

Harriet Irving library switches to computerized cataloguing system

The Harriet Irving Library at UNB has introduced a computerized catalogue system to replace part of its card catalogue. A "red tape" cutting ceremony marked the introduction of this new system Monday.

UNB President James Downey officially cut the "red tape" and used one of the terminals to search for material. Various staff members of the library and computing centre were also at the opening.

The new system, which is called PHOENIX, makes it possible for the library to offer better service, and, at the same time lower operating costs, said University Librarian, Dr. Gertrude Gunn. The system was developed at UNB by the staff of the library and of the Computing Centre. It is the first system of its kind in Canada.

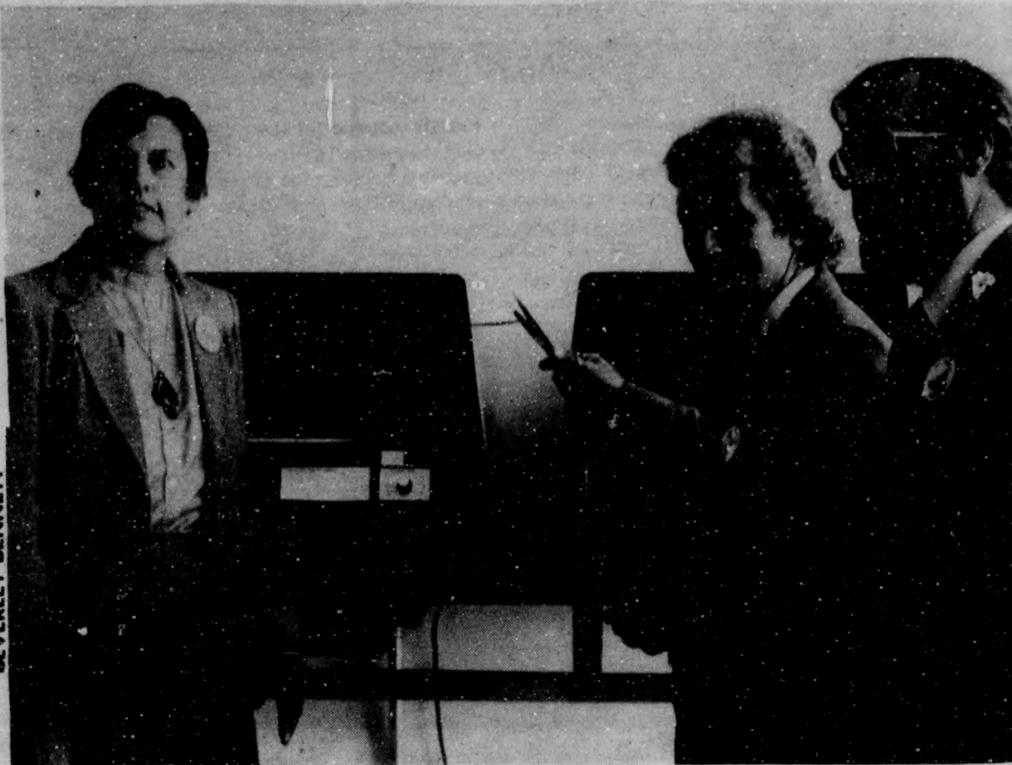
Rather than use the card catalogue system, users searching for books or material published since 1977 now enter words describing the topics at

any of the 30 computer terminals located in the library. The computer then gives them a list of the books available on the particular subject.

The PHOENIX system is easy to learn, much faster and more convenient to use than the card catalogue, says Marshall Clinton, assistant librarian. "In fact, students and faculty are finding it both easy and fascinating," he said.

This new system is also available to people outside the library. It can be used at any of the more than 300 computer terminals at UNB. People outside the university can also use the computerized catalogue if they have an account with the Computing Centre and a computer terminal.

PHOENIX is also helping to increase library cooperation in the Atlantic Provinces. Several libraries in the region are regularly using the system to help provide inter-library loan services. Libraries as far away as Banff, Alta. have been using the system.



The Harriet Irving Library's PHOENIX computer catalogue system was officially opened Monday. Left to right are Librarian, Gertrude Gunn, UNB President James Downey, and Dave Macneil, of the UNB computing centre.

