



Public Libraries Section

Newsletter 34. April 2007

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Editor's chat

Its 12 months since I last did a newsletter and a lot has happened to me in that time. Soon after the last issue, I was unexpectedly made redundant, just after getting promotion into a post I was very interested in , that of Social Inclusion Officer. After 40 years in libraries, it was a shock to be out of the library world.

However, my IFLA commitments and UK *Branch and Mobile Group* activities have kept me well in touch. I have done some consultancy work and have found time to do mobile library presentations in countries all over the world. I have also done some courses with my son on the way forward for downloads in the audio book field.

The pictures on the front page are all places I have visited in the last 12 months. They are all very different but all have the same thing in common, very dedicated and enthusiastic library staff. At all four places I was made most welcome.

This issue has some interesting articles by librarians from different parts of the world. I hope you enjoy them and feel encouraged to send me articles on your library.

Ian Stringer, Editor



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Leopold Sedar Senghor, new Branch library in France

On the 23rd September 2006 the city of Le Havre (Normandy – France) opened a new branch library (the eighth one) in the former harbour quarter, one of the poorest urban areas in the city (and in the country in general).

What's special in this? This cultural equipment was partly founded by UE subsidies (PIC-URBAN programme), as it is intended as a tool for social development and urban renovation. The focus is on welcoming people who are not familiar with the written culture of books and PC, and/or have a very poor grasp of the French language (women in particular). The « télévisions du monde » (international channels, continuous broadcasting at opening hours), for example, are providing information and programmes in various languages, making the visitor feeling more at home and more confident in their right and ability to use the services. Other examples : a particular place called the « marmothèque » welcomes the very young babies (under 4 years) and their parents (or nannies), with adapted furniture and material.

The library provides also all kind of materials including DVD and CD-roms (to be used in the library or loaned), various training for to computers, language improving CD-roms, story times for children every week, school co-operation.

A meeting room with 60 places hosts a wide range of entertainments (music, dance, movies, meetings...).

All services in the library are entirely free of charge, and borrowing materials for young people under 18 years is also free. Adults (except unemployed) have to pay a small annual fee (16 euros).

For more information see the city website :

http://www.ville-lehavre.fr/delia-CMS/guichet_virtuel/rubrique/article_id-852/topic_id-254/bibliotheques-de-quartier.html

or contact the librarian : Grégory Barbusse
gregory.barbusse@ville-lehavre.fr

See page x for pictures

Thanks to Florence Ponce for this information.



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Don't judge a book by its cover – borrow a living book **- a success story at Malmö City Library (Sweden)**

Borrow a prejudice - and get rid of it! - That was the call when the project "Borrow A Living Book" was first introduced at Malmö City Library in August 2005.

The idea of offering Living Books to the public comes from Denmark: In year 2000 the Danish organization "Stop The Violence" introduced a human library at Roskilde Festival. Malmö City Library has offered a living library at least twice a year since the start. Here people meet other people they would not normally meet, says Catharina Norén, organizer of the living library. Each living book can be borrowed for 45 minutes. The living book and its reader get vouchers for coffee and sit down to talk, an easy way of establishing contact. The people who borrow the living books are between 10 and 70 years old.

The titles so far have been: an imam, a veiled Muslim woman, a homosexual man and a homosexual woman, an animal rights activist, a Danish woman, a transvestite, a journalist, a blind man, a traveller, a Rom woman, a gypsy, a librarian, a businessman, an Arab, a clergyman, an ex-convict, a feminist and a homeless man. These persons represent groups that many people have a lot of prejudices or preconceptions against. - Many people judge others without actually knowing much, says Catharina Norén. Here they get a chance to meet and talk. Comments from the borrowers include: "It's a great idea with more social interaction and integration like this",

- "You learn a little bit more and you gain more knowledge and details than you would normally do reading a book",
- "This was an eye-opener!",
- "I had greater prejudices than I thought.",
- "It took away my fear..."
- and "Living books give a new dimension, this ought to be a permanent project in libraries!".

During the Holocaust Remembrance Day, the library lent out survivors from the concentration camps, with emphasis on living books rather than on prejudices.

All "books" have been thrilled about the project and would happily take part in the project again; like the animal rights activist who met a hunter and during their conversation they found out that they really had a lot in common.

