

Library Matters @ McGill

www.mcgill.ca/library-about/pubs/newsletter/

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FROM THE TRENHOLME DIRECTOR OF LIBRARIES

Whither Reference?

In the last few years, the future of reference service has been much debated. Will libraries continue to provide one-on-one assistance to users who visit the library seeking personal help in locating appropriate information resources for their research and learning needs? Should efforts instead be focused on the development of the library website as a tool for providing help in access to finding and using information effectively, as well as a finding aid? Would the provision of telephone services, online chat and email assistance provide more helpful services to our users? Or should the emphasis be on developing information literacy programs, both in person and on the web, which train people in how to find information for themselves?

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) national conference recently held addressed the topic yet again, expressing skepticism about the continuation of the traditional reference service. The April 10 issue of *Library Journal* addresses some of the issues raised at the conference.

"We've tried chat, roaming, deskless, and walkie-talkie reference, all with modest success," said Bill Miller, director of libraries at Florida Atlantic University. "Now we're IM, MySpace, Friendster, Second Life," all "laudable efforts," but reference service still faces an inevitable decline. If there is reference service in a decade, Miller warned, "it's going to look like the Avis desk at 3 a.m." in an airport.

"It's easy to get so close to something we can't see its dimensions," suggested Jerry Campbell, president, Claremont School of Theology, author of the influential 1992 article, *Shaking the Foundations of Reference*. "The kind of revolution we're in is not over," he said, urging attendees to get outside their comfort zones and follow the rapidly-changing web. "We could've created a Google...if we had the will and the foresight," he said, but librarians as a group are mostly change averse.

"Some people would have you believe Second Life is the future of reference," observed Brian Mathews of Georgia Tech, aka The Ubiquitous Librarian. "All I've seen is other librarians." He was more positive about MySpace, "which allows us to repackage our content into a framework people can understand," and Facebook, which allows him to target reference help to people in specific courses.

All of these offer us new approaches to the issues we face. We really need to involve ourselves in the development of these new ideas. Our online chat service has been very successful. Our Library Ambassadors have also been much appreciated, as have our Navigation Assistants. These are new approaches to "reference" and we need new words to describe what we are doing as we continue to shake the foundations of the assistance we provide. Please submit ideas and suggestions for new names for our services to my office—and yes, there will be a prize.

Janine Schmidt,
Trenholme Director of Libraries

The *Library Matters @ McGill* newsletter, brought to you by the *you-never-heard-it-from-us* editors, seeks to exchange and encourage ideas, innovations and information from McGill Library staff at all levels.

The newsletter is published monthly. The latest issue, as well as an archive of past issues, can be found at www.mcgill.ca/library-about/pubs/newsletter.

We welcome your contributions. The deadline for submissions is the first day of the issue month. Send your input to the *you-never-heard-it-from-us* editorial team:

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McGill

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WHAT'S NEW

POSITION INFORMATION

McGill RUIS:

A position has been posted for a Project Coordinator for work examining the future of the McGill RUIS (Réseau universitaire intégré de santé). (<http://www.mcgill.ca/files/library-about/ruis2-0703-bil.pdf>) This is an important development for McGill and the Faculty of Medicine. The position is being funded by the Faculty of Medicine and the Library.

Associate Directors update:

Offers have been made for three of the Associate Director positions and negotiations are being finalized. Recruitment continues for the other two positions. Stay tuned for more details.

CATALOGUING NEWS

Arrangements are being finalized for the creation of online catalogue records for the Lawrence Lande Collection of Canadiana and the Redpath Tracts by OCLC. These are important components of McGill's Rare Books and Special Collections Division, and having records loaded into our catalogue will ensure that researchers worldwide can discover what we hold. McGill Library is a member of the Association of Research Libraries and as part of its 75th anniversary celebrations this year, a book on noted research collections in North America is being prepared. A chapter on our Lande collections will be included, so the cataloguing of this material is timely.

Further work is being done to complete the retrospective cataloguing of the Islamic Studies Library's collections.

Additional projects this summer will help in other cataloguing backlog projects.

IMPROVEMENTS IN THE LIBRARIES

Ezone in Redpath:

Work is proceeding on the Redpath basement ezone. The

design is to be completed this week. The Director will be giving a presentation to all staff in June to inform everyone of what is being planned and developed. Other work is proceeding on improvements to the Schulich, Education and Life Sciences libraries.

