I am delighted to kick-off the combined February/March issue of Library Matters in my new role as the Director of Libraries (Interim). McGill Library has had the good fortune to have been led by the incomparable Janine Schmidt, our Trenholme Director of Libraries from 2005 to January 2010. The search for a new Trenholme Director of Libraries is underway and I am honoured to have been asked to perform the role of Director in the interim.

We have a clear path forward. The Library’s Strategic Plan and our Renewal and Reorganization document are two documents which provide direction. Both documents were developed from the ground up with input from all levels of staff and through extensive discussion with branch and sector heads and most recently with members of SAL T, the Library’s Senior Advisory Leadership Team.

This edition of Library Matters also reflects the other key success factor for the McGill Library – teamwork and the delivery of great service through highly effective teams. Janine Schmidt often reminded us that, “none of us is as good as all of us.” A substantial number of Librarians, Branch Heads, Team Leaders and Library Supervisors participated in a stimulating and highly interactive six month leadership training program entitled, “Building a Highly Effective Team” leadership program. This formal program is wrapping up shortly and plans are underway to continue with our commitment to being a learning organization. We look forward to putting together a team to develop our Summer Friday learning program.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2
I want to extend my sincere thanks to everyone on the McGill Library staff who are giving their all to ensure our students, faculty and researchers all have a successful Winter 2010 term. The Library is full to the rafters with students preparing their papers and studying for their upcoming exams. All the best to everyone involved in supporting their initiatives. Good luck students!

**La Ceinture Fléchée**

Symbol of Unity and Distinction
Exhibit in Blackader-Lauterman Library
Curated by Shelley Burian,
U3 Honors Art History
Supervisor, Dr. Charmaine Nelson
April 12 - July 7, 2010

This exhibit examines the place of the colorful braided sashes in the history and identity of two groups of people: Québec habitants and the Métis Nation. While usually seen as a practical object, the sash also carries a wide variety of cultural meanings which vary between peoples and time periods.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

Megan Fitzgibbons and Deborah Meert have published an article in the *Journal of Academic Librarianship*:

“Are Bibliographic Management Software Search Interfaces Reliable?: A Comparison between Search Results Obtained Using Database Interfaces and the EndNote Online Search Function”

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2010.01.005


Also this month there was a featured review in the *CAUT Bulletin* from Karen Jensen. It can be seen at: http://www.cautbulletin.ca/en_article.asp?SectionID=1214&SectionName=Bookshelf&VolID=294&VolumeName=No%201&VolumeStartDate=1/14/2010&EditionID=32&EditionName=Vol%2057&EditionStartDate=1/14/2010&ArticleID=3000

**NEW HEALTH AND WELL-BEING PROGRAM LAUNCHED**

Several library staff were among the 125 members of the McGill community who joined the Principal in launching the new Health and Well-Being Program at McGill with a “Walk to Well-Being” around the downtown campus on January 28. The program is aimed at helping University faculty and staff improve their fitness and overall wellness. Donations were collected in support of the Canadian Red Cross Haitian relief effort. For more information visit: www.mcgill.ca/health/staff/

**From the Director** 

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** tecnología tidbit**

By Louise O’Neill,
Library Technology Services

**McGill VPN & Library Staff Knowledge Base**

You need to use the McGill VPN if you want to connect to the Library Staff Knowledge Base from home:

http://knowledgebase.mcgill.ca/
The library members of the Campus Community Committee cordially invite you to the upcoming public launch of the Campus Community component of Campaign McGill. The aim of the committee is to engage all McGill employees and encourage camaraderie through events on both of our campuses. As we wrap up a year of exciting events, the spotlight is turned on YOU, the exceptional faculty and staff members who help make McGill the best university in Canada.

The afternoon celebrations will include wine and hors d’oeuvres at events on both McGill campuses. Please join us on Tuesday, May 4, 2010 between 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM, at New Residence Hall, 3625 Avenue du Parc; Link Café (Macdonald-Stewart Building), Macdonald Campus.

