



# Newsletter

**IFLA Libraries for the Blind Section  
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## **Standing Committee Members**

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## **Section News:**

### **New Chair and Information Coordinator**

Beatrice Christensen Sköld, TPB (Sweden) was elected chair for one year during the World Congress in Buenos Aires. Marijke van Boden-graven, FNB, Netherlands who was elected chair last year in Berlin, unfortunately had to leave.

Beatrice has a long experience of IFLA work. She has been the Section's Information Coordinator since 1999 and before that she held the office as chair for four year. At TPB Beatrice is the coordinator of International Affairs and Research & Development.

Lina Kouzi is replacing Beatrice as Information Coordinator. Lina is the Library and Media Services Production Manager at the National Council for the Blind of Ireland.

### **Section's activities at the World Library and Information Conference, Buenos Aires, August 2004**

#### **The balance of copyright and licensing**

The highlight of the Section's activity during this year's conference was the joint programme organised with the Libraries serving Disadvantaged People Section, entitled "The balance of copyright and licensing: access to information for print disabled

users". There was an excellent panel of speakers covering different ways of managing users' and publishers' rights, and the session attracted a large audience.

The programme was introduced by Winston Tabb, Chair of the IFLA Copyright and Legal Matters Committee, who said that his committee would take on board the concerns of the 180 million blind and partially sighted people in the world. Johan Roos, Director, South African Library for the Blind, talked to his paper which gave a comparative overview of copyright legislation in various countries. Victoria Owen, CNIB Library for the Blind, Canada, spoke about CNIB's experiences in negotiating with publishers for digital files and establishing a national digital file repository. Geidy Lung of WIPO presented their proposals for model copyright legislation and reported that WIPO would be carrying out a survey of exceptions to copyright legislation that have been put in place to address the needs of visually impaired people. Stephen King of RNIB, UK, urged members to support these proposals.

The programme continued with a local flavour as the audience heard from Pablo Lecuona about the digital book service developed in Argentina by Tiflolibros and from Ana Maria Cabanellas de las Cuevas, President of the International Publishers Association, who promised to report back to IPA with all the issues that had been raised. Following this there was a lively question and answer session, with a strong desire emerging for blind and partially

sighted people to work together with other print disabled people to make progress in this area. The Section will certainly return to this subject at future conferences.

Conference papers can be found on the IFLA website, at <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla70/prog04.htm>

Our special thanks go to Victoria Owen and Vibeke Lehmann who put this impressive programme together. Sadly, Vibeke had broken her ankle shortly before the conference and was unable to attend. Victoria has subsequently left CNIB after 11 years service, during which time she has been a very active contributor to the Section's work on copyright. However, we are glad to know that she has joined the IFLA Copyright and Legal Matters Committee and will undoubtedly continue to be an advocate for the concerns of print disabled people there. We wish her well in her new appointment at the University of Toronto.

### **Standing Committee business**

As usual, the Standing Committee held two meetings, attended by ten committee members and twelve observers. The Committee were pleased to appoint Beatrice Christensen Sköld as Chair to replace Marijke van Bodengraven who had stepped down. Marijke was thanked for her contribution to the Section.

Time at these meetings is necessarily very limited but the Committee members reported developments on a variety of initiatives. Some key points were

- The revised guidelines for libraries for the blind had been completed and submitted to IFLA for publication.
- There had been good progress with developing guidelines for integrated digital library systems which were expected to be completed by the end of the year
- Project START, which is benchmarking activity in member libraries, is just beginning work
- The Committee agreed to look at the postal situation in member countries
- The Committee also agreed to investigate ways of overcoming barriers to achieving a global library for the blind (interoperability, cataloguing standards, OPACs, interlending etc)
- Plans were developed for a workshop at the World Blind Union General Assembly, December 2004; the Section conference in Gothenburg Sweden, August 2005; and the Section's session at WLIC, Oslo, 2005.

Draft minutes can be found on the Section's smartgroup archive. Anyone can join the smartgroup; for details, please contact Helen Brazier, Secretary, [helen.brazier@nlbuk.org](mailto:helen.brazier@nlbuk.org)

Standing Committee elections take place this winter and there will be a few vacancies on the committee. All IFLA members should receive voting papers in October or November. If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else, please return your nomination to IFLA by the specified time.

