

# European Association for Health Information and Libraries



February 2002 • N° 58



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Die Romanische Kirche überragt die Altstadt. The Roman Church in the Old City of Cologne.

The production of this Newsletter was made possible by the generous sponsorship of:

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**Newsletter**  
to European Health Librarians

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# Newsletter To European Health Librarians

ISSN 1011-8454

N° 58 February 2002



Dear Everyone,

A very happy and successful 2002 to you all. In Romania we had a wonderful white Christmas with temperatures of minus 20-25o throughout the festive period. Since then it has got a little warmer averaging minus 10-12o but spring is a long way away yet.

Newsletter 58 has some very interesting articles and I would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to do this. The authors of the articles in **Highlight on...Poland** have demonstrated that their medical library and information network is one of, or possibly the most, developed in the former Eastern European countries. A new feature entitled **Our Profession** has attracted an excellent study by Benoit Thirion and Ioana Robu on a current question today. Our regular contributors Eve-Marie Lacroix , Giovanna Miranda and Constantin Cazan continue to offer a very high standard of medical library information.

I am also delighted to state that already I have a cache of promised articles for the next issue and as any Editor will tell you, this is an excellent way to start a new year. Therefore I thought I would outline the Newsletter deadlines for 2002/2003 and a list of the already established Highlight on features.

*(You will notice that I have added extra time for the deadline for the November issue 2002 because of the date of the EAHIL Conference and also for issue 64 because of the EAHIL Workshop in Oslo.)*

At this point I also would be grateful for any further offers\suggestions for European countries that we could feature in the Highlight on...in issues 62 and 63 of the EAHIL Newsletter. I am sure you will agree that we have all learnt a great deal about our European colleagues through these past features.

NEWSLETTER	DEADLINE	HIGHLIGHT ON....
No. 59- May 2002	30 Mar 2002	ITALY
No. 60- Aug 2002	30 Jun 2002	CZECH REPUBLIC
No. 61- Nov 2002	7 Oct 2002	8th EAHIL CONF. COLOGNE
No. 62- Feb 2003	7 Jan 2003	??
No. 63- May 2003	30 Mar 2003	??
No. 64- Aug 2003	14 Jul 2003	NORDIC-BALTIC EAHIL WORKSHOP, OSLO

Lastly I would like to ask you all to try and find a little time this year to participate in some of the discussions that the Newsletter articles strive to initiate.

Unfortunately rarely does the Editorial Board receive any responses and for those that do take the time to write these articles I feel it would encourage more contributions if members did forward their opinions. As I have

said before there is no need for an essay, an e-mail message would be gratefully received. These then can be arranged under the heading Comments on....

I look forward to hearing from you all in 2002.

**Sally Wood-Lamont**

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# Letter from the President



## Call to Köln

The first day back in the office after the Christmas break is never the happiest day of the year — and this is particularly so in the UK where most people manage an extended holiday encompassing Christmas and the New Year. This year, though, despite a horribly icy morning and lines of buses huddling motionless together for warmth like penguins, there was one optimistic ray of sunshine: a report from Oliver Obst of the Köln conference's programme committee and a draft programme.

Our biennial conference remains EAHIL's single most important activity; putting it together and making it work must be the worst and most nerve-shredding responsibility we can ask a member to take on. For the Köln meeting Oliver has gathered together an enthusiastic and experienced team which met just before Christmas in order to review the submitted papers and to put together the invited speaker programme. By the time this appears in print, the selected speakers should have confirmed that they will be attending, and something approaching the final programme should be available on the conference web site at [www.zbmed.de/eahil2002/](http://www.zbmed.de/eahil2002/).

Looking forward to see you all in:

Köln  
Cologne  
Colonia  
Keulen

The scientific programme is, of course, the heart of our conferences and workshops and in terms of quality and innovation our EAHIL meetings can bear comparison with the equivalent events in the other regions of the world. Another source of pleasure, though, is the way that the structure and atmosphere of succeeding EAHIL conferences has succeeded in reflecting the culture and professional traditions of each host country in turn. In contrast, for example, to the Eurovision Song Contest which always seems to reduce our amazing cultural diversity to an endless string of nonsense syllables! Köln will be no exception since many aspects of the conference (especially and most significantly the registration fee) will reflect the German professional tradition of keeping costs to a minimum and giving primacy to the quality of the presentations.



IPC meeting in Cologne, December 2001: From left to right: Rüdiger Schneemann, Manuela Colombi, Johnny Carlsson, Helena Bouzkova, Ulrich Korwitz, Friedhelm Rump, Oliver Obst, Anna Schlosser, John van Loo (Not in this picture: Suzanne Bakker, Peter Morgan)

Personally, I am very much looking forward to our Eighth conference: the venue is excellent, the programme is as strong as any we have seen in previous years, and above all Köln is a brilliantly young and exciting city. I look forward to seeing you there.

To conclude, I must say how much I have enjoyed reading preprints of the articles on medical librarianship in Poland. For the past twelve years the BMA library has been twinned with the Główna Biblioteka Lekarska (the central medical library in Warsaw), providing a back-up to their national document delivery service. This issue provides further evidence that our profession is developing apace in Eastern and Central Europe.

**Tony McSeán**

## Thinking Globally - Acting Locally: Medical libraries at the Turn of an Era



The members of the LOC. From left to right: Lydia Messing, Angelika Walckhoff, Albert Sawatzky, Annette Wöflinger, Simone Haas, Ulrich Korwitz, Uta Heinecke, Kai Heßling, Claudia Grimm, Stefan Schulte-Hermann, Helmut Schmitz, Cornelia Langer (Not in this picture: Luiza Alonso-Ferreira, Jürgen Gärtner, Christiane Haage)

More than one year before the conference centre opens its doors, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) has been founded. 15 employees from the German National Library of Medicine are taking care of everything necessary in this preparatory stage of the conference: preparation of programme and exhibitor brochures, acquisition of sponsors, booking of hotel options, of excursions and sightseeing events, planning of the conference dinner party and the catering. The conference web page has been designed and requires weekly updates. Financing has to be secured, bank accounts have to be opened and even matters of taxation have to be considered. During the hot phase of the conference preparations the LOC will be augmented to secure a successful conference.

On behalf of the LOC and IPC we would like to invite you cordially to participate in the EAHIL Conference 2002 in Cologne. Come to Cologne and see and hear the most recent developments in medical, pharmaceutical and veterinary information and library science in theory and practice! Meet colleagues from all over Europe and overseas and share their experiences and opinions. And see the city of Cologne and feel its specific lifestyle. Cologne is one of the eldest Roman settlements north of the Alps. It has been a centre of Catholicism and Romanesque architecture in the Middle Ages and is a focal point of Modern Art and Media development nowadays.

And have a regular look at the conference website (<http://www.zbmed.de/eahil2002>)  
Bookmarking this URL will be very useful.

Since Alghero the International Programme Committee (IPC), which consisted of 19 librarians from 14 countries, have worked intensively together on the Call for Papers, the evaluation of the submitted

abstracts, and the programme schedule for the conference. Thanks to a lively email discussion list and a web-based submission and scoring database, the preliminary programme was able to be fixed at a meeting in December 2001 in Cologne. From 114 abstracts, 54 submissions representing 22 countries were chosen for oral presentation. Look for the complete conference programme in the next EAHIL Newsletter or in the programme brochure which will be sent out in February. A registration form will be attached to the brochure.



ZBMed Cologne

**Ulrich Korwitz**  
Chair Local Organising Committee

**Oliver Obst**  
Chair International Programme Committee

8th European Conference for Medical and Health Libraries, Cologne, September 16-21, 2002  
E-Mail: [Eahil2002@zbmed.uni-koeln.de](mailto:Eahil2002@zbmed.uni-koeln.de)



Ulrich Korwitz and Eahil Executive Board (January 2002) From left to right: Meile Kretaviciene, Marta Viragos, Ulrich Korwitz, Linda Lisgarten, Arne Jakobsson, Tony McSeán

## Conference Extra:

For early birds:

Members and non-members of EAHIL can benefit by registering for the conference BEFORE APRIL 15th. Registration fees for the conference (including coffee, tea, lunches and the conference dinner): for EAHIL members EUR 250 (early registration), EUR 300 (registration after April 15th) for non-members EUR 320 (early registration), EUR 370 (registration after April 15th)

The preliminary programme, including an overview of the plenary and parallel sessions and a two-and-a-half day programme of continuing education courses, will be sent out soon. In addition all information related to the conference will be published on the web; please bookmark <http://www.zbmed.de/eahil2002/index.html> and check the conference site for the latest information.

