



## Library & Information Services, January 2007

Dear Colleague,

Hello and New Year Greetings from all at IALS Library and Information Services! We would like to take this opportunity to offer you some news and updates from the Institute Library and associated services:

- The official status of legal resources on the web, *page 1*
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Best wishes,  
Gerry Power  
Access Librarian

### Official status of legal resources on the Web

Richard J Matthews is Visiting Fellow in Law Librarianship at IALS from October 2006 to January 2007. Richard has been a lawyer and a law librarian in the United States for many years, and is former Head of Reference and Research Services, University Libraries, Wichita State University.

Richard's research at IALS concerns the official or unofficial status of legal resources on the Web. He is co-editor of the forthcoming *State-by-State Report on Authentication of Online Legal Resources*, to be published by the American Association of Law Libraries.

He read a paper on his research at IALS on the evening of 11 December 2006, which attracted an audience of over 30 lawyers and librarians. He made three claims or theses in his paper:

- Law has addressed the official or unofficial status of some legal resources on the Web
- Convention is taking hold in the extension of official status to some legal resources
- The concept of official status is useful and important if it is safeguarded by authentication procedures

Richard's paper took a comparative approach, considering US federal and state law and UK law. He analysed some examples of online sources of US and UK court decisions. His analysis stimulated discussion at the end of his paper, and one person remarked that his research is asking some very interesting and challenging questions about online legal resources. By popular demand, the notes of his paper are now on the IALS website and you can find them signposted at <http://ials.sas.ac.uk> - Gerry Power

Richard agreed to write a short piece for this newsletter:

"The opportunity to hold an IALS Fellowship in Law Librarianship could not have come at a better juncture in my career. A warm thank you goes to Jules Winterton and to all my international colleagues at the Institute's law library. My three and a half months of background study and focused research

on the official status of UK legal resources on the Web assisted substantially in finalizing my work on the American Association of Law Library's (AALL) Authentication Survey. That survey, administered by the AALL Access to Electronic Legal Information Committee, investigated the official status and authentication procedures, if any, of state-level primary legal resources available on government-hosted websites. I chaired the committee during 2005-2006, when it prepared the survey instrument, recruited state representatives to complete questions for each state, and worked on perfecting and compiling the results. My IALS Fellowship contributed substantially in my thinking through with the AALL Washington office and the current chair of AELIC the conclusions for the forthcoming *State-by-State Report on Authentication of Online Legal Resources* (AALL Access to Electronic Legal Information Committee and Washington Affairs Office, 2007).

My principal investigation at the Institute significantly stretched my understanding of the UK legal system. The opportunity to prepare and present "When is Law on the Web the 'Official' Published Source? Criteria, Quandaries, and Implications for the US and UK" (December 11, 2006) reflects strengths of the IALS library in supporting in-depth research into British legal bibliography, particularly Web resources. The close association of the British and Irish Legal Information Institute (BAILII) and IALS aptly fit with my research goals. Although I have not yet secured a publication source, I believe my fellowship provided ample material for a two-part article I propose with a title something like: "The Authority of Law on the Web: Assessing US and UK Readiness for the All-Digital World" - Part I "Official Status and a Focus on Court Decisions" - Part II "Authentication and a Focus on Statutes and Regulatory Materials." Ambitious? Awfully, maybe. I'm busily at work on the first part, since it grows directly out of my IALS

presentation. When I depart from London in mid-January, I know I will miss the time for contemplation offered here. I will surely miss as well my thoughtful friends at the Institute and its library." - Richard J Matthews

The presentation by Richard Matthews was extremely topical. On 20th December 2006, the long-awaited UK Statute Law Database (SLD), the official revised edition of the primary legislation of the United Kingdom, was made available online at <http://www.statutelaw.gov.uk/>

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### **IALS Introduction to Legal Research Methods Course**

- by Lisa Webley, Principal Lecturer, Department of Academic Legal Studies, University of Westminster

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies runs an annual introduction to legal research methods course for newly registered M.Phil/Ph.D. students who are undertaking doctoral level research that falls within the field of law or involves a legal component. The course is principally undertaken by students drawn from IALS and from Queen Mary, although staff and students have attended from other schools and colleges in previous years, and are very welcome to register. The course is offered as an intensive two-week programme that aims to assist students with developing their research question and focus, their research design and the methods that they may employ in their enquiry. It combines doctrinal research techniques with socio-legal and empirical methods. Classes are taught by IALS staff - both by law library specialists and academic research staff who are lawyers and social scientists, with the aid of two colleagues from other institutions. IALS is very fortunate to have specialist law librarians who are willing and able to offer advanced law library training as part of the course, as well as other staff who

provide research methods skills training, in addition to practical advice and their experience as PhD supervisors. It is hoped that this provides a firm foundation as well as encouragement for students in the early stages of their doctoral research.

