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EDITORIAL

Following the appearance of the last edition of the Zimbabwe Librarian, our Journal has soared to new heights as a provider of current information. The decision was taken to print current information irrespective of the cover date, while combining successive issues in order to bring the Journal gradually up to date. This should be achieved by the end of the current year, and readers are therefore requested to be patient over any apparent date anomalies which they may observe.

Meanwhile, at the risk of creating yet another chronoclasm, this issue contains a brief report of the most important event to affect the local library world in the last decade—the record of the most important event to affect the local library world in the last decade—the visit of Mr. W. Alison, City Librarian from Glasgow, who toured the country in February 1981 at the invitation of the British Council. Mr. Alison's report and recommendations for Zimbabwe's future library services will be awaited with interest, and could affect the lives of every librarian and library user in the country. It is, perhaps, a pity that the very considerable amount of work which went into the 1970 Greenfield Report on libraries is finally to be set aside without further consideration, but Mr. Alison's report introduces a new element of realism into the discussion of the problems of Zimbabwe's library services. It will be noted with interest that the report ends by calling for more investment in the development of the local library service.

ROBIN W. DOUST, A.L.A.
The National Archives has reproduced ten colour prints of paintings of historical interest from its rich collection of pictorial documents relating to the Zimbabwean past:

**THOMAS BAINES (1820-75)**
1. Victoria Falls from the West
2. Victoria Falls from the East
3. Devil's Cataract, Victoria Falls
4. Zanjuela, Boatman of the Rapids
5. Hartley Finds Gold

**EDMUND CALDWELL (1851-1930)**
7, 8, 9 Visit of Lord Selborne, 1906 (records a hunting trip in Mashonaland).

**CHARLES CROOIMENBERGS (1843-99)**
10. The Inxwala or First Fruits Ceremony (depicts Lobengula).

Each print (overall size 365 x 500 mm) is captioned with title and artist's name; descriptive labels are provided. The cost including packing, postage and registration is $3 (£2.50, US$5, R4.50) per print; set of ten prints $30 (£22.50, US$45, R40).

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*Zimbabwe — Blueprint for the Future*

For the last decade, plans for library development in this country have been based on the recommendations of the 1970 Greenfields Commission Report. Unfortunately, although the Greenfields Commission stated quite clearly that even in 1970 library facilities were woefully deficient, the Rhodesian government of the day was not sufficiently convinced of the need for improved facilities to initiate any major steps to start a national public library service other than the already existing postal loan service of the National Free Library. The one exception to this lamentable record came in 1977, when an extension was built at the National Free Library and a part of the National Education Department's Education Services Office was established to provide educational materials for teachers in the schools.

It was, therefore, exciting news when it was learned that the new government had invited the British Council to send a prominent British librarian, Mr. W. Alison, to visit Zimbabwe to inspect existing libraries and to make recommendations for future developments. Mr. Alison is City Librarian of the Scottish city of Glasgow, and is a past president of the British Library Association. He spent three weeks visiting libraries in various parts of the country (and also places which need libraries, but have never had one). He held discussions with senior government personnel and top librarians, and it is understood that he is now writing a major report for presentation to the British Council which could become the blueprint for a major expansion in library services covering the whole country for the first time.

Most of the details of this new report remain confidential, but Mr. Alison did give some ideas as to his line of thought in talks with local librarians. It is understood that the proposed national library services would be divided into three main divisions — government libraries, school libraries, and public libraries. Each division would have its own director, but there would also be an overall Director of Library Services, and a number of regional directors would be appointed. The aim, as Mr. Alison put it, is to bring libraries within the reach of every citizen, and to train enough librarians to run them. The report also calls for the establishment of a national library authority, and for the creation of a national library service with a central administration.

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**FIRST FRUITS CEREMONY (deprints Lobengula)**

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**THOMAS BAINES (1820-75)**
1. Victoria Falls from the West
2. Victoria Falls from the East
3. Devil's Cataract, Victoria Falls
4. Zanjuela, Boatman of the Rapids
5. Hartley Finds Gold

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**FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES**

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**THE ALISON REPORT — BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE**

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The only major point of controversy which emerged in the course of the discussions was the siting of the headquarters of the public library division of the new service. It was pointed out that the National Free Library had always been intended to fulfil such a function, and that its existing bookstock could be used to initiate a national service almost at once, whereas an alternative proposal that a new library be constructed in Salisbury to fulfil the same purpose would take 2-3 years, and would cost nearly $500,000. There was a suggestion that aid funds might be available for a new library in Salisbury, but other members of the profession felt that if $500,000 in aid were available for library development, the money would be more usefully spent in buying books for the rural areas, which could be served equally well by the existing National Free Library. A further point concerned the fact that since the overall Director of Library Services would unquestionably be in Salisbury, and that the school and government library divisions would be there too, it was reasonable to suggest that the public library division should be housed in Bulawayo where facilities already exist. At a time when the government is vociferous in its claims that all parts of the country are being treated equally, the question of the final choice of site for the new public library service will be watched with interest, particularly since the selection of the National Free Library for the purpose would save approximately $500,000 and would enable the service to begin more quickly.

