

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

The Information Point

(The Government Libraries Section Newsletter)

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Note from the Editor

This is the official newsletter of the Government Libraries Section of IFLA. It is published in December and June each year.

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Views expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily those of the Section Officers or the Editor.

Copy or feedback can be submitted to the Editor Patrick.Ryan893@mod.uk in plain ASCII text format, MS Word format or in the body of an email message. Accompanying photographs are welcome.

FEEDBACK

We welcome your feedback to the newsletter editor at Patrick.Ryan893@mod.uk

We would like to see more representation from all the continents and would welcome a volunteer from each continent to supply a continental update to the newsletter—if you are interested then please contact the Editor.

Acknowledgement: Amarjeet Birdi for design.



Chair's Column



Dear Government Librarians,

The Government Libraries Section had a very successful conference in Seoul, Korea. There were over 3,000 people from 124 countries in attendance. It's hard to estimate how many were from Government Libraries but our program was attended by over 160 people.

Korea is a truly beautiful country, very mountainous but with large agricultural fields full of flowers, fruits, and vegetables. Many IFLA attendees took the opportunity to travel around the country and visit cities, cultural sites, Buddhist temples, and the Demilitarized Zone. IFLA helped introduce attendees to Korean Culture with many programs of Korean music, singing, and dance both traditional and modern. The conference was held at the gigantic COEX center in southern Seoul. It was huge and one of the few complaints about the conference was how far people had to walk to get from meeting to meeting.

There were several real highlights to the conference. One was the opening general session where Dr. Dae-Jung Kim, the former President of the Republic of Korea and a Nobel Peace Prize winner in 2000 spoke. The audience also became tearful at the inaugural singing of *Guiding Our Dreams, the Theme Song of IFLA WLIC 2006 Seoul*. Sung by two Korean pop singers with a full orchestra backup, the song says in part:

*Who can lead the way to the light
Guiding the world to a brighter day*

Who can show the way to our dreams

Helping to explore the meaning of life

You are a shining light, beaming brightly on our path

Libraries, of course, can lead the way. Korea and IFLA are to be commended for the multitude of programs provided by divisions and sections; and for the exposure to the magnificent culture of Korea. Now we look forward to our exciting program in Durban.

The Government Libraries Section had a number of activities at the conference. First, we had a very interesting program on: *Customer Needs: The Engines of Change for Government Libraries and Information Centers*. We had three excellent speakers and the program was very well received. Juliana Hye, Director of the Public Service Division of the Supreme Court Library, hosted a tour of her library. For more about the tour of the Supreme Court Library, please see Rebecca Davies' article in this issue.



At the Government Libraries Section Standing Committee meeting, the group agreed the

following:

- The Government Libraries Program in Durban on *Government Libraries: Approaches to multi-lingual collections and service*. *The Call for Papers is now on the IFLA GL Section website [http://www.ifla.org/VII/s4/index.htm]*
- The Guidelines Committee renamed the Guidelines: *Guidelines for Libraries of Government Departments*. Authors of the chapters are now writing toward a deadline of 1 January 2007. (See elsewhere in this newsletter for a sample chapter).
- There will be a mid-term meeting in Cardiff, Wales. The conference

theme is: *Government Libraries: Creating Impact from Information*. Speakers are still being lined up but we know that the keynote speaker on Saturday will be Claudia Lux, incoming President of IFLA, on her Presidential theme on advocacy: *Libraries at the Table*

In other IFLA happenings, there was a report on a possible reorganisation of the IFLA structure to provide more streamlining. Smaller sections are encouraged to merge to ensure future viability. The Government Libraries Section seems to have enough members but needs more people on our Standing Committee. We would like at least 10 and can have as many as 22. The deadline for submission of nominations is February 7 and that date is final. Nominations must arrive at the IFLA headquarters by then.

