



# UKZN LIBRARY

## NEWSLETTER

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Editor : Rosemary Kuhn

### **Wikipedia – wikid or wonderful?**

It is difficult to find anyone who has not at least had Wikipedia references thrust in their face when doing a Google search; or who has not ventured into this interesting source of information boasting over two million articles in 250 languages since its inception in 2001. Love it or hate it, Wikipedia, an open content encyclopedia that welcomes contributions from the novice author or enthusiast as well as the expert, (just a matter of free registration), whose content is constantly available for editing, boasts 683 million visitors to the site annually. This attests to its attraction to the new digital generation (and others) in particular as an electronic collaboration project that is “huge, ... idiosyncratic, careful, messy, funny, shocking, and full of simmering controversies – and its free and its fast”<sup>1</sup>, addictive and current. Wikipedia entries pop up in every web search, they are unavoidable. Statistics from the UKZN ICT department indicate that in the first six months of this year, Wikipedia was ranked third highest in terms of megabyte downloads of any online resource.

Wikipedia was established by the non-profit Wikipedia Foundation and is maintained largely by volunteers who act as ‘administrators’ and editors for erroneous content and vandalism. Whilst extensive guidelines exist for contributors and referencing is encouraged, proper peer review is available for a relatively small segment of articles. As a result, errors and untruths can go unnoticed for long periods of time. A quick search on Google reveals an apparent dearth of scholarly studies about Wikipedia that support the range of criticisms and compliments for Wikipedia. Much of its original content was the 1911 edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

Criticisms are many. According to critics, authors can use pseudonyms so credentials cannot be ascertained. Three quarters of authors are estimated to be under 25 years of age and novice writers (the point of Wikipedia?) because of the low barriers to entry. Wikipedia promotes a growing trend of support for trivia instead of scholarship where everyone is an authority; much information is plainly incorrect, shallow or even slanderous and Wikipedia’s authoring policies encourage users to ‘abandon a world of certainty for an intangible universe made up of half blown ideas and blatant errors’<sup>2</sup>. Is Wikipedia in fact an encyclopedia at all? The editorial policies mean that any article can be constantly subjected to edits although Wikipedia claims that the original article always exists. Wikipedia has been accused of censorship; the focus is on quantity rather than quality and Wikipedia is rife with copyright infringements - the list is endless.

Support for or tacit acceptance of Wikipedia by its proponents is based on its currency, ease of use and accessibility. It’s the ideal starting point, and in some cases, finishing point in a search for information. It has a wide range of accurate and often in-depth information. It includes current events and news. Enthusiasts writing on particular topics often provide intricate detail and hints and tips that are hard to find elsewhere. Some subject areas have established peer review mechanisms. There are genuine attempts by experts to work with Wikipedia to ensure quality information is accessible by users. For example there is a peer review group for chemistry information and the Chemical Abstracts Service earlier this year announced its commitment to helping Wikipedia provide accurate CAS registry numbers. Many Wikipedia entries are of high quality due to maintenance by genuine experts and enthusiasts. In 2005 the journal *Nature*<sup>3</sup> conducted a comparison of a range of articles in *Encyclopedia Britannica* and Wikipedia and concluded that both sources contained errors but with fewer in *Britannica*. *Britannica* itself recently announced<sup>4</sup> an initiative to encourage wider

participation by readers in terms of contributions to the encyclopedia but at the same time maintaining editorial input by experts.

Where does this leave an academic community that is already plagued by the uncritical and unfettered cut and paste activities of students from the 'other information world' (outside of traditionally determined scholarly information) on the visible Web? It is nigh impossible nor necessarily sensible to ban the use of Wikipedia as has been suggested by many. The primary information environment for today's student is the World Wide Web and this 'same medium that brings us Wikipedia also brings us e-reference and ejournals.'<sup>5</sup>

The emergence of new entities such as Wikipedia offers the opportunity and necessity to educate users about the differing natures of e-information; the need to verify information; the need to assess resources against particular criteria and be aware of the range of resources available. The requirement to find, use and apply information for a range of circumstances is integrally bound up with the necessity for users to understand the information world. Users should be able to critically evaluate sources and use information appropriately. Librarians would argue that this is where the gap lies – where and how do students learn about the information world and its relationship to the substantive knowledge imparted in lectures? If there is no formal mechanism in place for this we should expect them to use what is easiest and immediately available and possibly go no further.

