OFFICIAL COLLECTIONS

ubc library bulletin

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN TO THE SENATE

The 1974/75 cri du coeur is out, delivered to its official audience, and available for all to see. The 23+ page production is called, "The Making of a Research Library: 60 Years of Collections Development." It begins with an analysis of the Library's growth rate through the years, then details subject strengths, and goes on to describe the value and cost of the collection. Inflated serials prices and the problems they cause are underlined. In considering the space needs of the collection, the report mentions, as a long-range option, the possibility of replacing the Main Library building with a new research library and sealing off the stacks for use as a storage area. A section of the report covers public service, discussing the introduction of computer-based users' tools, the use of the Library by non-UBC patrons, and inter-library lending. The report closes, having characterized the Library as "the chief resource centre for the province," with a rather wistful "hope that in the years ahead, whatever economic vicissitudes the University encounters, the Library will be enabled to continue to mature and to maintain and develop the collections for research and study."

PROCESSING BUILDING PROGRESS

Planning for the new Library technical services building goes on. Bill Watson reports that the recently formed University Processing Centre Building Committee passed on to the Library a Board of Governors decision that $2.5 million is to be the upper limit for the building's budget. This has meant some adjustments to the architects' preliminary plans, to wit: one of four proposed stairways is to be eliminated, a cheaper but still adequate heating and ventilation system will be used, and the road network around the site (near Woodward) will be maintained instead of revamped. The changes were approved by the Library's Users' Committee at a meeting last month. When the architects' final drawings are done, and approved by the Board of Governors, tenders will go out. Hopefully, construction can start sometime this summer; barring misfortune, the building will be finished a year from then.

BEGINNING CONTINUING EDUCATION

The UBC School of Librarianship offered the first of its projected semi-annual continuing education programmes February 27th at Vancouver Community College-Langara. The topic was "Total Library Service for British Columbia?" and panellists and participants examined the reports of various individuals and groups who have attempted to come up with a master plan for library service in B.C. ... from the Library Development Commission's 1973 Programme for Library Development to the final report of the so-called 'Infotec' group (Bob MacDonald of UBC, Bob Campbell of UVic, and Peter Simmons of the UBC School of Librarianship) which last year recommended the establishment of integrated, automated technical services throughout B.C., including a provincial union catalogue.

Resolutions were framed by the participants, basically supporting Infotec recommendations The School of Librarianship has forwarded the resolutions to the provincial cabinet ministers, deputy ministers, and MLA's concerned.

The programme was attended by 130 librarians representing all types and levels of librarianship in the province. The reports, and the reactions of panel members - especially those of provincial and municipal administrators who attended - gave the audience a much clearer picture of the present state and future hopes of library development in B.C.

The continuing education series is expected to include not only the rather generalized type of session offered February 27th, but also more specialized and practical workshops as well. Lois Bewley, chairwoman of the School's Continuing Education Committee, would be pleased to hear of suggested topics of interest, or concern, for consideration in planning future programmes.

LOAN POLICY PROGRESS

The start of the new policy brought a great stack of overdue notices to be mailed: 8,743 for Main Circulation and 14,056 for the whole system. Since it would have taken several weeks to search that many notices, the ones for Main were mailed without being searched. As a result there were phone calls and in-person complaints for over a week, and staff had to be reassigned from other duties to help with the snags. Actually the number of complaints was quite low in relation to the number of notices sent - it just seemed like a lot.

At the same time Circulation was receiving complaints about overdue notices, they had to cope with the usual transitional problems with the computer. (Have you ever seen a call-in notice with the name and address of the borrower but no information on the book - no call number, no author or title?) Eventually the problems petered out, things settled down, and circulation staff returned to the usual quota of headaches.

The best news about the new policy is that the rate of returns increased significantly during the first month. Last year, 89% of the Main Stacks books due in January were returned in January. This year, the rate of return in January was 132%.

Another illustration of the improvement in returns was found in checking one small batch of faculty overdues. All items in the batch were serials which were at least one year overdue, some of them two years overdue. Notices had been sent for each item at various times but with no results...until the new policy started. Then, between January 15th and January 30th, 50% of those serials were returned.

If books continue to come in so promptly, the next problem will be finding enough shelf space for all of them.

As for extended loans, the procedures seem to be working well. It certainly helps with special cases to be able to set whatever due date is considered appropriate, knowing that the item can be easily called in, and that the follow-up, in case of non-return, will be automatic. So far, the number of requests for extended loans has not been excessive: only 8% of regular loans in Main and much lower than that in Sedgewick. If extended loans continue at this level it will indicate, as the Task Force which prepared the new policy predicted, that long loan periods are not needed on most books and the term loan given automatically by some libraries does not serve the needs of borrowers as well as our system does.

