

# VALL REVIEW

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**VALL REVIEW** is the official newsletter of the Vancouver Association of Law Libraries, composed of law library community members interested in discussing issues and sharing ideas that affect it. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent VALL policy/position. Unsolicited submissions are welcome. VALL reserves the right to edit submissions.

## From the Executive of VALL

Anne Beresford

What happened to our winter? It seems only a few days since we had our Christmas luncheon. Hal Wake, CBC radio personality and host of "Early Edition" moved our minds December 18th, from the issues of the season and law to the pros and cons of corporate sponsorship. Those of us who were not already fans of this 6-9 a.m. talk show were immediate converts to his fetching and probing manner. Our January speaker, James Matkin, lawyer and author of the report on the Vancouver Stock Exchange, had to send his regrets. We were treated instead to a needed overview by four of our members on the various CD products we are using - and in anticipation of our March workshop on CD's, some recommendations for aspects to be covered. We were surprised to learn that not as many firms as we thought have moved to a WINDOWS environment. We also learned that the problems with CD products are not due to our lack of skills or experience, but to the many versions of software we're dealing with in a variety of environments. Thanks to Joan Bilsland, Tracey Carmichael, Susan Crysler and Teresa Gleave for filling in at such short notice. We are now suitably "revved" up for the March workshop - which you now know has been set for March 27th at the Robson Square Media Centre. We are looking forward to a mix of vendors, trainers and librarians providing us with some useful information.

February has been another interesting month for VALL! We had an opportunity to meet the Canadian Association of Law Libraries (CALL) President at a breakfast meeting February 12th. She is indeed dedicated to the cause! We enjoyed her succinct overview of CALL programmes and issues and wish her well in her remaining visits to local associations across Canada. This kind of visit is a first in CALL's history and a worthwhile precedent to set. Thanks to Gillian Crabtree for arranging the location and the breakfast.

At our most recent lunch meeting, February 15th, we appreciated hearing an outline by Sandra Sajco, Court Services Branch of the Attorney General's office, of the electronic distribution of judgments programme in British Columbia. The product is expected to be available later this year. Pricing is still to be determined.

Finally the Executive is pleased to present the Peter Bark Memorial Fund Bursary this year to Tracey Carmichael, who is our local Internet whiz and previous Newsletter Editor. She is one of the presenters at her first CALL meeting in May. Congratulations Tracey!

## From the Editors

Maureen Fauman and Ana Rosa Blue

It is once again a pleasure to bring you VALL Review. Many people have contributed to this newsletter and we'd like to say thank-you to everyone who phoned, faxed or wrote. The ongoing support of Western Legal Publications to VALL Review is, as always, greatly appreciated.

*VALL REVIEW is published four times a year in March, June, September and December. Deadline for submissions to the next VALL Review is May 23, 1996.*

# VALL REVIEW

## PRESENT AND ACCOUNTED FOR

Lynda Roberts

*In October 1995, the VALL executive conducted a Library Costs Survey on the changes to library costs over the last two years. The survey was initiated at the request of the Vancouver Association of Legal Administrators (VALA) for an article on how librarians were cutting back their library costs during these times of fiscal restraint, for their January 1996 newsletter, TOPICS. The data collected served as the basis for the article. Thank you to all those who responded to the Survey. The results of the Survey follow this article.*

Libraries represent the communities that supports them. Law libraries have come to symbolize a law firm's dedication to the scholarly pursuit of law and can represent the financial success of a firm. However, under the spotlight of economic reality, libraries really exist to house the tools essential to the lawyer's trade. They are just another department in the organization and another overhead expense to cover.

Like the other departments, libraries are dependent upon the financial health of the parent organizations. Presently, law firms are facing the battering winds of economic and technological change. More accountability is required in every aspect of the running of the business. Financial restraints are fundamental to librarians. Ever conscious of their financial dependency, and in an effort to maintain control over their enterprise, library managers develop skills to meet the economic demands of their parent organization. They are inured to accommodate economic fluctuations and are prepared to meet the current fiscal challenges.

