

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

SECTION on READING *Newsletter*

No. 12 - July 2001

IN THIS ISSUE:

Looking Ahead: A Message from the Section Officers
Section on Reading Meetings and Programme
Call for Nominations
Preconference Meeting to Discuss Literacy Guidelines To Be Held in Boston on Friday, 17 August
Boston Programme Session To Focus on Reading Research
Aging and Verbal Creativity Is Topic of Poster Session at IFLA Conference In Boston
IFLA Journal Features Articles On Literacy From Jerusalem Programme
Russia-U.S. Reading Promotion Project Launched
Section on Reading Action Plan for 2000-2001
IFLA Section on Reading Objectives
Reading Research in the United Kingdom: A Report Abstract
Section on Reading Information Brochure
E-Mail Address for Standing Committee Members and Project Participants
IFLA and Section on Reading Contact Information

LOOKING AHEAD: A MESSAGE FROM THE SECTION OFFICERS

IFLA established its Section on Reading in 1995, bringing together its Round Table on Research in Reading and its Round Table on Children's Literature Documentation Centres. In 1995, the executive committees of the two merged Round Tables endorsed the new arrangement and expressed their hope that the new Section would have "close links with the actual planning of the Working Group on the eventual future Core Programme on Literacy." IFLA decided not to form a Core Programme on Literacy, and at the 1999 conference in Bangkok, the IFLA Professional Board turned the final report and recommendations of the IFLA Literacy Working Group over to the Section on Reading. Our first response was to sponsor two events at the 2000 IFLA conference in Jerusalem: a programme, "Literacy and Libraries: An Introduction," on 16 August, and a workshop, "Library-Based Programming to Promote Literacy," on 17 August. These programmes are described in the Section *Newsletter*, Dec. 2000, no. 11 (available on IFLANET) and the papers presented on 16 August recently were published in the spring 2001 issue (vol 27, no. 1) of the *IFLA Journal*.

The next Section on Reading literacy-based project is the development and distribution of guidelines for libraries to use in promoting literacy activities. This is a cooperative effort that will continue through the 2001 conference this summer in Boston. Literacy, however, is only one of the Section on Reading's interests, and for our Boston programme we are focusing on another topic: the state of research about reading around the world.

New Section on Reading Standing Committee officers (chair and secretary/treasurer) will be elected in Boston, and we wish to thank Standing Committee members and members of other IFLA Sections for their support during the past four years. We also repeat a familiar message. In order to be more effective, the Section on Reading needs more members, especially from Latin America and Africa. Please consider joining us in our important work of promoting reading, literacy, and research about reading and literacy in the digital age. See our brochure for details and a membership form.

You may also contact either of us or IFLA Headquarters, c/o Kelly Moore, IFLA Membership Manager, P.O. Box 95312, 2509 CH The Hague, Netherlands, fax: +31-70-3834827, e-mail: kelly.moore@ifla.org

John Y. Cole, Chair
Adele M. Fasick, Secretary-Treasurer

Section on Reading Meetings and Programme

Standing Committee Meeting I

Saturday, 18 August, 11:30 -14:20

Agenda

Approval of Agenda
Election of New Officers
Approval of Minutes from Standing Committee Meetings in Jerusalem (see *Newsletter* No. 11, pp. 2-3, 7)
Reports
Projects
Membership
Guidelines for Library-Based Literacy Projects
Programme in Boston
Action Plan for 2001-2002
Plans for Glasgow Conference in 2002
Planning for Berlin Conference in 2003

Programme Meeting

Monday, 20 August, 12:00-14:30

“Reading Research: An International Perspective” (see report abstract in this newsletter)

Standing Committee Meeting II

Friday, 24 August, 10:15-12:15

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The current Section on Reading Standing Committee officers, John Y. Cole and Adele Fasick, have each served two terms and will be stepping down at the Boston meeting. New officers will be elected as the first item of business at the first Standing Committee meeting on Saturday, 18 August. If you wish to make a nomination or to be considered for one of these offices, please contact the current chair.

PRECONFERENCE MEETING TO DISCUSS LITERACY GUIDELINES TO BE HELD IN BOSTON ON FRIDAY, 17 AUGUST

To conclude its project of developing guidelines for library-based literacy projects, the Section on Reading will hold a special preconference meeting from 08:30 to 12:30 at Simmons College in Boston. The meeting is open to all interested IFLA members and delegates. It will be held in Room C101 in the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science. Simmons College is located at 300, The Fenway, not far from the Convention Center and about a 15-minute walk from the Sheraton Hotel. The most recent draft of the guidelines, pulled together and edited by Section Secretary-Treasurer Adele Fasick, is mounted on the Section on Reading's Web site on IFLANET. Section members are encouraged to read the draft prior to the preconference meeting and bring suggestions for changes to the meeting. Suggestions for changes sent to Adele Fasick (preferably by e-mail to amfasick@earthlink.net) will be duplicated and made available at the preconference meeting.