There is a Working Committee to discuss the possible reorganisation of IFLA. The Working Committee's charge is: The Committee will make recommendations regarding:

- the elimination and/or combination of existing sections
- the role, number and constitution of divisions
- the relationship between IFLA's core activities and sections
- the size of Standing Committees
- the minimum number of members required for each section
- the role and rules surrounding Special Interest Groups/Discussions Groups
- the role of the Professional Committee within the larger IFLA governance structure, and
- any other matters that affect the future professional structure of the organization

A draft of the IFLA Strategic Plan was also distributed in Seoul in all the official languages. Many comments were made and the document was revised for final

approval at the December IFLA Governing Board meeting. It includes strategic objectives under the three IFLA pillars: Professional, Society, and Members. Under Professional, strategic objectives deal with helping member libraries through developing guidelines and standards, providing continuing education, and helping library associations develop. Under Society, strategic objectives deal with advocacy and impacting international information policy. Under Members, strategic objectives deal with communication, forums for networking, managing the organisation, financial support, and examining IFLA's structure.

Next summer in Durban, South Africa, we will have elections for the Chair and Secretary/Treasurer of our Section. If you would like to be considered for one of these positions, you need to first be sure you are nominated and become a member of the committee and then let me know if you would like to hold an office. I will be leaving the Section both as Chair and as a member since my second four year term will be completed.

Nancy Bolt



Highlight report from IFLA 2006:

- A personal view of Conference
- Visiting the Supreme Court Library of Korea: a wonderful welcome!



The Conference Venue

The 2006 IFLA Conference at Seoul attracted some 3,000 librarians, scholars and information technology experts from 124 countries. It was held in the impressive COEX Exhibition and Conference Centre which, though massive in size, retained a human scale with easy access to each conference venue. An added bonus was the shopping mall beneath, home to thousands; shopping, eating and drinking.

The Conference

There was a particularly high quality of conference papers this year. The variety and coverage of the sessions was also remarkable. My own particular interest is in web services, and library and information services. But, I am interested in other services, concepts and ideas and a good conference, such as this, will allow diverse threads to pattern a picture for me, awaken me to new areas of thought, synergies and how I might use ideas in other fields for innovation in my own area. The topics presented touched on such issues as web accessibility standards, digital repositories, document delivery, management of library associations, copyright and legal matters, library and research services for parliaments with government information and official publications, knowledge management, and

acquisition and collection development. Something for everyone.

Conference Content

The full conference papers can be read at <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla72/Programme2006.htm>. Below are some highlights for me and some observations arising from attendance at different sessions.

The session on the world digital library project opened my eyes to what a truly international movement libraries and librarianship are. And, if like me, you work for an organisation with an international interest the sessions as the week went on opened my eyes to the volume of international information that exists. Also, in my case that of information architecture, governance, selection of material and the inevitable funding issue.

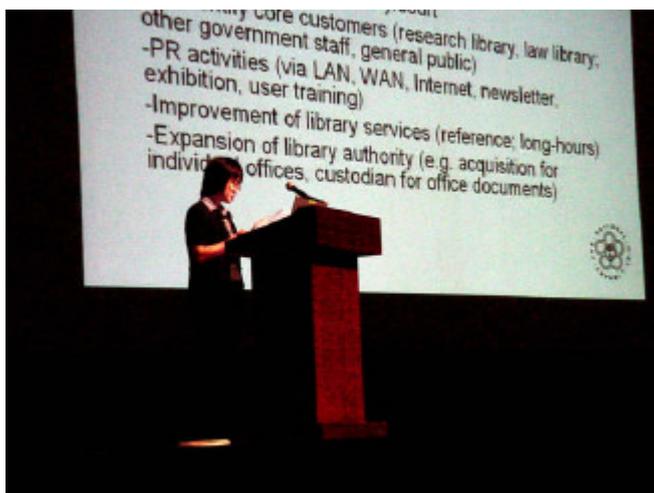
The Government Libraries section this year, co-sponsored with Social Science Libraries, concentrated on the topic of