Cutting library costs is a challenge. Doing so effectively requires the cooperation of lawyers, management, administration and library staff. This holistic approach fosters the understanding and support needed to streamline effectively the operation. To this end it is imperative that the library manager be involved in the strategic development of the law firm, particularly with regard to the development of specific areas of practice, financial management, client development, and long term technological planning. There is no benefit to working in a vacuum.

The library manager must be familiar with the philosophy and the needs of the organization and should develop a mission statement for the library that will reflect the goals of the firm. For instance, if a law firm library functions to serve the lawyers with current, practical information, in a specialized area of law and in a timely fashion, it will be understood that the mission of the library is to provide prompt delivery of fully updated, relevant and practical materials to the lawyers in their firm. Along with these guidelines come the fiscal responsibility to purchase only the appropriate resources for a specific area of law. To ensure the efficient use of the library funds, the selection, acquisition and disposition of legal materials should be based on a library mission statement that binds the activities of the library to the goals of the firm.

In an effort to control the costs associated with the maintenance of a library collection there are many practical choices a library manager can make depending upon the needs of the firm. A survey was conducted through the Vancouver Association of Law Libraries to measure the efforts being taken to cut library costs. More evident was the consensus to reduce subscriptions; to cancel those titles that were not used and to reduce the duplication of titles. It is very difficult to predict anticipated use of a specific title. As library managers, we often purchase materials on a just-in-case basis rather than just-in-time. There is a trend among those who responded to the survey to move to an access rather than ownership stratagem but not without first considering how effectively this paradigm shift will meet the needs and demands of the law firm.

The arguments of access vs. ownership becomes more acute as law firms upgrade their technological capabilities. Access, in this case, refers to the process of retrieving information and resources from other locations when they are required while ownership refers to the practice of purchasing and storing materials for reference. Accessing information resources off site can be done two ways, one is through interlibrary loan or document delivery and the other is through subscriptions to on-line reference services. Both have their advantages and disadvantages. It makes economic sense to pay for use rather than for maintenance, however, the cost of operating these services must be factored into the budget. Everything from bandwidth to royalty feed needs to be considered before electronic access and document deliver become truly cost efficient.

Librarians have been diligently fostering reciprocal borrowing arrangements in an effort to compensate for a lack of resources but for many users, access, no matter how quick, will never equal ownership. Delivery time cannot be guaranteed and there is premium cost for copying and transmitting on demand. These costs can be passed directly onto the client, if that is the practice of the firm, or reflected in the overhead costs, but disbursing these costs will require further administrative costs. Either way it can be argued that these costs represent a realistic value for service.

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On-line services, by the same token, can provide access to a vast number of resources when they are required but proffer hidden costs. Because using an on-line service requires a certain technical ability, considerable time and money is spent on training users. Often, in fact, due to a lack of consistency in the software standards and insufficient compatibility, training is not practical and accessing the resources efficiently can only be done by the experienced library manager. Reading from a screen is still not the medium of choice for many people and most of what is retrieved has to be downloaded and printed, adding time and money to the cost of an already expensive search. Again the administrative costs associated with disbursing the on-line charges must be taken into account.

When considering off site access it is most important to realize that these methods are labour intensive and can take their toll on the staff. Sharing of resources warrants participation between libraries, keeping up to date with the protocol necessary and, lest it be forgotten, borrowing rather than owning carries the burden of returning the item. On-line, full text, searching requires that, assuming there is a computer on every desk, everyone in the firm will need some level of training in order to access that information. Generally, the intuitive structure of printed materials is not evident in electronic sources and searching techniques need to be learned. Training is fast becoming the most important skill that a library manager can have - about 50% of the library staff time is spent providing some level of instruction. A great deal of support is necessary to train the trainers. If a move toward a virtual library is to take place, the library manager will be required to have both training and technological skills. These skills, in the context of the specific needs of the firm, will ensure that the library moves into the future in a cost effective manner.

