

International Leads

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

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An American Librarian in India and Nepal

By Dr. Lesley Farmer

I had the pleasure to visit with three types of librarians in India and Nepal over the Thanksgiving holiday, 2008. I started in New Delhi where I was warmly greeted by the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) Asian Regional Director Madhu Bhargav. While giving me an overview of the city, Madhu also explained the realities of school libraries and preparation of teacher librarians (TL). At this point, no formal librarianship training strand focuses on school librarians although sometimes a course is offered on that specialization. Nor do school library program standards exist. Madhu is developing an area association as well as a regional IASL team to address some of these issues in collaboration with TLs in other parts of the world.

As Special Library Association Education Division Chair, I was invited to present at the International Conference of Asian Special Libraries. Held at the India Islamic Center, the conference hosted over 300 delegates, mainly from South Asia. For three and a half days, librarians shared their experiences about shaping the future of special libraries beyond boundaries. Technology issues played a central role, be it for resources and their retrieval, infrastructure, preservation, or distance education. Other topics included academic librarianship, information literacy, and marketing. I presented two papers: one on the life cycle of digital reference sources, and the other on predictors of suc-



Dr. Farmer visits with Indian librarians.

cess of beginning and expert teacher librarians. Some of the challenges in the area include languages (dealing with 22 official languages and their scripts), coordination across agencies and regions, technology, and professional development. A strong sense of cultural sensitivity was evident, with libraries needing to support cultural heritages and perspectives.

As the IASL Vice-President for Association Relations, I had been in correspondence with the School Libraries Support Association Nepal for several years and took the opportunity to visit them in Kathmandu.

Teacher librarians and association leaders Sharada Siwakoti and Mahadev Parvate welcomed me with open arms and ceremonial scarves. We talked at length about the issues of school librarianship, TL preparation and resources. Several factors constrain collection development: limited publishing in Nepal, unstable or unavailable technology, lack of funds, lack of professional training, and lack of support. Nor does reading seem to be highly valued. On the other hand, cultural interest is high, which can be leveraged to collect and produce information about regional expertise.

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Message from the Editor

Happy Anniversary, IRRT! Sixty years ago a group of ALA librarians established a Round Table to focus on the international activities of librarianship. In her Chair's message in this issue, Judith Hunt gives a brief history of the Round Table and recaps some of the festivities during ALA Midwinter this past January. During Midwinter, ALA Council approved by acclamation a tribute to IRRT, which is included in this issue. Ms. Hunt also hints at what will be in store at ALA Annual in Chicago this coming July. We hope you will be able to attend, as it promises to be a great celebration of a wonderful accomplishment. Remember, Annual is later than usual this year, running from July 9-15. Finally, you are invited to contribute to the 60th Anniversary Endowment campaign.



The main article in this issue is contributed by Dr. Lesley Farmer. She spent time visiting libraries and presenting at conferences in India and Nepal. She recounts her experiences and observations of librarianship in India and Nepal.

Libraries in Southeast Florida are participating in an exciting book donation program to supply books to Armenia and Iraq. A report from the overseeing organization, SEFLIN, explains their work.

Also included in this issue are two brief reports from the recipients of an annual travel grant to the National Forum of LITA. Every year a librarian from the Caribbean is selected to attend the Forum; the observations from the last two recipients are presented here. I hope their positive reports will inspire others to apply.

Finally, Jane Meyers provides an update on the Lubuto Library Project in Zambia. Ms. Meyers first reported about the project in September 2007, and the update reports on the positive progress of the project.

Keep those submissions coming!

~ Rebecca L. Miller

Call for Submission

Do you have news about...

International library activities?

People in international librarianship?

Upcoming international conferences?

International partnerships between libraries?

Then why not submit it to *International Leads*?
Send your news to intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com
for consideration.

