Annual Report of the Rhodes University Library for 2010

Library Director’s Review

Improving the Physical Infrastructure
2010 was a momentous year for the Library, and for the University, with the new section of the Library being opened to users on 29 January and culminating in the official opening of the building on 4 November. This brought to conclusion the Library Building Project, an extension and refurbishment of the existing building, with building work beginning on 8 September 2008.

In the first half of the year, while 55% of the building was being refurbished, the book collections were fitted onto temporary shelving and only 300 of the full complement of 1100 seats were available to users. In July the remaining section of the existing building was handed over to the Library and the work of fitting shelving and moving collections into their final positions began. Users remained patient during the course of the year, but at times the continued disruptions were a major inconvenience to both Library staff and users. Before the opening, and the November exam period, the majority of the collections were in place, and the critical outstanding snags attended to by the contractor. It was extremely pleasing to see the study areas fully occupied at times during Swot week and the exam period, with students benefiting enormously from the range of study spaces the new building offers.

The Library opening was a major event in the University’s calendar with over 250 people attending the evening function on the 4 November. The building was officially opened by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, the Honorable Minister Mr Blade Nzimande. The event was attended by a wide range of delegates, including local, regional and national government officials, individual donors and representatives of donor companies, the University’s Governing Body and Council members, Heads of academic departments, Library staff, and the building project manager, contractor and consultants.

Collection Development and Management
As part of the Library Services review process, a number of recommendations pertaining to Branch Libraries were approved by
Senate. These included the return of book and journal collections as well as Librarian posts to the Main Library. Discussions took place with representatives from the relevant Faculties and departments, including Education, Music, Pharmacy, HKE, Physics and Geography and all the book and periodical collections were successfully returned to the Main Library, and the staff concerned redeployed in positions they had applied for in the Main Library. The Law Branch Library has remained in place, with all its collections remaining in the branch library. A Sound Branch Library was established in the Music Department, with only the audio-visual and score material remaining in the branch library.

The recommendations in respect of the restructuring of the Information Resources (IR) Budget were implemented in 2010. Two information sessions on the restructuring and on the 2010 IR grant allocation were held for Heads of Departments and departmental liaison staff. The proposal for a Collection Development Sub-committee, as part of the Library Committee, was agreed to at the Library Committee’s March 2010 meeting. Each Faculty was requested to nominate one representative, who along with two representatives from the Library Committee and Library staff, formed the Sub-committee. Mr Tim Huisamen was elected as the Chairperson and the first meeting was held on 17 September. The sub-committee is providing valuable user feedback to Library staff on collection development issues.

Expenditure patterns on books and subscriptions have remained much the same for the past two years, as reflected in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Resources Grant expenditure</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscriptions</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Expenditure on subscriptions came in at less than the proposed budget for 2010 due to the favourable exchange rates at which invoices were paid, compared to 2009 rates. Approximately R1 million less was spent, which was a saving on payments that were scheduled to be made from the Library’s retained income account.
Support for Learning, Teaching and Research
At the end of 2009 RUL was accepted as one of 6 academic library partners in the prestigious Research Libraries Consortium (RLC) Project (2009 – 2012 and funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York). A highlight of the first quarter of 2010 was the kick-off of the Research Library Consortium Project. Six RUL staff applied and were selected to participate in the first (of 3) Library Academy Training programmes focused on the needs and requirements of research and researchers. The six candidates, Linda Cartwright, Debbie Martindale, Thandiwe Menze, Jill Otto, Sue Rionda & Wynand van der Walt, attended an intensive 2 week Academy from 11-23 April. A further three candidates, Roelien Clarke, Noni Makhathini and Fiona Still-Drewett attended the Academy held from 3-15 October.
As part of their preparation, the staff were required to identify a limited research project, investigate, collect and collate data and present it as an article to be peer reviewed and considered for publication. They are required on return, to share their knowledge and experience across the library and to design useful training programmes for their colleagues.

In early December we heard that Fiona Still-Drewett and Linda Cartwright had been chosen to participate in a 12 week United States study visit programme (10 February-3 May 2011) as part of the RLC Project. Each staff member will be hosted by a leading research university (ARL Member) for a total of six weeks and they will spend two weeks at the Mortenson Center which promotes international librarianship (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), attend an international conference (ACRL) and participate in a mid-visit meeting in New York with the Project Director and Manager.

The opportunity for two senior staff members to spend an extended period in the United States at two highly respected research universities (Duke University and the University of Arizona) comes at a critical point in the history and development of our own Library. We are keen for them to explore and find out what is international best practice in respect of staff development, services and facilities in modern research libraries and to return with innovative ideas and practices to implement.
The physical aspect of the RLC project is the Research Commons, which is a quiet and comfortable area in the new library providing senior post-graduate students and academic staff with a place to read, write and contemplate, with trained librarians available to provide support and services. The Research Commons was successfully launched and opened by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Badat on 3 September at a function attended by the DVCs, Deans, HoDs and Library Committee members. It was opened at the start of the 4th term, on 6 September, and has proved to be a popular research venue in the Library.

