



IFLA Section of Public Libraries

Newsletter

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Your dynamic connection to the
international world of library
and information services



Chair: Barbara H. Clubb, Canada

THE VOICE OF THE CHAIR:

Ford, the motor company, is now giving every employee a PC. More than 1 billion pages exist on the Web, with 7 billion hyperlinks. The search engine Google gets 13 million queries per day. Some predict that newspapers will abandon print by 2013 and that eventually books will cost little or nothing and never go out of print. What then is the public library's core business? Who then are our customers? How do we pull it all together in the library of the future?

The driving forces of change are new affordable technologies, demographic shifts, fiscal constraint and government restructuring. Technology (e.g. the Web, e-books, licensed databases, Napster, new access models) is changing the public's expectation of its libraries. Libraries are passionately supported, respected and trusted more than any other public or private institution (with the exception of fire services). Citizens overwhelmingly affirm the use of library buildings. Yet it is clear that the public wants libraries to do different things not

only in those buildings but also beyond the walls. Libraries built on service must respond to the changing expectations of their users.

Today people want resources; they want service; they want speed and convenience. They want help navigating billions of e-pages of data. They want help finding a good book to read. They want help for their children learning to read. They want authenticity. To respond, libraries around the world are redefining many of their roles. As librarians, we need to assess our products and services, resources and allocations, marketing and management, collections and facilities, as well as the organization as a whole. This is how we will make our libraries better, more effective, more responsive, more service-centred and ready to meet the future. We need to create a dynamic resource that changes as new ideas and new technologies emerge. We will be funded based on our accomplishments in our new roles.

The new world of libraries calls for a strategy. Following are some of the elements suggested for that strategy

- Create a model with service at the centre
- Harness collective library power through joint

purchasing and consortial licensing

- Invest strategically in collections both print and electronic e.g. e-books
- Shift the collection emphasis from ownership to access
- Place priority focus on children's services, especially pre-school reading readiness and homework help centres
- Provide innovative, welcoming, flexible, up-to-date facilities
- Leverage technology to enable users to cross the 'digital divide'; to improve - efficiencies; to speed up service; to liberate staff; to better serve those with special -needs; to save the time of the reader; to access the world
- Customize services e.g. fee-based home delivery
- Develop staff to be pro-active guides, facilitators, researchers, knowledge navigators
- 7/24 as many services as possible, especially electronic library services and materials that can be accessed from anywhere
- Ensure more, user friendly open hours, especially Sundays
- Build more service partnerships

Library service of the future must be supported by:

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- Dynamic marketing strategies
- Constant customer research
- Leadership with an eye to the future
- On going capital development of facilities
- Intensive investment in collections tuned to demand
- Leading-edge technology and broad-band access to every library outlet
- Multi-year fundraising strategy to supplement the tax base
- Staff members who are valued, recognized, constantly trained and customer oriented.

All levels of governments are using and investing in public libraries as strategic delivery networks. The Gates Foundation is partnering with libraries to help citizens cross the 'digital divide'. Our newspapers devote space and resources to the public library. There is still an insatiable appetite for the written word. Public libraries will continue to be a central element of civic life in an informed society. Our goal to provide resources and services for learning, earning and leisure, will not change...but our strategies will.

Barbara Clubb
Chair, IFLA Section of Public Libraries



FOCUS:

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SOUTH AMERICA

Reports from Argentina, Chile and Uruguay



Many libraries for the general public in Argentina take the form of "bibliotecas populares", people's libraries. These libraries are autonomous civil associations, open to the general public that provide information, education, recreation and cultural activities as well as library services and programmes to encourage reading.

The National Commission in Defence of People's Libraries (*La Comisión Nacional Protectora de Bibliotecas Populares, CONABIP*) was created in 1870 and is a national government organisation reporting to the President via the Secretary of

Culture and Communications. A Special Fund for People's Libraries was created in 1989 for use by CONABIP in giving direct benefits to the public libraries that it serves.

This support includes donations of collections of books and multimedia materials as well as financial support, awarded according to a qualifying system for the libraries based upon the services that they offer to their community, the management skills shown by the staff, the programmes provided to encourage reading and the ability of the library to introduce innovative working methods.

Important programmes of support offered by CONABIP include:

System of Library Management (SIGEBI): a software system developed to allow libraries to computerise their administrative and bibliographic operations (for example, inventory, cataloguing, registration of members, payment of memberships, loans etc.). Created from a MicroIris base, the system has been designed to standardise the format and processing details of each library so that a national network can be created.

