



International Leads

A Publication of the International Relations Round Table of the American Library Association

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IFLA 2004 BUENOS AIRES

By Nancy Bolt

One of the reasons I joined IFLA in the first place was because I knew every August I would be able to go to a country which I might not have gone to otherwise. I had never been particularly interested in traveling to South America, focusing more on Europe. Now I'm hooked on South America. Argentina is a marvelous country with tasty food, tango dancing everywhere, whales in Patagonia, and great crafts.

I'm on the Government Libraries Standing Committee so much of my time was taken up with that responsibility. I'm chair of a new committee to develop Guidelines for Government Libraries. The Committee is made up of people from seven countries. We use English because that is the only language the 3 Americans know. All of the other committee members are bi- tri- or quad- lingual. Determining the "official" language of the guidelines and then translating the meaning, not just the words, of the guidelines into multiple languages will be challenging. In fact, just talking to each other is challenging.

We have defined a government library as:

Any library that is created by government to serve government with the primary audience being government although the actual audience served may be broader than only government.

We selected 15 areas as the preliminary topics of the guidelines. They are:

Government typologies
Functions related to the political authority
Cooperation
Functions for users
Access to information
Preservation and permanent access
Common management practices
Advocacy for role of libraries
Protecting privacy
Organization across department lines

Meeting needs of staff

Dissemination of government information

Staffing and personnel

Marketing, PR

Financial, technology, and material resources

We are hoping to have first draft to present in Oslo.

The Government Libraries Section Program was on Information Literacy in Government. One of the most impressive papers was by Anne Kauhanen-Simanainen from Helsinki, Finland. She discussed the obligation of government to help people understand the government information that is distributed and also the needs of government staff for information. For example, she says "*Information literacy skills can be seen as a multiple extension which relates to the total information acquisition, filtering, interpretation, production, communication and legal and ethnical process irrespective of the technical or media form. In addition, information literacy can be viewed laterally in the different areas of information: literacy skills relating to different areas of science, to statistics, finance, advertising, politics, religions, etc.*"

She goes on to say "*Information held by the government can be used for the inclusion or exclusion of citizens. Government can, by disseminating information, prevent exclusion. A person able to access information should be neither dependent on personal networks nor at the mercy of authorities.*"

Another exciting program had to do with the relationship between Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and libraries. Several people shared the frustration of getting information from and about NGO's. NGO's often produce important and needed information but do not disseminate

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Buenos Aires

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the information and there are few networks designed to collect and organize information from NGO's.

Another exciting program was conducted by Mary Sherman and Carol Brey-Casiano on how libraries can influence the democratic process. This will be a new IFLA discussion group.

There are hundreds of programs at IFLA delivered in multiple languages. All papers are on the IFLA website so you can read them yourself. It's not the same as being in the land of tango but it's the next best thing.

While in Buenos Aires, I also spent a couple of hours at the ALA booth. It was a very busy booth, partially because we gave away good things and partially because we were right next to the Internet Café. That was also very helpful because the people staffing the Internet Café tended to speak English and Spanish, skills sorely needed in the ALA booth when President Carol Brey-Casiano wasn't around!

Next year's conference is in Oslo, Sweden. Consider making the trip.

IFLA 2004 Conference Report

By Sha Li Zhang

Volunteers

Many of the IFLA 2004 conference participants were impressed by the assistance of the more than 100 conference volunteers recruited by the National Organizing Committee (NOC) of Argentina. The volunteers spoke Spanish or were bilingual in Spanish and English and were easily recognizable in their red IFLA sweat and tee shirts. They helped at registration desks, information/press desks, meeting rooms, hallways, and tours.

Library Tours

The NOC organized more than 20 library tours for IFLA participants. The hosting libraries, all in Buenos Aires, included special, university, art, medical, law, public, and national libraries plus a parliamentary library.