Cost effectiveness has become the touchstone for collection development. There is an ever increasing reluctance among the library managers to purchase every new edition and every new index unless there is substantive change to the intellectual content and that the content merits the cost. Quality is seen as tantamount to accountability and legal publishers are expected to measure up. It is important that library managers work closely with the publishing companies to help develop quality products that will be appropriate for their needs.

A library manager's relationship with a vendor can be of strategic importance as well. Economic opportunities can often present themselves in the form of discounts and special offers. This is particularly acute with the advent of CD-ROMs. As long as the appropriate electronic infrastructure is in place within the firm, many subscriptions can be replaced by one CD-ROM. The flat cost of CD-ROM's can be readily compared to the equivalent print costs but it is the indirect costs that are difficult to enumerate. Are networking and training costs equivalent to filing and shelf space costs, for instance?

In order to make these decisions it is imperative that the library manager practice proper accounting methods and always has the current financial records available for reference. In addition, keeping elaborate statistics in order to track how and when resources are used and how much assistance is required is very useful. This information can be broken down into costs which will further influence collection development policies. When a vendor knocks with an opportunity, a quick calculation can lead to a saving.

Some library managers, in conjunction with their parent organizations, are implementing zero-based budgeting as a means of achieving fiscal responsibility. The understanding here is to start a budget at zero each year and rank the budget items in terms of a hierarchy of importance. Items which fall below a certain level in the hierarchy are not funded. This forces library managers to set priorities and requires a review of activities each year. This type of budgeting provides a clear view of the organization as a whole and fosters communications up and down through the levels of the organization because of the emphasis on objectives and priorities. The results will illustrate differences that exists between the practices and the directives of the organization and weed out duplication. Accounting, done properly, is a very time consuming process. It requires the coordinated efforts between departments in the organization and most likely personnel will need to be trained in zero-based budgeting if it is to be implemented.

Of course no matter how fiscally responsible, cuts are inevitable. Some have argued that downsizing can eliminate waste and speed up decision making but cuts in budgets must be strategic and control over services maintained. Sharing information about the need to cut costs and involving employees in the decision making process regarding the jobs and activities to be cut can reduce the negative consequences of downsizing.

Communication and continuing education are the prevailing strengths to championing more cost efficient methods of service. Fiscal restraint can include purchasing fewer but better quality materials, introducing more cost efficient research practices through the sharing of resources and on-line access, encouraging more self sufficient research through the use of CD-ROM's and implementing creative budgeting techniques. However, none of these measures represent savings on their own. Without the proper planning, training, and implementation there will be an increased amount of pressure and stress placed on the library manager and the goals will not be accomplished.

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As organizations decentralize and as technology emphasizes remoteness there is an essential need for the library to provide a physical and intellectual centre for the firm. Faced with an explosion in the marketing of information it is more difficult than ever to agree on a price for it. Information should be valued by how efficiently it is used and the law library manager's prime function is and always will be to apply the proper tools to capture, categorize and coordinate information for use by the law firm now and in the future. The cost to sustain this essential service must always be considered in terms of the value of the organization as a whole.

## *Sources Consulted*

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## +++++ LAW FIRM COSTS SURVEY RESULTS +++++

Compiled by Lynda Roberts

Questionnaires were distributed to all VALL members and there were 14 responses, (ie. 11 from law firm libraries, 2 special libraries and 1 government library). To be truly representative, with a margin of error plus or minus 5%, 92 responses were required. However, the responses received provide an insight into the current situation in the Vancouver area.

None of the respondents serve less than eleven lawyers.

