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1. History

The history of the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow’s second University, begins on 13th January 1796 with the death of John Anderson, Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Glasgow. In his will, dated 7th May 1795, Anderson bequeathed his estate ‘to the public for the good of mankind and the improvement of science in an Institution to be denominated “Anderson’s University”’.

When the estate had been wound up the Trustees were left with a museum, a library of more than 1500 volumes, a collection of scientific instruments and a cash debt of £55. Nevertheless within six months of his death money was raised and Anderson’s Institution was founded on 9th June 1796.

John Anderson’s books were to form essentially a reference collection for the use of staff and students. In a clause in the codicil to his will Anderson forbids the lending of any of his books; but in the same clause he instructs the person in charge of the Library to “give sight of them to any learned or curious person who may desire to see them”.

Along a complicated path of development from this foundation until the establishment of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College in 1886, the institution maintained and encouraged links with the commercial and professional worlds outside its academic walls. The use of library facilities was evidently one of these links, for it was agreed in 1822 that the Mechanic’s Library, a small library formed in the first decade of the century to support the work of specific evening classes run in the institution, could be used by former students on payment of an annual subscription of two shillings and sixpence.

The growth of the institution continued, although not without interruption, and it became recognised as the most important in British technical education. The Library, too, expanded and established a pre-eminence in technical and scientific literature; its services included reader instruction and “an outreach to the industrial and professional users in the community”. The 1922–23 Annual Report of the Royal Technical College, as the institution was now constituted, noted that “a gratifying feature has been the great use to which the Library has been put by former students holding responsible positions with industrial firms”. Ten years later the Annual Report tells how “advantage was
being taken by representatives of numerous industries in and around Glasgow of the many facilities the Library affords”.

By this time co-operation had been arranged between the local libraries and professional bodies, such as the Mining Institute of Scotland, but it seems that the industrial and professional use of the College Library, to which I have been referring, was carried out by individuals who had some previous connection with the institution. It was C. G. Wood, Librarian from 1953–1982, who started the first corporate memberships of the Library. He established contact with a small number of organisations, no more than a dozen, and made the Library facilities available to them in return for an annual payment, the amount of which was set by himself, according to the size of the particular organisation and its likely demand on the Library’s services.

The nineteen-sixties were years of unprecedented growth in British tertiary education and in 1964 the College was raised to university status and became the University of Strathclyde. After that and during the latter part of Mr. Wood’s period as Librarian two developments are especially worthy of mention in relation to the theme of this conference.

Firstly, in February 1969, the Centre for Industrial Innovation was opened; it was one of eight University-based industrial units, supported by the Ministry of Technology, which offered expertise from the whole University to small and medium sized firms not having their own research and development resources. In the words of the Principal ‘There is nothing novel in collaboration between Strathclyde and industrial and commercial companies, and it has reached a high level in various forms, but the clear recognition of the contribution that such an institution can make to the economy of the country by offering the skills of a large and able staff in an organised and efficient manner is novel in this country’. By 1974 the Centre had ‘handled 200 projects’ and had a list of regular customers that varied in size from large firms to very small local traders and manufacturers. The Centre’s work led to many new contacts between academic staff and industry, and also provided a steady flow of supplementary income.

The second development was the establishment of the Business Information Centre which began full operation at the start of the 1976-77 session. The Centre supports the postgraduate teaching and research of the Strathclyde Business School, which offers a Masters degree and diploma courses, and a large variety of short courses for in-service training and for unemployed business managers and executives.

In most European countries during the early nineteen-eighties financial policies have caused universities to scrutinize their activity. The University of Strathclyde has been re-aligning its objectives to follow the change in the nation’s industrial base and the growth of information technology. A desire to modernize has emerged from within and academic effort is now being adjusted, not without some upheaval and discomfort, to concentrate on subject areas which have established strengths and which match the need for graduates both nationally and internationally. New initiatives sown in the lean
lean years and before have germinated and the Principal in the 1985–86 Annual Report writes of Strathclyde emerging ‘as one of a minority of universities on the financial up-escalator’. Many of the initiatives involve substantial co-operative development in partnership with outside bodies.

2. **The University Library**

The University Library consists of the Andersonian Library (named after John Anderson) which is the main part of the system and three satellite libraries: the Business Information Centre, which I have already introduced, the Law Library and the Fleck Library which support teaching and research in legal and chemical disciplines respectively.

The total stock of the University Library system is about three hundred and eighty-five thousand volumes (280,000 books and 105,000 serials). Four thousand two hundred serial titles are received currently. The collections of the Andersonian Library are especially strong in scientific, engineering and technological fields and include standard holdings of bibliographies, abstracts and indexes, British Parliamentary and non-Parliamentary Papers, British Standards and Codes of Practice and Defence Standards. The Library has access to Prestel (a United Kingdom public information service) and subscribes to more than fifteen host services for access to on-line databanks and databases. The operations of the Library are organised through a structure of four divisions. One of these, the Reference and Information Division, staffs two enquiry points giving a personalised enquiry service to the users; the annual number of requests to the enquiry points exceeds thirteen thousand. The staff of this Division also offer reader instruction in the use of the Library and attend to the requests for on-line information searches.

