



### The years before 1987: the primordial state of EAHIL

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#### THE ARCHIVES

On 27 February 2001 Tony McSeán, President of EAHIL, wrote a letter to Ursula Hausen mentioning: "(...) to hear that you had a file of important historical documents relating to the early days of EAHIL. The Association's own archives are fine as far as they go, but it is clear that they tell far from a complete story of the first couple of years and particularly in relation to the events leading up to our formation. I understand that you would be willing to add your papers to the official archive of the Association. If that is the case, then the Board has asked me to write to you accepting the offer in the most enthusiastic terms and to thank you warmly for a proposal that will allow us to maintain a much more complete picture of our history than has previously been available".

The return letter by Ursula includes: "They will indeed be of interest where they concern the early years. Those were fascinating years which are dear to my memory. Feel free, however, to discard any documents which would be a mere duplication of existing materials".

At some day later that year Ursula and I met in the Netherlands and she brought the boxes with the historical documents. At that time the EAHIL Secretariat was run by the Dutch Library Association and in the attic of the office at the Nieuwegracht in Utrecht there was enough space to store the material.

Later on, EAHIL archives moved to Maarsse, where Gerben van den Bosch and Nicole Regoort took care of the association's administration. In 2018 it was decided that this service would be discontinued; leaving the archives to be moved to ... indeed, my home address, where EAHIL still is registered according to the Chambre of Commerce. Marion Heymans, coopted to the Executive Board, will become the new liaison between EAHIL and the Dutch authorities and service providers.

In my correspondence to Nicole Regoort, by email, I mention: [transl.] "I do not know where the archive could be stored. Scanning seems to be an awful project and hardly useful. But because of being an international organization, probably nevertheless necessary".

In the first week of January 2020 the boxes arrived in Abcoude and have been staring at me ever since (Figure 1).

Steps taken: (i) at first checking the contents of these boxes; (ii) sorting by kind of material; (iii) deduplicating the newsletter and journal issues; (iv) sorting and deduplication of minutes of Board, Council and GA-meetings; (v) sorting and weeding the correspondence by the secretariat and the presidency over the years.



Fig. 1. EAHIL archives waiting to be sorted out and scanned in Abcoude.

The documentation of the Brussels' period (1987-1998), managed and cared for by EAHIL's secretary Roselyne Hoet (*Figure 2*), included literally everything, copies of all paper mailings that went out to members, including elections materials. The hardest decision to take was to disrupt this perfect archive, to throw away election papers, the personal records and membership lists, all further personal data we are no longer entitled to keep (!) according to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). It was the EAHIL Executive Board's wish to have the archival documents digitized; a scanned copy of all minutes of meetings, the *Newsletter*, the *Journal*, official documents, and whatever seems to be relevant to the history of EAHIL. Even without the *Newsletter*, the *Journal* and the Conference Proceedings the files mount to more than 1 GB on hard disk.

The archives of Ursula Hausen enabled me tracing back some of the historical connections and contacts relevant to EAHIL's founding and development in the seventies and eighties of the 20th century.



**Fig. 2.** Roselyne Hoet, EAHIL's secretary (1987-1998) in Brussels.

**THE CONGRESSES**

International Congresses on Medical Librarianship (ICML) are organized by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), the World Health Organization (WHO), and medical library associations worldwide since 1953<sup>1</sup>.

In 1969 the 3rd International Congress on Medical Librarianship (ICML3, May 5-9) (*Figure 3*) was held in Amsterdam; Ursula Hausen was one of the attendees. During this Congress a meeting of the participants from Germany (or German-speaking countries?) took place. The founding of the AgmB (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Medizinisches Bibliothekswesen) in 1970 is causally related to the Amsterdam-meeting, which is acknowledged on the AgmB-website<sup>2</sup>.



