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2000 CONFERENCE REVIEWED

ST. LOUIS

The INTAMEL 2000 Conference, 17-22 September, based on the neighbouring host libraries of St. Louis County Library and St. Louis Public Library, Missouri, attracted library directors from 20 cities and metropolitan areas in 12 countries, including Amman, Brasov, Budapest, Minsk and Singapore. Two of these were financially supported by INTAMEL's scholarships. In total there were 40 attendees, half of whom moved on

for the optional weekend programme in New Orleans.

Congratulations to Dan Wilson and Glen Holt for organising a splendid conference, and thanks to the hardworking staff of all three library systems and to the many other individuals and organisations whose dedication and hospitality helped to make it yet another memorable INTAMEL event.

The region of St. Louis, with a population of 2,520,000 over 6,397 square miles, is served by a network of several public library systems. St. Louis County Library (SLCL) is the largest circulating library in the State of Missouri, while St. Louis Public Library (SLPL) has one of the finest archival collections in the US. Jefferson and St. Charles counties have separate library systems and, in the State of Illinois across the Mississippi River, the Lewis and Clark Regional Library System supports township libraries in Madison and St. Clair counties.

Of the 85 municipalities within St. Louis County, nine maintain public libraries independent of SLCL which, with 19 branches and a large fleet of mobiles, serves a population of 843,000 while SLPL, with 16 libraries, serves 334,000 residents in a city which has suffered massive population loss over the last 20 years.

A wide variety of topics were raised through papers and presentations from several delegates and host colleagues. Delegates also enjoyed



Hosting the farewell reception – (from left) Leslie Holt, Glen Holt and Board President Erwin O. Switzer III, St. Louis Public Library, with Dan Wilson, St. Louis County Library

talks by the Missouri and Illinois State Librarians, Sara Parker and Jean Wilkins, who outlined the vision and programs of their respective services.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

The Political Process

From Toledo-Lucas, Ohio, Clyde Scoles discussed public libraries and the political process, referring not to partisan politics but to the more generic art of influencing government policy. "Whether we work in large or small libraries, we are all part of the political environment of funding issues, governance issues, personnel limitations and press relations. We operate in a world of challenging constraints and relationships . . . [which] can be managed productively."

Clyde suggested that role definition and the communication of adequate and appropriate information are important factors in the development and maintenance of a productive working relationship with a board or other governing body. Many of the problems that arise between directors and boards may be the result of a confusion of

roles. "Vision, courage, stamina and the ability to communicate are essential in the political process" was the conclusion: "Working with trustees, elected officials, the press and so many others in our communities is simply to find a shared path to the public good."

Family Literacy Program

Leslie Holt (SLPL) described Project REAL (Read and Learn), a two-year program funded by the US Department of Education. The goal was to develop a public library-based family literacy program to serve people at risk of not acquiring effective literacy skills. Activities included:

- homework helpers – two workers for 15 hours per week at each library location to provide after-school and Saturday help for kids doing homework or using library computers;
- volunteers – teens and adults helped with special programs and storytelling/reading to children;
- research families – 150 families who agreed to be part of in-depth research and who received special invitations to library programs;

Continued on page 2



2001 CONFERENCE AMMAN Jordan

- Please note the change from Paris, the previously announced site.
- Conference dates will be announced shortly by Mohammad Subeihi, Director, Department of Public Libraries, Greater Amman Municipality.

FUTURE CONFERENCES

- 2002 Stockholm, Sweden
- 2003 Singapore
- 2004 Brasov/Bucharest, Romania

CONFERENCE REVIEW continued

- parent training – workshops and events that helped parents to be able to read with their children, help with homework and support learning at home;
- teacher training – workshops to help primary grade teachers, administrators and school staff to encourage reading, provide appropriate reading materials and work with parents;
- preschool caregivers training – workshops to help preschool workers to encourage reading and work with parents;
- home reading kit – items that encouraged families to read and to use the library on a regular basis;
- special family programs – events and activities for families to do together, to encourage and improve home reading;
- school and preschool visits, delivering deposit collections, storytelling and reading activities to schools and preschools;
- collection improvement – using a grant from the Danforth Foundation to enlarge toy collection and develop book boxes (topical learning kits);
- publicizing library services to at-risk families and to recruit users for Project REAL, through targeted mailing lists, prizes and giveaways, radio spots and bus boards;
- setting standards of service for SLPL, finding better ways to offer services, set priorities and goals and change ways of doing things;
- research and dissemination – publishing results and making presentations at reading, early education and library conferences.

