

European Association
for Health Information and Libraries

*Association Européenne
pour l'Information et les Bibliothèques de Santé*



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EAHIL's past president Elisabeth Husem, Norway, brought greetings from EAHIL at MLA's Annual Meeting in Vancouver in May.

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NEWSLETTER

to European Health Librarians • des Bibliothécaires Européens de la Santé

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Instructions for Authors

Manuscripts either in English or French should be about 3-4 standard (1.50 space) typewritten pages and provided by e-mail or on a diskette. Informative title, short summary and keywords should be provided. References should be expressed in Vancouver style. Authors of submitted papers accept editing and re-use of published material by EAHIL.

Les manuscrits, qu'ils soient rédigés en français ou en anglais, devront être présentés sous forme de pages dactylographiées, de standard 3-4 (espace de 1.50) et fournis par e-mail ou sur disquettes. Le titre, un bref résumé ainsi que les mots-clés devront également être joints. Les références devront être formulées selon le "style de Vancouver". Les auteurs ayant soumis des articles acceptent que ces derniers soient édités et utilisés à nouveau dans les publications pour l'AEIBS.

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La Rédaction s'efforce d'obtenir des articles intéressants. Cependant, les faits et opinions exprimés dans ces articles sont de la responsabilité de leurs auteurs. Ils ne reflètent pas nécessairement les politiques et opinions de l'Association.

The full membership subscriptions including the subscription to our quarterly Newsletter remain unchanged for 2000. Les cotisations de 2000 comprenant l'abonnement à notre Bulletin d'Information trimestriel restent inchangées.

• Full information regarding the Association, membership fees and advertisements in the Newsletter, may be obtained from the EAHIL secretariat in Utrecht.

• Toute information concernant l'Association, les cotisations de membres et les annonces publicitaires dans la Newsletter peut être obtenue au secrétariat de l'AEIBS à Utrecht.

EAHIL / AEIBS



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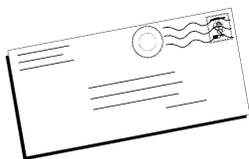
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EDITORIAL

Dear Everyone,



I hope you have all had a very good summer holiday and are back at work now refreshed and able for the long winter months ahead. This summer has disappeared in a blur of one event after another and until the beginning of November it will be the same. For me the long winter might be a welcome relief!

This Newsletter has returned to its original format having two feature articles instead of a specific Highlight on.. I had been hoping for something on Israel but that did not materialise. However I did receive an excellent article on the IFLA Conference in Jerusalem from Irene Lovas which I hope you will enjoy reading. We say goodbye to Manuela Colombi in her role as President in this issue and in her final Letter from the President, as always thought provoking, she asks us to think to the future of EAHIL. Manuela asks us to read and comment on Tamara Morcillo's very blunt and truthful article which I have entitled To Be or Not to Be a EAHIL Member? and I do hope we all will contribute to this discussion because it raises so many excellent points. In the next issue I hope to be able to publish a miscellany of these views. Please send your comments before December 15th 2000.

We have two feature articles in this issue, one on the Baltics and one from a new contributor, Dr Christo Mutafov from Sofia, Bulgaria. Due to a blip in my communication channels (which unfortunately happens frequently!) the Baltic article by Eeva Kihlberg was lost and missed Newsletter 52. Eeva has kindly agreed for it to be included in this issue

along with Dr Christo Mutafov's article on Bulgarian medical libraries which I hope will make interesting reading about the situation after Soviet rule in two separate areas of Europe.

In Newsletter 54 I would like to do a Highlight on.. Ireland and I am appealing to our Irish members to contribute 2 -3

articles. Again the deadline date is 15 December 2000. Finally in our issue we have an article from Judith Palmer telling us about the changes in Health Libraries Review. Hopefully it will show the way we, as EAHIL members, can serve both journals.

Sally Wood-Lamont

Letter from the President



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

This is now my last letter to you as President of our Association: from January 2001 the presidency will go to Tony McSean, the host of the 8th ICML.

It has been interesting working with the Board members and with the Councillors, and I hope to have given the latter the possibility to start working together on defined projects. It is not easy to cooperate over such a widespread area in Europe and, above all, at a time when our patrons are asking from us, the utmost possible effort for our institutions' well-being. I would like very much that Councillors would take a more active role in the management of the association.

These last two years have been a period of great change for the Association from an administrative point of view: the transfer of seat from Belgium to The Netherlands and recently from Amsterdam to Utrecht. I hope that the new secretariat will manage autonomously the administrative aspects of our Association so as to relieve Suzanne Bakker from one of her

many activities she has carried on. Thank you Suzanne for your dedication! During the summer I read the report by Tamara Morcillo, distributed on the EAHIL-C list and now reported in full in the Newsletter. If you have not read it, please do: it will make you think. The question was: How to attract new members to EAHIL. The astonishing answer is: Is EAHIL known? Are our offers interesting enough to attract members? I am really

worried about this situation, because the next question which comes into mind is: Will EAHIL have a future? Is it worth being a member of this Association? I hope yes, but we have to offer more to our members and first of all, we should work together to make EAHIL known among the European medical libraries so as to attract new members. In an era of globalization the survival of an association has to be a task of all the members and not only of its

executive board. Let's work on it! New projects and new objectives should be an incentive for us, both in the association and in our daily professional activities. I wish you all, to have and to find, challenging projects, to realize them, above all for your personal satisfaction.

With best personal regards.

Manuela Colombi
EAHIL President



To Be or Not to be an EAHIL Member?



« But probably the most important issue is attracting more colleagues to become an EAHIL member. What arguments can be given to persuade colleagues to join? To survive and to pursue the aims and scopes EAHIL needs not only more, but also younger members. The financial barriers that prevent many colleagues, not only from the middle and eastern European countries, to take part to EAHIL activities, might be lowered by finding the right sources that can provide grants. » EAHIL Newsletter, 1st Febr. 2000, no 50, p. 7

Introduction

The work the Council member gave me on February 2000 consisted of finding new arguments to promote the EAHIL in order to persuade colleagues to join it. Although I had several months to write this paper, I finally had no time to analyse the subject in depth. I regret that it has to remain a rough draft of ideas I wish to present to you. Other suggestions of Council members are welcome and I would be grateful for any further help, because time is passing.

1) To make EAHIL known

In the first place, I do not know the impact of the Association on the whole medical library community. More exactly, how many of the smaller or average size libraries know about the existence of the EAHIL association? If the library knows about the Association, our colleagues working there would too. I think that one of the main roles of each Council member is to make known the Association to potential library members within his own country (University Medical Faculties, Hospitals, Public Health Administrations, Pharmaceutical Industry, Health Consultants, Health Insurance Companies, etc.)

How can we proceed:

- to pass on to them by mail the address of the site EAHIL (<http://www.eahil.org>)
- to announce them by mail the the last issue of the Newsletter
- to make known them by mail also any news in connection with the association, such as the next congress, (courses), visits of libraries, etc.
- to advertise the EAHIL in the publications of librarians' national associations (eg. Arbido)
- to advertise in professional medical bulletins (ex : Schweizerische Aertzzeitung)

2) What are the benefits of becoming a member of the Association?

a) Current situation

In the "official" documents of the EAHIL, the rights and obligations of the members are written, namely:

- The right to vote at the General assembly and the right of eligibility for elections to the Board and the Council

- The right to benefit from the various activities of the association
 - Appropriate subscription fees
- The first point to be discussed is in connection with rights attributed to members in contrast to non-members: in fact, the advantages of the first compared with the second do not motivate people to register with the association as there are no benefits from the activities of the association.

b) Activities of the Association:

- The EAHIL Newsletter

If members receive it automatically, the non-member can however read it or consult it (without images) on the EAHIL homepage! This right does not seem to me justifiable for non-members; should it not be necessary to introduce a password to reach the on-line version of the Newsletter?

- The EAHIL Congress

In the registration Form to the 8th ICML, there was no difference between a member and a non-member, just a difference for the « Early bird registration » to be sent before 10th March. In most congresses relevant Association members do receive a discount

- The EAHIL homepage

This site is completely public, everybody can reach the information to be found there, as well as in the lists of discussion. Although we must ask questions on the rights of access, I defend free access to the homepage, because it does allow publicity of the association and therefore can attract new members.

c) Activities to be developed

- The EAHIL Newsletter

If we compare the EAHIL Newsletter with other professional publications such as "Bulletin of the Medical Library Association", we realize that the Bulletin emphasizes more practical information. We can find there for example articles on "Creating local bibliographic databases, A study comparing centralized CD-ROM and decentralized intranet access to Medline, Development of a Web-based faculty publications database, Software reviews" and even an article of B. Thirion and S. Darmoni of Rouen on "Simplified access to Mesh tree structures one CISMEF (Catalogs and Index of the French-speaking medical Sites)"! This practical information is the most sought after by colleagues, because they allow questions which are encountered daily, to be answered. It is this aspect that I am suggesting should be developed in the Newsletter, besides "How to" of Luisa Vercellesi, "Book reviews" and "Publications and new products". Furthermore, one could add columns such as offers for training, jobs, etc.