**Fig. 3.** Front cover of the program book of 3ICML in Amsterdam.

Among the members of the organizing committees we notice – not surprisingly – both librarians and publishers, but rather remarkable also biomedical researchers and clinicians from the Netherlands. President of ICML3, Dr Pieter J. Gaillard, was a leading cell biologist and the secretary-general of the organization; Dr Pierre J. Vinken, chief-executive of Excerpta Medica, later of Elsevier. Frank B. Rogers of the National Library of Medicine (USA) and Madeleine Wolff-Terroine, librarian/information scientist at the Institut Gustave Roussy in Paris (France), are members of the scientific committee. The Dutch medical librarian in the Organization Committee, Frederik P. Koumans, a biologist, affiliated with the Medical and Pharmaceutical Library, The Hague (Netherlands), born in 1905, would certainly have been involved in future international activities, if much younger<sup>3</sup>.

On the list of attendees of ICML3 there are the names of several colleagues who will get involved somehow in EAHIL, e.g.: Štefan Adamič, Yugoslavia<sup>4</sup>; Ritva Sievänen-Allen, Helsinki, Finland; Deborah Avriel, Jerusalem, Israël; Susan Crawford, Chicago, USA; Guus Mathijssen, Utrecht, Netherlands; Marc A. Walckiers, Brussels, Belgium; Paul Weiß, Geigy, Basel, Switzerland<sup>4</sup>.

Štefan Adamič, would lead from 1975 the Institute of Biomedical Informatics (IBMI) of the University of Ljubljana and will be awarded the title of Professor Emeritus in 1995 for his contribution to biomedical informatics. Deborah Avriel will later become the librarian of the WHO library in Geneva, Switzerland. Guus Mathijssen, librarian of the Veterinary Library of the University of Utrecht, the Netherlands, is co-founder of EAHIL's European Veterinary Libraries Group (EVLG).<sup>5</sup> Ritva Sievänen-Allen, is chief librarian of the Finnish National Library of Health Sciences (TERKKO) in Helsinki, succeeded by Miriam Ginman and later by Pirjo Rajakiili.<sup>6</sup> Mr. Paul Weiß, medical doctor and documentalist, working at the pharmaceutical firm Geigy (later known as Ciba-Geigy) was cofounder of AMDP, Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Methodik und Dokumentation in der Psychiatrie. This taskforce with members from Germany, Schweiz and Vienna, developed the system for documentation and evaluation of psychiatric symptoms and diseases (AMP). Since 1981 Dr Weiß was Director of the Institut für Wissenschafts information in der Medizin, Berlin, till its closure in 1990. Susan Crawford has been active in the MLA as an author and editor<sup>7</sup>. Marc Walckiers was the chief librarian of the medical faculty at the University of Louvain, Belgium. His name is strongly related to the history of EAHIL, being the organizer of the first European conference for European medical librarians in Brussel in 1986 and the founder and first President of EAHIL in 1987.

A short report by Ursula about the 4th International Congress (ICML4) in September 1980 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia published in the newsletter *Bibliotheksdiens*t, included the resolution adopted during this meeting "to promote partnerships between libraries in developed and developing countries". See also the article in the *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association* by Irwin H. Pizer c.s., including Štefan Adamič<sup>8</sup>. Among the people attending this congress in Belgrade we notice: Deborah Avriel (Israël), A. (Guus) Mathijssen (Utrecht, Netherlands), Anna Nannestad Nickolaysen (Oslo, Norway), Fiona MacKay Picken (London, United Kingdom), Ritva Sievänen-Allen (Helsinki, Finland), Marc Walckiers (Brussels, Belgium), Paul Weiß (Geigy, Basel, Switzerland) and Valentina Comba (Torino, Italy).