Borrowing a living book can even be a crucial moment in someone's life. This was the case for a young mother who borrowed the transvestite. She wanted to understand the transvestite's way of thinking, and what he had experienced when he finally told his family and friends about his situation. It turned out that her nine-year-old daughter feels like she is born into the wrong body, that *she* is really a *he*. The transvestite and the mother had a good talk and the mother called her daughter



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who came to the library. The meeting was a turning point for both the mother and her daughter. The mother received answers to her questions, and so did her daughter who was encouraged to declare to her friends that she was really a boy. A documentary was made by an Australian TV channel and interviews were made online with Catharina Norén, the transvestite and the mother. After the show a chat session was arranged where people "down under" gave their support to the young mother. She is now in contact with mothers in similar situations.

Both national and international media has shown great interest in Living Books. Articles have been published in several large European newspapers. Interviews have been made by the BBC as well as by the Radio Live New Zealand and a TV-team from San Francisco.

The Living Library concept has spread to other countries: Norway, Hungary, Finland, Iceland, Austria, the Netherlands, The United States and Canada. Maybe this activity will encourage people around the world to look upon their neighbours with less prejudice and encourage people to be true to themselves. As the transvestite told the young boy:

- Be yourself. Everyone else is already taken!

Eva Jönsson
Information officer, Malmö City Library

Thanks to Gunilla xx for this information

I can thoroughly recommend this idea, as I tried out the idea in my library last year for Refugee week. We used refugees and asylum seekers with local schoolchildren. I think it was an eye-opener for the children and the refugees but most of all for the teachers of one school who realised there was much more prejudice that they had realised in their school. The encouraging thing to me was the way the majority of the children reacted against those with open prejudice.

Editor



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World Library and Information Conference August 2007 Durban Section Programme

The Public Libraries Section has a very interesting programme lined up for the WLIC in Durban in August. Here's the draft programme. Its more or less complete but as always is subject to change at short notice.

Social Inclusion - how can libraries embrace the challenge of reaching out to serve all people in their community?

08.30-08.45	Opening Us and them: libraries in the community Alex Byrne, President of IFLA
08.45-10.45	Democracy and social inclusion
08.45-09.15	A theoretical paper: Public Libraries Addressing Social Inclusion: How we may think... Prof Ina Fourie, Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria, South Africa
09.15-09.30	Public Libraries, Spaces for Social Cohesion: Proximity and Inclusion in the public libraries of Barcelona Juan Jose Arranz, Programme Director, Barcelona Public Libraries, Catalonia, Spain
09.30- 09.45	Best practice within this theme: A Broad Library with Social Inclusion: Reaching out to Vulnerable Groups in China Qunqing, Huang & Zhaochun, Li, Librarian in Charge of Section of Foreign Books and Periodicals, Sun Yat-Sen Library, Guangdong Province, China & Director of Sun Yat-Sen Library of Guangdong Province
09.45-10.00	" I Have the Right to Know" Ana María Pino,, Librarian, National Library of Congress, Chile
10.00-10.30	Discussion and questions to speakers
10.30 – 10.45	Tea/Coffee Break



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10.45 -12.45	Bridging the information gap – digital inclusion
10.45-11.15	Information Literacy in Practice: engaging public library workers in rural South Africa Karin De Jager, and Mary Nassimbeni, Associate Professors, Centre for Information Literacy, Department of LIS, Cape Town, South Africa
11.15 - 11.30	Braving rapids and winding timber-tracks: towards equitable access to information for libraries in Sarawak Bolhassan, Rashidah Binty, Chief Executive Officer, Sarawak State Library, Malaysia
11.30- 11.45	What is a Community Centre?, Hedelund Gallerup , Loan Librarian, Aarhus Public Library, Denmark
11.45 – 12.00	Serving Patrons in Their Language, Not Just Ours Ulrich, Paul S & McGlamery, Susan, Reference Librarian, Berlin Central and Regional Library, Germany & Global Product Manager of Cooperative Services, OCLC
12.00 – 12.30	Discussion and questions to speakers
12.30 – 12.45	Cultural Presentation –
12.45 – 13.45	Lunch break – with music in auditorium
13.45-15.45	The Right to Read
13.45 – 14.15	Babies Guidelines – A presentation of the Guidelines for Babies and Toddlers Ivanka Stricevic Zagreb City Libraries, Croatia Kathy East, Wood County District Public Library, Bowling Green, Ohio,me USA
14.15 - 14.30	Libraries Respond to Children in Need: Two Model Programmes Muller, Pat, County of Henrico Public Library, Richmond, USA Barbara Genco Brooklyn Public Library Brooklyn New York, USA
14.30 - 14.45	Minority Group in a School Library Novljan, Silva, Consultant for Libraries, The State Centre for Library Development, National and University Library, Slovenia