EAHIL 2002 in Cologne - Microsoft Internet Explorer - [DIE Ihre werken]

Bestand Bewerken Beeld Favorieten Extra Help

8th European Conference of Medical and Health Libraries

Thinking globally - Acting locally

Medical libraries at the turn of an era

**WELCOME TO**

**EAHIL**

September 16 - 21, 2002

**C  
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E**

Conference Secretariat  
c/o Deutsche Zentralbibliothek  
für Medizin  
Joseph-Stetmann-Str. 3  
D-50904 Köln  
Tel.: + 49 (0)221 478 5800  
Fax: + 49 (0)221 478 7102  
E-Mail: eahil2002@zbmed.uni-koeln.de

8th European Conference of Medical and Health Libraries

Cologne  
16-21 September 2002

Home  
Invitation & Welcome  
Registration  
Hotel Accommodation  
Call for Papers & Posters  
Preliminary Programme Schedule  
Programme Committee

## EAHIL Council

We are pleased to announce that Mrs Maureen Forrest has agreed to replace Ms Gay Davis as the UK EAHIL Council member for the duration of what would have been Gay's term of office. Maureen is a very well known, active and respected UK medical librarian, and is currently Clairs Librarian at the John Radcliffe Oxford Hospital at Oxford.

At December 17/18 the IPC met at Cologne and decided finally about submitted papers. There were 114 submissions, 80 for oral and 34 for posters. The IPC ended up with 55 accepted oral presentations, where all countries that submitted are represented and 58 posters.

## Membership lists:

In order to further reduce costs for the Association it has been decided that correspondence and mailings to EAHIL members both from the Board and Secretariat will be by electronic mail. In the coming month you can expect to receive a PDF-version of the membership list. Please make sure that you have a correct and up-to-date e-mail address for EAHIL Secretariat, otherwise you may risk missing important news about the association. If you have not received an e-mail with the 2002 membership list from the EAHIL secretariat by April 1st please send a request to:  
[EAHIL-secr@nic.surfnet.nl](mailto:EAHIL-secr@nic.surfnet.nl)

## Future events:

All members interested in organizing an EAHIL event (workshop or conference) in the near future (2005-2010) are invited to send their proposal to the Executive Board before August 1st, 2002.

Such a proposal must include:

- name(s) of organizer(s) (chair of local organizing committee and co-workers)
- institution(s) or group(s) responsible for finances and organization
- expertise available
- conference venue, place and possible dates
- number of participants (expected/maximum capacity)
- constituents of the programme
- accommodation (hotel, restaurants, course rooms, lecture halls) available
- budget proposal (estimated pricing cf. 2002 price level)

## EAHIL elections:

Candidates wishing to stand for election as President or a Board member are invited to contact the Election Committee (René Mertens & Oliver Obst) c/o EAHIL Secretariat, Plompetorengracht 11, 3512 CA Utrecht, The Netherlands, fax: +31.30.231 1830, e-mail: [EAHIL-secr@nic.surfnet.nl](mailto:EAHIL-secr@nic.surfnet.nl).

## New Members:

We welcome the following colleagues joining EAHIL in the last few months:

- Lynette Cawthra, King's Fund Information & Library Service, London, UK and from Italy:

- Gaetana Cognetti, Istituto Regina Elena, Roma
- Christina Ferri, Istituto Zooprofilattico Lazio e Toscana, Roma
- Saba Motta, Istituto Neurologica C. Besta, Roma
- Enrica Veronesi, Fac. Di Medicina e Chirurgia/ Università, Brescia

and from Istituto Superiore di Sanita:

- Paola Ferrari
- Paola de Castro
- Laetizia Putti
- Elisabetta Poltronieri

IPC in Cologne,  
December 2001



IPC in Cologne,  
December 2001



Board meeting in Cologne, January 2002

*EAHIL Executive Board and IPC meetings took place in Cologne at the Zentral Bibliothek fuer Medizin enjoying the generous hospitality of Ulrich Korwitz. Staff members of ZBMed are very much involved in organizing the conference. They are doing a great job! We all look forward to meet them again during the conference in September.*





## Can We Move A Step Further With The Question Of CME?

We are living in an age of unprecedented change. It is the time when information has become an increasingly valuable commodity and the means of accessing that information is tied to rapid developments in technology. The question inevitably arises how library staff can cope in such a shifting environment? This is a matter that has serious ramifications for the profession.

**Continuing Education** is a concept which can be defined in more than one way. Firstly, it could be defined as educational activities leading to an academic degree. The intention of being engaged in such activities maybe the means of gaining professional development. Secondly, it could be defined as educational activities primarily designed to keep practising librarians and informational professionals abreast of their particular domain in their respective library or information centre and a way of offering them supplementary training in new fields. In the latter case, the ultimate objective of continuing education is to improve library and information services.

Individual librarians are responsible for their own professional development and the Internet access gives each librarian a platform for individual expression, thus opening new opportunities for professional development and collaboration, in addition to the personal development benefits gained by experiencing other perspectives. A good example of this is the use of listservers and WWW sites for special library groups.

The White Paper "**Towards the Learning Society**" (Commission of the European Communities, 1995) acknowledges the importance of

education and training in Europe in a period of rapid change. Within this broad context, the aim of this paper is to stress the significance of continuing education for the individual and to suggest that developments in information technology inevitably tend to encourage more open approaches to learning.

Health sciences librarians, like other professionals, function under an implicit public assumption that their education will be continuous so long as they are employed in information service. Our international partner institution, the Medical Library

Association has been involved in continuing education activities for the past few years.

At **the council meeting of the 2001 EAHIL Workshop in Alghero, Italy**, it was decided that the Association would encourage and take initiatives in generating organised frameworks for continuing education projects on a European scale. At the moment, as we see it, the most essential task is to increase the level of consciousness and efficiency of those involved in this multinational program.

**Marta Viragos**

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## News from EVLG

The next focus for European Veterinary Libraries Group activity is the veterinary contribution to this autumn's EAHIL conference in Köln. Friedhelm Rump of the Tierärztliche Hochschule Hannover Bibliothek, and EVLG Treasurer serves on the programme committee. We understand that several papers with a veterinary content have been accepted and we look forward to a scientifically and socially stimulating time in Germany. We look forward to meeting colleagues again, both those in our own animal health subject area and in the wider biomedical information community.

The Köln conference will also provide a springboard for the organisation of the Fourth International Conference of Animal Health Information Specialists (4ICAHIS). The first ICAHIS took place in Reading, UK in 1992, the second in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1997 and the Third as part of the remarkably successful ICML8 in London in 2000. Details for 4ICAHIS are not yet finalised, but one possibility is a meeting in Budapest, Hungary, hosted by our colleagues at Veterinary Science Library of the Szent István University.

Our electronic list, EVLG-L, kindly hosted for us by the Karolinska Institute Library continues to grow and we also maintain close contact with our US and other colleagues around the world.

**Tom Roper**

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## TOO MANY DISCUSSION LISTS FOR HEALTH SCIENCES LIBRARIANS ?

Benoit Thirion (1) & Ioana Robu (2)

(1) Medical Library of the University Hospital Centre of Rouen, France

(2) Central Library of the University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

The initial objective of this brief study was to see whether the number of “cross-postings” to the discussion lists for health sciences librarians represented a real problem. Certain messages are indeed sent to two or more lists, according to the importance attached to them by their authors. We wanted to examine this further by assessing the degree of overlapping in these lists.

In the first stage a message was sent to MEDLIB-L on 30 November 2001 with the aim to complete the number of listservs already known. It was an excellent move because with the help of the MEDLIB-L members the number increased from 12 to 52.<sup>1</sup> Through messages exchanged with the list coordinators and commands sent to the listservs we obtained the information regarding the numbers of subscribers to most of these lists. Seeing that the number of such lists was much higher than initially thought, it became obvious that the study could not be carried out in an exhaustive manner, firstly because of the mass of information to be processed and second out of respect for the people receiving the messages of this survey, who, indeed were at risk of receiving an overwhelming number of copies. Therefore the decision was made to select only the most general and representative lists of a country or language, in terms of the numbers of members (Table 1). The a priori assumption was that this limitation would not alter the final results significantly, as the general lists would include most of the subscribers to the more specialized lists.

