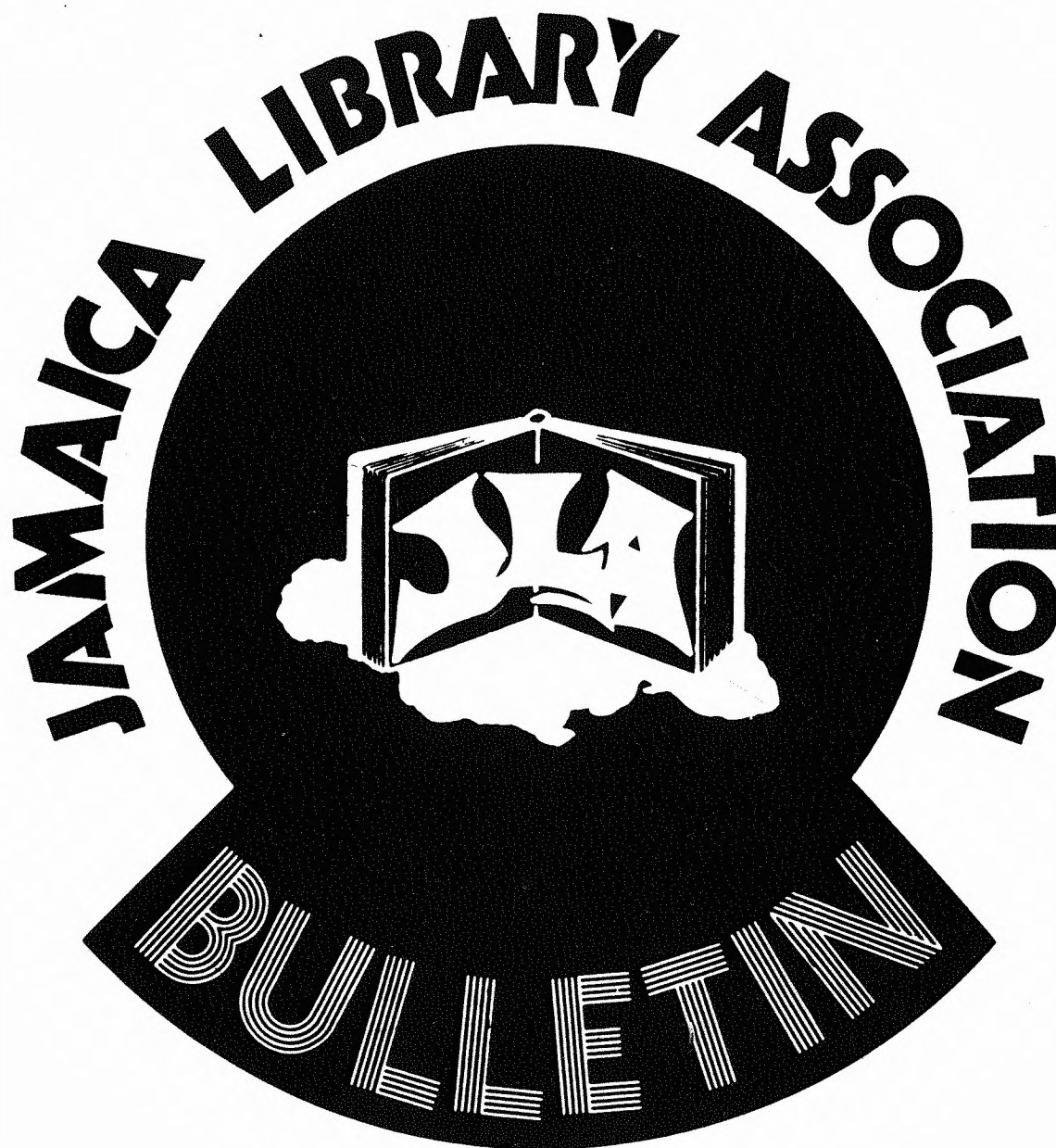


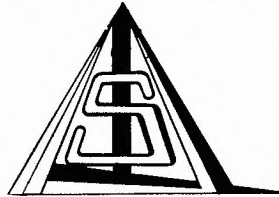
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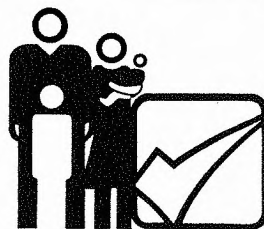
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Bulletin 1989-1990**

**Contents**

JLA Executive Committee .....	2
Presidential Address 1989 by Albertina Jefferson .....	3
Presidential Address 1990 by Blossom Mullings .....	9
Interview with the Hon. Dr. Paul Robertson by Blossom Mullings .....	6
Land Use & Language; Scholarly Research at the National Library of Jamaica by John Aarons .....	12
Integration of Print and Non-print Materials by Yvonne M. Campbell .....	16
Reminiscences and Reflections of a Librarian - the Highways and Byways of Work with West Indian Source Material by K.E. Ingram .....	19
Medical Bibliographies and Health Information Retrieval by Laxmi Mansingh .....	29
Indigeneous English Literature for Caribbean Children: a Historical Perspective by Cherrell V. Robinson .....	38
Design Planning of an Information Department: a Case Study from PCJ by Elsie Aarons .....	50
The Place of Statistical Services in a National/Regional Information System by Sheila Lampart .....	55
Notes on Contributors .....	63

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## ERRATA

"Reminiscences and Reflections of a Librarian - the Highways and Byways of Work with West Indian Source Material" by K.E. Ingram (Jamaica Library Association Bulletin, 1989-1990, pp. 19-27)

Page 19	column 1	line	44	<u>for</u>	West Indian collection <u>read</u> West Indiana collection
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" 19	" 2	"	20	<u>for</u>	West Indian history <u>read</u> West Indian library
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" 21	" 2	"	45	<u>for</u>	Caribbean folklore <u>read</u> Caribbean folklife
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" 23	" 2	"	42	<u>for</u>	Dodington park <u>read</u> Dodington Park
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" 25	" 2	"	22	<u>for</u>	persuing <u>read</u> perusing
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**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE  
JAMAICA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING -  
JANUARY 1989**

**Albertina Jefferson - President**

Ladies and gentlemen:



At the start of this my Presidential Year in the service of this the Jamaica Library Association, I am more than reminded of one of the lessons learned in my far distant youth, learnt through the ingenious, striking and effective method of one of the fables of Aesop, commonly spoken of not merely as an author, but as the author of fables. The fable, as you well know, is essentially a popular genre of literature reflecting the ideas of ordinary people about the conduct of life. While the virtues recommended by fabulists are chiefly the social virtues which make life comfortable and redound to the credit and interest of those who practise them - industry, resignation, gratitude, moderation, and so on - sometimes, the lessons they teach are not really moral lessons at all, but merely counsels of prudence and wordly wisdom. It is a fable of this latter dimension that came to mind as I read, not too long ago, that "the 39th President of the Jamaica Library Association will deliver her policy address at the Association's Annual General Meeting", and I set to thinking what new, exciting and even grandiose policy statement I should, and perhaps was expected to propound to you at this moment.

Paying due attention to what I had read concerning the conduct of life, I was reminded of the fable The Mountains in Labour:

"The mountains were said to be in labour, and uttered most dreadful groans. People came together from far and near to see what birth would be produced, and, after they waited a considerable time in expectation, out crept a Mouse."

Projectors of all kinds, who endeavour to raise the expectations of mankind, and then by their own performance defeat and disappoint them, have, time out of mind, been lashed with the

recital of this fable. Words are nothing till they are fulfilled by actions. I will provide no litany of things which I will put in place in this Presidential Year, but rather, as the caprice of fortune has placed me once again at the helm of our Association, I will simply say that I will endeavour to serve it with justice and integrity.

I thank you for the confidence placed in me, and I am fully aware of the awesome responsibilities and the demands for action. I wish to express appreciation for this further recognition and confidence. Rather, I will take time to dwell on what we together can do for the benefit of our Association in this our 39th year, and as we move forward together towards the year 2000.

On looking at my Presidential Address delivered at the JLA Annual General Meeting in January 1978, I found that I had exhorted you

"to be more interested in the general welfare of our own Association . . . by becoming more involved in, and by letting your ideas find expression in the work of the Association . . . It is not however good enough to simply remain on the books, so to speak. Let us have your attendance and ideas at meetings".

I exhorted,

"your service on Working Parties. The authority of the Association can only be derived from its members. Members must exercise their right to vote for representatives on the Executive, must volunteer to be on Working Parties".

In the years which have intervened since then, though remarkable and intensive activity has been a measure of our Association, it comes forcefully to notice that it is more or less the same small band of members who seem to perform this activity in so far as our Association is concerned. Indeed, much care must be exercised not to induce member "burnout". It behoves us as an Association to be more effective in recruiting new members, both to our Association and to our Working Parties, in encouraging these members to belong to the Association, and have us all participate fully in our activities.

"An idle Horse and an Ass labouring under a heavy burden were travelling the road together; they both belonged to a country



fellow, who trudged it on foot by them. The Ass, ready to faint under his heavy load, entreated the Horse to assist him, and lighten his burden, by taking some of it upon his back. The Horse was ill-natured, and refused to do it, upon which the poor Ass tumbled down in the midst of the highway, and expired in an instant."

You will of course recognise this as another fable of Aesop.

Every Association is to be considered as a body politic. No member can thrive better than when they all jointly unite in the endeavours to assist and improve the whole. If the hand was to refuse its assistance in procuring food for the mouth, they must both starve and perish together. And when those, who are parties concerned in the same community deny such assistance to each other, as the preservation and progress of that community necessarily requires, their self-interestedness in that case, is ill-directed.

All of this is to say that the energy available to us to advance the work of the Association and the profession is not inexhaustible. At this time of transition in our executive leadership, I ask you the members of our Association to consolidate our initiatives to provide maximum continuity and context to the work of our Association.

The opinion has oftentimes been expressed that the span of one year as the period of administration of the President is too short for the generation of ideas and the putting into effect of any grand designs which the President may have for the Association. By the time they really have a handle on things, they have become that most splendid of officers - Immediate Past President. It is therefore through the Working Parties that any blueprint should and must be carried forward. You may perhaps recognise here a none too subtle plea for the Chairmen and members of our Working Parties to continue in office as a nucleus, with the support of additional members. Much sterling work has been performed by these Working Parties and Special Interest Groups during the past year, and I take this opportunity to congratulate them on their efforts. Through them, we have the ingredients for active and innovative progress. We know what we represent and what principles we are working for.

The Jamaica Library Association has had

a great tradition over the years of effort, innovation and effectiveness. It has become one of, it not the leading professional association within the English-speaking Caribbean, if not in the whole Caribbean area. Our achievements have been great and highly appreciated, but too little of our achievements have been the result of the collective will and effort. Much remains to be done in the mobilization of our librarians to become active members of the Association.

With these realities in mind, let us review a modest number of initiatives that I believe should have a high priority as we organize our work for the coming year.

The Association has accepted the invitation of the Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries (ACURIL) to co-host with the National Council on Libraries, Archives and Documentation Services (NACOLADS) its 20th Annual Conference to be held at the Jamaica Conference Centre from April 23 - 29 of this year. I expect that we will be able to meet the obligations imposed by this, and this is an undertaking of tremendous proportions. Again, I call upon the full participation of the membership, not only in their attendance at the Conference, but for assistance with the implementation of preparations for this Conference. It is important that we maintain and strengthen ties to associations with whom we share interests and overlapping aims. I call upon your support for this endeavour.

The matter of the status and conditions of service for librarians has been a perennial bone of contention for the Association. Approaches have recently been made in association with NACOLADS to address the matter. Present thinking suggests a change in approach, to one in which librarianship is given high visibility and some leverage, by hooking on to some project of importance in the education system. Libraries will therefore be seen as a dynamic part of education, as we highlight the part they can play in reducing the high cost of misinformation or non-information. We intend to follow this through in association with NACOLADS. We owe it to ourselves, as to our predecessors and successors, to leave this meeting renewed in our commitment to build on the work of our professional ancestors as we face today's challenges and those of tomorrow.

In addition, we trust that through our other

Working Parties, continued efforts will be devoted to:

- fundraising tied to the staging of the ACURIL conference, but also towards our efforts in acquiring a permanent home for the Association, and to secure financial viability;
- the continued publication of the JLA Bulletin, and on behalf of that Working Party, may I ask that we resolve to undertake the writing of articles for this journal;
- our efforts in continuing education.

These modest initiatives are not meant to diminish our activities, but rather to suggest what appears to be important Associational priorities in

the coming year.

If I may be permitted one more fable, it will be that of the Lioness and the Fox.

"The Lioness and the Fox meeting together fell into discourse, and the conversation turning upon the fruitfulness of some living creatures, the Fox could not forbear taking the opportunity of observing that there are those creatures who are never delivered of more than one offspring at a time. The Lioness, filled with a good deal of vehemence replied - "What you have observed may be true, and not without reason. You produce a great many at a litter, and often, but what are they? Foxes. I indeed have but one at a time, but you should remember that that one is a Lion."

May this be our Association's Year of the Lion.

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE  
JAMAICA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING -  
JANUARY 26, 1990**

**Blossom Mullings - President**



Librarianship it appears is stuck at a crossroads and we are the ones who must find the way forward. This is never an easy task. Despite this, it still is an honour for me to lead the JLA at this time and I want to thank you for the trust implied and to pledge my all in the effort to merit your trust.

I bring to this position, a firm commitment to the development of the profession, a commitment which I hope may to some extent mitigate the lack of the usual apprenticeship as first Vice-President, and although I have not been involved in the day to day activities of a librarian for some time, my friends will tell you that the interest has never waned. However, what at first appears to be a limitation may have its own advantage, for it is this distance that will allow me a degree of objectivity in my observations.

Today, I would like to speak to you from my heart. Librarianship in my view holds a unique position in the extended information profession. It certainly enjoys longevity, and with this has come experience. It is this accrued experience that the more "modern" firms apply to the business of information delivery. Their strength rests on the library, on collections of documents and the ability to exploit volumes of information materials to supply complex demands. The good Librarian is not threatened by these modern "versions" as they merely enhance the capability to deliver information in a more timely way. The fact that we have adapted readily to these technologies our nation can afford is testimony of our confidence as a profession. But this advance must be made relevant to the priorities of nation building.

A profession, like an organisation follows a growth path which inevitably leads to a plateau. At this point there are three options - to remain on the plateau, to decline or to retool and ascend a further growth path. To remain on the plateau is to stagnate. This then, is the level which is crucial, for it challenges the best in the profession, asso-

ciation or organisation. It would be useful for us to reflect on the status of librarianship in Jamaica today.

Perceptions are that the profession generally, is no longer attractive and that a general feeling of malaise exists among those who still serve as librarians. But what is important is that librarians tend to like what they do and it is this positive tendency that must be used in propelling the way forward.

I see the present imperative as the management of change. The information field is perhaps the most dynamic of all. One might even say it is volatile. Not only is there a vast information explosion, but also, a situation of ever-increasing new technologies matched by a multiplicity of names for those who service information needs.

These changes present opportunities for expanding the operational style and scope of libraries. In this way we can better respond to the burgeoning demands of a struggling economy as it reaches towards self-actualization.

The librarian/information manager/information specialist is uniquely poised to enhance the process of development, while at the same time advancing the status of the profession and bur-nishing its image.

I hasten to advise that I am not unaware of the problems which we face - limited resources, high attrition rate, and the resultant effects on morale and the ability to provide effective service. Despite this the challenge still is service - the only way to begin to rise again and launch a new phase on the growth path. We must be aware that in this climate of interests, we have to perform in such a way as to garner attention and support. We need to embrace new ideas, new ways of looking at ourselves and how we serve, devise new methods and expand our philosophy on what the world of information constitutes.

In short, I propose nothing new, I propose creativity in management creativity in seeking solutions. In so doing we will stimulate and energise ourselves and enhance our own feelings of efficacy. Many will feel that this is a simplistic notion, but personal problem-solving experience demonstrates the validity of "working troubles away." And so, I offer a few simple but effective suggestions:

- Be positive - it keeps the mind open to new solutions.
- Pursue always, at least one task that gives personal satisfaction.
- Tackle the critical tasks for providing information efficiently and do not be bogged down by routines. Start with a small significant area if the whole is too much.
- Do not be daunted by the difficult task, just tackle it.
- Increase your role as an intermediary to the accessing of information.
- In other words - make your professionalism felt.

- talk to clients about their needs, make suggestions, provide information support;
- initiate tasks that highlight your specialist role;
- prepare a plan of activities and a budget for it. Then find ways of implementing the plan even if there is minimal support. Other librarians are supportive; talk to them;
- prepare displays on topical in-house issues and activities, and circulate booklists, bibliographies for new projects and to officers on courses;
- actively support your association and relate gains to the job;

- regularly prepare a report on activities. It helps you, if no-one else, and supports your claim on resources.

In all of this, training is important. Seek out training opportunities for yourself and your staff.

For many of you this is a way of life, for the others, I hope you find it attractive enough to apply.

Finally I suggest

"Rest if you must, but never give-up."

I pledge you my full support, through a programme of activities, to which I hope you will contribute your ideas. To strengthen your resolve, I would now like to reflect briefly on the history of the profession to which we belong.

The JLA this year, embarks on its 40th year of existence. During this time it has set an enviable record of achievement and established itself as a pace-setter in the Caribbean, and a valuable resource in the international forum.

Since Jamaica's independence the profession has spearheaded projects of national and regional significance such as:

- the establishment of the Department of Library Studies;
  - the National Library of Jamaica;
  - the National Council on Libraries, Archives and Documentation Services (NACOLADS);
  - the development of a national information system with regional and international linkages.
- We all can bask in the reflected glory of the public service, the JLS.

It has a history of excellence that is second to none.

- Many regional and a few international conferences have been successfully hosted in Jamaica.
- Our information professionals have contributed their expertise to the development of the information sector in other countries.
- Oftentimes, we take for granted the highly developed co-operative nature and participative process of our operations but this is not the

norm. This I feel is a major factor in the achievements of this profession. In this respect, I wish to single out the University Library, which although a regional institution, supports strongly the national goals and aspirations.

In my address, I have sought to emphasise the profession rather than the Association, for the upliftment of one is the advancement of the other. Our challenge this year is to build on the firm foundation that has been laid. The task is ours. "None but ourselves can free our minds."

I thank you.



