

# Minitex Then and Now



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## ELM (Electronic Library for Minnesota) Portal: Then

Designed and launched January 3, 2006, the first ELM Portal provided a single point of access to all of the ELM databases, easy authentication, and helped Minnesota libraries, patrons, and residents more easily access the statewide collection of databases by providing categories, a special section for kids and teens, database descriptions, and database specs and direct links.

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## ELM (Electronic Library for Minnesota) Portal: Now

The recently redesigned [ELM Portal](#) launched July 6, 2011. The new design incorporates: an enhanced organization including new categories based on subjects, content types, and grade level as well as providing tags; an improved integration of all MnKnows resources; newly created support pages for students, teachers, librarians, and the broader Minnesota community; increased access points; and new functionality such as ELM for K-12 Academic Standards and ELM Personalized. Much of Minitex Reference Outreach & Instruction's services today are providing instruction on the use of these databases for teachers, students, and library staff alike.

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## Interlibrary Loan Requests: Then

Interlibrary loan requests were checked in the University of Minnesota's card catalog. Students and some full-time staff would grab stacks of requests for books and check to see if they were owned at the University of Minnesota Libraries, Twin Cities. If the item wasn't owned by libraries on the University's Twin Cities Campus, Minitex staff would look on OCLC WorldCat for other locations in the Minitex region where we could refer those requests. If staff found the item at a University Libraries location, we wrote the campus library name(s) and call number(s) on the request, and staff would retrieve the item on the next visit to that campus library.



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## Interlibrary Loan Requests: Now

Today we check the University's online catalog, MNCAT. However, more and more we are moving away from manual checking of OCLC's WorldCat for finding other regional locations. Check out the video where Minitex staff member Paul Swanson talks about [autoverification of requests](#), which is currently being used for our incoming VDX requests and will be expanded to requests we receive on Aleph in the near future.

43969876

DCB  
KRL  
TDS  
SPP  
CRM  
CCE  
WPB  
GRR  
WLM  
RCL  
MLM  
HBG  
NRG  
+LOCS

**Lender:** [REDACTED] **Borrower:** [REDACTED]

**DO NOT REMOVE THIS SLIP!**

**Responder Req. No.:** [REDACTED] **Requester Req. No.:** [REDACTED]

Minitex: M001  
Requesting Library: [REDACTED]

**Printed Date:** 09-MAR-2011 **Last Action:** Answer Will Supply  
**Need By:** 05-SEP-2011 **Expiration Date:**

---

**Title:** World War II ; DK eyewitness books.  
**Author/Article Author:** Adams, Simon, 1915-

**Volume/Issue:** **Article Date:** **Pages:**

**Article Title:**  
**Publisher Info:** Dorling Kindersley Pub.; New York; 2000 ; Projected Publication Date 0007.

**ISBN/ISSN:** **Due Date:**

**Edition:** 1st American ed.  
**Description:** 63 p. : chiefly ill. (chiefly col.) ; 29 cm.

**Copyright Compliance:**  
**Call Number:** N/A  
**Database#:** Pioneerland Library Systems/ENNOPAC LCN: 00027293  
**Request Notes:**

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## Minnesota Library Access Center (MLAC): Then

**January 1, 2000. Total Deposits: 0.**

But MLAC wasn't empty; it was the temporary home to the Science & Engineering Library during renovation of Walter Library. Hear about the early beginnings of the Minnesota Library Access Center and the construction of the caverns from an [oral history recording with Kathy Drozd](#).



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## Minnesota Library Access Center (MLAC): Now

**June 30, 2011. Total deposits: 1,408,935.**

The shelving area in MLAC is nearly the size of a football field and is just about full. With shelves more than 17 feet tall, Bib the Book and MLAC staff use specially equipped forklifts to reach the upper shelves. [Take an online tour of MLAC hosted by Bib the Book.](#)



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## Sending Referral Requests: Then

Before we had access to the Internet to send requests, referral requests were first typed off-line on a TWX (Teletypewriter eXchange Service) machine that generated a paper tape with punch holes. Considered a speedy way to transmit the requests at the time, the paper tape was fed through a machine which was connected to a special phone line that could send the requests to the lending library's TWX machine in readable form. Minitex continued to use the TWX as a request printer in our office until 1999, well after we began using other software and methods of sending referral requests to libraries in the region.