The Campus Community Committee is made up of faculty and staff from McGill’s two campuses. The Library is very well represented on this committee: Marilyn Berger, Robin Canuel, Halyna Carpenter, Maryvon Côté, Jennifer Garland, John Hobbins, Christopher Lyons, Brian McMillan, & Diane Philip. Members of the committee get involved for a variety of different reasons – because we work here, because we studied here, because our kids are students here, or because we are simply proud to be part of McGill.

For more information about this event and to register (the event is free): www.mcgill.ca/campuscommunity/events10/
We look forward to seeing you there!
I learned to write in a class of sixty five 4-5 year-olds in a suburban school in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia half a world from here, with a slate and a slate pencil. I am retiring in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, some 50 odd years later with a blackberry in my handbag, a Kindle e-book reader on my bedside table at home, several USB keys in my purse and a laptop ready for me to take home – none of these was anywhere near the radar screen in my early life. I fell into librarianship. Shelving books and typing catalogue cards put me through university – and I stayed on working in libraries. It has been a wonderfully rewarding and exciting career – in various types of libraries, in several countries, and in different types of library work, including teaching in library school.

I have many memories of life here in Montreal. My first experience was at minus 15 degrees. I owned no boots. I must have cut quite a figure in my sneakers, a borrowed coat and an umbrella to deal with the snow. I quickly learned that every day in winter was a bad hair day, that getting in and out of coats, boats, hats and gloves was a very challenging operation; that I had to use a name I had not used in 35 years in various government circles. The real memories I treasure are of the students – firstly in the New Rez, where we lived for two and a half years until I thought I was in danger of being burnt to a crisp because we tired of leaving the building for fire alarms at 3 am and later with the many groups with whom I have worked and the correspondence we receive. It has been one of my rewarding professional experiences to work with the many outstanding students at the University, both graduate and undergraduate. The SSMU Library Improvement Fund teams with whom I have met each year (and I met with the latest group as recently as today) have been simply amazing to work with. The students are connected, committed and articulate. They know what they want and we try to give it to them. Adrian Angus connected with me via a social network site recently – yes he seems to be doing very well in Washington. He was on one of the library committees for several years – he finally confessed that it was he who had written in the Libqual survey the phrase that became emblazoned in my memory – What is a first class university like McGill doing with a tenth rate library? Our recent A grades in the Globe and Mail survey and our significant improvements in the Libqual+ survey demonstrate that with a great deal of commitment and energy from library staff, we have turned that around. So thank you to all the students who demanded excellence from us, and to all the library staff who have ensured we delivered.

Before coming to McGill, I had not dealt previously in any extensive way with donors and volunteers. McGill Library has outstanding friends who are generous with their money, their time, their ideas and their energy. It has been a tremendous privilege to work with people like John Gomery and Janet Blatchford in the Friends and with alumni like Don Walcott on many projects and endeavours. I thank each and every one of them.

This evening I look around at the many people with whom I have worked at McGill, who have been the recipients of some of my strange ideas and pleas for help in delivering on the strategic plans we have collaboratively developed within the Library. I cannot thank each of you individually – there are just too many, but the staff from Human Resources and University Services have been amazingly helpful. The highly successful refurbishment projects undertaken by the Library were made possible by many of you – and frequently we sought forgiveness rather than permission! Many of you helped all of us to achieve many of the changes we sought.

The University Administration is wide-ranging from the Principal and the Provost to the people who support the many committees on which I have represented the Library. It has been an enormous pleasure to work with all the Deans on ensuring the delivery of first class teaching, learning and research experiences for all at McGill. I thank all of you.

There are several francophone colleagues here this evening. It has been a great joy to get to know them and to work with them. We have all gained from the experiences, particularly through CREPUQ. Their English has improved out of sight! I learned French first at school in Australia from a book called Nos Voisins Français. The problem was that there were no “voisins français” – the nearest French neighbours were in Noumea and New Caledonia.

I would also like to pay a tribute to my long-suffering (although not silently!) husband of 40 years, Barry. Our relationship began in the Library when I found some information which helped him win a science competition at University – we now enter a new phase in our retirement, and I thank him for all his support over the years.

