



**Saint Mary's**  
University

**Patrick Power Library**  
**Saint Mary's University**  
**Annual Report**  
**1994-95**

Ronald A. Lewis  
University Librarian

## **Introduction**

The development with perhaps the greatest potential for long-term effect was the Library's reengineering in the summer of 1994, after nearly a year of consultation and discussion. This major organizational change was our response to two perceptions, that our students' need for reference service was overwhelming the staff available, and that the balanced division of library functions between Public Services and Technical Services had become anachronistic and ineffective.

Features of this initiative include: reference by appointment to handle lengthy and in-depth inquiries; basic and advanced Internet instruction; increased hours of service for the information area to accommodate non-traditional students. To meet these objectives, the reorganization centralized a number of clerical functions and more effectively shared workloads and expertise. All professional librarians assumed new responsibilities for teaching, collection development and information technology instruction. All staff have been involved in the restructuring and many paraprofessional jobs have been enriched to meet service demands.

## **Service to Our Users**

While the number of questions at the **Reference Desk** declined marginally this year, the quality of service improved. Our expanded hours appealed to non-traditional students who were able to come in on weekends and evenings and receive the same good service as those who come during the traditional working day.

The number of people coming to the Library declined by more than nine percent. More and more our users are taking advantage of the fact that the Novanet catalogue and our CD-ROM databases are available from sites other than the Library. We estimate that over 10,000 CD-ROM

logons took place on campus this year. In-library use accounts for only half of the actual campus-wide use. As we teach users to become more self-sufficient, they become more travelled on the information highway.

**Interlibrary lending** and resource sharing become more important as more and more libraries are unable to buy all the materials their users require. We have added new automated location search tools, electronic document delivery software and loan management software to Interlibrary Loans which is now the responsibility of the new Information Systems Department.

The **Ferguson Library** received 396 requests for materials, 45 percent more than last year. Of the 73 users, 17 were from Saint Mary's University, 24 from other Maritime universities and the rest from national and international institutions, including Homai College in New Zealand. An increasing number of requests were filled in computer text format rather than on tape.

The **User Education** programme benefitted from the overall reorganization of library resources and responsibilities. Distribution of the collection development responsibilities among all department heads allowed us to make the User Education Department much more effective. New instructional designs were tested and evaluated, all librarians became involved in the delivery of instructional services, and Internet services were expanded.

As well, more than half the introductory English students received hands-on library instruction via the Library Basics Workbook. We conducted 42 classroom instruction sessions this year. CD-ROM instruction sessions increased to a total of 614, one-third more than in 1992/93. As part of the reorganization of reference services, many library assistants participated in CD-ROM instruction, several for the first time.

The Saint Mary's University **Archives** had a very successful year. As part of the reorganization, the



Archives library assistant offered regular hours of opening for the archival collection. Patrons unable to visit during the scheduled hours of operation could arrange for an appointment. E-mail and voice-mail were also available. The number of patrons using the Archives was 189, an increase of 9 percent over last year.

Developing a policy framework for the Archives is a priority. A well-planned and executed strategy will ensure that the entity of Saint Mary's University is not lost, whatever rationalization or amalgamations may bring.

Service to our users would not be possible without the high quality work done by those behind the scenes. The expeditious acquisition, cataloguing and shelving of materials greatly improves our delivery of service.

## **The Collection**

Once again the constant dollar acquisitions budget, combined with the effects of increased prices and a devalued Canadian dollar reduced our ability to acquire sufficient materials for the Library. This year we made drastic cuts to the number of periodicals we purchase, cancelling 304 titles or nearly 20% of the periodicals. This enabled us to acquire 45 new titles to reflect a changing curriculum and to buy 3437 monographs, an increase of almost 25% over last year. The positive effect of the periodical cuts for book acquisitions will continue into the next years.

Grants and gifts continue to be important to the collection. This year we spent nearly \$12,000 of our SSHRC Grant for Irish Studies. We were also fortunate to be able to buy 107 volumes published in India through the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute.