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14.45 – 15.00	Paired Reading – Proposal to Follow Nel, Christine, Greater Tzaneen Library Services, Zambia
15.15 – 15.45	Discussion and questions to speakers
16.00 - 18.00	Libraries for all
16.00 -16. 15	Cultural presentation
16.15 -16.45	Public Libraries as Sources of Information to the Disadvantaged Ghaji Badawi, Lecturer, Department of Library and Information Serivces, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria
16.45-17.00	Co-operation for Better Libraries Ericksson, Anna-Birgitta, School Librarian, Rinkeby, Stockholm, Sweden
17.00– 17.15	To be confirmed
17.15– 17.30	From Caterpillar to Butterfly: Mobile book boxes in Rural Communities June Baatjes, South Africa
17.30 – 17.50	Discussion and questions to speakers
17.50 – 17.55	Closing remarks – summary
17.55 – 18.00	Short cultural presentation

Back up paper:

James Henri and Sandra Lee Associate Professor Faculty of Education Hong Kong
and Instructor, Faculty of Education, British Columbia, Canada

Copyright and copyleft: Intellectual property rights in a socially responsible and
culturally diverse world



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Catalonia (Spain) tours Germany

Bibliothek katalonien

An itinerant exhibition shows the Catalan culture in the libraries of Germany

"Catalonia library" is one of the first activities of the Frankfurt International Book Fair 2007

On the 21 of March, an itinerant sample of Catalan culture that will appeal several public and university libraries of Germany, on the occasion of the Frankfurt International Book Fair, started in Stuttgart. In the present edition, which will develop between the 10 and 14 October of 2007, the Catalan culture is the guest of honour and, fruit of the cooperation among Catalan and German public libraries, along all the year will take place the exhibition "Catalonia library" (*Bibliothek Katalonien*). The general director of Cultural Cooperation, Ms. Anna Falguera, will attend the inauguration of the exhibition in April in Frankfurt,

A hundred and fifty books edited in German, of fiction, essay and poetry, besides art, guides on journeys or gastronomy they are gathered in the exhibition which, accompanied of one about parallel activities, it explains what Catalonia is. The Department of Culture and Media, across the Area of Libraries of the General Direction of Cultural Cooperation, has produced samples. The Institute Ramon Llull has organized the program of activities and the bibliographical selection has been made in collaboration with the Goethe Institute of Barcelona.

Each library will have the exhibition installed for approximately a month. Stuttgart is the first in the months of March and April. Bremen, Frankfurt and Essen will hold it between April and May. Then follow, Braunschweig, Freiburg, Heidelberg, Würzburg and Mülheim. Finally, the months of November and December, the sample will finish its itinerary in Reutlingen and Hamburg.

At each library activities related with the Catalan culture, gastronomy, literature and music are celebrated during the exhibition.

The directors of the German libraries that hold the exhibition are invited to visit Barcelona's on the 23rd April, *Sant Jordi* Day (Saint Georges Day). Once the exhibition has been finished, the Department of Culture and Media will give the books to the libraries that have accommodated it.

More information: places and dates



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City	Library	Dates of exhibition
Stuttgart	Stadtbücherei Stuttgart	21.3.2007-13.4.2007
Bremen	Stadtbibliothek Bremen	13.4.2007-12.5.2007
Frankfurt am Main	Stadtbücherei Frankfurt am Main	17.4.2007-12.5.2007
Essen	Universitätsbibliothek Duisburg-Essen	19.4.2007-12.5.2007
Braunschweig	Universitätsbibliothek Braunschweig	7.6.2007-7.7.2007
Freiburg	Stadtbibliothek Freiburg	4.9.2007-29.9.2007
Heidelberg	Stadtbücherei Heidelberg	2.10.2007-27.10.2007
Würzburg	Stadtbücherei Würzburg	5.10.2007-3.11.2007
Mülheim an der Ruhr	Stadtbibliothek Mülheim an der Ruhr	8.10.2007-3.11.2007
Reutlingen	Stadtbibliothek Reutlingen	6.11.2007-1.12.2007
Hamburg	Bücherhallen Hamburg	10.11.2007-8.12.2007

