Highlights of the year

The year 2006-07 saw a number of changes and enhancements to library services, both in the physical building and in electronic form. Planning, preparation and delivery of a number of new developments took place:

More time to browse and study - this year saw a significant increase in library opening hours. In response to feedback from students, the library building is now open from 7.15am to 2am every day.

This year we saw a growth in usage of the Library, with visitor statistics higher than ever. 1,429,494 visits were made to the Library in 2006-2007, slightly up on the previous year, and against the national trend. The Library homepage also increased its numbers by 2% to 1,266,623 visits.

After extensive research, a new Library home page was launched along with new subject pages.

University regulations now require research postgraduates to deposit one electronic copy of their doctoral thesis into the institutional repository, Enlighten http://www.lib.gla.ac.uk/enlighten/

Podcasting is being developed as a tool for the delivery of information literacy training, as well as enabling students to take a tour of the library’s services. This is particularly useful for specific groups of students such as Law students, school groups and during University Open Days.

Preparations were made by Library staff for delivery of the RA2 part of the University’s Research Assessment Exercise submission.

Significant progress was made in collections management to create more flexible study spaces in the Library.
Exhibitions on the lives and work of James Joyce and Samuel Beckett attracted a steady stream of visitors to the library through the summer.

All staff play a key part in keeping the Library service-focused, efficient, effective and, in many cases, among the leaders in developmental work. This year Library staff have shown great commitment in ensuring that vital tasks are carried out while at the same time maintaining an alert and enthusiastic outlook towards setting up and implementing new developments.

Helen Durndell
University Librarian
Service development

After considerable research and user testing, the new Library home page was launched in July 2007. Responses to the new site have, not unexpectedly, been mixed and we will continue to respond to user feedback and modify the site as necessary.

A major focus for development has been the Library catalogue (WebOPAC). With different requirements and expectations from a new generation of users, the Library’s system supplier (III) has introduced facilities to allow libraries a greater degree of customisation of their catalogues (WebPac Pro enhancement bundle) as well as an entirely new interface (Encore).

Research

There has been a focus on the RA2 element of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) submission, involving presentations to RAE champions and data contacts, hands-on training sessions, and drop-in sessions.
Library staff sit on the University’s RAE Data Collection Group and have provided guidelines and training for staff to create Reference Manager databases for the RAE. In addition they collaborated with the national RAE team to test and refine imports and field mappings from Reference Manager so that the data was correctly imported into HEFCE RAE software.

The purchase of back files continues to be an important strategic goal, given the demands of researchers for desktop access and the pressures to make best use of space within the Library building. Journal back files from Wiley (with some additional help from central University funds) and from Lippincott Williams & Wilkins were bought during the course of the year, and the Institute of Civil Engineers journal files were acquired through a JISC deal. Towards the end of the academic year the University provided £750k which was used to buy all the remaining Elsevier back files, Sage back files, Nature back files to its 1869 origin, and Taylor & Francis Education back files.

E–prints

As part of the drive towards populating Enlighten (the institutional repository) with full text, staff have been linking bibliographic-only data to fulltext where it is freely available (PubMed Central for biomedical and life science journals or ArXiv pre-prints in physics, mathematics, computer science, and quantitative biology).

Learning and Teaching

A podcast, specifically aimed at first year Law students, was developed providing an introduction to the Law collections and basic instruction on how to use the print and online resources. This initiative was extremely popular with students and the podcast was downloaded over 200 times. Podcasts are also being developed to introduce the education collections and for use in Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences teaching. Wiki software has also been developed for the collaborative re-writing of library guides.

Working closely with the Learning and Teaching Centre, a member of senior library staff is examining how social networking technologies can be used to support learning, teaching and information literacy.
Library materials

Books
Throughput has increased significantly this year: the number of bought items accessioned increasing by 20% over the previous year.

Serials
23,143 electronic journal titles were made available to users in 06/07, an increase of 17% on the previous year.

Interlibrary Loans
There was a 5% increase in requests over the previous year (to 9802), halting a significant downward trend over the last decade as e-journals became widely available. There was a noticeable increase in requests from abroad. The proportion of online requests rose from 38% to 91% in the course of the academic year with savings on re-keying yielding faster turnaround times for users.

Resource discovery

Library staff tackled the personal library of the influential psychiatrist, R. D. Laing, cataloguing some 2000 books as well as various offprints, journals and other miscellaneous items. Amongst these have been many interesting items, some with manuscript annotations, while others contain presentation inscriptions from friends and colleagues. One book in particular (Laing 1288) stands out, having been transformed into an artwork by Peter Beard, incorporating collages of squashed flies, photographs and limericks.

