

IFLA Conference 2000 in Jerusalem

"Libraries for the 21st Century" was the theme of the section's open session in Jerusalem which addressed professionals planning or building a new library or just in the need of new professional inspiration.

First paper "Transforming a national library for a wider world" was about the new Black Diamond, the Danish Royal Library, The National Library in Copenhagen, by director Erland Kolding Nielsen. See web sites: www.kb.dk/kultur/diamant/architecture/index.htm + www.kb.dk/yd/tj-sted-en/kbs.htm. Having found the latter, choose: Tour.

Second was "Bodibeng, to quench the people's thirst from the lake of knowledge: creating Bodibeng Community Library in Shoshanguve, South Africa. By public library director Louise Mayer, Library and Information Services, Northern Pretoria Metropolitan Substructure, South Africa. See www.ifla.org/IV/ifla66/66cp.htm plus Tuesday 15th, and meeting 121.

Third came public library director Ana Maria Runkel from Municipality of Oeiras, Portugal with "Portuguese public libraries: a silent revolution". See www.ifla.org/IV/ifla66/66cp.htm plus Tuesday 15th, and meeting 121.

Close to 85-100 delegates participated in the meeting.

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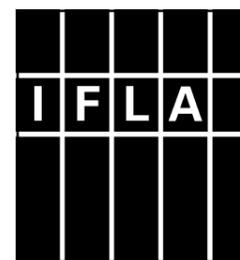
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News 2000/1 Section on Library Buildings and Equipment

Editorial

By Hellen Niegaard

Back on the tracks!

After a couple of rather turbulent years, little by little the Section is heading back on the tracks, ready to take up issues of relevance to library buildings and equipment. Present at the IFLA Conference 2000 in Jerusalem this summer were a good handful of committee and section members and some observers.

Supported by IFLA Headquarters the committee members made the decision to carry on the work of the section. Committing themselves for the next couple of years in pursuing the section's goals.

Elected new chair and information officer was Barton Clark, US. Joan de Beer, South Africa, elected as secretary in 1999 volunteered to stay on - and as editor of the two next issues of the newsletter (2000/Autumn + 2001/Spring) yours truly. Other present committee members were: Jean-Marie Arnoult, France, Maria Jose Moura, Portugal, and Sven Nilsson, Sweden. They signed up for different tasks. New section leaflet as *the* tool in an upcoming membership campaign, the 2001 seminar and an open-session/workshop on security matters at IFLA 2001 in Boston.

Pre conference 2001 in the States (XII Buildings Seminar)

Preliminary dates: Sunday the 12th to Thursday 16th of August, as an appetizer to IFLA conference 2001 in Boston, from Friday 17th to Saturday 25th. Location is to be announced within this year. Please contact Barton Clark late December. The Professional Board has approved the seminar to be one of the official pre-conferences.

Current development

To the committee there seems no doubt. The first decade of the new millennium is going to be a rough and extremely demanding time for most kinds of libraries and in most parts of the world. Demanding because at the same time the libraries must offer traditional as well as virtual services side by side. Rough because both type of activities will probably have to be carried out within existing economic frameworks. Of course this will not happen over night. But indications have been plain in recent years and a new

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reality is emerging. It is primarily based on electronic documents, digitised sound and pictures plus information communication via Internet. How this situation will influence library buildings and equipment, including the security aspects, will be looked into at the pre-conference and at the main conference as well.

Invitation

The committee strongly invite all present members of the Section to contribute to it's activities.

Sharing professional experience is central to IFLA in order to promote high standards of library and information services all over the world.

The committee therefore encourage you to contribute to one or several of the following activities.

Broadcast your local/national development via the newsletter. Take part in the pre-conference and the conference. And last but not least invite others to join the section *and* the section committee.

To create better, more functional and interesting library buildings, we need to learn from your good or bad experiences! Therefore please come forward.



Scope of the Section

The Section considers all matters concerning the design and construction for all type of libraries in all parts of the world, and their furnishing and equipment. The section aims to collect and disseminate knowledge about buildings and equipment in order to increase this knowledge among librarians. It also aims to establish better contacts between librarians and architects by creating the conditions under which it will be possible for each of them to understand the other's language, by promoting an exchange of experiences between librarians and architects.

Goals 1998-2001 (under revision)

1. Collect and present information on new library buildings and renovations
2. Organise seminars on library buildings in various countries - to which developing countries will be encouraged to send representatives
3. Organise study tours on library buildings in various countries - to which developing countries will encouraged to send representatives
4. Develop guidelines for librarians in the planning and preparation of building programme documents for architects and for participating in project development

Library building programmes in less developed countries

The building and furnishing of Public Libraries – some basic tips.