*Please see Table of Survey Results on Page 5 of this edition.*

## *Conclusion*

- \*Cutbacks were reported by all the respondents.
- \*Most common cutting measures were: eliminating duplication, cancelling American and lesser-used titles, questioning the need for new editions and making use of on-line resources on a "just-in-time" basis rather than housing material "just-in-case".
- \*Difficult to assess staff cutbacks, as it was mostly a matter of hours being cut. In some cases, hours were made up by others in the organization. But all responses suggested that there was more burden being placed on current staff to do more work.
- \*Majority of respondents reported services had suffered in law firm libraries. A reduction in materials meant more time spent arranging for inter-library loans or ensuring that materials stay current with less time spent on reference and research work.
- \*Although there is a trend to "self-service", none of the respondents is convinced that moving to an electronic environment will actually cut costs. Cost savings is minimal, as more of the library budget is required for setting up systems, training and supervising end-users.
- \*There is no evidence to indicate that the complex pricing for electronic products will prove to be less expensive than print copies.
- \*One respondent offered a positive aspect to the issue of dealing with cutbacks. The constant reviewing of materials to show cost-effectiveness, is gaining library managers a higher profile and demonstrating their value and expertise to the organization.

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Number of Respondents	3	2	6	2	1
Number of Lawyers Served	11-25 lawyers + 2 students each	26-49 lawyers + 4 students at one firm	50-100 lawyers + 10 students each	over 100 lawyers	
Library Personnel Employed	4 librarians + 5 Staff	1 librarian + 2 staff	14 librarians + 11 staff	3 librarians + 5 staff	1 librarian + 2 staff
Approximate number of Volume Owned	2=10,000 1=25,000	7,000	18,000	20,000	10,000
Budget Reduced	One by 40%, another by 5%	One by \$5,000 last year.	Half are facing Acquisitions budget cutbacks. Two report 30% less in last 2 years.  The other half is working with the same budget, despite the increased costs of publications every year.	One by 20% less to purchase materials.	
Impact	<p>*The first library discontinued materials in 2 areas no longer practiced in the firm.</p> <p>*The second one's primary concern was the shift from print to electronic format. There is no real cost savings, just budgetary manoeuvring.</p> <p>*All three libraries review subscriptions to eliminate duplicates and scrutinize standing orders. eg. Not every new office consolidation is purchased unless sufficient changes warrant a new edition.</p>	<p>*The first library reported spending a lot of time evaluating subscription before renewing.</p> <p>*Although the second library's budget was not cut per se, the library has cancelled the print format if the title is in electronic format, to maintain zero-growth. More time is spent training end-users to use electronic products than providing regular services.</p> <p>*Neither library reported cuts in staff or services.</p>	<p>*All titles are reviewed. Many American titles, duplicates or redundant titles discontinued.</p> <p>*Subscriptions not renewed unless: regularly used, material not duplicated elsewhere and information is not available online.</p> <p>*Two libraries reported cutbacks in staff. Reduction or freezing of staff and Acquisitions budget has been detrimental on services provided.</p> <p>*Inter-library loans has had the biggest impact on service.</p> <p>*Two respondents explain that library skills are being restricted to technical and administrative tasks.</p> <p>*Another respondent described the library as becoming a "self-service" one.</p> <p>*The issue of reducing subscriptions due to limited space was brought up more than once.</p>	<p>*American titles cancelled in both cases.</p> <p>*One library discontinued criminal law materials, while another discontinued 3rd Reading Bills. Duplicates were also discontinued.</p> <p>*All titles are examined for frequency of use and availability elsewhere.</p>	

# VALL REVIEW

## NEWS

### CALL Comes to VALL

On February 12, Canadian Association of Law Libraries (CALL) President, Anne Crocker flew into Vancouver, for a breakfast meeting, for the beginning of a cross-country trek to meet with local associations. The visit, intended to forge and maintain links between the CALL Executive and members of local law library associations, was an excellent way to start the process.