During the first week of December 2001 a message was sent to all the 12 study lists by ourselves or by the list coordinators, requesting all members subscribing to more than one of these 12 to send a short reply specifying to which lists they currently subscribe.<sup>2</sup>

Out of the total of 149 answers received, only 73 could be included in the study, the remainder being from people subscribing to only one list or to lists other than the ones selected. The results were introduced manually, as the responses arrived, into a table/matrix, generated with the MicrosoftExcel (Table.2). The figures in the highlighted cells, i.e. the crossing of the column and row of the same list, represent the number of subscribers to that particular list, e.g. there were 25 people stating they subscribed to CANMEDLIB-L. The figures in the other cells represent the number of people subscribing to both the lists crossing at a particular cell, e.g. there were 4 people stating they subscribed both to CANMEDLIB-L and EAHIL-L. In other words, one person with a subscription to, for example, two lists, CANMEDLIB-L and EAHIL-L, was recorded in 3 cells, the 2 highlighted ones, representing the lists as such and in another one, at the crossing of the two lists.

The proportion of members of one list also subscribing to another list was very low (see calculated percentages in Table 3), the highest by far being in the case of the EAHIL-L. The overlapping was not significant either, the highest value being recorded between CANMEDLIB-L and MEDLIB-L. Translated into percentages, in relation to the total number of members of each list, this would mean that only 0.79% of Medlibbers also subscribe to

CANMEDLIB-L and 3.42% of Canmedlibbers also subscribe to MEDLIB-L.

The extremely low figures are due of course to the low response rate, and there could be a number of reasons for this: (a) our colleagues are too busy most of the time to respond to these surveys; (b) lack of interest in the subject; (c) the presentation was not clear. However, a quick check of the subscribers to MEDLIB-L whose email address had the country code “.FR” yielded a total number of 2 (two), while the number of “.FR” addresses on BIBLIOSANTE, the French language list is 300! It was the same with the “.UK” addresses, which represent the majority of the 1195 subscribers to LIS MEDICAL, but only 19 of MEDLIB-L. Therefore it cannot be ruled out that the small number of responses might, after all, reflect the real situation. A more thorough and in-depth study would be to compare the names/addresses subscribing to these lists, but this was far beyond the scope of this study and it would involve a lot more time. The offer remains open!

On the other hand, the meaningful aspect of this study came through the content of the messages received. In our eyes this was in the end more important than the degree of lists overlapping, and it refers to the audience of MEDLIB-L among the members of our professional community, given the fact that certain

information posted to MEDLIB-L and only to MEDLIB-L is of major importance to us all.

A number of librarians have told us they terminated their subscriptions with MEDLIB-L because of the great number of messages. Others share this workload within their own community. Thus, Rhonda Mayberry, Fremantle Hospital and Health Service, Western Australia, in her quality of "list-mom", selects for her list the important messages from MEDLIB-L: "I am on both the aliahealth list and also the medlib-l list. As the list owner on aliahealth I read medlib-l and forward on any postings that may be of interest to health librarians in Australia. This then means that all the other health librarians in Australia do not need to be on medlib-l. A colleague is on canmedlib and lis-medical and the evidence based ones and forwards anything of interest onto aliahealth." Others do the same within their library, sharing the reading of messages that seem important.

A remarkable achievement was that of Sylvia Patrick from LIS-MEDICAL, who was sending out weekly digests to all its members, making a copy also for the German language list, MEDIBIB-L. This started in September 2000 but stopped unfortunately in June 2001<sup>3</sup>

We have no knowledge of any similar systematic action on any of the lists whose archives are available: BIBLIOSANTE (French), BIOMEDBIB (Dutch), CANMEDLIB-L, EAHIL, MEDBIBL (Scandinavian) or MEDIBIB (German).

It seems therefore very likely, which is rather disturbing, that a large number of our colleagues overlook some important information, and it does not appear that the situation will improve. No one doubts that a synthesis (in progress on the 7th of December 2001) of the responses to a question regarding the subscription to electronic alert services with abstracts will be of interest to most of us. And no one will doubt that the appearance of an article on PubMed and electronic publishing in BMJ should be known which is true for all the news regarding PubMed or MEDLINE.

What could we do to be better informed? A careful, knowledgeable and rigorous selection, performed weekly and sent as one message to all these lists or to their coordinators, would be enough to keep us to date with what is important. It is not difficult to recognize the messages of general interest. On the other hand, it is of general interest to be distributed widely. If Sylvia Patrick does not return to her initiative, the position is open. If she does, perhaps it is not too much to ask her to make copies to other lists as well.

Going back to our initial objective, it seems obvious that "cross-postings" do not represent a real danger, at least not across (sic) the discussion lists for health sciences librarians. It might be that a number of our colleagues worldwide also subscribe to discussion lists for mainstream librarianship and information science or for health care as such, which also include, of course, pertinent information which then is

passed onto our more specialized lists. This fact may better explain the "Sorry for cross-posting.." messages sometimes seen, on MEDLIB-L especially.

We would like to warmly thank all our colleagues for their help with this investigation.

Table 3. Percentage of list members who subscribed to more than their own list

LISTS	Total no.	%
Ahila-net	200	3.5
aliaHEALTH	341	3.22
BIB_MED	491	0.81
BIBLIOMED	87	2.29
Bibliosante	406	3.94
BIOMEDBIB	139	2.15
CANMEDLIB-L	496	5.04
EAHIL-L	193	13.47
LIS-MEDICAL UK	1195	2.09
MEDBIBL	318	2.83
MEDIBIB-L	323	1.54
MEDLIB-L	2133	2.20

<sup>1</sup>. A complete updated list is to be found at: <http://www.chu-rouen.fr/documed/lis.html#medlist>

<sup>2</sup>. The text of the message may be found at: <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi?bin/wa.exe?A2=ind0112&L=lis?medical&F=&S=&P=1048>

<sup>3</sup>. The last address: <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi?bin/wa.exe?A2=ind0106&L=lis?medical&F=&S=&P=8911>

# About our Profession

Table 1. Discussion lists included in the study and the number of members

NOTE: The list of URLs may be viewed at <http://www.chu-rouen.fr/documed/lis.html#medlist>

Lists	Association	Number of members
Ahila-net	Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa	200
aliaHEALTH	Health Libraries Australia	341
BIB-MED	Documentación en Medicina en Ciencias de la Salud	491
BIBLIOMED	Bibliotecas Biomedicas Argentinas	87
BIBLIOSANTE	French language medical librarians	406
BIOMEDBIB	Medical Libraries of The Netherlands	139
CANMEDLIB-L	Canadian Medical Libraries	496
EAHIL-L	European Association for Health Information and Libraries	193
LIS-MEDICAL	UK medical libraries	1195
MEDBIBL	Scandinavian Medical Librarians	318
MEDIBIB-L	German Medical Librarians	323
MEDLIB-L	Medical Library Association	2133

Table 2. Number of subscribers to the lists included in the study

LISTS	(AN)	(AH)	(BM)	(BLM)	(BS)	(BMB)	(CAN)	(EAH)	(LISM)	MED BIBL	MEDI BIB-L	MED LIB-L	No. total d'abonnes
Ahila-net (AN)	6				3		1	2	3			2	200
aliaHEALTH (AH)		11					1	2	4			10	341
BIB_MED (BM)			4	2	1							1	491
BIBLIOMED (BLM)				2									87
BIBLIOSANTE (BS)					16		8	4	2			6	406
BIOMEDBIB (BMB)						3		2				2	139
CANMEDLIB-L (CAN)							25	4	5	1		17	496
EAHIL-L (EAH)								26	10	6	1	14	193
LIS-MEDICAL UK (LISM)									25	4	1	17	1195
MEDBIBL										9	1	1	318
MEDIBIB-L											5	4	323
MEDLIB-L												47	2133

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## The Status of Medical Libraries in Poland

Edward Pigon and Roslawa Ran-Rokicka, Central Medical Library epp@gbl.waw.pl

Biomedical science development, mass input of clinical data, introduction of new drugs and technologies, medical education, changes and transformation of health care structures, along with topical and reliable information in line with evidence based medicine are just some of the new fields confronting efficient medical information searches and supply in medical libraries today. Medical libraries in Poland are striving to address these tasks in which new computer technology is assisting but poor financial resources is the principal problem.