Of increasing importance is the use of information technology. We are becoming less dependent on print sources for reference and information. CD-ROMs can be networked for access from sites away from the Library

and provide the ability for combining search terms for more precise searching. We are deflecting some of the budget for print sources to these new technologically enhanced sources.

The future must include more resource sharing among the Novanet libraries, and particularly among the Metro Halifax members. We are all experiencing difficulties maintaining even core collections in the present economic environment.

## **The Library Staff**

The reorganization of the Library affected all staff in one way or another. Some of the staffing complement of what used to be our Technical Services were reallocated to other areas of the Library to help improve direct service to users. Some of the tasks formerly undertaken by reference staff were reassigned to clerical staff in other areas. All the department heads assumed more responsibilities for direct service to our users and for collections development. Our staff have performed productively and positively through these changes. The increase in interdepartmental interaction and activity has increased cooperation and communication and has increased the sense that the Library operates as a team, with each staff member contributing his or her own specialty to the end result.

Along with the change in the Library's structure came another positive result, a return to staff training as an organizational goal. A strategic plan for training for all library staff resulted in appropriate instruction for all levels. Sessions were held in the University's computer labs, in the Library conference room and at terminals throughout the Library. Most staff participated on one or more of the following courses: Introduction to microcomputers, DOS basics, WordPerfect, Windows basics, and various Internet applications, including Netscape. Staff reacted very positively to our efforts to better enable them to meet our ongoing commitment to high-quality service.

## Some Statistics:

|   | 1984/85<br>(10 years) | 1989/90<br>(5 years) | 1993/94<br>(1 year) | 1994/95  | % Change<br>1984/85 to<br>1994/95 | % Change<br>1993/94 to<br>1994/95 |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Questions at the Reference Desk                                       | 15,344                | 21,491               | 28,039              | 27,875   | + 81.7                            | - 0.6                             |
| Total Circulation   | 146,012               | 182,385              | 256,914             | 252,909  | + 73.2                            | - 1.6                             |
| Visits to the Library   | 434,203               | 526,963              | 593,616             | 538,350  | + 24.0                            | - 9.3                             |
| Monographs purchased  | 5173                  | 6811                 | 2765                | 3437     | - 33.6                            | + 24.3                            |
| Volumes purchased per student   | 1.13                  | 1.00                 | .35                 | .45      | - 60.2                            | +28.6                             |
| Average cost of a journal<br>subscription                             | \$114.04              | \$166.64             | \$240.09            | \$286.36 | + 151.0                           | + 19.0                            |
| Journals as a percentage of total<br>acquisitions budget              | 47                    | 46                   | 65                  | 52       | + 10.6                            | - 20.0                            |
| Total titles added to Novanet,<br>including retrospective cataloguing | 8240                  | 14,103               | 14,889              | 8467     | + 2.8                             | - 43.1                            |



## Some Statistics:

|   | 1984/85<br>(10 years) | 1989/90<br>(5 years) | 1993/94<br>(1 year) | 1994/95  | % Change<br>1984/85 to<br>1994/95 | % Change<br>1993/94 to<br>1994/95 |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Questions at the Reference Desk                                       | 15,344                | 21,491               | 28,039              | 27,875   | + 81.7                            | - 0.6                             |
| Total Circulation   | 146,012               | 182,385              | 256,914             | 252,909  | + 73.2                            | - 1.6                             |
| Visits to the Library   | 434,203               | 526,963              | 593,616             | 538,350  | + 24.0                            | - 9.3                             |
| Monographs purchased  | 5173                  | 6811                 | 2765                | 3437     | - 33.6                            | + 24.3                            |
| Volumes purchased per student   | 1.13                  | 1.00                 | .35                 | .45      | - 60.2                            | +28.6                             |
| Average cost of a journal<br>subscription                             | \$114.04              | \$166.64             | \$240.09            | \$286.36 | + 151.0                           | + 19.0                            |
| Journals as a percentage of total<br>acquisitions budget              | 47                    | 46                   | 65                  | 52       | + 10.6                            | - 20.0                            |
| Total titles added to Novanet,<br>including retrospective cataloguing | 8240                  | 14,103               | 14,889              | 8467     | + 2.8                             | - 43.1                            |