Editorial

This is my first experience of editing, apart from a turn at the Union List a few years ago. So far I have had an interesting time familiarising myself with my new computer and software. The layout is not quite the same as before, but it's as near as I can get!

I must express the Association's thanks to Vicki Cormie for doing an excellent job over the past few years, and I hope I can match her high standard.

Any contributions for Interim are most welcome. A paragraph or two will do. At the November meeting, a member appealed for there to be more 'meat' in the newsletter. I hope you'll agree that we've acheived that with this issue - many thanks to the various contributors. This won't continue unless you do your bit, so get those quills out and get scribbling!

Contributions are welcome on 3.5" floppy disc as well as in hard copy. I can cope with most popular word-processing packages as long as it's IBM compatible. Let me know what you have used, and if you're in any doubt, save your file in text format. (The file extension is important - use .txt)

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Deadline for Spring / Summer issue - Friday 10 August 1996

Leaoing Article

Repositioning the library: how far can you go? Observations from a workshop with health sciences librarians

"Re-engineering an organisation means tossing aside old systems and starting over. It involves going back to the beginning and inventing a better way of doing work. ...... It can be defined as the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service and speed." (Hammer & Champy, 1993)

The philosophy of change

The key words in the opening quotation are 'fundamental', 'radical', 'dramatic' and 'processes'. Reinventing, re-engineering, repositioning are terms which stress the need to adapt to survive. The terms are not interchangeable. In the corporate environment, they denote a range of restructuring activities, from radical reconstruction to refocusing of business strategic objectives (1). This continuum is mirrored at the micro-level of the institutional library or information service, where we find advocates of total reconstruction (2) and more moderate positions recommending the introduction of performance measures and enhanced recognition of status (3).

Can such concepts from the corporate environment, and the diagnostic and planning techniques associated with them, provide a useful operational feedback for librarians facing radical change in the NHS? Can they help a low profile service, the situation of many libraries, to reposition itself in a parent institution undergoing radical change, when those planning for change are apparently unaware of what it has to offer? Do these models take adequate account of the role of local factors (structural, geographic, political) in enhancing or inhibiting radical change? This paper offers a brief, if concentrated, review of these issues as explored in a workshop organised by the Association of Scottish Health Sciences Librarians in April 1995. It covers the background to the workshop, the reactions of the participants, and possible training initiatives. Observations from this group may be of interest to others in the social services facing structural upheaval.

Background to the workshop

The background to the workshop was the Cumberledge seminars, held in July 1992 and October 1993, which clarified the concept of the 'knowledge base of health care' as an operational framework for information provision in the health service. A number of separate sources, systems and services are covered by the term 'knowledge base', and these are reviewed by Haines, who spoke at the workshop, in a recent editorial (4) and others (5,6,7). Some of the platforms for strategic change in NHS informatics were specified before the current climate of distributed computing. They have been described as "'data-led' (with data as an end in itself) rather than .... 'action-led'" (8), and without due consideration of possibly conflicting and ambiguous stakeholder interests (9). The objectives of a library service, for example, (support for

clinical outcomes or for the internal market) will depend on that unit's position in a local infrastructure, and those who enter health informatics must be prepared to work with a range of remits. Trust-based service has greatly enlarged the scope of responsibility for informatics as appropriate interventions must now be judged in terms of cost and effectiveness, and GPs. mediated by databases, are likely to assume a decision-making role which is acturial as much as therapeutic (8).

Beevers, in a recent Cumberledge follow-up survey (10), highlights the need for "strategies to bridge 'cultural' gaps between professions". He also demonstrates the discrepancies in information provision between regions, with one of his Scottish respondents observing: "Health care library provision in Scotland is uncoordinated and no minimum standards have been set. Most libraries are small independent units which are poorly financed, poorly staffed, and have very low status within their parent organisations". At the time of the workshop, the Scottish Office had last issued guidelines in 1992 (11). Beevers' summary list of the problems perceived by practitioners in developing and accessing the knowledge base - lack of strategic planning, lack of leadership, differential development across the UK, low morale and status - was recapitulated by Margaret Haines in her presentation to the workshop, adding duplication of effort and funding to the litany of complaint.

The ASHSL workshop

The workshop which is the focus of this article was attended by health science librarians working in different environments - trusts, health boards, colleges of nursing & midwifery, academic and teaching hospital libraries. The participants were placed in groups and asked to consider "How far could you take the repositioning process in your own organisation?". Six topic areas were offered as a basis for discussion:-

- personal extension and development - What do I do that could be done by others in the organisation: What could I do that others do?

- status issues

- finding out - How do I access knowledge for evidence-based healthcare?

- organisational resources and processes - What might be the best structural approach to realingment?

- combining present responsibilities with developments for the future

- shaping health information policy - Would email networking improve the participative process? To what extent can grass roots' planning be effective?

Notes taken from each group were collated and presented in the closing session. This used the reported experience of the participants to identify common difficulties, opportunities, mechanisms, and agendas for the repositioning of health libraries in Scotland.

