

# Annual Report 2008 – 2009



WHELF (Wales Higher Education Libraries Forum) is a grouping of Chief Librarians and Directors of Information Services drawn from all the higher education institutions in Wales. It meets four times a year, twice by videoconference and twice at the University of Wales Conference Centre in Gregynog, and is chaired by the Librarian of the National Library of Wales.

The purpose of WHELF is to promote library and information services co-operation, to encourage the exchange of ideas, to provide a forum for mutual support and to help facilitate new initiatives in library and information service provision.

WHELF actively promotes the work of higher education libraries in Wales and provides a focus for the development of new ideas and services.

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#### **WHELF Libraries**

Aberystwyth University  
Bangor University  
Cardiff University  
Glyndŵr University  
National Library of Wales  
The Open University in Wales  
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama  
Swansea Metropolitan University  
Swansea University  
Trinity University College  
University of Glamorgan  
University of Wales  
University of Wales, Lampeter  
University of Wales, Newport  
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff



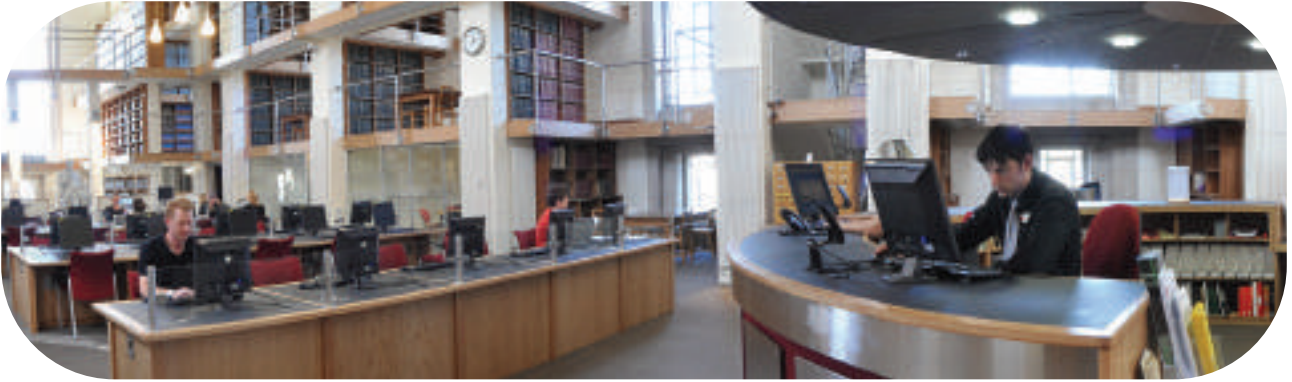
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*Cover pictures:*

*Trevithick Library, Cardiff University.*

*National Year of Reading 2008: Alison Walker (Welsh Video Network) and Sue Mace (WHELP) with Gweryl Pierce Jones of the Welsh Books Council and Education Minister Jane Hutt.*



*North Reading Room, The National Library of Wales*

## Chair's Introduction

Active co-operation is WHELF's constant aim. There can be few if any other higher education groups in Wales with a better record of combining resources and ingenuity for the common good of students and researchers.

Three themes stand out among WHELF's successes in 2008-09, all of them concerned with online resources: the collaborative purchase of access to electronic books, and more recently electronic periodicals, the shared development of institutional digital repositories, and the pursuit of a digitisation strategy and programme.

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None of this would have been possible without the proverbial harmony and friendship of WHELF's members and their staffs, without the dedicated and skilful work of our Development Officer, Sue Mace, and without Jeremy Atkinson, who steps down in summer 2009 after a distinguished period as Chair of the Development Group.

Behind all our work is the abiding belief in the critical importance of knowledge and access to knowledge to a sound education and well-informed research.