**INTERVIEW WITH THE  
HON. PAUL ROBERTSON,  
MINISTER OF INFORMATION -  
FEBRUARY 22, 1990**

**Role of Information**

I'm a firm believer in the view that knowledge is strength and power. By that I mean, everything that you do is dependent on your information. If you have information you are able to make good decisions and your decisions are as good as the information you have. If you are short of information or information is faulty then you make bad decisions. The other thing is that while it is as important to have information stored in your head as it is to know where to find it, the reality is that it is far better to know where to find information than to have a lot stored in your head. Additionally you need to know how to get information, how to access it, and in the modern world information is not just stored in files and books but is stored on disks and stored on chips and therefore sometimes you have to learn a new language to be able to access that information.

**Making Information Accessible**

There is a body called NACOLADS which is also looking carefully at information technology. I feel that there could be some changes in the structure of NACOLADS to incorporate new developments, but NACOLADS I consider to be a very important body in addressing this issue. Information is not the preserve of any one Ministry, Agency or Private Organization. It is essential that the whole thing be co-ordinated and that standards be set and so on and NACOLADS in my view is the organization that can effectively co-ordinate the national information system and ensure that the University, Government, Private Sector are pursuing a compatible course of activities which can bear fruit for everyone. Now on the question of accessibility, given cost and new developments in the area, clearly it is going to be important for the Government itself, through the education system, to provide some of the equipment necessary, introducing the country to some of the new technology and language that is necessary. Of course some of this is going to be done in conjunction with the private sector. I don't know if some of the adopt-a-school principle can be applied here. I know that there is an active Computer Society which does have a programme with schools. I recently met the President, I

think this is the sort of project they are very interested in. We can expect some assistance there. All in all, I think there is going to have to be a National effort in this particular area.

**Public Library System**

As part of the 5 year plan, it is going to be necessary to upgrade the library system. The Education Ministry I know has submitted a very ambitious but reachable programme for the 5 year period and this is one of the areas which I think will receive treatment under that programme. Clearly in a country like ours, where resources are scarce and where families have small incomes and so on, then obviously library facilities become very important in the development process, where people can go and actually borrow the material they need rather than have to purchase. I would hope that in the type of facilities which we develop over the next 5 to 10 years that we would seek to equip them with the latest technologies which will allow our students and our adult readers access to the latest technologies and also to the most accurate information that is available.

**Community Information**

It is my view that the whole Local Government System has to be an important point of information dissemination. Unfortunately over the last 8 years the system was emasculated but let's go through some of the things that were taken away from Local Government which we think are important from an information point of view. The whole public health area is one in which it is important to have personnel who operate at a community level, who can be advising people about proper public health practices. If an epidemic develops in a particular part of the island it is important that people are in direct touch with the communities to advise on treatment, inoculation, all of that sort of thing. In addition there is the whole area of disaster preparedness which once again it is important that there be personnel, who, at a community level, can work with people in preparing for disasters. A whole network is needed there. There are a number of areas that we could point to which are important from an information point of view.

The problem that we have faced in the past is that there has been a vacuum between Central Government which is seeking to project certain messages and the people at the community level.

The point is that the Local Government system will have to be a very important intermediary, interfacing between the activity of the Central Government and what is taking place at the communities. Now in that mix of things, we have for example, the Jamaican Information Service which provides public information, we have a network of regional offices which have mobile units which carry video material, brochures and other reading material which are available at the community level. Now in my view, the local government system is to be part of the vehicle which allows the JIS regional machinery to work effectively and to complement what the regional people are able to do. For example if the regional people come in with a film about some public health matter, when they have left, that communication process is not completed unless you have somebody who is actually on the ground to help the community to implement the messages they got via the video, and that is the Local Government system which can now pick up where you start with things like brochures, films and lectures and that sort of thing.

I don't frankly think you can circumvent the cost problem with regard to information. I think what we have to do is establish our priorities properly, and clearly one of the priorities has to be the information system of the country, to ensure that it is properly financed, that we have good personnel in there who can actually do the job, that we're not wasting money, but in many ways, as I stated, I have to reiterate that information is the key, and if people don't have information then really the system is going to fail. Now, in the end, the bottomline is production. I am amused at those people who seek to present the problems of Jamaica as something which developed over a three months, or six months or twelve months period. If one were to properly analyse the problems of this country you have to look long term and if you plotted a graph over the last 20 years related to say consumption patterns and our production of say goods and services you will find that our consumption of imported goods and services has been increasing at a faster rate over decades, than our production for exports, and this weakness from time to time has been papered over

by, in one case, the capital investment in bauxite and in another time period, particularly the 805 by borrowing. Essentially what needs to happen is to increase production, earn more. Now, once again you can see the importance of information for people need to really come to that realisation, that the problem is not some apparent problem which relates to the last 2 months, or a year, or 2 years, but that we have a national problem that can only be solved in one way. It is important that this be understood, that as a country we are able to respond to it and therefore we have to do what is necessary to ensure that the information agencies of the country get the resources that are necessary to be able to perform these functions, that the information agencies are credible, that they are trusted, so that people can believe in them and know that they are not being given false information because it is so critical to any process of national development.

### Human Resources

In this country we have been in a malaise for sometime and because of this many people who have a very important contribution to make in the public sector have not been coming into the public sector at all, and we have had the experience of the public sector being bypassed. Firstly I think that the Administrative Reform Programme(ARP) will begin to make a difference. I believe that the whole information sector has to begin to come into the 20th century and then begin to join the 21st century. I don't think we have begun yet to apply the new developments in the 20th century to this particular sector and therefore for many people it doesn't offer the type of challenge it really should. Computerization is one area in the process of decision making; it is so intertwined with the information sector in terms of how you access information, how you process it and how you present it. It is related to survey research, it is a complex area and I don't believe that we have really gotten into this area in the way that we should.

My final word therefore, is that information will have to move into the 20th century if it is to make a difference.



**ON THE BALL**

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## LAND USE AND LANGUAGE; SCHOLARLY RESEARCH AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF JAMAICA by John A. Aarons

In April 1989 as the library community in Jamaica was busy planning for the upcoming ACURIL Conference a milestone in the short history of the National Library of Jamaica, namely its tenth anniversary, slipped by unnoticed. The Library came into being on April 1, 1979 based on the collections, services and staff of the Institute of Jamaica's West India Reference Library. This library had been founded in the 1890s and has amassed an outstanding collection of Jamaican and West Indian material. The National Library was fortunate to have this collection to serve as its nucleus.

The value of the material in the National Library to local and foreign researchers is well known. References to the collection in numerous publications, theses, papers and audio visual presentations bear testimony to its use by students, scholars, government bodies and members of the general public. Indeed it is difficult for any serious work on Jamaica's history and culture to be done without reference to the collection.

The diversity of the collection; the value of primary source material and the ways in which it can be used to further our understanding of present day society are well demonstrated in the two scholarly monographs published in 1989 which are the subject of this article. They are Jamaica Surveyed: plantation maps and plans of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries<sup>1</sup> by Barry Higman and Voices In Exile: Jamaican Texts of the 18th and 19th centuries<sup>2</sup> edited by Jean D'Costa and Barbara Lalla. The authors all have Jamaican connections in that Higman is Professor of History at the University of the West Indies, (UWI) Mona, while D'Costa, a Jamaican was a Lecturer in English at UWI, (she is now at Hamilton College in the United States) and Lalla, also a Jamaican is head of the Department of Language and Linguistics at UWI, St. Augustine.

The subject content of the works is quite unrelated. One is concerned with land use, the plantation system and estate ownership while the other consists of annotated texts of Jamaican creole. They however both deal with aspects of Jamaican life in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and are the result of years of painstaking research into primary source material, most of it

done at the National Library of Jamaica (NLJ).

Jamaica Surveyed is based primarily, as the author himself says, on a study of approximately 1000 maps and plans which illustrate the internal layout of some of the large estates, plantations and pens which dominated the Jamaican countryside during this period. Most of these maps and plans are from the NLJ Cadastral Map Collection which contains over 20,000 items. The majority of them only show the boundaries of properties and were not therefore applicable to his study. However by going through the collection, which in itself was no mean achievement considering its size and the poor condition of many of the items, Higman was able to select those which met his requirements. The information in them varied but in general they showed acreage of land, amount under cultivation, type of crops, the location and at times illustrations of buildings including slave quarters. Some of them even listed the names of the slaves, their age and the fields in which they worked.

These maps and plans were drawn by a number of private land surveyors in response to requests from land owners. They later fell into the custody of the Survey Department chiefly through the efforts of Thomas Harrison, Surveyor General from about 1862 until 1892. Harrison used the plans to assist him in the preparation of his monumental work, the Cadastral Map of Jamaica which occupied 35 sheets and took 15 years from 1876 to 1891 to complete. Some time in the 1940s or 1950s the collection passed into the custody of the Institute of Jamaica and was placed in the West India Reference Library, now the National Library. It is fortunate that this collection has survived as it is unique in the Caribbean region, both in terms of size and content. It also compares favourably with similar collections in the United States and Britain.

Higman drew on other materials - both at the NLJ and in other institutions - to corroborate, expand and analyse the data provided by the maps and plans. At the NLJ he used the Jamaica Almanacks and other works in the Rare Book Collection; estate journals and records in the Manuscript Collection and historic prints, daguerrotypes and photographs in the Audio-Visual Collection. This last named collection contains many illustrations of the countryside and plantation life as Jamaica was a favourite visiting place for a number of 18th and 19th century artists. The

best known ones were George Robertson, James Hakewill and Joseph Kidd while Adolph Duperly produced some early daguerrotypes.

These illustrations however, although very attractive, cannot always be relied on for historical accuracy. For example, in comparing Hakewill's 1820 View of Williamsfield estate in St. Catherine with survey plans of the estate drawn in 1784 and 1790 Higman observes that although the artist provided a detailed picture of the Great House, including the pigeon house, he managed "... to completely conceal behind luxuriant canes the extensive slave village which accommodated 330 persons". This omission he notes "... was shared by most illustrators for Jamaican plantations hoping to avoid offending their aristocratic patrons. In this regard the land surveyors provided a more faithful representation of the plantation landscape, their purpose being utilitarian rather than decorative".

Jamaica Surveyed is an attractive publication with approximately 300 illustrations of estates, survey implements and machinery for the manufacture of sugar. Of these illustrations more than two-thirds are from the NLJ collection. Most of them are of individual estates and form an integral part of the case studies of the estates which occupy the largest section of the work. It is these chapters which will appeal most to the general reader as many of the estates are now well known areas or communities in the island and their early history is a matter of interest to many. These include Hope, Papine, Mona, Constant Spring, Duckenfield, Mavis Bank, Ferry and Salt Pond Pen where the large suburban area of Portmore now exists.

As Jamaica Surveyed illustrates, plantation life was central to the economic and social life of the country. Voices In Exile shows that it was also central to the cultural life as well. The plantations depended for their livelihood on the labour of slaves imported from Africa. As part of the strategy to make the slaves conform to their new life, the planters destroyed as much as they could of their culture and language. In order for the slaves to communicate with their white masters and with each other - coming as they did from different tribes and regions in Africa and speaking many languages, a new language, creole, emerged. As D'Costa and Lalla say this language "was a necessary creation for the plantation".

The slaves in Jamaica left no written records of their language but many of their experiences, stories and songs were recorded verbatim by writers, travellers, missionaries and other persons who came in contact with them. These are to be found in many contemporary, historical and literary works. As they are in creole, they have been used by historians and other scholars as primary source material on the social and cultural life of the slaves. They have also been useful in tracing and identifying the African retentions in the society.

The linguists, D'Costa and Lalla have used these accounts for a different purpose and that is to chart the origin and development of creole as a language which is still the mother tongue of the majority of Jamaicans. They have examined numerous accounts, both published and unpublished, of life in Jamaica in the 18th and 19th centuries to see whether they contain examples of creole speech. From this they have produced Voices in Exile which consists of 57 texts mainly from published works along with brief annotations for each. The companion volume Language in Exile which provides a linguistic analysis and commentary of the creole speech represented in the texts is scheduled to be published in 1990.

As the editors are primarily interested in speech patterns they let the people speak for themselves. The extracts show that creole was as expressive then as it is today. One cannot help being struck by the humour in many of the episodes in spite of the harsh economic and social climate of the period. The spirit of the people is vividly captured even if physically they were in exile.

As well as its value as a source book of creole speech, Voices in Exile is a valuable compilation of information on the customs, beliefs and experiences of the slaves and their descendants, as recorded by contemporary witnesses. The authors from whose works the extracts are taken are a varied group with different attitudes towards the people whose speech they recorded. Whatever these feelings were or their objectives in recording what they heard, they have given us valuable material on an important part of our heritage. This happened even when they were decrying the people as Cynric Williams did in his *Tour through the island of Jamaica*, published in 1823. The editors however note that "thanks



perhaps to his unflattering portrayals he preserves useful details of Jamaican Creole of the period."

The texts vary in length from a brief 18th century grace to a detailed description of a Wake. The grace is "Massa bless this little infreshment. may it tick to me ribs as burr grass to cuntung coat". It celebrates the eating of rats which was once an acceptable feature of plantation life, according to the editors, who learned of the grace from the late H.P. Jacobs. The Wake which was for Tom Kittle, a fisherman, was apparently held in the 1840s although not actually recorded by Thomas Murray until 1869. This text is of particular interest because Murray, who was a coloured Jamaican, records carefully the speech of persons from different social backgrounds who attended the Wake.

With a few exceptions the texts are taken from published works including such well known ones as the Journal of a West Indian Proprietor by Matthew (Monk) Lewis, History of the Maroons by Charles Dallas, Tom Cringle's Log by Michael Scott and Jamaica: its past and present state by James Phillippo. Almost all of them are out of print and therefore not readily accessible to the general reader. Most of the works are in the NLJ Rare Book Collection which was heavily used by the editors in their research. The only manuscript work from which an extract has been taken is the Diary of George Ross written in 1880-1801. This deals with the voyage of some Jamaican Maroons to Sierra Leone and their settlement in that country. The original Diary is in Sierra Leone but a copy is in the NLJ.

Two songs have been reproduced in the book from single sheet material in the NLJ. The first is Welcome Welcome Brother Debtor, composed in the 18th century and ascribed to Francis Williams, the Cambridge educated black teacher. The library only has a photocopy of this song which is nevertheless of great value as it is not known where the original is located. A more attractive song because it has a sketch in colour is "De Black Man's Lub Song" (Caricature and verse) sketched and written by a native artist. This song may be unique to NLJ as no other copy has been recorded elsewhere.

Voices in Exile is a very timely publication in view of the continuing national debate on the place of creole in our educational system. The editors give clear evidence - if any were needed -

that creole is a language in its own right and that it is deeply rooted in our history. According to them the earliest records of the language which have been located date from 1740 and though "... fragmentary, are recognizably the Creole tongue which is heard to this day in this island."

The National Library has benefitted from the research work of writers like Higman, D'Costa and Lalla as they have highlighted the value and importance of some categories of material in the library. This has resulted in increased attention to these materials in the Library's restoration and conservation programme. The Library regarded Higman's work as particularly significant, especially as it was published locally by the Institute of Jamaica Publications Ltd., a member of the "Institute" family of which the Library is a part. To coincide with its publication, the Library mounted an exhibition of some of the original maps and plans which were reproduced in the book along with information on selected estates. The exhibition was well received by members of the public, many of whom were seeing the maps for the first time. Thus, some of the results of a scholarly research project were disseminated to a wider audience.

In safeguarding a few centuries of the documented memory of our nation it is possible to overlook a mere decade of NLJ's existence. The publication of scholarly works such as these is a source of pride to the National Library of Jamaica which is concerned with not only collecting and preserving materials, but making it available to researchers.

It is gratifying to know that as the "Storehouse of the nation's memory" it is able to provide source material on such diverse topics which are valuable to the wider community.

## POSTSCRIPT

Since the above was written, the companion volume by Barbara Lalla and Jean D'Costa entitled Language in Exile: Three hundred years of Jamaica Creole has been published. It is divided into two parts. Part One entitled Early Jamaican Creole traces the origins and development of Jamaican creole and analyses its structure and sound system. Part Two entitled Data and Commentary presents 24 texts of creole speech from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries with commentaries on each. "Each text," the

editors say "point to the crucial relationship of African languages and English dialects as the major source of Jamaican Creole."

Although many of the texts are from the same printed sources used in Voices in Exile there are no repetitions. Each volume can therefore stand on its own. Scholars interested in locating the original works from which the texts are taken might have some difficulty as apart from the Narrative by James Williams which is identified as being at the National Library of Jamaica no locations are given for the works most of which are rare and out of print. However a quick check reveals that most of them are in the collection of the National Library of Jamaica where much of the research was done.

As with the earlier volume, Language in Exile is of interest to persons other than linguists and should be especially valuable to libraries which do not possess the original works from which the texts are taken. A study of it helps us to better understand our past and makes us more aware of our rich cultural heritage especially in the areas of speech, song and dance. Publications such as these justify the role of research libraries in storing the raw data of our past which can be exploited by scholars in their attempts to show how present day society has evolved.. Without this knowledge it is difficult to chart the future with hope and confidence.

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## **INTEGRATION OF PRINT AND NON-PRINT MATERIALS**

by Yvonne M. Campbell

When they were first developed, audio-visual collections were a minimal part of the total library collection. Seldom was serious thought given to their storage and retrieval. However, as multimedia collections grew, serious thought had to be given to their organization.

There are several choices of organizing a non-print collection: separate facilities, integration with the print collection, or partial integration.

This paper addresses integration through intershelving with the print collection and the interfiling of the catalog cards.

### **Technical Processing**

One processing approach treats print and non-print identically. They are catalogued and classified according to the same procedures, and usually by the same staff.

A second approach is to process non-print media separately. If the library decides to process non-print materials separately, it may be necessary to hire librarians or specialists. Alternately, existing staff may be trained to do this job.

The choice is dependent upon the circumstances of the individual library. Whatever the choice, the library should establish cataloguing and classifying procedures for an integrated collection by formulating a written policy. The policy should include:

- a classification scheme
- the depth of classification
- the depth of subject headings
- the extent and detail of descriptive cataloguing and added entries.

### **The Catalogue**

Non-print items may be listed in the main catalogue, as well as in a separate Audiovisual (AV) catalogue. Colour coding of AV cards in the card catalogue may make it easier for the user to quickly spot non-print materials. However,

colour catalogue coding does present some problems. (1) If catalogue cards are procured from a vendor, colour-coded ones are more expensive. (2) Colour coding erodes the all-media approach to resource center materials. (3) Colour coding is impractical for computer-produced book, microform or on-line catalogues. (4) Colour codes have the tendency to cause confusion with users. This results in additional "directional" questions to the library staff.

