

# The formation and evolution of the IFLA Science and Technology libraries Section, 1979-90

DENNIS SHAW

Radcliffe Science Library, University of Oxford, UK

## 1. Introduction

The formation of a Science and Technology Libraries Section within the Special Libraries Division of IFLA was discussed informally during 1977 and 1978. The proposal was approved by the Co-ordinating Board of the Division and the IFLA Professional Board early in 1978 and its establishment was formally announced at a business meeting held in September 1978 at the IFLA 44th General Conference in Czechoslovakia. A provisional committee was appointed to conduct the affairs of the Section until an election could be held in February 1979 for a properly constituted committee to take over at the 45th IFLA Meeting in Copenhagen. The initiative to form the Section was taken by (Miss) Tatiana Karatygina (USSR), Frank E. McKenna (USA), (Mrs) Mara Slaipah (Yugoslavia) and Erik Vajda (Hungary), together with (Mrs) Pat Molholt (USA) and (Miss) Beth Hamilton (USA).

## 2. Constitution and terms of reference

It was agreed that the affairs of the Section should be entrusted initially to a Standing Committee of seven members. Membership was open to any IFLA member interested in the objects and programme of meetings. The purpose of the Section was defined as follows:

- (i) to provide a forum for discussion on working methods and services of special libraries in science and technology
- (ii) to engage in projects, in co-operation with other sections of IFLA interested in the subject, for the analysis of new problems with which science and technology libraries are faced, as well as for the preparation and implementation of appropriate proposals, and
- (iii) to promote the improvement of the training of special librarians.

From the outset it was agreed that the Round Table for Astronomical and Geophysical Librarians should come within the activities of the new section.

## 3. Meetings held and papers published

The following is a summary of the meetings held by the Section and the papers presented during the years 1978-89.

### *1978 in Strbske Pleso (Czechoslovakia SSR), 1 September*

Theme: Scientific and Technical Aspects of Patent Libraries.

Speakers: A. N. Morozov, F. E. McKenna (presented a paper by H. Bank) and M. Šlajpah.

Mr Morozov presented a paper with the title: *The Availability of Patents: Information Sources or Intellectual Property*. According to our records no information is now available on this paper and no abstract was deposited at IFLA HQ.

The following summarizes the content of Mr Bank's paper: A study of the readers served by public patent libraries in EEC Member countries was carried out during the autumn of 1976. Many readers belong to the patenting profession and use patent literature mainly for legal purposes, and provincial libraries in particular appear to serve this category of user. The proportion of readers seeking technical information was unexpectedly high. However, access to information was difficult in many libraries included in the survey. It was recommended that improvements should be made in staffing

numbers and quality, so that these libraries could serve as active information centres and become widely known within the Community.

The number and breadth of questions and comments indicated that information on patents has a wide audience with wider interests than those of patents personnel. Emphasis was placed on the difference between nations with advanced technology and those in which technology is only just beginning to develop.

### ***1979 in Copenhagen (Denmark), 29 August***

Theme: Science and Technology for Development.

Speaker: H. C. Campbell.

A brief review was presented of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD) held in Vienna in August 1979. The recommendations present considerable challenges to organizations such as IFLA and this was noted by members of the S&T Section.

In discussion, a proposal was made that papers should be sought from librarians in developing countries, possibly concentrating on the South-East Asian region. It was agreed that such papers should summarize the problems, needs and requirements relating to the provision of scientific and technical information. Attempts should be made to find answers to the problems raised and possible ways of co-operation, particularly with regard to financial and moral support, should be discussed.

At the business meeting there was a general discussion on membership of the Section and the composition of the Standing Committee. It was confirmed that the size of the Committee should be set at seven members (the minimum allowed by the Constitution). Anthony Evans (UK) and (Mrs) Franziska Heinzle (FRG) were elected as members and (Miss) Irina M. Kharina (USSR) was appointed to replace (Mrs) T. Karatigina as the representative of the SSR Library Council.

At the invitation of the IFLA Professional Board the IFLA Medium-Term Programme was discussed and briefly evaluated. Of particular interest was the subject of copyright and it was agreed that the interest of copyright owners must be protected at all times. This applies not only to the primary literature but also the use of databases and allowing photocopying or other forms of reproduction. The compensation process should be as simple as possible, since the recording and supervision of copying raised serious difficulties and was time-consuming for staff engaged in scientific and technical information work.

