



Image © 2006 Getty Images

Welcome to the 12<sup>th</sup> SUNCAT newsletter. EDINA would like to wish all our users and contributing libraries

**\*\*A Happy Festive Season  
and All the Best for 2015\*\***

## Contributing Libraries

### Almost 100 Libraries

Ten years after becoming a service SUNCAT will reach the 100 libraries landmark when [The National Archives](#) serials records are loaded into the service. Seven new libraries have already been added this year. In practice, if libraries whose catalogues are contained within other libraries' catalogues are counted separately SUNCAT actually already includes more than 100 libraries. For example, the National Railway Museum and York Minster are included in York University; British Antarctic Survey, British Geological Survey, and Centre for Ecology and Hydrology are included in NERC Library Services; National War Museum is included in National Museums Scotland; and of course all the college libraries affiliated to Oxford University and Cambridge University libraries.

The seven new libraries added this year are:

#### British Museum

The British Museum, which is located on Great Russell Street in Central London, was founded in 1753 and was the first national public museum in the world. The founding collections largely consisted of books, manuscripts and natural specimens with some antiquities (including coins and medals, prints and drawings) and ethnographic material. In 1757 King George II donated the 'Old Royal Library' of the sovereigns of England and with it the privilege of copyright receipt. Just under 5,200 serials of their serial records have been loaded into SUNCAT.

#### Brunel University

Brunel is a campus-based, research-led university located in Uxbridge, West London, and founded back in 1966. It has eight Academic Schools, covering a broad subject range, as well as a further eight Specialist Research Institutes. The Library supports its students, academics and researchers in its refurbished campus building, as well as providing access to electronic resources, including databases, journals and e-books, through its e-library. Nearly 68,000 serials records for both print and electronic titles have been loaded into SUNCAT.

#### The London Library

The London Library was founded in 1841, and is one of the UK's leading literary institutions. With more than one million books and periodicals in over 50 languages, the collection includes works from the 16th century to the latest publications. Membership is open to everyone. Just under 2,500 of its serial records have been loaded into SUNCAT.

#### London Metropolitan University

London Metropolitan University offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses, which range from design to life sciences; from business to computing; and law to theatre practice. It has three library sites: Commercial Road, the newly-refurbished Holloway Road, and Calcutta House. There are also serials held as part of the [Trades Union Congress Library Collections](#). In the TUC Collections there are over 5000 periodical titles in runs ranging from one issue to eighty years. Almost 36,000 of its serial records for both print and electronic titles have been loaded into SUNCAT.

#### National Museums Scotland

National Museums Scotland has two major libraries located in Edinburgh offering collections and services to support the research and learning needs of Museum staff, visitors, and the wider external research community. Its Research Library is the largest museum library in Scotland, with a collection including hundreds of journal titles and access to many more e-journals. It is situated on the third floor of the National Museum of Scotland. There is also a library located in the [National War Museum of Scotland](#), which you can find within the walls of Edinburgh Castle. Its collections include monographs and journals on all aspects of Scottish military history since the 1600s. Just under 4,000 of their serial records have been loaded into SUNCAT.

#### Queen Margaret University

Queen Margaret University campus is situated to the east of Edinburgh city centre, by Musselburgh. It is an institution which focuses on addressing society's needs, providing relevant teaching and research which makes a real practical impact on everyday life. The Queen Margaret University Library provides resources and services to support students, academics and researchers in the areas of healthcare; drama and the creative industries; media, communication and sociology; and business and enterprise. Just over 29,500 of its serial records have been loaded into SUNCAT.

#### Royal Veterinary College

The Royal Veterinary College is one of the world's leading specialist veterinary institutions. Founded in 1791, the RVC has a unique heritage of innovation in veterinary and biomedical sciences, clinical practice and education. The RVC Library is divided between two sites; Camden, located in central London, and

Hawkshead, located near Potters Bar, just north of the M25. Both are intended primarily for use by students and staff of The Royal Veterinary College, but external visitors may consult the libraries' stock by prior arrangement only. Just over 750 serials records have been loaded into SUNCAT.

Any library which wishes to become a contributing library should contact the [EDINA Helpdesk](#).

[View a list of all SUNCAT contributing libraries.](#)

## Alma Libraries

Working with libraries which have changed their Library Management System (LMS) to the Ex Libris Alma system proved to be a significant challenge this year. However, after working in close co-operation with the relevant libraries and Ex Libris it was possible to overcome the initial difficulties.