**Andrew Green, The National Library of Wales**



*Janet Peters, Cardiff University Librarian, pictured with Carol Vorderman*



*The First Minister, Rhodri Morgan, opening the new Roderic Bowen Library*

## The Year in Brief

This was a year of anniversaries for WHELF libraries – with Cardiff University celebrating 125 years, the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama 60 years and the Open University 40 years. It was also a year which saw a number of higher education institutions achieve university status – Swansea Metropolitan University, Glyndŵr University and Trinity University College. On 16 April 2009 the governing bodies of Trinity University College and the University of Wales Lampeter gave the go ahead for the formation of a new university. The University of Wales: Trinity Saint David will be established in late summer 2010 subject to Privy Council approval, and will welcome its first students in September 2010.

The University of Wales recently concluded a strategic alliance with six of the university institutions in Wales, with whom it will be working closely on collaborative ventures, research groupings and other new initiatives. These institutions are Glyndŵr University, Swansea Metropolitan University, the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC), the University of Wales, Newport, the University of Wales Lampeter and Trinity University College (from 2010, the University of Wales: Trinity St David).

On 1 March 2009, Wales' five major universities announced their intention to act together, combining their strengths and talents to drive forward the knowledge economy in Wales. Together, Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, Glamorgan and Swansea Universities represent over 70% of all students in Wales and more than 95% of the nation's research activity. "We firmly believe that by building on the intellectual capital and academic excellence of our universities, we can help Wales create an innovative and dynamic economy and a just society for the 21st century."

Innovation was in evidence at Cardiff University when the redesigned Trevithick Library was declared officially open by Honorary Fellow Carol Vorderman in March 2009. The Library has been completely redesigned to enhance the student experience and now offers a range of modern environments which meet changing technological and curriculum needs.





*Rebecca Davies*



*David Learmont*

The First Minister, Rhodri Morgan, opened the Roderic Bowen Library at the University of Wales Lampeter in October 2008. This new library houses Lampeter's Special Collections, a remarkable treasure trove for researchers and academics. This event provided confirmation of the thriving research culture at the University and offered exciting new facilities for researchers to exploit its celebrated collection of rare books and manuscripts.

At Swansea University, Library & Information Services was the first department in the University to receive the Customer Service Excellence Award. They are one of a small number of library, ICT and careers services in UK universities to have achieved this award.

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This year saw the retirement of Dr Mike Hopkins from his post as Director of Information Services at Aberystwyth University. Mike was a very active member of WHELF and his contribution to the development of academic library and information services in Wales will be greatly missed.

He was succeeded by Rebecca Davies, formerly Head of the Welsh Assembly Government Library & Public Enquiry Service. Speaking of her appointment, Rebecca said "Aberystwyth University has changed beyond recognition since my days there as a student, and it is a privilege to be appointed to work for an organisation that is ambitious and growing, both in terms of research and student numbers."

David Learmont joined Bangor University in January this year as the Director of Library and Information Services, moving from the University of the Arts London. As well as overseeing the library and IT function, David will be involved with the University's plans for a new Arts and Innovation Centre at Bangor as well as the development of a digital strategy.



## Collaboration and Partnership

### WHELF Study Tour to Dublin

How we plan and use our buildings has become an issue of increasing significance in recent years. Academic libraries in Wales are re-thinking learning spaces. Changing learning styles and the pressure to be cost- and space-effective are leading to more innovative designs. The overall aim of the study tour was to visit a range of academic libraries in the Republic of Ireland in order to identify innovation and good practice which could be brought back to Wales. It was an opportunity to share knowledge and experience, and create and strengthen networks between institutions in both countries.

Sixteen WHELF members travelled to Dublin in November, sponsored by CyMAL, a division of the Welsh Assembly Government. It was particularly productive to visit some very different HEIs and their libraries in such a short space of time. For those planning new library buildings, it was also invaluable to see iconic buildings like the Berkeley Library in Trinity College Dublin and more recent new buildings like Dublin City University.

Links were forged with CONUL, the consortium of Ireland's main research libraries, and possible areas for collaborative activity include reciprocal visits, staff development, information literacy and digitisation projects. Delegates also attended a meeting of COLICO, a North-South body which encourages co-operative projects on the island of Ireland (pictured).



