U.B.C. LIBRARY NEWS

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This newsletter appears once a month as an information service for faculty and other people outside the Library. It contains news items about current developments in the Library system which we feel will be of interest or concern to the larger community.

LIBRARY GUIDES NOW AVAILABLE @&@

New information brochures for eighteen campus libraries and subject collections have been issued during the past month. These guides cover such things as hours of service, location and description of holdings, loan regulations, and special services available. Most include floor plans as well.

Staff and students may pick up copies at the service desk of each library or division covered. These include:

Main Library Building

Asian Studies
Fine Arts
Government Publications
Humanities Division
Map Division
Record Collection
Reserve Book Room
Science Division
Sedgewick Undergraduate Library
Social Sciences Division
Special Collections

Other Campus Libraries

Curriculum Laboratory
Forestry–Agriculture Library
Law Library
Marjorie Smith (Social Work) Library
Mathematics Library
Music Library
Woodward Biomedical Library

In the near future a comprehensive guide to the Main Library will be issued in the form of a large illustrated handbook. Meanwhile, please bring your library problems to the staff at the Information Services Desk.

INFORMATION AND ORIENTATION SERVICES DIVISION @&@

The Library's newest division, Information and Orientation, is rapidly becoming one of the building's busiest public service areas. Located near the Main Card Catalogue at the old Humanities counter, it provides four main types of assistance:

1) General information about the Library's collections, organizational arrangement, services and facilities. Librarians are on duty from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, and Sundays from noon to 10 p.m.

2) Instruction in the use of the Main Card Catalogue, the Location File, and the Library's serials lists.

3) Guided tours of the library and guest lectures on library use. The division invites requests from teaching departments for class tours.

4) Preparation of printed library guides, information leaflets, and handbooks.

Future plans include audiovisual instruction programs on library use. One such program, already in production, will be shown on a small scanner which can be operated by the individual user. In time, the Information and Orientation Division hopes to build up a collection of filmed programs on various aspects of library use. Progress reports will be published in this newsletter.

TWO SUCCESSFUL TRANSPLANTS @&@

The apparent disappearance of both the Humanities Division and the Interlibrary Loan Office late this summer upset a number of library users. But fear not. Interlibrary Loan has moved to the old Humanities work room beside the Author/Title Catalogue, and Humanities is alive and well in the Ridington Room.

Their telephone numbers have also been changed, at least for the time being. The Interlibrary Loan Office may now be reached at extension 2411, and Humanities is sharing the Social Science number, 2725.

With both Humanities and Social Sciences housed together in the Ridington Room, a certain amount of reorganization has been necessary. The two reference collections have been amalgamated, and the encyclopaedias and university calendars have been moved in from the stacks. However, each division still maintains a separate office area and public service desk. So far, this new arrangement is proving much more satisfactory for both patrons and library staff.

CURRENT SERIAL HOLDINGS @&@

The second, revised edition of the annual U.B.C. list of serial holdings is now at the printers, and should be distributed later this month. Users of the Library will remember that this is a computer listing, by title, of serials held in the Main Library and in most departmental libraries on campus. One major difference between this edition and the 1967 cumulation is the inclusion, for the first time, of the Law Library's serial holdings.

However, the computer list may not always give complete information about current holdings. Users are reminded that the Location File, near the Main Card Catalogue, is still a useful supplement to the printed list.

Copies of the new list will be distributed to all campus libraries and reading rooms. In addition, a limited number will be reserved for sale to faculty members at $5.00 apiece. For further information, inquire at the Information Services Desk by the Main Card Catalogue or phone extension 2411.

MEMORANDUM ON BINDING @&@

A continuously recurring complaint about Library service is that books are away too long at the Bindery. The complaint frequently follows the pattern, "Every time I want something it's at the Bindery and it's still there three months later. If there is more than one copy, all the copies are gone at once!"

Like many complaints, this one is exaggerated, though it has some basis in fact. The actual binding process in the Library Bindery takes about four weeks. Prebindery operations take a week or so, and after binding has been completed another few days are needed to prepare the volume for the shelf. Altogether, the entire process takes about six weeks.

