



**Jamaica Library Association  
Bulletin 2000**

**50<sup>th</sup>**

*Anniversary*

*Recalling The Past. . .*

*Venturing Boldly Into The Future*

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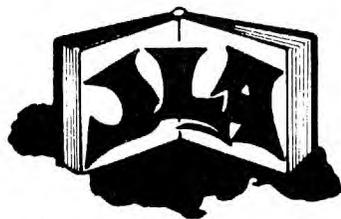
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**JAMAICA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
BULLETIN  
2000**

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## The Executive of the Jamaica Library Association — 2000

NAME	JLA POST
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Patricia Cuff Kingston and St. Andrew Parish Library	Chairman, Advocacy Committee
Stephney Ferguson Main Library, UWI	NACOLAIS Representative
Norma Amenu-Kpodo Main Library, UWI	COMLA Representative
Swarna Bandara Medical Library, UWI	UWI Representative
Byron Palmer National Library of Jamaica	NLJ Representative
Sandra Stubbs Main Library, UWI	Ordinary Member

## Editorial



An anniversary date is the traditional and a convenient time to pause and reflect on what has gone before and where one would like to go. Our Association is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> year and this natural tendency to look at both past and future is reflected in the theme for our celebrations: "Recalling the past... Venturing boldly into the future".

The theme has also guided the development of this special issue so that its content is a mix of information on where we are coming from and where we would like to go. In recalling the past, there are articles on the early years of the JLA, a fifty-year review of its achievements, brief reviews also from the two Sections of the Association, profiles of some of the past presidents of the Association, an evaluation of the 1996-1999 Strategic Plan developed by the Futures Committee and the growth of the Department of Library and Information Studies based on photographs from its collection. A tribute to volunteer workers in the library field completes our salute to the past.

The guest speaker at our Banquet in January 2000 pointed us to the future by urging us to help renew national idealism, a sense of community and to nurture a different type of leadership than we now experience in Jamaica. The future of the Association rests with young professionals and five of them, all active members, were asked to comment on various aspects of the Association in a kind of modified *Vox Pop*. The future, to some extent, is also acknowledged by a useful overview on the professional preparation of students in information technology at the Department of Library and Information Studies and by a brief report on the JLA's 2000-2004 Strategic Plan.

An anniversary issue would not be complete without a bibliography of our publications, a difficult task to complete, given the fact that the Association does not have a "permanent home" and the effect that this has had on the integrity of our records and documentation. This in fact proved to be the second guiding factor in developing this issue. It was conceived as a reference source as the relevant information on the life of the Association is scattered, not easily accessible and, in some cases, unable to be traced. Citations have been noted, where available, to assist future research and a lot of time was spent in tracking down personal sources to confirm facts, recall dates and identify colleagues in many of the photographs used. As two Presidents of the Association entered office while this issue was being

developed, the presidential addresses of both have been included.

On behalf of the Research and Publications Working Party, I would like to thank those colleagues who assisted us. Our profession is truly a generous one and we received positive responses to requests for help in many areas, often at very short notice. Special mention has to be made of Mrs. Amy Robertson, Professor Daphne Douglas, Dr. Hazel Bennett, Miss Stephney Ferguson and Mrs. Judy Cover.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Research and Publications Working Party who have worked on this project: Hyacinth Brown, Verna George, Ouida Lewis, Eileen Marshall, Judy Rao and June Vernon. It has been a long and time-consuming exercise but their patience, humour and commitment to excellence made it all worthwhile. Thanks are also due to Gracelyn Cassells, Norma Davis and Jacqueline Roberts for their help with seeking advertisements and sponsorship to off-set the publishing costs. Each member brought her own set of unique skills and strengths to the table and we were able to pool these to achieve our objective.

Barbara A. Gordon.

Chairperson, Research & Publications Working Party.

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## *Message from the Governor-General of Jamaica*

A reading society has the power to move forward. Fifty years ago the Jamaica Library Association was officially launched and, through the dedication of your pioneers and those who have served the organisation sacrificially, you have provided an invaluable service island-wide by encouraging the establishment of libraries. I have watched your growth and am pleased to congratulate you on the celebration of your fiftieth anniversary.

Over the years the Jamaica Library Association has served schools, businesses, communities, prisons, churches and international organisations with a commitment that is commendable. There is no doubt that you have been instrumental in raising our level of literacy. You are therefore deserving of accolades for the role you have played in the national education process. As we move into the twenty-first century, a new era that will be dominated by technology, it is my wish that the Association through its various members will sustain its interest in keeping abreast of advanced systems of library management and be an example to the region in the science of librarianship.



Libraries must be an integral part of any plan for national development because an educated society has the potential to effect and manage meaningful change. The mission of today's library is not only to impart love of books, but also love of knowledge whatever the source through which it is available. I wish you continued success as you take this mission to new heights.

Howard Cooke  
Governor-General

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## *Message from the Minister of Education*

Let me use this medium to congratulate the Jamaica Library Association on the occasion of its Golden Anniversary. It has been fifty years of hard work and dedication to the building of your professional organisation for the development of libraries in Jamaica.

This Association unites members from the library system — public libraries, school libraries, libraries in the private and public sectors as well as in the academic field. Yet, though it seeks to address the welfare of the various professional groups, the objectives seem much more broad-based and aimed at meeting the needs of the wider public.

The Association must be commended for the various initiatives undertaken to forge links with other professional groups and organisations so as to bring about improved training and institutional facilities. The Association's lobby for a library school at the University of the West Indies cannot go unnoticed.

Through links with international associations such as the Commonwealth Library Association and the International Federation of Library Associations, the communication



Launching the COMLA poster on *Libraries and Reading*, 1997. L to R Norma Amenu-Kpodo, Executive Secretary, COMLA; Patricia Cuff, JLS; Stephney Ferguson, UWI Main Library; and the Hon. Burchell Whiteman, Minister of Education.

network is strengthened. There is sharing of information and interchange of ideas which serve to advise on development in the field.

It is my wish that the Association will continue to experience both expanded membership and outreach.

Burchell Whiteman  
Minister of Education

## *Message from the President*



In 1950, a group of visionary librarians and other persons interested in and/or working in libraries, united to form a professional association, the Jamaica Library Association, dedicated to excellence and the development of libraries, library professionals and para-professionals.

Now, fifty (50) years later, the Association has a membership of over 300, comprising both individuals and institutions. The Association boasts membership in the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), the Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries (ACURIL), the Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA) and the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL). It also has strong links with various organisations of the international library fraternity including the International Federation of Documentation Services (FID) and the Library Association (UK). Locally, it was a foundation member of the Professional Societies Association of Jamaica (PSAJ) in 1971 and is still an active member. Two of our members, Dr the Honourable Joyce Robinson and Dr Pippa Fray were inducted into the PSAJ's Hall of Fame in 1996.

The Association has hosted several international conferences and workshops and its members have served or headed a number of international organisations. Indeed, the IASL was born in Jamaica and its first President was the indefatigable Amy Robertson, who was then head of the Schools Library Service. The JLA was also home to the first headquarters of the Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA) for many years, with Dr Pippa Fray serving as the first Executive Secretary. Some years later, our own Stephey Ferguson was elected President.

A signal achievement of the Association was its leading role in the establishment of the Department of Library Studies at the University of the West Indies in 1971. This institution has, over the years, produced an increasing cadre of professionals for the library and information sectors in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean. The Association has also facilitated and encouraged ongoing professional development of its members by promoting opportunities for visits to local and overseas libraries, conferences, seminars and workshops to observe new trends and developments and to benefit from interaction with professional colleagues.

So today, as we reflect on our past and bask in the successes we have enjoyed during the half a century, I challenge you now, as I did when I took office, to continue to carry the torch high. While recalling the past, let us redefine our goals, rethink our strategies and reorganise our operations. Thus we will reposition our Association to be a dynamic force and an insistent voice for change as we venture boldly into the future.

Over these many years, a dedicated band of women and men has worked unstintingly to ensure that the Association remains vibrant and relevant in a constantly changing world and that it continues to promote high standards for its members. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to all those who have devoted themselves to the development of our profession and Association. May we continue to build on their legacy and may God continue to bless us all as we fix our sights on another 50 years and beyond.

Hermine C. Salmon  
President, 2000

# *Message from the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions*



On behalf of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), I would like to offer the Jamaica Library Association sincere congratulations on your fiftieth anniversary.

Library associations are important tools for developing the profession. At their best, they raise the profile of librarians in the eyes of politicians, decision-makers and – all important – the community of library users and potential users. They work to improve standards of library provision, the skills of their members and they inculcate a sense of community amongst those who work in libraries. Above all, they mark the difference between an occupation and a profession.

IFLA was established nearly 75 years ago as a federation of library associations. Associations still form the core of our membership. Encouraging and nurturing them, on behalf

of libraries and their users, is a fundamental purpose of the Federation. So our delight at your golden jubilee comes naturally.

A distinctive characteristic of all professional bodies is that they depend ultimately on the voluntary effort of people who have demanding daytime jobs. The editing of newsletters, the drafting of position statements, making representations to ministers, organising promotional events such as national library weeks and the sheer slog of administration are all, to a large extent, the responsibility of a relatively small number of dedicated members.

To have completed 50 years is an achievement in itself for any organisation. To have done so, relying largely on voluntary effort, warrants a celebration in true Caribbean style!

All of us at IFLA congratulate you, our colleagues in the Jamaica Library Association, on your first fifty years. At the same time we look forward to your next fifty and to a continuing close working relationship with you.

Ross Shimmon  
Secretary General, IFLA  
The Hague  
The Netherlands

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## *Message from The Library Association*

Dear Colleagues

It is truly a pleasure to send you greetings as you celebrate your Golden Jubilee as a professional association. Since your foundation fifty years ago you have achieved a great deal and made a significant contribution to the development of Librarianship in the Caribbean and world-wide. The Library Association of the UK is proud of the fact that the Jamaica Library Association can trace its roots back to the UK. We hope that you have found the support which the LA has tried to give over the years helpful, especially in those early formative times when a young association is still finding its feet. Now we stand shoulder to shoulder in the professional world of library and information science.

There has never been a time when such solidarity has been needed more. We are working in rapidly changing times and our professionalism is often under threat from many different sources — political, economic, legal and technological. We need to stand up and be recognised as those who can and will deliver what society truly needs —

unbiased information delivered, without impediment, to all those who legitimately need access to it and that is true whether it is highly technical data or leisure reading. To do this means a change in direction for many of us and requires new skills such as marketing, political lobbying and venturing into quite new areas of expertise.

As we move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century I have every confidence that the JLA will continue its honourable track record of professional development and enable its members to take their rightful place in shaping a new and vibrant society.

The Library Association congratulates the Jamaica Library Association on its fiftieth anniversary and wishes it every success in the next fifty years.

Graham P Cornish (Rev)  
President  
The Library Association (UK)

## *Message from the Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA)*

It gives me great pleasure, as President of the Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA), to congratulate the Jamaica Library Association (JLA) on the attainment of its golden jubilee.

The relationship between COMLA and the JLA dates from the inception of COMLA in 1972, when the JLA acted as the host association for the meetings that established our association. Since then, the JLA has served for two terms as the host association for COMLA's Secretariat. COMLA is deeply indebted to the JLA for its unwavering support and is particularly mindful of its keen supporting role that has contributed to COMLA's own development, growth and success.

Fifty years is a significant lifetime for a professional organisation in the Commonwealth Caribbean and the contribution that the JLA has made to the development of pro-

fessionals across the region during these years is well known. In its pursuit of professional excellence, the JLA has served as a benchmark for its sister organisations throughout the region.

On behalf of the Americas and Caribbean Region of COMLA and the entire COMLA family, I wish to compliment the JLA for fifty (50) years of exemplary service to the profession.

Elizabeth F. Watson.  
President  
COMLA

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## *Message from the International Association of School Librarianship*

To the members of the Jamaica Library Association:

Greetings to the members and officers of the Jamaica Library Association from the members and officers of the International Association of School Librarianship! We have shared a close relationship with you during the thirty years of our existence. We feel a particularly close kinship with your organisation and your members who have also served as our IASL officers and members.

We plan to continue our close relationship for the next fifty years. We look forward to working with you to make the

world better for children in our schools. Congratulations on your past accomplishments and our best wishes for your future success.

Sincerely

Blanche Woolls  
President

# Presidential Address, 2000

by  
Hermine Salmon

Master of Ceremonies, Dr Simon Clarke, Chairman of the Jamaica Library Board, our esteemed guest speaker, Dr Blossom O'Meally-Nelson, other members of the head table, Past Presidents and other awardees, our special guests, colleagues, friends.

It is with great pleasure and some trepidation that I accept the challenge of leading this noble organisation, the Jamaica Library Association, in its 50<sup>th</sup> year of development. And what an exciting, awe-inspiring period in the history of mankind: the beginning of not only a new decade, but a new century and a new millennium!

First, I would like to warmly thank my colleagues for their confidence and trust in me. I and the rest of the Executive shall do our best to ensure that this trust is not misplaced. We know that we have a hard act to follow, considering the many illustrious persons who have captained this ship over the last fifty years: Joyce Robinson, Ken Ingram, Leila Thomas, Hazel Bennett, Daphne Douglas and the list goes on. Nevertheless, we will devote our best efforts to the task. And at this point, I crave your indulgence to present the team for the year 2000. We are committed to serve to the best of our ability.

Ladies and gentlemen, over the past year, as I reflected on this moment, and contemplated our changing needs, demands and priorities, I have agonised about what to say to you, what undertakings to give and what new challenges to throw out. After all, over the years, it has all been said, again and again, in various ways. Certainly, there has been no shortage of challenges we have talked about: the challenges of the seventies, of the eighties and of the nineties; the challenges of the new century or of the new millennium; the challenges of the new technology; the challenges of change and many more.

Yes, challenges abound. Today, however, the challenges we face are even more formidable than those of in the past. As we stand on the threshold of this new era, with its promises and its fears, I firmly believe that we have an obligation to re-define our goals, re-think our strategies, re-organise our operations and re-position our Association to be a more dynamic force in the social, cultural and economic life of our country.

Strategic thinking is critical if we are to remain relevant and keep ahead of the game. I am reminded of the story of two powerful CEOs who were engaged in talks on the merger of their respective companies. They decided to go for a weekend hike through the woods to hammer out a preliminary proposal. As they walked along they saw a bear coming towards them.

One of the men quickly bent down, pulled his running shoes from his knapsack and put them on. The other man asked, "What's the point? You can't outrun a bear!" "No, but I sure can outrun you!" the other man replied. We must be a voice for change and I am very pleased to note that we are not afraid to embrace change.

This is evident in our historic vote today, to change the name of the Jamaica Library Association (JLA) to the Library and Information Association of Jamaica (LIAJA).

We must redouble our efforts to establish standards and to secure the strengthening and upgrading of Libraries in educational institutions, from primary to tertiary, to enable them to deliver efficient and effective service to meet the diverse needs of their clients. Staff must be empowered, through vibrant staff development programmes, to exploit the opportunities offered by the constantly changing technology. This also applies to other types of libraries: those in the public as well as in the private sectors.

Let us keep our finger on the pulse of the nation. Issues, such as legislation which affect education, libraries, telecommunications, culture, the environment and the economy, must be thoroughly assessed and debated and informed positions put forward.

Let us, in recalling our past, actively develop and strengthen the links and ties with all stakeholders: local, as well as international, in the information and other sectors, for our common benefit.

Let us vigorously encourage and support the professional development of our members. For example, it seems clear that downsizing, rightsizing and re-engineering will continue to be features of both the public and the private sectors for the foreseeable future. Organisations will become leaner and leaner in the years ahead. Our members must therefore be prepared for such eventualities.

"How is this to be achieved?" The answer lies in the fact that librarians are multi-skilled and their skills are transferable. We should therefore nurture them as an important element of survival in an uncertain economic climate. We must be bold and creative, never failing to see challenges as opportunities and converting them to successes.

I would like to endorse an idea already advanced at the Executive level. This is the concept of a virtual headquarters for our Association. The technology is both available and affordable. Indeed, this would integrate very well with the JLA website that has been developed by students of the Department of Library and Information Studies at the University of the West Indies. It would certainly facilitate our more actively serving the membership.

I am particularly attracted to the idea as there is evidence all around us that expensive and imposing edifices do not guarantee the continued existence of an organisation.

Let us therefore harness our resources. Through our personal and institutional members, we must build on the legacy passed on to us by our visionary, dedicated predecessors. In this regard,

I must pay tribute to all Past Presidents and other awardees. We thank you for your foresight, dedication and contribution. Let us join forces and unite in this effort as, united we succeed, divided we shall surely fail.

Each of us has a responsibility for the success of this organisation and we must be ardent advocates of its advancement. Let us remember that the Association is all its members, not just those elected to lead it. The story is told of a church whose congregation constantly complained about how dead it was. "Pastor", they said, "the church is so dead, we may as well bury it." The Pastor agreed and, the funeral was set. Before the homily, the Pastor invited the congregation to view the corpse.

As they filed past the casket, each member appeared to be upset and shocked. They quietly took their seats. The Pastor had placed a mirror in the casket and each member saw his own reflection.

Colleagues, may this never happen to us. Let us embrace positive and meaningful change as we venture boldly into the future to continue the building of the Association, assured by St. Paul's encouragement to Timothy... that God has not given us a spirit of timidity and fear but a spirit of power, love and a sound mind.

May God continue to bless us all.

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*Excellent contribution. Congrats!*

*Now, venture boldly into the future!*

Hermine C. Salmon, President



**Congratulations for 50 years of outstanding leadership to the Library/Information field.**

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## Presidential Address — 1999

by  
Cherrell Shelley-Robinson

Madam Chairperson, Honorary Members, Regular Members of the Association, Ladies and Gentlemen — It is with a sense of humility that I accept the position of President of the Association in the final year before the dawn of the third millennium. It is also the year before the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first official meeting of the Association. While I count it an honour to be asked to lead the Association, I also regard it as a serious responsibility entrusted to me by you, my colleagues, because the Association is at a crucial juncture. Fifty years is an important milestone and the beginning of a new millennium in a global society characterised by rapid change. It presents a real challenge to us professionally and otherwise.

After so many years it is a good time to celebrate our achievements and it is also an opportune moment to pause and evaluate past actions and plan future strategies. According to Richard Dougherty, writing in *American Libraries*, we need to do some “preferred futuring” — creatively envisioning the future we desire by celebrating past accomplishments, assessing what is or is not working now, looking at the changing external environment and then creating a series of images of the future. This should then be followed by strategic planning in order to transform visions into reality. Importantly, he also stated that this is best done as a group activity. So while we may delay the celebrations for next year, I thought that perhaps it would be salutary for us to do some evaluation of the Association this year, starting now. Quite fittingly, the featured panel discussion this morning gave members a chance to do some of this. Based on your responses, it seems that we are both satisfied and not too satisfied with our present position.

Fifty years later is a good time for serious reflection and re-imagining. We must remember and acknowledge the work of stalwarts of our profession who, in those early years, laboured unstintingly and sacrificially to lay a solid foundation and paved the way for the evolution of the profession as it is today. Some of them are still with us and continue to contribute in every way possible. They have carried the first leg of the relay and it is now up to us, inheriting the fruits of their labour, to carry the baton into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We therefore need to question ourselves about the legacy we are creating for the future generation of librarians.