My tour visited the Argentina Supreme Court Central Library (*La Biblioteca de la Corte Suprema de Justicia de la Nación*) located in the Argentina Supreme Court building. The Supreme Court Library was established and funded under a Supreme Court resolution on August 5, 1909. Three years later, the position of library director was created through another court resolution, but the library was not opened until 1952 at which time there were about 12,000 legal volumes in the collection.

The bilingual staff introduced us to the library's services and collections that mainly serve Argentina's judicial officers, attorneys, and law students. The library is open to the public but the materials, housed in closed stacks, can be borrowed only by people who work at the Supreme Court or who are in the legal profession. Due to the down turn of the economy in Argentina in recent years, the materials budget has been tight for several years. Most of the library employees work half-time, with one group of employees staffing the library in the morning and another group in the afternoon. Despite of these difficulties, we were impressed by the staff's diligence toward its duties, by its enthusiasm in serving users, and by its care for the library materials. I observed that when a user returned several library books, a staff member in suit and tie immediately climbed a ladder and returned the

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IRRT Web Site:

<http://www.ala.org/irrt/>

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Message from the IRRT Chair

Karen J. Starr

2004 Annual Conference – Orlando

1. As per discussions initiated in the fall of 2003 with Nancy Bolt, the chair-elect position assumed responsibility for committee appointments. The spreadsheet documenting the 13 committees and some 89 members with contact information and terms was handed off in early 2004 to Nancy Bolt, Jeannette Pierce, and Delin Guerra. Final assignment of committee appointments to the role of the chair-elect is subject to completion of the revision of the Officer's Manual currently in process. A review of roles and responsibilities of the executive board members will help define priorities and support effective use of the time of the chair and chair-elect in coordinating the activities of the round table.
2. Attended the Friday meeting of the IRC, IRRT, and divisional IRC's representatives during ALA in Orlando along with the chair-elect. The discussion focused on the planning process for ALA and the input of those groups in ALA that participate in international activities. The IRRT executive committee meeting agenda on Sunday was modified to include time for the members of the executive committee to review the current ALA international planning document and to identify up to 10 priorities of the round table which will be considered during the ALA planning meeting in September. These priorities will be forwarded to the IRO by July 15.
3. Worked with the past-chair and chair-elect to raise money for the reception on the Monday evening of the Annual Conference. A total of \$13,750 was donated. These vendors are recognized in *Leads*, on the IRRT website, and at least one of them will be included in the receiving line which will start the reception.
4. Membership committee's charge to address membership fees as an action item was successfully completed with the spring ALA elections when membership voted to raise fees. Free membership for the international library community was also approved and has the potential of increasing membership in IRRT, which may impact total membership and therefore result in the possibility of the round table having its own representative on ALA Council.

New/pending items:

- The program committee still needs to address the action item of identifying international programs held during the ALA annual conference and ensuring the program's presence on the IRO/IRRT webpage and in other venues for distribution during the conference.
- Final revision of the officer's manual remains to be completed. The incoming chair will convene an ad hoc committee to complete that process by ALA midwinter 2005 including the current chair, past-chair, previous past-chair, and chair-elect with vetting by current players in the round table who are or have been active in the round table's work.
- Review the current status and usage of ALAWORLD and incorporate information about the listserv in IRRT documentation. Explore the potential of an identified listowner to work with ALA staff in managing the listserv.
- Implement the virtual committee membership process pilot project as per the motion in the minutes of ALA Midwinter in San Diego approved by the Executive Committee and documented in those minutes.
- Include the approval of the bylaws changes at the membership meeting to be held prior to the IRRT program on Monday afternoon of the annual conference in Orlando.
- Address the concerns of the previous visitor's center committee and ensure that newly appointed members will implement the ongoing presence of the visitor's center during the annual conference.
- Address the need for the publications committee to complete the two activities approved as motions during the ALA Midwinter meeting in San Diego as documented in the minutes. These include written editorial procedures for publication of IRRT documents on the website and the formalizing the process of identifying as web editor.
- Address the recommendations of Lesley Farmer in her role as ALA Literacy Assembly liaison as documented in the ALA Midwinter minutes from San Diego.