Subsequently, the University of York became the first Alma library to be loaded into SUNCAT. The Universities of Sheffield and Manchester will follow shortly. While there are many similarities between the Alma libraries there are also many differences, as with any LMS. No two libraries are ever the same.

In early 2015 EDINA will be contacting the other SUNCAT Alma libraries requesting a full file so that we can resume maintaining their currency in SUNCAT.

The National Archives use the Koha library management system which will be another first for SUNCAT. And another library has advised us that they will be changing to the Kuali OLE system in 2015, so there are plenty of challenges ahead!

## Updates

Most libraries continue to send regular updates enabling us to maintain the currency of SUNCAT. A big thank you to these libraries which take the time to send the updates. Thank you also to libraries which amend any records which are notified as having incorrect data.

The latest library files loaded into SUNCAT are listed on the [updates](#) page.

## SUNCAT: Ten Years and Beyond

Last year SUNCAT celebrated its tenth birthday. The need for an online serials catalogue was identified back in 2000 and SUNCAT started as a project a few years later, becoming a service in August 2006. To mark reaching its first decade, we thought that it would be great to look back at how SUNCAT started, how it has developed and is being developed, as well as look at what the future holds for the service.

An article, "SUNCAT: Ten Years and Beyond" will be published in the next issue of *Ariadne*, the Web magazine for information professionals in Higher Education. The article charts the beginnings of SUNCAT and the ways it has developed over the last ten years to meet the challenges and changes in scholarly communication and technology. This has included the addition of new Contributing Libraries and the ability to link to the Table of Contents of a journal and to the full-text of the article where available. SUNCAT has also been working with other initiatives in the serials domain, such as The Keepers Registry and the UK

Research Reserve (UKRR), to help deliver improved services to all those with an interest in serials. Also, in spring 2012, SUNCAT began a process of re-development inside and out which has been very much informed by end-user feedback. This work has already resulted in a new and much improved interface with increased functionality, which is continually being refined – please see the next item for more information on this.

The future of SUNCAT is a very exciting one, which is mirrored by the new possibilities now presenting themselves in the digital landscape. Look out for our article in *Ariadne*. We hope you will find it interesting and insightful.

## The new SUNCAT Platform

### New Interface

Back in spring 2012 we announced that we had started work to replace the search front end of [SUNCAT](#) with an open source enterprise search platform, [Solr](#). The new interface became publicly available at the end of October 2013 and since then there have been several new releases incorporating improved functionality. The new interface became the primary interface in March this year and was launched at the [EDINA Serials Forums](#) held in Edinburgh and London in March.

Both the new and the original Aleph interface ran in parallel for some time to allow for a period of consultation with our users and to enable them to migrate over to the new service. An online survey was conducted in June and once the results were analysed, and a few remaining issues resolved, it was decided to retire the original Aleph interface in September.

Some of the key features of the new interface include:

- A redesigned homepage with the search box, a map of all our Contributing Libraries' locations and a feed of our latest news
- Auto-suggestions as you type in your search and alternative search suggestions if your search returns zero results
- Automatic relevance ranking of results but with the option to sort alphabetically or chronologically by year first published
- Ability to limit searches to a specific library or selection of libraries
- Ability to limit searches to a specific location or selection of locations
- Ability to combine library and location limits to suit your individual search requirements
- Ability to limit searches to either electronic only or print only holdings
- Ability to filter search results by institution, subject, publisher, author, date or to electronic only or print only holdings
- An alphabetical listing of holding libraries for each title on the search results page
- Detailed holdings information at volume and issue level on the full record page
- Quick indication of whether holdings are print or electronic

- An expansion of the TOCs feature with more records containing TOCs links, linking to both [Zetoc](#) & [JournalTOCs](#)
- Further information about each library, including a link to the library homepage, Google map and directions, general contact details, British Library code and Inter-Library Loan (ILL) department contact details and the date the library's data was last updated in SUNCAT
- Links to the local catalogues of holding libraries
- More sophisticated searching via the Advanced Search option

The new interface was highlighted at a number of events throughout 2015. The first of these were the EDINA Serials Forums held in Edinburgh and London in March. In June the focus was on how it could assist Interlending Librarians with a [presentation](#) at the Interlend 2014 Conference in Edinburgh. Finally, a [presentation](#) at Internet Librarian International in London in October described some of the benefits and challenges we experienced in moving over to a new search platform.

Positive feedback was received at all of the above events with attendees commenting on how the improvements to the interface increased the value of the SUNCAT service to their work.

