

European Association for Health Information and Libraries



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On August 19th, 2002 EAHIL Secretariat will move to:
Nieuwegracht 15, 3512 LC Utrecht

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Newsletter
to European Health Librarians



Hello Everyone

Here in Romania since the middle of June we have been experiencing a steady temperature of between 30 and 35°. August is supposed to reach higher temperatures so I shall welcome the cooler temperatures of Germany in September. It's not very long now to the 8th EAHIL Conference in Cologne and like Tony I am very much looking forward to joining everyone there. The scientific program looks superb and I am sure in addition everyone will find many of the Continuing Education courses very interesting indeed. I also shall be looking for two or three members to give a report on the conference for Newsletter 61.

ERRATA

In the EAHIL Newsletter, issue 59, May 2002, in the feature Highlight on Italy, on page 27, there was a mistake with the photo of Rossella Aprea, former President of BDS. Here is the correct photo.

Also in Maurella della Seta's article on p22 the title should have been: *The role of Istituto Superiore di Sanita' as the Italian MEDLARS Center*, as the Istituto is the only Italian MEDLARS Center.

We are very sorry for any inconvenience to our Italian colleagues on account of these errors.

The Editor



This newsletter does not have a Highlight exactly but instead two excellent feature articles on two countries that have not been covered before: *Reflections on Medical & Healthcare Libraries In Ireland* by Beatrice M. Doran and *A Study Trip to the Czech Republic* by Patricia Flor. Our President gives us the latest information on the progress of the Health Internetwork while Eve-Maria Lacroix reports on the MLA Annual Meeting in May in Dallas. Giovanna Miranda supplies us with up-to-date information in publications and forthcoming events and Constantin Cazan continues his theme on German websites in preparation for the Cologne conference. Liisa Salmi reports on the 2002 HILJ Editorial Board Meeting in London in her new role as the EAHIL representative and Suzanne Bakker sustains and expands the "new look" of the layout of this newsletter.

BUT.. as the EAHIL Newsletter list of contributors continues to grow there is something still lacking..... comments, opinions and responses from the majority of the EAHIL members regarding common subjects in medical information. I, as a relative newcomer to EAHIL, am quite surprised at the apathy towards thought-provoking articles or further discussions in EAHIL topics. I would hope that we can change this in the future. A good starting point could definitely be at the 2002 EAHIL General Assembly in Cologne where the EAHIL Board requires all members' presence in order to achieve in the first place a quorum. Secondly it could be an excellent platform for open discussion about our association. I would like to echo our President's plea to make a special effort to be at this meeting. Until then enjoy your summer break.....

Sally Wood-Lamont

Editor-in-chief

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Health Internetwork

It is a year now since Dr Brundtland announced that the WHO had persuaded the world's six largest medical publishers — Reed Elsevier, Springer, Wolters Kluwer, Wiley, Blackwell, Harcourt — to make the electronic versions of their journals available free of charge in the world's poorest countries. The Health Internetwork, as it is now known, has spent the year building on this initial success and a detailed view of where they have reached is set out on their web site (www.healthinternetwork.org).

For example, during the past year the hoped-for increase in the number of participating publishers is being achieved and at the time of writing the number of partner publishers has reached 23: *Annals of Internal Medicine*, Arnold, *Biology Reports* (BioMed Central Faculty of 1000), Blackwell, *BMJ*, *CABI International*, *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, *The Cochrane Collaboration*, Elsevier, *JAMA & Archives Journals*, *National Academy of Sciences*, *Nature*, *NEJM*, OUP, *Royal Society of Medicine*, Sage, Springer, Taylor & Francis, Thieme, *University of Chicago Press*, Wiley, Wolters Kluwer, *International Health & Science* and *Yale University Libraries*.

The number of publishers joining the WHO initiative Health Internetwork is growing!

There have, inevitably, been delays in turning well-meant and sincere promises into tangible benefits for the health workers and librarians that HINARI (to use the project's acronym) is designed to help. There are difficult technical, political and operational problems which will take time to sort through. Not the least of these is trying to make accessible high-bandwidth, advanced web sites in areas where reliable voice telecomms and any sort of computer are rare luxuries. Nevertheless, in my opinion what Barbara Aronson and Maurice Long have achieved in this project is extraordinary and perhaps the most important development in global medical information since Medline.

