aplaBulletin

From the President's Desk

LOUISE WHITE

It is not a coincidence that the membership of APLA has reached an all-time high just when the Association has been asked to respond to the Royal Society of Canada Expert Panel on the Status and Future of Canada's Libraries and Archives. All 388 APLA members are dedicated to gathering, preserving and making accessible the record of human intelligence and creativity. We know society values this record. We know our principles are sound. We struggle, however, to match our practice to the current generation of that record, and its user behaviour. By joining APLA, librarians and library technicians and assistants in the region connect in the common pursuit of excellent, vibrant and relevant libraries and archives. As the questions become more pressing, so does the need to connect.

In preparation for its response to the Royal Society panel, members of the APLA executive are discussing the framing questions and planning to participate in the in-person consultation to be held in Halifax on November 9. Please feel free to email your provincial representative, or use the APLA listserv or social media channels, if you would like to share your views with us.

Also on the advocacy front, the Association complaint to the Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada with regard to the *Library and Archives Canada Code of Conduct* was assigned to an OIC investigator, and brought to the attention of LAC officials.

We remain hopeful that the Code will be revised to not only permit, but encourage, the continued participation of LAC staff in professional practice outside the confines of their workplace.

Library associations across the country are following the APLA complaint with interest. I would like to thank Peter Glennister for putting forward the motion at the 2013 OGM, which was the impetus for the *LAC Code of Conduct* advocacy effort. Peter's contributions to APLA are legend, this being only the most recent chapter.

No doubt you have already noticed the new layout for The APLA *Bulletin*. Co-editors Corinne Gilroy and Ron Rooth intend to keep your attention by introducing new columns and highlighting beautiful and interesting digital collections which are managed in the region. It seemed fitting to begin by sharing images from the *Decorative Nineteenth Century Trade Bindings* collection, a selection of the *Roger and Marlene Peattie Collection* of the Queen Elizabeth II Library at Memorial University of Newfoundland. We're featuring images from a unique collection, digitized and made available online, and asking for your input on the future of libraries and archives. That's not a coincidence either.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Conferences galore in Corner Brook and St. John's
- *Lumière* in Sydney
- Alissa York visits Dalhousie
- SMU's TESL Library gets a new home
- Library Instruction: some strategies for serving diverse populations
- Reference road trip: Touring the library service desks of Atlantic Canada

Welcome to the spook-tacular Fall 2013 APLA *Boo-lletin*! I'm thrilled to be co-editing my first issue along with Ron Rooth. Old habits die hard, they say, and it really must be true: I gave up editing and teaching English to become a library technician, yet here I am editing once again. I should've known my past would come back to haunt me – thank goodness it's more *Casper* and less *Poltergeist*.

I have a particular interview panel to thank for my interest in the *Bulletin*. I was a brand new library tech., as wet behind the ears as *Swamp Thing*, and not at all ready for the job in question. But instead of ripping out my brain and feeding it to zombies, they kindly suggested I submit my interview presentation to the *Bulletin*. I never worked up the guts to follow through, but I did start reading, participating, and meeting other APLA members. Before long, old life and new were stitched together like *Frankenstein*.

I am frightfully thankful to the APLA Executive for taking a chance on a newcomer, and to our contributors for some shockingly interesting library news. And dear readers, don't be fooled into thinking you're the caboose on this ghost train. You're tied to the tracks, and we're about to run you over with stories from across the region!

Frightfully yours,

Corinne

News from Newfoundland and Labrador

Kirsta Godfrey

Conference News

Newfoundland libraries have been busy hosting international conferences. This summer, the Grenfell Campus Library hosted the Community-University (CU) Expo, while St. John's Memorial University librarians hosted the Access 2013 Conference.

Access

Access is Canada's premier library technology conference bringing librarians, technicians, developers, programmers, and managers together to discuss cutting-edge library technologies.

Access is a single-stream conference featuring in-depth analyses, panel discussions, lightning talks, hackfest, and plenty of time for networking and social events. Access 2013 was held September 23-26 at the Masonic Temple in St. John's, and hosted 120 delegates and volunteers from across Canada, the U.S. and Europe. This year's conference marked the 20th anniversary conference, which was first held in St. John's in 1994 and then again in 2000. The conference was chaired by Krista Godfrey with the help of an organizing team including Lisa Goddard, Sue Fahey, Iris Liu, Kathryn Rose, and Amanda Tiller and volunteers from Memorial University Libraries.
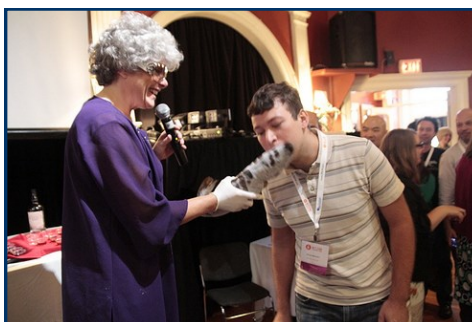
[Top: Access volunteers and organizing members running the registration desk. L-R: Sue Fahey, Andy Fowler, Michelle Swab. Photo by Declan Fleming.)

[Above: Delegates becoming honorary Newfoundlanders with an official screech-in. Photo by Declan Fleming.]

