI - Gerard Manley Hopkins a very private life Robert Bernard Martin

SEARCH 2?

**order**

At this point the system will ask for your DSC User Code. This stage can be avoided by placing this in your BLAISE-LINE User Profile.

PROG:

ENTER REQUEST NUMBER FOR ITEM 1

*use a DSC request number*

USER:

**AB12345 loan only**

PROG:

BATCH NUMBER = A9131119

REQUEST(S) FORWARDED TO BLDSC

ORDER COMMAND COMPLETED

The order facility can be used to select specific records or search sets e.g: **order 1-3 search 2** will generate orders for the first three records from search set 2.

#### **How to use BLAISE-LINE Order Input**

A sample search for an item not found through a BLAISE-LINE search is given below:

SEARCH 3?

USER:

**file bnbt**

*to connect to the BNB Training file at a  
lower connect charge*

SEARCH 3?

USER:

**order input**

PROG:

ENTER REQUEST NUMBER FOR ITEM 1

USER:

**PP23456 photocopy**

PROG:

ENTER TEXT, OR TYPE 'DONE'

**Nature, 19 Sept. 1991, pp.3-7, ecology and cd-roms** *type in the article details*

ENTER TEXT, OR TYPE 'DONE'

**done**

PROG:

ALL REQUESTS ENTERED (YES/NO/CANCEL LAST ITEM)?

USER:

**yes**

---

BATCH NUMBER = A9131432  
REQUEST(S) FORWARDED TO BLDSC  
ORDER COMMAND COMPLETED

### Order Maintenance

In order to list all requests sent to DSC simply type order 1 at the user prompt. This will list all batches sent to DSC:

PROG:  
USERID      BATCH NO.      REQUESTED      ORIGIN      REQUESTS      BLDSC STATUS  
AJOLO      A5094451      25/05/94      DSCM      1      PENDING  
AJOLO      A5094712      25/05/94      DSCM      1      PENDING  
AJOLO      A5094856      25/05/94      INPUT      1      PENDING  
END OF SUMMARY  
ORDER COMMAND COMPLETED.

You will notice that the BLDSC STATUS field is given as PENDING. This indicates that the request has not been downloaded from the DSC computer. Requests are downloaded twice a day and as long as the status remains as PENDING it can be cancelled. In order to do this type **order d** followed by the batch number:

SEARCH 3?  
USER:  
**order d A5094451**

PROG:  
ORDER BATCH NUMBER A5094451 DELETED  
ORDER COMMAND COMPLETED.

If you want a full listing of the actual requests from any batch number just enter **order 1** followed by the batch number at the user prompt (e.g. **order 1 A5094451**). This will show full details of the individual requests sent to DSC.

If it is necessary to keep an actual copy of orders sent it is possible to (if your communications software has the facility) either store to hard disk or print out the orders sent.

To make use of this facility libraries must be registered customers of both DSC and BLAISE-LINE. DSC customers who are not registered for automated transmission of requests should contact DSC Customer Services.

### Access to BLAISE-LINE

BLAISE-LINE can be accessed through BT's GNS X.28 or Dialplus networks, and via JANET. We are also currently testing a direct Internet connection in order to open up access to a far wider group of users.

### BLAISE-LINE Free One Day Trial

For those of you who have not seen BLAISE-LINE and would like to explore further we can offer a free day's trial at a time and date to suit. For details of this, or if you have any questions about BLAISE-LINE please contact me directly on (01937) 546551 (phone), (01937) 546586 (fax), john.lowery@bl.uk (E-mail).

*John Lowery, BLAISE-LINE, BLDSC,  
Boston Spa.*

## WHAT IS FIL?

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

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

Activities include:

- Annual conference;
- Exchange of experience workshops;
- Regular newsletter;
- Liaison with regional and national organisations involved in interlending and co-operation between libraries (eg BLDSC, LINC);
- Production of reports and publications covering matters of importance to ILL staff;
- Facilitating expression of views on national issues.

Recent areas of concern addressed by FIL include:

- Charges between libraries;
- Impact of CD-ROM;
- Quality assurance;
- Automation and ILL;
- VISCOUNT;
- JANET;
- LINC and BLDSC activities;
- Thesis charges and declaration forms.

## MEMBERSHIP

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

Please register me as a personal/institution\* member of the Forum for Interlending.

I enclose a cheque for £20.00, made payable to the FORUM FOR INTERLENDING/Please invoice my institution.\*

\*Delete as appropriate.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

---

## FIL MEMBERSHIP

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

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

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

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

## FIL MEMBERSHIP — UPDATING FORM

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

Contact name: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel no: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax no: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you.

Please return to:

*Elaine Dean (Membership Secretary), ILL Department, Main Library, University of Sheffield,  
Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN*

## **FIL COMMITTEE**

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