## Diary dates

Standing Committee mid-year meeting, South African Library for the Blind, Grahamstown, 2-3 December 2004

“Think access – think libraries”: workshop and exhibition stand at the World Blind Union General Assembly, Cape Town, South Africa, 8 December 2004

Accessible libraries - Libraries for the Blind Section/Libraries serving Disadvantaged People Section joint conference, 10-12 August 2005, Gothenburg, Sweden

## The Section at the WBU

During the WBU General Assembly to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, the Libraries for the Blind Section will be well represented. On Wednesday 8th December, the Section will present a two hour workshop based on the premise that:

In almost every aspect of professional and private lives, members of the WBU need access to information. Braille, large print and all forms of digital texts are the bridges to the knowledge that is essential in our lives.

Libraries play a large part in the provision of alternative format materials. The workshop aims to discuss the changing roles of libraries in the light of technological developments and changes in society.

The session “Think access – think libraries” will open with three short presentations from

- Johan Roos, South African Library for the Blind - Are libraries for the blind needed?
- Helen Brazier, National Library for the Blind (UK) - the UK experience of transforming relationships with mainstream libraries
- Birgitta Blokland of the Federatie Slechtzienden- en Blindenbelang (Netherlands) the production and provision of digital services to visually impaired readers from the standpoint of the users.

But the most important part of the workshop will be the chance for the WBU members, the users, to discuss what they need from libraries and other producers of accessible literature. The IFLA members present will ensure that the views of the WBU delegates are taken back and added to the policy development debate.

The new technologies are radically altering the services that can be offered by libraries. This will be a chance for the WBU delegates to influence the development of libraries that provide the services.

Throughout the week of the WBU Conference the Section will share exhibition space with the South African National Library for the Blind. In addition to demonstrating DAISY audio books there will be on line access to several digital library portals serving the needs of visually impaired readers.

## News from the FORCE Foundation

Vietnam: Ministry of Culture and Information Award for FORCE-Director Matthijs Balfoort

Mr. Matthijs Balfoort was awarded the 'Commemorative Medal for Cultural Services', the highest decoration conferred by the Ministry of Culture and Information. "The award is largely a result of the excellent work of the director and staff of the General Sciences Library in Ho Chi Minh City in their efforts to make the library accessible to print-handicapped readers", says Matthijs Balfoort.

Russia: St Petersburg Library Society presents the Ekaterina Romanov Dashkova award (Diploma 1st Class) to Richard Tucker of the FORCE Foundation. Laureates were selected in four nominations; Trustees, Maecenas, Publishers and Journalists. It was as Maecenas or sponsor that the support of FORCE was honoured. In receiving the award on behalf of FORCE, Evgenia Shepvalova Director of the St Petersburg State Library for the Blind, thanked the foundation for improving the quality of life for blind readers not only in St Petersburg but also across the Russian Federation.

## Satellite Meeting in Gothenburg, Sweden, August 2005

The Section in cooperation with IFLA Libraries Serving Disadvantaged

Persons and the Regional Library of Västra Götaland, Sweden, are planning a three day satellite meeting in Gothenburg under the theme of Accessible Libraries. The satellite meeting will take place before the IFLA WLIC in Oslo, August 2005.

The city of Gothenburg was chosen because of its close proximity to Norway. Also, Libraries in Västra Götaland have developed plans in making both Public and University Libraries accessible to vision and print impaired persons. They have also introduced a new library profession; Literacy Technician. Thirty individuals with varied work related dis-abilities have been trained by the Regional Library to assist other dis-abled users in accessing library resources. The Literacy Technicians are involved in marketing Library Services to these groups. Currently, Västra Götaland operates 23 literacy points in a range of localities.

The Gothenburg programme has not yet been finalised. The proposed programme is as follows:

**Day 1** August 10: Dedicated to the Swedish and the Norwegian policies on library access as well as presentations of Library Services in Västra Götaland.

**Day 2**, August 11: The programme will be aimed at the international digital library. Presentations will include; copyright and licensing, updates on the latest DAISY developments, accessible on-line catalogues etc.

**Day 3**, August 12: Buses will leave for visits to several libraries where you will meet Literacy Technicians.

Update information about the conference is available at [www.vgregion.se/ifla](http://www.vgregion.se/ifla), Registration will be open from the end of February 2005 at the above site.

