



**REFERENCE & INFORMATION SERVICES SECTION
NEWSLETTER, SUMMER 2008**

**BONJOUR & WELCOME TO QUEBEC!
FROM MARTIN KESSELMAN, RISS CHAIR**



Disneyland Photo of Martin Kesselman at the American Library Association Conference in Anaheim, CA 6/08

I am glad to add a few words of welcome to the Quebec IFLA Conference and to activities of the Reference and Information Services Section. As the new Chair of the Section I look forward to meeting many of you at our events during the conference. As Chair I hope to follow the excellent stewardship of Annsophie Oscarson who has provided the leadership coupled with the work of many members that has made the Reference and Information Services Section a dynamic force within IFLA.

I'm the Life Sciences Librarian and Science Libraries Team Leader at Rutgers University Libraries, New Jersey, USA. Within IFLA, I served as a member of the Science and Technology Section, co-founded the User Education Round Table which evolved into the Information Literacy Section, and served as Secretary/Treasurer of the Reference and Information Services Section from 2004-2008. I am also the co-author of the book, *Global Librarianship* (Taylor and Francis, 2004), member of the editorial board for *Reference Services Review*, and was just named co-editor of *Library Hi-Tech News*. My philosophy of librarianship is to deliver quality information in an accessible manner that meets the diverse information, reference and research needs of our user(s). I believe that professional librarians provide a unique "value add" to their libraries, their institutions, and the academy. The IFLA Reference and Information Services Section is the ideal venue to promote the value of reference and information services librarians worldwide.

The Reference and Information Services Section has been quite busy this past year and members look forward to an excellent upcoming open session in Quebec and two satellite conferences. In addition we received funding from IFLA for a new project, *How Do You Say Reference?* There are many opportunities for current members and hopefully those thinking of joining the section to participate in our many activities.

WHO WE ARE

The section addresses all aspects of reference work, in all types of libraries and information service organizations, in all regions of the world with an emphasis on unrestricted availability of information in physical and digital libraries and to support quality services through the development of standards, guidelines, programs, projects and training opportunities. RISS is an official section that IFLA members can join. Members of the Standing Committee are nominated and elected by IFLA members that include RISS as one of the sections they belong to.

RISS Officers:

- Chair/Treasurer: Martin Kesselman, Life Sciences Librarian and Science Team Leader, Rutgers University, State University of New Jersey, USA martyk@rci.rutgers.edu
- Secretary: Ms. Bodil Wöhnert, Reference Librarian and Consultant, Esbjerg, Public Library, Denmark, bow@esbjergkommune.dk
- Information Coordinator: Ms Sara Gube-Josefsson, Department of Information and Readers' Services, National Library of Sweden, sara.gube-josefsson@kb.se
- Newsletter Editor: Ms. Sarah B. Watstein, Assoc. University Librarian for Research and Instructional Services UCLA, Los Angeles, California, USA, watstein@library.ucla.edu

MIDYEAR MEETINGS IN MADRID HIGHLIGHTS



During our meetings on March 13 and 14, 8 section members met at the Biblioteca Nacional. We discussed ways to increase participation for RISS members and others at future annual conferences such as workshops, study tours, discussions on hot topics, poster sessions combined with our open session, and how for the Milan conference we might cooperate with other sections or libraries. A former member at University of Bologna will be contacted for ideas. “Information Services for Business and Culture” was one idea given for the open session for Milan. Much of the meetings in Madrid involved working on communication issues and our next strategic plan. Due to IFLANET’s redesign, we are experimenting with Sakai at Rutgers University. The SC is also interested in trying out teleconferencing which has been quite effective with one of the satellite planning groups. We also discussed the possibility of a reference manifesto which relates quite well with the first goal of our strategic plan; promote excellence and collaboration in promoting user centered reference and information services. Our current project, How Do You Say Reference might provide some of the background needed for a

reference manifesto. To explore libraries in the Madrid area, our host, Concepción Lois Cabello (Concha), Directora del Departamento de Referencia, organized a visit to Biblioteca Universidad Complutense – Facultad de Ciencias Químicas: <http://www.ucm.es/BUCM/> At the local metro stop we were also introduced to the Bibliometro, small library kiosks within the Madrid subway system, http://www.psfk.com/2007/03/bibliometro_mad.html. At the Biblioteca Nacional, the “ask a librarian” service was introduced: *Pregunte: las Bibliotecas Responden*, <http://www.pregunte.es/> We were given a tour of the Biblioteca Nacional de España, <http://www.bne.es/> We are indebted to Concha and her colleagues for their interest in sharing with us – and their demonstration of the treasures of BNE.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