## THE CORRESPONDENCE

In October 1984 Ursula Hausen writes a letter to several medical librarians in different parts of Europe about planning and organizing a European Conference and Workshop on Health Sciences Librarianship in 1986. Among the recipients of this letter: Brigitta Pawlik (Offenbach, Germany), Beryl Ruff and Deborah S. Avriel (WHO, Geneva, Switzerland), Brigitte Blum (Bern, Switzerland), Valentina Comba (Torino, Italy), Gabriella Poppi (Rome, Italy), Øystein Wendelbo (Bergen, Norway), Sigrid Reinitzer (Graz, Austria), Hannelore Schmidt (München, Germany), Fiona MacKay Picken (London, United Kingdom), Kyziaki Apaki (Athens, Greece), Monika Segbert (British Council, Cologne, Germany), Greta Renborg (Uppsala, Sweden), Marc Walckiers (Brussels, Belgium) and Helga Faluwoye (Ibadan, Nigeria).

In that same period there were already contacts with potentially interested institutions who would be able to support, such as: The WHO Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen, the Ministry of Health of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Foundation for Economic Development; but also LIBER (Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche) was expected to support the initiative of organizing a conference or workshop for medical librarians in Europe.

The questions posed to the European colleagues were:

1. Which country would you consider best to serve as a host [for the conference or workshop]?
2. What percentage of the conference time should be devoted to continuing education courses, papers, poster sessions, round table discussions?
3. What subjects should be chosen for continuing education sessions?

4. What would be a practical length of the conference, and of the CE [Continuing Education] courses? (practical in the sense, that librarians would have the time and the money to participate).

Before going to Japan, Ursula had already received replies about interest in organizing and attending such a conference from 6 countries, from France, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, Italy and the UK, among these Christine Deschamps (Paris), Brigitte Blum (Bern), Øystein Wendelbo (Bergen, Norway).

It was important to get an overview of the degree of organization and cooperation among medical librarians in the countries of Europe as well as the existence of biomedical library associations (or subgroups of national library associations) and what the particular needs would be for workshops and continuing education courses. The information gathered by Ursula Hausen would become the layout of the program of the ECML in 1986.

### DECISION TAKEN

Being in Tokyo for the ICML in 1985 the European medical librarians gathered in a room made available by the Japan Medical Library Association (JMLA), with the help of Mrs Takada, in the building where the ICML was being held (Figure 4). They discussed the options for closer cooperation among the European Medical Librarians by either/or founding of an association and/or publishing a European Journal of Medical Librarianship. It was decided that the best way to start the closer cooperation would be a three-day meeting in the fall in 1986 or spring 1987 with the support of and, if possible, funding by the WHO and European institutions.

In the report of this meeting:

- “ - Mr Walckiers, the only librarian from Belgium [in Tokyo], accepted to organize in Brussels the first European meeting of medical librarians with the help of Mrs Hausen and the support of the WHO and of the Commission of the European Communities, if possible,
- everyone accepted that librarians from each country would send suggestions about this meeting to Mrs Hausen and Mr Walckiers
- Mr Wright accepted to prepare and to send to the 26 present European librarians a short report of their meeting of 2nd October in Tokyo”<sup>9</sup>.

Attendees of this meeting:

- |                                |                                       |                                  |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Valentina Comba, Torino     | 10. Agnes Nagy, WHO                   | 18. Linda J. Parr, London        |
| 2. Fiona MacKay Picken, London | 11. Eeva Kihlberg, Helsinki           | 19. Stefan Adamic, Yugoslavia    |
| 3. Brigitta Pawlik, W.Germany  | 12. Terttu Soini, Finland             | 20. Paul Weiss, German Dem. Rep. |
| 4. Ursula Hausen, WHO          | 13. Anna Nannestad Nicolaysen, Norway | 21. Øystein Wendelbo, Norway     |
| 5. Eustace Cornelius, London   | 14. Liliane Frenkiel, Israel          | 22. Kari Halldal, Oslo, Norway   |
| 6. Gillian M. Pentelow, London | 15. Christine Deschamps, Paris        | 23. Elisabeth Kjellander, Sweden |
| 7. C. (Tina) Craig, London     | 16. Ritva Sievenen-Allen, Helsinki    | 24. Ragnhild Lande, Norway       |
| 8. Phyllis Gale, London        | 17. Monique Cleland, Switzerland      | 25. Marc Walckiers, Belgium      |
| 9. Derek Wright, London        |                                       | 26. Rüdiger Schneemann, Berlin   |