CU Expo

CU Expo is a Canadian-led international conference designed to showcase the best practices in community-university partnerships worldwide, and to create opportunities for innovative and successful collaborations that strengthen our communities. CU Expo 2013: Engaging Shared Worlds, was held in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador, from June 12 to 15, 2013, and co-hosted by Grenfell Campus, Memorial University and the City of Corner Brook, with support from the Provincial Office of Public Engagement. The conference hosted approximately 450 regional, national and international delegates. There were participants from across Newfoundland and Labrador, all 10 provinces, 21 US States, as well as Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, the Netherlands and South Africa.

The staff and librarians of the Ferriss Hodgett Library, Grenfell Campus, Memorial University played a key role in all aspects of CU Expo. Louise McGillis served as the Chair of the Conference Steering Committee and Crystal Rose was responsible for registration, logistics, hospitality, and promotion & communications. The library staff ran the conference registration desk and provided technical support for concurrent sessions. The impact of CU Expo for the Ferriss Hodgett Library has been to raise the profile of the library within Gren-

fell Campus and the university, as well as with individuals and groups in the community.

[Above: Library staff filling delegate bags. R-L, Crystal Rose, Rosie Myers, Krista Ennis, Amy Alcock and Heather Strickland.]

Activities

St. John's Public Libraries just wrapped up their annual Ghost Story Writing Contest. Check it out! http://stjohnsghoststorycontest.blogspot.ca/

New Website

Newfoundland and Labrador Public Libraries have updated their website, built with current standards of HTML5 and CSS3. The website now offers a mobile-friendly version. Check out the new look! http://www.nlpl.ca/

News from Nova Scotia

Cape Breton Regional Libraries

<small>CHRIS THOMPSON</small>

McConnell Library Hopping During Lumière

The McConnell Library drew record crowds during this year's spectacular *Lumière*, downtown Sydney's contemporary art-at-night festival. The library hosted three of the 32 events presented in downtown Sydney that evening: a mini-opera *Howl Amore / Han n°7* performed by Janice Jackson of Halifax, which included singing using vocal techniques from all over the world, acting, using percussion to express a doomed love story; an art installation called *Interaction* by Jaqueline Steudler of Fall River, which invited visitors to move, rearrange and interact with miniature paintings to become an active part of the installation; and intermittent performances around the library entitled *We Drop Into a Quiet Little Place* by the ensemble Endnotes, a new a capella group from Sydney.

Librarian Erin Phillips of McConnell Library is one of the members of Endnotes, along with Cape Breton University faculty, staff, students and other members of the community. They performed a wide range of contemporary pop favorites and standards, many of them in original arrangements.

Katherine MacLennan Virtual Exhibit Launched

In early July, *Through Her Eyes: Katharine McLennan Virtual Exhibit* was launched at the Fortress of Louisbourg. It can be accessed at www.kmclennan.com. This website features the personal collection of photos, artworks, and diary entries of Katharine McLennan held by the Cape Breton Regional Library, Cape Breton University's Beaton Institute and the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site. This project was a partnership between the Cape Breton Regional Library, the Beaton Institute, Parks Canada and the Fortress Louisbourg Association, to facilitate broader public access to these unique and rare documents. The site is arranged by theme and includes links for educators.

Also announced in July was the Katharine McLennan Award for Volunteer and Community Contributions. The first recipient was John C. O'Donnell, choir director of the Men of the Deeps. The original Louisbourg Museum was rededicated as the McLennan Center in honour of Senator J.S. McLennan and his daughter Katharine McLennan. They both strongly advocated for the Fortress of Louisbourg as a National Historic site, and Katherine conducted years of research toward the eventual partial reconstruction of the Fortress site. She founded and financed the Fortress Louisbourg Museum, was named Honorary Curator in 1936 and was active as Curator for 20 years.

Katharine McLennan, as well as being a strong advocate for the development of the Fortress of Louisbourg and the Fortress Louisbourg Museum, was a Cape Breton Regional Library Board member in the mid-1900's and an active supporter of the public library. The property upon which the original section of the McConnell Library building still stands was donated by Ms. McLennan. The Nova Scotia Collection at the McConnell Library holds an extensive and very interesting collection of items donated by Katharine McLennan, including artwork, photographs, letters, etc.

More | News from Nova Scotia

Chris Thompson

In My Community - Storytelling

Storytelling and the preservation of stories from our communities are important to our culture and our knowledge about where we come from. *In My Community - Storytelling* is a fun way for communities to have a chance to tell their stories. The first event took place at the Polish Village Hall in Whitney Pier, followed by Englishtown and Grand Mira South. These were all fun and informative events and were well attended by community members willing to share stories and knowledge of their communities. We look forward to further Community Storytelling sessions to be held in Middle River, Gabarus and Louisbourg.

CBRL's Storyteller in Residence, Ken Chisholm, is the emcee and leads the discussion during each session of *In My Community - Storytelling*, which is funded by the Nova Scotia Communities, Culture & Heritage and managed through a partnership of the Cape Breton Regional Library, CBU's Beaton Institute, and local community halls.

Nova Scotia Provincial Library

Catherine S.W. Kelly

NSPL moved to the Homburg building in downtown Halifax in early May. Our new location further south on Brunswick Street places us right across from the Old Town Clock, and very close to the Citadel's daily noon gun! The move also puts us in the same physical building as most of our Communities, Culture and Heritage (CCH) colleagues. Among other things, this means better access to our shared services such as the CCH Secretariat, whose work includes handling internet and marketing strategies and design. Watch for a new NSPL website, and the promotion of regional library and Libraries Nova Scotia work via the CCH website coming soon.