Source:

Glòria Pérez-Salmerón

Servei de Cooperació Bibliotecària

<http://www.bibliothekkatalonien.com/>

Branching out in Florida, USA

There has been a remarkable resurgence of interest in poetry within American popular culture. Public libraries, bookstores and nightclubs are hosting poetry slams and readings. Poetry is featured within online communities on the Internet, and there has been an unprecedented appearance of poets in the mainstream media. Poetry has even entered daily home life with poetry magnets on American refrigerators. To celebrate poetry, Jacksonville Public Library will host *Branching Out: Poetry for the 21st Century*.

A highly successful initiative now in its second series, *Branching Out: Poetry for the 21st Century* is hosted by public libraries in seven cities across the U.S. Sponsored jointly by two of the country's preeminent poetry organizations—Poets House and the Poetry Society of America—*Branching Out* is made possible by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.



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The *Branching Out* program series comes to Jacksonville with a talk by poet/scholar Edward Hirsch about the life and work of Spanish poet and dramatist Federico Garcia Lorca on Tuesday, May 8th. *Branching Out* brings a second program to Jacksonville with a talk by poet/scholar E. Ethelbert Miller on the life and work of famed Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes on Tuesday, June 12th.

Topic: Federico Garcia Lorca, Spanish poet Speaker: Edward Hirsch

Program description:

What are a poet's artistic inspirations? Edward Hirsch will explore Federico Garcia Lorca's artistic sources, including native Andalusian music and the avant-garde Hispanic literary movement Ultraísmo, the intellectual community in which Lorca became a youthful prodigy. Also explored will be Lorca's complicated friendships with surrealist painter Salvador Dali and surrealist filmmaker Luis Buñuel and how he came to write Poet in New York, considered by Hirsch to be one of the greatest books of poems written about New York City.

Speaker biography:

Edward Hirsch is an award-winning poet and academic with six published books of poems. Hirsch wrote the national bestseller, *How to Read a Poem and Fall in Love with Poetry* in 1999. Incorporating interesting anecdotes from the lives of poets, the bestseller is a guide for the layperson in understanding and appreciating poems. Hirsch is currently the president of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, which gives fellowships to professionals in the fields of natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and the creative arts.

Topic: Langston Hughes, Harlem Renaissance poet Speaker: E. Ethelbert Miller

Program description:

What are Langston Hughes' lessons? The life and work of Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes echoes the social transformation of America from the 1920s to the early 1960s. Exploring the tough tapestry of race, an examination of his work will help library customers learn more about America. How did he put blues and jazz into his words? What was his secret to incorporating these musical genres into his work? Audience members will discover how Hughes changed literature. Ethelbert Miller will explore these topics and more in his talk "Dance With the Dreamer."

Speaker biography:

E. Ethelbert Miller is an award-winning poet, academic and literary activist, who has helped to launch the careers of many professional writers. This spring, Miller was



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honoured with the Barnes & Nobles Writers for Writers Award, recognizing authors who have given generously to other writers or to the broader literary community. Miller is author of ten published books. Since 1974, Miller has been the director of the African American Resource Centre at Howard University.

Thanks to Barbara Gubbin Jacksonville Library Florida USA

A visit to Dubai Public Library

When I returned from New Zealand I was given a package deal by the booking company which included a couple of nights in Dubai. Not one to miss an opportunity I called in at the main Dubai Public library. Having never been to a library in an Arab country I was little apprehensive as to what I should encounter.

I should not have worried from the moment I told enquiries who I was I received a most friendly welcome. I was immediately passed on to the Library Adviser Emad Abu-Eid, who made me most welcome and gave me a grand tour of the library.

Dubai libraries are booming they are opening new branches at frequent intervals. In Dubai they process the new books for all the branches. Whilst I was there, they were in the middle of transferring stock from their existing system to a wi-fi system. During this time, they needed two sets of machinery on counters to cope with old and new systems. As books were returned they were passed to go on wi-fi. They use Dynix(now Sirsi-Dynix) having made the upgrade to Horizon just before wi-fi. . It was fascinating to see exactly the same system as I used in my last library being upgraded with very little apparent stress. At the same time, some of the staff were taking ICDL exams.