I leave with mixed feelings. I have made many friends. I know I shall keep them. I wish everyone success in the future. McGill gets in the blood – the McGill miracle will continue. There is an angel statue outside my office. I hope it continues to stay there – it will continue to guard and watch over everyone after I leave.
AND THE SURVEY SAYS...

by Sara Holder,
Education Library & Curriculum Resources Centre

The sun is shining, there’s a hint of spring in the air – what does this mean? Why LibQUAL+® of course! It’s time once again to find out how we are doing in the minds of the McGill community. Anyone who has tried their hand at assessment by survey knows that one of the big hurdles is response rate. In an effort to boost the number of respondents to the LibQUAL+® survey this year we are using LibQUAL+® Lite, an abbreviated form of the traditional LibQUAL+® survey. Institutions across Canada will be doing the same as part of a Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) initiative, which will allow for additional benchmarking.

LibQUAL+® Lite was developed using a methodology called matrix sampling. Matrix sampling allows for shortened survey forms by having each participant answer a randomly-selected subset of the larger survey. In the case of LibQUAL+® Lite, each participant answers eight of the 22 core items from the LibQUAL+® survey – three of which will be the same for every participant and five of which are randomly selected from the remaining items. This technique (given a decent respondent pool) will provide data on all 22 items from the full LibQUAL+® survey, making year over year comparisons possible regardless of which version is used.

We opened this year’s survey on March 3rd and invitations to participate were sent to a sample set of 5,000 undergraduate students, 3,250 graduate students and all full-time faculty. Slides publicizing LibQUAL+® are featured on the Library web site and on the LCD screens in the branches – but it doesn’t stop there. Over the next few weeks when you interact with students and faculty members, ask them to check their email for the survey invitation. We can all pitch in to increase the response rate – the more we know, the more we can improve!

McGILL LIBRARY RARE BOOKS ON OVERDRIVE

by Maria Savova,
Collection Services

As part of the effort to promote and make accessible its Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill Library has started sharing digitized titles via “OverDrive Local Content” feature. The collection currently includes 19 titles from Rare Books and Special Collections and Osler Library, published between 1843 and 1919. The original items have been digitized by LTS and transformed into PDF e-books. Fifty copies of each title are available for check out and download similarly to the rest of the electronic content offered on McGill OverDrive and are accessible to McGill users and users of OverDrive subscribing libraries worldwide.

Featured titles include first edition of Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol”, “The Canadian handbook and tourist’s guide” from 1866 and “The Home cook book, compiled by ladies of Toronto and chief cities and towns in Canada” from 1887. To view the complete list, visit McGill OverDrive homepage - http://mcgill.lib.overdrive.com and access the featured collection. The list will be gradually complemented with additional titles.
Staffing Changes

Andrew Collier has accepted a position in another unit of the University and left the Library at the end of January, 2010. Andrew was appointed to Web Services Librarian in October, 2007 and provided dedicated service within Library Technology Services. We thank Andrew for all the work he has done in ensuring that our clients have access to quality online services and resources. We wish Andrew all the best in his new role.

Brian McMillan has been appointed as Head Librarian, Howard Ross Library of Management (Interim) effective April 1, 2010. Brian has been a Liaison Librarian at the Marvin Duchow Music Library since 2004 and prior to coming to McGill, Brian was a reference librarian at the Scott Library of York University from 2002-2004. Brian has shown leadership in his extensive involvement in information literacy initiatives within the Faculty of Music as well as system wide, including the successful myResearch program for our graduate students. Brian currently serves on the Collection Development Committee and the Campus Community Volunteer Committee and represents McGill Library on the Teaching and Technology Fair 2010 Organizing Committee. Brian will be a very welcome addition to the Howard Ross Library of Management team and we wish him every success during Amber Lannon’s maternity leave.

Marisa Antenucci transferred to Collection Services on Feb. 15, 2010. Marisa has been providing client service at the Life Sciences Library for many years, and is now in Lise Hackett’s team in E-Resources and Serials.

