

Saint Mary's University
Patrick Power Library

ANNUAL REPORT

1979 - 1980

It has been many years since an annual report has been given by a Chief Librarian of Saint Mary's University. The Patrick Power Library was opened almost five years ago and, if for no other reason, time dictates that a report be given.

There are two dominant themes for this year, that are echos from the last few years. One is the statistically verifiable fact that the use of the library services, staff and collection has increased placing great demands on our human and material resources.

The other is the curtailment of the library staff's ability to provide the kind of service that it would like and the faculty and students expect. Much of frustration stems from the fiscal restraint placed on the library. Such restraint made it necessary to cancel many periodical titles, reduce the number of books purchased and impose fees on some of the services which were offered free in the past. In the eyes of many, this is interpreted as a cut back in library service and an annoying hinderance in the pursuit of academic excellence.

All areas of the Public Service Division have seen a marked increase in use, circulation, information services, traffic and photocopying to name a few.

Technical Services undertook many projects designed to improve the processing of library materials which ultimately provides better service to our patrons.

During the last five years the library has been quickly heading toward a crisis situation. From 1975/76 to 1979/80 the regular acquisition budget has remained constant. During this same period the cost of library materials has increased by 15% per annum cummulatively.

Because of these two factors, constant budget and rising costs, the library has been able to acquire, this past year, about one half of what it did five years ago. Forty percent of faculty departments come close to or exceed their budget allocation with periodical and standing order subscriptions alone leaving little or no funds for the purchase of books. Last year alone 72 periodical titles were cancelled and we expect to cancel more than 100 in 1980/81.

In 1975/76 the library's percent of the total University budget was 7.17. Since then it has steadily declined to 4.35 for 1979/80. The Canadian national average is 7.29.

Because of budget restraints the library has had to adopt a collection development policy of buying only material that directly supports the curriculum, that is, basically student materials oriented.

The concern for the library in the future will be its

inability to support even the present curriculum if there is not a reversal in the funding trend of recent years.

PUBLIC SERVICES DIVISION

HIGHLIGHTS

The question of the Group Study Rooms seems to have been resolved satisfactorily, at last. A report on the usage of the rooms shows a 65% occupancy indicating the popularity of this facility.

A proposal to unite the Circulation and Control desks in the lobby area was presented and accepted. The actual work will be done in the new fiscal year. This change will greatly improve service to library patrons while more effectively deploying library staff.

The function of Reserves and Circulation was combined under the Head, Circulation Department. This increased responsibility of the Head of Circulation has necessitated some reorganization and further delegation of tasks in the department.

INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

General activity at the Information Desk declined marginally by 0.4%, a figure which conceals a more positive and encouraging trend. Questions involving the use of the card catalogue or requiring direction-giving dropped by an average of 41.3% while more complex reference questions, both across the desk and over the telephone, increased by 11.2%. This suggests that users are feeling more at ease with the library building and the use of the card catalogue (a direct result of successful orientation tours and instruction) and that they are turning to the Information Department for assistance with more difficult aspects of research -- hard-to-find facts, tough essay topics, etc. Table 1 shows the trend in Information Services activity over the past four years.

TABLE 1: INFORMATION DESK ACTIVITY

	76/77	77/78	78/79	79/80
Reference questions	4929	4565	6874	7720
Telephone questions	1339	1253	1510	1600
Card Catalogue use	718	729	547	392
Directions	2177	2067	1833	1006
Combined Totals	9163	8613	10764	10718

Percentage increases from 1976/77 (the academic year following the opening of the new library) to 1979/80 are:

Reference questions	+56.6%
Telephone questions	+19.5%
Card catalogue use	-45.4%
Directions	-53.8%
Combined Totals	+17.0%

Orientation and Instruction

In order to advertise its services, and to facilitate efficient use of the Library, the Information Services department has developed a high-profile orientation program. This year, in order to measure the impact of classes held in the Library's conference room, a follow-up survey was sent to each participant. Returns, representing 90% of the questionnaires distributed, indicated that students were positively inclined towards the Library, learned significantly from the instructional sessions, and felt that they would retain a large part of the skills which were taught. The program reached 595 students, through 27 sessions. The department hopes to build on this positive result to reach more students in the 1980/81 academic year.

