
CHAIR'S REPORT FOR 1999/2000

I. Committee and Officers

The Committee for 1999/2000 consisted of:

- Linda Banwell, University of Northumbria
Colette Coles, The City University
Noeleen Cookman, David Haynes Associates –
Awards and Prizes Officer
Alan Cooper, Library Association (co-opted)
Ros Cotton, British Library (co-opted)
Biddy Fisher, Sheffield Hallam University –
Treasurer
Pat Gannon-Leary, University of Northumbria
Elizabeth Hart, Staffordshire University –
Secretary
Bruce Madge, British Library (co-opted)
Steve Morgan, University of the West of England
– *LIRN Reviews Editor*
Clare Nankivell, University of Central England
Judy Palmer, Health Care Libraries Unit, Oxford
Philip Payne, Leeds Metropolitan University –
Chair
Carolynn Rankin, Leeds Metropolitan University
– *Publicity/Marketing Officer*
John Sumsion, Loughborough University –
LIRN Editor
Isobel Thompson, LIC (co-opted)
Maurice Wakeham, Anglia Polytechnic
University (co-opted)
Dorothy Williams, Robert Gordon University

Collette Coles and Dorothy Williams will be standing down this year and I would like to thank both of them for their contribution to the Committee's work.

Noeleen Cookman kindly agreed to take responsibility for the administration of the LIRG awards and prizes during the year. The range of awards and prizes now offered by LIRG creates a significant workload and it was felt appropriate to have a separate officer on the committee to co-ordinate and oversee this important area of activity.

The Committee met in March prior to last year's AGM and also in July (British Library Document Supply Centre, Boston Spa) and in December

(Leeds). This represented a reduction in committee meetings held each year from 4 to 3 and reflected the fact that much Committee's work now takes place through small working groups and by e-mail, telephone, and post. E-mail communication has been facilitated by the creation of a closed Mailbase list for the LIRG Committee.

2. Library & Information Research News

The LIRN Editor, John Sumsion, has continued to produce the Group's newsletter, *Library and Information Research News (LIRN)*. The newsletter is very much appreciated by members and represents one of the main benefits of personal membership of LIRG. *LIRN* includes a variety of material including articles, news, and reviews. It looks good, it is relevant, it is very readable, and it appears on time. This is largely through the efforts of the Editor, John Sumsion. Two Associate Editors assist him: Ros Cotton and Dorothy Williams. Steve Morgan, the Reviews Editor, has continued to commission reviews of relevant books and this has maintained a steady flow of reviews in *LIRN*. I would like to thank all of those who have been active in producing LIRN over the year and for building it up into a publication in which the Group can take pride. Thanks also go to all of those who have contributed articles, reviews, and news items. The editorial team is always keen to have contributions from within the membership and outside.

Three issues of *Library and Information Research News* appeared during the year. Articles which appeared during the year included:

- Information technology in public libraries (Chris Batt): a review article
- An Investigation into information recovery planning for a large law library (Jaspal Kaur)
- Combining research with training: results of research on the Internet training needs of community library staff using a one-day course (Margaret Kendall)
- Stock management in public libraries: recent and current research (Geoffrey Smith)
- Practitioner research in Ayrshire: advantages and problems (Angela McCormick)
- Centralised classification of library materials - a benchmarking study (Margaret Weaver et al)

- An Empirical evaluation of human-produced and machine produced abstracts (Amanda Tinker)
- Information audit: procedures and its place in information chains (Peter Dalton)
- Some 'hybrid' features: a review article (John Sumsion)
- Access - the millenium fix?: the role and performance of document supply servicers in a higher education library (Frances Boyle)
- Electronic theses: their production, management, and use (Susan Copeland)
- The Corporate Intranet (Alyn Jones)

3. Student Prizes and Research Awards

The 1997/8 student undergraduate prize was awarded to Alyn Jones from Queen Margaret College for a study of the corporate Intranet. The 1998/9 prize was awarded to Jonathan Back of Loughborough University for his evaluation of relevance ranking techniques used by Internet search engines. The winner of the postgraduate prize for 1999 was Nicholas Lewis of Thames Valley University for a study of Level 4 Information and Library NVQs. Competition for both the postgraduate and undergraduate prizes remains keen and the judges often experience difficulties in choosing a winner from the entries nominated by the Departments of Library and Information Studies.

