



# International Leads

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## No library Is An Island: Libraries in Rarotonga, Cook Islands

By Pat Kittelson

Last year, with funding from the Harold Lancour Scholarship for International Travel from Beta Phi Mu, I had the opportunity to spend time in the Cook Islands touring the libraries in Rarotonga and visiting with librarians.

The fifteen islands that comprise the Cook Islands lie between Tonga and the Society Islands (Tahiti) in the South Pacific Ocean. In 1965 the Cook Islands achieved self-government in a unique partnership with New Zealand. Today, the Cook Islands independently handle all internal matters. Cook Islanders remain New Zealand citizens and rely on the New Zealand Government to carry out defense functions and external affairs in consultation with Cook Islands representatives. The libraries are internally managed and independent of the New Zealand library system.

**The National Library.** Cook Islands Prime Minister, Sir Jeffery Henry, established a new National Library, Archives, and Museum located not far from the original Cook Islands Library and Museum. This new facility receives funding from the government and reports to the Minister of Culture and Education. I met with Justina Nicholas, librarian at the National Library. Justina described the National Library's mission as currently evolving from providing resources and materials to primary and secondary schools to becoming a repository for Cook Islands and Pacific government documents and reports. She envisions one day that the National Library and the National Archives (housed in another building) could be merged into a unified collection preserving Cook Islands culture and heritage. Because much of the history of the Cook Islands is oral in nature, an oral tradition collection has been collected on audiotapes and transcribed. Justina sees possibilities in digitizing that collection and providing research access for Cook Islands genealogists and scholars. Currently she is exploring possible funding sources for such a project.



Runanga Puka/Cook Islands National Library in Rarotonga. (Photo: Pat Kittelson, November 2002)

**The Cook Islands Library and Museum.** It was established over 30 years ago, the most visited library in the Islands. The collection contains over 6,000 items, including children's and adult fiction and non-fiction, a large Pacific Island collection, and a small special collection of early Cook Islands books, newspapers, and Pacific magazines. Johnny Frisbee is the part-time librarian of this self-sufficient enterprise. With no government support, the library relies on donations and membership fees to cover the costs of wages, insurance, power, telephone, and an Internet connection. Books and materials are donated by individuals and also through a unique network that winds its way across the Pacific and into the state of Oregon in the United States. "Books for the Cooks" is the motto of a small book and video donation program led by Bob and Dot Pailthorp of Depoe, Oregon. Over the past seven years, the Pailthorps have

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## Gary E. Strong Receives 2003 Humphry/OCLC Forest Press Award

Gary E. Strong, Director of the Queens Borough Public Library and soon-to-be University Librarian at UCLA, is the recipient of the American Library Association's International Relations Committee 2003 Humphry/OCLC Forest Press Award. The award is presented to a librarian or other person who has made significant contributions to international librarianship, classification and subject analysis, and/or library work in Third World countries.



Mr. Strong earned a Master of Library Science degree (MLS) in 1967 at the University of Michigan and a Bachelor's degree in Education in 1966 at the University of Idaho.

Between 1980-1994, Mr. Strong was the State Librarian of California, founding member and director emeritus of the board of directors of the California State Library Foundation. He served as CEO of the California Library Services Board; chaired the California Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act board; a member of the California Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act Finance Committee; Executive Director and ex-officio member of the board of the California State Library Foundation; chaired the Governor's State Literacy Collaborative Council, and established the California Literacy Campaign and Families for Literacy Program. Between 1979-1980, Mr. Strong was the Deputy State Librarian of the Washington State Library. In addition, he has held leadership positions in the Everett (WA) Public Library (1973-1976); the Lake Oswego (OR) Public Library; and the Markeley Residence Library at the University of Michigan (1966-1967).

Mr. Strong is the recipient of numerous professional honors,

including the Public Library Association's Charlie Robinson Award; a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Librarian National Award from Syracuse University's School for Information Studies, and the Queens Business Person of the Year-Large Business Award by the Queens Chamber of Commerce, 1996 Chinese American Librarians Association Distinguished Services Award, to name just a few.

Mr. Strong is the author/editor of many journal articles on library and literacy issues, and was recipient of the H.W. Wilson Periodical Award for his editorial work on the California State Library Foundation Bulletin between 1982-1994.

Mr. Strong has an outstanding record for contributions to international librarianship. Certainly, his work as Co-Chief Executive Officer of the 2001 IFLA Boston National Organizing Committee was a very significant contribution to international relations with other libraries and librarians. He not only has served in other important capacities, e.g., IFLA Representative to

The information in this report is based on the data provided by the IFLA International Librarianship Committee. The information is not intended to be used for any other purpose.

**IRRT and IRC Programs and Meetings at 2003  
ALA Annual Conference in Toronto (June 19 – 25, 2003)**

**Programs**

## 2002 Hong Kong Book Fair

By Christine Cundall

Last July I had the privilege of attending the 2002 Hong Kong Book Fair along with other librarians from the U.S. It is certainly everything that Frank Xu and Carol Alabaster described in *International Leads* (September 2001). Frank Xu led the U.S. delegation last year. Many of the seventeen delegates were there for at least the second visit and all but two of us spoke Chinese. I do not speak Chinese and this was my first book fair in Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) was a wonderful host. It works closely with joint Publishing who coordinates and ships the purchases. It also provided each of us with an assistant. In my case, Janice Ching was invaluable. She is an editor, designs book covers, and, most fortunately for my library, reads fiction. There are many non-fiction titles in Chinese. We do not collect these at present although I did find a few bilingual titles to try.

This time many young people were again enjoying the book fair. Teenagers frequently sat at the edge of their hall reading their purchases. It seemed quite the place to be socially. Many young families made the colorful children's area very busy. The quantity of educational material in English was also impressive. All the halls were busy at the book fair, especially during the weekend.

We visited the HKTDC library that serves the HKTDC mission "to promote trade with and within Hong Kong." This special business/trade library produces several of its own publications, such as one-page trade guides to other countries. The library has 40,000 titles, 2,000 periodicals, 500 statistical tables, 160,000 newspaper clippings, videos and more. It is freely open to the public who makes good use of these resources, including the many database subscriptions. People starting new businesses and those with small businesses find the library particularly useful for the marketing and trade information, especially in areas

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## International Librarians Reception

American librarians and librarians from other countries gathered at the International Librarians Reception held at the ALA Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, June 2002.

(Photos: Sha Li Zhang, June 2002)



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## Cook Islands Libraries

Islands and Niue, manuscripts of a Dutch/Maori dictionary as well as the diaries of Monsignor Bernadine Castinie (French clergy 1921-1939).

**Educational Libraries.**

*Report from the International Relations Committee*

Student use of Internet is growing  
at the University of the South  
Pacific. (Photo: Pat Kittelson,  
November 2002)

advantage of increased access to their  
locally produced reports, documents,  
and literature is immeasurable.

*(Pat Kittelson worked at the University  
of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand from  
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Postage