A report was presented on a project, initiated by Frank McKenna, on *Availability of Patents* which was aimed at the preparation of a manual for handling patent documents in libraries. It was intended for use mainly in developing countries but would be useful also in other countries in libraries whose staff were less-experienced in the problems of dealing with patents.

Additional papers were presented as follows:

*Library Legislation and Management with special regard to Libraries in Science and Technology*, by J. Balazs and P. Gyore.

*Self-management Agreement in the field of Special Libraries in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia*, by Mara Šlajpah.

*Universal Availability of Publications - a basis of NPLST Activity*, by Irina M. Kharina.

Abstracts were published in *IFLA Annual* 1980.

### ***1980 in Manila (Philippines), 20 August***

There was only a small attendance of Section members at this meeting and very little information is on record. The Standing Committee met once on 17 August and there was an open meeting on 20 August at which the following papers were presented:

*Report on the Fourth UNISIST Meeting on Problem Solving in Socio- economic Development*, by Patricia Molholt.

*Co-operation of the USSR National Public Library for Science and Technology with Libraries, Institutions and Specialists of Developing Countries in the field of Scientific and Technical Information* by Irina M. Kharina.

Evidently the section was unsuccessful in obtaining papers from librarians in South-East Asian countries as had been planned the previous year. However, this will be referred to again in the report below on the 1984 meeting in Kenya.

### ***1981 in Leipzig, 20 August***

There is little information recorded on this meeting. A paper was presented by J. Keriguy on *The Availability of French Grey Literature* and there was a report from Yasushi Sakai and Y. Terashita on *The Multi-lingual Information Systems Project in Japan*.

### ***1982 in Montreal (Canada), 24 August***

Theme: Science and Technology Libraries with Central Functions in National and International Library Networks.

Speakers: E. Smith (Canada), G. Schlitt and J. Tehnzen (FRG), Irina M. Kharina (USSR), D. Schnridmaier (DDR), Mara Šlajpah (SR Slovenia), L. Vézier (France), Maurice B. Line (UK), and A. Miranda (Brazil).

Abstracts of five of these papers were published in *IFLA Annual 1982*.

Two further papers on patents were presented by G. Kruse (FRG) and A. N. Morozov (USSR).

It is recorded (*IFLA Journal*, 8 (4) 1982: p. 405) that "the Section of Science and Technology recommends that a Working Group should be established to examine the feasibility of producing a *Directory of Specialized Information Sources in Science and Technology*". This was approved and Tony Evans and Maurice Line undertook responsibility for a feasibility study.

### ***1983 in Munich, 22 August***

Theme: Patents as Prime Information Sources.

A full day was devoted to this topic. Visits were made to the libraries of the German Patent Office and the European Patent Office and a paper on *Patents as Information - an Unused Resource* was read by R. Walker (USA). The presentation established the relationship between patent literature and the periodical literature of science and technology. Arguments were given, a priori, for the value of patents to industrial growth in both developed and developing countries. Examples were given of the way patents may be used and exploited to improve the direction of development effort within corporations. Evidence was presented to show that patents systems stimulate research, discourage the use of secrecy and represent the only public disclosure of a large amount of important technical information.

Dieter Schnridmaier completed his study on Poster Sessions in Librarianship and distributed the German version of the report. This report was subsequently translated into English and published in 1983 with the title *Poster Sessions in Library Science; Guidelines*. Copies were held at IFLA HQ.

J. Price presented a paper on *The Library of Congress Optical Disc Pilot Programme* which was followed by discussion.

### **1984 in Nairobi (Kenya), 21 & 22 August**

The meetings in Nairobi were devoted to a consideration of the problems of developing countries, first proposed as a topic for the meeting in the Philip-pines in 1980. Additionally, there were further papers and discussions on the role of patents as sources of scientific and technical information. The scope of the meetings is clearly shown by the titles of the papers presented which are listed below. Abstracts of all except one of these papers were published in *IFLA Journal* (1984).

The following papers were presented during the Conference in Nairobi:

*Scientific and Technical Literature in Developing Countries: a Preliminary Review of Output and Characteristics*, by S. Pilling.