RISS is currently updating and finalizing the details of our next action plan and strategic directions from our last plan that covered the years 2005-2007. In our work on the plan at our Madrid mid-year meeting we felt we should focus on who we are, what makes us unique, and why that’s important. Below are the mission and goals which will be at the forefront of this plan.

Mission: The mandate of the IFLA Reference and Information Services Section is to promote unrestricted, freely-available, and quality reference and information services world-wide.

Goals:

1. Promote the availability and development of user centered reference and information services worldwide.
2. Establish quality and ethical standards for reference and information services.
3. Promote the development and availability of sustainable reference and information services world-wide.
4. Develop and support reference and information services staff in providing high-quality services.
5. Increase membership and participation in the activities of the Section

2007-ANNUAL REPORT

- Membership: As of July 2008, there are 66 institutional, association and personal members registered for the Reference and Information Services Section. Librarians elected to fulfill the section’s work from 2007-2011 can be found at <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s36/s36-MembersList.htm> .
- In 2007/2008, the section held a mid-year meeting at Rutgers University which included tours of Princeton University and Princeton Public Library as well as participation in Columbia University’s annual seminar on reference. Minutes of that meeting can be found at <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s36/annual/s36-Minutes-2007NJ.pdf>

- At the 2007 IFLA Conference in Durban, the SC’s open session was “Getting and Keeping Ahead: Educating for Reference and Information Services for the Future.” Presentations were:
 - “Preparing library staff for reference and information work in the hybrid library - the need for skills and continuing professional development,” Ms. Gette Larsen, Royal School of Library and Information Science, Copenhagen, Denmark, <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla73/papers/151-Larsen-en.pdf>
 - “Are librarians missing a continuing education opportunity? An international comparison of virtual reference services,” Lawrence Olszewski and Ms. Paula Rumbaugh, OCLC, Dublin, OH, USA, http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla73/papers/151-Olszewski_Rumbaugh-en.pdf
 - “Information literacy skills training of staff and students in the Unisa Library: challenges and opportunities,” Ms. Leanne Brown and Ms. Mercy Mokgele, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa, http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla73/papers/151-Brown_Mokgele-en.pdf
 - “Library 3.0: where art our skills” Ms. Grace Saw and Ms. Heather Todd, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla73/papers/151-Saw_Todd-en.pdf
- The Digital Reference Guidelines are now translated into 12 languages. <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s36/pubs/drg03.htm>
- The Toolkit for Developing Reference Services provides access to freely available full-text papers and websites that assist libraries in planning and developing reference services. <http://web.scc-net.rutgers.edu/referencetoolkit/> We need volunteers to add entries to this valuable resource.
- A new project, How Do You Say Reference? was approved for funding by the IFLA Professional Committee (see more information on this project below).

AGENDA FOR SC MEETINGS IN QUEBEC

SC1- Saturday 09 Aug, 8:30-11:20

SC2- Friday, 15 Aug, 14:00-16:50

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Approval of agenda
3. Approval of minutes Midterm meeting, Madrid, March 2008
4. Reports from CB Meeting, Treasurer’s Report, Information Coordinator’s Report

5. Matters regarding Quebec Conference: Open Session and Other Issues
6. Report from Open Session Quebec
7. Current and forthcoming Projects
8. Strategic Plan Completion
9. Planning for Milan: Open Session and additional SC event.
10. Report from Crimea Conference
11. SC communications during the year
12. Other business