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Message from the IRRT Chair

By Judith Lin Hunt

The International Relations Round Table is 60 years old this year! It was established by the ALA Council in 1949 as the Round Table on Library Service Abroad and has grown to nearly 1,800 members with thirteen committees and two interest groups. Celebratory events began with a reception for international librarians attending the Midwinter Meeting. Thanks to President Jim Rettig graciously offering his suite as the venue, several international librarians had the opportunity to meet with the IRRT Executive Board and members of the Orientation/Mentoring Committee, IRRT's Emerging Leaders, IRO's Michael Dowling and Delin Guerra, President Jim Rettig, and Executive Director Keith Michael Fiels.

To celebrate this important anniversary and to strongly maintain and expand its many activities, IRRT has embarked on an Endowment Campaign, Sixty for Sixty. Many international librarians' first encounter with American library practices has been through the work of IRRT and many U.S. librarians have found that their participation in IRRT has resulted in rewarding contacts with international librarians. IRRT has fostered opportunities for U.S. librarians to visit libraries in other countries and to work overseas in exchange and other programs. It has facilitated the donation of books to needy institutions abroad and provided professional expertise to libraries on every continent. A successful campaign will provide a foundation for IRRT's continued contribution to ALA's important role in international librarianship.

ALA's Midwinter Meeting President's Program was international and inspirational. Dr. Muhammad Yunus, Nobel Peace Prize winner and author, spoke about his program of providing micro-loans to people, mostly women, who could not otherwise borrow

money to start or expand their small businesses. Lives and communities have been transformed. President Jim Rettig noted that "Libraries also make micro-loans--gifts, actually--of knowledge. They help transform people's lives, improve their well-being and contribute to our knowledge-based economy." (Cognotes 1/24/09) Dr. Yunus was surprised and interested in the size of ALA! He received a standing ovation at the end of his presentation. I was fortunate enough to receive an autographed copy of one of his two books, (Banker to the Poor: Micro-lending and the Battle Against World Poverty), and read it while waiting for the airport shuttle, on the plane, and finished it that night at home. It is a compelling story.

ALA's Annual Conference in July will bring many international activities with special celebrations: the Pre-Conference, Orientation/Mentoring

Program, Chair's Program, International Papers Session, International Posters Session, and the always enjoyable International Reception, which will be held at the Chicago Public Library. (Get your tickets early--it will be a sell out this year especially!) The International Visitors Center will be welcoming visitors from around the world. Volunteer to be a mentor or to spend an hour or two and the International Visitors Center--a great way to meet international colleagues! A special commemorative booklet will mark the 60th anniversary.

More information about the Sixty for Sixty Campaign and the opportunity to donate can be found on our website - <http://www.ala.org/irrt/>. We hope you will consider supporting our future activities. Thank you and see you in Chicago!



IRRT Leadership enjoys meeting ALA Executive Director Keith Fiels. From left to right: Judith Lin Hunt, IRRT Chair; Sha-Li Zhang, IRRT Chair Elect; Keith Fiels, ALA Executive Director; and Joan Weeks, IRRT Past Chair.

Southeast Florida Libraries Give People in Two Nations Opportunities to Read English