*Availability of Publications in Science and Technology in Kenya: Problems*, by D. Ng'ang'a.

*Information Activities in Selected Types of US Scientific and Technical Libraries, Developments, Persisting Issues and Implications for the Lesser Developed Countries*, by K. Cveljo.

*The Study of Scientific and Technical Literature of the Developing Countries and the Co-operation between the USSR's State Library for Science and Technology and these Countries' Organizations in the field of Scientific and Technical Literature*, by I. M. Kharina.

*The Dissemination of Patent Information by Libraries - an Example demonstrating the necessity of Libraries in the Process of National Development*, by E. Derday.

*Patent Documentation: a Source of New Ideas and Inspiration for the Economic Growth of Developing Countries*, by G. Kruse.

*Library Ethics and the Special Library Network in Science and Technology*, by D. Schrnidnaier.

During 1984 Mrs Xu Hong-ying (China) joined the Section as a corresponding member. Mrs Xu is now Head of the Acquisitions Department of the Library of Academia Sinica in Beijing.

### **1985 in Chicago (USA), 20 & 21 August**

It was decided at the Section Committee meetings to concentrate efforts on the annual Conference programme. Papers presented at these meetings have been directed towards current issues of wide interest not confined to the problems of member libraries. This was indicated by the large attendance at these meetings which attracted between 100 and 300 delegates. It was now firmly established that the provision of simultaneous interpretation was justified and it was hoped that this facility would be available at future meetings of the Section. It was also decided to proceed no further with the project outlined above (1983) since Mr Line and Mr Evans were no longer active members of the Section.

The theme of the meetings was the new communications technology and optical data storage. The following papers were presented:

*New Developments in Space-based Communication Systems*, by Cheryl Stone.

*The Domesday Project: an innovative use of Optical Disc Technology by the British Broadcasting Company*, by P. Armstrong.

*Information and Technology Transfer to Developing Countries*, by J. E. Beverly.

*Optical Disks - an Emerging Technology for Libraries*, by W. R. Nugent.

The second programme session was devoted to technical demonstrations of equipment by the following:

David Tiechi of Kurzweil Computer Products Inc. presented some of the recent advances in the field of optical character recognition with particular reference to the manufacture of reading-machines for the partially-sighted.

Leslie Goldstein of the Intelligent Video Systems section of the Sony Communications Products Company demonstrated recent developments in videodisc technology including a large screen video projector, and instructed members of the audience in the use of interactive videodiscs. One of the discs created by Sony for the Library of Congress Optical Disk Pilot Project was included in the presentation.

Jane Ryland of Reference Technology Inc. demonstrated the work her company has done to advance the state-of-the-art in the use of optical discs for the storage and retrieval of information. This demonstration was microcomputer-based with a CD-ROM player. It was one of the first successful systems to be demonstrated outside Japan.

Dan Tonkery of Horizon Information Services demonstrated the work of the Library Corporation on the use of the CD-ROM for the distribution of MARC bibliographic data.

The following two papers were distributed but not communicated at the meeting:

*Resource Sharing in Science and Technology Libraries in India*, by S. Taneja.

*UAP and User Training for Categories of Grey Literature*, by D. Schmidmaier.

Abstracts of all but one of these papers were published in *IFLA Journal*.

### ***1986 in Tokyo (Japan), 26 & 27 August***

Theme: New Technologies and Information Distribution.

The first session concentrated on possible future effects of information technologies on libraries and librarianship. A paper by Pat Molholt was responded to by speakers from Malaysia, Australia and Japan. There was an audience of about 300 delegates to bear the lively discussion presented by the speakers. Four of the participants were members of IATUL and the meeting was under the chairmanship of Dennis Shaw (UK) who as President of IATUL had been invited by the S&T Section Chairman, Joseph W. Price, to arrange this session. This was the first practical demonstration at an IFLA Conference of the tangible benefits to be expected to result from the agreement between IFLA and IATUL which was proposed in Chicago in 1985 and was subsequently ratified by the Professional Board of IFLA and the Board of Directors of IATUL. The full details of this agreement were published in *INSPEL*, 20 (2) 1986.. pp. 85-89.

