

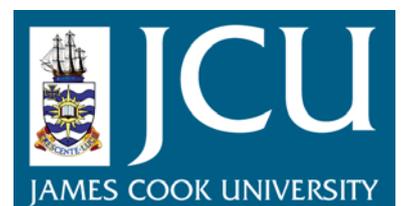
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CONCLUSION

Each of the five concepts of the school library which have been discussed in Chapters Six to Nine - the school library as a curriculum support unit, the school library as a source of recreational reading, the school/community library, the school library as a scholars' library, the school library as a memorial - has been a significant, if not always dominant, one in the history of school libraries at some time and in at least one country during the last twelve hundred years. From as early as the eighth century in Great Britain, school libraries which closely reflect the school curriculum and prevalent instructional ideas have been established in many schools. Large numbers of English grammar schools in the Reformation period developed such libraries, as schools both in England and in other countries have continued to do to the present day. During the late Middle Ages chantry libraries were established as memorials; in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries memorial libraries of various types were again being built. Scholarly libraries, serving the needs of a small group within a school or college, were popular in the fourteenth century; even in the nineteenth century they stood out as a significant school library type in the evidence produced by the Schools Inquiry (Taunton) Commission. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries many school libraries, particularly in British grammar schools, offered a service to the local community. Sunday school libraries and elementary school libraries also offered this service in nineteenth century Britain and America. With the development of rate-supported public libraries in both countries from the mid-

nineteenth century, however, public libraries, in a reverse process, began to offer special library services to schools. Today many specially-designed joint school/community library facilities are being established in response to demands for greater economy in public spending and for greater community access to school facilities. In the late eighteenth century, and especially in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, school libraries designed to meet pupils' recreational reading needs came into existence, their growth paralleling the increasing availability of non-didactic literature designed primarily to give children pleasure.

Each of these concepts of school library service has been changed and modified over the centuries. The curriculum-related school libraries have altered in character as both the school curriculum and the methods of instruction employed have changed in response to new theories and developments in education. While the centralised school library resource centres of the twentieth century have little physical resemblance to the chained libraries of the sixteenth century English grammar schools, they still share essentially the same purpose: to support the teaching and learning activities of the school. Memorial libraries have also undergone a change. The chantry libraries of the pre-Reformation period have their nineteenth and twentieth century successors in the war memorial libraries and the libraries built, at least partly, to commemorate the life and work of a person associated with the school. Such libraries have tended, in the later part of the twentieth century, to become more functional, with the commemorative features kept to a minimum; in many cases one suspects that the association of a person's name with the building is simply a means of raising additional funds. In the

twentieth century, with an increasing emphasis in education on democratic ideas and on equal opportunity for all, scholarly libraries in schools and colleges have been opened up to a wider range of users, though their original function, of providing a sound basis for the intellectual life of the institution, remains paramount. School/community libraries and library services have also undergone a change, from the sixteenth century when community library services were often offered from school libraries, to the present emphasis on joint services.

Individual school libraries, established to serve a particular purpose, have changed and developed over the years, so that many have come to serve other purposes than those for which they were founded. In the nineteenth century in Britain and America, Sunday school libraries, established to support the teaching in those schools, with collections closely related to classroom instruction, gradually changed in character, with their collections widening in scope to include fiction and general recreational reading materials. On the other hand, in a reverse process, large numbers of primary and secondary school libraries originally established in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries to provide for the pupils' recreational reading needs, had so altered in character by the late 1930s that they were predominantly a source of support and enrichment for curriculum-related teaching and learning activities in the school. Libraries established primarily as memorials have come to serve the need for recreational reading for pupils or for curriculum-related materials for teachers and pupils.

The currently popular concept of the school library in English-speaking countries is that of the school library resource centre

supporting the teaching and learning activities of the school. Some less pronounced emphasis on the school library also as a source of recreational reading is evident in the fiction collections, of varying size, usually incorporated in present-day school libraries. And in the last fifteen years, in Great Britain, the United States of America, and in Australia, new initiatives have been taken in the development of various forms of joint school/community library service.