As you would expect, there will be an opportunity to hear a detailed, first-hand account of progress when Barbara speaks at the WHO session that will be part of the . . .

8th European Conference of Medical and Health Libraries, Köln, September 16-21

This is my last chance to remind you about our conference, and there is a lot to talk about. This will be the first time an EAHIL event has been staged in Germany and Ulrich Korwitz and his team have done a tremendous job putting together a strong and varied programme. As is characteristic of German professional events, the emphasis is very much on the scientific programme, developed by a strong international team chaired by Oliver Obst. This will include papers and posters from

News from our Association

22 countries — mostly European but also featuring a plenary speaker from Brazil and contributed papers from Mexico, Australia and the USA.

For most delegates, this will also be the first Euro-based EAHIL conference, and the organisers have worked hard to find a range of reasonably-priced hotels and to use university facilities in order to keep the overall price of the event as low as possible. The exhibition promises to be larger than for some years, with a strong German presence as one might expect, and there is also a full range of continuing education programmes and professional and educational visits.

Can I make a special plea on behalf of the Board — the 2002 EAHIL General Assembly will take place during the conference. Although this will not necessarily be the most fascinating hour of your visit to Germany, we need the largest possible attendance in order to achieve a quorum. There will be some administratively important business to conduct, notably the approval of the budgets for 2003 and 2004, and without a proper Assembly our association will have a lot of unnecessary work and expense.

Finally, the social side of the event is sure to live up to the standards of previous EAHIL conferences. The city of Köln is an unusually lively place, perhaps driven by its position as the media capital of Germany, and the local organisers' plans will take full advantage of this. I look forward to meeting veterans and newcomers alike, and encourage anyone still undecided to read through the conference web site which you can reach via the EAHIL conferences page or directly by going to: <http://www.zbmed.de/eahil2002> .

EAHIL General Assembly will take place on Thursday 19th September in Cologne during the 8th ECMHL.

The agenda will be distributed by e-mail. If you haven't seen the announcement sent out by Linda Lisgarten, EAHIL Honorary Secretary, on July 17th please send a message with full details of your name and e-mail address to: EAHIL-secr@nic.surfnet.nl requesting to receive the agenda and accompanying information for the EAHIL General Assembly.

Tony McSeán
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MBE for Sally Wood-Lamont

It is a great pleasure to announce that Sally, our editor-in-chief and my colleague here at the Cluj Medical Library has been granted the title of MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire), which is one of the highest distinctions in the United Kingdom. Because, yes, the title is granted by the Queen herself in a ceremony which will take place at Buckingham at the end of October.

The title was conferred to Sally for her outstanding work and achievement in promoting a healthy lifestyle and equal rights for young people with neuromotor disabilities in Romania. This is a facet of her activity which is unknown to most of the EAHIL members, who only see her as an editor and a medical librarian. So I take this opportunity to tell you that for the past two years she has founded and runs the Lamont Day Centre and Sports Club for Adult Disabled People. The 32 members of the Centre find here the best conditions for daily activities – English lessons, icon painting, sewing, computer skills, crafts, life skills- and of course sports - table tennis, chess, athletics. They are now participating and winning at national and international sports competitions. Sally built this centre with her own money, which she inherited from her mother's property, and now maintains it through various sponsors, mainly from her own family and from the UK. She has certainly made a tremendous change in the lives of all these people, who had little choice but to sit in a wheelchair between the four walls of their home.

And I am sure I am right in hearing your voices echoing mine when I say: ***Congratulations, Sally!***

Ioana Robu
Central Library of the Cluj University of Medicine and Pharmacy

EAHIL REPRESENTATION AT HILJ

Health Information and Libraries Journal (HILJ), the official journal of the Health Libraries Group of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Britain is the most important European journal in our field. It includes in its Editorial Advisory Board a representative from EAHIL. The journal is published four times a year and the publishing house is Blackwell Science Ltd. HILJ is covered by American Hospital Association's Hospital Literature Index, Cambridge Scientific Abstracts, CINAHL, Health Care Literature Information Network, LISA and MEDLINE.

The Editorial Advisory Board meets once a year in London, customarily in June. I succeeded Marta Jorda in this post; Suzanne Bakker from EAHIL also attended the 2002 meeting and our task is to promote cooperation between EAHIL and HILJ. At EAHIL, we had discussions on how we could meet this challenge best. The relationship of the EAHIL Newsletter and HILJ has been already established, the Newsletter being a newsletter, with a feature article in each issue, and HILJ being a scientific journal. I find this relationship good and practical, since creating a scientific journal requires other kinds of activities than are now currently at EAHIL.

