Prague

Headings and the Library of Congress Classification System (LCCS), two topics obviously not covered in great depth in UISK's usual offerings in cataloging. My hope was that students would gain a greater appreciation for thesauri and classification systems through an in-depth understanding of American ones. At least one student, whose library was considering changing classification schemes, became convinced by the end of the class that LCCS should be adopted by the library where she worked.

The courses were taught in English, but I worried that the technical nature of the courses might be difficult for non-native English speakers. About 40 percent of Czechs speak some English; the language is more commonly spoken in Prague than elsewhere in the country. Also, the younger the Czech, the more likely that he or she will have studied English in school. Nevertheless, English skills were especially of concern in the subject analysis course where discussions of the nuances of subject terms and subject hierarchies are so important. I need not have worried. Students self-selected for both classes and I found that those with the best English skills enrolled in my courses. To ensure greater comprehension, all PowerPoint presentations were posted to a class website for later review. Frequent pauses during lectures allowed for questions and provided me with feedback as to whether my explanations were understood.

Cultural confusion visited the class a few times, though not often. In one exercise, students were to classify a book listing "Biblical baby names" (i.e., Biblical names that expectant parents might choose for their babies) with the anticipation that it would be classed with other baby name books. However, many classed it with scholarly works on Biblical names. Why? My students claimed that baby name books are not published in the Czech Republic so they were unfamiliar with this genre of publication.

The metadata class provided me with the opportunity to teach a topic outside the main focus of monographic cataloging and enabled me to catch up on my reading in the field. Together with my students, we read many articles on the web and in print on different aspects of metadata. The students were not accustomed to classroom discussions and homework assignments, although after a couple of weeks they became familiar with my expectations for participation both in and outside of class. Although the style of university instruction is changing, the older style of the professor lecturing and students taking notes is still commonly found in Czech academia. Evaluation of students was done using written midterm and final examinations. The usual method of evaluation for most classes there is an oral examination with a panel of professors.

I was most fortunate that the Fulbright grant also allotted funds for the purchase of textbooks and supplementary readings, which were donated to the institute's library and kept on reserve for the classes. The library contained a small collection of library science resources, primarily in Czech, German, and English, but with many books outdated. Also, as with most of the libraries I visited in the country, this one had a locally devised classification system with books shelved within classes according to accession number. None of the libraries I visited did shelf-listing as we know it in the United States, that is, assigning unique call numbers to books usually ending in a cutter number based on main entry. Consequently, browsing was nearly impossible as like topics were not shelved in proximity to one another. Editions of a work were not shelved together. The literature section had works by the same author in widely separated ranges. Editions of AACR2 and its translations were scattered amongst books on library management, reference services, and book

Variety of publishers attends Hong Kong fair

By Chengzhi Wang

When the ALA International Relations Office notified me that I was selected to participate in the ALA Free Pass Program for the Hong Kong International Book Fair 2005, I was delighted that my application went through successfully. Meanwhile, however, I was afraid that the fair, known as an extravaganza appealing largely to general and youth readers, perhaps wouldn't be able to benefit me as much as it does colleagues in public libraries or relatively small East Asian libraries. Unlike most of my colleagues of the 8-member ALA delegation, I conduct indiscriminative collection of Chinese language publications in all subjects of humanities and social sciences at research level for a university library. This library started as the Columbia University Chinese Library over 100 years ago, the first one

In the fair this year, it was encouraging to see an increasing number of exhibitors from China and Taiwan: 63 and 23, respectively.

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Library director joins Oxford round table

By Mark Reidell

What are the odds of a librarian in a small Minnesota town being invited to prestigious Oxford University in England to participate in an international round table discussion on government policies regarding the library and freedom of information?

For Marcia Savela, director of the Kasson Public Library, the invitation to join 55 other community leaders and scholars from the United States, England, Denmark, Peru, Poland and Canada to attend the March 2005 Oxford Round Table was unexpected and exciting. "This was a wonderful opportunity for a rural library, tucked between cornfields in southeastern Minnesota, to be represented in an international forum," stated Savela.

The invitational Oxford Round Table is a unique forum, not a conference in the conventional sense, but an opportunity for select leaders in the public and private sectors

Marcia Savela

along with scholars to discuss government policy over a five-day period in a collegial, "think-tank" atmosphere. The focus of the March 2005 Round Table was "The Library and Freedom of Information." Presenters addressed such topics as National Security Interests and Access to Library Records, Government's Restraint and Filtering of Information, The Librarian and the "US Patriot Act," Books as an Aid to Terrorism, and Internet Control and the Flow of Information.

Savela was able to fund her trip with support from the Kasson Public Library, Kasson Chamber of Commerce, Friends of the Kasson Public Library, Eastwood Bank, library patrons, and two anonymous donors.