- The EAHIL homepage

It would be necessary to develop the site in a way that it becomes an indispensable one not only from the information that one finds there, but also by links proposed (access to catalogs, libraries, data bases.). We could develop at the European level a site which looks like that of the CHU of Rouen (<http://www.chu-rouen.fr/>). This problem was moreover raised during the last Council meeting and as Jarmila Potomkova and Laura Cavazza are working on it, I would not like to interfere in work which is already being realised.

- Continuing education

As suggested by Françoise Pasleau, EAHIL has to encourage its members to participate in courses and training by



allowing them to benefit from more advantageous fees, to facilitate exchanges and visits of libraries by announcing them in the Newsletter or through the discussion list and when possible, to organize also courses and training for members of the Association. The need is indeed evident in view of the fast evolution of techniques: continuing education courses are essential to update one's own knowledge and keep abreast of new technology. It would be also good to be able to benefit from agreements between the various associations (e.g.: IFLA) to participate in the other congresses for reduced prices.

3) Sources of financing:

- To offer advertising space on the EAHIL homepage (eg. Amazon) and in Newsletter
- To look for sponsors at a national level. Is this the role of Council Members?



Introduction

Bien que j'ai disposé de plusieurs mois pour effectuer ce travail, je n'ai malheureusement pas eu le temps de m'y pencher et c'est donc un premier jet d'idées que je souhaite vous présenter ici. Toute autre suggestion que les Council members peuvent me suggérer est naturellement la bienvenue et je serai reconnaissante de toute aide qui pourrait m'être apportée, car le temps me fait cruellement défaut.

1) Faire connaître EAHIL

Premièrement, j'ai du mal à me rendre compte de l'impact de l'Association auprès des bibliothèques médicales, plus précisément les bibliothèques de taille moyenne ou plus petites ont-elles connaissance de l'existence de cette association? Ne faudrait-il pas dans un premier temps faire connaître EAHIL auprès des bibliothèques? Il me paraît en effet difficile pour les collègues qui travaillent dans ces bibliothèques de dégager du temps pour rechercher les associations qui pourraient leur correspondre ou leur apporter un plus dans leur travail quotidien. Je pense que l'un des rôles principaux des Council members est de justement faire connaître cette association. Pour cela, il faut que chacun répertorie au niveau national les bibliothèques et centres de documentation qui ne font pas partie de l'association et

ensuite il faut définir quelles sont les actions qui pourraient être menées.

On peut envisager par exemple

- De leur transmettre par mail l'adresse du site EAHIL (<http://www.eahil.org/>)
- De leur annoncer par mail la parution du dernier n° de la Newsletter
- De leur faire connaître par mail également toute nouveauté en relation avec l'association, telle qu'un prochain congrès, des cours, des visites de bibliothèques, etc.
- De faire de la publicité pour l'EAHIL dans les publications des associations nationales de bibliothécaires (ex. Arbido).
- De faire de la publicité dans les publications médicales professionnelles (ex : Schweizerische Aerztezeitung)

2) Quels sont les avantages à devenir membre de l'Association?

a) Situation actuelle

Dans les documents « officiels » de l'EAHIL, on peut lire que les droits et obligations des membres sont les suivants:

- Le droit de vote à l'Assemblée générale et le droit d'éligibilité pour les élections du Board et du Council
- Le droit de bénéficier des différentes activités de l'association
- Le devoir de payer la cotisation annuelle

Le premier point à relever est en relation avec les droits attribués aux membres par rapport aux non-membres: à priori, les avantages des premiers par rapport aux seconds ne motivent pas à adhérer à l'association si ce n'est le fait de bénéficier des activités de celle-ci.

b) Activités de l'Association.

- The EAHIL Newsletter

Si les membres le reçoivent automatiquement, le non-membre peut toutefois le lire ou le consulter (les images en moins) sur le site de EAHIL ! Ce droit ne me paraît pas légitime pour les non-membres, ne faudrait-il pas envisager d'introduire un mot de passe pour accéder au Newsletter en ligne?

- The EAHIL Congress

Sur le bulletin d'inscription pour le 8ème congrès ICML, il n'y a aucune différence entre les membres et les non-membres. La différence existe uniquement pour les "Early bird registration" qui s'inscrivent avant le 10 mars.

- The EAHIL homepage

Ce site est entièrement public, tout le monde peut accéder aux informations qui y sont données, ainsi qu'aux listes de discussion. Bien que l'on puisse se poser la question sur les droits d'accès, je défends un accès libre à la homepage, car elle permet de se faire connaître et en conséquence d'attirer des nouveaux membres.

c) Activities to be developed

- The EAHIL Newsletter

Si l'on compare l'EAHIL Newsletter à une autre publication professionnelle comme le «Bulletin of the Medical Library Association», on se rend compte que le Bulletin met davantage l'accent sur les informations pratiques, on y trouve par exemple des articles sur «Creating local bibliographic databases, A study comparing centralized CD-ROM and decentralized intranet access to Medline, Development of a Web-based faculty publications database, Software reviews» et même un article de B. Thirion et S. Darmoni de Rouen sur le «Simplified access to Mesh tree structures on CISMef (Catalogues et Index des Sites médicaux francophones)»!

Ce sont les informations pratiques qui sont les plus recherchées par les collègues, car elles permettent de répondre aux questions rencontrées dans le travail quotidien. C'est donc cet aspect que je suggère de développer dans le Newsletter, en plus du «How to» de Luisa Vercellesi, des «Book reviews» et des «Publications and new products». De plus, on pourrait envisager d'ajouter des rubriques telles que «recherche de stages», «offres d'emploi etc.

- The EAHIL homepage

Il faudrait développer le site de manière à ce qu'il devienne incontournable par les informations qu'on y trouve, mais également par les liens proposés (accès à des catalogues, des bibliothèques, des bases de données.), on pourrait développer au niveau européen un site qui ressemble à celui du CHU de Rouen (<http://www.chu-rouen.fr/>). Ce problème a d'ailleurs été relevé lors du dernier Council meeting et comme Jarmila Potomkova et Laura Cavazza y travaillent, je ne voudrais pas m'immiscer dans un travail qui est déjà en train de se réaliser.



• *Continuing education*

Comme l'avait suggéré Françoise Pasleau, EAHIL doit encourager ses membres à participer à des cours et des stages en leur permettant de bénéficier de prix plus avantageux, de faciliter les échanges et les visites de bibliothèques en les annonçant dans le Newsletter ou par la liste de discussion et dans la mesure du possible, organiser aussi des cours et des stages pour les membres de l'Association. Il est en effet évident au vu de l'évolution rapide des technologies, de

pouvoir suivre des cours qui permettent de mettre à jour ses propres connaissances. Dans ce même ordre d'idée, il serait intéressant de pouvoir bénéficier d'accords entre les différentes associations (ex : IFLA) afin de participer à d'autres congrès à des prix réduits.

3) *Sources of financing*

• *Offrir de l'espace publicitaire sur la EAHIL homepage (ex. Amazon) et dans la Newsletter.*

• *Rechercher des sponsors au niveau national: quel est le rôle des Council Members?*

Tamara Morcillo

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EGA2000/9

EAHIL General Assembly, London July 4th, 2000, 2:00pm

The Assembly was opened by the President, who invited J Michael Homan, President of the Medical Library Association to deliver a greeting to the Assembly from MLA.

1. Quorum. After consultation with the official tellers, the Board Secretary confirmed that the attendance of 117 voting members of the Association was enough to render the Assembly quorate.

2. Minutes of the 2000 General Assembly (EGA2000/2). AGREED as a correct record.

3. Matters arising not otherwise appearing on the agenda. There were no matters arising.

4. President's report and programme of work (EGA2000/3). The President emphasised three important aspects of the Association's work over the previous year. The first was the amount of work that had gone into the re-drafting of the Statutes and Rules of Procedure, scheduled for discussion later in the Assembly, and expressed the thanks of the Board for those involved. The President also announced the signing of a collaboration agreement between EAHIL and the Medical Library Association which will build on the existing arrangement for payment of subscriptions and create a closer and developing relationship between the two organisations. Finally, the President set out her initiative to increase the number of members actively involved in EAHIL affairs and in particular to expand the role of the Council by encouraging the formation of special project groups within Council.

RECEIVED by the Assembly.

5. Treasurer's report (EGA 2000/4) and EAHIL Budgets for 2001 and 2002 (EGA2000/5). The Treasurer presented the Association's accounts for 1999 and the balance sheet as of December 31st, 1999. He emphasised a number of unusual factors affecting both income and expenditure: (a) the savings achieved in Secretariat costs had resulted from the hard work and initiative of Suzanne Bakker; (b) the printing of the Newsletter was much more expensive than before the move to Amsterdam but that this had been offset by other economies in production; (c) there was a small, unbudgeted loss on the Proceedings of the Utrecht conference; (d) apart from the proceedings, expenditure was generally below budgeted levels.