By the end of the year the goal was reached of arranging library user services staff into faculty teams providing service to users on levels 2 to 4 of the new Library. Subject Librarian Services, with a team-based approach, have been implemented in the new Rhodes University Library to provide equitable and comprehensive information services to Rhodes University researchers, academics and students across faculties and institutes. Guided by physical space planning and book collection sizes and taking into account staff and student numbers, four faculty specific service desks linked to research collections are operating in the new Library. The Faculty Liaison Librarian teams will liaise proactively with departments, provide information services, actively engage in collection development & management, and present information literacy training.

The Library Director submitted an application, on behalf of the Principal Faculty Librarians, for membership of the Faculty Boards. A critical part of their liaison work is to understand the varied needs of the Faculties for which they are responsible. Their attendance at the Faculty Board meetings will help to ensure that they keep abreast of any new programmes, courses or initiatives as well as new post-graduate students and their approved topics. They would also be able to answer questions about the Library Services Division and new Faculty Liaison Services as well as to give feedback to the Library Management Team. The Registrar, Dr Fourie, has indicated that the rules pertaining to the Faculty Boards are currently being reviewed. It is proposed that in the revised rules, the Director: Library Services or his/her nominee becomes a member of each Faculty Board. In the interim, the Principal Faculty Librarians are in attendance at the Faculty Board meetings and attended the meetings held in October.
Digital collections in the Library continued to grow with 227 theses and 57 research articles deposited in the Rhodes eResearch Repository (ReRR) this year.

**Serving our Users**

Despite the disruptions associated with the Library building programme and the movement of the collections, as well as the appointment & redeployment of staff, User Services staff managed to devote time to training programmes in the Library. Altogether 70 sessions took place for undergraduate students involving a total of 2449 students. 20 sessions were arranged for a total of 271 postgraduate students. 30 academic staff attended the 2 sessions organized for them and 16 College of the Transfiguration students were introduced to the Library.

In addition many staff and postgraduate students were assisted by senior user services staff in one-on-one sessions.

Issue statistics across all Library points were down by close to 8000 items checked out compared with 2009. This might be due to the inaccessibility of some parts of the collections during the final building operations, but might also be due to the fact that with the new part of the Library building being available from January 2010, students’ usage patterns changed and they used material in the comfortable new spaces, rather than checking out material to use elsewhere.

**Knowledge Exchange:**

**Local**

The Confucius Institute held an exhibition from 27 September to 2 October in the Library as part of their China Week programme. Two Faculty Librarians and the Information Commons Librarian liaised in preparing and mounting a display entitled “Positive Living” from the 1-3 December.

**Regional**

As a regional consortium, SEALS continues to perform as a cost-effective and dynamic organization bringing benefits of shared services and collaborative projects to the four academic library members and user communities at their institutions. Activities in
2010 include the implementation of new software products for the III Millennium system, module reviews, ongoing training and support for staff in the libraries by the SEALS Trust and Library Systems Manager, Ms M Allwright. The Millennium software is hosted by the RU IT Division on behalf of the SEALS members. A copy of the 2009 SEALS Annual Report was sent to the Vice-Chancellors at the four member institutions as a way to highlight achievements gained through collaborative and shared activities.

Consortium activities included:

- Trust Meeting held on 28 May at RU attended by the 4 IT Directors (annual initiative)
- III Millennium software migrated to the Storage Area Network (virtual server) at RU on behalf of the 4 members
- Site visits by the SEALS Manager to provide operational training and support, April
- SEALS ERM Workshop hosted by RU for members, 27-28 May
- Trust Meeting held on 23 August (teleconference)
- The RUL Director is line manager for the SEALS Manager and office. Bi-weekly teleconference meetings were held to discuss operational, planning and management matters.

The Library Director, Gwenda Thomas, represents the Library on several regional boards and committees and attended meetings of CHELSA (Committee of Higher Education Libraries in SA) on 19 May and the SANLiC (SA National Library and Information Consortium) meetings on 24 August, 9 October. She also attended a symposium at the University of Johannesburg: The future is now, from 17-18 May.

She is also a member of the University of Pretoria Library Advisory Committee, and attended meetings in Pretoria on 9 April and 30 August.

Ms Thomas attended the Sabinet Client Conference at Skukuza from 6-8 October.