BOSTON PROGRAMME SESSION TO FOCUS ON READING RESEARCH

The Section on Reading will sponsor one programme at the IFLA Boston conference: "Reading Research: An International Perspective," which will take place on Monday, 20 August from 12:00 to 14:30. Cosponsored with the International Reading Association, the meeting features Prof. Greg Brooks of the University of Sheffield, UK, who will present "Research About Reading: An Overview." His remarks will be followed by several brief presentations about the state of reading research around the world; the speakers will include Gertrude K. Mulindwa, former director, Botswana National Library Service and now a consultant in Uganda ("Reading Research in Africa"), Valeria Stelmakh, senior researcher, Russian State Library, Moscow ("Reading Research in Russia"), and Briony Train, University of Central England in Birmingham, UK ("Reading Research in the UK"—see report abstract in this newsletter). Other brief reports about reading research in other parts of the world will be presented by Section members and the programme will conclude with a question and answer session and discussion. This programme is presented to further the Section's goal of monitoring and promoting "the dissemination of knowledge and research about reading, literacy, readers, and library patrons." It is hoped that it also will stimulate interest in "Current Research in Literacy and Reading," an occasional feature in the Section's *Newsletter*.

AGING AND VERBAL CREATIVITY IS TOPIC OF POSTER SESSION AT IFLA CONFERENCE IN BOSTON

Reading Section member Ivar Haug has arranged a poster session that will be of particular interest to Section members and others interested in lifelong learning. The presenter, Odd Saetre of Flaktveitgeila, Norway, will describe a project funded by the county library of Hordaland, Norway, that encourages verbal creativity among elderly people. Several writing courses have been established and the more than 60 participants, ranging in age from 67 to 91, have produced hundreds of texts: poems, short stories, essays, articles, and orally told stories. Many of these are available on the Internet at the cultural site of Hordaland county. In addition to its practical benefits, the project has an academic and scientific purpose. The experiences and results from the work are being studied in relation to theories from the fields of pedagogy, philosophy, gerontology, and literature. The group behind the project wants to create a pedagogy of aging that emphasizes the opportunities and possibilities of aging.

Learn more about the Center for the Book's reading and literacy promotion activities at IFLA Boston at the Library of Congress booth #2232. Stop by and visit.

IFLA JOURNAL FEATURES ARTICLES ON LITERACY FROM JERUSALEM PROGRAMME

The two papers presented at the Section on Reading's programme in Jerusalem on 16 August 2000, "Literacy and Libraries: An Introduction," have been published in the latest (vol. 27, no. 2) issue of the *IFLA Journal*. They are: "Literacy, Libraries, and IFLA: Recent Developments and a Look at the Future," by John Y. Cole, and "Libraries and Literacy: A Preliminary Survey of the Literature," by Shirley A. Fitzgibbons."

RUSSIA-U.S. READING PROMOTION PROJECT LAUNCHED

A project developed during the 2000 IFLA conference in Jerusalem completed the first of its three phases in late April and early May, 2001. Developed through the initiative of Valeria Stelmakh, former chair of the IFLA Section on Reading, the project supports three visits—two to the United States, one to the Russian Federation-- of Russian and U.S. librarians interested in reading and library promotion. It is funded by the Open Society Institute in Moscow. The other principal partners are the Pushkin Library Megaproject and the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. The IFLA Section on Reading is a cooperative partner. The project's goals are to share information about effective reading promotion ideas and to encourage a better understanding of the importance of reading and libraries in a democratic society.

The first phase of the project began on 24 April when the Center for the Book welcomed a delegation of nine prominent Russian librarians, most of them regional library directors. On 25-26 April the visitors, escorted by Center for the Book director John Y. Cole, visited the Library of Virginia and the Virginia Center for the Book in Richmond, Virginia.

On 27 April they toured the District of Columbia Public Library, which also is the home of the District of Columbia Center for the Book. At the Library of Congress from 30 April 30-2 May, they participated in the center's annual "idea exchange" for its 42 affiliated state centers. They also met with James H. Billington, the Librarian of Congress and with the Library's Russian area specialists.

A second delegation of Russian regional librarians will visit the U.S. from 21-30 Oct. and in the spring of 2002, Mr. Cole will lead a group of American reading and library promoters on a trip to Russia.