The number of health care staff in Poland amounts to over 34,000 employees working for all types of health care institutions plus ca. 80000 students. The network of medical libraries comprises the Central Medical Library together with 16 regional branches and 12 University medical libraries which also have their departmental sites, 20 libraries from medical sciences institutes and over 200 small libraries at hospitals, health spas etc. Moreover several medical libraries are working for the Polish Academy of Sciences and governmental departments of defence, administration, transportation and others. This is the network fulfilling the information needs and delivering library services to Polish health care staff and students.

At most of the medical scientific libraries, automated library systems are installed, mainly HORIZON, ALEPH, VTLS (VIRTUA), PROLIB. These systems work for local networks of universities and medical institutes etc. Those libraries' OPAC catalogues and other local databases are also available via Internet home pages. The National Universal Central Catalogue (NUKAT) was created in Poland by many scientific libraries of different fields cooperating with The Department of Format and Authority Files in Warsaw's University Library. NUKAT will be a source of ready-to-use bibliographic records and will accelerate cataloging procedures, lower costs, and should make easier catalogue retroconversion. Bibliographic information in medical libraries in Poland is available online or on CD ROM's using most of the worldwide

medical databases such as MEDLINE, EMBASE, CURRENT CONTENTS Life Science and Clinical Medicine, the COCHRANE LIBRARY, CINAHL and many others.

Polish medical literature, which is only partly represented in the international databases, is fully indexed in the Polish Medical Bibliography whose headquarters have been at the Central Medical Library since 1979. The Polish Medical Bibliography database contains 260,000 bibliographic records. The Tezaurus Medyczny (Medical Thesaurus) database which is the Polish version of MeSH, cooperates with PMB, controlling subject headings input and information searching tools. At the same time all of the medical libraries universities and institutes run their own bibliographic databases which complete the Polish Medical Bibliography.

Polish medical literature is continuously under bibliometric analysis. The publication and author data provided by medical libraries for the Central Medical Library are analysed in conjunction with the Science Citation Index and SC Journal Citation Reports' Impact Factor lists. The results of the bibliometric analysis have become the base evaluation of Polish medical society activity and are used by the Ministry of Health Department of Science in the decision making process regarding distribution of grants.

When it comes to quick access to full text documents, information on the location of the library collection is a very important factor. The Central Medical Library together with others, maintain the Union Catalogue of

Foreign Journals whereby data on those journals are added to the Union Catalogue Foreign Journals database via Internet by 57 medical libraries in the country. This database includes over 3700 journal titles, over 1000 supplements and is available on the CML's home page.

The UCFJ database in addition ensures more efficient interlibrary loans.

However for medical library users, quick access to many necessary documents is still a problem. As a solution, Poznan Medical University Library has established a national electronic document delivery system, which is customised according to the specific medical libraries in the country. The system enables quick localization and access to journal articles offering a 48 hour service. Articles from journals unavailable in Polish libraries are ordered through foreign documents supply services as Subito or direct cooperation partners. For a number of years Polish medical libraries have had online access to many full text journal databases services thanks to EBSCO Subscription Service, Swets Blackwell and others, which strengthen individual library information performance and enable quick and easy access to necessary documents.

For many years medical libraries in Poland have had their own journal "Biuletyn GBL", (The CML Bulletin) issued twice a year consisting of articles, reports, conferences papers etc. demonstrating the experiences and development of our and foreign medical libraries.



Organizing Committee

The XX Jubilee Conference of the Medical Libraries in Poland was held on 6-8 June 2001. This meeting was organised by the Main Library of the Pomeranian Academy of Medicine in Szczecin and the host was the Director, Danuta Jaworska. The first two days of the conference took place in Midzyzdroje - a well-known resort on the Baltic Sea coast.

The main subjects of the Conference were as follows:

- Library co-operation in the field of document exchange in Poland and worldwide
- Electronic document delivery
- Projects of consortium solutions in the medical environment
- Jubilee Session - 20 years of co-operation between medical libraries

There were 90 participants comprising staff from the Central Medical Library in Warsaw, Directors and librarians from other medical university libraries and medical and scientific institutes including representatives of different companies who cooperate with the medical libraries group in such areas as software, hardware and library equipment. In addition publishers, library services related companies and guests from Germany, Netherlands and United Kingdom took part.

The program consisted of 14 Polish presentations as well as 4 international papers. The Conference included also exhibitions and presentations from the companies, a social program and meetings and an exhibition of pictures from all the medical library conferences that had been organised over the last 20 years. The last day of

## Conferences of the Polish Medical Libraries

Dagmara Budek and Jadwiga Plichta

The Main Library of the Pomeranian Academy of Medicine in Szczecin, Poland

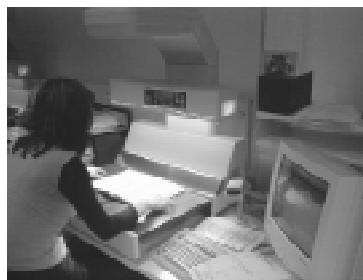
the conference took place in Szczecin, in the building of the Main Library of the Pomeranian Academy of Medicine. The Conference participants were divided into two groups. The first group attended a meeting of Directors of the Polish Medical Universities Libraries as is customary. For the first time, in such a meeting, Dr Aleksander Tulczynski the new Director of the Central Medical Library in Warsaw was invited. The main topic of this meeting was the development of libraries: how to make the work of the libraries more efficient and how to modernise workplaces in a medical environment. The second group of participants were involved in practical presentations concerning electronic document delivery and direct co-operation of the integrated library systems Horizon and Aleph with the Z39.50 protocol application.

In the age of global access to Internet, information services and databases such as MEDLINE, EMBASE or other specialist databases, one of the most important problems for a modern scientific library is how to get access to source materials - full text journal articles. Nowadays traditional methods of receiving copies of articles by post is not fast enough for clients of medical libraries. Systems of electronic document delivery already exist in the world e.g. BLDS (British Library Document Supply Centre) or SUBITO in Germany. At present some of the Polish medical libraries have started to use Internet for their services and it is obvious that Poland requires a similar

system to be set up. The result of the debates at the last Conference was a pilot project for document distribution of foreign journal articles included in Polish medical library collections called the doc@med system which started in September 2001. This program was initiated by the Main Library of the Karol Marcinkowski University of Medical Sciences in Poznan and it was based on their own data about Polish medical libraries resources. The system is localised in their server in the library in Poznan and it is available at <http://www2.bg.am.poznan.pl:8585/> At present three libraries in Poznan, Szczecin and Wroczaw have succeeded in using this system where over 1800 foreign medical journals are available. Currently the biggest problem has been to supply libraries with proper, high quality equipment for scanning documents and this proves that libraries should overcome their financial problems first initially. This system can

be used by registered libraries and also by individuals users: it is available at the Internet medical portal - Clinika.pl [www.clinika.pl](http://www.clinika.pl) The principal conclusion of the conference was the modernization of library services. All participants of the meeting received

conference information including full text articles of all presentations. A historical photogallery from all conferences of the Medical Libraries in Poland can be easily found on the Main Library of the Pomeranian Academy of Medicine homepage <http://sci.pam.szczecin.pl/~bgpam>.



Scanning of documents for the SUBITO service by the ZBMed

As is customary therefore at the meeting in Szczecin it was decided that the next XXI conference would be organized on 12-14 June 2002 in Katowice. Its theme will be: Financial Problems in the Medical Library, in Staff and User Training and also in the Bibliometric Analysis of Medical Publications.

Such conferences are a beneficial source to all medical libraries and it is important to stress that this was the XX Jubilee Conference so we should remember the first time an annual meeting of medical librarians was thought of which was in 1981. That was a memorable year of considerable changes in all areas of daily life in Poland as well as in medical universities as well. The Rectors of medical universities who assembled in Łódź in October 1981 decided to organise a team of library directors and ask them to coordinate co-operation between medical libraries. The first meeting of this group took place on 6 December 1981 in Gdansk and this was the start of co-operation between medical universities libraries. Other medical libraries (e.g. medical scientific institutes) were included in this group only later. It was also the beginning of annual meetings of medical librarians, too. The meetings enabled personal contacts which was especially important in these difficult times in Poland. In addition it facilitated the exchange of information regarding basic functions of the library. The subject of the first Conference was: "The Exchange of Information With Special Regard to Holdings in Medical Libraries" and due to political and social problems (martial law), the meeting only lasted several hours. Libraries did not have computers then and the printing of the union catalogue of foreign journals had been delayed terribly. The hosts of the subsequent conferences were the eleven libraries of the medical universities. During each meeting it was decided what would be the next topic and which library would



Participants at the Polish Conference

organize the following meeting. The following are just some of the subjects which have been discussed over these 20 years: interlibrary loans of medical collections, bibliography and scientific information in medicine, library training for students, specialization of library collections.

