

Profile

Geoffrey Hamilton

Geoffrey Hamilton retired as head of BLNL in July of this year.*

Below he answers some questions put to him by the editor.

Would you please give some details about yourself – where-born, education, family? etc.

Born and lived through the war years in Surrey, then still semi-rural though within twenty miles of London. Started school in the week war broke-out, more time initially spent in air raid shelters and gas-mask drills than in classroom activities. Post-war we moved to a remote village in Suffolk. My education continued at a quintessentially English grammar-cum-minor public school, in whose pupils were instilled the values, virtues and courtesies of an age that was rapidly passing.

What first brought you into librarianship? Was it always librarianship?

After the then statutory two years under arms I began my career in librarianship - an intuitive, if irrational, decision which I have never regretted. From Ipswich Borough Libraries I went to Leeds Library School, to experience life in the "other England" - northern,

industrial, where folk speak their minds. However, by chance rather than design my first appointment after qualifying was back in Surrey, at the County Library HQ.

Professionally qualified librarians in government libraries were still a novelty. These posts had to be fully justified in terms of their professionalism, whereas at that time many public library posts had elements of semi- or non-professional duties. I moved to the Board of Trade (later this became the Department of Trade and Industry), specialising for most of the next twelve years in technical processes and bibliographical services. After a two year stint at Loughborough University investigating indexing and retrieval of published statistical information, I resumed my government libraries career with DTI, as head of Department of Energy Library Services.

My first British Library appointment was as head of its services to the library and information community, through

the former Library Association Library. Subsequently I headed the Official Publications Library and administration for the Humanities and Social Sciences Division, before moving to the Newspaper Library. My involvement with IFLA began in 1983, on the Government Publications Section Standing Committee. Since 1989 I have been the Round Table's Secretary.

What in your career has given you most satisfaction? Do you have an ambition that has not yet been fulfilled?

Throughout my career I have had opportunities to take part in activities - nationally and internationally - that were professionally and personally satisfying. High points in my five years at the Newspaper Library have been the work, with libraries throughout the British Isles, on NEWSPLAN (co-operative preservation microfilming) and as Secretary of the Round Table, so, no unfulfilled ambitions.

What do you consider to be your particular contribution to your vocation?

Rather than a particular contribution to the library profession, I think I have made a number of general contributions to the areas of professional activity which have in succession engaged my attention - descriptive cataloguing, indexing, official publications, statistical information, newspaper preservation and access.

What recreations do you enjoy? What will you do after retirement? and how would you like to be remembered by colleagues and Mends in the library world?

I enjoy travel especially when it involves trains, and have a

particular interest in railway history. In retirement I intend to act on another intuitive decision and move to the Scottish Borders, an area of great natural beauty yet within easy reach of three of Britain's most interesting cities -Edinburgh, Glasgow and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. I hope my friends and colleagues will remember that I tried to help and usually managed to see the funny side of life's tragi-comedies.

17/5/94

**Mr Hamilton is continuing as Secretary of the Round Table for the time being.*

Reports From the 60th IFLA Conference, HAVANA

In August 1994, the Sixtieth International Conference of the IFLA was held at Havana (Cuba). Despite the serious social and economic crisis the country is suffering, our Cuban colleagues made a considerable effort to turn this event into success and they organized a very enjoyable Conference.

The sessions of the Round Table took place on Wednesday 24th August, jointly with the IFLA Section of Serial Publications. Three papers were presented at the Round Table open meeting. **Ms Ursula Schadlich**, from the National Library of Chile, opened the session with a broad overview of the Chilean press collection and a description of the preservation procedures followed in this South American country. Then followed **Ms Teresita Morales**, from the National Library of Cuba, with a talk on the present situation of the press in Cuba. Finally, **Mr Hartmut Walravens** presented a papers on press cataloguing in Germany. The 15 to 25 participants in the session

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Members of the Round Table's Business meeting held in London in March 10 & 11 1994
L to R: Majken Bremer-Laamanen (Helsinki University Library),
Andrew Phillips (British Library), Carmen Sannundo (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid),
Henry Snyder (University of California, Riverside),
Elena Garcia-Puente (Hemeroteca Nacional, Madrid),
Robert Harriman (Library Of Congress), Geoffrey Hamilton (BLNL),
Dora Secic (National University Library), Croatia.



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NEWSPAPER COLLECTIONS

The second in a series of brief descriptions of important newspaper collections. Similar contributions will be welcomed from all sources for future publications

Hemeroteca Nacional (Spanish Newspaper Library)

The Hemeroteca Nacional (Spanish Newspaper Library) is a cultural institution intended to provide the public with all local and national newspapers as well as general information magazines after 1945.

