

Reflections and experiences from the 2014 EAHIL Conference in Rome



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“Reading” Rome...

First of all, I would like to say that I was grateful to be among those awarded an EBSCO-EAHIL scholarship this year and to have the opportunity of attending the 2014 EAHIL conference. On my first day in Rome, the First-timer's event held in the Library of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità presented me with the opportunity of meeting EAHIL Executive Board members, and fellow librarians/information specialists either new to the profession or to this specific scientific field. Besides chatting, making new acquaintances, and having a glass of wine, we also visited the Rare Book Collection of the ISS Library displaying anatomical drawings of Antonio Canova, the only Italian neoclassical sculptor to have become famous in Europe. During the conference there were many interesting presentations, so many in fact that my colleague and I divided the sessions between us so that we could attend as many presentations as possible. I, myself attended mostly Technology sessions (digital library, virtual/web services, electronic databases, etc.), occasionally Research ones (information retrieval, librarian-researcher collaborations, embedded librarians, etc.), but also the Poster Presentation and Exhibition, the *Future of Libraries*, the *Professional Development/Role of Librarians* sessions.

The SIG meeting brought us together with the small, but very spirited European Veterinary Libraries Group (EVLG). The cosy group dinner we had on Piazza Navona was almost as culturally diverse as the conference itself bringing together people from Sweden, Norway, France, UK, USA, and Hungary.

The visit to the National Library (i.e. the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma mentioned above), the Galleria Borghese, the Welcome reception in the garden of the ISS, a quick visit to the Colosseum which - coincidentally - had an exhibition about the beginnings of READING and LIBRARIES; all were unique and memorable moments of my journey.

However, the memory I will hold dear for a long time and which makes this trip unforgettable is to be awarded the prize for “Best poster presentation EAHIL First-time attendee” for the poster created together with my colleague, Bea Winkler. It was a time of not only listening to interesting presentations, getting acquainted with new people, networking, enjoying the company of colleagues from very similar or very different scientific fields, learning about the latest technologies, getting to know different points of view, but also rediscovering the city of Rome, an ever astonishing and exciting place which welcomed us with great warmth inside, namely at the Istituto Superiore di Sanità and the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma, not to mention the hot temperatures outside. It was a good year 2014 A.D., the year of the 14th EAHIL conference held in the Eternal city of Rome.

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First, I am very grateful to the EAHIL Board who offered me the scholarship and gave me the opportunity to attend the 14th EAHIL Conference "Divided we fall, united we inform: building alliances for a new European cooperation" in Rome. It was my first experience in participating in an international conference. The first timer's reception was great and allowed those of us who had never attended any EAHIL conference, to meet and share some first impressions. I enjoyed the introductory game as well as the Library Rare Books Collection, which was displayed during the event in Italian National Institute of Health. During the conference in the National Central Library of Rome, there was a great choice of sessions. The Conference offered a variety of interesting topics such as technology, semantics, metrics, patients, economics and research. I chose sessions which were about technology development at health libraries, their influence on librarians' work, and the opportunities that technology development offers to users. With the development of new technologies in libraries, the librarians also face the need to acquire new skills. I paid particular attention to presentations about e-books in libraries. I enjoyed poster presentations, particularly a poster presentation on e-books which was very attractive. I also attended the course "OA capacity-building for Europe's libraries: Horizon 2020, Open Access Policy and Training" and gained a valuable insight into Open Access and listened to colleagues' experiences. This Conference will certainly help my professional development and inspire me to improve our library services. It was a wonderful opportunity to share exciting professional experiences and unforgettable moments of social life. I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the sincere closing ceremony and the beautiful choir performance! Thank you all!



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I would like to thank the EAHIL Board members for awarding the scholarship and EBSCO for sponsoring the scholarship, which allowed me to attend and participate in the 14th EAHIL Conference in Rome 2014. This is the first International conference that I have attended, which provided me an excellent opportunity to not only meet professionals from different backgrounds but also to find out the new trends and practices in medical and health library across the European community and beyond. The conference programme was quite diverse and the parallel sessions were thought provoking with such a full and varied programme of speakers; it is difficult to pick out any favourites. In line with the nature of my professional role, I attended patient information parallel sessions and it was interesting to hear the work undertaken by fellow librarians in different countries. The one minute poster presentations were interesting, providing a quick overview and it is overwhelming to see so many posters.