If a colour code system is used, it is simpler to use a single colour for all non-print materials or a different colour catalogue card.

### **Call Numbers**

The use of a media code as an integral part of the call number has proven to be unsatisfactory. Despite the use of signs, patrons seek help from the staff in understanding the codes. The media code complicates the call number by making it more mysterious than it already is. An accurate general material designation (gmd) on the catalogue card may be more effective.

Oversize materials can be treated in the same manner as oversized books.

### **Storage**

A major obstacle to intershelving is the awkwardness of some AV materials. However, media producers have recognized the impact of integrated shelving, and now package their products so they can be compactly shelved with print materials. Library supply houses have also developed new lines of multi-media packaging to facilitate intershelving.

It is prudent to get a sample of storage boxes before ordering large quantities. Cardboard boxes can be tested for sturdiness by dropping them on a concrete floor. If they remain intact, they should be suitable.

The brochures or other attractive materials that come with most AV materials can be attached to the outside of the containers. They arouse interest and provide information on the contents. A catalogue card pasted on the outside is a useful alternative.

## Shelving

If their size permits intershelving, all items should be shelved by the classification scheme. If an item cannot be intershelved in its proper place on the shelf because of its size or shape, its location should be stated on the catalogue card in accordance with the method adopted for reference and oversize books. Dummy containers can be shelved in their place. A photograph or illustration of the object is useful. The aim is to reduce storage in drawers and cabinets to a minimum.

It should be noted that for archival purposes, certain items will have to be stored under conditions best suited for their preservation. Normal air-conditioning is usually suitable for most types of non-print materials.

### Frequent questions and concerns

#### Additional expense

Once a library decides to maintain a non-print collection, there will be related expenses. Integration does require additional expense, but not more so than segregation; storage containers and supplies have to be procured. Spending money to replace and mend damaged AV materials is as justifiable as money spent on print materials. Quite possibly, these materials will not be damaged if they are housed in a separate location; also, quite possibly they will not be used.

#### What to catalogue

- A. All things purchased from commercial sources.
- B. Faculty projects and gifts - if they conform to your collection development policy.

#### Losses and damages

This will occur as with books. Many librarians feel that it is too great a risk to put AV material on open shelves. However, the literature indicates that there is little difference in the amount of vandalism and materials loss occurring with the integrated shelving system.

Audiotapes should be copied for circulation and the original kept for rerecording - erasures and wear and tear will occur frequently

on these tapes. If certain items are always 'disappearing' a dummy container can be shelved and the original kept in a supervised area.

## Space

Research and experience has shown that audio-cassettes stored in plastic containers take up the same space as the average paperback book. Video cassettes are similar in size to most hardcover books.

### Summary

Some advantages of intershelving/integration can be stated as follows:

- \* All types of materials on the same subject are shelved together.
- \* Materials can be accessed through the integrated catalogue (on-line or card).
- \* Integration is an aid to browsing.
- \* It makes all materials in the collection readily accessible to users.
- \* The user is able to choose from a variety of media.

In the final analysis, the decision to segregate or integrate your print and non-print materials will depend on how you believe your users are most likely to find the information they need. Also, successful integration requires the commitment of the entire library staff and the support of administration.

The provision of quick and easy access to all information stored in the library is a desirable and attainable goal. Integration of book and non-book media facilities that goal.

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**LABORATORY**

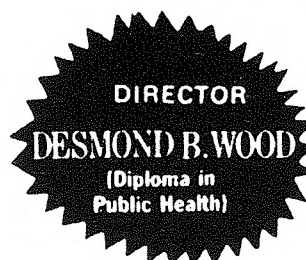
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## REMINISCENCES AND REFLECTIONS OF A LIBRARIAN - THE HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS OF WORK WITH WEST INDIAN SOURCE MATERIAL by K.E. Ingram

During the last 10 1/2 years of my attachment to the University of the West Indies Library, my involvement in terms of day to day work with West Indian material had been mainly peripheral, as the duties of University Librarian allowed one little time for bibliographical pursuits, although I had a special concern with such material from the view point of collection development of the Mona Library. Apart from the almost total absorption of such leisure time as I had in bibliographical pursuits, for me it was very largely a matter of travelling along a byway rather than a highway. This was less so during the 21 years prior to that when the byway was more than a path, though the duties of the second in line in a growing library such as the University Library never allowed one the indulgence of being a bibliographer. I was fortunate however, during those years, not only to have been concerned with the acquisition of West Indian material, but also with much of the responsibility for cataloguing it and for handling a good deal of the reference and research enquiries received in the Library pertaining to subjects of West Indian interest. It was during those years that I developed an interest which absorbed so much of my spare time, namely, tracing and describing the obscure and little known sources of West Indian history, an interest which I was able to couple fruitfully, with building for the Main Library an extensive collection on microfilm of many of the more important of these sources.

My earliest association with librarianship, began with my joining the staff of the Institute of Jamaica in 1941. For much of my time at the Institute of Jamaica, I was attached to the West India Reference Library, (now incorporated into the National Library of Jamaica), a collection which, despite years of financial deprivation, remains still perhaps the most important West Indian collection. Work with West Indian material was very much the highway of my working life during that period, and it was to awaken in me a life long interest in this field - an awakening and an awareness of part of our historical heritage - of the written part at least, and of the need to enrich and preserve that heritage and to make known the contents of its records. I have often wondered whether there was in that response some element of the historian manque, perhaps there was, but if

so, I believe it was a frustration that was fruitfully channelled.

You will understand therefore, that I write not only from the perspective of bibliography, but of Librarianship with its concerns for acquisition, preservation and use. Although what I have to say is very much a personal view, and the expression of a personal experience, it is nevertheless one that recognises that all one does is interdependent on the efforts and achievements of others. Much of what I have to say may have been less meaningful, less significant, had Frank Cundall not had the foresight to struggle against incalculable odds in establishing the West India Reference Library, if Harold Holdsworth, the first librarian of the University College of the West Indies had not from the very outset recognized the unique place of a West Indian collection in a nascent West Indian university - a foresight that led him to acquire by purchase, the West Indian history of some 3,000 items of the late Harry Vendryes, Jamaican collector, to mention but one example of that foresight; and if his successor Willie Gocking, my predecessor, had not given me every support during his term of office to continue to build and strengthen our West Indian Collection, a process which even now is being carried forward by the more recent efforts of the younger members of staff, so that the Collection bids fair to come a close second to that of the National Library of Jamaica, which incorporates the former West India Reference Library.

I have mentioned that at a much earlier date I became absorbed in the effort to trace source material for the history of the West Indies. Just over thirty-two years ago, I began a voyage of discovery, a veritable Odyssey, that was to prove as arduous and exciting though nothing as dangerous as the first Odyssey; that was to lead me into an enormous exchange of correspondence with several hundred libraries, archive repositories and private owners of papers in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Holland, Denmark, the West Indies, Panama and even as far as the antipodes, that was to send me to visit thirty-six repositories in North America, and seventy-two in the British Isles, and that was to direct me to comb veritably hundreds of catalogues, calendars, surveys, lists and reports of manuscript and archival collections, the most conspicuous number being that of the National Register of Archives, Chancery Lane, London, for which some 180 reports have been cited in the publications which have been one of the fruits of this Odyssey.

If one can date the first manifestation of active involvement in the search for sources, although it was clearly incipient over a much longer period, I would go back to a chance reference to the West Indian furniture trade of the Lancaster firm of Gillows, better known later as Waring & Gillow, in Ralph Fastnedge's book English Furniture Styles. This began a correspondence in 1957 with the Lancaster firm, still the owners at that time of the firm's archive, and was to lead later in 1959 to a personal visit to Lancaster to discover a truly monumental and unique furniture archive which embraced a considerable trade in furniture and general merchandise between Lancaster, Liverpool, London and the West Indies from the mid-eighteenth century to the decade before the end of that century. Subsequently, an attempt was made by a prospective American purchaser, the Winterthur Museum in Delaware, to acquire the archive, but an appeal to the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art was successful in preventing its impending sale while Westminster City Council, with the help of a grant from the British Government acquired the records. It may be of interest to note that when I first examined the records in 1959 with a view to obtaining copies of the material relative to the West Indies for the Mona Library, so extensive and scattered was that material, that the cost was prohibitive, using the copying methods then available at Lancaster, though in later years the Library was able to obtain microfilms of a considerable part of this archive at a much lesser cost.

This was the beginning of a search for sources outside the well trodden paths of the Public Record Office and the British Museum, that was to lead me to a seemingly endless number of county record offices, learned and religious society libraries, university libraries, banks, solicitors' offices and private homes.

I have been asked on a number of occasions what was the purpose of all these esoteric laborious searches and, even more incredible, did I write books about them to make money, though all my experience was to the contrary, that it was an excellent way to spend money with little or no hope for material reward. I know that I shall not have to present an apologia to my present readers, but I would like to draw attention to remarks which I made in another place in expressing the hope that one of the published products of this work, would not only be useful to historians, but to scholars in other disciplines as well. I wrote then:

Increasingly sociologists, anthropologists and philologists are turning to the records of the past for evidence of the theories deduced from their observations of contemporary society. While the materials in the Public Record Office and in national libraries such as the British Museum (now the British Library) and the Bodleian are widely known to scholars, the resources of less well known repositories, might be overlooked and are frequently not represented in published form. Even where such material is represented in published works, it is a tedious task tracing all references to a particular place, and it is hoped that a survey of this kind might serve as a work of reference to all interested in locating source material for the history of Jamaica. Finally, in a wider context, it may be viewed as a contribution whereby all those who are concerned with further discovering, understanding and constructing Jamaica's identity through the study of her past and the persons and influences which have shaped it, will be guided to some of the sources for this task of discovery and understanding. <sup>1</sup>

It should be evident also that "when we speak thus of 'history'," to quote the words of a famous Master of the Rolls, "we mean not only the story of the great affairs of state, but also of every side of society. It is the story of the life on the land and in the mill, and everywhere else; and the story of every kind of activity, of art and of science, of business and of games, and all the rest. the study of all these is enriched by recourse to the papers of those who took part in them". <sup>2</sup>

Or if I may be allowed to introduce another vivid quotation from another eminent authority, the Secretary to the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, who in his report to the Commissioner for 1976-77 says:

If the Public records provide the skeleton around which British history has to be written, it is these other more diffuse and elusive types of records [i.e. records, the property of institutions and families by whom created and maintained at private expense] that provide the flesh, muscle and nerve.

Having said this I know that the thought will be in the wings if not in the forefront of somebody's mind that this type of record may well be the flesh,

muscle and nerve of British history but not necessarily of West Indian history. I recall clearly some years ago in a discussion following an interesting paper on the role of national libraries in the West Indies, that the speaker dismissed with a flick of the hand and a nod what he called "your business about archives and old books", as part of an exaggeratedly powerful colonial little tradition of the written word, or best, pottering with some alienated records of an alien great tradition. I have no intention here of entering into an anthropological argument or a discussion on the classification of cultural systems, but I will venture to say that these records are part of the flesh, muscle and nerve of our own history, though not always as evidently so as of the expatriate and often absentee shapers of much of this history, to whom fell the opportunity and the task of creating these records. And this is all the more so because there are so few remains of indigenous written traditions even as late as the present century, so that we would be ill-advised not to clutch at every straw in the wind that bears some evidence from the past. How much may not the history of slavery be enriched by the study of extensive family collections and plantation papers of those who held property in the West Indies? - the Codrington papers in the news some years ago, the Thistlewood Journals which form part of the Monson deposit in Lincolnshire Archives Office, the papers of the Lane family relating to Newton Plantation, Barbados, preserved in the University of London Library, Senate House, of the Barham family and their Jamaican estates which constitute part of the Clarendon Deposited MSS in the Bodleian Library and of the Brydges Family Papers pertaining to its estates in Jamaica, which form part of the Stowe Collection in the Henry Huntington Library in California? How much more could we not learn of 18th century political faction in Jamaica by a study of the Fuller Papers, centering around the disputes with Governor Knowles, now preserved in the Sussex Archaeological Society at Lawes, and how much better might our understanding of the early 19th century plantation economy of Jamaica be enhanced by a study of the almost untouched papers of the Goulburn family in The Survey Record Office, Kingston - Upon - Thames. I can mention too, the Belmore Papers, the extensive private collection of the Earl of Belmore, Governor of Jamaica at the time of the Rebellion of 1831 and just prior to the introduction of the Apprenticeship System with their references to the trials and executions of slaves, including "Daddy Sharp" the leader of the rebellion and now one of Jamaica's national heroes. I may mention the extensive

though somewhat tedious archives of missionary societies with their voluminous reporting on the moral and social life of the West Indian peoples in the nineteenth century. I may also mention the fragile personal diary of the Jesuit priest Rev. Joseph Splaine, stationed in the mountainous countryside of the Jamaican parish of St. George in 1872, with his observations on African and Creole customs, folk remedies and hair styles, or, if one may switch to an entirely different field, what of the album of hand-coloured drawings of birds of Jamaica, done by that earliest Jamaican savant, Richard Hill, and presented by him through the wife of Sir Lionel Smith to the Zoological Society of London in 1839. I could go on like this, with many more examples, save that it would be tedious, but I would only ask again, who would say that these records do not add flesh, muscle and nerve to the skeleton of our history?

Having said this, however, I hasten to recognize that much needs to be done in making manifest and in recording that oral and unwritten body of experience, observation, knowledge and wisdom which constitutes an important and pervasive part of West Indian history, though until recently, it received but little attention except from a few exceptional home-spun scholars like J.J. Thomas in the latter nineteenth century, or by a few expatriate anthropologists or musicologists such as Martha Warren Beckwith and Walter Jekyll in the earlier part of this century. Librarians and archivists have an important role to play in the preservation of this part of our cultural and historical heritage, but in order to do so, they need governmental and institutional support.

I recall when I stopped at the University of Pennsylvania in 1965 on what I like to think of as the North American sector of my Odyssey, meeting there that veteran folklorist and collector of the folk songs of Trinidad, Dr. Jacob D. Elder, who was working along with Professor MacEdward Leach who has spent a sabbatical year at Mona studying Jamaican folklore. In the previous year I had heard that some 250 tape recordings of Caribbean folklore and folklore from Trinidad and the adjacent Islands, made by J.D. Elder, together with the tapes made by Leach, were to become the nucleus of a large and representative collection of Caribbean folk culture which was intended to make the University of Pennsylvania the centre of such study in the western world. I do not know whether the collection is still there or whether the intention and purpose of establishing the collection there have been realized. I do know



that around that time I heard rumblings of discontent and expressions to the effect that such a collection properly belonged in the Caribbean, and, more recently, similar views were expressed when the Codrington papers were auctioned and purchased by a bidder from outside the West Indies. This brings me to some reflections on other aspects of the subject of cultural patrimony - its repatriation and its preservation, which ought to follow naturally upon the search for and the discovery of elements of this heritage. Certainly, these were some of the concerns of the Caribbean Archives Conference, which was jointly sponsored by the University of the West Indies and the Government of Jamaica and which was held at Mona September 1965, and, more recently, though from a different perspective, these were also some of the concerns of a conference held by the University of Florida's Centre of Latin American Studies, in October 1978, under the title "Cultural Traditions and Caribbean Identity: the Question of Patrimony".

It is commendable that West Indians should be so concerned as to publicly deplore the fact that their governments have not been able to purchase archival or manuscript collections relating to their history which come on the market, but it is also important that in expressing our disappointment at not having acquired them we should avoid making exaggerated claims to what we have lost, claims which have no legal or moral basis. Certainly we have much to be thankful for, that the creators of some of these collections have preserved them over centuries when it is almost certain that had they remained in the West Indies during that period, they would have either perished or suffered greatly from neglect and other ravages of our climate and environment. It is to be noted that the Caribbean Archives Conference made no exaggerated claims about repatriation, but rather emphasised the importance of making provision locally for preservation of what remains of our own archival heritage, and for the use of microfilming and photocopying to make available what is preserved abroad. An example of the importance of photocopying is that of the copying of some 90 volumes of the personal and meteorological diaries and common-place books of the eighteenth century Jamaican overseer Thomas Thistlewood, which was done with the permission of the owners, Lord and Lady Monson, for the Mona Library and for the use of Professor D.G.H. Hall, who has recently published an absorbing account of slavery in Jamaica under the title, In Miserable Slavery: Thomas Thistlewood in Jamaica, 1750-86 3 O.A. Sherrard in whose book

Freedom from Fear: the slave and his emancipation (1959) these manuscripts first came to my attention, used the Thistlewood journals to sketch and illustrate slavery in Jamaica during the eighteenth century.

Helpful as are the uses of photography, there is nothing quite like 'the real McKoy', and hence it is always extremely gratifying to read of the acquisition of original papers and collections. Some owners of family papers which contain material relevant to the West Indies, may be encouraged to deposit the originals here if they are assured of the interest and/or of the capability of repositories to care for their documents. At U.W.I. Mona, the library has experienced this generosity on a number of occasions, both from local and expatriate owners, two examples of such instances being the deposit of the copies of the Roger Mais literary MSS by his literary executors, and the gift of some Gladstone Jamaican estate deeds by a member of the Gladstone family.

A fruitful field for the further development of collections of source materials in West Indian libraries and archive repositories is that of the papers of contemporary West Indian public figures and West Indian creative writers. The former often need to be convinced that their papers are worth collecting and preserving, so strong are the effects of the oral tradition, and the latter, despite their strong ties with their native soil often have the blandishments of much needed cash offers dangled before them by better endowed libraries in a nearby developed country. It is a source of encouragement to those of us who regard libraries as the purveyors of cultural and historical heritage, with a duty to record and conserve the basis of that heritage to know that by one means or another, some of the literary MSS of Wilson Harris, Alfred Mendes, Roger Mais, Earl Lovelace, Orlando Patterson, Eric Roach and Derek Walcott, are preserved in the University libraries at Mona and St. Augustine. These, together with the photocopies of the literary scripts broadcast in the BBC's Caribbean Voices Programme from 1945 to 1958, occupying 24 box files, generously presented by the BBC to the Mona Library in 1966, represent a worthy corpus of West Indian literary MSS.

