



23th of January 2005

Genealogy and Local History Section

Annual Report 2003-2004

Genealogy and Local History Section has now been a formal section since 2003, and we are confident that the section has its place in the IFLA institution, that we fill a gap supporting the interests of the many librarians working with these subjects in archives, libraries and museums. We are concerned with our cultural heritage that is situated in these three types of institutions, and we are also most concerned with the communication of the collections to the benefit of our users, in particular those dealing with genealogy and local history.

As in other years much of our energy has been concentrated on putting together an interesting Open Session at the IFLA Conference in Buenos Aires 2004.

The conferences provide our key opportunity of learning of new developments in library practice, of new methods of cataloguing, of new Internet resources and other innovative ways of communicating our collections to our potential users.

At the Berlin conference the Section theme for Buenos Aires was agreed: "Resources for Immigrant History: Their Origins, Lives, and Contributions." We succeeded in putting together an interesting program with very good speakers, as was made evident by the strong attendance. Furthermore, the Committee was most gratified to receive considerable praise from many of those in attendance for having put together a most stimulating program.

The papers presented can be seen at the IFLA homepage:

<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s37/index.htm>

In Buenos Aires, as before, we decided to arrange our own study tour. In the morning we visited the Immigrant Museum, which actually is situated on the spot where thousands of emigrants for the first time set foot on Argentine soil. It was an amazing experience to walk around in the rooms thinking of the destiny of all the people who passed through these surroundings.

In the afternoon we visited the State Archives and had a very interesting presentation on the archives and their holdings and cataloguing methods. In honour of our visit they had found an original sound recording of Eva Peron giving one of her speeches, history was hovering in the room.

Given that we did not have the opportunity to publicise the study tour in advance of the conference, we were pleased at the turnout. Around 20 people joined us from all over the world, with, among other countries, England, Wales, Scotland, the USA, Denmark, Russia, Korea, Sweden, Peru, Russia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Brazil, Argentina and Ireland.



During the conference the committee had a chance to meet to discuss our accomplished work and our future tasks. Before the meeting in Buenos Aires, we had arranged an e-mail conference during a weekend discussing our strategic plan and action plan.

With this valuable e-mail discussion beforehand, we succeeded in focusing on important points during our committee meetings and made some relevant and necessary changes to both the strategic plan and the action plans.

We have accomplished other things during the year apart from the conference work. Our leaflet of the section was translated into Spanish, Portuguese, French, Chinese and Russian,

Issue 4 of the Newsletter was published but the Section was sorry to lose the services of our worthy and long-time Newsletter Editor, Harriet Kasow. Our Chairman sent her a letter of appreciation for the sterling work she had accomplished.

At the Committee Meeting, Elizabeth Melrose of England offered to take over as Newsletter Editor assisted by Richard Huws of Wales. Issue 5 of the Section Newsletter was published in December 2004 and was distributed by Janice Macfarlane, the Section Treasurer.

We have undertaken a campaign to encourage section members to nominate new standing committee members.

We will complete a survey of Library Associations to identify who we might work with to promote genealogy and local history.

We are working with FAIFE to draft statement or position paper on data privacy issues that affect the services of genealogy and local history libraries librarians.

We are now in the middle of planning our Oslo conference Open Session and study tour. We are particularly pleased to be co-operating with our colleagues in the Geography and Map Libraries Section on the Open Session. Both Sections have much in common, and going together we have the possibility of having a longer Open Session with more speakers presenting papers. The theme of the Open Session in Oslo is:

“Navigating the World of Ancestors”

We have now sent out the Call for Papers and are starting to receive responses. Discussions are underway as to which institutions we want to visit for our study tour.

We are confident that we will have a good Open Session and an interesting study tour this year also.

We look forward to another year of valuable exchanges between colleagues around the world and to continued cooperation to the benefit of this area of growing interest in our libraries, archives and museums

January 2005

Ruth Hedegaard

Secretary of Genealogy and Local History Section