## **News from the World:**

### **Microsoft Summit**

A summit of international leaders from agencies serving the reading needs of people with print disabilities was convened at Microsoft's corporate headquarters, in Redmond, Washington, USA, on 8-10 November 2004. The summit, called, "Libraries for the Blind and Print Disabled: Moving Toward a Digital Future," included representatives from IFLA, twenty nations, agencies working in developing countries, the international publishing community and international bodies including the United Nations and the World Health Organization.

Bill Gates shared his vision of empowerment for individuals with disabilities that limit or preclude their access to the printed page. He reaffirmed Microsoft's commitment to doing whatever it can to help libraries leverage new technology to convert their collections from analog to digital formats, to improve and accelerate distribution, and to provide better service to people who are blind or have print disabilities.

"Empowering people who are blind or otherwise visually impaired includes ensuring that our software incorporates a broad range of accessibility features and works well with screen readers and other

assistive technology devices," said Gates. "It also means working with libraries and publishers around the world to eliminate barriers that keep a lot of printed information beyond the reach of the visually impaired."

Forum participants made a joint commitment to work together to develop and implement a global accessible library. The library is intended to provide timely access to information, and will result in a worldwide collection of accessible reading materials.

"Imagine what it would be like if more than 95 percent of all print publications, from textbooks to popular novels to magazines and daily newspapers, were simply unavailable to you," said Gates. "For millions of people worldwide who are blind or have other print disabilities such as mobility impairments or learning disabilities that prevent them from using traditional printed materials, that limitation is a fact of life. It doesn't have to be that way."

Gates' partnership has particular meaning to the DAISY consortium, according to Stephen King, of the Royal National Institute of the Blind, and a member of the DAISY board of directors. "We now have a clear commitment to move DAISY standards into mainstream publishing," said King. "DAISY is a better way to read and a better way to publish. Together with Microsoft and the technology community, libraries can bring more material more quickly to blind and print disabled readers around the world."

## **Celianet - Celia Library's new library catalogue and a complementing Web service**

Celia Library for the Visually Impaired launched Celianet, the new library catalogue and Web service in the spring of 2004. The aim of the Celianet project was to develop an accessible OPAC and to provide Celia's patrons, both individuals and institutions, with an independent access to the library's collections.

Celianet can be used to search for books and other library materials. There are four different types of searches: basic and advanced search, new title search and "I'm feeling lucky" -search: the search will find a title from the topic of one's choice that is available and that one has not borrowed before. After logging in with a personal password patrons may - and this is where Celianet differs from most OPACs - place a request on a title directly in the database. The requested books are mailed to the patron the following working day. Patrons may also renew loans in case some other patron has not reserved the materials. In case the desired title is on loan, it can be reserved and it will be mailed to the patron as soon as it becomes available. Patrons may also browse their own loan records and reservations and their own personal information.

New features to be added to Celianet this fall include the following: patrons may modify their own search profiles, they may receive informa-

tion on new acquisitions by a certain author or on a certain topic of interest and they may receive e-mail notifications on overdue loans, among other things.

In a user survey conducted in September 2004 Celianet received positive feedback: patrons have found the service easy to use, and importantly, very accessible.

More information and access to Celianet: [http://www.celialib.fi/celianet\\_english.html](http://www.celialib.fi/celianet_english.html)

## **ScienceDirect improves accessibility for the visually impaired**

ScienceDirect is pleased to announce a milestone in the progress of its committed effort to improve the accessibility of the ScienceDirect platform for the visually impaired. Recent tests showed that the platform is very user-friendly and those involved with the tests are convinced it could make a serious contribution to advancing the educational and career opportunities of the visually impaired. ScienceDirect, who see these tests as just the first step, intends to continuously improve the platform for impaired users and wants to set the standard for other publishers in the future.

As a result of previous testing in October 2001, the ScienceDirect team dedicated itself to improve the accessibility of the platform, and tested the improvements made on

June 24<sup>th</sup> 2002. Studies took place at the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., and at the National Federation of the Blind in Baltimore, Maryland, US.

"The purpose of the testing was to yield greater information to help us develop ScienceDirect for users of assistive technology", says Niels Weertman, ScienceDirect Product Manager, Usability. "It is just one of the many studies planned as part of the continuing effort to improve the ScienceDirect platform and exceed user expectations."