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On the 2nd day of the conference I was very curious to visit to the **National Library** and the **Galleria Borghese museum** and I learnt interesting new things about rare collections. The conference dinner venue was very pleasant and the live music rendered during the dinner time was really melodious and very kind to the hearing and the mind.

The farewell choir was lovely. Totally I enjoyed the three day conference and after that I stayed along with my husband a couple more days in Rome visiting the Vatican and Colosseum. It was indeed memorable visiting the historical sites during my short stay apart from experiencing quite varied weather conditions within that short period. Once again I would like to thank EBSCO and EAHIL board for offering me a scholarship to give me this experience.



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I was happy to be one of the first timers who were granted the EBSCO-EAHIL scholarship. Therefore I would like to thank the EAHIL Board for providing me this wonderful opportunity to participate in the EAHIL 2014 Conference in Rome.

The scientific program was very interesting and choosing the track which to follow was sometimes very hard. Many excellent presentations were held throughout the days so it's difficult to pick out just a few favorites. But for me Maria Cassellas' key note speech about the open paradigm was a subject that was so timely due to the development going on in Finland and in the university I work at. Valeria Scotti and the altmetrics presentation gave a nice overview of altmetrics and suits well as an introduction to altmetrics. Natalia Tukhareli's presentation about bibliotherapy was an eye opener; it was a topic I didn't know anything about before. Shona Kirtley's presentation gave valuable information about the EQUATOR network and tools that can be used in supporting researchers in their work.

The short poster presentations were interesting and helped with choosing which posters to study more closely. Beforehand I had prepared a list which ones to read, but I just had to add some more to my list just because the presentations were so interesting. It was also very interesting to listen to Elena Prigoda-Springall, who talked about blending e-learning with face-to-face teaching. The classes we give our medical students are so similar and to get a confirmation of one's own thoughts about the advantages and pitfalls is always reassuring.

The first timer's event was really fun and we were able to meet and talk with many people, including the Board members who gave us their time and presented themselves to all of us which made one feel really privileged. The non-Scientific program was overall well organized and gave wonderful cultural experiences of which of course the Borghese Gallery and Museum was the most stunning experience.

The overall experience of the conference left me relieved. To realize that all over Europe and the world, libraries and information professionals are facing the same challenges in these economically hard times and the ever changing world. I really hope that I will be able to attend many more EAHIL conferences in the future. Meanwhile I will be sharing the fruits of the conference with my colleagues in the Turku University Library and in Finland.

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I was very fortunate to be awarded an EAHIL scholarship (generously funded by EBSCO) to attend EAHIL 2014 in Rome. The warm welcome provided at the first-timers event on the evening before the start of the conference gave me my first introduction to what Marshall Dozier (EAHIL President) termed the “extended family” of EAHIL.

The main conference sessions opened with a keynote from Maria Cassella (Digital Library specialist and consultant, Torino). Her presentation set the scene for the next three days: libraries face profound financial challenges across Europe, whilst the landscape of published information becomes increasingly fragmented. This is reflected in the plethora of initiatives linked to the Open agenda: open source, open access, open data, open learning, open education resources and open peer review. Libraries can play an important role in harnessing these initiatives to “recompose the fragmentation” – putting the pieces back together. We can do this at a strategic level – working within our organisations to develop policies in these areas – and at a technical level by collaborating on individual projects, particularly those linked to research.

In the morning parallel sessions, Heather Moberly (Texas A & M University) described a large-scale collaborative project between 28 American veterinary schools to identify interdisciplinary and collaborative publications. The afternoon sessions encouraged us to consider the ethical dimensions of health information, including an insight into approaches to patient information in France provided by Guillemette Utard Wlerick (BIU Sante Library, Paris).

The second day opened with presentations about findings from two research projects funded by EAHIL. Janet Harrison (Loughborough University) described the ELiQSR (European Library Quality Standards for Health) project examining quality standards for health libraries across Europe. In *Working in the health information profession: perspectives, experiences and trends* Barbara Sen and Robert Villa (University of Sheffield) reported on the very wide range skills needed in the health information profession, and the variety of ways in which professionals acquire these skills.