Patrick Dupuis joined the staff of the Marvin Duchow Music Library as of March 15, 2010 as a Library Assistant. Patrick studied double bass and holds a Bachelor degree in music performance from Université de Montréal. While pursuing his studies, Patrick worked as the music librarian for the Université de Montréal’s orchestra. Originally from New Brunswick, he is passionate about his Acadian roots. Patrick brings extensive customer service as well as knowledge of the music world. We welcome Patrick to the McGill Library team.

Macy Zheng will be the liaison librarian for East Asian Studies, including Chinese, Japanese and Korean studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences Library on a full time basis. In this role, Macy will assist in the provision of a range of library and information services and collections to support teaching, learning, research and outreach activities at McGill University and, in particular, in East Asian Studies. Previously Macy held a dual role which involved cataloguing.

Departures

We said farewell to Cornelia Penner from the Humanities and Social Sciences Library in December, 2009. Cornelia added much value in the service provided to students and faculty since her appointment. We thank her for her service and wish her the best of luck in her career at Champlain College.

Debbie Meert, Liaison Librarian, Macdonald Campus Library has relocated to Chicago with her family. Debbie began at McGill Library in 2005 in the Life Sciences Library and transferred to Macdonald Campus Library in January 2008. Debbie was known for delivering high quality information literacy programs and identifying new opportunities for collaboration. Debbie contributed significantly to the management of the Library’s QP service as a member of the coordinating team and assisted in the creation of an EndNote Manual. Debbie’s work on the Life Sciences Library Global Health Wiki Resource Page was well received and was included on the Intute site. We wish Debbie and her family all the best.

Stéphanie Simard, Liaison Librarian in the Schulich Library of Science and Engineering, has decided to relocate to Trois Rivières and join the staff of the Université de Québec à Trois Rivières where she will support the Faculty of Engineering and take on a leadership role in the delivery of the information literacy program for the réseau de L’UQ. Stéphanie has been with McGill Library since 2008 and has provided liaison service in the departments of Geography, Civil Engineering, School of Computer Science, Mathematics and Statistics, Electrical and Computer Engineering and Physics. During her time with us, Stéphanie was heavily involved in a number of successful projects including collection analysis, managing the student shelvers in support of the Schulich Library refurbishment and the Currie Gym collection relocation, the important Expanded Course Reserve initiative and information literacy efforts such as myResearch. We will miss Stephanie’s enthusiasm, passion and commitment to her clients and support of colleagues. Best wishes to Stephanie in her new appointment.

Adam Lauder, Liaison Librarian in the Humanities and Social Sciences Library, has accepted a position at the York University Library. Adam provided liaison service for the departments of Communications and Psychology. He also participated in several projects relating to Student Navigators and the relocation of the McLennan closed storage material to open access within the Humanities and Social Sciences Library.

Jessica Hunt, Communications Officer, decided to follow her dreams in London, England. Jessica made a wonderful contribution to the McGill Library’s posters, brochures and newsletters.
Retirements

Several longstanding Library Staff have made their decision to retire from McGill University. We wish them every happiness in this next stage in their lives.

Sandy Anderson began to work part-time in the Acquisitions Department of Humanities and Social Sciences Library in 1974 and has been a strong member of the Collection Services team ever since. Sandy’s work was of a high caliber and was always very helpful to members of her team. Sandy contributed to the development of new procedures within the cataloguing department which have proven effective. Sandy’s co-workers will miss her commitment and especially her infectious laugh.

Halyna Carpenter joined the McGill Library in 1979 in what was then known as the Undergraduate Library as a Reserve Processor. Halyna quickly mastered the position responsibilities and was promoted to Senior Library Assistant in the Library Science Library then moved into Humanities and Social Sciences Library as a Reference Assistant. Halyna has always been described as the “epitome of stability.” Her adaptability and profound interest in being a team member was always evident. Throughout her career at the McGill Library Halyna has consistently demonstrated her commitment to serving the members of the McGill community. This service excellence was recognized by her peers when Halyna was honoured with the Library Staff Excellence Award in 2009.