> *Where we were once a busy hub for boxes of books arriving and departing, cataloguing is currently done using emailed title and ISBN information provided by the regions.*

Cataloguer Lynne McCulley retired from NSPL at the end of December, 2012. She began with NSPL when we were located on Bayers Road, and she saw many changes over the years; from the introduction of talking books, videos and DVDs, downloadable eBooks and audiobooks, to the first RDA records. Cataloguing at NSPL has changed over the years too: where we were once a busy hub for boxes of books arriving and departing, cataloguing is currently done using emailed title and ISBN information provided by the regions.

Catherine Kelly has returned from maternity leave and is working as Communities Librarian with the Client Services Team. She will be developing strategic partnerships, working on projects based around community engagement, and working with NSPL's community partners both within and outside of government.

Michelle Graves joined the NSPL Systems and Collections Access Team as Computer Services Officer in early August 2013. Michelle will be working with the regional public libraries on a variety of systems and IT-related projects. She will also be joining CCH project teams, as appropriate.

Chuck Hubbard has joined the Systems and Collections Access Team as the new User Experience Librarian. Some of his many tasks will include the daily operation and maintenance of the Nova Scotia Digital Media collection, optimising OPAC functionality, and focusing on other IT-related projects that will improve patrons' library experiences.

NSPL supports the work of Libraries Nova Scotia which has once again launched a successful One Book Nova Scotia collective reading campaign. In its second year, the activities supporting the featured book, *Fauna* by Alissa York, are happening throughout the month of October, in conjunction with Canadian Library Month.

More | News from Nova Scotia

Dalhousie University Libraries

Marlo Mackay, Communications Coordinator, Dalhousie University Libraries

One Book Nova Scotia Reading with Alissa York

Alissa York read at the University Club Pub on October 3 as part of this year's One Book Nova Scotia provincial tour. Her book, *Fauna*, is the One Book Nova Scotia selection for 2013, as well as the DalReads selection for this academic year.

Fauna is described by author Annabel Lyon as "rich and strange and deeply satisfying." The novel explores the complicated relationships between humans and animals, portraying humans both as the animals' advocates and adversaries.

This is the second year for the province-wide community reading event One Book Nova Scotia. Public, community college and university libraries work with government and community partners to make this event a success.

[Above: Alissa York and her One Book Nova Scotia and DalReads selection, Fauna.]

University Archives on YouTube

The University Archives is now on YouTube!

We are beginning to digitize material from our audio-visual collections and acquire digital media from our donors. Over time, the Archives will be uploading these materials to DalSpace for long-term digital preservation, but we will also be making selected materials available on our YouTube channel.

The first videos include a pair oral history interviews conducted as part of the *Our Voices Matter Project*, an initiative of the Halifax-Dartmouth Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association. The project was established to record and document the lives of senior mental health consumers in Nova Scotia. The interviews provide rich and vivid accounts of life-long experiences with the mental health system.

We've also uploaded a fantastic clip of Elisabeth Mann Borgese's dogs using a custom-built typewriter during an interview with NBC News. The clip was digitized from 8 mm film so it could be included with other materials from Borgese's archives in an exhibition at the Buddenbrookhaus Museum in Lübeck, Germany.

We'll be uploading new material as it becomes available. Check out our channel at http://www.youtube.com/user/DalArchives

Dal Libraries at the Pride Parade

Staff, friends, and family from the Dal Libraries walked as part of the Dalhousie group in Halifax's Pride Parade on July 27. The weather was mild and breezy, perfect for a parade. Thousands of people lined Barrington St. and Spring Garden Road, cheering on the colourful floats and walking groups.

[Above: Staff from the Dal Libraries with Dalhousie's new President and his family. From left to right: Stephen Murray (Sir James Dunn Law Library), Marlo MacKay (Dal Libraries), Judy MacDonald (Hardware Services, Killam Library), Cindy Miller (W. K. Kellogg Health Sciences Library), Dr. Richard Florizone, daughters Elinor and Zoë, his wife Dr. Mona Holmlund, and Sandra Dwyer (Dal Libraries).]

Saint Francis Xavier University Libraries

Rita Campbell

Open Access Week

We've turned Open Access Week 2013 into Open Access Month.

During October, we offered 4 sessions as part of the Faculty Development Committee Brown Bag Lunch series:

* *Open Access Publishing: Navigating the Wild West of OA Publishing, the Good, the Bad & the Ugly* (Oct. 8);

* *Metrics: Journal Metrics, Article Metrics, Author Metrics, Altmetrics* (Oct. 16);

* *Open Data* (Oct. 22);

* *Funder Mandates: Complying With Open Access & Open Data Research Funder Mandates* (Oct. 30).

Saint Mary's University Libraries

Cate Carlyle

New Home for TESL Library

The new home of the Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) Library at Saint Mary's University in Halifax was officially opened on September 19, 2013.

Imagined conceptually as an international gateway, the three-storey, 28,000 square foot building is the new home of the University's English as a Second Language program and the Sobey School of Business Development Centre (Saint Mary's Media Release).

The TESL Library is an open airy space located on the second floor complete with computers and print services for students, as well as comfortable seating for small group sessions and socializing.