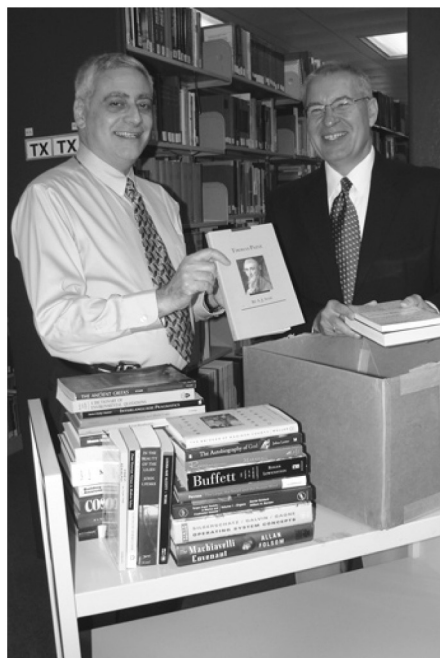
Florida Atlantic University Libraries have redirected thousands of English language books that are not needed by its library users to Armenia and Iraq, enabling librarians in those nations to augment their collections and offer a larger variety of titles to readers. The library's grass roots effort, which now includes a network of Southeast Florida libraries as partners and an Iraqi university as a recipient, began after Dr. William Miller, dean of University Libraries at FAU, returned from Armenia following the September 2001 terrorist attacks. Miller and his staff at the S.E. Wimberly Library on FAU's Boca Raton campus began the project by setting aside appropriate books among duplicates from their gifts program. The first books shipped were mainly science and technology books that were donated by an area publisher of scientific research manuals or books that had been superseded. "The emphasis was always on current, quality material, either in science or in history, literature and other areas of great interest," he said.

After the project got underway, Miller and Tom Sloan, executive director of the Southeast Florida Library Information Network (SEFLIN), who has also visited Armenia as a consultant for the State Department on numerous occasions, collaborated on how to provide ongoing assistance to Armenian libraries.

SEFLIN, which includes FAU Libraries among its membership of more than 300 libraries, assumed the project in January 2006, named it the SEFLIN Gifts Book Program and began shipping books to Armenia in January 2006. The project's name has since been changed to the SEFLIN Gift Library Materials Program. SEFLIN, a nonprofit group founded in 1984, fosters cooperation among member libraries and partners to advance staff development, informa-

tion services, resource sharing, the recognition and promotion of libraries, and disaster preparedness and response planning.

SEFLIN ships five boxes of books weekly from its offices at the S.E. Wimberly Library. About 3,500 of the books shipped by SEFLIN have been academic titles, while about 3,200 have been books designated for grade



Miller and Sloan review books at the S. E. Wimberly Library

schools and public libraries. More than 100 titles on the study of the English language have been donated to language institutes. FAU Libraries have given at least 55 percent of the books for the effort over the past two years. In addition, Lynn University, Palm Beach Community College, Lighthouse Pointe Library, and members of the S.E. Florida Independent School Libraries Consortium have donated books, microfilm, videotapes and other library materials.

Amed Demirhan, library director of the University of Kurdistan Hawler

Library, an English language university in Erbil, Iraq, said he has noticed a change in his students since his library began receiving the books. "The connectivity gives our students the feeling that they are part of the global community and not isolated anymore," said Demirhan, a former Broward County Library employee, who requested the books before returning home to Iraq.

Sloan says it has been gratifying to see and understand how important the library materials are to the recipients in both nations. In December 2007, he delivered English language books, including books for children, to a 6,000-square foot community library that served 135,000 people. "The program has been a good community-building as well as library-building activity," said Sloan. "We are fortunate to have FAU's support and happy that this project has turned out to be a successful partnership."

In addition to the ongoing book shipments, FAU Libraries have an interlibrary loan agreement with American University of Armenia's Papazian Library. The agreement, signed in 2001, allows the Armenian university to receive electronic photocopies of periodicals, conference papers, government documents and other materials from FAU Libraries.

For more information on the project, contact Tom Sloan at 877-733-5460 or sloan@fau.edu, or Dr. William Miller at 561-297-3717 or miller@fau.edu.

Are you part of an international partnership? Have you recently visited or hosted your partner? If you have - please share your experiences with us! Send a description of your partnership or visit to intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com.