The delegates were: Elena M. Alexandronets, Director, Central Library System, Kaliningrad; Nelli N. Belova, Director, Vologda Regional Library; Evguenia M. Kolesnikova, Director, Don State Public Library, Rostov-Don; Anastasia A. Kornienko, International Relations Department, All-Russia State Library of Foreign Literature, Moscow; Svetlana D. Malдова, Deputy Librarian, Tver Regional Library; Elena Sineva, Director, Murmansk Regional Library; Liudmila S. Spiridonoa, Deputy Director National Library of the Chuvash Republic; Valeria D. Stelmakh, Russian State Library, Moscow, Project Director; Olga S. Stepina, Director, Arkhangelsk Regional Library. Maria A. Vedenyapina, Executive Director, Pushkin Library Megaproject, and a member of the IFLA Section on Reading, accompanied the visitors.

Section on Reading Action Plan for 2000-2001

Goal 1. To assume a leadership role in outlining strategies for international campaigns that support reading development.

- Action 1.1 To work with national and international reading associations in organizing joint conferences and seminars on related issues, publishing relevant papers, conducting research, and promoting reading in different countries. Closer cooperation is planned with the International Reading Association and its International Development in Europe Committee and with the International Book Committee, a UNESCO advisory body.
- Action 1.2 To work with other organizations to publicize World Book Day (23 April) and International Literacy Day (8 September).
- Action 1.3 To work, through IFLANET and with links to other Web sites, to serve as a clearinghouse for information about literacy promotion and research projects and their organizational sponsors.

Goal 2. To monitor and promote the dissemination of knowledge and research about reading, literacy, readers, and library patrons

- Action 2.1 To publish the English and French versions of the proceedings of the June 1998 international conference, "Libraries, Reading, and Publishing in the Cold War," held in cooperation with the IFLA Round Table on Library History. The papers will be published in 2001 in the journal *Libraries and Culture* and soon thereafter as a monograph.
- Action 2.2 To continue a column in the Section on Reading *Newsletter* citing recent research in relevant areas of concern.
- Action 2.3 To make available the "Library-Based Literacy Programmes" workshop papers available.

Action 2.4 To present a programme session at IFLA in Boston in 2001 on "Reading Research Around the World."

Action 2.5 To issue a Call for Papers for the Boston reading research session

Goal 3. To promote among librarians, educators, and other cultural agents a better understanding of reading promotion, reading patterns, and literacy problems

Action 3.1 To organize at each annual IFLA conference an open session that discusses reading and literacy issues for all age groups.

Action 3.2 To participate with the IFLA Library History Round Table and IFLA National Library Section in the Library of Congress conference in the year 2000 on national library functions.

Goal 4. To explore various ways of promoting reading and literacy in specific cultural milieus.

Action 4.1 To hold a working session in Boston to develop guidelines for literacy programmes in libraries.

Action 4.2 To develop and publicize guidelines for literacy programmes in libraries.

Action 4.3 To publish the literacy guidelines in all of the IFLA languages.

Goal 5. To emphasize the role of reading in children's development and to outline various approaches and methods that have been used in different countries.

Action 5.1 To continue to cosponsor the IFLA-UNESCO "Books for All" library development project.

Action 5.2 To provide advice and publicity for the UNESCO-coordinated "Reading for All" international reading promotion project.

Action 5.3 To co-operate with the Section on Libraries Serving Children and Young Adults in their development of guidelines for services to young children.

Goal 6. To promote membership in the section in order to increase effectiveness.

Action 6.1 To cooperate with other IFLA units with similar interests.

Action 6.2 To translate the informational leaflet about the Section into all of IFLA's official languages.

Revised August 2000

IFLA SECTION ON READING OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To provide leadership, advice, and information regarding international campaigns that support reading development;
- ▶ To monitor and promote research about reading, literacy, readers, and library users;

- ▶ To encourage a better understanding of reading patterns and literacy problems through discussion, publications, and conferences
- ▶ To raise awareness of the importance of reading in children's development and sharing information about research and reading promotion activities regarding young people.

READING RESEARCH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM: A REPORT ABSTRACT

This brief overview of current trends in reading research in the United Kingdom has been contributed by Section on Reading member Briony Train, Research Fellow, University of Central England, Birmingham, UK. A more detailed report, containing more specific examples of ongoing research, will be presented at the programme on "Reading Research: An International Perspective," sponsored by the Section on Reading on 20 August from 12:00-14:30.

During the previous decade, a number of major changes occurred in British thinking about the teaching and development of reading and writing. The themes most widely debated that predominated research during this period were: 1) teaching methods in reading; 2) family literacy; and 3) the role of new technologies in reading.

In the United Kingdom today, there appear to be two major strands of research within the area of reading: literacy and reader development. The significant development of these two areas has taken place as a direct consequence of recent government initiatives. A significant proportion of government funds has been allocated both to raising literacy standards, via the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, and to promoting reading as a leisure activity, via the Public Libraries Challenge Fund.

