



International Leads

A Publication of the International Relations Round Table of the American Library Association

Volume 19

September 2005

Number 3

Hosting strengthens ties at home and abroad

By Kristin McDonough

In late 2001, in the wake of 9/11's devastating impact on New York City's economy, The New York Public Library imposed a temporary moratorium on travel to professional meetings. Having just stepped down as chair of the ACRL International Relations Committee, I was sorry to miss upcoming committee meetings at ALA conferences and sought to keep a finger on the pulse of global librarianship during the travel ban. A simple way to do so "in my own backyard" at the NYPL Science, Industry and Business Library (SIBL) is, I have discovered, to exploit opportunities to host international visitors.

Four years later, with dozens of study tours and exchanges under SIBL's belt, it's clear that this heightened receptivity to accommodating colleagues from abroad reaps rich mutual benefits. The most visible was the recognition accorded to SIBL's director as the 2003 recipient of the first John Jacob Astor award for "exceptional contribution to the transatlantic transfer of information" from the Checkpoint Charlie Foundation, whose mission is to foster cooperation between German and American institutions. But perhaps the most gratifying result has been the strengthening of ties between SIBL and colleagues from *local* libraries and government bodies, as well as commercial associates such as architects and database vendors, when we involve them in planning events for foreign guests.

Michael Dowling of the ALA International Relations office first set

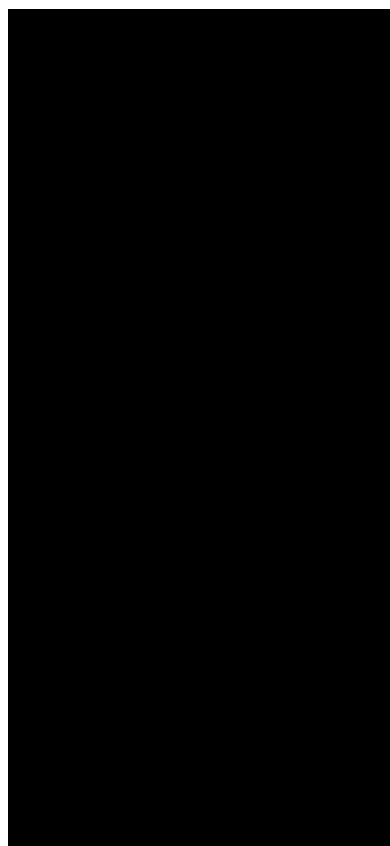


SIBL Director Kristin McDonough (right); Alvin Roselin, district manager, New York, Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE); and Jennifer Keohane, business outreach librarian, Simsbury Public Library, address 400 participants on "Business Assisting Services in U.S. Public Libraries" at the Research Institute on the Economy, Industry and Trade symposium in Tokyo, Japan, in July 2003.

SIBL on this path by asking us to handle a key aspect of the Dutch Library Association's (DLA) New York study tour. Their able organizer herself had set up the rota of visits to academic and special libraries, but couldn't realize her dream of culminating the week-long study tour with a symposium that brought together Dutch and U.S. librarians as presenters and participants. Via email she and I quickly determined the symposium topic (the rising cost of serials), engaged speakers, solicited underwriting from

vendors, and created an e-invitation and other promotions, all in virtual exchanges. Then I took over site and refreshment selection, guest list generation, gift-bag preparation, etc. When she literally wept her gratitude at the closing reception, I was taken aback until I realized that making local arrangements, though hardly an onerous task, might seem an insurmountable challenge when tackled at a distance.

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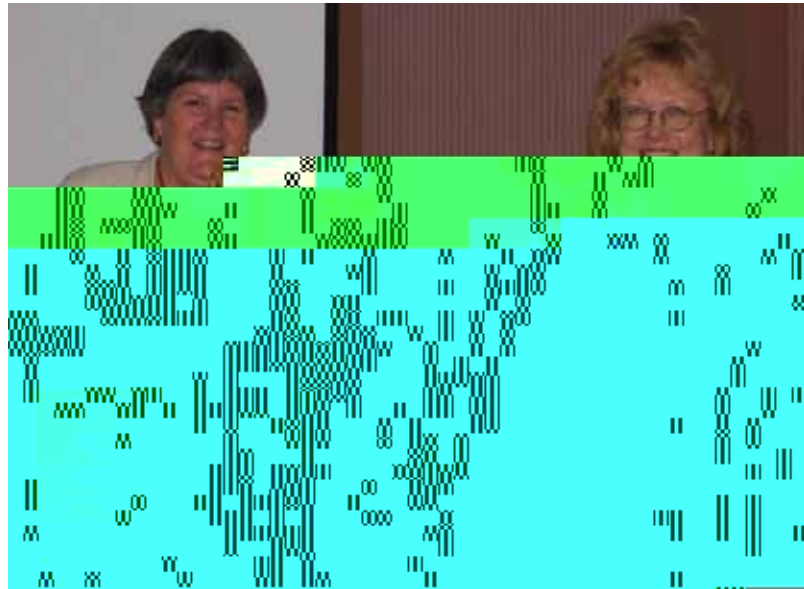
IRC presents awards to Choldin, Tarsis