"Bibliotecas Populares.ar": a project created in conjunction with the Secretary of

Communication of Argentina, with the objective of giving each library information technology and access to Internet. As a complement to this effort, a telephone line was installed free of charge in each library, with discount rates for calling.

Development of Special Services for Visually Handicapped

Users: a programme implemented with assistance from the National Organisation for the Blind (ONCE) of Spain which provides the libraries with the latest technological advances in terms of the services available to visually handicapped users. Staff training is also provided in the use of the hardware and software. There are currently 24 sets of equipment operating in the 24 provincial capitals in the country. Each set consists of a Multimedia PC, Jaws software, Braille printer, inkjet printer, electronic magnifying glass, scanner and Narrator 99 (audio producer).

Professional Development Scholarships

The majority of the people's libraries in Argentina do not have trained library staff and only a small percentage have qualified librarians. This is due to the great shortage of librarians in general in Argentina and also to the lack of resources available to employ qualified staff or to train the existing staff.

In 1997 CONABIP started a programme of professional development scholarships. The scholarships support students studying library science, at this stage 540, at both a technical and university level, who will later work in the people's libraries. The total investment up until the year 2000 has been US\$7, 584, 750.

CONABIP also organises a series of seminars which allow library workers to get together to share learning experiences and exchange ideas, contributing to keeping skills up to date and encouraging innovation in the workplace.



Program to provide improved access to information for all public libraries

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is establishing a partnership with Chile to provide the more than 300 public libraries in the South American country with computers, Internet access and training.

The program marks the Foundation's first effort beyond North America and the United Kingdom to provide individuals in low-income communities with public access to technology and

digital information through public libraries.

“The Chilean library system is already making a tremendous effort to ensure free and open access to information for all citizens,” said Richard Akeroyd, Director of the Foundation's Libraries and Public Access to Information programs. “This partnership will allow us both to support these successful structures already in place and accelerate efforts to connect every Chilean public library with the world of information on the Internet.”

Foundation officials selected Chile as a partner because of the country's leadership in the effort to provide free and open access to public libraries for all citizens.

Only a few public libraries in Chile currently have computers or Internet access. This partnership between the Foundation and the Chilean library system is expected to provide more than 1,200 computers to libraries throughout the country – from large, central libraries in Santiago to small libraries in outlying communities from the southern Patagonia mountains to the desert in northern Chile.

“Not since the invention of printing has humanity been offered a revolution in communications such as that represented by the Internet. Taking on the challenge that new technology offers to our country is one of the central concerns of my government, accepting at the same time the massive change that this will mean to our society,” said Chilean President Ricardo Lagos. “With the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the public libraries of Chile will take an active part in the education process, the anticipation of global

economic changes and in the development and the strengthening of more equitable relationships between all Chileans.”

The Foundation is currently working with the Chilean government, the country’s central library organization –Directorate of Libraries, Archives and Museums—and corporate and philanthropic partners to finalize details of the program. The Foundation plans to support the program through hands-on training scheduled tentatively to begin next July; computer installation will start following the training next year.

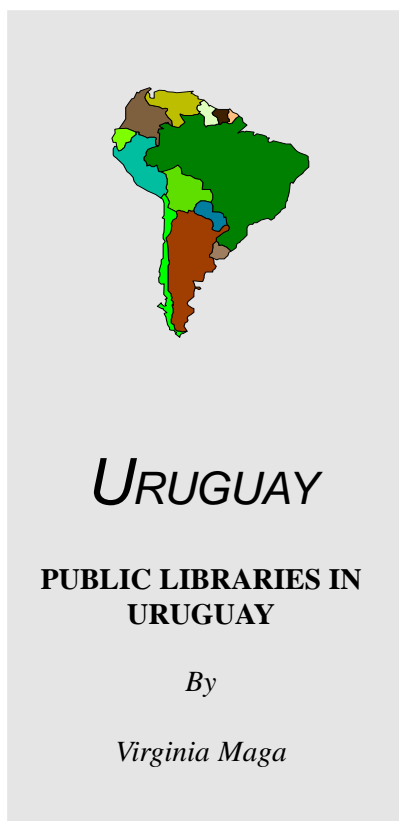
The estimated value of the partnership will be a grant of more than U.S.\$5 million. Separately, Microsoft Chile will donate software for the library-bound computers with a retail value of U.S.\$1.2 million.