## Upcoming Features

This does not signify the end of the development for SUNCAT, an upcoming release will reintroduce the ability to browse as well as search the catalogue. Future releases will present personalisation features such as:

- Saving searches across sessions
- Saving records across sessions
- Saving preferred library and location limits

## Replacing the Aleph backend software and improving deduplication

It is also planned to investigate alternatives to replace the Aleph backend software and as part of this to improve the deduplication of records on the service with the creation of an enhanced matching algorithm. In preparation for this, a "Suggest a match" feature has been added to the interface to enable users to highlight where they believe two or more records should have matched together. EDINA will collect this data and use it to inform the development of the algorithm.

## Provision of Mini Union Catalogues

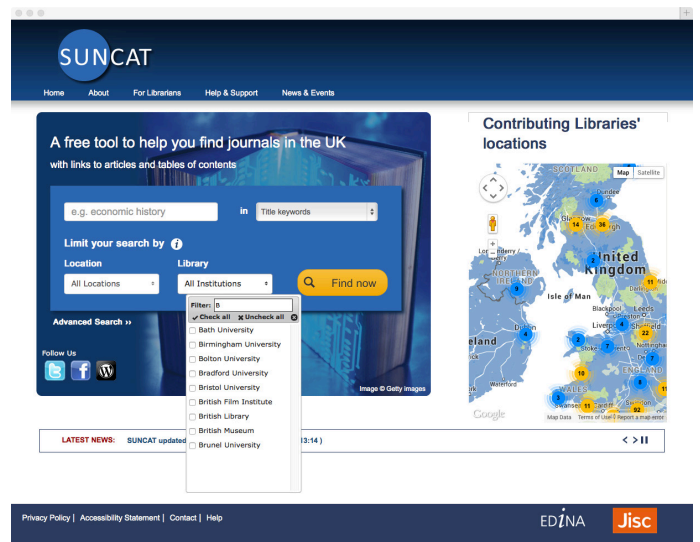
As highlighted earlier it is now possible to limit searches to a selection of libraries. It is planned to build on this functionality by enabling the configuration of some predefined library limits or views onto SUNCAT which may be useful for groups of libraries in a particular geographic area or in a particular subject area or linked as part of a consortia. This would effectively provide customisable mini union catalogues onto their serials data. We would be interested to hear from any libraries who would be interested in exploiting this feature.

## Journal Holdings Comparison

EDINA is embarking on a pilot project to investigate providing a journal holdings comparison service which would enable you to upload a batch of journal titles for holdings comparison purposes. It is envisaged that the service would enable flexibility on the comparisons you could conduct, e.g. by a list of titles/ISSNs or by subject area and also on the type of report you receive, e.g. a graphical overview or a detailed spreadsheet. It would be possible to compare your holdings against all the libraries on SUNCAT or to limit your selection to particular libraries of your choosing or to your local geographic area. This might help you decide whether:

- To dispose of an older print run, e.g. if it is widely held
- To move a print run into secure storage if it is a unique title or not widely held
- To cancel a current subscription if it is available to your users in alternative local libraries or via ILL

The initial development will be based on the service which EDINA already provides to the [UK Research Reserve](#) to assist them with scarcity checking on journal submissions from their member libraries.



Limiting a Search in the New SUNCAT

## SUNCAT Survey 2014

A survey was conducted on the new look service in June this year. The results were largely very positive but it did highlight a few areas where we could make further improvements.

The vast majority of respondents, 88%, found SUNCAT "Quite Easy" or "Very Easy" to use. Five percent reported that they found SUNCAT "Very Difficult" to use and on further investigation this was revealed to be due to a compatibility problem with older versions of Internet Explorer. However, as soon as we noticed these responses we investigated and resolved these issues within a short time frame, see the blog post: [Problems using the new service on the IE8 browser](#).



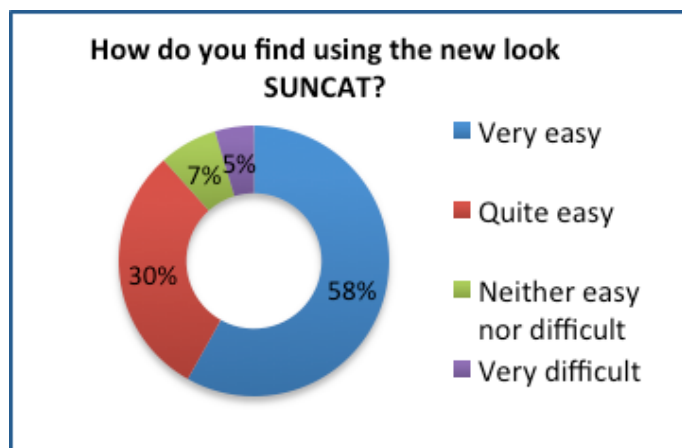


Chart from the survey on the new look service

Further, 91% of respondents indicated that they found the new service better than the original one.