*Delegates at the COLICO meeting*



*Delegates at the meeting with SCURL*

### **Scottish colleagues from SCURL visit Cardiff**

Colleagues from the Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL) visited Cardiff University in June for a successful joint study day with WHELF. SCURL is the principal association of research libraries in Scotland and has been working collaboratively and cross-sectorally for over 25 years. There are many collaborative activities and projects of mutual interest in Wales and Scotland which everyone is keen to explore.

Topics under discussion included joint procurement of e-books and e-journals, shared catalogues, collaborative projects in Wales and Scotland, progress on repositories, open access and a wide variety of digitisation projects. The day ended with a tour of Cardiff's newly re-opened and refurbished Trevithick Library.

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### **Access to e-resources**

Meetings with Irish and Scottish colleagues also helped to inform the work that WHELF is doing to investigate shared provision of journals across higher education libraries in Wales. The Irish Research eLibrary (IRel) delivers quality peer-reviewed online journals direct to the desktop of researchers wherever they are located. Scotland's university researchers benefit from an online shared initiative that makes key journals more widely available. The Scottish Higher Education Digital Library (SHEDL) has been backed by all of Scotland's HEIs, who say that easier access to more journals will stimulate better research and support learning and teaching. Progress is being made towards a similar deal in Wales.

Wales already has joint procurement of online newspaper and reference services for public and academic libraries, and work continues on joint procurement of health journals for NHS and higher education libraries. Throughout the year there have been a number of negotiations with individual publishers, with a view to cost savings if several institutions in Wales join together to purchase. One of the benefits of WHELF is the opportunity to share information and negotiate together, especially at a time of increasing pressure on budgets.





*Treforest Learning Resources Centre, University of Glamorgan*

### **Building on collaboration: the WHELF e-book deal**

Under an agreement between WHELF and OCLC, NetLibrary provides 85,000 Welsh students and National Library users with access to over 600 e-book titles in a broad range of subjects including law, political science, art, business, economics, management and history. This collaboration has extended provision and ensured a greater number of e-books are available for use in teaching, learning and research. A recent example of joint purchase this year was a collection of e-books to support the PGCTHE course that UWIC partners with Bangor, Aberystwyth, Swansea and Lampeter. Work is now underway to find ways of expanding the collection for the future.

### **UK Research Reserve**

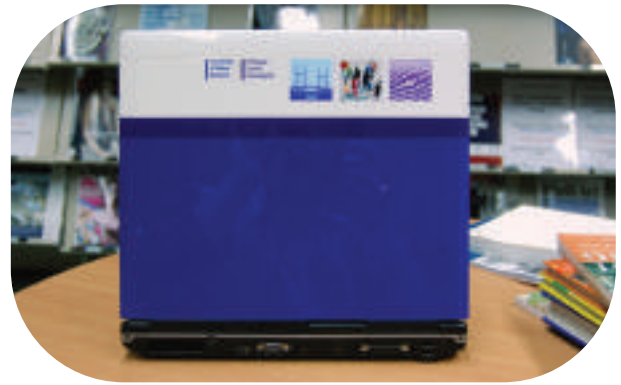
Cardiff University and Aberystwyth University both signed up to UKRR this year. This collaborative collection, holding print copies of important research journals, is managed and stored through a partnership between the British Library and Higher Education. At least 3 copies of journals that fall into a 'low use' category are maintained within the UK. Access to the collection is underpinned by the BL Document Supply Service, which can deliver a document electronically to the desktop within 24 hours. The de-duplication of journals across the sector frees valuable space within institutions which can be used by the individual library for whatever purpose best fits its need. Libraries who participated in the pilot project created new zoned areas for quiet study, improved group work areas and improved integration of study facilities with their collections. All of which have a direct tangible benefit on the local students and researchers.

### **Sharing expertise**

WHELF is supporting a number of initiatives to ensure that specialist expertise is shared between the various higher education libraries in Wales. A new Welsh Copyright Group is being set up, and support has also been given to a Welsh cross-sector group on document delivery. The first meeting of a new Wales-wide Special Collections forum, aimed at librarians curating special collections, will take place later this year.