Attached to the library is the new language learning lab with 19 computers, a presentation podium and document camera. Staff and students are thrilled with the increase in space and services. The ever changing seasonal landscape on view from the library's glass wall is definitely a highlight.

Sir James Dunn Law Library

Pink Day ribbons

Please wear a ribbon to promote a respectful and inclusive learning and work environment.

This Pink Day initiative is brought to you by the Dalhousie Libraries' Health & Wellness Committee.

Killam Memorial Library

PINK DAY at the Dalhousie Libraries

W. K. Kellogg Health Sciences Library

FACULTY - STAFF - STUDENTS
Wear **pink** to promote respect

PINK DAY
SEPT 25, 2013

Sexton Design & Technology Library

MacRae Library

Dalhousie University Libraries, continued

Pink Day at the Dal Libraries

On September 25, the staff at the five Dal Libraries took part in the Dalhousie-wide initiative Pink Day. Pink Day is when we wear pink to call attention to issues around bullying and respect.

[Above: Staff at the Dal Libraries get into the spirit of Pink Day.]

The interns of
the Dalhousie
Libraries.

Dalhousie University Libraries, *continued*

Summer Shine 2013

On September 16, the interns of the Dalhousie Libraries took part in a presentation opportunity called the Summer Shine series. The series, introduced last year, was designed to give the interns an opportunity to present projects they have been working on during their summer internships. The faculty from the School of Information Management (SIM), the first-year SIM students, and all of the faculty and staff from the Dalhousie Libraries were invited to attend.

The interns' presentations were diverse and fascinating. Thank you to all of the interns for your excellent work this summer.

[Above: The interns of the Dalhousie Libraries.]

Announcements

The Continuing Education Certificate (CEC) Program Nationwide Launch

LOU DUGGAN

June 2013 marked the launch of a new program from The Partnership of provincial and territorial library associations of Canada. The *Continuing Education Certificate* (CEC) program is an online toolkit to help library staff and information professionals plan, document, and reveal their professional development activities.

Background: The CEC Program was a pilot project of the Library Association of Alberta. The pilot was modeled after an Australian program with similar aims. After review of the final report from the pilot project, The Partnership expressed interest in a national offering of the program with a few changes based on feedback from the pilot participants.

A national committee was struck that now operates much like the *Education Institute* (EI - also a project of The Partnership). There is a four person steering group that includes a chair, two representatives from Library Association of Alberta who are hosting the program, and the Education coordinator from the Ontario Library Association. Each association has a representative for communications out to the 7500 individual members of Partnership associations around the country.

CEC website: http://cec.laa.ca The website offers plenty of information including a screencast demonstration for getting started, and a recording of a recently held EI Webinar that provides explanation and answers many questions.

The basics: Participants collect points based on "Learning Activities". More formal activities like taking credit courses or serving as a board member for your association score two points per hour, while less formal activities like attending a webinar score one point per hour. Points are self-reported to an online database which offers reports that can be used to organize a CV or annual report.

There are only 3 rules:

1. Participants must accumulate 120 points over three years to be awarded the certificate.

2. A maximum of twenty points per year can be collected for any one activity.

3. A minimum of 30 points must be gained each of the three years. The first certificates will be granted in June of 2016.

Mentorship: Participants may choose to have a mentor help them plan their activities and the subject areas they are focussing on for their PD. The CEC committee is now working on an extension to the program that will help participants find a mentor if they do not already have one. The exact process for matching participants to mentors and creating meaningful experiences for both parties will be developed in the coming months.

The EI Calendar: The CEC will operate closely with the Education Institute to create and promote quality content for your professional development, and then track activities in a standardized and meaningful way. The EI calendar is set to evolve into the collective of national library PD activities, where events and activities from across the country will be advertised including conferences, courses and learning opportunities outside the EI offerings.

Value of the Certificate: Many questions have been asked about how the CEC program will be accepted by employers, especially given the informal reporting structure and lack of adjudication. In the absence of resources and mandate to offer a very formal, mandatory, and probably expensive CE program through our associations - like you might see in medicine or education - The Partnership has chosen to offer an inexpensive ($40 for three years) program that we believe will demonstrate a pattern of activity in participants.

Participants can claim points for 'soft' activities that normally go unrewarded, like reading a journal article or attending a brown-bag lecture at lunchtime. Categorizing the activities and reporting in a standardized way will help employers (who are most certainly among our 7500 members nationwide) assess the professional development activities of current or potential employees easily and in a meaningful way.

APLA CONFERENCE 2014 – June 3-6, Delta Beauséjour (Moncton, NB)

NATHALIE RICHARDS

It doesn't take much searching to find examples of innovative library initiatives, spaces and partnerships. There are blogs, wikis, Scoop.it pages, Pinterest boards, and email listservs that are frequently updated and full of great ideas. As library professionals, we know how to find the ideas, and we know how to customize them to suit our communities. But do we know how to market them effectively? Do our communities know about our great ideas? Do our stakeholders hear about the value we add to our own communities as well as society at large? **CONFERENCE, continued on following page**

Feature | Library Instruction: some strategies for serving diverse populations

SARAN CROOS, LIBRARIAN FOR ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK - FREDERICTON

Diverse Library Communities

According to Statistics Canada's demographic data, the Canadian population is increasingly becoming culturally and linguistically diverse [see below, Further Reading - Eds.]. Indeed, in addition to speaking either English or French, the majority of immigrants will speak another language. This also holds true for the Canadian-born children of immigrants who tend to hold on to their cultural languages. In the university and college environment, this trend will become more noticeable as post-secondary institutions increase their ratio of international students. Moreover, the presence of such international students is apparent in applied technical fields such as Engineering, Computer Science and Mathematics at many university institutions across Canada. As the Engineering and Computer Sciences Librarian at the University of New Brunswick, my experience serving such a diverse community on a daily basis has enabled me to identify some common problems experienced by international and non-English speaking students in terms of the library and its available services.

