

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1957

GENERAL

The Library has completed a reasonably successful year of operation which, however has brought into focus a number of problems worthy of serious consideration.

Figures for cataloguing output during 1957 are lower than those for 1956 and some further remarks will be made about this later. On the other hand the figure representing the total intake of volumes into the Library reached a record level. At the present rate of expansion alone the Library will more than double its stock in under thirteen years. The implications of this growth are dealt with under "Accommodation" below.

STAFF

It is with deep regret that the death is recorded of Miss R.M-T. Quinn, B.A. in December. Miss Quinn had been appointed to the cataloguing staff early in the year and had been dogged by ill health from the start.

At the beginning of July the Librarian, Mr. Bryan, was granted study leave for nine months and went to the United Kingdom where he undertook a detailed survey of British University libraries.

Consequent upon resignations mentioned in the last annual report and which took effect at the end of 1956 the following appointments were made:-

Miss B.M. MacDougall, B.A., Engineering Library (replacing Miss J.S.Oakeley, B.A.)  
Miss H. Paterson, B.A., Cataloguer (replacing Miss A.Thatcher)  
Miss J. Doig, acting cataloguer (replacing Miss J. McDonnell, B.A.)  
Miss P.M.Armstrong, junior cataloguer (replacing Miss J.Doig)  
Miss M.Waugh, Central Medical Library (replacing Mrs. J.Orange, B.A.)  
Miss B. Mellor, Dental School Library (replacing Miss M.Waugh)

An extra appointment was approved during the year to enable the Main Library to staff the Fryer Memorial Library on a part time basis. Miss R.M-T. Quinn was made responsible for the Fryer and since her death it has been staffed by Miss P.M.Armstrong.

As from the end of August Mr. C.E.Roberts, M.A. resigned and returned to the United States of America. An appointment to replace him was not made until January, 1958.

Other resignations received during the year were those from Miss B.A.Wanchap (Main Library) and Mrs. A. Bernard (nee Hancox) (Physics Library). Other appointments were those of Miss S.P.Mansfield (Library Assistant engaged to enable staffing of the Fryer), Miss Judith Atkinson, B.A. (to Architecture Library replacing Miss H.Paterson who took up a cataloguers position in the Main Library), Miss M. Donald, B.A. (to Agriculture-Botany-Entomology Library replacing Miss B.M.MacDougall who transferred to Engineering Library) Misses J.Lee, M.Proud, and M.Coward replacing Misses P.Armstrong (to junior cataloguing) B.Mellor (to Dental School Library) and B.A.Wanchap (resigned)

After having been on leave without pay for twelve months Miss M. Hooper resumed duties in the Physics Library following the resignation of Mrs. A. Bernard.

To the Thatcher Memorial Library staff Misses J. Quinn (replacing Miss D.Thorpe) and Miss J.Townsend (extra staff member) were appointed.

In view of the deterioration of Miss Quinn's health the Senate granted the Library Committee's request to appoint a replacement for her and an appointment was made which was not effective, however, until January, 1958.

Several of the staff were successful in the Preliminary Examination of the Library Association of Australia. These were Misses J.Atkinson, J.Lee, C.Morrison and J.Quinn. Misses P.Armstrong and J.C.Smith and Mr. S.Spearritt were successful in completing portion of the requirements for the registration Certificate of the Library Association of Australia.

BOOK PROCESSING(a) Ordering and Accessioning

The number of items ordered in 1957 was the lowest for two years. There does not appear to be any single cause for this but one factor of importance is that in 1957, nearly 100 items less than in 1956 were cancelled or reported out of print and this means that more substitute orders would have been made in 1956.

Another feature of the ordering statistics which should be touched upon is that in 1957 a lower proportion of orders were accounted for in the year than in the previous twelve months. The figures are as follows:-

	No. of items checked	No. of items accounted for
1955	7507	5310
1956	7967	5625
1957	7470	4990

Arrangements were made from early last year for the University Bookshop to be supplied with book orders which were typed on to marginal punched cards and an assurance was made by the Bookshop that this would enable an automatic follow up of all orders to be made during the year and that this would obviate the need for the Library to send the Bookshop follow up lists which had been the procedure in 1955 and 1956. On investigating the reasons for the lower percentage of orders accounted for in 1957 it has been ascertained that the Bookshop, owing to staff shortages, did not begin to follow up overdue orders until January, 1958. This is a serious omission not only because of the delay in receiving ordered material but also because probably a good number of the orders which have not been followed up are in fact for out of print material; but because this has not been officially discovered departments cannot make substitute orders, or the Library endeavour to buy second hand copies of the out of print items.

