

Press cuttings

THE R&D DEPARTMENT CHANGES DIRECTOR

In February 1995 we said farewell to Brian Perry, who had been Director of the R&D Department for the past 11 years, on his retirement. Brian has had a long career in library and information work, stretching back to the days of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR). It is interesting to note that he was a member of DSIR's Lending Library Unit, the planning body for the National Lending Library for Science and Technology which subsequently became the British Library Document Supply Centre.

Brian Perry's involvement with research funding for library and information science began in 1965 in the Office for Scientific and Technical Information (OSTI) and he was Deputy Director when OSTI transferred to form the Research and Development Department of the British Library in 1973, becoming Director in 1983. His influence on the development of information research and, through his position, on the development of library and information services, has been considerable. He has been a well known and influential figure not only within the British Library but also nationally and internationally and has been a chairman or member of more committees and presented more conference papers than he probably cares to remember. It was Brian who initiated the Information UK 2000 study which has done much to stimulate thinking and planning for the future of library and information services and who recently instituted a new, global study - Information 2010.

Brian will be greatly missed but his presence will not be entirely lost to the information world since, as an Honorary Fellow of the International Federation for Information and Documentation, he continues to be active, currently as a member of FID's Task Force on Global Information Infrastructures and Superhighways.

We have been delighted, however, to learn that the new Director of the R&D Department will be Nigel Macartney. Nigel, who takes up the post on 1 July, has been Librarian of the University of Hertfordshire (formerly Hatfield Polytechnic) since 1982. During that time he was also County Technical Librarian

for Hertfordshire as well as being actively involved in research and development projects, notably as project head of Cimtech (previously the National Reprographic Centre for documentation) and of a number of projects covering such topics as charging for fee-based services, information and business culture, digitisation of library materials, Business Links and public libraries, and the value of information. Nigel has been a member of numerous committees, including the British Library Advisory Committees for Document Supply and Bibliographic Services, and was also a member of the Library and Information Services Council for England.

Nigel is thus no stranger to the R&D Department and we look forward to welcoming him, particularly at a time when other changes are affecting the Department - notably the establishment of the Library and Information Commission.

Left | BLR&DD *Research Bulletin*, 11, Summer 1995, page 1

British National Committee for FID

Penny Biggs

WITH the new FID Strategic Plan, *Participating in progress*, comes the need for a wider representation to Council from the UK. The British Library, in taking over the role of National Member, has decided to have a broad-based Committee to assist this function.

This Committee met for the first time on 12 December, with Brian Perry, Director, BL Research and Development Department, in the Chair, representatives were convened from Aslib, the British Council, BSI, COPOL, IIS, the Library Association (Russell Bowden), SCONUL and the Society of Archivists. Michael Hill, President of FID, attended this first meeting and gave an excellent résumé of current practice and future intentions.

FID members have become increasingly aware of the need to update the structure and methods of work within FID to meet the growing demands of information work in all its forms. If the Strategic Plan is adopted at the April Council, there will be some far-reaching changes which should streamline procedures and make committee-work much more effective.

At its first meeting the BNC discussed the possibility of widening representation to include business and commercial interests, particularly in the fields of information technology. Should the Strategic Plan be adopted, this wider community would certainly be affected.

Also planned is an annual Open Meeting for all UK representatives on FID Committees. The first Open Meeting is likely to be held in May 1987.

The word "documentation", as in FID, is not always clearly understood. It may be helpful to quote from *Participation in progress, fields of activity*:

"The terms 'information' and 'documentation' are often differently understood by different organizations. FID's statutes define 'documentation' as including *inter alia* the organization, storage, retrieval, dissemination and evaluation of information, however recorded, in the fields of science, technology, social sciences, arts and humanities. This field of coverage is generally referred to as Scientific and Technical Information (STI) which serves to emphasize that FID is concerned only with the sort of information that derives from scientific or objective studies and is not concerned with politically or religiously sensitive matters."

This excerpt perhaps makes clear the role of FID in relation to other international NGOs. Wherever possible FID looks for cooperation with such organizations, and is currently engaged in a joint programme with IFLA and WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization), and a planned joint programme with ICA.

Comments or suggestions should be sent to Laurence Howells, British Library Research and Development Department, 2 Sheraton Street, London W1V 4BH.

Above | *Library Association Record*, 89 (1) January 1987, page 42



The Library's Research and Development Department held a consultative seminar in Banbury last month to provide a forum for the discussion of its current and future research plans and priorities. A wide cross-section of the library and information community was represented, together with some of the Department's advisors and colleagues from the USA and Europe.

The seminar, chaired by Sir Harry Hookway and Brian Perry, Director of the Department, consisted of formal presentations followed by small group discussions of various programmes of research. The seminar's opening address was made by Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer, Chairman of the Advisory Committee of the Research and Development Department.

The exercise was a valuable one, and many helpful suggestions were made which will contribute

strongly towards the future development and forward planning of the various programmes of research supported by the Department. Suggestions were made for improving dissemination methods, and on research affecting the user, the changing climate for information professionals, the need for good statistical indicators, and the special problems posed by the exploitation of information technology. These recommendations will be developed over the coming months, and will be covered in *British Library News*.

The photograph shows (left to right) Mr Julian Blackwell (The Blackwell Group Ltd), Mr Neil McLean (Polytechnic of Central London), Sir Harry Hookway, Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer, Mr Russell Bowden (Library Association) and Brian Perry at a reception to mark the occasion.

Above | *British Library News*, 98, June 1984, page 2

Project Quartet is launched

A MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECT – costing £794,000 – was launched by the Library on 20 March. Project Quartet is a three year investigation aimed at improving the speed and efficiency of information exchange in research communities. It is a collaborative project by the University of Birmingham, Hatfield Polytechnic, Loughborough University of Technology and University College London.