First, while this group of students tends to enjoy a high level of computer literacy, they often have very little experience with libraries and with using the available resources and services. Second they are also very unfamiliar with library related terminology which may be due to a lack of experience with libraries in general, or as a result of language barriers in terms of understanding concepts and terminology. Third, it has been my experience as a Librarian that international students are less inclined to ask the library staff questions when they are uncertain. Again, this may be due to language barriers or cultural reasons whereby the students may feel that they should not interrupt library staff while failing to realize that library staff are there to help them.

My strategy

Keeping these issues in mind, there are four simple strategies that I have adopted when I am providing library instruction to a culturally and linguistically diverse student community: understand the audience; use a minimum word strategy; keep it simple; use learning activities wherever possible.

> *It has been my experience that international students are less inclined to ask the library staff questions when they are uncertain.*

Understanding the audience

Understanding the audience is vital to delivering effective library instruction, especially when it comes to linguistically and culturally diverse populations. For example, when preparing to conduct an information literacy course, in addition to gathering information about the scope of the course and the research projects associated with the course, I prepare several questions to ask the students at the beginning of the class in order to understand whether or not diverse needs exist. These include questions about the students' level of library exposure in terms of how often they use the library; what library materials and resources they have previously used for their research projects and reports, as well as whether or not they have encountered problems in the past while using any of the library resources. These types of questions enable me to quickly understand the audience and provide just-in-time library instruction as opposed to ready-made library instruction. As a result of gaining this type of understanding, I believe that the audience receives useful library instruction tailored to their needs and expectations. **INSTRUCTION, continued on following page**

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CONFERENCE, continued from previous page

We know we do great work, and we can demonstrate our value through the responses of our clients—their feedback and support is invaluable when decision makers are looking at the bottom line. Innovative library initiatives can convert participants into advocates. Knowing how to market these initiatives becomes the key step between a good idea and a great success.

With news of shrinking budgets and economic woes constantly in our ears, it's time for a concentrated dose of marketing, outreach and advocacy know-how. So mark your calendars and come learn how to think like a marketer at the 2014 APLA Conference in Moncton, NB!

The APLA Conference organising committee is planning an exciting lineup of pre-conference sessions and keynote speakers, along with our own experts. No doubt next year's conference will be a great venue to discover the latest tips, tricks and strategies for successful library marketing, outreach and advocacy projects. Stay tuned for more details in upcoming issues of the APLA *Bulletin*!

Call for Proposals: Have you tried something new or different to put your library services and collections in the spotlight? Whether a success or failure, consider sharing your experience and presenting your idea at the conference! Proposals may be submitted for three different types of sessions : one hour presentations; five minute Ignite Talks; or posters. We are also entertaining submissions for pre-conference sessions. For more information, please consult the conference website : http://web.umoncton.ca/apla2014
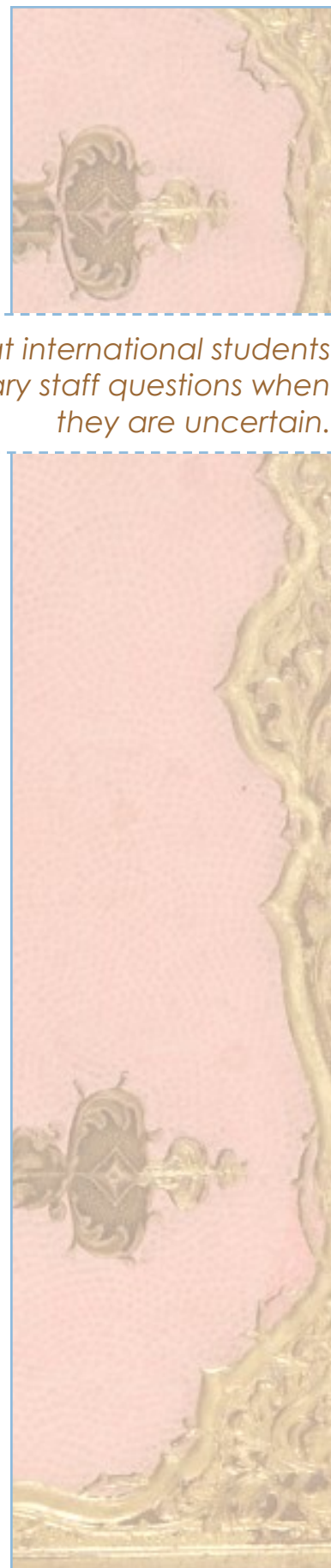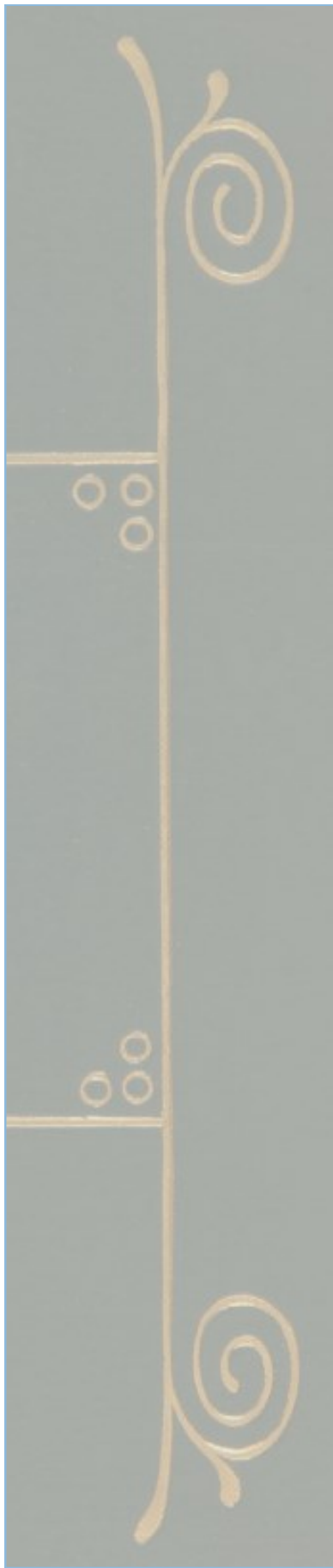
INSTRUCTION, continued from previous page