A professional association has certain obligations to *its* members that it is expected to fulfil. The members, however, also

have obligations to their association. In order for the association to meet these expectations, members need to assess their own commitment to *it* as expressed by what they do.

We need to re-assess how effective we have been in:

- lobbying for the good of the Association’s members
- setting standards for the profession reflected in a code of ethics
- developing and maintaining quality service in different types of information units
- convincing the general public and government that we are the experts when it comes to information issues and so we should be their first point of reference when they need information or are devising policies on information issues
- creating new knowledge in the field through research and publication
- promoting and acting as advocates for the profession through writing letters to the editor, speaking to others about the profession and being ready to defend issues of interest to our field.

We often ask: what is my professional association doing for me? A valid question, but we also need to ask: what am I doing, or have done, for my professional association? It is a mutual affair. Our Association is only as good as its members and that means each one of us. Therefore I would like to ask each of us not only to evaluate the work of the Association over the years, but also to do a personal evaluation:

- am I carrying out my professional responsibilities to the best of my ability and education?
- am I serving as a mentor, whether formally or informally, to others by my high level of commitment and service? (as a fledgling library assistant my mentors really convinced me that librarianship was a worthwhile profession and one in which I could find personal fulfilment)
- how effective am I as an advertisement for the profession?

Our challenge lies in achieving positive answers to these questions.

## Realising a Renewed Jamaica

*As part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the Jamaica Library Association, a Presidents' Banquet was held at Le Méridien Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, Kingston on January 28, 2000. The guest speaker was Dr Blossom O'Meally Nelson, President of the University of Technology and someone closely connected at one time to the Jamaica Library Service.*

### Address

by

Blossom O'Meally Nelson

Madame Master of Ceremonies, distinguished persons at the Head Table, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. First let me say how deeply honoured I feel to be asked to bring you the keynote address on this most significant occasion.

I see here before me this evening many stalwarts of the JLS, persons who conceptualised and brought into reality this enduring institution which predates independent Jamaica and which has seen Governments come and go, the building of significant educational institutions, changes in patterns of membership and radical shifts in the demands and tastes of your clientele. The Jamaica Library Association epitomises tenacity, perseverance and a commitment to ideals that are severely challenged by modern society.

I am very proud to have been part of the early story of the Library Service. The JLS is where I began my working life and, though I have been through many professional lifetimes since those early days, the skills that I gleaned there have served me in good stead to this day. There is a certain discipline and appreciation of clarity, precision, accuracy and authenticity that library skills bring to the portfolio of competence of any individual and I know that these skills have been an important part of the foundation of my professional achievements. So please allow me to add to the voices of many my heartfelt congratulations for all your achievements over the years.

Now as we stand on the brink of the twenty-first century, the question that you ponder must be: what of the next fifty years? What changes will they bring? I know that over the past few years, being caught in the vortex of rapid change, you have been seeking to re-cast your role and to view with a critical eye your services and your service niche. You, I am sure, have struggled with the difficulty of predicting the future and what it will demand of you. In instances such as this, we are tempted to retreat into some conservative haven and put our efforts into making future realities resemble our present experiences so that we can be more comfortable. If you take this route, however, it won't be long before you find yourself in some dead-end far from the main road of effectiveness and relevance.

The truth is that the future is very unforgiving of those who will not interpret and embrace change, and I use the present tense because we are in essence in the future. But it is not enough to interpret and to embrace change. In a very real sense, we have to shape change and, challenging though this may be, it is in a very

real way our only hope of ever remaining relevant.

It goes without saying that this, the fourth information revolution facilitated by technology and the notion of the information superhighway, has created radical changes in the nature and quality of information that is available to all. It has changed habits and created a new generation of what I call pseudo-readers. In fact reading, as we know and have promoted it, is challenged and may eventually become the pastime of a few that have time and money. If you are to survive as a service, therefore, you must create your own demand and visualise and articulate a mission which if not fulfilled would mean that living in society would be intolerable.

If I may be so bold, I would like to suggest to you, tonight, a starting place for shaping your future *raison d'être*, an approach which, to my mind, will be enduring and useful as long as we remain humans. The approach that I suggest is centred on the tenet that the well-being of mankind is the central mandate of any social institution and that achieving that well-being creates tension between the individual and the society. It is in the resolution of this tension that your mandate is to be found.

Charles Taylor, in his book *The Malaise of Modernity* speaks of three areas in which there is social decline or, put another way, a decline in the way in which man expresses himself as a social and moral being. For Taylor the first source of worry is individualism, the type of individualism that reduces relationships, social institutions and services to being means to an end, to facilitating a narcissistic self-realisation.

This overindulged individualism, which is underpinned by the notion of freedom of choice and self determination, gives rise to a preoccupation with "instrumental reason" where success is determined by the bottom-line and the best cost-output ratios. As Taylor points out, "once society no longer has a sacred structure and the modes of action are no longer founded in the order of things or the will of God, they are in a sense "up for grabs".

And so we find ourselves in an age where we are willing ourselves to believe that the most important moral tenet is to respect other people's choices and other people's freedoms, even if those choices and freedoms are inimical to the well-being of the community.

The third area of discomfort that Taylor identifies speaks to the political level and the consequences for the political life of the individual when he or she is driven by individualism and instrumental reason.

The end result is an alienation from the political system where the individual citizen is left alone in the face of a vast bureaucratic state and feels, correctly, "powerless", or conversely a fanatical allegiance to political parties, an allegiance driven by access to scarce benefits.

You may by now be saying to yourself, why have I put you through all this? This is certainly not after dinner fare; it is more likely the main course. But it is precisely in these three issues that you will find that your mandate must be one that focuses on

the nature and quality of person-hood and the commitment of the individual to community.

You should not see yourselves, therefore, only as information providers, a role which can and will be easily handled by a thousand other sources, but as the nation's conscience committed to enquiry, to the transmission of values, to putting knowledge always in a context of community and a commitment to shaping the type of human society in which we can realise our greatest virtues.

You should, therefore, encourage authentic dialogue, create productive interfaces between the social classes, between genders, encourage in the young the consideration of the quality of life, a quality that is sustainable yet fosters innovation. It will require some thought to shape this new curriculum; it will require a redefinition of the individual's dialogue with society and of individual responsibilities, but it is something that must be done if the world as we know it is to survive and if our country is to survive in any tolerable form. I can hear you say that we must commercialise to be sustainable and the best way to do this is to give the people what they want. Let us not fool ourselves, ladies and gentlemen. Somebody, some entity, must undertake to shape the type of ideals which will serve our society well. We have left this largely to the church and now there is a gap which at one time accommodated strong political ideology but now, as ideology becomes less relevant, there is space which is being filled rapidly by negative thinking and a kind of materialism which is unsustainable. All great civilisations have been led by an intellectual elite and, we may argue, they have been destroyed by a mutation of the intellectual elite. But I feel strongly that a productive type of intellectual elitism is lacking in this country. We seem to have lost our thinkers and, in our concern with economic growth and macro-economic indicators and the delivery of the hardware and the things that satisfy the belly, we are fast

forgetting that "life is more than meat and the body more than raiment". It is in this forgetting that we are losing the pulse of our identity as a people.

This then is my charge to you. It is not beckoning you to the superhighway, but rather to that path that is rapidly being consumed by weeds and the thick growth of popular demand and economic imperatives. The thing that has made you great over this last fifty years has been the pioneer spirit. You are called upon for the next fifty years to bear an even greater responsibility — that of giving this country a new persona.

Perhaps not so much of a new persona as the old, where one by one our children and their children will say as they bend their efforts towards the common good, in the words of the Koran:

"I do not ask you a wage for this, except love for the kinfolk, and whosoever gains a good deed, we shall give him increase of good in respect of it."

How can you, then, so structure your programmes and promote the type of information that points the way to a new idealism? How can you really build community, bring its disparate parts together into productive dialogue? How can you bring to the minds of the young the tools of thought that will generate new insights and nurture a new generation of leaders? These are the strategies that should occupy your thinking and planning, these are the things in our society that require ownership and you are best placed to do it.

As you face the future, then, I would urge you to take these thoughts seriously and to take as your real mandate the empowerment of our people to re-create this society, so that civility will take precedence over discord and achievement will mean that we are our brothers' keepers and purpose and direction will be restored. We will then be well on our way to realising the renewed Jamaica that we so desperately long for.



Dr Blossom O'Meally Nelson having her corsage pinned by Barbara Gordon on her arrival at the Presidents' Banquet.

**Hazel Bennett, President 1962 & 1968**

**Joyce Robinson, President 1964**

**Leila Thomas, President, 1970 & 1976**

"We are all librarians working towards the same common goal – an effective and efficient library and information service for the benefit of the community or society we serve. Let us be united in our efforts. (1976 Presidential Address)

**K.E. Ingram, President, 1956; 1972**

"An enthusiastic and informed staff or governing body is the first hurdle surmounted in any library undertaking." (1956 Presidential Address)

## Looking Back at the Jamaica Library Association

*In May 1999, the Research and Publications Working Party invited four of the early members of the Jamaica Library Association to share their recollections on the formation of the Association. These persons all became librarians and have made an impact on the development of the Association and on Jamaica. They are Mr. K. E. Ingram, O.D., the Honourable Joyce Robinson, C.D., O.J., M.B.E., LL.D., Mrs. Amy Robertson and Mrs. Audrey Roberts. They were interviewed by Miss Barbara Chevannes, a past president, while Mrs. Amy Robertson with the assistance of Miss Joyce Wallen compiled the final article.*

staff to organise the public library segment of the Bateson Library Plan for Jamaica.

With the prospect of an island-wide network of libraries in sight, it seemed opportune to bring together persons involved or interested in libraries into an association which would “grow” with the profession and perhaps help to shape its course and direction. The formation of a Library Association was the initiative of Mr. A.S.A. Bryant, the former Chief Librarian of Nuneaton Public Library, England, first Director of the new Jamaica Library Service and also the Association’s first President.



The Inaugural Meeting of the JLA, July 14, 1949.

### The Beginnings

The Jamaica Library Association (JLA) can claim a premier role in the establishment and consolidation of a library profession in Jamaica.

Prior to its first general meeting held on January 26, 1950, there were few libraries and fewer professional librarians. Kingston boasted the West India Reference Library and the Junior Centres of the Institute of Jamaica, the Library at the Department of Agriculture at Hope and the Library of the new University College of the West Indies (now the University of the West Indies).

Outside the capital city, communities in Manchester (1938), St. Elizabeth (1944), St. James (1944), Westmoreland (1946), St. Ann (1947) and later on St. Thomas and St. Catherine, organised public libraries. Funding for these libraries was uncertain and service mainly voluntary until 1948 when the Jamaica Library Service began operations under the auspices of the British Council and the Government of Jamaica.

The British Council, which had established offices in Jamaica in 1942, considered the development of public libraries to be of prime importance and was responsible for recruiting

The invitation to persons interested in libraries to meet in historic Spanish Town on July 14, 1949 for preliminary discussions re the formation of an association was a timely one. It gave library managers, workers (whether paid or voluntary) and community leaders the opportunity to meet. Young people, who had been attracted to a possible new profession but were tentative about permanent employment opportunities and career paths, were especially happy to meet others struggling with the same doubts. This first encounter proved to be an exciting occasion, as the zeal and missionary spirit of those who attended were evident and gave some indication of the goodwill, support and co-operation which would characterise the Association.

Special mention must be made of Mr. Pat Jones, the host of the meeting and father of Mrs. Sybil Iton who herself was to become a Director of the Jamaica Library Service. Interestingly enough the meeting was held in the Offices of the Parochial Board (Parish Council), home of the newly emerging St. Catherine public library. The Councils, along with the Central Government, financed the public library movement and their officers were intimately involved in its history and development.

The involvement of prominent citizens not directly connected to libraries brought prestige and influence to the fledging association. These included Sir John Carberry, Chief Justice of Jamaica; Mr. Harold Houghton, Director of Education; Mr. Louis Byles, a prominent attorney in St. Ann; Mr. R.L.C. Aarons later to become the Chairman of the Library Board; Rev. Morton York, a pioneer in the Manchester library movement as was Rev. Kitson Walters in St. Elizabeth; Mrs. Gloria Cumper, attorney and later Vice-Chairman of the Board; Colonel Norman Jackson, former Headmaster of Cornwall College and Wolmer's Boys' School and Chairman of the Parish Committees of St. James and Kingston & St. Andrew Parish Libraries; Mr. Hector Wynter, Director of Extra-Mural Studies at the University of the West Indies (UWI); Professor Leslie Robinson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of UWI and so many others. The foremost book-seller of the time, Mr. Ferdie Sangster of Sangster's Book Stores, was also a great supporter of the Association and was always present at meetings. The scholarship given in his name has benefited many young librarians. In the parishes, the library movement was greatly assisted by the interest of the Parish Custodes, Mayors of Parish Councils, Parish Council Secretaries and many expatriates. The names of Goldsworthy, Monkman, and Pickering in Mandeville, Mrs. Louis Byles in St Ann and Mrs. Letsen Ewen, Mrs. Marjorie Grahame and Dr Sylvia Lowe of Montego Bay are all synonymous with the growth of libraries. Following British practice, Association Presidents were elected from persons outside the profession in alternate years.

### Objectives of the Association

The objectives of the JLA have been clearly defined and include *inter alia*:

- To unite all persons engaged in library work
- To enhance the image and status of the profession
- To attract and retain membership in the Association
- To provide libraries and information services with a standard of education
- To influence government policies and legislation positively.

Mr. Bryant, the Association's first President, was a product of the British system of library training. At that time in the United Kingdom education and training for "new" professions like librarianship, which had a considerable vocational component, were regarded as being outside academia and entrusted to professional associations which it was felt could better develop the special techniques needed by that particular profession and could provide instruction and certification.

### Contribution to the Development of the Profession

As there were few qualified Jamaicans in 1948 when the JLS started and no facilities here for the study of librarianship, it is not surprising that the fledgling Association followed the British pattern by placing considerable emphasis on training. In fact, it took on this role with gusto. Local staff was recruited with the necessary entry qualifications to start professional training in the British system. This approach combined studies with practical work under the guidance of professional librarians. Success in

these examinations and compliance with the Library Association's requirements of age and service, made applicants eligible for election to the Register of the British Library Association as chartered librarians whether Associates (A.L.A.) or Fellows (F.L.A.).

Recruits were fascinated by this new area of study with its unfamiliar vocabulary and practice and so eager were they to qualify that examination results surpassed all expectations. P. Havard-Williams writing in 1972 refers to spectacular Jamaican successes in the Library Association examinations as a matter for appreciative comment.

Mention must be made here of the pioneer library training work undertaken by the Eastern Caribbean Regional Library (ECRL) with assistance from the British Council in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad. From 1942 to 1948, certificates of competence were issued following a six months training course and from 1948 students, including many Jamaicans, prepared for the first Professional and Associateship examinations until 1962 when curtailment of funding put an end to the programme. Voluntary in-service programmes were again organised by the Library Association of Trinidad & Tobago and the Jamaica Library Association.

Not satisfied with the in-service system of study only, Mr. Bryant urged the establishment of a School of Librarianship as early as May 1950. The Association continued to make this one of its prime objectives and lobbied continuously for this institution over the next twenty-one years. In addition, insistence by the British library schools on residential study to coincide with the revised Library Association syllabus effective in 1964 posed the problem of cost for overseas students. The library associations of both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago agreed that the most practical solution would be the creation of a permanent regional library training facility which would better address Caribbean needs.

In 1966 the Jamaican Government, following a submission from the Jamaican Library Association, made an application to UNESCO for assistance with a Library School. UNESCO agreed to provide certain types of assistance for four years starting in 1971 and, in the same year, the University Grants Council approved the projected library school and agreed to accept responsibility for total financing when the UNESCO grant came to an end. Thus the long negotiations for a viable institution were



L to R: Rosalie Williams, K.E. Ingram and Leila Thomas at the Annual General Meeting at Medallion Hall Hotel, January 1996 when they were recognised for their contribution to the profession.

at last over. The school, a department within the Faculty of Arts and Education, continues to serve the region with undergraduate and graduate degree programmes.

### The Association and the Jamaica Library Service

There has always been a unique relationship between the Jamaica Library Association and the Jamaica Library Service, so much so that after fifty years some members of the public seem unable to separate them. It is easy to understand this as it is the JLS with service points scattered over Jamaica, its distinctive bookmobiles moving from school to school or from one population centre to another, which has defined libraries and librarianship in this country.

Quarterly Association meetings held from parish to parish brought local staff in contact with library personnel from Government Libraries, the University and from the administration of the JLS. In the beginning, there was no sharp division between professional, para-professional and support staff as far as membership was concerned. The small size of the professional staff could hardly have maintained a viable organisation and the Association grew and thrived under its diverse membership. Moreover, the frequent opening of public library buildings brought Governors, Colonial Secretaries, Government Ministers and Senior Civil Servants to communities all over Jamaica, thus enhancing the image of libraries and librarianship. Professional members have long been active in the Professional Societies Association of Jamaica, as the Association sought membership quite early. Individual members have been honoured from time to time by this body.

### International Activities

Over the years the Association became affiliated with many associations overseas such as The Library Association (UK), ALA, IFLA, COMLA, IASL and ACURIL. JLA members made use of every opportunity to attend conferences and workshops and some have served as Heads of COMLA, IASL and ACURIL. The Association itself has co-hosted three successful international conferences in 1972, 1985 and 1996 with the proceedings of the first conference, edited by Ingram and Jefferson, being one of the Association's most outstanding publications.



Glory Robertson, at the Annual JLA Luncheon in January 1995, replying to tributes paid her on her retirement from the Main Library, UWI.

The increasing professionalism of Jamaican librarianship as evidenced by contributions to international journals, papers presented at conferences and representation of governments at international fora, attracted requests from countries of the Caribbean, Central and South America and Africa for In-Service Training and observation periods for their staffs.

These were gladly met. Our own University students were, in the early years, assisted particularly by UNESCO to go overseas for supervised field-work. JLA members have, therefore, greatly benefited from international librarianship.

Other noteworthy contributions include:

- leading delegations to the Government on behalf of the library and information community
- developing standards for school and college libraries
- assisting in the conceptualisation and implementation of NACOLADS / NACOLAIS
- fostering the on-going education of the Library and Information Community through seminars and workshops
- organising scholarships
- preparing syllabi for the training of para-professionals.

### Personalities

Some of the early members of the Association became leaders and Heads of Library Systems:

- Mr. K.E. Ingram, eminent bibliographer and poet, then Library Assistant at the West India Reference Library, headed that organisation and later the UWI libraries;
- Dr Joyce Robinson who, as Miss Lawson, assisted Ms. Mae Barrett at the St. Elizabeth Parish Library and later became the dynamic first local Director of the JLS;
- Miss Leila Thomas, then a Library Assistant at the St. Catherine Parish Library, succeeded Dr Robinson as Director of the JLS and was the moving spirit behind the 1972 Conference and the invitation to COMLA to be sited in Jamaica;
- Miss Daphne Douglas, then of the Forestry Department, became Professor and Head of the then Department of Library Studies;
- Dr Hazel Bennett, Secretary to the Director of the JLS, became its Deputy Director and moved on to be Documentalist of the Faculty of Education, then Senior Lecturer and Head of the then Department of Library Studies; she is now the distinguished co-author of an important history of the Jamaican people;
- Mrs. Amy Robertson (née McCourtie), starting as a volunteer in the St. James Parish Library, moved through the ranks of the new Jamaica Library Service to the post of Principal Librarian of the Schools Library Service before taking up the post of Documentalist in the Faculty of Education, UWI;
- Miss Mercedes Josephs, Assistant at the UWI Library, later became its Deputy;

- Mrs. Audrey Roberts (née Gunter) retired as a Senior Member of the UWI Library staff after serving as Library Assistant at the Library of the Department of Agriculture under noted Civil Servant Miss Ethel Marson, sister of Miss Una Marson, foremost Jamaican woman of letters.

