

A photograph of a library study area. The room is filled with tall wooden bookshelves packed with books. In the foreground, a person is sitting at a desk, working on a laptop. The desk is equipped with a lamp and a printer. In the background, there are more desks with lamps and a window. The overall atmosphere is quiet and scholarly.

Declaration concerning the Evolving Role of Libraries in Research Centres

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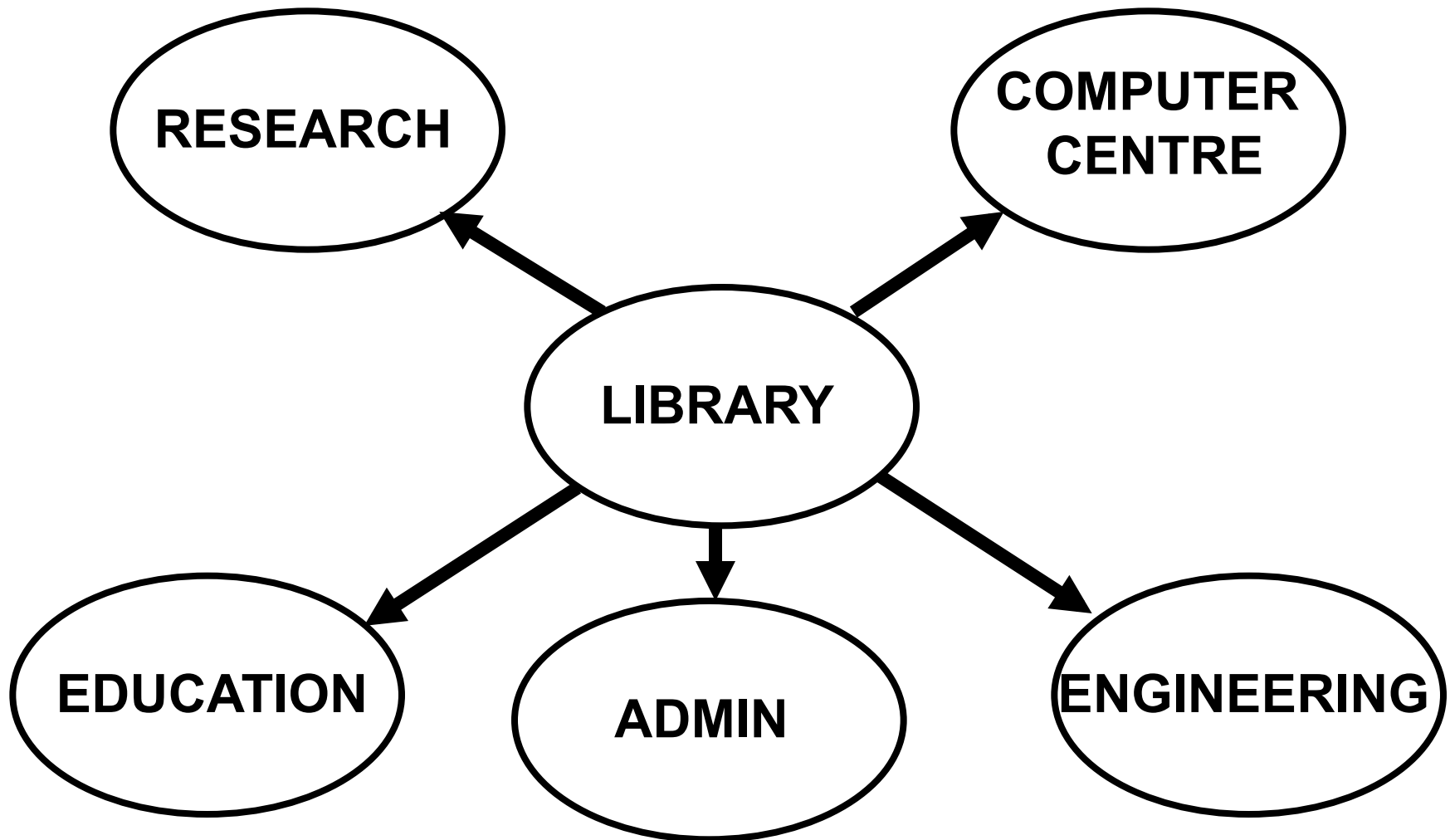
Who needs libraries?

Cecilia Payne-Gaposchkin recommended that young researchers spend time getting to learn the use of the library. Times have changed, but the researcher's need to understand what the modern library has to offer remains.