Anne highlighted CALL's history, outlined issues concerning law libraries and spoke about CALL's new initiatives. CALL's archives are being centralized as the National Archives can no longer accept CALL's material. Denis LeMay is the archivist. A new archives policy is expected to be unveiled in May. Issues which CALL is monitoring are: the not-yet-tabled revised copyright legislation, CD-ROM pricing and access to justice. CALL is working on position papers on these topics to be approved at the CALL meeting in May prior to publication and distribution. Among CALL's new initiatives is an idea to hold a National Conference on Legal Information Issues, whose purpose would be to bring members of the judiciary, the bar and the academic community together with law library staff to discuss legal information issues. A new Public Relations Committee, headed by Anne Morrison, has recently been formed. CALL is urging those committed to promoting law librarianship to get involved.

Gillian Crabtree of Ferguson Gifford very kindly reserved the Park Place Board Room and organized the continental breakfast. Those in attendance agreed that this type of forum worked well and ought to be attempted more often.

Anna Holeton and Liisa Tella are the local representatives on the "CALL Vendors' Liaison Committee." If you have any concerns about CD-ROM pricing, licensing or anything else you can contact either one of them.

### A Letter from France

*Carol Williams*

We are indeed living a different life this year, housed as we are in very modest accommodations in the medieval town of Puyoubier, located at the base of Mont St. Victoire, about 30 minutes east of Aix-en-Provence. So many of the daily tasks take much longer when operating in another language and different culture. Hence, I cannot as yet say I have had "time on my hands" despite the concern expressed by many of "what are you going to do for the year?" As the letterhead indicates, we are indeed "connected", so e-mail sent and received on a daily basis to family, friends, and colleagues allows us to keep in touch and

carry on a certain amount of business. While my husband churns out articles and gives seminars, I handle our daily affairs (including doing battle with the washing machine and with the ancient Lada we are driving) and grab opportunities for the computer. We have taken advantage of the hiking, walking, and biking opportunities in our vicinity and were able to experience the ripening and harvesting of the grapes for the local wineries. It was wonderful to taste this produce straight from the vines and then to watch the "paysans" drive their tractors hauling the loads of grapes to the local "caves" for sale. The winery in our town is particularly noted for its Rose, which we are doing our best to adequately sample.

While I have yet to find a law library to visit, I have had the opportunity to closely observe the documentation library of the "Centre des Hautes Etudes Touristiques" from which my husband does his research. This library has been a labour of love for its director who established the Centre 35 years ago. With limited funds, he has managed to obtain tourism materials from all over the world, so that the collection is the largest of its kind in this field. However, as a librarian, I would hesitate to follow his example as he relies entirely on the donations from publishers and authors (much letter writing) and on volunteer services (including the full-time assistance of his 92-year-old mother!). Though not a librarian by training (rather a tourism specialist), he has developed his own classification scheme and thesaurus of terms, and has used his own money to purchase the hardware and to pay for the development of the library software. Unfortunately, his efforts have largely been directed externally, rather than developing his ties within his own university. Consequently, he is now facing the closure of his Centre and an uncertain future for the documentation library.

While on a trip to England and Wales in October, I visited libraries in Cambridge, Swansea and Oxford. Through some friends, I gained entrance to one of the Cambridge faculty libraries and was told (rather facetiously, but with a grain of truth implied) that there were "more librarians per square mile" in Cambridge than anywhere else. This is due to the proliferation of libraries — at the university, college, and faculty levels. Visiting the libraries of Oxford University is very difficult, as one must be a student or faculty member of one of the colleges. However, I did the prescribed tour (very limited) of the Bodleian Library and found its rarefied atmosphere much too reminiscent of the "Rare Books Library" at the University of Toronto where I had once worked (but happily left). To use the Bodleian, members of the public must apply several days in advance and have a very specific research need and affiliation. By contrast, the library at the University of Wales, Swansea was much less restrictive and had a very user-friendly computerized catalogue.

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## NEWS, continued...