It cannot be emphasized too much however, that having obtained such sources, we have a duty to preserve them. Julian Boyd, now deceased, a former librarian and professor of history, emeritus, of Princeton University, recalled in one of his addresses that Thomas Jefferson, whose library became the foundation of the Library of Congress,

the national library of the U.S.A., "believed the preservation and study of 'these precious monuments of our history' to be a matter of public concern" (my emphasis). The governments, learned institutions and people of the West Indies have much need to examine themselves on this score. Conservation can involve enormous expense, especially if the old adage "an ounce of preservation is worth a pound of cure", has been ignored in the past. With the right support and representation, external aid from international agencies can be anticipated. During recent years it has been encouraging to note the arrangement of short term training in aspects of advanced binding, paper conservation and microphotographic reproduction as well as to observe the establishment and equipping of conservation laboratories attached to our libraries. In this way a small contribution is being made to the solution of a national and regional problem, over which in the past, a veil of silence fell after the acquisition, exhibition or publication of some item of historical importance had been given momentary publicity in the media.

So far, I have concerned myself with sketching on a wide canvas some of the major concerns of my own experience as a librarian in dealing with West Indian material and my reflections thereon. I should like now to sketch in some of the details of work with West Indian material and possibly allow myself to meander in memory down some of the pleasant and teasing pathways which have engaged my interest in the past. I refer here to subjects such as the ascription of authorship, dating the record, provenance and the migration and inter-relationships of sources, MSS lost and strayed, the formation of collections, the uses of sources, actual and potential.

The tantalizing pursuit of discovering the authorship of unknown works or dating documents or publications is as much the concern of librarian/bibliographer, as it is of the historian, and there is no reason why the one or the other should not use methods more commonly applied by his counterpart, such as the close comparison of related texts and the internal evidence of the text. I will briefly refer to but two such instances, one in which my efforts were marked with success and the other which remains a riddle to be solved. The first relates to the discovery of the authorship of an interesting journal of a naturalist's visit to Jamaica in the late eighteen fifties, the original journal being preserved in the National Library of Jamaica.

The story of the successful ascription of the

authorship to W. Osburn, an English naturalist of some promise who died in Jamaica, is told by me in one of the early issues of the Jamaican Historical Review.<sup>4</sup> Although Osburn was known to prominent nineteenth century naturalists such as Philip Henry Gosse, P.L. Sclater, Richard Hill and, possibly, to Alfred and Edward Newton and, although the date of his death is recorded in the Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London, no reference to his death in any contemporary Jamaican newspaper can be traced nor any record of his burial. No such success attended my attempts to discover the authorship of the anonymously published work entitled Marly: or, a planter's life in Jamaica, issued in Glasgow and London in 1828. It has the ring of an authentic account of slavery, plantation life and the mores of Jamaican society on the eve of emancipation, set within the framework of a fictitious narrative, by a narrator who described himself as a "slave-driver", having been a book-keeper on a sugar estate. The late bibliophile and historical writer Ansel Hart, regarded it as a work of exceptional merit and, in a sense, it may be regarded as the first authentic Jamaican novel. It would be tedious to recount in detail the extensive correspondence with the publishers of "Halkett & Laing", the Mitchell Library (Glasgow), the National Library of Scotland (Edinburgh) the Scottish Record Office (Edinburgh) and the High Court of Justiciary (Edinburgh), in pursuing this most interesting problem in ascription. Suffice it to say, however, that my theory that the author was one Charles Campbell could not be proved though it has not been disproved.

The migration and inter-relationships of manuscript collections reflect very aptly the ceaseless movement and inter-relationships of various peoples which form so much of the stuff of Caribbean history. For instance, take the Codrington papers. In addition to the main body of papers until recently belonging to the Codrington seat at Dodington park, Gloucestershire, there is a small collection of Codrington records in the Gloucestershire Record Office. Still other papers of this family were in the hands of Robson Lowe, Ltd., philatelists and publishers of London, who published the book entitled The Codrington Correspondence, primarily written from the point of view of postal history. In about the year 1951, Robson Lowe sold his collection to various collectors but before dispersing the correspondence, the firm enquired from a number of universities as to whether they were interested in having a microfilm copy. Twelve years later, Mr. Robson Lowe wrote to me saying that to the best of his



recollection three universities in America replied and asked for microfilms which were then made, but unfortunately the firm's correspondence of that date had been destroyed but from memory he believed that one went to a university in either Houston or Dallas. These microfilms, wherever they be, are now the sole record of that dispersed collection.

Who can tell how a series of plantation indentures for bond servants going to the West Indies, dated 1683/84, belonging to a numbered series one to one thousand, and ordered by the Privy Council in 1682 to be kept among the records of the Courts of Quarter Sessions, have come to suffer considerable alienation. Seven hundred and forty-two of the numbered series are still preserved in the Greater London Record Office. Some of the missing numbers of this series have been located outside the United Kingdom - sixty-six in the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C., of which all but two are numbered, and three in the National Library of Jamaica, all three being numbered. Both sets were acquired from the same bookseller in 1957 and 1955 respectively. In the Folger Library too is the original consignment book kept in the London Office of a shipper, William Brooke, relating to shipments made to Barbados, Bermuda and elsewhere, from 1693 to 1697. In 1978 the Historical Manuscripts Commission reported that a similar bill of lading registered for William Brooke, including shipments to Barbados and Bermuda from 1696 to 1709, had been acquired by the Guildhall Library, London. How two sets of documents which obviously were created by the same person came to be separated and dispersed we may never know, but the systematic reporting, description and compilation of such information clearly serves a useful purpose in this instance, by bringing together information about both series which obviously complement one another.

A most curious instance of migration and dispersal of a family's papers is that of the Kidd family. Joseph Bartholomew Kidd, R.S.A., is well known for his rare and lavish volume of 50 illustrations of Jamaican scenes, published in 1840. His brother, Thomas Patrick Kidd, Jamaican planter, rented part of Georgia Estate, Trelawny, Jamaica on which the town of Stewart Town was later built. At a date prior to May 1959, the Library of Congress obtained microfilm copies of some papers of J.B. Kidd, the originals of which were then in the possession of J. B. Kidd's grand-daughter, Miss Miriam Kidd of London. Subsequently, I

entered into an interesting correspondence with Miss Kidd, then an elderly lady, who gave me permission to acquire for the U.W.I. Library, copies of the microfilms in the Library of Congress. In 1963, an article entitled "The lost letters of Thomas Kidd", by Ray Fremmer appeared in the Daily Gleaner, describing the discovery of some 50 odd badly soiled and faded letters which passed between Thomas Patrick Kidd, his daughters and others, between the years 1834 and 1888. They were discovered in a rat's nest in pulling down the old Anglican rectory at Stewart Town on August 16, 1963. Among them is a letter from Joseph B. Kidd to Mrs. Thomas Kidd. Thus had a member of the family of rodents entered the record of those to whom we must be indebted for the preservation of human records. A further surprise was to be encountered in this little saga of the Kidd papers, when, on one of those rare occasion when I was spending a short holiday outside of libraries and archive repositories, lolling on a private beach near Ocho Rios in 1975, my host introduced me to another guest and the conversation turned on the subject of my pursuit of the sources of Jamaican history. The lady, who was the other guest, invited me to her home to see her small collection of family papers and lo and behold, on examining them, they were observed to include the original Kidd Papers, of which the Library of Congress and the University of the West Indies Library had previously acquired copies from Miss Miriam Kidd. It turned out that the present owner was a Jamaican descendant, the great great grand-daughter of Thomas Patrick Kidd on her maternal side, to whose aunt they had been given subsequently, by Miss Mariam Kidd of England with whom she had been in touch. Thus had a small segment of our patrimony come full cycle home through rodent instinct and human foresight and generosity.

Another curious migration came to light in the summer of 1981 when, during a visit to London in early September, I was at last able to run to earth, a copy of an old series of Jamaican Law Reports, published in Kingston in 1873, which I had almost concluded was a bibliographical ghost. It is listed by Cundall, by Patchett and Jenkins and by Velma Newton, but no where could a copy be located. It was not in the National Library of Jamaica, not in the Library of the Supreme Court of Jamaica, not in the U.W.I. Mona Library, not in the Law Faculty Library, Cave Hill, not in the British Library or in the Library of Congress. A visit to the Library of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, also gave every indication of being negative after they had checked their



catalogues and had also assured me that their copy of the Law Catalogue of Cambridge University disclosed the presence of no such work. At this point however, a member of staff produced what seemed like a little used location list of serials which indicated that a copy of this work was indeed recorded as being in the Library of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, Downing Street. I was around to the Privy Council on the next day, and although the visit of the French President Mitterand posed some problems with entering Downing Street, I was able to enter the awesome presence of that Court and with the aid of the Chief Clerk, there was the object of my search - no ghost at all, but a copy of the old series of Jamaican Law Report bearing if you please, the stamp of the Library of the Supreme Court of Jamaica.

The boot is on the other foot in this other instance of a work located in Jamaica, which, from all known records, ought to be located elsewhere. In my work on the Sources of Jamaican History, I mention the case of the original journal of Rear-Admiral Sir Hovenden Walker, during a residence at Jamaica in 1712, which was eventually located in the Institute of Jamaica though recorded as originally belonging to the MSS of the Marquess of Ormonde. Mention is also made in that work of an example of another type of migration, concerning which conclusive evidence has only recently come to light. I refer to the four volumes of reportedly meritorious natural history drawings by the Rev. John Lindsay, entitled "Elegancies of Jamaica", 1758-1771, for the publication of which he had petitioned the House of Assembly in 1770 for assistance, without success. These volumes formed part of a bequest made by Dr. Arthur Broughton, (ca. 1758-1796), early Jamaican naturalist, to the Bristol Library Society. They subsequently passed into the possession of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery and were reported as being there in 1915, by A.B. Rendle, another botanist famous for his work on Jamaican flora.<sup>5</sup> In 1969 when I wrote to enquire concerning these volumes, I was informed that they could not then be located and it was supposed that they had been destroyed in the bombing during World War II, 1939-1945. Subsequently, Gavin D. Bridson's Natural History Manuscript Resources in the British Isles (London: Mansell, 1980) located the volumes in the Bristol Museum, and when I again wrote trying to resolve the apparent contradiction between these two statements, I was relieved to learn that the four volumes were indeed there, having been recently returned from the Bristol Central Library where

they had been stored and where no doubt they were, when the Museum informed me in 1969 that they could not be found. That was a happy ending to the tale of a rare and precious item lost and found.

It is to be hoped that a previous volume of Dr. Anthony Robinson's botanical drawings, part of the heritage of this country, will not be alienated in somewhat similar circumstances, which I will not detail here since I have already placed them on record elsewhere.<sup>6</sup>

Of course, original MSS are not the only form of source material which migrate and are lost and sometimes found. Two instances of the missing edited version of a manuscript and of a microfilm are worth mentioning as they had direct connections with the University of the West Indies Library.

The first relates to the journal of a tour of Jamaica in 1835 by Alfred Domett, the poet friend of Robert Browning and later, Prime Minister of New Zealand. The existence of this manuscript came to my attention in 1960, in pursuing the introduction to the published edition of Domett's Canadian Journal (1955) where the editor, Professor E.A. Horsman, of the University of Otago stated that Domett's manuscript journals, Canadian and Jamaican were in the possession of his grand-daughters. When I wrote to Professor Horsman to discover how I might communicate with the owners of the journals, he wrote me saying that my letter was something of a surprise to him as since September 1956 the annotated typescript of Domett's Jamaican Journal, edited by himself and Alan Cunningham, a former member of the History Department of U.C.W.I. had been in the hands of the Extra-Mural Department for publication in Caribbean Quarterly. Subsequent exhaustive enquiries on my part with all parties concerned failed to disclose the whereabouts of the lost typescript. I am happy to say that Professor Horsman despite the now established loss, graciously put me in touch with the owners of the original journal, the Misses Domett of Richmond, Surrey, who in turn put me in touch with a Mr. Webster, of London, who had acquired the journal and who gave me permission to have a microfilm copy made for the University Library. I do not know the present whereabouts of the manuscript though I am under the impression that it may have gone either to Australia or New Zealand, so I hope nothing happens to the U.W.I. microfilm such as befell the microfilm copy of the Colthurst Journal, which must be my last reminiscence.

The existence of the original manuscript journal, which has been edited and published by Professor Woodville K. Marshall of the Department of History, U.W.I., Cave Hill, Barbados,<sup>7</sup> first came to my attention in 1961 and in the following year a microfilm copy was acquired from its owner, the Boston Public Library, for the University Library at Mona. During the removal of the contents of the Library workroom in 1962, the microfilm, along with other microfilms of original MSS, having been packed in a waste paper basket for easy removal, was lost when the whole contents of the basket were dumped by an early morning cleaner and could not be retrieved. Either two or three subsequent copies made at our request were lost in the post or mislaid otherwise, and then in March 1965 the Keeper of Rare Books of the Boston Public Library wrote me to say that the negative copy of the journal, from which he had supplied our positive copies had also been mislaid, closing with the remark "Something there is - Colthurst's ghost, perhaps - that doesn't want the journals in your Library. The reluctance, I assure you, is not mine". There the matter rested until later in that year, 1965, I had a chance of visiting Boston and examining the original journal. Later in the same year I ran into Professor Marshall in the lobby of a Pasadena hotel and during a conversational exchange on our mutual interests, my wife who was with me had developed a great interest in many of the manuscripts which she had helped to examine and describe, suggested that I tell him about the Colthurst Journal, which I did. The end of that story however, is this, that Professor Marshall having acquired a microfilm of the journal for his editorial work, presented the U.W.I. Library, Mona, with his microfilm copy in 1968, when he had finished with it, and that is the copy now preserved in the University Library. I like to think of it as a classic example of casting your bread upon the waters and its returning to you.

As I was preparing this paper with its recollections of these memorable little episodes it occurred to me how important a part the individual collector has played in the survival and transmission of many rare and precious collections of printed works and manuscripts. I have mentioned Harry Vendryes and Ansel Hart of Jamaica and of course, many items of West India in the Rare Book Department of the Boston Public Library came from the Massachusetts-born private collector Benjamin P. Hunt, who served from 1840 to 1850 as U.S. Consul at Port-au-Prince, where he conceived an intense interest in the Caribbean area and assiduously gathered all kinds of material

relating to the Caribbean until his death in 1877, when he bequeathed his library to the Boston Public Library. Another famous Caribbean collection, the Nicholas M. Williams Memorial Collection was originally the private collection of Rev. Joseph J. Williams, S.J., for years a missionary priest in Jamaica, who presented it to the Baptist Library, Boston College.

In an era in which the prices of this material have soared so high that only the wealthiest connoisseurs can attempt to collect source material of this kind on any scale, the onus falls more heavily on institutions such as universities, national libraries and learned societies to acquire and to preserve these precious sources, which are important not only to the disciplines of history, sociology and anthropology, which, as Professor Gordon K. Lewis pointed out in this paper "The claim for Caribbean Identity", presented at the University of Florida Conference, 1978, have emerged as prestigious disciplines in Caribbean Studies, but these sources are invaluable for the yet unwritten intellectual history of the area. No single element is more important in advanced research than the literature of a subject and hence the development of collections such as these is far more than the dilettante indulgence of antiquarian pursuits. Basic to any library and information service in the service of Caribbean studies, is the quality of the Library's collection.

The Caribbean Archives Conference of 1965 drew attention to the importance of published guides and finding aids to assist historians and other research workers in exploiting to the full archival and other collections of source material. It is my opinion that the best of the guides of this nature qualify as a type of historical editing and in this I am encouraged by the words of Paul H. Bergeron in his article "True Valor Seen: Historical Editing" with which I close these reflections:

Finally, the editor knows that his job is worth performing well when he begins to sense that he is achieving new insight into the humanness of history . . . After the industrious editor has been immersed in his work for many months, the letters and documents begin to speak to him. The voices of the great and the near great, as well as the obscure, are heard: these persons seem alive again. While reading their comments and observations about business, politics, religion, family, marriage, death, and even the weather, the sensitive editor

becomes aware of historical figures as humans. When he reflects on the panorama of events and persons with which he is working, he sees that the great theme of his labors is human commonality, past and present. It is a great reward for the editor to arrive at this understanding; a more mature scholar is the result. The temptation, of course, is to become too romantic or sentimental about this special insight. The reasonable individual admits that there have been and will continue to be such strong forces as economics and nationalism at work, but the historical editor completes his responsibilities and task with the added assurance of the humanness of history.<sup>8</sup>

To this I would only add as a librarian, that one is thereby not only assured of the humanness of history but one is fortified in the awareness of the irrefutable responsibility of the librarian, or the archivist, to preserve, transmit and make known the historical records of human commonality.

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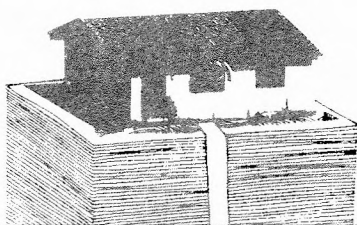




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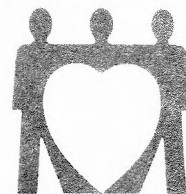
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# MEDICAL BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND HEALTH INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

by Laxmi Mansingh

## Introduction

Medical science and literature have been an important aspect of the development of human civilization through the ages. Starting with the oral traditions of passing on information from generation to generation, it acquired written form in India (ca 400 C.E.), China (2698 B.C.E.), Egypt (200-1700 B.C.E.) and Babylonia (2000 B.C.E.) [1]

The Hindu system of medicine, known as Ayurveda (the science of life), may be traced back to ca 6000 B.C.E., though the art of writing (Sanskrit language) on Bhoj Patra (banana and palm leaves and bark) is believed to have started around 4000 B.C.E. There is considerable evidence that Indian medicine influenced Asia Minor and Greece [2], though the treatise - Ayurveda, was compiled more recently (ca 500 B.C.E.) and used in medicinal schools of the era at Taxilla, Ujjain, Varanasi, Vidarbha and Nalanda in India.

Egyptian medical literature may be traced back to about 3520 B.C.E., though writings on papyrus in hieratic script started around 2000-1700 B.C.E. However, the oldest comprehensive medical treatise may belong to the Chinese who wrote Su Wen during 2698-2598 B.C.E. In Persia, the sixth Book of Zend-Avesta (1400 B.C.E.) contains medical information. A medical compendium in the form of tablets in the Library of Ashurbanipal suggests the existence of ancient medical literature in Babylonia as well [3].

Until about five hundred years ago, the growth and usage of medical literature posed no problem in its organization and retrieval. Thereafter, its development, particularly in the western countries, increased to the extent that special retrieval technology had to be evolved. Catalogues, indexes, guides and bibliographies were thus devised and produced to address the needs. As science and technology dominated human minds and energies during the twentieth century, medical literature proliferated at an unmanageable pace for the traditional approach to its management. Computer technology with unlimited scope has now provided the answer to the new challenge.