The most popular features on the new SUNCAT emerged as those related to identifying; distinguishing between; limiting to; or filtering out particular journal formats. This reflects a high number of users wanting to focus on non-electronic formats due to licence restrictions on providing copies from electronic formats. However, the additional information provided on the library pages and the links to local catalogues also proved popular.

*“I really like being able to tell at a glance whether a library has print or online holdings for a particular journal.”*

*“... is especially useful as it alerts to licensing issues etc. and therefore prevents requests that will fail and saves time in getting information to the library user.”*

*“The improved links through to library information and the links to the local library catalogue is a big improvement.”*

*“The new library information pages are very helpful as I work in Interlibrary loans and this feature gives me important information very quickly without having to try and locate it on the library’s own website or in the BL’s directory of library codes.”*

*“Cleaner, easier to read and navigate”*

*“much nicer interface – much more obvious in terms of how to use it”*

The survey also established the improvements users would like to see in SUNCAT. This information is vital to EDINA as it directly informs the planning and prioritisation of future developments. See the [full survey report](#) for more details.

The results of the survey are very positive for the new SUNCAT service and indicate it now provides an overall improved platform from which to continue to develop the service further.

## RDA and SUNCAT Update

It has been a busy summer for RDA-related matters. For those who are not aware of it, RDA (Resource, Description & Access) supersedes the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2nd edition revised, and contains the rules for cataloguing all media. It is based on the FRBR and FRAD models (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records / Functional Requirements for Author-

ity Data), and is a comprehensive encoding standard (and thus schema-neutral) for cataloguing all sorts of items to be found in a library and other communities.

An article has been published in a special RDA-themed issue of Alexandria: the journal of national and international library and information issues. The article reported on a questionnaire about the adoption of RDA in SUNCAT Contributing Libraries. The results indicated that, although there has been much thought around the topic, some libraries are waiting to see what others are doing before committing themselves to the expense (in time and experience) of adapting a new cataloguing standard. When the article was written, libraries were still in the process of moving to RDA; many libraries are now using RDA regularly, although there still appears to be less confidence in the serials arena than in monographs. It is stressed that SUNCAT will adapt processes to cater for RDA, but it is seen as another standard in an already hybrid catalogue. A [pre-print version of the article](#) is available on the SUNCAT website.

As a result of the increasing use of RDA, SUNCAT is seeing more and more records catalogued according to this standard. Therefore, when a new library is added to SUNCAT which does not use MARC21 (for the carrier) or any known standard for the content, a cross-walk is created, which is RDA-like. It is not completely catalogued according to RDA, as the bibliographic record is being created from the data sent to us – meta metadata, if you will – but will contain RDA elements.

In September, a [presentation](#) was given at the CILIP Cataloguing & Indexing Group Conference 2014, held at the University of Kent in Canterbury, under the conference theme of Metadata – Making an Impact. The adoption of RDA was one of the main impacts that were discussed across the conference, and many papers reflected this. The SUNCAT paper was entitled Deep Impact: Metadata & SUNCAT, and reflected on the varying quality of the data sent to SUNCAT, in all sorts of formats and following all sorts of standards, RDA being one of them. This means that SUNCAT is a prime example of a hybrid catalogue, as all these standards are accepted, and then undergo some normalisation to ensure that bibliographic records will match and merge in the SUNCAT catalogue.

## Retiral of the SUNCAT Service Manager

EDINA colleagues paid fond farewells to the SUNCAT Service Manager, Fred Guy, on his retiral at the end of March. Fred had worked at EDINA, primarily on SUNCAT and The Keepers Registry, since 2005, and had steered both from projects into successful services. While he is missed in the office Fred is still active in the Library world continuing as a member of CILIPS Cataloguing and Indexing Group Scotland (CIGS).

## Meetings and Events

### EDINA Serials Forum, Edinburgh and London, March 2014

To highlight the release of the new SUNCAT interface and also other EDINA delivered services for the management of serials a couple of Serials Forums were held in March this year.