During Orientation Week, acting on the request of the Orientation Committee, the Library established a booth in the Colonnade where copies of library publications and bookmarks

were distributed.

Another facet of the library's publicity and instruction campaigns involved the slide/tape show, an 18-minute introduction to the library building and its services. This show has been screened for off-campus groups as well, and has drawn critical acclaim from members of the professional library community.

As mentioned, the third element of the orientation program involves classroom instruction in library techniques, and is provided for students from freshmen through graduate levels.

Special Collections

The Corporate Reports collection, has taken new shape and direction. Using the Fortune, Canadian Business, and Financial Post listings of top corporations, Saint Mary's has collected as many annual reports as are available, and has supplemented this collection with 10-K forms and prospectuses supplied by the companies. During 1979/80 academic year, use of the Corporate Reports collection was active, both by Saint Mary's students and by others; future vigorous use is anticipated.

University calendars experienced a similar growth and heavy use following extensive building of the collection. All Canadian universities and community colleges, together with a representative sampling of American and overseas universities, are now accessible through the library.

The Government Documents section experienced an active year, marked by the completion of a thorough, 123-page manual and the processing of more than 3200 incoming documents.

Interlibrary Loans

Interlibrary Loans, integrated into the Information Services department in 1979, has had a long-standing good relationship within the University community. The need for esoteric materials not held here has required daily contact with the Nova Scotia Union Catalogue (operated by the Provincial Library) and with university and national libraries around the world. Faculty and students responded well to the enforcement of policies prohibiting interlibrary loans between Halifax universities, where reciprocal borrowing exists, and made excellent use of other libraries. There were 665 items loaned from our collection and 667 items borrowed from other libraries.

On Line Information Retrieval

In the domain of online information retrieval, Saint Mary's established itself as an authority for Nova Scotia, answering enquiries for assistance from Acadia, Dalhousie, the Provincial Library and the Nova Scotia Research Foundation. Consultation was provided to the College of Cape Breton and the Nova Scotia Department of the Environment.

CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT

Available figures indicate an increase in all areas of activity in the Circulation Department.

Traffic

The number of people actually leaving the library as recorded automatically by the electronic security system, reached 343,234 in 1979/80. In 1978/79 this figure was 330,900. This traffic figure is significant in relative terms as it indicates increasing use of the library building.

Circulation

The circulation of material from the collection is the major role played by this department. Efficient record-keeping of each transaction and prompt return of material to its proper place enables patrons of the library to locate required material easily.

Items circulated to students and outside borrowers	51,664
Books circulated to faculty	6,497
Circulation of Reserve material	20,503
Total items circulated 1979/80	78,664

Photocopying

The Circulation Department services the two public photocopiers in the library. The two machines had a total volume of 290,437 copies in 1979/80. In 1978/79 this figure was 263,873. These machines are subjected to very heavy use during the school year and required extensive staff time for key-operator duties -- adding paper, minor repairs, and calling servicemen.

The Public Services Division sees many changes and innovations in 1979/80. The future appears very challenging with the closing of the card catalogue and the introduction of a microfiche catalogue, consideration of various alternatives to the present circulation system, construction of the new Circulation/Control area, and more technological advances in information retrieval.

TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION

PREAMBLE

In the Technical Services Division the 1979/80 fiscal year reflects tremendous vigor and activity to organize processes, to streamline procedures and to define policies which were embarked upon with a great deal of enthusiasm.

The main reason for rejuvenation is directly attributable to the three new managers who accepted the responsibility as heads of acquisition, cataloguing and the technical services.

It was immediately observed that both in the acquisitions and in the cataloguing areas, a great deal of work needed to be done in order to put the house in order. Consequently, a number of short and long term projects were undertaken in various areas of technical services operations, which had either suffered from years of neglect or needed an alternative approach to maximize the effectiveness of those activities.

ACQUISITIONS DEPARTMENT

About 1,000 periodicals were claimed which had remained unclaimed for over 6 months by the time 1979/80 fiscal year began. Also about 1500 monographs were claimed which were long overdue. This led to cancellation of those periodicals and monographs which were no longer needed or available in order to free up the funds for new orders.

The task of completely overhauling the standing order files was undertaken. Half of these were still maintained manually and thus never entered into the automated acquisitions system. This project is still in progress and soon to be completed.