Paula Ochoa giving her presentation at the conference (Government Library Section)

meeting customer needs, determining and ensuring quality. Speakers from Britain and Japan shared their experience and again I was impressed by the common desire and the drive of the profession to give quality. For me there was a useful

definition of value – ‘the difference between expected and perceived service’. As a profession we can sometimes make things too hard for ourselves and it was useful to be reminded of a simple approach. On evaluating a service ask a simple question, ‘If you didn’t see this what would the consequences be’ or ‘in which area does this support your line of work?’ Also striking, as a general



Mika Lawler giving her presentation at the conference (Government Library Section)

conference point, was that aside from English being the most used common language in delivery there was a will to understand not only accents but also national differences and nuances. At times, there was an element of the United Nations about the conference, which was an indication of how people with a common purpose can work together. Attendance inevitably makes a participant more tolerant and receptive to other nationalities. And this perspective, for me, underlines the potential for international conferences such as IFLA to have an input into international development in the information field in such areas as world poverty, overseas aid and the environment.

Speaking of politics, the FAIFE debate (IFLA Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression) centred on the Danish newspaper’s publication of political cartoons. For me, what was interesting were not the rights or wrongs of publication but the ability to

discuss matters in open forum which is the very essence of democracy and free-thinking. Given the representation of countries in the room the IFLA approach is illustrative of free and open discussion and how it can be conducted without causing offence in a cross-cultural environment. This is almost a subliminal approach to true globalisation and free speech. Again, in the times we live in, it is a matter of perspective.

Sessions on copyright and legal issues focused on the Google Book Project and its implications e.g. is the hard copy book dead? Does Google now own access to everything to the detriment of free and open access? Another subject in this section focused on ‘The Korean – USA Free Trade Agreement’. Not something which I have ever given any care or consideration to and yet the perspective was fascinating. The speaker turned to the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) deficit of a loss to Korea of billions of dollars over 25 years. He emphasised the value and cost of information, and that emerging nations were being charged a premium for information. Unrecognized by the western world – this was not an accusation, more an awakening that what was legitimate to the western perspective could be an impediment to development from another perspective. I was later able to place this approach in context when an African speaker attributed much of the poverty in Africa to lack of information. There can be some discussion about this and the other factors involved, but it has to be accepted that the ‘selling’ of information may not help a poorer nation particularly when the relative cost of a book (information) in a developing nation is so much more expensive in relative terms than it is to the US or Europe. And in paying for the information it does use, from an African perspective, the speaker made the point it can be said that the developed world still ‘extracts rather than gives’. Interestingly, this may not be an underdeveloped nation’s approach solely, a New Zealand speaker referred to the ‘colonisation of the intellectual output of our nation unless

we make it ours via digital institutional repositories’.

A conference in the declining hours can tail off but at IFLA some of the most instructive sessions, for me, came on the final day. An exposition on the lack of peer review of journal publications in a continent (not Africa) gave a picture of uncontrolled publishing, leading to a decline in quality information output and the subsequent eagerness of professionals to publish overseas. This in turn was driving down the value of journal publishing. Such a scenario could almost lead to an information meltdown increasing the reliance on overseas information. For me, this is not a dissimilar scenario to an uncared for intranet or internet site. It is by listening and deriving such analogies that we make our experience richer but also enables us to understand the value of what we do and why we do it. And, when someone questions the value of information professionals in an information rich culture we should think of the African perspective on their thirst for information and the cost of it to them.

The Conference Exhibition

If I never have time to take time out to visit exhibitions I had no alternative here. I could not ignore an exhibition within such proximity to the conference venue. Presumably it’s what exhibitors treasure; a captive audience.

For me, the exhibition gave the opportunity to learn what is new and remember /refresh on what I had forgotten. The exhibition, the right size and supplemented with industry updates met the requirement. It reminded me of the sources of information, of my love of finding out, finding where to go and why I became a librarian in the first place.

