

DEPARTMENTS / DÉPARTEMENTS

Editor's message

I am looking forward to being the Editor of the *Journal of the Canadian Health Libraries Association (JCHLA)* for 2006. Through various communication avenues (e.g., attending conferences, reading and participating on listservs, examining blogs, etc.), I see the outcome of innovative, creative, and educational work. Furthermore, I recognize that we are very busy; however, writing a paper, case study, report, or a column detailing your research and innovative services will benefit all of us in the health librarianship field. JCHLA is a result of a collective effort and I encourage you to participate.

This issue of JCHLA contains an article about the history of the William Osler Library at McGill University. The authors, Christopher Lyons and David S. Crawford, provide details about Dr. William Osler's contributions to medicine and to the field of health librarianship. Think about including the Osler Library — a renowned "history of medicine" library — on your itinerary the next time you travel to Montreal. Eugene Barsky offered to write a series of articles examining Web 2.0 issues — a very timely subject. The first article in the series is entitled "Introducing Web 2.0: RSS trends for health librarians". Other articles in subsequent issues will

discuss blogging, podcasts, and social networking tools. Wendy Hunt, the Publicity Chair for the 2006 Canadian Health Libraries Association / Association des bibliothèques de la santé du Canada (CHLA / ABSC) conference in Vancouver, has written an enthusiastic report detailing both the educational and entertaining reasons for attending the conference. Checkout "A Word from the President / Le mot de la présidence" to see how proactive Tamsin Adams-Webber and the CHLA / ABSC Board members have been on the issue of budget cuts to Health Canada's Sciences Library Network. Susan Murray's Consumer health information column contains information about creating a top 10 list of Canadian consumer health Web sites.

Gillian Griffith, the Assistant Editor of JCHLA, and I will be working together to develop the content for each journal issue in 2006. Peruse Gillian's Current research, and News and notes columns to remain up to date with the latest research and events. Next, I would like to thank Rebecca Zakoor, past JCHLA Editor, who provided me with many "Pearls of Wisdom" regarding the role and responsibilities of a journal editor. Lastly, I look forward to communicating with you about your ideas and JCHLA contributions.

Sandra Halliday

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A word from the President

When I decided to accept the nomination for CHLA / ABSC president, little did I know that one of the new skills I would learn was the art of giving comments to the media. Just as I was preparing to leave the country for 10 days, I returned a call from a CBC radio reporter in Ottawa who wanted CHLA / ABSC's comments on Health Canada's Science Libraries Network funding cuts. We spoke, and I left. The news story played 3 days later. Upon receiving two more requests for comments, I got nervous! I took the advice of a colleague and contacted the public affairs department of my organization for some words of wisdom on handling interviews. Their comments were invaluable.

While I was away, the other Board members, led by incoming Vice-President Linda Slater, took on the task of creat-

ing the "CHLA / ABSC Response to Budget Cuts to Health Canada's Science Library Network". This response was posted on the CHLA / ABSC Web site and distributed to various people in Health Canada, in an attempt to persuade them to rethink the budget cuts. The outcome of our efforts remains to be seen.

Lessons learned from this experience? You cannot predict what you will be asked to do. Take the new challenge in stride, call on the expertise of others, and realize that your work on the Board is part of a team effort.

These are my "Pearls of Wisdom". See you at the 2006 Conference, 12–16 May, in Vancouver.

Tamsin Adams-Webber

CHLA / ABSC President, 2005–2006

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Le mot de la présidence

Lorsque j'ai décidé d'accepter ma mise en candidature à la présidence de l'ABSC / CHLA, j'étais loin de me douter que l'une des compétences nouvelles que j'allais acquérir serait celle de m'adresser aux médias. Au moment même où je me préparais à quitter le pays pour un voyage de dix jours, je retournais un appel à un reporter de la radio de CBC à Ottawa qui voulait avoir des commentaires sur la réaction de l'ABSC / CHLA relativement aux compressions budgétaires de Santé Canada à l'endroit du Réseau des bibliothèques scientifiques du Canada. Nous avons conversé quelque temps et je suis partie. L'entrevue a été diffusée trois jours plus tard. Après avoir reçu deux autres demandes de commentaires, j'ai commencé à me sentir quelque peu nerveuse! J'ai suivi le conseil d'un collègue et j'ai communiqué avec le service des Affaires publiques de mon organisme pour en obtenir quelques conseils de sagesse quant à la façon de réagir aux entrevues. Leurs commentaires m'ont été des plus utiles.

Pendant mon absence, les autres membres du Conseil d'administration, sous la direction de notre Vice-présidente,

Linda Slater, ont assumé la tâche de rédiger la réaction de l'ABSC / CHLA aux compressions budgétaires de Santé Canada imposées au réseau des bibliothèques scientifiques du Canada. Cette réaction a été publiée sur le site Internet de l'ABSC / CHLA et diffusée auprès de diverses personnes au sein de Santé Canada, tentant ainsi de les persuader de repenser les compressions budgétaires. Nous demeurons aux aguets des effets de nos efforts.

Ce que j'ai appris de cette expérience? Il est impossible de prévoir ce qu'on vous demandera de faire. Il suffit de faire face au défi résolument, de faire appel à l'expertise des autres et de prendre conscience que le travail au sein du Conseil d'administration fait partie d'un effort d'équipe.

Voilà donc mes « Perles de sagesse ». Au plaisir de vous rencontrer au Congrès 2006 à Vancouver, du 12 au 16 mai prochain.

