

Remembering Laura Shane Godbolt

(9 December 1943 – 24 November 2019)

During summer this year the sad news was spread among friends and colleagues about the serious cancer that struck Shane. The first round of chemotherapy seemed to bring some relief, but unfortunately not for long. It was typical of her dedication and sense of duty that, having decided to decline further therapy and instead opt for palliative care, she should then use her remaining months to liaise energetically with colleagues who could pick up the threads of her work, thus helping to ensure continuity and secure her legacy.

It was in my early years in medical librarianship that I first met Shane. It was during the British Council Course for medical librarians end of January 1991 in London. Shane was hosting and co-chairing the course in her institute with Tony King being the Director of Studies. It was a whole week very full program, but Shane seemed indefatigable. With this course started our friendship and professional cooperation and we would meet regularly either in London (in relation to the Editorial Advisory Board meetings of HILJ/HLR) or elsewhere at MLA, ICML or EAHIL meetings. Shane contributed to most of the EAHIL meetings as a speaker but also as a course leader in one or more of the Continuing Education Courses. Many times she took the opportunity to introduce a colleague from the African continent in EAHIL meetings, always active in connecting people and promoting international collaboration. She played a crucial role in EAHIL's developing relationship with AHILA and was the driving force in the discussions that in 2015 led the EAHIL Board to establish the EAHIL-AHILA scholarships.

In 1978 Shane took on editorship of the Newsletter of the recently merged UK Medical Health and Welfare Libraries Group Committee (MHWLG) and in 1984 was the founding editor of Health Libraries Review till 1999, when Judy Palmer took over as editor-in-chief. Ever since there was a representative of EAHIL in the International Editorial Advisory Board of HLR/HILJ.

Shane was a founding member of EAHIL participating in almost all meetings since Brussels 1986. She was very much involved in library networks in the UK and even more in reaching out to the colleagues on the African continent. Her contributions to EAHIL had a more scientific and strategic character than serving in the executive board or organizing committees.

While it is impossible in this brief tribute to do full justice to the broad and complete range of Shane's interests and achievements, a short list of references in EAHIL Proceedings will give some indication of the areas in which she was influential during her career. Many of her initiatives meant creating networks among (medical) librarians and promoting professional cooperation. The UK colleagues will certainly include references to these when paying tribute to her (1, 2). At most, if not all, EAHIL meetings Shane was attending, she spoke about her views and activities and led workshops to support colleagues in developing their libraries and organizations, e.g.: about editing and the responsibility of professional organizations to publish a professional journal (3, 4); about restructuring the library training module for medical students (5); about the Network of medical libraries in the UK NHS, especially the Regional Librarians Group (6, 7); and about the strategic planning of a professional journal (8).

Many, many thanks to Shane for her work, time and energy spent into our profession; many of us, all around the globe, have gained and learned from her knowledge, leadership, vision and friendship.

Suzanne Bakker
former President of EAHIL
suzanneb@planet.nl

Remembering Laura Shane Godbolt

1. Fairlamb S, Wood A. Tribute to Shane. In: A Wood, S Fairlamb (comp) and S Godbolt (ed). Links of Future Past: a story of library information knowledge services networking. London Library & Information Development Unit, 2003. p. 33-34.
2. Arif R. Reflections on international collaboration: enthusiasm, commitment, resilience (interview with Shane Godbolt), CILIP: News & Press: Health Sector. published online 2 December 2019
URL: <https://www.cilip.org.uk/news/news.asp?id=479978&hhSearchTerms=%22godbolt%22> [accessed 8 Dec]
3. Godbolt S, Valentine P. Health Libraries Review - the need, the challenge and the future. In: C Deschamps, M Walckiers (eds) Medical Libraries: Cooperation and New Technologies. Elsevier Sci Publ, 1987. [1ECML] p. 145-150.
4. Godbolt S, Bonnett P, Bakker S. Editors' workshop, a continuing education course at the 6th ECMHL.
5. Godbolt S, Hague H, Wentz R, Whitsed N. Resources and courses for second year medical students - an approach to curriculum change. In: S Bakker, MC Cleland (eds) Information Transfer - new age - new ways. Dordrecht etc., Kluwer Ac Publ, 1993. Proceedings of the third European Conference of Medical Libraries, Montpellier, France, September 23-26, 1992 [3ECML]. p. 127-130
6. Morgan P, Godbolt S. UK National Health Service Regional Librarians Group (NHS RLG). In: [3ECML]. 1987. p. 170-172. See also Bentley C. "The Roy Tabor Lecture on Medical Librarianship" In: [3ECML] p. 41-46
7. Godbolt S. Optimism for the future: a regional health care library and information service network. In: S Bakker (ed) Libraries without limits: changing needs - changing roles. Dordrecht [etc], Kluwer Ac Publ, 1999. Proceedings of the 6th European Conference of Medical and Health Libraries, Utrecht, 22-27 June 1998 [6ECMHL]
8. Godbolt S, Crawford S. Strategic planning for a professional journal - a case study of Health Libraries Review. In: T McSeán, J Van Loo, E Coutinho (eds) Health Information - New Possibilities. Dordrecht etc., Kluwer Ac Publ, 1995 [4ECML], p. 242-243.



Fig. 1. A photo taken at the 2017 ICML+EAHIL Conference in Dublin of Shane Godbolt (third from the left) with Tzu-Heng Chiu, the President of the Taiwan Medical Library Association, Prof Maria Musoke, past President of AHILA, and Patti Biggs from the UK (The Francis Crick Institute).