The Business Information Centre, which is principally a small reference library staffed by one professional librarian and one library assistant, holds statistical sources, including *Business Monitor*, company, professional and trade directories, United Kingdom and overseas company reports, Extel Company Information Service material, and maintains its own information files on selected industries, selected markets and selected foreign economies. The Centre has access to Ceefax and Oracle (information services similar to Prestel) and the same on-line information services as the Andersonian Library.

3. **Development of the Library’s Service to Outside Bodies**

Obviously it was important for the University Library to respond to these changes; the more so since the professional staff resource had sustained a 20% reduction and a definite demonstration of the Library’s ability to contribute to the co-operative ventures between the University and industry and commerce would yield benefits.

At the beginning of the decade there had been an increase in the use by outside bodies of the Library’s facilities and in 1983, therefore, Albert Harrison,
the present Librarian formed a working group to reconsider the services and facilities being offered to business, commercial, industrial and other corporate organisations having formal membership of the University Library.

One of the documents placed before the group was the Abstract and Summary of Findings (June 1983) of the report of a five month study undertaken by the Technical Change Centre in London into the effects of the current recession on the supply of technical and commercial information services in British Industry. Strathclyde University Library was one of the 305 external information providers surveyed and the views of its working group were in close accord with the findings of the report. The following points were highlighted:

- an increased demand for information, broader and more detailed than that previously needed, to be sought from outside the companies,
- the greater user sophistication brought about by the growth of on-line systems,
- demands upon companies to economise and rationalise services to the extent that industrial information units should be required to provide more information for marketing, planning, legal and administrative matters, and for public relations,
- the present low level of use of academic information facilities and the anticipation that university and polytechnic libraries would not be able to cope with any increased demand because of shortage of staff,
- many academic librarians expect industry and commerce to make greater use of their facilities in future because of closer academic-industry links, the development of science parks and cuts in both academic and industrial budgets,
- for many academic libraries there is a potential for publicising their facilities and possibly for earning revenue by offering tailored services to meet the needs of industry and commerce. The revenue from charges is expected to be at least on a cost recovery basis.

With these findings in mind the working group summarised its views as follows:

(i) Corporate membership of the Library should be expanded without any detriment to the services offered to the academic community. There was a large potential local market for information in all spheres of industrial and commercial activity.

(ii) Once corporate members were enrolled the present staff resources could only support a reactive service. However if additional resources were to become available the service should be converted to a proactive one.

(iii) There should be a charge for corporate membership which should reflect the quantity of use made of the services offered and not conflict with the charge for graduate membership which was open to many of the individuals in corporate organisations. Many graduate members in outside employment use the Library to help their work.
(iv) The administrative procedures for membership should be simple and the corporate members' responsibility for membership clearly defined. After several meetings the group agreed upon an operational policy for what was to be called Commercial and Industrial Membership:

4. Commercial and Industrial Membership

4.1 Responsibility for Membership

Once an organisation has decided to join the Library a specific person within the organisation or group must assume responsibility for the Membership. This responsibility includes authorising and arranging payment of the subscription and any additional charges, nominating the individuals of the organisation who will hold Library cards and arranging that any default against the Library Regulations by the nominated individuals is made good.

By the way of explanation firstly, a valid library card is necessary to gain admittance to the Library building and to use the lending services, and, secondly, the usual defaults against the Library regulations are overdue items and loss or damage to items. For such defaults charges are normally made.

4.2 Subscription

The annual subscription for Membership is based on the number of individuals nominated to hold Library cards. The present rate is £30.00 per individual. The subscription for each card will run for a year from the date of payment.

4.3 Use of Library cards

From past experience the working group forecast that both the position of the person within the organisation who held responsibility for Membership, and the use of the Library cards issued to nominated persons would vary widely. This has turned out to be the case. It was assumed that in many instances a library card would be used by staff other than the nominated person; this gives rise to a whole variety of awkward situations. It is therefore stated in the description of the Membership scheme that other individuals may substitute for the nominated card holders at the discretion of the organisation.

4.4 Facilities offered

Payment of the annual subscription of £30.00 per library card allows the nominated persons or their proxies to use the full library facilities including the Quick Reference service, but excluding the Information service and the Inter-Library Loan service.

Quick Reference enquiries are those that are answered in less than half-an-hour. An enquiry that takes more than half-an-hour to satisfy is considered to have involved the Information service and incurs a charge of £15.00 per hour
when only the Library's stock is utilized. If access to on-line databases is involved the customer is charged for the telecommunication and database costs as recorded plus £15.00 per hour.

Inter-library loans are charged at the rate of £10.00 per item.

Photographic and self-service photocopying services are available to all library users at standard rates.