It was good to hear of innovative projects to engage a wider audience – for example, by providing public health information about food production through interactive theatre and tasting sessions (Raoul Ciappelloni (Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale, Perugia)). Highlights of the afternoon included Ben Skinner’s (Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust) presentation about the KnowledgeShare project, developed in an English National Health Service library, to manage library services (such as literature searches and training sessions) and to help library users to connect and to engage with others working in relevant fields. Jan Manson’s (Healthcare Improvement Scotland) presentation described the challenges of finding guidelines about rare diseases, highlighting apparently limited coverage or dissemination of guidance about these conditions through established databases.

The third and final day of the conference saw further discussions about the role of health information professionals in supporting research. Shona Kirtley (EQUATOR Network) discussed the role of librarians in promoting good reporting of research, as well as introducing the EQUATOR Network’s tools for supporting librarians and researchers (www.equator-network.org) in this work. Patrice Chalon (Belgian Health Care Knowledge Centre) introduced another useful tool for those preparing systematic reviews or Health Technology Assessments. The site *Summarized Research in Information Retrieval* for HTA (SuRe Info: www.sure-info.org) offers useful resources for information

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professionals looking to develop their knowledge and to stay up-to-date with current search methods and developments in information retrieval research. The conference concluded with the presentation of awards for outstanding contributions, as well as an unexpected but enjoyable musical finale.

Throughout the conference, from the first-timers event to the welcome reception and the conference dinner, the organising committee did an excellent job of making everyone feel welcome. The social events, the tour of the National Library and the visit to the Galleria Borghese offered plenty of opportunities to discuss shared experiences and to reflect on the conference presentations with colleagues from across Europe and beyond.



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First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to the EAHIL board for awarding me one of the EAHIL-EBSCO scholarships. The conference was a wonderful opportunity for me to meet colleagues from all over the world and to learn more about health sciences librarianship. Working at the Library of Odontology at Malmo University, my main tasks are teaching information literacy and managing the library's journals. At the conference I found a lot of inspiration for these two areas, as well as much more in the library and information science field.

My overall impression from the conference was that no matter in which field you specialize or in which country you work, we share so many mutual experiences and benefit so much from sharing knowledge and information with each other. This reflects the conference's theme: *'Divided we fall, united we inform - Building alliances for a new European cooperation'*.

Keynote speaker Maria Cassella spoke in her presentation *The open paradigm and the knowledge society* of the changing role of libraries and how important it is that we as librarians and information specialists "recompose the fragmentation" by adapting to new roles, building partnerships and being active in the research process. I was very inspired by this presentation, and I also found that these themes were applicable at several other presentations held at the conference. I also very much enjoyed the parallel session with the theme *Education/cooperation*, because I not only picked up several good ideas to try at home (for example blended e-learning), but also because the presenters talked so much about cooperation and sharing knowledge between colleagues. We don't have to reinvent the wheel over and over again! This was very well illustrated by the presentation *Sharing to learn, learning to share* where Katri Larmo and colleagues presented the results from a questionnaire sent to Finnish health information professionals, and suggested action plans for extended cooperation in EAHIL.

My colleague Madeleine du Toit and I presented the poster *Teaching information literacy* at the poster session. It was a great experience to do a one-minute presentation and then be a part of the poster exhibition along with the other poster presenters. In the exhibition I saw several interesting posters with hand-on tips for my daily work, for example managing user statistics for journals, as well as several aspects of teaching information literacy.

I would like to thank the organizers for putting together such an interesting and packed schedule, plus the social events and the excellent food. And last but not least: thank you for providing such a beautiful location as the National Central Library of Rome. Thank you for an amazing experience, I hope that we will meet again in the future.