The Forums revealed significant interest and engagement in these services, particularly the new look SUNCAT with some very positive feedback about the new interface and the latest planned development of the journals holding comparison service.

After an initial chat over coffee and biscuits the Forums commenced with an [overview](#) of EDINA's involvement in the world of journal discovery, access and preservation and how it is positioned within JISC's portfolio of services.

Attention then focussed on [SUNCAT](#), starting with a brief background to SUNCAT, moving onto the context for the current development, the key enhancements of the new look service, a live demonstration and rounding off with how SUNCAT can support end-users and library professionals, illustrated with a number of use cases.

The final use case focussed on the UKRR and led into an informative [overview](#) from the UKRR Manager, Daryl Yang, describing its core objectives, members, figures on material disposed of and retained, savings made and future plans as well as how SUNCAT supports them with the vital scarcity checking element of their decision making process.

A break for afternoon tea and cake provided an opportunity for networking; to catch up with SUNCAT contributors; to speak to those attendees interested in contributing to SUNCAT or in finding out more about the holdings comparison development.

After the break, there was an [introduction](#) to the need for archiving programmes for ejournals mentioning the work of the Keepers Registry and our analysis that has found that over two thirds of ejournals accessed in 2012 are not currently being archived by any organisation.

The final session of the day started with a [walk-through](#) of the forthcoming Title List Comparison feature of the Keepers Registry, which will assist with print rationalisation and subscription management workflows. This led onto a broader discussion of EDINA services that can assist with continuing access assurances. The UK LOCKSS Alliance helps libraries to build local collections of content and provide readers with continuing access by integrating the collection with link resolver systems. There was also an overview of SafeNet, a project to establish a shared service that offers strong continuing access assurances in conjunction with an authoritative entitlement registry to manage access permissions.

Finally, after a final round of Q&A we wound up the afternoon by asking if anyone would be interested in attending a similar event in the future and having received a very definite yes, please look out for something similar (but different) in the future. Please see our [blog post on the Forums](#) for pictures and further details.

EDINA also promoted SUNCAT at a number of other events throughout 2014

- **EPUG-UKI**, London, 7 April and 13 October 2014
- EDINA/SUNCAT stand at **UKSG Conference**, Harrogate 14 - 16 April 2014
- [Introduction to the New SUNCAT Interface](#). Presentation by Zena Mulligan at **Interlend Conference**, Edinburgh 23-24 June 2014
- [Deep Impact: Metadata and SUNCAT](#) Presentation by Natasha Aburrow-Jones at **CILIP Cataloguing and Indexing Group Conference**, Canterbury 8-10 September 2014
- **IGeLU Conference**, Oxford, 15-17 September 2014
- [Harnessing open source search \(Solr power\) in a library context](#) Presentation by Zena Mulligan at **Internet Librarian International Conference**, London 21-22 October 2014
- UKSG Serials Forum, London 21 November.

## Articles and Book Reviews

**Aburrow-Jones, Natasha.** "RDA: Analysing the impact of a new cataloguing standard on SUNCAT, the UK's Serials Union Catalogue". *Alexandria* 24(2), 2013, pp.63-81. This is a preprint of an article whose final and definitive form has been published in *Alexandria: the journal of national and international library and information issues*, published by Manchester University Press. It is available online at <http://dx.doi.org/10.7227/ALX.0009>

Natasha has also written a **book review** on *Maxwell's Handbook for RDA: Explaining and Illustrating RDA: Resource Description and Access using MARC 21* (ISBN: 9781856048323; Facet Publishing, c2014). Or, as she described it: All you ever wanted to know about RDA and MARC21, but were afraid to ask. The review can be found in the [CILIP CIG, Catalogue and Index](#).

**Jenkins, Celia.** "SUNCAT: Ten Years and Beyond" to be published shortly in [Ariadne](#).

## Training and Promotional Material

In addition to user guides, FAQs and information on how to use both the web search interface and the Z39.50 connections, there is a short video available on the [SUNCAT Help and Support pages](#) and on [EDINA's YouTube channel](#) providing a brief introduction to the coverage and functionality of the service.

A [guide](#) for library/information professionals about how to integrate SUNCAT into your library website and services is also available.

## Help and Further Information

For more information about SUNCAT please [visit our website](#) or contact the EDINA helpdesk at [edina@ed.ac.uk](mailto:edina@ed.ac.uk) or follow us:



SUNCAT Blog



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