Carlyle Eugene, began at McGill University Library in September of 1970 as a Library Assistant, Circulation Department of the Humanities and Social Sciences Library and became Stack Supervisor shortly thereafter. Carl has been a dedicated staff member known for his serious attitude, energy and initiative in providing service to our patrons. Many faculty have communicated their appreciation of Carl’s work throughout the years. Carl took great pride in doing a good job and improving work standards. Eamon Duffy’s farewell speech included the following, “Carl has been an example of professional commitment and courage. He was always hard-working, honest, organized, prepared and principled.”

Rabbiun (Dolly) Rahaman joined the McGill Library in 1976 in Circulation Department of the Humanities and Social Sciences Library and was quickly promoted to Assistant to the Stack Supervisor. Dolly always managed to keep her work up to date. Dolly’s dedication was evident in her quest to ensure that books were back on the shelves where users could find them, and this, often very early in the morning before her workday began. In 1997, Dolly was assigned floor supervisor on the McLennan Library Building 4th and 5th floors. Throughout the years, Dolly has served our numerous students, faculty and McGill community with great skill and dedication.

Our thanks to our former colleagues for all their work in support of the teaching, learning and research needs of the McGill community; their contributions and commitment to McGill Library is gratefully acknowledged.

Permission has been obtained to fill various vacant positions: Liaison Librarians in the Schulich Library of Science and Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences Library, Marvin Duchow Music Library, Web Services Librarian, several Library Assistant positions and the Communications Officer.

Facilities Update

New signage has been installed in the Humanities and Social Sciences Library in an effort to improve wayfinding for our users and reduce the staff workload devoted to locational inquiries. Priority areas were identified including signs for washrooms, designated quiet study and group study areas, areas where cell phones may be used and instructions about eating and drinking. We now have an effective prototype that will be rolled out in other branch libraries over the upcoming months.

This final stage of the quiet study area upgrades around the perimeter of the 2nd, 5th and 6th floors of the McLennan Library Building was completed recently with additional lighting installed. Students really appreciate the refreshed spaces.

New low-glare, energy efficient lighting has also been installed in the main stairwells in the McLennan Library Building, increasing lighting output dramatically.

The Microfilm Viewing Room on the 2nd floor of the McLennan Library Building has been re-located to the room next door. This allows for staff at the Government Information Service Desk to quickly identify and assist clients requiring assistance. The space has been refurbished with new desks for the six microfilm readers as well as new chairs and a printer.
Linking to resources was the number one request by students and the SSMU Library Improvement fund felt so strongly about this need that they funded the original Expanded Course Reserves project last summer. As the Library’s first full semester after bringing it “in house” wraps up, it’s a time to celebrate the extensive teamwork across the Library that helped to make this project a success, note lessons learned, and consider feedback for the future.

This service complements traditional course reserves by giving students access to online course materials and print holdings through the “Course materials” tab on the Library’s website. Instructors have been encouraged to create links to the Course Reserves Module directly in myCourses.

When instructors submitted course pack material to Ancillary Services, a copy was sent to the Library and forwarded on to the liaison librarians, who then teamed up with Library staff to identify material, create and add links to the Course Reserves Module. Course material that was not owned was immediately purchased in print and an electronic version, when available.

One of the main challenges with the project was determining the allocation of work responsibilities and the creation of new workflows within each branch and team. While every team had to determine the process that worked best for them, this challenge proved to be an excellent opportunity to pull together as a team to provide this new service to clients.

Feedback from the students and faculty has been overwhelmingly positive. One main suggestion from clients is that they want even more material online. In some cases, faculty have responded by dropping print readings in favour of online material.

In total, 390 courses were processed in the Winter 2010 term, with links to over 6600 books, eBooks, articles, sound recordings, and more. Ninety-six percent (96%) of all articles requested by faculty are held by McGill Library in electronic form and most surprisingly 20% of all the monographs included in the Fall 2009 and Winter 2010 coursepacks are available in electronic form.