(b) Cataloguing

Owing to the prolonged illness of Miss Quinn the cataloguing staff was in an embarrassing position for the whole year and the total number of volumes catalogued was 8,836 or 10.8% lower than the figure for 1956 (9,916). On the other hand the available cataloguing labour was some 15% lower than in 1956 so that the output per cataloguer showed a slight rise.

As has been pointed out in earlier reports there is much other work which the cataloguing staff is called on to do. In addition to the cataloguing of new material, the figures for which were quoted above, 1,040 volumes were recatalogued on discovering errors and inconsistencies of earlier years. Similarly the cataloguing of new periodical titles and pamphlets is not included in the above statistics. The cataloguers, together with the officers in charge of the periodicals and orders/accessions departments also man the reference desk in the evenings besides taking their turn with the rest of the staff for desk duty on Saturday mornings.

During the year the Acting Librarian made a detailed statement concerning the cataloguing position and the general conclusion reached that more staff was necessary remains true. When approval was given to appointing another cataloguer as a replacement in view of Miss Quinn's continued illness it looked as if the cataloguing staff would have extra labour to the extent of the amount of time Miss Quinn was capable of working. She died, however, a month before the new appointment was made and this meant that the cataloguing staff was back where it started before Miss Quinn became ill.

THE MAIN LIBRARY

Attendances, both day and evening, in the reading rooms showed a marked increase in 1957 and as <sup>an</sup> experiment the opening of the Library on Saturday mornings was undertaken during first term. The number of people using the library on Saturdays was not great but was large enough to warrant Saturday opening as a permanent arrangement.

Another experiment tried in 1957 was that of keeping in the Main Library copies of External Studies lecture notes, but it could not be said that this proved a success. Apart from the questionable principle of making these notes available to internal students the arrangement is not possible in practice without considerable frustration on the part of students and noticeable labour costs to the Library.

Students tended to feel, rightly or wrongly, that it was vital for them to read these notes and in the competition of anything up to hundreds of students to see a few copies of notes wholesale pilfering of sections of the notes occurred so that even if a student found a set available at any time he often found that the particular portion he wanted to read had been removed by some previous reader. In turn this meant continual checking of notes by the library staff in an attempt to keep sets complete.

The experience with External Studies lecture notes is an exaggerated instance of a general shortcoming in the use made of the Main Library by most students, and this means mainly the students in the Faculties of Arts, Commerce and Economics, and Education. The notable characteristic of the use made of the Main Library is that of a large number of students making an intensive if not over-intensive use of a very small number of books. There is little intelligent use of library resources in terms of finding, selecting and using all the available material. The present common practice of setting term essays does little to encourage a better kind of library use. Some departments make a real effort to set a number of essays topics each with a fairly long list of suggested reading; others do not. To give an extreme example one department with a very large number of first year students last year set only one essay and gave a bibliography of less than half a dozen books. This created an unreasonable demand on the books concerned with the result that the students had great difficulty in consulting them. Under this system too students are unwilling either to look for alternative material which is not mentioned on their reading list or to accept other material when it is offered to them, because they feel that if they do not show some evidence of having used the books their lecturers have suggested, then they have but a small chance of doing well in the essay.

Thus there is little utilization of the full potential of the Library, little or no experience on the part of the student in finding for himself the relevant sources on a particular topic or in exercising his own judgement as to the quality and significance of those sources.

At least in the case of early year students it would seem preferable to lessen the emphasis on the term essay idea and to greatly expand the system of setting short essays, assignments or projects, a practice which is already followed to a greater or lesser degree by some departments, in order to get a wider and more educative use of the Library. This should be accompanied by an expanded programme of tuition in using the library which might take two main forms -

- (a) lectures or tutorials by the Librarian or his deputy (which would be gladly given) that would cater for library use in different subject fields and would be graded according to the level of the students concerned.
- (b) a better reference and reader guidance service in the reading rooms to render assistance to individual students and to offset as far as possible some of the shortcomings of the catalogue.

#### DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARIES

A plan for the reorganisation of the Veterinary Science Library was drawn up and involved a considerable expansion of the library's shelf space. It was hoped that this reorganisation might be carried out early in 1958.