A former Association President, Miss Stephney Ferguson, can be said to have had a remarkable career! She moved from Library Assistant in the Jamaica Library Service to Senior Librarian, before heading the library systems of CAST (now UTECH), the National Library of Jamaica, the Department of Library and Information Studies, UWI and now, as University Librarian, the three – campus library system of the University of the West Indies. Running for Secretary of IFLA was only one of the international ventures in which she has been involved, with COMLA and ACURIL being among the others.

### Recognition for the Profession

Several librarians have been honoured by the Government of Jamaica for their contribution to national development. These include:

- Dr The Hon. Joyce Robinson, O.J.
- Professor Daphne Douglas, C.D.
- Mrs. Gloria Salmon, C.D.
- Miss Leila Thomas, C.D.
- Miss Stephney Ferguson, O.D.
- Mr. Ken Ingram, O.D.
- Mrs. Sybil Iton, O.D.
- Mrs. Sheila Lampart, O.D.
- Mrs. Delphine Cupidon, Badge of Honour (Merit)
- Miss Joyce Wallen, Badge of Honour (Merit)

The Institute of Jamaica has also honoured members by the award of the Musgrave Medals:

- Dr Joyce Robinson for library development (Silver, 1969)
- Mr. Ken Ingram for librarianship and historical scholarship (Gold, 1986)

- Mrs. Sybil Iton for library and social work (Silver, 1989–92)
- Dr Hazel Bennett for outstanding merit in the field of literature, library development and historical scholarship (Silver, 1998)
- Jamaica Library Service for distinguished eminence in the field of literature (Gold, 1998)

In 1979 many librarians also received the Centenary Medal of the Institute of Jamaica.

### The Association Today

Looking back, I must conclude that the JLA after fifty years has proven that it is not moribund nor even static. Its vitality is unquestioned. It still holds out the same challenges that it did to a new generation of young people, as it continues to foster the interests and promote the concerns of a profession that is even more dynamic than it was at the inception of the Association. It still supports the needs of education in the ever-growing field of information; still provides an avenue for the coming together of practitioners, thus generating the camaraderie and *joie de vivre* which characterise the Library profession in Jamaica; and still requires the enthusiastic work and support of its members in order to continue to meet their needs.

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*Thank you, founding members. I hope I am a credit to you.*

June Vernon.

*Congratulations, JLA, and continued success!*

Reta Whittaker

# The Jamaica Library Association Over Fifty Years

by  
Audrey Chambers

The chronicle of the Jamaica Library Association (JLA) reflects a record of dedicated service, commitment to the development of library systems and services, the well-being of the library profession in Jamaica and persistence in striving to attain goals (always with scrupulous attention to protocol and parliamentary procedure). This outline sketches a succinct account of a half-century of achievements of the Association.

## The Beginnings

The Association developed alongside and shared the dynamism of the early burgeoning years of the nation's public library system, the Jamaica Library Service (JLS), which itself later gained a reputation world-wide as a model for developing countries.

A planning meeting was convened on July 14, 1949 at the St. Catherine Parish Library by A.S.A. Bryant, the first director of the JLS which had been established in the same year. His proposal for the structure for the public library service covering the island incorporated the creation of a professional library association as an integral part of library organisation. The Provisional Island Library Board duly gave its authority for an exploratory meeting to be called. The invitational circular from Mr. Bryant proposed an association in which an educated body of public opinion might be formed and that persons interested in library development might have opportunities to meet together to discuss matters of mutual interest. The ninety-four persons who attended this foundation meeting included members of staff from the Institute of Jamaica, the JLS, the University College of the West Indies, the Forestry Department, the Agricultural Department and the Jamaica Agricultural Society as well as a large number of persons with an interest in library matters. The size of the meeting seems a positive indicator of the respectful and healthy interest by and in the relatively few existing libraries.

The framework for the JLA was shaped by resolutions passed at the meeting that encouraged library co-operation, a high standard of education and training, the opportunities to discuss matters of interest to the profession and an educated public opinion on libraries. A provisional committee prepared a draft constitution that was presented at the inaugural meeting on January 26, 1950. The administrative core of president, vice-presidents, past president, honorary secretary, honorary treasurer and ordinary members form an Executive Committee. This body is elected largely on a representational basis that incorporates the larger library entities and the Association's Sections (q.v.). The 1991 revision of the Constitution increased the proportion of representation and added members. This core is complemented by a web of standing sub-committees, which have evolved into the current working parties, viz., Education and Training, Public Relations, Membership and Conditions of Service, Research and Publications joined by Information Technology in the year 2000.

These working parties have developed and implemented plans and programmes mandated by the membership of the Association over its lifetime.



Democracy in action: overseeing the election of members to the JLA Executive.

L to R: Professor Daphne Douglas, Stephney Ferguson, Reta Whittaker, Paulette Kerr.

Each year, the Chairmen are invited to sit on the Executive Committee as non-voting members. Also provided in the Constitution in the 1970s was the establishment of Sections within the Association. To date, two such Sections have been established — School Libraries (1973) and Special Libraries (1982) and these have proved very vigorous in their activities.

Despite revisions to the Constitution, notably that in 1991, the structure agreed on at the beginning has proved workable and durable and remains essentially intact. Patterned off the American and British Library Associations, early membership did not distinguish between persons from controlling bodies, administrative personnel, library professional staff, other library workers and interested parties. However, in order to place the Association on a more professional footing, with the 1991 Constitutional revision, full membership became restricted to library professionals while participation of those with a keen interest in library affairs and of other library workers is invited through associate membership. Institutional membership has remained unchanged. The category of Honorary Membership is reserved for long-serving persons who have made a significant contribution to the Association, are nominated by the Executive and then elected at General Meetings.

In the early era also, and again following British Association practice, distinguished Jamaicans served as president in alternate years, adding visibility to the young professional body.

## Achievements

The many achievements of the JLA are woven into a colourful tapestry crafted by the dedication of members and supporters and rich in anecdotal tales.

## Organisational Framework

The strategy, business and activities of the Association are guided by the following:

- The Constitution
- Rules and regulations

- A Code of ethics (established in the 1960s)

These constitute the regulatory infrastructure of the JLA which is laid down in a combined booklet, the current edition of which was issued in 1991.

The JLA Strategic Plan, 1996-1999, was published in 1996 after intensive consultation among members.

### Education and Training

From the outset, the Association has focussed on education and training to meet the demands for manpower within the profession of librarianship. The intensive efforts of the 50s and 60s centred on preparation for the external examinations of The (British) Library Association. The lengthy path to gain qualifications was endured as persons pursued part-time study (classes were conducted locally on a voluntary basis by members of the JLA), or attended the now-defunct Eastern Caribbean School of Librarianship in Trinidad, or studied in Great Britain through awards granted by the Jamaica Library Service and the British Council or drew on private resources. Successful candidates, as Associates of the Library Association (A.L.A.), applied for the status of Chartered Librarians and a few obtained the higher qualification of Fellowship of the Library Association (F.L.A.). Increasingly, would-be librarians also travelled to the United States of America, Canada and Britain to complete postgraduate degrees in the field.

From as early as 1962, the JLA took the leadership position in the drive to establish an academic programme at the University of the West Indies (UWI). Following persistent lobbying of the UWI, UNESCO and the governments of individual Caribbean states, the Department of Library Studies (DLS), later the Department of Library and Information Studies (DLIS) was established and accepted its first cohort of students in 1971. On the eve of the Department's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the tally up to 1999 shows that 397 persons have been awarded the Bachelor's Degree in Library Studies and 214 students have completed Postgraduate programmes (P.G. Diploma in Library Studies; M.L.S.; and M.A. (L.S.)).

From its inception, the Association has arranged and facilitated continuing education by organising a range of special workshops, summer and seminar programmes, in the main targeting professionals but also special interest groups. For example, apart from workshops geared to paraprofessionals such as The Library Paraprofessional in the Information Age in 1999, the JLA has endorsed a formal Caribbean-wide curriculum for paraprofessionals, the Library Technical Assistants' Training Course and assisted with its revision as taught at the Excelsior Community College.

To provide further inducement for strengthening professional qualifications and promoting exposure, the JLA has offered a pot-pourri of awards: bursaries to DLIS students, special bursaries to commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> DLIS (1985) and 50<sup>th</sup> JLA (1999) anniversaries and travel grants to attend overseas conferences or courses.

One of the channels to attract and encourage noviciates to the profession and to develop professional personalities in trainees was the introduction in 1994 of the mentoring programme linking students of the DLIS with experienced librarians. Another liaison

activity is the annual welcome to first year students in the DLIS at a social event hosted by the JLA.

It has been a long journey from the classes for the First Professional examinations of the Library Association to the recent Workshop on Web Design and Creation mounted at the well-equipped Computer Laboratory of the DLIS.

### Status and Advocacy

The status of librarians, not unexpectedly, occupies a high proportion of the energies of information professionals around the world. An integral function of the JLA has been to identify and analyse anomalies, discrepancies, oversights and opportunities which accompany conditions of service for staff working in a variety of settings – public, special, school, college and university libraries. The Association has prepared numerous submissions and manned deputations to the Ministries of Education and of the Public Service and other agencies. The early years were marked with successful outcomes in salary and work-related improvements. Latterly, such activity promoted by the Schools Library Section (q.v.) has resulted in greater Ministry recognition of the role of libraries in the educational system. The rise of properly functioning units in the high schools is evidence of these initiatives.

From the start, the JLA, through its actions, has lobbied for continued recognition of the profession and essayed to voice its concern on public matters. Landmark developments in which the Association played a lead include, *inter alia*, the creation of the National Library of Jamaica and the establishment of the National Council on Libraries, Archives and Documentation Services in the 1970s. The latter had provided a comprehensive plan to strengthen the effectiveness of all libraries in the national system through a coherent network of networks. The plan received world-wide professional notice and acclaim. Further, the Council enjoyed a secretariat within the policy-making structure of the Ministry of Information. Its demise represents a serious loss to the profession. The networks, namely, COLINET (College Library Network), SECIN (Social and Economic Information Network), STIN (Science and Technology Information Network) and LINET (Legal Information Network), remain active under the guidance of the National Library.

Recently, the JLA has renewed its pro-active stance through the Advocacy Ad Hoc Committee, set up in 1995 as a lobby-group and vehicle for the submission of position papers on such diverse matters as the Freedom of Information legislation in 1995 and the Education Green Paper in 1999. Formal protests have been registered against the dissolution of the National Council on Libraries, Archives and Information Services in 1998 and the lack of proper financing of the public library service.

### Sections

The Sections have brought depth to the Association. The Schools Section has maintained a robust presence and proved to be a resilient group. The Section played a key role in the establishment in 1971 of the International Association of School Librarians, the idea for which was formulated at a World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Profession Conference held in Jamaica. It has offered incentives for perfor-

mance through schemes such as the Innovative Award for Excellence for School Library Programmes. In a similar fashion, the Special Libraries Section has held a strong following and mounted special projects for the benefit of members of its special interest group.

### Development of Standards

The JLA has promulgated Standards over the years for School (1971), College (1980), and Special libraries (1987). The academic and public libraries appear to have set up adequate self-policing measures to ensure that above-minimum levels are adhered to locally. The first standards for school libraries were formally presented to the Ministry of Education which has accepted but not endorsed them. The overall situation in school libraries leaves much to be desired and the lobbying continues. The Guidelines and Standards for Special Libraries are currently being revised.

### Membership in Associations

The members of the JLA have shared their flair for leadership with and contributed their organisational skills and scholarship to national, regional and international professional bodies. Members have served, with commendation, on an array of national bodies such as the Professional Societies Association of Jamaica, the Jamaica Festival Commission and service clubs. Through the Association's institutional membership and by their own professional development, individuals have distinguished themselves as president and occupied a variety of posts within the Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries (ACURIL), filling the presidential position on three occasions; the Caribbean Association of Law Libraries (CARALL); the Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA); the International Association of School Librarians (IASL); the International Federation for Information and Documentation (FID); the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and other organisations. Members have provided a steady stream of research papers for conferences, especially those sponsored by ACURIL. The secretariat of COMLA has been resident in Jamaica since 1972 due to the JLA's initiative and commitment.

The resulting networking and camaraderie amongst their peers have yielded for the members of the Association immeasurable positive, if sometimes intangible, results.

### Publications

The publication record of the Association is handsome despite an inconsistency in respect of the regularity of its serial titles. The major documents bearing the imprint of the JLA include conference proceedings, a Festschrift volume, an occasional paper series, the standards for college, school and special libraries, a directory of Jamaican libraries, the annual bulletin and a number of newsletters – JLA Newslink, JLA News and School Libraries in Touch.

### Conferences

The JLA has successfully organised conferences over the years including:

- JLA international conferences:  
**Libraries and the Challenge of Change, 1972**  
**Information Support for Social Management: Imperatives for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 1994**
- Conferences mounted on behalf of ACURIL and IASL  
**Information and Development in the Caribbean, ACURIL XIII, 1976**  
**Libraries and Information: Towards a Policy for Schools, IASL Annual Conference XIV, 1985**  
**Universal Availability of Information: the Caribbean, ACURIL XX, 1989**  
**Sustaining the Vision, IASL XXV Annual Conference, 1996.**
- Conference co-hosted with COMLA and DLIS  
**First Conference on Special Libraries in the Caribbean, 1999**

A miscellany of activities ranging from the early Book Wave (a reading promotional activity in the '60s) to the annual Library Week with its companion, Teen InfoQuest, leaning more towards the social life of the Association, lends variety and strength to the constitution of this "senior citizen".

### Conclusion

The preceding paragraphs have summarised the events, the nuts and bolts which have held the Association together. What is indefinable, but nonetheless present, is the spirit, the pioneering forcefulness and the loyalties that have characterised the JLA. It has been at times described as an "old girls' network" (while acknowledging the not insubstantial input by a few gentlemen). Yet, the continued survival and growth of the JLA has profited from weaving together the longevity, experience, commitment and tenacity of the old guard with the vibrancy and imaginative drive of the incoming waves of new graduates.

The golden anniversary of the JLA brings a change in name to the *Library and Information Association of Jamaica* (LIAJA). The past has been enriched by the collective offerings of hundreds of librarians, library staff and individuals who considered libraries and the Association worthy of their contribution and involvement. LIAJA, mindful of the socio-economic development of Jamaica, will surely continue to expand the traditions set by the JLA while integrating the technological imperatives that surround the profession.

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# The Jamaica Library Association: School Libraries Section

by  
Beatrice Anderson and Cherrell Shelley-Robinson

The School Libraries Section of the Jamaica Library Association was officially launched on November 10, 1973 at the Jamaica Library Service Headquarters and was the Association's first-born "offspring".

The Section evolved out of what was then referred to as "talk shop" sessions hosted by Sister Tarcisia, librarian at the Immaculate Conception High School. The meetings were held once per term and brought together practising librarians, interested school principals and classroom teachers, affording them the opportunity to discuss common interests and concerns. A newsletter was started that proved invaluable especially to those who were unable to attend meetings. In addition, a significant number of events and programmes in Jamaica at that time helped to build an awareness about school libraries such as:

- an invitation to teachers by the Jamaica Library Service to participate in their professional training courses which served as a valuable forum for the exchange of common interests and concerns
- the formulation and implementation of a training programme for teacher-librarians in teachers' colleges in 1970
- **Bookwave** — an island-wide travelling exhibition of books for teenagers that started in 1970 and stimulated interest in reading among young people and educators
- the 1971 inauguration of the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) in Jamaica, a body having as its objective the development of school library programmes internationally.

A year after the first meeting at Immaculate, the JLA organised a committee to draft standards for school libraries and this document was presented to the Ministry of Education in July 1971. The "talk shop" sessions continued with an increasing number of participants until it was felt that there was a large enough number of interested persons to establish a formal group under the aegis of the Jamaica Library Association. Special mention should be made of the contribution of Katie Mungo who was instrumental in building interest in the field.

After twenty-seven years, the School Libraries Section can boast of some outstanding achievements such as:

- JLA's publication of the following three titles  
School Library Standards  
A Teacher/Librarian's Handbook  
Libraries and Information: Towards a Policy for Schools
- a national seminar hosted by NACOLADS (1983) to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Section

- JLA's hosting of three IASL conferences (1971; 1985; 1996, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) where members of the Section actively participated
- a national forum on school libraries for principals and teacher librarians (1990)
- participation in two-week training courses sponsored by the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Ministry of Education Core Curriculum Unit, Reform of Secondary Education Programme
- the holding of numerous seminars and workshops as part of the regular quarterly meeting of the Section
- participation (by members) on International Boards at conferences, seminars and workshops held in Jamaica and overseas; for example, with regard to IASL, Amy Robertson was President for two consecutive terms; while Joyce Wallen (2 3-year terms), Beatrice Anderson (3 3-year terms) and Dr Cherrell Shelley-Robinson (2 3-year terms) have all served as Regional Board Directors
- the appointment of an Education Officer for school libraries (post now defunct)
- participation in the Summer Institute for Regional School Librarians (1972-1973)
- consultancy assistance to Human Education and Resource Training (HEART) in the Technical High School Development Programme (THSDP)
- assisting Jamaica Library Service with workshops for school librarians and teachers responsible for school libraries.

At present there are many schools with libraries as a result of government and individual school projects because there is now a greater awareness of their importance. In addition, the impact of technology on school libraries has led to the increased availability of information with some of these libraries providing Internet access.

Today, there are also many more professional librarians in schools because of the programmes offered by the Department of Library and Information Studies (DLIS), including the new B.Ed. (School Librarianship) course and the teacher / librarian programme offered at Mico Teachers College.

Despite these achievements there are some pressing issues that need to be addressed:

- the School Library Standards that were presented to the Ministry over 27 years ago were accepted in principle, but have not yet been implemented

- the role and status of teacher/librarians need to be clarified and properly articulated
- an Information Skills curriculum is needed so that these skills can be integrated into the curriculum for maximum effectiveness
- the extensive work-load of school librarians needs to be addressed and their duties and responsibilities clearly established
- the deployment of Education Officers with chief responsibility for ensuring that all libraries fulfil their curricular role
- the enactment of school library legislation and policy so as to establish the framework for systematic development.

The government's Green Paper on Education is now being debated. Voices need to be heard as decisions made now will affect, adversely or otherwise, generations to come. The school library, one of the products of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has struggled to

stay alive and, at the outset of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there is the hope that it will one day be given its rightful place in the nation's education programme — and so the struggle continues.