The best way to develop this kind of relationship is to write papers to be offered to HILJ. The research and article writing ambitions and

activities of our membership can be channeled through HILJ. If we activate our members to publish in HILJ, then it also benefits by becoming a real European journal. Compared with the Journal of the Medical Library Association (USA), HILJ publishes articles that are perhaps of more interest to us, simply because it is European and also because the health care systems in most European countries are much more similar to each other than the American system is.

The Board of EAHIL and the Editorial Board of EAHIL Newsletter will contact HILJ and vice versa, when common interests appear. These could be e.g. marketing together, when appropriate, or representing our field together to "outsiders".

The 2002 Editorial Advisory Board

meeting was a good opportunity to become acquainted with the other members of the board, and in discussing the future of the journal a vivid picture of the path the journal wants to follow was elucidated. The Editor's and the publisher's reports were given and this assisted new members of the board to adjust to the editorial community.

I very much want to encourage the EAHIL membership to offer papers to HILJ, or to give hints on topics they want to read about in the journal. Please feel free to contact me in any matters concerning HILJ, or address yourselves directly to the Editor or Editorial Board members.

Liisa Salmi

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Kuopio University Library/Kuopio University Hospital Library



Health Information & Libraries Journal



EAHIL members who are *individual* members of our Association are entitled to subscribe to HILJ by credit card or giro transfer payment through EAHIL secretariat at the reduce rate of EUR 70 (for the year 2002).

Please send a message to: EAHIL-secr@nic.surfnet.nl (This offer is not valid for our members in the UK or in the USA).



Reminder for Pharmaceutical Information Group

Dear Colleagues,

On the occasion of the 8th European Conference in Cologne we invite you to participate with discussions and suggestions in the

Round Table Discussion on
Evaluating Pharmaceutical Databases:
Academic Freedom versus Company Constraints.
Moderated by Linda Lisgarten and Giovanna F. Miranda
Tuesday, September 17 – 18-20 p.m. - Free of charge

The Round Table is listed in the Conference Programme and has been itemised in the Registration/booking form.

We are also planning a business meeting to identify the real needs and the future of our group and we will send you details by e-mail. We are open to any suggestions and we hope to receive news from you soon.

We look forward to seeing you in Cologne.
If you cannot participate, please feel free to send us any comments or suggestions you think suitable.
We will be pleased to report your views at the Cologne meeting.

Best regards.

Giovanna Miranda and Luisa Vercellesi

Co-Chair PHING
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luisa.vercellesi@astrazeneca.com

EAHIL welcomes the following new members:

F.C. POND (Frederick),
Dartmouth-Hitchcock Med.Ctr.,
LEBANON, USA

S. GIMSE (Sigrid), Norwegian
Directorate for Health and Social
Welfare, OSLO, Norway

R. VAN DIEËN (Ronald), Ingressus,
Rotterdam, Netherlands

B. LARSEN, Genmab a/s,
COPENHAGEN K, Denmark

L. HOOG (Lisbeth), Karolinska
Institutet Library, STOCKHOLM,
Sweden

P. BIGATTI, Biblioteca Facolta
Med.Veterinaria, Torino, Italy

J.H.M. FRIJNS (José), Academic
Medical Center Library,
AMSTERDAM, Netherlands

C. DELVENNE (Catherine), CHU-
Bibliothèque Fac. Médecine,
SART-TILMAN (LIEGE I), Belgium

P. CHALON, CHU-Bibliothèque
Fac.Médecine,
SART-TILMAN (LIEGE I), Belgium

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY,
EDINBURGH, Scotland, UK

R. WARNER (Rosemary), Library,
Faculty of Veterinary Med.,
DUBLIN 4, Ireland



NEWS FROM MLA

Annual MLA meeting

Librarians who headed to Dallas, Texas for the annual meeting of the Medical Library Association in May were greeted with very pleasant weather outdoors, and enjoyed a stimulating meeting indoors as well. There were over 2,000 attendees in total, including 68 librarians from 16 countries outside the USA. The International Reception, hosted annually by the International Cooperation Section, brought these librarians together to share food and wine with their colleagues.