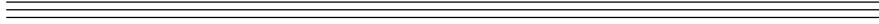
From 1988 the main fields of concern were the usage of computers in medical libraries, integrated library systems, possibilities of medical library co-operation in the new technology age, on-line journals and network databases, medical information services and educational tools, electronic system of

document distribution, library co-operation in the field of document exchange in Poland and worldwide. Reprints from each conference are available and the presentations usually appear in separate publications or in the "Biuletyn GBL" (Journal of the Polish Medical Libraries) published in Warsaw. An account of the XVIII Conference of Medical Libraries held in Kraków in 1999 can be found in EAHIL Newsletter no.51. We are hopeful that information about Polish Medical Libraries conferences might appear more frequently in the EAHIL Newsletter.

**EAHIL members in Poland:**

K. Czujkowska, Institute of Oncology, Warsaw  
J. Leowski, School of Public Health, Warsaw  
B. Mauer-Górska, Jagiellonian University, Krakow  
J. Przyłuska, Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine, Lodz  
M.Z. Styblinska, University of Silesia, Sosnowiec  
A. Uryga, Collegium Medicum of the Jagiellonian University, Krakow  
Anna Uryga represents Poland in the EAHIL Council

# *Advertentie Ovid*





## The Annual Conference of the Italian Libraries Association



During the first week of October the Italian Libraries Association (AIB) had its annual conference in Rome. During one of the sessions the organizers planned to hold a “round table” open to different libraries associations. Some were formally invited, such as EAHL, and others joined spontaneously. As we had been invited, EAHL was given a small shared space within the booth of AIB to exhibit its publications. Moreover some Board members also prepared a poster to be exhibited at the booth. Thanks are due to the Italian National Institute of Health in Rome, the institution for which **Gabriella Poppi** is working, for supporting the graphics and poster printing. Unfortunately, due to the large number of convened associations and subsequent lack of time, it was not possible to run a real round table discussion, and so the session became more of a sequence of presentations.

First we listened to the representatives of foreign associations: SLA (School Libraries Association), LIBER (Association of European Research Libraries), EAHL, BIB (German Libraries Association), and to finish with, the Belgian Association of Archivists.



Gabriella Poppi arranged for the EAHL-poster to be presented at the meeting

Then different Italian associations introduced themselves: the Italian Association for Advanced Documentation, the Association of Italian Archivists, the Association of Librarians and Information Officers for Health, the Association of architecture librarians, the Association of music librarians, the association of librarians working for prisons.

Some of these associations are very small (not more than 40 members, but all except one are managed by volunteers, receiving funds mainly from subscriptions, and running their own conferences. All suffer from similar problems and concerns - especially money and keeping up the membership levels! For the small Italian associations there

could be the possibility to work as subgroups under the AIB umbrella, but nothing was said about the other organizations. Thus a matter for consideration by EAHL members should be whether we could promote a wider cooperation, at least with those associations working in the Health/Scientific environment? There was certainly a level of interest in EAHL from visitors to the AIB booth, and several copies of our literature and poster printouts were taken.

Finally I would like to thank **Linda Lisgarten** and her husband for spending some of their holiday leave in Rome to be at the conference.

**Manuela Colombi**



“Linda Lisgarten, Honorary Secretary of the Executive Board was very pleased to be able to attend the Bibliocom meeting in Rome, and was greatly encouraged by the degree of interest shown in our Association by delegates and members of other European library associations. Hopefully we made some useful contacts for the future, and all Board members are keen to continue this kind of professional interaction whenever possible.”

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## Medical Libraries Association (AGMB): Annual Conference 2001 in Hamburg



Exhibition at the AgmB conference in Hamburg

This year the Annual Conference of the Medical Libraries Association (AGMB) was held at the University Hospital, Hamburg-Eppendorf on 17 - 19 September. It was organised by the University's Central Medical Library. The main theme of the conference was "Medical Libraries: Actively Changing". It was attended by 170 delegates, from Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland. In parallel with a specialist exhibition in which 25 companies took part, the visitors were offered an extensive and profession-oriented programme of lectures in plenary sessions, working groups and company presentations.

In addition there was an opportunity to take part in two Workshops "Change Management in Medical Libraries" and "Creating Websites". As is traditional, the three working groups of the AGMB met on the afternoon of the first day of the conference.

Alena Ittner (Berlin-Buch Hospital) chaired the meeting of 55 hospital librarians for the last time. Her successor is Ingeborg Rosenfeld (Scientific Library of the Psychiatric Centre, Bad Schussenried). First M.A. Neitzke and Dr Udo Riege (Information Centre, Social Sciences, Bonn) reported on "Using information technology to support the work

for the specialist and patient libraries. This year the Pharmaceutical Libraries Working Group attracted over 50 delegates. Dr Thies-Peter Engelhardt (Bayer AG, Wuppertal) described the progress in "Setting up the digital scientific library of the Pharmaceutical Research Centre of Bayer AG".

In her talk entitled "Copyright problems in pharmaceutical libraries" Cornelia Rickert (University Library, Würzburg) presented certain regulations contained in German and international copyright laws, with special regard to the electronic medium. In future Dr Thies-Peter Engelhardt (Bayer AG) will take over the chairmanship of the Pharmaceutical Libraries Working Group from Wolfgang Kosten (Scientific Library, Bayer AG, Wuppertal).

Ralf Brugbauer (University Library, Marburg) similarly chaired the University Medical Libraries Working Group for the last time. The first

processes in an OPL – the TORTOISE project". In her talk Brigitte Hayn (Hospital Library of the University Hospital Charité, Berlin) presented "The Working Group 'Patient Libraries' of Section 8 of the DBV (German Library Association)". Finally, Alena Ittner described the first consequences of the privatisation of Berlin-Buch Hospital

lecture was by Sabine Buroh (Library of the University Surgical Hospital, Freiburg) who described the project "Freiburg Virtual Medical Library". <http://www.ub.uni-freiburg.de/virlib/med/index.html>

In the session devoted to "Financing medical libraries at universities and university hospitals" the increasing effects on library budgets as a result of the privatisation of hospitals were discussed. In his lecture "Subito and E-Journals: a Münster Update" Dr Oliver Obst (Medical Branch Library of the University and Regional Library (ULB) Münster) reported on an analysis of the use of e-journals.



Oliver Obst

The Annual Conference was officially opened on 18 September by Ulrich Korwitz who took the opportunity to express the AGMB governing body's shock at the terrorist attacks in the USA.

The theme of this year's conference "Medical Libraries: Actively Changing" demands that we change ourselves and our work and develop from a "fetch to a bring library" for our users.

In his welcoming speech Prof. Dr Hans Dieter Jüde, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and acting Medical Director at the University Hospital, Hamburg-Eppendorf, supported the

active change in libraries to more customer-orientation.

Prof. Dr Peter Riedesser, Director of the Dept. of Juvenile and Child Psychiatry gave a fascinating lecture entitled "On the way to child- and family-oriented medicine: perspectives of an extensive concept of psychosocial care", in which he presented a model for medicine that is more child- and family-friendly.

Heidemarie Stahl (Central Medical Library, Hamburg) reported on "The Central Medical Library and the



Heidemarie Stahl

development of the supply of documents at the University Hospital Eppendorf". Milestones in the development of the document supply at the UHE were the combination of all the institute and hospital libraries in March 2000, together with the reorganisation of all work processes in the libraries which this required, and the offer of new electronic services.

Prof. Dr Konrad Umlauf discussed the special value of "Personnel Development in Libraries" in his lecture. The determination of the development required and the preparation and evaluation of a personnel development plan should lead to an improvement in professional, social and personal skills.

Ulrike Lang (State and University Library, Hamburg) reported on "BI

(Library & Information) International and its programme for medical librarians". As the successor organisation to the Office for International Library Coordination of the Federation of German Library Associations, BI International coordinates the transfer of international know-how concerning librarianship and information science and related fields <http://www.bi-international.de>.