The 1999 Daphne Clark Prize for excellence in practitioner based research was awarded to Frances Boyle of Liverpool *University for her report of the University of Liverpool's Document Delivery Research Project (1997/8)*. The prize for 2000 has been awarded to Alison Bremner of the Open University for her report of their *Students and Libraries Project 1999*.

The Elsevier Science/LIRG Research Award for 2000 was won by Elizabeth Gadd of Loughborough University for a study entitled *Clearing the way: copyright clearance in UK higher education*. The judging panel again had difficulty in choosing between several good entries. The Award's prominence in the profession means that we continue to receive entries from experienced professionals. We are very grateful to Elsevier Science for their continued support.

4. LIRG Mailbase List & Web Pages

Noeleen Cookman and Alan Cooper have taken the lead in a project to develop the LIRG web pages. They have prepared a proposed map of the site and identified essential content. They have also been with a designer to improve the presentation and image of the LIRG web pages and developing a template to enable easier updating and maintenance. Thanks to Alan and Noeleen for their hard work and we are also grateful to the Library Association for hosting these pages on their web site.

LIS-LIRG, the Mailbase list for the Library and Information Research Group, continues to be popular and now has over 150 members and non-members as subscribers. It is a useful way of communicating with researchers and disseminating information about LIRG and its activities to them.

5. Events

After a busy year in 1998/9, when a new course of five workshops on research methods was offered in London and York, 1999/2000 has been a quiet year for events.

The research methods course was a tremendous success in meeting an identified need of the LIS profession and in helping to raise the profile of LIRG. The course was very much appreciated by participants who rated it highly through the feedback. I would like to thank David Haynes and David Streatfield, who were the trainers on the course, and the Library and Information Commission who provided support for the course. Some proposed revisions of the course have been identified including a new module on recording behaviour and the possibility of a residential course. We are also continuing to work with colleagues in the health sector on a module specifically relating to health. Bruce Madge has been co-opted to the LIRG Committee to facilitate communication with the health sector. The Group now needs to consider how the course can be run on a regular basis, bearing in mind that running training courses can be difficult for a group of the size and resources of LIRG.

Committee members have undertaken initial planning of seminars on the effective academic library and museums research.

6. Collaboration with other organisations

We are fortunate in having representatives of the Library Association (Alan Cooper) and the Library & Information Commission (Isobel Thompson) as co-opted members of the Committee. Both are active members of the committee as well as providing the Group with more effective communication with their host organisations.

Maurice Wakeham attended an invited seminar on the proposed LIS research portal/web gateway in February 2000 on behalf of LIRG.

7. Administration

I would like to thank Jo Horsfall, LIRG Administrative Officer, on behalf of the Group. She went on maternity leave in January and we are already missing her contribution to the work of the Group. She has kindly agreed to continue to maintain the membership and LIRN subscriber databases during the time she is on maternity leave. The Committee have put in place alternative arrangements to cover Jo's other responsibilities whilst she is away.

8. Conclusion

The Committee is grappling with the realities of sustaining a small, but active independent, professional group at the start of the 21st. Century. Current proposals for a new organisation for the library and information profession will inevitably raise questions as to the closeness of the relationship that LIRG should seek with the new professional body. Whilst the Group enjoys some benefits from remaining independent, a closer association with the new professional body potentially offers scope for a larger membership and a more influential role. Irrespective of these developments, we must generate a steady income flow to enable us to resolve the tension between developing our activities and maintaining the viability of the group. It is essential for LIRG to have a regular and full programme of events to generate income which will enable it to develop its activities and range of services to its membership.

PHILIP PAYNE

Chair, Library and Information Research Group

MARCH 2000 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Committee for 2000/01 is reduced by the resignations noted above but with the addition of Juliet Eve, CERLIM, Manchester Metropolitan University. Pat Gannon-Leary becomes Hon. Secretary – ED.

HON. TREASURER'S REPORT 1999

Research methods course The impact of running the Research Methods course is the major feature of the accounts this year. Overall we have ended the year with £4,000 less in our accounts. Most of this expenditure can be attributed to the investment made in the RMC. This is an investment that will pay off when the course is re-run in the future.

Subscriptions Following a boom in 1998, personal subscriptions have fallen in 1999. The major decrease has been in the Institutional subscriptions to LIRN. These are now £2,500 less than in 1997.

Committee The committee has been thrifty, but a decision was made to reduce the full committee meetings to three per year. However, some meetings of officers are inevitable and this is reflected in the overall meetings expenditure.