The present article discusses the historical development and roles of medical bibliographies and the present efforts with intermediate and high technological strategies for serving the needs of physicians, medical students, researchers and health-care personnel around the world, and particularly in the Caribbean and Jamaica.

## Historical Development

Treatises in medicine written in China, India and other countries in ancient times (3000 B.C.E. to 500 C.E.) may be regarded as an effort to compile and organize the then available literature - oral or otherwise, for both documentation and retrieval purposes. However, serious efforts in the production of medical bibliographies started in the sixteenth century in Europe. Conrad Gesner initiated the process by compiling a medical bibliography though it was not published in his Bibliotheca Universalis (1545-55). Nearly half a century later, Pascal Lecoq published the first systematic medical bibliography entitled Bibliotheca Medica in 1590. The number of published bibliographies increased to 25 by 1660 [4] and to 255 by 1954 [5]. Until the mid-nineteenth century, these bibliographies, which really were the products of individual academic initiatives, had limited access and therefore did not serve the research and patient-care needs on a wide scale. During the past 150 years or so, indexing, retrieval and dissemination of medical literature have become highly institutionalized and commercialized, incorporating contemporary state-of-art technology.

Dr. John Shaw Billings may be regarded as father of the modern system of indexing medical literature. U.S. Army Surgeon General John Lovell's collection of books had gained the status of a library in 1836. The first bibliographic activity started in 1840 with the handwritten bibliography entitled A Catalogue of Books in the Library of the Surgeon General's Office, which was revised and printed in 1864 [6]. Under Billings's direction (1865-1895), the library holdings grew from 1,800 to 113,000 books and 192,000 pamphlets, from every available source in the world. He had the literature organized and indexed and published as Index Medicus (1879) and Index Catalogue (1880). In 1861, Billings started to develop a system which was to be the foundation for management of medical information in the world [7]. Some scholars regard this as

"America's greatest contribution to medicine" [8]. The U.S. Congress recognised the international scope and role of the library, and in 1956, elevated it to be the National Library of Medicine (NLM).

While Index Medicus has been serving the world and undergoing technological transformations, Britain and Netherlands embarked upon similar projects. In 1940, the British Medical Association started a medical information service by publishing Abstracts of the World Medicine, which ceased publication in 1971. The Excerpta Medica Foundation of Amsterdam started an abstracting service in 1947 with Excerpta Medica, which now has 42 sections, containing 250,000 English abstracts per year, drawn from 3,500 medical journals from around the world.

Introduction of computer technology into the bibliographic management of biomedical literature at the NLM transformed the manual database of Index Medicus into MEDLARS (Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System) in 1964. Excerpta Medica also completed computerization in 1969 and began to offer EMBASE commercial retrieval services. Various international and national organizations are currently engaged in developing a world-wide network of regional and national databases and retrieval services, which could draw upon the MEDLARS and EMBASE resources.

The NLM and MEDLARS are central to the international network for the management of medical literature (Fig. 1,2,3), and Index Medicus, its monthly bibliography of biomedical literature, is the most widely used biomedical index around the world by the health sciences libraries.

NLM's activities in the management of medical literature for national and international services are outlined in Figure 1. It boasts one of the world's largest collections of biomedical literature with more than 3 million holdings. For standardization of indexing and bibliographic work, NLM appoints a Chartered Committee of distinguished physicians, medical editors, and medical librarians to advise on the selection of material to be indexed and indexing is done by highly trained literature analysts consisting of NLM staff, contracted commercial firms, and foreign collaborating institutions.

The Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) - a controlled vocabulary of technical terms, is used

almost universally for indexing and cataloguing of medical literature. NLM's system of abbreviation for List of Journals Indexed in Index Medicus is the most widely accepted form for the citation of journals.

MEDLARS and MEDLINE: MEDLARS provides rapid bibliographic access to NLM's vast store of biomedical information. The entire process of producing Index Medicus and Cumulated Index Medicus and other publications is now completely automated.

In October 1971, NLM introduced an interactive system termed MEDLINE (MEDLARS On-Line), which enables medical libraries around the world to query the NLM computer's store of journal articles references for rapid retrieval. MEDLINE tapes cover over 3,200 journals and over a quarter of a million journal articles annually from over 72 countries. MEDLINE was reorganized in 1982. The on-line database for MEDLINE references from 1966 to about 18 to 24 months from the current date is termed BACKFILES, the current file (last 18-24 months) is called MEDLINE, the file covering the current month is termed SDILINE.

NLM keeps abreast with contemporary needs of the users and creates new databases for quick retrieval. Of the 20 such databases listed in Fig. 1, those of importance are: AIDSLINE (references to the recent AIDS literature), AIDSTRIALS and AIDSDRUG (current information on clinical trials of AIDS drugs and vaccines), CANCERLIT (references to the journal literature on cancer), CATLINE (cataloguing information on books), HEALTH (Administration and planning information), TOXLINE (references to toxicology information), and DENTALPROJ (an on-line database developed by National Institute of Dental Research). To facilitate on-line access, NLM has introduced a new interface software system named GRATEFUL MED, which allows economical automated access to more than 11 million records in its databases [9]. More than 20,000 institutions and individuals in the United States have on-line access to MEDLARS databases. By the end of 1988, they had utilized the facilities for 4.2 million searches [10].

NLM'S International Cooperation: With the assistance and collaboration of various international agencies and national governments, NLM has established an effective and efficient network



# NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL ROLES OF NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE, USA

## ACTIVITIES:

Acquisition of literature from 72 countries

### MEDLARS DATABASES - Online Indexing

- BACKFILES (1966-1987)
- MEDLINE (1988-90)
- SDILINE (Current month)

OTHERS: AIDSLINE, AIDSTRIAL, AIDS DRUG, AVLINE, BIOETHICSLINE, CANCERLINE, CANCERPROJ, CATLINE, CHEMLINE, DENTALPROJ, DIRLINE, HEALTH, EPILEPSYLINE, HISTORY OF MEDICINE, INFORM, MEDNAME, MeSH, POPLINE, SERLINE, TOXLINE, TOXLIT

PUBLICATIONS: AIDS Bibliography, Bibliography of History of Medicine, Current Bibliographies in Medicine, Index Medicus, Abridged Index Medicus, Cumulated Index Medicus, Medical Subject Headings, NLM Audiovisual Catalogue, NLM Current Catalogue, Health Sciences Serials, NLM Literature Searches, Recurring Bibliographies

### INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

International MEDLARS Centers, and National MEDLINE Centers, Indexing, Publications

---

### SERVICES National & International

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Online Retrieval  
Online access to  
NLM's computers

Extramural  
Programmes

Reference

Training &  
Workshops

Document Delivery  
Books Loans  
Interlibrary Loans

Audiovisual

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Figure 1. An outline of the Management (Acquisition, Indexing, Retrieval & Dissemination) of Health Literature by the National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, Md, U.S.A.

of bibliographic compilation and retrieval system around the world and which undoubtedly needs further expansion in order to have the real global impact. Fig. 2 outlines this network system. NLM has established over 20 MEDLARS Centers with varying scopes, facilities, roles and services. These centers, except BIREME in Brazil, serve various centers in their national network and many offer services to a few neighbouring countries. NLM

either provides direct access to its computer data bases or sends its computer tapes for use on local computers, or both. Some countries such as Canada, Mexico, South Africa, France, Italy, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Colombia and Costa Rica prefer to have direct access to NLM's computer despite the cost involved. Within Canada, there are over 70 centers which are directly linked to NLM.

## NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE, U.S.A. MEDLARS DATABASES

### INTERNATIONAL MEDLARS CENTERS

WITH MEDLARS TAPES & ONLINE ACCESS TO NLM's COMPUTERS				ONLINE ACCESS TO NLM's COMPUTERS
France	Canada	Australia	Kuwait	Jamaica
Germany	Mexico	China	Egypt	Trinidad & Tobago
Italy	Brazil	Japan	South Africa	Colombia
Sweden	(BIREME/PAHO)			Costa Rica
Switzerland				
United Kingdom				

Figure 2. International Collaboration and Cooperation Network of National Library of Medicine, USA

MEDLARS also produces some 25 Recurring Bibliographies in specialized biomedical fields. These are printed and distributed by non-profit professional organizations and government agencies. The Literature Searches, which are individualized bibliographies, are reprinted by NLM for distribution on request.

In return for online access to the NLM's databases, the 16 international MEDLARS Centers for example, Canada, Australia, BIREME etc., provide their own indexed material as input to NLM's databases. This system contributes to about 25% of the MEDLARS input and enables the indexing of several local and regional journals which were otherwise not indexed [11]. The

MEDLARS Centers such as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Costa Rica and Colombia have online access to NLM's databases but do not receive tapes for retrieval on local computers or provide input in MEDLARS databases.

Under the auspices of the World Health Organization (WHO), various countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean have been working towards the establishment of national networks which will be linked with other international databases. For the Latin American and the Caribbean region, WHO/PAHO have established a regional center at Sao Paulo, Brazil, called BIREME.

## Latin America and the Caribbean

In 1967, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Government of Brazil upgraded the Library of Medicine, Sao Paulo, to become the Latin American and Caribbean Health Sciences Information Center (BIREME), with the primary objective of improving health care in the region through the promotion of a regional network of health sciences libraries and information centers. BIREME management has an Advisory Group with representatives from each country in the region [12].

Activities of BIREME are outlined in Fig. 3 and described briefly hereunder.

1. Establishment of a database with the indexing of all the published and unpublished health sciences literature of the region. Its importance is understood by the fact that the NLM has been indexing only 36 of the 800 health sciences journals, which are being published in the Region. The database being developed at BIREME is called LILACS (Literatura LatinoAmericana en Ciencias de la Salud/Latin American Health Sciences Literature). At the moment, LILACS receives inputs from eleven countries, but the number will grow just as soon as Jamaica and other centers start inputting. LILACS has some 50,000 citations with abstracts and on-line access.

2. Production of CD-ROM (Compact Disc-Read Only Memory) discs with input from LILACS. REPIDISCA (Pan American Center for Sanitary Engineering and Environment) and LEYES (Basic Legislation on the Health Sector for Latin America and the Caribbean), and their distribution to National Coordinating Centers (NCC) for strengthening local databases [13].

3. Equipping NCC with computer hardware and software for the usage of CD-ROM discs and indexing of national health literature.

4. Provide bibliographic search facilities to health professionals in the region through on-line and offline access to MEDLARS databases at NLM. LILACS database is also used for bibliographic services on demand.

5. Document Delivery service of providing photocopied articles from journals in BIREME's collection. About 92 of the requests from the Latin American countries are being satisfied by

BIREME.

6. Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) service is being offered on cancer and nutrition to about 5,000 oncologists and nutritionists in the region through periodical citations on specific subjects.

7. A quarterly bibliography - Index Medicus Latino Americano (IMLA), containing abstracts of articles published in more than 350 journals is produced by BIREME. Another publication - LILACS-SP, which includes any type of literature on public health is also produced.

8. Training of medical librarians in the region is BIREME's top priority. Since 1971, over 450 librarians in the network system have been trained. Every year, the training programme is extended to librarians from new NCC's in the network [14].

The network collaboration between BIREME and various National Coordinating Centers is outlined in Figures 2 and 3.

### Jamaica, BIREME and NLM

Unlike most other countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, Jamaica had embarked upon its own medical bibliographic programme almost at the turn of the 20th century. The first bibliographic work was carried out by Frank Cundall, who published Bibliographia Jamaicensis in 1902 and Bibliography of the West Indies (excluding Jamaica) in 1909. Seven decades later Lambros Comitas published Complete Caribbeana (1900-1975) with chapters on human biology, health and public health, folk medicine, food and nutrition, psychiatry and mental health, and fertility and family planning. However, there has been no bibliographic programme in the region nor any system of retrieval and dissemination of health information for research, health care or teaching purposes.

Recognizing the gap between the needs of the highly qualified and dynamic health personnels in Jamaica, I initiated "Caribbean Health Information Project" (CHIP) at the University of the West Indies Medical Library (UWIML) at Mona soon after joining the library in 1974. The CHIP gained full momentum in 1976 as the maximum utilization of existing resources at the UWIML began. The programme involved manual

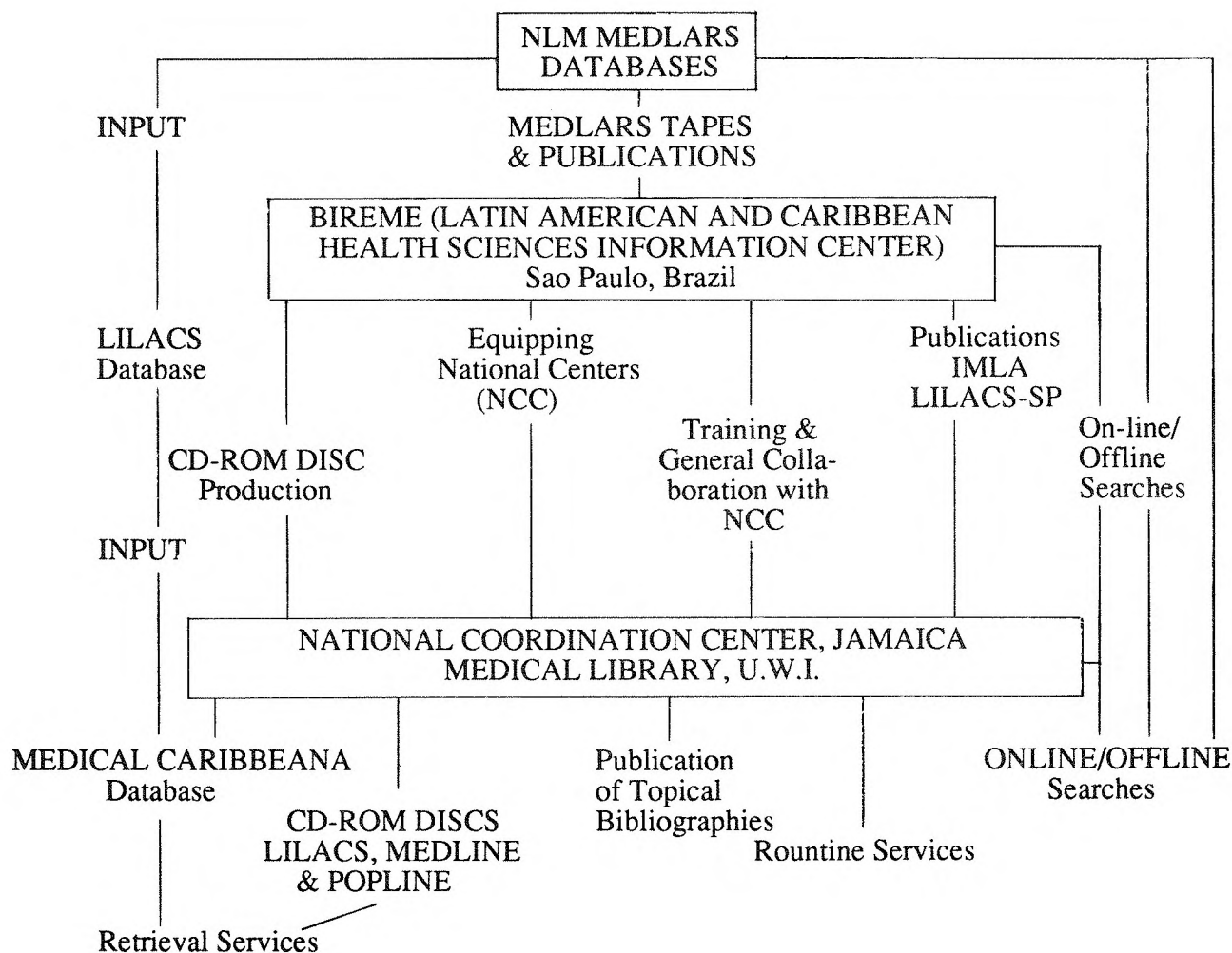


Figure 3. Individual and Collaborative Activities and Services of BIREME and UWI Medical Library, Kingston, Jamaica, as a part of Latin American and Caribbean Health Sciences Information Network

literature searches in the production of bibliographies on topics of contemporary importance as well as those suggested by the members of the medical faculty of the UWI and considered important for teaching research and health care. Till 1987, thirty-eight such bibliographies were produced by the UWIML staff. The cyclostyled bibliographies were distributed in Jamaica, English-speaking Caribbean countries and elsewhere on demand.

CHIP was upgraded in 1979 by an ambitious "Medical Caribbeana" project which envisaged indexing all available health sciences literature published in and on the Caribbean since 1979.

Initially it involved manual searches, and indexing on cards before putting it on UWI computers with author and subject access. As the work progressed on the "Medical Caribbeana", computer printouts of the indexed material were made available to the users of the UWIML. The printouts were updated every six months and were heavily used between late 1979 and early 1989.

A UWI/PAHO sponsored workshop of the medical librarians of the Commonwealth Caribbean, held at the UWI Medical Library, Mona in January 1982, had endorsed the UWI CHIP objectives and recommended the publication of the "Medical Caribbeana", creation of a regional



database and the establishment of national and a regional health information centers [15].

In the 1980s, the Ministry of Health, Jamaica, and PAHO, recognized the urgent need for establishing a national database in Jamaica and providing direct linkage between UWIML and NLM and BIREME. In March 1987 PAHO designated the UWI Medical Library as the MEDLARS Center for Jamaica and by July 1987, on-line access to MEDLARS database at the NLM was established. The facility is being utilized by Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados and St. Lucia.

In March 1988, PAHO launched a Caribbean Health Initiative Information System (CHIIS) project and recognized UWIML as the National Coordinating Center for the network and "Medical Caribbeana" as the national health sciences database for Jamaica. The project funded the printing of the already indexed "Medical Caribbeana" and on-line indexing of literature beyond that. In April 1989, the MEDICAL CARIBBEANA: an index to Caribbean Health Sciences Literature, compiled by Laxmi Mansingh, was published. The 965 pages index has over 10,000 entries covering more than 700 monographs and articles from some 1,100 regional and international journals.

The on-line indexing of "Medical Caribbeana" started in February 1989 when PAHO funded computers were installed at the UWIML. It covers Caribbeana health-related literature from 1988 onwards. Till the end of 1989, 1,300 such entries were indexed. The Medical Caribbeana database will input indexed material to the LILACS database on a regular basis.

In March 1988, BIREME equipped the UWIML with a microcomputer, CD-ROM Reader, Printer, FAX Machine and the CD-ROM discs containing LILACS database, and Compact Cambridge Medicine discs containing 1986, 1987 and 1988 data.

