IALS | LIBRARY NEWS

Institute of Advanced Legal Studies

June 2009

IALS Springs into Summer

Spring 2009 has been a busy time at the IALS Library! Lesley Young reports on the new digitisation and cataloguing project, which began in late March. Laura Griffiths outlines the reader satisfaction survey for 2009, and Hester Swift gives a brief profile of two international law databases. The Flare Index to Treaties was launched in March, and you can read more details about the Index here. This newsletter also includes a short update on the Current Legal Research Topics Database.

IALS Library is here to help law researchers, as an addition to their own law library. If you have any questions about our collections, services and admission, please get in touch – we will be glad to hear from you and to help! Our phone number is 020 7862 5790 and our e-mail address is ials@sas.ac.uk

Best wishes,

Gerard Power
Access Librarian

Russell Square in bloom

Digitisation and Cataloguing Project at IALS

IALS Library has obtained funding from the Vice Chancellor's Development Fund and the SAS Dean's Development Fund to undertake a six month project to catalogue and digitise selected titles from its collections.

Frontispiece from Il Consolato del Mare

The aims of the project are: to make some of our earliest volumes more widely known and accessible to researchers by cataloguing them, providing an image of their title pages and then by fully digitising some of the older and at risk volumes; to develop practical expertise in the art of digitising historical material from our extensive collections; and to continue to play a part in contributing digital content to a major international project organised by one of our overseas partners

LLMC-Digital.

The project involves two categories of material. One is a small collection of printed maritime and shipping law treatises transferred to IALS by the Association of Average Adjusters and the London Shipping Law Centre under a trust deed. This interesting collection ranges in date from the 17th to the 20th centuries with volumes published in various parts of Western Europe. All of the volumes will be catalogued and images of their title pages will be produced; the detailed bibliographic records along with the title pages will appear on the Library catalogue. Selected titles, out of copyright, will then be fully digitised and the text made available through the web site under a creative commons licence. The volumes themselves will be integrated with our existing collections. The second category of material which the project will work on is early Commonwealth legislation. This includes seventeenth century legislation from Heligoland and manuscript copies of eighteenth century laws from New South Wales. These are already fully catalogued and integrated with the collections and the project funding will allow us to make them more widely available through digitisation. The ink is fading in many of the manuscript volumes

Title Page from Il Consolato del Mare

so the availability of a digital copy will ensure that the content is not lost.

The project will be using existing resources and expertise from within the Library supplemented by additional specialist equipment and two newly recruited project team members with good experience in cataloguing and in the preparation of digital images. Members of the team visited several research libraries with digitisation programmes of their own and gained a great deal of practical information. We are consulting within the UK and overseas concerning the selection of titles for full digitisation. Before making final decisions we shall also be checking what has already been digitised in order to ensure that we do not duplicate effort. The title page images will be prepared onsite by the project team while the full text scanning will be carried out by an external organisation working to our specifications.

The project began in earnest in the last week of March and we have made good progress in assessing and cataloguing the volumes and creating a work station for producing the title page images. We are now in the process of evaluating examples of images produced by an outside bureau, finalising our technical specifications and agreeing a list of priority candidates for full text scanning.

More detail about the project is available on our website at
http://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/digital/digital.htm

Lesley Young

Flare Index to Treaties

Want to find the text of a multilateral treaty fast? Can't remember its name or the full date it was signed but need the treaty text quickly? Know vaguely what it is about but do know where it was signed? Help is now here!

The Flare Index to Treaties http://ials.sas.ac.uk/treatyindex.htm hosted by the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, contains details of over 1,500 of the most significant multilateral treaties concluded from 1856 to the present. It is searchable by:

- keywords drawn from the official, popular and alternative titles which have been used for each treaty;

- additional keywords relevant to the subject matter or organisations associated with the treaty;

- the date on which the treaty was concluded either precisely or just the year;

- the place where the treaty was concluded.

The entry for each treaty in the database includes:

- where the full text of the treaty can be found in printed publications;

- links to where the text is available on the Internet;

- the official languages used for the text of the treaty;

- the name of the state or international organisation acting as depository for the treaty.