Project REAL findings were:

- of parents, 100% valued the library's services, 83% valued

reading and read to their children on a regular basis, and 95% had library cards and stayed active library users for two years;

- of teachers, 84% actively used Project REAL materials three or more times a week, 66% reported children used the materials for more than 30 minutes a week, 80% reported children became better readers because of Project REAL, 75% reported children enjoyed reading more, and 83% reported that Project REAL improved their teaching;
- of preschool/care providers, 82% reported enhanced learning in their classroom, and 77% reported that children read or looked at books more often and enjoyed reading more because of Project REAL.

Adaptation and Renewal

Frans Meijer (Rotterdam) updated colleagues on Transformation 2000+, a continuous process of adaptation and renewal involving a strategic investment in:

- restyling and redesigning the layout of the Central Library and branch libraries;
- training of staff to effect a change of culture;
- ICT infrastructure;
- marketing through research into customers' needs, enquiry profiles, and target group policy.

The objectives are to:

- improve public accessibility (physical, and psychological in terms of image);
- enable the public to cope for themselves and to promote a self-service concept;
- strengthen the library's information, cultural and educational functions;



Missouri State Librarian Sara Parker greets Falah Al-Emoush, Greater Amman Municipality

- concentrate on core business and to outsource other functions;
- modernise the library's image (eg. annual Reader's Festival, Open Learning Center, and the meeting-place function).

Strategic objectives for the period to year 2004 include measured increases in 16 areas, including visitors and users, customer satisfaction, accuracy of information provided, self-service, usage in deprived areas, budget for new activities, staff training, and productivity.

Technology Developments

George Durnell, David Marjamaa and other staff made detailed and impressive presentations on SLCL's Technology Development 1997-2000, covering project management, system administration, networking, staff help desk, Web and telecommunication services, materials management, cost savings, statistical improvements, and a major staff development programme. This includes the Cybermobile, a converted bookmobile with network capabilities, travelling the County with hands-on computer training sessions for staff.

At SLPL, Waller McGuire and other colleagues introduced the library website's 'Electronic City Hall' (City Charter, Board Minutes, city information etc.), and the Gates Lab at Central West Library.

Value of Library Services

Glen Holt summarised the Value of Public Library Services project, which researched and calculated a conservative lower bound of the monetary benefits that users get from using library services, and developed a communications mechanism that conveys the monetary value of library services to officials and civic leaders.

Glen also introduced work on the importance of library partnerships,

eg. for training, development, research and funding, and the management of such partnerships. See: Glen Holt. *Public library partnerships: Mission-driven tools for 21st century success*. Bertelsmann Foundation, Gütersloh, 1999. <www.stiftung.bertelsmann.de/english/publika/download/index.htm>

CONFERENCE VISITS

Visits included SLPL's impressively restored Carnegie Cental Library, and Buder Branch (1998, a major redevelopment of a former bank), SLCL's HQ library and Florissant Valley Branch, Lewis and Clark Library System (which provides support and service for 150 member libraries in 11 county areas in Illinois), DRA (Data Research Associates, leading library automation company), research libraries of the Missouri Botanical Garden and Missouri Historical Society; and in New Orleans the Main Library, the expansive East Bank Regional Library of neighbouring Jefferson Parish, and the Hogan Jazz Archive at Tulane University.

- Copies of the papers are available from the speakers (see the Membership Directory for contact details), or contact the METRO Editors (see p.1).

CHANGES

INTAMEL

The 1999 Business Meeting in St. Louis agreed a number of changes to the INTAMEL Statute, the association's constitution. Among them was an amendment to the association's name. INTAMEL is now known as the International Association of Metropolitan Libraries (rather than 'Metropolitan City Libraries').

It was agreed that population size for membership eligibility should be retained at 400,000, with the addition that exceptions could be made by the membership.

It was agreed that the separation of the Secretary and Treasurer roles should be discussed at the 2001 meeting and that dues for 2001 should be increased to \$125 after several years at \$75. Two scholarships of up to \$2000 each should be the aim for the 2001 conference, more if possible. ●



INTAMEL members at the SLPL Gates Lab

REGIONAL ROLE FOR CITY LIBRARY?

