



Bulletin

The Atlantic Provinces Library Association

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January/February 1999

WHO PUT ME IN CHARGE? -- A CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING ONLINE SERVICES

Life used to be so easy. Our major library purchase was probably the encyclopedia. You got yourself a copy of Kenneth Kister's *Best Encyclopedias*, looked at the comparison chart in the front, decided what your patrons needed most (and the library could afford), and made the purchase. The print encyclopedia was familiar; we all knew how to operate it. It sat on a shelf and no one muttered threateningly about ip-based access and proxy servers and logins and passwords. The publisher had probably been in business for a number of years, and we knew his or her reputation. The price was certainly obvious and there was no fine print in the contract about restricting the use to those persons who had library cards from our library. No consortium agreements, no simultaneous user limitations (except when the two nine year olds got in a fight over the dinosaur volume), no file not found, no ip unrecognized.

Evaluating online services -- providers of encyclopedias, indexes, abstracts, and full-text periodicals -- is considerably more difficult and all-in-all a tricky undertaking these days, both for the evaluated and the person doing the evaluation. That being the case, the following checklist is presented to help you pick your way through the online minefield.

Having decided to take the plunge, knowing what to look for can make all the difference.

Database Design - Human-Computer Interaction

A good database, like a good web site or a good catalogue, should be transparent. It should allow the user to move smoothly from one area or function to another and back again without confusion. There should be obvious visual and textual cues to prompt the user.

The "pages" within the database should be set on a standard template. Too much new information makes it difficult for users to see what they need to see or are supposed to see. Templates allow the user to see familiar information on each page and be comfortable with it, thus making the new information (the search results, for instance) more visible and easier to concentrate on.

The template should not overwhelm or confuse the content. For hundreds of years, publishers have printed black text on white paper for a very good reason -- the contrast makes it easier to read. Ten to twelve percent of the male

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First and Foremost: The Audience/Library Fit

Before you even begin looking at online services, spend a few minutes to think about you patrons -- your current patrons and your potential patrons. Why do they come to the library? Are they comfortable with the OPAC, or do they still long for the card catalogue? Do they like just books or are they also interested in current news and magazines? Do they have regional, national, continental, and international information needs?

Spend a few minutes thinking about your library. Does your staff have technical skills and electronic research skills (ask them-you might be surprised)? Are your librarians good teachers? Can the library building be wired to accommodate numerous computer workstations? Can you afford new furniture and the space to accommodate it? Who will look after the contracts and licensing agreements involved in buying electronic database access? Access to online services is expensive and you want to be sure that your patrons get the information and the service they need and deserve.

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From the President's Desk

Not much has happened since my last article. Regarding the hiring of a consultant to conduct a study into the feasibility of hiring an Executive Director for this Association, the Request for Proposals was submitted to listservs with a deadline of November 17 for responses. We received five replies-- Nova Scotia (2), New Brunswick (1), Ontario (2). A consultant has been selected and a contract will be finalized in the New Year. The consultant will be required to present a report to the Executive by March 21. The Executive will present the results of the report to the members at the next OGM meeting in May 1999.

I will be attending the Ontario Library Association's "Super Conference" being held in Toronto January 21-23, 1999. Since APLA is a member of the Provincial and Territorial Library Associations' Council (PTLAC), I will be attending the Conference compliments of OLA's Executive.

On a happy and yet sad note.... I will be leaving the Atlantic Provinces to take on the position of Librarian at the Southern Crop Protection & Food Research Centre's Food Research Program in Guelph, Ontario. The position is new, permanent and challenging.... I will be creating and running the library there. Though I am

excited about moving to Guelph, starting a challenging position and being closer to my family, I am sad to leave the beauty of the Atlantic Provinces and the many good friends I have made here. My last day in Kentville will be on January 25 and I will start my new position on February 1. I will continue my term as President of APLA until the Conference in May and will then carry on, electronically, as Past President. Though it will be sad to leave here, I will be back for visits and will always be in touch with the Association.

I want to wish everyone a wonderful New Year!

- Francesco Lai

WHO PUT ME IN CHARGE? *(continued from page 1)*

population is red/green colour-blind. Users can set their own colour preferences on web-browser which can override those in the database. The standard colour for hypertext links is blue. Online service providers need to remember these things.

Features to Look For

Just as every car has standard features, so too should an online database service.

Standard search features include:

onboard controlled vocabulary (thesaurus); clear explanations of: indexed fields, defaults (and how to disable them) and potential effect on search; boolean and positional operators in place; nesting and/or cross field search capability; phrase searching; left- and right-hand truncation; the term "keyword" should be clearly defined; masking (the ability to mask a character and search all variants simultaneously, for example, wom?n).

Convenience features might include:

email
save (choice among floppy, hard drive, network)
print capabilities ("printer friendly" versions)

Disability features might include:

red-green colour-blind friendly
sticky keys or key combinations available for those

unable to handle a mouse
capability of audio instructions

Content

Once we have decided we like the database design and the features, then we need to consider the content. Here, librarians are on more familiar ground -- as long as we remember not to be confused by the bafflegarb sometimes promulgated by the vendor. "It's got Canadian content." "It's a value-added product." "It requires little or no supervision." "It's comprehensive." All of which makes me want to ask: "Compared to what -- exactly?"

The content should enhance library materials and tools already in place. For instance, an index should index the editions of items you actually receive -- if it indexes Time magazine, does it index the American edition or the Canadian edition; if it indexes the Globe and Mail, does it index the National edition or the City edition?

The content should be (relatively) unique; it should not duplicate a service or product you already have in place. Value-added should mean something more than it is "easier" to search or "updated frequently." Both of those things may add value, but not necessarily content value. Value-added content means content users did not have before: an index which includes abstracts; an index which has hypertext links to related web sites; an index that includes the full-text of many articles.

The content should be explicitly identified. If it is a periodical index or full-text service, for instance, there should be a list of titles readily available within the database.

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WHO PUT ME IN CHARGE? *(continued from page 2)*

There should also be a clear explanation of how much of each title is included in the service: full-length feature articles; supplemental issues; advertisements; letters to the editor; editorials; graphs, charts, maps; photographs; errata.

Ownership, Reputation and Agendas

Most libraries have selection policies that include determining the reputation of the publisher and author, and the viewpoint or agenda advocated by the materials under consideration. Selection is balanced: 'separatism' by 'federalism'; right to life by freedom of choice; 'conservative by liberal'.

Publishers and vendors of online services also have owners, reputations and agendas. It behooves us to find out what they are before we buy their services. Some of the agendas are obvious. Good online services keep advertisement and marketing kept to a minimum and it does not appear at all inside the database itself. They also have a privacy policy that is up-front and explicit. The nature of online technology makes it very easy for web sites to collect information about users (often without the user realizing it). For example, if I go to AltaVista (a free internet search engine) and search the word gambling, the banner ad that appears when the search results posts, reads "Looking for the most reliable Vegas odds and analysis? Click here!" The next time I perform a similar search, the banner ad may change, but it will still revolve around a gambling service.

Interestingly, a search on Gamblers Anonymous (a self-help group) still produced a click here ad to gamble away my money. You probably do not want this to occur on an online service for which your library is paying. Nor would you want that online service to collect and sell information about your patrons interest to other advertisers or marketers.

You can often tell the attitude an online service has toward these issues by what happens when you explore their web page or email them for information about their service. If you suddenly receive spam (unsolicited mailings) about their services or similar services, you have your answer.

Comparison Shopping

We take cars for test drives; we read book reviews; we try on clothes. We would not buy a car without the tires -- even if the salesman promised they would arrive within four months of our purchase. We would not buy a book without all the pages -- even if the bookseller assured us he would send them along later. We would not buy that coat if it only had one sleeve. Why do we buy online services which do not include all the promised features? It is a rhetorical question -- and I do not know the answer, but we do it all the time. Any online service should have a trial available. Take advantage of it. The trial should include all the features of the actual database, though it may not include the entire content of the database. Make sure those features work as promised.