The Index includes entries for all the treaties and conventions in force now concluded by or under the auspices of the Council of Europe (CETS series), the International Labour Organisation (ILO C series) and the Organisation of American States (OAS). It also includes a selection concluded by or under the auspices of many international organisations including the African Union, the Arab League, the EU, and the International Maritime Organisation, among others.

Like its sister, the FLAG database of foreign and international law collections in UK universities and national libraries, the Flare Index to Treaties is free and easy to use. It will be kept up to date annually.

Try the Flare Index to Treaties now: http://ials.sas.ac.uk/treatyindex.htm

The Flare Index to Treaties was devised and compiled by Dr Peter Clinch, Cardiff University. The web database and search interface were devised by Steven Whittle, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of London.

The Index is supported by the FLARE partnership of libraries http://ials.sas.ac.uk/flare/flare.htm led by the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of London. The partnership includes the Bodleian Law Library, Oxford; the Squire Law Library, Cambridge; the School of Oriental and African Studies, London and the British Library.

The project was financed by the University of London Vice Chancellor's Development Fund and is managed by Steven Whittle Steven.Whittle@sas.ac.uk Information Systems Manager at IALS.

Reader Satisfaction Survey March 2009

A survey of readers was carried out between 9 and 14 March 2009 in order to find out how satisfied readers are with the library's collections and information services. The survey asked readers to rate how the library generally meets their needs in terms of books, journals, electronic databases, library catalogue, computers, photocopiers, printing, helpfulness of staff, training sessions, study facilities, study environment and opening and closing times.

The top rating was tied between 98.34 % for helpfulness of the staff, and overall satisfaction also at 98.34%, with electronic training sessions at 95.86%, range of journals at 93.37%, range of e-journals at 92.48%, range of books at 92.26%, and quality of computing facilities at 91.66%. Also this year, for the first time, the rating for our study facilities scored above 90%, at 91.48%, (87.19% in 2008). The fact that the rating for our electronic training sessions has improved year on year, and remains above 90% for the second year running, is particularly gratifying as we have expanded and developed these, and this result clearly shows that researchers and students view our annual programme of training sessions as a major value-added service .

Ratings above 80% were received for availability of PCs, photocopiers and printers, the study environment - noise, sufficient copies of LLM textbooks, ease of use of library catalogue, and opening times. We are particularly pleased to have received a rating of over 80% for noise levels for the first time since the survey began, as the Academic Services team have been trying to police noise in the reading rooms more actively, undertaking regular patrols to ensure a quiet study environment.

For more details of the survey method, findings, and the full reports, see the website at http://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/satisfaction_survey_results_2009.htm

Laura Griffiths
Academic Services Librarian

New Electronic Resources at IALS

Foreign and International Law Librarian, Hester Swift, reports on two subscriptions which have recently been taken out to two international law databases:

Oxford Reports on International Law (ORIL)
ORIL is an Oxford University Press database comprising five international case law modules: International Criminal Law; International Human Rights Law; International Investment Claims; International Law in Domestic Courts; and International Courts of General Jurisdiction (ICJ and PCIJ cases). Each case has a headnote as well as

the full text of the decision. The International Law in Domestic Courts module provides expert analysis of each case and translates key passages of foreign-language judgments into English.

Max Planck encyclopedia of public international law
This is a new edition of the printed *Encyclopedia of public international law*. It is edited by Rüdiger Wolfrum, Director of the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, and published online by Oxford University Press. New articles are uploaded every few months; the latest update covers issues of current interest such as piracy and the recognition and enforcement of foreign arbitral awards.

Both databases can be accessed by academic users onsite at IALS on the Electronic Law Library. If you intend to visit IALS soon and would like to use these, or any other database on the ELL, please phone us on 020 7862 5790 if you would like a demonstration.

Current Legal Research Topics database

The Current Legal Research Topics database has been updated during Spring 2009. I have written to most UK law schools to ask for details of the working titles of new dissertations, and for updates to existing titles. Many thanks to all the research students, teachers, and administrators who have replied and helped with the database so far this year. To date, over 100 new titles have been added, and 50 existing titles have been updated. It is still not too late to send in details of new or updated titles – just e-mail the details to Gerard.Power@sas.ac.uk