The Zambia Library Service was established with the aid of a grant from the Ford Foundation of America as a Department of the Ministry of Education soon after independence. The object was to provide a library service to the scattered rural population of the country, thus filling the gaps left by other libraries — municipal and academic — which grew up in the rural areas. The people of Central and Copperbelt Provinces, whose cities were already served by municipal libraries and British Council libraries, were to be served from Lusaka. Subsequently branch libraries would be built in the larger towns which grew up in the rural areas.

By Roger Stringer, B.A., A.L.A.

The Zambia Library Service

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this system was made apparent when it was discovered that an unscrupulous Post Office worker had been intercepting parcels of books in order to develop his own personal library! The lack of personal contact between the Provincial Librarian and the centre librarian also led to a frequent misunderstanding of the purpose of a library. It was not unusual to find on a visit to a centre, that all the books were in perfect condition — simply because they had been securely locked in a cupboard for two years!

The second major problem at Kasama had been caused by an acting librarian who had been left in charge for a few years. Being so far out of contact with the rest of the ZLS, it was some time before it was discovered that he had been operating his own kind of library service. If the price was right books were sold off to eager readers. Visits to the centres were an excuse to visit relatives and friends, and books would be left without any instruction to the centre librarian or indeed without any records being kept. Two years of this led to an incredible build up of confusion which neither my predecessor nor myself were able to get anywhere near sorting out.

Thirdly, there was no provision for the practical training of newly qualified staff at Kasama. Some graduates did work initially in the ZLS HQ in Lusaka but few were sent to the Provincial Libraries. It was not difficult to visualize a continuing succession of V.S.O. librarians being employed for the foreseeable future. It was essential to build some form of in-service training in this respect and similarly for suitably qualified school-leavers who could obtain some practical experience of library work before embarking on a professional course.

The desperate need for a national free public library service in Zimbabwe raises the possibility of adopting a system similar to that used in Zambia. I hope I have not painted too black a picture of my experience in Zambia as I do believe that in general the ZLS is a workable national public library service. There is however a need to avoid the problems which I met in Zambia in order that the most efficient service can be provided for the people of Zimbabwe.

In many ways I feel that we are at an advantage in this country in that the development that has taken place is geographically less restricted than was the case in Zambia. Communication and distribution are more highly developed in Zimbabwe and the infrastructure of the economy is much stronger. I would hope that a similar public library service would have a greater chance of success in this country if certain improvements are made to the ZLS system, which I see as follows:

1. Authority
   - Many problems in the ZLS could not be resolved because the position of the Chief Librarian was not sufficiently high in the Civil Service. It is essential that the views of the Chief Librarian be expressed at the highest level in order that a fair assessment of the needs of the library service can be made.
   - The importance of the role of the library service must not be lost by the Department becoming an insignificant part of a large Ministry.

2. Development
   - While the rapid establishment of libraries in the rural areas is necessarily slow because of the financial allocations required, I feel that the early establishment of branch libraries in the larger towns in the rural areas is essential. This would reduce the emphasis placed on the use of vehicles which will never be satisfactory in a country of this size.

3. Transport
   - The parts of the country more sparsely populated will need to be served by some form of non-static library. In order for this to be done, a greater emphasis on mobile libraries is essential. In this way it is hoped that the outlying areas in the rural areas will be covered by having mobile libraries which can be moved to different areas as needed.

4. Training
   - It is essential that full professional courses in librarianship are established in Zimbabwe. This is particularly important in view of the fact that many of the people who are likely to work in the libraries in the future may not have had the opportunity to receive proper training.

5. Professional Standards
   - The ZLS should be responsible for ensuring that the standards of librarianship are maintained. This could be done by setting up a national committee which would be responsible for the examination and registration of librarians.

6. Promotion
   - The purpose of a library service will be new to the majority of the people served and it is essential that they are informed of the service available to them in order that the most effective use is made of it.

Promotional activities

Promotional activities are essential. They should be aimed at informing the public about the services offered by the library.

1. The ZLS should arrange for the distribution of leaflets and brochures promoting the library services.
2. Radio and television programmes should be arranged to promote the library services.
3. Articles and advertisements should be placed in local newspapers to promote the library services.
4. The ZLS should arrange for the distribution of books and periodicals to local schools and libraries.

The ZLS should be responsible for ensuring that the library services are promoted effectively. This could be done by setting up a national committee which would be responsible for the examination and registration of librarians.

In recent months several local librarians have been globe trotting, and have returned with interesting tales to tell.

Mr. Mupawaenda, of the University of Zimbabwe Library, recently spent five weeks at the Leeds Polytechnic School of Librarianship as part of a group of twelve overseas librarians studying current trends in librarianship.

Among the topics discussed were the need to make newly qualified librarians realise that their professional knowledge was only beginning when they left college, and their career would be one of continuing education as they gained practical knowledge through experience in successive posts. This need for continuing education was highlighted by the growth in demand for new features in libraries such as audio-visual aids and the use of computers for cataloguing and recording loans.