RFID at Trinity



Laptop for loan at Newport

### Open Source for Libraries

Over 20 representatives from Welsh higher education, further education and public libraries gathered in Swansea in April to spend a day hearing about open source for libraries in theory and practice. There was also an overview of the ongoing implementation of the open source VuFind system as part of the Virtual Academic Library project in Wales. VuFind is being used to provide a common interface for searching three universities' print and electronic resource collections. The project is a good example of how Wales is leading the way on library collaboration and open source development.

### European Convergence Funding

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WHELF has commissioned work leading initially to the posting of a project idea with the Welsh European Funding Office. The *Access to e-resources – navigating the digital world for business* project would help overcome the challenges and barriers that may exist for SMEs and entrepreneurs in accessing and utilising business information. It would provide direct access to published, often expensive, business information (for example market research reports) to support new SMEs and for established businesses that know the specific information they require; it could also provide coaching, advice, training and guidance on how to access and make the best use of the information that is available.

### Access for students in Wales

CROESO is a scheme which permits any of the 85,000 students on a higher education course in Wales (including those in franchised course in further education colleges) to use any other higher education library for reference purposes. Many libraries are also open to the public for consultation, and there are a number of regional partnerships in place which allow reciprocal borrowing between various libraries.

### Videoconferences with Welsh authors

In the autumn, WHELF worked with the Welsh Video Network (WVN) to put on a series of events with authors across Wales. Using videoconferencing, students in higher education were able to link with groups in schools and further education for an audience with Bethan Gwanas on 4 November, Mererid Hopwood on 18 November and Rachel Trezise on 9 December 2008. One of the WHELF events had the honour of being the 2008th event during the 2008 National Year of Reading in Wales. Education Minister Jane Hutt met with Alison Walker and Sue Mace, the organisers of the winning event, to congratulate them.



*Delegates at the launch*

## Welsh Repository Network

With the advent of the Welsh Repository Network, Wales becomes the first country in the UK where all higher education institutions have established online repositories. The formal launch took place at the National Library of Wales on 19 February. Developed under the auspices of WHELF, the Welsh Repository Network is made up of 12 individual university research repositories. Dr Michael Hopkins, Director of Information Services at Aberystwyth University, said: "The repositories allow universities to archive and protect the intellectual output of their institutions, but also make available cutting-edge research to the world."

In April, Aberystwyth was awarded £260k by the JISC to support the Welsh Repository Network Enhancement Project. The project will run from 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2011. Aberystwyth will act as the lead partner in the newly funded scheme which will involve collaboration with all other Welsh HEIs and the National Library of Wales.

The project team will investigate the potential of a collaborative, centrally managed model to accelerate the development and uptake of repository services by Welsh HEIs and will investigate the potential for a mediated deposit bureau to facilitate the increased population of newly established repositories with appropriate academic research outputs. Another project strand will work on the creation of a Welsh Thesis Harvesting Service in collaboration with the National Library of Wales, developing an earlier pilot programme known as Repository Bridge. There is clear evidence that online availability increases the visibility and usage of theses, and would give Wales a large research advantage and strengthen the Welsh Assembly Government's efforts to improve the impact of research conducted in Wales.



*Dog with a pipe in its mouth – from the National Library of Wales collection (Flickr Commons)*

## Digitisation

### WHELF Digitisation Strategy

WHELF's Action Plan for 2009-11 includes the aim 'support further digitisation projects'. The first objective was to agree a digitisation strategy for WHELF, and this was agreed in July 2009.

WHELF's strategy is to collaborate, together or through particular alliances, in:

- creating new digital content (or enhancing the value of existing digitised content)
- sharing expertise and knowledge in digitisation policy and practices
- developing mechanisms and supporting materials to encourage take up for teaching, learning and research
- helping to make the research undertaken in Welsh higher education institutions more visible

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### Welsh Journals Online

Working in partnership with members of WHELF, the National Library of Wales is currently completing a project funded by JISC, the Library, and the Welsh Assembly Government, to digitise a substantial part of its holdings of 20th-century journals relating to Wales. The material ranges from academic and scholarly journals to current affairs and popular magazines, reflecting all aspects of Welsh life.