Rosemary Kuhn

<sup>1</sup> N Baker. (2008). The charms of Wikipedia. *New York Review of Books* 55(4) Mar 20, 1

<sup>2</sup> W Badke. (2008). What to do with Wikipedia *Online* 32(2) 4

<sup>3</sup> J Giles. (2005) [Internet encyclopaedias go head to head.](#) *Nature*, 12/15/2005,

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/blogs/2008/06/britannicas-new-site-more-participation-collaboration-from-experts-and-readers/>

<sup>5</sup> W Badke. (2008). What to do with Wikipedia *Online* 32(2) 4

## New Subject librarians



**Noni Makhathini**



**Sagren Moodley**

**Noni Makhathini** has joined the Pietermaritzburg subject librarian unit with effect from 1 June 2008. A Durbanite, Noni undertook her tertiary studies at the universities of Zululand and Natal completing her library diploma in 1994. She has worked for the eThekweni municipal library, an AIDS project in Amanzimtoti and recently the Law Society library in Pietermaritzburg. Noni will be based in the Cecil Renaud main library and will be responsible for the subjects: Computer Science, Education, Information systems and technology, Mathematics and Statistics and actuarial science. Her email is: [makhathinin@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:makhathinin@ukzn.ac.za) and extn: 5054

**Sagren Moodley** has joined the Howard College subject librarian unit with effect from 1 June 2008. Sagren has been based in the Medical School library until this appointment. Sagren has worked at UKZN (and the former UN) for the past 16 years and has progressed steadily through the ranks to

his current position. A move in 1998 from the EG Malherbe Library to the Medical Library as IT/E-resources librarian set the ball rolling in terms of his studies and professional activities. He is currently pursuing his Masters in Information Studies through UKZN. Sagren hopes to utilize his IT knowledge in developing new and innovative programmes for Information Services. He will be responsible for part of the Engineering portfolio. Sagren has/is involved in the development of off campus access to library resources, the Library's webpage and a range of E resource activities. Sagren's email is: [moodlesr@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:moodlesr@ukzn.ac.za) and extn : 3472

## E-resources made easy

In May 2008, the Pietermaritzburg campus library ran a series of workshops for researchers (staff and postgraduate students) about various electronic resources. These were hands-on sessions concerning the finding and using of online information resources subscribed to by the Library and accessible from the UKZN library website.