Tamsin Adams-Webber

Présidente, ABSC / CHLA, 2005–2006

Introducing Web 2.0: RSS trends for health librarians

Eugene Barsky

In Jenny Levine's excellent blog *The Shifted Librarian* (<http://www.theshiftedlibrarian.com/>), I recently noticed an interesting debate about Web 2.0 that I had completely missed.

Knowing very little about Web 2.0 or its implications for my work as a health sciences information professional, I chose to read Tim O'Reilly's article "What Is Web 2.0: design patterns and business models for the next generation of software" (<http://www.oreillynet.com/lpt/a/6228>). O'Reilly comes up with this somewhat technical definition:

Web 2.0 is the network as platform, spanning all connected devices; Web 2.0 applications are those that make the most of the intrinsic advantages of that platform: delivering software as a continually-updated service that gets better the more people use it, consuming and remixing data from multiple sources, including individual users, while providing their own data and services in a form that allows remixing by others, creating network effects through an "architecture of participation," and going beyond the page metaphor of Web 1.0 to deliver rich user experiences.

In other words, Web 2.0 has enormous potential to bring user-generated content to the Internet. The idea is to free data from corporative control and allow anyone to assemble and locate content to meet their own needs or the needs of clients. Rather than having to conform to the paths laid out for us by content owners or their intermediaries, *we* create the content.

Is Web 2.0 something that we need to start thinking about? What does it mean for how we provide medical information services? Perhaps this is another bubble that will disappear if we just ignore it for a while. However, in thinking about this, I would like to share with you some ideas and tools that will set up the way for Web 2.0. I have written a series of short reviews of the major trends and surmised their application in health and medical information services.

Let's start with RSS feeds. In subsequent articles we'll move onto blogging and podcasting, continue with Wikis and folksonomies (tagging), and conclude with social networking tools.

RSS

RSS (RDF Site Summary, or Rich Site Summary, or Really Simple Syndication) is an easy-to-use XML format for distrib-

uting content on the Web. It has been around since the late 1990s but has received considerable attention very recently because of the expansion of blogging. In short, RSS is a simple XML syntax for describing recent additions of content to a Web site. These additions can include news items, blog updates, library acquisitions, or any other information elements. A Web site with one or more RSS feeds is said to be syndicated. Users subscribe to the feeds using an RSS aggregator or newsreader that crawls the sites on a regular basis, usually several times per hour. An aggregator displays feeds and enables users to organize them and to access related Web pages when these are available. RSS feeds can have the following applications for health librarians:

- (1) Blog updates – Today many librarians act as communicators while writing and maintaining blogs. RSS feeds mean that blog readers can be informed immediately when a blog is updated. Most blog software includes embedded RSS feed generation. For instance, you can follow an excellent Dean Giustini's UBC Google Scholar blog by subscribing to its RSS feed (<http://weblogs.elearning.ubc.ca/googlescholar/index.xml>).
- (2) Newspaper and journal articles – Increasingly, many newspapers and scientific journals provide new content via RSS feeds. My daily favourites are the following: *The New York Times* Health section feed (<http://www.nytimes.com/services/xml/rss/nyt/Health.xml>), *International Herald Tribune* Health and Science RSS (<http://www.iht.com/rss/healthscience.xml>), and CBC Health and Science News (<http://rss.cbc.ca/healthsciencenews.xml>).
- (3) Press releases and announcements – RSS can be very useful for more formal announcements. For instance, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) provides seven RSS feeds, including the agency's press releases, recent recalls, withdrawals, and institutional alerts (<http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/rss.html>).
- (4) News and database updates – Some major services, such as Google News (http://news.google.ca/intl/en_ca/news_feed_terms.html) and PubMed (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/techbull/mj05/mj05_rss.html), have recently started to provide search results in RSS format. RSS is likely to become increasingly common for users to stay current in the future, particularly with respect to keeping up with new research.

RSS readers/aggregators

There are a number of RSS aggregators available. The aggregators can be categorized as follows:

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- (1) Web-based readers – These Web sites collect RSS feeds online and can be accessed from any Internet-enabled computer. Bloglines (<http://www.bloglines.com/>) is my favorite free online RSS reader, allowing easy access to selected RSS feeds from both my home and work desktops.
- (2) Standalone clients – These software packages access selected RSS feeds and download results to your computer. SharpReader (www.sharpreader.net) is my favorite free standalone RSS reader.
- (3) Plugins – These programs are integrated into software packages installed on your desktop (e.g., Microsoft Outlook).

For an easy introduction to RSS feeds, I recommend a simple Web-based aggregator such as Bloglines. Since Bloglines is Web-based, there is no software to download, and subscribed feeds can be accessed from any Internet-connected machine.

Writing RSS

Making an RSS file is easy to do. If you understand basic HTML, you know enough to use someone else's RSS to

make your own file. Don't know HTML? You might consider starting a blog, as the majority of today's blogging tools automatically generate RSS files. Danny Sullivan's SearchEngine-Watch offers great advice for compiling a simple RSS feed (<http://searchenginewatch.com/sereport/article.php/2175271>). In addition, Syndic8's How To section also lists numerous tutorials that describe the building of RSS files (<http://www.syndic8.com/documents.php?Section=HowTo>).

Conclusion

In summary, my sense is that 2006 will be a year of increasingly *pushed* and user-created content on the Internet. RSS will not necessarily become the core of Web 2.0 services, as it does not include any transactional *pulled* component. In other words, you cannot use RSS to purchase a DVD or reserve an airline flight. However, for information professionals, particularly those in life and health sciences, and those that use the Web primarily to retrieve, provide, and update information, RSS will be increasingly more prominent. RSS is becoming an essential communication tool that allows us to provide the most up-to-date information to our clients. It is definitely a trend to watch.