Tribute to the 60th Anniversary of the International Relations Round Table

Wednesday, January 28, 2009
ALA Midwinter Meeting
Denver, Colorado

The ALA Council pronounced the following tribute to IRRT, which was approved by acclamation

- Whereas, The International Relations Round Table has worked for the past 60 years to celebrate the richness of relationships developed over the years between American librarians and their colleagues abroad; and**
- Whereas, The International Relations Round Table has contributed to ALA's important role in international librarianship; and**
- Whereas, The International Relations Round Table members have supported numerous activities for an increasing number of international visitors to ALA annual conferences, most notably the International Librarians Reception; now, therefore, be it**
- Resolved, That the American Library Association (ALA) congratulates the International Relations Round Table on its 60th Anniversary and its work for the Association.**



Let's make the 60th Anniversary of IRRT one to remember! Submit your...

*Memories of experiences with IRRT
Memories of international experiences with ALA
Recognition of librarians who have had an impact on international librarianship
Photos and/or memorabilia from IRRT events*

*for inclusion in the 60th Anniversary commemorative booklet.
Send submissions to intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com*

The LITA National Forum: Two Experiences

Editor's note: The Library & Information Technology Association (a sub-unit of ALA) holds a National Forum annually. A librarian from the Caribbean is chosen to receive the Errol Hill Travel Grant to attend the Forum. The following are excerpts from the Grant recipients for 2007 and 2008.

*Annette Smith, Barbados
Attended Denver, 2007*

My plan was to arrive in Denver on the afternoon of the third, attend the pre-conference and the main conference and spend two days visiting public libraries looking at services and programmes in this more developed environment. All my plans nearly came to nought and as local events almost prevented me from leaving Barbados. I arrived in Denver two days late, on October 5 late at night, too late even to buy a toothbrush. I didn't care; I had made it.

The Forum was all I expected. The theme was "Technology with Altitude." Eventually I attended David King's The Future is not out of Reach: Change, Library 2.0 and Emerging Trends; Corrado's <http://Library 2.0>; some of Catherine Dannik's It's Up and Running. Now What ...; Martha Chantiny's Using the Street Print Engine for Digital Image Collections at the University of Hawaii; Jeremy Frumkin's In our Cages with Golden Bars and all of the Poster Sessions. I was also able to spend one day visiting libraries.

It seems to me that technology and library go hand in hand, like the proverbial 'hand and glove'. Every time a new application comes on the scene the library community finds a way to build it into the programme or service delivery system. However, for some of us, the new technologies are creating an operating environment that, if not totally unfamiliar, at least appears a lot different from the one to which some of us have grown

accustomed. In the past when the librarian and libraries guarded access to the portals of knowledge, when we stood between the customers and the technology, change went on around us but if we could not afford to buy it we could keep quiet about it; but for some of us this has all changed. The customer now not only knows what is on the market, he knows how to use it and when the new release is out long before some libraries and librarians even see the outdated beta version.

I had gotten to the Forum late but I was glad that I had made it. I was glad that I had had the opportunity to attend. I left with papers that would help to narrow the information gap created when I missed half the sessions, ideas, answers, and maybe more questions, but at least with the contacts I had made, maybe finding answers in the future would not be so hard.

*Gracelyn Cassell, Montserrat
Attended Cincinnati, 2008*

The theme of the 2008 Forum "Technology and Community: Building the Techno Community Library" and the presentations that I attended provided a wealth of information as to low cost solutions that could be utilized by libraries in the region to improve their operations. During the 4 days, I experienced a number of Eureka moments as I recognized potential solutions to some of the issues with which I had been concerned.

The Opening General Session "What is Social Cataloguing and Where is it Going" by Tim Spalding, creator of LibraryThing.com, was welcome information. Many of the libraries in our region have been trying to get their catalogues online. Not only does LibraryThing provide functionalities for quickly getting library collections on the internet, it also simplifies the whole process of cataloguing.

Another interesting session was "Re-Swizzling the IT Enterprise for the Next Generation: Creating a Strategic and Organizational Model for Effective IT Management" presented by Maurice York of North Carolina State University Libraries. Unfortunately, very few Caribbean libraries have a systems librarian much less a systems department. Too often the foundational pillars of support, operations, products and applications about which Maurice spoke are the responsibility of the sole individual, not necessarily trained, with an interest in using IT for the delivery of library services. We will need to find a way to get such persons the kind of exposure and ultimately training that will re-swizzle their libraries.