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*Congratulations, JLA. Keep going strong.*

Marva Bradford

*Congratulations! May you continue to grow.*

Richele Harvey, UTech Library

*You have reached the coveted number.*

*Congratulations!*

Administrative/Technical Staff — UTech Library

*Congratulations, JLA, on this milestone!*

Library Assistants/Aides, UTech Library

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# The Jamaica Library Association: Special Libraries Section

by  
Carlene Bailey

The establishment of the Special Libraries Section can be said to have its roots in a 1964 article by Pippa Fray on cooperation in Jamaican government libraries. The article provides a comprehensive overview of the state of special libraries in the public sector at the time, discussing some of the major issues that librarians in this field faced, such as limited job opportunities and career advancement; lack of professional staff (of thirty-five libraries at the time, only seven were staffed by professionals); insufficient inducements in terms of salary and status; and inadequate funding. Staffing in particular presented many problems as there were few professionals. Public sector organisations interested in establishing special libraries often sought advice from the Jamaica Library Service who would offer short-term basic training at their Headquarters.

The article suggested strategies for improvement, one being a proposal to have all library services under the aegis of the Jamaica Library Service excepting those in the private sector and at the University of the West Indies. Also suggested was the possibility of forming a body of special librarians, the Jamaica Special Library Association, either as an adjunct to the JLA or as an independent organisation. This would allow for discussion among members of common problems, a kind of "swapping notes" forum, facilitate co-operation and provide a voice for the special library branch of the profession. Membership could be open to all special librarians.

Although attempts were made to discuss the possibility of a special interest professional organisation, support for the idea was not unanimous among JLA members as some feared that it would weaken the Association. It was not until 1981 that events took a more positive turn. In May of that year, a meeting of special librarians was called on the initiative of Lilleth Morris (Librarian at Grace, Kennedy and Co.) to discuss the possibility of a special library section. The meeting proposed the formation of such a body as part of the JLA and, on June 12, 1981, a formal proposal signed by thirteen special librarians was submitted to the Regular Meeting of the Association. A Steering Committee, including the then JLA President Katie Mungo, met in November 1981 and prepared a draft document that set out the aims and objectives of the new section.

The formal proposal for establishing the section was made and accepted at the JLA's Annual General Meeting in Montego Bay on January 29, 1982. The new Special Libraries Association was now represented on the Executive by its Chairman, the first one being Lilleth Morris. She was instrumental in the development of the new association and, as its first Chairman, contributed significantly to setting it on a firm footing. Terms of Reference were prepared in December 1981 and, shortly after, there was a change of name to Special Library and Information Section [SLIS].

The Section continues to meet regularly (quarterly) and has coordinated several training sessions directed at special library staff covering topics such as image building, metrication, management, bibliographic standards, various aspects of law, marketing of library services and Internet use. In 1988 it published Guidelines and Standards for Special Libraries in Jamaica. A newsletter devoted to the section was discontinued in favour of a regular column in the JLA's newsletter.

It actively supports the JLA's Teen InfoQuest; has taken part in a mentorship programme at the Musgrave Girls Home (1999); set up a library at the Elsie Beaman's Girls' Home; and partnered COMLA in putting on a conference in 1999 on Caribbean applications of information technology.



Members of the Special Libraries Section on a visit to Port Royal.



Dr Pippa Fray at work in the Port Royal Library when the Special Libraries Group visited.

A recent questionnaire developed and administered by the Section's Executive revealed the following concerns:

- desire for better coordination of consultancy work within the profession
- improvement in working conditions
- better salaries
- more support from the JLA

This year, 2000, marks eighteen years of service within the Association for the Section and it has been a fine record of service. In spite of difficulties faced by special librarians, especially those who manage "one-shop" operations or have limited support staff, librarians have made the time to serve and to provide leadership for the Section. Dr Fray's consistent advocacy for and support of the Section over the years should also be noted.

There have been many changes: in staffing, with more professionals now in special libraries than previously due to the Department of Library and Information Studies; in the qualifications of support staff, with para-professional graduates from Excelsior Community College; and in the number of companies that now boast their own libraries so that membership count now stands at sixty-three. What has remained unchanged, however, is the commitment of the Section to advancing the profession and special librarianship in particular.

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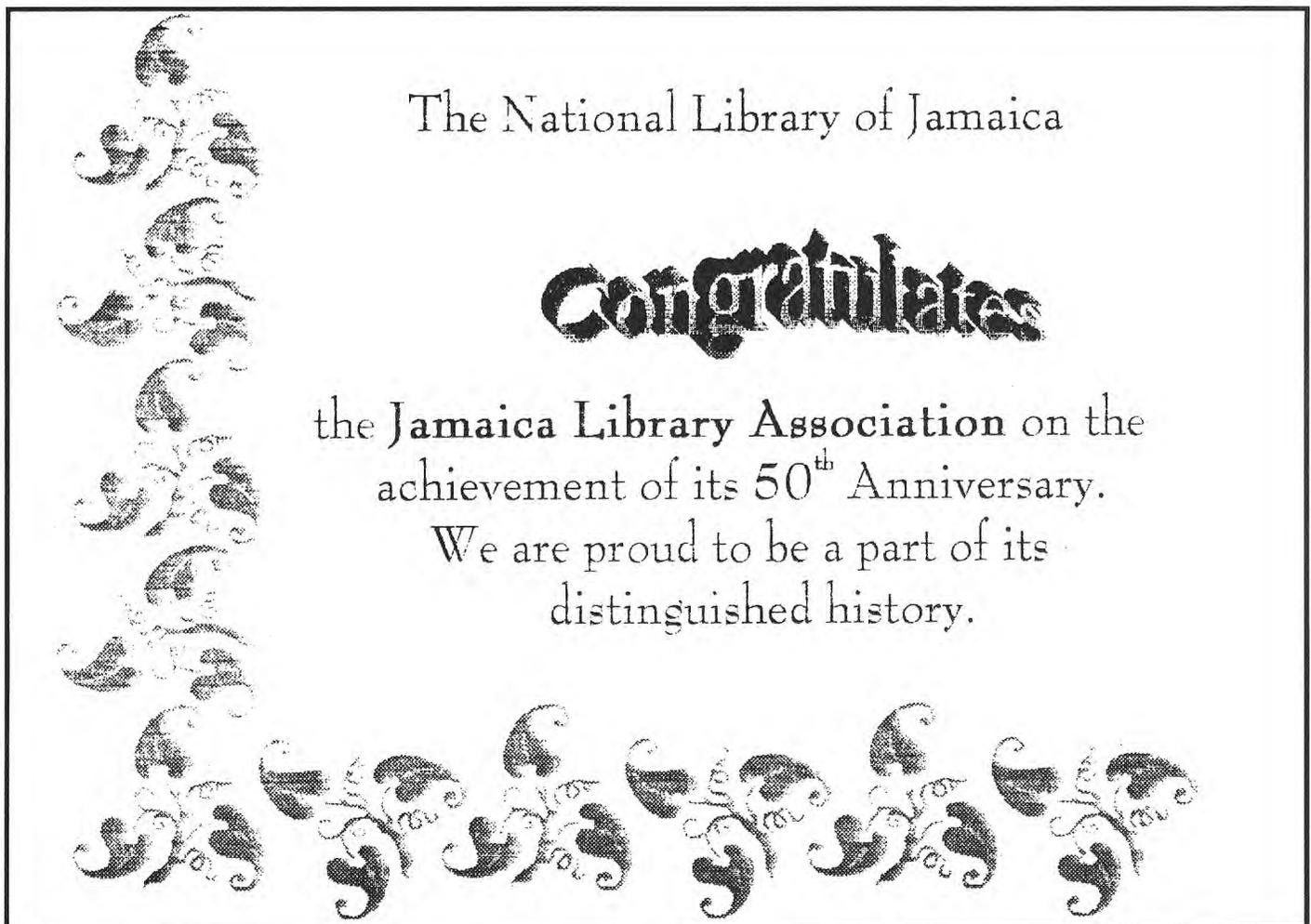
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*Congratulations on your 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!*

Audrey Saddler, UTech Library



# Young Professionals Speak Out

Some of the more recent members of the Association express their views on areas of importance for the Association:

- professional development
- the profession's image
- benefits of membership in JLA
- improving communication in JLA
- expectations of our professional association

## The Association & Professional Development



by  
Karlene Robinson  
Documentation Centre,  
Dept. of Education, UWI

Within the last decade there have been many changes that have taken place within the profession with respect to technology, the nature of materials / resources worked with and the needs of clients. It is therefore vital that librarians keep abreast of these changes in order to be relevant and viable in a dynamic environment.

An important area of concern for professional development is the need to develop skills in the use of the computer, more specifically word-processing, spreadsheets, multi-media, Internet searching as well as database construction and development. Additionally, skills could be honed in how to make decisions about purchasing computer hardware and software and just general trouble-shooting. There is no place for techno-phobia within the profession. Each of us should see the need to embrace the new technologies so as to have more than just a working knowledge of them, to deal with the demands of the Information Age and to meet the changing needs of clients. More is being demanded of us in these areas. The profession could do with a boost in its image as more librarians demonstrate to clients and employees that they are capable of managing in this environment.

Secondly, we need training in the area of research. With shrinking budgets, inflation and a declining currency, more and more librarians have to justify their demands for the resources required for their various libraries. If more libraries are able to keep good statistics and conduct research on different aspects of their work, they will be able to justify and obtain the requisite funding. Our organisations will become more aware of the pivotal role of the library in contributing to their viability and productivity so that we are not down-sized, or eliminated altogether, during re-engineering. Another aspect of this is the need for training in proposal writing so that we can be better able to acquire funding for projects within our institutions.

Thirdly, records management is an area that is increasingly falling within the purview of librarians. It can add value to our knowledge base and it should be a focus for professional development.

It is now time for us librarians to shake off the reticence for which we are well known and become more vocal on issues that affect us and the society on a whole. Librarians are skilled and knowledgeable on and in a multiplicity of areas. There is need for training in advocacy so that we can utilise the media to get our voices heard and lift the profession out of the malaise that it is in at present.

## The Association and Improving the Image of the Librarian



by  
Glenda Dalling  
Calvin McKain Library, UTECH.

What, for the most part, is the popular image of the librarian?

If members of the public, chosen randomly, were to be asked this question I'm sure that the response would include descriptors such as: reserved; bookish; studious; introverted; and perhaps even dull.

Firstly, the public's perception of our profession is, to a large extent, based on what they see and how they interact with us when they visit our libraries. We therefore have to be the catalyst for that desired positive image. We have to adopt a business-like approach to meeting the information needs of clients and we should always project a professional image in our respective communities. Technology has given us a powerful tool and we now need to become online specialists and database developers as well as web masters and designers. Proficiency in these skills can help to increase our status in the eyes of the public.

Secondly, many persons remain ignorant of the specialised training that librarians undergo, or even what it takes to run a library. Every opportunity needs to be grasped, both individually and by the Association, to highlight our work:

- library open days
- showcasing the work of libraries, locally and regionally
- promotional features in the media such as the recent excellent newspaper supplement on the Jamaica Library Service and the "The Best of St. Bess" television documentary in which Dr Joyce Robinson appeared.

Thirdly, we also need to promote an accurate face of the profession as opposed to the traditional one. Jamaican librarians

are both male and female, young and old and many are stylishly dressed in casual or in "power suits". We need to become more involved in a wide range of activities and develop networks with other professionals and organisations.

This "image issue" therefore can be addressed by both individual action as well as support from the Association as a whole.

### Benefits of JLA Membership



by  
Irma Morgan  
Librarian – Ascot Primary School,  
Greater Portmore

I graduated from the Department of Library and Information Studies in 1997 and began my professional life as a librarian at the Wesley Powell Learning Resource Centre (Excelsior) where I was the High School Librarian and Librarian in charge of Circulation. At present I am the Librarian at the Ascot Primary School, Greater Portmore.

I joined the Jamaica Library Association as soon as I graduated as I wanted to keep abreast of professional developments whether locally, regionally or internationally. My interest in the Association was sparked after I attended the "getting-to-know-you" sessions hosted by the JLA on campus each year for the DLIS students. Here I was introduced to the lighter side of my lecturers, who did not seem so awesome after all and the librarians that I met on these occasions were not "fuddy-duddy" old ladies with the proverbial horn-rimmed glasses and buns, but were fashionable professionals no matter their stage of maturity.

A professional association is a coming together of persons with mutual work-related interests and a common purpose. The Schools Section and the Special Libraries Section of the Association allow for members to meet around their special interests.

A professional association should provide avenues for its members to develop and to upgrade themselves whether through workshops, seminars or conferences. As a member of the Schools Section I have benefited from workshop sessions on topics as varied as:

- designing and producing posters
- the research process
- IT applications

Our Section encourages its members to upgrade themselves whether through the teachers colleges as teacher librarians; the community colleges as para-professionals; or through DLIS as professionals.

Conferences are important for professional growth and, through my involvement with the Association, I was able to attend the 1999 ACURIL Conference in Aruba.

This afforded the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with other professionals from across the region. In my special interest group, School Libraries, I was able to interact with other librarians, some of whom were directly involved in policy- and decision-making concerning school libraries in their respective countries. This has encouraged me to strive for this level and in so doing help school libraries in Jamaica gain the recognition they deserve.

### Improving Communication in the Association

by  
Cheryl Cousins  
Librarian, Clarendon Parish Library.

As an Association, how do we communicate?

Our methods include using letters, reports, minutes of meetings, facsimiles, telephone conversations, face-to-face meetings and newsletters.

With whom do we communicate?

We communicate first with members of the Association, the users of our respective libraries, funding agencies and the various Government or Private Sector bodies that govern us.

How could this communication be improved?

Firstly, a Secretariat would help to improve communication. The Association needs a permanent address and telephone number to allow members and the wider community to contact us. The Secretariat would help to improve proper documentation, storage and retrieval of our records as well as allow for better information flow to and from members. The Secretariat would also provide support for the public relations functions of the Association making it easier than at present to inform the wider society about issues pertaining to the profession.

Secondly meetings, which are a major means of communication for the Association, could be improved. The Regular Meetings are too few and need to be de-centralised as our membership is drawn from all across Jamaica. JLA could adopt a regional approach thus giving persons more opportunity to attend meetings than presently is the case.

The style of our meetings could also be addressed. These could be more informal, taking the form of planned retreats, panel discussions and other social events. This might help to boost attendance, encourage camaraderie and therefore improve participation and membership.

JLA needs to make more use of information technology. E-mailing is fast and efficient and members should be encouraged to use it. Members could learn to check their e-mail for professional correspondence every second and fourth Friday, for example. Teleconferencing would significantly reduce travel time and having our own web-site would improve our ability to communicate with a wider cross-section of persons both locally and overseas. Encouraging members to publish on the web-site might be one way of increasing their participation in the work of the Association. A directory of useful web-sites could help members keep abreast with professional developments and a chat-line would allow members to meet in cyberspace and exchange ideas.



Association "get-togethers" -an important means of maintaining communication links.

Finally, we need to make full use of the mass media. Newsletters, community bulletin boards, letters to and articles for the newspapers are all fast ways of disseminating information on who we are, what we are about and where we stand on issues that affect our profession and Jamaica. We should make our voices heard by attending and actively participating in major conferences and seminars that the government and other civic bodies hold from time to time. Talk shows provide an excellent opportunity for airing our views.

What can we expect by improving our communication methods?

I believe that these strategies would encourage an increase in membership and a more vibrant association. I also believe that a presence on the Web might encourage a wider audience to take a second look at us. Certainly we can only benefit from efforts to improve communication in our Association.

#### Some Expectations of My Association



by  
Josephine Crawford

A profession without a vibrant association is a formula for failure. Libraries in Jamaica and the Caribbean have come a long way and I am sure our library associations had a lot to do with our journey thus far. Everyday our society evolves into something new. The technologies we use today were not thought of years ago. Libraries must therefore keep pace with the various changes in our environment so as not to become obsolete.

All this means that our Association will have quite a bit on its plate.

I feel it important to confess that I have been a delinquent where my Association is concerned and as such might expect some things that are already being offered. Wherever that is so, I apologise.

I am blessed to be in a unique position of working in two very different library environments at the same time: an American-funded school library; and a school library in an "inner-city" community. For both institutions I have the responsibility to do the budgeting down to the last dime. Thanks to the Department of Library and Information Studies I was somewhat prepared for the job. I must, however, admit that while on campus I failed to see the relevance of a lot of what was being taught. I am sure that there are others of my batch-mates who felt that the technology course taught by Mr. Sookraj was designed to make us fail. I must now thank him and his colleagues wholeheartedly. It would therefore be a good idea for the Association to hold seminars on topics such as:

- budgeting in Caribbean libraries
- library automation in the Caribbean environment
- library management from a Caribbean perspective

I would love to see more literature coming out of our Association. This is one way of informing persons of what we have to offer and therefore an excellent way to keep young librarians like myself abreast of the changes in our profession. Let me pause to make my plea here.

I am a member of the Association but I rarely receive notices concerning meetings or, if they do come, I receive them after the meetings are held. I wonder how many other persons have been suffering from this lack of information on the Association's activities. I hope that this will change, as I am really interested in the work of the Association and would welcome an opportunity to make a contribution other than just paying my fees.

The mentorship programme offered by DLIS to library students has been a wonderful way of forging links between the more experienced and the budding librarians. This programme serves the purpose of removing the blindfolds thereby exposing young librarians to the reality of being professionals in a Third World environment – an experience not documented in our British and American textbooks. This interdependence will get us where we hope to go for the new millennium and beyond, as we will learn from each other's experience. This should add much needed spunk to the profession.

The coming together of the young and the experienced should give us back our groove, bearing in mind that "together we build".

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*Congratulations on your  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!*

Norma Livingstone, UTech Library

## Past Presidents of the JLA

C. L. Stuart, a Past President of the JLA, noted in his 1971 Presidential Address that the Association's objective of uniting all persons *interested in* libraries, rather than only those *engaged in* library work, was an ambitious goal.<sup>1</sup> In the early years of the Association, many of its members were not themselves "engaged in" library work and this did not bar them from being elected to the position of President. Graham Binns, in his 1967 Presidential Address, noted that the practice of alternating the election of a President from inside the profession with one from outside showed an awareness of and an interest in not only the profession itself, but its environment.<sup>2</sup> These "interested in libraries" Presidents were usually eminent persons in their respective fields.

In order to show the range of interests and skills that they brought to the work of the Association and, in recognition of their contribution, a brief profile of each is provided.

A profile is also provided for each of the "engaged in library work" Presidents of the 1950s, as some of the names may now be unfamiliar to many professionals, as well as for K.E. Ingram, the first Jamaican trained as a librarian. For the remaining professionals who have served as President, their names and a keynote sentence from the Presidential Address of each, where this could be found, are distributed throughout the issue.

### The Early Days: Presidents of the Association during the 1950s

**1950 A.S.A. Bryant** was the first Director of the Jamaica Library Service and the Association's first President. Appointed to his JLS post by the British Council in May 1948, he came to Jamaica from the Nuneaton Public Library, England where he was Chief Librarian. It was on his initiative that the 1949 Spanish Town meeting was held to discuss the formation of a professional association. His Presidential Address noted that libraries were as essential a part of a school as the benches and desks at which the children sit and, unless these were provided, much of the money spent on education would be wasted. He served the Association until his departure from Jamaica in 1953 and was made an Honorary Member in 1954.