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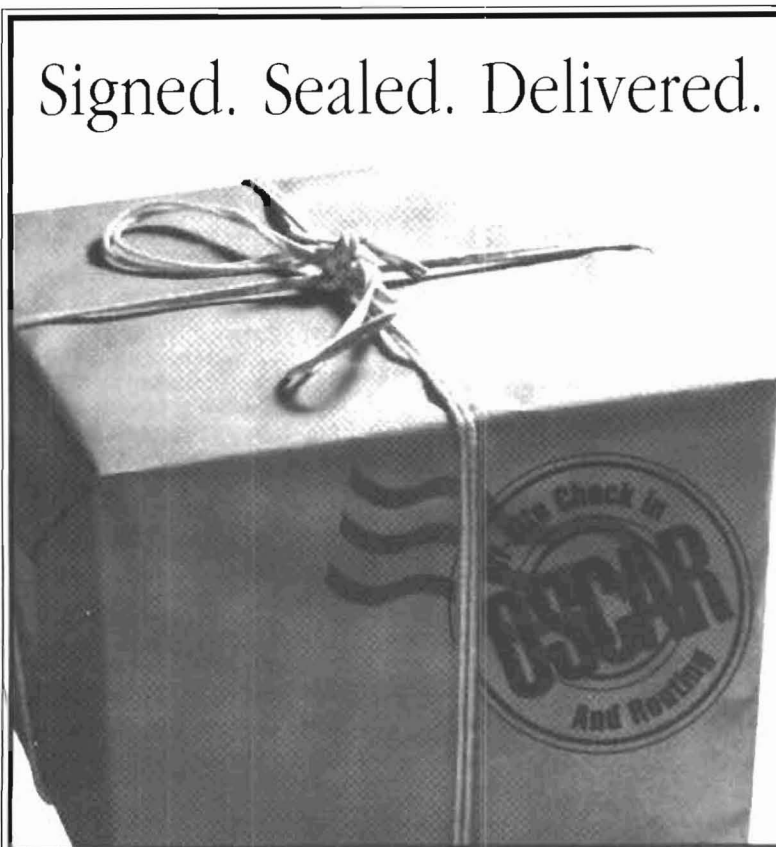
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1999 APLA MERIT AWARD

The Atlantic Provinces Library Association invites nominations for the Association's Merit Award. The Award is conferred on an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to library service in the Atlantic Provinces. Nominations with the appropriate accompanying documentation of the nominee and her/his contribution(s) should be sent by March 31, 1999 to:



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WILL MANLEY HEADLINES 1999 APLA CONFERENCE



Author and columnist Will Manley will give the keynote address at the upcoming APLA conference set for Saint John, New Brunswick, May 27th to May 30th, 1999.

Mr. Manley, whose regular column in *Booklist* continuously entertains and informs library personnel, has agreed to be involved with other sessions throughout the weekend and will conduct a session on reference services. His ability to entertain while making one think is evidenced by a writing style that can keep you reading an entire column even when he is discussing everyday, mundane things like cereal boxes. And like the skilful whodunit scribe he can employ a twisted ending that can make you stop and say: "Hey what a great idea! Why didn't I think of that?"

As one librarian said who loves reading his columns: "he helps me see the humour in library work and I am able to laugh at myself – something that's good for my soul."

Mr. Manley's books include: "For Library Directors Only: talking about trustees;" "Snowballs in the Bookdrop: talking it over with your library's community;" and "Unprofessional Behaviour: confessions of a public librarian."

The program committee consisting of Leslye McVicar and Joann Hamilton-Barry, with input from the conference chairpersons Susan Collins and Ian Wilson, have completed a schedule of events that will be of interest to everyone in the library field.

Three separate pre-conference sessions are now being planned for Thursday, May 27. Negotiations are underway to offer a day long media session to assist library directors, trustees and those in public relations on how to deal with the media. Two sessions on cataloguing internet documents, one in French and one in English, will also be offered that same day.

Sessions to choose from on Friday, May 28 include: dealing with the business community and faculty for reference librarians, conflict management; library school at the turn of the century; and career development for the non-librarian, to name just a few. Preparations to offer sessions in French are in progress.

On Saturday, May 29 a sample of the offerings include: breakfast with Will Manley; challenging children, partners in planning (for trustees); leadership and mentoring; Library of Congress and Dewey meet Alta Vista; romance in the library, literacy, training programs for academic libraries; reference services; writing for children; and board-staff relations. "Librarians in the Movies" presented by Sue Sixty is slated for its own time slot on Saturday to accommodate all the movie buffs, of which we know there are many.

Other traditional events such as author reading, official opening of exhibits, receptions, dinners and dance are also on the schedule. It is sure to be a valuable conference to attend, both educationally and funwise.

So, make plans now to attend. Future articles will include information on accommodations, restaurants and entertainment.

WHO PUT ME IN CHARGE? (continued from page 3)

Nail down a price

Check the service. If you cannot get in touch with a sales representative easily to talk about the content, features, and price, imagine how difficult it may be to contact someone when something goes wrong.

Make sure the service is "teachable." Is it similar to systems your patrons already know? Does it have those standard features and feature names (for example, does it say "print" or the less familiar "output"?) How much investment are you going to have to make to train staff and users? Will the company provide onsite training as part of the purchase price? If the search engine or service interface changes, will the company: first, let you know in advance; and second, retrain your staff for no additional charge? If there are major changes to the content and search service, do you have the

right to opt out of the service without penalty?

There may be a number of delivery and access combinations: ip-based access; user login and password; onsite, offsite, proxy server; and such like. If you are unfamiliar with how these options work, talk to someone who does, preferably someone who is not trying to sell you a particular service.

The Perfect Service

No online service will ever be perfect. It will be a compromise among audience needs, content, features, design, deliverability, and price.

No checklist will ever be perfect but I hope this one helps a bit when someone puts you in charge of evaluating an online service.

- Linda Hansen

University of New Brunswick-Saint John

NEWS FROM THE PROVINCES



Academic Libraries

Effective July 1, 1998, Mr. **Terry Paris** has been appointed as Head Librarian at **Mount Saint Vincent University**, initially for a one year term. Plans for filling the vacant University Librarian position are currently unknown.

Ms. **Annette Anthony**, a 1998 Dalhousie SLIS graduate, has been hired on a halftime basis for the academic year.

Novanet, a Nova Scotian consortium of academic libraries cooperating to enhance access to information and knowledge, was noted for its innovation when it was selected as one of the twelve finalists in NovaKnowledge's new program of presenting Smart Enterprise Awards. Four categories of awards were recognized including: Young Leader, Smart Technology User, New Product/Service, and Smart Organization or Partnership. Novanet was placed in the Smart Technology User category competing against the Lunenburg Assistive Technology Centre Society and a Learning Resource and Technology Initiative. Novanet congratulates The Assistive Technology Centre for being chosen recipient of the NovaKnowledge award.

Public Libraries

Halifax Regional Library - A presentation was made to Halifax Regional Council on October 27th proposing deferral of the central library project until budget year 2001/2002. The in-

formation report prepared for Council recommended that \$500,000.00 contained in the current capital budget be redirected for immediate Spring Garden Road branch repairs, and that the project be brought to Council earlier than the deferral date if the selected site and funds become available from all sources. All recommendations were approved.

Work is continuing on the Public Services staffing allocation plan which is the next step in achieving service equity in the region. The plan identified staffing models and criteria to allocate staff resources equitably across the region. The proposed 1999/-2000 operating budget includes estimates for revised branch staffing allocations resulting from the implementation of the plan.