Do not be misled by the descriptions in the above two paragraphs. Very little of my time to date has been spent in libraries. Rather, I have been attempting to become more comfortable with the French language; have found a book club to attend (English-speaking I hate to admit); have been meeting other Canadians also living in Aix; have been making day trips to historical (Arles, Normandie, etc.) and scenic (Cassis, St. Tropez, etc.) Destinations; have journeyed to England and Austria and am now preparing (with great anticipation) for the arrival of my children at Christmas. Hopefully, in the long run, this year's respite will bring some new energy, experience, and enthusiasm to my work when I return. There is no doubt in my mind that Vancouver (though rather wet this fall, I understand) is, indeed, a good place to return to! See you next September.

Sincerely,

Carol Williams December 5, 1995

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### Online Catalogue at the Courthouse Library

The British Columbia Courthouse Library Society heralded 1996 by unveiling its online public access catalogue in Vancouver. The online catalogue software, called Horizon, is from Dynix Library Systems and uses a Windows interface. In addition to the library's holdings, users can also access the Revised Statutes of British Columbia, the Index to Legal Periodicals and Black's Law Dictionary.

If you wish to book a database demonstration, please call Ana Rosa Blue at 660-2841.

## INTERNET CORNER

*Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire* provides information about the role, history, proceedings and activities of the Parliament of Canada. It was developed jointly by the Senate, the House of Commons and the Library of Parliament. In addition to official publications of the House and the Senate, such as House of Commons Committee Evidence and Hansard, visitors to the site can also take an on-line tour of Parliament. You can find it at:

<http://www.parl.gc.ca>

CANSIM is the Canadian Socio-economic Information Management database produced by Statistics Canada. It covers topics such as; population, price indexes, labour and income, agriculture and national accounts, industrial organization and

finance, investment and capital stock, energy and domestic trade, manufacturing, international travel and crime statistics. CANSIM is available through:

<http://www.datalib.ubc.ca>

Readmore provides serials and acquisitions librarians with access to document delivery services, such as UnCover. See it for yourself at:

<http://www.readmore.com>

The Superintendent of Documents' Home Page on the U.S. Government Printing Office Web Site, provides access to the Federal Register, Congressional Bills and Congressional Record. It can be found at:

[http://www.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/)

The Faculty of Economics, Commerce, Education and Law, University of Western Australia has provided Internet users with links to United Nations information, including Security Council Resolutions and General Assembly Resolutions. Check it out for yourself at:

<http://www.ecel.uwa.edu.au/law/links/fauburn/law-un.htm>

BCK2SKOL is an Internet primer written especially for librarians with little or no Internet experience. The 30 lessons, designed to take no more than 15 minutes to complete, are archived at:

<http://web.csd.sc.edu/bck2skol/bck2skol.html>

Have you ever wondered how to build a Web page? *Writing HTML* is an on-line tutorial for creating Web pages provided by the Maricopa Community Colleges in Phoenix, Arizona. The free, hands-on tutorial can be found at:

<http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/tut/>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### *VALL Events/Luncheon Meetings*

March 27, 1996 - FOLIO/CD-ROM Workshop

April, 1996 - Dr. Mary Sue Stephenson, UBC, School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, on how students are being prepared to meet today's technological challenges.

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May, 1996 - Drew Jackson on Legal Research and the Internet

June, 1996 - Roundtable

Watch your mail for further details.

All luncheons will be held at the Hotel Georgia.

## Conferences

BCLA/BCLTA Annual Conference - "Ensuring Our Future: Libraries Working Together." April 25-27, 1996 Whistler, B.C.

Joint conference of the British Columbia Library Association and the British Columbia Library Trustees Association. For details, phone BCLA at: 430-9633.

CALL Annual Conference - "The Changing Face of the Legal Profession and the Future of Law Libraries." May 25-29, 1996 Kingston, Ont.

For more information you may access the Conference World Wide Web site at: <http://qsilver.queensu.ca/law/call96/call.htm>

or, e-mail the Conference organizers at: [call96@qsilver.queensu.ca](mailto:call96@qsilver.queensu.ca)

CLA Annual Conference June 6-9, 1996 Halifax, N.S.

