



Saint Mary's
University

PATRICK POWER LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT

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Acting University Librarian

Introduction

By far the most challenging activity in the Library this year was implementing the new GEAC Advance system within the Novanet Consortium. In speed, capacity and features this powerful new system far outperforms its predecessor; it provides excellent library catalogue access for our patrons, and offers significant opportunities for us to provide an array of integrated information resources in the future. It is a major step forward, but its implementation has been difficult. Two problems lay at the core: Advance was a far less developed system than we had anticipated and Novanet, as a consortium, was not prepared in its central office with adequate staffing or technological knowledge.

A highlight of the year was the official launch of the Novanet Advance system, held at the Patrick Power Library. Many dignitaries attended, including the Nova Scotia Minister for Education and Culture.

In August 1995, Ronald A. Lewis, University Librarian for the past twenty years, retired. Margot E. Schenk was appointed Acting University Librarian in September.

Service to Our Users

Although the number of questions at the **Reference Desk** plateaued at just over 27,000, they represent a 63% rise over ten years. The quality of the service has changed dramatically. Rather than just answering questions, our staff focus on teaching and training roles, guiding our students through an increasingly complex world of electronic reference sources. Over 6000 CD-ROM searches were recorded in the Library, while those accessing our networked databases from their offices, homes and computer labs logged over 12,000 searches. Our Reference by Appointment service increased by 80% over 1994/95 with over 160 researchers taking advantage of the service.

Public relations and innovation were the hallmarks of change for this year's **User Education** programme. A well-timed series of efforts to promote both traditional and

electronic library resources took advantage of the University community's growing interest in and curiosity about the "cyber" library, resulting in the highest user education participation rate in the history of our programme. Total classroom sessions taught nearly doubled over last year.

Access Services reports that the number of people coming to the library, and the number of materials borrowed have levelled out. A variety of general explanations can be suggested: falling student numbers at Saint Mary's and shifts from traditional methods of teaching and learning. It is also true that in-library use of our resources is diminishing as we have developed external access to our catalogue and electronic reference sources.

Interlibrary lending statistics reveal few changes from last year, with about 1500 items loaned to other libraries and about 1000 items borrowed for Saint Mary's users. We offered an in-house interlibrary loans form on the University's networks, permitting users to request materials from other libraries using their personal computers.

The Ferguson Library for Print-Handicapped Students handled 465 requests for materials, an increase of 17% over last year. While Saint Mary's students are the Library's main clientele, the 74 users served come from over 15 different national and international institutions, 8 of them in Nova Scotia. Homai College in New Zealand continues to use us as a resource. Fifty-three items were scanned to e-text, representing nearly 2000 pages of material. Despite the decreased emphasis on readings to tape, the Library's dedicated volunteer readers continue to be an essential part of the Ferguson Library programme.

After several revisions the **Saint Mary's University Archives** Policy was sent to the President to take to Senate for consideration in the Fall of 1996. The document is currently a working policy and procedures have been altered to conform. The most striking achievement this year was the rise in the use of the collection, over 200% over 1994/95, with 2000 items used by more than 230 people. Support for the University Archives as a historical

repository for Saint Mary's is growing and will continue to grow as the University adopts policies on the collection and retention of appropriate records.

The reputation for excellent service that the Patrick Power Library has earned by our various public activities and services would not be possible without the equal dedication of those who work behind the scenes. The staff in **Acquisitions Services, Cataloguing Systems and Database Management**, as well as our staff in the **Administrative** area are to be commended for the high quality of their work.

Media Services now has 31 television screens in classrooms across the campus installed for the broadcast of videotapes. Demand for this service continues to increase. A powerful computer was purchased to produce very high quality full-colour graphics for the faculty and students. Colour scanning, colour printing, the production of custom slides, graphs and transparencies are now available, and can be networked.

The Collection

Electronic full-text journals were offered for the first time this year, with the introduction of the Lexis-Nexis news and information database. The SwetScan table of contents service, available through the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information was also added, improving the Library's access to scientific and technical material. The demand for and availability of electronic databases are growing. We are devoting an increasing portion of the serials budget to formats other than paper.

The Library bought about 10% fewer books this year as our budget remained static and the prices of serials rose by over 17%. Once again, gifts and grants to the Library accounted for over 2000 of the items catalogued. We bought 280 volumes through the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute.

Our ability to answer questions concerning Canadian activities was greatly enhanced when the Library became a full-service depository for Statistics Canada publications.

The Novanet consortium continues to work towards rationalization of the member libraries' acquisitions. In the next year the Library will be contributing to a report of the collections policies of the Novanet libraries which will enable us to determine where there is unnecessary duplication and where we need to acquire more material. The Novanet Collections Development Committee is also investigating shared purchasing of electronic databases to be networked across the system.

Meeting the Challenges

The need to train library users to access the latest information sources via Internet and electronic databases has required the Library to engage in a continuous staff training program. The implementation of the Novanet Advance system especially required additional training efforts this year. In providing our staff with a thorough understanding of the latest electronic and traditional information tools we are able to continue to fulfil our traditional role of helping library users navigate the information world in a timely and efficient manner.

The Library faces one enormous challenge: the global scholarly communication crisis. How far and how fast can we deal with the proliferation and runaway costs of scholarly publications, and the inability of universities to increase funding for library collections at the required pace? Seeking possible solutions, in early Spring we consulted with our user communities, presenting them with a broadsheet outlining our options. Guided by their responses, we reluctantly are going to cut periodical subscriptions in order to preserve our core collection, to buy sufficient monographs, and to prepare for the creation of a virtual library.

The information age forces revolutionary changes - and opportunities - on libraries and librarians. To resolve these challenges we will depend on creating productive, enduring partnerships with other institutions, but especially with our students and faculty, as we plan together for the next millennium.

	1985/86 (10 years)	1990/91 (5 years)	1994/95 (1 year)	1995/96	% Change 1985/86 to 1995/96	% Change 1994/95 to 1995/96
Questions at the Reference Desk	16,765	25,942	27,875	27,205	+ 62.3	- 2.4
Total Circulation	163,525	206,538	252,909	233,249	+ 42.6	- 7.8
Students taught in Library Instruction Sessions	1049	2189	1775	2263	+115.7	+ 27.5
Visits to the Library	455,105	506,175	538,380	515,187	+ 13.2	- 4.3
Monographs purchased	4482	5370	3437	3069	- 31.5	- 10.7
Volumes purchased per student	.96	.75	.45	.44	- 54.2	- 2.2
Average cost of a journal subscription	\$129.12	\$194.31	\$246.85	\$290.77	+125.2	+ 17.8
Journals as a percentage of total acquisitions budget	54	52	52	58	+ 7.4	+ 11.5
Total titles added to Novanet, including retrospective cataloguing	14,586	28,781	8467	7461	- 48.8	- 11.9