A Materials Budget Allocation Model has been developed to support the Library's Strategic Direction "...to increase public satisfaction through the equitable provision of top quality customer service and thorough collections...." The actual budget amounts will be determined based on approved materials budget and circulation and information questions data from the 1998/99 fiscal year.

Michael Christie has been appointed to the position of Director of Human Resources effective December 2, 1998.

Provincial Library System

Cape Breton Regional Library - During the month of December, the **McConnell Library** in Sydney has put up a Book Tree! With the Book Tree the library is asking patrons to think of the library during this gift giving season by donating a book to the library. The tree, located near the Circulation Desk, is arrayed with holiday decorations, each labelled with the title and price of a book the library wants to add to its collection. Included is a wide selection of children's and adult's books.

To take part in the Book Tree program, patrons select a decoration with the book title they want. When a book is sponsored, the patron has the first opportunity to borrow the book, receives a tax receipt, has a bookplate placed at the front of the book with an inscription of their choosing, and receives a new ornament for their own tree. Most importantly, the giving patron has the satisfaction of knowing they have supported an essential community service.

The **Cape Breton Regional Library** participated in the Celtic Colours Festival by hosting a series of five programs at the **McConnell Library**. Four noon hour programs featured Piano Composition with Pat and Winnie Chafe, Irish Fiddling with Liz Doherty, Celtic Storytelling with Jim St. Clair, and Textiles/Weaving with Angie Aucoin and Marie MacDonald. Saturday morning programming included a visit from storyteller Rosemary McCormick. Ms. McCormick's storytelling is unique because stories are recounted in Gaelic. All sessions were well attended and enjoyed.

The McConnell Library welcomed **Lisa Mulak** to staff in October as Children's and Young Adult Librarian. This position is new and is the first time the Library has had a full-time Children's Librarian.

Cumberland Regional Library - The **Pugwash Library**, one of the seven branches in the Cumberland Regional System, celebrated ten years of library service to its area patrons on October 16th. This celebration was used as an opportunity to launch the Web NcompasS and the online reference databases. With the launch of the Web NcompasS, library users will be able to search for library materials from home. The program of activities included a talk by keynote speaker, Lloyd Gillis, Deputy Minister of Education and Culture and awarding talented young

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News from the Provinces continued...

library users for their creative library birthday greetings. For more information about the Pugwash Library, visit the homepage at: rs6000.nshpl.library.ns.ca/regionals/cur/pugwash/

Eastern Counties Regional Library has recently completed its strategic planning process. The strategic plan highlights document "Linking Rural Communities" will be available at year's end. Please contact the library if you would like to receive a copy of this document. (E-mail: info@nsme.library.ns.ca) It will also be found at www.library.ns.ca/regionals/ecr/.

A Year 2000 steering committee, consisting of **Western Counties Regional Library** management, representatives from the **Yarmouth Public Library and Museum Board**, and the WCRL Board has recently formed. The Committee, which is responsible for directing all aspects of the regional library's Year 2000 Project, will identify and correct any potential problems related to technology systems.

A total of 865 new members signed up with WCRL during the region's first Library Card Month. The total number of registered members across the region as of September was 11,624.

The long term goal of Library Card Month is to double the membership. Organizers will move in the direction of this goal by setting a percentage target for subsequent campaigns.

Cameron Publications, sponsor the Library Card Month, has expressed their pleasure in being a partner with the library and would be pleased if we seek their assistance next year. Other supporting players included CJS and Tusket Sale & Service.

Western Health Information Project was one of twelve finalists for the "Smart Enterprise" award announced during the NovaKnowledge 1998 Fall Stakeholders Conference held in Digby in October. The project is a partnership of WCRL and the Western Regional Health Board.

Along with the Health Reference Centre database, WCRL is pleased to

announce the acquisition of three new databases. These include the General Reference Centre, the CPI.Q (Canadian Periodicals Index Online), and Books in Print.

Under the direction of Doug Jones, students from the Internet Systems Management and Support Diploma Program (Burrige Campus, Yarmouth) are assisting WCRL in revamping its web site. Additions to the site will include a page on WCRL Charitable Association, Friends of the Library, and a Reader's Friend page. Design changes will be made to the homepage, online forms revised, and new forms added. Burrige Campus has assisted the Regional Library with several projects over the past few years - most recently, the Adopt-a-Book program and the new Children's Web Site.

Children, ages 2 - 8 will have an opportunity to win a ticket for themselves and a chaperone to a performance by celebrated author Robert Munch. Munch will be at the Dalhousie Arts Centre on Sunday, April 18th. Children's Coordinator **Joanne Head**, is planning a Munch-a-Thon reading program in the new year. Children from Digby, Shelburne, and Yarmouth counties can enter what promises to be a very popular contest. Campbell's Shuttle Service of Yarmouth has agreed to provide both its vans, at no charge, to transport the lucky winners to Halifax.

Craig Cormier has returned to the **N.S. Provincial Library** to continue the development of the successful "Internet Training Handbook". The project involves the writing and development of two new modules, one for Web NcompasS and one for the online reference databases. The modules will also include resources such as instructions on how to plan a workshop, generic scripts for the training sessions, exercises, and evaluation forms.

Funding has recently been secured for the creation of a searchable database containing the many reference



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News from the Provinces continued...

questions that have been answered by the Nova Scotia Provincial Library User Services staff. Each month the Provincial Library fields approximately 100 reference questions from librarians across the province. The more significant inquiries are recorded for future consultation. **Michael Vanderburg** will develop the accessibility to this knowledge bank. On completion, the database will be posted on the Nova Scotia Provincial Library homepage.

On Sunday, September 27th, on a pedestrian-only Spring Garden Road, Halifax celebrated literacy and reading by hosting the 3rd Annual Word on the Street. For the second year, the **Halifax Regional Library** generously allowed the Nova Scotia Provincial Library to share its booth. **Arlene Watts**, Special Services Library Assistant, NSPL, represented the nine Regional Public Libraries' province-wide Summer Reading Program. A variety of the Summer Reading Program's promotional items, such as shirts, mousepads, and posters were available for purchase. Inclement weather could not dampen spirits - the event had a carnival-like atmosphere and provided an excellent opportunity to raise awareness for the Reading Program.

Special and Government Libraries

Nova Scotia Legislative Library - The **Legislative Library's** WebPAC catalogue has launched its online catalogue on the Internet. The URL is <http://www.gov.ns.ca/legi/library> and can also be reached via the Nova Scotia government homepage (<http://www.gov.ns.ca>) by clicking on Nova Scotia Legislature and then clicking Legislative Library Catalogue. You must have a Java enabled browser and the vendor recommends the following versions be used for the best results:

Internet Explorer 3.0 and 3.02

Netscape 3.01; 3.02; 4.03; 4.04

We will be linking to full-text docu-

ments if they are available on the Internet. Please let us know if you are experiencing difficulty in accessing our catalogue. Contact: **Margaret Murphy**, (902) 424-5932 or murphymf@gov.ns.ca.

Jennifer Millman, formerly with the **N.S. Department of Education and Culture Library**, joined the Legislative Library staff in October to replace **Elizabeth Johnson** who has left to work with the NDP Caucus. Jennifer will be responsible for cataloguing and indexing as well as maintaining the newspaper index on InMagic.

- Cathy Chisholm

Vice President (Nova Scotia)



Public Libraries

Bibliothèque régionale AWK Regional Library - Prior to its regular meeting on November 18, the **Sackville Public Library** Board made a special presentation to retiring Board member, **Ralph Howe**. Mr. Howe has been actively supporting and working for the Sackville Library for many years. He was instrumental in the plan-

ning and construction of the present library facility. Over the years his varied talents have been put to use in fundraising, repairs and maintenance and in support of all endeavours of the Board.

Nancy Cohen of the **Moncton Public Library** was interviewed by the Moncton Times & Transcript for an article on librarians, one of a series on various careers.