The Periodicals section investigated various subscription agencies to consolidate purchasing of Canadian periodicals through a responsible agency rather than acquiring the titles directly. This would result in eliminating a plethora of unnecessary correspondence and laborious processing of hundreds of individual invoices.

Initiative was taken to establish a comprehensive policy and to formulate procedures with respect to binding, securing, discarding and maintaining of periodicals in the library. The committee responsible for the task has now outlined the policy and this project is being continued in the current fiscal year.

CATALOGUE DEPARTMENT

The Catalogue Department started utilizing the computer terminal to catalogue regular books as well as books with variations to reduce the turn around time in obtaining catalogue products through BNA.

Fastcataloguing was introduced to clear the backlog of about 7,000 books remaining unattended for several years. Most of these books were processed through Fastcat and our Computer Centre produced author and title listings of each item catalogued.

As a result of inventories done in 1976 and 1977, 3571 titles were noted as lost or missing. A searching project was undertaken to verify this data and 3142 books were finally declared lost. Now appropriate policy and procedures have been drawn up for lost and missing items.

Statistical Highlights

Books ordered (titles)		3983
Books received (titles)		
Acquisition	5059	
Gifts	<u>1134</u>	
Total		<u>6193</u>
Books catalogued (titles)		
Full cataloguing	8173	
Fastcat	<u>3949</u>	
Total		<u>12,122</u>

Future Considerations

The impact of the new cataloguing codes as well as the anticipated demise of the AAU/BNA system has accelerated the need to utilize an on-line cataloguing support system in order

to provide more efficient and effective service to our patrons.

If we join such a facility, we would engage in a substantial reorganization of our manpower and resources.

We are also moving towards establishing an on-line acquisitions system and the Computer Centre is being approached to slowly convert our batch system to on-line. Hopefully this can be accomplished by the end of the next fiscal year.

In future we should also strive to integrate our acquisitions as well as cataloguing system to derive optimum benefits from the automation process.

CONFERENCES AND PUBLICATIONS

Jane Archibald: attendance at the Canadian Library Association; participation in workshop on AACR II; article, "FASTCAT - New Cataloguing System at Library", The Times, Sept. 1979, p. 7; and "CLA Conferences: A Fledgling's Perspective", Emergency Librarian, v. 6, no. 3-4 1979, pp. 18-20.

Murray Baillie: attendance at Atlantic Provinces Library Association Conference; participation in workshop on "Promoting Your Library"; certificate in Public Relations from the University of King's College; article; "How do you find a Royal Commission report". The Times, 9 (6), April 1980, p. 7 and Municipal Government In Metro Halifax: A Bibliography. Second edition with supplement (Published by Saint Mary's University Printing Centre).

Diane Boutilier: completion of School of Library Service Basic Library Skills course.

Margaret Dunsworth: Key operator training for I.B.M. and Xerox copiers.

Ruth Fritze: Key operator training for I.B.M. and Xerox copiers.

Ronald A. Lewis: attendance at Atlantic Provinces Library Association conference; Canadian Library Association Conference and Association of Atlantic Universities Library Council.

David Manning: attendance at the Nova Scotia Library Association.

Joan Moore: attendance at the Atlantic Provinces Library Association Conference and the Canadian Association for Informa-

tion Science Conference.

Gwyn Pace: attendance at workshop on "Promoting Your Library", instruction in ORBIT information retrieval system through INFOMART of Canada.

Lauren Savary: attendance at workshop "Promoting Your Library"; attendance at various Friday morning lectures at the Dalhousie School of Library Service; Canadian Library Association Conference; Halifax Library Association meetings and Nova Scotia Library Association conference.

Margot Schenk: attendance at Special Libraries Annual Conference, Atlantic Provinces Library Association Annual Conference; attendance at workshop - "Promoting Your Library"; instruction in ORBIT information retrieval system through Infomart of Canada.

Cynthia Tanner: participation in workshop on Public Relations and Libraries.

Douglas Vaisey: attendance at ONLINE '79 Conference on information retrieval and at Canadian Association for Information Science Annual Conference; participation in workshop on "Promoting Your Library"; publication of The Labour Companion: a bibliography of Canadian labour history based on materials printed from 1950 - 1975; and of the annual bibliography in Canadian labour history in Committee on Canadian Labour History. Bulletin, no. 6, Fall 1978.