Minimum word strategy

As is often stated, a picture is worth a thousand words. Effective library instruction often involves demonstrations of how to properly use various library resources such as how to locate scholarly research material from databases for research projects. At times, some lectures would incorporate the theoretical aspects of research processes and skills as well as in-depth discussions of library terminology, concepts and the research process. For the most part, linguistically diverse library users such as international students are often unfamiliar with library lingo. Therefore, when providing instruction to linguistically diverse library users, it is essential to adopt a minimum word strategy. Basically, a minimum word strategy involves using many illustrations to explain library concepts and terminology as opposed to written text when providing library instruction and material. Visual aids are also extremely helpful when explaining library procedures. When implemented effectively, minimum word strategy tends to eliminate much of the confusion experienced by diverse groups as a result of unfamiliarity with library terminology and concepts.

Keep it simple

As librarians we are accustomed to using library lingo as well as abbreviations that describe various research processes and library resources. However, most of the time we fail to stop and ask ourselves important questions: are we confusing the audience? Do they understand what we are talking about or saying? My approach is to eliminate library lingo as much as possible when providing library instruction to people with diverse cultural and language backgrounds in order to avoid confusion and discourage students from accessing library resources. Keeping it simple is also important due to the fact that linguistically and culturally diverse library users are sometimes not used to collaborating when it comes to learning activities. As a result, they may be reluctant to ask the instructor questions even when they are confused about terminology or concepts. Keeping it simple helps to avoid placing students in a position where they will not feel comfortable seeking clarification.

Learning activities

Embedding learning activities into library instruction is also very important when it comes to improving the learning outcomes of culturally and linguistically diverse populations. First, learning activities help these library users grasp basic concepts by putting theory into practice. Second, learning activities help students master basic concepts by reinforcing instruction already covered in the classroom. This, in turn, helps users build confidence in their ability to use library resources as well as their familiarity with concepts. Finally, learning activities could be collaborative in nature, providing students with the opportunity to learn from each other.

Recap

As student populations and library communities in general begin to diversify, it will be increasingly important for librarians to evaluate the needs and expectations of the community they serve. While not a magic formula, I have found the four strategies discussed above helpful in catering to the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse individuals. It is my hope that by implementing some or all of the above strategies, other librarians will be able to contribute to creating a positive library atmosphere for all.

Further Reading

Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population: Linguistic Characteristics of Canadians http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/121024/dq121024a-eng.htm

Statistics Canada, A Changing Portrait of International Students in Canadian Universities http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-004-x/2010006/article/11405-eng.htm

Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency

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Call for Submissions

APLA Bulletin Winter 2014 Issue

Research | Milestones | Conference Takeaways | Regional News | Special Events | Fundraising Campaigns | and more!

Deadline: Monday, January 13, 2014

Need more information? Contact the editors:

ron_rooth@cbu.ca | corinne.gilroy@msvu.ca

Feature | Reference road trip: Touring the library service desks of Atlantic Canada

Jeannie Bail, Information Services Librarian, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland

The reference road trip

During the summer of 2012, I travelled to seven different libraries in Atlantic Canada and conducted an environmental scan of their service desk configurations. I planned to visit these particular libraries primarily because of my travel route, which would take me from Halifax to Fredericton (with side trips to St. John and Charlottetown), but also these libraries represented a good mix of both large, research-focused institutions and smaller, primarily undergraduate schools. The reasons for conducting this scan were twofold: first, I am part of the Service Desk Working Group at the Queen Elizabeth II Library at Memorial University and, in seeing what other libraries were doing in this area, it would help influence and better inform the recommendations of the group, as Memorial is currently undertaking a review of its existing desks and advising on future planning; secondly, it would be a fantastic opportunity to travel throughout Atlantic Canada and become familiar with some of its academic libraries, their unique features and collections. My goal was to assess the design, function, technology, services, and staffing at each of the selected library service desks. The scan consisted of two parts: a survey-based interview (developed by the Working Group) with the head of reference services (or equivalent), and visual documentation, through digital images, of the spaces I toured. The following is a summary of my findings and some of the trends I observed.

