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Adventures in Librarianship: If Rumors Were Mules

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Profile Encouraged

Digby Sales

Collection Development Manager
Chancellor Oppenheimer Library
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch, South Africa

Born: Born in Cape Town in 1949.

Current residence: Rondebosch, Cape Town.

Education: BA in History from UCT, 1971.

Secondary Teacher's Diploma from UCT, 1972.

Higher Diploma in Library Science from University of South Africa, 1976.

Master of Arts (Librarianship) (by thesis) from UCT, 1981.

Summary of job experiences: I came to working in libraries via teaching and a brief spell in business. Here is a run-down on my career:

1977: Librarian at Johannesburg Public Library

1977-79: Librarian for South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg

1981-88: Cataloguer and then Head of Acquisitions dealing with purchases, gifts and legal deposit of books and serials, at South African Library, Cape Town (now National Library of South Africa (Cape Town))

1988-2000: Head of Book Acquisitions at University of Cape Town Libraries

2000-present: Collection Development Manager at UCT

Family: I have two boys: Donald, 16, and Andre, 14.

Biggest recent surprise: Despite not having done much exercise for many years, I am not as unfit as I thought. After having recently joined the mountain club, I found I could hike for many hours.

Last book read and literary tastes: *Disgrace* by J.M. Coetzee. I read mostly literature from Africa, and the classics.

What I do in my spare time: Hiking in the mountains among the *fynbos*, reading, and watching films. (I am a classifier for the government Film and Publications Board).

What I'd like to be doing seven years from now: I would be on top of my present job that has the potential to be very stimulating. To be able to do the job effectively, the local currency must not have declined to less than R12 to the dollar (presently R8: 1), so the Libraries could still purchase some library material.

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which acquires much of its material by having individuals physically pick up material within Africa.

Collection Development

Collection Development is part of every subject librarian's job description and is co-ordinated by a Collection Development Manager, who approves all orders. Subject areas, rather than departments, are the focus of collection development.

The Library controls the budget, but information on notional amounts is provided to the academic departments. Purchases are based on needs. Requests are encouraged from the academics, but staff, students or librarians can initiate orders. The approval of new journal titles is more difficult because of the problem of an ongoing commitment. The Libraries are faced with annual inflation rates of between 25 and 40 per cent due to the weakness of the South African currency and publishers' price increases.

Budgetary control for the purchase of library materials was removed from the academics in 1998. Journals no longer are circulated, including those which were once housed within small and unofficial departmental collections. These changes have brought dissatisfaction from some academics, particularly those from the Science Faculty,

who have previously worked with highly decentralized resources.

The Future

The major changes in the Libraries – as well as the major physical renovations and building – are part of the overall plan to enhance UCT's ability to be a world-class African university in the 21st century. Past practices have had to change, so that staff and students can have as wide access to material as possible, within the limited materials budget of about \$2.4 million for 2001.

UCT is a very stimulating place to work as the institution tries to deal with transformation and equity issues within a framework of a changing student and staff profile. All of the problems of academic libraries are here. In addition, however, UCT faces a set of problems which are very different: significant devaluation of the currency; providing a first-rate education for a mix of students from different levels of information and language literacy; inability of the public library system to meet the broader information needs of business and the community; and an economic environment in which unemployment runs at 37.3%.

South Africa has made a radical transformation in the 1990s, and UCT and its Libraries are taking the lead in the academic sector in ensuring that first rate education is available to a broad range of the population, as these graduates will be the future leaders of the country.

Adventures in Librarianship: If Rumors Were Mules

by **Ned Kraft** (Order Librarian, Ralph J. Bunche Library, U.S. Department of State) <kraftno@state.gov>

The following text was submitted anonymously. It appears to be a clumsy satire of a column written by our own beloved Katina Strauch. If any of us should happen upon the witless writer of this drivel haunting the dark corners of some convention or other, I would suggest that we simply ignore him. -NK

Wow! Stocks may be falling and our 401K retirement dates may be creeping ever-so-far into the future but my library and publishing-world friends keep moving up and up!

The incredible, tallish, and very-nearly-likable **Gary Plush** of **Niche Enterprise Publishing** just informed

me that **Niche** has quite handily averted bankruptcy by selling itself to **MallMart Inc.**, the retail mega-chain from Milwaukee.

Good job, **Gary**! And just in the "niche" of time! **Gary** says that **MallMart** has given him carte blanche to reorganize **Niche** into a profitable publisher, and won't sell off the assets for at least three months!

