



## Library and Information Services – September 2005

Dear Colleague,

As we prepare for a new academic year, it is a convenient time to share with you some news on IALS Library and associated services:

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### Annual Course on International Law Librarianship

Constitutional developments in the EU, copyright harmonisation, Italian legal information sources, and the "ius commune", are the themes of this year's Annual Course on International Law Librarianship organised by the International Association of Law Libraries and to be held in early September near Florence, Italy. The European University Institute, at San Domenico di Fiesole, will be the venue for the 4-day event. The keynote speaker is Professor Giuliano Amato, former Prime Minister of Italy and former Vice President of the Convention on the future of the European Constitution. The Annual Course attracts delegates from many

countries including bursary recipients this year from Kenya, Malaysia and Puerto Rico.

Jules Winterton, IALS Associate Director and Librarian, will chair the formal opening of the Course on 5th September, in his capacity as President of the International Association. Jules comments: "The conference invites speakers and delegates from many countries and legal traditions to explore together the development of legal systems in an enlarged Europe and the legal documentation arising from those systems. In doing this, the Association continues its task of bringing together legal information professionals and legal scholars in an international and comparative forum across borders and across legal systems. It is, of course, also an opportunity to renew friendships, make new acquaintances, and learn from colleagues in leading legal research libraries around the world."

### The BAILII / JISC OpenLaw Project

*By Joe Ury, Executive Director, British and Irish Legal Information Institute*

The usefulness of BAILII, the British and Irish Legal Information Institute, would be greatly enhanced if BAILII were able to provide not only copies of judgments in cases decided in the last 10 years, but also the most important judgments in older cases. This will be of particular benefit to law faculties and students. It will also be of benefit to other users of BAILII such as Legal Advice Centres, Citizens Advice Bureaux, voluntary organisations and overseas users of BAILII,

many of whom are not in a position to subscribe to the Law Reports or to commercial databases.

To this end BAILII has been provided with a grant from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (via the Joint Information Systems Committee) in order to digitise and make available online the most important judgments from the past, in the following approximate numbers:

1. 2,000 judgments of the most cited English and Scottish and Northern Ireland cases on the core areas listed below;
2. 400 judgments on non-core areas listed below; and
3. 15 research reports in core areas and 10 research reports in non-core areas.

The project will primarily focus on the following core areas of the undergraduate law syllabus:

Contract	Criminal law
Tort (Delict)	Commercial
Evidence	Family
Property / Land law	EU law
Trusts	Tax
Public / Constitutional law	

#### Project Methodology

For most of BAILII's law school/further education users these are the areas which are weakest in access provision, and which are likely to be required most frequently. A mechanism for collection of these materials will be set up to include representatives of law schools, interest groups, librarians etc... Special interest groups (for example, those groups currently existing within the Society of Legal Scholars and the Association of Law Teachers, particularly the former) will be invited to be actively involved in 'collection groups'.

A short study of Constitutional Law has been conducted under the auspices of BAILII/IALS.

In that study it was found that there were some 180 core judgments (up to and including the 1990s) which were frequently cited in undergraduate textbooks and course syllabi. On the assumption that each of the core areas has a similar requirement, BAILII intends to digitise around 1,600 judgments.

This estimate is based on English requirements. If we include Northern Ireland and Scottish materials, we aim to digitise 2,000 judgments in total.

However, law schools also teach modules and courses in the undergraduate syllabus which cover a wider area and which are relevant to a number of institutions. For example:

Intellectual property	Banking
Law and society	Human rights
Competition law	Etc.
Housing	

We will set up an on-line mechanism to select judgments for these latter areas and to arrive at agreement with the user groups over this selection. We are expecting a similar number of relevant judgments in each of these areas as was found in Constitutional Law. Given the number of non-core courses and subjects (in total, the Society of Legal Scholars has 28 special subject groups) we will focus on the 40 most requested judgments in 10 subject areas where there is a clear need for historic judgments. This amounts to 400 judgments.

Law teaching is now a much more contextual form of education, with students expected to read reports on the development of law and legal system, in addition to case-law. There are a large number of still valuable research reports (for example, law reform reports on property, family matters etc. etc.). BAILII intends to digitise approximately a minimum of 15 core reports, and 10 reports in non-core areas.