Over the past year, Special Collections staff have concentrated on cataloguing donations from the 1930s-1950s (including many books from the bequest of James A. Ure in 1933). This pressmark run is especially important for its number of eighteenth century Scottish pamphlets dealing with topics such as the Jacobite rebellions and the Union.

The Novel Collection: Improving Access and Raising the Profile
English literature did not figure in Glasgow’s curriculum until the 20th century, when a lectureship was created in 1907 and eventually a professorship was established in 1947. The source for the majority of the early 19th century imprints in the collection is likely to have been the Copyright privilege which the Library enjoyed from 1709 until 1836.
This collaborative project, in conjunction with English Literature, was funded by the Chancellor’s Fund to increase the pedagogical use and research potential of the 19th century Novel Collection, previously largely neglected. Now discovery of the collection and its resources is greatly facilitated by the creation of a new, dedicated website, which will enhance its value in teaching and research.

**Efficient Processes**

90.4% of catalogue records for current and retrospective cataloguing of general material are imported. Binding, conservation, digitisation for undergraduates are already outsourced; consolidated print serial delivery is achieved through Swets, and Serials Solutions is used to aid maintenance of the e-journals database.

In addition, library staff work with partners in the Scottish consortia for serials (SNIPES) and books (SCABS) in negotiations on a HEI Scotland wide basis on deals from purchase/rental of electronic information to the more mundane but important standardisation of book processing to share the cost savings with suppliers.

An interesting though relatively small scale co-operative agreement utilises Edinburgh cataloguers’ linguistic expertise in Arabic to catalogue Glasgow material while staff here catalogue Edinburgh’s Cyrillic material. Recently an Edinburgh cataloguer has begun to catalogue the Hebrew material in Glasgow collections.

**External involvement**

Glasgow continued to participate in the JISC funded LOCKSS project (long term preservation of electronic journal content through multiple hosting) and led the JISC funded OpenLOCKSS project (a similar project for open access journals).

Library staff are involved in:- the OASIS Advisory Group (streamlining of monograph purchasing), the SNIPES and SCABS consortia (Scotland wide consortia for supply of information
materials), the Serials Solutions User Group, FIL (the UK Forum for Interlending and Information Delivery), the EIUG (European Innovative Users Group), the Heron User Group (digitisation), the SUNCAT User Group, the London School of Economics Institutional Repository Development Programme Steering Group, and the JISC Information Environment Working Group.

Building Developments

The Special Collections department on Level 12 featured as a case study in Christopher Kitching’s Archive Buildings in the United Kingdom 1993-2005 (2007).

In December 2006, Glasgow hosted the SCONUL Annual Buildings conference. 70 delegates listened to presentations, including one on Glasgow University Library development.

**Wolfson Foundation funded enhancement of Special Collections**
The new facility offers optimal storage conditions for some 20,000 mainly 19th century images on paper and glass and is already attracting considerable interest and positive comment. The temperature, the most critical factor in determining the longevity of photographic images, is held at a chilly 14 degrees Celsius, while the relative humidity is also maintained at between 30 and 40%. In order to provide additional protection and to facilitate handling, all the albums were professionally cleaned and boxed prior to being relocated.

Photographic Unit

The Photographic Unit officially became part of the University Library in August 2006. The provision of photographic services has continued as previously, but there have been two significant upgrades technically. New equipment was purchased for non-studio use, as well as large format equipment, primarily for studio use.
Special Collections Department

Two interviews with Roddy Simpson for The Scots Magazine, the world’s most widely-read Scottish interest publication, have helped promote the rich photographic collections and the Scottish Theatre Archive, respectively, to a wider audience. ‘Something special’ September 2006, 314-8 and ‘A place of variety’ October 2006, 380-383.

Glasgow Emblem Digitisation Project
http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/index.php

This major project supported by the AHRC was completed in late 2006 and as a powerful research tool, the enhanced study of one of our most important special collections is now possible. The website provides access to all twenty seven French emblem books of the 16th century, along with their Latin versions when appropriate.

Dr John Durkan
In September at the age of 92 one of the Library’s most devoted readers and one of the University’s most honoured scholars died. John Durkan’s remarkable achievements, over sixty years, in almost single-handedly re-shaping how we view Renaissance Scotland, its troubled Reformation and its many colourful characters, have been recounted in numerous obituaries.