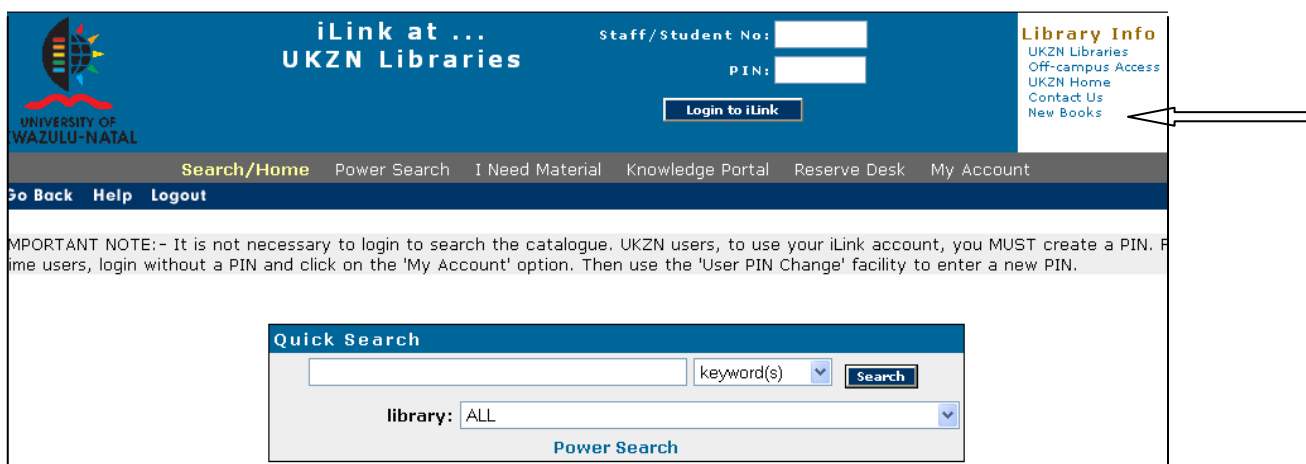
The workshops were targeted at those interested in database usage in particular subject areas and the use of bibliographic management packages, namely *Endnote* and *Refworks*. The subject specific sessions familiarized researchers with information resources in their subject areas. Included was the use of citation indexes to find literature, the impact factor of journals, and setting citation alerts.

*Endnote*, available from the University's software library, is a bibliographic management package for downloading onto the pc. *Refworks*, purchased as part of the Research Libraries Consortium project, is an online bibliographic management tool, (compatible with all versions of Endnote) and can be accessed from the Library's website: from the Electronic resources option, choose databases and select *Refworks* from the alphabetical list.

The workshops were attended by 145 people with the sessions on the bibliographic management packages *Refworks* and *Endnote* proving to be the most popular. A major problem experienced during the sessions was very slow internet connectivity.

## iLink catalogue upgrade

A recent upgrade to the iLink catalogue has made available a few new features. One is the list of new books processed by the libraries which will be updated every two weeks. This list is in alphabetical order by title. Unfortunately it is not possible to limit by campus. The New Books option appears in the top right hand corner of the screen.



The screenshot shows the iLink catalogue website interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the UKZN Libraries logo on the left, a search bar in the center, and a 'Library Info' menu on the right. The 'Library Info' menu includes links for 'UKZN Libraries', 'Off-campus Access', 'UKZN Home', 'Contact Us', and 'New Books'. A white arrow points to the 'New Books' link. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for 'Search/Home', 'Power Search', 'I Need Material', 'Knowledge Portal', 'Reserve Desk', and 'My Account'. A 'Quick Search' box is visible, containing a search input field with 'keyword(s)', a 'Search' button, and a 'library: ALL' dropdown menu. A 'Power Search' link is also present below the search box.

In Quick search, searching by Dewey number is now working.

It is also now possible to save references into *Refworks*, the online bibliographic management package.

# Alan Paton Lecture: “Liberalism, Human Rights and Foreign Policy” by Prof. John Dugard

Professor John Dugard is an eminent academic, who has been given honorary doctorates by five South African universities. He is currently Professor of Law at the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria. Before that, he was Professor of International Law at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands. From 1978 to 1990 he was Director of the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand. He is a member of the UN International Law Commission and a *Judge ad hoc* of the International Court of Justice. His career started at the old University of Natal, where he was a lecturer in Law from 1961 to 1963.

Professor Dugard spoke about Liberalism, Human Rights and Foreign Policy at the 15th Alan Paton Lecture held on 6 March 2008 on the Pietermaritzburg Campus. He was introduced by Professor Colin Gardner, who had read the laudation in 1990 when Dugard received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Natal. The Lecture was organized by the Alan Paton Centre & Struggle Archives, and sponsored by the Liberal Democratic Association. The text of the lecture can be accessed from the Alan Paton Centre site at <http://paton@ukzn.ac.za/Lecture784.aspx>

Jewel Koopman  
Alan Paton Centre & Struggle Archives

## DITCHE (Developing Information Technology Capacity in Higher Education)

The DITCHE programme run by the Tertiary Education Network (TENET) hosts an annual event for those with IT responsibilities working in academic libraries in the higher education sector in South Africa. The purpose of this National Library IT Event is to deepen and strengthen the bonds that exist within this community by bringing people together once a year to talk, listen, share ideas, discuss experiences, plan collaborations, and to learn from one another. UKZN library representatives were Roshini Pather and Sagren Moodley.