Our old friend, the oh-so-wonderful **Kitty Hamper** from **Darkmound Uni-**

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Publisher Profile — PaperPath, Inc.

Edited by **John Long** (Consultant) <john-long@worldnet.att.net>

PaperPath, Inc. *streamlining the flow of information*
1244 Boylston Street, Suite 103
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467-2115

Email: jfisher@paperpath.com

Web: <http://www.paperpath.com>

Number of employees: 16

President: Julian H. Fisher, MD

Officers of the company: Julian H. Fisher, MD

Background: **Dr. Julian H. Fisher**, President and Founder, has worked for two decades in information systems development. A neurologist on the **Harvard Medical School** faculty since 1979 and Senior Associate in Neurology at **Harvard's Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center** in Boston since 1981, he developed the first CD-ROM medical textbook in 1987, for **Little, Brown & Co.**

Electronic Products: Advanced Web-based software to facilitate online review worldwide, including complete document tracking and management, online peer review and editorial decision-making and comprehensive workflow oversight and control. **PaperPath 2000 Editorial Suite** enables all participants in the editorial process, authors, reviewers, editors, editorial assistants and publishing staff, wherever they are located, to work locally or globally over the Internet on a shared database. The product utilizes two Web-based approaches technologically, with a simple browser interface for occasional users (authors, reviewers and advisory editors) and a unique marriage of Web and Windows technology (the new **Microsoft .NET** strategy) for power users (editorial staff and editors).

Key Developments: **PaperPath** has concluded an agreement with **British Broadcasting Corporation Technology, Ltd. (BBCT)** as a global application service provider (ASP) for **PaperPath 2000 Editorial Suite**. This service agreement offers end-to-end editorial management solutions for journals, societies, and small to mid-sized publishers who want to work over the Internet without maintaining Internet technology in-house.

Editor's Note: I think that all **ATG** readers are aware of how special our scholarly community is, and how we can sometimes get the opportunity to associate with awesome people who make our community unique. So it was a delight for me to actually meet **Dr. Fisher** on another occasion; and most important, to learn the salient features of his impressive company.

In closing, I wanted to ask **Dr. Fisher** to elucidate how the transition occurred from his work in neurology; to author of the first CD-ROM medical textbook for **Little, Brown & Co.**; to founding of **PaperPath, Inc.**

Here is Dr. Fisher's inspiring reply: As a physician, I was concerned about quality of care and errors in clinical care. When I lost both parents through medical malpractice, related to incorrect use of medical information, I decided to involve myself in new approaches to medical information for physicians and for patients. This led to my developing an online medical records system designed for group practices in the early 1980's (**PULSE**), the first CD-ROM textbook in medicine (1987) and the most widely distributed patient information kiosk system (**HealthTouch**) in the late 1980's and early 1990's in the nation, located in high-volume chain and small community pharmacies. A logical extension was to develop better ways for scholarly information to be evaluated and exchanged, with **PaperPath's** early versions appearing in 1996. As the desire for greater collaboration among researchers (authors, reviewers and editors) grew, we moved to take advantage of innovative technology, creating working communities of scholars — working together over the Web more cleverly and efficiently than they had been able to previously. Whether the area of interest is molecular biochemistry, archaeology or political science, the need to exchange information rapidly has grown from a wish to a requirement. That has been our interest in enhancing and further developing **PaperPath** — to speed the flow of information.

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named it after our very own **Charleston Conference!** That is so sweet!

Which reminds me of **Charleston 1997** when **Joe Farb**, then East-Coast Sales Manager for **Dixie Books**, after a few juleps threatened to name the two carp in his new garden pond **Errata** and **Ephemera**. Anyone know what became of **Joe**? Hello, **Joe**? You out there? Are those fish still alive?

Have you seen the new **ARL SPEC Kit #1234: Choosing Colors for Your Library?** It's not as simple as you think! You'll find a list of best practices, an outline of the theory of Color Management, a survey of colors used in all the best reading rooms past and present, a color wheel with everything from "asbestos white" to "spineless red," and an excellent bibliography. Don't start painting without it!

Speaking of legal news, the **Copyright & Libraries** newsletter just announced that it is suing **Danville Public Library** for

photocopying its January issue to distribute at a staff meeting. **Danville** claims fair-use, while **C&L** insists that it is definitely NOT aiming for a quick buck to keep its creditors at bay, and that the whole situation is definitely NOT ironic. "We have experts on staff," says the editor, "who know how to do this sort of thing. It's a test case." Hmmmm...

And don't forget to read **Ned Kraft's** "Adventures in Librarianship" column somewhere toward the back of this issue. That guy is a hoot!