She also attended the SCANUL-ECS (the Standing Conference of National & University Libraries of Eastern, Southern & Central Africa & SCECSAL (Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa Library and Information Associations) Conferences from 3-9 December in Gaborone, Botswana.
Other Library Services staff also attended a number of regional activities:

- SA Online User Group Chapter Launch, 17 March
- EBSCO Information Day, 21 May
- Sabinet Regional Roadshow, 20 July in Port Elizabeth
- LIASA Special Libraries Interest Group (LiSLIG), 10 July in Grahamstown (F Still-Drewett was the LiSLIG Secretary and has been elected as an additional member to the national committee for 2010-2012.)
- Vendor and supplier visits and demonstrations of databases including the InCite product shown to the Research Office staff
- The Rhodes University Library was visited on 16 August by the SANLiC Manager, Yvonne Halland, to discuss national site licensing issues.
- E. Shepherd attended the Sabinet Library Products User Advisory Committee meeting from 6-8 September in Gauteng.
- Helena Theron from the vendor/supplier Sabinet visited the Library on 20 September.

W. van der Walt was invited to be part of an advisory group of the Academy of Science, the Core Database Group.

Global

OCLC and its member libraries cooperatively produce and maintain WorldCat, the world’s largest online database for discovery of library resources. In South Africa, there are approximately 748 member libraries with 9.3 million holdings in WorldCat. As a member-owned organization, the governance structure of OCLC has a permanent staff for its day-to-day management as well as an elected user representative base that actively participates in and guides the direction of the organization. In 2009, a new governance structure was implemented to broaden representation and participation by regions in the global cooperative. The main representative body is the Global Council with three regional councils each with its own Exco and an annual conference:

- EMEA (Europe, Middle East & Asia)
- Asia Pacific
- Americas (North & South America & Canada)
Ms G Thomas is the elected delegate for the EMEA region (Africa) and Chair for the period July 2010-June 2011. She attended the OCLC EMEA Regional Council Conference from 24 – 25th February (Leiden) and the Global Council Meeting from the 19 – 22nd April in Dublin, Ohio. A presentation was made by her to the plenary session entitled “Opening access to knowledge: the role of the South African national research agenda”.

G. Thomas also attended the EMEA Exco meeting which was held in Leiden from 29-30 September 2010 which was followed by a Global Council Exco meeting in Dublin, Ohio from 25-26 October.

Two other staff members participated in international activities during the year:

- Ms F Still-Drewett who attended the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML), 27 June to 2 July in Moscow and gave a presentation entitled “ILAM’s archival revitalization- the past ten years at ILAM”. A publication is in progress.
- Ms C Nyama (Student Circulation Assistant), who was studying 1st year Chinese at RU, was selected as part of a student study group to visit China from 17 June to 10 July.
- Ms E Shepherd published an article in an international, accredited journal, the Electronic Library, entitled: “In-service training for academic librarians: a pilot programme for staff”

Staff Development

A. Booi passed two more subjects for his Matric certificate: English & Economics
M. Booysen completed both the Foundation & Intermediate MS Excel courses through the RU Human Resources Division
G. Dampies passed three courses of the National Diploma in Information Technology through UNISA
V. Menze passed 2 modules of the Hons BInf degree through UNISA.
M. Mpokela passed 4 modules of the BInf degree through UNISA.
B. Stoltz passed a further 5 modules of the BInf degree through UNISA & hopes to complete her studies in 2011.

A paper conservation workshop held at the Albany Museum in Grahamstown from 9-10 February was attended by R Goosen and F Still-Drewett.
New Appointments
Noni Makhatini - Head Librarian: User Services & Information Commons – 1 June
Noelene Pillay - Assistant to the Director’s Office - 1 May
Mark Frier - Principle Librarian: User Services & Training – 19 July
Roelien Clarke - Principle Librarian: Digital Library Services – 1 August
Chantel Clack - Librarian: Cataloguing – 1 September
Nobathembenyo Letsoeny - Librarian: Information Commons – 1 October
Jabu Nene - Librarian: User Access Services – 1 October
Vuyo Gontshi - Faculty Librarian: Commerce – 1 October
Ilana Kretzmann – Srn Admin Assistant-Sound Branch Library – 1 September
Nabisa Mbali- Faculty Librarian:(Humanities & Education)-1 December
Madireng Monyela - Librarian: Cataloguing – 1 December
Sindiswa Gule - Assistant Faculty Librarian: (Commerce)-6 December

Retirements
Yvonne Surtees – 31 March
Sue van der Riet – 30 June

Farewells
Mark Frier – 31 December

Loans Statistics
Item use by check-out on the Millennium system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Services</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>142072</td>
<td>135620</td>
<td>-6452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>12435</td>
<td>11488</td>
<td>-947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>1696</td>
<td>1405</td>
<td>-291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>1683</td>
<td>-217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>158103</td>
<td>150196</td>
<td>-7907</td>
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### Inter-Library Loan Transactions With Other Libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Items Sent</td>
<td>1198</td>
<td>1391</td>
<td>+208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items Requested</td>
<td>1601</td>
<td>988</td>
<td>-613</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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