The state of service desks in Atlantic Canada

I possessed little-to-no knowledge of the service desk landscape in Atlantic Canada going into this project, so I was struck by my finding that every single one of the libraries I visited had implemented a change in the past six years. Since my visit in 2012, a few libraries have even changed their desk areas further. For ex-

ample, in 2013, Killam Library reconfigured their 2011 introduction of an Information kiosk, which then supplemented the Research Assistance area (the two areas were divided by a glass wall), to create the Killam Library Service Point (KLSP), merging three service desks (Circulation, Information, and Research Assistance).

Killam is the second Dalhousie Library to adopt the single service point model; the Kellogg Health Sciences Library was the first in 2010.

Having research help located right next to computer support was the most frequent configuration observed (St. Mary's University, Mount Allison University, University of New Brunswick-Fredericton and University of Prince Edward Island). This change in service configuration had the effect of reducing redirects, in some cases quite dramatically. The remainder of the libraries, including our QEII at Memorial, feature stand-alone reference desks. (Killam, as mentioned earlier, recently introduced a single service point).

> *Nearly all surveyed libraries reported that noise poses many challenges…. Students have protested the lack of quiet study space due to open concept design.*

Another finding of my scan was that nearly all surveyed libraries reported that noise poses many challenges, and that it is often addressed when designing a space in terms of the placement of service desks or the purchase of sound absorption products like baffles, carpeting and ceiling tiles. Often, the issue stems from the design, or the materials used in the construction, such as the echo effect that occurs in the lobby of the Killam Library, due to the stone floor. The Hans W. Klohn Commons at the University of New Brunswick-St. John has an architecturally-significant, newly-constructed building. Despite its stunning glass walls, the library has had to deal with noise complaints, as students have protested the lack of quiet study space due to the open concept design. Klohn Commons has responded to the noise issue by installing baffles, designating areas according to volume (quiet, silent, etc.) and educating users on how to be respectful of others in the space.

As a pre-emptive measure, the Harriet Irving Library at the University of New Brunswick-Fredericton hosted extensive pre-renovation consultations with an acoustics expert, and, as a result of this planning, has seemed to bypass any serious complaints regarding noise, despite having an open café on the main floor. The issue with noise can sometimes be a subjective one, as each person has an individual level of tolerance for sound, and there are varying opinions within the profession on the tone a library should set. For example, the concept of the Learning Commons introduces collaborative work space (vs. isolated studying), which, by its very nature is louder than a library reading room. Is it appropriate to expect silence in a Commons setting? Obviously, some amount of noise is to be expected, but just how much, and what kind, is unacceptable remains to be debated.

The concept of universal design is one that is taken seriously by all visited libraries **REFERENCE, continued on following page**
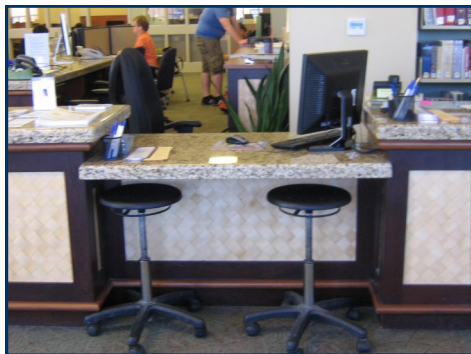
REFERENCE, continued from previous page

as there is a strong service ethos to provide access for all users. The measured height of all the service desks visited will accommodate users with disabilities. The most-popular height was standard desk height (30"), but a few desks had varying counter levels to accommodate users in wheelchairs. The attention paid to the juxtaposition of service desks - for example, locating

reference next to computer support - also benefits users with mobility issues, as they are not forced to travel from one end of the library to the other to receive help.

Observed trends in reference

A frequent observation voiced by interviewed librarians is that reference transactions are on the decline, although the complexity of the questions has increased. This has led to longer, in-depth teaching sessions where, depending on the desk design, patrons can sit down and consult with the librarian. Also, of course, reference service is being provided in a number of ways outside the traditional desk, such as in computer chat interfaces, email and phone. To keep track of these transactions, over half of the surveyed libraries collect the statistics electronically, using software that ranges from the home-grown to the commercial (e.g. RefTracker). At Memorial, we are contemplating a switch from manual, paper-and-pencil data collection to electronic, as we are currently piloting Gimlet, a low-cost, online reference-tracking tool.

Cross-training in ready reference is frequently utilized by circulation staff. There appears to be a link (based solely on information gathered during my interviews) between the availability of a local library technician

Reference transactions are on the decline, although the complexity of the questions has increased.

program and successful integration of reference service. An excellent example of this is Killam Library, which benefits from having a library school on campus, and its location in Halifax, also home to the Library & Information Technology diploma at Nova Scotia Community College. When Killam had a stand-alone Information Desk, it was staffed by members of circula-

tion, the majority of whom held Library Technician diplomas. Also, the Head of Circulation at Killam holds an MLS degree, in addition to having reference experience, so there is good leadership in place regarding the promotion of cross-training. At Acadia, most of the circulation staff have library technician training and provide ready reference, which frees up time for the liaison librarians to promote information literacy sessions and hold office hours.

