

NEWS AND NOTES / NOUVELLES ET NOTES

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In memoriam

Colin William Fraser, 1925–2005

Bill Fraser (Bachelor of Library Science, McGill, 1949) was Director of the British Columbia Medical Library Service (BCMLS) of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia from 1961 to 1991. Bill was elected to life membership in the Health Libraries Association of British Columbia, the British Columbia Library Association, and the Canadian Health Libraries Association / Association des bibliothèques de la santé du Canada (CHLA / ABSC). The Medical Library Association (MLA) elected him a Fellow in 1991. He was a significant influence in medical and hospital librarianship in the Pacific Northwest and in the Canadian medical and library communities. That Bill was not an academic librarian and was such a progressive force in health librarianship is an indication of his character and intellect.

Bill passed away peacefully on 12 October 2005. The sad news brought back many memories and thoughts. I had the good fortune to teach the medical libraries course with Bill at the University of British Columbia (UBC) library school. On his retirement in 1991, I took his position at BCMLS, now called the College Library. During my orientation, he shared with me, as with many people, freely. He was never judgmental and always succinct and clear in communicating. His regular column in the *BC Medical Journal* was a model I used. I remember his handwritten drafts — firm, clear hand, few mistakes.

Working on Bill's nomination to become a Fellow of MLA, we learned from Seattle colleagues that Bill had been an early influence in the US. Through his participation in a symposium in Seattle in 1962, his ideas contributed to the development of the system of Regional Medical Libraries, now the US National Network of Libraries of Medicine. He came to BCMLS from the regional library system in Prince George, British Columbia (B.C.). I have never been able to find an official record of how the word "regional" became part of the US system, but I am sure that Bill did speak at the symposium, eloquent as always, about his progressive ideas.

Bill applied the regional idea to BCMLS, which served all doctors registered to practice in B.C. Hospital libraries were used as the local presence in each community. Bill set forth every year, each spring and each fall, across the province visiting doctors and people who looked after hospital "libraries" (some worthy of the name, some, in smaller places, just a couple of shelves of books). He evaluated these libraries, suggesting purchases to update and complete the collections. In my travels around the province, following in Bill's footsteps, I met person after person who asked about him. They recalled what a friendly person he was and his good work developing and maintaining a far-flung network of some 100 hospitals. These hospital "libraries" — hospital staff to keep them in order and doctors who chaired local "library committees" — worked well with his help and back-up from BCMLS people in Vancouver. One of the few situations when I saw Bill become insistent, even strident, was when he talked

to doctors about the importance of keeping up-to-date. Many were surprised by the scathing reports he submitted to hospital administrators when the library space was not a place fit for reading and reflection. "Outreach" was invented about 20 years after Bill made his first trip, and research later showed that well-trained and informed local contacts made for successful outreach, which is exactly how Bill had set it up across B.C.

Bill was a collaborator. He always attended the MLA Annual Meeting and was an active participant in the Medical Society Libraries and the Relevant Issues Sections. He was the program chair for the 1977 annual meeting of MLA in Seattle. Bill told many stories about Pacific Northwest Chapter meetings and regularly attended the CHLA / ABSC annual meeting. He was a founder of both the B.C. and Canadian associations, the Canadian one arising from the Canadian group that came together at MLA. At BCMLS, Bill brought the staff together each morning for coffee and each afternoon for tea, and he came back to participate in these get-togethers after he retired. He believed in and knew how to engender cooperation.

To some he was Colin, to me always Bill. During my orientation to take over as BCMLS director, travelling together across northern B.C., visiting hospitals, Bill and I stopped at an art gallery in a small town. He did appreciate his art. I left when Bill started talking about a particular painting with the owner. A good stretch later, I came back. The store was supposed to be closed, but Bill and the owner were still talking, and he had become "Colin" to the owner.

Bill was a natural teacher. He thrived on sharing what he knew with everybody, but especially students in the medical library course. His favourite class was the one where he used role play, and what better way to convey the politics of hospital librarianship? The UBC library school scholarship in his name was a particular point of pride to him.

In retirement, Bill kept busy, and his smile grew with travel and opera. In 1995, he moved to Victoria with his cats. In remembering Bill, I know that he would wish us all to dance, as he was a superb dancer. He would hope we would think of his family. He was always interested in my family and shared the ups and downs of, and love for, his family. The news of Bill's passing brings a time to celebrate the fine life of a fine man, but it is still sad.

An oral history with Bill is available (http://www.mlanet.org/about/history/c_fraser.html). An obituary was published in the Vancouver Sun and the Victoria Times-Colonist (<http://www.legacy.com/can-vancouver/LegacySubPage2.asp?Page=LifeStory&PersonId=15449198>).

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CHLA / ABSC Annual Conference 2006 celebrates 30 years

Thirty years is a great milestone for the Canadian Health Libraries Association / Association des bibliothèques de la santé du Canada (CHLA / ABSC). Save the “personal” past of the association by posting your CHLA / ABSC memories of people, places, and events at our Memories blog. Share your thoughts and impressions about 30 years of health librarianship in Canada by contributing to the Memories of CHLA / ABSC 1976–2006 Blog at <http://weblogs.elearning.ubc.ca/memories/>.