**1951 Harold Holdsworth** was Librarian of the University College of the West Indies from its inception until his departure for Australia. His wide experience and quiet enthusiasm were very useful to the new professional body and he maintained a keen interest in its growth. His

Presidential Address emphasised the importance of gaining public support for libraries and urged professionals to maintain this support, as it had direct influence on funding, by delivering quality service. He was elected an Honorary Member of the Association in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the development of librarianship in Jamaica.

**1952 The Hon. Harold Haughton**, a British national, held various posts in the Jamaican Civil Service. As the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare and Director of Education, he attended meetings of the Jamaica Library Association including the inaugural meeting and made a contribution to the formation of the new Association.

**1953 John William O'Regan** was another British national who held various posts in the Civil Service including that of Deputy Colonial Secretary and Under Secretary (Administration). His Presidential Address provides a good overview of the rapid development taking place at the time in many areas of Jamaican society and outlines the Association's role given the many new responsibilities for its own affairs being assumed by the country.<sup>3</sup>

**1954 William F. Chape** F.L.A. came to Jamaica from Argentina where he was the British Council Librarian. He served as Deputy Director of the Jamaica Library Service from January 1950 to March 1955 and, on Mr. Bryant's resignation in December 1952, he acted as Director until August 1953 when Mr. S. W. Hockey was appointed as the new Director. He served the JLA as the first editor of the Jamaica Library Association Bulletin, Vice-President and President of the Association. His editorial for the first issue states that a professional association that publishes its own periodical shows that it is committed to having its members maintain an interest in matters relating to the profession.<sup>4</sup> He left Jamaica for Australia, becoming City Librarian, Perth Public Library.




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### R.L.C. Aarons, President 1973

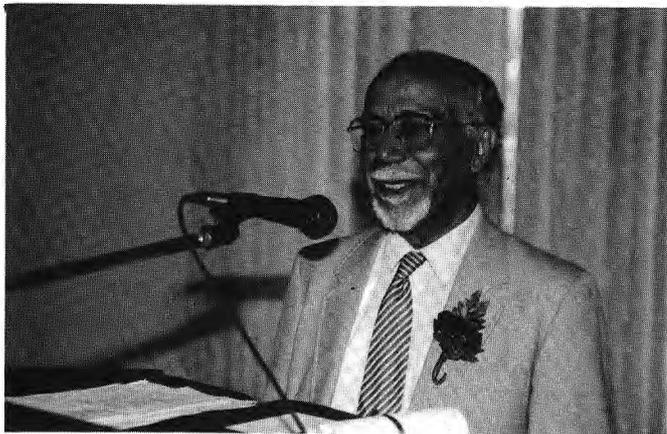
"...the challenge with which we are more particularly concerned here is the challenge to the medium itself, to the written word and the first step in meeting this challenge is to affirm the primacy of the book; its primacy over any other medium in the storing and transmitting of information."

### Amy Robertson, President 1974

"It is doubtful if librarianship will ever become fully recognised until there is a complete understanding of the role of libraries in the educational, economic and social development of the country."

**1955 C. Bernard Lewis**, an American Rhodes Scholar, first visited Jamaica in 1938 as part of a biological expedition to the Cayman Islands organised by Oxford University. During his Jamaican visit, he recommended the establishment of a Natural History Museum to the Board of Governors of the Institute of Jamaica and was invited to take up the position of Museum Curator starting in 1939. He became Director of the Institute in 1951 and served until his retirement in 1973. He played an active role in national life being a foundation member of the Natural History Society, the Jamaican Historical Society, the Jamaica Library Association and the Bolivarian Society of Jamaica. He also found time to serve on the Wildlife Protection Committee, the Public Gardens Advisory Committee, the Jamaican National Trust Commission, the National Commission for UNESCO and he contributed to the establishment of the Hope Zoo. The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting for 1955 shows that his Presidential Address took the form of a review of the Association's work from its inception and he urged it to become a voice for the profession.<sup>5</sup>

**1956 Kenneth E. Ingram**, OD; M.Phil.; F.L.A.; A.L.A., outstanding Caribbean bibliographer, librarian, historian and poet, is a founding member of the Association and was its first Secretary, 1950-1953. He started his career as a library assistant at the Institute of Jamaica in 1941, becoming University Librarian UWI, Mona, 1970-1981; President of the Association in 1956 and again in 1972, in which year he was also Chairman of the International Library Conference hosted by the JLA, JLS and the Ministry of Education as well as being the co-editor of the conference proceedings. He also served as President of ACURIL in 1976.



K. E. Ingram — Annual General Meeting held at Medallion Hall Hotel January 1996.

**1957 Sir Edgerton Richardson** was a distinguished Jamaican civil servant, attaining the rank of Financial Secretary at a time when this was the third most important position in Jamaican colonial government following that of Governor and Colonial Secretary. He was responsible for the development of Jamaica's public finance system; was foreign affairs adviser to the Prime Minister (1972); established the Ministry of the Public Service, serving as its first Permanent Secretary (1973-1975); and was Jamaica's first Ambassador to the United Nations. His Presidential Address noted that the role of Jamaican libraries was in breaking down barriers, since access to books in libraries was about the only opportunity the poor man had of getting a higher education.<sup>6</sup>

**1958 W. Adolphe Roberts**, journalist, historian, poet and nationalist, had a successful career in journalism in the United States where he formed the Jamaica Progressive League (1936); served as its first president; and is often regarded as the father of the self-government movement. He was a founder of the Bolivarian Society, President of the Jamaica Historical Association, the Jamaica Library Association, the Natural History Society of Jamaica, the Poetry League of Jamaica and the Jamaica Centre of the International P.E.N. Club. He was awarded the Gold Musgrave Medal in 1954 and the O.B.E. in 1961. He lived for 45 years outside of Jamaica and often expressed his love of country in his poetry.

**1959 Mary Brebner** was a British librarian who came to Jamaica in 1955 to work at the Institute of Jamaica. She joined the JLA's editorial committee and one of her articles appears in the 1955 issue of the Bulletin.<sup>7</sup> She left for East Pakistan in 1960.

### The 1960s

The decade of our political independence saw an increase in Caribbean leadership of the Association. Sir John Carberry was from Grenada and Mr. William E. Gocking, Librarian University of the West Indies and President in 1960 and 1966, was Trinidadian. The other Presidents were all Jamaican except for Graham Binns. Five presidents came from the "interested in libraries" group.

**1961 Sir John Carberry**, a Grenadian by birth, made his home in Jamaica where he had a successful legal career. A graduate of McGill University, he was admitted to the Jamaican Bar and, rising steadily through the ranks as Clerk of Courts, Resident Magistrate and Puisine Judge,

### Stephney Ferguson, President 1975

"If you are therefore among those who have been asking what has the Jamaica Library Association done for me, I suggest you ask yourself what have I done for the JLA because the JLA cannot do anything for you until you do something for it. It is only by our active participation and involvement in the affairs of the Association that we will be able to progress individually or as a group."

### Daphne Douglas, President 1977

"The new librarian in Jamaica today enters a milieu of acceptance unknown in the days when I started in the field. Such a person will have no experience of the struggles we faced for even a living wage in the early days. But none of us I hope grudge them this freedom from obscurity and I am sure each one is able to recognise this fact and acknowledge, hopefully with gratitude, the paving of the way for him or her by us older folk."

he became Chief Justice in 1954 until his retirement in 1958. He was the father of the poet, H.D. Carberry.

**1963 Professor Leslie Robinson** was the first lecturer appointed to the Department of Mathematics, University College of the West Indies. He also served the University as Pro-Vice-Chancellor and was instrumental in initiating the University's consideration of establishing the library school on the Mona campus.

**1965 Gloria Cumper**, educator and barrister-at-law, was a well-respected news analyst on the popular RJR's News Analysis Programme during the 1960s, the only woman on the panel of contributors to this popular radio programme. Her commentary covered issues related to education, culture, sociology and local politics. She also lectured in the Department of Government at the University of the West Indies, Mona and was seen as a feminist because of her active participation in areas then considered a male preserve. She believed that gender should not be allowed to limit the development of



women's potential but that, on the other hand, militarist feminism defeats the purpose.

**1967 Graham Binns** was English and came to Jamaica from Malta as General Manager of the radio station RJR. His secretary at the time, Mrs. Gloria Matthews, remembers him as a tall man with excellent command of English, a graduate of either Oxford or Cambridge (she was unable to recall which one precisely) and someone who enjoyed books, literature, art and music. He was very much involved in Jamaica's cultural life and was closely associated with the Manley family and Drumblair. He left

Jamaica for Malta a year after his presidency but returned to the island many times.<sup>8</sup> His Presidential Address offered a challenge to the profession: "Librarians are a revolutionary force. They are incendiaries, showering sparks about the place and setting fire to people, or at any rate, striking a light to the minds of men."<sup>9</sup>

**1969 The Hon. Victor Stafford Reid O.J.**, the noted Jamaican author and journalist, was a founding member of the Association. A feature writer and reporter at the Daily Gleaner, his career also included being editor of: Spotlight; Newday; and Public Opinion. He was also founder/publisher of The Sugar Worker. His awards include the **Norman Manley Award for Excellence** and the **Musgrave Gold Medal**. Jamaica students should be familiar with The Young Warriors and Sixty-Five, with other well-known works being New Day and The Leopard. As an author it is not surprising that he was especially interested in copyright and lobbied vigorously for revision of the copyright law.

His Presidential Address is brimful of quotable views on libraries and books and their role in nation-building, making selection of just one difficult:

- "...race is not our most important divisor. It is education, and the trauma that the lack of it brings, which presents the great divide. We must build bridges and books are excellent timber."
- "Video tapes and microfilms need electric power and machinery to bring them to life. But books, with their infinite greater capacity to add to individual knowledge, only need eyes to leap into life".<sup>10</sup>

#### Past Presidents: The 1970s

**1971 Clevens L. Stuart** was an outstanding educator starting his career as a Junior Tutor at Mico, then moving on to Calabar High School, Munro College and then Clarendon College where he made his name as Headmaster. He served as Chairman of the Clarendon Parish Library Committee, receiving an award at the JLS 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Long Service Awards (1969) for nineteen years of service. His Presidential Address provides a brief but useful historical context for the start of both the

#### Albertina Jefferson, President 1978 & 1989

"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." (1978 Presidential Address)

#### Barbara Chevannes, President 1979

"We are joiners, also it is easier to be followers, but let us also be doers. Let us be willing to stand up and be counted. Demand change but do not be afraid when it comes."

#### Mercedes Josephs, President 1980

"There should be a definite career structure for librarians...so that a young recruit can be assured of prospects of advancement in accordance with the ability to assume greater responsibility."

#### Katie Mungo, President 1981

"Our own development – as individuals and as a profession – affects that of the libraries we administer and the quality of services we give."

Jamaica Library Service in 1948 and the Association two years later citing, for example, an estimated 50% national adult illiteracy rate at that time.<sup>11</sup>

By the 1970s, a larger pool of professionals from which leaders of the Association could be drawn had developed and C.L. Stuart was the last President who was *interested in* libraries rather than *engaged in* library work. It seems fitting that his field was education.

### Notes

1. Jamaica Library Association Bulletin January (1972):2.
2. Jamaica Library Association Bulletin 2.3 (1967): 4.
3. Jamaica Library Association, Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 1953. Ts. National Library of Jamaica.

4. William F. Chape, "Editorial", Jamaica Library Association Bulletin 1 (1950).
5. Jamaica Library Association, Minutes of the Sixth Annual General Meeting, February 17, 1955. Ts. National Library of Jamaica.
6. Jamaica Library Association Bulletin 8 (1957): 226.
7. Mary Brebner, "Her Majesty's Patent Office Library, London." Jamaica Library Association Bulletin 6 (1955): 145-147.
8. Gloria Matthews, personal interview, 2 Nov. 2000.
9. Jamaica Library Association Bulletin 2.3 (1967): 1.
10. Jamaica Library Association Bulletin (1969).
11. Jamaica Library Association Bulletin (1972): 1.

**Norma Kelly**, President 1982

"I make a special appeal to all library personnel to make your library the most attractive place in the community. A place of solace where the individual may turn for peace and tranquillity and enrichment of soul, mind and body."

**Sheila Lampart**, President 1983

"Professional integrity, service to the community and professional development are not enough however. Above all, we need unity . . . Think what we could accomplish if we could get more members of the Association excited about what we stand for and what we would like to do. There is no lack of talent in our membership and I am positive there are many who would like an opportunity to contribute."

**Lilleth Morris**, President 1984

**Sybil Iton**, President 1985

"I however feel...that the most effective public relations is still the satisfied client."

**John Aarons**, President 1986 & 1987.

"Let us by all means use the skills and expertise of persons in other professions. But let us not forget the knowledge and expertise which many of our members possess and which would be of value to all of us." (1986 Presidential Address)

**Norma Amenu-Kpodo**, President, 1988

"...there is certainly cause for pride, when a small association as this boasts of individuals of such calibre that recognition is given them not only within its ranks but nationally, regionally and globally."

**Blossom Mullings**, President 1990

"Do not be daunted by the difficult task, just tackle it...Rest if you must, but never give up."

**June Vernon**, President 1991

"We should be writing more on issues that affect us.... There are numerous topics — look through the professional literature - talk to colleagues — think of something you wanted and could not find."



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# A Tribute to Volunteers

Volunteers have made a significant contribution in many areas of our national life.

The 1998 Grace, Kennedy lecture by Dr Don Robotham, Vision and Voluntarism: Reviving Voluntarism in Jamaica, suggests that volunteerism is usually defined by three characteristics. Firstly motive, meaning that the volunteer participates in social/civic activities with the desire to help others. Secondly remuneration, meaning that the presence or absence of remuneration is a tangible measure of who is, or is not, a volunteer. Thirdly beneficiary, meaning that the voluntary action should benefit those who are not directly the responsibility of the volunteer. The lecture also stresses the importance of recognizing the strong moral element that is at the core of Jamaican volunteerism.

This article pays tribute to that spirit of volunteerism by featuring three persons who have contributed to the growth of librarianship and the Jamaica Library Association:

- Miss Millicent Clare (Hanover)
- Mr. F.L. Sangster (Kingston and St. Andrew)
- Mr. Cecil C. Charlton (Manchester)

Although not originally intended, these volunteers represent each of Jamaica's three regions, Cornwall, Middlesex and Surrey.

**Millicent Louise Clare: April 9, 1915 — December 8, 1994**

by

Barbara A. Gordon

I can still hear her calling each child by name as they return their books at the Circulation Desk.

"Did you enjoy the story, Delroy? Tell me why you liked it."

"Sonia, I haven't seen your sister for two weeks. Is she sick?"

"Blossom, I need an item for the Christmas concert."

It is Saturday morning at the Hanover Parish Library's Junior Department and Miss Clare is at her usual place behind the desk. There is a long line waiting for check-in, not only because of the number of children, but also because she has a word for almost every one. Questions are asked about stories read, the spelling of a new word learnt is requested, progress at school is checked on and encouragement warmly given to those who confide some personal achievement gained since their last visit to the library.

Millicent Louise Clare, Aunt Millie as I knew her because she was my mother's closest friend from childhood, was a major influence in the development of public libraries in Hanover, especially in the area of children's services. As Kenneth Grant, a past junior member of the library, notes: "Miss Clare's passing in December 1994 ended a period of selfless service to the parish, spanning over six decades, with the main focus in the areas of educational and social improvement."<sup>1</sup>

She was a self-taught teacher who started her own school, Clare's Preparatory, only months after graduating from Rusea's



The first library was located on the ground floor of this building owned by the Hanover People's Co-operative Bank, Main St., Lucea.

High School in 1932. Beginning only with three students, one of whom was her younger sister Cecille, she soon built a reputation for achieving good academic results from her students. She had that rare gift of connecting with children, understanding their perspective and building their self-confidence to learn and to explore the world through books.

Cecille recalls that the JLS connection began when Mrs. Elsie Davis, a volunteer social worker in Lucea, asked Aunt Millie if she would be willing to manage the small parish library to be opened on the ground floor of an old two-storied building across the road from the Clare's family home and school. This casual enquiry resulted in forty years of outstanding work in the Jamaica Library Service. When the Hanover Parish Library in Lucea opened its doors in 1950, Aunt Millie was in charge as volunteer librarian, coming across from her school for two afternoons per week but gradually increasing her commitment as the service developed. This combination of teaching and library work remained the pattern for her life until retirement from JLS in November 1990.

I remember that first library well. It had the advantage of opening right onto the street so that it seemed welcoming, or so I thought at the time. It was an old building with a concrete floor, thick cool brick walls and low, wide window ledges just right for curling up with a book. It was here that Aunt Millie introduced me to Ann of Green Gables, Susan Coolidge's Katy books, The Swiss Family Robinson, the March girls from Louisa May Alcott, Elsie Oxenham's Abbey stories, Noel Streatfeild and countless others. The good librarian that she was, she always knew the right book at the right time and this skill remained with her as I saw it still at work when my own daughters, years later, became Summer holiday members of the Lucea library.

She loved children and was interested in all aspects of their development. Not having any of her own, the community's children became hers also. She saw the church, schoolroom and library as three pivotal influences in the shaping of their lives and she brought passion, dedication and integrity to her work in each of these environments. In her own life there were no boundaries between these three institutions, but I strongly believe that

it was the library that provided her with the opportunity for a seamless meshing of her Christian faith, her interests and her skills in service to her community.



It's Friday afternoon and time for Story-hour with Aunt Millie.

She was a Sunday-school teacher at her church, Lucea Methodist, and started its first Bible Study Group. She was also the Church's organist and choir-mistress for many years and I remember her friendly rivalry with my father, organist and choir-master at the neighbouring Presbyterian church, over Church cantatas and concerts. He remembers her beautiful and powerful soprano which meant that she often took the lead in these choral presentations. She drew on her choir experience for organising the library's annual Christmas concert and could coax a contribution from the shyest child so as to build self-confidence and participation. JLS Headquarters also knew that "Jesus books" were a must for Miss Clare in Lucea.

She ran her school until the day of her death, being noted particularly for her ability with "difficult" children. From her classroom experience she was able to gauge the needs of her young users and so match these to appropriate materials. Classroom discipline was also important as she insisted on straight queues before the check-in desk, no slouching over the desk and a polite greeting when returning books. From teaching also came the awareness of the power of graphics and colour, so that careful attention was given to the arrangement of books on the shelves, to attractive displays, mobiles and exhibitions of the art-work completed by children in the various popular holiday programmes. Norma Davis, Parish Librarian 1964-1968, describes the Friday afternoon story-hour as legendary with a jam-

packed Junior Reading Room as her infectious enthusiasm and rapport with her young audience always evoked a response.

Aunt Millie brought additional skills and qualities to her work at the library. She was an expert at needlework and is listed in the 1970s locally-produced directory of Jamaican masters of craft. Craft groups formed a regular part of the library's programme and she taught embroidery to many young members. One of her pieces was a map of Jamaica accurately identifying the service points of the JLS. In current slang, she was "wicked" at networking long before its importance received formal recognition and she could pull out all the stops in getting books, free art supplies and small treats needed for the various children's activities. Hermine Salmon, Parish Librarian during the 1970s, remembers her formidable web of resource persons developed as a result of numerous church- and community-based activities, as well as by keeping in touch with ex-students both at home and abroad. When Alex Haley of Roots fame visited Jamaica, she was able to organize a presentation by him at the library as well as one by John Akar, the well-known radio commentator of the 1970s whose wife was from Hanover. In addition to her workload, somehow she also found time to serve as Secretary to the Parish Library Committee until 1958, member of the Probation Committee and on the school boards of Lucea Infant School, Lucea Primary School and Rusea's High School.