In addition to these individually small items, the Treasurer highlighted the substantial reduction in subscription income resulting from unnecessary delays in sending our reminders on the part of the ICP staff responsible for providing secretariat services. The total loss from this error will be within the range 15,000-22,000fl and will be met from reserves.

The President asked for questions and comments from the Assembly on the treasurer's report.

Ursula Hausen: asked for more information on the unpaid fees.
AJ: explained in more detail the problems that had arisen over the method that had been adopted for chasing up

members who had not paid their subscriptions - the basic problem was that this was done far too late.

Arjan Hogenaar: can we save money by producing future Proceedings online. AJ: agreed that this should be done in future, thereby saving money and providing a better service for members.

The Treasurer then explained the main features of the proposed budgets for 2001 and 2002:

(a) a reduction in the cost of the Secretariat to 40,000 fl/year; (b) a reduction in Newsletter costs to 21,000 fl/year (from 31,000); (c) introduce a scholarship scheme for members, which can be increased over time if the Association's financial situation permits.

The President asked for questions and comments from the Assembly on the proposed budgets.

Anne Parrical: is it possible to express the budgets in Euros. AJ: this will be done next time the budgets are presented.

The budgets for 2001 and 2002 were APPROVED by the Assembly nem con.

Newsletter. The President invited Sally Wood-Lamont, editor of the EAHIL Newsletter, to present an oral report. The Editor thanked members for responding so effectively to requests for articles. There was concern that reductions in the budget would affect the ability of the Newsletter to publish new material. Future issues would have a special focus on an individual country: 52 on Latvia, 53 Israel to tie in with IFLA, 54 Ireland, 55



NEWS FROM OUR ASSOCIATION

Lithuania and 56 a Scandinavian country yet to be finalised. The deadline for the coming issue had been extended to permit some coverage of ICML

6. Election Committee report (EGA2000/8). Suzanne Bakker presented the report on behalf of the Committee.

APPROVED unanimously by the Assembly.

7. Awards. The President announced that the 1999 EAHIL Award of Honour had been awarded to Eeva Kilberg for her contribution over many years to the development of our profession in the Scandinavian and Baltic regions. Because the recipient was unable to attend by reason of ill health it was received on her behalf from Tony McSeán by Pirjo Rajakili.

The President then announced that the award for 2000 was to be given to Ursula Hausen in recognition of her seminal contribution to the development of EAHIL, including serving for a term as President, and for her professional work in Germany and beyond. The award was presented by Arne Jakobsson.

The President then thanked the three Board members (Elisabeth Husem, Alice Nørhede and Liisa Salmi) who would be standing down in December 2000 at the end of their term of office, and presented each with a scarf as a token of EAHIL's appreciation of their work.

8. Revised version of EAHIL Statutes (EGA2000/6). Alice Nørhede, chair of the working group responsible for drafting the proposed new Statutes, presented the text, and paid particular tribute to Ragnild Lande, Turid Tharaldsen, Rudiger Schneeman, Livia Vasas and the many others who had given time and effort to the process:

The original version of the EAHIL Statutes dates from the Association's founding in 1987. Although they have been amended on many occasions the Board felt that the time was right to produce a comprehensive re-draft in order to reflect the changes in our profession, in the structure and organisation of Europe itself and in the seat of the Association. Both the working group and the Board have worked hard to make the phrasing of the Statutes simple

and straightforward. The text before the Assembly had undergone many stages of revision and rewriting before having been approved unanimously by both Board and Council in January 2000.

There were several substantial changes incorporated in the new Statutes:

(a) EAHIL was now a Dutch organisation and based in Amsterdam.

(b) English would become the only official language of EAHIL, although Association news would still appear in the Newsletter in English and French.

(c) EAHIL would now draw members from all over the world rather than specifically limiting full membership to Europe.

(d) Categories of membership would be simplified for clarity.

(e) The quorum for a General Assembly would now be 80 or 25% of the voting membership, whichever is the smaller.

(f) Several changes would be introduced to accord with the requirements of Dutch law: a General Assembly to be held every year instead of biennially, applications for admission to membership to be approved by the Board with appeal first to the President and ultimately to a General Assembly, approval by postal ballot of all voting members to require a unanimous vote in favour.

Anne Parrical: expressed regret at the dropping of the French language as an official language of the association, and asked what happens if there is not a quorum in a General Assembly held in the year between full EAHIL conferences. AN: The language issue was discussed in great detail in both Board and Council. It was decided that since it was possible for the Association to function effectively with a single language that the Statutes should reflect this, mainly for reasons of economy.

There being no more questions or comments, the President called for a vote by the Assembly that the new Statutes be adopted. The motion was ACCEPTED overwhelmingly, with 3 votes against and 6 abstentions.

9. Revised version of the Rules of Procedure (EGA2000/7). Alice Nørhede, chair of the Statutes working group introduced the proposed new EAHIL Rules of Procedure, which had been changed to accommodate the changes in the new Statutes. There being no questions or comments from the Assembly a motion by the President to adopt the new Rules of Procedure was ACCEPTED nem con.

10. Invitation to Sardinia. Valentina Comba invited members to attend the 2001 EAHIL workshop which will take place in Alghero, Sardinia and be titled 2001 Cyberspace Odyssey. Full details of the congress are given on the EAHIL web site, including the Call for Papers.

11. Invitation to Köln. Ulrich Korwitz introduced the next 8th European Conference of Medical and Health Libraries, which will take place in Köln, Germany in 2002. This will be the first EAHIL event to take place in a German-speaking country and full details will be available shortly on the EAHIL web site.

There being no other business the General Assembly was closed at 3:35pm.

Tony McSeán
Board Secretary



Words of farewell from Elisabeth Husem

Dear colleagues,

After 10 years on the EAHIL Board, "it's time to say goodbye"! However, I do not retire with a light heart. The reason is not that I do not believe that EAHIL can do without me, but sooner the contrary, how will I manage without my EAHIL Board family? We have been working so closely together, and I feel that I have got some very good and close friendships during these years. The atmosphere in the Board has been extremely good and friendly, and the work has been executed by all members with pleasure and effectiveness. Collaboration and enthusiasm have been two important elements in our motivation. Looking at the new Board, I am very confident that the good work will continue in the same good ambiance. Tony has once before proved his abilities as a good leader and his sense of responsibility towards EAHIL, and he will surely do it again! The very successful ICML this year in London only strengthen our opinion about his managerial skills. I am very thankful for the chance I have had to work with so many competent and nice people, it has certainly widen my professional horizon and my mind.

I believe that working together in a close European community make our work easier and our profession stronger. EAHIL has an important role to play in order to strengthen and expand our European family, where the eastern European countries and the Baltic countries have now joined as equal partners, and where borders, languages or different politics do not or should not create any obstacle for free exchange of information and knowledge.

There have always been strong links between MLA and EAHIL, and I hope they will grow even stronger in the future. Personally I must say that it has been a great pleasure to getting to know our "big sister" MLA and all its very nice members. I am thankful for the opportunities I have had to represent EAHIL at the MLA meetings.

I take this opportunity to thank all my Board members and all EAHIL members for ten fruitful and interesting years. I am proud to belong to the EAHIL family, and I look forward to meeting you all again at different EAHIL workshops and conferences.

And I invite you all to come to Oslo in 2003 for the joint Nordic-Baltic-EAHIL Workshop!

Elisabeth Husem



Farewell from Liisa Salmi

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a good period of four years as a member of the Board and now it is time to say farewell. I hope this doesn't sound too final as I will continue to act as a member of the Editorial Board of the Newsletter where actually I started in EAHIL.

Looking back, this has been a time of feeling really international. I have made many very good friends during this time, and it is now so easy to ask colleagues all over Europe and even beyond, when a professional problem occurs. I always get an accurate answer very quickly - I wonder if this helpfulness is a universal feature in librarians. Those years in EAHIL have also been very educational, and not the least in intercultural relations.

Another question is whether I have given as much as I have got. That is impossible for me to evaluate, but at least the contents of my work at EAHIL has been for me

more than I could wish. Many colleagues have noticed, however, that financial matters are difficult for me, since I always make mistakes in counting, even with calculators. Another matter in which I get aches and pains is statutes and rules and bureaucracy. I really do admire those people who are careful enough to work through articles and paragraphs. I have tried to pretend to be able to do that, but without success.

Whether leaving a position on a board is easy or difficult, depends obviously on the personality. I find it easy to do, because I feel that I do not have any new ideas any more to give: others and those new members do it better now. When I was younger I very much disliked older people, stepping down from a position, saying that they would leave space for younger colleagues. I always thought it is hypocritical, but now I notice that it is exactly what I want to do.

You will not, however, get completely rid of me. As I mentioned I will continue on the Editorial Board, so you will be reading News from Finland regularly. I do hope you will also contact me if you find good ideas to write about or good writers who could and want to contribute to the Newsletter.