Whatever happened to William Osler's library?

Christopher Lyons and David S. Crawford

Abstract: Sir William Osler bequeathed his library to McGill University in 1919, and the 8000 volumes arrived in Montreal a decade later. Then, as now, the collection consisted of both primary works (rare books) and secondary commentaries, and current works on the history of the health sciences. In the last 80 years, the collection has grown considerably, and the library now adds about 1000 books each year, mainly current publications, and receives 200 current serial titles. The Osler Library, which is one of the largest "history of medicine" libraries in the world and the largest in Canada, tries to collect current material on the history of the health sciences from all over the world and attempts to collect all medical history published in Canada. The Osler offers its resources to researchers through its Web site, publications, and Research Travel Grant program.

The librarian of today, and it will be true still more of the librarians of tomorrow, are not fiery dragons interposed between the people and the books. They are useful public servants, who manage libraries in the interest of the public... Many think still that a great reader, or a writer of books, will make an excellent librarian. This is pure fallacy [1].

William Osler

William Osler was born in Bond Head, Canada West (now Ontario) in 1849. After commencing his education in Toronto, he became a student at McGill University in Montreal and graduated in medicine in 1872. Osler's life and career have been well described in two major biographies [2,3], but, briefly, his career took him from being a professor at McGill (1874–1884) to the University of Pennsylvania (1884–1889), to Johns Hopkins University (1889–1905), and finally to Oxford as Regius Professor of Medicine (1905–1919) (Fig. 1).

When Osler died in 1919, he was probably the most famous doctor in the western world. Along with his many articles, letters, and lecture presentations, he authored and edited the best-selling textbook, *Principles and Practice of Medicine*. The textbook went through eight editions from 1892 to his death, was translated into French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, and Russian, and continued to be published in further editions after he died [4]. "Oslerian medicine" was of great interest, and "Osler Clubs" were established in many places. Some of the clubs, such as those in the United States, London, Japan, and at McGill, continue today; though now they more often discuss "history" and "Osler" rather than current medical practice. Osler was an early proponent of the need to listen to the patient and realized that disease and health are closely connected to living conditions. He was strongly influenced by Sir Thomas Browne, whose 17th century work *Religio Medici* guided Osler

throughout his career. Osler was awarded a baronetcy in 1911 and held numerous honorary degrees. He was also very human and enjoyed teasing and practical jokes. In his letters, speeches, and articles, he clearly comes across as a person whom it would have been a pleasure to meet. Osler created a mischievous alter ego, Egerton Yorrick Davis, under whose name a variety of letters and articles appeared on subjects ranging from the fanciful customs of the "Indian Tribes About Great Slave Lake" to vaginismus and Peyronie's disease. Such was the notoriety of "EYD" that some medical writers continue to use this pseudonym today [5].

Osler was also a bibliophile and a strong supporter of libraries and library associations. While at McGill he served on the Faculty Library Committee, in Philadelphia he served on the Library Committee of the College of Physicians, in Baltimore he was a member of the Library Committee of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of the State of Maryland, and at Oxford he was a Curator of the Bodleian Library. Osler was one of the founders and second president of the Association of Medical Librarians (which became the Medical Library Association) [6] and later was one of the founders and first and only president of the short-lived Association of Medical Libraries of Great Britain and Ireland [7,8]. He donated books to libraries throughout his career — sometimes with such enthusiasm that he tried to donate the same book several times. For example, he attempted to donate a second original Vesalius to the New York Academy of Medicine! Osler was also a book collector; in his lifetime, he assembled a personal collection of about 8000 items. His aim was to create a library containing a record of the history of medicine, and he attempted to include both primary works and secondary commentaries. His collection included about 140 incunabula (books published before 1501), many rare primary works such as first editions of Vesalius' *de Fabrica* and Harvey's *de Mortu Cordis*, and many commentaries and

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Fig. 1. Sir William Osler, 1849–1919.



secondary works on the history of medicine. His collection also contained books showing the relationship between medicine as art and medicine as science and contained a sizable section of books on medicine in literature.

In about 1912, Osler decided to leave his library to McGill University. When he died in 1919, the whole collection, with the exception of a few items donated to other libraries, was bequeathed to McGill's Faculty of Medicine. He made this generous gift for several reasons. In his introduction to the catalogue, the *Bibliotheca Osleriana* [9], he wrote "as a young, untried man, McGill College offered me an opportunity to think and to work; but what is more, the members of the Medical Faculty adopted me, bore with vagaries and aggressiveness, and often gave practical expressions of sympathy with schemes which were costly and of doubtful utility." He was also moved by pride in his alma mater and by "loyalty to the country of one's birth and breeding." Because of the need to prepare a suitable home at McGill and, more importantly, because of the need to complete the catalogue, it took 10 years for the collection to reach Montreal. Osler had started to compile the catalogue before his death. It was completed in Oxford (under the watchful eye of Lady Osler) by four of his friends, led (very slowly!) by his cousin's son William Willoughby Francis. This catalogue has been described as "probably the most complete well-annotated bibliography in the history of medicine. It reveals Osler's character better than any of his writings and stands as a monument to him" [10]. The *Bibliotheca* was originally published in 1929 and was reprinted, with corrections and an additional prologue, in 1969. It remains in print and is available from the library. The introductory material (including Osler's Introduction) has been reproduced on the Osler Library's Web site (<http://www.mcgill.ca/osler-library/>).