Conclusion

Being there allows time for reflection, gives you anecdotal asides which you

don’t get on a bare reading of the papers, and an international perspective in another country where you are out of your comfort zone. From a working day perspective it allowed me to mull over ideas. For example, since listening to the sessions on institutional repositories I have reassessed my approach to e-publications in my own organisation. And, it is by attendance at such events and constant development training that we can evolve as professionals.



Visiting the Supreme Court: Rebecca Davies

During the weeks leading up to IFLA I’d started to consider which of the library tours would be the best for me to attend. In our library at the Welsh Assembly Government we deliver services to over 60 lawyers and the visit to the Supreme Court Library seemed likely to offer the chance to see how a truly world class service operated. Now, reflecting on my visit, those of use who went really experienced all this and more; a uniquely Korean warm welcome, the opportunity to



Lunch at the Supreme Court

share knowledge and experience and importantly a chance to gather our thoughts outside of the bustle of the IFLA conference venue!

On Wednesday 23rd August a truly international group of librarians including

librarians from the USA, UK, Malaysia, China, Russia and the Netherlands gathered for the short bus ride to the Supreme Court. On the trip to the Supreme Court a member of the Library team gave us a commentary on the route we were taking and a run through of the



Lunch at the Supreme Court

agenda for the visit. On our arrival we were welcomed by the President of the Supreme Court Library Yu Won-Gyu and Juliana, one of the Committee members of the IFLA Government Libraries Group and some of the library staff. The foyer was decorated with beautiful scrolls, in honour of our visit and Juliana took us up to a room for a presentations and starting point for the tour of the library. The presentations gave us an insight into the history and current functions of the Supreme Court giving a context to the work of the library. The library service presentation and views of the digital library work were impressive, in particular the care and foresight taken to developing cutting edge electronic services for their physical and virtual users – often in more than one language!

Touring the library I was eager to see how the different language collections were stored and enquiry services laid out. The library is very attractive, and the use of art work brings Korean culture into the library spaces encouraging a calm and contemplative atmosphere.

The Supreme Court also houses the Exhibition Hall of Judicial History and a member of the publicity team gave us an interesting run through the historical materials held on display, a fascinating insight into the judicial history of our host nation. The tour also included a visit into the court area itself and many of us took the opportunity to take some photographs of the court.

We ended our visit with a chance to interact with more of the libraries' staff, and we all enjoyed the opportunity to observe the traditional print demonstration from an exceptional Korean artist. Personally I appreciated the chance to learn from the staff more about Korean food and importantly on the use of chopsticks!

Visiting the library was one of the highlights of my experiences of IFLA this year, and on my return I have circulated to staff the booklet on the library services for them to experience (and see what we could learn!) and the beautiful book of the scrolls made by the staff of the Supreme Court Library.

If you're interested in recreating our visit or finding out more about the library <http://library.scourt.go.kr/jsp/index.html> for their English Language web pages – you won't be disappointed!

Wednesday 23 August, Thursday 24 August, 09.00-14.00

The library is situated inside the official building of the Supreme Court of Korea in Seoul. As the main library of the judiciary of Korea, the Supreme Court Library conducts the libraries of all levels of courts in the country. Overall, the court library system contains about 1,280,000 various law-related books, among which, the Supreme Court Library holds the collection of about 238,000 volumes, both domestic and foreign. Since 1996, to support an integrated search for cases, legal documents and laws, the library is

building the "Legal Information Databases (the Law World)", which is accessible by internal users like judges as well as the general public. Currently, the library is pressing forward projects related to providing various legal information, including Supreme Court Decisions Report, Collection of Supreme Court Decisions, the English edition of "Collection of Supreme Court Decisions," and Commentaries on Supreme Court Decisions etc.