The **New Brunswick Architects Association** presented the Moncton Public Library with seven books on architecture. The presentation was made in conjunction with their annual conference which took place in Moncton this year. The Association intends to continue this practice, donating books to the library in whichever city the annual conference takes place.

The **Riverview Public Library** celebrated twenty years of service to their community with a full week of activities beginning with an open house and tours of the library and including a session on storytelling for adults, a special preschool storytime with the Mayor, and a program for children and teens with local author, Krista Johansen, who explored with them how to find and develop story ideas.

Ten trustees of the **Albert-Westmorland-Kent** region attended the annual reception for M.L.A.s, sponsored by the NBLTA.

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News from the Provinces continued...

This event gives trustees a chance to meet with their local representative to discuss library issues.

Through a series of sessions arranged by the **New Brunswick Library Service**, all staff of the Albert-Westmorland-Kent region have received at least a basic level of training in using the Internet.

York Regional Library - Staff of York Regional Library prepared a display for the reception hosted by the **New Brunswick Library Trustees Association** in the members' lounge of the Legislative Assembly on December 8th from 4:30-5:30. The display consisted of two segments: ----a map of the province indicating all service points of the public library system of the province as well as identifying communities requesting library service. ----a display of new acquisitions indicating the cost of the item and the cost of including it in the system.

Friends of Fredericton Public Library received grants from the Protestant Orphans Home (\$10,000 for children's books) and McCain Foods Foundation (\$5,000 for adult non-fiction). **Fredericton Public Library**, as the region's resource library, will make materials available to all branches.

York Regional Library is recipient of a \$7750 grant from a private Ontario foundation to upgrade and expand the Talking Book service. Money will be spent on new titles, new tape players and a long term radio advertising campaign.

Lieutenant-Governor Marilyn Trenholme-Counsell read to children at the **Doaktown Public-School Library** and at the **Minto Public Library** during Children's Book Week. December 3rd, Her Honour was in the **Plaster Rock Public-School Library** to help Board, staff, volunteers, patrons and other guests celebrate 20 years of service to the community.

Ruth Russel of Naswaaksis Pub-

lic-School Library invited 450 young people to the Nahswaaksis Middle School theatre to listen to storyteller Leslie Robbins as part of Children's Book Week.

Acclaimed children's author Michael Kusagak from Repulse Bay NWT read to large audiences at both the Nashwaaksis Public-School Library and the Fredericton Public Library November 27th. Mr. Kusagak also demonstrated the technique of Ajaraaq story telling to an enthralled audience.

York Regional Library held its 2nd annual fireside booksale January 29th and 30th in Fredericton Public Library's Assembly Room.

Perth Andover Public Library Board and staff are pleased with their new expanded and renovated facilities. The old clock that used to be on the building when it was a post office has been returned to the library and will be reinstalled in its former place of glory over the front door.

First in the region, Fredericton Public Library's circulation went online November 17th and plans are already on the way to connect Nashwaaksis and **Oromocto** (February) and **Bibliothèque Dr. Marguerite Michaud** (April).

Bibliothèque régionale du Haut-Saint-Jean - La deuxième réunion du Forum régional de la Bibliothèque régionale du Haut-Saint-Jean s'est tenue le 13 octobre 1998 au bureau régional sous la présidence de **Madame Jocelyne Lebel**, directrice régional.

Un premier Salon de l'informatique s'est déroulé le 15 novembre dernier à la **Bibliothèque publique Mgr-Plourde**. Sous le thème "En route vers l'an 2000" et organisé par le Centre d'accès communautaire de Saint-François de Madawaska, le salon a connu un franc succès. On y trouvait une exposition de produits informatiques, des jeux en réseau, et des conférences intéressantes : "Le bogue de l'an 2000"; "Comment évaluer le placement publicitaire sur le

web"; "Impact du commerce électronique"; "Info-Source (recherche d'emploi sur Internet)".

La Bibliothèque régionale du Haut-Saint-Jean offre depuis cinq ans un service de livres sonores qui s'adresse à toute personne ayant un handicap visuel ou physique. Des livres de tous genres, en français ou en anglais, sont disponibles sur cassettes et sont prêtés pour une période de quatre semaines.

La fête annuelle des bibliothèques de la région du Haut-Saint-Jean s'est tenue à la **Bibliothèque publique de Saint-Quentin** le 20 novembre dernier. On a procédé à la remise des marques de reconnaissance pour le personnel méritant du réseau. Jeux, échanges de cadeaux et un délicieux repas étaient aussi au rendez-vous de la soirée.

New Brunswick Library Service - New Brunswick Library Service has entered into an agreement with Industry Canada and Connect NB BranchÚ that will see Industry Canada provide funding for the purchase of one Internet ready computer workstation in all of the remaining unconnected public libraries in the province by the end of March 1999.

The **New Brunswick Public Libraries Foundation** is operational. It is now possible to make donations to the Foundation and the provincial government has committed to matching the first \$100,000 raised annually. A fundraising plan for the Foundation will be developed over the course of the next year.

Public Services Librarian **Ella Fairley** has been accepted as a participant in the Northern Exposure to Leadership to take place in Emerald Lake, B.C. in February 1999. She is one of 26 candidates selected nationally.

The final edition of VISION.DISC the CD-ROM format of the provincial union catalogue was produced in December 1998. The CD-ROM product will no longer be needed as all of our

(continued on next page)

News from the Provinces continued...

libraries will be connected to VISION.ONLINE before the next CD-ROM is due to be produced.

The Youth Employment Strategy Internet Training Project funded by Industry Canada wrapped up in December. More than 150 staff members benefited from the training.

NBLS has established a **Gates Library Foundation Committee** to work on producing a provincial application for submission to the Foundation.

Academic Libraries

La **Bibliothèque Champlain** de l'Université de Moncton accueillera une Étudiante française dans le domaine du métier du livre du 8 mars au 14 mai prochain. La stagiaire travaillera à développer un plan marketing pour la bibliothèque.

Special Libraries

Marthe Brideau, bibliothécaire à l'**Hôpital Georges-Dumont de Moncton**, vient d'accepter le poste de responsable de la Bibliothèque de la santé à l'Université de Sherbrooke. Elle débutera la-bas à la fin janvier 1999.

There are two new staff members at the **Canadian Forest Service Library**, Natural Resources Canada - Atlantic Region. The acting Regional Librarian is **Darlene Tan** who worked as a part-time librarian at the Reference Department, **Harriet Irving Library**, UNB Fredericton until the birth of her son, Benjamin in June 1998. The new library clerk is **Kelly Dickson** who also works part-time at the Circulation Department, Harriet Irving Library, UNB Fredericton.

An exhibit prepared by the **Dordrecht Municipal Archives** to honour Canadian soldiers who liberated that city opened at the **Provincial Archives of New Brunswick** November 8th. The exhibit, "Dordrecht during World War II," / Dordrecht pendant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, is a series of

55 black and white photographs that record the impact of the war on life in Dordrecht from the first military activity in 1939 to the city's liberation by Canadians in 1945. These are supplemented by 14 colour photographs of the propaganda posters used by the Germans and the posters put up by the Dutch to welcome the liberating Allies. The exhibition will continue until early in January and is open to the public Monday to Saturday during normal hours of operation.

Saint John Regional Library - In October, **Pamela Stevens Rosolen** represented the **Saint John Library Region** at a one day session on the National Panel on Accountability and Governance in the Volunteer Section. Some valuable insights on fundraising initiatives were gained.

The **Consumer Health Library Committee** presented a Consumer Health brief to the Health Services Review Committee, and took part in a one-day health conference which stressed the "intersectoral" nature of health care. The MindCare Collection was launched at a noonhour reception. This is a collection of books and videos on health care matters selected by the Consumer Health Library Committee. A \$5,000 grant from MindCare New Brunswick made the collection possible.