IRRT INTERNATIONAL LEADS EDITOR

Volunteer Position Available Beginning January 2005

Do you want to play a significant role in promoting international librarianship and the activities of the International Relations Round Table? You can do so by volunteering to serve a two-year term as the editor of IRRT's official publication International Leads (IL). The position will begin in January 2005 after the Midwinter Conference in Boston.

IL Editor Description:

The Editor of International Leads is responsible for the official organ of the International Relations Round Table, in conjunction with the IRRT Publications Committee and the IRRT Executive Board.

The purpose of IL is to disseminate information about international librarianship and the activities of the Round Table. IL seeks to support Round Table and Association objectives by bringing IRRT's members news and articles that help them understand and react to recent developments in international librarianship.

Because IL is the official publication of the IRRT, the editor has a particular responsibility to convey to IRRT members and other readers full and accurate information on the activities, purpose and goals of the Round Table.

IL is published quarterly, edited by a member volunteer and printed through the production facilities of ALA's Publishing Services Department.

The IL Editor will serve a two-year term, renewable once. The term begins at the end of the ALA Midwinter Conference in January and runs for two calendar (volume) years.

Responsibilities:

Coordinate International Leads working with the IRRT Publications Committee and the IRRT Executive Board.

Have the responsibility for the content, form and design of IL within the parameters of ALA and IRRT policies and in consultation with the IRRT Publications Committee, the IRRT Executive Board, the ALA International Relations Office (IRO).

Seek manuscripts and encourage the submission of high-quality articles.

Review all submitted manuscripts in light of the philosophy, purpose, and general style of the publication. Correspond with authors regarding acceptable, rewriting and resubmission, or rejection of articles.

Edit and proof manuscript copy.

Assume final authority for all content in each issue of IL.

Serve as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the IRRT Publications Committee and the IRRT Executive Board.

Qualifications:

Experience in publishing and/or journalism, either in editing or writing, sufficient to be able to produce a high-quality publication that addresses interests of the readership.

Effective communication skills.

Experience in or demonstrated knowledge of international librarianship.

Membership in the International Relations Round Table.

Attendance at both the ALA Midwinter Conference and the ALA Annual Conference is required.

Reports to:

IRRT Publications Committee

IRRT Executive Board

To make inquiries or to apply for the position, please contact Mary Boone, Chair of the IRRT Publications Committee. Applications should include a brief statement about your interest in the position and a description of your skills and background relevant to the position. Please include a current resume or CV. Applications are due by November 8, 2004 for review by the Publications Committee. Candidate interviews will be held at the Midwinter Meeting in Boston on Saturday, January 15, 2005.

Mary Boone

IRRT Publications Committee Chair, 2004 - 2005

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From ALA's Information Desk

By Michael Dowling

ALA activities at IFLA Conference in Buenos Aires
ALA was pleased to see a very good turnout at the IFLA Conference in Buenos Aires, the first to ever be held in South America. Three thousand delegates attended the conference, including over 1,000 from Latin American and Caribbean countries. Argentina had the largest delegation with over 600 delegates. Over 350 delegates from the United States participated. Many of these delegates serve as ALA representatives to IFLA Section Standing Committees.

ALA took an active role in this year's IFLA Conference in Buenos Aires. ALA assisted with publicizing the conference and organized the Fellowship for the Americas program, sponsored by the IFLA 2001 National Organizing Committee. This year, 40 librarians from 23 countries in the Americas received fellowships.

ALA organized two programs at the conference, which were held on the last day of the conference. The *Campaign for the World's Libraries/La Campaña para las Bibliotecas del Mundo* program highlighted the promotional activities and plans of Mexico, Brazil, Australia and Uruguay. ALA will be working with IFLA to enhance the Campaign website this fall to include these presentations to help others in their promotional efforts. ALA President Carol Brey-Casiano followed up with a wonderful bilingual (Spanish-English) presentation on *Library Advocacy - Promoción de bibliotecas*.

