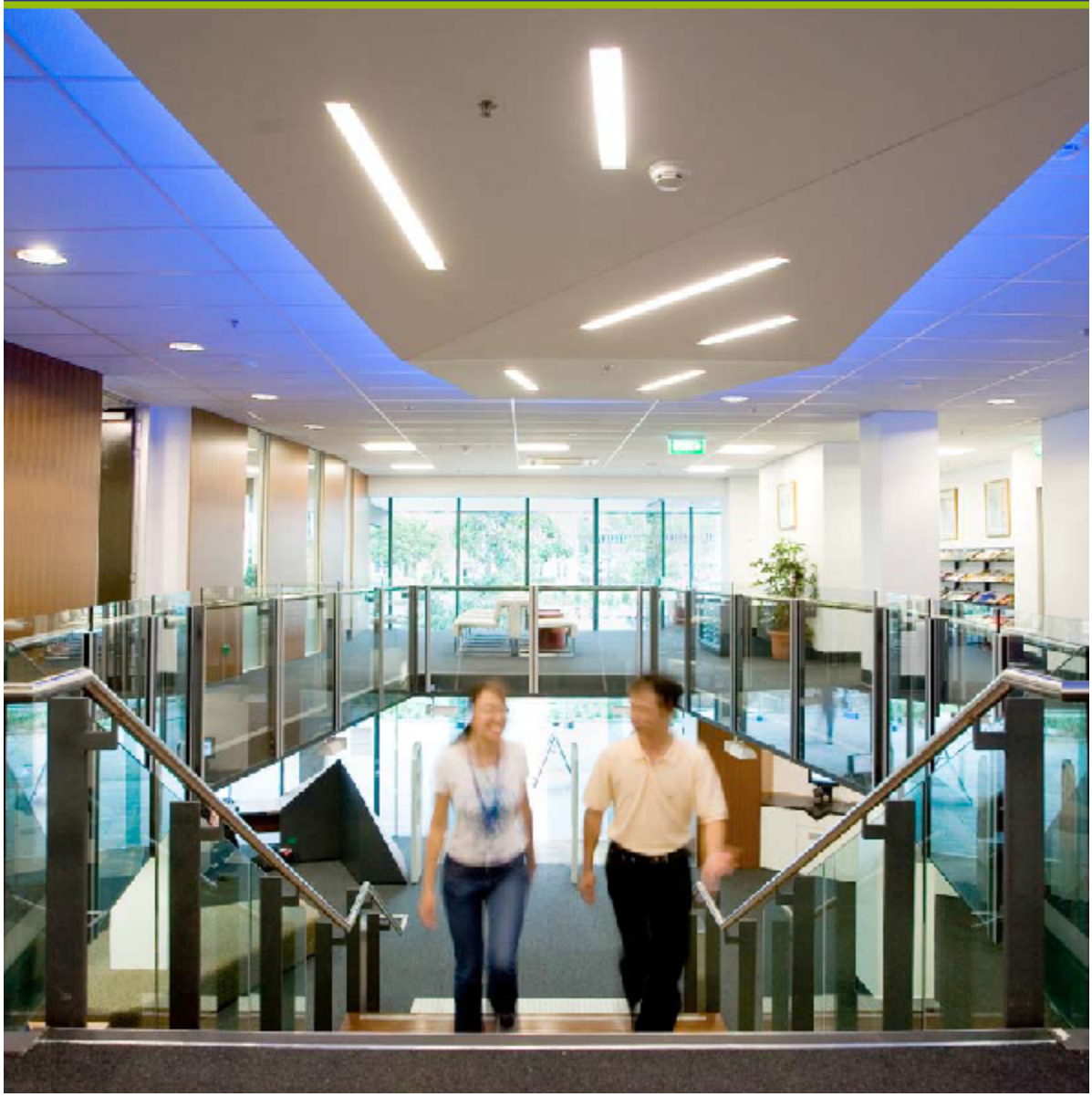
The University of Queensland Library

2008: ANNUAL REPORT



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LIBRARY COMMITTEE OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD

Terms of Reference of the Library Committee:

To advise the Board and the University Librarian on matters relating to the University's requirements with respect to the Library.

To consider and advise the Board and the University Librarian on library policy matters and the conditions of use of the Library.

To serve as a means of communication between the University community and the Library.