In November, **Book Ends** - our used book outlet - was officially launched. The brainchild of **Melanie Hatfield**, Saint John Library Region employee, the concept received extra publicity during its first week, due to the protests of a local used book store owner. The first week was highly successful raising approximately \$1,700 for the purchase of new materials.

The **Saint John Free Public Library** was the sight of the first annual Gingerbread House Workshop. This was a family event co-sponsored by the Bulk Barn with proceeds going to support children's programming. Over 100 people took part in the event. The houses were left on display in the library during the Festival of Trees at

the New Brunswick Museum. The best house, selected by popular ballot, was awarded a children's cookbook.

In December, the Saint John Free Public Library partnered with Mayor Shirley MacAlary's annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. Following the tree lighting, over 300 children accompanied the Mayor in the library for Christmas stories, mines and a puppet show. The Mayor was the guest reader. Following the reading, Her Worship personally took photographs of each child with Santa.

- *Charlotte Dionne*
Vice President (New Brunswick)



Public

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada donated a copy of its video, "CPR, you can do it" to every public library on the Island. Also, the **PEI Provincial Library Service** has moved its internal newsletter, *The branch exchange*, to electronic format. The newsletter is being distributed on a monthly basis over the Internet to all Provincial Library staff.

Associations

The **PEI Professional Librarians' Association** held its annual meeting in November. The current executive consists of **Johanne Jacob** (President), **Sharon Neill** (Vice-President) and **Andrea Stewart** (Secretary/Treasurer). The Association participated in a Careers Fair day for Island high schools. Staff from the PEI Provincial Library provided a booth and went to most of the Island high schools to provide information on careers in library and information science to students.

(continued on next page)

News from the Provinces continued...

The PEI Teacher-Librarians' Association held their semi-annual meeting on November 16. Highlights included a recap of the ATLC-PEITLA conference held at the University of Prince Edward Island last May and the guest speaker was Nancy Russell, an Island author and sportscaster on CBC.

Carolyn Ledwell, a student in the school library diploma program at the University of Prince Edward Island, has received an ATLC (Association for Teacher-Librarianship in Canada) project award for her booklet entitled: *Building better learners*. The booklet originated as course-work for the diploma program. It is targeted at parents and describes the roles that teacher-librarians play in helping students develop skills for the Information Age. It also includes ways that parents can support and promote school libraries. The booklet is available for a small charge from the ATLC.

School

The PEI Department of Education held its annual Curriculum Marketplace for teacher-librarians in the beginning of December. The full-day program included 23 concurrent sessions for teacher-librarians including changes in the curriculum programs and introductory sessions to software such as Corel Presentations.

Academic

Holland College has received a grant for \$35,000. from the Crabtree Foundation in Ottawa to purchase computer hardware and software. This equipment will improve the ability to teach information skills to students at the college by building an information lab at the Resource Centre in Charlottetown. Among the software being considered is Ariel which will enhance the interlibrary loan procedure.

- Moira Davidson
Vice President (PEI)



College Libraries

An agreement has been reached to merge the **Engineering Technology Centre Library** of the College of the North Atlantic with the Marine Institute's **Dr. C.R. Barrett Library**. Plans are underway to facilitate the smooth transfer of serial subscriptions, standing orders, and outstanding monograph orders. The ETC Library collection will be integrated into the Marine Institute Library, and all bibliographic records into **Memorial University of Newfoundland's** on-line library catalogue, *Unicorn*.

Gary Peschell, Librarian at the **Baie Verte Campus** has accepted the Librarian position at the **Labrador West Campus** of the **College of the North Atlantic**.

Public Libraries

On November 20 **Gilbert Higgins** died. Mr. Higgins was a tremendous living resource for Newfoundland history and Newfoundlandia generally. In a professional capacity Mr. Higgins was for many years in charge of the **Stephenville Public Library**. He was an historian and archivist, and he had in his lifetime amassed a voluminous library of materials pertaining to Newfoundland. Notable among his achievements was his spearheading of many preservation projects in the Bay St. George area. As well, Mr. Higgins was one of the founders of the Bay St.

George Historical Society. He was recently highlighted on Wayne Rostad's CBC television program, *On the Road Again*, and in April of this year he was presented with a Heritage Award by the Newfoundland Historical Society.

In other news, Toronto storyteller Gail Fricker performed readings of her work at libraries in Corner Brook, **Stephenville**, and **St. John's**.

The CORNET group is in the final stages of setting up equipment to run the Community On-Line Resource Network, based out of the **Corner Brook Public Library**. CORNET will be providing free dial-in text-based e-mail accounts and space for WWW Home Pages for non-profit groups in the area and IT training for individuals and groups, as well as other services.

Newfoundland and Labrador public libraries now provide access to a web version of their on-line catalogue. The web version, called *Beacon*, shows the holdings of the Provincial Information and Library Resources Board's 96 public libraries. It is available at the following URL: <<http://www.publib.nf.ca>>.

The **St John's Public Libraries** held a book sale on Saturday, November 28, 1998 in the main Lecture Room of the Arts and Culture Centre. The sale raised \$1,923.00 for the purchase of new books. In addition the St. John's Public Library Board held a draw for their 1998 Ticket Draw on October 30, 1998. The prize was a hooked mat with the title "Union Mine at Tilt Cove." The draw raised \$1,425.00 which will be used for the purchase of talking books.

The Writer-in-the Library-Program launched "The Scarf and the Moonlight Dancing", an anthology of work by all participants in the Year of the Arts (1997) writing workshops for teenagers, at the **Mount Pearl Public Library** on October 20, 1998. Twenty young people and their families were involved, and the event was covered by a reporter from the Newfoundland

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News from the Provinces continued...

Herald. **Suzanne Sexty** of Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II Library introduced those who read their work to an appreciative audience of 60 or more. The Writer-in-the-Library Program is a joint project of the Provincial Public Libraries and the Writer's Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador.

As part of Canadian Children's Book Week, award winning illustrator Ron Lightburn concluded his provincial tour of public readings in public libraries on November 14 with a presentation at the **A.C. Hunter Children's Library** in St. John's.

On the administration front, there were changes. **David Gale**, the Executive Director of the Provincial Information and Library Resources Board has resigned and returned to the Newfoundland Treasury Board.

Special Libraries

Jenny Rumboldt is now on staff at the **Canadian Forest Service Li-**

brary, Natural Resources Canada in Corner Brook. She had previously worked at the Ferriss Hodgett Library, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Pat Warner has returned to Newfoundland as the librarian for C-Core's Ocean Engineering Information Centre in St. John's after spending a year at the New York Public Library.

University Libraries

The **Queen Elizabeth II Library** is presently undertaking a project involving the movement of government documents from their present location in a separate collection into the regular library collection. This integration of the government document collection has involved reclassing government materials into their appropriate LC classifications and determining their future location, either in the circulating book collection or in the reference collection.

Suzanne Sexty is on sabbatical from Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II Library starting in January 1999. She will be doing research on

the topic of distance education. **Louise White** will be returning from maternity leave to work part-time at the Queen Elizabeth II Library. She will be dividing her time between the Information Services and Periodicals divisions.

Other news

The Newfoundland and Labrador Library Association held its Fall General Meeting on November 12, 1998 at the Marine Institute's Hampton Hall in St. John's. The guest speaker at the meeting was **Dianne Cmor**, a librarian at Memorial University's Health Sciences Library. Ms. Cmor presented a talk entitled "Finding and Evaluating Information on the WWW." The session touched on what kind of information is on the World Wide Web, what tools are available to help you find it, and what evaluative criteria are particularly important for web-based searches.

- Steve Field
Vice President (Newfoundland)

From St. Jerome's Den

In the last column we looked at how one patron felt about the library. Now, as we begin a new year, might not be a bad time to look at how a few others see libraries - and the people who work in them.

