



## Bennett Library Open Longer Hours

The SFU W.A.C. Bennett Library has increased its late-evening hours on Mondays to Thursdays, as well as Saturdays, in response to the 1998 Library External Review which found that faculty and students wanted longer opening hours.

With closing hours 11:45 M-Th, students are able to use the library after classes end at 10:30.

"These changes were based on consultations with faculty and students" notes Paul Baldwin, Associate Librarian "But we were unable to afford to remain open all the hours we wanted."

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New hours:

M-Th 8am-11:45pm

F 8am-6pm

S-S 11am-10pm

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The new hours raise SFU Library to third place among the 26 members of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL). Prior to the adjustment, SFU ranked below average.

"We gained extra hours each week through staff agreeing to work modified work weeks" Baldwin says "The longer hours were achieved by staff reallocations, not new money."



Assistant evening group leader Thyra Mulder: Staff agreed to an innovative arrangement, resulting in extra hours weeknights.

## A Busy Year

*Report from Lynn Copeland, University Librarian (Pro tem)*

The last few months have been busy for the Library. We have increased library hours by 12 hours per week. We are also exploring ways to improve the availability of reference and help desk services, and to strengthen our liaison services.

The *Library Review Report* and *Response* were received by Senate at the March 1, 1999 meeting. The Library's Three Year Plan was available to the Library community for the month of February 1999 for comment; the final version is available on our Web site. We are working to help ensure SFU's participation in the Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI) National Site Licence pilot project; this will provide a unique opportunity for Canadian research libraries to significantly expand their electronic scientific, technical and medical holdings, as well as to make the transition to electronic journals where that is appropriate and desirable.

Over the last few months, I have had the opportunity to meet a great variety of SFU students, faculty and staff. Their lively interest in the SFU Library and its services confirm my belief that the library continues to be, in the words of the Library's mission statement, 'at the heart of the University'. In working with Library staff over the last months, I am confirmed in my belief that they are united in supporting the mission statement's assertion that 'the SFU Library is dedicated to providing access to collections, services and facilities of the highest possible quality in support of the teaching, learning and research goals of the Simon Fraser University community.'

## Collecting a career

### *Thirty years helping staff – and building a collection*

As Sharon Thomas, Head of Collections, enters retirement this spring, she leaves behind a library vastly different from the one she entered 30 years ago.

Thomas arrived at SFU Library in August 1969, following stints at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, Trinity University in Texas, and Columbia University where, in addition to library work, she completed her graduate studies. Though her move was partly to shun the U.S. politics of that era, she quickly discovered SFU was “the liveliest place I’d ever been – very radical,” she recalls.

Starting out as the young library’s head of acquisitions, she was subsequently head of budget planning and then collections head beginning in 1985. Over the course of three decades, she has witnessed a vast transformation, especially in two areas – fundraising and technology.

Thomas has been a key figure in helping initiate various fundraising programs: Friends of the Library, Endowment Funds, and an aggressive gifts program.

In the 1980s, technology began overtaking the collections/acquisitions process. Since then, Thomas has worked with vendors and subject specialists



Thomas: Planner — and counselor.

to fine-tune the computerized approval plans that help build the library’s collections. Meantime, the online revolution has ushered in an array of challenges and opportunities.

“The trick is to achieve a balance between print and electronic publications, to take advantage of the new technologies yet be wise to their limitations,” Thomas says.

Over the years Thomas has been valued for her kindness to fellow staff. “Often you’ll see her having an intense conversation with someone in her office,” says collections librarian Ralph Stanton. Longtime colleague Marilynne Finlayson recalls “She’s one of the most compassionate people I’ve known. I’ll never forget her kindness to an employee dying of cancer. Sharon has always been very modest – never one to talk about herself, but always willing to listen.”

Thomas will enjoy retirement – as a devoted grandmother, and a participant in her son’s horse-training business.

Staff and faculty wished Thomas well at a farewell party and reception, March 24<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. in room 7200 of the W.A.C. Bennett Library.