PubMed news – new NLM Mobile link

A new link, NLM Mobile, will be added to PubMed’s blue side bar. Like the Text Version link that takes you to a page providing specialized PubMed searches for text browsers, the NLM Mobile link provides access to a directory of PubMed tools that are appropriate for mobile devices. These include Palm Powered and Pocket PC handheld computers as well as newer Smartphones and BlackBerry devices. The directory links to the following:

- PubMed for Handhelds Web site, which is designed for the small screen and Web browser of any mobile device.
- PubMed on Tap software, an application that works on Palm Powered and Pocket PC handheld computers. It allows user-customized searching.
- Wireless System for Emergency Responders (WISER), software for Palm Powered or Pocket PC devices to assist first responders in hazardous material incidents.
- NCBI Bookshelf, with downloadable versions of books from the NCBI Bookshelf for any mobile device.

Search links added to PubMed displays

The following fields on PubMed’s Citation format will soon become “search links” to PubMed, MeSH, and other Entrez databases:

- MeSH Terms (headings, publication types, and substances)
- Grant Support
- Secondary Source ID
- Personal Name as Subject

In addition, ClinicalTrials.gov identifier numbers (under Secondary Source ID) will link directly to the trial on the ClinicalTrials.gov Web site (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/techbull/so05/so05_search_links.html). Publication Types and Personal Name as Subject search links will also be available as search links on the Abstract display.

New journal – *PLoS Clinical Trials*

A new Public Library of Science (PLOS) journal will soon appear. *PLoS Clinical Trials* (eISSN 1555-5887) is an international, peer-reviewed, open-access journal published by the PLOS. The journal began welcoming submissions on 18 October 2005 and will be formally launching in March 2006. *PLoS Clinical Trials* is run as a partnership between its in-house PLOS staff and international advisory and editorial boards, ensuring fast, fair, and professional peer review. *PLoS Clinical Trials* aims to broaden the scope of clinical trials reporting by publishing the results of randomized trials in humans from all medical and public health disciplines. Trials may investigate aspects of treatment or prevention, including drug or nondrug interventions. Nondrug studies may include (but not necessarily be restricted to) investigations of devices, surgical therapies, health service delivery, behavioral, lifestyle, psychological, or educational interventions. Publication decisions will not be affected by the direction of results, size, or perceived importance of the trial. Visit <http://clinicaltrials.plosjournals.org/information.html> for further information.

OMNI’s “Internet Resources in Healthcare and Medicine” brochure is available for download

<http://biome.ac.uk/about/publications/index.html#booklet>

A brand-new edition of the Organising Medical Networked Information (OMNI) – Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions (NMAP) booklet “Internet Resources in Healthcare and Medicine” is now ready to order. It provides examples of some of the quality Internet sites in health and medicine, to give a flavour of the millions of resources that are available. The Wellcome Library for the History and Understanding of Medicine and OVID have given generous support to the production of the booklet.

Meetings, conferences, and workshops

CHLA / ABSC Annual Conference 2006 – “Pearls of Wisdom”

For librarians who like to make conference plans in advance, the CHLA / ABSC Annual Conference in 2006 will take place in Vancouver, British Columbia, May 12–16. For details, check the conference Web site at <http://www.chla-absc.ca/2006/>.

Medical Library Association (MLA) Annual Conference 2006 – “Transformations A-Z”

The annual MLA conference will take place May 19–25 in Phoenix, Arizona. For details, check the conference Web site at <http://www.mlanet.org>.

Living the Future 6: WOW – Where Next?

If you are interested in a conference that focuses on future challenges facing libraries, check out “Living the Future 6” at The University of Arizona (Tucson), 5–8 April 2006. The conference is cosponsored by the Association of Research Libraries, Office of Leadership and Management Services, and the Association of College and Research Libraries. John Perry Barlow, self-professed “free agent and peripheral visionary”, is the closing keynote speaker. Details will soon be posted at <http://www.library.arizona.edu/conferences/ltf/2006/index.html>.

Special Libraries Association (SLA) 2006 Annual Meeting – “Where Tradition and Transformation Converge”

SLA’s Annual Conference will take place in Baltimore, Maryland, 11–14 June 2006. The keynote speakers are Gwen Ifill (*The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* and *Washington Week*) and Walt Mossberg (*The Wall Street Journal*).

Ontario Library Association (OLA) Super Conference 2006

The Super Conference will be held February 1–4 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Check the OLA Web site for program information, to register online, or to view information about subsidies or scholarships (www.accessola.com).

Professional development

MLA CE Institute: Developing Web-based Instruction

An online continuing education (CE) tutorial designed for MLA CE instructors, this Web-based tutorial is designed to take you through the process of formatting your CE content for delivery via the Web. The tutorial is intended for current CE instructors who already have an understanding of teaching and adult learning principles. The course will take place 12–17 March 2006 in Chicago, Illinois. Further details are available at <http://mlanet.org/education/institute/index.html>.

SLA's 2006 Leadership Summit – “Even Monkeys Fall from Trees: Strategies for Effective Leadership”

If you are interested in developing your leadership skills, SLA's 2006 Leadership Summit is scheduled for January 18–21 at the Hyatt Regency Houston in Houston, Texas.

If you would like an upcoming course, conference, or meeting included in an upcoming issue of JCHLA / JABSC, please send an e-mail to gillian.griffith@queensu.ca.