St. Jerome

Author Maya Angelou has stated: "Libraries are valuable beyond measure, for they keep, protect and conserve all human thought, and they are actively about the business of sharing their bounty daily. I don't think I could live without them, and I double if I would care to." Quoted in *The U*N*A*B*A*S*H*E*D Librarian*, No. 105, p. 6.

Eric Wilson, best known for his mystery books for children, reflected on his youth: "The library and the local movie theatre were the two places I most loved to go to when I was young. I loved the smell of books and I loved the sense of being surrounded by all those stories. And I loved the quiet. The atmosphere of the library itself created my love of books." Quoted in *BC Bookworld*, Spring 1998, p. 29

Lest you think that all your efforts of cataloguing and

organizing information are wasted, keep the following in mind. Hailz-Emily Osborne, an English teacher at Bradfield College in Great Britain, writes that "Time is one of the great problems for young students using the Internet. Confronted with hundreds of thousands of references, [the pupil] has little guidance as to the nature and the quality of the sites on offer. Even with the help of electronic browsers, the choice remains bewildering. Libraries can be bewildering places, too, but at least you don't have to search the garbage cans before getting the books." Quoted in the *Globe and Mail*, April 28, 1998, p. A26

Max Freedman noted that, "A library is your true democracy. It has no respect for rank. It is indifferent to wealth. The insolence of youth does not frighten it and it stands unabashed before the authority of old age. Its favours cannot be taken by force nor won by flattery." Freedman was a Winnipeg journalist who could not afford to go to university. In the 1930's, with his older brother Sam (who later became the Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal of Manitoba), he spent many an hour in the Elizabeth Dafoe Library of the University of Manitoba. A plaque at the front entrance of the library states that the Library was his University - nothing more need be said. Posted on the APLA-list February 16, 1998



Call for Nominations



The executive offices requiring nominations for 1999/2000 are:

Vice-President, President Elect
 Vice-President (New Brunswick)
 Vice President (Prince Edward Island)
 Treasurer

Guidelines:

1. No member of the Nominations and Elections Committee is eligible for nomination.
2. Any APLA member may nominate any other member for elective office.
3. Every person nominated shall be a personal APLA member in good standing and shall file a letter of acceptance with the Secretary of the Association.
4. The Treasurer shall reside in the Province of Nova Scotia.

Please send nominations, postmarked no later than March 31, 1999 to:

John Teskey
 Past President, APLA
 Harriet Irving Library
 University of New Brunswick

E-mail: jteskey@unb.ca
 Phone: (506) 453-4740
 Fax: (506) 453-4595



General Activities Fund

- Provides funds for projects or activities which will further the aims and objectives of APLA.
- Applications will be considered based on availability of funds.
- Applications should state topic and date of activity, relevancy to the Atlantic library community and APLA, sponsoring bodies, estimated costs and revenues, and a contact person.
- Send applications by March 31, 1999 to:

Peter Webster
 Head of Information Services
 Saint Mary's University
 Halifax, NS B3H 3C3
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ALTA VISTA TRANSLATIONS
 [[HTTP://BABELFISH.ALTAVISTA.COM/](http://babelfish.altavista.com/)]
 BY ANDRÉ GIONET
 (reviewed December 28th, 1998)

Reflecting the growing cultural diversity of the Internet, AltaVista started offering a translation service with the cooperation of a software company called Systran Translation Software.

AltaVista's translation service offers the capability to translate from French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese to English. You can also translate from English to any of these languages. You also have the choice to translate a portion of text that you type in, or to enter an URL, and have AltaVista translate a whole Web page.

AltaVista Translation works very fast. Keep in mind that if it is fast, it is because we are dealing with machine translation. There are no native speakers of the languages to do the work in a very short turnaround time. AltaVista Translation has a FAQ that takes great care to keep some realism in our expectations. Among the warnings that are given, we learn that:

- the translated text should use proper grammar and vocabulary. Slang translates very poorly. Even if machine translation gives reasonable results, you should not rely on it
- AltaVista recommends we acknowledge the translator and append the original text
- the whole document might not be translated. Because translation requires a lot of computer resources, they set a maximum limit of 5k of text from a Web page.

So, with my expectations brought back to very low level, I went on to give it a first shot. I went to the AltaVista Translation page, selected translation from French to English, and typed in a short French sentence:

Entered: Je m'appelle Andre Gionet et j'habite en Saskatchewan.

Result: I am called Andre Gionet and I live in Saskatchewan.

Not too bad, but, if I remember my English classes, the proper way to say it would be "My name is Andre Gionet and I live in Saskatchewan". I then tweaked my original French sentence:

Entered: Mon nom est Andre Gionet et j'habite en Saskatchewan.

Result: My name is Andre Gionet and I live in Saskatchewan.

This result resembles the phrasing I learned in my English classes. It also reminded me that computer translation works on a word to word basis, with no regard to what we would consider proper style.

Now, let's switch to more serious stuff. I opened a new browser window and connected to the Web site of a French weekly, *Le Nouvel Observateur* <<http://www.nouvelobs.com/>>. I then went back to my AltaVista Translation window, and typed in the URL for *Le Nouvel Observateur*, and asked for a translation from French to English. Then I had a good laugh. For example:

Original: ÉCONOMIE - Vins de Bordeaux : les châteaux ivres

Translation: ECONOMY - Wines of Bordeaux: the châteaux drunk ones

A more correct translation would have been: "Bordeaux Wines: the drunk castles". For your information, the French original had a spelling mistake; it was supposed to be "châteaux" and not "châteaux". This confirms AltaVista's disclaimer about having documents properly spelt in the original document. To give some context, that particular article was about Bordeaux vineyards charging very high prices for their wines.

Another example from *Le Nouvel Observateur's* table of contents:

Original: NOTRE ÉPOQUE - Toulouse : les enfants volent, la police tire

Translation: Our Time - Toulouse: the children fly, the font draws

This is more proof that computer translation works on a word-to-word basis, regardless of context. "NOTRE ÉPOQUE" was correctly translated with "Our Time". Once again, we have a problem because in French, "volent" is the third person plural for a verb that designates both the act of flying and the act of... stealing. Also, the French language uses "police" to designate law and security forces as well as... typesets or fonts. A more appropriate translation of that title, according to the context of the article, should have been: "Toulouse: the children steal, the police shoot".

One last word about the resulting translation from *Le Nouvel Observateur* table of contents. I noticed that if text that was in HTML was translated by the machine,

(continued on next page)

ALTA VISTA TRANSLATIONS*(continued from previous page)*

portions that were part of images or inserted as images were not affected by the translation. This is to be expected, as images are not standard HTML text (even though they might be inserted in HTML documents).

Because AltaVista refuses to translate Web documents that are bigger than 5k, you can bypass this restriction by copying a block of text from a Web page opened in another window, then paste it in the translation window. Which is what I did for an article that I picked from the Web site of another French weekly, *Courrier International* <<http://www.courrierint.com/>>. If the English translation does not make too much sense, try replacing some of the "it" by "he".

French original:

Il y a deux ans, Jesse Nyamu, le vice-ministre des Mines et de l'Energie namibien, séjournait dans un camp établi sur les rives du fleuve Cunene [frontalier avec l'Angola], qui donne sur les magnifiques chutes Epupa. Il en fut impressionné. "Ce site est paradisiaque", inscrivit-il sur le livre d'or avant de repartir. De retour à son bureau, il trama la destruction de ce lieu.

English translation:

Two years ago, Jesse Nyamu, the vice-minister for the Mines and of Energy namibien, remained in a camp established on banks of the river frontier Cunene [with Angola], which gives on the splendid Epupa falls. It was impressed by it. "This site is paradisiac", registered it on the gold book before setting out again. Of return to its office, it wove the destruction of this place.

AltaVista Translation shows that human mediated translation is not yet dead. It shows that the great onset of computer mediated translation has not yet arrived, mostly

because translation is still on a word-to-word basis and ignores the context of a sentence. And let's not mention the cultural baggage attached to many words as we hop from one language to another.