Connections '96: Linking Teaching, Learning and Technology May 9-11, 1996 Vancouver, B.C. Conference designed to examine and explore a range of applications and uses of educational technology. Contact: Amanda Harby at (604) 356-7662; fax (604) 387-9142; e-mail: [harby@camosun.bc.ca](mailto:harby@camosun.bc.ca)

## Workshops

VCC Vancouver Community College Library Skills Courses - Spring/Summer 1996. Ask for cancellation policy information when registering.

To register for a course, please call 871-7070. For further information on courses, ask for Cindy John, Library Skills Programme Coordinator.

Basic Library Skills - Circulation, Processing and Catalogue Records (106069) \$215 7 eve. - Mon. Apr. 22, 18:30-21:30 - City Centre

Looks at the elements of the catalogue record, machine-readable catalogue records, filing rules, physical processing & mending, circulation procedures & interlibrary loan procedures.

Internet - Introduction to the Network of Networks (106077) \$175 1 day - Sat. Apr. 20, 09:00-16:30 - SFU/Harbour Centre, Main floor

Looks at how to find and retrieve information resources on the Internet, the potential uses of Netscape/Mosaic, and options for accessing the Internet through local service providers. Students must have some previous experience using MACs or PCs in a Windows environment.

Internet: Web Design and Development (106084) \$195 1 day - Sat. May 25, 09:00-16:30 - SFU/Harbour Centre, Main floor

Looks at the various factors involved in developing a World Wide Web site. Learn how to author Web pages using HTML programming. No previous programming experience is required.

Internet: Netscape and Next Generation Web Browsers (106085) \$195 1 day - Sat. Apr. 13, 09:00-16:30 - SFU/Harbour Centre, Main floor

Teaches students how to use Netscape. Will introduce the new generation of Web browsers, including Hot Java!

UBC Sponsored by the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies. For further information call: 822-2404 or e-mail: [slais@unixg.ubc.ca](mailto:slais@unixg.ubc.ca)

Going It Alone": A Workshop About Freelance Opportunities (\$120., \$150 after Mar.1) Sat. Mar. 30, 09:00-16:00 - University Golf Club, 5185 University Blvd.

Creating a WEB Home Page (\$110., \$130 after Mar. 15) Sat, Apr. 13 or Sat. Apr. 20, 09:00-16:00 - School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, 8th floor. Enrollment is limited.

Netscape Beyond the Basics: Using Netscape for Information Retrieval and Organization (\$70., \$85 after Apr. 5) Sat. May 4, 09:00-13:00 - School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, 8th floor. Enrollment is limited.

## MEMBERS' PROFILES

*This ongoing feature introduces VALL members to VALL Review readers. In this issue we are pleased to present Nick Collings who works in London, England.*

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## MEMBERS' PROFILES, continued...

*Nick Collings - Allen & Overy*

As a member of VALL I must be unusual in that I'm actually a librarian in London, England with a large English firm. In fact I left Vancouver for London over ten years ago, my librarianship degree is from a London university and all my work experience has been in the English library scene. So there is nothing Canadian about my work but through VALL I'm trying to cultivate professional links with my old hometown with the prospect, however faint, that I may one day return.

To give you some idea of what I do: I am the deputy librarian at Allen & Overy, one of the top ten law firms in the United Kingdom. We are a mainly commercial firm with about 125 partners and nearly 600 lawyers in total based in London or at one of nearly a dozen offices around the world. The main library is staffed by seven professional members of staff and three assistants. We provide an information resource and enquiry service based on English law and commercial information (but in the heat of the moment we will do just about anything). Although the firm is so large the London office is physically under one roof, in contrast to several comparably sized firms who are not. However, the main library is at one end of a rather long and awkwardly shaped building and this, together with the information demands of various legal departments, has impelled us to provide satellite libraries at strategic points around the firm. Only one of these is staffed on a permanent basis: the Competition library, which also deals with European Union and Eastern European information. In addition, although this does not come into the library's hierarchy, there is a parallel series on 'Infobanks' based in the legal departments and containing the firm's internally-produced expertise such as memoranda, opinions from counsel, and similar in-house information that is deemed to be of possible future use. Much of this structure is the result of organic growth rather than planning, particularly since the firm has grown massively, tripling in size in the past decade.