Oxford University, located northwest of London, is comprised of a number of constituent colleges. The round table was held at Pembroke College. "Being in the most distinguished educational setting in the world couldn't help but inspire and energize us," Savela said. The five-day gathering consisted of 22 presentations and panel discussions.

Savela participated in the panel discussion on Mary McLeod Bethune. Bethune was born to former slaves a decade after the end of the Civil War. She devoted her life to ensuring the right to education and freedom from discrimination for black Americans. Bethune believed that through education, blacks could begin to earn a living in a country that still opposed racial equality.

Beyond receiving a diploma at the conclusion of the round table, Salvela was also enriched by the many new friends she made and by touring historic Oxford, including the haunts of C. S. Lewis. She also took in many other engaging sites such as Blenheim Palace, the home of Winston Churchill.

The Oxford Round Table convened in Oxford, England, for the first time in 1989 to consider major issues in contemporary educational policy in the United States, the United Kingdom and other selected countries. In the later half of the 1990s, the round table was expanded to consider important public policy matters bearing on human rights, law, economics, public finance and politics.

Marcia has been in the library field for over 25 years, the last 15 as director of the Kasson Public Library, a member of the SELCO Regional Library System. Two other Minnesotans, Jan Carey, director of the Hibbing Community College Library, and Dennis Ingolfsland, director of library services for Crown College in St. Bonifacius, also attended the round table.

CILIP service helps identify exchange opportunities

By Julie Robinson

CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals), the U.K. Library Association, has a service which could be a good professional development opportunity for the right person. Libex, the International Library and Information Job Exchange, acts as a clearinghouse for library and information professionals who are interested in arranging a job exchange between U.S.-based and U.K.-based posts. The service is free.

And now is the time to make an exchange because there are over 30 people in the U.K. registered on the Libex database who really want to make an exchange with someone in the United States. In fact, 35 percent of those who stated a preferred destination chose the United States.

Please note that CILIP does not arrange exchanges itself; this is done directly by the applicants. CILIP's role is to host the database and support, develop, and promote the

scheme in the interest of enhancing international cooperation. It is up to the exchange participants themselves to research their individual requirements and agree on the details of their exchange.

Full details, including an application form and how to apply, are available on the Libex website at http://www.cilip.org.uk/libex. Please address all enquiries about existing and future applications to Angela Frampton, Libex at CILIP e-mail: libex@cilip.org.uk.

Project brings international interns to Yale

By Graziano Krätli and Ann Okerson

In a professional environment increasingly dominated by electronic information and communication, online databases, libraries without walls, paperless archives, and other virtual realities, it is easy to forget about the real work done by real people to develop, implement, and maintain digital initiatives. These are initiatives which—it is worth remembering—are increasingly the result of, as well as the inspiration for, fruitful collaborations between individuals and institutions

Yale

acquisitions at Tishreen University in Latakia, Syria. During a three-month stay in the summer and early fall of 2004, their primary responsibility was the integration of the serials holdings of their home institutions into the OACIS bibliographical database. In addition, Mr. Khoury incorporated call numbers for all the Tishreen holdings, using the Dewey Decimal system. (Prior to this effort, the Tishreen University Library had not made use of call numbers for their serials.) Mr. Khoury also worked with the curator of the Near East Collection and a Yale student, Mr. Nakhy Kanfer, on the translation, from English into Arabic, of Library of Congress Subject Headings related to the Middle East and Middle Eastern toponyms. These were later incorporated in the OACIS search engine to facilitate searches for subjects in Arabic.

Three more interns, including two software engineers from the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt and one IT librarian from the University of Balamand in Al-Kurah, Lebanon, came to work on the OACIS project for a month each in the summer of 2005.

Mohamed El-Halosy and Shenoda Guirguis, both recent graduates of Alexandria University, concentrated their efforts on two tasks for system enhancement and long-term maintenance. First, Mr. El-Halosy worked to improve prototype data entry forms that permit partner institutions without automated library systems to enter their serial holdings information directly into the OACIS system. His second task involved automating the loading of patron datasets to the OACIS server. In addition, both he and Mr. Guirguis worked on the display of digital content in OACIS. This display was developed in prototype last December during Elizabeth Beaudin's visit to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Mr. Guirguis' other task involved developing input forms and a workflow scheme to manage the metadata associated with the digital content in OACIS.

During his internship, Mr. El-Halosy attended the METRO Digitization Expo, sponsored by the Metropolitan New York Library

IRRT Fast Facts

Compiled by Sha Li Zhang, IRRT Membership Chair

publishing. My students complained that it was difficult to find books, necessitating a heavy reliance on the catalog to locate books on a single topic. In many libraries I visited, the classes used were very broad. As a cataloger, this was perhaps the most significant difference in library culture that I experienced in the Czech Republic.

Certainly one of the reasons for shelving by accession number and the consequent lack of browsability has to do with the history of libraries in the Czech Republic. During forty years of communism, most libraries had closed stacks since their purpose was to

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