Liisa Salmi





Goodbye and Thank You to the Leaving Officers



Madam Past-President, Dear Elisabeth,

Of all the EAHIL Board members, you have reached the Guinness Book of Records, TEN years Serving EAHIL on the Board, the first 4 years as a member, the second 4 years as our President and the last period of two years being the “past” President and the official liaison with our sister association, the North American MLA. Your energy - and I know from intimate sources that you are indefatigable and your personal thesaurus does seem to lack the entry, “tiredness” - has been favourable to the maturation and growth of EAHIL. Being the Chair of the local organizing committee of the EAHIL-Nordic-Baltic workshop in Oslo in 2003 you certainly will draw our attention to the work to be done. You have done so much work for European medical librarianship. The Oslo Conference was an important impetus for cooperation, the workshops in Middle and Eastern European countries opened for many of our medical librarians new relationships in different areas. In the position of Past-President you were the obvious person to be given the responsibility for the cooperation with MLA. The renewal, reconfirmation and extension of the mutual agreement in London was only one of the tangibles. It is with great pleasure that we have the picture of you at the MLA-CHLA meeting in Vancouver in May 2000. Your understanding and knowledge of the French language was very much appreciated by our members speaking latin-related languages. Elisabeth, be convinced that the Board in its new configuration will do its utmost to continue the good work you have done. Thank you!



Dear Alice,

It is a pity that you decided to resign from the Board, although you were entitled to stand for re-election. Your work and contribution to EAHIL has been substantial and most essential: your pivotal role in the revision of the Statutes and Rules of Procedures will be remembered by many of us. Many thanks from all of us and we look forward to meeting you in less busy times enjoying both the scientific and social events at the future EAHIL workshops and conferences.

Dear Liisa,

The many years you have been serving EAHIL are more or less dominated by editorial work: as editor of the Newsletter and in the Board often being the liaison to Council and members, you have played a very important role in EAHIL internal communication and mutual understanding. It seems to be an important role for the Finnish people in Europe: your charming intelligence and modesty certainly helped to smoothen the intercultural relationships in our association. Your willingness to stay on the Editorial Board of the Newsletter is much appreciated. Thank you for staying on the floor.



Dear Manuela,

You will not leave the Board, but stepping down as President is nevertheless a moment to stand still and look at the recent history of EAHIL and its working program. By being truly multilingual you were able to communicate and understand not only the wording but also the hidden meanings of comments and remarks of the many, all too different members in our Association. The Board meetings have been very pleasant, fruitful and constructive. The local organising committee of the EAHIL workshop in Alghero, Sardinia, next year will certainly benefit from your hard work and dedication to European medical librarianship. We all hope that EAHIL has been emotionally supportive to you this last year, when you needed it. We thank you for the most responsible way you have been leading the Association and thank you for organizing the 2001 workshop.

Suzanne Bakker



EAHIL WORKSHOP: 2001 CYBERSPACE ODYSSEY

Alghero June 7-9, 2001

Now that the echo of the 8th ICML is declining, it is time to talk about the next EAHIL event: the workshop to be held in Alghero next June. Paraphrasing the title of a well-known book, the Local Organizing Committee (Valentina Comba, Laura Cavazza, Alfonsa Martelli, Beniamino Orru, Vanna Pistotti and the undersigned) decided to entitle it: 2001 Cyberspace Odyssey.

I cite from the foreword: "Health librarians and users are now able to relate with information using new technologies, moulding the Web for new interactions and taking advantage of global partnership. The paradox is that in this information era our clients are becoming remote users, even if working in the same building." Our goal is to give our users some indications, so that their navigation through the cyberspace will not become an odyssey. The submissions of abstracts is continuing. By the time you read this article, the International Scientific Programme Committee will

have evaluated all proposals and defined a draft programme. The accepted papers will be divided between oral and poster presentations. The workshop will be subdivided in three main sessions, one per theme: The Librarian as Gatekeeper for Scientific Information, Resources on the Internet, The Remote User. Each one will be introduced by an invited speaker. Sponsors have been invited to exhibit their merchandise and a welcome event and gala dinner are part of the social events.

Please take note of the deadlines for registration: before March 31, 2001 = Euro 186 and after March 31, 2001 = Euro 245 for EAHIL members. As per our agreements MLA members will benefit from the reduced rate. Please note that to reserve a room in the same hotel where the workshop takes place, you have to book early in January.

More details can be found at <http://medicina.unica.it/alghero2001/main.htm>

A few words now about Sardinia. It is not enough to tell you that I like this

island very much and it is maybe better to use the words from D.H. Lawrence's book 'Sea and Sardinia': "Lovely space about one, and travelling distances - nothing finished, nothing final. It is like liberty itself." Marvellous coasts with emerald-green or sky-blue waters, long beaches of white sand alternated with stony bays which can sometimes be reached only from the sea. An island in which agriculture is mixed with historical sites: from the Paleolithic to the Nuraghic Age, from the Romans to the green-white churches of the Pisa domination and more recently the Catalan colonization, still evident in Alghero. Sardinia is an island waiting to be discovered and appreciated by those who still love nature and arts. As far as folklore and gastronomy is concerned I cannot write about it, you have to taste it, so, come to Alghero and I can assure you, you will enjoy this island full of surprises

Manuela Colombi
EAHIL President

Reduced Rate Subscription to *Health Libraries and Information Journal* for members of the EAHIL

Blackwell Science are delighted to be able to continue to offer members* of EAHIL the opportunity to take out a reduced rate subscription to *Health Libraries and Information Journal* (previously *Health Libraries Review*) for 2001 at £35 (£178 for institutional rate in 2001) which represents tremendous value for money.

Health Libraries and Information Journal continues to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among medical, health and welfare librarians. For 2001 the title has been changed to reflect its increased coverage of health information and knowledge technologies.

Don't miss out on this exclusive offer! For further information and to subscribe *Health Libraries and Information Journal*, please contact: Silvana Losito, Blackwell Science, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0EL. Tel +44 (0) 1865 206122; Fax: +44 (0) 1865 721205; Email: silvana.losito@blacksci.co.uk

***N.B. Please note that this offer applies only to personal subscribers.
It must be paid for by personal cheque or credit card.**



Move of the EAHIL Secretariat

Early this year the EAHIL Executive Board decided to look for another organization that could provide the services of running the secretariat of the association.

The Bureau of the Dutch Library Association (NVB : Nederlandse Vereniging voor Beroepsbeoefenaren in de Bibliotheek-, Informatie- en Kennissector) was interested in expanding their activities. Discussions and negotiations showed that both parties, EAHIL and NVB, would benefit from the agreement: EAHIL will be supported by staff experienced in running a library association and NVB would expand their experience on a European level.



NVB Bureau (headquarters) is located in the city centre of Utrecht, within walking distance from the central railway station, situated in an old building, today partly in use by the Utrecht University. The city canal - Plompetorengracht - makes a charming and romantic picture.



NVB Bureau staff members are: Annette Kuipers, Paula Bakker and Jan van der Burg. Annette has lengthy experience in this job, and holds a German degree. Paula qualified as a librarian years ago but family duties were her main

responsibility until a few years ago when she joined the bureau staff. Jan has a degree in biochemistry, long experience as a reference librarian and international consultant in the agricultural information scene through projects in Eastern Europe, North America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific Rime and worked for quite a number of years and has worked for quite a number of years in Montpellier. These qualifications as a group will guarantee that the EAHIL members will be well served: there is command of the four languages Dutch, English, French and German.

On Monday 18th September the EAHIL archives were moved. Cindy Boutkan of the ICP-group arranged two pair of helping hands for packing and carrying. A hired van with me at the steering wheel, brought everything to Utrecht: we even managed to organize most of the boxes within a very short time. Due to the well labeled boxes from the Belgian Times (thank you Roselyne Hoet) and the new organizers and folders (thanks to



Suzanne Laeven) it was easy to differentiate between active and archival files.

The first thing to be done will be the conversion of the membership database: thereafter: production of the mailing la-



bels, sending out the invoices for the 2001 membership fees and for advertisements. The actual work of the association should not be influenced by this move. The publication of the November issue of the Newsletter will not change, the organization of the next workshop in Alghero, Sardinia and the conference in Cologne are in the good hands of Manuela Colombi and Ulrich Korwitz, respectively. The EAHIL Executive Board will meet on 26-27 January 2001 in Utrecht. The Council Members will continue (on the EAHIL Council list); the discussion started last year during their meeting in Amsterdam, with the first results published in this issue (thank you Tamara Morcillo). There is a slight delay with respect to the legal advice and arrangements in the publication of the revised Statutes. As Supervisor of the EAHIL Secretariate I can assure you that our Association is doing well, healthy and in good shape!

Suzanne Bakker
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New address!!!