Observations from the groups

Participants' discussion focused largely on what might inhibit them in any attempt at repositioning, and their comments in this summary have been grouped as 'internal

inhibitors' and 'external inhibitors'. Internal inhibitors included lack of ownership of both resources and strategies; lack of knowledge of, and participation in strategic planning in their own institutions; the constraints imposed by temporary contracts and poor pay, coupled with shortage of time and staff to whom they might delegate routine and low grade tasks; the constraints of job descriptors, and the lack of understanding of LIS skills among other groups in the institution. Suggestions to overcome these inhibitors included making links with those who hold influence in the organisation; using users as lobbyists for the LIS role; instituting performance measures which would demonstrate the value of LIS work; assuming, and demonstrating the value of, an advisory and training role.

Comments on external factors focused on isolation and lack of comprehensive, current knowledge of developments in NHS informatics - several delegates could not access the Cochrane database, for example. Dissemination of information, participants observed, must work both ways: there is a limit to an individual's influence at national level unless that individual can demonstrate why he or she should be heard, as a model of good practice, for example. Several delegates raised the issue of direction from the Scottish Office perceived as currently lagging behind developments south of the border. Few were willing to invest effort in projects which might contravene revised national guidelines. There was general agreement, however, that a grass roots' networking initiative, like an ASHSL Web page, would improve things, though committed volunteers would need to come forward in the absence of central funding.

Training / education

It was clear that for most of the participants repositioning, rather than radical restructuring, was the preferred or expected path. The training implications of repositioning within a given professional framework are not clear. There are a number of training options available which range from vocational competence assurance schemes to graduate Masters degrees (12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17) though their value and appropriateness is currently a matter for fierce professional debate (18). The participants' comments almost universally endorse the need for understanding of strategic management techniques, and these may not be served by vocational competence programmes. One way forward is the tailored 'Statement of recognition' endorsed by the NHS Training Division and amply described by Judith LeMaitre, one of the speakers at the workshop, and at least one delegate had embarked on the construction of a portfolio to achieve this. However, such accreditation may not prepare professionals for the innovative role proposed by Palmer & Streatfield: "For librarians the choice is between marginalisation of themselves and their libraries, as scarce resources are increasingly redeployed into systems and services that serve the end-user directly, or taking a new engaged and more interactive role" (19). A third path may also need to be considered in the light of recent changes in regional informatics - outsourcing (13), which may force some LIS professionals to go further down the path of change into radical reskilling and restructuring.

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Meeting Report

"Integrating Medical Information on the Academic Network" 1st Annual OMNI Seminar : Welcome Centre for Medical Science, 30 November 1995

This 1st annual seminar, run under the auspices of OMNI (Organizing Medical Networked Information) was well attended by some 150 delegates, mainly from academic/ university libraries. Five papers were presented, followed by an open forum discussion.

Shirley Wood from the eLib programme and JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) gave the first paper entitled "The eLib programme and access to network resources". The eLib programme was born as a result of the Follet report which reviewed library services in higher education. Sub-groups were formed to look at funding and resources, management of libraries, and information technology. Information technology was seen to be essential for library and information services of the future. The report has been carried forward by FIG (Follet Implementation Group) which oversees the implementation of proposals, and FIGIT (Follet Implementation Group on Information Technology). This latter group is part of the eLib programme and invited proposals for projects which would improve information provision, such as electronic document delivery, training and awareness, and access to network resources. They have also carried out supporting studies in the areas of copyright management, organisational change, and presentation of electronic information, amongst others.

eLib is a process not an event, promoting collaboration, improving understanding, and transferring out in to the commercial world, with the wider community benefiting through improved accessibility to networked information.

It is likely that there will be further project approval in the future of the eLib programme, as well as a call for more projects. There will be a focus on sub-groups, and increased public relations through information packs, mailbase and Web pages.

The second paper "Map of Medical Networked Information" was presented by Frank Norman from the National Institute for Medical Research. He looked at the history of networked information.

1984   JANET (Joint Academic Network) established
1987   Email; FTP (File Transfer Protocol); OPAC JUGL (Janet User Group) set up
1990   BUBL; Mailbase; NISS
1992   BIDS introduced - access only through telenet/email
        EMBASE over network; Gopher
1994   WWW (World Wide Web) servers; Mosaic
        Internet moves outside of academic sector to the general public
        Majority of sites have slow access and heavy US bias
1995   eLib programme begins to make an impact

The types of medical network information were then discussed:-

- text
- images
- bibliographic data - especially in research
- teaching software
- electronic journals & mail groups.

Users access this information for:-

- research
- learning
- teaching
- publicity - home pages
- patient care - as Cochrane advances
- selling.

The information providers are:-

- higher education institutes
- JISC
- government
- information industry
- commerce
- NHS - due to grow in 1996.

"UK Internet initiatives" was the topic for the third paper by Liz Davies from the Royal Postgraduate Medical School, London. End users have altered the way we provide information, from CD-ROM technology onwards. Librarians use the Internet in the following ways:-

- communicating
- keeping up to date
- interlending
- locating and referring
- literature searches
- reference checking.
- answering enquires

However the Internet is still a problem in terms of locating good quality, evaluated information.

Librarians may be providers of networked information thorough the provision of:-

- bibliographic databases
- library catalogues
- library home pages, providing local information and links to selected information and resources.

Librarians may be promoters and teachers by providing:-

- Internet access from library computers
- demonstrations and training sessions
- printed documentation and guides
- support staff.