Report of the Guidelines Committee

**From Nancy Bolt, Chair of the
Government Libraries Section.**

**Our Section has been working on
Guidelines for Libraries of
Government Departments for the
last two years. We are close to a
first draft and this will be
presented at the Government
Libraries mid-term meeting in
Wales in April. To wet the
reader's appetite, here is the first
chapter of the guidelines. We
hope you find your own library
here. If not, please let me know
at nancybolt@earthlink.net**

Types of Libraries of Government Departments

0. Introduction

A government's duties usually include passing laws and its implementation, defense and essential services like health, education, social, cultural, economic, and political as well as trade and relations with other countries.

Government's role includes the passing of laws and their implementation, and the provision of defence and security, health, education, social care, cultural support, management of the economy, trade and relations with other countries.

The tasks of any government can be grouped into categories. These categories are branches of government for different works and mainly divided in the following:

- A. The Legislative:** such as Parliaments / Congress, etc for making laws;
- B. The Executive:** Ministries / Departments which are responsible for implementation of Laws;
- C. The Judiciary:** Legal branch to make sure that laws are enforced.

The functions of government can be grouped into the same three categories:

- A The Legislature: Parliaments, Congresses, etc, which make laws
- B The Executive: Ministries / Departments, etc, which are responsible for the implementation of law and policy
- C The Judiciary: Legal Branch which ensures the enforcement of law

These guidelines relate primarily to B and C, though they may also have some relevance to A.

1. Principles

Government has a range of different departments and organisations to carry out their functions, and each of these should have a library to support the needs of their parent body. These libraries have a key role to play in their organisations and should be at their core. They may also have an important role to play in a country's national information structure.

2. Role of Government Libraries

The primary function of government libraries is to serve government at different levels by making available all kinds of information published by government and non-government bodies and individuals. Their clientele are elected representatives, ministers, administrators, scientists and other specialists, researchers, and in some cases the general public. The number of libraries may be considerable, and they can differ widely in size and scope. They support the basic functions of their parent bodies such as (1) the formulation of programmes and policies, (2) administrative and regulatory actions, (3) advisory functions, and (4) research programmes.

3. Types of Government Libraries

The three types of government libraries may be further subdivided as follows:

A. Libraries of the Legislature:

i) Parliamentary Libraries: These are established to support members of the Legislature / Parliament and their officers and staff at national level and are usually for their exclusive use.

ii) State Legislature / Assembly Libraries: In some countries there are state or regional legislatures, and each of these will have a library to support members of the legislature or assembly and their officers and staff.

B. Libraries of the Executive: The executive arm of government consists of a number of ministries and other bodies, which are responsible for the administration of government policy. If policies

require decentralisation, several different departments, attached or subordinate offices, autonomous organisations, statutory bodies, public sector undertakings/ agencies and projects may be created.

i) Ministry / Departmental Libraries:

Libraries: These have developed mainly to serve the needs of the decision makers, administrators, and other employees of their respective departments and ministries. They collect government and other information relevant to the needs of their parent body. As important collections within their subject field they may also be available to researchers.

ii) Libraries of Government Agencies / Organisations / Projects:

Libraries: These Libraries work mainly to meet the needs of the decision makers, administrators and other employees of the government agency. These agencies are government-funded and usually autonomous but come under the control of government or a specific department or ministry.

iii) Diplomatic Mission / Embassy Libraries:

Libraries: These Libraries are established in the embassies or diplomatic missions of a country with the primary aim of assisting the diplomats, embassy officers and other employees. They may also have a role in promoting their country's trade, cultural and other interests and act as an information on their country to the local public.

iv) State, Regional and Local Government Libraries:

Libraries: These libraries serve government at various sub-national levels, supporting elected representatives, administrators and other employees. They may act as repositories for all the published materials of their parent body. They may also act as

a public library for the local population.

v) **National Libraries:** The National Library sector can be divided into two types. The first, the National Library, is the depository for the printed cultural heritage of the country, and normally holds all its published material. The second consists of subject-specific libraries like a National Science Library, National Agriculture Library, National Medical Library, etc.