UTRECHT

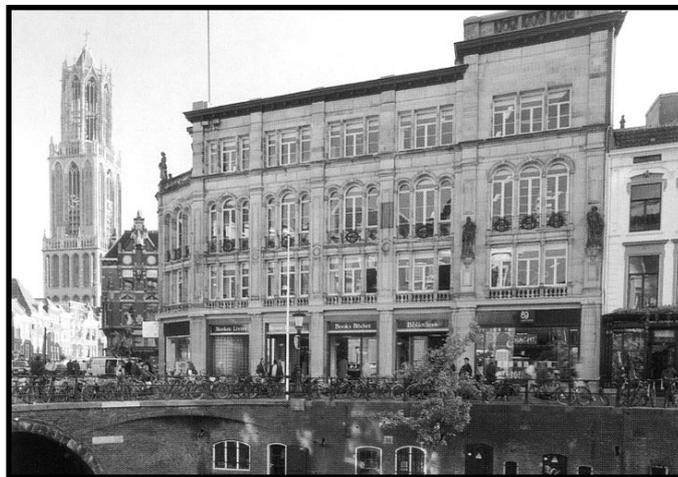
By the end of 2000 it should be clear whether the intended merger of the Utrecht Public Library with the endangered County Library Service into a single library system for both city and region is a cost-effective and realistic prospect. A research team led by consultant Piet Schoots is investigating whether the city library can be better positioned in its natural role as the central front-and-back-office in the region in order to guarantee services to smaller libraries and to create a modern library system serving about 850,000 people.

Library Director Ton van Vlimmeren points out that the

The Gemeentebibliotheek Utrecht (Public Library of Utrecht) is one of INTAMEL's newest members. It is also a library on the cusp of change.

decision will directly affect Utrecht's Central Library and a major issue for the future will be a new building. The current library is in the medieval heart of the city, built on remains dating back to the Roman Empire. The historic site does not permit extending the present building to the level required by the city's growing population, let alone carry out an expanded regional role.

The library has existed for 108



Utrecht Central Library in the historic heart of the city

years and is the oldest public library in the Netherlands. Utrecht, the country's fourth largest city, has approximately 250,000 inhabitants. However, an extensive building programme of 30,000 houses in the next ten years means that its population will grow to about 330,000. Service is currently provided in the Central Library, 11 branches and one library bus. The building of three more branches is planned.

Computer centres

As the city's historical collection is housed in the University Library of Utrecht, the public library has a broader and deeper collection to support smaller libraries in the region. Its vast music department contains 70,000 items. The library has recently installed three computer centres, providing access to the Internet, databases, CD-ROMs and other resources,

and courses are given to school classes and various age groups. Five more such centres are to be opened in the coming months. The library also delivers services such as lending collections, reading promotion and media training for staff to 140 schools, kindergartens and community centres.

A special feature of Utrecht library, governed by the city council, is the city and community information it provides for all citizens. The library even runs, on a contract basis, the city's website <www.utrecht.nl> of which the library website is a part <www.utrecht.nl/bibliotheek>. In January 2001 the city's collection of paintings and art objects for loan to the public will become part of the collection and service of the library.

● Ton van Vlimmeren
T.van.Vlimmeren@utrecht.nl



One of the Library's three computer centres – soon to expand to eight

INTAMEL communications, for most members, are being transformed by the widespread use of e-mail, the setting up of the listserv INTLIB, and the reactivation of the INTAMEL web pages on IFLANET. The implications of increasing use of electronic communication for the continuing publication of *METRO* in printed form were raised at the 1999 Business Meeting in St. Louis.

MEMBERS' DIRECTORY

The annual INTAMEL Members' Directory will shortly be sent as an e-mail attachment to most members. This followed an enquiry on the INTLIB listserv asking if members would be happy to receive the Directory in this way.

INTAMEL COMMUNICATIONS

More than 20 members replied, all saying "yes". For those members without a known e-mail address, the Directory will be sent by post.

• If you do not receive the Directory, please contact Secretary/Treasurer Jan Boman (details, p4).

INTLIB

INTAMEL's new discussion list INTLIB was set up in July and is already proving its value. The aim is to encourage communication between members and to enable exchange of experience. Of INTAMEL's 90-plus membership, 80 are subscribers to INTLIB. Of the other members, either they have no e-mail facility at present, or

an up-to-date e-mail address is not known to the INTAMEL officers.