A joint presentation followed by John Cox and Sue Welsh of the OMNI Project. Their subject was "Organizing Medical Networked Information" which gave a profile of the OMNI project. The need for OMNI arose from the following:-

* a rapid and chaotic growth of the Internet

* variable quality of information on the Net

* poor subject access

* crude search engines

* UK information very hard to find - still heavily biased towards America.

OMNI began life as BIONIR, a voluntary initiative, which was seen not to be sufficient. A funded project was needed, and so a consortium bid for JISC / ISSC was put together. This was successful. Staff were then recruited and a detailed plan of action put together.

OMNI will deliver a gateway to quality information on the Internet, which has been evaluated, selected and described. It will provide a simple WWW interface and subject indexing - by far the biggest project. Documentation and training will also be provided.

OMNI collaborations include other eLib projects, national collaborations in other countries, and a network of volunteers and information providers. Consortium membership comes from:-

* National Institute for Medical Research in Leeds

* University of Nottingham

* BMA

* Kings Fund

* Royal Free Hospital

* Wellcome Trust

* Cambridge University.

The project is funded by JISC / ISSC and is managed as part of an eLib programme. It has funding for two years which ends on 31 May 1997.

OMNI differs from other projects as it selects quality information, adding value to it, indexing it, adding a classification code and attributing the work to the author. Information accessed through OMNI will have a UK bias by the creation of a separate (UK) database. The project intends to offer a keyword searching facility, a "what's new" page, help facilities and email support. Searching OMNI will be possible by keywords with automatic truncation and Boolean capabilities. There will be a UK and world-wide coverage. Browsing will be possible via an alphabetical list of subject headings, by UDC, or by NLM classification schemes.

The future of OMNI looks promising, with intentions to expand and improve the software. The indexing system is by MESH headings at present, but this will change to a Unified Language System. OMNI will maintain an up to date list of current sites, with reviewers checking and evaluating pages in a particular subject area for quality, accuracy and so on.

In the afternoon, Gary Malet from the Medical Matrix in California gave the final paper on "Internet medical resources from a US perspective". The Medical Matrix is a database of Internet clinical medical resources with hypertext. Its goal is a keyword driven search engine.

http://www.kumc.educ:80/matrix

A clinical medical database is search driven, with MESH categorisation. It is edited for clinical versus lay content, and is peer reviewed with a facility for feedback. Examples of CMRs (Clinical Medical Resources) include:-

* Center for Disease Control

* University of Washington

* Cancernet.

These can be accessed using search engines such as Yahoo, Web Crawler, Infoseek, Medical Matrix, and OMNI.

The main problems with medical information on the Internet can be summarised as follows:-

* copyright

* privacy

* funding

* quality

* obsolescence

* physician inertia.

The open forum which followed enabled delegates to raise questions about the OMNI project. The most relevant questions concerned the issue of volunteers, and the amount of time that would be required to become a reviewer.

There are two ways by which someone may become a volunteer/reviewer. The first would require a small amount of time, and would simply involve the volunteer/ reviewer sending OMNI details of pages that they had found useful. OMNI would then assess the page based on predetermined criteria. The second option would involve more time and commitment. Users with particular knowledge or expertise in an area would review pages relevant to their subject, again based on a set of criteria laid down by OMNI. A one-day training seminar is being held on 31st January to show how to locate, select and enter resources of sufficient quality.

It was also suggested that the evaluation criteria established by OMNI could be made public to enable volunteers to assess pages and to publish pages of sufficient quality to be included.

Medical information on the Internet at present is not assessed for quality or accuracy, is hard to find using the existing search engines, and has a US bias. OMNI hope to improve the standard, quality and availability of the information through a team of voluntary reviewers using a set of criteria to be established.

Carol Hallesy

Health Education Board for Scotland

Meeting Report

ASHSL November Meeting held at MDG, Edinburgh on 10 November 1995

Driving from Ayr to Edinburgh is invariably horrible. So I always pause and think "Do I really want to do this?" before I go to any meeting arranged for the vicinity of Crewe Road. However I'm glad that I did not miss the "Critical Appraisal Skills" meeting as it was well worth the journey.

The sessions kicked off with the AGM of ASHSL where several points of business were gone through. Principal among these was the running of the Union List Scheme. The ASHSL committee are concerned at the income which has been generated due to the changes which had to be made recently to the scheme in order to comply with the Copyright Act. It was agreed to let the scheme run for another year in order to gauge the level of forms being purchased as it was thought that the figures obtained for 1994-5 may be different as everyone had to "buy in" with forms at the start.

Sheila Cannell also outlined the efforts which had taken place during the year to get the Scottish Office to look at a review of health service library provision in Scotland. These efforts were mainly directed through SLIC , but despite repeated efforts on our behalf we are no nearer finding a "home" within the Scottish Office. On a more encouraging note however there has been some contact with the Chief Scientist's Office through the launch of GRASP (More of this later).

Once again a plea was made from the Chair of ASHSL for members to pay their subscriptions on time!! For a meagre £7.50 you can join a network of fellow professionals, attend meetings and find out generally what is happening throughout Scotland. What else can you get for that amount these days!! ASHSL is also looking for co-opted members for the committee with a view to people joining in November when several positions within the committee are due to fall vacant.