“This donation from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is making a dream come true: the creation of public libraries without physical limits, open to all. This virtual library will be able to offer equal access to knowledge and recreation to all Chileans, allowing us to build a better, more democratic society,” said Clara Budnik, Director, Directorate of Libraries, Archives and Museums.

The Chilean partnership will build upon the Foundation’s existing work in improving availability to public access computing. The Foundation is halfway toward its commitment to wire every eligible library in the United States. A similar effort in Canada is nearing completion of providing access to digital information in all Canadian provinces and territories.

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The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is dedicated to improving people’s lives by sharing advances in health and learning with the global community. Led by Bill Gates’ father, William H. Gates, Sr., and Patty Stonesifer, the Seattle-based Foundation has an asset base of \$21 billion. Preventing deadly diseases among poor children by expanding access to vaccines, and developing vaccines against malaria, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis, are central priorities. Other major efforts include extending unprecedented opportunities for learning by bringing computers with Internet access to every eligible library in the U.S. and Canada, and providing scholarships to academically talented minority students in the U.S. with severe financial need through the Gates Millennium Scholars Program (www.gmsp.org). For complete information and grant guidelines, visit www.gatesfoundation.org



Public libraries have always played a very important part in

the cultural life of Uruguay. They were established with the founding of the Republic on 26 May, 1816, by José Gervasio Artigas through his intermediary, the priest Dámasco Antonio Larrañaga.

Despite having a population of only 3 million people, there are 158 public libraries throughout the country, located in cities, towns and smaller population centres.

Uruguay does not have a national policy for libraries. The libraries are the responsibility of the 19 municipal governments, which means that there are vast differences between them, dictated by the local situation. The libraries are particularly active in supporting the formal education efforts at both a primary and secondary level.

In 1996, the Cultural Department of the Ministry of Education and Culture began a programme to create a cohesive system of public libraries in Uruguay; the “*Support Programme for Public Libraries*”, which encouraged libraries to participate in projects and programmes aimed at improving their services. A Co-ordinating Group for Public Libraries was formed, with representatives from all regions of the country, with the task of designing and implementing a range of different initiatives. The main areas of activity are:

1. Creation of policies for the weeding of collections: to standardise the criteria for the de-accession/weeding of materials.
2. National Awards for Public Libraries: encouraging creativity and innovation in the libraries.
3. Frontier Libraries:

programme for cultural exchange at the physical border points between Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil.

4. Circulating Libraries: small collections from the countries of the Southern Cone of Latin America (Mercosur) which tour around the country.

Training the existing library staff is also very important as there are very few professional librarians working outside the capital city of Montevideo. Technical training is especially important in the information technology area. Training programmes began in 1998 and have stressed the importance of automating library services and offering free access to Internet. In 1999, the system Microsis was chosen for the libraries, in its version for Windows. Courses are being offered in Winisis, and a standard format, based in CEPAL, has been developed for use in all the libraries with a view to establishing

a national network.

Plans for the Future:

Two areas of high priority for the public libraries in Uruguay at the moment are:

1. Approval for the "Guidelines for Public Libraries" which establish certain minimum standards to improve the way in which the public libraries operate throughout the country, making recommendations in terms of the staff and the organisational structure. This document has been sent to the municipal governments and is being followed up to make sure that it is approved and adopted.
2. The creation of a National Network of Public Libraries, so that projects can be developed in common and cover all public libraries. The network will facilitate the

development of a joint catalogue, inter-library loans and other co-operative activities.

While the development of public libraries in Uruguay is closely linked to the development of national information policies, we are optimistic that by working co-operatively we are drawing closer to our goal of placing public library services at the reach of everyone.