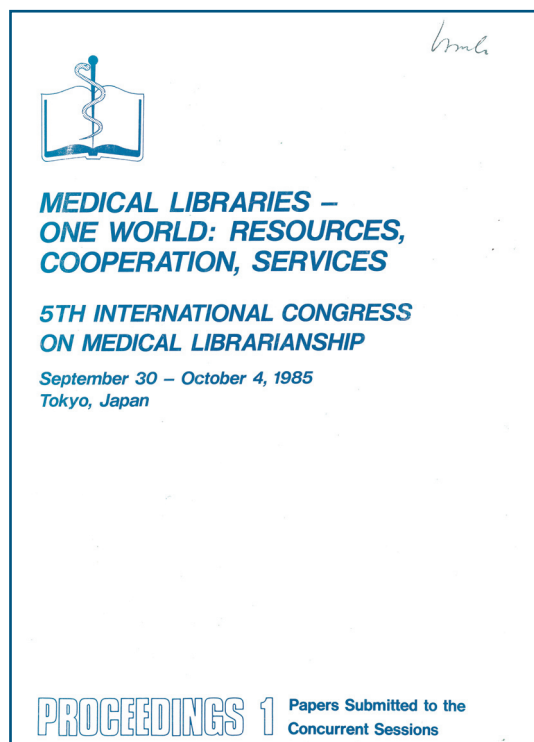


Fig. 4. Front cover of the Proceedings of 5ICML in Tokyo.



**Fig. 5.** Marc Walckiers, first President of EAHIL.

In November 1985 Marc Walckiers confirms in writing to Ursula Hausen that 10 Belgian colleagues promised to support and cooperate with him in order to organize the 1st ECML in Brussels in October.

Marc Walckiers became chair of the Local Organizing Committee, Ursula Hausen chair of the European Organizing Committee and Christine Deschamps chair of the Programme Committee and together they prepared for and took the responsibility to organize the first European Conference in October 1986 in Brussels (Figures 5-7). Interestingly enough most of the correspondence about the conference continues to be written in three languages: French, English and German.

In order to get sponsoring and support many letters were sent out, e.g. to the European Office of the World Health Organization in Copenhagen, the European Commission, library organizations and research institutes. Stationary with letterhead and footer was designed for the use of all these paper (!) mailings (Figures 8, 9).

Before the decision was taken to organize the 1st ECML the subject of the letters was a short questionnaire about the state of medical librarianship in the different countries regarding organization of the library, associations for librarians and/or medical librarians, union lists of (medical) periodicals, interlibrary loans etc. In the archives I found some clippings of library literature on this subject e.g. the chapter on Europe in the book of Fiona MacKay Picken about Medical Librarianship<sup>10</sup>.

The colleagues gathered in Tokyo promised to support and spread the idea of a European meeting.

With the dates set for the 1st ECML most letters are about preferences and interests regarding the subjects and themes to include in the conference program and on the issues to be discussed in workshops or the subjects of training sessions and continuing education courses. Looking at the invitation to contribute and attend the conference<sup>11</sup>, as well as the published proceedings<sup>12</sup>, the scheme looks very familiar. It has been and still is the blueprint of most of the EAHIL conferences ever since!