I was able to participate in the "Five Minute Madness" session with my presentation "Incorporating ICT and a New Vision for Caribbean Libraries." I was rather pleased with the response to my plea for assistance. Several persons provided cards and wanted further information. Discussions have since been held with the Head of the Library School at Mona who is willing to partner in a project to get IT skills into the region to assist with developing information services.

David Lankes presentation "Obligation of Leadership" provided the right note on which to end the Forum. He presented a number of challenges which I took seriously. I thank David for reminding us that libraries have to be active participants in the conversation which is part of the knowledge business. Too many of us sit and wait rather than being proactive taking the conversation forward. If there is anything that was drummed home at the 2008 LITA National Forum it is that the mission of the Library is to make the world a better place.

India/Nepal

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A regional Interaction Program on School Library Management was held to gather stakeholders to discuss school library's significance in Nepal's education. The group is starting a "No Library No School" campaign, and hopes to include a mandate that every school have a library and professional teacher librarian in the revised constitution (a Parliament representative participated actively in the program). Both grass roots and systemic strategies were voiced: e.g., collecting local information, promoting the habit of reading, increasing collaboration between teachers and librarians, working with publishers and other entities, garnering community support. The need for library and librarian standards was identified, and an idea for TL-focused professional development was discussed.

As the Librarianship Program Coordinator at California State University Long Beach (CSULB), I was interested in talking with fellow library educators about their programs. In addition, the CSULB College of Education has an agreement with Lucknow University to provide teacher preparation training through a train-the-trainer model. In the process, faculty at both institutions would develop Open Education Resources (i.e., free online learning objects such as simulations, web tutorials, assessment instruments) to support teacher preparation programs. I spoke with Lucknow University librarian Dr. Jyoti Misra about the library's role in helping organize those OERs for optimum storage and retrieval. Dr. Misra also teaches in their library science preparation program, so we also exchanged ideas about curriculum and instruction. No librarianship courses focus on education per se, although information literacy is now being addressed. Ideally, teacher preparation programs should include a module on libraries and information literacy as part of their methodology courses.

News from the Lubuto Library Project

By Jane Kinney Meyers

In 2008 the Lubuto Library Project finalized a Memorandum of Understanding with Zambia's Ministry of Education, identifying the organization as Zambia's national partner in providing professional leadership in library development and book-based literacy programming for orphans and vulnerable children. In turn, the Government will ask its donors to fund construction of Lubuto libraries. We are working with them at the moment to secure funding for one of our next libraries. Other recent accomplishments in fulfillment of this new responsibility have been the establishment of the Zambia Board on Books for Young People, in partnership with the University of Zambia, and recruitment of a Fulbright Scholar to teach children's literature and library services at the University while developing a book-based literacy program for Lubuto Libraries (whose benefits will extend far beyond our libraries' walls).

The Lubuto Library Project was nominated for the 2009 Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, the most prestigious international award related to children's literature. The award was established by the Swedish Government in 2002. The annual international prize of SEK 5 million (equivalent to approx. USD 660,000 or 490,000 Euros) may be awarded to authors, illustrators, narrators and/or promoters of reading whose work reflects the spirit of Astrid Lindgren. The object of the award is to increase interest in children's and young people's literature, and to promote children's right to culture on a global level. The award is administered by The Swedish Arts Council. More information: www.alma.se.

The 2008 year recipient of the award is the Australian author Sonya Hartnett. Earlier award winners are: 2007, the Venezuelan institution Banco del Libro; 2006, the American

author Katherine Paterson; 2005, the Japanese illustrator Ryōji Arai and the British author Philip Pullman; 2004, the Brazilian author Lygia Bojung; 2003, the Austrian author Christine Nöstlinger and the American illustrator and author Maurice Sendak.