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NEWS FROM FINLAND

Training in evidence based medicine searching

The Finnish Medical Society, Duodecim, has initiated clinical guidelines for Finnish health care. They have employed a part-time information specialist, who with the help of two other information specialists are educating Finnish physicians to do evidence based medicine searches, or at least to understand that the searches are not that simple. The guideline administration sent a letter to all medical faculty libraries in Finland to inform them of the new type of searches and employed three part time information specialists to prepare the education programme. First there was a seminar for medical librarians in Finland some years ago, which also included major discussion of the new tasks ahead. Then the *Bibliothecarii Medicinæ Fenniae*, our own association, organised another seminar, where actual searching could be dealt in depth. Finnish physicians have been very enthusiastic towards the EBM search courses: three courses have already been organised for them and more has been asked for.

The morning course comprises a short introduction to the mysteries of searching, followed by choosing the databases and after that demonstrations of the databases. The afternoon is devoted to end user searching, the three information specialists going around and

giving a helping hand. We also refer to the excellent EBM search guides that abound on Internet and in addition we distribute good www addresses.

In teaching PubMed/Medline, there are some difficult issues for physicians to understand. First of all, they seem to find it hard to see the difference between the thesaurus word and free text searching. The significance of a thesaurus seems very obscure, and if they accept its existence, they cannot see why those words they use themselves have not been selected to build up MeSH. We have noticed that Internet helps us here very much: when we explain that the lack of standardisation on the Internet makes the completely automatic search engines retrieve so many irrelevant documents, they get an idea of a thesaurus as a standard. Truncation of free text words is also very easily forgotten and their imagination is not always vivid enough to remember all the synonyms for free text searching. The idea of EBM is well understood, but it is sometimes very confusing for physicians to understand how the thesaurus is made up of different kinds of EBM filters, such as MeSH terms and publication types. To be honest, sometimes using these EBM filters when searching, is hard even for us professionals.

In the instruction of searching the Cochrane databases, the networked CD-ROM version was used. Of the principal databases, one database is a full text one and the two others are bibliographical ones. During a short course, it appeared problematic to demonstrate the differences between databases when the search was simultaneously conducted in all three of them. The criteria for inclusion of references for the Systematic Reviews Database and for the Controlled Trials database respectively seemed to remain obscure for many participants. Also, in order to obtain satisfactory coverage, both MeSH and free text terms should be applied because not all references are indexed with MeSH. With these different kinds of terms, the same difficulties as with Medline are clearly seen. The Cochrane databases are not yet very well known among Finnish physicians, but they show great interest in them and in the usage of them. It is true that a great effort has been made to evaluate research for them. At present, the Finnish Medical Society Duodecim has decided that the physicians can do their own searches for the clinical guidelines if they want to, but the searches have to be supplemented and completed by professional information specialists.

Merja Jauhainen and Liisa Salmi

PHING - The Way Forward

We met in London as expected on the occasion of the 8th ICML at the beginning of July and it was a good meeting, full of decisions, information, willingness to do things well and with as few restraints as possible.

Before giving the highlights of the meeting, we think it important to show our appreciation of the work done by Ingeborg Van der Burgt. In her role as secretary, Ingeborg has been able to keep the group on its tracks.

Phing 2000 membership and rules

The EAHIL meeting was well attended and the EAHIL President also participated and so most decisions taken could be checked on the spot for their feasibility. It was agreed that Phing members should be those EAHIL members interested in

pharmaceutical information, both from pharmaceutical companies, academic circles and regulatory bodies etc. No membership fee is foreseen. The previous statute has been cancelled and a new set of rules will be written; in the case of institutional membership, members will be allowed to invite colleagues and all of them will have the right to vote.

The need for promoting the group was extensively discussed and a few members volunteered to make contacts with PDR, European regulatory bodies and national drug information associations. A few members have publicised their ideas and we all hope that this will help to increase the number of EAHIL members and Phing participants.

Survey

Ingeborg Van der Burgt produced a

detailed report of the survey carried out earlier in 2000. We had 29 respondents, but at the meeting more members who had not replied were present.

The main objective of the survey was to understand the key interests of potential members. It clearly emerged that Internet searching followed by Assessment and Selection of Sources are the key interests. The main wish from PhInG is the organization of workshops; the full report of the survey is available on EAHIL website.

Voting

Giovanna Miranda and Luisa Vercellesi were the only candidates for the Chair and Deputy Chair and Ingeborg Van der Burgt maintained her position as secretary. Ingeborg was willing to accept that she is acting also as Treasurer.



Having decided to abolish the statute and work on simple rules, the proposal of two co-chairs has been accepted by the participants. Giovanna and Luisa have a long standing habit of working together and are pleased to do so within EAHIL for the next two years.

The Phing Session at Converge on London

The Session went well. Our room was full and the three speakers delivered interesting reports and received a few questions. This result and the request of our members to attend other specialized workshops has given us the enthusiasm to continue to do things.

Visit to EMEA

This was the only negative point of the week : unfortunately only very few of the

expected visitors attended the visit, creating an awkward situation. It was really sad; Marju Remes Castell had done a very good job in organizing the visit to the prestigious agency. Marju again please accept our excuses and continue your proactive participation to the group.

Future Plans

A few interesting suggestions were raised:

1. To organize a workshop on the occasion of the 2001 EAHIL workshop to be held in Sardinia. Deadline for pharmaceutical presentations could be extended to end of March. The topic of this event will take into consideration the wishes expressed in the survey. We had a very good suggestion from ? about the opportunity of a direct involvement of participants, perhaps in the form of syndicates.

2. To organize a special pharmaceutical session on occasion of the 8th EAHIL conference in Cologne, Sept 2002.
3. To participate to both with an "institutional" poster to show the activity of the group and foster our members to participate actively
4. To revise our "institutional" presence in the EAHIL website
5. To create a page of internet resources for pharmaceutical information.

Nada Trzan-Herman is willing to take care of internet, but she will welcome any cooperation. Ingeborg is our memory and will start drafting the poster and we would appreciate offers of help for this

**Luisa Vercellesi and
Giovanna Miranda**

New title, new contributors

From March 2001 Health Libraries Review which is the journal for the Health Libraries Group of the UK Library Association, will have a new title - Health Information and Libraries Journal.

As the demand for high quality information in health care becomes more persistent, and as new technologies become more sophisticated, the sphere of influence of the librarian is extending far beyond the walls of libraries into new organisational, technological, educational and other environments. We believe that our new title will attract a wider readership and encourage a broader range of contributions.

Some of you will have attended the 8th International Congress on Medical Librarianship (8ICML) held in London 2-5 July 2000. The Congress provided a wonderful opportunity to meet colleagues from over 70 different countries and backgrounds, to exchange ideas and learn from one another. I was fortunate to meet the EAHIL Board and as a result I look forward to much closer cooperation between health librarians in the UK and our colleagues in Europe.

One of the most effective ways to become a more integrated community is by sharing experience and practice. In my view the best way to do this is through direct contact - by visiting colleagues and discussing our common agenda on a face-to-face basis. Regrettably travel is expensive and time is limited and so I, like you, use the professional literature to keep up to date and to share knowledge. Of course it is much easier to

read than write! Much easier to read what colleagues are doing than to sit down and organise thoughts and experience into some meaningful structure and narrative. However, I am sure that I do not need to convince you all of the value of the written word as a means to share insight and best practice with colleagues or indeed the importance publication has for our own professional progress.

The Health Information and Libraries Journal is a peer-reviewed journal. This means that all original articles that are submitted for publication are reviewed by two people who have special expertise or experience in the particular subject area and it is through this process that we maintain the reputation of our journal and the high quality of the contributions. An original article may comprise an account of original research or a descriptions of a newly developed service or information product. We would expect an article of this nature to be approximately 4 to 5000 words long. Occasionally we publish longer review articles of up to 10,000 words. In addition to the peer-reviewed original articles, we publish Book Reviews and Brief Communications. A Brief Communication is a shorter article of up to 2000 words and is not peer-reviewed. Typically we would expect these to be descriptive accounts of interesting and important developments within the field, single case studies or service innovations. Brief Communications do not aim to be comprehensive or research oriented. We have two regular columns - Innovations Online and R&D.

The Health Libraries Group also publishes the HLG Newsletter. This includes short accounts of new services, new products, meetings, conferences and training events and in many ways resembles the EAHIL Newsletter. Margaret Forrest is the Editor.

I would like to encourage all EAHIL members to consider either publishing a paper, or encouraging a colleague to publish a paper in Health Information and Libraries Journal. I believe passionately that we all have a duty to communicate best practice and to share our knowledge through publication. Please do not feel diffident about writing in English. Our Editorial Team and Members of our Editorial Board are happy to help colleagues who would like some support or advice in writing and editing manuscripts. Sometimes it is helpful to discuss an idea that is not yet fully formed or to explore the possibilities of content and structure that might be appropriate for an article that you would like to write. Please don't hesitate to contact me or Penny Bonnett - we would be delighted to hear from you.