### Welsh Newspapers and Magazines Online

In April the Welsh Assembly Government announced a SCIF grant of £2m to the National Library of Wales for a project entitled 'Welsh Newspapers and Magazines Online'. This is a three-year project to digitise a high proportion of all out-of-copyright Welsh newspapers and publish the resulting text online for all to search, browse and reuse for free. WHELF supported the bid to SCIF (the Strategic Capital Investment Fund).





North Reading Room, The National Library of Wales

### Welsh Ballads – completing the British ballad network

The Welsh Ballads project will fill the final gap in the network of digitised collections of printed ballads around Britain. Cardiff University with the National Library of Wales and Bangor and Lampeter University libraries hold the main Welsh printed ballads collections (in both Welsh and English). A total of 5,000 ballads will be digitised, from the earliest 18th Century ballads to the final few published in the 20th Century. In total this will produce around 20,000 pages of digitised text images (all out of copyright). A website portal will be developed from a pilot which already exists at Cardiff. This will provide a gateway and an academic resource for access and study of the ballad in Wales, Britain, and in its international context, and will link to the catalogue and ballad images.



Digitised ballad from the collection in the Salisbury Library, Cardiff University



The Shankland Reading Room, Bangor University Library





*Trevithick Library, Cardiff University*

## Continuing Professional Development

WHELF aims to encourage staff development and training opportunities for member institutions. It supports WHISD, a staff development group for WHELF and HEWIT members. (HEWIT is the group of managers of IT services in Welsh HE institutions).

### **Gregynog Colloquium 2009**

Every year WHELF and HEWIT organise a residential colloquium at Gregynog Hall, the University of Wales conference centre, for library and IT staff to discuss recent developments and to exchange experiences.

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A successful feature of the Colloquium is the opportunity for new (and not-so-new) professionals to give a presentation based on their own experience. Other themes in this year's excellent conference included special collections, library education, finance and staffing, collaboration, changing roles, innovative service provision and planning for the future.

The Colloquium included an extended two day Repositories Stream as part of the programme. This was well attended and comprised practical workshops and presentations on a diversity of topics including copyright and repositories, multimedia deposits, repository management, the Electronic Theses Online Service (EThOS) and the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

### **Welsh Collaboration in Action: supporting higher education in further education colleges**

Libraries have an important role to play in supporting higher education in further education, so each year WHELF organises an event for staff to enable participants to share experiences, get up to date on recent developments and develop individual and shared programmes of action for the future. This year's event was held in June at the University of Wales, Newport. Topics included social learning spaces, dedicated HE learning spaces and personal learning environments and e-portfolios for students.



*Heritage Minister, Alun Ffred Jones, met delegates at the Welsh Libraries Conference*

### **Welsh Libraries, Archives and Museums Conference 2009**

Once again the annual conference in May offered an unrivalled opportunity to meet other people active in libraries, archives and museums in all sectors in Wales. The theme was space, and among the subjects were Web 2.0, planning physical and virtual spaces, change management, digital content for archives and rural information needs. WHELF organised a very successful half-day seminar in which speakers from higher and further education explored the theme of learning spaces in libraries.

### **LILAC 2009**

LILAC 2009 (The Librarians Information Literacy Annual Conference) took place in Wales this year. The venue was Cardiff University, and the themes were Inquiry based learning and information literacy; Emerging technologies; Information literacy for life; and Supporting research. LILAC aims to provide a forum across all sectors of the profession, which encourages debate and allows the exchange of knowledge in all aspects of information literacy. Information literacy is also a key activity for WHELF, and we are currently working to bring together all education sectors to develop a national information literacy framework for Wales.