*Pictured (left): Mark Eckes using the TWX machine in the 1970s.*



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## Sending Referral Requests: Now

A variety of Internet-based interlibrary loan software is available, many of which allow patrons to generate requests that are routed to lending libraries without staff mediation. Among those currently in use in the Minitex office and the region are Aleph, VDX, ILLiad, Worldcat Resource Sharing, and Agent.

Pictured (left): *Rena Johnson working on Aleph, 2010.*





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## Minitex Training and Travel: Then

Providing training sessions and interacting with staff of Minitex participating libraries used to involve lots of travel. Hand-drawn maps and bison blocking the road were not unheard of, and many Minitex staffers have interesting stories about adventures experienced while travelling throughout Minnesota and the Dakotas.

Listen to one such adventure in the oral history interview with former Minitex staff member, [Mary Rae Oxborrow](#) (about 6 minutes into the recording).

Pictured (left): *Adventures in North Dakota.*



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## Minitex Training and Travel: Now

While we still enjoy travelling around the region to provide in-person training sessions and site visits, Minitex staff provide many training options and have conversations with library staff members through webinars, virtual meetings, and other online conversations. Not only do these sessions save travel costs for Minitex and participating library staff, they make it possible for us to offer training sessions on many more topics and allow staff of libraries from Williston to Winona and Hibbing to Hot Springs to participate in the same session without leaving their own desk. Virtual meetings mean that Minitex staff can talk directly with their contacts and other staff members of participating libraries. See [Minitex Training and Events](#) for more information.

*Pictured (left): Dave Linton provides a webinar on OCLC Local Holdings Record Maintenance.*



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## Minitex Office: Then

On the wall in the Minitex office, in the basement of the University of Minnesota's O. Meredith Wilson Library, we had a life-size Peter Max "winged messenger" painting that was done by a staff member that helped brighten our cement walls. Listen to an [oral history from former Minitex staff member Mary Rae Oxborrow](#) (about 12 minutes, 30 seconds into the interview) in which she describes what it was like to work in the first Minitex office space.

Hanging in the workspace that housed Minitex's Document Delivery and Delivery staffs, the winged fellow was a great illustration of our efforts to get to and from campus libraries quickly.



**40** YEARS  
1971-2011  
*of collaboration*

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## Minitex Office: Now



We are located in the [Elmer L. Andersen Library](#) at ground level in a beautifully designed building that also houses the [University of Minnesota Libraries Archives and Special Collections](#), and the [Minnesota Library Access Center \(MLAC\)](#) caverns hundreds of feet below. Over time, Minitex has expanded our programs and services to include cooperative purchasing of electronic resources and library products; MLAC, a high-density storage facility; instruction on Electronic Library for Minnesota resources; training and assistance with cataloging, digitization and metadata, and OCLC; and MnLINK: a statewide virtual library. Minitex is also the administrative home of the Minnesota Digital Library.

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## Reference: Then

Begun in 1973, the Minitex Reference Service provided back-up reference referral to all types of libraries throughout Minnesota. Staff relied heavily on the extensive collections of the University of Minnesota–Twin Cities, Minneapolis Public Library, and Minnesota Historical Society. There was such an overwhelming response to the reference referral program that staff often had very little time for any other work. Prior to the web intake form (introduced in 1999), questions were submitted by phone, fax, or mail.

Pictured (left): *Loren Taylor, Minitex Reference, 1970s.*



**40** YEARS  
1971-2011  
*of collaboration*

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## Reference: Now

As of July 1, 2011, Minitex was faced with the difficult, but unavoidable decision of having to discontinue reference referral after 38 years of service because of reductions in funding. Today, Minitex Reference Outreach and Instruction coordinates the AskMN: The Librarian is in! statewide virtual reference program and participates in providing chat reference.



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## Minneapolis Central Library: Then



Early on, Minitex established a special relationship with the [Minneapolis Central Library](#). The proximity, size, and scope of the Central Library collection made it a natural fit for the Minitex mission to share library resources.

