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From Achievements to New Possibilities

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From Achievements to New Possibilities

It's the year of Jubilation. The ACL has been in existence for fifty years now. The first meeting of the Christian Librarians' Fellowship was held at Columbia Bible College (now Columbia International University) in 1956. There were only five librarians in attendance. The organization has come a long way from its humble beginnings to its present permanent headquarters in Cedarville, Ohio. I wrote an article on the 25th anniversary back in 1982. It is time to reflect on ACL's past successes and achievements since 1982 and look to what possibilities the future holds.

Many official and nonofficial leaders have served in the last 25 years. The main leadership, along with the Board, over the years has created a concrete structural system. This includes several individuals who have served the organization for many years now. Board members have assumed definite areas of responsibility.

Over the years there has been a lot of attention given to membership enrollment. However, there is still the need for concentrated promotion and recruitment to take place in two areas. First, those responsible for promotion of the organization need to continue actively recruiting new members. Our membership has grown from the first five members to now over 500 current members. Special effort should be made to encourage all professional librarians of Bible Colleges and CCU Christian Colleges to subscribe to membership in the organization. Also, these same institutions should be encouraged to subscribe for institutional membership. We should seek to recruit Christian Librarians serving in other institutions of higher learning.

Secondly, we need to actively recruit future candidates to send to Library School. This is very critical in the light of the number of ACL members who will be retiring or leaving the profession in the near future. At this time it is very difficult to find professionally trained librarians who adhere to the biblical and philosophical

tenets of many of our schools. I know that I have sent three of my student staff to library school. They currently serve in the Bethel Library.

CPI has come a long way since the 25th anniversary. We continue to publish the hard copy index, but have moved to an online version at a very reasonable cost. The staff of CPI has secured several full-text journals to the online version. This is a tremendous feature and will continue to be so in the future as we move more and more toward the electronic library. There have been many volunteers who have spent a tremendous amount of hours working on retrospective indexing for the online version. There is still much work to be done but it can be accomplished with the faithful support of ACL members. Advertising and marketing of the online version should be to all Christian colleges and to other higher educational institutions that would have an interest, especially those who have library science programs. Perhaps we can expand to include Christian high schools in our marketing of CPI.

Another area of tremendous change in the Association is in the area of missions. CILA (Commission for International Library Assistance), the mission arm of ACL has been created. We have encouraged and provided financial assistance for overseas librarians to attend the annual conferences. CILA supports overseas missions by encouraging our members with opportunities to serve overseas and to train librarians on the field using Library Master. This has been translated into several foreign languages. It is perhaps time for the Association to consider establishing a permanent endowment to provide future support for the work of libraries overseas.

The annual conference has changed over the years. There are more professional workshops being conducted, attracting librarians from all walks of life, while still maintaining the

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spiritual emphasis of the founding leaders. Attendance at the annual conference has increased over the years, with approximately an average 200 attending, depending on the location.

The purchase of ACL's own property in Cedarville was a giant step forward for ACL. It will bring more creditability to the Association. Those who had the foresight to see this and bring this to fruition about are to be congratulated. Now permanent office space will be provided for the organization's business. Hopefully, the time will come when ACL will be able to have full-time staff and regular hours. The building will also house the archives for the

organization. Special attention should be given to the gathering of our archives and their preservation.

We have a responsibility to keep up with current trends in the Library world. There are many possibilities to be accomplished. I believe that ACL's greatest days are still ahead. Let us celebrate ACL's fifty years of professional growth and development and spiritual nurture and fellowship among Christian Librarians. Let us also continue toward the future possibilities that lie ahead for the Association of Christian Librarians. †

Anniversary Greetings

From the Friends of ACL

*Compiled by Alice Ruleman
News & Views Editor
The Christian Librarian*

For our special 50th anniversary issue, we decided to replace our usual News & Views section with greetings from friends of ACL. We contacted companies who have been involved in our vender exhibits, previous keynote speakers and pre-conference presenters, organizations that ACL and our member libraries have relationships with, past-presidents and the wonderful members of ACL. Many have graciously responded and shared their well wishes and memories of the Association. I hope that you are as touched as I have been as you read these greetings.

CCCU

As the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, I am humbled to think of the visionaries who pulled the Association of Christian Librarians together 50 years ago while I was a high school freshman! One of my first meetings after becoming president of the CCCU was with a group of our librarians. From that evening on, I have been more aware of the central role librarians play in keeping up with the doubling of knowledge every few years, the

shifting paradigms you face that are brought about by technology, and the challenge of selecting the best resources within tight budgets. We in Christian higher learning have great respect for the written word as we seek to honor Him who said he was the Living Word. You are a protector of the written word in all its dimensions. May you continue for many years to come in your faithfulness to our mission of relating scholarship and service to Biblical truth.

Robert C. Andringa, Ph.D.
President, CCCU

SOLINET

Dear ACL Friends,

Congratulations on your 50th anniversary! How time flies. This will be a truly blessed year for ACL and its 500 members.

I remember attending my first ACL meeting in Tennessee. Having never been to an ACL meeting before, I didn't know folks and didn't know what to expect. Well, when I arrived there was a lovely note in my room, and flowers too! I knew that I was going to enjoy this conference. Then,