**OPEN SESSION: “HAVE WE BLOWN UP THE REFERENCE DESK?
REFERENCE SERVICES IN VIRTUAL WORLDS.”**

Thursday 14 August, 8:30-10:30

- “Gimmick or groundbreaking? Canadian academic libraries using chat reference in multi-user virtual environments,” Ms. Amy Buckland, McGill University, Montréal, Canada and Ms. Krista Godfrey, McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada, http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla74/papers/158-Buckland_Godfrey-en.pdf
- “The unopened door: the virtual world and reference services reality in the Caribbean,” Ms. Ingrid Iton, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados, <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla74/papers/158-Iton-en.pdf>
- “The value of turning virtual,” Ms. Asma Al-Wreikat, Al-Balqa Applied University, Al-Salt, Jordan, <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla74/papers/158-Al-Wreikat-en.pdf>
- “The sidewalk is our reference desk: when librarians take to the streets,” Ms. Lia Friedman, University of California, San Diego, USA and Ms. Melissa Morrone, Brooklyn Public Library, New York, USA, http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla74/papers/158-Friedman_Morrone-en.pdf

RISS Co-Sponsored Satellite Meetings

- Rethinking Access to Information: Evolving perspectives on information content and delivery, 5 - 7 August 2008, Boston, MA, USA (with Document Delivery and Resource Sharing Section, Acquisition and Collection Development Section), <https://www.bcr.org/rethinkingaccess/index.html>
- Genealogy and Local History for All: Services to Multicultural Communities, 6 - 7 August 2008, Ottawa, Canada (with Local History Section), <http://www3.telus.net/public/cv910081/GenLoc/invite/index.html>

HOW DO YOU SAY “REFERENCE” PROJECT

The Reference & Information Services Section has received IFLA funding to develop a website, “How do you Say Reference?” featuring profiles of reference and information service in countries throughout the world. The goals of the project are 1) to honor and celebrate the lives of reference and information services’ librarians and 2) to increase both knowledge and appreciation of reference services worldwide. “How do you Say Reference?” will collect the stories of everyday reference and information services “life” in diverse libraries throughout the world. These stories will serve to increase both knowledge and appreciation of these services around the world. Collectively, they are who we are as a profession. This information is critical for IFLA and the Reference & Information Services Section to become a leader in the development and provision of reference librarianship, a concept that is still not practiced in some parts of the world.

CRIMEA CONFERENCE REPORT – FRANK KIRKWOOD

The Crimea regional conference for librarians and educators from the countries of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is held annually in beautiful Sudak by the Black Sea, and this year's trilingual program in Russian, Ukrainian and English drew about 1700 participants from 9 to 13 June. IFLA had a very full program at the conference, with an opening plenary speech by Stuart Hamilton, Senior Policy Officer from the Hague, and an afternoon workshop on the first day by Stuart Hamilton, Frank Kirkwood (FAIFE and RISS) and Galina Kislovskaya, head of the IFLA Regional Office in Moscow, on IFLA advocacy initiatives and the role of libraries in the community. The IFLA contingent also held a full day forum consisting of five special-topic seminars, one of which was the organization of a Reference Round Table of the Crimea conference. Frank Kirkwood gave the closing plenary address, focusing on the role of reference librarians in creating an informed public and building democracy.

The inaugural round table on Reference Services on 10 June, led by Galina and Frank, was entitled "How do you say reference in Russian? Finding common ground between bibliographic reference and centres of specialized information, to create a Russian presence in international reference librarianship." In the Russian-speaking world, reference services are traditionally split between departments of bibliographic reference and those dealing with provision of special resources, such as business or legal information for the public. Participants from backgrounds as diverse as national, parliamentary, government, public and children's libraries compared notes on interview strategies, information organization, and reference management issues and found much in common. An organizing committee consisting of Oxana Dineeva of the State Historical Library of Russia and Tatiana Moskalenko of the Russian Parliamentary Library will help Frank and Galina to plan next year's round table program and future co-operation with IFLA RISS in the Crimea and abroad.

[Reference and Information Services Section – www.ifla.org/VII/s36/index.htm](http://www.ifla.org/VII/s36/index.htm)