Computer upgrades:

Additional computers will be purchased for public spaces. All the older computers will be replaced, and new computers purchased to increase the number available in both the Life Sciences and Schulich libraries. The installation of additional laptop positions is planned as well.

Storage news:

Compactus shelving will be purchased for the lower floor of the Redpath Building. The hope is to be able to move material from unsatisfactory storage conditions in the Currie Gym to this location. Summer projects will assist in clearing materials and sorting out what needs to be done.

PROJECTS AND FUNDING

The University's Capital Campaign is approaching and there is much

preparation to be done. Emma Buckley has been engaged as a casual to assist both Steven Spodek and the Director of Libraries in documenting projects and providing suitable communications material. Emma has qualifications in both journalism and archives management. She is located in the Office of the Director of Libraries.

LIBRARY HOLDINGS IN OCLC, WORLD CAT AND GOOGLE SCHOLAR

The Library's monograph holdings have been made available via OCLC, WorldCat, and Google Scholar. Through the excellent work of Jane Aitkens and staff in Technical Services, much of our e-journal content is now available as well. Using SFX links, searches can be made directly and references easily imported into EndNote. Check it out and use the Library Search component to search at McGill.

MCGILL UNIVERSITY SERVICES

The structure of the "University Services" unit of McGill administration has been formed. This unit was established as part of the recent reorganization of the Administration and Finance portfolios into the three areas of Financial Services, Human Resources, and University Services. "The objective of University Services is to build a sense of unity and purpose between service units and the University community in support of the McGill's teaching, research, and public service goals," says a memo from Jim Nicell, Associate Vice-Principal (University Services). This unit includes Ancillary Services.

To find out more about University Services, visit their website at: www.mcgill.ca/university-services/.

*Library staff are invited
to attend a small reception
to announce and celebrate
this year's staff award
recipients.*

DATE: May 1, 2007
TIME: 11:00 a.m.
PLACE: Office of the
Director of Libraries

FROM RENAISSANCE TO ART DECO

BY MARILYN BERGER, HEAD (BLACKADER-LAUTERMAN)



Botticelli's *Primavera* from Wilson Web (<http://www.picture-desk.com>)

McGill Library hosted a meeting and illustrated lecture of the Art Déco Montréal Society on Tuesday, March 27, 2007 in the Rare Books and Special Collections Division. Dr. Ross S. Kilpatrick, Queen's University Professor Emeritus of Classics and noted author, was the guest lecturer and the title of his presentation was *Botticelli and Jean Dupas: Renaissance and Art Deco Inventions*. After a warm welcome by Trenholme Director of Libraries, Janine Schmidt, to 60 enthusiastic attendees, Dr. Kilpatrick gave a comparison of the spectacular and mysterious Art Deco painting *Les Perruches* (Lovebirds) by Jean Dupas (1882-1964) to Filipepi Sandro Botticelli's celebrated *Primavera* (ca. 1480) located in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. The painting by Dupas, now part of the Xavier Roberts Collection, Pennsylvania, was first shown at the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes of 1925 in Paris which was considered to be the birth of the Art Deco style.

Dr. Kilpatrick has had a prolific career teaching Classics at Yale University and at Queen's University, Kingston where he is now Professor Emeritus. He is a specialist in Latin poetry having written two books on Horace and many articles, conference papers and chapters in books. His interest in Art History began in 1984 with the Japanese painter and writer Yoshio Markino. His research on the

artist led him to write the monograph "Yoshio Markino in Italia: The Travels of a Samurai Artist" (1999). While researching Markino, Dr. Kilpatrick discovered that the Blackader-Lauterman Rare Book Collection owned a copy of the

book *The Colour of London: Historic, Personal, and Local* (1907) which was illustrated by Markino. The McGill copy has a pencil sketch of the artist and Yone Noguchi in their Brixton flat on the front page and was a presentation copy given to Arthur Ransome and later given to McGill. Dr. Kilpatrick has also authored many arti-



Dupas' *Les Perruches*

cles on classical themes in Renaissance Italian Art.