Surplus/deficit Members will notice that our running costs are now over £3,227 p.a. in deficit. It is therefore time to consider the options in front of the group at this time.

My thanks are extended to Jo Glover and to John Tarrant for assistance in the preparation of the accounts. The auditors, Peter Preston and Susan Stott have once more given their time freely and our sincere thanks are extended to them.

BIDDY FISHER

Hon. Treasurer, Library and Information Research Group

January 2000

Library and Information Research Group			
Accounts for the year ending 31 December 1999			
Income and Expenditure Account			
	1997	1998	1999
	£	£	£
Income			
Personal subscriptions	923.00	1,880.50	1,443.00
LIRN subscriptions	4,406.00	3,360.00	1,877.50
Meetings	1,310.00	70.00	0.00
Royalties	0.00	36.60	0.00
Daphne Clark award	0.00	250.00	250.00
Elsevier award	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Res Mds Course fees	na	na	10,760.00
BL/LA grant	na	na	6,593.75
Interest - Capital Reserve	410.71	434.04	91.42
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	100.00
TOTAL	8,049.71	7,031.14	22,115.67
*overcredit 4 May 1999			
Expenditure			
Committee expenses	2,005.17	1,385.08	996.42
Publicity	0.00	595.50	0.00
Meetings	1,121.67	794.68	143.90
LIRN	539.30	1,378.64	2,412.29
Account charges	0.00	0.00	(2.85)
Administration	1,815.27	2,185.87	815.09
Res Mds Course payments	0.00	0.00	19,192.20
Daphne Clark award	0.00	250.00	250.00
Elsevier award	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Student award	750.00	250.00	500.00
Miscellaneous	125.75	0.00	36.00
TOTAL	7,357.16	7,839.77	25,343.05
** returned cheque 7 May 1999			
Surplus/(Deficit)	692.55	(808.63)	(3,227.38)
Balance Sheet			
Reserve Ac. balance 31 Dec 1998			10,963.81
Current Ac. balance 31 Dec 1998			3,062.47
Add surplus/(deficit) for the year			(3,227.38)
Income not credited in 1999			
Expenditure not debited in 1999			34.30
Balance at 31 December 1999			10,833.20
Reconciliation with Bank Account 1 Jan 2000			
Current Account		10,777.97	10,777.97
Capital Reserve Account		55.23	55.23
			10,833.20
We the undersigned certify that we have audited these accounts and that they are a true and accurate record of the information supplied to us.			
Signed:		Signed:	
Name: Mr P. Preston ACIB and		Name: Ms S. Stott FCA, ATII	
Date:		Date:	

IAN MALLEY 1940 – 2000

An Appreciation

Stephen Roberts

I am sure that Ian would approve of a reflection on his life that began with the present before going back a little into the past. This present is still very fresh in the mind and was an event prepared by his own hands and mind a very short while before he died. The event was the service at Loughborough Crematorium held on February 25th. It was in fact more than a service: in his own words it was a celebration of his life. A good number of colleagues and friends, as well as his dear family on both sides, did indeed enjoy, as intended, the celebration he had planned.

Most remarkable for me was to discover that Ian was a serious jazz buff of the kind the late Philip Larkin (poet and librarian) would have approved. Ian had chosen with great care a number of tracks from original New Orleans to the Swing era. Since Ian left Thames Valley University (Ealing College of FE as it was then) our paths had not crossed although we had kept in touch at least once a year. Too little in touch I can say in retrospect, since in the meantime I had also discovered a strong liking for jazz. As Ian and I agreed about a lot of things, but found things to disagree about as well, I would have offered a wider range of charts. But I am sure that he had a good reason for what he chose.

The celebration was a highpoint. Later, in the recently acquired family home with Praful, family and friends, there was joy at what Ian had achieved – albeit tinged with natural sadness that he should leave this life so soon. It was clear to see that some years of illnesses and the final one had not dimmed his spirit.

Like many people at the celebration I got to know Ian when he came to Loughborough University as the British Library funded Information Officer for User Education in 1977. This man was dynamic

and hardworking, but we soon discovered he was a great party animal and bon viveur. I was working on another British Library project so it was not long before we found we had much in common, and a circle of researchers and academics soon developed who could mix work and pleasure. Ian was drafted in to give impetus to the Library and Information Research Group. As *LIRN* readers will be aware, he was the second editor – between Alan Cooper and myself.

