Thanks to Northborough Free Library, the SAILS Office, Mashpee Public Library, Bedford Free Public Library, The Berkshire Athenaeum and Sunderland Public Library where we held a series of successful User Group Meetings for Document Delivery and Mediated Interlibrary Loan in April 2016. We had about 76 attendees all in all.

Susan Applegate gave an overview of the Boston Public Library’s ILLiad system used to request articles. We logged into various library’s ILLiad web accounts to use as examples. Susan noted that the only choices available for libraries using the Document Delivery service are photocopy or book chapter. Anything else should be considered a returnable and the request should go to MLS. Sue and Susan agreed that they would discuss any requests that are questionable. When a request is made, any lengthy comments should be placed in the notes field. Other fields sometimes are truncated.

When an ILLiad account is first opened, Outstanding Requests are always on the screen. The column on the far right provides the current status and the column on the far left lists by transaction numbers. When each transaction number is clicked open it provides notes and tracking thus far. The other listings under View were described; Electronically Received Articles, Cancelled Requests, Completed Requests, All Requests, and Notifications. Change User Information under Tools was also discussed, and the need for a single, accurate email address was stressed. About ILLiad, a short history of the ILLiad software, was mentioned.

Timing of article request fulfillment was discussed, and reasons were offered for why some requests take much longer than others; licensing issues, incorrect citations, electronic delivery failures, and copyright infringements were noted. A separate handout on Copyright Guidelines was supplied. Ways to increase the speed of receiving articles were provided; complete journal titles and ISSN are very helpful and websites like PubMed and JournalSeek help to find them.

Susan also discussed other services provided by the Boston Public Library that Massachusetts librarians and patrons outside the Greater Boston area can use. BPL eCards were promoted as a way for all Massachusetts residents to access databases and many other electronic collections.

The Internet Archive, Digital Commonwealth, and Digital Public Library of America were all displayed on screen and the BPL ILL department makes use of the Internet Archive primarily. Thanks to the IA lab being in the building on Copley Square, ILL will not lend pre-1923 imprints but offers to have them digitized. Many of these items, including Rare Book, Music, and Fine Arts materials, were never loaned in the past and now we can share them electronically. Sue made note of the Primary Resources page on DPLA and how useful that can be to teachers and students across the state. Also shown were curated exhibitions on the Digital Commonwealth page, including the History of Shoemaking in Massachusetts by BPL’s own Anna Fahey-Flynn.

Susan also described the recently begun effort to transfer many of the items held in the BPL stacks from In Library Use Only to 21-day loan items. This is being done as each Delivery Desk item is requested through OCLC and Commonwealth Catalog. Certain criteria regarding replacement cost and holdings nationwide must be met for this transfer to happen.

Susan also told everyone about the grand re-opening of the Johnson Building in late June or early July and assured everyone that we’d start holding meetings and tours of the bldg. for Massachusetts librarians!

Sue discussed the Interlibrary Loan Code for the United States. It has recently been updated. It can be found at http://www.ala.org/rusa/resources/guidelines/interlibrary. The code governs ILL transactions between libraries beyond any policies in place in local networks or consortia. The code forbids the placement of any kinds of labels on materials that do not belong to your library. It discourages the use
of staples. It continues the concept that if anything happens to a material involved in an ILL transaction, the borrowing library is liable to compensate the lending library. Due date has been re-defined in the latest version of the code. It is now defined to be the date by which the material is returned to the borrowing library to begin its journey back to the owning library rather than the date it should be all the way back in the owning library’s hands.

We discussed recent postal developments. The USPS changed its rates in January 2016 and again in April 2016. Library Rate is now the cheapest option, even for light materials unless the item weighs 3 ounces or less (practically an impossibility!) The Post Office has begun to insist that mailing labels placed on parcels have the destination address placed considerably below the return address. If you think of placement of destination address and return address on a typical envelope containing a letter, that’s the placement of addresses the post office wants for parcels. That means that the labels that many libraries have used for years where the from address is vertical and placed to the left of the destination address are no longer acceptable. If you want to use these kinds of labels, it is best to cut the two addresses apart and orient them as they would appear on a letter. The Post Office is also beginning to require Intelligent Mail Parcel Barcodes on packages. These are not necessary if you hand your packages in at the Post Office or use an online service such as Stamps.com. If you use a postage meter you may need to obtain Intelligent Mail Parcel Barcodes to affix to your packages. They come with a duplicate barcode you can keep for tracking. The MLS is adding a section on mailing issues to our Interlibrary Loan LibGuide. It also includes some tips for mailing to Canada.

Sue gave a demonstration of little used features on Clio. It is possible to print book straps from Clio. It is possible to email your patron from within Clio. If you click on Request History, you can see everything that has happened to the request, including any messages sent to you from the MLS. It is also possible to click on the request and open up a hidden flap at the bottom that shows you the lender and their return address as well as such important information as the due date. Call or email if you would like us to talk you through any of these features.

Conversation became more general at this point. Everyone seemed to agree that the Commonwealth Catalog is working quite well and that they are doing fewer Clio requests since the Commonwealth Catalog has gotten off the ground. Participants in the West are excited that there will soon be a new MLS office in Northampton. (We are, too.) Participants in the South are excited about the Expanded Delivery Pilot Project we have going where materials can be sent between MLS S Route Delivery libraries and many libraries in Rhode Island via Delivery, saving on postage. Participants in the former MetroWest and the former NMRLS regions are excited that OCLC has decided to continue FirstSearch rather than insisting upon a switch to WorldCat Discovery.

If anyone would like a copy of the handouts Susan or Sue passed out at the meetings, please contact us. Thank you very much. It’s always a pleasure to get out and about and talk to people in person.

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