The course this year covered the following areas: Introduction to M.Phil/Ph.D. research; introduction to theories of research; research design and strategies; the role of the literature review; legal research on the internet; legal research and legal databases; international legal research; commonwealth legal research; comparative research theory and concepts; comparative research methods and EU research; comparative research and North American legal sources; policy research; qualitative research employing interviews; focus group research; third party observational research; analysing qualitative data; quantitative research and the use of surveys; analysis of quantitative data; theory generation; and written style and writing up findings.

We offer an optional session for students who are either civil law trained lawyers or who are relatively new to legal study, to provide an introduction to the English legal system and legal method. The course offers all students the opportunity to receive feedback on research design, literature review style and to take part in the question and answer clinic at the end of the course. In the past the sessions have all been plenary ones, which has limited the places to 25 students per course, but this year we have experimented with some parallel sessions so as to permit more students to attend and to allow attendees to specialise in methods that are appropriate to their research. The course runs in the autumn term each year, and by exception also in the spring term some years. We are always happy to hear of other sessions that may prove helpful to students and also from people who would like to become involved in the

course. If anyone has suggestions about new sessions or would like further details about what is involved in teaching on the course then please do let me know.

Lisa Webley  
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### **Hidden treasures of IALS Library**

- as revealed by Aileen Cook, Serials Librarian at IALS

Have you ever wondered where you might find the handwritten statutes of the brand new colony of New South Wales? A 1562 dictionary of legal abbreviations? Or the report of the appeal case between Michael Douglas and *Hello!* magazine? How about legislation from jurisdictions from Alaska to Zanzibar, encompassing Papua New Guinea, Antarctica and Outer Space? Then look no further, as all these and more are available in the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library.

When I decided to arrange a display for a visiting group of non-legal librarians, I discovered I was spoilt for choice. It was clear that the Library - especially the reserve collections in the basement - held enough fascinating material for many displays, and it was difficult to narrow it down to just one. In the end I concentrated on six areas - reports of famous cases (including Dr Crippen, the Oz obscenity trial, and the case of Helen Duncan, the last woman to be convicted of witchcraft in the UK in 1944); legislation from around the world; reports of war crime trials; examples of the changes in legal literature concerning mental health (although this could have been any number of other subjects); legal jokes (I use this word advisedly); and finally a catch-all category of Interesting Items.

This last section included some of our oldest, rarest and most interesting material, and the following is a very short

list of examples. The laws of a country give a fascinating insight into the lives and concerns of its inhabitants, and this was what I was trying to convey to our visitors. Of course, we included the Magna Carta - sadly not the original, but as reprinted in the *Statutes at Large* of 1811. The reforming zeal of the new legislators following the French Revolution is shown by a collection of laws published in 1793, open at 5 October 1793 but followed by the next date, 15 Vendemiaire, an.11. Another unusual French item is a copy of the *Code Napoléon* from 1812, which at only 10 cm high was probably a pocket edition for taking into court. The manuscript laws of New South Wales, covering 1786-1821, also have beautifully handwritten tabs attached to the pages for ease of reference. The Acts of Assembly passed in the Island of Barbadoes from 1648 to 1718 contains numerous laws, most of which seem to be concerned with alcohol - regulation of alehouses, the duty payable on wine and so on. But what can have been the reason for enacting An Act to prevent Abuse of Lawyers?

It's certainly true that the Institute Library holds a lot of fascinating material which is of interest to more than just legal historians. As if to prove this, at Christmas I arranged another display, this time with a Christmas theme. Obviously this was far more limiting, but I was pleased to be able to display the Ordinance of 1644 banning the celebration of Christmas, some statutes from Christmas Island, and my favourite piece of festive legislation, the *Sausage Making (Christmas) Order 1968*. - Aileen Cook, Serials Librarian, IALS

If you have any questions about IALS collections of primary materials, books and journals, please phone us on 020 7862 5790, or you can send the Library an e-mail message to [ials@sas.ac.uk](mailto:ials@sas.ac.uk) You can search the Library Catalogue on the IALS website, just click on the red book icon.



Intute: Law  
- by Heather Memess

The IALS Library continues to work on the Intute: Law Gateway - <http://www.intute.ac.uk/socialsciences/law> - in partnership with the University of Bristol Law Library. The Intute service was launched in July 2006 as the new face of the Resource Discovery Network (RDN) providing access to high quality internet resources of interest to the higher and further education communities. At the heart of the service is the internet catalogue containing profiles of key sites which have been selected, reviewed and catalogued by us. The Law Gateway includes resource types such as legislation, case law, journals, books, governmental sites and professional organisations and covers UK, European Union, and international law. A full range of jurisdictions and legal subject areas are also provided.