By Maria José Moura, Director, Instituto
Português do Livro e das Bibliotecas

1. The existence of abundant literature on building and furnishing public libraries – does not seem to prevent many of our colleagues from the less developed countries from finding difficulties when confronted with the options versus the problem of lack of resources, which usually leads them to concluding that it is impossible to apply the standards and other recommendations which are internationally proclaimed.
2. The UNESCO Manifesto on Public Libraries (www.ifla.org/VII/s8/unesco/manif.htm) is a guiding document, which should be taken into account, and, therefore, I will merely add some practical considerations, which may help to build and furnish better libraries, in adverse conditions, which was the case of Portugal 15 years ago.
3. In all the countries I know, the Public Libraries pursue the same ultimate objectives, but are nevertheless different because they reflect the geographic, environmental and social conditions, as well as the traditions and cultural identity of the communities in which they are integrated.
4. There are, however, some principles that all of them can follow in order to take advantage of the investment in physical infra-structures, which sometimes can take years to achieve (being almost always considered insufficient in view of the existing needs):
 - 4.1. Step one: the building programme. The programme to be elaborated – which is one of the most important phases and in which the role of the librarian is absolutely vital – should be adequate to the number of potential users of the library. Even knowing that the public library does not replace the school library – since both should complement each other – it is necessary to an-

icipate a reasonable number of reading seats at the site, although loans should always be encouraged. Since the library, despite its use of the information and communication technologies, continues to be a place for meeting and socialising, it is essential to anticipate spaces for those purposes and not merely for containing collections, which, being necessarily organised for free access, also occupy a considerable amount of surface area. For this reason, the size of the library should satisfy all these needs, adding to those needs that concern the staff's work area and also those spaces for storage.

- 4.2. The adults section should be different from the one prepared for children (under 13 years, normally) and where the adolescents no longer like to stay. Whenever possible, the children's room should be organised with a specific space for the young ones, with appropriate furniture and equipment, at least simple pillows, cloth carpets or straw mats. Besides these, decoration elements appropriate for their ages should be considered, which will help create a comfortable, informal and cosy environment, so that they may feel at ease.
- 4.3. Should it not be possible to allocate specific spaces to promotion activities, debates and meetings with authors, it is important to be able to provide them in certain occasions, through the acquisition of bookshelves with wheels (when they are not placed up against the wall) and taking advantage of the flexible layout organisation of the different sections, especially the children's ones.
- 4.4. Furniture should be resistant, durable and easy to maintain, so as to avoid short-term expenses. The design should be simple and the furniture should exist in the market or be easily manufactured in the region, anticipating the need for replacing or adding to certain modules. Do not forget that certain alleged savings can sometimes bring about more expenses later on!
- 4.5. The same principles apply to the floor and the interior and exterior finishes, which have to consider weather conditions, avoiding to use inappropriate solutions.
- 4.6. The latter are extremely important for the options to be made regarding building orientation and climate. Heating, ventilation, air conditioning and power supply should imply a cost-effective maintenance and the use of the traditional

systems of the region, as well as the usual expertise of the local construction workers.

5. The interior and exterior sign-plates of the library should also be subject to careful attention, since the initial guidance of the reader and his desirable autonomy in the usage of the library depends on it.
6. The emergence of new media and the introduction of new information and communication technologies bring about new demands and challenges, not only in the creation of innovative services, but also when we are thinking about the construction of the library or even the adaptation of a building for that purpose. Even if that apparently seems to be a remote problem from the realities of the countries with few resources.
 - 6.1. Whenever possible the library building should contemplate cabling infrastructures in order to provide data and voice integration.
 - 6.2. The hardware acquisition should be aware of multi-services to provide and upgrading capabilities. However, it should be taken into account the constant investment needs.
 - 6.3. The CDS/ISIS software, distributed freely by UNESCO, can be a starting solution for library catalogue creation. Integrated library management systems have a high level of acquisition and maintenance costs.
7. Considering that the modern public library is not only seen as the traditional support to information, education and leisure, but also *as the window to the world at the disposal of all citizens without exception*, access to the Internet is now seen as a vital condition for accomplishing this objective – and may after all represent a short cut to provide access to information, knowledge and culture where means for printed materials and multi-media are sparse. Therefore, it should be integrated in the priority services to be rendered to the user, with access through a leased (telephone) line as minimum requirement.
8. Although apparently outside the scope of these brief considerations, it's also important to mention the need for professionals who will follow, from the starting point, the building and furnishing of the public library. They should later be responsible for its management, promotion activities and for the development of user's services.