After the AGM we divided into sectorial meetings (a welcome innovation) where discussion ranged around topics of concern to each of the groups: Nursing, Medicine, Administration / Health Promotion. Feedback form these meetings provided several points for ASHSL to carry forward.

The nursing group were obviously concerned with the imminent changes. Discussion centred around the provision of services to trained staff and the role of Trusts in facilitating resources for these staff. It was suggested that we as librarians should be highlighting our concerns not only to Trust boards but also lobbying nurses themselves.

It was suggested by the administration / health promotion group that ASHSL could change its title to reflect the range of membership and that we should perhaps encourage people from consumer information services and health shops to join.

The medical libraries group had wide ranging discussions and came up with a number of useful suggestions, including a specialist skills directory, lobbying for a post of regional librarian in Scotland, putting more "meat into *Interim*", and ensuring there were up to date contributions for the ASHSL home page on the Internet which Kerr Donaldson is currently working on. (If you would like to contribute to any of these or have any suggestions please contact a member of the committee).

The speaker scheduled for the morning session was Mark Lewis of the Chief Scientist's Office, who outlined the development of the GRASP (Getting Research Applied to Scottish Practice) initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to raise skills in the critical appraisal of evidence of clinical effectiveness. This will be done through a series of multidisciplinary study days involving public health, nursing, medical, management and information staff. The initiative was launched by the CSO in August of last year and has begun, through the Health Service Research Network, with a series of workshops to "train the trainers" i.e. to train people to act as facilitators who will then run workshops of their own and so it is hoped that skills will cascade throughout the service.

Mark Lewis outlined the role which he thought librarians could play in this process:-

- as participants in the training programme
- perhaps also as facilitators
- as a resource which will undoubtedly be called upon by clinicians and managers
- to provide information
- with a responsibility for ensuring that information concerning clinical effectiveness is widely disseminated.

To this end librarians have been invited to be involved in the trainer workshops taking place in Aberdeen in December, in Glasgow in February, in Edinburgh in April and in Stirling in June.

Lunch at the MDG was, as usual, excellent and although I did over-indulge, as usual, I stayed awake for the afternoon session mainly because Gill Needham and Judy Palmer packed their presentation with useful information and pointers for action. They even managed to get us, the assembled body, to participate and do a little work ourselves. No mean feat for a Friday afternoon!!

Their theme was Critical Appraisal Skills and Finding the Evidence. Both come from Anglia and Oxford Regional Health authority where CASP initially developed. They outlined the advantages of adopting the evidence based medicine approach as being:-

- allowing clinicians to review and improve practice
- enabling resources to be used effectively
- encouraging teamwork
- giving clinicians a means of keeping abreast of the literature
- improving clinicians reading habits!

Systematic reviews are recommended as a means to these ends because of the sheer volume of information, because they are "new" information, and because they are reviews of effectiveness. The move towards EBM has obvious implications on the delivery of information services. Just some of those outlined by Gill and Judy were:-

- the resource implications
- the need for more professional networking
- the need for awareness of sources for EBM
- the need to raise customer awareness.

To meet these needs they suggested that we in Scotland should look to our own professional development and education and that we should ensure that it includes themes such as:-

- organisational know-how
- understanding the market place
- learning critical appraisal skills
- knowing how to teach
- being aware of new health information sources
- knowing how to navigate the Internet
- making use of any other new technology.

Some of these have already been facilitated through recent ASHSL meetings but they are themes that will no doubt continue on into the 21st century and ones we shall be revisiting.

All in all I found the day stimulating. Driving back to Ayr gave me plenty of time to reflect on the main points of the day - especially when stuck in the rush hour traffic on Queensferry Road, in between cursing the stupidity of other drivers of course!!

Mhairi McMillan

Ayrshire & Arran Health Board

Book Review

Medicine and the Internet: introducing on-line resources and technology. McKENZIE, Bruce C. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996 ISBN 0192027058 £16.95

This book is a useful introduction to health care information available on-line, on and off the Net. It was written for doctors, but all health professionals will find it of interest.

Part one covers the hardware and software required to gain access to world outside one's PC.

Bulletin boards; electronic mail; and on-line services like UK Healthlink, Datastar and Dialog; CompuServe; and the NHS Viewdata Information Services are described in part two. The important issues of copyright and 'netiquette' are discussed. Ever wondered how to cite on-line sources? - the answer is here.

The Internet is introduced in part three - what it is; why you might want to access it; and how to do so.

Part four goes into more detail about utilizing the Internet for electronic mail; file transfer; using other computers; and information retrieval. The mysteries of acronyms like Archie, Veronica, gopher, WAIS, WWW, Telnet, Usenet and FTP are revealed. It need not only be one way traffic. Details are given about how to become an information provider, and tips are given on how to write your own home page.

Part five looks at accessing Medline by modem via the likes of the BMA Library and PaperChase.

Each part of the book has a set of learning outcomes which can be useful to check one's understanding.

This book does not avoid the use of jargon. I agree with the author - it is well worth the effort of familiarising oneself with terms in common usage. There is a fairly extensive glossary too, as well as technical notes and tip-or-trap advice notes.

Medicine and the Internet has its own home page on the World Wide Web which includes electronic extracts from the book; a selection of European Medical Resources, World Medical Resources, and Medical Specialty Resources; online updates to the printed book to ensure that it remains current; and a list of medical Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) postings on Usenet giving details of various subjects and their locations.