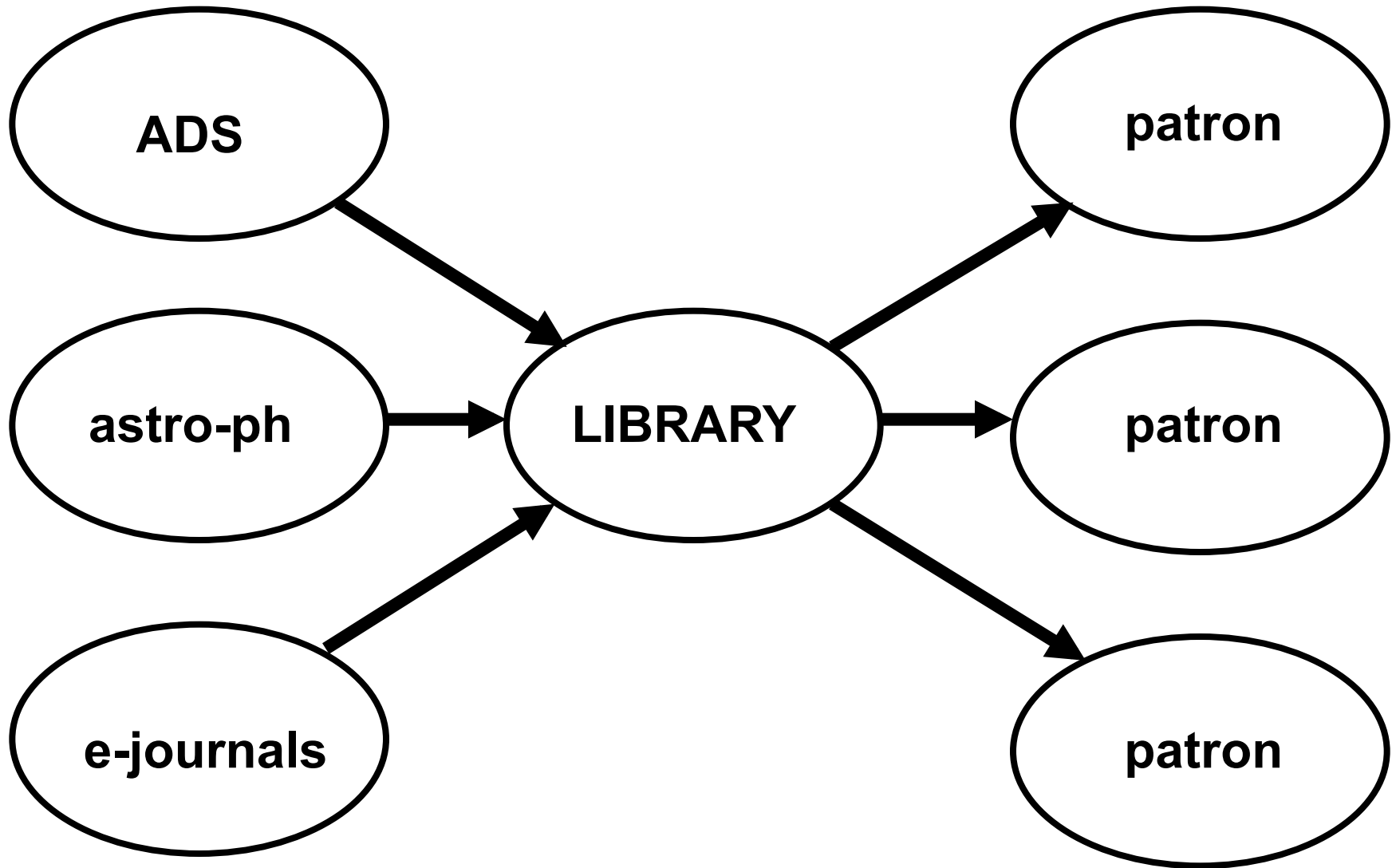


Celebrating centenary of Payne-Gaposchkin's birth (Phillips Auditorium).

Libraries in Research Centres



The Virtual Library



Ethos and Origins

- Concern ‘at the increasing invisibility of research libraries *vis-a-vis* recent accelerated changes in publishing and reader-access technology.’
- Inspired by the success of the Washington Declaration (personal view!).
- The Declaration was drafted subsequent to FPCA-I but was not part of the proceedings of that meeting.

The Librarian's Tasks

- Ensuring fullest possible coverage of subject areas through acquisition of new publications
- Making information available to patrons
- Ensuring continuity of the astronomical record from antiquity to the present in print and on line

Librarian's Tasks (continued)

- Ensuring scholarly access to information resources in all media and formats
- Identifying, retrieving, organizing, evaluating, repackaging, filtering and providing electronic access to digital information sources
- Ensuring access through purchasing licenses and other software

Librarian's Tasks (continued)

- Combining librarian's expert knowledge of information resources with astronomer's specialized subject knowledge
- Enhancing access through the librarian's ability to identify and link patrons to their required information needs

‘Not fade away...’

- Direct laptop access to astro-ph, ADS, etc., from home or office can hide the role played by librarian’s in providing this access.
- Librarian’s need to promote the role of libraries more proactively (library tours, seminars, courses, etc.).
- Library space and manning levels must be maintained in order to provide an efficient serviced.

Library budgets and the serials crisis

- Learned society journals (ApJ, AJ, MN, A&A) have tripled in volume and cost over the past decade
- Library budgets have remain more or less constant in that time.
- Funding bodies must increase library funding
- Research centres should also consider the central role played by libraries when allocating limited resources.

My Personal Nightmare

E-only publishing

⇒ Ditch paper copy

⇒ Save shelf space

⇒ Reallocate library floor space to other uses
(offices, storage, canteens, etc.)

⇒ Outsource librarianship and close library

⇒ Impoverished research and learning
environment

⇒ Outsource research

⇒ Close research centre!!!



Preserving Continuity with Astronomy's Long Past . . .



- Libraries as repositories of photographs, past research workers' papers and correspondence, etc.



. . . while Adapting to New Needs

- Higher-visibility proactive librarians
- New uses for some parts of library (small meetings, etc.)
- Preservation of reading areas and recent journals sections (to combat laptop autism)

Progress on the Declaration

- Many astronomical librarians have signed the Declaration
- The Declaration has been published in
 - *The Observatory*, **127**, 401 (2007)
 - *Society for the History of Astronomy Newsletter*, **16**, 28 (2008)
- It has been translated into Italian and Spanish
- Plans to get the Declaration adopted as IAU official policy at next IAU GA