In the beginning, an enterprising Minitex staffer, Jean Knippenberg, visited Central to fill requests on her way home from work. The details of those requests have faded, but it is believed she was making copies from journals.

Over time, Minneapolis Central and Minitex developed a more substantial relationship with Minitex staff visiting Central daily to fill requests. At the peak, we were making 2 trips to Central a day. By FY 93/94, we tried to fill over 18,000 requests from Central. Of those, we were able to fill over 14,000, with over 10,000 being photocopies.

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## Minneapolis Central Library: Now



These days, 1 staff member visits Central daily, and we fill about 8,500 requests a year. Loans have taken over as the primary request retrieval. Improved technology has allowed the Central library to bear less of a burden in the resource sharing arena, as other libraries have greatly increased the number of items they supply.

Minneapolis Central continues to be an important resource to the Minitex region with its enormous collection of musical scores started by a donation from Emil Oberhoffer, the first conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra (now the Minnesota Orchestra); the Kittleson World War II collection, which has a large number of posters from the period available online or as reproductions; and many other special treasures.

We would also like to recognize that the Hennepin County Library is celebrating its [125th anniversary](#) this year. Ground was broken for the Minneapolis Central Library in 1886.



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## Minitex Delivery: Then

Every day, we packed tubs, and then drove them down to the Greyhound bus station. During the winter around the holidays, the lines were very long and we would send two people and stand there holding the tubs. The point was overnight delivery!!!

During this time we sent one box via Greyhound to each major city. One of the libraries took the responsibility to drive down to their Greyhound bus station and pick up their tubs for routing to libraries in their city and to bring down the one tub to get on Greyhound for us to pick up.

Each box was painted a distinct color and that helped for sorting purposes. Some cities, St. Cloud on very busy days, had two boxes. We moved from using beer boxes, to purchasing boxes from Chippewa Water.

To hear more about Minitex Delivery Services in the early years, listen to an oral history [interview with Kathy Drozd](#).



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## Minitex Delivery: Now

Now, we often have 9-10 tubs going to different cities, some days 2-3 tubs are packed and sealed for one library location. We might send 10 to the city of Rochester and 2-3 presorted for Rochester Public. We handle on average over 55,000 tubs a year.

We use a courier that drops directly into the ILL offices, for routing to the next level of locations if needed. We move over 1 million items in the backbone delivery.





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## Minitex Communications – *Minitex MESSENGER*: Then

One of Minitex's important goals has always been to communicate with the staff members of participating libraries and the library community to discuss our programs and services and seek input and suggestions. Perhaps the longest running communication vehicle has been the *Minitex MESSENGER*, our general newsletter that provides information about the full range of Minitex activities.

The first *MESSENGER* (Vol. 1, No. 1, May 1974), contained information about the programs of the Minnesota Interlibrary Teletype Exchange (yes, Minitex is an acronym of such long vintage that many can't identify all the permutations that the full name has had over the years). The issue talks about the Minnesota libraries that were part of Minitex as well as the services that Minitex provided. (For more information, hear Hear Mary Rae Oxborrow, a former Minitex staff member, talk about the winged messenger logo and the first newsletter about 14 minutes into her [oral history interview](#).)





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## Minitex Communications – *Minitex MESSENGER*: Now

Currently, the *MESSENGER* is published in print and [online on the Minitex website](#), providing information about Minitex programs and news from participating libraries throughout Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

**Minitex**  
**MINITEX MESSENGER**

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**Considering Budget Reductions**  
*Bill DeJohn*

The Minnesota Legislature has adjourned its regular session, and none of us knows how the current impasse between the Legislature and the Governor will be resolved. The Governor vetoed the Higher Education Bill. I anticipate that the same reductions will remain in whatever bill is finally adopted, if there is a bill to be adopted. With these facts in mind, I am contemplating several changes in Minitex services based on information on hand.

Based on appropriations in the Higher Education Conference bill, which passed both the House and Senate but was vetoed by the Governor, the appropriations for our operations are:

- Minitex appropriation is reduced \$406,000 (7.2%) for FY12 and FY13
- McLINK appropriation is reduced \$20,000 (5%) for FY12 and FY13.

More information will be provided in June. ■