Project Quartet will make possible the development of a single integrated information storage and communication system by bringing together research into computer networking, mass data storage and retrieval (in text, pictures and graphics) and visual display techniques. The research will involve the development of electronic workstations from which users will be able to access large stores of information and communicate with other research workers.

A committee which will be set up by the Library to manage the project will represent the interests of publishers as well as service and system suppliers and the information profession. The International Electronic Publishing Research Centre will also fulfil an independent advisory role by carrying out studies of users' needs and options for different technologies.

It is intended that the results of Project Quartet will provide a sound scientific and commercial basis on which information systems can be constructed.



Project Quartet is launched. Picture shows, from left, Brian Perry (Director of the British Library's Research and Development Department) Kenneth Cooper (Chief Executive, British Library) and Professor Brian Shackel of the Department of Human Sciences at Loughborough University, who heads one of the four project teams working on Quartet.

Above | *British Library News*, 115 March/April 1986, page 2



Bowker-Saur has entered into an agreement with the British Library Research & Development Department to publish a selection of the Department's forthcoming titles in a new series of international significance—**British Library Research**. Pictured at the signing of the contract are, from left to right: Tony Warsaw, Publications Manager, BLRⅅ Brian Perry, BLR&DD Director; Geraldine Turpie, Managing Editor, Library & Information Science, Bowker-Saur; Neville Cusworth, Group Chief Executive of Butterworths; and John Burchill, Assistant Director, BLR&DD.

Above | *Library Association Record*, 93 (3) March 1990, page 145



Sir Harry Hookway retired as Chief Executive of the British Library on 31 August. At a reception to mark the event, Sir Harry (third from left) is here pictured with (left to right) Brian Perry (Director, Research and Development Department), Maurice Line (Director-General Lending Division), Alex Wilson (Director-General Reference Division), Lionel Bell (Director, Central Administration) and Peter Lewis (Director-General, Bibliographic Services Division).

Above | *British Library News*, 100, September 1984, page 1

Brian Perry retires

R&DD Director Brian Perry retired on 17 February.

During a notable career in library and information work Brian served with the Office of Scientific and Technical Information, R&DD's predecessor, from its inception, joining the Library with the Department in 1974, and becoming R&DD Director in 1981.

'(Brian Perry) has had a major influence – both persuasive and pervasive – on the development of library and information research throughout the (last twenty years)', wrote Professor Jack Meadows of Loughborough University in his 1994 volume *Innovation in information. Twenty years of the British Library Research and Development Department*.

● R&DD Assistant Director John Burchell is serving as Acting Director pending the forthcoming appointment of Brian Perry's successor.



Brian Perry at the 1991 launch of *Information UK 2000*, the R&DD report setting the agenda for library and information research in the nineties – one of R&DD's key achievements of recent years.

Above | *Focus: the British Library staff newsletter*, 102, Early March 1995, page 2

CAMEL gets a push

LIBRARIANS from Italy, Spain, France, Cyprus, Libya, Tunisia and Egypt attended a conference of Mediterranean countries to discuss library cooperation in Malta in April. There were representatives from several other countries, including Brian Perry, Director of the BL R&D Department, who gave the keynote address. Mr Perry warned that "many publications at present available in official printed format will in future be available in electronic forms".

During the conference, the dearth of library schools and library training opportunities in the Mediterranean was apparent, as was the participants' general desire for the establishment of some form of centralized regional training facility.

A new body, provisionally named Co-operative Association of Mediterranean Librarians, is to be formed in 1984.

Above | *Library Association Record*, 85 (6) June 1983, page 214

Information UK 2000 sets the agenda

Richard Farnhill



R&DD Director Brian Perry helps to launch the Information UK 2000 report

The Library has launched a major report setting the agenda for library research, and for the BL itself, for the remainder of the 1990s.

The report predicts that new professionals with high-tech skills will replace traditional librarians by the year 2000.

Other forecasts are that more and more information will be digitised, that there will be an increasing development of electronic services in libraries, and that there will be a greater emphasis on services to the customer.

The report is the result of 'Information UK 2000', a programme established by R&DD in 1989 to explore trends in the way that information will be treated over the next decade.

'We instituted this wide-ranging study because the library and information community and the users of information are being faced with some of the greatest challenges for change in history', says R&DD Director Brian Perry.

'The report provides a basis for planning on how to meet these challenges, not just for future research, but also for action. We are delighted that the BL Board has decided to use the report as a background to some of the discussions at its 'Awayday' in July'.

More than fifty experts in fields ranging from library management to computer architecture were consulted during the Information UK 2000 programme.

The project will continue with a programme of consultation with professional bodies in the library and information world and there will be a series of workshops to explore opinion at the grass roots level.

The report is published by Bowker-Saur in the series *British Library Research*.

Above | *Focus: the British Library staff newsletter*, 60, Late January/ Early February 1991, page 2

An honourable profession

CHARTERED librarian and LA Honorary Vice-President Elizabeth Esteve-Coll, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum and Vice-Chancellor elect of East Anglia University, became a Dame of the British Empire in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Dame Elizabeth was one of several library professionals to receive honours.

Michael Messenger, City Librarian, Hereford and Worcester, was awarded an OBE, as was Brian Perry, who recently retired as Director of the British Library R & D Department. Sara Harity, Director of Book Aid International, who received the LA Certificate of Merit last year,

PHOTO: DEBBIE THOMSON, *Malvern Gazette* and *Lebury Reporter*



Michael Messenger

becomes an MBE.

Tom Faries, President and founder of library suppliers T C. Faries, also receives an MBE. He was awarded the LA Certificate of Merit in 1990.

Above | *Library Association Record*, 97 (8) August 1995, page 414