The OpenLaw project also has made funds available for improvements to be made to the BAILII user interface and search engine.

## Foreign Law: working with FLARE

*Lesley Young, Information Resources Manager, reports.*

The consortium of libraries which produced FLAG, the web-based Foreign law guide, described in the last newsletter, is continuing its work to improve access to foreign, comparative and international law under the name of **FLARE** – Foreign legal research. FLARE is using a number of ways to achieve this including organising an introductory course on the legal systems and sources of legal information in Central and Eastern Europe; developing a web-based union list of library holdings of European official gazettes – to date this includes the holdings of the Institute and the British Library – and developing collaborative collection development and management policies to ensure the widest possible coverage of foreign legal material in the major research law libraries of the UK.

One of the main activities in the area of collection management has been work on creating the most complete and accessible national collection of foreign official gazettes. The Institute Library and the British Library have carried out a pilot project involving the official gazettes for Belgium and Italy. The two sets are being amalgamated to fill gaps and retain those volumes which are in the best and most usable condition so that they can be made available to all legal researchers. It is intended that this work should be extended to holdings on other jurisdictions.

Another project being undertaken by FLARE is the sharing of responsibility for collecting legal materials for the 10 European Union accession states and the 4 candidate states to ensure that coverage is as complete as possible. The range of skills within the FLARE member libraries include in depth legal knowledge and good language skills which should ensure that holdings are comprehensive. For more details of the

FLARE project, click on the FLARE icon on the IALS website.

## IALS review of US law journals

The IALS Library has been carrying out a detailed review of its print holdings of its 300 current general United States law journals. The purpose of the review is twofold: to identify titles in the collection which are of less academic value and to identify important research titles which are not held but which the library would like to acquire.

It is essential that the Institute library maintains permanently a good collection of legal research journals located as conveniently as possible whilst making the most effective use of its hard-pressed journals budget and taking full advantage of the increasing availability of long runs of full text journals in electronic format from reliable sources such as HeinOnline. The library also needs to address the problem of the acute shortage of space in the Institute building.

The Library used a variety of methods to assess titles and inform its decisions including a survey of library users, analysing several citation studies, noting the availability on HeinOnline and looking at the US law school rankings where relevant. Based on its findings the Library then allocated the titles to one of four categories and decided on the possible action to be taken with each, ranging from keeping the whole set on the open shelves regardless of availability in full text electronically to cancelling the subscription and keeping the title on closed access.

The Library also identified a number of titles which it does not hold and these will be considered as part of the regular review of potential subscriptions.

*Lesley Young, Information Resources Manager*

## IALS Library Series Book Project

*An update from John Huggett, Project Supervisor, and Robert Turner, Project Assistant*

The printed serials catalogue at IALS, the Series Book, is well on the way to being digitized. Almost 120,000 items from 8,000 titles have been placed on the Millennium catalogue and completed records can be accessed through our OPAC from within or outside the library, at <http://library.sas.ac.uk>

Bibliographic records are linked to a PDF image of the relevant page in the Series Book. All of these images have now been scanned; most have already been hotlinked to bibliographic records.

One problem has been the scattering of related titles, which are found in the same place in the Series Book, but are not connected in the digitised catalogue. We have reconnected them by creating an umbrella record linked to all the related titles. Readers can also navigate between the individual records by using a series connection. For example, if you look at the catalogue record for the *Report of the Law Reform Commission of Canada*, the holdings record gives you the titles of several individual reports, with a link to their respective catalogue record.

With the project now entering its final quarter, we are working on tidying up, sorting out and finding whether we ever managed to replace those missing pages from volume 13 of *Annuario di diritto comparato e di studi legislativi* (what the militarily inclined would term euphemistically 'mopping up operations'). Given the size of the holdings, this is taking a little longer than originally imagined but it will produce a fuller record and one of more help to the researcher and librarian. It is the knowledge that we are producing such a useful resource for the worldwide community of information specialists and academics that inspires those of us who work on the project.