Literacy

The National Literacy Strategy was implemented in England and Wales in 1998, a key focus of the Government's drive to raise standards in schools. Considerable research is ongoing in order to investigate the impact of this strategy on teachers' thinking and classroom practice, and to highlight examples of good practice in order to support future policy initiatives. Also in 1998, the National Year of Reading (1998-99) began, the aim of which was to support the Literacy Strategy in schools by involving the whole of society in a wide-reaching campaign to encourage and promote reading. The year was coordinated by the National Literacy Trust, an independent charity dedicated to building a literate nation." (<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk>) The Government supported the National Literacy Trust in developing the continuation of the National Year of Reading, the National Reading Campaign (NRC). The NRC acts as a channel through which details of successful initiatives throughout the U.K. are disseminated, with the eventual aim of achieving long-term, sustainable change.

Reader Development

Reader development, with adult readers in particular, has experienced a dramatic growth in recent years, yet definitions of the term are sometimes unclear. Van Riel (1998, *Creating the Readership for Literature in Translation*, presentation to international conference at University of East Anglia, British Centre for Literacy Translation) defines the term as "an active intervention to open up reading choices, increase readers' enjoyment and offer opportunities for people to share their reading experiences."

The increase in reader development activity means that public library authorities throughout the United Kingdom are now involved in a wide range of project-based promotional events and programmes. Arguably the most significant of these to date is Branching Out (<http://www.branching-out.net>), a three-year initiative (1998-2001) from the Society of Chief Librarians, funded by the Arts Council of England. Thirty-three local authorities plus the National Library for the Blind have been selected to take part in specially devised training to enable librarians to develop new methods of involving readers in contemporary literature. A key objective of the project is to raise the status of

reader development within and beyond all 150 authorities through a series of regional networks. The University of Central England (UCE) is conducting the evaluation of Branching Out, which focuses both on the impact on the readers and on the participating librarians. Over the last two years the growth of reader development activity has become sufficiently widespread that the Government, via its Department of Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) has allocated two years (2000-01, 2001-02) of its Public Libraries Challenge Fund (<http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk/dcms-wolfson.html>) specifically to reader development projects. All projects are being monitored by external evaluators, and research into the overall impact of the programme is being conducted by academic departments.

Research Methodologies

Both of these key areas of current reading research result in the collection of qualitative data. This is inevitable, as when investigating the value of reading it is critical that people's experiences and perceptions are used to measure the impact. However, it generally has been the case that policy makers placed a great reliance on quantitative as opposed to qualitative data, but there may be indications that they may now be more willing to use qualitative data in order to inform political decisions. Research conducted for programmes such as the National Year of Reading and Branching Out has provided many data with which to link reading to key initiatives on the government agenda, such as lifelong learning and social inclusion. Qualitative techniques used to collect these data would require further promotion in order to make explicit to policy makers the value and impact of reading.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES FOR STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

Rustem Aygistov, Russia	chamber@aha.ru
Alice Buglogosi, Kenya	uonjkml@healthnet.or.ke
John Y. Cole, USA	jcole@loc.gov
Gwynneth Evans, Canada	gwynneth.evans@nlc-bnc.ca
Adele M Fasick, USA	amfasick@earthlink.net
Shirley Fitzgibbons, USA	fitzgibb@indiana.edu
Ivar Haug, Norway	ivar@vf.fylkesbibl.no
Jan Martine, France	mjan@cg77.fr
Gertrude Mulindwa, Uganda	kayaga@hotmail.com
Valeria Stelmakh, Russia	stelmakh@rsl.ru
Catharina Stenberg, Sweden	catharina.stenberg@hb.se
Shirley Tastad, USA	stastad@gsu.edu
Briony Train, UK	briony.train@uce.ac.uk
Carmen Gómez Valera, Spain	bibloplain@utrnet.es
Maria Vedenyapina, Russia	mvedenyapina@osi.ru
Maureen White, USA	white@cl.uh.edu
Alec Williams, UK	alecw@lineone.net

The Section on Reading's information brochure will be available at the IFLA headquarters booth at the Boston conference. The brochure describes the Section's objectives, its recent and future activities and projects, and its publications. It also includes membership information. Additional copies are available from:

The Center for the Book, Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20540-4920 USA
Send e-mail request to: cfbook@loc.gov

IFLA AND SECTION ON READING CONTACT INFORMATION:

IFLA Headquarters
P.O.B. 95312
2509 CH The Hague, Netherlands
tel: +(31)(70)3140884
fax: +(31)(70)3834827

IFLA SECTION ON READING OFFICERS

Chair
John Y. Cole
Center for the Book
Library of Congress
101 Independence Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20540-4920
phone: 202-707-5221/ fax: 202-707-0269
e-mail: jcole@loc.gov

Secretary-Treasurer
Adele M. Fasick
1386-28th Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94122
phone/fax: 415-564-3096
e-mail: amfasick@earthlink.net

Visit the Section on IFLANET at: www.ifla.org/VII/s33/sr.htm