



Saint Mary's
University

PATRICK POWER LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT

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Rashid Tayyeb
Acting University Librarian

Introduction

Over the last few years, we have seen revolutionary changes in the way we find, retrieve, and exchange information, particularly in the academic world. While traditional print-based library services have been maintained, there has been explosive growth of the virtual library (networked electronic access to databases that can be reached without having to physically enter the library, and the Internet). Access to library-funded information in offices and laboratories have provided new challenges.

The Library's adherence to the University's mission of "providing excellence in its services to students and the larger community" remains paramount. The Library accomplishes this by:

- Cultivating core information literacy skills in our students.
- Providing a myriad of electronic databases, traditional books and serials and a dynamic reference service.
- Reinforcing its strong commitment to staff development and training in new technologies.

Service to our users

The concept of a virtual library comprises campus-wide access to 15 databases which, combined, provide full-text of articles for 2150 magazines and journals. Most of these databases are accessible from campus offices and computer laboratories; demand is growing for off-campus access as well. Almost 27,000 CD-ROM and database sessions were recorded across campus and at library workstations.

User Education

Building on the firm foundation of an existing program, efforts were made to explore new instructional options. Incorporating instruction in effective Internet skills and in the evaluation of Web sites reflected the shift in student research strategies to incorporate more electronic information.

In-class instruction of course-specific skills and materials required 109 sessions taught to more than 2400 students. Instruction through the ResearchWorks library workbooks, although somewhat declined from last year, still continued to meet popular demand.

Initiative was taken to improve the Library's web page and to make it a viable instructional tool.

Access Services:

Access Services, which has responsibility for circulation of materials, the Reserve Reading system, and specialty services such as making

ID cards and sending FAXes, has a commitment to innovation and places strong emphasis on working together to achieve goals.

One example of the commitment to staff development occurred through the creation of an inter-university supervisors' leadership course. Several front-line staff received training in order to augment the skills needed to deal effectively with Library patrons and to efficiently manage the work of others.

Our active participation in the Novanet consortium ensured the addition of a peck of new and highly requested services, such as 'Return Anywhere', 'Pay Anywhere,' and 'Renew Anywhere'. These services enable our registered patrons to pay fines, renew, and return books at any of the libraries within the Novanet system.

The study and pilot project to develop electronic reserve service (a.k.a. Class Links) was a success. Future financial and human resource commitments will be required to continue this much-needed initiative.

Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery

With the end of the pilot project, the Library endorsed the Novanet Express service, which guarantees three-day delivery of books and photocopied articles from any Novanet partner for a modest fee. 1650 books and articles were distributed to other Novanet libraries; 1040 items were requested for Saint Mary's users. In its first full year of operation, Novanet Express has grown in popularity, has proved its usefulness to our users, and has been assigned more library personnel to support its continuation.

For more traditional interlibrary loans, Saint Mary's borrowed 782 items from other institutions, while lending 1152 items. About 20% of this material was transmitted electronically.

In both cases, Saint Mary's collection has proved a significant resource for libraries, both locally and regionally.

Ferguson Library for Print Handicapped.

The Ferguson Library for Print Handicapped students served 60 users and filled 210 requests for materials to be read to tape. This is a substantial decline from last year. However, 4853 pages of print material were converted to electronic text -- nearly twice as many as last year. With technological changes, students are able to do more for themselves and require less staff intervention.

Archives

Our University Archives continue to be a jewel among our services. The gathering in of the University's historical materials and the

development of appropriate means of access have ensured that Saint Mary's heritage is not lost or neglected.

Saint Mary's is leading the way into the provincial ArchWay database, a shared record of Nova Scotian archival resources, with an excellent initiative to preserve the photographic history of the University and through the compilation of a history of the founding dates and reporting hierarchy of administrative and academic departments.

The need for more resources to support the Archives, particularly space for the growing collections, remains. This enterprise deservedly needs University commitment in the near future.

Cataloguing Activities

The Library continued to catalogue new materials in a variety of formats while emphasizing efficiency in processing, maintenance of standards, and effectiveness in utilizing new technology. A large quantity of gift books, including many publications of the Asian Development Bank, were catalogued. Progress continued to be made in the cataloguing of monographs from the government documents collection. As well, cataloguing of electronic journals was undertaken for the first time.

Media Services

As a result of restructuring, Media Services now reports to ITSS rather than to the Library.

Staffing - A new University Librarian

Three professional librarians were promoted to the rank of Librarian IV. Four staff members were recognized this year for their ten and twenty-five years of service. The Search for a new University Librarian was successful. Following broad consultations within the University community, Madeleine Lefebvre was selected. She will take the helm during the summer of 1999.

Library Renovations

Long-awaited alterations and renovations to the building were completed. Damaged windows were replaced on all floors, and the reference area floor was re-leveled and carpeted. Window treatments replaced the tattered curtains installed twenty years ago. Hopefully, future budgets will support a continuation of carpeting and renovation on the second and third floors.

Systems and Training

The migration to Windows 95 was a prime technology activity this year. The Acting University Librarian provided training sessions for staff. Installation and configuration sessions followed the initial training. The Windows 95 platform performed well following the changeover.


Sixteen workstations were upgraded during the year. Many individual computers and all of the Novanet workstation remain to be upgraded from 486 vintage to Pentium quality. As the new technologies, from Web catalogues to electronic journals, gain prominence, the need for equipment both fast enough and capable of dealing with them will be paramount.

Conclusion - Future

Last year provided challenges and we have risen to every one. Saint Mary's library continued to provide leadership in the Novanet consortium and beyond. And it strove to bring the best advantages of print and electronic information to the research community.

The impact of technology on all facets of library functions and services is ever increasing. But the demand on limited resources is of continued concern. Inter- and intra library cooperation and the consortium-wide purchase of databases have had a beneficial impact. But skyrocketing prices of print and electronic resources, which are now demanded by our sophisticated users -- both actual and virtual -- will require future financial support.

The Library juggles the competing demands of traditional and new courses, wrestles with the force of escalating prices against the aim of a sustainable collection, and hears daily the expectation from students and faculty alike that they be able to find the resources they need on campus. Courses and new program (such as the doctoral program in Management) will require continued and sustained financial support by the University of library resources if Saint Mary's and its university library are to effectively excel and compete within the Canadian academic environment.

	1988/89 (10 years)	1993/94 (5 years)	1997/98 (1 year)	1998/99	% Change 1988/89 to 1998/99	% Change 1997/98 1998/99 
Questions at the Reference Desk	20,214	28,039	27,428	24,689	+22.1	-10
Total Circulation	186,554	264,914	211,451	179,379	-3.8	-15.2
Students taught in Library Instruction Sessions	1,012	2,135	2,733	2,415	+139	-11.6
Visits to the Library	424,742	593,616	471,653	421,098	-9	-10.7
Monographs purchased	5,307	2,765	2,842	1,371	-74.2	-51.8
Average cost of a journal subscription	\$147.99	\$241.17	\$315.41	\$358.92	+142.5	+13.8
Journals as a percentage of total acquisitions budget	48	65	54	61	+27.1	+13
Total titles added to Novanet, including retrospective cataloguing	9,584	14,859*	7,187	6,162	-35.7	-14.3

*A special recon project was undertaken with additional staff and resources.