Susan Hirst, our Editorial Assistant, would be glad to send you copies of our "Editorial policies, procedures and instructions for authors" either as a Word attachment or hard copy. Please contact her at: Blackwell Science, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0EL United Kingdom, susan.hirst@blacksci.co.uk

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IFLA CONFERENCE - 2000 - Jerusalem

I have been asked to share my impressions of the 66th General IFLA Conference held in Jerusalem from August 13-18, 2000. This was my first IFLA conference and to have the opportunity to visit Israel and to network with librarians from all over the world were experiences I will long remember. The theme of the conference, "Information for co-operation: creating the global library of the future," accurately describes my overall feeling about being in Jerusalem for IFLA 2000.

I will try to describe some of the events that impressed me the most about the conference. On Saturday, August 12th, I attended the USA Caucus and learned about the upcoming discussions on the status of Division 8, the Division of Regional Activities and other proposed by-laws changes. Since next year's IFLA meeting will be in Boston, we heard about the wonderful meeting plans for IFLA 2001.

The exhibits opened on Sunday evening with vendors ranging from OCLC, to Ex Libris, who donated the wonderful meeting bags, to SilverPlatter, who provided the CD-ROM with all the conference papers, to SUN Microsystems. It was hard, in many cases, to choose which session to attend. On Tuesday, there was a two-part program sponsored by Management and Marketing joint with Information Technology and Social Sciences Libraries. Part I's theme was "Building change management marketing skills for the information age. Part II's theme was "Changing patterns of library work for today and tomorrow." Most of the speakers provided food for thought about the changing library, digital collections, and new roles for librarians.

The program for the Biological and Medical Sciences Libraries Section, chaired by Ysabel Bertolucci, was held on Wednesday, August 16th. The theme, in keeping with the conference theme, was "Global Library Cooperation in the Health Sciences." Lois Ann Colaiani, former associate director for library operations at the National Library of Medicine, in Bethesda, MD spoke about "Making stone soup: library cooperation, a professional responsibility or a necessity?" She was followed by a presentation authored by Harvey Brenneise from the Michigan Public Health Institute, Okemos, Michigan, USA on "Creating a statewide virtual health library: the Michigan experience." The last paper was authored by Arlene Cohen, University of Guam, Claire Hamasu, Pacific Southwest Region, National Network of Libraries of Medicine, University of California, Los Angeles, and Irene Lovas, Pacific Hospital of Long Beach. The presentation was "Innovations in networking to provide electronic delivery of documents to health professionals in the Western Pacific."

Many of my memories of the conference center around the wonderful events planned for the participants and visits to two health sciences libraries. The Monday evening dinner reception was held at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Givat Ram. The weather cooperated and we all enjoyed a wonderful meal, great entertainment, and the opportunity to network with our colleagues. On Wednesday evening, we attended a reception and tour of the Israel Museum. I was in awe to be able to see some of the original Dead Scrolls housed at the Shrine of the Book at the Museum.

I had the privilege of visiting the Hadassah Hebrew University Medical Center and saw the famous Chagall Windows which were dedicated in February 1962. We had a wonderful tour of the medical center, the health sciences library, and the enormous history of medicine collection that is housed at the medical center. I also toured the Gitter-Smolarz Library of Life Sciences and Medicine, Tel-Aviv University. The director, Ilana Peled, provided us with a history of the library and a tour of the facility, which is only about three years old. I learned a great deal about designing a functional facility from her comments as we toured the library.

An, in addition, I managed to visit almost all of the sites that I have always wanted to see, including the Old City, Bethlehem and the Chihuly exhibit at the Tower of David, to name a few. I took two of the after conference tours sponsored by IFLA. Many of us visited the Dead Sea and Massada on the Saturday following the conference. I also toured Northern Israel before returning to the United States.

I hope everyone will come to Boston, USA in August 2001 for another IFLA conference that combines the old and the new, "Libraries and Librarians: making a difference in the knowledge age."

Irene Lovas

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News from the EVLG

The European Veterinary Libraries Group now has its own electronic discussion list. EVLG-L has been set up with invaluable help from Arne Jakobsson of Oslo University. The aim of the list is to improve cooperation between veterinary libraries: as the importance the interface between animal health and human health becomes

better and better understood, EVLG-L will help in bringing together this important section of the European information world.

To join the list please send an e-mail to Tom Roper: t.roper@rcvs.org.uk.

Tom Roper

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Web site: <http://www.rcvs.org.uk>



A Look at the Baltic States



The three Baltic states have together an area of 175 000 sq. km with a population of ca. 7.3 million. Lithuania is the biggest, Estonia, the smallest while Latvia is situated in the middle of these two. Naturally each of the countries has a history of its own but the past events of the last century have so many common characteristics that it is possible to have a look at the whole area at the same time. There have been articles on the actual situation in each country separately but it might be interesting to see what similarities these countries share in spite of the different languages. The Baltic countries have a strong spirit of solidarity with each other and especially since the 1980s they have enjoyed close cooperation.

Ten years ago the Baltic countries, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were almost a white spot on the European map. Latvia and Estonia had been two hundred years while Lithuania more than a hundred years, part of the Russian Empire before becoming independent after World War I. The first period of independence lasted twenty-two years. The secret Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939 transformed the Baltic republics to the Soviet sphere of influence. After German occupation in the World War II the Baltic States were reincorporated into the Soviet Union and thus they fell behind the iron curtain and under the strong and centralised Soviet

administration. In the 18th and 19th centuries all three nations had been under foreign cultural influence: Estonia and Latvia were dominated by the Germans and in Lithuania the upper class was Polish. The national movements began in the second half of the 19th century and in addition they had to fight against a systematic russification too. The twenty-two years of interwar independence constituted the first golden age in the history of these countries. During that period, national life gained the characteristics of a national civilisation and their culture broke through to the international arena. The achievements in art and science were remarkable in all of the Baltic countries.

The consequences of the World War II were disastrous. Prior to the return of Soviet rule, tens of thousands of Baltic citizens fled to the West, including a very large segment of the intelligentsia, university lecturers and professors, writers and artists, business people and well-to-do- farmers. It appeared as if the countries were losing their best citizens.

On their return, the Soviets initiated very strict repressive measures. In the course of ten years more than 100, 000 people of the population from every country were deported to Siberia and other distant areas of the Soviet Union. It has been calculated that the Baltic countries lost approximately 30% of their population during the period 1940-53. At the same time a mass immigration of Soviet nationalities to the Baltic area began, bringing unavoidable sovietism and Russification of public life. At the same time there was a basic change within the economy and infrastructure:

land was nationalised and unrestrained industrialisation of the countries took place without any reference to internal needs and opportunities. The economies were developed solely through the methods of the occupying regime. Worst of all was the total separation from the Western world : even the small boats on the coasts were destroyed and in most places it was not possible to bathe in the sea. The Russian language was a very important subject in schools. Generally it was possible to learn elements of the German or the English language. but not too much! In cultural life and education all threads led to Moscow. The Soviets did not like universities very much and therefore the scientific research was transmitted to separate research institutes, preferably at some distance from the universities.

The Perestroika was initiated in Moscow in 1985, the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, and in the same year the three Baltic states managed to get their independence internationally recognised.

The starting point for the re-established republics in 1991 was not an easy one. The Baltic people wanted to establish democratic republics on the basis of market economy and to take their place again among the European nations. There was a shortage of everything as the economy had been part of the Soviet system. At the same time the heavy industry based on imported materials was useless and the commercial relations to Russia already broken. The legal and administrative systems were in chaos and it took several years to get the Russian soldiers out of the Baltic area. Now, ten years later one can see that the progress

has been enormous. Naturally there are still economic difficulties but the GDP per capita has risen to about \$5000 in every country. The collectivisation of land is repealed; the legal system has been built according to the principles of the European Union and most important - the people have been able to develop their own identities and cultural heritage.

During the Soviet occupation the separation from the West was almost total. Ten years ago when the frontiers opened, the scientific community in these countries entered a new world. In the Soviet Union the Russian language had been lingua franca. It was important to learn English now and it was done very rapidly - not only the younger generation but also the older can now read English and speak it well.

In medicine the tradition in treatment and in medical research in the Soviet Union was different from that in the Western countries. Members of the medical profession as well as medical librarians had to adopt a new way of thinking and to learn new knowledge and skills. For librarians the change was enormous also because of the new information technology. The EAHIL members who attended the Workshop in Tartu last year had the possibility to get acquainted with Baltic librarians and libraries. At the beginning of the 90s the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm donated microcomputers to some medical libraries and also organised Medline courses. The emigrants in the United States also collected money and helped libraries to buy computers and CD-ROMs. By the way, the President of the Republic of Lithuania, Mr. Valdas Adamkus is a former refugee who worked



FEATURE ARTICLES

as an administrator of the Fifth Region Environmental Protection Agency in the U. S. Federal Service, an office which he held until 1997. When still in office Dr. Adamkus assisted the environmental institutions of the Baltic States in acquiring academic literature, equipment and software needed for their projects. Dr Adamkus is a well-known person, but many other former refugees did the same, e.g. physicians helped medical libraries. (The president of the Republic of Latvia, Ms. Vaira Vike-Fraiberiga is also a former refugee. She used to work as a university professor in Canada.) Today in every country there are computer reading rooms for CD-ROMs, internet and word processing in medical libraries, financed by the Soros, Open Society Foundation. You can find these in Tartu, Riga, Kaunas, Vilnius. However, personal computers are rare and therefore those living outside the

big cities do not have the chance to exploit the information stored in CD-ROMs or in internet. Anyhow, the use of databases is not a big problem anymore whereas to be able to read the original publication can be more difficult. The state budgets continue to be meagre, and journals and textbooks are expensive. In computer reading centres there are some full-text electronic journals but they are not cheap to subscribe to either.