I decided to test the reverse process. I took a paragraph from an English article on the Web site of *The International Herald Tribune*.

English original:

KUALA LUMPUR - When Anwar Ibrahim, Malaysia's ousted deputy prime minister, was first brought to court two months ago on corruption and sodomy charges, there were calls from across the political spectrum for a fair and open procedure. Malaysia was on trial, politicians and columnists said, as much as Mr. Anwar was.

French translation:

KUALA LUMPUR - quand Anwar Ibrahim, Malaisie évincer deputy prime ministre, la première fois apporter pour v au devant deux mois il y a sur corruption et sodomie frais, là appel à travers politique spectre pour un juste et ouvert procédure. La Malaisie était sur l'épreuve, les politiciens et les chroniqueurs dits, autant que M. Anwar était.

The translation from English to French is, at best, very basic. The words were translated from English to French with no regard to proper syntax or grammar. The result is a string of words that may give the non-English speaking person a hint of what the original article said, but will be definitely not be quotable material for a term paper.

And yet, let's not dismiss AltaVista right away. Very often, a hint is better than nothing at all, especially when no one around is well versed in other languages.

**FIRST TIMER'S CONFERENCE GRANT**

*Have yo never been to an APLA annual conference?
Do you want to go to Saint John, but cannot afford it?
Why not apply for APLA's First Timer's Conference Grant?*



To be eligible, an applicant must be a personal member of APLA, residing in an Atlantic province, and planning to attend her/his first APLA annual conference.

Grants are allocated, consistent with general APLA guidelines, to help meet conference related expenses. If more applications are received than can be met by the fund, money will be awarded by drawing from the names of all eligible applicants.

Recipients will be expected to write a short report, for the Executive and the *Bulletin*, summarizing their conference experience.

Applications should include name, business address, chosen means for contacting (mail, e-mail, telephone, fax) estimated costs (travel, accommodation, meals, registration), and a signed statement acknowledging compliance with eligibility requirements.

Applications should be submitted by March 31, 1999 to:

Francesco Lai, President, APLA
Manager, Library and Information Services
Atlantic Food and Horticultural Research Ctre
Kentville, Nova Scotia
Phone: (902) 679-5508; Fax: (902) 679-2311
Email: laif@em.agr.ca

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES
FRIDAY LECTURE SERIES

As part of its continuing education programme, SLIS presents a series of Friday lectures. These lectures are open to the public at no charge. The synopses reprinted here originally appeared on the SLIS web site at <http://www.mgmt.dal.ca/slis/con_edfr.html>

SEPTEMBER 16, 1998

"The Social Production of W. O. Mitchell's
The Kite."

Sheila Latham, Toronto

The first lecture in the Friday Lecture Series was actually held on Wednesday, September 16, 1998. Sheila Latham, a former Dalhousie graduate and recipient of a PhD. from the University of Leeds, presented the assembled group of students and faculty with a paper entitled "The Social Production of W.O. Mitchell's The Kite." By following Mitchell's writing career, Latham has drawn correlations between his work and his involvement over time with different mediums of expression (ie. magazines, radio, television, and novels).

Latham's work seeks to explain the fifteen year gap between Mitchell's publication of the much acclaimed novel *Who Has Seen the Wind* in 1947, and his second novel, *The Kite*, published in 1962. Latham suggests that *The Kite* was a product of Mitchell's writing conditions and its publication a collaboration between the author, the CBC, and Macmillan of Canada. This collaborative effort is indicative of mid-twentieth century publishing practice, just as its actual creation exemplified Mitchell's creative process and sources of inspiration.

His work in radio with the "Jake and the Kid" series proved to be a testing ground for his ideas and a source of inspiration for his later work. Mitchell gauged the popularity of his story lines from listeners' reactions and characters from "Jake and the Kid" often found new homes in Shelby, the fictional town that served as the setting for *The Kite*.

Latham also explores in her paper the frustrations felt by Mitchell and other Canadian writers of the time who were forced to undergo much wrangling and negotiating to get published in the United States. She brought together the creative and publishing traumas of Mitchell to provide an example of the same forces and problems facing other Canadian artists at mid-century, when success at home was secondary to success in the United States and Britain.

Latham contends that Mitchell fought to be considered a "serious" novelist and therefore early in his career tried to shun the popular mediums of radio and magazines. However, she concludes that it was because of (and not despite) Mitchell's foray into these mediums that his work came to be considered among the classics of Canadian fiction. Enjoyed

by a wide audience, Mitchell's short stories and radio plays brought his characters into the homes and imaginations of Canadians and increased interest in his longer works of fiction. W.O. Mitchell's work remains a standard in any survey of Canadian literature and his characters continue to draw readers back to his stories of small-town living and Canadian values.

- Carolyn Whalen
First year student

OCTOBER 30, 1998

"Socio-Economic and Spatial Data
for Teaching and Research:

A New Chapter in Library Services."

Ernie Boyko (Statistics Canada) and
Wendy Watkins (Carleton University)

The lecture given on Friday the 30th of October was entitled *Socio-Economic and Spatial Data for Teaching and Research: A New Chapter in Library Services*. While the topic dealt with statistical data, it was an interesting lecture on the emerging role of many university libraries as data centres, providing access to the raw data of Statistics Canada in a more economical, convenient form.

The guest lecturers, Ernie Boyko and Wendy Watkins first gave historical background on the manner in which Statistics Canada used to disseminate information and the reasons for the change to an electronic form. While it was perhaps basic economics for the Canadian government to decide to cut paper publications, it resulted in a pilot project headed by Boyko and Watkins that made the dissemination of raw statistical data much more accessible by providing it upon the internet.

With the move to making university libraries the centers for access to this data, managed by a librarian, they have created an arena where this information is more widely available to a greater variety of people, without the need to pay large fees, or to travel to Ottawa. As the library pays an annual fee to provide access to this information, the data is by necessity protected by password (hence the data manager) and ensures that the information provided is used for academic purposes only. In this way, a win-win situation is created: the public still has a reasonable access to Statistics Canada, and the government manages to recover some of the cost of producing the data.

- Monica Graves
First year student

(continued on next page)

NOVEMBER 6, 1998

"Canadian Publishing: Sharing a
Near-Death Experience."

James Lorimer

(Formac Publishing Co. Ltd., Halifax)

On November 6, 1998, James Lorimer gave a talk entitled "Canadian publishing: sharing a near-death experience". Mr. Lorimer is the president of Formac Publishing Co. Ltd., which publishes Canadian Forum.

Mr. Lorimer commented that the Canadian publishing industry has grown considerably in the past thirty years. When he first became involved in the industry in 1970, 90-95% of all books that were available in Canadian libraries were of British or American origin. When he complained to librarians about this, they told him that they did not stock Canadian titles because the public did not read them. Times have changed. Mr. Lorimer estimated that there are 10-20 times more Canadian novels and books of poetry published today than in 1970, and 50-100 times more books from Atlantic Canada published today than in 1970. He stated that in the genre of fiction, Europeans now prefer Canadian writers to U.S. writers. Nevertheless, despite all these successes, Mr. Lorimer described Canadian book publishing as an "incredibly fragile" industry, "standing on 16 thin little spindly legs".

He explained that although Canadian book publishing is profitable, the profit margin is "about 2%", and all publishers rely on subsidies. In addition, Canadian publishers must compete against wealthy U.S. publishers which consider Canada part of their home market.

Mr. Lorimer gave two examples to illustrate the vulnerability of Canadian book publishers. As his first example, Mr. Lorimer spoke about Ontario, where 13 publishing companies were customers of the Ontario Development Corporation (ODC) for 25 years. When the Harris government decided to cut the ODC, all book publishers in Ontario were threatened. Some, like Coach House Press, folded. Others, like Mr. Lorimer's company, survived. However, Mr. Lorimer related that he was forced to talk to the "special accounts" team at the bank, and it was a most unpleasant experience.