It was founded on 17th November 1945 as an associated centre to the Escuela Oficial de Periodismo (National School of Journalism), and opened to the public in June 1949. In 1985, the Hemeroteca Nacional came under the administration of the Biblioteca Nacional (Spanish National Library), and was transferred to its present location at the Palacio del Marqués de Perales, an early XVIII century mansion in the old historical centre of Madrid. This old mansion was probably built on the remains of a XVI century convent that still keeps a vaulted crypt with niches. Its baroque style facade was designed by Pedro de Ribera.

The Spanish newspaper collection is now housed in two different buildings. The Biblioteca Nacional, at the Paseo de Recoletos, hold more than 9,000 titles of Spanish newspapers prior to 1945.

This is where the microfilming of the old press is carried out, which presently covers seventeen different titles, beginning with the XIX century newspapers of Madrid, which were badly endangered due to the poor quality of the paper and their overuse.

The Hemeroteca Nacional houses three different collections; The Spanish press 1945-, the foreign press, which comprises over hundred European and South American titles, and general information periodicals, both current and dead. More than 1,139 are Spanish newspaper titles.

The main sections now operating at the Hemeroteca Nacional are the Sala de Prensa Diaria (Daily Press Room), where collections are displayed in open access, the Sala de Lectura (Reading Room), where bound volumes are served to the public, and the Sala de Microfilm (Microfilm Room). The Hemeroteca Nacional also serves all requests on reproductions of its material both from private users and public institutions.

The Hemeroteca Nacional has received more than 38,000 visitors during 1993.

Hemeroteca Nacional

La Hemeroteca Nacional es la institución española encargada de poner a disposición de todos los ciudadanos, para su consulta, la prensa nacional y las revistas españolas de información general posteriores a 1945.

Creada como centro de apoyo a las enseñanzas impartidas por la Escuela Oficial de Periodismo el 27 de noviembre de 1945, abrió sus puertas por primera vez en junio de 1949. Actualmente se ubica en el Palacio, del Marqués de Perales, un antiguo palacete de principios del siglo XVIII construido probablemente sobre un antiguo convento del XVI del que se conserva una cripta con bóvedas y hornacinas. Su portada barroca, obra de Pedro de Ribera, fue criticada por Benito Pérez Galdós en uno de sus Episodios Nacionales, el titulado "Napoleón en Chamartín". La vida del marqués inspiró también una zarzuela de Emilio Carrere con música del maestro Luna.

En 1985, la Hemeroteca Nacional perdió su autonomía y pasó a depender jerárquicamente de la Biblioteca Nacional. Es en esta institución, situada en el Paseo de Recoletos de Madrid, donde se conserva la colección de prensa anterior a 1945, constituida por unos 9,000 títulos, y donde se desarrolla el programa de microfilmación de prensa antigua.

Los fondos de la Hemeroteca Nacional están constituidos por tres colecciones: la colección de prensa española; integrada por todos los 1,139 títulos editados desde 1945; la colección de prensa extranjera, que cuenta con más de un centenar de títulos europeos y sudamericanos, y la colección de revistas de información general.

Entre sus servicios se cuentan la Sala de Prensa Diaria, con fondos de libre acceso; la Sala de Lectura, en la que se sirven los fondos retrospectivos y encuadernados, y la Sala de Microfilm, que reúne una colección de material hemerográfico en este soporte. La Hemeroteca atiende también cuantas peticiones sobre reproducción de sus fondos recibe por parte de particulares o instituciones. En el año 1993 visitaron sus instalaciones 38,000 usuarios.

Elena Garcia-Puente Lillo



The Newspaper Collection at Helsinki University Library – The National Library of Finland

Helsinki University Library has been a legal deposit library since 1707. Newspapers have been collected ever since the first national newspaper was published in 1771. During the Russian era newspapers from the entire Empire were received as legal deposit copies. Helsinki University Library has for more than a century collected newspapers published by Finns abroad, for example the Finnish-American newspapers. Foreign newspapers are whenever possible bought on microfilm and the library has the most extensive collection in Finland.

The newspaper holdings are part of the respective collection. The national newspapers are accordingly part of the National Collection and Preservation Department, which also is in charge of the microfilming of newspapers. This is done in the newly established Centre for Microfilming and Conservation, situated in Mikkeli a town in Eastern Finland. The actual filming is done in Mikkeli by the Audiovisual Centre of Helsinki University. The microfilming and

conservation centre is a preservation centre for the HUL and provides services for other libraries in Finland. Microfilming has played an important part in preserving the newspaper content. Actually the Library was one of the pioneers of microfilming in Finland when the microfilming began in 1951.