A recent article [11] gives much historical background on the "physical library" (and describes the recent renovation), but, in brief, the room prepared for the collection at McGill was designed by the famous Montreal architect Percy Nobbs. It was inserted into the Strathcona Medical Building, adjacent to the Medical Library. The central focus of the library (then comprising only one large room, now called the Osler Room) was a bronze plaque of Osler, under which the ashes of both Sir William and Lady Osler (who died in 1928) were

Fig. 2. Mezzanine of the Osler Library of the History of Medicine, McGill University.



placed. The library opened, amid a great deal of pomp and ceremony, in 1929. In his biography of Osler, Canadian historian Michael Bliss has described the Osler Room as "a shrine, architecturally a cross between a church and a mausoleum."

William Willoughby Francis, who had a medical degree from Johns Hopkins, had been appointed Osler Librarian by McGill University in 1921 and, tellingly, often referred to himself as "Osler's Librarian". Until his death in 1959, he maintained, in the rather biting words of one commentator, "the Mecca for Osler devotees, a memorial and museum designed to perpetuate the inspiration which Osler had instilled in his followers... he kept Osler in the forefront and never allowed the Library to become anything more than Osler's Library" [12]. Osler had instructed that the library should have a Board of Curators, whose existence and composition was clearly influenced by the Curators of the Bodleian Library [13]. Though the library did grow during the years of Francis' "reign", the meetings of the Curators were not easy because Francis strongly resisted any attempt to expand "Osler's Library" [14]. However, by 1963, despite this resistance, the library had doubled in size, to about 17 500 volumes.

Much has changed since Francis died. First, in 1964–1965, the library was moved into the new McIntyre Medical Sciences Building. This was not a simple move as it involved not only the library collections but also the original Nobbs-designed Osler Room. This beautiful room was dismantled and rebuilt inside a panhandle-shaped wing adjacent to the Medical Library. This wing provided some expansion space for both the collection and the staff and allowed the creation of the Wellcome Camera (Fig. 2). Shortly afterwards, all of the pre-1851 material in the adjacent Medical Library was transferred to Osler. The McGill Medical Library (later named the Health Sciences Library and now the Life Sciences Library), which was founded in August 1823, is Canada's oldest medical library, and the approximately 4000 volumes transferred added further treasures (and the sale of the inevitable duplicates brought in some additional funds). Francis had taught the "history of medicine" at McGill, and by the mid-1960s, a more formal Department of the History of Medicine was established. This department

Fig. 3. Front entrance of the Osler Library of the History of Medicine, McGill University.



was also allocated space adjacent to the two libraries. In the mid-1970s, the Osler Library and the department were allocated some adjacent space, and in April 1978, the Francis Wing opened. This provided a larger rare book area, more offices for both the library and the department, and provided some additional space for the circulating collection. However, by the late 1990s, this space had been (more than) filled and the department had expanded (and changed its name to the Department of Social Studies of Medicine to better reflect its interests in the history, anthropology, and sociology of medicine). As the close physical and intellectual links between the Osler Library and the Health Sciences Library were mutually beneficial, and since it was virtually impossible to move the Nobbs-designed Osler Room once again, the decision was made to relocate the department. Most of the space was then allocated to the Osler Library, and the whole area was renovated to provide additional shelving, better security and environmental conditions, and enhanced study areas and offices. The John P. McGovern Foundation largely underwrote the cost of this major project, and the newly expanded library reopened in November 2002 (Fig. 3).

Osler's original donation had been composed of both rare books and current secondary works, and, in fact, the *Bibliotheca* includes several items published after his death. The library now adds about 1000 recently published books each year (most of which are available for loan) and also acquires out-of-print or rare books by both donation and purchase. The library has two major collections of medical theses: about 1100 from the University of Edinburgh (1790–1821) and about 30 000 French theses from the Université de Paris (1796–1920) [15,16]. The Osler Library collection now totals about 60 000 printed volumes, excluding the theses, and the library subscribes to approximately 200 current serials in all aspects of the history of the health sciences. As the Osler Library is a component of the McGill University Library, it benefits from McGill University's licensing of e-book and journal collections such as Early English Books Online and Early Canadiana Online and, of course, can draw on printed material in related subject areas held in other McGill libraries. The Osler is unusual for a history of medicine collection as it contains both rare and circulating material, and it is now one of the largest history of medicine libraries in the world — certainly the largest in Canada. In addition to books and archives, the library has a small and static collection of

medical artifacts, including one of Osler's microscopes and one of Norman Bethune's pneumothorax machines.

Information on all of the library's printed and manuscript collections is included in the McGill Library catalogue (<http://muse.mcgill.ca/F>). As a service to students and researchers, the library has tried to make some of its reference resources available through the library's Web site. These include databases of the library's reprint and medical almanac collections; the Canadian Health Obituary Index, which lists 19th and 20th century obituaries of health professionals; and the Bibliography of Canadian Health Sciences Periodicals (compiled by David S. Crawford and based on the earlier printed bibliography by Roland and Potter). The library has quite substantial archival collections, and collection-level records for most of these 150 fonds are also available on the library's Web site; records for the rest will be added in the next few months. We hope to add links to these from the online catalogue in due course. Most of these fonds are connected to Osler, the Osler family, McGill, and Montreal medicine, but there are also the documents used by Beatrice Simon (who was a McGill librarian) when she compiled her survey of Canadian medical school libraries [17] and the working papers of M.A. (Babs) Flower as she wrote *Libraries Without Walls* [18]. The Osler is the official archive for both the Committee on Libraries of the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC) and the Canadian Health Libraries Association (CHLA) and has the working documents of the ad hoc committee whose work led to the establishment of the CHLA.

