NEW BEGINNINGS

As one of the newer kids on the block I suppose that it is fitting that I write the last editorial for a feisty little newsletter that has quietly stirred the Pietermaritzburg University community since 1962. Of course, although the end of our bulletin must be seen in the larger context of the merger and the exciting opportunities it brings, there is also a sense of sadness at this, one of the first inevitable results of the merger. This relatively small 'ending' – encapsulates what many of us feel: sadness at the end of something worthy and special, and excitement at embarking on something bigger, brand-new and different. Hopefully our new newsletter, that will represent all five University of KwaZulu-Natal libraries, will be a manifestation of our pooled resources and like the merger generally, a positive and enhanced product.

While we in Pietermaritzburg are physically separated from the main impact of the merger between the former University of Durban-Westville and University of Natal, Durban, we can be lulled into a sense of complacency and be forgiven for wondering if this union will have any impact on our library. In 2002, Technikon Natal merged with ML Sultan Technikon. I was working in the Technikon Natal library at the time and became closely involved in the merger of the libraries of the new institution. I therefore have some insight into the effects and consequences that this union is likely to bring.

It is all too easy to get bogged down in negativity and concern ourselves with what we have lost, or alternatively to pretend that it is not happening and ignore the whole thing. Having been witness to and having experienced both these mind-sets, I believe the only way forward is to embrace the union, be proactive and look for the positive. In this spirit, I believe the union of the new University libraries has great advantages for its users and I would like to highlight just a few of these.

- We can look forward to the appointment of a Library Director – a new position in the University. This should begin a process whereby new policies and procedures will be generated for a shared vision of a new library. A unified and coherent library service can only benefit users.
- With a wider pool of experts in the combined university libraries, we will be able to offer added expertise to our users.
- We will improve our collection of online databases. This will be achieved by extending access to existing databases to include all our sites wherever appropriate.
- In our new combined collection there will be reduced duplication and therefore more money available for library resources. By combining collections we will build strong core collections.

There is a vast difference between the theory of what should happen and the practicalities we will probably experience once the actual process of merging the libraries begins. It is probable that some books will be relocated at some point in the future. This we will do if and when subjects are relocated. Library materials will then be moved to support these departments. My experience has shown this to be unsettling and disruptive to both users and library staff as material is moved around. Patience and tolerance will be needed by all. But - it will all be worthwhile in the end; a better service will be offered and an early step in this process will be a new combined library newsletter........
THANK YOU BILLY

Thank you to Billy Farina who has continued to work at the University Archives for the past four months (Billy ‘retired’ in December 2003). We are very grateful for her help. Congratulations are also due to Billy on the recent arrival of her first grandchild!

THANK YOU FOR ARCHIVAL SCIENCE LITERATURE

The University Archives extends a sincere thank you to Ms Caroline Williams, Director of the Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies (LUCAS), UK, for donating sequences of two archival science journals to the University Archives. They are:

- Journal of the Society of Archivists Vol.3, no.5 (April 1967) to vol.23, no.2 (Oct. 2002); and

The archivist expressed an interest in these journals when Ms Williams offered them on the UK archivists’ mailing list, “Archives-NRA”.

In addition, Ms Williams has very kindly given the University Archives two recent LUCAS publications:

- New directions in archival research. Edited by Margaret Procter and C P Lewis. c2000.; and
- Archives in the UK and the government agenda. Edited by Caroline Williams. c2002.

Both were published by the Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies (LUCAS), Liverpool.

This wealth of literature is a valuable resource for Archives’ staff, students of archives and records management, and others working in the field. The literature will be available to users (for consultation in the reading room) as soon as processing and cataloguing are complete. Archives’ telephone number is (033) 260-5622.

*BJ*
CORRECTION

The item on ‘User instruction 2004’ in the March Bulletin (no. 360), should have read:

In addition, Subject Librarians ran two course-work modules: AGRI 220 and Legal Methods 2. For each of these courses approximately 200 students registered.

ALAN PATON CENTRE NEWS

Zimbabwe: Lessons for South Africa

Mr Trevor Ncube, the Chief Executive Officer of the Mail and Guardian, will be the speaker at the 11th Alan Paton Lecture, to be held at 18h30 on Thursday, 6 May 2004, in the Colin Webb Hall, UKZN Pietermaritzburg Campus.

