



Metropolitan Libraries Section of IFLA (formerly INTAMEL – the International Association of Metropolitan Libraries – a Round Table of IFLA)

Officers' report, 2003-2004 – a transitional year

Following the decision at last year's Business Meeting to apply to become a formal Section of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), our President Frans Meijer sent a formal application to IFLA HQ in November 2003. The application was approved in December by the IFLA Professional Committee, subject to adoption of the name Metropolitan Libraries Section.

Frans Meijer, Aline Girard-Billon and Stuart Brewer met in Lyon in December 2003, and again in Rotterdam on 5 March 2004, to discuss current issues and future plans. The latter meeting was also attended by Sjoerd Koopman, IFLA's Coordinator of Professional Activities, who assisted our discussions on the transition process for INTAMEL in becoming a Section of IFLA.

Frans, Aline and Stuart also met in Paris on 25 June and had further discussion on a number of issues, e.g. IFLA procedures, membership, the Section's open sessions at the forthcoming IFLA conferences in Buenos Aires and Oslo, the Section's annual conferences ('mid-term meetings') over the next few years, IFLA procedures, membership, finance, etc.

In July, Stuart Brewer travelled to Riga to assist with the planning for the Section's conference there in 2005 (September 11-16). The provisional theme is Lifelong Learning and Metropolitan Libraries, and there will be a reduced conference fee for members of the Section.

Acting as an interim Standing Committee for the Section, the four officers held two meetings during the IFLA Buenos Aires 2005 Conference, with the helpful participation also of Claudia Lux (Berlin), Liv Saeteren (Oslo) and Davorka Bastic (Zagreb). Over the next few months, a formal Standing Committee will be established as part of the election process for all Section Standing Committees, organised by IFLA HQ.

The Metropolitan Libraries Section, alongside seven other Sections, is part of IFLA Division III, the Division of Libraries Serving the General Public. The Section is therefore entitled to seats on the Coordinating Board (CB) of

Division III, and Aline Girard-Billon and Stuart Brewer attended the two meetings of the CB during the recent IFLA Buenos Aires conference.

As part of the Conference programme in Buenos Aires, the Section held an open session, attended by over sixty people, with the title 'Metropolitan libraries: engines for learning'. The speakers were Marta Clari i Padrós (Biblioteques de Barcelona, Spain): 'Culture and education in public libraries – cultural policy in the libraries of Barcelona'; Liv Saeteren (Deichmanske Bibliotek, Oslo Public Library, Norway): 'New digital services'; TAY Ai Cheng (National Library Board, Singapore): 'Teens @ Jurong Regional Library – a case study'; and Nora Luaces (Mariano Moreno Public Library and Cultural Complex, Bernal, Buenos Aires Province (Argentina): 'Culture and education in public libraries – an experiment in Argentina through the Mariano Moreno Public Library and Cultural Association'.

Planning is now being done for the Section's open session at the IFLA Oslo Conference 2005 (14-18 August). The provisional title is 'Managing Metropolitan Library Networks', and again we envisage that there will be four papers.

INTLIB continues to be an invaluable way of sending relevant news and information to members and to other interested colleagues, complemented by the Section's web pages at <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s46/metro.htm> – both services are hosted free of charge on IFLANET and are supported by the collaboration of the IFLA Web Manager. The IFLA list, IFLA-L (with c.1300 subscribers), is also used to disseminate information about the Metropolitan Libraries Section.

An article on the 'New Metropolitan Libraries Section' was published in the News section of IFLA Journal, 30 (2004) 2, p179-181.

In the autumn of 2003, Wiebke Andresen, the recently retired Director of Hanover City Library, made a generous donation to be used for scholarships, i.e. grants to provide the opportunities to take part in INTAMEL conferences for colleagues who otherwise would not have the resources to attend.

Hannover City Library, under its new Director, Carola Schelle-Wolff is progressing with the collation of annual library statistics for 2003; the questionnaire for 2003 has recently been posted on INTLIB, and the questionnaire for 2004 is ready for posting early in 2005. We thank Hannover for its hard work.

A manual of guidelines for organising the annual conference, for the guidance of host cities and potential host cities, is being prepared by Stuart Brewer in tandem with the current preparations for the conferences in Singapore, Riga and Paris.

Frans MEIJER, Aline GIRARD-BILLON, Ai Cheng TAY, Stuart BREWER
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