Having librarian offices located on the main floor is advantageous for both spontaneous patron interaction and scheduled one-on-one appointments. At the University of New Brunswick-Fredericton, the information services librarians were relocated from the main floor to a higher floor, following the main floor renovation. Their new offices are off-the-beaten path and not as visible, leading to less serendipitous contact with patrons. Alternatively, at University of New Brunswick-St. John, the librarian offices are located directly in the Research Help desk area, which makes it easy for patrons to seek out assistance, and for librarians to actively engage with patrons on a day-to-day basis.

Printed reference collections are steadily decreasing at all surveyed libraries, as space for services such as computer terminals and collaborative work rooms is in demand; not to mention, online accessibility of reference sources has often eliminated the need for print. At the Hans W. Klohn Commons, much of the reference collection was put into storage during the construction of the new building and remains there due to space constraints. In addition, a couple of libraries (Harriet Irving and Killam) report that the reference

desk is no longer located near the main reference collection, so the lack of proximity could be a factor in decreased usage as well.

Conclusion

Service desks at libraries in Atlantic Canada are undergoing a transformation. As reference questions become more complex, the reference interaction has become more of a consultation than a transaction. This change has been reflected in desk design, as there are often chairs or stools for patrons to pull up, so that they can comfortably engage in the teaching and learning process. The most important take-away from my "reference roadtrip" is that what works, or doesn't work, in one library doesn't necessarily work another.

More | Features

REFERENCE, continued from previous page

The unique culture and personality of each library are important factors in determining the success of a service desk reconfiguration. Also, consultation with stakeholders, especially library users, is essential before making any changes.

NOTES

1. CBC News. (30 November, 2011). UNBSJ students protest for study space: Say the new library is too noisy. In CBC News. Retrieved from:

http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/story/2011/11/30/nb-unbsj-library-commons-noisy-protest.html

IMAGES

1. The Research Help desk at Harriet Irving Library. (Computing Support is right around the corner, which makes redirects simple.)

2. The Research Help desk at Hans W. Klohn Commons.

3. Information & Research desk at Patrick Power.

List of visited libraries, locations, reference desk names and reconfigured service points:

Library name	Location	Name of the reference desk	Service points blended or reconfigured
Killam Library Dalhousie University	Halifax, NS	Research Assistance Area	Circulation, Information and Research Assistance were combined into a single service desk.
Pickard Bell Library Mt. Allison	Sackville, NB	Research Help	Research Help and IT Support were combined, but exist as two separately staffed services
Harriet Irving Library UNB-Fredericton	Fredericton, NB	Research Help Desk	Research Help Desk was strategically positioned between Computer Help and Circulation
Hans W. Klohn Commons UNB-St. John	St. John, NB	Research Help	Computer Help and Circulation were blended. Research Help desk relocated to the back of the main floor, where it is quieter.
Robertson Library University of PEI	Charlottetown, PE	Information Desk	Information Desk and Computer Help were combined, but exist as two separately staffed services
Vaughan Memorial Library Acadia University	Wolfville, NS	Reference and Information Desk	Access Services handles ready reference questions. Main reference desk remains, but its hours have been cut, and there is talk of repurposing.
Patrick Power Library St. Mary's University	Halifax, NS	Information and Research	Circulation went from 3 desks (Circ, Reserves, Services Plus) to 1, which was renamed Access Services. Reference and IT share one space, but exist as two separately staffed services with different desks

Note: In addition, I was able to collect survey responses from St. Francis Xavier University. Unfortunately, I was not able to make it to Antigonish, N.S. to visit the Angus L. Macdonald Library in person. At my institution, Queen Elizabeth II Library - Memorial University of Newfoundland, the reference desk is called "Information and Research Help."

Contributors

JEANNIE BAIL is Information Services Librarian at the Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

RITA CAMPBELL is Special Projects Librarian at the Angus L. Macdonald Library, St. Francis Xavier University.

CATE CARLYLE is Librarian and Instructional Resources Assistant at the TESL Centre Library, Saint Mary's University.

SARAN CROOS is a Librarian at the Engineering & Computer Science Library, University of New Brunswick Fredericton.

LOU DUGGAN, APLA Past President, is Cataloguing & Metadata Librarian at Saint Mary's University.

CORINNE GILROY, APLA Bulletin Co-editor, is a Library Technician at Mount Saint Vincent University.

KRISTA GODFREY, APLA VP for Newfoundland and Labrador, is Web Services Librarian at the Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

CATHERINE S. W. KELLY is Communities Librarian, Nova Scotia Provincial Library.

MARLO MACKAY is Communications Coordinator for Dalhousie University Libraries.

NATHALIE RICHARDS est Bibliothécaire de référence et responsable de RefWorks, Bibliothèque Champlain, Université de Moncton, campus de Moncton.

RON ROOTH, APLA Bulletin Co-editor, is Librarian for the School of Graduate and Professional Studies, Education, and the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Cape Breton University.

CHRIS THOMPSON is Programs Assistant for Cape Breton Regional Libraries.

LOUISE WHITE, APLA President, is Associate University Librarian (Marine, Music & Education) at the Marine Institute, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

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1) *A jar of honey from Mount Hybla*; **2**) *A round of days*; **3**) *Hyperion*; **4**) *A record of the Black Prince*; **5**) *Beattie's minstrel*; **8**) *The story of a feather*; **9**) *The coins of England*; **10**) *The prince's progress*; **11**) *English sacred poetry*; **12**) *The course of time*; **13**) *The shipwreck*; **14**) *Parables and tales*.