The conference delegates were visibly impressed by Eva-Maria Oldenburger (St. Joseph Hospital, Berlin) and her practice-based report "I set up a library: experience in setting up the specialist and patient library in Berlin". It took a great deal of personal commitment and unconventional action to establish a patient library at the St. Joseph Hospital in Berlin.

In his lecture "Management Staff for Libraries and Information Science: the Cologne Master course compared with similar courses in Germany" Prof. Dr Achim Oßwald (University for Applied Science, Cologne) informed the delegates about the new additional study course "Library and Information Science" at the University for Applied Science, Cologne, <http://www.fbi.fh-koeln.de/studium/reform/master.htm> which will replace the previous advanced training in 2002. At the end of the course the successful student will be awarded the internationally recognised degree "Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS)".

Ulrike Scholle (University and Regional Library, Münster) opened the afternoon's proceedings with her lecture on "User training courses: previous concepts and new approaches at the University and Regional Library,

Münster". The new project, LOTSE (Library Online Tour & Self-paced Education), of the promotional programme Global Info of the Federal Ministry for Education and Research is to be used in addition to the previous individual training courses round the clock at the scientist's work place as a navigation system for locating conventional and printed information. Stefan Müllenbruck (University Library, Trier) described the possibilities of "Online-information by means of Chat – Experience and Perspectives" and the use of the software Humanclick/Lifeperson <http://www.lifeperson.com>. This Internet-Service was often used at the University Library, Trier, for complaints, for help with technical problems and as a supplement to the conventional information services, telephone and e-mail.

In his talk entitled "Data Mining in Literature Databases: methods for generating hypotheses for biomedical research" Dr Johannes Stegmann (Medical Library, Benjamin-Franklin Hospital, Free University, Berlin) explained in detail Don Swanson's method of establishing links between sets of documents which are isolated with respect to one another and so producing new (unpublished) hypotheses.

Ursel Lux (Central Library, Boehringer Ingelheim Pharma KG) opened the last day of the conference with her presentation entitled "Introduction of global electronic services - Experience and problems using e-journals as an example". The global licensing of e-journals, the updating of the stock of e-journals (at present approx. 1,000) and the technical support for the group of companies mostly take place centrally in Ingelheim. The use of LitLink make it possible to link up internal and external databases with e-journals. In her lecture describing "A quick scan for uncited titles: a possibility to trace the (last?) few low usage journal titles in the collection of a research institute

# From our Colleagues

library” Suzanne Bakker (Cancer Research Institute of the Netherlands) explained the need for a cost/user analysis of current journal subscriptions. Price increases of 10 % a year for printed journals, additional costs for electronic access and stagnating library budgets require an objective evaluation of the printed stock.

In his paper on “Cochrane-Update and the function of a Cochrane Trials Search Coordinator” <http://www.uni-duesseldorf.de/WWW/MedFak/MDN/Cochrane/> Dr Bernd Richter (University of Düsseldorf) described the special functions of a Trials Search Coordinator within a Cochrane Review Group. These include the development of search strategies in databases and in the Internet, the coordination of the hand searching procedure and the creation of a group-specific database with relevant literature references of published and unpublished information. The medical libraries could take over some of these important activities of evidence-based medicine in future. In his annual survey “Report from the German Institute for Medical

Together with the Central Medical Library and the publishers Kluwer and Springer the DIMDI is making 800 full-text e-journals available via a standardised portal. The DIMDI is also involved in the European system E-BIOSCI for the provision of full texts in life sciences.

Yasemin El-Menouar (Cologne) presented a national study “What do our users expect from the Internet range of medical libraries? Results of an Internet-based survey” carried out on behalf of the German Central Medical Library in Cologne. The evaluation of the answers to almost 2,000 questionnaires collected over a period of 5 weeks revealed detailed requirements with regard to the content, preparation, and the technical form of medical Internet information. Ulrich Korwitz (German Central Medical Library, Cologne) gave his traditional annual “Report of the German Central Medical Library”. Main activities over the last year were the collaboration with the DIMDI on the provision of full texts of medical journals via a pay-per-view service, the preliminary preparations for the establishment of a Virtual Medical

Library and the taking over of the combined field Nutrition and Environment. In the year covered in this report the Central Medical Library dealt with 530,000 orders, many requesters using the Subito document delivery service. This volume of orders makes the

Central Library the largest suppliers of documents in continental Europe. In his closing remarks Mr Korwitz, the Chairman of the AGMB, summarised the main points arising

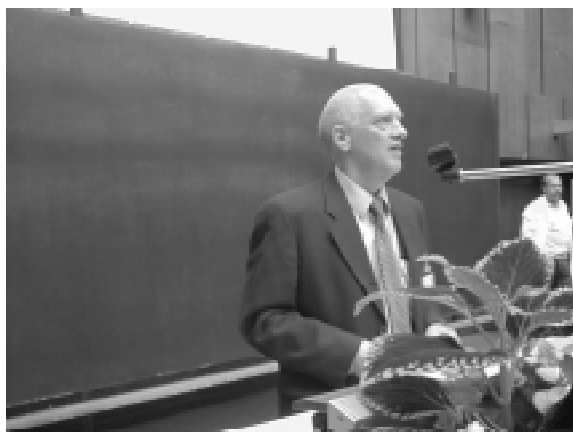
from the conference and thanked Ms Stahl and her colleagues for the excellent organisation of this year’s AGMB conference in Hamburg.

At the General Meeting of the AGMB e.V. the Chairman’s report for the period October 2000 to August 2001, the minutes of the previous year’s General Meeting in Vienna, the financial report and the budget for 2001/2002 were adopted. In accordance with the articles of the Association a new executive Committee of the AGMB e.V. was elected comprising the following members:

- Ulrich Korwitz (German Central Medical Library, Cologne): Chairman
- Dr Oliver Obst (University and Regional Library, Münster, Medical Branch Library): 1st Deputy Chairman
- Ingeborg Rosenfeld (Psychiatric Centre, Bad Schussenried): 2nd Deputy Chairman
- Dr Thies-Peter Engelhardt (Scientific Library of Bayer AG, Wuppertal): Secretary
- Dr Angelika Weiß (Otto-von-Guericke University, Magdeburg): Treasurer

The next meeting of the AGMB will take place during the EAHL conference in Cologne on 16 - 21.02.2002. There will be no separate AGMB Annual Conference next year.

**Ursel Lux**



Werner Stöber (DIMDI)

Documentation and Information” Dr Werner Stöber (German Institute for Medical Documentation and Information (DIMDI), Cologne) described how the DIMDI took an active part in changing the information scene and the provision of medical information.



At the conference dinner; in front (left) Suzanne Bakker and (right) Ursel Lux



The Fellow for 2002 is **Yuan Lin**, who is Chief Librarian, Central Library of West China University of Medical Science, **Changdu City, Sichuan Province, China**. Yuan Lin is particularly interested in Evidence-Based Medicine, search engines and gateways to knowledge, and standards. Ms. Lin will arrive in the US in late January and will visit 8 libraries including university medical center libraries, special libraries, and the National Library of Medicine. The tour ends in May, when Ms. Lin will attend the MLA Annual Meeting in Dallas, Texas.

This is a wonderful opportunity for any librarian outside the US and Canada with a Master's level degree and working or preparing to work in a health sciences organization. Applications for the MLA Cunningham Fellowship are now invited for 2004. Detailed requirements and the complete application form are available on the MLA Web site at <http://www.mlanet.org> under "**Scholarships**." Though the deadline for application is December 1, 2002, it is not too early to get started, as there are many elements to be submitted.

Sister Library Initiative  
MLA's International Cooperation Section initiated the **Sister Library Initiative (SLI)** in 2000. Donna Flake, who now Chairs the SLI Committee, wrote about the new program in the August 2000 issue of the EAHIL Newsletter in an article describing the Medical Research Library of Latvia,

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As we start the new year, MLA members are planning the trip to Texas for the **MLA '02 "Big D" Annual Meeting in Dallas May 17-23**. EAHIL members are invited to attend the meeting at MLA member rates. Visit the MLA Web site at [www.mlanet.org](http://www.mlanet.org) for more information.

#### **Cunningham Fellowship**

MLA's Cunningham Fellowship is a four-month fellowship for health sciences librarians from countries outside the United States and Canada. Beginning in 1972, 32 librarians have come from all parts of the world to spend time in a variety of medical libraries in the US and Canada, both observing and working on projects of particular interest to the Fellow. Recent recipients have hailed from South Africa, Moscow, Nigeria, The Netherlands, and Romania. The award for the four-months is US\$6,000 with \$2,000 additional for travel with the two countries.

one of the first two libraries selected for this initiative. I am happy to report that there have been tangible accomplishments with both libraries, and will summarize the status of this encouraging program.