Guests were invited to look at an exhibit curated by Marilyn Berger, assisted by Dagmara Chojecki and Donald Hogan which included the two paintings discussed in the lecture as well as the original catalogue of the 1925 Exposition in Paris where the painting was first shown and several of the publications authored by the speaker. □

Take me out to the ball game

BY MAGGIE ALLEN AND REBECCA NICHOLSON

After surviving a somewhat mild, but certainly relentless winter, here we are at spring, when thoughts turn to ice cream, cycling and of course that great staff tradition—softball! With the season set to start in less than a month, the anticipation is surely starting to mount.

With two new teams joining the McGill Staff Softball League this year, it brings the total to 8. Most of the teams have been in the League for several years, and some go as far back as the 1970s, like your faithful Library Leaders.

Though sold as a friendly get-together league with a few beers thrown back for good measure, it does tend to get a bit tense and competitive around playoff time. With your adrenaline pumping and your desire—no, need—to win, it can be testosterone-inducing madness. And that's just the women. Imagine when we throw the guys into the mix.

For decades, McGill Library staff have been playing ball each summer as the Library Leaders. A new-this-year, still-to-be-named team will also draw its members from the ranks of Library staff. Dear reader, your two humble authors, longtime members of the Library Leaders, suggest the name "Library Followers" for the junior team.

If you are interested in playing ball on one of the Library staff teams, we're still recruiting. So, drop us a line, and you too can be up on the reservoir, one weeknight per week, grabbing a can of corn, hitting a Texas Leaguer, dodging some chin music, making that play around the horn, and having a grand old time playing ball with other McGill staff and students.

The season runs from mid-May until mid-August, and each team plays about one game per week, starting at 5:30 p.m. up on the reservoir.

Contact Maggie (margaret.allen@mcgill.ca), Rebecca (rebecca.nicholson@mcgill.ca) or April (april.colosimo@mcgill.ca) and we'll get you on a team!

COMING ATTRACTIONS

A LOOK AHEAD TO CONVOCATION

BY JANINE SCHMIDT, TRENHOLME DIRECTOR OF LIBRARIES

There are many distinguished people to be honoured at the convocation ceremonies with honorary degrees in May. One of them is Mme. Lise Bissonnette, the President and General Director of the Archives nationales du Québec. Under Mme. Bissonnette's distinguished leadership, the BANQ has emerged as a vital library and exemplar for library service delivery in Montreal, Quebec, Canada and the world, particularly through its relationship to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. The Grande Bibliothèque was recently selected as winner of one of the 2007 AIA/ALA Library Building Awards, presented jointly every two years by the American Institute of Architects and the American Library Association. These prestigious awards celebrate the finest examples of library design. We extend our sincere congratulations to Mme. Bissonnette.

From the University Relations Office, April 20, 2007:

Lise Bissonnette, Doctor of Letters
Faculty of Education, Wednesday,
May 30, 10:00 a.m.

An eminent journalist, author and

former publisher of *Le Devoir*, Lise Bissonnette added to her singular reputation when she became president and general director of the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec in 1998. Her career in journalism began in 1974 at *Le Devoir*, where she worked as the parliamentary correspondent in Quebec City, then in Ottawa, before taking on the position of editorialist. From 1986 to 1990, she worked as an independent journalist writing for such publications as *The Globe and Mail* and *L'actualité*. In 1990, she returned to *Le Devoir*, where she served as publisher until 1998. Mme. Bissonnette is the author of several books that have been celebrated by both French and English critics alike. She was elected member of the Academy of Letters and the Social Sciences of the Royal Society of Canada in 1994. She has been inducted into the Canadian Journalism Hall of Fame, is an officer of the Ordre national du Québec and a member of the Ordre de la Pléiade and the Académie des lettres du Québec.

□

*By the way,
your staff has been
fantastic over the
past few years—
friendly, helpful,
and informative.
Thanks!*

Drop in to the Director's Office

Wednesday, May 9:
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, May 29:
4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Exhibition

The World of Slavery: An Exploration of Slavery across Time and Borders

April 18 – June 21, 2007

McLennan Library Building
Lobby

Monday – Friday:

8 a.m. – 10 p.m.

Saturday, Sunday:

8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Information:

514-398-4677



*“The universe (which others
call the Library) is composed
of an indefinite and
perhaps infinite number of
hexagonal galleries, with vast
air shafts between, surrounded
by very low railings.”*

— Jorge Luis Borges, “The Library of Babel”
[“La Biblioteca de Babel”] (1941), First lines