According to IFLA’s overall professional priority – promoting standards, guidelines and best practices a working group developing guidelines was established a couple of years ago. The idea is to have a set of guidelines ready in 2006/2007 meeting the growing need and demand for up-dated guidelines for planning the new physical framework for the modern 21st century libraries. Combining the classic book-house with the e-library.

As the Section considers all matters concerning the design and construction for all types of libraries in all parts of the world, including their furnishings and equipment the members of working group were selected from the Section Committee, see whom they are below. Currently it is the intention to introduce the first part of the guidelines at a session in Oslo. The Guidelines will consist of two text parts – Basic texts and Directory – plus of course references.

To establish the decisive “joint touch” the group will go deeper into the matter together at a meeting first scheduled for this spring but now for Oslo. Thereafter some-time next autumn the first part of the guidelines will intro-duced to and discussed with the rest of the Committee members – for their perspectives to be included in the recommendations.

Between Oslo (2005) and Seoul (2006) the working group will prepare the second part of the guidelines – that is a kind of encyclopaedia directory (on light, cabling, security, etc) in order for the full text to be introduced/discussed in Seoul. Whereafter it should be finalised and publicised during the autumn 2006/winter 2007.

Existing national Guidelines

Please send information now! All SC members are invited to forward copies of existing national guidelines/ standards on library buildings to Hellen Niegaard (hn@dbf.dk) before August 1st this year.

Members of the group, which are all present or former mem- bers of the section committee:

Andrew Cranfield, UK – University Library Director
Helen Niegaard, Denmark – Chief Consultant Danish Library Association

The Physical Library and beyond. Library as place and the library in cyberspace

11-12 August 2005 in Järvenpää, Finland

Along with a host of organizers including IFLA’s Reference and Information Services Section we are greatly looking forward to this satellite meeting in conjunction with the IFLA World Congress in Oslo. Hopefully the programme will address many issues of interest to those who wish to work towards understanding and designing physical libraries in an age where more and more library services are becoming on-line and the role of the library as mediator has changed significantly over the last ten years.

Speakers from among other countries Canada, Slovenia, Denmark and Finland will talk about virtual library services, local services in a virtual age, demands on modern library architecture thinking and libraries in a social environment. There will also be the possibility of visiting a number of interesting libraries as a part of the meeting and the opportunity to be inspired by the famous Finnish architecture.

For more information about the satellite meeting, full programme and how to register please visit http://www.ifla.fi/PHYSICALvSVIRTUAL05/

We look forward to seeing you in Finland.

On behalf of the organizers

Andrew Cranfield
The Designing Libraries project in the UK came into being in 2003 as part of the government’s strategy for the future development of the public library service in England over the next ten years. Framework for the Future was issued in February 2003, its object being to create a shared sense of purpose amongst key stakeholders and to identify areas of activity that were critical to the future success of the public library service. The intention was to enable the service to build on existing strengths whilst developing innovative projects for the future. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport charged Resource (now renamed the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council) with producing a three-year action plan to implement Framework for the Future and this was produced in October 2003.

The state of the public library building stock in the UK has been of considerable concern for some time and the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) had mooted the idea of a library buildings portal or database at a seminar in May 2003. Framework for the Future had highlighted the need to design attractive new buildings, or renovate the old, in order to deliver a relevant and useful service in the 21st century. Resource recognised the need for a source of information along the lines of that proposed by CILIP so the scene was set for a fruitful collaboration between the two bodies. A pilot project was run in 2004 under Work Package 4 of the Framework for the Future Action Plan 2003-2006 “Community and Civic Values” and addressed strategic objective 10 to “provide library premises that meet the needs of the twenty first century”. As well as the setting up of a database/portal, the work package also included an audit of the state of public library buildings in England and a series of regional seminars on designing interior space in libraries which were held between March and July 2004.

The pilot website has now been granted funds from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to go live. The project is being carried out by the Information Service department of the University of Wales Aberystwyth under the direction of CILIP’s Library Buildings Project Steering Group and is already well under way. The Designing Libraries website (www.designinglibraries.org.uk) provides a database of descriptions and images of recent UK public library building projects, a resource for sharing expertise on library planning and design, and links to useful web resources and bibliographic references. The 1995-2003 entries for the UK Public Library Building Awards are included on the database. Entries for the 2005 awards are soon to close and they, too, will in time appear on the site. There is also a link to the AIA/ALA library building awards.

The Designing Libraries database can be searched by local authority, county, size and type of library, and by project whether it be a conversion, an extension or a new building. Entries include illustrations, information on special features and services, details of costs, the source of funding, the name of the architects responsible for the work and awards won. The focus is on public library buildings but the information should be of use to anyone involved in the process of building a new library or of renovating an existing one. With the Standing Conference of National and University Libraries (SCONUL) database also available on the web (www.sconul.ac.uk/lib-build/), those fortunate enough to have bags of gold to spend on building new libraries or on fizzing up old ones should have no excuse for not availing themselves of existing information or checking up on best practice elsewhere.

Kris Lambert, Public Library Oostende (above), Cleveland Public Library (left), Economics Library, Göteborg University Library (below). All illustrations are from the 2003 edition of New Library Buildings of the World, edited by Dr. Wu Jianzhong, Director of the Shanghai Library, China. The book presents library architecture from around the world, is superbly illustrated and gives us many images of the library of today and tomorrow.