The Osler Library tries to collect printed material on the history of the health sciences from all over the world in all languages but makes special efforts to buy any material published on the history of Canadian health sciences, including institutional histories and biographies and autobiographies of health care practitioners. (In the case of Canadian material, the library tries to add even "non-academic" primary and secondary material.) Because much of this Canadian material is somewhat ephemeral, is not published by regular publishers, and is frequently only available locally, it is often a challenging task to discover and then buy this material. Because the McGill Life Sciences Library has had a long-standing policy of not withdrawing older editions of books and will add significant "middle-aged" material that is donated, the Osler and its users can rely on a vast continuum of resources. The Life Sciences Library holds primary material published from 1851 onward (but only adds material published from 1915 onward), while the Osler adds historical works published in all time periods and primary works published up to 1914. At some point it is anticipated that a further tranche of older primary material (presumably 1851–1914) will be transferred to the Osler Library, but the space to house and the staff to properly manage this material are not presently available. As the holdings of both libraries are listed in the McGill Library Catalogue, this separation of resources is not a major problem for our users. Although the environmental and security conditions in the Life Sciences Library's storage facility are not ideal, they are currently under review.

The Osler Library has a staff of four: two librarians and two library assistants. The Osler relies on the Life Sciences Library for circulation services and the McGill Library

Technical Services for acquisitions and cataloguing. The Osler staff, in addition to having responsibility for collection development, conservation, and reference, participate in McGill courses involving the library's resources. The library has also recently developed a number of student guides to the literature, which are available on the library's Web site. The Osler has an active Friends group and publishes the *Osler Library Newsletter* and a series of books on medical history, *Osler Library Studies in the History of Medicine*. Information on these and full-text of recent newsletters are available on the library Web site. To assist scholars who need to use the library's resources, we sponsor an annual Research Travel Grant to allow scholars to travel to Montreal. Sir William's original instruction was the following: "The library is for the use of students of the history of science and of medicine, without any other qualifications, and I particularly wish that it may be used by my French Canadian colleagues, who will find it rich in the best of French literature." This aim has been fulfilled, and by using the Internet, the library's resources are being made available to students and researchers throughout the world. Although the library is no longer *only* "Osler's Library" and has become "The Osler Library", it continues to fulfill the aim set out by William Osler almost a century ago — to provide Canadians, in particular, with a world-class collection describing the development of the health sciences.

A library represents the mind of its collector, his fancies and foibles, his strength and weakness, his prejudices and preferences. Particularly is this the case if to the character of a collector he adds — or tries to add — the qualities of a student who wishes to know the books and the lives of the men who wrote them. The friendships of his life, the phases of his growth, the vagaries of his mind, all are represented [19].

William Osler

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Appendix A

A note to Canadian health librarians

As explained in this article, the Osler Library is both a rare book library and a circulating library on all aspects of the history of the health sciences. Information on our holdings is fully available through the McGill library catalogue (<http://muse.mcgill.ca/F>). Our holdings are reported to AMICUS, and we participate fully in the interlibrary loan system (though rare and fragile books do not circulate and must be used on site). As we are primarily staffed to serve the needs of McGill University staff and students, we cannot accept general reference questions on the history of medicine but are happy to try to answer questions related to William Osler himself or to unique material that we hold.

If you would like a copy of the *Osler Library Newsletter* sent to your library, please contact us at osler.library@mcgill.ca. If you prefer, it is freely available at <http://www.mcgill.ca/osler-library/>.

The library maintains an active and annotated Web listing of history of medicine Web resources. If you wish to suggest additions or corrections, we would be pleased to hear from you (christopher.lyons@mcgill.ca).

The Osler is very keen to obtain material (by donation or purchase) on all aspects of the history of the health sciences in Canada and actively collects current and retrospective

material published in Canada on all aspects of health. If your institution has published a history or you know of any locally published items of medical history or biography (and they are not listed in our catalogue), please let us know (osler.library@mcgill.ca).

If you or your patrons are interested in applying for the annual Research Travel Grant, please see the library Web site. Applications for 2006 are no longer being accepted; however, the deadline for 2007 applications is 31 December 2006.

REPORT / RAPPORT

Learn while you live it up! CHLA / ABSC 2006 comes to Vancouver!

Pearls of Wisdom / Perles de sagesse
 Canadian Health Libraries Association / Association des bibliothèques de la santé du Canada
 2006 Conference / Congrès 2006
 12–16 May / mai, Vancouver
 chla.2006@ubc.ca
 www.chla-absc.ca/2006/

The annual conference of the Canadian Health Libraries Association / Association des bibliothèques de la santé du Canada (CHLA / ABSC) comes to Vancouver in May 2006. It is the 30th anniversary of CHLA / ABSC, no less, and there is wisdom to share. The Vancouver Conference Planning Committee has been working for the past year and a half to secure an attractive venue and book topnotch speakers.

We're inviting CHLA / ABSC members to join us while we learn more and live it up at the same time — a small pearl of wisdom to start! Here's what you can look forward to.

You can choose from a number of *continuing education courses* being held over 2 days: bioinformatics, clinical librarianship, evidence-based practice, health literacy, copyright, consumer health, leadership, and more.