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EAHIL in Rome this summer created a fresh appreciation for Air Conditioning and Ice Cream, as the ovenly air hits you each time you leave a building. The conference took place in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale on 11-13 June. Three days crowded with an impressive array of international speakers, imaginative pasta dishes, a gallery tour and a gala dinner with beautiful music. The Irish contribution included two presentations and two posters and we greatly appreciated the Best Poster Prize, and the joint scholarship which enabled myself and Gethin White to attend. City highlights included the beautiful pink and white magnolia trees and a delegates' tour of the Galleria Borghese where the spectacular Apollo and Daphne, and Pluto and Persephone sculptures by Gian Lorenzo Bernini brought a magical lightness and softness to marble. The variety of perspectives under the umbrella of "Cooperation" was inspiring and highlighted threads of shared experiences and new learnings and the Poster Exhibition offered an arena to see projects other librarians are working on. Some highlights for me included the following presentations:

Natalia Tukhareli increased her library's visibility and had a positive impact on customer service, patient safety and clinical effectiveness in the Rouge Valley Health System in Toronto. A new Rx Information Service was set up whereby patients were prescribed an information package and self help books on their condition, similar to the bibliotherapy project in Irish public libraries. The clinician prescribed an information package topic, and the librarian would carry out a literature search and compile the information package for the patient. The librarians role was advertised by flyers to doctor's offices. The library made an important contribution to this hospital project which reduced re-admission rates for discharged patients.

Ben Skinner, the librarian in Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, set up a customised web tool to manage 3 core library activities – teaching, searching and updating – and to enable work sharing and regional collaboration among Library and Knowledge Services in south east England. The KnowledgeShare system was designed to manage library administration tasks, to standardise searching using the hierarchy of evidence, to record library users' specialties and professional interests, and to create an interactive shared workspace for librarians and library users. KnowledgeShare was established in Brighton in October 2013 and is currently being rolled out to other regional NHS Trusts. As more library teams join the scheme, issues of collaboration, workload and standardisation have arisen. The creators of Knowledge Share highlight the considerable benefits of personalised library services, the impact on patient care, and the increased efficiency of library services.

One of the most useful presentations of this conference was *Hunting Zebra* by **Jan Manson** from Healthcare Improvement Scotland where she discussed the development of new protocols for finding rare disease guidelines. The Zebra in her presentation title referred to surprise diagnoses and also made me think of the librarian as an Explorer! Her aim was to address healthcare inequality caused by a lack of clinical knowledge of rare diseases. Along with some familiar resources, she introduced less familiar resources such as Orphanet and Eurogentest and RareBestPractices and the concept of Pearl Growing Search Methods.

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Rome will stay as an unforgettable city in my memories not only because of its historical and monumental atmosphere that impressed me immensely, but also because it implicated an important career step in my professional life as my poster presentation titled “Health sciences libraries and public health education awareness in social media platforms” was accepted for the EAHIL 2014 Conference with the theme of *Divided We Fall, United We Inform-Building Alliances For A New European Cooperation*. I will cherish all my memories in there as long as I live.

Being one of the EAHIL-EBSCO scholarship recipients doubled my enthusiasm for this conference participation and the travel to Rome. For me the outstanding highlights from EAHIL 2014 were the wonderful art gallery visits and the live Baroque Orchestra concert at the Gala Dinner. It was my first time listening to the specific character sounds of the theorbo and harpsichord live. This made me feel as if I was in the Renaissance era.



This year, a one-minute presentation opportunity was provided for the poster papers accepted. The difficulty of summarizing everything in one minute scrambled with the excitement of making an international presentation for the first time and also answering several questions from the participants when I went to the poster area was a delightful experience for me. I want to congratulate all authors, presenters and best presentation winners on their achievements.

I came back to Turkey bringing new trends and ideas in health librarianship regarding these topics: e-learning, open education, flipped/blended classrooms, open access resources, research data management, mobile applications, social media, EBLIB, remote control/off-campus library, bibliometrics and altmetrics. The librarians’ changing roles in the “ALA Core Competences” include “Bibliometrics specialist, Knowledge Facilitator, Rights Specialist, Educator, Data Curator, Digital/Data Librarian, Scholarly Communication Librarian, Ontologies Specialist, Project Manager.

This was my second EAHIL event after our hosting in İstanbul where I worked at the information desk. After 2 years I attended a perfect Workshop 2013 hosted by Karolinska Institutet Stockholm. Undoubtedly, I am going to be a part of sustainable medical librarianship in my country with these experiences. I would like to thank all contributors for improving my professional skills and for giving me an opportunity to build relationships from all around the world that allow me to go beyond the boundaries of my education.