The National Collection of newspapers is the most complete one in our country and consists of some 1400 titles of which over one thousand are available on film. Today there are about 300 titles on the market and 160 of them are continuously filmed, with editions and supplements. An extensive newspaper bibliography and history was published in 1987 titled "Suomen Lehdistön historia 1-10. At present the library has also other newspaper microfilming projects.

The Russian newspapers, mainly from 1828-1917, are filmed retrospectively and the HUL is supporting the Estonian National Library to film the Estonian newspapers 1918-1940. Recently the filming of 29 Latvian newspapers 1867-1919 was completed as well as the filming of the Finnish-American newspapers in cooperation with the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota.

Ms Majken Bremer-Laamanen

Recent developments in newspaper cataloguing in Germany

Traditionally former West Germany had two union files of newspapers - one in Bremen (university library, Deutsche Presseforschung) for German titles, and another one in Berlin for those not published in Germany. An extract from the Bremen catalogue was published by Gerd Hagelweide: Deutsche Zeitungsbestände in Bibliotheken und Archiven¹ which still is one of the main reference tools for researchers and interlibrary loan. The Berlin file (SAZI = Standortverzeichnis ausländischer Zeitungen und Illustrierten)² was

much smaller, for obvious reasons. Its data were completely incorporated in the German Serials Data Base (*Zeitschriftendatenbank, ZDB*), thus making the information available not only to all major libraries for bibliographical and location purposes but also forming the basis for further shared cataloguing. Another source of information is the Institut für Zeitungsforschung at Dortmund, which is the central depository for films from the newspaper microfilming project supported by the German Research Association (DFG). A convenient handlist of a major part of the film holdings is the published catalogue of the Mikrofilmarchiv der Deutschen Presse. Former East Germany had a focus on newspapers at the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek at Berlin but there was no union catalogue of newspapers.

The pattern of a division between national and foreign newspapers has now been abandoned, and the researcher is offered all the information available on the ZDB. But why take the trouble to select and print data from a database which is available online and offline all over Germany? The publication under the title of *Internationale Zeitungsbestände in deutschen Bibliotheken/ International newspaper holdings in German libraries* has two advantages for newspaper specialists:

- It contains only about 18,000 newspapers and similar serials from the shared cataloguing files. The reader does not have to check the 700,000 serial titles on file to find just the newspapers.

- While a combined country/place of publication/distribution search is not yet possible in the online database and definitely not in the more widely distributed microfiche edition, the printed selection has a comprehensive geographical index with a breakdown according to countries. Within these groups the newspapers are listed under the respective place names which are arranged in alphabetical order.

Currently two newspaper cataloguing projects are under way in Germany. Both started at the same time but one is almost finished while the other one (concerning the collections of the Dortmund Institut für

Zeitungsforschung) is still struggling to get under way.

When the merger of the two state libraries in Berlin created Germany's largest library (effective as of Jan. 1, 1992) it became obvious that a machine-readable catalogue of its holdings ranked among the first priorities. The German Research Association gave generous support towards the cataloguing of the serials of the Berlin State Library, and special funds were devoted to incorporating also the newspaper holdings in the ZDB. This cataloguing project is almost completed now and has brought the number of newspapers in the ZDB to well over 20,000.

Also with support from the German Research Association most of the university libraries in the Eastern part of Germany are busy recataloguing their serials. There are only rough estimates of the actual serials holdings. In many cases an autopsy of the titles and the existing holdings is necessary. Newspapers with their additional problems might be included under the terms of the projects but there is much reason to doubt that libraries will manage to cover also this time-consuming task. In addition, major holdings of newspapers are kept by archives, museums and institutes which are not part of the outlined cataloguing programme.

The conservation of newspapers raises special concern also in Germany. For this reason there is a microfilming programme, and there is a project to describe German newspaper holdings from the point of view of conservation and the necessary measures to save them. As the result of this investigation has not yet been circulated it is not possible at present to give any assessment of its possible benefit to future cataloguing projects.

During recent years a lot of information on holdings of regional newspapers in several states of the Eastern part of Germany has been assembled by Heinz Gittig. This has led to two printed catalogues so far, one listing Berlin newspapers in Berlin collections,³ the other one Brandenburg newspapers in Brandenburg collections and the Berlin State Library.⁴ At the moment however

this must be regarded as a stepping stone only and a lot of work still remains to be done in these regions.

As of November 1, 1993, the Berlin State Library established a Newspaper Department. The new department has not had an easy start, due to the present economic climate. In addition the refurbishment of the building of the former Deutsche Staatsbibliothek necessitates an interim storage of large parts of the holdings in a warehouse.