In December 1988, the Population Information Program of the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, U.S.A., extended the POPLINE database to the UWIML. This will enable retrieving information on population.

As a part of the regional network, the UWIML is engaged in developing a Jamaican

national health database (Medical Caribbeana) and has on-line access to NLM's MEDLARS databases, and CD-ROM discs access to LILACS, MEDLINE and POPLINE data bases. The Medical Caribbeana database provides input to LILACS database. These and other activities of UWIML in the bibliographic control of the health related literature are outlined in Figure 3.


Bibliographic control of health literature through the process of indexing has proven to be the best strategy for organization and retrieval of information. Computer technology has improved the efficiency and accuracy of indexing, retrieving and disseminating the information besides reducing the cost and providing quick services. An international network with NLM at the top, MEDLARS Centers in the middle and the National Centers at the base of the pyramid has been quite effective. As the base of the pyramid widens, several National centers would develop a similar pyramidal structure. Furthermore, as the literature grows in different countries and regions, it is possible that the top of the international pyramid also widens and the NLM is joined by a few national/regional centers of importance.

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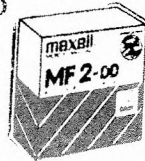
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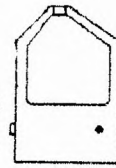
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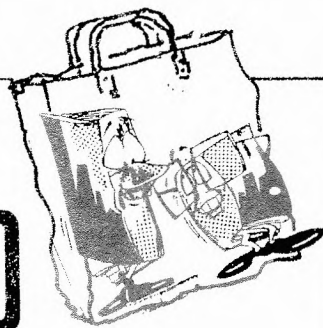
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# **INDIGENEOUS ENGLISH LITERATURE FOR CARIBBEAN CHILDREN: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

by Cherrell V. Robinson

## **Preamble**

To date very little formal research has been done on this topic and this paper sets out to present some findings and observations with regards to the kind of literature being produced for the Caribbean child, why this is so important and some of the trends and issues relating to the field from the 1960s to the present time. While attempting to present a historical overview the writer wishes to establish two things; one is that the term "Caribbean Literature" is used here in its broadest sense to mean books that describe the Caribbean experience at home or abroad, irrespective of the writer's nationality. Consequently, the authenticity of these works is judged primarily by the degree of knowledge and insight into Caribbean sensibilities revealed by the authors. The second point that must be made is that the ideas expressed here are based on preliminary research and so should be seen as referring specifically to the body of literature examined. Systematic documentation of published materials in this area is haphazard since much of the material is published privately, goes out of print rapidly and is not often recorded in any national bibliography. As a result it is not easy to identify or locate titles and so any statistics or data given should not be seen as final figures but as broad estimates based on items located. Since statistics of publications were so difficult to obtain even after consulting some of the publishers, the writer resorted to checking publishers' and library catalogues, bibliographies issued by libraries and books found in various collections.

Despite these limitations, the writer identified a fair body of Caribbean children's literature produced over the last three decades that needs to be critically evaluated to determine its value for our young people.

We also need to document and promote what exists, as well as note the issues and trends in these works.

## **The need for indigenous literature**

Until the last decade or so, most of the literature written for children either ignored blacks and other ethnic communities completely or relegated them to subordinate roles, described them in derogatory terms or as mere stereotypes. Despite the growing move towards cultural diversity and the acceptance of a multi-ethnic society in the developed countries, it still only a small percentage of books that reflects this development. This means that Caribbean children are still being nurtured on a steady diet of books with all-white characters that live in a world greatly removed from their own culture and values.

The Plowden Report states that:

"... it is through a story that children grope for the meaning of experiences that have already overtaken them, savour again their pleasures and reconcile themselves to their own inconsistencies and that of others... it is through literature that children feel forward to experiences, the hopes and fears that await them in adult life... It is almost certainly in childhood that children are most susceptible, both to living examples and to those found in books... As children listen to stories... they may be choosing their future and the values that will dominate it..."<sup>3</sup>

If there is a validity in this statement, it becomes imperative that we strive to provide our children with an ample supply of indigenous literature in which they will find themselves in the experiences described. In this way they will be given some examples from their own culture to emulate, and experiences of adulthood that they seek to move towards will reflect that of their own society. Lastly, the futures and values they choose will be in keeping with the society to which they belong.

This is by no means advocating the exclusion of literature about the experiences of other



peoples because we all recognize the contribution of all types of literature to the child's growing experience, and we anticipate that a good proportion of the child's imaginative world will be inhabited by characters from universal literature.

### **Emergence of Caribbean Literature for Children**

The development of an identifiable body of literature for the Caribbean child has been slow.

Prior to the nineteen sixties there was very little written for children, and of the few books that did exist, most were ostensibly written for the overseas audience (e.g. Lucille Iremonger. West Indian Folktales: Anansi stories from West Indian Folklore retold for English Children.) These were mainly folk-tales, nonsense verses with a few realistic fiction titles. Most of these were produced by local individuals and the physical quality and contents were not generally of a very high standard. The Pioneer Press established in Jamaica in 1950 for the publication of indigenous literature for the Jamaican people did include some titles for children among its publications. Also the education system up to this time was intended to perpetuate the dominance of the colonial powers and so did not provide any incentives for either the production or use of indigenous materials since the curriculum was similar to that of England, leaving little room for materials that reflected the lifestyle and heritage of the local people.

Gradually a spattering of children's books started to appear, mostly under British imprints and as some islands moved towards independence, the demand for indigenous materials grew partly out of the attempt to make the curriculum more relevant to the needs of the emerging nations. The latter situation has led to a trend that still persists today - the production of books primarily for educational purposes. This has also been responsible for the many anthologies of poetry and short stories that have been compiled to meet the need for local materials in the classroom. Through these collections some of our children received their first real exposure to the writings from the region.

This trickle of books became a steady flow during the seventies and eighties, until now there

is a reasonable body of children's literature for curricular and recreational purposes. Publishers now recognize that the market is viable, at least in the educational area, more persons are conscious of the need for indigenous literature and some writers of note have emerged (e.g. Salkey, Palmer, D'Costa and Rosa Guy). International organizations like UNESCO and OAS have funded projects in the region to produce supplementary readers. However, while such developments are encouraging, much more needs to be done that will guarantee our children a literary heritage that will enhance their self-image while providing for recreational and educational needs.

### **Publication trends and themes in the literature from 1960-1989**

#### Publication Data

The following data are organized to indicate the number of books published during each decade, the places of publication and the categories of material published, to give an indication of the trends and patterns of production for each of the decades. For this survey, text-oriented books are excluded since they are not usually classified as children's literature except for those used in the literature programme. Also omitted are anthologies of prose or poetry which by the nature of their arrangement and the accompanying exercises indicate that they are intended for classroom use.

Of the 284 books identified as published over the three decades, it should be noted that 204 (72%) were done in Britain, 61 (21%) within the region and 19 (7%) in the United States of America. The predominance of British imprints is to be expected because of the colonial links that tied the educational system to that of England and made it the leading supplier of texts and later trade books. As the market expanded many of these publishers (such as Longman, Heinemann, McMillan) established local subsidiaries which provided greater opportunities for publishing local materials and discovering talent. The demand for more indigenous materials to meet the requirements of the newly introduced CXC curriculum in the 1970s gave added impetus to the publishing industry in the region. One of the by-products of this increased activity was the fostering of local writers like Diane Browne, Pam Mordecai and Peggy Campbell, to name a few. Many of them

went on to produce supplementary reading books which in turn were published by these same companies.

Another source for much of this literature coming out of Britain is the immigrants who flocked to that country in the 1950s and 1960s. Among them were many of our nascent writers who gravitated towards London because of the greater opportunities for pursuing and developing their craft. Of these, only Andrew Salkey has firmly established himself as a writer for children as well as adults. To date he has nearly a dozen titles for young people to his credit. Other writers for this age group that have emerged in Britain include Petronella Breinburg, Grace Nichols, James Berry, John Agard, Ossie Murray and Errol Lloyd. The last two named are better known for their illustrations in picture books. The works of these writers and illustrators deal with the Caribbean experience at home and abroad. Unfortunately, we in the Caribbean are sometimes unaware of their publications and at other times do not realize that they are Caribbean writers when we encounter their works as there is no indication of their origin.

Local publications have always been sporadic and insufficient to meet local needs. They are usually the product of private enterprise or the few local publishing houses scattered throughout the region. The sum of 61 titles for the three decades can only serve as a rough estimate since these items are very difficult to track down as they quickly go out of print because of the small print runs. The general standard of many of the locally produced materials

tends to be low due to poor quality paper, illustrations, print, layout and design. Contributory factors to this state of affairs include the high cost of production (especially books requiring colour) and the lack of qualified personnel at all levels of the book trade. In contrast to this, however, is the high quality material produced by the local subsidiaries of well established publishing houses such as Heinemann and Longman and a few of the local publishers such as Kingston Publishers in Jamaica. The preponderance of these indigenous works being issued under British imprints should alert us to the kinds of precautions needed to ensure that colonial attitudes and racial stereotypes are not passed on thinly disguised as authentic local literature, as will be discussed later.

Only a small percentage (6.7%) comes out of North America despite the large number of West Indian immigrants resident in both Canada and the United States of America. One can only hazard a guess as to why this is so. In comparison with what prevails for Britain, it would seem as if the lack of colonial ties did not allow these countries to capture the market when the time came and the British companies are now so entrenched that there does not seem to be too much incentive for the Americans to contend for a fair share of the market. Sometimes, as in the case of C. Everard Palmer's books, American publishers do issue reprints of successful titles originally published in Britain. To the writer's knowledge, Rosa Guy is the only outstanding West Indian writer for young people to emerge from the United States. She migrated from Trinidad at an early age, and now writes very graphic and powerful novels about young Blacks coming of age in the United States ghettos.

**TABLE 1: NUMBER OF BOOKS IDENTIFIED AS PUBLISHED BETWEEN  
1960 - 1989**

PLACE	YEAR			TOTAL
	1960s	1970s	1980s	
U.K.	35	97	72	204
U.S.A.	4	10	5	19
CARIBBEAN	15	20	26	61
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>284</b>

The 1970s saw a peak in the production of indigenous material while there was a slight decline (11%) in the 1980s. The upward climb in numbers during these two decades over that of the sixties might have been due to the localizing of the curriculum to meet the demands of the newly introduced CXC examinations, and also the increase in the number of capable writers as will be seen later. The total number of titles falls short of what is required if we are ever going to make an impact on the growing consciousness of the young and help them to develop healthy self-images from seeing themselves positively represented in a good proportion of the literature they encounter.

equal number of titles appearing in the 1970s and 1980s. Research prior to this revealed that Folklore is one of the earliest forms of literature to be recorded and published in the region, and each Caribbean island has issued at least one collection. The pattern conforms to the evolution of children's literature elsewhere in the world because folktales form a part of the oral tradition and are easily accessible. For us these tales have particular significance because they were one of the chief means by which our ancestors preserved and passed on their cultural heritage.

The number of titles (which does not include reprints) attests to their popularity locally

**TABLE II: CATEGORIES OF FICTION BOOKS PUBLISHED 1960 - 1989**

CATEGORIES	YEARS			
	1960s	1970s	1980s	TOTAL
Historical	6	4	2	12
Realistic	25	52	28	105
Picture Books	2	15	16	33
Poetry	1	3	19	23
Folklore	4	22	21	47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>220</b>

#### Categories of Material

In selecting the categories under which to organize the titles the term "Picture Books" is used to refer only to fictional materials in this format. Non-fiction works in this category are placed in Table III along with information books. Poetry and folklore have also been included under "Fiction" because by their nature they do not truly qualify as informational works.

**Folklore** - During the three decades a total of forty seven (47) titles were produced with an almost

and internationally. We have many writers in this area, such as Petronella Breinburg (Surinam), Grace Hallworth (Trinidad), Jacintha Lee (St. Lucia) and the master storyteller himself, Sir Philip Sherlock (Jamaica) who was commissioned by Oxford University Press to write the Caribbean collection for their series of folktales of the world. Also from Guyana there is a prolific writer of modern Anansi stories named David Makhanlall who has several volumes to his credit. These folktales depict animals possessing all the foibles of human beings, some also include creation myths about the Arawaks and Caribs, the original inhabi-



tants of the islands. Most of them feature the irrepressible Brer Anansi - part-man, part-spider - famous for his cunning and guile, who was transported with the slaves directly from Africa. These stories form a vital link with our African heritage and embody the spirit of resilience and ingenuity our ancestors needed to survive the harshness of the slavery experience. They have personal appeal to the young because of their straightforward plots, quick action, characters that are easily identifiable as good or bad, and the satisfying conclusions with their overt didacticism. They can be used in the classroom for storytelling, to discuss values, to compare cultures and beliefs, to trace connections between our present way of life and that of our forefathers, and as a starting point for creative writing exercises after the children have identified the structural conventions of the genre. Many of them also echo the speech rhythms of our different dialects which should give our children a sense of affirmation of their everyday language.

**Poetry** - With the exclusion of the numerous anthologies of poetry intended for classroom use the remaining number of volumes for the individual's reading pleasure is very small. In the 1960s there was 1, and the 1970s, 3. There was a giant leap in 1980s, 19, with the majority of these being for younger age group.

An examination of the actual titles for the 1980s shows that of the 19 volumes published 8 belong to a set called Story poems written for the very young by a Jamaican, Pam Mordecai. They describe the typical world and concerns of the child in simple poetic language that teases the imagination. Their one drawback for the Caribbean child is the illustrations which depict only the world of the white British child, and so fails to communicate any special sense of his own existence to the Caribbean reader.

The 1980s produced two award-winning poets, both resident in England and well-known there for their works. The first is John Agard (Guyana) whose collections are suited for the five to nine age group. The poems are tough, zesty and humorous with a blend of British and Caribbean culture and rhythms reflective of the experience of the Caribbean child growing up in Britain. The second poet is James Berry (Jamaica) who writes

in the same vein, with less humour, for a teenage audience. Their poetry is useful for exploring the variety of emotions of the Black child being brought up in a predominantly white society, and for exposing the child to a situation in which his own dialect is used in a positive and pleasurable manner. The use of Caribbean speech patterns and sayings should give the child pride in his heritage and provides a satisfying experience as he recognizes familiar ground.

**Picture Books** - Only two titles from the 1960s were located, and both privately published. This is not very surprising since few publishers were willing to take the financial risk involved in producing something not directly related to the curriculum. This cautious attitude still persists today and so the majority of picture books available are either the result of private enterprise or are produced elsewhere. The marked increase in the 1970s and 1980s was brought about largely by books from overseas, primarily Britain, where the thrust towards multicultural education has increased the number of books that present each culture with dignity and respect.

In the picture book world in the United Kingdom there are several titles written and illustrated by West Indians such as Errol Lloyd, Ossie Murray and Petronella Breinburg, to name a few. One of these books, My Brother Sean written by Breinburg and illustrated by Lloyd was the runner-up in 1974 for the prestigious Kate Greenaway Medal awarded annually in Britain for the most distinguished work in the illustration of a children's book. Jan Carew (Guyana) better known for his adult works, has also written two picture books that present a beautiful fusion of story and art of which he can be justly proud.

These picture books cover familiar experiences like first day at school, venturing into a new situation, going to the carnival in London, having a new baby, pretending to be a doctor - all within the grasp of the young child, with the added bonus that these activities occur within an atmosphere of acceptance that inspires self-confidence. Although the settings may be unfamiliar to the Caribbean child, his self-esteem should be boosted as he can physically identify with the characters whom he sees as an affirmation of himself.



Despite this promising picture there is still the occasional lapse on the part of some well-intentioned author who for one reason or the other decides to write about the Caribbean experience and in so doing reveals a lack of understanding of the Caribbean consciousness. One book that falls into this category is Babylon written by Jill Paton Walsh and illustrated by Jennifer Northway.

The warm, bold and vivid illustrations capture the mood of the story, while conveying the atmosphere of the inner city and the children's exuberance at play. But this cannot compensate for the weakness revealed in the author's unsuccessful attempts to capture and reproduce Jamaican speech patterns, and the inappropriate choice of symbolism in the word "Babylon." Here one is not too clear exactly what she wished the word to symbolize as it seem to spark memories of a happy life in Jamaica. But to us, Jamaicans, the term is incongruous in this context since it is used by the Rastafarians to refer contemptuously to what they see as an oppressive social system which is slated for destruction.

When we consider the significance of picture books for early stimulation and language development and aesthetic response, then we realise that we must produce more even if the publishers will not undertake the task themselves. A group of committed writers in Jamaica have responded to this challenge by forming a Children's Writers Circle that meets monthly and holds workshops and critique sessions. Since their formation in 1983, they have published ten titles ranging from picture books to short stories for the 10 - 12 age group. Many ingenious ways were used to secure funding which included advertisements placed in the books by commercial firms and with members of the Circle investing their own money to produce the books. Marketing is conducted solely by the group which usually produces about 2,500 copies per title and manages to sell them all, an indication that there is a market responsive to aggressive promotion.

### **Realistic Fiction: Historical and**

**Contemporary** - Contemporary realistic fiction has always dominated the publishing scene and is responsible for 48% of the total output, while historical fiction has been minimal (5%). The reason for the latter might be the extra demands placed on the writer to conduct the research essential for creating an authentic and credible account of the historical period. Of the 12 titles, six focused on the theme of struggle and resistance in order to

gain national and individual freedom. This should not be too surprising when we remember our historical experience as a people.

Vic Reid, the author of three of these titles, sets out to rewrite the history of his people from their perspective to give them pride in their heritage and achievements. Another writer is Morna Stuart, who presents the story of two slave boys against the background of the French Revolution and its counterpart in Haiti, in the book Marassa and Midnight.

Other titles in this category recall life during the time of the Arawaks and the Caribs, (The Raid and Woodskin); the legend of three-fingered Jack (Three Finger Jack's Treasure); and life during the war years, (Voice in the Wind).

It is in the area of contemporary realistic fiction for children as well as young adults that we have achieved the highest level of artistry over the past three decades. We have produced a number of prize-winning writers beginning with Andrew Salkey in 1967 who won the German Book Prize for Hurricane. His success has been repeated by Zee Edgell, with Beka Lamb for the Fawcett Society Book Prize, Marlene Norbese Philip received the Casas de las Americas Prize for Harriett's daughter, Olive Senior won the Commonwealth Writers Prize for Summer Lightning, and James Berry gained the Smarties Prize for A Thief in the Village. Andrew Salkey, C. Everard Palmer and Jean D'Costa were consistent writers during the sixties and seventies, with new writers coming to the fore in the eighties. Early works of Michael Anthony (Green days by the river and The year in San Fernando) although not written specifically for children, have also been included because of their sensitive portrayal of adolescence. Themes frequently dealt with include: the resilience of people in the face of national disasters, growing up with its accompanying pains and perplexities, greed and its destructive power, the yearning for a sense of belonging and social acceptance, divorce and death. All the preceding are relevant to the daily lives of the Caribbean child and should elicit a positive response from them.