Three excellent speakers are confirmed:

- Dr. Sherrilynne Fuller is presenting the opening keynote address. Dr. Fuller currently serves as the Director of the Health Sciences Libraries and Information Center, University of Washington. Her areas of research include developing new approaches to mapping scientific research, designing and evaluating information systems to support decision-making at the place and time of need, and designing integrated health sciences information systems.
- Dr. Richard S. Rosenberg is the closing keynote speaker. Currently professor emeritus in the Department of Computer Science, University of British Columbia, his research interests focus on the social impact of computers and on artificial intelligence, with a special interest in natural language interfaces to databases and the Web. His work on the social impact of computers includes privacy, freedom of expression, intellectual property rights, universal access, work, and education.
- Dr. Joe Tennis, assistant professor at the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, University of

British Columbia, will speak on the evolution of the classification system at the National Library of Medicine. His research interests include the theory of classification and subject analysis, and the history and philosophy of classification.

In addition, colleagues from Canada and abroad will present *papers and posters* on a variety of themes: consumer health, electronic access, expert searching, innovation, evidence-based practice and librarianship, and career development. And of course, be sure to check out the many library vendors participating in the *trade show*.

Out-of-towners can anticipate staying at the *Vancouver Marriott Pinnacle Downtown*, the conference venue and hotel. Enjoy a little bit of luxury close to all the city's amenities at affordable rates.

And no conference is complete without *social activities*. The opening reception will be held at the *Vancouver Aquarium*, while the closing banquet will be held at the Marriott, home to award-winning chefs. Entertainment at the banquet promises to be a special treat. Be amazed by *Sawagi Taiko*, a women's drumming group incorporating theatre, movement, and voice.

Re-energize yourself and reconnect with friends and colleagues from British Columbia and beyond. Make a commitment to attend the CHLA / ABSC 2006 Conference. *Bookmark our Web site* at www.chla-absc.ca/2006/ for updates. Watch for further news on CANMEDLIB, including the *conference-at-a-glance* and *online registration form*, so you can plan to gather Pearls of Wisdom come May.

Wendy Hunt

Publicity Chair

Vancouver 2006 Conference Planning Committee

CHLA / ABSC

Consumer health information

Compiled by Susan Murray

Top 10 Canadian consumer health Web sites

The Consumer Health Information Providers Interest Group, an affiliate of the Canadian Health Libraries Association / Association des bibliothèques de la santé du Canada (CHLA / ABSC), is developing a top 10 Canadian consumer health Web sites list and hopes to present it at the annual CHLA / ABSC conference in May 2006. Committee members include Jean Williams, Elsie Petch, Elizabeth Puckering, Michelle Arbuckle, Kim Meighan, and myself. The top 10 Canadian consumer health Web sites list will be of value to consumers and health intermediaries as a good starting point for quality health information with a Canadian focus. Furthermore, it could also be used to publicize quality Canadian consumer health sites in the media. Lastly, we will be asking for your recommendations on CANMEDLIB and through other channels.

Evidence-based herbal and dietary supplement information

In December 2005, more than 100 herbal and dietary supplement monographs from Natural Standard, an evidence-based, peer-reviewed collection of information on alternative treatments, were added to MedlinePlus. Each herbal or supplement receives a grade ranging from "A" (strong scientific evidence for this use) to "F" (strong scientific evidence against this use) for diseases or conditions it treats. In addition, each monograph provides information on dosing, safety, interactions, and selected references.

Roundup of current readings

Schwartz KL, Roe T, Northrup J, Meza J, Seifeldin R, Neale AV. Family medicine patients' use of the Internet for health information: a MetroNet study. *J Am Board Fam Med.* 2006;19:39-45. Available from <http://www.jabfp.org/cgi/content/abstract/19/1/39?ct>.

This study looked at a diverse sample of family medicine patients' use of the Internet for health information. It explored the extent of access to the Internet, types of health information sought, how the information was searched, and how patients assessed the accuracy of the information. It also surveyed the physicians' perceptions of their patients' use of the Internet for health information.

Griffiths KM, Christensen H. Website quality indicators for consumers. *J Med Internet Res.* 2005 Nov 15;7(5):e55. Available from <http://www.jmir.org/2005/5/e55/>.

This study aimed to determine (1) whether the instrument DISCERN is a valid indicator of evidence-based Web content quality for consumers without specific mental health training, and (2) whether Google PageRank is an indicator of Web site content quality as measured by an evidence-based gold standard.

Pew Internet & American Life Project Report (released 28 December 2005). Available from http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Women_and_Men_online.pdf.

Findings of this key report on Internet use in the US included the following statistics on accessing health information. Far more women (74%) seek health or medical information online than men (58%). The percentage of men and women who use the Web is nearly equal. Roughly 68% of men and 66% of women reported making use of the Web. When compared with Pew's 1995 study, this represents an increase of approximately 20%, as in 1995, 58% of the online audience were men.

Crumley ET. Exploring the roles of librarians and health care professionals involved with complementary and alternative medicine. *J Med Libr Assoc.* 2006 January;94(1):81-9. Available from <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?artid=1324776>.

The goals of this study were to identify resources health care professionals involved with complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) use, specifically, to explore the librarians' role as well as their approaches to teaching and searching with respect to CAM, to acquire information about CAM education, and to connect with other librarians in the CAM field.

Mays TL, editor. Consumer health issues, trends, and research: part 1: strategic strides toward a better future; part 2: applicable research in the 21st century. Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science. *Library Trends*, 2004, Vol. 51, Nos. 2-3, ISSN 0024-2594.

A review, by Andrea Kenyon, of this special issue of *Library Trends* is in the *Journal of the Medical Library Association*,

2006 January;94(1):91–2. I coauthored the following article in this special issue:

Kouame G, Harris M, Murray S. Consumer health information from both sides of the reference desk. *Libr Trends*. 2005;53(3):464–79.