Carol Jenkins, AHIP, President of MLA, delivered her Presidential Address on Sunday morning, inspiring all of us to think about our profession and the people who will follow us. Entitled "Investing in our Future – Health Information Leadership in the 21st Century", Carol outlined a vision for MLA, describing MLA's core values, the major challenges facing MLA and its members, and some of the "investment strategies" or "practical magic" we might choose to make it all happen. The MLA Board has drafted a "challenges" document that will be widely discussed this year. Since many of the issues and challenges MLA faces may be shared by EAHIL members as well, I have included some of the major points here.

MLA's Envisioned Future: To be the association of the most visible, trusted, and respected health information experts with proven positive influence on the quality of health in the world.

"Mega" Challenges We Face to Achieve This Future:

- Recruiting and retaining the best, brightest, diverse challenges to become health information professionals.
- Providing the full range of health information education needed to attract them and sustain them
- Promoting the value of health information professionals to society
- Serving the needs of the general public
- Expanding the professional research knowledge base, linking the information services provided by health information professionals to improved health care and advances in biomedical research
- Improving access to quality health information and library services worldwide
- Demonstrating technology leadership that helps members advance.

During her year as President of MLA, Carol has worked with the Board to focus on MLA's future. The Board will be soliciting comments on a draft vision document, with recommendations for specific actions, i.e., the "practical

magic" MLA and its members would undertake to meet these challenges and achieve our vision.

See the "Dallas Wrap-Up" section linked from <http://www.mlanet.org> for more information and electronic presentations from the Annual Meeting.

Health Information Professional Career Website

MLA has revised and expanded its career website www.mlanet.org/career by developing brochures and tip sheets for mentors, for career presentations at health care and career fairs, and for those exploring a career in medical librarianship. These are freely available to librarians everywhere. The website is organized in three sections:

➤ Career Exploration: Find Out What It Takes to Become a Medical Librarian

Two new brochures are available for downloading in PDF format, in both English and Spanish: A Medical Librarianship brochure: *A Career Beyond the Cutting Edge* and a High School brochure *Medical Librarians Rock! A Career that Surfs the Net!* In addition, Career Tip Sheets aimed at teens, college students, and post-graduate/second-career tips are available.

➤ Career Resources for Medical Librarians

This Section describes the specific resources available from MLA to assist librarians as they progress in their careers.

➤ Online Career Fair for Career Presentations

In this Section, animated PowerPoint presentations are available for downloading both in English and Spanish. The presentations cover all aspects of a career in librarianship – for example, where librarians work; what they do; what characteristics they might have; what their current salaries are. Presentations are targeted to specific audiences as well. These are well worth a look!

Eve-Marie Lacroix
lacroixe@mail.nlm.nih.gov

Advertentie Embase

The Netinformation (Verkkoinfo) Project : Promoting Regional Networking of Welfare in Eastern Finland

The *Netinformation Project* (2000-2006) is a subproject of the *Sonetti Programme* in which the five hospital districts of Eastern Finland co-operate in developing regional information exchange and communication between hospitals, health care centres and municipal social workers. The other two subprojects are *Digital Imaging*, which is building a radiological service network for the district, and *Video Conferencing*, which is developing a model for consulting and discussing in the district. The partners in the programme are the hospital districts of Eastern Savo, Kainuu, Northern Karelia, Northern Savo and Southern Savo and the East Finland Centre for Excellence in Social Welfare Work. The piloting municipalities are Leppävirta, Nilsiä and Siilinjärvi, situated in Northern Savo near the city of Kuopio. The Kuopio University Hospital is the main operator in the Netinformation Project.

The aim of the Netinformation Project is to create a flexible regional information system for social and health care services. Interaction between the professionals is facilitated by an extranet. In addition to providing technical solutions, the project carried out a large survey of social and health care services, and the existing information is being reorganised to be easily retrievable. As a result of the project, organisations involved in public social and health care in Eastern Finland will be unified into a comprehensive electronic service, and high quality information will be distributed via the Internet.