We provide the normal core services of a law firm library but our collection and enquiries reflect the commercial bias of the firm. We have an extensive collection of English law reports with some others from Canada and Australia. The same is true for legislation although because of the difficulties of keeping current we take far less foreign material. Because the firm is often called upon to advise companies on how to react to new or prospective legislation we will follow developments in the relevant areas very closely and obtain the government papers as soon as they are available. The number of journal titles we take has now reached about 300 and most of these are circulated, with all the attendant problems that entails. We produce a number of current awareness bulletins, partly to deal with these problems. In addition to ordering

material for the library stock we supply a number of core books as personal copies for the lawyers in various departments which means bulk orders of 200 or more in some cases. The London investment markets have taken the route of self-regulation to protect investors' interests and set up various bodies that produce rulebooks. Some of the rulebooks we only have a few copies of but others we supply to each lawyer in our Corporate department, over 200 copies in looseleaf form. Finally we subscribe to an ever-growing number of databases and similar services, some of which may not be familiar in Canada: Lexis/Nexis, FT Profile, Extel (company information), Perfect Information (scanned share prospectuses), Topic (Stock Exchange Information), to name a few.

However, before all of this, we run an enquiry service. We take a frontline approach with enquiries and all other work must come after. As with most librarians I still find this the most enjoyable part of my work, even if it is often the most stressful! We cover such subject areas as; general corporate law, mergers and acquisitions, intellectual property, taxation, competition and government regulation, banking and finance, insolvency, international capital markets and property. Having said our work is mostly commercial our firm is unusual among the large City firms in having a sizeable Private Client department. Consequently we also cover trusts, probate, inheritance and similar taxation and charities. A great proportion of our enquiry work is done face-to-face with the firm's 'trainees', or article clerks, and we run a training program for each year's intake on legal research skills since these are not taught extensively in the university courses.

Finally, we do co-operate with other law libraries where possible in lending materials although we need to govern this carefully so as not to undercut and offend our commercial suppliers. All our librarians are members of BIALL (British and Irish Association of Law Librarians) and we take part, where possible, in a couple of London-based associations. I have tried to describe briefly what I do without boiling it down to complete unintelligibility but if any VALL members would like to contact me I would be happy to receive correspondence or even enquiries. Our address is:

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1 New Change  
London EC4M 9QQ  
United Kingdom

Phone: (171) 330 2236  
Fax: (171) 330 9999

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# VALL REVIEW

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

### *New Faces:*

Wendy Eng will receive her M.I.S. from the University of Toronto this spring and will join Ladner Downs in mid-April.  
Jennifer Martison, Bull, Housser & Tupper  
Janet Parkinson, Price Waterhouse  
Stuart Rennie, Legal Information Management  
Iola Whiteside, Douglas Symes & Brissenden

### *Familiar Faces:*

Congratulations to Tracey Carmichael the 1996 recipient of the Peter Bark Memorial Fund Bursary! Tracey will attend the CALL conference in Kingston, Ont. and will provide a report at a forthcoming VALL Luncheon.

Teresa Gleave has moved to Farris, Vaughan, Wills & Murphy.

Denise Bonin has joined forces with Kathy Bryce to form &!/ Andornot Consulting Inc. The main objective of the new company is to coordinate Inmagic sales, training and consulting services. You may contact them at:

Tel: 730-1865

Fax: 737-1875 or

andornot@mindlink.bc.ca .

## **CALL FOR VALL REVIEW SUBMISSIONS**

Contributions to **VALL REVIEW** are encouraged and greatly appreciated. Please note the following copy submission deadlines:

May 23, 1996 for the June issue

August 22, 1996 for the September issue