Dr. Marianna Tax Choldin is this year's recipient of the American Library Association (ALA) International Relations Committee's *John Ames/Humphry/OCLC/Forest Press Award*. OCLC/Forest Press donated the cash award of \$1,000, which is given to an individual for significant contribution to international librarianship.

Dr. Marianna Tax Choldin received this award for her significant contributions in librarianship and community service worldwide. Dr. Choldin is the director emerita of the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the Center's first director. Her accomplishments include making the program one of its kind, furthering international exchanges of library material, extending the involvement of the University of Illinois and its library in international programs, and promoting research and teaching.

Dr. Choldin is an internationally renowned scholar, librarian and advocate for intellectual freedom. She is known for her commitment to improving library services, sharing knowledge, and opening the doors of intellectual and human exchanges.

In 2002, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign recognized Dr. Choldin for her work in international librarianship by awarding her the Distinguished Faculty Award for



International Achievement.

In its recommendation, the 2005 jury noted that "Dr. Marianna Tax Choldin has touched the lives of many librarians all over the world most notably through her work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Mortenson Center, as its first director, through her work with the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) on its Freedom of Access to

Information and Free Expression (FAIFE) activities, and through her work with the Open Society Institute. Her numerous contributions to libraries around the world, but especially in Central Europe and Central America, reflect the same dedication and commitment to international librarianship that John Humphry displayed in his career."

Dr. Choldin was recognized during the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois.

CHICAGO - Irina Tarsis is this year's recipient of the American Library Association (ALA) International Relations Committee's Bogle-Pratt International Library Travel Fund.

The award is in recognition of Sarah Comly Norris Bogle, a prominent U.S. librarian who made notable contributions in international library service.

Irina Tarsis is a curatorial assistant for the Houghton Library at Harvard University. Tarsis works in the department of Printing and Graphic Arts. Her research focuses on the acquisition of Russian publications by leading U.S. institutions.

"This year we had a number of very good applications, but the leading candidate which the

Committee unanimously chose was the application by Ms. Irina Tarsis," said Priscilla Yu, chair of the IRRT-Bogle Pratt Award. "Ms. Tarsis is an up-and-coming scholar of Russian antiquarian book dealers and her research centers on the acquisition of Russian publications by prominent and leading libraries in the U.S., such as the Library of Congress and Harvard Library."

Tarsis attended the VII World Congress of International Council forJ s(F)71.7(whc.9(W)