As far as the Internet resources detailed in the book, they are, for a change, mostly UK ones. I am definitely not the best person to comment on any of the services mentioned as I don't have access to anything more exotic than Datastar, Blaiseline and ARTTel, all via Dialplus. At least, when the great day dawns and we get connected, I'll know how to go about it, and what sources to try.

Related articles

There has also been a recent series of four articles by Mark Pallen in the *BMJ* entitled 'Guide to the Internet'.

The references are as follows:-

Introducing the Internet *BMJ* 1995 **311** (25 Nov) 1422-4

Electronic mail. *BMJ* 1995 **311** (2 Dec) 1487-90

The world wide web. *BMJ* 1995 **311** (9 Dec) 1552-6

Logging in, fetching files, reading news. *BMJ* 1995 **311** (16 Dec) 1626-30

As well as being written in conventional paper journal format, they have also been published in electronic form on the *BMJ*s World Wide Web pages. The electronic versions are intended to act as a starting point for exploration of the Internet as they contain many additional hypertext links to on-line resources.

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Sheila Cannell is presently head of division, medical, science and veterinary libraries, Edinburgh University Library. She is based in the Erskine Medical Library. At the moment she is also medical librarian, with day-to-day responsibility for the University medical libraries (Erskine Medical Library, Western General Hospital Library, Royal Edinburgh Hospital Psychiatry Library, City Hospital Library and the newly created Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh Library). The post of medical librarian has just been advertised. Sheila will retain overall responsibility for the medical, science and veterinary libraries, and is also taking a new role in Edinburgh University Library with regard to information strategy.

As well as being chair of ASHSL, Sheila represents the health science sector on the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC). Her previous posts have all ben in university libraries, at Glasgow and at Heriot Watt.

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(Consumer health representative)

Born in Glasgow, but brought up in Yorkshire, Kerr graduated from the University of Glasgow with a BSc (Hons) in zoology. He then went to Robert Gordons Institute of Technology to do the post-graduate diploma in library and information studies. After qualifying, he worked first as a part-time lecturer in physiology at Queen's College, Glasgow, from 1984 to 1986, before moving south of the border to Slough College where he was assistant librarian (technical services). Since 1988 he has worked at HEBS as project manager for Health Search Scotland, then datasets manager and now as information services manager.

Kerr is married with two children, Sam and Ellen. His interests are watching videos and sleeping!!

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(Treasurer)

Carol graduated from Robert Gordons in 1980 with a BA, and from Napier in 1991. Her first post was with Lothian Area Health Promotion Department from 1992 until 1994 and in 1995 joined the Health Education Board for Scotland. However she will be leaving soon to take up the new post of resources and information officer with Lanarkshire Health Board Health Promotion Department.

She has been the treasurer of ASHSL since 1995, and is the deputy representative on the LINC Health Panel.

Carol got married last year and enjoys going to the cinema, Latin dancing and going with girlfriends in search of the perfect chocolate cake. She has also recently taken up the clarinet, to the horror of her neighbours.

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Alan is health information scientist at the Common Services Agency (CSA), Information and Statistics Division (ISD) Library. He has held this post in one form or another since July 1984. Before that he was area librarian at Fife Health Board.

His specialty is health statistics and he has given talks on this subject, as well as publishing a monograph in 1995 entitled *'Not collected centrally': problems of finding and using health statistics.* (Cheadle: IFM Healthcare, 1995, ISBN: 0952054620). He also edited the first edition of the ASHSL *Directory of health library resources in Scotland* (1986), and was chair of the Association from 1988 to 1992.

(NB Alan's book, *'Not collected centrally'*, is available from IFM Healthcare, PO Box 19, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 6 DJ. Price £8.50 - payment with order)

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(Administrative representative & Editor of Interim)

Dorothy started her career as library assistant at the Highland Health Sciences Library, Raigmore Hospital, Inverness in 1977. As the library grew, she progressed to assistant librarian and then deputy librarian.

She has been in her present post as a 'one man band' at Fife Health Board since February 1995. The library, part of the Public Health Directorate, serves all health board employees, and Fife Health Research in Glenrothes, and has recently extended its remit to cover all general practices in Fife.

Her interests include cross-stitch embroidery, Scottish country dancing, and playing classical guitar. She has two 'shadows' in the form of Siamese cats who follow her about the house, and even try to sit on the computer keyboard, if given half a chance!

Dorothy is a previous editor of the *ASHSL Union List.*

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(Secretary)

Alison worked in public, health board, school, community and polytechnic libraries (the latter in Germany) before taking up post as college librarian at Foresterhill College in 1992. When the college structure was re-organised at the end of 1993 she was appointed to her present post, managing the learning resource centre which is made up of the library, audio-visual and IT services, and desk top publishing / reprographic services.

She is currently studying for an MBA and has recently finished compiling a short history of Foresterhill College (before it disappears into higher education).

Any spare time she has left is spent on the golf course.

Mhairi Mcmillan, Learning Resource Officer, Ayrshire & Arran Health Board, Head Office, Seafield House, Doonfoot Road, Ayr, KA7 4DW

Tel 01292 611040 Ext 4714

Fax 01292 610636

(Nursing representative)

Mhairi was educated at Cumnock Academy, Ayrshire. She graduated with a BA from Edinburgh University in 1980, then went on to gain her Dip Lib at Strathclyde University 1981, and became ALA in 1983.