## Three Year Plan focusses on collection issues

SFU Library’s Three Year Plan will be the springboard for a new collections policy – one that reconciles the pressures of diverse faculty needs, rising costs, a limited budget, and the growing role of electronic journals.

The plan – closely tied to recommendations in the 1998 Library Review Report – identifies collection development as one of the Library’s core pursuits. It commits the Library to a full re-examination of collection allocations to subject areas supporting SFU programs – to identify whether allocations are equitable; to identify criteria for assessing fairness; and to identify ways of addressing any inequities.

While the Library’s budget is too small to satisfy all requirements, the new policy will ensure that limited resources are distributed fairly, says University Librarian (pro tem) Lynn Copeland.

“There appear to be some historical anomalies, and a concern among various departments as to whether their share is equitable.” An advisory committee will be set up to help steer the process.

After years of escalating journal costs, the advent of journals in electronic form has further muddied the waters. Some journals offer free access to their

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The library hopes to disseminate manuscripts via an electronic text centre.

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Web sites along with paid print subscriptions. But leading publishers are now imposing surcharges of up to 20% for electronic access, says Copeland.

Digital access has enabled the library to cut print subscriptions to some indexes and abstracts. However, “it’s a more difficult decision when it comes to full text,” Copeland notes, “because online access requires that the user have



Classic guides: Some ‘historical anomalies’ and concerns about equitable distribution.

adequate desktop resources, and many students and some faculty still don't."

SFU Library and other CARL (Canadian Association of Research Libraries) members are developing a proposal in response to a CFI (Canadian Foundation for Innovation) initiative that would provide up to \$20 million over three years with the libraries providing

\$30 million. SFU's share will be between \$150 - \$200 thousand per year. SFU library users would gain significantly increased access to electronic journals, at a reduced cost to the library.

Meanwhile, the library plans to disseminate SFU electronic material to the academic community at large through its newly established Electronic Text Centre. Print documents unique to SFU would be scanned, then put on the Web along with SFU e-journals or research papers already in digital form. Funding for the e-text centre is being sought through SSHRC (the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Centre).

## When worlds combine

### *Map Room and Research Data Library unite*

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) enable libraries to provide geographic information in a new way: as dynamic, electronic databases.

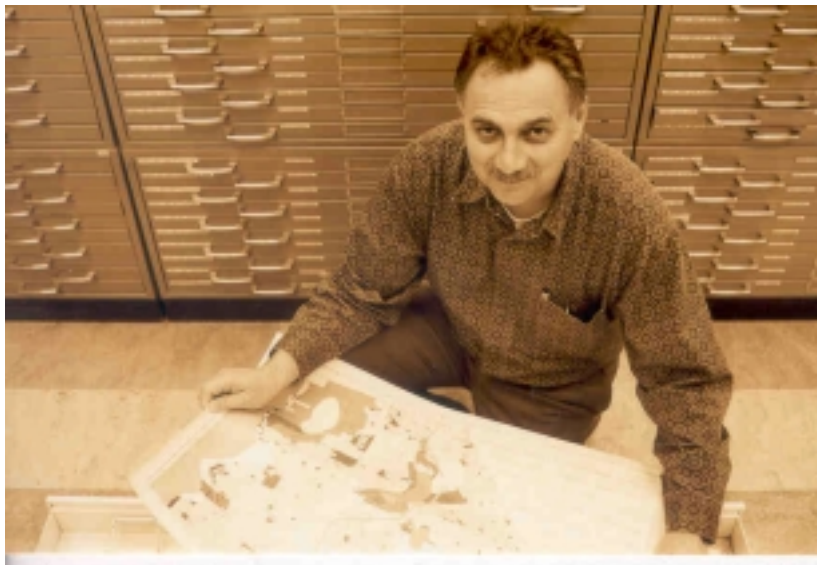
GIS is changing the nature of cartography, enabling people to generate maps as answers to specific political, demographic or economic questions.

SFU Library has provided access to both print maps and machine-readable data for many years through separate services. In January 1999 these two services were combined.

"There was a synergy taking place, brought about by the increasing use of numerical data in GIS coupled with the increasing availability of digital maps," says Walter Piovesan, a longtime data librarian, now head of the new Maps / Research Data Library.