### **New Foundation Degree launched in Wales**

Glyndŵr University is offering a new Foundation Degree in Library and Information Practice this year. The course has been approved by CILIP (the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) and will equip students with essential technical skills such as database management, research techniques and online search techniques. The course was developed through a £10,000 funding grant from CyMAL, a division of the Welsh Assembly Government.

### **Award for Excellence**

Congratulations to Cathie Jackson, Senior Consultant – Information Literacy in Information Services at Cardiff University, who has been awarded a prize for Excellence in Teaching by the HEA Subject Centre for Information and Computer Science. This is Cathie's second award – last summer she was presented with the Wallace Breem Memorial Award for an outstanding contribution to law librarianship.



*Open University event at Cardiff Central Library*

### **A 'Day in the Life...' behind the scenes of Libraries!**

A new website has been launched which reveals the 'behind the scenes' activities of the library during Cardiff University's 125th anniversary year – the 'Day in the Life'. Janet Peters, University Librarian said: "The range and complexity of work today in a large, modern University Library is amazing. The 'Day in the Life' series, written by ten of our staff, really captures the blend of innovative and traditional, digital and documentary, educational and inspirational work which goes on behind the scenes here in Cardiff University." She added: "Information Services supports the research and teaching work of Cardiff University in dozens of different ways. Our 'Day in the Life' series shows the range of successful work undertaken in doing this; these people are role models for any students who want to go on and become professional information workers."

**<http://www.cf.ac.uk/insrv/aboutus/dayinthelife/index.html>**



## Representation

WHELP members are represented on a wide range of national and UK organisations. These include:

**AWHILES – the All-Wales Health Information and Libraries Extension Service** – Janet Peters, Cardiff University

**CILIP Wales** – Sally Wilkinson, Trinity University College; Rebecca Davies, Aberystwyth University (from May 2009)

**CyMAL Advisory Council** – Mike Hopkins, Aberystwyth University (to March 2009)

**CyMAL Libraries for Life Advisory Group** – Chris West, Swansea University; Mike Hopkins, Aberystwyth University (to March 2009); Rebecca Davies, Aberystwyth University (from May 2009)

**CyMAL Libraries for Life Online Services Board** – Lesley May, University of Wales, Newport

**ETHOS Advisory Board** – Mike Hopkins, Aberystwyth University (to March 2009)

**HEFCW E-learning Group** – Janet Peters, Cardiff University

**JISC Content Services Committee** – Chris West, Swansea University (to June 2009)

**JISC Digitisation Advisory Group** – Jeremy Atkinson, University of Glamorgan; Andrew Green, National Library of Wales

**JISC Film and Sound Think Tank** – Jeremy Atkinson, University of Glamorgan

**NHS-HE Forum for Joint Procurement** – Janet Peters, Cardiff University

**Research Information Network** – Andrew Green, National Library of Wales; Janet Peters, Cardiff University

**Research Libraries UK Executive Board** – Janet Peters, Cardiff University

**Research Libraries UK** – Andrew Green, National Library of Wales

**SCONUL Executive Board** – Chris West, Swansea University (to June 2009); Jeremy Atkinson, University of Glamorgan (from June 2009)

**SCONUL Working Group on Information Literacy** – Janet Peters, Cardiff University

**SCONUL Access Steering Group** – Paul Riley, UWIC; Josephine Burt, Open University

**SCONUL Quality Assurance Group** – Paul Jeorrett, Glyndŵr University

**Strategic Content Alliance Wales Forum** – Janet Peters, Cardiff University; Jeremy Atkinson, University of Glamorgan; Andrew Green, National Library of Wales

**UK Research Reserve Phase 1 and Phase 2** – Janet Peters, Cardiff University



## More Information

For more information on any of the topics in this annual report, please contact:

Sue Mace  
WHELP Development Officer  
Library and Information Services  
Swansea University  
Singleton Park  
Swansea, SA2 8PP

Email: [s.j.mace@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:s.j.mace@swansea.ac.uk)  
Web: <http://whelf.ac.uk>  
Blog: <http://whelf.wordpress.com/>