There is an obvious omission in these novels of controversial themes such as sex, religion and violence which are no longer considered taboo in the wake of the new realism prevalent in North America and Britain. However, it may only be assumed that our local writers may be unwilling

ing to incur the displeasure of our seemingly conservative societies so they avoid such topics. The only author to date who has openly dealt with one of these explosive subjects is Rosa Guy in Ruby, a novel focused on a lesbian relationship which becomes the vehicle for exploring the young person's need to love and to be loved.

These realistic indigenous novels furnish useful insights into West Indian life at home and abroad for the readers and help them realize that they are not alone in their stryuggles to cope with the vicissitudes of life, and they may even hint at strategies for coping since the solutions are presented in terms of the readers's own social and cultural context. Their greatest impact on their personal development should come from the fact that they are written out of a familiar background and a consciousness with which the child can readily identify. A well planned literature program based on these novels and employing a variety of presentation techniques can lead the readers to a clearer understanding of themselves, others, and their society while providing for personal enjoyment.

### Informational Books

This was one of the most difficult areas to trace materials, especially the older ones. Most of the informational books published are aimed at the educational market where sales are guaranteed, so there are many textbook titles but few for the general market. The statistics support this when we see that only 64 out of the 284 fall within this category. Caribbean geography and history are the most popular topics of books published within this category (53%). A scattering of books on biography, science, religion, and music, surfaces occasionally, among which are some music books worthy of note because they include several songs from the region with the accompanying musical score, thus making it possible for children at home and abroad to share with pleasure the cultural heritage of the region.

These are almost invariably written by foreigners and are subject to inaccuracies caused by too many generalizations, over-simplifications, errors in historical data, superficiality and stereotyping. In addition, there is always the tendency for the writers to adopt a patronizing tone and too often the emphasis in text and illustrations is on primitiveness. Also there are those that read like expanded tourist brochures highlighting mainly the exotic. Such books fall short of the standards

of accuracy and authenticity required for informational works, and do little to convey any sense of pride in self or cultural heritage.

A biography, Bob Marley, of the famous reggae singer and one of the Let's visit series will be used to illustrate this problem.

Bob Marley is one in a series that according to blurb is supposed to "... narrate the lives of famous people and in the process tell an interesting and enjoyable story, while providing solid factual information about the figure and their times ..." Yet this book is riddled with inaccuracies, with the author repeatedly making value judgements, and very often resorting to exaggerations in order to prove some point. He states that even though the Jamaicans were freed from slavery in 1838 their lives are still little different from then. He takes time out to explain "obeah" to make sure the readers understand that it is an uncivilized primitive practice. He cannot conceal his wonder at the fact that Jamaica could produce a singer of the stature of Bob Marley, failing to mention Jimmy Cliff, Peter Tosh and others who have also won international acclaim. Finally, there is no bibliography or indication of the sources for his material, and the black and white pencil drawings create a shadowy picture of the great singer. Surely, a judicious selection of pictures from the thousands of photographs available would succeed in making him more real, especially since this is supposed to be a biography.

Another example, Let's visit Jamaica written by Frances Williams and illustrated with photographs, has a 1987 copyright date, but the attitude and concept displayed belong in the past. Firstly, the picture on the cover is that of a peasant with a banjo - reminiscent of the happy-go-lucky negro, who loves music. The map at the beginning includes the two major cities, but the other places included seem to have been chosen because of the quaintness of their names rather than for their importance in the country.

The inaccuracies are innumerable. For example, the writer states that the majority of the population belongs to the Church of England and that the Jamaicans rid themselves of evil spirits to the beat of jungle drums. The illustrations, though fairly accurate portrayals of conditions in some parts of Jamaica, are so used that they suggest primitiveness as evidenced by a revivalist group, the Maroons, girl on a donkey, children in a shack. Also throughout the text, to make sure that the

**TABLE III: INFORMATIONAL BOOKS PUBLISHED 1960s - 1980s**

CATEGORIES	YEARS			TOTAL
	1960s	1970s	1980s	
Biography	2	2	1	5
Geography/History	10	8	16	34
Religion	-	-	2	2
Science	1	-	2	3
Music	1	6	3	10
*Miscellaneous	4	3	3	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>64</b>

\*(Miscellaneous includes books on careers, first aid, cookery, sugar, water and cement)

reader understands the weird nature of the people and their beliefs she generously adds quotation marks. Her tongue-in-check, superior attitude lessens the value of the book, and renders it unsuitable for use in schools, except with proper guidance from the teacher.

### **The 1990s and Beyond**

Over the last thirty years we have witnessed the emergence of a recognizable body of indigenous literature for our young people. While we have occasions for pride in some of our achievements we still have a long way to go. If we believe that literature is essential to education because it orders, evaluates and illuminates the reader's growing experience - then we must seek ways to promote the creation and availability of books relevant to the needs, interests and social circumstances of our young people.

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**DESIGN PLANNING OF AN INFORMATION  
DEPARTMENT  
A CASE OF STUDY FROM PCJ**  
by Elsie E. Aarons

**Idea and Vision**

The idea and vision for the PCJ Resource Centre became a reality in 1987 when the building was formally opened. The years of planning and design which preceded this event had seemed endless. The idea was born out of a desire to construct an energy efficient building but at the same time a structure which was open and which did not deny visual or physical access to our beautiful tropical environment. Hence, the north-south orientation to take advantage of prevailing winds, the open "atrium" design to allow air and light through the centre of the structure and the large glass windows to promote excellent views in all directions over the corporate area.

The first plans were drawn in 1981 by Architect Marvin Goodman. These were the first of many over the next few years. They embodied the free atmosphere of PCJ and the commitment to developing appropriate energy technology for buildings in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean.

The purpose of this article is to share the unique experience of planning the layout of an information section in the new building, through a move and the subsequent "settling in" period. Aspects of this experience can be applied by those persons faced with a similar situation - even if the move is from one floor to another.

**Plans and requirements**

The construction of a building is not a "one-shot" operation. There are special requirements for its proposed use, type of operation, number of personnel, etc., and plans are made accordingly. Concurrent with architectural design therefore, is the preparation of plans for use and layout of floors. A Building Committee was established for this and at all times there was corporate representation at the Architects meetings. Each Division and Department had to identify staff requirements and detailed descriptions of work to be performed. This had implications for meeting rooms, likely number of visitors,

location of computer terminals, traffic patterns, to name a few.

To prepare this kind of information for a library is a particularly challenging task. It was necessary to forecast needs and assess special requirements when projects were growing, subsidiaries were being developed and organizational structure was changing accordingly.

The Library at PCJ started as the usual one person special library in 1980. This evolved to a much larger Department in 1989, with both a Library and a Production Unit. In planning the layout this change was taken into account.

**Layout**

The layout of the section is based on the "open plan style" using the workstation concept rather than closed or individual offices. This was also in keeping with the requirements for energy efficiency with respect to lighting and air-conditioning. In planning the layout, the relationship which TIS had with other Departments was examined. The Library had to be "up front." Each operation was studied in detail and the design of the front desk was carefully planned. It included not only the main workstation but other seating areas to accommodate a terminal, a microfilm machine and extra seating for a temporary worker such as a UWI/Department of Library Studies student. Lockable drawers, newspaper storage, disguised cubby holes were all part of the design.

The secretarial workstation has special "slot" shelving to store stationery. A "hide-away" for the typewriter allows it to be pulled out when required for use. A special shelf at eye level allows privacy to open mail and handle documents.

Each workstation has an in/out tray with a hidden area beneath for books, folders, etc. A corkboard for each workstation fits neatly over the front panel and can be placed and used at the convenience of the staff member. The length of wall under the windows has built-in counters - wide enough to allow each workstation to be L-shaped, giving increased working and storage areas. Each workstation has task lighting to supplement ceiling lighting on overcast days. The

computer workstation has a lower surface and appropriate cuts for paper feed from the floor. It is sited at an L-shaped corner which darkens the area around the monitor.

The final layout did not come overnight. It took many hours and weeks of critical assessment of each person's work processes, and finally continual dialogue directly with the architect, interior designers and furniture builders. This was PCJ's third and the library's second move. For the first move a layout plan was prepared for the library, with scale cutouts of furniture and equipment. For the move to the Resource Centre, an architectural blueprint was used.

Many details had to be taken into consideration. Some of these were to:

- i) Ascertain the current journal stock and forecast the likely stock in five years' time. Estimate the shelf space likely to be needed based on the space taken by one year's issue of each title and assign space for current or back journals.
- ii) Ascertain the size of special collections, their importance, their growth potential and assign space and location.
- iii) Determine the potential size of the reference collection and locate it within visual range and protective custody of the front desk.
- v) Determine the size, likely growth and potential use of the map collection and design a use area near to the storage area.
- vi) Ensure that workstations, exhibition layout areas and tables were all exactly the same height to ensure ease in layout of large quantities of graphic material.
- vii) Include a small washroom for cleaning pens, using paints, etc. for graphic purposes.
- viii) Include workstation/seating facilities in the storage rooms with special collections.

### Site visits

It was important to keep abreast of changes in the design plan but equally important to make

frequent site visits. As soon as the steps to the fourth floor on which the library would be located were installed, we made our first visit in low-heeled shoes and the necessary hard hats. From this time on it was interesting to follow the progress of construction from wet, unfinished surfaces to the final carpeted, textured rooms. It was important to see what was being done and to ensure that each step was contributing to the objectives of the end product.

On one visit prior to the move, it was observed that the location of the washroom door vis-a-vis the sink fitting was incorrect and this was amended before further work was done.

### The Information Component

TIS ensured that a photographic record was made of the entire building project. The photo story commenced from the original site with views of piles of garbage and clumps of bush. The photo record shows site clearance, excavation for the underground water tank, the simple groundbreaking ceremony, construction and addition of each floor, the move and the opening ceremony. It is not enough just to construct the building but also to ensure a visual record of its progress.

As the building neared completion, arrangements were made for visits by staff other than those directly involved with construction or layout planning.

In addition, regular reports were included in the PCJ (Staff) Newsletter to ensure that staff members were kept informed about the progress of the building.

### The Move

It was necessary to move in before the building was finally ready - and it was difficult to define what or when is "finally ready!" The move took place during the last week of January 1987.

Moving a library is a challenge. Preparation started weeks, even months in advance, with general tidying up procedures. The Luana collection, which had moved three times without organization and which had neither home nor parent, was the target for a blitz project with a temporary staff member employed for the purpose. This collection alone utilized some 24

boxes. All publications and special collections were examined in detail and excess material sent to other libraries or discarded as necessary. Some excess duplicates were destroyed after it was clear that they had no future. Material so designated was incinerated.

Based on a prepared plan, each staff member in TIS had a specific area of responsibility to tidy, clear and pack. The book collection was put in a strict classified order and packed in that order in labelled boxes. The oil and gas exploration collection received similar attention. A printout was done of the Library catalogue to ensure easy access to the collection after the move. Boxes were numbered to match their equivalently numbered areas in the new building. Altogether TIS moved with about 200 pack boxes in addition to furniture.

TIS was identified as the most difficult - that is with the most to move - but also the most organized (normal for an information department). The moving van was late and TIS property was manouvered in on the night of January 25, 1987 at 10:40 p.m. There were no lights in the section but this was solved by hastily borrowed lamps and extension cords. A minor logistics problem - one of several.

The wall finishes had - unknown to us - not been applied and this was done the following morning. It meant that boxes and equipment assigned to special storage rooms, were taken out by the workmen, who with no commitment to numerical order or placement, created additional grief - logistics again! It took several weeks of moving things in, out and around to be able to find anything without agony. In the midst of the frustrations it is to the credit of the staff that a cheerful and cooperative spirit was maintained.

Compounding the confusion was the fact that shelving had not been installed. When it arrived, it was found that specifications had not been followed and measurements were incorrect.

Our desire to be settled in no way allowed us to accept improper work and in all cases furniture was not accepted until it met the required standard. This took some eleven months to sort out and complete. The fact that furniture/workstations were incomplete for this section allowed us to make changes simplifying the overall design

and speeding up the process. Problems which we have encountered with shelf loading showed clearly that furniture manufacturers do not understand the incredible weight of books.

In addition to the trauma of the move were the special deadline requirements for the Opening Ceremony set for February 27, 1987 - four weeks after the move. Information was required for a large photograph exhibit, a reading list, a critical research project for a full page newspaper advertisement, as well as records on the construction of the building. All this with one telephone.

### **Hindsight and memories**

In hindsight it was a terrific experience and now easy to recall calmly. It is important to share the problems associated with a move because when the dust settles and everything looks good it is easy to forget the rocky road of progress.

### **We learnt some lessons**

- i) Do not send messages to the architect, interior designer or furniture manufacturer. You will not get what you want or need. Direct contact - however improper in the scheme of things - is the only way to avoid potential eyesores or costly mistakes. This also keeps the Financial Controller on your side.
- ii) Follow up on furniture design, shelving, etc. Manufacturers do not take exact measurements seriously and especially the exacting specifications necessary for a library situation.
- iii) Do not accept half way measures. Accept manufactured items if and only if it meets your required standard of excellence.
- iv) At the same time be flexible. Things cannot go our way in everything, all the time. Foreign exchange problems, items delayed on the wharf are always around to haunt us.
- v) Walk with a steel tape. You will be



the only member of staff who has one and you will need it to check your layout and the fit of new furniture. It is also the one everyone else will borrow. It is a powerful tool when challenging the furniture manufacturer who will not expect that you know how to use it.

- vi) Be persistent but patient. Put all recommendations and criticisms with constructive comments in writing. You will need the record for at least twelve months.
- vii) Ensure that your layout is documented and the reason for the sitting of any item clearly stated. This will be useful reference for a long time afterwards.
- viii) Keep a daily record of events, meetings, problems, and solutions. It will help when you write your follow up article to this one.
- ix) Question everything. It is exhausting for you and everyone else, but sometimes the answer is worth the effort. I recall challenging the installation of some unsightly wooden panels (supposedly in connection with the telephones) and incurred the vocal wrath of the workmen. The panels were subsequently removed and to this day, along with the explanation, have never re-surfaced.

x) Keep a watchful eye on repairs, additions, new or additional wiring and lighting which could be unsightly. Encourage mutual agreement on decor and spatial relationships especially within defined areas. Individual likes and dislikes can play havoc with the visual decor of an area.

xi) Be prepared to share information on your experience so as to make life easier for others.

### Internal decor

In keeping with the objectives for a natural look in the PCJ Resource Centre we introduced as many plants as possible. These were arranged in clusters. Trailing philodendrons in hanging baskets were attached to the wall, about two feet from the ceiling. These soften the wall spaces and carry the eye upwards. A couple large Spanish jars, Ma Lou pottery and Things Jamaican vases were added. In addition to framed prints of photographs of PCJ projects (taken by staff members) there are two artistic pieces - a textile by Jackie Marshall and a bird by Allison West. Straw wall mats from Font Hill were recent acquisitions.

### Conclusion

This article covers briefly the input to the design and layout of a new information department and the subsequent move - Overall it was a challenging experience which we have tried to share as much as possible with other interested parties. It is a small aspect of the PCJ story.

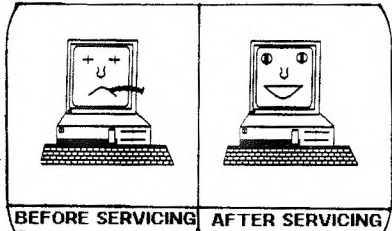
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# THE PLACE OF STATISTICAL SERVICES IN A NATIONAL/REGIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

by Sheila Lampart

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Information systems evolved in response to the need for more efficient management of information. A growing awareness of the value of information for decision-making and problem-solving; an increasing demand for more and more specialized information; the proliferation of and burgeoning cost of information materials; the inability of individual libraries/information units to attain self-sufficiency even in specific subject fields, were critical factors highlighting the need for greater co-operation, resource-sharing and rationalisation of operations in the information sector.

In this context, UNESCO promoted world-wide, in the early seventies, the advancement of scientific and technical information systems as a basic resource for socio-economic development and the eventual evolution of a world information system designated UNISIST.

Subsequent recognition of the importance of information for all sectors of the society caused a shift in emphasis towards the role of information in cultural, economic and social development and efforts to stimulate and harmonize the setting up of national information systems.

This paper attempts to present, firstly, the various concepts attributed to national information systems including their purpose, scope and major features; secondly, it will review the Jamaican experience in the development of its national information system and finally, address the expanded role of the national information system envisaged by the present new administration.

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/Schutz, H. et al. Function and organization of a national documentation centre in a developing country. Paris, Unesco, 1975, 218p.

## 2. NATIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

### 2.1 Definition

The composite term "national information system" can be interpreted in several ways, as more than one meaning can be given to each term.

For purposes of this paper, "national" signifies country-wide or nationwide. There are national information activities that are limited to a particular sector as in national agricultural, or to a particular community as in national research community or to a special service as in national public library. There are also national information activities that link all sectoral and intersectoral information activities, all kinds of institutions and services and aim to serve all levels of users in the society - a system that is applicable both vertically and horizontally.

The second term "information" has been defined in many ways. A rather standard definition ascribed to Schutz (1975) states that information is

"intelligence or knowledge communicated, and the communication of intelligence or knowledge"

A more interesting interpretation presents information as

"conclusions drawn from an analysis of data which contribute to new ideas, stimulate reflection, promote discussion and enable efficient and effective action"

Emanating from a meeting of experts gathered for a Regional Seminar on National Information and Information Policies in Africa (PADIS 1989) is a broad and more elaborate definition which reads as follows:

"Information is intelligence or knowledge that contributes to the social, economic and cultural well-being of society irrespective of the form in which it is encrypted (text, figures, diagrams, etc.)"

irrespective of the mode of dissemination (oral, written or audio-visual, etc.) the social activity that gives rise to it (research, administration, censuses, remote sensing, etc.) and the institutions that organize and disseminate it (libraries, documentation centres, archives, statistical offices, mapping agencies, geological surveys, computer centres, media broadcasting services, telecommunication services, etc.) (PADIS, 1989)<sup>2</sup>.

Indeed this definition embraces information representations, formats, activities, organisers and communicators.

