February 1997

Annual Report for 1996 from UK Libraryland

Liz Chapman
Oxford University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>

Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Chapman, Liz (1997) "Annual Report for 1996 from UK Libraryland," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 9: Iss. 1, Article 12.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.1985>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

Annual Report for 1996 from UK Libraryland

by **Liz Chapman** (Acting Social Studies Librarian, Oxford University) <elizabeth.chapman@econlib.ox.ac.uk>

British spelling has been retained. — KS

The first books went on the shelves at the long-awaited new **British Library** building in London. Apparently everything will be moved in by 1999. The Library staff have gone through another high-level reorganization.

John Major said he would like to be a librarian when he retires. There will be a General Election in 1997.

The **Library Association** bid to the UK Millennium Commission for funding to connect every UK public library to the Internet has to be re-submitted having failed but not entirely. **Sir Charles Chadwyck Healey** chairs the newly formed company working on the bid.

The **National Acquisitions Group** held its 10th birthday conference and two librarians dressed up in a pantomime horse costume to celebrate. NAG continued to help its members in the provision of standards for book servicing and for tendering for supply. Many libraries were effectively forced to go for tenders for book and journal supply on price alone. Service did not seem part of the contract picture.

1996 was our first year without the **Net Book Agreement** (this is not the same as net books in the USA). Libraries went out hunting for more than the NBA approved 10 per cent discount. Library suppliers shed staff and cut margins.

Jackanory the 30-year-old storytelling book programme on TV was cut.

LIBRAIRIE - BOOKSELLER

**Bookseller & subscription agent
for material from France and
French speaking countries.**

For information on our services contact
Edna Laughrey, 291 Tower Dr. Saline, MI 48176
Phone 313-429-1029 Fax 313-429-1711
E-mail elaughrey@aol.com

62, Avenue de Suffren 75015 Paris, France
Phone (33-1) 45.67.18.38
Fax (33-1) 45.66.50.70
E-mail aal@auxam.fr

For academic libraries the **Electronic Libraries Programme** — elib — worked on 60 different projects, components of future electronic library services. These projects form part of a larger, centrally-funded strategy, which now covers the Arts and Humanities data centres and the national periodicals site licensing initiative which began a 3 year pilot in 1996.

This scheme involving 3 publishers; **Academic Press**, **Blackwell** and **Institute of Physics** allows on payment of a license fee, discount on print copies, access to electronic versions and less restrictions on copying (more details of the project can be found in *Advances in Librarianship*, vol. 20, 1996).

The **Bookseller's Diagram Prize** for the oddest title published in 1996 was won by: *Greek rural postmen and their cancellation numbers*.

Virginia Bottomley, Secretary of State at the Department of National Heritage, and, therefore, responsible for public libraries, launched a national Reading Challenge for children at the Conservative Party Conference. She also hinted that libraries would be able to get money from the National Lottery and just before Christmas this came to pass (in a limited and very hurried way).

Good Housekeeping magazine bemoaned the fact that current designs of spectacles made their wearers look like librarians.

Local Government was reorganized with the result that large county library services are splitting into small units which may not be able to support current specialist services. Wales and Scotland have already gone through the mill, England is faced with a colourful but ill-matched quilt for the future. By 1998 there will be 51 unitary authorities replacing the current 20.

Oxfordshire County closed its schools library service. The government had asked counties to devolve budgets to individual schools and then they could buy in the services they wanted. Not surprisingly the schools had other priorities for their money and Oxfordshire may be the first but not the last to close. What price school libraries now?

HMSO, Her Majesty's Stationery Office was sold into private hands and became the Stationery Office Ltd. Staff redundancies are likely and Crown Copyright may be under threat. Libraries do not expect government publications to become cheaper.

A **motorway policeman** followed a preoccupied driver for 20 miles, and finally stopped him for reading a book while driving. History does not relate the title. 📖