While the Newspaper Department will deal with the Berlin State Library's own collection the Department of Bibliographic Services (Überregionale Bibliographische Dienste) will continue to be responsible for newspaper cataloguing activities on the national level, in connection with the ZDB. At the beginning this included also the processing of the SAZI files and the recataloguing of the holdings of the former Deutsche Staatsbibliothek.

It would be useful to get a closer cooperation on the international level regarding newspaper union cataloguing. While the current preservation and microfilming programmes are necessary and useful, shared cataloguing and data interchange would cut staff costs, increase efficiency and make rare material more widely available.

Hartmut Walravens

1. Ed. by the Kommission für Geschichte des Parlamentarismus und der Politischen Parteien and the Verein Deutscher Bibliothekare. V. Düsseldorf: Droste, 1974. 372pp
2. Winckler, Martin: *Standortverzeichnis ausländischer Zeitungen und Illustrierten in Bibliotheken und Instituten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Berlin (West)*. SAZI. München/Pullach: Verlag Dokumentation, 1975. 334pp.
3. Gittig, Heintz; Willi Hofig: *Berliner Zeitungen und Wochenblätter in Berliner Bibliotheken*. Berlin: DSB, 1991. XIII, 252 pp.
4. Gittig, Heintz: *Brandenburgische Zeitungen und Wochenblätter*. Berlin: SBB, 1993. XVIII, 177pp.

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held a lively debate with the speakers, and the issues addressed reflect typical problems found in all countries regarding press management: the printers' failure to obey the laws of legal deposit, the lack of common records and union catalogues of press in Latin America, the need to keep track of the press collections scattered in each country, etc. At the end of the session Ms *Mari Lohman*, from the University of Bolivia, asked permission to make a demo of the automatization of press articles with ISIS, as performed in Bolivia.

The Chairperson of the meeting gave a brief description of the activities performed by the Round Table and its current programme, and offered membership to all Latin American libraries willing to collaborate with the Round Table. Brochures in Spanish, Russian and German were distributed.

Elena Garcia - Puente

ALSO ...

The conference was well organized and well attended; unfortunately the surrounding circumstances (life in the city, deplorable situation of the population, prostitution etc.) were rather desperate. I stayed, unlike many colleagues, in the Old Town, and was thus in the middle of it ...

Cuban colleagues were very nice but admitted freely that they were not up-to-date in librarianship because they were cut off from current library literature.

The Open Meeting offered three papers, one on the Cuban situation, by *Ms Morales*, one on the national library in Santiago de Chile, by *Ms Schadlich* and mine. The two Spanish-language papers were first, and when my paper was announced as being in English, there was an exodus. This confirmed my former experience in Latin America, namely that English is an unknown language, almost like Latvian to us, in that region. I should have read it in the Spanish, the translation was made by the National Library. *Elena* competently chaired the meeting, in cooperation with *Suzanne Santiago*.

Hartmut Walravens

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

LENNART EKLIND is the head of the Royal Library's Newspaper Section and is replacing Kerstin Wiman who has transferred to other duties at the Royal Library. The Round Table convey Kerstin's appreciation of contributions - especially in connection with the 1990 Stockholm Conference - and best wishes for her future career.

Galina Kislovskaya, is the Deputy Director of the Library for Foreign Literature in Moscow.

We warmly welcome the above new members of the Round Table.

BROCHURE

The Round Table's brochure detailing its various activities is now available in two more languages-German and Russian in addition to the English and Spanish versions.

FUTURE IFLA CONFERENCES

- 1995 Istanbul
- 1996 Beijing
- 1997 Copenhagen
- 1998 Amsterdam
- 1999 Thailand?
- 2000 Portugal
- 2001 Boston, USA or South Korea
- 2002 Edinburgh?
- 2003 St. Petersburg



CONGRATULATIONS



Geoff Smith who has been appointed to succeed Geoffrey Hamilton as Newspaper Librarian and Head of the British Library Newspaper Library. We wish him well in his important new post.

IFLA CONFERENCE PAPERS

Sets of papers from the Havana Conference deposited at IFLA clearing Houses include the three papers from the Round Table's Open Meeting, in Spanish or English. Single copies of the English versions can be supplied by the Secretary, c/o The British Library Newspaper Library.

UNION CATALOGUES OF NEWSPAPERS

The Round Table hopes to start work in 1995 which will result in published guidelines for compiling union catalogues of newspapers. The editor will be pleased to receive information about existing or proposed union catalogues for publication in the newsletter and as input to the Round Table project.



NADOLIG LLAWEN
MERRY CHRISTMAS
BON NOËL
FELICES NAVIDADES
FROHE WEINACHTEN
BUON NATALE



NEWS FROM THE ROUND TABLE