Judith Dixon, Consumer Relations Officer at the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, who was instrumental in setting up the tests, says, "When it comes to accessibility for the blind, ScienceDirect is really in very good shape. I feel that the long-term support of these issues will advance the educational and career opportunities in areas where the blind had previously limited options".

Feedback from users in the test group was also positive. Robert Jaquiss, Treasurer of the National Federation of the Blind Science and Engineering Division, himself a user of assistive technologies, commented "ScienceDirect does appear to be a pretty accessible place and is certainly very user friendly - I was able to get done what I wanted to get done". Concurring with Judith Dixon's comments, Robert continued that "It would be a great thing to have

ScienceDirect here, to really demonstrate that blind people can improve their scientific research using this tool".

Frank Vrancken Peeters, Managing Director ScienceDirect, reinforced Elsevier's position, stating that, "We are committed to facilitating the use of ScienceDirect by visually and physically impaired users, and this is just the first step. Through further trial tests such as the ones carried out in Washington D.C. and Baltimore, we plan to continuously improve the site design and really set the standard for other publishers going forward".

Further testing of the next release of this functionality is planned for later in 2002. ScienceDirect will also roll-out testing in both Europe and Asia.

### **About ScienceDirect ([www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com))**

ScienceDirect, the world's largest provider of scientific, technical and medical information, is an open platform offering its subscribers desktop access to more than 2.5 million full-text articles. Coverage includes over 1,500 journals published by Elsevier Science, Academic Press and Harcourt Health Sciences and dynamic linking on ScienceDirect via CrossRef provides access to articles from over 120 leading STM publishers. An expanding suite of scientific full text journals and abstract databases in a rich linking environment provides subscribers with increasingly flexible and

extensive access to the world's published STM literature.

ScienceDirect is a division of Elsevier Science ([www.elsevier.com](http://www.elsevier.com)), and part of the Reed Elsevier plc group ([www.reed-elsevier.com](http://www.reed-elsevier.com)). Operating in the scientific, legal and business-to-business sectors, Reed Elsevier provides high value and flexible information solutions to users, with increasing emphasis on the Internet as a delivery method.

## **RFB&D names John Kelly as new President and CEO**

The Board of Directors at the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic has announced that John Kelly of Lawrenceville, NJ, will succeed the organization's President and CEO Richard O. Scribner upon his retirement, effective October 23. "We initiated a thorough and intensive nationwide search for a CEO to carry out our ambitious plans for growth and development," explained national board chairman Tom Trainor. "When it came down to the final decision, we agreed that one of our own staff, John Kelly, is the candidate whose experience, knowledge, proven leadership and devotion to our mission makes him the best possible individual to carry the mantle of President and CEO." Scribner, whose volunteer and executive leadership of the non-profit organization extends over 14 years, applauds the decision.

"Having built his career at RFB&D, John is intimately familiar with every

facet of this wonderful organization. He steps into this job with a deep understanding of the needs of those with print disabilities whom we seek to serve," said Scribner.

Kelly joined RFB&D in 1985 as manager of library services and earned a series of promotions based on his successful implementation of programs that significantly increased RFB&D's membership and its level of service among students of all ages with disabilities that make reading challenging or impossible. He was most recently named executive vice president of programs and services. "In his two decades of service and leadership at RFB&D, Kelly is credited with the initiation of programs and services that resulted in a six-fold increase in RFB&D's membership since 1989. John conceived and developed RFB&D's Educational Outreach program which is now in place in more than 7,000 schools across the country. In addition to greatly expanding RFB&D's profile among educators and its reach and effectiveness in classrooms across the nation, programs under Kelly's leadership are credited with generating successively higher levels of revenues through fees, sales and public funding.

Through his tenure, Kelly has significantly expanded RFB&D's network of partners among agencies and organizations serving people with print disabilities in education, the publishing industry and library services. This enhanced profile has enabled RFB&D to better serve its growing membership by preserving or advancing legislation and regulatory initiatives in arenas in-

cluding copyright and fair use, digital rights management and intellectual property protection.

A 1981 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Kelly holds a master's degree in library and information science from Drexel University.

He is a member of the American Library Association, the International Federation of Library Associations and the Special Library Association. Kelly resides in Lawrenceville, NJ, with his wife and two children.