• To post messages on INTLIB, send to: intlib@infoserv.nlc-bnc.ca

INTLIB is provided by IFLA, as part of its IFLANET service. It is a closed list for INTAMEL members. Queries to list owner and moderator Stuart Brewer, Information Co-ordinator.

• stuart@wressell.demon.co.uk
Tel: +44 191 281 3502

INTAMEL AT IFLA 2001

Plans are in hand for an INTAMEL program as part of the 2001 IFLA Conference in Boston. The topic of the session, organised by Barbara Gubbin (Houston) and Susan Kent

(Los Angeles) is to be public library and museum partnerships and how they can be mutually beneficial. They point out that "We need speakers who have experience with such partnerships to either present a paper or serve on a panel to react to the speakers. You will need to be attending the IFLA conference in order to participate. We are anxious that this will not be an entirely American program!"

An INTLIB message seeking ideas for topics and the experience of potential contributors brought responses from several members. Enquiries about participating to Barbara Gubbin.

• bgubbin@hpl.lib.tx.us
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MOVE TO NEW HOME

LJUBLJANA

During the summer the central Bežigrad Public Library in the Ljubljana-Bežigrad district moved from its former 494m² building to new premises of 1.322 m² floor space in a specially adapted building. The opening ceremony was on Friday, 6 October and on Monday 9 October the first visitor entered the new library.

"All the library staff worked very hard during the previous months," says Library Manager Marija Kobal. "We moved 93,994 items – books, serials and non-book



Picture book boxes in the Youth Department

materials – from the old to the new location. We renewed and checked an inventory of the library stock and before the opening we supplied all the materials – books, serials and non-book items (cassettes, videos, CDs and CD-ROMs) with electronic protection."

In the old library an open shelf system was combined with book storage; in the new building all items are on open access. Library members can read serials in the newspaper reading room and study or access the Internet in the study room. Young readers have their own reading room in the Youth Department.

The first month justified the staff's efforts. There were 34% more visitors and 50% more items borrowed; 178 new library members were registered.

"At the 50th anniversary of the Bežigrad Public Library we can now offer better conditions to our users as well as to the staff," says Marija Kobal.

● marija@lj-bez.sik.si



The new library building on the Einspielerjeva 1, Ljubljana-Bežigrad

CITY-WIDE PARTNERSHIP

EDINBURGH

Edinburgh City Libraries and Information Services are a major partner in the production of a guide listing 140 libraries and other organisations in the city which are willing to assist enquirers. As well as highlighting the rich resources in the city's libraries, the guide aims to open up access to them for all who have a genuine information need and to all those engaged in learning and education in the broadest sense.

"An unprecedented degree of co-operation and collaboration is taking place amongst libraries and other information providers", the

guide says. "While each library has its own set of rules and regulations for access and use, a sense of common purpose and outlook is beginning to grow."

The guide, also available at <www.edinburgh.gov.uk>, is published under the auspices of the Edinburgh Libraries Strategy Group, comprising public, university and college libraries, the National Library of Scotland and the Scottish Parliamentary Information Centre. The Strategy forms part of the Cultural Policy of the City of Edinburgh Council. Its aim is to develop partnership working between libraries from every sector for the benefit of all.

● eclis@cityedin.demon.co.uk

GROWING MEMBERSHIP

INTAMEL

During the past two years, INTAMEL's membership has been steadily growing.

New members include:

- ACT Canberra, Australia
- Brasov, Romania
- Brooklyn, USA
- Cincinnati & Hamilton County, USA
- Denver, USA
- Hennepin County, USA
- Helsinki, Finland
- Lexington, USA
- Ljubljana-Bežigrad, Slovenia
- Miami-Dade, USA

- Minsk, Belarus
- Moscow, Russia
- Norfolk, USA
- Riga, Latvia
- Turin, Italy
- Utrecht, Netherlands

● One of INTAMEL's new members is the first beneficiary of a recently established award. Helsinki City Library has won \$1 million, for free convenient access and special facilities for disabled and multilingual users, from the annual Access to Learning Award, set up by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

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HILLARY WOOS PRESCHOOLERS

America's First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton reads from *Corduroy* by Don Freeman at the flagship Flushing Library, Queens Borough, New York, in September. As well as reading to preschoolers in the Children's Room, she toured the library with Trustees, senior Library Directors and political representatives, and spoke with English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students who were meeting in the Adult Learning Center. ●