Her first professional post was with Cumnock & Doon Valley District Library Service from 1981 to 1982 when she became school librarian at Auchinleck Academy, Ayrshire. In 1986 she moved to the health sector when she was appointed librarian at the College of Nursing, Crosshouse Hospital Kilmarnock where she stayed until 1994.

At present she is the learning resource officer, Ayrshire & Arran Health Board. The principal aims of her post are to set up and run a library and information service to serve the needs of Board executive, staff and members, for up-to-date, relevant information, and to act as network co-ordinator. The main focus of the collection is health service management, encompassing topics such as commissioning and purchasing healthcare; quality assurance; personnel management; GP fundholding, clinical guidelines and evaluations.

A member of the ASHSL committee since 1994, she has also participated in a number of other working groups, and was the last chair of the NBS conference for Librarians in Scottish Colleges of Nursing and Midwifery.

Outside of work, she tries to make it a rule never to look at a computer screen unless absolutely necessary. She is married with no children and enjoys swimming, hill-walking and classical music. She is an avid follower of Grand Prix racing and a David Coulthard fan in particular!!!

Hazel Williamson, Medical Librarian, Glasgow Royal Infirmary University NHS Trust, 8-16 Alexandra Parade, Glasgow, G31 2ER

Tel 0141 211 5975/4760

Fax 0141 211 4802

(Medical representative & Editor of the ASHSL Union List)

Hazel has a long and rather fragmented career history. She started life as a chemist working at Dounreay before discovering the rewards of information work. Three years as an information scientist with Unilever came to an end when her daughter was born (no such thing as maternity leave in those days). She was fortunate to find part-time work in public libraries and the British Standards Institution which gave her some useful experience.

After moving to Edinburgh in 1975, Hazel was Christine Coltart's first assistant at what is now HEBS. She took the unusual step of "retiring" when her daughter was eight and after another eight years as a full-time wife and mother she eventually broke through the barriers and got a job establishing a small library for the Blood Transfusion Service.

Her next move was to Glasgow where she failed to find paid employment but was extremely pleased to work in a voluntary capacity for Liz Gordon at Stobhill Hospital and also help in establishing the library at Hunters Hill Marie Curie Centre.

It was apparent that without a current qualification she was not going to get work and so she became a very mature post-graduate diploma student at Strathclyde University.

The job at the Southern General Hospital followed, but after surviving two years of a serious lack of management support she escaped exhausted to the relative calm of the MRC Medical Sociology Unit. There she was able to take stock, gain her LA Charter (supervised by the wonderful Selina Gillespie) and think seriously about the ASHSL Union List, her time-lapsed MSc project.

When the job at the Royal came up she felt able to cope with the challenge. In her four years there she has witnessed many improvements and innovations, a very healthy increase in library usage and the establishment of valuable links with the University. She has also been able to publish three editions of the Union List and, with your help, the new edition will be out before she starts her new job as virtual librarian in the attic above the Chapel at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh!

Hazel really enjoys her association with ASHSL and takes a great pride in being part of this "invisible college".

Co-opted members

James Beaton, Librarian, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, 232/42 St Vincent Street Glasgow, G2 5RJ

Tel 0141 221 6072 / Fax 0141 221 1804

James is a graduate of Edinburgh University with a degree in Celtic studies. He did his post-graduate diploma in librarianship and information studies at Robert Gordons University. Before moving to the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, he has held posts at the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, Glasgow Eastern College of Nursing & Midwifery, and Southern General NHS Trust.

Charlotte Boulnois, Librarian, Southern General Hospital NHS Trust, 1345 Govan Road, Glasgow, G51 4TF

Tel 0141 201 2163 / Fax 0141 201 2133

Originally from Hertfordshire, Charlotte went to library school at Birmingham Polytechnic (now the University of Central England in Birmingham) where she studied for her BA (Hons) in Librarianship. This was a sandwich course and she spent a year working in three different libraries for the Ministry of Defence in London. One of these libraries was at the Royal Army Medical College where answering such queries as what are the differences between shark bites and boat propeller injuries sparked her interest in health sciences librarianship.

On completion of her course, her first job was as the librarian for South West Hertfordshire College of Nursing. Having hated living in London during her placement year, she soon found that St Albans, where the college was situated, was still too close for comfort. Wanting to get as far from London as possible, she then got the job as assistant librarian at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley. Charlotte's final move (so far) was in June 1995 when she took up post at the Southern General.

Jane Farmer, Lecturer, School of Information & Media, Robert Gordon University, Hilton Place, Aberdeen, AB9 1FP

Tel 01224 283834 / Fax 01224 492608

Jane has worked at the School of Information and Media Studies at Robert Gordon University for 5 years. Currently she is involved in teaching about bibliographic sources and services, mainly in the public sector, and information management. Her previous posts were as area librarian at Grampian Health Board, and trainee librarian at Perth and Kinross District Libraries, both for 2 years.

At the moment she is carrying out research towards a PhD in the area of impact of cost-effectiveness information on health service purchasing. Her other research interests include health information for patients and the public, methods of measuring information impact, and information professionals' continuing development.