The Expanded Course Reserve initiative was successful through the cooperation and hard work of staff across the entire Library system. Congratulations to everyone involved!
EXHIBITIONS AT THE LIBRARY

THE DEVIL’S ART

Humanities and Social Sciences Library, Main floor, McLennan Library Building
Now until May 15, 2010

Selections from the William G. Colgate History of Printing Collection

Established in 1954 from a gift of books from the Toronto art historian, William G. Colgate (1882-1971), the Colgate History of Printing Collection has grown to over 12,000 titles. The Collection is noted for its extensive holdings of examples of printing including fine press productions; but it also includes significant holdings on the history and technique of printing; on calligraphy and letter forms; on the design of typefaces and typographical productions; on type founding and type founders’ specimens; of printers’ manuals and handbooks, including those for colour printing; on the history of book binding with selected examples; papermaking and paper specimens; and book design.

The current exhibition focuses on type design and printing techniques from the hand-press period; the history of printing and the work of the quintessential late eighteenth-century Italian printer Giambattista Bodoni (1740-1813). There were a number of significant type designers in the eighteenth century including the English masters William Caslon (1693-1766) and Edmund Fry (1754-1835) and the firm of Fry Steele and Co. French designs of the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, including those of the Didot family, were also to have a long heritage. Printing manuals document the technical improvements in press equipment since the fifteenth century, while histories of printing recount both the origins of printing in different countries and the controversies surrounding the credit for the invention itself.

Thanks to the generous support of the Friends of the Library, it has been possible to catalogue over 3,000 titles during the past year, thus making this exceptional collection more fully available to students and researchers.

This exhibition has been arranged by the staff of Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library.

CELEBRATING THE WINTER OLYMPICS 1924–2006

Now until March 31, 2010
Humanities and Social Sciences Library, 4th floor McLennan Library Building

To commemorate the Winter Olympic Games being held at Vancouver in February 2010, this exhibition presents a short history of Canadians’ participation at the Winter Olympics from 1924 to 2004. It shows unusual material from the three Olympic Collections housed in the McGill Library’s Rare Books and Special Collections: the Canadian Olympic Association Collection, the Fernand Landry Olympic Collection and the Richard W. Pound Collection. Among the items on display are five Winter Olympic Games Torches from Calgary 1988, Lillehammer 1994, Nagano 1998, Salt Lake City 2002 and Torino 2006.

Each collection reflects the interests of the former owner and covers different aspects and timeframes. The collections complement each other, offering a wealth of information for researchers: official publications, ephemeral material, manuscripts, posters, prints and realia.

This exhibition has been arranged by the staff of Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library.
This month we had a milestone in eScholarship@McGill — we now have more than 20,000 eTheses openly accessible online! Having these theses (say that three times fast!) and ePrints in our institutional repository - makes them available to anyone with an internet connection - increases visibility of the authors - offers full-text searching - ensures archiving of the article - satisfies the Open Access mandates of funding agencies

How to deposit:
1. liaison librarian solicits CV from professors
2. professor sends CV to the liaison librarian, or directly to the eScholarship Team at escholarship.library@mcgill.ca
3. eScholarship Team verify copyright for each article, determining which version is eligible for deposit (more on article versions next month)
4. liaison librarian receives a letter to personalize and forward to the professor with list of required documents
5. professor then sends all versions to liaison librarian/eScholarship Team
6. eScholarship Team uploads articles to the institutional repository

If you have any questions about eScholarship, or would like to set up a presentation for faculty/students, please don’t hesitate to get in touch with me.

Current totals in eScholarship@McGill:
eTheses: 21443
ePrints: 474

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The Beast in Shakespeare: How an Animal Became the World’s Greatest Writer

On March 4, 2010 Professor Paul Yachnin gave the Friends of the Library Annual Shakespeare Lecture to a full house in Moyse Hall. Professor Yachnin discussed the thin line between animals and people in Shakespeare’s time - a time in which some people, like aristocratic men, were considered fully human, and others, like women, people of colour and people of lower rank like Shakespeare, were considered closer to animals. In his outstanding talk, Yachnin referred to a number of Shakespeare’s characters including Katherine in Taming of the Shrew and Shylock in The Merchant of Venice.