2008 Membership

Ex Officio

Deputy President, Academic Board: Professor Susan Hamilton
University Librarian and Director of Learning Services: Mr Keith Webster

Other Members

Two persons elected annually by and from the Academic Board:
Professor Candi Peterson; Assoc/Professor Stephanie Hanrahan

One representative at a senior academic level from the Institute for Molecular Biosciences, to represent all the University's institutes, nominated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and appointed annually by the Board: Professor Jenny Stow

One representative at a senior academic level nominated by each faculty and appointed annually by the Board:

Arts	Professor Carole Ferrier
BACS	Dr David Merritt
BEL	Dr Alan Davidson
EPSA	Dr David Wadley
HS	Mr John Hughes
NRAVS	Dr Robert Pym
SBS	Professor Kevin Clements

One representative from alumni of the University nominated by the President of the Board and appointed annually by the Board: Mr Blair Wilson

Two undergraduate students nominated by the president, University of Queensland Union:
Ms Carly McCarroll; Mr Joshua Young

Vale Harrison Bryan

HARRISON BRYAN AO Librarian

Born: Brisbane - September 23, 1923

Died: Melbourne - February 12, 2008

HARRISON Bryan was one of Australia's outstanding librarians of the twentieth century. He was, between 1950 and 1985, successively the University Librarian at the Universities of Queensland and Sydney and the Director-General of the National Library of Australia.

His parents were Walter Heywood Bryan and Myee, née Harrison. His father was Professor of Geology at The University of Queensland, 1947-59. One brother, Robert, kept close to his father's discipline as an outstanding mining entrepreneur, but Harrison went from Brisbane Grammar School to study history at the university. Three years in an army signals unit, mostly in north Queensland, complicated his education. He married Florence Jolly on February 21, 1948, and then trained as a librarian at the now State Library of New South Wales.

In 1950 he became James Forsyth Librarian at The University of Queensland. The university's library collection was puny, even by contemporary Australian standards. It had had only two professional librarians in 45 years and many of the university's books and periodicals were held in its academic departments. Queensland was crying out for professionals of every kind and university enrolments were booming. Helped by a study tour in Britain and the United States in 1957, Harrison persuaded the university to lift its library holdings from 96,000 in 1949 to 289,761 in 1962. Zestful, outgoing, very productive through long workdays, he took on positions to promote the library's and its Librarian's profile, such as secretary of the university's academic staff association. He and his deputy and great friend, Barry Scott, could be decisively "hands-on"; whether their occasional book-shifting blitzkriegs helped Harrison's campaign to achieve professorial status could be debated. (The University was ready to grant this when advertising for his successor.)

Two of Harrison's great themes throughout his career were the adequacy of collections, both locally and nationally, and the importance of inter-library cooperation. Like many university staff members, he believed he had greater freedom as a public advocate than most state or local government employees. So he and Scott took leading roles in the Library Association of Australia locally and in representing Queensland nationally.

In 1963 Harrison Bryan was invited to become Librarian at the University of Sydney. There he succeeded Andrew Osborn, whose previous experience as Associate Librarian at Harvard University, the Mecca of American university libraries, had engendered plans, and funding proposals, to create a building and an acquisitions policy for books and periodicals on a scale much greater than any other Australian university. By slightly discounting Osborn's demands, Harrison Bryan made himself warmly welcome to his new university's managers.

At the University of Sydney until 1980, he managed Australia's leading university library, acted as consultant on senior library appointments and new library buildings at other Australian universities and, with Professor Gordon Greenwood of The University of Queensland, helped the emerging colleges of advanced education develop worthwhile libraries. He was President of the Library Association of

LEARNING: ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Again the commencement of the 2008 academic year brought with it a fresh generation of students to The University of Queensland. Seeking to enrich their time with us, the Library adopted a number of approaches this year to better understand their use of libraries and learning spaces and their interactions with people, places and technology as they undertook their studies. This work complemented, but did not replace, the various client perception surveys undertaken on a regular basis.

The Library had conducted the biennial InSync survey in the second half of 2007, which revealed continuing high levels of satisfaction with staff, services and collections. Nevertheless, during first semester of 2008, staff identified opportunities for improvement and acted in response to these, and also advertised these responses to the Library's clients via a Highlight on the front page of the website linking to further information on the Surveys page.

In 2008, the Australian-developed InSync survey was complemented by participation for the first time in the international LibQUAL+ survey. This gave the opportunity to benchmark the perceived quality of the Library against academic libraries in the US and UK. The response rate was very good, and the number of respondents from the various demographic cohorts was more than sufficient to ensure representative validity.

This survey told us that more than 90% of respondents use the Library at least weekly for both information resources and the study spaces. The rate of daily and weekly in-library use was the highest when benchmarked with nineteen international libraries. The UQ Library also had the highest percentage of daily use of resources via the Library webpage (45.8%, compared to an average of 32.2%).