Jane is chair of Grampian Information Health and Community Information Group and a member of the Health Libraries Group committee - principally active in the CPD subgroup.

Veronica Harry, Library, Academic Centre, Gartnavel Royal Hospital, 1055 Great Western Road, Glasgow, G12 0XH

Tel 0141 211 3913

Fax 0141 334 0875

Veronica graduated with an MA in Philosophy from Dundee University in 1982. She went on to train as a systems analyst and computer programmer with the Greater London Council and worked in this field until 1991, with the GLC, Chase Manhattan Bank, and Prudential Assurance. With the aim of moving on from systems design, she studied at Strathclyde University in 1991/92 for the MSc in Information and Library studies.

Her present post is as librarian with Greater Glasgow Community and Mental Health NHS Trust, where she has worked since the beginning of 1993. The post is based at Gartnavel Royal Hospital, but the Trust itself is spread across Glasgow and covers many fields and disciplines. Veronica's main interest in LIS is the provision of electronic information to a distributed clientele.

Jane Mackenzie, R&D Information Manger, Chief Scientist's Office, Room 109, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG

Tel 0131 244 2215

Jane started in her new post at St Andrew's House on 8th January. As a new post it will be gradually evolving - but initial activities include involvement with the implementation of the Culyer report *Supporting research and development in the NHS*, specifically declaration of R&D costs; ensuring access throughout Scotland to key R&D information resources ie the Cochrane, CRD (Centre for Research & Dissemination) and NRR (National Research Register) databases; as well as developing links with key information providers eg health librarians, health service research co-ordinators and specialist services.

Jane was previously library and information service manager at the King's Fund in London. While there, she was secretary of the NHS Management Librarians and is currently secretary of IFM Healthcare.

Maureen Thom, Librarian, Management Development Group, Scottish Health Service Centre, Crewe Road South, Edinburgh, EH4 2LF

Tel 0131 332 2335 ext 445

Fax 0131 315 2369

A failed speech therapy student, Maureen started working at the Scottish Health Service Centre in September 1979. Having obtained a degree from the Open University, she completed the post-graduate diploma at Robert Gordon Institute of Technology in 1987, after which she worked for a short while at the Scottish Community Education Council in Edinburgh. She returned to the SHSC in 1988 as assistant librarian, becoming acting librarian in 1991, and, finally, librarian in 1995.

Maureen has been an ASHSL member since 1986, including a two year spell as treasurer.

People and Places

We welcome back **Norman Macdonald**, who Interim readers will remember from his days at the CSA Building Division, to the post of librarian at the Scottish Centre for Infection and Environmental Health at Ruchill. Norman takes over from **Liz Moore** who has headed back to her spiritual home in the Lake District. We are very grateful to Liz for the hard work which she has done at Ruchill over the past two years in organising this valuable collection. (More from Norman later.)

Jane Samson has left her post as librarian at Fife College of Health studies in order to spend more time with her family. We wish her well. She is suceeded by **Helen MacDougall.**

Jane Sutton-Carr, who was also at Fife College of Health Studies, had two role changes in 1995. The first was to become mother of Alastair in June and the second was to become librarian at the MRC Human Genetics Unit, Edinburgh, in October. Congratulations on both counts.

Congratulations are also extended to **Sheila Cunningham,** from the Glasgow Eastern District College of Nursing & Midwifery, on her marriage to John Sutherland on 15 December 1995.

Still in Glasgow, we welcome back **Fiona McLeod,** who Interim readers will remember as librarian at the Northern District College of Nursing & Midwifery, to be librarian at the Hunters Hill Marie Curie Centre and also **Jenni Campbell,** who was at Lothian College of Health Studies Morningside site, to be information worker at the Centre for Women's Health.

Jackie Cahoon has joined the staff at Gartnavel Royal Hospital Library as assistant librarian. Jackie graduated from St Andrews University in 1993 with an MA in modern languages. She worked as a graduate trainee at Glasgow University Library and in 1993/94 took the MSc in information and library studies.

Congratulations to **Carol Hallesy**, librarian at HEBS, who will shortly be moving to a new post as resources and information officer with Lanarkshire Health Board.

The **Comely Bank site** of **Lothian College of Health Studies (L/NN)** has recently installed a new telephone system. Their new contact numbers are as follows:-

0131 343 7900 (Switchboard)

0131 343 7917 (Janice White, principal librarian - direct)

0131 343 7918 (Sheena Moffat, librarian - direct)

0131 343 7919 (Library issue desk - direct)

Their address and other details remain unaltered.

Hazel Williamson

Glasgow Royal Infirmary

Obituary

It is with regret that we have to announce the death of **Joyce Polson**, Librarian at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley. Joyce was found dead from smoke inhalation at her holiday cottage in Arran following a fire.

Tributes from two of her colleagues follow:-

Joyce Polson was born in Edinburgh, but moved to Glasgow as a child. Upon leaving school, she got a post as a proof reader at HarperCollins. Deciding that books were the area she wished to specialise in, Joyce attended the Robert Gordon Institute, gaining a Diploma in Librarianship. After qualification, her first post was in the Mitchell Library in Glasgow, which she always remembered fondly. Deciding to move from the public library field, she took up post as the librarian for the Renfrew, Dumbarton and Argyll College of Nursing, Paisley, moving into premises at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in 1986. Joyce was a font of strange knowledge, always knowing of the person to contact to solve the problem, or of some obscure text which would give the answer. She developed the Royal Alexandra Hospital Library into the large, well equipped, multi-disciplinary library it is today.