Her caring disposition meant that the regularity of library visits by Junior members was closely monitored and, after closing the library for the day, Cecille was often asked to drive her to the home of a child whom she hadn't seen for a week or two. This concern was also extended to staff members of the Library. Both Norma and Hermine describe her with deep affection as a "special person". They remember her as warm and motherly, taking them under her wing when they arrived in Lucea; someone who was thoughtful and whose spontaneous invitations to pot-luck suppers at home would help to brighten a day that perhaps had not gone quite as planned; someone who could be depended on to host visitors to the library, whether at home or at work, therefore providing that reliable support so deeply appreciated by any library manager.

Aunt Millie was a major influence on my life and on my choice of career. Her years of service were generously given and marked by constancy and integrity. Her status did change from that of volunteer to paid staff member, but she saw little difference between these two roles as she gave her very best to each so that the quality of her work was above expectations in either category. This small tribute honours her memory and that of the many other "Aunt Millies" across Jamaica who value their communities, strive to make a difference and have contributed to the development of libraries in this country.

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*Best Wishes for the flexibility to effect the  
necessary changes for this wonderful age. Congratulations!*

Blossom Mullings, Past President

The second volunteer, Mr. Ferdinand (Ferdie) Sangster, was the founder of Sangster's Book Stores.

He was an active member of the JLA and, as noted below, a firm and loyal supporter of libraries and of the Association in both cash and kind.

### Ferdinand Llewelyn Sangster (1907— 1991)



by  
June Vernon

In the late 1930s a young man riding a bicycle sold books and magazines in downtown Kingston. This young man was no other than Ferdinand Llewelyn Sangster, Ferdie or Mr. F.L. as he was affectionately known.

Ferdie Sangster possessed all the qualities needed for success. He had an aim and ambition to which was added perseverance so that success came his way. He was the Founder, first Managing Director, then Chairman of Sangster's Book Stores Limited, the largest book-selling operation in the English-speaking Caribbean. He played a pioneering role in the publishing industry when in 1968 he teamed up with William Collins, a British publisher, to form Wm. Collins and Sangster (Jamaica)

Limited to publish books on Jamaica by Jamaicans. Leading Jamaican authors were among its imprint.

F.L. Sangster was interested in everything that was associated with libraries and librarians. He was an early and active member of the Jamaica Library Association, attended meetings and functions regularly and his commitment to the work of the Association never wavered. He would offer his car to transport members to out-of-town meetings even when he was unable to attend. In the late 1960s when the Association was planning its International Conference, Mr. F.L. was named as Chairman of the Book Fair Sub-Committee. He accepted the task with his usual dignity and held meetings after working hours. He worked tirelessly and, on April 25, 1972 when the Book Fair was declared open by His Worship the Mayor, Eli Matalon, the transformed National Arena was a credit to his organising skills. Seventy local and international publishers and booksellers exhibited and over five thousand persons visited the exposition. Special guests at the opening ceremony were the two hundred and sixty overseas participants from eighteen countries attending the Association's International Conference. The Association benefited by donations of publications.

The importance of library training was never far from Mr. F.L.'s consciousness and he supported the Association's efforts to establish a library school in Jamaica. This became a reality in October 1971, when the Department of Library Studies, University of the West Indies opened its doors to twenty-eight students. In 1976, the first Sangster's Book Stores' Scholarship for Librarianship was established and the Scholarship has been awarded three times.

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Mr. F.L.'s generosity was regularly demonstrated by his willingness to assist the Association. Requests for advertisements in the Jamaica Library Association Bulletin, a fund raising function or a newspaper supplement were never refused. He also assisted the Association by sponsoring events, donating book tokens as prizes and his company was one of the first to offer a discount on purchases to JLA members. There were many occasions when local and visiting colleagues enjoyed his hospitality and that of his family.

The Jamaica Library Service shared a special relationship with Mr. Sangster. The bond was forged between Mr. F.L. and the first local Director, Joyce Robinson and his regard and respect spilled over to all who joined that organisation. The staff were all "his girls" and all felt that each and everyone was very special to him. The limited book fund was able to stretch far because of the favourable terms negotiated by Mr. F.L. with overseas publishers. In the 1960s and 1970s his store at Harbour Street had one of the best collections of West Indian materials in the English-speaking Caribbean and he allowed JLS staff to inspect new stock as soon as it arrived and make selections for purchase, not only in this area, but in a variety of subjects. He began the tradition, which still continues, of senior staff visiting overseas publishers to choose directly from their stock. This hands-on experience has been beneficial to the staff and rewarding to the book budget of the Jamaica Library Service.

Mr. F. L. was respected and well known internationally as a bookseller and many publishers sought to have him act as their agent. He helped to nurture the careers of many who today have distinguished themselves as publishers — Mike Henry of LMH Publishing, Ian Randle of Ian Randle Publishers and Shirley Carby of CARLONG.

Mr. Sangster found time to take an active part in the community. He founded the Presbyterian Laymen's Association and at one time was the President of the Laymen's Association of the United Church. He was a Justice of the Peace, Treasurer of the Friends of the Kingston and St. Andrew Parish Library, Chairman of the Board of Governors of Camperdown High School and a life member of the Jamaica Boxing Board of Control.

His contribution to Jamaican society was acknowledged with many awards conferred on him. In 1972 he was awarded the Order of Distinction for his contribution to the development of the book trade in Jamaica; in 1979 the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce presented him with an Award (Special Category); and, in 1989, the Jamaica Library Association conferred on him Honorary Membership for his contribution to the Association.

On his retirement Mr. F. L. relocated to St. Elizabeth, the family home, where he continued to serve as a valuable member of the Parish Library Committee until his death in July 1991. The role he played in the development of the book industry in Jamaica and his dedication to the Jamaica Library Association and the Jamaica Library Service will long be remembered.

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**Sonia Reid**, President 1992

"I do not need to reiterate how important it is for us to have all our records in one central location.... It is my sincere wish that we can find a location and move into our own office in the near future."

**Merline Bardowell**, President 1993

"More than natural resources, more than cheap labour, more than financial capital, knowledge is rapidly becoming the key factor of production."

**Gloria Clarke**, President 1994

"We are managers of knowledge and knowledge is power.... We therefore need to awaken our decision-makers to the importance of our skills."

**Paulette Kerr**, President 1995

"There is no doubt that a race is on: the race of information transfer and provision.... How do we prepare for the race? First we must stay ahead of technology and new trends. Training, continuing education and upgrading of skills are musts."

**Reta Whittaker**, President 1996

**Richelle Harvey**, President 1997

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*May God giver our Association the vision, wisdom and will as we strive to serve the profession*

Hyacinth Brown

*Congratulations JLA and best wishes for the future.*

Ouida Lewis, Main Library, UWI-Mona.

**Cecil Charles Charlton (April 5, 1928 –)**



Our third volunteer, Mr. Cecil Charlton, was born in Mandeville and was educated at Manchester Government School and West Indies College. He is a former Mayor of Mandeville and has served as Chairman of the National Water Commission, of Hargreaves Hospital and of the Manchester Secondary School Board. He also served as Chairman of the Manchester Parish Library for many years. He was interviewed by Mrs. Ouida Rowe who served as Librarian under his tenure as Chairman.

**O.R. Mr. Charlton, how long have you been associated with libraries in Jamaica?**

C.C. Over 40 years.

**O.R. What has been your motivation for giving voluntary service to the Manchester Parish Library for so many years?**

C.C. Thank God, I have lived to see several persons who have come to the library to read and I have noticed that a number of those persons who have put reading above all other activities have come out to be people of good will, to be Christian people and people of whom the country can be proud. For example, I cannot think of one other organisation — not at the moment and I doubt very much if I would be able to find one — that can mould youths in the proper manner that we would like to see them function in this country, as the library has done.

Sometimes I wonder why so many people give voluntary library service all these years and I ask myself, why do they do this? I would venture to say that it is the guiding hand of the Almighty and because of prayers why we are able to accomplish what we have achieved. I think it was a wonderful idea to establish libraries throughout the world and I do hope and pray that our libraries will continue to help people and will continue to grow from strength to strength.

**O.R. We associate you particularly with the Manchester Parish Library Committee. When did you begin your years of voluntary service? Was it in the fifties?**

CC. In 1958. I became Chairman in 1966. Before I became Chairman, the Rev. Morton York was Chairman and, in those days, we had a little building out in the town of Mandeville. Although it was shabby, my librarians were genuine people who stood by me and I stood by them. Thank God, the building that we have today for the library is something of which we are proud.

We constantly brought our case to government and I remember quite vividly the Minister of Education the Hon. Edwin Allen, that was the last man we brought our case to and he assisted us to build this library that we now have. Something that we are very proud of, a building that we can boast about and I would venture to say that we have gone from a little dilapidated building in Mandeville centre to the library on Hargreaves Avenue that stands as an edifice.

**O.R. So, I can assume then that your motivation for voluntary service has been the development of the Manchester Parish Library over the years. Tell me briefly of the satisfaction you have derived from these years of service?**

C.C. My greatest satisfaction and encouragement have been derived from seeing young people grow up to become adults who are respected. Some are ministers of religion, some ministers of government, some are doctors, nurses and skilled persons. It gives great satisfaction to know that somewhere down the line you have played a pivotal role in moulding those youngsters. You can look back on those days when you used to see them reading at the library. Sometimes I say to myself, well, I have given enough service and I think I can depart now. However, when I remember what has been accomplished and how well the library service continues to grow, I would love to continue.

**O.R. I agree with you. The forty years were really well worth it.**

C.C. It was a very, very blessed day when I joined the library committee and, it was a blessed day when I was elected Chairman. Sometimes I think about the number of Librarians, including yourself, who have worked with me and it has been so encouraging. Sometimes I wonder, when my librarians are being transferred, where I am going to get another librarian like the incumbent person and the next person, like God's blessings, is just as good. I just keep getting people who give service without complaining. It is God's work why the library goes from strength to strength.

I have never even had the concern of anybody thinking about going on strike or not working. The service goes on and on. If I were to be assured that I would still have the same people that I have had during my tenure as Chairman, then if I should come back to this earth when I die, my first choice would be as Chairman of the library.

**O.R. Mr. Charlton, what would you say about the importance of volunteerism in nation-building?**

C.C. Well, let me say that I hope that people will continue to volunteer because the experience I have had has shown me clearly that voluntary service is very necessary. Jamaica has a history of organisations that have their roots in voluntary service and the Manchester Parish Library is an excellent example of what can result from volunteerism. Voluntary service is something that gives you satisfaction. You know, I have to digress by just quoting a writer who said: "It is good to have money and the things that money can buy, but you should make sure that you don't lose the things that money cannot buy. My Librarians and the library service people on the whole also give voluntary service and I am satisfied that the voluntary service that they have given to Jamaica is greatly appreciated.

O.R. In these harsh economic times when some people are saying that volunteerism is dead or dying rapidly, as the longest serving volunteer in the Jamaica Library Service, what type of encouragement or motivation would you offer to potential volunteers?

C.C. I make it my point of duty when I address gatherings or visit schools to bring home to them the importance of voluntary service and I say to them that people who have the mind to give voluntary service that you do not begin to think about money. The people who will take on a job and the only interest they have is money, greed will tell

them every day: "You need some more, you need some more." I would also advise persons who may be standing outside and saying that the time has come when we cannot give any more voluntary service, that good things don't die and excellence has no winning post. Give voluntary service, place yourself in a position where you can assist or give leadership and guidance.

Ouida, you remember quite well that when you were at the library and it needed land or other assistance I would request that letters be written to the Mayor of the Parish Council and, when my instructions were carried out, I was the recipient of those very same letters which came from the library. I was always willing and ready to do anything necessary to keep the library alive.

O.R. Oh yes,- sir, at that time you wore two hats, as Mayor of Mandeville and also as Chairman of the Parish Library Committee. You were able to wear both hats successfully, I recall. What do you think the Jamaica Library Association can do to continue to foster the spirit of volunteerism in libraries of all types?

C.C. I believe we should have some seminars, have meetings with potential volunteers, young people in particular. Even though I say it myself, I don't like to blow my own trumpet, but I could give to the youngsters some of my experiences and I am certain it would help. In the Bible the question was asked:



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*"Excellence through Knowledge"*

Can anything good come out of Nazareth? I now ask the question: Can anything good come out of Jamaica? With what is happening, seventy per cent would say, no. I am left with thirty who would say, yes. Yes if you can train them and show them the example that libraries and librarians have shown to Jamaica.

**O.R. As you know, the Manchester Parish Library was started by a band of older folks. I know you will agree that there is room for both young and older volunteers.**

C.C. Ouida, as I have often said, when you are replacing the older people with younger ones we have no objection, but I would advise that experience is not something that can be bought at the shop. We want to train young people and mould them, we want to show them the way but I would like to advise that it is not something that can be bought, you know. One writer says:

“Experience and knowledge cannot be watered by tank water and it cannot be watered by sea water, it cannot be watered by water from NWC, only one thing can water knowledge and it is the tears of experience.” So experience has to be respected every time. As we are discussing the question of voluntary service, I hope this message will go home to people. We do not want people who will only work, we want people who will volunteer to work *and work* and keep the light burning, keep the torch burning that in the distance the beacon’s light will be there. Once you see the light on your journey you will get there at sometime.

**O.R. Some people may say that librarians are paid. Why do you say they are also volunteers?**

C.C. Well, I would not call their salaries pay because the calibre of people libraries employ are capable of doing things they could easily earn ten times as much as they are earning anywhere else. I call it a stipend. That’s why I say they are volunteers.

**O.R. By the way, in your capacity as Chairman of the Manchester Parish Library Committee, are you planning to host a meeting of the Jamaica Library Association during our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary? In the past you have always been a gracious host.**

C.C. Certainly, ma’am, and I have promised. It is only a little business that has delayed it, maybe for good purpose as it might have gone before this interview. I can answer by saying, without a shadow of a doubt, that on that special occasion I will be able to see all my librarians once again and that is satisfaction!

**OR. Well, that function will be something to look forward to. Thank you, Mr. Charlton, for kindly consenting to be interviewed.**

CC. It was a pleasure. I am very glad you found time to be with me this morning. I should be in Kingston, but I promised you faithfully that I would wait for you to come and let us have this interview. I am sure that this is going to plant another tree in the life of Jamaica and testify quite eloquently to people that money is not all. The sacrifices that you make voluntarily will cause others to pattern what you are doing and that becomes an example.

Each of these volunteers brought their own unique gifts to the development of libraries and of the Association. As Robotham notes, volunteerism provides “an opportunity for Jamaicans of all classes and colours to work together ... an opportunity to discover our common Jamaicanness, to appreciate one another more for what we are and for what each and every one of us brings to the common efforts to develop a nation.”<sup>2</sup>

### Notes

- 1 Kenneth Grant, “My Favourite Librarian.” Gleaner August 2, 1998. 16.
- 2 Don Robotham, Vision and Voluntarism: Reviving Voluntarism in Jamaica (Kingston: Grace, Kennedy Foundation. 1998.) 55.

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# DLIS in Pictures

(Based on the Photograph Collection of the Department of Library and Information Studies)

## The Beginnings

The Department of Library and Information Studies (then the Department of Library Studies) started classes on the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies on September 1, 1971. The Department's offices had to be located in the School of Edu-

cation and the Department of Extra-Mural Studies as its own offices were still under construction. Below, staff and students of a 1972 DLS Summer Course for Caribbean Teacher-Librarians are photographed in front of the unfinished DLS wing at the Faculty of Arts and General Studies.



DLS Offices Under Construction, 1972.

DLS staff seated in the front L-R are Mr Roderick Cave (Senior Lecturer), Mrs. Hazel Bennett (Lecturer and Course Organizer), Professor Dorothy Collings (the School's first Professor and Head of Department) and Miss Daphne Douglas (Lecturer). Mrs. Stella Merriman of the Guyana Public Library is seated at the extreme right.

## Our New "Home"

The Department opened its own doors officially in 1973 with an Opening Ceremony held in front of its new building. The photograph below shows Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Planning) Leslie Robinson addressing the gathering from the podium. As Chair-

man of the University's Advisory Committee on Librarianship, set up to help develop the new Department's programme, DLS benefited considerably from his advice and support.

**Opening Ceremony, March 22, 1973.**



From row L to R, are: Professor Dorothy Collings; Vice-Chancellor Dr O.R. Marshall; Mr. C.E. Jackman, Registrar (in dark glasses); Mr. A.Z. Preston, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Finance) and University Bursar (in glasses and just visible behind the floral arrangement); Mrs. O.R. Marshall, who opened the door of the new building; Mr. D. Chadwick Braggiotti, Representative of the General Secretariat, OAS; and Mr. Sturges Shields, Resident Representative, UNDP.

Second row L to R, are: Mrs. Gloria Knight, Vice-Chairman Jamaica National Commission for Unesco; Mrs. Agnes McMurdoch, Director, Free Public Library, Guyana and a member of the Advisory Committee on Librarianship; Mrs. Joyce Robinson, Director of the Jamaica Library Service and member of the Advisory Committee (partially hidden by Professor Collings); Mr. K.E. Ingram, University Librarian and also a member of the Advisory Committee; Mrs. Hazel Bennett; and Mr. Roderick Cave (barely visible over that floral arrangement).

---

*Congratulations JLA.*

Stephney Ferguson

## The First Students

DLS started with twenty-eight students. In 1973, a one-year postgraduate diploma was introduced with ten students in the first group. The Department now offers three post-graduate pro-

grammes and the 2000/01 student body stands at one hundred and eleven (eighty-six undergraduates and twenty-five postgraduates).



Undergraduate Students, 1973

The entire student body in 1973 comprising those who entered the department in 1971 and 1972.

Staff seated in front row are Professor Dorothy Collings, centre; to her right, Miss Daphne Douglas; and to her left, Mr. Roderick Cave and Mrs. Hazel Bennett.



Postgraduate Pioneers, 1974.

The first graduating class with department staff

DLS staff in the back row at the extreme left include Mr. G. Chan (Lecturer); beside him Professor Frank Hogg of the College of Libraianship, Wales, who succeeded Professor Collings as Head of the Department; and, at the extreme right, Mr. Roderick Cave (Senior Lecturer).

Staff seated in the front starting at third left are Miss Janet White (Lecturer) on secondment to DLS from the University of Western Ontario and funded by the OAS; Dr P. Fray (Lecturer); and Mrs Hazel Bennett (Lecturer). Seated at right is Mrs. Ruth Smellie, Department Secretary. Absent from the Department during this year was Miss Daphne Douglas who was studying at the University of Pittsburg.

### Continuing Education

The Department has maintained an active continuing education programme consisting of extension courses, other short courses and workshops in an effort to meet the needs of professional and non-professional staff both nationally and regionally. Assis-

tance has been provided by agencies such as Unesco, Organization of American States (OAS), International Development and Research Centre (IDRC), the Canadian Development Agency, the British Council and the British Overseas Development Administration.



Supervising Students in St. Vincent, 1973.

DLS Lecturer Mrs. Hazel Bennette in St. Vincent preparing students for the Caribbean Teacher – Librarians Summer Training Programme.