**Fig. 6.** Ursula Hausen, first vice-President of EAHIL.



**Fig. 7.** Christine Deschamps, first Treasurer of EAHIL.



**FIRST EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF MEDICAL LIBRARIES**  
Brussels, 22-25 October 1986  
**PREMIERE CONFERENCE EUROPEENNE DES BIBLIOTHEQUES MEDICALES**  
Bruxelles, 22-25 octobre 1986  
**ERSTE EUROPÄISCHE KONFERENZ FÜR MEDIZINISCHE BIBLIOTHEKEN**  
Brüssel, 22-25 Oktober 1986

**Fig. 8.** Letterhead of the stationary designed for the mailings and correspondence related to the first conference.

**European Organizing Comité**  
**Comité Européen d'Organisation**  
**Europäisches Organisationskomitee**  
Chairman – Président – Vorsitzende  
Ursula HAUSEN  
WHO Library - Bibliothèque OMS  
Av. Appia - CH 1211 GENEVE 27

**Local Organizing Comité**  
**Comité local d'Organisation**  
**Lokales Organisationskomitee**  
Chairman – Président – Vorsitzender  
Marc WALCKIERS  
Bibliothèque Méd. Univ. Louvain  
Av. Hippocrate 50 - B1200 BRUXELLES

**Programme Comité**  
**Comité de Programme**  
**Programmkomitee**  
Chairman – Président – Vorsitzende  
Christine DESCHAMPS  
Bibliothèque Univ. Paris 7  
Pl. Jussieu 2 - F75005 PARIS

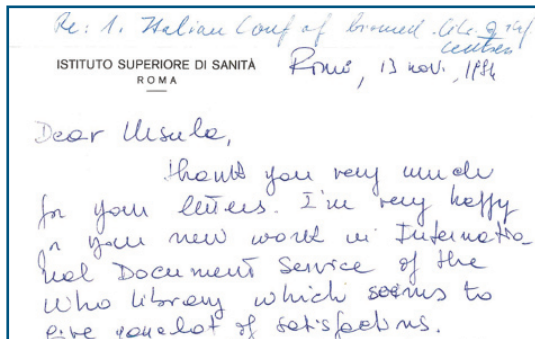
**Administrative Secretariat**  
**Secrétariat administratif**  
**Verwaltungssekretariat**  
Dalia SHANNI  
E.C.C.O. sprl  
Rue Vilain XIII, 17A - B1050 BRUXELLES  
Tél. (32.2) 6478780 - Tx 61434 SDR BRU

**Fig. 9.** Footer of the stationary for the first conference and the contact details of the chairs of the organizing committees.

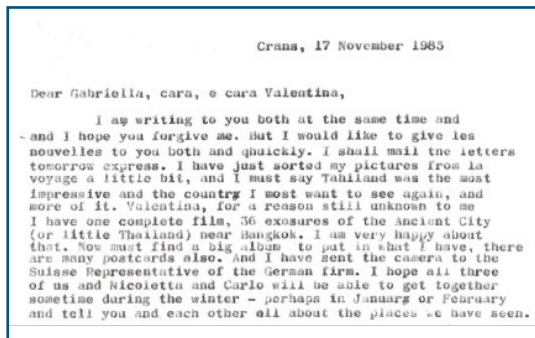
**SPIRIT AND MOTIVATION**

By reading the many letters and notes from Ursula Hausen one can feel the strong motivation she had to setting up a network of medical librarians in Germany and in Europe. Furthermore, it is clear that Ursula maintained close friendly contacts with several colleagues she had met in Zagreb and Tokyo, e.g. the Italian colleagues Valentina Comba and Gabriella Poppi. By organizing the 1st ECML and the founding of EAHIL she was in very close cooperation with Marc Walckiers, who spent 5 months working in the WHO library (Jan-May 1987)<sup>13</sup> (Figures 10, 11).