As the founder of Uruguay, José Gervasio Artigas wrote in a letter to D. A. Larrañaga:

"I will never stop putting my seal of approval on any work which has as its clear objective the prosperity of the public. I know how important public libraries are and I hope that you will use your efforts to help me improve them"

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The revision of IFLA's Guidelines for Public Libraries, which began in 1998, is nearing completion. A draft was sent out for comment over the summer to public librarians throughout the world who had expressed an interest in this project. It was also put up on IFLA's web-site. A meeting was held at the IFLA Conference in Jerusalem in August 2000 to get further views on the draft, the last chance for public debate on the revised draft. The meeting was well attended and generated a lively and constructive discussion. A final draft is being prepared taking into account the various

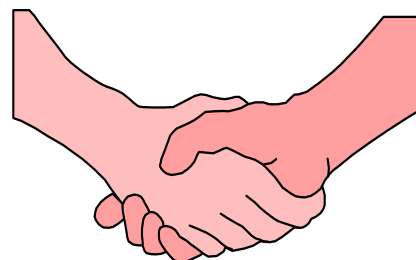
comments that have been received. It is hoped to complete this before Christmas 2000. The Professional Board has delegated final approval of the draft to three of their members. When approval is given the draft will be made ready for publication by K.G.Saur, which it is hoped will be early in 2001. UNESCO has indicated that it will be able to fund the translation of the final document into the official UNESCO languages.

The final document has benefited considerably from the various comments and practical examples sent by public librarians from many different countries. The Working Group are very grateful to all those who have taken the time and the trouble to comment on the drafts as they have been sent out for consultation. We trust that they

and the public library community in general will find the final publication helpful as they continue the exciting and challenging task of developing the public library service.

Philip Gill

Chair, Working Group on the Revision of the IFLA Public Library Guidelines



MOSCOW MANIFESTO

RUSSIAN LIBRARIES, MUSEUMS AND ARCHIVES OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM AND THEIR ROLE IN THE GLOBAL INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

From 17th to 19th April 2000, more than 300 experts and policy makers from all over the Russian Federation and 19 other countries met at the International Conference 'Managing the Digital Future of Libraries' held at the Russian State Library in Moscow, to consider the current state of practice and the potential contribution Russian libraries, museums and archives can make in the context of the Information Society.

The Conference recognised the following ways in which libraries, museums and archives can make substantial contributions in key policy areas:

- **DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP** – Publicly accessible libraries, museums and archives have a strategic opportunity to improve the quality of life and democratic opportunities of all citizens by providing free and equal access to high-quality information and to diverse opinion, helping to overcome inequalities of wealth and location.
- **ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT FOR INDUSTRY** – Libraries, museums and archives support wealth creation by ensuring efficient access to information and the opportunities afforded by knowledge. They can be important tools for reducing

disparity between the information rich and the information poor citizens of Russia.

- **RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING** – Libraries, museums and archives provide, through their widespread physical network, a cost-effective infrastructure for both formal education and lifelong learning. They support students and researchers at all levels of formal education and scholarship.
- **CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY** – Libraries, museums and archives are cultural institutions in the widest sense. They support, preserve and promote the cultural heritage and provide access to knowledge in all forms of cultural expression.

The Conference noted and supported the following key documents:

General documents

- IFLA/FAIFE Statement on *Libraries and Intellectual Freedom*
- Report on the *Role of Libraries in the Modern World* of the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education and the Media of the European Parliament
- Council of Europe Cultural Committee report: *Library Legislation and Policy in Europe*
- IFLA/UNESCO *Public*

Library Manifesto

- European Commission's study – *Public Libraries and the Information Society*
- And the *Copenhagen Declaration*

Russian documents

- Concept of the *State Information Policy*
- Concept of *Information Society Development in Russia*
- Concept of the '*Russian Digital Libraries Programme*'

The underlying conviction of the Conference, supported by much evidence is that the information and communications technologies provide an unprecedented opportunity to enhance the contribution which libraries, museums and archives can make to contemporary society in Russia. At the end of the meeting those present agreed the following recommendations regarding digital libraries development in Russia and the role of international co-operation:

Recommendations to the Russian Government

That it should seek to:

- Recognise the Russian Digital Libraries Programme as a federal programme and render appropriate political and financial support;
- Improve the legal basis in Russia on all aspects of digital libraries development;
- Devote substantial resources to

creating Russian digital cultural and scientific content available via the Internet;

- Equip libraries, museums and archives to provide maximum access to the new information resources for all citizens and allocate adequate resources to sustain the services over time;
- Provide an equitable balance between the rights of the creators of information and the rights of citizens' access to the information;
- Adopt the "design for all" principle thus enabling specific user groups [e.g. children, handicapped people] to receive appropriate benefits through the application of ICT in libraries, museums and archives.