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Awards Ceremony, Caribbean Teacher/Librarians Course, 1973.

The University's Pro-Vice-Chancellor Dr F. Roy Augier presenting a certificate to participant Daisy Lake, now the Supervisor of School Library Services in Antigua, at the 1972/73 DLS two-summer Course for Caribbean Teacher/Librarians.



←  
 “All work and no play.....” DLS Courses are not all work. Professor Daphne Douglas (R), then Head of Department and first Jamaican professor to head the school, relaxes with students on a 1986 course on Archives Management.

→  
 At the same function, Mrs. Judy Cover (R), DLS lecturer, and Miss Marjorie Gonsalves (C), the then Supervisor, School Library Services, Antigua, both listen attentively as Mrs. Norma Amenu – Kpodo (now University Deputy Librarian, UWI) emphasises a point.



**Course Participants, *Introduction to Computer Studies*,  
 June 20 – August 6, 1977 and Departmental Staff**

Course Director for the Department's first computer course was Professor Fred Matthews, Computer Studies Specialist from the School of Library Service, Dalhousie University, seated third R. To his L is Mrs. Hazel Bennett, Course Co-ordinator, and to his R is Miss Daphne Douglas, Co – Tutor for the course. Mr. Gordon Chan, standing behind Mrs. Bennett, assisted with the practical sessions. Professor Norman Horrocks, Dean of the School of Library Service, Dalhousie and an external examiner for DLS, is seated second L and, standing in the second row, extreme L, is Professor J.C. Harrison also from Dalhousie's School of Library Service and on secondment to DLS.



**Time to relax**

After the intensive *Introduction to Computer Studies* course, students enjoy the closing luncheon. Standing are: Mrs. Amy Robertson and Mrs. Matthews, wife of Professor Fred Matthews.



**Presenting the Summer Course, *Exploiting the New Information Technology*, 1996.**

Mr. Ramnauth Sookraj, DLIS staff member, faces his audience of Caribbean librarians as course presenter for *Exploiting the New Information Technology*. To his right is Miss Stephney Ferguson, then Head of Department.

## Technical Assistance

DLIS has benefited from the generous assistance of many organisations such as Unesco, the University of Western Ontario, the British Overseas Development Administration, the International Development Research Centre, the Organization of American States, the Jamaica Library Service and the Jamaica Library Association. The OAS made a significant contribution to the start of the Department's Computer Laboratory and therefore to

the expansion of information technology courses in the curriculum. Dr Martha Tome, Senior Specialist in the Improvement of Educational Systems Division, OAS, Washington, who had portfolio responsibility for library development programmes, was especially supportive of the Department.



### Technical Assistance from the OAS, 1986

Pro-Vice-Chancellor Dr Roy Augier, on behalf of the University, accepts the Department's first computer system from Dr Martha Tome of the OAS.

Standing L to R, are: Miss N. Farquhar of PIOJ; Mr. Joe Pereira, Dean Faculty of Arts and General Studies, UWI, Mona; Mr. V. Marquina, OAS Representative in Jamaica; Miss Dahlia Owen of PIOJ; Dr Martha Tome, Senior Specialist, OAS, Washington; Mrs. Hazel Bennett, Senior Lecturer DLS; PVC Dr Roy Augier, UWI, Mona; and Professor Daphne Douglas, Head of Department, DLS.

*Congratulations!*

With the compliments of Kreisha Ferguson

## Milestones

The Department marked its tenth anniversary with an "Open Day" featuring: a demonstration of a reference and research enquiry service designed and manned by students; an exhibition of research and publications by both staff and students; and a public

lecture by Dr Vincente Garibaldi, representing Unesco. After these activities, the third year students contributed a large tenth anniversary cake, complete with the appropriate number of candles.



**Cutting the tenth Anniversary Cake, 1981**

Mrs. Hazel Bennett, Head of Department, cuts the tenth anniversary cake with students eagerly watching her every move. Also looking on is Mr. Vincente Garibaldi, representing UNESCO and the Department's guest for the occasion.

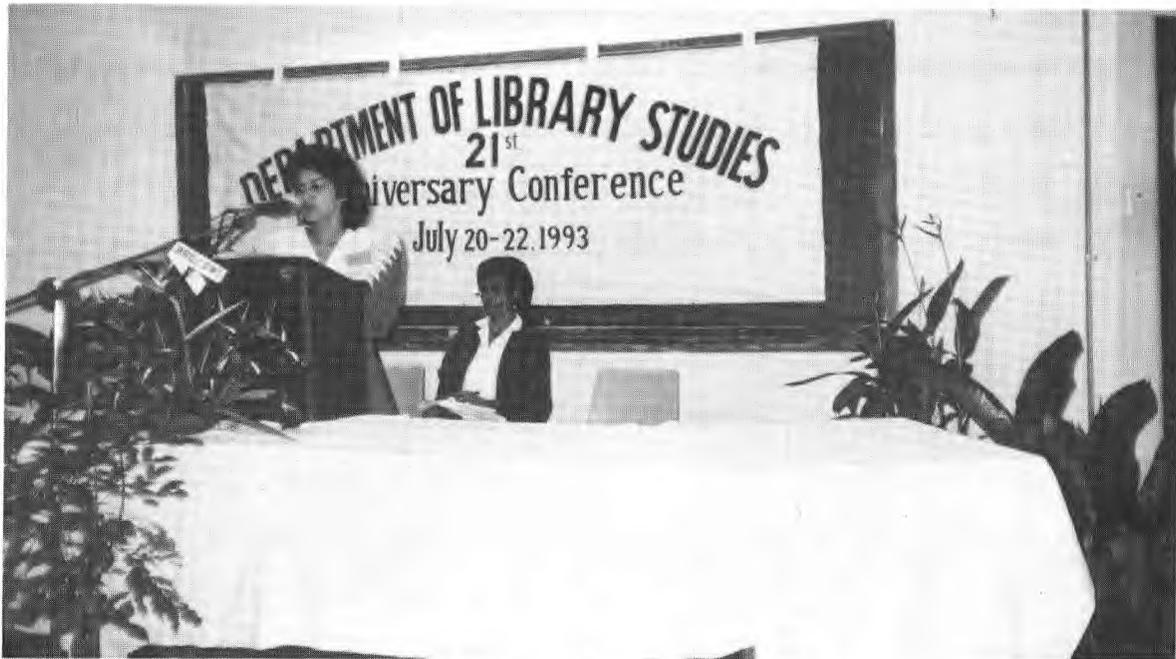
The Department's 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary was marked by a conference at the University of the West Indies in 1993 on the theme, The Environment of Libraries and Information Units: Strategies for

Sustainable Development. Professionals came from around the Caribbean and the opening address was by Professor Errol Miller of the then Faculty of Education, University of the West Indies.



Professor Daphne Douglas, Head of Department, welcomes participants of the 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Conference. Behind her, L-R, are Dr Pauline Christie, Dean, Faculty of Arts and General Studies; Professor Gerald Lalor, Campus Principal; and Miss Rosemarie Runcie, Lecturer in the Department.

**Opening Session, 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Conference, University of the West Indies, 1993.**



Conference Participants, 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Conference

DLS graduate, Sarah Persard-Maharaj, presents a paper at the 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Conference. Seated behind her is Mrs. Hyacinth Brown, also a DLS graduate and Raporteur for the session.

#### Awards & Prizes

Awards and Prizes are an important part of student life as they provide both encouragement and support. Many agencies/governments offered financial assistance for students in the early years especially for those coming to Jamaica from the other Caribbean countries. In 1976/77 the Jamaica Library Association negotiated the **Sangster's Book Stores' Scholarship** with Mr.

Ferdie Sangster, founder of Sangster's Bookstores. Professor Collings established an undergraduate and a postgraduate prize for outstanding academic achievement and these are awarded annually where appropriate. In 1995, DLIS alumnae established **The Daphne Douglas Prize** to recognize personal and academic development at the undergraduate level.



Presentation of the first *Sangster's Book Stores' Scholarship*

Mr. Ferdie Sangster congratulates Miss Edris Benjamin, the first winner of the scholarship in his name.



Presentation of *The Dorothy Collings Award*, 1977

Here our own Cherrell Shelley-Robinson (R) accepts *The Dorothy Collings Award* from Professor Collings herself.

## Heads of Department

The present Head of the Department is Professor Fay Durrant. She succeeds:

Professor Dorothy Collins, an American of Jamaican parentage with roots in St. Mary (father) and St. Elizabeth (mother) and the School's first professor, 1971–1974; Professor Frank Hogg of the College of Librarianship, Aberystwyth, Wales, 1974–1976;

Miss Daphne Douglas, later to become Professor Douglas and the first Jamaican to head the Department, 1976–1980 and 1982–1993; Mrs. Hazel Bennett, subsequently Dr Bennett, 1980–1982; Miss Stephney Ferguson, 1993–1997; and Mr. Ownali Mohamedali, 1997–2000.



**Professor Dorothy Collins (1971–1974)**



**Professor Frank Hogg (1974–1976)**

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**Patricia Cuff, President 1998**

“An Association is dynamic, combining the strength, vision, intellectual and other resources of the many to make a unique whole.”

**Cherrell Shelley-Robinson, President 1999**

**Hermine Salmon, President 2000**

“The library profession is probably one of the most dynamic professions, the most important and central professions, in one of the most complicated parts of the modern world.”

(Neil Rudenstine. President, Harvard University. Librarian’s Assembly, Harvard University. Oct. 3, 1997).





**Dr Hazel Bennett (1980–1982)**



**Professor Fay Durrant (2000 – )**



**Mr Ownali Mohamedali (1997–2000)**

# A Review of the Jamaica Library Association's Strategic Plan for 1996-1999

by  
Gloria Clarke

The Association's Strategic Plan for 1996-1999 was drafted by a fifteen-member Futures Committee under the Chairmanship of Amy Robertson. The Committee was set up in 1990 during the presidency of Blossom Mullings with the mandate of:

- examining the structure and work of the Association
- developing a long term plan for its continued growth and development.

The vision of the Plan was to create awareness in the society of the primacy of up-to-date information in personal and national life and to promote the delivery of total quality service. The Committee had hoped that the plan would facilitate leaders in their efforts to promote and mobilise the information profession and garner resources to carry through the functions of the Association. A brief review of the plan provides a useful guide for identifying the issues of concern to the Association during the period as well as how the Association responded to these concerns.

A primary objective of the strategic plan was to enhance the image, status and reputation of the profession through coalition with organisations and agencies with similar goals.

In an effort to achieve this objective, membership was retained with local, regional and international associations as follows:

- The Professional Societies Association of Jamaica
- The Commonwealth Library Association
- The International Association of School Librarianship
- The Association of Caribbean Universities, Reference and Institutional Libraries
- The International Federation of Library Associations

Association members have attended conferences and workshops organised by these bodies and the following members have served on the various executives:

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| • Mrs. Norma Amenu-Kpodo        | Member of Executive Committee<br>Management of Library Associations, IFLA Secretary, COMLA |
| • Mrs. Beatrice Anderson        | Caribbean Regional Representative, IASL  |
| • Dr. Cherrell Shelley-Robinson | Caribbean Regional Representative, IASL  |
| • Mrs. Gloria Salmon            | Secretary/Treasurer<br>IFLA<br>Round Table on Mobile Libraries                             |

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| • Miss Stepney Ferguson    | President Elect, ACURIL<br>Member, Standing Committee on Education & Training, IFLA |
| • Mrs. Albertina Jefferson | Special Adviser on<br>Regional Activities: Latin America and the Caribbean, IFLA    |

A second important objective concerned the promotion of libraries and the profession. Strategies here included the hosting of conferences and, in 1996, the Association co-sponsored the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference of the International Association of School Librarianship at the Renaissance Jamaica Grande Hotel in Ocho Rios. In 1999 JLA, along with COMLA and the Department of Library and Information Studies, hosted a Caribbean Conference of Special Libraries.

Participation in the University of the West Indies' annual "Career Expo" and the promotion of Library Week in 1996 and 1998, together with scheduled career talks to secondary school students at school and on radio programmes, have been avenues for promoting the profession. However, there is still no noticeable enrolment of students with a Science and Technology background in the profession. Of significance is the Ministry of Education and Culture's initiative to recruit eighty-nine Teacher/Librarians on a phased basis for work in Primary Schools. In addition, the course on Records Management at the University of the West Indies has attracted a significant number of students and an increasing number of Government Ministries and Departments have recruited Records Managers. In spite of the Association's Advocacy group, another means of increasing the profile of the profession, the tendency of the general membership to refrain from enunciating their views on important national issues has restricted the effectiveness of this body.

A third objective set a target of achieving membership status for at least eighty per cent (80%) of professional workers in Jamaica. This growth has been minimal as personal membership is no more than fifty per cent (50%). A Mentorship Programme, organised in collaboration with Placement and Career Service at the University of the West Indies, has functioned with varying degrees of success. However the continuing education programme for practising professionals was sustained and newsletters and Bulletins kept the membership informed on activities within the Association. Staff welfare was enhanced as the Association sought and obtained discounted rates for members for the purchase of computers.

Regarding our impact on national policies and legislation, while the relationship between Government and the Association has been cordial, it has not been fruitful. In spite of our best efforts NACOLAIS, the sole organisation representing library

authorities at the governmental level, was dismantled and no replacement instituted.

As the period was beset with heightened difficulties due to increasing economic hardship the plans for establishing a Secretariat could not be implemented. This is compounded by the fact

that all the volunteers are in full-time employment. It is clear that the method of funding the Association, a critical objective, must be re-conceived in order to promote and sustain an enabling environment.

---

*Congratulations, JLA.  
We toast you on your 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
and wish you continued success.*

Yvonne Brodie & Elora Davis.  
The Library, Cable & Wireless.

*Congratulations and Best Wishes.*

Eileen Marshall

*Congrats, JLA. Compliments.*

Carol Plummer.  
Jamaica Library Service

*Congrats and best wishes for the future.*

Cheryl Cousins  
Clarendon Parish Library

*Congratulations on your 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and  
best wishes for the next 50 years.*

Clover L. Chung

*Best Wishes and continued success.*

Yulande Lindsay



# The Jamaica Library Association's 2000–04 Strategic Plan

The JLA's Strategic Plan for 2000-04 was developed after consultation with the general membership at a retreat in Runaway Bay in June 1999. It was further refined at follow-up retreats for the Executive Committee later that year, in November and again in March 2000. The overall aim is to have a vibrant Association that provides professional guidance and leadership for its members; an Association that both public and private sector policy-makers and administrators will consult on library/information-related matters; and an Association that speaks with authority on matters of public concern.

The strategic objectives are:

- to achieve a 50% increase in membership by January 2004; collaboration with DLIS, EXED and Mico, participation in mentorship programmes, active recruitment of both professionals and institutions and building partnerships with related organisations such as computer groups, booksellers and library suppliers are the associated activities;
- to retain members by developing meaningful partnership with them, that encourages interaction and networking; suggested activities include an annual Awards Function, promotion of the profession and Association, providing increased opportunities for the social interaction of members, investigating possibilities for exchange/development programmes and an active programme for continuing education and training;
- to widen the Association's sphere of influence both within and outside the Association; this objective is both wide-ranging and complex as activities cover building an awareness among policy-makers about the education and responsibilities of librarians, researching the conditions of service and salaries of professionals so as to advocate minimum levels, establishing committees to review library standards and bringing these to the attention of the relevant

policy-makers, lobbying for the inclusion of information literacy skills and for the enactment and implementation of library-related legislation; this objective also relates to policy development in areas such as filtering Internet access;

- to develop and promote a positive image of the profession and the Association; promotional activities that have been identified include the development of a range of tools such as flyers and brochures as well as making full use of the electronic and print media; a bulletin board/conferencing facility has also been included in the Plan;
- to develop a strong financial base for the Association; major activities here are the development of a viable investment portfolio and renewed focus on fee-collection in addition to the traditional fund-raising activities of the Association;
- to develop & strengthen the Association's administrative structure; this objective was strongly supported and activities here include setting up a virtual secretariat and the appointment of an executive secretary, formulating the necessary guidelines for effective operation (security, documentation, maintenance and archiving) and launching an Internet website;
- to strengthen international linkages; playing an active role in the international library community, serving on international committees and hosting international conferences have been suggested as the appropriate means for achieving this goal.

Sections, Working Parties and Committees should be guided by these objectives in developing their work programmes for each year, developing activities that are relevant to their respective areas of responsibility and so "flesh out" the Plan and ensure its implementation. There should be something in this programme for each member and, working together, we can achieve a great deal.

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*To God be the Glory*

Ouida Rowe

*Our profession is as vibrant as our Association is perceived to be.  
Let us make it strong.*

Amy Robertson

# Preparing Caribbean Information Professionals for the Twenty-First Century: Information Technology in the Curriculum at the Department of Library & Information Studies, University of the West Indies

by  
Ramnauth Sookraj

## Introduction

In the annals of the Jamaica Library Association, one significant milestone to which the Association can look back with pride was the Association's lobbying role in the establishment of the Department of Library Studies at the University of the West Indies three decades ago. Few then could have envisaged the dramatic impact which information technology would have on the library school curriculum. What are some of the newer applications of information technology to which students of the Department of Library and Information Studies (DLIS) are exposed as part of their education and training?

DLIS has been involved in the education and training of the region's information professionals since 1971 and has taught students from virtually every country of the English-speaking Caribbean. The Department offers a three-year Bachelor of Arts undergraduate programme, a fifteen-month MLS programme and a one-year MA programme (introduced in the academic year 1998). There is also a two-year B.Ed programme offered in association with the Dept. of Education for students who wish to major in Library and Information Studies. As part of its continuing education programme for professionals in the field, DLIS has been regularly offering summer courses in areas such as records management, web page design, web searching and creating multimedia presentations.



Students at work in the DLIS Computer Laboratory.

From its inception, DLIS has been a pacesetter in the use of modern information technology. Under the leadership of Professor Daphne Douglas, the Department acquired several micro-computers during the mid-1980s and set up one of the earliest local area networks on the campus. Students were exposed to a

range of applications, including database management, word-processing, desktop publishing, and demos of library applications and tutorials.

Today, the Department continues this tradition of innovation and, in recognition of the changing role of the modern information professional, has expanded its computer facilities and introduced several new components into its curriculum so as to prepare students for the challenges that they will undoubtedly face in the new information environment.

## Expanded Facilities

Up to the end of 1994, the Department's computer facilities included four DOS machines and a printer linked through a Novell network and housed in a corner of what was then the Cataloguing Laboratory. By mid-1997, this room had been converted into a Computer Laboratory and the DOS machines had been replaced by ten Windows-based, multimedia computers. Through UNESCO's SLISNET project, the Department had acquired a web server to host its web pages. The Novell network was replaced by a Windows NT network, with all computers providing full Internet access. A range of peripheral hardware was subsequently acquired, including colour printers, a flatbed scanner, a digital projector, a digital camera, a camcorder, video capture hardware, a Jazz drive and a CD-Rewritable Drive. An extensive range of software was also acquired including the Microsoft Office and Corel WordPerfect suites, multimedia authoring software such as Macromedia Authorware, graphics programs such as Adobe Photoshop and image management software such as ImageAXS Pro.

In September 1999, work commenced on the expansion to the Department's physical facilities with funding provided by the Dorothy Collings Bequest Fund. Work was completed by mid-2000 and when the lab re-opened for the academic year 2000/2001, students were welcomed to an expanded Laboratory housing 25 computers, most of them brand new Pentium III machines with DVD drives, capacious hard drives and large memories.