I had an interesting meeting with the children's librarian. She was most interested to find a male librarian who had been a children's librarian and we as we swapped experiences I think we were both surprised at the similarity of children's activities we had done.

Thanks to Emad Abu-Eid and staff

Editor.



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Mobile Library News

30 years at Zagreb

Congratulations to Zagreb Mobile Library Service on reaching their 30th birthday. I was invited to be a speaker at the event in the Central Library Zagreb and it was great to see such enthusiasm for the service from staff and elected members.

The event was in the main central library and was accompanied by an exhibition of the history of Zagreb mobile libraries and presentations to national authors, artists, illustrators and musicians.

I did a presentation on mobile libraries of the world. Spomenka Petrovic of Zagreb did a talk on local mobiles and Elina Harju of Finland gave us a good talk on the new Netti-Nesse, the award winning IT bus from Tampere in Finland

Now for the next 30 years!

How to retire without really retiring

Imagine taking retirement, getting a good pension and then continuing to work and spend all the pension.

That's what Jaswant Singh former librarian in Grandledge Michigan USA has just done. After a 30 year career he has devoted his retirement to providing a mobile library service in his native Punjab in India.

In 2003 he instigated the first mobile in the Punjab a state which does not have a compulsory library service. It took him 6 months continuous work to get it up and running. He has spent \$180,000 in the first 5 years, which includes the cost of a new vehicle.

The vehicle is increasing issues rapidly and Singh is hoping its use will awaken the Punjabi government to come into line with most of India and introduce a state-wide system of libraries.

Well done Mr Singh!

Further details available from the editor

New Zealand mobile meet

Wairakei Resort, Taupo

Saturday 27th January 2007 – Monday 29th January 2007

I was delighted to be invited to speak at the New Zealand mobile meet in January. I had reported in Service Point on the last NZ meet way back in 1994.

Fortunately, I have family in South Island, and was able to combine the two trips.

After 39 hours flying, I arrived at Christchurch and had a good 2 weeks with my cousin exploring South Island. I visited some branch libraries and was intrigued to



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visit Darfield library as I have worked at Darfield Library in Barnsley UK. I was made most welcome especially after discovering that a couple of staff were to attend the Taupo conference.

When I arrived in Taupo I realised this was going to be no ordinary mobilemeet. The site was spa resort with hot thermal springs giving a lovely 38 degrees in the swimming pool. I soon met up with Organiser Cathie Richard from north Shore libraries who made me most welcome. I helped her and Bruce Myers a fellow speaker from Australia set up the conference.

The conference lasted three days and there was a great variety of speakers

1. The first speaker was Helen Woodhouse Manager of Takapuna Library at North Shore Libraries. She gave a useful history of Mobile Libraries in New Zealand.
2. Robert Knight is Director of the Riverina Regional Library, in south-west NSW, Australia. He gave a presentation on *Branches on Wheels: Innovations in Public Library Mobile Services* Showed us pictures of interesting vehicles 40 foot semi trailers with pods on both sides making an immense x- shaped library.
3. Beth Didovich provoked much discussion on floating collections. Will floating collections work for a mobile library? Floating a collection allows items to be re-shelved in the library where they have been returned, rather than being sent on to their home library. This change to the way the stock is managed is presenting its own problems for the Mobile Library with its much smaller collections and different customer profile. The issues, challenges, workarounds, benefits and successes were discussed. Beth Didovich is the Collections Manager for North Shore Libraries
4. *Mobile Librarian – what sort of job is that?* Bruce Monley has worked with the State Library of Queensland's Country Lending Service since 1989. Bruce examined the results of a mobile library survey on the employment of mobile library staff based on a sample of Australian mobile services.
5. *Keeping Bookmobiles Alive* Jan Meadows, Bookmobile Supervisor, Pikes Peak Library District in Colorado Springs, Colorado USA She is currently the "21st Century Bookmobiles" columnist on the ALA website. Jan discussed; Why do we need bookmobiles? Bookmobiles v's branches. How to be creative when



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looking for funding. .Managing and making the most of your service including service priorities. Marketing of your bookmobile.