ALA's booth in the exhibit hall received a lot of visitors and 1,000 *en tu biblioteca* buttons were passed out to delegates to promote the value of libraries.



Barbarba Ford and Susan Schnuer, IRRT Members, had poster sessions at IFLA 2004.

Photo by Sha Li Zhang



Left to right: Nancy Bolt, IRRT Chair; Michael Dowling, IRO Director; Sha Li Zhang, IRRT Secretary/Treasurer. Photo by Sha Li Zhang



Supreme Court Library Entrance/Checkout Desk. Photo by Sha Li Zhang

Welcome New IRRT Members!

Paul Bartos	Lisa Ahlstedt
Brooke Becker	Katrina Anderson
Valerie Christie	J. Archer
Yolanda Cuesta	Paraskeva Dimova-Angelov
Deana Groves	Linda Johnson
Charla Hylton	Helen King-Desai
Benjamín Koker	Lucia Lee
Jodi Shepherd	Cheryl MacLennan
Linda Silba	Deirdre McDonald
Vicki Valleroy	Roberta Menger
Thomas Washington	Catherine Michael
Debra Mitts-Smith	Jennifer Nichols
David Nutty	Ann Paprocki
Diane Skorina	Mark Szarko
Samantha Thompson-Franklin	
EP Ipswich	

Hong Kong Libraries: Post 1997

By Helen Lam

Information Technology and Digital Libraries in Hong Kong: Post 1997

As a library professional who had worked in Hong Kong decades ago, I looked forward to returning and seeing family and friends and was curious about changes in libraries that happened since 1997 when the city became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) within China after 155 years of British government. I wanted to learn how Hong Kong libraries had been affected by the change in status and also by the technological revolution that began in 1996 with an international conference, "Hong Kong's Information Networks", sponsored by the Hong Kong Library Association.

In April 2004, the author visited Hong Kong and interviewed librarians from Hong Kong Central Library, the University of Hong Kong (HKU), and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), about their digitization projects.

The opening of the Hong Kong Central Library in May 2001 revealed a custom made Multimedia Information System (MMIS), developed by IBM and the ICO (a software system integrator and developer), that allows patrons to retrieve digitized images and play video and audio files from a single search interface. Searching is flexible and advanced and allows, in addition to text searching, image searching by color average, color histogram, and color layout. The project won several awards for its innovation in IT design.

In 1997 the new government of Hong Kong allocated HK\$51 million to the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and the University of Hong Kong to promote IT education and to conduct research on networking, multi-media technology, Internet applications, etc. The intention was to transform Hong Kong into an information technology society, thus securing its position in Asia as a leader in technology.

The University of Hong Kong (HKU) has one of the most extensive digital collections in Hong Kong, with new resources added on a continual basis. In 1997, HKU became an active member of the newly formed Pacific Rim Digital Library Alliance (PRDLA) that promotes global sharing of online information through multilingual servers. One of HKU's digital collection contributions to the PRDLA's digital Pacific Explorations Archive is 'Hong Kong & the West until 1860,' a collection of maps,

sketches and information on early settlers and foreign visitors in early Hong Kong.

Other multi-media digital collections include: 'Beijing Historical Geography Database', 'e-Video' (containing miscellaneous television programs, lectures, seminars and conferences, etc.), 'Hong Kong Tourism Board Collection', 'Historical Laws of Hong Kong Online', 'Hong Kong Government Reports Online (1879-1941)', 'Hong Kong Listed Company Papers Online', 'Hong Kong Newspaper Clippings Online,' 'Hong Kong Stock Market Archives and Artifacts Collection,' and 'Sun Yat-sen in Hong Kong'. Taking search technology a step further, in September 2003, HKUL launched its 'Library Without Walls' program. From anywhere in Hong Kong, using a wireless-LAN enabled Palm handheld, students can search the catalog of two million books and journals, send e-forms, or read their SDI (Selective Dissemination of Information) messages. The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, opened in 1991, has already established a library that is on the cutting edge of technology. HKUST was the first Hong Kong university to use an online library catalog and made it available on a wireless network in 2001. A year before HKUST opened, the university collaborated with Innovative Interfaces, Inc., to enhance support of Chinese characters.