Banick CR. RX for medical libraries. *Libr J*. 2005 Nov 15: 32–4. Available from <http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6282616.html>.

This article discusses the four main threats to small medical libraries: deprofessionalization, failure to do outreach, a shift in culture toward “McInformation”, and ongoing budget crunches. (There was a brief exchange regarding “McInformation” on CANMEDLIB on January 20.)

Decooman D. *Marketing library resources: an annotated bibliography*. Elsevier Library Connect, pamphlet #8, 2005. Available from http://www.elsevier.com/framework_librarians/LibraryConnect/LCP08/LCP08.pdf.

Although most of us do not have sufficient time to market our services, *not* marketing is the kiss of death for libraries. This useful bibliography covers a range of libraries (academic and public), as well as different types of services (e.g., the article by Lillard discusses customer service for distance education students).

Current research

Compiled by Gillian Griffith

Garde S, Harrison D, Hovenga E. Skill needs for nurses in their role as health informatics professionals: a survey in the context of global health informatics education. *Int J Med Inform.* 2005 Dec;74(11–12):899–907. PMID: 16081316.

In the process of developing global health informatics education, a common understanding of educational outcomes is required. Therefore, an educational framework for health informatics professionals is desirable to support student mobility, transnational and borderless education. Nurses form a significant part of the health workforce and need to be properly educated for their roles in health informatics. To ascertain their perceptions of needs and priorities, we developed a Web-based questionnaire and surveyed Australian nurses on the preferred knowledge/skills set for health informatics professionals. Among others, the questionnaire is based on the International Medical Informatics Association's (IMIA) set of recommendations on education and IMIA's scientific map. Benner's five levels of competencies were applied to measure the degree of competency required for each skill/knowledge. Together, 82 Australian nurses completed the questionnaire. The nurses' perceived degree of competency required for a total of 74 specific skills and knowledge in five skill categories is presented in this paper as well as the overall results for each of the five categories. Further, significant differences between the nurses' primary roles and primary interest in health informatics are discussed. The development of a comprehensive health informatics education framework needs to take into account nurses as well as other health professionals. Repeating the survey in other countries and for various professions is essential to develop an international educational framework.

Garfield E. The history and meaning of the journal impact factor. *JAMA.* 2006 Jan 4;295(1):90–3. PMID: 16391221.

No abstract available.

Madge B, Plutchak TS. The increasing globalization of health librarianship: a brief survey of international trends and activities. *Health Info Libr J.* 2005 Sep;22 (Suppl 1): 20–30. PMID: 16109025.

Background and purpose: Throughout his career, Leslie Morton was interested in international developments in health librarianship. In memory of the work he did in this field, the authors examine current developments in international health librarianship and describe some current themes. **Procedures:** The authors draw from their combined experience in international activities and the published information available from selected library associations and related organizations. **Findings:**

Although many of the major health library associations around the world are tackling agendas specific to their own country, issues of international concern are emerging in common. These are grouped around globalization, partnerships and cooperation, electronic access, especially open access, and working with the developing world in a number of different ways. Of course, the basis of all of these initiatives is to improve the health of the population by providing the best possible access to materials. **Conclusions:** Professional associations can provide a useful institutional infrastructure for addressing issues of international interest. Librarians should encourage their associations to develop these international initiatives and to seek out new and innovative ways to work together across international boundaries.

Maheswari U. Document delivery service at a Scottish primary care hospital library: Maria Henderson Library, Glasgow. *Health Info Libr J.* 2005 Dec;22(4):286–90. PMID: 16293171.

No abstract available.

Shen B. Ecologies, outreach, and the evolution of medical libraries. *J Med Libr Assoc.* 2005 Oct; 93(4 Suppl):S86–92. PMID: 16239963.

Question: What are some of the forces shaping the evolution of medical libraries, and where might they lead? **Data sources:** Published literature in the fields of library and information sciences, technology, health services research, and business was consulted. **Main results:** Medical libraries currently have a modest footprint in most consumers' personal health ecologies, the network of resources and activities they use to improve their health. They also occupy a relatively small space in the health care, information, and business ecologies of which they are a part. Several trends in knowledge discovery, technology, and social organizations point to ways in which the roles of medical libraries might grow and become more complex. **Conclusion:** As medical libraries evolve and reach out to previously underserved communities, an ecological approach can serve as a useful organizing framework for the forces shaping this evolution.

Steinbrook R. Searching for the right search — reaching the medical literature. *N Engl J Med.* 2006 Jan 5;354(1):4–7. PMID: 16394296. [No abstract available. NEJM extracted the first 100 words].

Web-based search engines are transforming our use of the medical literature. Although we continue to read the print issues of journals and to browse current issues online, we are

now using links from Google — the flagship search engine of the Mountain View, California, company of the same name — and other search engines, as well as citation links in other articles, to gain direct access to the articles we want. For example, by quickly searching by the title of an article, an author, or a specific topic, we can often link to a bibliographic citation, the abstract, or the ...

Turtle KM. A survey of users and non-users of a UK teaching hospital library and information service. *Health Info Libr J.* 2005 Dec;22(4):267–75. PMID: 16293169.