This six-week period is not a firmly fixed one. Technically, it would be possible to bind a volume and get it on the shelf in a morning. Economically and practically, however, this would not be feasible. For economy's sake an item is not taken individually through the binding process, but is treated as part of a batch. This allows a bindery worker to spend a block of time on one operation, and also allows sufficient time for glue to dry naturally, and so on. Generally speaking, the larger the batch and the longer the period of process, the lower the cost.

There are other sound reasons why the binding process cannot be scheduled in an entirely satisfactory way. Some of these have to do with the nature of university library binding requirements.

1. A university library's binding does not involve work with a standard product. In a very real sense, each unit produced is different. One item can be prepared for its cover in a few minutes. Another will take half an hour. Each will end up as a bound volume.

2. Journals, as a class of materials, are extremely irregular. Some appear at fixed intervals and the title-page, contents, and index to a complete volume are delivered shortly after that volume is otherwise completed. Other appear in irregular parts, at irregular times, and with title-page, etc., arriving months later or not at all. For even the most regular ones, issues go missing and have to be replaced.

3. From one month to another the intake of material ready to be bound may vary from zero to several hundred volumes. Averages over extended periods are possible and meaningful, but it is extremely difficult to predict in advance the amount of material which will be ready for the Bindery in any given month.

4. Xeroxed pages for insertion into a work to be bound may be produced internally or externally. The Library can control the format and quality of what is produced locally, but not what is obtained from other libraries.

5. Times conveniently binding are not well-spaced throughout the year. If there were no practical binding considerations, everything would be bound in the periods between terms; that is, just before and after summer school. Clearly, no shop, internal or commercial, could handle the 25,000 to 30,000 volume annual load in the ten weeks between terms.

6. Materials can be classed and priorities established for binding, but to some extent users' needs are unpredictable. Some materials (e.g. just completed scientific journals, abstracts, and books on required reading lists) are obvious candidates for immediate binding, but not everything is so readily categorized. Some items may be needed today or not needed for five years. Decisions on what is likely to be wanted are much more an art than a science.

Other difficulties in the way of a satisfactory binding situation are part of the particular situation of the U.B.C. Library Bindery.

1. The Bindery has very little flexibility in its operation. Hours of work are fixed, and overtime is impossible for budgetary reasons. Space is fixed and cannot be expanded until there is a new Library building. There is no room for new equipment.

2. Capital equipment costs are very high. Re-equipping the Bindery properly would cost $125,000 or more. Delivery time on most equipment is a year, eighteen months, or even two years.

Costs and difficulties, however, are not everything. Insofar as possible they must be balanced off against convenience to the user, so that material wanted will be available as soon as can be managed with reasonable economy.

To get around some of the inherent difficulties, the Library has implemented several procedures, from establishing a special category of "rush" binding to contracting out work to a commercial bindery.

"Rush" volumes are put through the process in a week or less. Again, the cost factor limits the number of items that can be given priority attention.

In emergencies, it has been possible to locate and remove volumes from the Bindery to meet special needs. The amount of time required to find one particular item out of several hundred, when they may all be without covers and anonymously alike, means that this practice, too, has to be limited.

Because the Library Bindery has been unable to expand to meet the increased demand for binding brought on by greater expenditures on books and periodicals, arrangements were made to have some of the work handled commercially. Through the Purchasing Department, an annual contract is let to a union shop capable of doing high-quality binding on a two or three week schedule. In practice, most journals have been bound internally and most other work has been done commercially.

As a further step towards increasing access to materials, the Library is expediting the binding process by cutting the time a book is in the Bindery to two weeks, and planning to hold the total time of the process to one month. The reduced time will mean that Bindery output will be somewhat curtailed, probably by about 20 per cent. So long as funds hold out, the work not done internally will be handled as part of the commercial contract.

Some changes in library procedures will be made in order to accommodate the shorter binding period and to make materials more available to the users.

The Library will revert to its former practice of drawing up a binding schedule, in which each division and branch will forecast its requirements month by month and undertake to have predicted numbers of kinds of work ready at specified times for the Prebindery.

Material to be bound will be kept in its division and available for use until a week or so before it can be taken into the Bindery. The time for delivery to the Prebindery will be determined in consultation between the division and the Prebindery, and between the Prebindery and the Bindery.

As far as the user is concerned, material will be available in the division until it goes to the Prebindery, after which it can be expected back in a month's time.

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