U.S. students attend symposium in Budapest

By Terry Weech

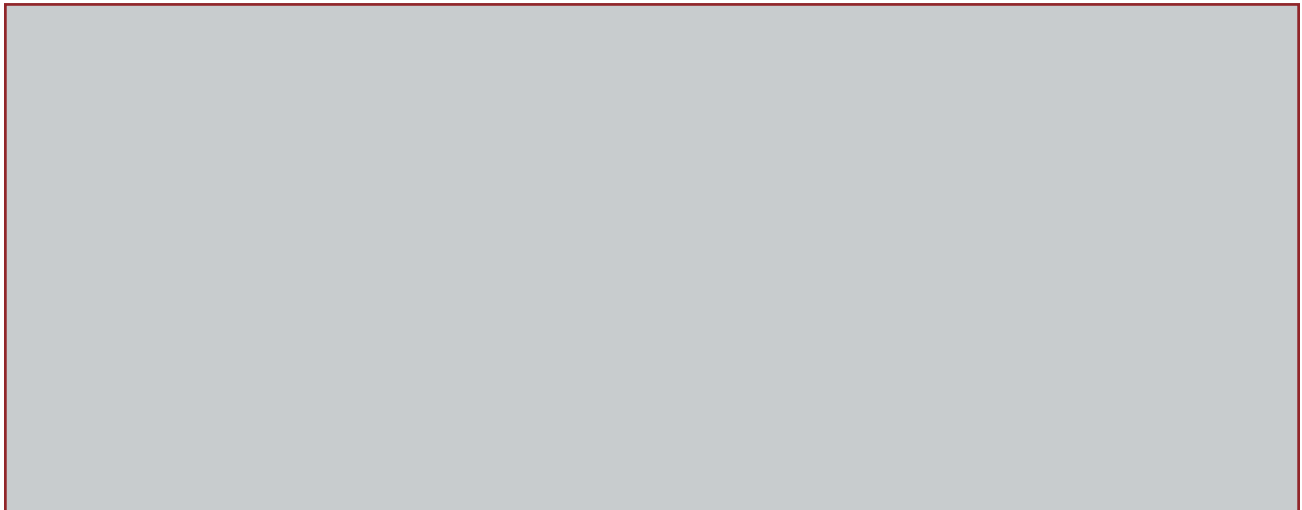
Every year since 1993, library and information studies students from two European universities organize a conference on current issues in library and information science. The name of the conference, BOBCATSSS, is an acronym for the cities in which the universities which originally established the annual conference are located. Teams of students plan and implement both the content and the management of these conferences as a part of their studies. The pattern over the years has been to pair one school from central and eastern Europe with a school from western Europe. All participants profit from the cross-border team work with other European cultures.

The Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has been supporting student participation in this unique library and information science event for the past four years. Terry Weech, who teaches at the school, has worked with the students and often co-authored papers that the students present at the conference. He is also one of the American Library Association's elected representatives to IFLA's Education and Training Section and currently serves as chair of that section.

In January of 2005, Terry traveled to Budapest, Hungary, with four graduate students from the school to attend the BOBCATSSS conference. The theme of BOBCATSSS for 2005 was Librarianship in the Information Age. At the conference, Jaclyn Bedoya and David Kunz presented their paper, "Teaching Librarians to Assist International Students: Part I, Identifying the Problem," while Leah Dodd and LeAnn Suchy presented the follow-up, "Part II: Services, Programs and Instructions." Part I addressed the problems involved in training international students to use a library, due mostly to the language barrier and differences in culture. Part II dealt with how to overcome these problems by, for instance, offering library instruction online in different languages and communicating with international student organizations on campus so as to better integrate different cultures into library training classes. Their papers are published in the proceedings of the symposium.

BOBCATSSS gave these students the opportunity not only to share their research with others, but also to discover what kind of research in library and information science is being conducted throughout the world. It introduced the students to library programs they might never come across here in the States. LeAnn Suchy explains, "It was wonderful to speak to students and librarians from so many different countries, and to hear about their library experiences."

BOBCATSSS 2006 will be held in Tallinn, Estonia, from January 30 to February 1, 2006. The theme for 2006 is "Information, Innovation, Responsibility: The Information Professional in the Network Society." More information can be found at <http://www.bobcatsss.nu/> For photos of recent BOBCATSSS conferences, see <http://leep.lis.uiuc.edu/spring05/lis590IL/BOBCATSPHOTOS.htm>



Singapore National Library embraces change

By Deborah Abraham

On a recent trip to Singapore, I set out to take a look at the city's libraries. The Singapore National Library appeared on my map only a few blocks from our hotel. So, I set off in my usual forge-ahead style in search of a large red brick, Victorian building. The area was interesting but I soon ran into a huge construction site for "SMU"—Singapore Management University. A little bewildered and already wilting from the Singapore heat, I retreated to the closest air-conditioned building. It turned out to be a renovated Victorian, the Stamford Building, where I found an Internet Café and Restaurant called the Moon River Café.

U.S.-China conference explores knowledge management

By Beverly P. Lynch

The third U.S.-China Library Conference was held in Shanghai March 22-25, 2005. It follows the first conference, held in Beijing in 1996 as a pre-conference to the 62nd IFLA Conference, and the second conference, held in New York in 2001 just before the IFLA conference in Boston. Fifty-six delegates from China and 26 from the United States participated.

The theme of the third conference, proposed by the China Organizing Committee and agreed to by the U.S. members, was Knowledge Management and Services in the Digital Age.

the book's publication and the RIETI symposium, no fewer than 10 study groups from Japan have visited SIBL from a number of different cities and prefectures. While some of these teams approach NYPL directly, others work through non-governmental agencies

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