Since the inception of the scheme no new costing exercises have been undertaken and the charges have not been increased. A review is overdue and will take place before the start of next session.

From the experience gained so far these arrangements have worked smoothly and proved adaptable. Their administration is straightforward and efficient and is the responsibility of a Chief Library Assistant.

5. Present Membership and the use of library facilities

As the Librarian's working group predicted, the range and variety of corporate organisations taking out membership is wide. At the time of writing there are thirty-three members.

Fifteen members are principally involved in manufacturing. Eight of these employ more than five hundred people, two employ between fifty and five hundred people, and five employ less than fifty people.

Twelve members offer professional services. Five are firms of chartered accountants and management consultants, five are partnerships of consulting engineers, one is a firm of solicitors and one is an advertising agency.

The remaining six members form the 'others' group. One is the local office of a government ministry, two are departments of local authorities. (A department of economic planning and development and a department of industrial development). One is a national Scottish newspaper, one is the local area office of the national electricity provider and one is the government funded, Scottish Development Agency.

These members joined the scheme after being made aware of the Library's facilities either through personal contact with the Librarian and his senior professional staff, or through an employee who, as a student, was an active library user, or through contact with the Strathclyde Business School and its Business Information Centre.

Librarians or information specialists are employed by twelve members, one of which, a large oil company, employs four librarians, and a second, the development agency, employs one and a half librarians with clerical assistance. These twelve members are, as one would expect, the larger type of organisation.

Of the five manufacturing companies who employ less than fifty people four are tenants of the West of Scotland Science Park, a joint venture of the University of Glasgow, the University of Strathclyde and the Scottish Development Agency. As such, under the terms of Strathclyde's commitment to the Park, these members are allowed to hold the first two library cards free of charge.
No systematic survey of the members use of the library has so far been undertaken. My comments are taken from observations of members of library staff, collated with points from discussion with members' representatives. Here I should like to stress two points. The service offered at present is largely reactive, thus a quantity of use, I feel not insignificant, passes unnoticed by staff, and there is also an appreciable use of the Library's facilities for commercial and industrial purposes. Firstly, by individuals who have joined the Library by virtue of being graduates and, secondly, by individual members of academic staff who are involved in consultancy.

As is to be expected the most regular and consistent use of the main Library is made by companies or organisations who employ librarians or information officers, for they act as information seekers and gatherers for the staff of their parent organisations. They come to borrow books and serials, to make photocopies, to consult statistical sources and official publications and so on. Most frequently observed using the lending services are three firms working in engineering, one manufacturing and two consulting.

Use of the main Library by individuals from the smaller organisations without a librarian or information officer cannot be summarised further than to state that the most intense library activity takes place during periods of research and development and product launch and marketing.

None of the thirty-three members uses the Inter-Library Loan service although those with librarians are known to make use, as necessary, of the British Library Document Supply Centre (formerly the British Lending Library) at Boston Spa.

So far only one of the members, the large engineering company mentioned above, makes use of the on-line searching facility available in the Andersonian Library. Several of the members have in-house access to a selection of databases somewhere in the organisation. The staff of the Library's Reference and Information Division, through regular training and use of the many commercial services available, have acquired very substantial expertise in database searching and it is felt that in time more members will recognise that to use the Library's service for literature searching and information gathering is more efficient and, therefore, more cost-effective than using their in-house operations.

The two staff of the Business Information Centre deal with four thousand four hundred enquiries per year, and although no detailed statistic is kept it is known that a significant number of these come from external sources, i.e. other than from the current staff and students of the Strathclyde Business School. The majority of enquiries come from members of the Commercial and Industrial Membership scheme and in the main from the management consultants and chartered accountants, who may be acting for clients or on their own behalf, and from those departments of businesses concerned with financial development. The information is needed, for example, for new product planning, development and market penetration, to help in the choice of possible suppliers of a product or service, and to make an assessment of com-
panies for possible merger or take-overs. The enquiries range over the whole spectrum of industrial and commercial activity and are answered using a mixture of hard copy sources, on-line databanks and sometimes through personal contacts e.g. the Business Information Centre staff and the Librarian of the Scottish Development Agency frequently assist each other.

6. Conclusion

The Library will remain the prime information resource of the University and its development will reflect the growth of the whole institution. To the partnership between the university and industry and commerce, which is so important at Strathclyde, the Library has a very useful contribution to make through its Commercial and Industrial Membership scheme.

The scheme will be expanded by increasing the number of members and by encouraging and assisting members to make fuller use of the facilities available. By costing the services and charging the members realistically for their use, care will be taken to ensure that the provision of library facilities for the students and staff of the University will not be diminished. I agree with James Dodd of the Georgia Institute of Technology who is reported as saying in 1982 that librarians “are doing themselves a professional disservice by providing information free to off-campus users” and with the view that “the bottom-line in fee-based services is not money, as in profit, but a concern that excellence in providing resources to a library’s academic community be maintained”.