The third term "system" as defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary is a set of connected things or parts forming a complex whole. Samuelson and Borko (1977) states:

"Information systems is that combination of human and computer-based capital resources which results in the collection, storage, retrieval, communication and use of data for the purpose of efficient management (planning, decision-making, reporting, control) . . . 3"

A national information system is basically a network of existing information resources, with new services for identified gaps, so co-ordinated, as to reinforce and enhance the activities of the individual units and thus enable specified categories of users to receive the information relevant to their needs and abilities.

In its widest sense it is responsible for national information activities at large; for the level of efficiency and cost-effectiveness obtained in the collection, organization, storage, retrieval, manipulation and communication of information by virtue of the modern information management concepts, tools and technologies that are put to use.

## 2.2 Purpose

Briefly put, the major objective of a national information system is to ensure that members of that country have access to the information they need to carry out their respective functions particularly in relation to the achievement of national development goals.

Relevant information must be available to achieve national priorities such as human resource development, cultural awareness, national identity, greater productivity and economic progress.

## 2.3 Possible Scopes

As mentioned in the quote from Samuelson and Borko<sup>4</sup> noted above and in keeping with UNESCO's guidelines on the subject, the original emphasis given to bibliographic information has been expanded to include:

- numerical and non-bibliographic data
- non-governmental information required for industrial development such as design specifications, standards, patents, laws and regulations
- financial and economic information
- information on research and development

that is, a wide range of information inputs in a multiplicity of formats to support political, socio-economic and social transformation.

## 2.4 Major Features of a national information system could be identified as follows:

- i. A formal commitment by Government to the provision of a reliable information delivery system as an integral part of development policy.
- ii. A realistic assessment of the existing information infrastructure in order to determine its adequacy and its effectiveness.

<sup>2</sup> Pan African Documentation and Information System (PADIS). Issues pertaining to national information policies in Africa. Addis Abba, UNECA, 1989. 36p.

<sup>3</sup> Samuelson, K. Borko, H. and Amey, G.X. Information systems networks. Amsterdam, North-Holland, 1977, 148p.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

- iii. The formulation of a national information plan incorporating the established systems and their further co-ordinated development, and the accommodation of new systems and services in order to provide equitable access to information as needed by all users in all sectors and at all levels of the development process.
- iv. The establishment of a structural framework which delineates responsibilities and services of institutions and which recognises and acknowledges the significant role of a central co-ordinating agency.
- v. The enactment of relevant legislation, when necessary, to set up appropriate national institutions to ensure compliance with and stability in the procedures essential to the smooth and effective functioning of the national information system.
- vi. A commitment by all components and participants to resource-sharing, to common standards and practices and superimposed channels that the plan might entail.
- vii. A maximum of available resources - human, financial, material and physical.
- viii. Sustained programme planning and development based on practical goals that are significant as well as realizable and making provision for compatibility of systems at national, regional and international levels.
- ix. The introduction of modern technology, where appropriate, in a phased and orderly process.
- x. The use of available telecommunications facilities to achieve systems interconnections for speedier access to and transfer of information locally, regionally and internationally.

- xi. Special attention to development of the specialized human resources essential for the planning, operation and promotion of the systems and services, and the training of users.
- xii. Improvement and strengthening of the institutional components of the information transfer chain.

### 3. THE JAMAICAN EXPERIENCE

3.1 The need for a national information system in Jamaica was expressed in 1972 by leading professionals in the country who were named by the Government to examine the existing situation regarding libraries and to make recommendations. Government's response in keeping with their report, was to appoint an advisory body, the National Council on Libraries, Archives and Documentation Services (NACOLADS), to make recommendations to Government regarding the co-ordinated development of a national information system.

3.2 In September 1974 the Jamaica Cabinet endorsed the authority of NACOLADS and its objectives as policy.

3.3 Comprised of information professionals, government officials and experts from related fields, NACOLADS took its responsibilities seriously and proceeded to carry out its terms of reference.

The Council's **modus operandi** was to involve fully the information providers, planners, educators and users under expert guidance in assessing the existing situation and formulating a national plan for the development of the national information system.<sup>5</sup>

3.4 This plan, entitled Plan for a National documentation Information and Library System for Jamaica, published in

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<sup>5</sup> Plan for a national documentation, information and library system for Jamaica, Kingston, Jamaica, NACOLADS, 1978.



1977 was accepted in principle by Government and became the blueprint for the first phase of the development of the national information system.

It included a structural framework for the national information system which was a network of networks to be co-ordinated by NACOLADS. Major components were the Jamaica Library Service, a network of island-wide public and school library systems; the University of the West Indies Library network at Mona; four networks of special libraries (three subject-oriented and one community-oriented) under the umbrella of the newly constituted National Library of Jamaica, and the Jamaica Archives.

3.5 It was envisaged that one central national bibliographic data base, located at the National Library of Jamaica ((NLJ) would provide information on publications available in the national information system and NLJ would be responsible for the National Referral service. It would also be the responsibility of NLJ in collaboration with NACOLADS, to set standards and to promote national compatibility of systems in keeping with the relevant regional systems.

3.6 In time, as various problems arose in relation to the implementation of this plan, a review was undertaken and several modifications made in keeping with developments locally and abroad. One of these was related to the widening scope of information needs with increasing emphasis on non-bibliographic information. Another was decentralisation of the building of the national bibliographic database with shared responsibility among the major networks.

3.7 The Second Plan formulated in 1983/84 and published in 1987, addressed these matters and incorporated, inter alia, the following modifications.<sup>6</sup>

The national information system would be based on:

- separate automated database systems to be compiled at the major network focal points and connected by telecommunications links
- in addition to bibliographic databases, factual data bases, e.g., directories of institutions of experts; of research in progress, would be compiled
- the structural framework would include the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) responsible for the collection, storage, retrieval and dissemination of national statistics.

It is the last mentioned institution - STATIN and its incorporation into the national information system with which this paper is most concerned.

3.8 On the publication of the First Plan in 1978, it was the Director of the Department of Statistics, as it was then called, who questioned the authority of NACOLADS to formulate a plan for the development of a national information system, when the Department of Statistics was, by law, the authority for the collection, processing and dissemination. In the Director's estimation that type of information - statistics - was essential for national development. On the other hand, the libraries were pre-occupied with the need for awareness of and access to publications, particularly those produced locally and regionally.

#### 4. USERS NEDS

4.1 More than twenty years ago, social scientists, seeing the need for preserving data collected in the process of social science research, began suggesting that libraries might become part of the conservation effort. Their concern was based on the fact that data are expensive to collect and their research value is seldom fully

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<sup>6</sup> Second Plan . . . 1987.

exploited by the original investigator. If repositories of such data were established, data could be made available for a fraction of their initial collection. The original user was a researcher who wished to provide a statistical analysis of a body of data to prove or disprove a hypothesis<sup>7</sup>. Data were collected, stored and used for establishing trends, for modelling purposes, for forecasting and for planning.

4.2 However, the pace of change in the technological, political and social milieu today makes the availability of current statistics obligatory. A new user of numerical data has emerged - one who is not as interested in numerical data as part of the pursuit of knowledge but is more interested in data as information. Today it is from the analyses of data that discoveries are made and decisions taken. Data are used for research of all types - in the business world, in economics, in finance and the person with the accurate and current information has the advantage.

4.3 The expressed need of users, for example in the recently launched Caribbean Energy Information System (CEIS) and by the Planning Institute of Jamaica has convinced information professionals that numerical databases have become an important new source of information.

4.4 Several factors contribute to the value and usefulness of these databases, namely:

- they may contain information not available elsewhere
- they are sometimes the only, and often the most complete, up-to-date source of information
- they may include published as well as unpublished information
- their use allows the statistics to be manipulated according to the need of users

- they facilitate the supply of pre-negotiated or customized products tailored to meet specific requirements.

4.5 In this context, over the past decade, Government has established computerized systems for recording and communicating statistical data in priority areas - agriculture, banking, economics, energy, population, trade, *inter alia*.

## 5. INFORMATION INTERMEDIARIES

5.1 Traditionally libraries have provided statistical information from printed sources such as copies of reference tools obtained both locally and from overseas and particularly those produced by the national statistical institution.

5.2 Many libraries already search online bibliographic databases, for example those in the DIALOG Information Retrieval System but they have not yet extended themselves to searching the numerical data files such as PREDICAST, LABSTAT and US Imports available in the DIALOG System. Numeric files in machine-readable form is not the traditional type of information resources found in libraries.

5.3 Librarians and other information professionals however, have an obligation to provide access to these new forms of information either directly or by referral.

Part of the referral capability should include the collection of database directories and investigation of factors such as:

- what is available on a given subject
- the scope of coverage

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<sup>7</sup> Dionne, Jo Anne. "Why librarians need to know about numeric databases" in Numeric databases, Norwood, N.J. Ablex Pub. Co., 1984. 238p.

- frequency of updating and revision
- cost
- who can be consulted on technical matters
- nature and quality of available documentation

#### 5.4 Library staff must be aware of:

- the importance of these databases as an information resource
- the methods of gaining access of desired files
- the contents of individual files

and refer their clientele to the appropriate provider of such information.

At this level the identification of locally and regionally held numerical files is necessary. At another level, libraries could purchase or assist in the purchase of data sets often available in various formats with the aid of new technology - magnetic tapes, diskettes, microfiche, videotex - and maintain them for use by their clientele.

Of critical importance is the need to know what statistical information is available and where it can be obtained.

## 6. STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA (STATIN)

### 6.1 STATIN as Focal Point

The strategic role of STATIN as co-ordinator of statistical activities among Government agencies and private sector interests makes it an ideal access point for statistical data generated in the country. By law any information requested by STATIN from any individual or institu-

tion, must be supplied. That information is regarded as confidential and can only be published in summary where the source cannot be identified. Because of this, delays can be experienced in the release of urgently needed information.

The ultimate role for STATIN is a focal point of a network of statistical data banks.

### 6.2 STATIN as Referral Centre

Many decisions in the nation are made on the basis of information collected, analyzed and dissemination by Government agencies. These data are gathered by a variety of agencies for their own purpose but are used in different ways by other components of the public and private sectors. Examples of such use are:

- by farmers to determine crops in demand
- by businesses to plan new location
- by the state to set educational priorities

In such situations if STATIN itself does not have the data needed it is able to direct seekers of such information to the particular institution which gathers, analyzes and disseminates that information.

STATIN acts in an advisory capacity to many of these institutions in planning and implementing surveys, in streamlining data formats, in setting procedural standards and sometimes actually carries out surveys on their behalf.

### 6.3 STATIN as a Database Provider

According to the Second Plan<sup>8</sup>, published by NACOLADS in 1987, STATIN outlined four phases of its development programme, as follows:

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<sup>8</sup> Second Plan . . . 1987

- i. Bibliographic control of statistical publications and other data collections;

Provision of:

- ii. "meta data" including:
  - a description of the format of statistical tables or files in which the data is held
  - concepts, definitions and classifications of statistical units and data items
  - methods of collection
  - measures of reliability;
- iii. an integrated statistical file system with a facility for access by selected agencies; and
- iv. accessing facilities via remote terminals on-line to enable the data to be manipulated by major private and government users, including libraries, some of them equipped with printers and graph plotters.

At present, STATIN, can provide on request, tapes of statistical data of local origin and in the future tapes from overseas sources. There are certain restrictions as to what the users can do with the data and there is an obligation to send copies or reports based on the data to STATIN and to acknowledge the source.

#### 6.4 Achievements

So far phases i. and ii. have been realised and in phase iii. statistics collec-

ted - consumer prices, labour, trade, etc. - have all been computerized. Integration of the files has not yet been done chiefly due to the lack of technical staff to undertake the task, but it is recognised that the scope of the programme would have to be expanded to meet increasingly sophisticated needs.

#### 6.5 Accessibility

The statistics provided by the national agency should be presented so that they are intelligible and useful for all categories of users - the specialist who is usually well-experienced in their use and also the non-specialist who has a general interest in the field.

The statistics must be easily accessible and the fact that they exist must be known.

The needs of the non-specialist can perhaps be better satisfied through publications which ought to be designed for use by practically anyone who needs to use them.

With the aid of the computer, more timely data in more combinations of variables and greater geographic flexibility will contribute to an expanded capacity to meet the needs of the more sophisticated user.

### 7. STATISTICAL SERVICES IN A REGIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

7.1 Existing regional information systems in the Caribbean have been established chiefly by the Governments of the region and these are essentially on a sectoral basis, e.g. socio-economic; agricultural.

The structure of the regional information system comprises a regional focal point as the co-ordinator of a network of national nodes.



7.2 The only regional information system now providing statistical services is the Caribbean Energy Information System (CEIS). In the area of banking and finance, a subregional debt management information system for member states of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank is in place and meets a well-defined need<sup>9</sup>. The Agricultural Information System (ACT) comprising five non-bibliographic data modules operates within Trinidad and its sister organisations in Antigua and Dominica<sup>10</sup>.

7.3 National Statistical Agencies exist in the Caribbean states and there is a collaboration and co-operation among them through a regional association. Publications are exchanged and statistical data are provided on users' requests.

Combined development of these national units, i.e. computerisation and online access to the national statistical databases, is anticipated. In keeping with the structure of regional information systems, a regional focal point needs to be identified to which the national statistical units could be formally linked and through which further co-ordination could be carried out in order to facilitate access to, exchanging and transfer of statistical data.

## 8. CONCLUSION

The Jamaican national information system as envisaged for the 21st Century will be the product of national policy, firm leadership, professional commitment, participatory management and the support of technical assistance programmes.

It aims to be:

- a mission-oriented system having as its basic purpose, its original goal of timely access to accurate up-to-date information as required for decision-making, policy-formulation and problem-solving in national development.

- multi-sectoral as it aims to handle information relevant to a variety of sectors with emphasis on national priorities such as agriculture, energy, manufacturing, tourism, trade, etc.
- a multi-information type system which originally concentrated on bibliographic information but will give increasing attention to factual, numerical, statistical commercial and industrial information
- a multi-dimensional system involved in information processing, storage and retrieval, information training, advisory services and referral services.
- modular in design, gradually incorporating the use of new technologies yet enabling those information units using conventional methodologies to participate in it
- fully participatory in regional information systems.

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<sup>9</sup> A Regional information strategy for the Caribbean for the year 2000. Prepared by Fay Durrant. Georgetown, 1987.

<sup>10</sup> Williams, Allan N. "Communications and information the experience of ACT" in Report on UWIDITE/IDRC workshop on computer-based communication for Caribbean Development. March 28-30, 1988, UWI, Mona Campus, Jamaica. 32p.

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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## GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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The *Jamaica Library Association Bulletin* welcomes original contributions related to the field of Library and Information Science with special reference to Jamaica and/or the Caribbean. Articles should not have been accepted for publication or already published. Feature articles are refereed and all contributions are edited for style, accuracy, clarity and length.

- **Feature Articles:** These should reflect some academic or scholarly work and may consist of original research, state-of-the-art reviews, analyses, progress reports and interviews of outstanding persons in the field or related fields.

- **Conferences, Seminars, Workshops, Reports of Conferences, etc.** attended by members of the profession should have evaluative content as well.

- **Book Reviews:** Publications reviewed should have some relevance to Jamaica, the Caribbean or the profession and should be of academic or educational value.

**Copies:** Two typewritten copies of the article should be submitted, double spaced, including footnotes and references.

**Style:** The MLA Handbook for writers of research papers, theses, and dissertations, (New York: Modern Languages Association, 1984) is recommended for style.

**Author:** In addition to the author's name, position, place of work, mailing address and phone number should be provided.

**Abstract:** A short author abstract of about 50-100 words should accompany each feature article.

# Jamaica Library Association

The Jamaica Library Association was founded in 1949 to:

- Unite all persons engaged in or interested in Library work in Jamaica and provide opportunities for their meeting together to discuss matters relating to libraries.
- Encourage co-operation between libraries and promote the active development and maintenance of libraries throughout Jamaica.
- Promote a high standard of education and training of library staff and work towards improving the status of librarians.
- Promote a wider knowledge of library work and to form an educated public opinion on libraries.

## HOW IT WORKS

The work of the Association is carried out by the Executive Committee, five working parties and ad hoc committees appointed when the need arises.

The Executive Committee holds monthly meetings and the Working Parties and ad hoc Committees meet as often as is necessary.

### Working Parties

The objectives of the Working Parties are as follows:

#### Education & Training

To promote the general professional development of members by organising lectures, workshops and seminars on topics of interest.

#### Research and Publications

To produce the publications of the Association and encourage research into areas of interest to the profession.

#### Conditions of Service for Librarians

To address the issues of status and salaries of librarians in Jamaica, whether in the public sector, central government, colleges or schools.

#### Public Relations

To communicate policy and promote actions and activities of the Association to the membership as well as to the general public.

#### Fund Raising

To raise funds to assist with the ongoing programmes of the Association.

## MEETINGS

The Association organizes regular meetings, professional meetings, conferences, seminars and other activities to promote libraries and librarianship in Jamaica.

## PUBLICATIONS

*Annual Report*: free to members  
*JLA Bulletin* (Annual): (minimal cost to members)  
*JLA News* (3 issues p.a.): free to members  
*Librarianship as a Career* (tape/slide)  
*Information Today* (tape/slide)

The Association also publishes monographs, pamphlets and standards on matters considered pertinent to librarianship.

## SECTIONS

### School Libraries

This was the first section formed within the Association in 1973. Its main objective is to foster the development of libraries for children and young people.

Membership is open to all Association members who work in libraries serving youth or who are interested in development of such libraries.

### Special Libraries

Formed in 1981 to:

- Promote continuing education activities for the benefit of all librarians.
- Provide a forum for sharing problems and ideas so as to further the development of special libraries.

Open to Association members only.

## TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP

### Full

Open to all members of library staff in Jamaica, all qualified librarians, and to other persons who by their services to library development in Jamaica are considered eligible for membership by the Executive Committee.

### Associate

Open to persons interested in library work.

### Student

Open to all registered students of library science.

### Corresponding

Open to persons living outside of Jamaica.

### Institutional

Open to libraries or other institutions and associations.

### Sustaining

Open to individuals or organisations who are invited to subscribe a fixed sum of money for a period of not less than three consecutive years.

### Honorary

Persons who have shown a keen interest in library development or have otherwise been of outstanding service to the Association may, on the recommendation from the Executive Committee to an Annual General Meeting, be elected to Hon. Membership.

For further information please write: Secretary,  
Jamaica Library Association, P.O. Box 58, Kingston 5.