SEDGEWICK TERM PAPER CLINIC CONCLUDED

Sedgewick Library has just completed its first term paper clinic. Six Library School students and five librarians participated in this extended reference service. 165 term paper interviews were done. Sedgewick librarians are still enthusiastic about the service even though things were hectic during the three-week clinic. Librarians felt the clinic kept them in touch with currently assigned topics and welcomed the opportunity to do extensive searches of the library's materials and reference sources. The clinic is currently being evaluated by Gillian Campbell, a Library School student.

LOCAL TALENT READING SERIES REACHES THE END OF THE LINE

After five months of intermittent, sometimes inspired, often insouciant public readings, the Local Talent series will wind up, this Thursday, with an Open Reading. The series has been, on the whole, a qualified success. The aim was to provide an opportunity for campus writers to read, and for devotees to hear them...and this was realized. Attendance, it's true, was spotty, ranging from four to forty. And performances ranged from sloppy to slick. But audiences were attentive and they seem to have appreciated the variety and regularity of the programme. High points, many would agree, were the readings by Avron Hoffman (L.A. III in LC Cataloguing) in November and Toby MacLennan (Instructor, Fine Arts Department) in January.

The organizer of the series, Michael Kasper, I & O Division, wishes to thank all the people who helped the series to happen: the University Librarian who made available money from the Friends of the Library Fund; Sedgewick staff who directed people to the readings in the obscure lower level Orientation Room; and I & O staff who put up posters.

The Open Reading - to which everyone is invited...read your own things and/or listen to assorted others - is set for 12:30 p.m., in Sedgewick, Thursday.

SEDGEWICK LIBRARY: AN ARCHITECTURAL CRITIQUE

Though it may be remote, the day will come when UBC gets around to building a new main library. We can begin planning by critically examining the libraries we have now. Below is a summary of an analysis of Sedgewick, prepared by Joye Volker, I & O Division, for an architecture course she's taken this year.

The low profile building nesting among the landscaped terraces in the centre of the UBC campus is the Sedgewick Library, opened in 1973 to serve the specific research needs of undergraduate students. Its purpose is to create ease of accessibility to a finite collection with a high circulation, in an attractive, work-oriented environment.

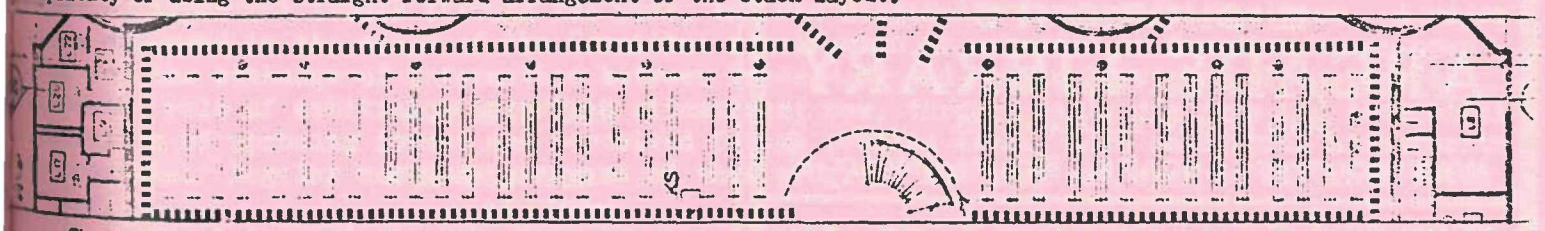
In the interior of the Sedgewick Library, the architects grouped carrells, tables, benches, and giant hassocks into sociologically congenial areas, providing a variety of study spaces to accommodate 1,400 students. The interpretation of student surveys and the observation of study habits influenced the design of a highly informal atmosphere. The 32-foot diameter tree drums, a potential design problem, were covered with a facade of brickwork and made to act as monumental design elements which break up the interior 87,000-square-foot area. In addition, the structural use of 42-foot-long pre-cast concrete T-beams provides a flexibility in the efficient handling of books and library services, by creating large open spaces.

This open-space design, however, creates a potentially dangerous condition for a library. On the lower study floor, large tables conducive to social interaction are placed on platforms adjacent to a high traffic area. Consequently, noise generated echoes uninhibitedly off the concrete beams. The only refuge for serious readers is one of the two "quiet rooms," originally designed for orientation and group study. (When noise levels in the open space rose high enough to require enclosed, separated study areas, the functions of the rooms were changed.) According to student feedback, noise is still a major problem. It can be attributed to a large extent to the design of the study area, which physically represents the difficulties of transposing study habits from an established environment to a newly-created one, and of interpreting students' desires in a way which does not accurately reflect their future needs.

The poor acoustics are aggravated by a giant megaphone-skylight in the centre of the building. The double stairwell it houses allows students the choice of alternate environments in progressing from one level to another, as recommended by environmental psychologist Dr. Richard Seaton. At the top of the enclosed stairway - nicknamed the "gun turret" - is a projection booth from which synchronized multiple-slide programmes can be shown on the curved wall opposite. This is a delightful feature for Open House, but an obvious deterrent to study.

