

by

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The past year has seen much activity in the planning of library automation with some important changes announced which foreshadow some longer range decisions. The Association of Atlantic Universities/Blackwell North American Project (AAU/BNAP) has grown in the level of activities and is now serving twenty-one users up from eighteen. Training sessions for the users have been run on MARC record structure, original cataloguing and modifying records. Steps have been taken to bring to the operations centre at Fredericton the computer operations concerned with profile input, subject authority systems and Computer Output Microfilm (COM) listings. A number of users are putting all original cataloguing through the systems, however the decision of Dalhousie University not to put their original cataloguing through the system, brings into question the viability of the - "Union Catalogue for Atlantic Canada" - concept on which the system was first promoted. The decision announced in December of Memorial University in Newfoundland to leave AAU/BNAP, to go to the University of Toronto Library Automated System (UTLAS) is a second factor which puts the future of AAU/BNAP as the dominant system in Atlantic Canada in doubt. Tests of this system in the school system in Halifax have not shown encouragement for its adoption in this area. The Provincial Library has organized experimental use of the AAU/BNAP service in the reference area and in the Cumberland and Yarmouth regions. First results are encouraging for the reference collection and further tests are planned in one regional library.

The On-Line Consortium, a Halifax based group concerned with searching of data bases, has organized a number of training activities and more are planned. Workshops held in the past year include Chemical Abstracts and Biosis as Data base suppliers and Lockheed/Dialog search services. Planned are workshops on QL systems, Can-Ole and Infomart (SDC) systems. Publicity for on-line searching services has been given in presentations to the Halifax Library Association and the Nova Scotia Institute of Science. Membership in the Consortium has grown to fifteen organizations. All this indicates a marked growth in on-line searching in the area.

A project to create a union catalogue of Serials from existing machine-readable files in Nova Scotia has the backing of the Provincial Library. The files include Dalhousie Libraries, St. Mary's, Mount St. Vincent, the Atlantic School of Theology and the Bedford Institute of Oceanography. While the format and styles of these files differ, it is considered feasible to merge and edit them into a useful union list of serials for the area.

Considerable interest has been shown in circulation systems. Memorial University has had the CLSI system in operation for two years

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and reports satisfaction. Dalhousie decided in November to go with CLSI, a decision which has been questioned by some in that it is a proprietary package which does not allow the flexibility required for full use of an automated system. Dalhousie is preparing book and borrowers files and expects to be in operation by September of this year.

The Provincial Library of New Brunswick continues to develop their system with the production of union catalogues by author and by subject and the issuing of selected catalogues of "talking Books". The high proportion of books in French makes the system somewhat unique. The use of Optical Character Readers (OCR) as the method of input continues as a most satisfactory feature. The Province of Prince Edward Island has a study of automation alternatives in progress which is scheduled to be reported in September.

Dalhousie Libraries have installed Multiwriter (Diablo in U.S.A.) equipment which has been programmed through the main university computer (CDC 6400) to produce catalogue cards from original input. The extension of this system to include the order/acquisition cycle is in progress. Word processing routines allow the production of listings in upper and lower case and a variety of fonts and formats.

The University of Moncton, which maintains a largely French library service has applied for membership in the UNICAT-TELECAT system which operates as part of the UTLAS system. This would be an extension of the system beyond the fifteen members in Quebec and Ontario. It will be interesting to see if this eastward extension materializes.

The Dartmouth Regional Public Library is now in its fourth year of operation of its book catalogue, this continues as a highly effective and economical system. The input to the system now uses the computer facilities of the municipal offices in Dartmouth which provides an input-terminal system using a formatted "fill in the blanks" entry system. The data can be edited on the screen, providing easier and more economical input. Daily input is accumulated in files and a monthly tape is prepared for entry to the larger Dalhousie University CDC equipment. The catalogue, in addition to books, phonodisks and talking books, now includes municipal reports from the City of Dartmouth. Cost continue at less than twenty cents a title added to the master files including the production of book catalogues in twelve copies.

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