Ursula Hausen<sup>14</sup> (Oct 1985):



**Fig. 10.** Letter of 13 November 1984 by Gabriella Poppi to Ursula Hausen.



**Fig. 11.** Letter of 17 November 1985 from Ursula Hausen to Gabriella Poppi and Valentina Comba.

*Am wertvollsten waren wieder die persönlichen Kontakte, die während der Kongresswoche angeknüpft oder erneuert werden konnten*” [transl.: The personal contacts that were made or renewed during the congress week were again the most valuable]. “After the Belgrade congress, it was already possible to say that these gatherings of librarians from all over the world provided a strong impetus for the medical library system in the individual countries, often a first association of librarians in this sector of special libraries, so this will be increasingly expected to be the case in the future.

For the first time, 25 medical librarians from Eastern and Western European countries came together with the wish to keep closer contact among their European colleagues in the future. It was decided with great enthusiasm to hold a joint conference in Brussels in October 1986. It should be under the aegis of the WHO regional office for Europe and, if possible, the European Community. Librarians from twelve European countries, who were represented in Tokyo, have taken on the task of getting in touch with colleagues in their countries, receiving professional, moral and financial support and making suggestions for lecture and discussion topics and training events” [translated].

**SUPPORT AND ORGANIZATION**

Financial support to organize the first conference was received from the European regional office of WHO in Copenhagen, and from French and Belgian Ministries. The

European Commission provided the Conference venue and translation services. Sponsorships were received from Svenska Lakaresallkapej, Pharmacia AB, Astra AB, Janssen Pharmaceutica, Smith-Kline Rit, Sigma, Fidia SpA, UCB and Merck, Sharp & Dohme. The conference attracted almost 300 participants; the programme included library visits to Maastricht and Antwerp as well as continuing education courses. With a positive outcome, the conference was a great success.

One of the first preparatory meetings by the organizers for the first conference was held in Lausanne on 28 November 1985 as a side event for a meeting regarding the founding of the European Council of Library Resources (ECLR) with M. Clavel and the Secretary of LIBER, Dr Koch, present. The aims and scope of the ECLR consisted of further cooperation among libraries all over Europe as well as representation towards the European Commission, comparable with the US Council of Library Resources. Among the attendees of this meeting are Christine Deschamps, (Directeur, Bibliothèque, Université Paris VII), Brigitte Blum (Universitätsspital Bern, Bibliothek) and Monique Cleland (Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Médecine, CHUV



**Fig. 12.** *Brigitte Blum, EAHIL Board member and secretary 1989-1990, who became close friends with Ursula Hausen; a friendship that lasted into retirement.*



**Fig. 13.** *Monique Cleland, EAHIL Board member (1988-1990) and President (1991-1992).*

Lausanne); they would later on take up roles and responsibilities in the Executive Board of EAHIL and in the organizing committees of future meetings (Figures 12, 13).

Already in 1978 LIBER organized in Cologne a seminar for medical librarians in cooperation with the AgmB and it was agreed that a LIBER Group of Medical Librarians should be established but this initiative did not arouse much interest<sup>15</sup>. “Although LIBER sponsored the first ECML in Brussels 1986, further cooperation with EAHIL or subjects of mutual interest and shared aims and goals did not develop between the two organizations. LIBER was founded under Council of Europe auspices and has grown to consist [in 1986] of about 180 research libraries. Though these are at present drawn mainly from the national and university sectors, membership is equally open to research libraries with other affiliations such as medicine”<sup>16</sup>.

The local organizers of the Brussels event had their meeting on 27 February 1986 in Brussels at the Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology. The European Organizing Committee met again on 3 March 1986 in Geneva. This meeting was hosted by the World Health Organization Library. All committees gathered in Brussels on 12 and 13 September 1986. Meetings of the Programme Committee were also held in Paris in Christine Deschamps' Office in Paris, talking in French, English and German (translated by Gabriella Poppi in English).

From November 1985 till October 1986 seems a very short period for organizing a conference. Remember, in times before email and Internet, communication was by paper mail, expensive phone lines or faxes of poor quality. The workload was most probably mainly on the shoulders of Marc Walckiers, Ursula Hausen and Christine Deschamps.