Respondents also told us that they are more interested in the "information control" aspect of Library service than either "affect of service" or "library as place". Accordingly, they want the Library to put even more effort into making sure that they can easily and independently access electronic journals and other electronic resources that they require for their work. They also would like more specialist support when they have complex information needs.

In recent refurbishments, the Library has worked hard to ensure that there is adequate provision for group and collaborative learning in the Library spaces. This has been successful and is appreciated by clients. However, survey respondents let us know that the need for quiet spaces still exists, particularly around exam time, and, while there are designated quiet areas in all the branches, clients would like the requirement of quiet enforced.

In addition to the surveys, further research was undertaken to create a much richer picture of the ways in which the libraries are used and how they could be developed in the future.

During Orientation Week around 600 first year students participated in a survey gathering information about their ownership of, and access to, technology, their use of the internet and libraries, their participation in social networking services and support networks for their studies. This showed widespread ownership of laptop computers and extensive access to the internet off-campus. In response to these directions, the Library installed laptop lockers where students can connect their computer to the power supply to recharge their batteries and leave the computers in a secure environment.

During the course of the year the Library worked with a group of volunteer students to understand the ways in which they seek and use information when working on an assignment. Students participated in two focus groups facilitated by the University Librarian, and in second semester they maintained a log book of their activities as they researched and produced a major assignment. They recorded where they looked for information, who they talked to for help, where they spent time on the assignment, and how long they spent in the various activities. This study afforded rich insights into the many influences that shape, help – and hinder! – the student assessment process.

In a further study in second semester, questionnaires were distributed to students entering four of the largest libraries. Each questionnaire had three elements: a series of questions about the students' intentions as they use the library space; a floor plan on which they marked their movements and activities during their time in the library; and an exit questionnaire which compared the success of the visit with their intentions when they arrived. Some students also participated in a design workshop led by Hamilton Wilson of Wilson Architects, in which students worked together to design their preferred learning space for a number of different academic scenarios.

This research demonstrated that students are very intentional about their use of the Library spaces and services. They know what is available and they are purposeful about where they go to work in the Library according to their current task. They expect to get the job done. One student reported that she had not fulfilled her intention in visiting the Library and blamed her 'own stupidity' for wasting time. Certainly students are using intelligently the various types of spaces – quiet, social, technology-enabled – that are provided by the Library. The students at the design workshop affirmed that place is important to them: they like to come to the Library. They also confirmed what staff knew from experience: that student demands of Library spaces change during the academic year according to course progression and the nature of assessment tasks, so flexibility is an important design consideration.

Concurrent with this research, a survey was undertaken by health librarians to gain understanding of medical students' use of information for their studies. All MBBS students were invited to complete an online survey and a total of 238 responses were received. Follow-up focus groups were held with 24 students. Results showed that while 90% of students have broadband internet access at home, 60% of them prefer to use print rather than electronic resources. Student preferences amongst the evidence-based resources were identified. Seventy percent of students use Google to find information for their studies, but notably twice as many use Wikipedia as use Google Scholar (40% and 20% respectively).

Awareness that today's students have spent their lives surrounded by the toys and tools of the digital age, and that they think and process information differently from their predecessors, led to the establishment of the Library's Innovation Lab. Selected staff members are released part time from their regular duties to work on developing applications which bring information to the Web 2.0 places inhabited by the students. The first team of staff in the Lab produced a number of podcasts and vodcasts, referencing guides and information skills training applications using a range of technologies to create and publish rich-media content. It is expected that the availability of these learning objects via the Library website will accord with our Gen Y students' learning styles and expectations.

The Library also took advantage of the efficacy of peer-to-peer learning by running a video competition over the semester break of 2007-2008. Students were invited to create a two-minute video that would help incoming first year students learn about the Library and the services it provides. The winner,

all their information seeking activities in the preparation of a major assignment – where they looked for and found information, who they asked, where they worked, how long they spent. Completed log books were returned late in Semester 2, and analysis of responses completed. The Report of the whole project was prepared and accepted by the Library Policy and Planning Group in December, to inform decision-making about service and space use improvements.

SPACE USE SURVEY AND DESIGN WORKSHOP

Students contributed again to research into the use of Library learning spaces. A survey asked all students visiting four libraries during one day, 13 August, to indicate what they had come to do and whether they achieved it, and to map on a floor plan their movements around the library. In a design workshop conducted a week later, students contributed their ideas for optimum design of library study spaces. Data from the survey responses was analysed using software produced inhouse. Material from the survey and the workshop was used to prepare a presentation for the Next Generation Learning Spaces Colloquium in October. The paper and powerpoint presentation were placed on UQ eSpace, and the paper will appear in the published proceedings of the Colloquium.