- **The Medical Research Library of Latvia** was the first to get off the mark, as the library had Internet access and good computer support for library systems. An American of Latvian descent, Livija Carlson, visited the library early on to do a needs assessment. NLM provided DOCLINE access to the library so that requests could be input and routed to libraries in the US and Canada that owned the journal and could supply the article. The Research Libraries Group (RLG) donated a copy of the Ariel software so that articles could be transmitted electronically. Over 40 libraries volunteered to donate 30 articles each to the Latvian library during the year, and most have agreed to supply an equal number in the second year of the project. STAT!Ref donated their CD-Rom product containing 32 medical textbooks and MD Consult donated their database for the Medical Library of Latvia's primary location in Riga, as well as one of the satellite libraries in Jurmala. Health professionals who are now able to use these electronic resources are understandably very pleased. Other important contributions have been made by Latvian organizations in the US who have donated money and have paid to ship books and journals to the library. These

partnerships are perhaps the most important outcome of the project, as they yield the promise of continuing assistance.

- **The partnership with the Medical Library of the Holberton Hospital, St. John's, Antigua** required that the SLI Committee members first focus on procuring a computer and facilitating Internet access for the Library. Elsevier donated funds for the computer and an Antiguan Internet service provider donated free Internet service. Avril Reid from Trinidad, Chair of the Antiguan subcommittee, traveled to Antigua in late December to install the computer and provide training to the librarian at Holberton Hospital. During the year, libraries have filled interlibrary loan requests for the Hospital and donated print materials. In 2002, it will be possible to set up a DOCLINE network of libraries willing to provide articles, and committee members will solicit donations of electronic resources as was done for Latvia.

MLA had approved the Sister Library Initiative for two years on a pilot project basis. The SLI Committee has recently submitted a motion to extend the partnership with these two libraries for three years, to end in April 2003. The SLI has also proposed that this program become a continuing one, with a new sister library selected every three years.

**Eve-Marie Lacroix**  
MLA Representative to EAHIL

## To Google Or Not To Google - A Look Back .....

This Year I used the days between Xmas and New Year to take a look at the journals I subscribe to regarding what has been published on internet issues and which topics have been discussed and reported. Indeed what are the trends and issues a librarian or information specialist in the medical field has to cope with?

Though the web is still growing many analysts and writers tell us that the acceleration is slowing down, possibly due to the fact that many dot.coms have crashed and as it turns out, many ideas and projects for turning internet technology into money machines have failed.

It might have been just luck for the whole scene of the "give away society" that made the internet initially succeed but now the money-knights have lost a little ground - giving way to more serious work towards a global information infrastructure on solid business models, slower but steady.

The wider recognition of the GNU/Open Software people in the success of the Linux-club may be indications that business models in our world are still an open course. This mix of new business models has many faces. Just think of Napster/ mp3 or the ejournal or full-text-Linking-issues. Open Directory and Public Library of Science are other encouraging and stimulating paths to businesses serving people instead of stocks.

Napster and e-publishing also represent the very big sales area of content, econtent, evolved over the last 1-2 years. Ebooks, Portals, Vortals, communities, repurposing, micropayment are some of the

keywords on this issue. And again it turns out it is not that easy to generate money from these applications. Only those content providers that have some standing in the older traditional markets or channels survive either by themselves or indeed only by mergers and alliances.

The search for profitability of the e-content area is reflected in the re-purpose issue facilitated by SGML/XML, meta data and CSS developments and we as a professional community may have to be much more involved in the near future. Some investment in this area is highly recommended.

There has been a lot of talk and work already done especially in the medical field on the development of bringing the information/content business to the mobile technology. Within the physicians' community often mentioned as " bedside information " through pda and handheld-devices, which also implies other approaches to operating systems such as those we are accustomed to these days. The dawn of the desktop computing windows operating system may have come.

It might be only curbed by the the limited acceptability of people to live within forests of communication towers and the frequencies around them. Another bottleneck might be the usability and functionality, that already has become a buzzword in the website-managing field where many of us are implicated nowadays.

The internet for many years has become more and more an

important infrastructure and tool for our daily (not only professional) lives. Even though more specialised topics have arisen in the past year or so, the invisible web and historical/disappearing sites are of some concern to many colleagues. The vanishing character of dynamically generated content has enabled continuous efforts by many of us to handle search engines effectively and to develop solid knowledge in this traditional core of our business.

Everything old is new again says Marydee Ojala in one of her Editorials this year. It turns out that the new ebusiness nonetheless is embedded in very old and traditional issues of which the meta name issue, for example, is just a new cloak for the indexing, thesaurus business, which all of us know as a hard but efficient approach for better precision and recall. Many of these topics come together in the Intranet business that is still of growing interest to our profession. This is enhanced by management developments toward evidence based research and enterprises which portrays librarians, documentalists and information professionals as the ideal knowledge managers. It's an exciting area to work in. Let's try and make things better. All the best in 2002.

**Constantin Cazan**

(By the time of publication.. you will find this text on the web with some functional links under <http://www.cazan.at> )



## Dear Colleagues,

Nowadays there are two important points under discussion: the future of science journals and the future of peer review of biomedical journals. Today, almost two-thirds of scientific journals are available both electronically and in print, and there are more than 1000 electronically-only peer-reviewed journals. Despite the fact that the proportion of reading electronic versions is increasing rapidly, the journal system has remained surprisingly stable.

According to the authors and publishers, scientists and librarians need to base their actions on facts, not emotions (Nature, 2001, 413, 672).

Regarding the second point, journals have to improve the process of peer review; researchers found little evidence that peer-review actually improves the quality of research papers (Science, 2001, 293, 2187).

Open peer review and electronic publication of additional material available to readers, such as raw data, detailed results of analyses and postpublication comments and criticisms of the study can help to improve the quality of research papers (JAMA, 2001, 286, 2931).

Giovanna F. Miranda

## JOURNAL ISSUES

Since the Newsletter of November 2001, the following journal issue of Health Information and Libraries Journal has been received: vol. 18, 2001, no. 4

A. Coomarasamy, H. Gee, M. Publicover, K.S. Khan. Medical journals and effective dissemination of health research. p. 183-191. The article explores why journals are ineffective in bringing useful studies to clinicians' attention and suggests strategies for effective dissemination and implementation.

D. Pearson and H. Rossall. Developing a general practice library: a collaborative project between a GP and librarian. p. 192-202. Collaboration between clinicians and librarians is an effective approach to the successful development and maintenance of a practice library.

N. Blackburn. Building bridges: towards integrated library and information services for mental health and social care. p. 203-212.



## Health Information & Libraries Journal



The table of contents of the journal is available on the Internet at URL: <http://www.blackwell-science.com/~cgilib/jnlpage.asp?journal=hlr&file=hlr&page=contents>

The research focuses on identifying the information needs of health professionals, social workers and staff from voluntary agencies.

D. Nicholas, P. Huntington, P. Williams, P. Vickery. Health information: an evaluation of the use of touch screen kiosks in two hospitals. p. 213-219. This study evaluates kiosks in use and determines whether the information obtained meets patients' information needs.

J.G. Shaw. Health library partnership programmes between resource-poor countries and Western Europe. p. 220-228. A survey of health library partnerships between the UK and northern European countries and African or eastern European countries.

Innovations online series (B. Anagnostelis). p. 229  
Research (A.Booth). p. 238

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# Publications & Products

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## BOOKS REVIEW

Digital future: strategies for the information age. Eds. M. Deegan and S. Tanner. Library Association Publishing, London. ISBN 1-85604-411-4. £ 39.95, pp. 288

A guide for information managers and archivists facing change in the library environment on how to implement new modes and methods of resource management. The book includes guidance on developing collections in the digital world and designing systems for sharing digital resources, economic factors, portals and personalization, mechanisms for end-user access.

Internet Blue Pages: The guide to Federal Government Web Sites. 2001-2002 Edition. Ed. L. Andriot, Information Today, Medford, NJ, ISBN 0-91096-543-9, \$ 34.95 pp. 476.

A reference to almost 1900 US Federal web sites with a lot of information available on policy releases, laws, regulation and licences, health advice, etc.