The archives don't tell much about the procedures of inviting speakers, the call for papers and the selection of oral and poster presentations. The names of committee members for this first conference include many of the people who were approached personally and invited to the conference by the organizers. Having known each other already for several years and dividing the workload among the three of them seems to be the secret behind the very successful 1986 conference in Brussels.

## THE FIRST CONFERENCE

The title of the first ECML is “Medical Libraries – cooperation and new technologies”. Themes proposed in the call for papers:

1. Cooperation/networks (acquisitions, interlibrary loans, etc.)
2. Computerization and standardization (interfaces, formats, etc.)
3. Information on scientific reference works
4. Development of scientific databases
5. Continuous education of information specialists
6. The role of libraries and documentation centres in health services administration.

In addition to the official sessions, round tables will be held on subjects of common interest. For the first time in many years, this conference will also present to medical librarians in Europe an exhibition on new information technologies, particularly in the fields of publishing, computerized libraries, and databases. Finally, a selection of courses on medical librarianship and consultation of databases, as well as visits to

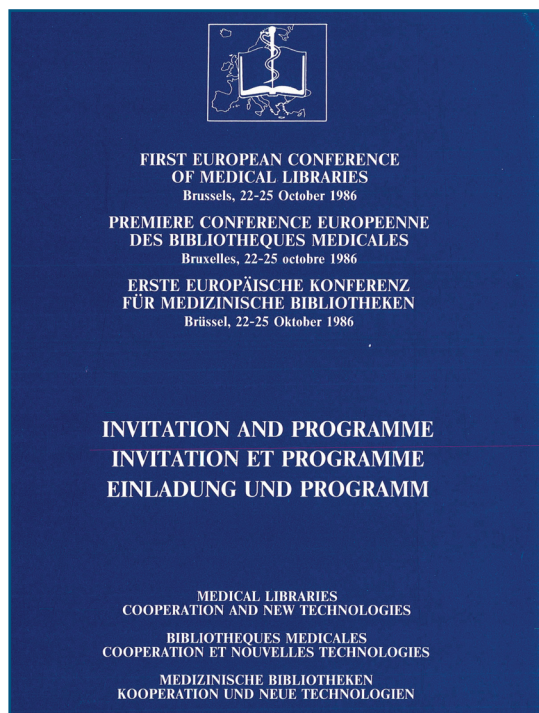


Fig. 14. Front cover of the announcement and invitation to the first ECML.

libraries in Belgium and neighbouring countries, are proposed for the days preceding the conference (Figure 14).

## AFTER THE CONFERENCE

The press release issued on October 27th was published in 4 languages (EN, FR, GE, NL):

“From 22 to 25 October 1986, 300 medical librarians from 26 European countries attended the First European Conference of Medical Libraries. This Conference, held in Brussels, was sponsored by the Commission of the European Communities and the Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organisation and received support from various institutions in different European countries. Over 80 contributions covered topics like library management, user education and efficient cooperation through the coordinated use of new technologies in libraries (information technology, telecommunications, compact disks, databases, etc.) in accordance with the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities dated September 27th, 1985. Medical librarians play an important role in the active information support of medical research and health care services working for “Health for all”, an aim jointly accepted by the countries of the European Region of the WHO. During the closing session, the plenary assembly decided, following a proposal of the chairmen of the organizing Committees (Mrs U. Hausen, WHO Geneva; Mrs C. Deschamps, University Paris 7 and Mr M. Walckiers, University of Louvain) to create a European Association of Health Librarians. Its aims will be to represent European health librarians, offer them continuing education, and improve their cooperation for better information to medical research and health services”.

The archives hold many thank-you messages to several persons, organizations and institutions for supporting the conference. For those who have organized an EAHIL meeting (conference or workshop) ever since, you can imagine the relief felt after the closing session, receiving congratulations and compliments; this certainly has been something very special for Ursula, Marc and Christine after years of networking and planning. In the financial report a small surplus is stated, that allows for the founding of the association the year after in Brighton.