HKUST, one of 277 academic institutions worldwide using the Open Archives Initiative (OAI) interoperability framework, has digitized scholarly materials such as journal articles, conference papers, and technical reports. Once scanned, the materials are indexed and searchable in OAIster, a system created by the University of Michigan Digital Library Production Services.



*Hong Kong Central Library
Photo by Helen Lam*

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ROUND TABLE AT ALA

By Nancy Bolt

IRRT had a very successful conference in Orlando. Several hundred international visitors were in attendance and they participated in the services that IRRT offered. The Visitor's Center welcomed our international visitors. Many took advantage of the comfortable seats and easy computer access. The orientation session was also well attended with people eager to learn about ALA and the activities happening all week.

This year the International Reception was outstanding. Held at a popular local restaurant, over 500 people attended and ate and drank and mixed and mingled for two hours. This IRRT event is being a must-go-to ALA activity. Many thanks to our sponsors for their support.

The International Papers, and International Poster session allowed international librarians to share information about their programs and projects.

IRRT members in the spring election elected Jeannette Pierce as Vice President/President Elect and Judith Lin Hunt as the board member at large. Even more exciting, the members approved a dues increase for United States librarians and free for international librarians. At the business meeting at the conference, a new set of bylaws was also approved.

ALA is engaging in a long range planning process. The International Relations Committee asked IRRT, along with some other groups, to make suggestions on the top priorities for international relations in ALA. The IRRT Officers and Board sent the following top ten priorities to ALA IRC.

- 1) All ALA units will understand the importance and relevance of participating in international activities.
- 2) Efforts will be made by ALA to encourage involvement by Americans in professional meetings in other countries.
- 3) Programs and services will be developed with an international audience in mind; materials,

publications, and products will reflect a global approach to librarianship.

- 4) ALA will publicize activities, events, and library related stories from other countries and highlight U.S. library projects ongoing in other countries.
- 5) The Association will identify opportunities for exchange programs, publicize their availability, and facilitate connections between U.S. and foreign librarians.
- 6) Increasing involvement by international members in ALA programming and committee work will be promoted through encouragement of attendance at meetings and through electronic means
- 7) Opportunities will be provided at ALA conferences for U.S. librarians to meet and interact with their international colleagues and efforts will be made to further involvement by Americans in professional meetings in other countries.
- 8) Through scholarships, grant programs, and exchanges, librarians will be brought to the U.S. and Americans will be sent abroad to enrich professional lives and to contribute professional expertise
- 9) ALA will provide a wide range of opportunity for its members to become involved in international work.
- 10) ALA will provide leadership in the international arena in those areas where American librarianship is particularly strong, such as freedom of access to information, information technology, reference services, and bibliography.
- 11) Through its work in IFLA, with other library and educational associations, and through various independent entities, ALA will be an influential force in areas of international importance such as copyright law and the development of standards.

IFLA 2004

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books to the shelves. In 1998, the library implemented an online catalog system that now contains 500,000 records. The library's comparative law section houses periodicals in several foreign languages and includes a large section of U.S. law reviews and journals. The library staff is proud of its foreign language journals and their value to the understanding of the law in other countries. The staff in this section reads and speaks several languages. At the end of our tour, we thanked the library staff for its hospitality and the conference volunteer, an Argentine school teacher who brought six of us, from six different nations, to the library via train. We could tell that our library colleagues in Buenos Aires took pride in hosting IFLA 2004 in their home city.



*Reference Librarians at the Argentina Supreme Court Central Library
Photo by Sha Li Zhang*



*Reference Shelves at the Argentina Supreme Court Central Library
Photo by Sha Li Zhang*

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Postage