"The RDL exists mainly in virtual space, requiring only enough room for some computers and a number of code books for reading data, most of them online now anyway, so" says Piovesan "we could accommodate the two service points in one area."

For Piovesan the merger is a kind of homecoming – Maps was one of the first places he worked when hired by the library 20 years ago.



Piovesan: A case of maps – and data.

The new division will soon host two GIS computer stations, enabling geographers to add geo-coded data to digital maps, thus creating layers of information. But Piovesan sees the merger benefitting both services. "This new arrangement provides better access to GIS and databases, and full-time help with Maps."

Geography professor Arthur Roberts, chair of the Maps Advisory Committee, says the merger is consistent with the Map Library's long-range goal of building a digital collection. The committee determined years ago that SFU Library lacks the space necessary for a large print collection and should be acquiring digital spatial holdings instead.

## Expiry Date

After consultation with the Senate Library Committee, and the SFSS, it has been decided that effective May 1, 1999, the expiry period for student cards will be extended to week two of the following semester in order to allow students to finish term papers and other course work. During a term when they are not registered, students will be able to pay \$20 for a card. This was felt to be a fair balance between the interests of students who are not registered during a term and those who are registered and would be competing for the same materials.



Marotz and clientele: Celebrating Belzberg's broad appeal.

## Ten years on the street

### *The Belzberg Library serves everyone – electronically*

The Belzberg library's academic clients reflect the Harbour Centre campus's location and mandate – often older students, from downtown Vancouver's corporate and professional ranks, seeking to upgrade their skills.

When Harbour Centre was planned in the late 1980s, the library's location – at the very front corner of the complex – was the subject of much discussion. Eventually campus planners chose the library as occupant, and with good reason: libraries are familiar social institutions, serving everyone, so they have a welcoming demeanor. The Belzberg Library itself makes a bold, affirmative statement about learning, with its bookshelves radiating out toward Hastings Street. Even in Vancouver's commercial centre, it says lifelong learning has a vital place.

The library's official opening, June 7, 1989, was during Convocation to coincide with Vancouverite Samuel Belzberg's receipt of an honorary degree. The Belzbergs' donations had been instrumental in refurbishing the library, funding a core collection, and establishing an endowment for future acquisitions.

Yet the bookshelves belie the high-tech facility within. To serve its student body best, the Belzberg Library has always relied extensively on electronic access to information. Over the ten years, that technology has continued evolving.

When the branch opened in 1989, it was wired to access the vast resources at SFU's main Burnaby campus. But its shelves were still empty. So Karen Marotz, the newly hired manager, combed the W.A.C. Bennett Library, pulling together a collection suited to Harbour Centre's diverse areas of interest: business administration, liberal studies, publishing and gerontology.

Over the years, technology has streamlined the library's ability to put needed materials into the hands of Harbour Centre's students and instructors.



Samuel Belzberg

The biggest change is the users' ability to make requests online using Web-based forms. Requests for journal articles involve just a few mouse-clicks. Staff in Burnaby scan requested articles and send them to Belzberg as electronic files. In fact, the Belzberg Library wouldn't be the success it is today without enormous support from the staff at the Bennett Library, Marotz adds.

"As a strictly public-service operation, we rely entirely on 'the hill' [in Burnaby] for collections, processing and systems support," she notes. Further support has come from the downtown campus as a whole. "They recognize the need for a library here, and the library as being central to a campus downtown," Marotz adds – the reason the library became Harbour Centre's streetfront.

## Drop by for a little Norris

The Belzberg Library marks its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary May 5 with tours and an open house. From May 3 to June 26, the library hosts works by Len Norris, Vancouver's fondly remembered editorial cartoonist. A wealth of Norris originals was donated to SFU Library.

"I'm selecting cartoons that best illustrate the Vancouver scene of the mid-1960s, when SFU was established," says librarian Karen Marotz. "I've found several that concern SFU campus, including student protests."

A second exhibit, June 7 to June 26, titled 'Ten Years of Library Treasures,' features a range of items from Special Collections.