Paul Yachnin has a long history of involvement with the Friends of the Library. The Shakespeare lecture was revived in 2004 through his leadership and involvement. Professor Yachnin was named as the Library’s Friend of the Year in December 2008 in recognition of his many accomplishments and the wonderful role that he plays as a McGill Library ambassador.

The Friends of the McGill Library events such as the Shakespeare lecture create a strong presence in the community, and build awareness of the Library’s role in the life and outreach of McGill. Antoni Cimolini, Executive Director of Stratford Festival of Canada, has agreed to give the Library’s Shakespeare lecture in 2010.

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“Building, Crashing, Thinking” - Elizabeth McNab Lecture in the History of Science

On February 15, 2010 the Mossman Endowment at McGill University presented the Elizabeth McNab Lecture in the History of Science. Peter Galison, Professor of the History of Science and Physics at Harvard University, spoke on “Building, Crashing, Thinking.”

His work explores the complex interaction between the three principal subcultures of physics—experimentation, instrumentation, and theory.
Invoicing Upgrade for Interlibrary Loans

by Jessica Hunt,
Communications Officer

I was in contact recently with Valerie Mayman, Coordinator, Interlibrary Loan, to find out more about the new invoicing system that has streamlined the billing process for Interlibrary Loans. An informative question and answer session ensued.

I heard there is a new invoicing system for Interlibrary Loans, can you please describe it?

For the first time, ILL invoices have been produced directly from data entered into the COLOMBO interlibrary loan database during the process of filling ILL Lending requests.

In the past, ILL staff at most McGill branch libraries sent an individual invoice with each ILL transaction where charges were applicable. This was inefficient for both McGill and the external library, which often received a myriad of individual invoices, in a variety of funky formats (!) for small charges, sometimes as small as $5.00, from each McGill branch library. Now each external institution gets one invoice from McGill Library which itemizes all the ILL lending transactions with all of our branch libraries combined on one invoice.

What steps were involved in the planning and implementation of this new system?

McGill Library was the guinea pig for this ILL invoicing project for the CREPUQ institutions, as McGill Library had never developed or implemented any sort of centralized ILL billing system. The COLOMBO Support team generates a pdf in MS Access from raw data extracted from the Colombo database using software called Jasper Reports. The work was done entirely by the COLOMBO Support team including the design of the very professional looking invoice. This COLOMBO invoice product is now being offered to all the CREPUQ institutions who wish to implement it.

When did this new invoicing system come into place?

The first invoice covered ILL Lending transactions from June to November 2009. The next invoice will cover December 1, 2009 to May 31, 2010. In future the ILL Lending invoices will be issued on June 1 and December 1, every year.

What does the centralized ILL billing mean for library staff? Is it good news?

Yes, it’s very good news. While waiting for the new system from COLOMBO, staff in Planning and Resources had to manually prepare a temporary centralized ILL invoice in June 2009, and that process took 3 staff members 3 weeks.

With invoices being produced from COLOMBO, it took 1 person 2.5 days for the number of transactions, to print, fold, and place invoices into envelopes.

For many years prior, ILL or other staff in each branch library had to chase after external institutions for their respective payments. That too was a lot of duplication of effort and very time-consuming.

Are there any specific steps staff need to follow now that the system has changed?

It’s quite simple. ILL staff working in COLOMBO enter the charges on the “Action Shipped” page by selecting “invoice” as the method of payment for ILL transactions with institutions where there are charges.

Are there any changes for clients?

External ILL partners are very pleased. Some had been asking us for years to issue a centralized ILL invoice. It was very costly for them to issue numerous cheques to each branch library for small charges. Most universities with multiple branches had been issuing centralized ILL invoices for many years. It’s not rocket science. But it was an important piece of internal housekeeping. I always felt kind of embarrassed by our previously disorganized ILL billing system. But it’s now improved—better late than never.