Recommendations to foreign governments, multinational agencies and private sector partners in Russia and abroad:

That they should:

- Support the modernisation of Russian libraries, museums and archives through global programmes such as the UNESCO Memory of the World, the EU Information Society Technologies Programme, and other bilateral and international programmes;
- Identify substantial resources to allow joint digital libraries / museums / archives research and development programmes with Russia, the EU and other countries, in particular the US, on issues of mutual concern. Essential elements of such a programme are:
- Existing research and development projects and programmes in the EU and US include Russian partners;
- Regular expert meetings between Russia, EU and US experts to stimulate discussion,

co-operation and practical projects of common interest, in particular regarding the development of international standards, the regulation of copyright and intellectual property, and issues of multilingual diversity;

- A programme of development of human resources in libraries, archives and museums to develop competencies for the management of the change to modern service oriented institutions;
- Bilateral and multilateral programmes of institutional twinnings and partnerships to forge closer co-operation and joint research and development;
- Workshops on proposal writing and fund raising to provide the necessary tools for full participation of Russian partners in international programmes;
- Special language courses for Russian staff in libraries, museums and archives to foster international professional communication.

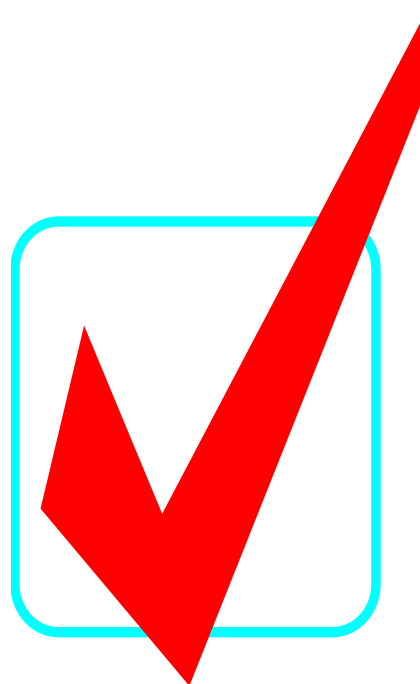
Recommendations to Russian libraries, other memory institutions, and their stakeholders and funders

That

- Russian libraries, museums and archives join forces to co-operate and create digital cultural and knowledge heritage on the Internet for the global community of researchers
- Co-operation between libraries, museums and archives be improved in the area of negotiating licensing agreements with digital content providers;
- Russian libraries, museums

and archives develop a common and strategic approach to national and international funding agencies;

- Special measures be devised to recruit, train and retain staff with the necessary skills to work in and for libraries, museums and archives including high levels of competence in ICT, finance, management and marketing;
- Private partnerships between libraries, museums, archives and commercial investors be encouraged to develop legal and managerial skills to deal with commercial investment;
- Russian libraries, museums and archives establish strong co-operation with public, private and non-commercial sector to support the development of the Information Society in Russia



NEWSLETTER ON-LINE ?

The Section's Newsletter will always appear on our IFLA website immediately after the release. It will be put on the website in pdf-format, which requires the free software Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer. In order to save money spent on paper and posting, I would like to ask you, if you would be satisfied with only reading the Newsletter on-line ?

I will of course set up a mailinglist, and I will send you a message every time there is a new issue out, and of course direct you to the website, where you can download the free software Adobe Acrobat Reader.

If you are interested, please confirm to me by mail or fax.

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Borge Sondergard
Information Coordinator

HAVE YOU CHECKED THE SECTIONS WEBSITE LATELY?

We always try to keep the Section's Website up to date and interesting. Why don't you try a little visit at: <http://ifla.org/VII/s8/spl.htm#3>, and look up these hot items:

Lifelong Learning:

The scope, targets and timetable for the Sections largest project in 2001/2002: <http://ifla.org/VII/s8/proj/rolepublib.htm>

Public Libraries Guidelines:

The latest revision, June 2000: <http://ifla.org/VII/s8/proj/gpl.htm>

Library Acts:

The Section has started collecting Library Acts in order to inspire our colleagues around the world. Right now you can find Acts from Denmark, Finland, Russia and Sweden: <http://ifla.org/V/cdoc/acts.htm>

Public Library Manifesto:

You will find the IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto in more than 20 languages: <http://ifla.org/VII/s8/unesco/manif.htm>

Members of Standing Committee:

Get in contact with members of your Standing Committee for Public Libraries: <http://ifla.org/VII/s8/contact.htm>

IFLA/PL Newsletter

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