One common feature which goes back to the Soviet era is the duality of the library system. Universities with a medical school required a library but as the medical research took place in the separate research institutes, a State Medical Library was also needed and one is found in each country. In Estonia the university is situated in Tartu and the Estonian Medical Library in Tallinn. In Latvia both the Medical

Academy Library and the Latvian Medical Library are in Riga: in Lithuania there are large medical libraries in Kaunas and in Vilnius. Taking into consideration the small density of the population, it seems evident that the medical library systems will have to be reorganised in future.

It is very exciting to follow the rapid progress in the Baltic medical libraries. It is a good lesson of how to exploit fully all resources one can reach, how to work hard on a very modest salary and how to be capable of thinking innovatively in the middle of hard daily work. It could be interesting for you to travel there and have a look at the libraries in the Baltic area : it would be worthwhile too because of the excellent holiday facilities and because of the very low prices.

Eeva Kihlberg

Information supply in the medical university of Sofia: an overview

"Information Society" is a real fact nowadays. Recently, technical and technological problems of information exchange have given way to interest in aspects of information contents. Producers and consumers of information are reversing more and more their roles. The system of libraries and information services in Bulgaria is in deep crisis now. Ten years after the "velvet revolution in 1989", Bulgarian libraries still fulfil their functions nominally. The National System for Scientific and Technical Information (NSSTI) which existed up to 1989 and was developed many years without a real methodological and organizational connection with librarianship, is no longer functioning. Its personnel of highly qualified professionals have been dismissed. The only unit existing from the ex-NSSTI, which still continues now, is today's Medical Information Centre (MIC)! Over these decades the restriction of libraries in their traditional library activity and the impossibility of new developments typical of information in the modern library, resulted in the non-implementation of modern technology and in the disparaging of the libraries' role in the dynamic development of contemporary society. The "velvet revolution 1989" held out bright prospects for a modern development of library and information activities under the conditions of democratization of public life. Irrespective of contemporary economic difficulties

there are certain technical and technological prerequisites for the development of modern information activities. However, the technological possibilities of available computer techniques are much greater than the professional abilities of staff and the organizational and methodological conditions where these staff work. There is not a clear, publicly approved conceptional idea with short and long-term programmes. The basic aims of an information and library system at each medical university are to facilitate access to any information generated nationally and abroad and to contribute actively to medical information generated in the country to find its potential addressees abroad. In addition it has to contribute methodological and organizational practice to the creation and realization of a modern university information network incorporating the following processes:

- the generating of new medical knowledge by scientific research, encompassing diagnostic, clinical, laboratory and other information produced in the course of medical treatment;

- servicing today's medical learning process; coordination, terminology, hardware, and software providing the coverage, processing and organization of information in modern databases and its supply to its addressees (the US National

Library of Medicine is the best example of this);

- to organize, co-ordinate and carry out training of students, postgraduates and physicians in medical informatics (which should include not only obtaining some computer skills but a more complex knowledge in this modern specialty).

- to prepare, distribute and co-operate in the usage of both research and training in multimedia documentation and other publications relating to university functions and to the health care as a whole.

Information officers and librarians should seriously reconsider their activities nowadays, in the epoch of planetary communications, when a man actually interested in a subject can browse catalogues, search information from specialized data bases and even read full texts of articles and documents locating thousand miles away from his working place. In fact the libraries at the R/D institutions and the universities in Bulgaria should be developed today like information+library centers providing a comprehensive information supply and take on the role of information analysis centers with modern libraries and with widely spread out communications. They have to fulfil the active methodological and organizational functions of an operative centre of scientific information



network in these institutions and to contribute actively to the realization of their scientific production in Bulgaria and abroad.

According to the present financial and normal situation in Bulgaria, the acquisition of book-stocks and personnel maintenance in libraries with traditional activities should be financially supported by the state. But, after initial subsidizing, all information services provided beyond the scope of traditional library activity, have now to be paid for by the users to ensure their existence. This will constantly stimulate their improvement on one hand while preventing their expansion for real necessities on the other hand. At the same time, however, the necessity of stabilizing and further development of scientific information and library activities under the conditions of limited financing, imposed market oriented approaches of work, enabling a certain freedom of activity and innovative possibilities without absolute dependence on the state budget. It was necessary to achieve an optimal expansion of information activities, to achieve a functional infrastructure and effectiveness and to provide coordination of activities connected with the information supply of scientific research and education to widen and to ensure financially the usage of modern data bases. In addition all possibilities for providing means for subscription of medical journals and for the purchase of books and manuals had to be realized. Topical data bases with financial benefit and expert systems had to be worked out and methods of managing information for the health care system had to be processed. It was necessary to study and to implement computer skills, modern archives and to provide photo and video documental services, etc. The Department of Scientific and Educational Photo Documentation (DSEPD) and the Studios of Educational and Scientific Films (SESF) were included in the Central Medical Library Complex. The CML units with the managerial staff and skilled personnel has managed to provide a level of activity which has defined the place of CML amongst the 3-4 leading library and information establishments in Bulgaria. At present, after 7 years of "mutual existence", the development of both the information and the social praxis encompasses the four separately functional-production lines in the CML namely: The library unit within the frames of the CML complex remains at present the leading library in our coun-

try despite its limited budget and uses donations and tied financing for the purchase of scientific journals and books while ensuring the use of computerized data bases. MIC was created after 1989 as an information business centre which was preserved as the only constant developing unit of scientific information after the collapse of NSSTI. The possibilities for further development have been exhausted under the conditions of limited budget financing and formative documents for economic activities and MIC covers with its own means, apart from the salaries, almost all expenses (mainly for non-profitable publications with small circulation). DSEPD and SESF have been functioning for many years dependant on donations and their activity is limited as far as their human and instrumental abilities. Therefore the limited budget provided for the library at the Medical University (MU) Sofia (i.e. to the CML complex) financially ensures, but very unsatisfactorily, three more units: MIC, DSEPD and SESF. This decreases very much the possibilities for the library itself. The necessity of budget privatization with the possibilities of self-financing together with the necessity of creation structures suitable to ensure higher effectiveness in the information supply of MU Sofia leads to only one way out of the existing situation which is to create an university complex for information and library services that will include units of different economic status, namely: 1. A Scientific medical library which has to exist only as a budget institution. In the case of the eventual transfer of the remaining units of CML to private companies, its budget under the present financial stagnation should be reduced only to the "Salaries of MIC, DSEPD and SESF" by rationally fixing and stimulating the development of correlation between "budget for salaries" and "budget for activities". All information activities outside the so called traditional library services which cannot be financially ensured by the budget should be transferred to units working on a self supporting basis. 2. MIC as a self-financing Ltd company with state participation has itself to finance its production activities and overhead expenses. MIC finances for example with the so-called self-financing income the publishing list of 82 principally non-beneficial small circulated scientific titles. MIC's further development is limited by the present economic norms. Its privatization from Worker-Manager-

Company (WMC Ltd) with state/CML participation would be a prerequisite for further production and financial rationalized development of its activity in accordance with the real economical circumstances in Bulgaria. 3. DSEPD and SEDF have to join together in one self-financing Ltd company with state/CML participation. The independent existence of two sections is unreasonable and irrational in the present state of the photo and video technics (the analogical functions at the University of Oldenburg in Germany for example are carried out by a private firm). 4. An educational unit-firm Ltd also has to be established, aimed at "training in medical informatics". It has to be with state participation and using self-financing measures to ensure its activity and innovative development. A similar structure should provide more effectively the functioning and development of the four units above. The newly created university complex of information and library services could consist of scientific library and three financially independent or combined together companies with differentiated areas of activity. State participation should be realized through the CML in its role of an independent corporate body. This should provide the necessary organizational commitment between them. The budget should be exempt from non-typical and now nominally covered expenses for activities, which under the conditions of self-financing would have the perspective of a more effective realization. A better management and activity could provide regulated, additional incomes to the budget for the constantly needed innovations in the library.

So medical professionalism could be initiated in our country with the possibilities and the practice of modern informatics. Taking a step towards optimization of the information structure is a question of good will, sober determination and professional competence. The consolidation and its orientation towards creativity is very necessary.