6. Mobile Library Occupational Health and Safety Guidelines Bruce Myers is currently Manager of the Swan Hill Regional Library, located in northwestern Victoria, Australia. Bruce explained the documents developed by the Country Public Libraries Group of Victoria in 2005. The guidelines were revised at the October 2006 conference in Ballarat and I found it a most useful document that could save you lots of time see <http://www.mobilelibraries.com.au/oh&s.htm>
7. Mobile Libraries Around the World: a visual roundup by Robert Pestell. Robert did an excellent presentation on mobile libraries around the world. He threatened that this would be his last presentation, but I wouldn't bet on it.
8. Library Service to the Aged and the Housebound, Speaker: Gayle Rowden's current role encompasses responsibility for 8 library branches and two mobile vehicles, one of which is an articulated, new, state of the art mobile library with two pods! The other is the Outreach vehicle, which delivers service to nursing homes, institutions and retirement villages. Working with the community and believing in the ethos of libraries and equity of access to all, Gayle feels that this is an exciting time to be in libraries. Although she has been working in libraries for a number of years, she has no intention of not being excited and challenged by the new roles, responsibilities and technologies that libraries are embracing.
9. Mobile Libraries online, anywhere, anytime? By Sonia Higgs, Information Systems Manager at Upper Murray Regional Library. Sonia is an IT specialist working in libraries, and has a special interest in data communications for mobile libraries. As the Information Systems Manager, Sonia has been involved in two trials of mobile two way satellite and extensive testing of the 1X CDMA/EVDO services. These trials have been conducted in extreme conditions ranging from snowy Alpine areas to over 40 degree inland plains. Sonia is the webmaster for www.mobilelibraries.com.au and is a member of the State Library of Victoria's Federated Search Portal committee.

Finally I had to earn my crust and gave a paper on 101 things you need to know about a mobile library service.



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The mobile meet was made more memorable because of the wonderful social activities. These included a coach trip to Orakei Karaka Thermal area and River Jet ride on Waikato River. This gave us the splendid spectacle of 15 mobile librarians clinging on to the jet raft as it spun down the river; someone said it was rather like travelling in their old mobile library!

The conference ended with a parade into Taupo and a picnic lunch by the vehicles.

Many thanks to Cathie Richards for her splendid organisation, without doubt the best mobilemeet I have ever attended.

Editor

From shelves to computers

By Smriti Daniel Sri Lanka

The much beloved, dog-eared novels, the stern librarian behind her desk; the inviting racks bending under the weight of hundreds of books...for better or for worse, their time is nearly done. The digital age is altering things fundamental to our life and nothing seems exempt from change – not even our books.

What does the Digital Age hold for the country's libraries? A National Conference on Library and Information Science that was held earlier this month, in Sri Lanka, discussed the issue with some fascinating results.

While many may not be able to see past the end of libraries, as we know them, the potential in digital libraries is actually tremendous. These libraries could exist on the World Wide Web – no longer the prisoners of location. Books would no longer need to be printed – with all the cost and consumption of paper that implies. Circulation could be accomplished with a few clicks of a button.

Even more tantalising is the possibility of access for all. "Much is being said about information provision to rural communities, marginalised communities, etc...in other words, information for all," said Mrs. Dilmani Warnasuriya, President of the Sri Lanka Library Association, addressing the conference. With the government now focused heavily on the e-lanka concept, "digital" is now a new buzzword, she said.

Dr. B. Shadrach from the International Development Research Centre, making the keynote address spoke about connecting people with information. He discussed mobile and outreach services and their ability to mobilise and link communities. Featuring free computer and internet access, such services would seem a natural extension of the role that public libraries have already embraced – that of being learning centres open to all citizens.



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Discussing the “new breed of librarians,” Dr. Shadrach emphasised their role as leaders of the community. Using the information at their disposal, librarians around the world are turning trainers and mentors – teaching everything from mushroom cultivation to ground water conservation. Such grassroots initiatives are possibly the most powerful tools for change.

The Tuk–Tuk project

A perfect illustration of this is what is known as ‘The E-tuktuk Project, Kotmale’. The Kothmale Community Radio & Multimedia Centre, located in the hill country dotted with small farms and tea plantations, serves a population of 200,000 and boasts a radio channel and a computer centre among others. However, many are prevented from utilising it because of its relative remoteness or gender, ethnicity and caste considerations. Speaking at the conference, Kosala Keerthiratne, Coordinator of the UNESCO/ KMC Programme shared his inspiring and innovative approach. The centre chose to deploy an e-tuktuk – a self-contained mobile telecentre housed within a three-wheeler. The e-tuktuk boasts a laptop computer placed snugly inside the little vehicle. Alongside is a battery operated printer, a camera, a telephone and even a scanner. A wireless connection provides internet access, while electricity is provided courtesy a generator. A roof rack allows the vehicle to carry other equipment such as the Kothmale Community Radio Station’s mobile broadcasting unit. Narrowcasting of radio programmes is achieved via two loud speakers mounted to the roof rack.