Intute can be searched or browsed. It is possible to search the whole catalogue across all subject areas -science and technology, arts and humanities, social sciences, health and life sciences- or to focus on individual subjects and sub-sections. A search on the full catalogue aids inter-disciplinary work, enabling researchers to find law materials in other contexts such as business, government and politics. Searching can be done via a simple keyword search box or by using the advanced search form, which enables you to construct queries specifying fields to be searched, subject area and resource type.

Browsing from the Intute: Law page takes you to the following categories: General Law, UK Law, European Union Law, Other Jurisdictions, International Law and Law by Subject Area. Selecting any of these will take you to another list of sub-categories. For example, Law by

Subject Area provides you with a list of legal topics arranged alphabetically. Below this list are resources dealing generally with a range of subjects starting with those marked as 'Editor's Choice'. These are sites we have identified as being particularly useful. In this way the service offers options to support different stages of research - you can browse to gather materials and see what is out there or you can search to pinpoint specific items.

One of the new features of Intute is the MyIntute service. This personalisation tool enables you to create your own set of records from resources you have identified on Intute. Records can be tagged and saved before being emailed or exported to another website - as part of a personal Internet resource bibliography or reading list for example, or as a reliable set of links for an academic Web page. Free registration is required to set up a MyIntute account. You can then save your searches and receive email alerts whenever new records have been added which match your search terms. Similarly you can select subject areas of interest and receive email alerts when new records are added for these subjects. Help with using MyIntute is available here [http://www.intute.ac.uk/supportdocs/quick\\_guide\\_intute\\_myintute.doc](http://www.intute.ac.uk/supportdocs/quick_guide_intute_myintute.doc)

You can recommend a site for inclusion on Intute: Law at any time: [http://www.intute.ac.uk/new\\_resource.html](http://www.intute.ac.uk/new_resource.html)

Heather Memess, Intute: Law Project Officer

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### **New report on researchers' needs and perceptions**

A new report from the Research Information Network ([www.rin.ac.uk](http://www.rin.ac.uk)) aims to assess the use and perceptions of resource discovery services by

academic researchers in the UK. The report is available on the RIN website, and is entitled *Researchers and Discovery Services: Behaviour, Perceptions and Needs* (November 2006).

By resource discovery services are meant the wide variety of resources used by researchers to help them identify and find the information they need: abstracting and indexing services, search engines such as Google, portals like Intute, catalogues, websites, libraries, and networks of colleagues, etc. The report aims to paint a broad picture of researcher behaviour and views. Its findings and analysis pose many interesting points and questions for those of us who work to support researchers.

The key findings of the report include:

- Researchers' general satisfaction, in the social sciences, with the resource discovery tools they use
- Difficulties and frustration posed by a lack of access to many journal articles, and short backfiles of many journal titles
- The importance of peers and networks of colleagues as sources of information and advice
- The integration of resource discovery services into the research process
- The popularity of alerting and updating services
- The trend towards remote use of libraries via desktop rather than visits in person
- Difficulty in access to foreign language material
- Difficulty of tracking down chapters in books by multiple authors

At IALS Library, we will be studying the report closely to explore its implications for the services we provide, and to help us identify new and improved ways of reaching out to researchers.

Gerry Power  
Access Librarian

## **Brief Update on services at IALS Library**

WIALS is the new wireless internet access service at IALS. Library members are able to login to the WiFi internet services on their own laptop computer, using details from their IALS library card. Guides to WiFi and to connecting computer laptops at IALS are available on the Library's website, and in print at the Enquiry Desk.

Work has started on refurbishing the Library Lift at IALS, and is due to be completed by the end of March 2007. The L2 floor is closed to readers during that time, but to help readers during the refurbishment project, we offer a regular book-fetching service from floors L2 and L3 every day. Some recently published and frequently used books have been moved temporarily from L2 to the 4th floor concourse area. The computers on floor L2 have also been temporarily moved to the third floor reading room. We will facilitate access to either the 3rd floor or 2nd floor for any reader with limited mobility. If you have any question or concern about using the Library while the Library Lift is unavailable, please do not hesitate to contact us on 020 7862 5790 or send us a message to [ials@sas.ac.uk](mailto:ials@sas.ac.uk). We can look forward to using a refurbished and improved lift from Spring of this year! Incidentally, the main lifts in IALS, which take you to the Library entrance on the 4th floor, are not affected and are operating as usual.

News compiled, and distributed to UK law schools and academic law libraries, by Gerry Power, Access Librarian, IALS. January 2007.

## **Document supply service for academic researchers**

The IALS Library provides a photocopying service for currently registered academic staff and students, by mail or fax, within normal copyright restrictions, to individuals in the UK and around the world. The Library also participates in the British Library scheme and can handle requests for photocopies from academic libraries. Full details are on our website, or phone us on 020 7862 5790 to discuss your requirements.