The event is participant driven and can take the form of formal presentations, discussions and/or breakaway workshops. This year's event was held at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University conference centre from the 20-22 May 2008. Roshini Pather and Sagren Moodley attended the event. Sagren Moodley reported on the progress of the Research Libraries' Consortium activities at UKZN. This included a brief report on the six-week internship (development programme) in the USA that Omesh Jagarnath and Rosemary Kuhn participated in.

This year's event covered a number of issues that are affecting libraries in SA, namely institutional repositories, digitization projects, the changing role of librarians and technology hints and tips.

### Institutional Repositories:

A key issue academic libraries are grappling with is that of Institutional Repositories (IR). An open discussion was held on Institutional repositories and some issues discussed were:

- IR content: what should an IR include – is it just the research output of the institution, what about research that is externally funded?
- Copyright: who takes responsibility for it – the end-user, i.e. the author, or the administrator, such as the Library or university? Currently there is no copyright law on digital documents.
- Policy issues were discussed at length and these require careful consideration as these affect the success or failure of a repository
- IR document format: textual and multimedia
- Lack of “buy in” from academics and their concerns
- The roles and responsibilities of those involved in setting up an IR
- Marketing an IR to the university community and library staff
- The use of open source software versus licensed software. A number of projects were discussed that had used Greenstone Digital Library software, D-Space and ContentDM

## Digitization and library collections:

A number of library collections engaged in digitization projects were reported on. Gwenda Thomas and Jeanne Berger from Rhodes University provided input on the challenges and issues they are facing, with reference to the digitization of the International Library of African Music collection.

## Changing role of librarians:

Geoff Hoy from TENET led a stimulating discussion on the “librarian as an intellectual” which got us librarians really thinking “out of the box” in terms of our supporting researchers and users in different ways. With such a vast array of information at one’s fingertips librarians need to engage more fully at an intellectual and conceptual level in terms of matching users with needed information.

- An interesting in-service training programme for librarians is taking place at Rhodes University Library using the open source software Moodle. This programme provides in-service training, at different levels, for their library staff over a six month period. The programme includes an evaluation. Rhodes library had identified a need for succession planning due to attrition, retirements, and resignations and the Moodle based programme reflects an attempt to upskill library staff and keep staff abreast of developments in the library and information world. This programme was developed and offered to all staff who were qualified, studying towards a library qualification or staff members who were qualified but not in professional positions.

## Librarian’s toolbox:

Hennie Rautenbach from Sabinet presented a report titled “Peregrinations in the web 2.0 and library 2.0 environments”. Top global companies have poured billions into technology developments to enhance their products and capture markets and libraries need to do the same. Libraries need to take on board technologies that are an integral part of users’ lives in order to provide service, meet users where they are at and prevent the re-inventing of the wheel.

Duncan Greaves provided us with a “librarian toolbox” for troubleshooting basic network access problems. He also presented a simplified view of computer networking.

Overall the workshop afforded us an opportunity, not only to network with colleagues who are working with similar projects, but to keep us abreast with current ICT trends in the LIS community.

Sagren Moodley and Roshini Pather

## Open Day in the Library



Campus Librarian of Howard College, Catherine Dubbeld, presents the prize to the winner of the Open Day Library competition.