Lubuto Project volunteers will be introducing the One Laptop Per Child XO laptops in their first library in February 2009. Also in February, the children who have participated in our Visual Arts program during the past year will be exhibiting their paintings at the Henry Tayali Gallery in Lusaka, Zambia. Final plans are being made for the next two Lubuto Libraries, one construction in Lusaka's Garden Compound to be funded by Dow Jones & Co. (whose employees are also building the complete 4,000-volume collection for that library) and the other in the rural town of Nabukuyu. The latter construction will be carried out with funding from Oprah's Angel Network, other generous donors, substantial contributions from the community and businesses in Zambia and bilateral funding mobilized by the Government of Zambia.

Two recent articles in ALA journals by Drexel University i-School Professor Denise Agosto, an internationally recognized expert on library services to disadvantaged youth, explore the Lubuto Project's model libraries. "The Lubuto Library Project as a Model of School Library Media Services for Disadvantaged Youth" is in the September/October 2008 issue of AASL's Knowledge Quest (v. 37, no. 1, p. 38-42). "The Lubuto Library Project and the Universality of Public Library Services for Youth" is in the November/December 2008 issue of PLA's Public Libraries (v. 47, no. 6, p. 56-60).

*Ms. Meyers is President of the
Lubuto Library Project*

India/Nepal

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My main “take-away” was a refreshed definition of libraries. Librarians need to work closely with their communities to assess local needs and interests as well as available resources. Librarians need to take leadership roles in identifying what local resources need to be developed as well, and then collecting, organizing, and making available those locally-produced resources as part of the library’s collection. As well as physical access to the collection, librarians need to provide intellectual access to these resources by working with users directly and also with educators to integrate literacies (reading, technology, information, cultural) into teaching and learning. This role necessitates librarianship preparation programs including educational issues into their curriculum. The importance of culture was also a big insight, with the idea of education helping learners to appreciate and express their cultures accurately and authentically. Finally, the need for librarian and library standards – and professional development to support those standards – has become a strong desire among librarians. I will be working with associations and library educators to that end.

Dr. Farmer is Professor of Library Science at California State University

Volunteer at ALA Annual!

The IRRT IVC Committee is looking for volunteers to staff the International Visitors Center at the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago. IRRT sponsors the IVC for international librarians attending the conference. The IVC will be located near the exhibits and will be open Friday, July 10, through Monday, July 13. IVC volunteers assist international visitors by answering questions and providing directions at the conference. (Don’t worry, we provide all the information you need to help the visitors!) Working at the IVC is fun and a great way to meet a variety of people from around the world. All you need to be a successful volunteer is a smile and a helpful attitude! To volunteer, please contact the International Relations Office at intl@ala.org. We’ll set the schedule in June, but please let us know now if you are interested in helping.

The IRRT Orientation/Mentoring Committee seeks mentors to help out international colleagues during the ALA Annual Conference. If you are interested in being a mentor in Chicago, please fill out a form at <http://tinyurl.com/arprgj> or contact the International Relations Office at intl@ala.org.

IRRT’s 60th Anniversary Endowment Campaign

Over the years the International Relations Round Table has provided opportunity for countless numbers of librarians to participate in global advancement of the profession. Round Table programs and receptions have been highlights of the association’s annual meetings. ALA membership at large has benefited from contact at conferences with colleagues from every corner of the world. Many international librarians’ first encounter with American library practice has been through the work of IRRT. Over the sixty years of its existence IRRT has fostered opportunities for U.S. librarians to visit libraries in other countries and to work overseas in exchange and other programs. It has facilitated the donation of books to needy institutions abroad and provided professional expertise to libraries on every continent. To maintain and expand these important activities resources from an ongoing fund are essential.

For additional information or to make a donation, please visit: <http://www.ala.org/irrt60thanniversary>

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