Accommodation deficiencies are now serious problems in many departmental libraries, notably Engineering, Geology and the Thatcher Memorial Library. For libraries such as Engineering which are to eventually move to St. Lucia this problem will be overcome as the building programme progresses. But for both the Thatcher Library and for the Geology Library early consideration will have to be given to overcoming their cramped state.

#### LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

The University maintains corporate membership in this Association which continues, through its examination system, to make a most valuable contribution to the standard of librarianship in Australia.

The Deputy Librarian was again in 1957 one of the two Representative Councillors for Queensland and attended the meeting of the General Council of the Association held in Adelaide in August. During the same week the Association held its general conference attended by many delegates from each state. Mr. S. Spearritt who was at that time officer in charge of the Periodicals and Exchanges section was one of the

Queensland delegates. Mr. Spearritt also held the position of Secretary of the Queensland Branch of the Library Association.

#### OTHER UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES

The Librarian, who has been Senior Proctor for some years was appointed Marshall in 1957. He was also re-elected Secretary of the Staff Association. He remains a member of the Board of the Faculty of Arts and the editor of the Arts Faculty Handbook.

The Deputy Librarian continued to act as Beadle and during the year was elected Hon. Treasurer to the Staff Common Room Society.

#### ACCOMMODATION

This brief report cannot be ended without some further mention of the accommodation question. This was touched upon in the above section in relation to some departmental libraries but particular attention should also be paid to the situation in the Main Library itself. Last year a total of 13,306 volumes were taken in which brought the Library's total stock to just under 161,000 volumes. Even if the Library continued to expand only at this rate it would double in size in just over twelve years, whereas it is more than likely that its rate of expansion will increase and the "doubling period" will be correspondingly less. The Main Library will expand at an even more rapid rate, acting as it does as a storage centre for departmental libraries' older, lesser used or duplicate material. In approximately eighteen months the Main Library will be completely taxed on its own intake alone, the overflow from departmental libraries already having been curtailed. The basements are even now grossly overcrowded. The work space for the processing departments especially cataloguing is quite inadequate. The reading rooms have at present places for 165 readers and so far in the first few weeks of the 1958 first term attendances frequently reach over 130. It is likely that later in the year the reading rooms will be often full and that in 1959 students will have difficulty on occasions in finding a seat.

Apart from accommodation difficulties in relation to current operations, there is no room for the expansion of the Library's functions and expand they must if the Library is to serve the University in a proper way.

The conclusion is that there is an urgent case for the completion of the Main Library building and this would not only give elbow room to the Library itself for some years, but also, at least on a temporary basis, serve to alleviate other University accommodation shortages.

## STATISTICS

### 1. Summary of expenditure on the Library Vote

1956			1957	
£	£	Payments for the year were:	£	£
11,323		Books	12,255	
8,540		Periodicals	9,299	
3,790		Binding	3,383	
1,615		Sundries	2,024	
	25,268	<u>Total payments</u>		26,961
<u>Against which receipts were:</u>				
	24,406	Library vote		26,905
Resulting in a balance of:				
<u>Dr.</u>	862		<u>Dr.</u>	56

### 2. Accessions (includes only items fully processed during the year)

1956		<u>Books</u>	1957	
8,416		Purchased	7,656	
1,500		Donated	1,180	
	9,916	Total		8,836
<u>Periodicals</u> (Bound volumes only)				
3,067		Purchased	4,163	
76		Donated	438	
	3,143	Total		<u>4,601</u>
	13,059	<u>Total</u> (all items)		13,437
	62	Less withdrawn		131
	<u>12,997</u>	Net increase		<u>13,306</u>

### 3. Total Bookstock

31.12.56	31.12.57
147,665	160,971

4. STAFF

1956		1957
1	Librarian	1
1	Deputy Librarian	1
1	Assistant Librarian	1
	<u>Main Library</u>	
-	Head Cataloguer	1
1	Orders and Accessions Officer	1
1	Periodicals and Exchanges Officer	1
4	Cataloguers	3
5	Library assistants	4
1	Junior library assistants	3
1	Library attendant	1
<u>16</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>17</u>
	<u>Departmental Libraries</u>	
3	Senior library assistants (equivalent to cataloguers)	4
9	Library assistants	9
-	Junior library assistants	-
12	<u>TOTAL</u>	13
28	<u>TOTAL STAFF</u>	30

Barry Scott  
Acting Librarian