With the winner Ignituous Maviri are library staff members Tim Reddy and Malini Govender

The library Open Day committee at Howard College campus comprising Tim Reddy, Malini Govender and Sibusiso Gumede organized a competition in the EG Malherbe library for students attending the 2008 Howard College Open Day on 24<sup>th</sup> May. The prize up for grabs was a collection of books by South

Africa's best-selling author, John van de Ruit entitled "Spud" and Spud: the madness continues...", which was generously sponsored by Adams Campus Bookshop, Howard College. The lucky winner of this prize was Miss Ignituous Maviri who answered the question "On which campus is the E.G. Malherbe Library"?

Tim Reddy

## **Internship in the USA**

**Omesh Jagarnath spent a month at Texas A & M University in April as part of the Carnegie funded Research Libraries Consortium project. The objective was to gain insights into good research libraries.**

My visit at Texas A & M University during April was an overwhelming and rewarding experience. Not only was the library staff pleasant, friendly, accommodating and respectful, but I found the atmosphere within the library very different from ours. I observed a sense of commitment and seriousness by staff to their jobs, from the junior to the most senior of members. Team spirit and transparency prevails amongst departments with their main focus being to serve the end user. Services which I found interesting include:

"Ask Now" – This is a form of virtual reference (VR) service that allows librarians to converse directly with patrons online in real time as they guide them through Web sites and other online resources.

"Deliver Edocs" is a fast and efficient way of getting journal articles / chapters from books delivered to the desktop within 48 hours. A service called "Get it for Me" allows books to be requested from within the library or branch libraries book shelves / stacks to be made available at home library circulation issue desks.

Another amazing technology the library is investigating is the use of the so called Kindle book. Kindle is an electronic book reader about the size of an A5 page, which is web based, allowing one to buy books online from Amazon and read them. It has wireless connectivity. It is also possible to read email on the Kindle.

A self service issue and returns station is available but many students still make use of the circulation desk as many feel the need for face to face contact.

An interesting thing about Texas A & M library's teaching lab is that there are no desktop computers. Instead laptops are used which are wireless. Students enter the room and remove these laptops which are housed in special cabinets that have all the cables to charge the laptops. Libraries in America do not suffer from bandwidth problems as we do in South Africa. My experience in using the internet was that it was very fast. When asked about the bandwidth problem, I was told this was something they had experienced about 10 years ago. Wireless access is common throughout campus and beyond. In some areas one can access the internet while traveling on a bus.

Omesh Jagarnath

## **Library vacation hours: 17 June till 26 July**

### **Edgewood**

#### **17 June to 11 July:**

Monday to Friday : 8.30 – 21.00 pm

Saturdays : 9 am – 5 pm

#### **14 July to end vac**

Monday to Friday : 8.30 am – 11 pm

Saturdays : 9 am – 5 pm

### **Howard College**

#### **E G Malherbe library:**

Monday to Friday : 8.30 am – 19.30 pm

Saturdays : 8.30 am – 12 noon

#### **Architecture branch library:**

Monday to Friday : 8.30 am – 4.30 pm

Saturdays : 8.30 am – 12 noon

#### **Law branch library**

Monday – Friday : 08:30 am – 19.30 pm

Saturdays : 08:30 am – 12 noon

#### **Music branch library**

Monday – Friday : 08:30 am – 4.30 pm

Saturdays : 08:30 am – 12 noon

### **Medical school**

#### **28 June to 12 July**

Monday to Friday : 8 am – 5.30 pm

Saturdays : 9 am -12.30 pm

#### **14 July onwards**

Monday to Friday : 8 am – 10 pm

Saturdays : 9 am – 5 pm

### **Pietermaritzburg**

#### **Cecil Renaud (main) library :**

Monday to Friday : 8 am – 6.30 pm

Saturdays : 8.30 - 4 pm

#### **Law library :**

Monday to Friday : 8 am – 4.30 pm

Saturdays : Closed

#### **Life Sciences library :**

Monday to Friday : 8 am – 4.30 pm

Saturdays : Closed

### **Westville**

Monday to Friday : 8 am – 4.30 pm

Saturdays : Closed