The weekly route of the e-tuktuk is broadcast over the centre’s radio station, giving listeners the details of the e-tuktuk’s packed itinerary.

Thanks to this mobile service, many things are now possible. Telemedicine, an English teaching programme and emergency communications are among the many benefits that remote communities can now avail themselves of.

Other programmes are also being geared to meet the needs of rural communities. The Dambulla Public Library, Sri Lanka is focusing on an information programme designed to give Sri Lankan farmers access to relevant information. Public libraries are being encouraged to provide local farmers with reliable information that will multiply productivity and also provide solutions to agrarian problems, revealed I. Mudannayake, from the Agriculture Library in the University of Peradeniya. Disease and pest outbreaks, water problems and how to select suitable pesticides and fertilizers may not seem entirely like subjects in the traditional library, but libraries are evolving to meet many varied needs, and in doing so affecting and supporting many people across the social spectrum.

Even in the cities, where plenty of libraries exist, networking is proving to be important. Colleges are linking up and in the process are dramatically multiplying the information resources they offer. For the modern generation e-books – easy to transport, store and exchange - may very well be the future.



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Taking all that was said into consideration, if there was one thing the conference firmly established, it was the boundless potential inherent in going digital. From preservation, to improving access and sharing, libraries all over the world are evolving, and stepping up to meet the challenges of the digital age...and while they may never be quite the same again, they just might be a whole lot better.

IFLA Section 8 for Public Libraries Standing Committee Meetings Meeting Mülheim an der Ruhr, Germany Friday – Saturday 9 – 10 February, 2007

The committee had a very successful couple of days in Mülheim an der Ruhr thanks to the hospitality of Klaus-Peter Boettger. The committee were pleased to be joined by Claudia Lux, the President elect for IFLA. She was invited to talk to the meeting on her theme of *Libraries Make a Difference* getting libraries on government's agendas by "interfering". She explained that while it was not always possible to get messages across from our employed positions it was possible to do this using our "professional" status through national associations and IFLA. She said that we need to find business partners, use examples of good practice e.g. on WSIS database, and write when libraries are not invited to forums when discussions are taking place.

The main points discussed at the meeting were:

- The problems for some members getting to distant meetings
- Chair's Report by Torny Kjekstad she reported on the call for papers for the Section programme for Durban
- The Multicultural Manifesto – was being progressed but needed some further work and approval by UNESCO. TK had on behalf of the Multicultural Section and as chair of Division III, had a meeting in Unesco, Paris with Assiz Abid.

- Financial Report

The Caterpillar project had funds for 2 years to be completed

year The e-book project for the Public Library Guidelines also had its final funding to be used up.

It was agreed that we could look at sponsoring a student to attend a conference and proposed that this should be the student who had assisted Barbara Clubb on the Libraries, Museums and Archives project.

- The need for a social event after the Section programme in Quebec was also identified and agreed in principle that this could be supported by the Section funds.
- Report from Governing Board and Professional Committee



Public Libraries Section

- Torny Kjekstad would be judging the poster sessions for Durban.
- Under the evaluation of the Seoul Conference, the lack of a delegate list in the publications distributed was to be redressed in Durban.
- The Committee was advised that the minutes of GB and PC meetings were on IFLANET and to read these as further information to supplement TK's report.
- There was a review of Ongoing Projects
 - a) Meeting User Needs
 - b) Public Library Guidelines
 - i. Translation and publications update
 - ii. Marketing update
 - iii. E-book Revised Edition
 - c) Public Libraries, Museums and Archives Research Project
 - d) Caterpillar Book Box Project
 - e) Public Library Manifesto Revision
- Website, Newsletter and Section Brochure
- Programmes for IFLA 2007 in Durban, South Africa
- IFLA Structure Review
- More information was required on how to set up and run a Special Interest Group and the possibility of a Mobile Libraries SIG flagged up.
- Elections for the Committee 2007
- Programmes for IFLA 2008 in Quebec, Canada
- Pre-Conference Seminar update
- Review Strategic Plan for 2005-07