A second programme session featured two Japanese speakers, one describing the services of the Japan Information Center for Science and Technology, and the other from the United Nations University in Tokyo describing an attempt to preserve traditional knowledge from a very early Pacific culture, which is in danger of disappearing for ever.

The following papers were presented:

*A View from the Chip: the Influence of Information Technologies on Libraries and Librarianship*, by P. Molholt.

*Response to Pat Molholt's paper on "A View from the Chip: an Economist's View"*, by Takayasu Miyakawa.

*Adumbrations on the Information Support Centre*, by A. Horton.

*A Developing Country's Response to Pat Molholt's "A View from the Chip: the Influence of Information Technologies on Libraries and Librarianship"*, by Syed Salim Agha.

*The Influence of Information Technologies on Librarians and Librarianship: Ideas from Another Point of View*, by D. Schmidmaier.

These four papers with an introduction by Dennis Shaw were published in *IFLA Journal*, 13 (1) 1987: pp. 13-38.

*Online Information Service of the Japan Information Center of Science and Technology*, by R. Igarishi.

*The United Nations University Proposal for an Archive of Traditional Knowledge: Implications for Scientific Communities*, by W. Shearer and E. Shinoda.

Abstracts of all these papers were published in *IFLA Annual*.

### ***1987 in Brighton (UK), 18 to 19 August***

The Section held two sessions in Brighton, one of which was organized jointly with the Section on Serial Publications and centred on the theme of new technological approaches to scientific journal publishing. Papers on two aspects of the ADONIS project were read by Barrie Stern of Elsevier Publishers (Netherlands) and David Bradbury of BLDSC(UK).

The second programme session was organized around the theme of human aspects of electronically stored information. Speakers were invited to address this theme from the aspects of library user, publisher and library administrator.

The following papers presented were summarized in *IFLA Journal* (1987).

*ADONIS - the Experience to Date*, by B. T. Stern.

*ADONIS: the View of the Users*, by D. Bradbury.

Human Aspects of Electronically-Stored Information: the Library User, by A. J. Meadows.

*Human Aspects of Electronically-stored Information: the Publisher's Point of View*, by C. Baldwin.

*Human Aspects of Electronically-stored Information: Point of View of a Director of Library Staff*, by D. Schmidmaier.

### ***1988 in Sydney (Australia), 1 September***

Under the new programme arrangements introduced by the IFLA Professional Board, there was only one session for the Section meeting in Sydney and this featured three papers on the theme of the prospects and possibilities for electronic networking. The speakers for this session were Rowland C. W. Brown, President of OCLC (USA), Ivi Eenmaa, Director of the Kreutzwald Library in Tallinn (Lithuania SSR), Dieter Schmidmaier, Bibliotheksrat, Freiburg Mining Academy (GDR) and Christian Lupovici, Director of the BUTC Compiègne (France).

A joint seminar with IATUL on this same theme, with particular emphasis on the prospects for networking on Oceania, was held in Melbourne on 24 August before the main IFLA Meeting. The papers from the latter were published in a theme issue of *IATUL Quarterly*, 3 (2) 1989.

### ***1989 in Paris (France), 22 August***

The programme session in Paris featured three papers on the special concerns of Science and Technology Libraries related to the conference theme: 'Libraries and Information in Yesterday's, Today's and Tomorrow's Economy'.

Nancy Anderson, from the University of Illinois, explained the measures they were taking to persuade alumni to give on a regular basis to support library activities. Examples of promotional

material were given by way of illustration and it was reported that the library planned to augment its income by 100/o on a regular basis through the development campaign.

Caroline Sakoun-Wiegandt from CNRS gave an interesting account of the development of the French Scientific Research Information Service from its inception after World War 11 to the present day. As we had experienced throughout most of Europe, governments were cutting back on funding of such institutions and CNRS was seeking to supplement its sources of revenue by selling services in a manner similar to that of the Science Reference and In- formation Service of the British Library. This paper was presented in French, but an English version is to be published in *IATUL Quarterly*.