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Dear Colleagues,



The discussion on Internet publishing is continuing. “Unreliable”, “revel”, “hostility”, “toy” are words now used to debate the role of scientific publications online (see paper review). Even if, as published in JAMA, another aspect of Internet is “a newly emerging risk environment for sexually transmitted diseases” (JAMA 2000, 284, 443), electronic publications on Internet is one of the most effective ways to distribute scientific information worldwide. A good example on the actual situation is the BMJ data on the paper and online audience. Only about 5-10% of those 115, 000 who receive BMJ access bmj.com. At the same time bmj.com has around 100, 000 weekly visitors (BMJ 2000, 321,192). For the time being paper and electronic publications are complementary.

Giovanna F. Miranda
Co-Editor & Publications

JOURNAL ISSUES

Since the Newsletter of 1st May 2000, the following journal issue of *Health Libraries Review* has been received: **vol. 17, 2000, no. 3**

J. M. Brittain and A.C. Norris. Delivery of health informatics education and training. *p. 117-128.*

An overview on education and training in health information management in the context of national information strategies in European countries, north America and Australia.

M. Forrest and M. Robb. The information needs of doctors in-training: case study from the Cairns Library, University of Oxford. *p.129-135.*

The aim of the study was to find out the information needs of doctors in-training and to identify their preferred sources of information.

C. Keeling and S. Lambert. Knowledge management in the NHS: positioning the healthcare librarian at the knowledge intersection. *p.136-143.*

This paper gives a synopsis of a study that investigated issues around implementation of knowledge management across a sample of healthcare librarians.

D. Bereczki and G. Gesztelyi. A Hungarian example for hand searching specialized national healthcare journals of small countries for controlled trials. Is it worth the trouble? *p.144-147.*

To obtain a comprehensive controlled trials register, specialized healthcare journals printed in national languages should be cover-to-cover hand searched.

I. Rooney and S. Hornby. From troglodytes to information managers: information management and technology needs to achieve the primary care NHS modernization agenda-the views of three GPs. *p.148-156.*

The article examines the issues that General Practitioners feel to be of major significance to their work.

M. Wakeham. The Nursing Interest Subgroup: beginning the organization of nursing librarians. *p.157-163.*

The article shows the generally inadequate level of resourcing for library provision, especially for qualified nurses. The Nursing Interest Subgroup facilitated the sharing of experience, provided opportunities for professional and educational development and served to raise the profile of nurses’ libraries.

Innovations online. (B. Anagnostelis). *p.164*

Brief Communication. *p.171*

Research (A.Booth). *p. 173*

BOOKS REVIEW

Copyright for library and Information service professionals. 2nd edition. By P. Pedley. 2000, 120 pp. £ 13.99 paperback. Aslib Publications, ISBN 0-85142-432-5. The new edition contains a chapter on licensing agreements for electronic information and updated list of useful organisations addresses and web sites.

Tyler’s herbs of choice. The therapeutic use of phytomedicinals. By J.E. Robbers and V. E. Tyler. 1999, 287 pp. \$ 19.95 soft cover. The Haworth Herbal Press, ISBN 0-7890-0160-8. The new edition contains information on safest and most effective herbs, including legal data about herb use in the US, data on clinical studies and mechanism of action.

Tyler’s honest herbal. A sensible guide to the use of herbs and related remedies. By S. Foster and V. E. Tyler. 1999, 442 pp. \$ 24.95 soft cover. The Haworth Herbal Press, ISBN 0-7890-0875-0. This new edition provides essential botanical information,

scientific data and folkloric background of herbal remedies.

PAPERS REVIEW

Health information on Internet is often unreliable.

S. Gottlieb. BMJ, 2000, 321, 136.

Revel in electronic and paper media.

T. Delamothe and R. Smith. BMJ, 2000, 321, 192.

Internet publishing camps renew hostilities.

C. Macilwain. Nature, 2000, 406, 112.

Chemists toy with the preprint future.

R.F. Service. Science, 2000, 289, 1445.

A new source of herbal information on the web: the IBIDS database.

P. Tomasulo. Medical Reference Services Quarterly, 2000, 19 (1), 53.

An introduction to minority health resources on the World Wide Web.

M.Z. Holbrooks. Medical Reference Services Quarterly, 2000, 19 (1), 59.

Resources from the toxicology and environmental health information program (TEHIP).

R.B. Fitzpatrick. Medical Reference Services Quarterly, 2000, 19 (2), 65.

Clinical practice guidelines resources on the web.

D. Sobczak. Medical Reference Services Quarterly, 2000, 19 (2), 73.

INFORMATION SOURCES

..... **Web-based**

Cardiosource website gives searchable online access to 16 top journals in cardiology and general medicine. Full-text article are available in both HTML and PDF formats at no additional cost to personal subscribers of the print version of a journal, as well as to those who receive



PUBLICATIONS AND NEW PRODUCTS

the journal as a benefit of society membership. Cardiosource include a searchable database of over 600 ongoing and recently published clinical trials in cardiology. <http://www.cardiosource.com>

CrossRef is a reference linking service through which it is possible click on a reference citation in a journal and immediately access the cited article. CrossRef is a service run by Publishers International Linking Association, Inc (PILA), a not-for-profit membership organisation comprised of publishers of original scholarship material. There are over 50 publishers participating in CrossRef, accounting for over 3,000 journals with about 1.9 million article records in the database. For further information and fees: <http://www.crossref.org>

e-Skolar a web search engine for medicine launched by the Stanford University. It allows performing rapid searches across multiple medical references. Any physician or medical group can subscribe to Stanford Skolar, M.D. for an annual fee of \$ 240 per user. <http://www.e-skolar.com>

Medterms is a free encyclopaedic dictionary of medical terms containing over 9000 entries. It includes abbreviation, acronyms, jargon, eponyms, institutions, projects and medical history. Users can browse the dictionary by alphabetical entry or keyword search. <http://www.medterms.com>

NEWS FROM EDITORS

EBSCO has signed an agreement with the High Wire Press for full text electronic access. This new association between High Wire and Ebsco includes the American Academy of Paediatrics, Biophysical Society, Genetics Society of America, the Histochemical Society and many other publishers. Among the available journals titles are: Journal of Biological Chemistry, Journal of Cell Biology, Journal of General Physiology. <http://www.ebsco.com>

ISI announces the Web of Science back-year databases have been extended. It provides coverage from the present back to 1945 through the Science Citation Index Expanded, to 1956 through the Social Citation Index, and to 1975 through the

Arts & Humanities Citation Index. The Web of Science also provides hyper navigation to full-text and other scholarly databases including data from NCBI and patent and chemical literature. <http://www.isinet.com>

The Haworth Press, Inc. announces the launch of its online e-journal delivery program. Subscribers to Haworth's journals will be able to gain access to the online editions of a selected list of titles for Fall 2000 and Spring 2001 seasons. By the end of next year Haworth's full list of more than 170 journals will be available online. For further information: gstebbins@haworthpressinc.com

E.S. Burioni Ricerche Bibliografiche announced an agreement with the University of Padova for the realisation of an Internet-based service ("Ensemble service") for the distribution of information, using Silver Platter Electronic Reference Library (ERL) technology. This service will be available to universities, research institutions, corporate industries and professionals. Form for trial requests is available at <http://ensemble.unipd.it>



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

5-9 November 2000, Monterey, Ca, USA

Internet Librarian 2000

For further information: <http://infotoday.com>

13-16 November 2000, Midhurst, Sussex, UK

Medical Information Skills

Information on meeting: tel. +44-(0)7940 514307

27-29 November 2000, Salamanca, Spain

I Coloquio Internacional de Ciencias de la Documentacion

For further information: Universidad de Salamanca-Departamento de Biblioteconomia y Documentation, Salamanca; frias@gugu.usal.es

5-7 December 2000, London, UK

Online Information 2000

For further information: <http://www.online-information.co.uk>

16-18 January 2001, Sydney, Australia

Information online 2001, Tenth Exhibition & Conference

For further information:

<http://www.csu.edu.au/special/online2001>

7-9 June 2001, Alghero, Sardinia, Italy

EAHIL Workshop "Cyberspace Odyssey"

For further information:

<http://medicina.unica.it/alghero2001/main.htm>

19-26 August 2001, Boston, Mass., USA

67th IFLA Council and General Conference "Libraries and Librarians: making a difference in the information age"

18-24 August 2002, Glasgow, Scotland, UK

68th IFLA General Conference: "Libraries for life: Democracy, Diversity, Delivery"

16-21 September 2002, Cologne, Germany

EAHIL Conference 8th ECMHL "Thinking globally - acting locally"

25-29 June 2003, Oslo, Norway

EAHIL-Nordic-Baltic workshop: Cross boundaries - join forces"

1-8 August 2003, Berlin, Germany

69th IFLA Council and General Conference

2005, Sao Paulo, Brazil

9th ICML

Giovanna F. Miranda