C. Libraries of the Judiciary:

i) **Supreme Court Libraries:** The Supreme Court is the highest legal authority in a country. Its library serves the judiciary, officers and staff of the court, and it is extensively used for reference and as a repository of legal information

ii) **Other judicial libraries:** High Courts and the lower courts will have their own libraries to assist the judges, officers and staff of the court. These libraries will vary considerably in size

multi-lingual collections and service

Proposals should focus on one or more of the following topics: How libraries with multiple official languages or multiple languages that are in use in a country:

- Plan and deliver services
- Develop and acquire collections
- Develop multi-lingual websites
- Develop policies about service and collection development
- Other aspects of services to multi-lingual populations

IMPORTANT DATES

Please e-mail abstracts (maximum 500 words) by 1 FEBRUARY, 2007 to: Nancy Bolt, Standing Committee Chair
nancybolt@earthlink.net

Accompanied with the following;

Abstract
Names of presenter(s)
Position or title of presenter (s)
Employer or affiliated institution
Mailing address
Telephone/fax numbers
E-mail address
Short biographical statement and resume
Notifications of abstracts acceptance will be issued by **1 MARCH, 2006**
The deadline for submission of full papers is **1 MAY, 2007.**



**Looking Forward to
South Africa: Durban
2007**

CALL FOR PAPERS

GOVERNMENT LIBRARIES SECTION

The IFLA [Government Libraries Section](#) in co-operation with the Library Services to Multicultural Populations Section invites Library and Information Science professionals to submit paper proposals.

Theme:

Government Libraries: Approaches to

IMPORTANT NOTES

You can expect to speak for about 15- 20 minutes. We ask that you not *read* your paper at the presentation but rather prepare a power point or other more informal presentation.

Regrettably, **no financial support can be provided. If you know you will not be funded to come to Durban, South Africa, please do not submit an abstract.** We can issue a special invitation to authors of accepted papers. Abstracts and papers must be submitted in one of the official IFLA languages (English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish).



Government Libraries: Creating Impact from Information

The Government Libraries sponsored Mid-Term Conference in Wales, 2007

*Government Libraries: Creating Impact
from Information*

Building on the success of the pre-IFLA mid-term conference in Stockholm 2005 we are pleased to announce the 2007 mid-term conference in Wales, April 19th-21st. The conference will focus on the impact of government libraries, and in particular on the new draft *Guidelines for Government Libraries* which will form the major part of the discussions on Friday 20th April.

Provisional programme:

Thursday 19th April at the Welsh Assembly Government in Cardiff:

14.00 - 17.00 talks on the impact of government libraries & greeting from Permanent Secretary, Welsh Assembly Government, with a Welsh "high tea" in the afternoon.

In the evening we will visit the new Assembly "Senedd" (http://www.architecture.com/go/Architecture/Also/Awards_5426.html) and there will be a chance to have some food in a traditional pub in Cardiff Bay.

Friday 20th

We will visit the National Library for Wales (<http://www.nlw.org.uk>) via coach from Cardiff and hold our day's talks there. We will be focusing on the guidelines.

The bus will stop on the way back for fish & chips (weather depending - by the sea!)

Sat 21st

Claudia Lux, IFLA President Elect will be talking and we will have a tour of European Documentation Centre/South

Wales Europe Direct Information Centre (SWEDIC) of the University of Wales, Cardiff.

BOOKINGS

As at the Stockholm conference there is no conference fee, **but individuals will have to purchase their own evening meals / arrange & pay for their accommodation/breakfast.**

Jessica Williams in the Assembly Library and Publications Service will send all individuals who express an interest advice on the closest hotels and an idea of the costs of evening meals etc. and a more formal booking form/agenda closer to the date. If you would like to express an interest in attending then please email Jessica on:

jessica.williams@wales.gsi.gov.uk

There is a registration form on the Government Libraries Section website for the conference and the URL is:

http://www.ifla.org/VII/s4/conf/Booking_Form_Wales.pdf

Croeso i Gymru / Welcome to Wales!