Even without this feature, there are too many visual distractions. The innovative use of coloured plastic on the up-light component of the fluourescent fixtures was based on the hypothesis that warm colours produce active-feeling areas and cool colours produce quiet-feeling areas. The only obvious result here is a scattering of inharmonious colours which conflicts with the sweep of green carpet reflecting the lawns outside, and with the variegated rich tones and rough texture of the extensively-used resawn cedar panels. Red lights wash over both noisy and quieter areas, intermingling with glimpses of yellow, green, orange, and a most disturbing blue. The coloured reflection is used most effectively in the library staff office. A green wash above, green carpeting below, and yellow-accented furnishings create a pleasant place to work - unfortunately, the office was designed as an open space with little privacy.

The most peaceful section on the lower floor is the book stack area with its rich yellow stack ends and white acoustically-tiled ceiling. The initial difficulty in finding this area from the upper floor is outweighed by the simplicity of using the straight-forward arrangement of the stack layout.



The two most successful informal study areas are located in diagonal corners next to racks of paperbacks. Multi-level carpeted areas juxtaposed against large colourful supergraphics counter the institutional atmosphere often generated by heavily furnished libraries. Tired students who just want to curl up with a book before their car pool goes home find a relaxed, comfortable environment. However, the visual clutter and social groupings do little to inspire diligent or serious study.

The imaginative use of Shakespearean references to the word "glass", printed in a continuous line on east and west windows, is the most inspiring element for research: the quotations note the source play. Designed to substitute for the rail or visual-graphic barrier, the quotations are an appropriate accolade to Elizabethan scholar Dr. Garnett Sedgewick, after whom the facility is named. More appropriately, they reflect the primary function of a university library - to communicate academic knowledge.

The Sedgewick Library is unquestionable a popular building with students. The exterior is a visual treat, particularly at night; the interior is more hospitable than most public libraries and should be the envy of the Student Union. In addition, with its simple traffic patterns and obvious layouts, it offers an alternative to the complex organization inherent in large academic libraries. The major problem is that both the physical constraints of the site and the social demands of the Sixties which faced the architects, have impinged upon the proper functioning of the building today. Perhaps the designers should have been more sympathetic toward the students who find themselves poring over books and journals, providing them with an environment of quiet dignity, and less concerned with passing student preferences and architectural gimmickry.

RECENTLY READ & RECOMMENDED

Bianca Barnes, Graphics: PIRSIG, Robert. Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance. 1974. (Autobiography) CT 275. P 648. A 33. 1974. Main Stacks & Sedgewick.

Jack McIntosh, Bibliography: HOSKING, Geoff. "The Search for an Image of Man in Contemporary Soviet Fiction," in Forum for Modern Language Studies, October 1975, pp. 349-365. Main, Periodicals area.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WANTED

The following items are needed to complete the Library's holdings:
CANADIAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE. No. 1, 1974.
CANADIAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION. INFORMATION SERVICES SECTION. NEWSLETTER. Vol. 1, no. 3-4 (1968/69); vol. 2, no. 2-4 (1969/70); vol. 3, no. 4 (1971).
CANADIAN LITERATURE. Any issues, especially recent ones.
CANADIAN MUSIC EDUCATOR. Vol. 16, no. 2 (1974).
ENGLISH QUARTERLY (New Brunswick). Vol 3, no. 4 (1970); vol. 7, no. 3 (1974).
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL (Toronto). Vol. 28, no. 3 (1973).
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE. Vol. 146, no. 3 (Sept. 1974); vol. 147, no. 6 (June 1975).
PRISM INTERNATIONAL (Vancouver). Any issues, 1971-1974.
QUEEN'S QUARTERLY. Vol. 77, no. 1 (1970).
SOLEIL DE COLOMBIE. Vol. 6, no. 51 (Ap 26 1974).
WESTERN LIVING (later WESTERN LIVING AND VANCOUVER LIFE). Vol. 1, no. 6 (1971).
If you can supply any of these, contact Graham Elliston, local 2304.

MISSING

The Information Desk copy of FORTHCOMING BOOKS has disappeared from its appointed place. If you notice it lying around somewhere, tell it to get back to work!

UPWARD MOBILITY

The following recruitment notices have been received recently by the Library. For details and contact addresses, see Michael Kasper, I & O Division.
University of CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO. University Librarian. (Deadline: May 1)
University of GEORGIA (Athens). Assistant Head, Processing Division. (Notice dated: February 20)
University of WATERLOO (Ontario). Special Collections Librarian. (Notice dated: February 10)

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ATT MR B STUART-STUNND

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO THE NEXT ISSUE OF THIS BULLETIN: March 26