The desktop guide to complementary and alternative medicine: an evidence-based approach. Eds. E. Ernst, M.H. Pittler, C. Stevinson and A. White, Harcourt Publishers, London, 2001, ISBN 0-7234-3207-4, \$ 34.95, pp. 440. The authors describe complementary and alternative medicine therapies and the diagnostic techniques. Moreover they cite the scientific basis and the evidence for their use, if any.

## PAPERS REVIEW

Lessons for the future of journals. C. Tenopir and D.V. King. *Nature*, 2001, 413, 672

Peer review and quality: a dubious connection? M. Euserink. *Science*, 2001, 293, 2187.

Biomedical Journals ponder the failures and remedies of peer review. J. Stephenson. *JAMA*, 2001, 286, 2931.

World Wide Web in slowdown. G. Smith. *Information World Review* n.175, December 2001

## INFORMATION SOURCES

..... Web-based

Science Directory. A selected list of federal government Web sites offering all kind of scientific and technical information. The site also gives access to many government reports and studies. [www.scitechresources.gov](http://www.scitechresources.gov)

Stem Cells Registry. The US National Institutes of Health has posted on its website the registry of stem cells eligible for federal research funding. It includes 72 stem cell colonies available at 11 institutions in five countries. <http://escr.nih.gov>

SciDev.Net. The site funded by UK, Swedish, and Canadian development agencies, is sponsored by the journals *Nature* and *Science*. Its aim is to bridge the divide between knowledge rich developed countries and the knowledge poor developing countries.

The project is based on the premise that those who stand to benefit most from modern science and technology are also those who have least access to information about it. The main goal of the website is to enhance the ability of all its users to engage in informed debate on ways of applying science and technology to social and economic development in an environmentally responsible way. [www.scidev.net](http://www.scidev.net)

Faculty of 1000. This site is a new online literature awareness tool that will systematically highlight and review

the most interesting papers published in the biological sciences, based on the recommendations of over 1000 selected leading scientists. Online subscriptions are available for individuals, laboratories and institutions. [www.facultyof1000.com](http://www.facultyof1000.com)

## NEWS FROM EDITORS

Biomed Central is introducing a membership scheme that will move the cost of publication from individual (\$500 per paper published) to their institution. Membership will allow all research staff and students within an institution to submit an unlimited amount of research papers to the journals currently published by Biomed Central. For further information: e-mail [institutions@biomedcentral.com](mailto:institutions@biomedcentral.com)

Ebsco Subscription Services have signed an agreement with seven leading publishers to allow access of their publications through Ebsco Online, in particular scientific, medical and technical subjects with The Pharmaceutical Press and Radcliffe Medical Press. [www.ebsco.com](http://www.ebsco.com)

OVID Technologies announces the availability of the Cochrane Controlled Trials Register at no extra charge to all current subscribers to Ovid's Evidence-Based Medicine Reviews database. [www.ovid.com](http://www.ovid.com)

UKSG launch Serials news service. The service is structured as a bi-weekly emailed newsletter with an associated web service. The service is only available to UKSG members and the membership fee for 2002 is 76.19 GBP [www.biblio-tech.com/UKSG/demo.cfm](http://www.biblio-tech.com/UKSG/demo.cfm)



13-15 March, 2002, Washington DC, USA

Computers in libraries

For further information: [www.infotoday.com/cil2002/program.htm](http://www.infotoday.com/cil2002/program.htm)

18-20 March, 2002, London, UK

London Book Fair

For further information: [www.internet-librarian.com/bookfair02](http://www.internet-librarian.com/bookfair02)

18-20 March, 2002, London, UK

Internet librarian International 2002

For further information: [www.internet-librarian.com](http://www.internet-librarian.com)

17-19 April, 2002, Rome, Italy

Semantic WEB and libraries.

European Library Automation Group

For further information: [www.ifnet.it/elag2002](http://www.ifnet.it/elag2002)

22-26 April, 2002, La Habana, Cuba

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Congreso Internacional di Informacion.

For further information: [www.congreso-info.cu/index.htm](http://www.congreso-info.cu/index.htm)

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[www.mlanet.org/am/am2002/index.html](http://www.mlanet.org/am/am2002/index.html)

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For further information: [www.gfkl.de/gfk12002](http://www.gfkl.de/gfk12002)

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Manuscripts either in English or French should be about 3-4 standard (1.50 space) typewritten pages and provided by e-mail or on a diskette. Informative title, short summary and keywords should be provided. References should be expressed in Vancouver style. Authors of submitted papers accept editing and re-use of published material by EAHIL.

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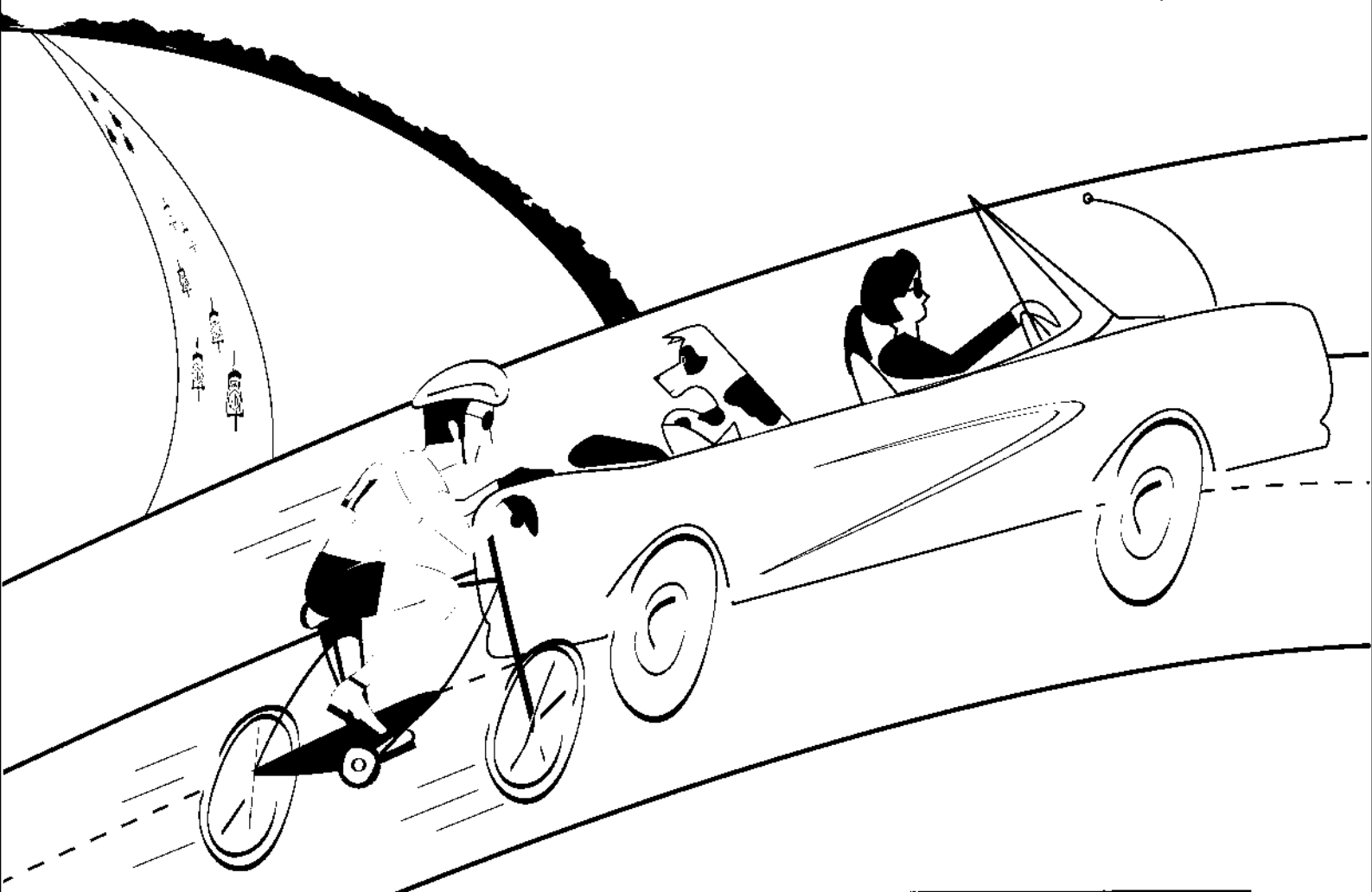
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