The third paper was by Professor Elin Törnudd, the Director of the Libraries of Helsinki University of Technology and, until recently, Chairman of the Inter-Governmental Council for the UNESCO General Information Programme. Elin Törnudd reviewed the circumstances leading up to the establishment of this Programme for which she was largely responsible and indicated the guidelines now operated by UNESCO when considering what activities in the development of information services in general they should support from their UNESCO funds. Members of our Section were invited to join the IATUL Reunion which was devoted to the subject of 'Action Plan for Libraries' in the EEC. There was a good attendance of members from both Associations and a proposed co-operative project was presented by Annette Winkel from Copenhagen.

#### 4. Growth of membership

Initial membership of the Section was reported in August 1979 as a total of 62. Since then it has grown steadily and now in July 1990 stands at 114. Analysis by geographical region is shown in Table 1 and by class of member in Table 2.

**Table 1** 1990 Membership of the IFLA Science and Technology Libraries Section distributed by geographical region

Africa	15
Asia	13
Australasia	4
Central and South America	4
Europe	58
Middle East	4
North America	16
Total	114

**Table 2** 1990 distribution by membership category

Library Associations	14
University and Polytechnic Libraries	37
Research Institutes and Museum Libraries	9
Scientific and Technical Libraries and Information Centres	8
National Libraries and Institutions	23
Government Agencies	10
Publishers and Commercial Enterprises	8
Personal members	1
International Associations	3
Total	114

#### 5. Conclusion

The Science and Technology Libraries Section of IFLA has met regularly during the 12 years since its inception and its programme of meetings at IFLA general conferences has included presentations on some of the most important recent developments in Library and Information Technology. Notable contributions to the recorded debate in these fields have been the meetings concerned with: patents as sources of information; science and technology for development; new technologies for data storage and

transfer; economic and sociological factors associated with electronic storage of information; and electronic networking prospects and possibilities. The members of the Section Standing Committee work closely with the Board of the International Association of Technological University Libraries and have an agreement to collaborate for the mutual benefit of both organizations. A basic principle of this association is that IATUL has the expertise to conduct professional studies and develop new techniques on its own behalf and for IFLA, whereas the S&T Section has the forum to initiate debate and influence affairs on the international scene.

## Appendix

### Officers 1977-91

#### Chairman

1978	Frank McKenna (USA)
1979-81	Erik Vajda (Hungary)
1981-83	Franziska Heinzle (FRG)
1983-85	Joe Price (USA)
1985-87	Joe Price (USA)
1987-89	Dennis Shaw (UK)
1989-91	Dennis Shaw (UK)

#### Secretary

1978	Erik Vajda (Hungary)
1979-81	Pat Molholt (USA)
1981-83	Pat Molholt (USA)
1983-85	Franziska Heinzle (FRG)
1985-87	Franziska Heinzle (FRG)
1987-89	Dieter Schnidmaier (DDR)
1989-91	Nancy Anderson (USA)

## References

Reports on the activities of the Science and Technology Libraries Section are published in the following issues of *IFLA Journal*:

Vol. 4 (1978) p. 49, 170, 290; Vol. 5 (1979) p. 189; Vol. 6 (1980) p. 40-41; Vol. 7 (1981) p. 405; Vol. 8 (1982) p. 405; Vol. 9 (1983) p. 362; Vol. 10 (1984) p. 423; Vol. 11 (1985) p. 163-, Vol. 12 (1986) p. 127; Vol. 13 (1987) p. 13-38, 163, 392; Vol. 14 (1988) p. 70, 132-136; Vol. 15 (1989) P. 65.

Annual reports from the Section are published in the *IFLA Annual* as follows:

1978, p. 115-1 17; 1979, p. 133-135; 1980, p. 154; 1981, p. 208/209; 1982, p. 186-188; 1983, p. 219-220; 1984, p. 141-143; 1985, p. 184-187; 1986, p. 163-166; 1987, p. 176-178; 1988, p. 139-141. These reports contain the abstracts of papers presented at meetings as detailed in section 3 of this paper. The Section has published Newsletters regularly for circulation to members and the following issues are on record: May 1985 (Ed. Joseph W. Price); May 1986 (Ed. Joseph W. Price); June 1987 (Ed. Joseph W. Price); May 1988 (Ed. Dennis F. Shaw); June 1989 (Ed. Dennis F. Shaw); June 1990 (Ed. Dennis F. Shaw).

Papers presented at meetings have been published in *IFLA Journal*, *IATUL Quarterly* and *INSPEL* and references to these will be found in *LISA*.