The nature of the work is such that it can be repetitive. But the vast range of holdings, the odd quibble or confusion over precise holdings, the accuracy of a certain bibliographic record, or title changes in series, all keep us on our toes and give us some insight into the rich tapestry of legal publishing. Checking for possible gaps in runs or additional volumes gave us the unexpected bonus of taking the lift down to the refreshing cool of the reserve stock basement in the sweltering days of the summer. With the physical aspect certain, the printed catalogue is checked (and only very rarely emended) and the generations-old ink (and sometimes pencil) record on the foolscap page is copied into the less-human typeface of the computer. The pages of the series books are stamped 'RECORD AUTOMATED', and this is the mark of their successful passage into virtual existence. Scanned for posterity's sake, their unfading image accompanies their newly-born digital cousin, visible though the wonder of the web. An occasional typo is spotted and corrected. Piece by piece the whole project is coming together, the frustrations flattened by the growing mass of item records, PDF images and hyperlinks that coming together in the one place will ultimately constitute the project as you, dear user, will come to know it. Please remember the toil of those who built it!

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## Law Gateway on SOSIG

*Heather Memess, SOSIG Project Officer, reports.*

In 2005/6 IALS Library is pleased to be continuing work, in partnership with the University of Bristol, on the law section of the Social Science Information Gateway. The SOSIG Law Gateway, on [www.sosig.ac.uk/law](http://www.sosig.ac.uk/law) is a free Internet service providing an overview of the best legal websites for UK education and research. Other features on SOSIG include **Grapevine** where you can find details of conferences, events, courses and academic

contacts and **My Account** which enables you to customise SOSIG to create your own, tailored SOSIG information services.

Earlier in the year a booklet introducing the SOSIG Law Gateway, and giving details of some of the most useful Internet resources for law, was sent to academics in all UK law schools. The 'Best of the Web' Internet Resources for Law booklet can be downloaded at [http://www.sosig.ac.uk/about\\_us/docs/sosig\\_law\\_booklet.pdf](http://www.sosig.ac.uk/about_us/docs/sosig_law_booklet.pdf)

Free training materials can also be downloaded from the SOSIG Law Gateway. Steve Whittle has revised the SOSIG Law Workbook and developed a SOSIG Foreign and International Law Workbook. Both documents are available in Ms Word format and may be downloaded and customised for local training needs. The workbooks are designed to introduce the service, offering examples and exercises to help explore the most relevant legal materials available on the Internet. The workbooks aim to facilitate practical workshop sessions as well as supporting self-paced learning.

All the latest developments on the Law Gateway can now be followed on SOSIG Subject News- the SOSIG blog. This provides service news and highlights legal news stories with links to relevant subject sections and resources on the Law Gateway <http://www.sosig.ac.uk/subject-news/>

Congratulations to Sue Pettit, Subject Librarian for Law at the University of Bristol and joint section editor of the SOSIG Law Gateway, who was voted 2005 Wildy-BIALL Law Librarian of the Year. Sue was presented with the award at the British and Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL) conference in Harrogate in June this year.

If you are aware of any Web sites not already on SOSIG that you think should be included please let us know. Suggestions can be submitted on the feedback form which you can find on the welcome page, just click "Add Resource".

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## IALS Archive

The IALS Archive is currently participating in two new online database projects being co-ordinated by the University of London Research Library Services, (ULRLS). The first, which will be launched in October 2005, is the Higher Education Libraries in your Personal History Research (HELPERS) project <http://helpers.shl.lon.ac.uk/index.html>, which is designed to raise awareness of HE Archives as a research resource for family and local historians. Collection level descriptions and contact details are included, together with an evaluation of the relevance and value of the collections for research. The database also includes useful research skills tutorials.

The second project is the ULRLS Archive Database, which has recently received funding from the Vice Chancellor's development fund. The database will provide an online search facility for archive collections within the Institutes of the School of Advanced Study (SAS), and will be developed using Adlib software.

This important initiative will bring together catalogues currently held in a variety of electronic and manual formats and standards, and will provide a major research tool. It will allow archive collections to be searched individually or collectively, providing links to related sources held by the SAS Institutes and Senate House Library, and will increase awareness of these important and wide - ranging archive collections. Work on the project started in August 2005 and it will be launched in late 2006.

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Finally, please find enclosed with this newsletter a new leaflet outlining what IALS Library has to offer to research students and teaching staff in law schools in the UK. If you need more copies, just contact Gerry Power.

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