A very important point arising from the Leeds course was the need for librarians to acquire practical experience. Now that entry to library degree courses was often straight from school, students were emerging from universities with advanced paper qualifications, but no experience in a library, and they had to realise that they had much practical knowledge still to acquire before they could consider themselves adequately qualified — and such experience could not be acquired by sitting behind an office desk waiting for subordinates to do the actual work.

The practical aspects of the course continued with an investigation of the value of computers in libraries. Charging systems (i.e. loan records) were seen as the most successful use of computers, as the routines were more basic. Computerised cataloguing posed more problems due to delays in getting entries through the computer process and into a readable form, although there were advantages in being able to produce multiple copies of computerised catalogues in microfiche form for use throughout a library system.

Also considered on the course was the need to educate library users — often difficult when libraries had insufficient staff and in the face of readers' assumption that library staffs' sole task in life was to conduct information searches on their behalf. Nonetheless, tuition in library use was seen as important if library users were to appreciate the range of services available in the library and to obtain maximum benefit from the library.

Theft of bookstock was recognised as a major problem, and the use of electronic "bagging" devices in library books was discussed. Expensive British and American systems are probably out of reach in Zimbabwe at the present time, but at least one South African firm is marketing a library book security system at a basic price of about £200 (details available from the editor).

A growing tendency was observed in libraries for administration to become polarized into two main divisions — Reader Services and Technical Services. The former deals with all matters affecting the reader/library interface — loans, reference services and the like, while the Technical Services Division deals with all the acquisition, classification and cataloguing work.

Mr. Mupawaenda's conclusion at the end of his course was that contact with libraries and librarians of different kinds was a valuable exercise, and although it might not be possible on an international scale due to problems of expense, exchange of library staff within Zimbabwe could well be a valuable exercise which the Z.L.A. should explore.

Also travelling to foreign parts recently was Grace Nyatsambo of the Bulawayo Technical College, who spent two weeks at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. The ravages of life under Idi Amin were still much in evidence, and it was interesting to learn that the Library of the Makerere University Library in Kampala, Uganda, had recently been burgled and the bookstock stolen. Theafers of the life under Idi Amin were well in evidence, and it was interesting to learn that the Library of the Makerere University Library in Kampala, Uganda, had recently been burgled and the bookstock stolen.
crime is so rampant in Kampala that all shops are emptied of goods daily at 5 p.m., and the
contents locked up under guard every night. Poor Grace had to be content with a small bucket
of cold water to wash in each day, as the water supplies had completely broken down. The
staff at the University library were still trying to carry out their work as efficiently as possible,
but due to the complete lack of foreign currency, no new books could be bought, and the
library was entirely dependent on donations. It was a sobering thought that a country once as
prosperous as Uganda could be reduced to bankruptcy by government mismanagement, and
it is hoped that the lesson has been learned by those in charge of Zimbabwe's future.

A third local librarian to make a foreign visit was Mr. W. Gurure of the Library of
Parliament, who visited Sweden for a three-week study tour of Swedish libraries during
September 1980. Visits were made to all kinds of libraries in Sweden, and the eleven
participants, all from Africa, were able to see many innovations actually in operation. Mr.
Gurure and his colleagues took the opportunity of passing on much information about library
developments in Africa, and a number of contacts were made which could bear fruit in the
form of Swedish assistance with various African library activities currently under
consideration.

All three of these visits were felt by the participants to have been rewarding, and it is very
much hoped that there will be many more such opportunities for local librarians in the future.
WHAT THEY DIDN'T TEACH YOU AT LIBRARY SCHOOL

From time to time, this Journal has been criticised for concentrating too much on matters of concern to senior library staff, and for not catering for the unqualified members of the Association. It is therefore proposed to initiate a series of short articles which will seek to convey the type of information which will help to make daily library routines easier for those engaged in the practical side of running a library.

For starters, therefore, let us deal with the basic positioning of the book pocket and book card contained within most library books. Elementary, I hear you say, and yet an investigation of published library text books while preparing this article revealed that in every complete and detailed diagram of the inner layout of library books, the book pocket was wrongly placed!! Here, then, is the way it should be done!

The book pocket should be stuck on the inside cover of the book (either front or back), with the open side of the pocket facing the fold of the endpaper. It should also be stuck as close to the fold as possible, so that if the book is dropped or handled carelessly, the book card does not fall out of the book pocket. In those books where the book pocket is fixed to the fold of the endpaper, the book card should not fall out of the pocket either. By having the book pocket fixed to the fold of the endpaper, the book card does not fall out of the book pocket when the book is dropped or handled carelessly, unless the book is dropped at an angle, in which case the book card is released from the pocket. However, if the book is dropped on the endpaper, the book card remains in the pocket and cannot fall out.

Adherence to this simple but basic suggestion will ensure that 90% of those bookcards which fall out of books onto the library floor, to be irretrievably trampled into scrap by innumerable boots before being noticed, will instead remain, as they should, firmly attached to the book they belong to right up to the moment when they are intended to be removed at the time of issue.

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