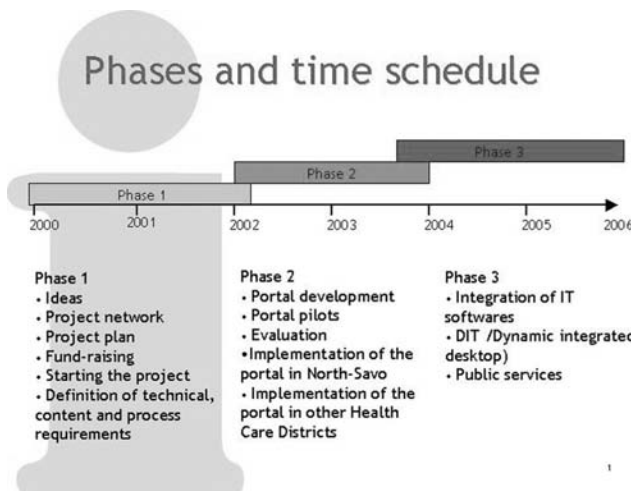
The Netinformation Project will provide professionals and the public with high quality information. It will design and build a portal for networked information, and organise the content production and its maintenance. It will bring instructions, publications and reports into extensive use, and administer documents by means of metadata. It will promote communication, support, unify and intensify social and health care activities, and create a model for work and education.

The initial surveys have already been carried out in the Northern Savo Health Care District during 2000.

The following issues are being developed within the project in order to create an infrastructure. 1) A regional network, extranet, is being installed for the hospitals in specialised medical care, health centres in primary health care and social work in communal administration. 2) A regional network portal designed to offer information and knowledge produced by the partner organisations and external sources has been built up for the whole welfare sector. The use and searching of the information on the network is based on both the individual recognition of the user, and on the documents' metadata, which describe the contents in the terms of indexing and classification. 3) An organisation to support the production and

maintenance of the networked information has been established. Networks of substance experts and information specialist and secretarial services are the corner stones of this organisation. An editorial board of experts in each area draws the content policy lines.

As soon as possible, the regional network will be expanded to cover all hospitals, health centres and municipal social work units in the Sonetti area. In addition, private institutions in the field and pharmacies will be given offers to join the network.



The regional network in each area is an independently administered entity, thus creating five regional networks in Eastern Finland. These five networks have been, in turn, combined into one jointly used extranet. The advantage of the Sonetti area network is the wide geographical coverage including all municipalities in the area with its 68, 000 inhabitants.

The characteristics of the regional network are being developed in the following issues. 1) The security of the consumer and patient data will be guaranteed. 2) The IP characteristics of the data network are being developed in order to be able to transfer multimedia material produced by video and other techniques. 3) Centralised archiving of digital radiological images is made possible by rapid transfer capacity. 4) Wireless network connections are applied to information transfer in health and social care between organisations or between citizens and organisations.

The portal defined for the Netinformation Project, should include general knowledge in the field from various sources, where handling of information is based on standardised metadata, including indexing and classification and a universal URN identifier, and where the portal can be customised for each user. After the pilot phase the characteristics of the portal will be developed further: sophistication of the use of metadata, search software and customisation, integration of different information systems for parallel use of consumer/patient information, development of simultaneous use of textual and image information, development of handling of multimedia material, personal electronic identification and signature, etc.

The pilot version of the portal was published in June 2002. It already meets many of these requirements and further development looks promising.

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Focus on Nordic-Baltic Collaboration – Notes on a Nordic Seminar on Indexing in Health Sciences

The Finnish Association of Medical Librarians BMF - Bibliothecarii Medicinae Fenniae (<http://www.terkko.helsinki.fi/bmf/>), the Finnish Medical Society Duodecim (<http://www.duodecim.fi/>), the National Library of Health Sciences, Helsinki, (<http://www.terkko.helsinki.fi/>) and the Karolinska Institute Library, Stockholm, (<http://www.kib.ki.se>) joined forces with the support of NORDINFO, the Nordic Council for Scientific Information, <http://www.infolit.org/members/nordinfo.htm>, to organize a Nordic Seminar on Indexing in Health Sciences at the new biomedical centre in Helsinki, Biomedicum Helsinki (<http://www.biomedicum.fi/>), on the 22nd of May 2002.

The purpose of the seminar was to bring together health sciences librarians from Nordic and Baltic countries to review and discuss current issues in

- Indexing languages;
- Indexing and searching processes;
- Medical Subject Headings – MeSH - as the major indexing instrument/language for health sciences librarians, as well as the vernacular versions of MeSH - FinMeSH and SweMeSH - from a multilingual perspective in the digital environment;
- Educational and training needs.