Mr Ncube is a well-known Zimbabwean journalist, who was awarded the Zimbabwe Editor of the Year Award in 1994. He was Editor-in-Chief of The Zimbabwe Independent and Group Editorial Director of The Zimbabwe Independent and The Standard from 1996 to 2000. He has been owner and CEO of the Mail & Guardian since July 2002. In August 2003 he was made President of Print Media South Africa and Chairman of the Newspaper Association of South Africa.

He is a well-known speaker, having delivered numerous public lectures on the role of the press, press freedom and democracy in South Africa, Zambia, the USA and Canada. He delivered the Raymond Ackerman Freedom of Speech Lecture at Rhodes University in 1992.

The Alan Paton Lecture is presented by the Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives and the Liberal Democratic Association. If you would like to attend, please contact the staff of the Alan Paton Centre at (033) 260-5926 or (033) 260-6143, or by e-mail at koopmanj@ukzn.ac.za or liebbe@ukzn.ac.za

STAFF NEWS

Carol Brammage, Acting Librarian, Pietermaritzburg, will be away from the Library from the 6th May to the 7th June 2004.

In her absence queries can be directed to the following staff members:

- Liz Van Der Berg (ext. 6178) - cataloguing and general library systems
- Barbara Gentil (ext. 5261) - staffing, circulation and building
- Rose Kuhn (ext. 5904) - general user education and branches
- Margie Gray (ext. 5065) - acquisitions

TRIED THIS ONE?

The University Library subscribes to Bowker’s Global Books in Print, which claims to be the most comprehensive database of English language titles. The database indexes English and Spanish books as well as e-books and videos. Search options are simple to use and often information can be found using minimal information. There is a full bibliographic description of each title and in most cases, a helpful abstract.

In addition, the following are a selection of searchable indexes accessible in this database:

- Forthcoming Book Room - alerts users to new books scheduled for publication or release in the next six months
- Author biographies – access to over 6,000 biographies of authors
- Awards – lists all the winners and titles of all the well-known book awards
- Publishers – access to a wide selection of publishers and their works

Bowker’s Global Books in Print can be accessed from the Campus LAN via the library website (click booksellers and publishers) or at

Http://www.globalbooksinprint.com

This database costs R11,372.85 per annum – please use it!!!
This short, easy-to-read and interesting book overviews the development of gambling in the United States and in particular, ‘problem gamblers’. The book focuses on casino gambling but considers the spectrum of gambling activities. The author is at pains to point out how the study of gambling behaviour and problems, causes and effects is very much in its infancy and much research is needed to present the full picture. Volberg provides comparative research findings from the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. She compares gambling problems with other addictions such as alcoholism.

The book begins with a consideration of the different definitions of gamblers with problems and the ongoing debate concerning the diagnostic criteria against which gamblers are measured to determine if they are problem or pathological gamblers. The latter is defined as a chronic disorder whereas the former includes all those with varying degrees of vulnerability, involvement and withdrawal from gambling problems. Pathological gambling was only widely recognized as a mental disorder in the latter quarter of the previous century and was only included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association in 1980. Not all gambling problems are considered medical. The causes include factors unique to the individual, social and environmental factors and gambling settings, it being likely that problems are a combination of all of these. Volberg looks at the impact of gambling problems on the individual, family, employment and the economic and social cost and parallels it with domestic violence, other addictions and suicidal tendencies.

The emergence of problem gambling was the result of the

‘intersection of two unique social and historical developments at the end of the twentieth century… first, the rapid legalization of lotteries and casinos throughout the United States and, second, changes in the American health care system that led to an expansion of the conditions for which therapists could obtain reimbursement for mental health treatment’ (p.23).

The history of gambling and government’s alternating repressive and liberal stance as regards legalization makes for interesting reading. Alongside the current leniency towards availability of gambling facilities is a growing groundswell of opposition to the ever-increasing ease of access to gambling activities. Problems of gambling are being increasingly brought to the public’s attention. Volberg presents comparative findings with regards to gender, age and race and gambling. She considers how the little research that exists indicates that future trends are likely to reflect an increase in the severity of gambling problems.

The latter half of the book looks at how problems arising from gambling are being addressed, the need for funding and research and problem gambling as an academic issue. Policy challenges include:
- the current lack of deliberative planning at state level
- the regulation of gambling
- the polarization over social impacts
- the lack of initiative in conducting research concerning problem gambling in particular communities and settings.

Rosemary Kühn