Her loves were books, particularly detective novels, animals, especially cats, and Arran, where she tragically died in a fire in the New Year.

Charlotte Boulnois

Southern General Hospital, Glasgow and former assistant librarian, Royal Alexandra Hospital

I first met Joyce in 1981 when she was on the interview panel for my post at Greenock. In those early days she was my mentor and an invaluable source of information and advice, which was always given freely. Later on our paths crossed again when our respective colleges amalgamated to form Argyll and Clyde College of Nursing & Midwifery. These were difficult times and I fear swords were crossed now and again as personalities clashed.

When I was unable to work due to ill health last year, the first person to contact me was Joyce, to offer help and advice. This was much appreciated and will not be forgotten.

A brusque exterior fronted a very caring personality. Caring particularly for wild life, Joyce was a keen bird watcher and animal lover.

A true professional, she was a first class librarian and her contribution to the college will be sadly missed, particularly in these times of change. We have lost a true and valued friend.

Tom McClymont

Librarian, Argyll & Clyde College of Nursing, Greenock

Changes at SCIEH .

The **Scottish Centre for Infection and Environmental Health** (**SCIEH**), a division of the Common Services Agency, was formed in 1994 as a result of the amalgamation of the Communicable Diseases (Scotland) Unit and the Environmental Health (Scotland) Unit, both based at Ruchill Hospital, Glasgow.

The Centre is therefore a multi-disciplinary organisation providing expertise for the surveillance and investigation of infection and the health aspects of environmental issues in Scotland. Specific surveillance programmes include:-

*   hospital infection
*   travel-related diseases
*   foodborne infections and intoxications
*   AIDS/HIV and sexually transmitted diseases
*   salmonellosis
*   legionellosis
*   waterborne diseases
*   environmental health.

Since 1993, **Liz Moore** has been responsible for imposing some order on the hitherto widely dispersed collections of first the Environmental Health Unit and, latterly, SCIEH as a whole, and in this comparatively brief period has managed to build up a comprehensive, wide-ranging, reference collection to support the staff of the Centre in all aspects of their work.

However, in autumn of last year, the call of her native Cumbrian wilderness overcame her resistance (why one will never know - Ruchill in wind and snow ought to be wilderness enough for anyone). She and her family are now well dug in somewhere in the hinterland of Penrith, or was it Kendal (I've been told to be vague about this), reclaiming an ancestral house for civilization. Good luck, Liz, and don't forget your medication.

Which is to say, it's Goodbye from her, and Hello from me, **Norman Macdonald**, (There is something truly creepy about introducing oneself in cold print, but there we are.), late of the CSA Building Division, and apart from that the less said about me the better. You could however know that the SCIEH Library hours are now extended to 9.30 - 17.00, that telephone contact should preferably be made via the direct line number (0141 946 0861) and that if you usually receive SCIEH additions lists and haven't had the Nov / Dec one, you should nag me ASAP as I can't find a mailing list. If, on the other hand, you don't get SCIEH Library missives but feel they would enrich your existence, drop me a line and I shall give the matter etc, etc, etc. But be quick before I am tempted to launch myself on the InterWet (or do I mean the World Wide Neb?).

Norman Macdonald

SCIEH Library, The White House, Ruchill Hospital, Glasgow, G20 9NB

Forthcoming Events

The **ASHSL Spring Meeting** is being held on 26 April at Stirling Royal Infirmary. It will be a joint meeting with the LAITG and it's theme is "Networking initiatives in healthcare".

The finalised programme and application form will be sent out to you within in the next few weeks.

The **Library Association Health Libraries Group 1996 conference** is being held in Exeter at the University of Exeter Peter Chalk Centre on the weeked of 6-8 September. The theme this year is evidence based medicine. The weekend will combine working sessions on all aspects of the theme relevant to all interests of the group, with an exhibition and social events.

We have had an invitation via **George McGlasson** of **Riley Dunn & Wilson**, Falkirk, for individuals or groups to visit the bindery, groups are preferred. Contact a member of the committee if you are interested and we can perhaps arrange an association visit, depending on numbers. Alternatively George can be reached on 01324 621591, car phone 0860 630675.

ASHSL Union List

You will all have received your holdings list to update for inclusion in the new edition of the *Union List*, currently being prepared by Hazel. There has been a good response so far, but several libraries still have send in their returns.

Please send in your lists as soon as possible so that the work can be completed expeditiously.

There are several new members to the scheme including the Royal College of Physisians and Surgeons of Glasgow, Lothian Health Promotion, the Centre for Women's Health in Glasgow and a return to the fold of the MRC Human Genetics Unit at the Western General Hospital, Edinburgh.

Comment

Spotted in *The Herald* by Anna Illingworth, Stobhill.

"What's really hot for cooler days this winter? The little camel coat has been liberated from librarians and dragged to the epicentre of style from a long suburban exile."

As Anna says, How's that for obsolete stereotyping - and *The Herald* is supposed to be a quality daily too.

All I can say is, I wish I could afford one!

A S H S L

Association of Scottish Health Sciences Librarians