As his second example, Mr. Lorimer spoke about Paul Martin's budget in February 1995. That budget slashed a \$25 million subsidy programme by 60%. According to Mr. Lorimer, "(t)he next day, every Canadian book publisher was effectively out of business", because without the subsidy all Canadian book publishers would inevitably fall deeply into debt. Thankfully, Paul Martin's decision was eventually reversed.

As a spokesman for an embattled industry, Mr. Lorimer appealed for help. He stated that libraries have an important role to play in supporting the Canadian publishing industry. Although many readers now demand Canadian books, some

500 Canadian magazines remain unknown. Mr. Lorimer argued that libraries are well-positioned to introduce these magazines to potential readers. In order to promote their publications, some magazine publishers have given libraries free subscriptions to 20 Canadian magazines at a time. Seventy percent of these subscriptions have been renewed. In this way, libraries have both served their readers and helped prevent future near-death experiences for Canadian publishers.

- Adam Newman
First year student

**SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES
FRIDAY LECTURE SERIES**

Lectures are held in the MacMechan Auditorium on Fridays at 11:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m. They are open to the public at no charge.

For information on future lectures, watch the School's web site (check under Continuing Education) <<http://www.mgmt.dal.ca/slis/>>.



MEMORIAL AWARDS



Financial Assistance is available, from the APLA Memorial Trust, for study and research. Projects which contribute to the professional development of the applicant and benefit the professional are encouraged.

To apply, send a letter outlining your proposed research and estimated costs and a copy of your curriculum vitae by March 31, 1999 to:

APLA Memorial Awards Committee
Sheila Pearl
14 Crescent Drive
Truro, NS B2N 1N6

COMING EVENTS

March 4-6, 1999 - Dalhousie University. The Creation, Dissemination and Preservation of Literature: A Conference of Professionals from the Maritime Provinces and St. Petersburg, Russia. March 4: Library Day. Morning Papers and Afternoon Roundtable on the State of Archival Preservation in Canada and Russia. March 5: Literature Day. Morning Papers and Afternoon Roundtable on the Nature of Literary Processes in the Maritimes and St. Petersburg. March 6: Journal Day. The Dissemination of Creative Literature in Canada and Russia. Readings will be given on several occasions by at least six guest members of the Writers' Union of Canada and the Writers' Federation of N.S. Russian guests include: Iakov Gordin, editor of "Zvezda;" Natali'a Kraineva, head twentieth-century archivist, Nat. Library of Russia (St. Pbg); Mikhail Eremin, poet; Valerii Sazhin, Nat. Lib. of Russia and editor of "Russian Studies". Those wishing to give papers, participate or attend should contact David MacFadyen, Russian Studies Dept. tel: 902-494-3817/3679, fax: 902-494-1997 or e-mail: <dmacfady@is.dal.ca>.

March 29-30, 1999 - The Canadian Online Information Summit will be a two-day event held in Toronto at the Toronto Convention Centre (North Building). For further information, please contact the Canadian Online Information Summit at 416-488-7373 or email <subs@tce.on.ca>. The Canadian Online Information Summit is a special event of INFORMATION HIGHWAYS Magazine.

May 19-21, 1999 - 28th Annual Workshop on Instruction in Library Use - McGill University, Montreal. WILU '99 will focus on the growing interest in building a culture of information within the curriculum. For more information, e-mail <wilu@lib1.lan.mcgill.ca> or contact a member of the Steering Committee. See our web page at www.library.mcgill.ca/wilu for details.

Le 19-21 mai 1999 - 28e atelier annuel sur la formation documentaire - Université McGill, Montreal. Le prochain Atelier annuel sur la formation documentaire portera sur une question qui suscite de plus en plus d'intérêt: le développement d'une culture de l'information en milieu académique et son intégration au curriculum. Pour de plus amples information, faites parvenir un message a <wilu@lib1.lan.mcgill.ca> ou communiquez avec un membre du comité d'organisation (liste et coordonnées disponibles sur le site web de l'Atelier: <<http://www.library.mcgill.ca/wilu>>).

25-29 May/mai, 1999 - Canadian Health Libraries Association / Association des Bibliothèques de la Santé, "A Bridge to the New Millennium - Un pont vers l'an 2000". 23rd Annual Conference/23ième congrès annuel, Halifax, Nova Scotia. For programme details, registration forms and other information about the Conference, please visit our website at <<http://www.library.dal.ca/chla-absc99/>>

May 27-30, 1999 - APLA 1999, Saint John, New Brunswick. Conference committee: Ian Wilson, Saint John Free Public Library and Susan Collins, University of New Brunswick in Saint John; Program co-chairs: Leslye McVicar and Joann Hamilton-Barry. (See page 6 in this *Bulletin* for more details.)

Juillet 1999 - L'Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie - Région Amérique a tenu une réunion sur le thème «L'évolution des bibliothèques publiques dans le maintien de la langue et de la culture françaises en Amérique», le 21 août près d'Ottawa, suite à une suggestion de Sylvain Lavoie (Médiathèque Père-Louis-Lamontagne de Miramichi). Après une allocution convaincante de Sylvain, le président de la section canadienne a annoncé son désir d'amener le thème à la réunion internationale qui se tiendra en juillet 1999.

Carin Alma E Somers Graduate Scholarship

Application forms for the Carin Alma E Somers Graduate Scholarship in Library and Information Science will be available at the APLA Web Site and from Canadian library schools by February 15, 1999. Application deadline is March 31, 1999. If you have any questions please contact John Teskey, jteskey@unb.ca.

John Teskey	voice: (506) 453-4740
Director of Libraries	fax: (506) 453-4595
University of New Brunswick	http://www.lib.unb.ca

Introducing the Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Award

"Children need a literary landscape before their country will be real for them."
Robert MacNeil, "Wordstruck"

Children in Atlantic Canada will have one more thing to celebrate in the year 2000. This will be the inaugural year of the Hackmatack Children's Choice Award.

This award is designed to promote reading by children in Atlantic Canada and to recognize fine writing. There are many prizes for children's books which are selected and awarded by adults, including the Governor General's Awards and the Ann Connor Brimer Award. While these awards recognize outstanding children's books, they are not chosen by their intended readers. A children's choice award gives young readers the respect they so richly deserve, as well as an opportunity to flex their reading muscles and develop critical thinking. With the Hackmatack Award, children will get to vote for their favourite Canadian and Atlantic Canadian books in region-wide "elections."

This program is based on the Silver Birch Award founded by the Ontario Library Association and developed from a parallel undertaking by the Texas Library Association. Since its inception in 1994, the Silver Birch Award has grown tremendously, with over 37,000 children involved in 1997.

The Hackmatack Committee would like to invite you to help make this award a reality in your community. Our goal is to have children begin reading in the fall of 1999 with the first winners announced with the millennium, May 2000.

Help us to give the children of Atlantic Canada a literary landscape of their own.

Our many partners in the school, library, book, publishing and literacy communities have been working hard to make the dream of an Atlantic Children's Choice Book Award a reality. A selection committee are preparing the shortlist of twenty fiction and non-fiction books. From this high quality list of Canadian and Atlantic Canadian books children will choose their personal favourites. Children in grades 4, 5 and 6 will begin reading in the fall of '99 and will vote to select their favourites in April 2000. An award ceremony to celebrate the winners will take place in Halifax in May of 2000.

A brochure outlining details of the program, along with a registration form will be available in early spring.

For more information about the Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Award, please contact:

Carol McDougall, Project Administrator, NS Provincial Library, 3770 Kempt Road, Halifax, NS B3K 4X8, phone 424-2453, fax 424-0633, e-mail mcdougac@gov.ns.ca.