During my time at Loughborough until 1983 Ian owned two houses which became regular social centres for partying and dining as well as much professional plotting and serious discussion. All harmless stuff that did not influence the direction of history one iota – well, perhaps a little, but we will never know!

There is, however, some evidence that we do know. From Loughborough I moved to Ealing College to take up a teaching post in 1983 – to be followed by Ian some years later. Exactly what influence produced this migration I do not know, but it gave Ian and my colleagues a number of years together. Ian is still remembered with great affection by those who have survived through to the present day at TVU.

To begin with Ian's commuting was confined to the District Line from Wimbledon. But the pleasures of married life to Praful in Shephed, and skyhigh property prices, drove him to endure a daily commuting marathon of 240 miles on days when he was required to teach by the timetable (four a week in term). Unlike myself Ian was never a rail buff – but I am sure I would have tired of quite this distance, let alone railed against the cost! This had to stop, and stop it did when Ian was called to his final decade of extremely successful work co-ordinating the Library and Information Plan in Leicestershire.

Based, unusually, in the Chief Executive's Office rather than in the Library & Information Service Ian showed the rest of the UK just how successful a LIP could be and he had a wide and benign influence on research in the whole East Midlands region. I know all this to be so, from the heartfelt contributions which other colleagues made at the celebration.

Being an excellent writer (a closet journalist indeed) Ian would have had no difficulty in writing an 'appreciation' to the required number of words. However, for me I feel an article coming on! I make this point to show that, once the memories are stirred, there is indeed a very great deal that I could write. But, as in a scientific paper, I will go for condensed quality content now, to concentrate on the main features.

Ian grew up in Fraserburgh, studied science at Aberdeen, and had come to Loughborough from the Physics Library at Bristol. He maintained a vigorous interest in communication in science stimulated by Prof. J. Ziman at Bristol and continued through acquaintance with Prof. Jack Meadows at Leicester and Loughborough.

So, Ian was a writer – and, in later years, a poet too. His professional writings number several hundred. He enjoyed editing - not only *LIRN* but also *Infuse* (the bulletin from his days as Information Officer for User Education at Loughborough). He also managed to produce a departmental bulletin at Ealing. No doubt that he was a great believer in the written word and that he believed in the power of writing. His memory will be preserved in several texts on user education.

But it did not stop here. Ian was an excellent presenter of conference papers for which his professional work gave him many opportunities. He was always happy to take on the challenge of a paper and to hone his text and delivery. He was also a good hand at teaching materials as well as a respected lecturer and class teacher.

In his professional life Ian's interest in research was fundamental. This arose from his science background so that, when he came to Loughborough, his position opened possibilities for fulfilment. Whilst informing the profession of research and practice in user education, he gradually became an indispensable member of groups and committees of BLRDD, SCOUNL and other agencies. He was oiling the research machine with a fund of ideas, commenting on proposals, giving advice and generally being a stimulus. Although doing 'hands on' work on several projects he clearly had a strong role in dissemination, communication and reviewing. Ian was a research polymath and a representative of the highest standards.

Quite a number of his papers were delivered overseas – in the USA and Australia – but he travelled to many other places for recreation. For a time the Greek Islands had their attraction making his personality, lively at all times, even more hedonistic. I think some of this excess (!) was before he found his life partner in his wife Praful. Visits to India added a new dimension to his travels. It was clear from what Praful told us after the celebration at Loughborough that his liveliness never dimmed; it was just combined with growing maturity and continued zest for life.

In the late 1970s Ian and I had some mutual friends in Germany who – because they were (and still are) great Britophiles (one has to be careful here) – understood Ian's brand of enjoyment and pleasure perfectly. Like the Rhine wines we enjoyed then, Ian's life continued to improve with age. The vinous metaphor is appropriate to end, temporarily, this part of Ian's story because he was a well developed oenophile. That reminds me of another day spent on a wine tasting in Herefordshire . . . another story, for another day!

As his great friend Alan MacDougall said to us all that day in Loughborough, it would give Praful great pleasure to return to their home to enjoy some of Ian's wine. This we did to share in his memory and in his spirit as a true friend of many and a most admirable professional. It is fitting that an appreciation can be published in *LIRN* and I am proud to have been invited to write it. I am sure Ian would approve if I conclude by saying that I will enjoy thinking which wine or growth or vintage we may compare him to. If without a specific name, it will be a very fine and excellent one. Many people should miss you, Ian, and many will not forget you.

STEPHEN A. ROBERTS,
Thames Valley University.