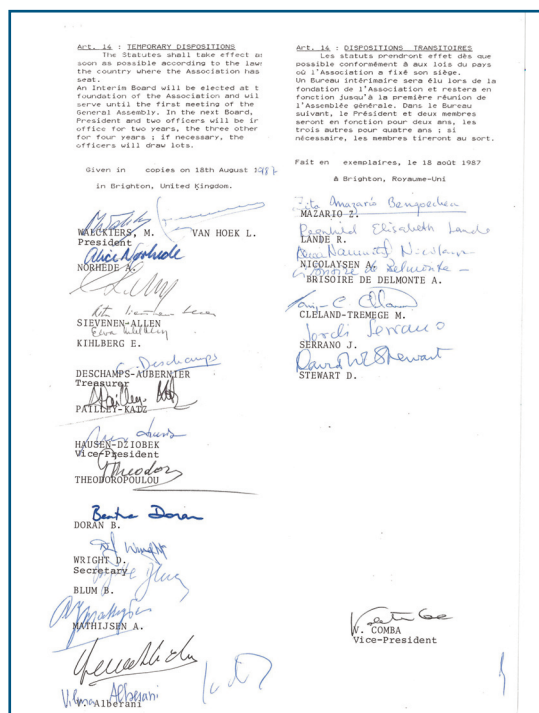


Fig. 15. Signatures of the colleagues accepting EAHIL statutes during the meeting founding the association in Brighton, October 1987.

## THE YEARS AFTER

In 1987 at the IFLA meeting in Brighton 72 European Medical Librarians came together on Tuesday 18 August in the Metropole Hotel for the founding of EAHIL (Figure 15).



It would be interesting to investigate the career path of these and all forementioned colleagues and how EAHIL played a role in their professional life. It is stimulating and heartwarming to feel the enthusiasm among these *founding fathers and mothers*, that contributed to and, to my opinion, laid the basis for the outcome of the European cooperation and collegial friendship where EAHIL stands for until today. Even in the virtual world EAHIL's warmth and inclusiveness still exists, as was proven by the very successful online gathering in Łódź last week (16-18 November 2020).

### THE AUTHOR'S POSTSCRIPTUM

All issues of the Newsletter to *European Health Librarians* (1987-2004) and all issues of the *Journal of EAHIL* (2005-present) are full-text available online at: <http://ojs.eahil.eu>. Minutes of meetings (Executive Board, Council and General Assembly) are scanned and stored in the digital archive, managed by the Executive Board. Programme and Abstract Books of the conferences and workshops await digitizing. Most of the published proceedings are or will become available full-text online (see the links on EAHIL's website under "Past events"). Copies of most of the conference and workshop websites are on EAHIL's webserver, hosted by Novoserve in the Netherlands. Easily accessible and a great help in "rebuilding" a complete archive of the minutes, are the archives of EAHIL discussion lists going back to 1997, hosted by SPRI (Institute of the Health Services) in Stockholm till the end of 2000, nowadays by E-compass in the Netherlands. The remains of the archive, i.e. the original paper copies of legally important documents, will be transferred to IFLA's headquarters in The Hague (Netherlands). There are only a few photographs in the archive. The 20-year-old compact disc is unreadable on all of my (6!) computers and devices. I have to apologize for the very low quality of some of the illustrations used in this paper.

About my time and energy dedicated to EAHIL I can but quote again Ursula Hausen: "*Am wertvollsten waren die persönlichen Kontakten*". [transl.: By far the most valuable were the personal contacts]. For more than 30 years EAHIL had a prominent role in my life, be it by obviously guiding me as to when and where to travel for the annual vacation.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for belonging to the EAHIL family and to thank my European colleagues for their cooperation and friendship and the uncountable many good memories that I bear with me. That's why I stayed in medical librarianship!<sup>17</sup>

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