Background: The Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust was formed in 2002 with the merger of two existing trusts. The library services unified to create a new expanded service with 11 staff. **Objectives:** The librarians wanted to test out users' opinions of the service, as a basis for a developmental strategy. They also wanted to find out to what extent they were offering a multidisciplinary service, available to all staff. Therefore, it was decided to include both users and non-users in the survey. **Methods:** A 20-question questionnaire was sent out to a 10% sample of registered users in

all staff categories. The same questionnaire was sent out to a 10% sample of non-users, with the help of the Human Resources Department. **Results:** The library staff and facilities were generally well regarded. The stock needed expansion in various areas, especially allied health and biomedical science. Non-users were, in fact, often occasional or remote users. Other non-users needed informing that they were entitled to use the service. **Conclusions:** Further research is required, especially concerning the information needs of allied health and scientific staff. There is a need for stock expansion. A marketing strategy is required to capture the interest of potential users.

Crews K. *Copyright Law for Librarians and Educators: Creative Strategies and Practical Solutions.* 2nd ed. Chicago: American Library Association; 2005.

Copyright in the world of digital information is changing at a fevered pace, even as educators and librarians digitize, upload, download, draw on databases, and incorporate materials into Web-based instruction. It's essential to stay abreast of copyright law and fair use without information overload.

NEWS AND NOTES / NOUVELLES ET NOTES

Compiled by Gillian Griffith

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NEWS AND NOTES / NOUVELLES ET NOTES

Canadian Health Libraries Association / Association des bibliothèques de la santé du Canada (CHLA / ABSC) response to budget cuts to Health Canada's Science Library Network

View the response at <http://www.chla-absc.ca/news/20060117HealthCanadaCuts.html>.

Clinical Queries filters in OVID's CINAHL

OVID's CINAHL now has Clinical Queries filters that restrict retrieval to clinically sound studies. The filters have been based on the work of R. Brian Haynes et al., Health Information Research Unit, McMaster University. The categories are etiology, prognosis, qualitative, reviews, and treatment.

Google

Google Video has partnered with commercial publishers, including Aquarius Health Care Media, to offer a variety of health care-related videos covering sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), diabetes and blindness, and other health issues. You will be required to download Google Video Player to view the videos, and the service is fee based.

The Health Education Assets Library (HEAL) collection expands

HEAL is a digital library that provides freely accessible digital teaching resources of the highest quality to meet the needs of today's health sciences educators and learners. Recent additions include the Gallery of Hematology Images, the William F. Hoyt Neuro-Ophthalmology Collection, and the Medical Response to Weapons of Mass Destruction. Users may also try the site's federated search engine to search for the Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT) repository.

Hospital library standards

The Task Force on Hospital Library Standards plans to post a draft of the revised standards for library and information services in Canadian health care facilities on the CHLA / ABSC Web site in early 2006. Comments on the proposed revisions are invited.

2006 MeSH

What's New in MeSH (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/whatsnew.html>) discusses the most significant new additions, deletions, and other changes to MeSH for 2006. Most notably, significant changes regarding bird flu (influenza A virus) have been made to MeSH for ease of use.

National Network of Libraries for Health / Réseau national des bibliothèques pour la santé Task Force update

A stakeholders meeting was held in June 2005. One of the outcomes of this meeting was the decision to move forward with the development of a business plan for the creation of a National Network of Libraries for Health.

National Library of Medicine (NLM) Technical Bulletin: new feature

The NLM Technical Bulletin describes a new feature called Skill Kit. Skill Kit articles provide search hints, review system features, and cover data and indexing issues for NLM databases, expanding your search skills and knowledge. The latest feature, for example, is “Retrieving citations from a journal issue in PubMed” and includes step-by-step instructions with screen captures.

Open Access report

Sponsored by the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP), Highwire Press, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), with additional data from the Association of American Medical Colleges, the study’s objective is to determine the impact of Open Access on scholarly journals’ financial and nonfinancial factors, and to establish a substantial body of data about different forms of Open Access publishing and a baseline of comparison with traditional subscription publishing. The full report (*The Facts about Open Access*) may be downloaded at <http://www.alpssp.org/publications/pub11.htm>.

PubMed news

A printer-friendly format option has been added to the PubMed interface that creates a clean printout of your search results.

Meetings, conferences, and workshops

CHLA / ABSC Annual Conference 2006 – Pearls of Wisdom

The 2006 CHLA / ABSC Annual Conference will take place in Vancouver, British Columbia, 12–16 May. To view the conference-at-a-glance and to find other conference-related information, visit <http://www.chla-absc.ca/2006/>. The preliminary program and online registration are slated to appear in late February. Contact information is available at chla.2006@ubc.ca.

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>.

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

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

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*).

Virtual Reference Desk (VRD) Conference

Presentations, papers, bibliographies, handouts, and other resources from the 2005 annual VRD Conference (14–15 November) have been posted at WebJunction (<http://www.webjunction.org/do/Navigation?category=11842>).

World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) – 72nd IFLA General Conference and Council

“Libraries: Dynamic Engines for the Knowledge and Information Society” will take place 20–24 August 2006 in Seoul, Korea. The Health and Biosciences Libraries Section invites librarians, health informaticians, knowledge managers, educators, researchers, clinical staff, and others to submit proposals for papers, to be given in a 2-hour session as part of the program of the WLIC, which provide insight and experience of the role of new technologies in supporting access and delivery of health and health information. The theme is “What’s new in technology for health information?”

Professional development

CHLA / ABSC 2006 Annual Conference – continuing education opportunities

Courses that will be offered cover evidence-based practice, bioinformatics, and health statistics. Check the conference Web site (<http://www.chla-absc.ca/2006/>) for details and additional courses.

FIS Professional Learning Centre – Influencing Decision Making: Strategies for Getting Results You Want

At the end of the 2-day workshop scheduled for 2–3 March 2006, you will have developed a series of practical strategies for influencing others one-on-one, on a team basis, or when making a presentation to others.

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