## New Roles for Information Professionals

The literature of library and information science is replete with the new roles which the modern information professional is expected to assume in the brave new information age. These include the role of facilitator, educator, information re-packager and knowledge manager, to name a few. The success with which the new information professional is able to carry out these new roles will to a large extent be dependent on the kind of education and training he/she receives in library school.

From a technological standpoint, today's information professional is expected to be technologically savvy. This means being able to assess critically existing and emerging technologies and utilise them for more effective service to patrons. It requires mastery not only of traditional technological skills such as database construction and searching, but also web page creation, Internet searching, networking and working with multimedia amongst others.

In the facilitative role, the modern information professional is expected to be able to plan, provide and manage the infrastructure required for patrons to access information, regardless of its format or geographic locale. Less emphasis is placed on ownership of, and more on access to, information. In the instructional role, the modern information professional is expected to train end-users in the effective exploitation of the new technologies. As information repackager, the information professional must rework and repackage content to suit the specific requirements of patrons. Both of these latter roles can be considerably enhanced through the use of multimedia.

### **Technology Courses**

Students at the DLIS begin their immersion into information technology immediately on entering the programme. It is important to note that while there are a number of information technology-specific courses through which this occurs, all of which are compulsory, the use of information technology is ubiquitous and integrated into virtually all the courses offered. All students at the undergraduate level are required to take an introductory course during their first year of study (LS15A-Computer Literacy for Information Professionals). This covers basic computer concepts and applications, including word-processing, graphics, spreadsheets and database management using CDS-ISIS. Students are also exposed to the elementary use of Internet applications, such as electronic mail and basic web searching.

During their second year, students are introduced to library applications of information technology (LS25A-Automation in Information Work I). This includes Acquisitions, Circulation, Cataloguing, Online Public Access Catalogues, Serials Management and online searching. A second course at this level emphasises computer-based multimedia applications including the development of web pages (LS27A-Audio-Visual Information Work I).

In the final year of the undergraduate programme students cover systems development, database design using CDS-ISIS for Windows, use of bibliographic management software, advanced web searching, planning of local area networks/Intranets, use of web-based discussion groups and creation of list-servs (LS35A-Automation in Information Work II). They also do a second audio-visual course that exposes them to the creation of multimedia presentations using Microsoft PowerPoint and Macromedia Authorware (LS37A-Audio-visual Information Work II).

These courses allow students to be exposed to the newer applications of information technology as noted below.

### **Web Page Design and Creation**

The Internet, more specifically the World Wide Web, has revolutionised the way information is generated, stored and delivered. Libraries today are using it for a host of applications and, in order to take full advantage of this powerful medium of communication, the modern information professional needs to master at least the basics of web page design and creation.

DLIS has therefore incorporated web page design as a major component in several of its courses. At the undergraduate level, students are introduced to the process of planning and producing an institutional web site, complete with multimedia elements such as graphics and sound (LS27A). They are taught to author HTML documents using a variety of software including HTML Assistant Pro and Netscape Composer. A term project involves a team of students working on a web presentation for an existing organisation and some examples of student work can be found at the Department's website ([http://www.dls.uwimona.edu.im: 1 104](http://www.dls.uwimona.edu.im:1104)). It should be noted that the foundation for the JLA's website was created by a pair of students doing this course. At the postgraduate level, web creation skills are covered in a new course (LS66C-Multimedia Librarianship) offered to students of the recently introduced MA degree in library and information studies.

### **Web Searching**

Perhaps even more important than web page creation is the ability to search the World Wide Web efficiently and effectively. The Web has been a mixed blessing for librarians as it represents the world's largest repository of information, most of which is freely available but not centrally indexed. Instead there is a variety of search tools including search engines, subject directories, meta-search engines, yellow pages, white pages, webliographies and library catalogues, none of which can claim to be the definitive index to the World Wide Web. This presents a major problem for the information professional who must come to grips with using a number of these tools in order to locate needed information. Students of the Department are introduced to simple web searching as early as their first year, but it is not until the third year that it is covered in depth. In addition to learning the characteristics of the major search tools and effective search techniques, students are also taught how to critically evaluate retrieved web pages.

### **Multimedia Presentations**

Multimedia is a powerful tool that can greatly assist the modern information professional in the new instructional role that he/she is expected to assume. Students are introduced to both presentation and authoring software, the two broad categories of multimedia programmes. Using presentation software such as Microsoft PowerPoint, students learn to plan and create electronic slide shows to accompany oral presentations or as stand-alone presentations. Authoring software such as Macromedia Authorware enables students to create more sophisticated, interactive multimedia projects such as electronic

encyclopaedias and online tutorials with quizzes. Multimedia is taught at both undergraduate (LS37A) and postgraduate (LS66C) levels.

Course projects require students to do a considerable amount of digital capture, conversion and manipulation of multimedia information. Competence in the use of a flatbed scanner is essential and the department has acquired two as well as a digital camera that can be used to take pictures for downloading to a hard drive or floppy disk.

Once the images have been digitized, they frequently need to be manipulated in a variety of ways, such as resizing, cropping and adding special effects. This is done using a number of graphics programs such as Adobe Photoshop and Paint Shop Pro.

The digitizing of sound is also a major component in the creation of multimedia and all the Department's computers are equipped with sound cards and external speakers as well as microphones. Students are taught the process of digitizing sound from a number of sources including audio CDs, tape recordings and recording one's own voice. The digitized sound clip can then be re-sampled, cropped and enhanced with special effects using a number of sound editing software, such as Windows Sound Recorder and Sound Forge.

To complete the range of digital media for multimedia presentations, students are also taught how to digitize video. The Department's camcorder and video capture card, for connecting the camcorder to the computer, allows video clips to be digitized. These can then be edited using video editing software such as MGM Videowave.

Storage of digital multimedia can pose a problem both during authoring and after the work is complete. As it is important to develop an appreciation of the need for storage devices with substantial capacity, a 2 GB Jazz drive and a CD-Rewritable drive have been acquired and students are taught how to store the media files on the removable Jazz disks during production. Their large capacity ensures that sufficient storage will be available for student projects. Completed projects can be transferred to CD-ROM using the CD-Rewritable drive and proper disk and jewel case labelling techniques are imparted to ensure that the product is attractively packaged. A digital projector has also been acquired in order to give students experience in making effective PowerPoint presentations to their class and to interested faculty members with impressive results.

### **Image Databases**

The proliferation of scanners and digital cameras has resulted in the increasing accumulation of a large number of digital images in many libraries. The advantages are obvious: wide-spread access, enhanced image manipulation and cost effectiveness. Many librarians also view digital imaging as an alternative method of preserving deteriorating rare material, but these digital assets need to be organised for easy retrieval. Both undergraduates and postgraduates are introduced to the process of creating image databases and, using the program ImageAXS Pro, they are able to define the required fields, incorporate and index the images, perform a variety of searches and retrieve the

desired image. - A major advantage of Image AXS Pro is that it allows not only for the incorporation of digital images, but also other digital assets including sound and video files. A number of past students interested in setting up digital photographic collections in their libraries have subsequently returned to the department for this program.

### **Database Creation**

For many years the design and creation of text databases using UNESCO's CDS/ISIS software has been an integral component of the department's information technology courses and students learn the entire process of database-building. The DOS version of CDS/ISIS has in the past been the software of choice, but with UNESCO's introduction of Winisis, the Windows version of the program, students now gain experience in working with both versions of the software. In addition, they are also introduced to the popular commercial software program Inmagic (in LS25A) so that they are able to do a critical comparison of the two programs.

### **Generating Bibliographies**

Although their work with general database programs equips students to create any kind of database, including bibliographic databases, DLIS students benefit from using a package designed specifically to generate bibliographies — Procite. This popular commercial software comes with a number of predefined worksheets for a variety of formats including books, journal articles, photographs, maps, sound and video recordings to name a few. Once the data have been input, bibliographies are easily generated using any of nearly two dozen predefined output formats. These include some of the most common bibliographic styles such as MLA and Turabian. Procite can be used to easily generate bibliographies of any length, from a two-page bibliography at the end of a term essay to a three-hundred-page definitive bibliography on a given topic. It has been observed that once students are exposed to this software, there is a remarkable improvement in the quality of the bibliographies submitted with their essays. In fact, many students attempt (unsuccessfully) to wrangle the department into donating a copy of the software to their libraries!

### **Videoconferencing**

Once an expensive undertaking reserved for a privileged few, videoconferencing is now within the grasp of most libraries due to a dramatic decrease in hardware costs, the availability of affordable desktop PC video conferencing software and the spread of the Internet. It is an easy and effective way to network with colleagues and an extremely useful tool for distance education. Both undergraduates (in LS37A) and postgraduates (in LS66C) learn how to plan and conduct effective videoconferences. Using Microsoft's NetMeeting and a number of webcam video cameras, microphones and speakers, students are able to sit at their terminals and interact with each other remotely. Not only are they able to see and hear each other, but they are also able to share applications and use whiteboards to enhance communication.

## Desktop Publishing

The availability of low-cost desktop publishing packages and cheap colour printers has meant that virtually all libraries can now afford to produce attractively designed brochures and other publicity material. As one of their in-course assignments, students are required to produce a brochure using Microsoft Publisher (LS15A). Not only does this exercise enhance their word-processing skills, but it also introduces them to the basics of layout and formatting as well as working with graphics. In addition to incorporating clipart, students are expected to use the Windows Paint program to create an original graphic for inclusion in their brochures. This has proved to be one of the most effective ways in overcoming their initial fear of the technology, building their enthusiasm and unleashing their innate creativity.

## Electronic Mail

Electronic mail is a fast, cheap, convenient and non-intrusive medium of communication and today's information professional must quickly become familiar with it if they are to function effectively in the modern work environment. All new students are required to obtain an e-mail account whether from UWI or from a web-based service such as Yahoo or Hotmail. Once accounts have been established, students are expected to use them regularly for communication with the lecturer and other students. Some tutorial assignments are both distributed to and returned by students using this means only. They are also encouraged to subscribe to electronic mailing lists and, for most of the technology courses, a discussion group is set up using the free, web-based, mailing list service, egroups.com. All students

taking a given course are added to the mailing list and are required to be active contributors to the online discussion of topical issues.

## Digital Libraries

Digital library collections have mushroomed in recent years covering a wide range of subjects and media types and libraries are moving beyond the mere provision of online access to their library catalogues to that of access to full text digital collections via the World Wide Web. DLIS students are trained in the techniques of planning and creating digital collections not only from the standpoint of making them more widely accessible, but also as a preservation tool. A term assignment (in LS35A) involves producing a proposal for the digitization of a collection of their choice requiring a justification for the proposal, consideration of its limitations and selection of a digital library model on which to base their project. This usually results in a good awareness of the ramifications involved when creating these collections.

## Conclusion

In the world of information technology the one constant is change. At the Department of Library and Information Studies, the watchword is innovation. No effort is being spared to ensure that its students are equipped with the knowledge of, and practical exposure to, state-of-the-art technology that will ensure that they are able to face the challenges of the technological future ably and confidently. The Jamaica Library Association can be justly proud of the technological accomplishments of its brain-child, the Department of Library & Information Studies.

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# A Bibliography of the Publications of the Jamaica Library Association

by  
June Vernon

*This bibliography is in catalogue entry format and is a work in progress as many of the Association's publications could not be easily located. It includes works published by the Association as well as works about the Association.*

## BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

**Directory of Jamaican libraries** / compiled by Judith E. Richards for the Jamaica Library Association, Research and Publications Working Party. Part 1.

Kingston : Jamaica Library Association, 1967. – vii, 99p.; 22 cm  
“Jamaica Library Service, University of the West Indies, Libraries of Government Departments and Statutory Boards” – T.p.

**Disaster planning in Jamaica** : safeguarding documents and vital data / edited by Hyacinth Brown.

Kingston: Jamaica Library Association, 1989. v, 46 p.: ill.: 28 cm.

Bibliography: p. 44

ISBN 976-8001-34-8 (sd): \$200.00

### **International Library Conference (1972: Kingston, Jamaica)**

**Libraries and the challenge of change** : papers of the International Library Conference held in Kingston, Jamaica, 24-29 April 1972 ; edited by K.E. Ingram and Albertina A. Jefferson.

London: Mansell Information Publishing, 1975. – x, 265p.; 24 cm

“Published for the Jamaica Library Association and the Jamaica Library Service”

ISBN 0-7201-0523-4: \$22.00

### **International Conference of the Jamaica Library Association (2<sup>nd</sup>: 1994: Kingston)**

**Information support for social management: imperatives for the twenty-first century: final report of the Second International Conference of the Jamaica Library Association, August 15-19, 1994.**

Kingston: Jamaica Library Association, 1994 (i.e. 1996). – [50] p. 28 cm

Free to participants (sd)

**Libraries, literacy and learning : essays in honor of the Hon. Joyce Lilieth Robinson, O.J., C.D., M.B.E., F.L.A., LL.D. (Hon.)** / edited by K.E. Ingram.

Kingston: Jamaica Library Association, 1994. – xi, 224 p.; 23 cm

Includes bibliographical references

ISBN 976-8092-92-0: \$550.00 (pbk)

### **Jamaica Book Fair**

1972 International Book Fair; organized by the Jamaica Library Association, National Arena, April 25–May 2, 1972.

Kingston: The Association, 1972. 36 p.: ill.; 28 cm  
Includes messages and programme

### **Jamaica Library Association**

**Constitution / Jamaica Library Association**, [1950]  
[Kingston: The Association, 1950] – 4p.; 13 cm

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**Constitution / Jamaica Library Association**.  
[Kingston: The Association, 1954?]. – 4p.; 13 cm

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**The Constitution and Rules and Regulations of the Jamaica Library Association**. – Rev. ed.

Kingston: The Association, 1971. – 9p.; 14 cm

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**The Constitution and Rules of the Jamaica Library Association**. – Rev. ed.

Kingston: The Association, 1973.

11p.; 14 cm

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**The Constitution and Rules and Regulations of the Jamaica Library Association**. – Rev. ed. [Kingston: The Association, 1977]. – 6p.; 28 cm

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**Constitution, Rules and Regulations [and] Code of ethics of the Jamaica Library Association**. [Kingston: The Association, 1979]. – 16p.; 14 cm

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**Constitution, Rules and Regulations, [and] Code of ethics of the Jamaica Library Association**.

[Kingston: The Association], 1991. – 23 p.; 14 cm

Free to members (sd)

School library standards / Jamaica Library Association.  
[Kingston: The Association,] 1971. – 17p.; 28 cm  
Bibliography: p.1–4

Standards for college libraries in Jamaica /  
Jamaica Library Association.  
Kingston : The Association, 1980.

Strategic plan 1996-1999/ Jamaica Library Association.  
Kingston: The Association, 1999.

### **Jamaica Library Association. Special Libraries and Information Section**

Guidelines and standards for special libraries in Jamaica/Special Libraries and Information Section, Jamaica Library Association.  
Kingston: The Association, 1987. 18p.; 28 cm  
Bibliography: p.17  
\$100.00 (sd)

### **Jordan, Alma**

The changing world of librarianship, or, Change on the library scene: our constant companion : a public lecture/delivered by Alma Jordan at the University of the West Indies, Mona on Friday, January 26, 1990.

Kingston: Produced for the Jamaica Library Association by the Jamaica Information Service, 1991. 28p.: 22 cm. – (JLA occasional papers series; no. 1)  
ISBN 976-8092-19-X (sd): \$50.00

Scientific and technical information : a select bibliography / compiled by the Jamaica Library Association.  
[ Kingston: The Association], 1983. – 39p. 28 cm  
“A reference document from which science teachers, students, scientists, and the general public could find information relevant to the subjects of science and technology” – Introd.

## **SERIALS**

### **Jamaica Library Association**

Annual report/Jamaica Library Association. – 1950–  
Kingston: The Association, 1951– v. ill.; 28cm  
Free to members

**Jamaica Library Association bulletin.** – No. 1  
(May 1950)–  
Kingston: The Association, 1950– . – v.; 28 cm  
Frequency varies. Some issues illustrated  
Minimal cost to members

**JLA news**/Jamaica Library Association. – No. 1  
(June 1955)–  
Kingston: The Association, 1955– . – v.; 28 cm  
Three issues per year  
Free to members

**JLA newslink** / Jamaica Library Association. – No.1 (Mar. 1995) –  
Kingston: The Association, 1995–.  
v.; 28 cm  
Free to members

**School libraries in touch:** the newsletter of the Schools Section. (Nov. 1986)–  
Kingston: The Section, 1986–  
–v.; 28cm  
Free to members of the Section

**SLIS news** / Special Libraries and Information Section, Jamaica Library Association.  
Issue 1 (April 1985)-Issue 3 (April 1990).  
Kingston : The Section, 1985–1990.  
v.; 28cm

## **ARTICLES AND PAPERS**

### **Aarons, John A.**

“Milestones of the Jamaica Library Association 1950–1985”.  
*Jamaica Library Association bulletin* 1985–1986, p. 9–11.

“The role of the Jamaica Library Association in continuing education for librarians”  
Paper presented at XVII ACURIL, 1985, U.S. Virgin Islands.

### **Ferguson, Stephney**

“Organizing library associations in small countries”  
*COMLA newsletter*, no.54 (Dec. 1986), p.8–9.

### **Harris, Myrtle**

“Advocates for information provision and use: the role of library associations”  
Paper presented at XXV ACURIL, 1996, Puerto Rico.

### **Harris, Myrtle**

“Mentoring: the JLA experience”/by Myrtle Harris and Lorna Love.  
*JLA news*, vol. 27, nos. 2 & 3 (Jan 1997), p.1–5.

### **Iton, Sybil**

“The role of the library association as effective pressure group for political action : the Jamaican experience”  
Paper presented at IFLA Roundtable on Library Associations, 1985.

### **Tarcisia, Sister Mary**

“The Schools Section of the Jamaica Library Association”  
*Jamaica Library Association bulletin* 1971.

## **POSTERS**

Reading is Fun  
Kingston: Jamaica Library Association, 1991.  
Colour poster 56 x 38 cm

## EPHEMERA

The Commonwealth Library Association  
[Kingston]: Published by the Jamaica Library Association for  
COMLA, 1985.  
1 folded sheet ; 23 cm

Jamaica Library Association.  
[Kingston: The Association, 2000]  
1 folded sheet; 23 cm

Librarianship in the information age.  
Kingston: Jamaica Library Association, 1983. – 1 folded sheet;  
23 cm

Librarianship in the information age.  
Kingston: Jamaica Library Association, 1991. – 1 folded sheet;  
23 cm

Librarianship in the information age.  
Kingston : Jamaica Library Association, 1996. – 1 folded sheet;  
23 cm

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sionals/prepared by the Research and Publications Working Party,  
Jamaica Library Association.  
[Kingston: The Association], 2000. – 1 folded sheet; 23 cm  
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Professor Rex Nettleford at the podium paying tribute to the Hon. Joyce Robinson, 3<sup>rd</sup> R, at the launch of *Libraries, Literacy and learning*, the JLA publication in her honour, Library Week 1994.

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The chrysanthemums come out like shooting meteors  
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“Chrysanthemum” K.E. Ingram.

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