..... a history of the PHOENIX system

In late 1978, a committee investigating access to UNB's libraries' collections agreed to close the card catalogue, as it was an outdated method of providing access to the catalogue, cumbersome in its space requirements and usage, and too expensive to maintain in terms of staff hours.

Alternatives to the card catalogue were examined, including putting the catalogue on microfilm (COM) which was expensive and unpopular, or acquiring IBM's computerized library package (DOBIS), which was also deemed too expensive, even for the entire region.

In August, 1980, the UNB Computing Centre and the library resolved to develop its own online computer catalogue.

Out of the ashes of DOBIS, PHOENIX was born! (Attributed to David Macneil of UNB's Computing Centre).

COMPONENTS

Hardware by COMTERM, marketed through the Fredericton-based Datamaster; 30 terminals in the Harriet Irving Library (HIL) alone, and access through terminals in the Education Resource Centre, the Science Library and the Engineering

Library, not to mention through some 300 other terminals located around the campus, in the UNB Law Library, and at the Ward Chipman Library at UNBSJ.

Software, (the PHOENIX program), by UNB Computing Centre and HIL staff.

USES

As a "card" catalogue by all library patrons.

As an "inventory" for library staff in technical services to pinpoint what holdings the library already has, how they are catalogued, and what should be or has been ordered.

PHOENIX can also be programmed to show if a book is on reserve, missing or lost.

A terminal has been designated to show exactly what materials are on the reserve shelf. (Reserve books are those taken out of circulation at the request of the professor and signed out to individual students for use in the library only).

WHAT'S ON PHOENIX

All materials in HIL and its branches catalogued since the end of 1976 - approximately 110,000 entries, or about 1% of the total library holdings.

All entries from the Engineering Library Indexing and Searching Technique

(ENLISIT), a computerized information retrieval system developed since 1968 by UNB's Engineering Department.

ADVANTAGES:

To The Library Patron:

PHOENIX is much easier to use than the card catalogue. PHOENIX is "user friendly". It will try to meet the user halfway. And PHOENIX speaks English!

PHOENIX is self-teaching. Simply sit down at one of the 30 conveniently located terminals in HIL, punch in the word "lesson" and you're set to go! There are 5 lessons in total but it only takes one or two to get results.

No more rifling through little cards in a narrow drawer.

PHOENIX has four basic commands - SEARCH, DISPLAY, BROWSE and CHOOSE - all of which mean exactly what they say. And if you hate to type, you need only punch S, D, B, or C.

PHOENIX responds to Keywords - it searches for any word and all entries that contain the word(s) you punch in. Therefore, you are more likely to find more useful materials than you could looking up individual cards in the old catalogue.

You can be more creative in

your search - PHOENIX can suggest topics of interest to you as you BROWSE through the entries.

With PHOENIX there is now access to material not previously catalogued in standard fashion, such as government documents, maps, microfilm and archival material.

Any person/organization with an account with the UNB Computing Centre can link up with PHOENIX. This is especially convenient for the NB-PEI universities' computer network.

For The Staff:

PHOENIX can be kept up-to-date more easily than the card catalogue - it only takes a week to add or delete from PHOENIX, as opposed to up to 2 months for the card catalogue.

Staff time is therefore funneled into more valuable activities including PHOENIX instruction for patrons.

PHOENIX has all the library's periodicals or magazines in its database.

PHOENIX has a feedback system built into it which provides a monthly report to the library staff on the use of the terminals. This information will allow the staff to evaluate the use of PHOENIX and im-

prove the system where necessary.

PHOENIX allows a shift in library focus from the perfection of cataloguing to the delivery of materials to the user as quickly as possible.

IMPLICATIONS

PHOENIX is unique in Canadian online cataloguing systems because:

a) It is the most sophisticated system available to the public.

b) It is the only system which operates on the Keyword principle.

c) It is the only system which allows you to find what you're looking for before you know what you're looking for - it does not require step-by-step search techniques.

PHOENIX can introduce its users to the world of computer technology in a friendly and practical way, providing at the same time an essential library service. (HIL staff estimate there are over 2,000 non-student library users annually).

PHOENIX was designed to be connected to the IBM DOBIS library package (which currently has no public access feature), if and when that larger system becomes financially viable.

continued on p. 11