DOCUMENT DELIVERY FOR UNDERGRADUATES

From the beginning of 2008, the Library offered document delivery to undergraduate students for the first time. Undergraduate students were able to request up to a maximum of 15 items per semester. This may include requests for books or articles that are related to their studies and which are not held at The University of Queensland Library as well as requests for journal articles held at Warehouse or at another UQ campus.

The number of requests from Australian libraries decreased slightly by 0.23%, while the number from overseas libraries decreased by 11.49%. While this appeared to be a marked decrease, it should be noted that the 2007 figures were unusually high. When compared to the average number of requests received from overseas libraries over the last five years, there was no marked change (0.1% decrease).

The fill rate for Australian libraries remained comparable to previous years at 74%. For overseas libraries the fill rate decreased slightly to 43%. The low fill rate for overseas libraries was due in part to the high proportion of requests submitted for items not held and also to the move to electronic format for journals, as electronic resources have restricted access due to licensing agreements. Inaccuracy of holdings data on the national bibliographic database, Libraries Australia (LA), may have been a factor influencing the fill rate for Australian requests. A project was initiated to update our holdings in LADD, due for completion in 2009.

Demand for copies of UQ theses increased significantly by 16.24%. The Library's reputation as a reliable and comprehensive supplier may have contributed to this increase.

GOVERNANCE

MARKETING OUTREACH AND CORPORATE SERVICES

An event of significance for Library Corporate Services was an external review, conducted in July by consultants from BDO Kendalls. The review resulted in a changed organisational structure for the section, in which inward and outward focusing tasks performed by staff were clearly differentiated. The Manager, Planning and Projects, and the Manager, Marketing and Community Outreach, continued to report to the Executive Manager. A new management position, that of Manager, Corporate Services, was established, also reporting to the Executive Manager. Glen Dalgleish (formerly Finance Coordinator) was appointed to this role, taking responsibility for Finance, Human Resources, and Facilities. The staffing component of Human Resources was increased by .5, with Joanne Rutherford retaining responsibility for Staff Development on a half-time basis, and Peter Moore being appointed full-time as Human Resources coordinator.

The name of the section was changed to reflect the full range of its activities: Library Marketing, Outreach and Corporate Services.

FINANCE

All operating expenditure categories were under budget for 2008; Salaries by 1.9%, Materials 7.8%, Maintenance and Equipment 15%. This resulted in overall savings of 5.2% of the 2008 budget that will be available to use in 2009. Ordinarily this would have been a very good result, but other factors placed significant pressure on the Library's 2009 funding; namely, the exchange rate between Australian and US dollars which fell 30% late in 2008, the Library's high proportion of recurring costs, and budget increases of only 2%. A budget deficit was expected for 2009.

having to relinquish their position at the University of Queensland and preserved leave entitlements and continuity of service. One staff member was seconded to Griffith University Library initially as an Information Services Team member, then as a Faculty Librarian and a second staff member was seconded to QUT Department of Education to work on the Children's Literature component of AustLit. Two other staff participated in secondments within UQ - The Manager, UQ eSpace went on secondment to UQ International within the University to manage the implementation of a new IT system. One of the Facilities Officers from Corporate Services returned from a secondment as Furniture Project Officer, Property and Facilities in April 2008.

OTHER HUMAN RESOURCES ACTIVITIES

The Library HR staff participated in the testing of the TimeKeeper module of the Aurion HR system which incorporated electronic timesheets and claim forms for casual staff. TimeKeeper was rolled out in the Library in September. Comprehensive training was provided to Library managers and supervisors. Instructions were developed for managers and casual staff to assist with the use of the new payment system.

As part of the Workforce Planning project a Skills Audit was conducted of all Library staff. This was a web based questionnaire which asked staff members to assess their competence in a very wide range of skills areas. Data from the Audit was downloaded into Excel and analysis of the results began.

The HR and Staff Development Coordinator was involved in several activities during the year. She gave a number of presentations at Discrimination Harassment Contact Officer training session about the role of the DHCO. She participated in the Equity Office review. She was also an Employer's representative on the Masters of Information Management Course Reference Group at QUT. She also participated in a poster session as part of the HEESP funded project on Indigenous participation in Higher Education.

The Library provided placements to two people who were undergoing work trials as part of a rehabilitation or return to the workplace scheme. Both of these trials were very successful. One of the participants applied for and was appointed to paid employment after the trial. Library staff in the receiving work areas provided a welcoming environment and excellent training to the participants.

The Library hosted five library science students as part of the Professional Placement Program in July 2008. Students participating in the program came from Charles Sturt University, Queensland University of Technology, Curtin University of Technology and Southbank Institute of Technology. Host libraries were Fryer, DHPSE, SSAH, HHSL and IAS.