Fifty librarians and information specialists from Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Estonia participated in the Seminar chaired by **Liisa Salmi** from **Kuopio University Hospital Medical Library** (<http://www.uku.fi/kirjasto/english/welcome.html>). The seminar programme succeeded in combining theoretical issues with practical ones and, indeed, served as a stimulus to intensive discussions during and after the sessions (<http://www.terkko.helsinki.fi/BMF/ajankoht.htm>).

Theoretical issues were addressed by the representatives of two university departments of information studies:

Sara von Ungern-Sternberg from Abo Akademi University (<http://www.abo.fi/fak/esf/bii/index-eng.html>) and **Jaana Kekäläinen** from Tampere University (<http://www.uta.fi/~lijakr/JK.html>).

Sara von Ungern-Sternberg gave an introduction to the key issues of the day in her paper *Indexing and thesauri – basis for finding information – what are the educational needs?* She highlighted the indexing process through concept analysis, term identification and term assignment, and the thesaurus structure through thesaurus relationships - semantic (relation to meaning), syntactic (relation to other words), pragmatic (relation to the actor/user), as well as the current educational needs. She emphasized the knowledge of indexing and thesaurus theory, the knowledge of the subject field and its terminology, the knowledge of indexing instruments, and the knowledge of end user information behaviour in the education of librarians and information specialists. In her overview of some research projects of her university department she pointed out that with the increasing digital resources and global reach of health information, the multilingual and multicultural environment will have a more and more pronounced impact on indexing and searching processes – a fact which should be considered in the curricula of information studies at all levels.

On the other hand, **Jaana Kekäläinen** provided insights into intellectual indexing versus automatic in her challenging presentation *Is intellectual indexing viable?* On the basis of her research, and for the reassurance of the audience, she stated that intellectual indexing *is viable*, particularly in specific subject fields. Relying on human capacity in the processes of meaning identification, indexing language representation and pre-coordinated vocabulary control, intellectual indexing results in a greater accuracy and precision, i.e. a better retrieval quality than automatic indexing. Human intellect is still the invaluable characteristic of an indexer; human capacity can be aided by an automatic process, e.g. in indexing masses of full texts, but cannot be replaced by it. She concluded that the hierarchies and ontologies of information networks imply structures which are being investigated and will be exploited in indexing – both intellectual and automatic.

More practical views on the issues were taken in a series of MeSH presentations and papers on MeSH-based vocabularies

(<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/meshhome.html>): by **Marie Monik**, the Karolinska Institute Library (<http://www.kib.ki.se/>), in her MeSH review *MeSH – the State of the a*; by **Gun-Brit Knutsson**, the Karolinska Institute Library, in her *Presentation of SweMeSH*, the Swedish version of MeSH; by **Leena Lodenius**, the Finnish Medical Society Duodecim (<http://www.duodecim.fi/>), in her *Presentation of FinMeSH*, the Finnish version of MeSH; and by **Marianne Tallberg**, Kuopio University (<http://www.uku.fi/laitokset/hoitot/english.htm>), in her paper on a MeSH-based Finnish 'CareMeSH' *Nursing Thesaurus and indexing nursing resources in Finland*.

Three different approaches to producing vernacular versions of MeSH / MeSH-based vocabularies were given:

- Term use frequency > SweMeSH: the Karolinska Institute Library;
- Term category > FinMeSH: the Finnish Medical Society;
- Term definition > Finnish 'CareMeSH': the Finnish Society of Nursing Education.

The **Karolinska Institute Library** has taken the most pragmatic approach. The translation project was started in 1995 by translating the MeSH terms used ten times or more in indexing articles to the Swedish Medical bibliography **SveMED**. The 2002 version of **SveMeSH** contains 17000 terms; most of the MeSH headings have been rendered into Swedish, and, in addition, 4500 MeSH scope notes have been translated and related to the Swedish usage of corresponding terms. Articles in the Swedish medical bibliography **SveMED** are indexed with English MeSH terms, which are automatically mapped to the corresponding **SveMeSH** terms, and the database can thus be searched with either Swedish terms or English terms. **SveMeSH** is available on the web (<http://www.kib.ki.se/>), so is the indexing manual (<http://mesh.kib.ki.se/indexing/>), which is used in training of indexers, cataloguers and searchers of MeSH-based databases.

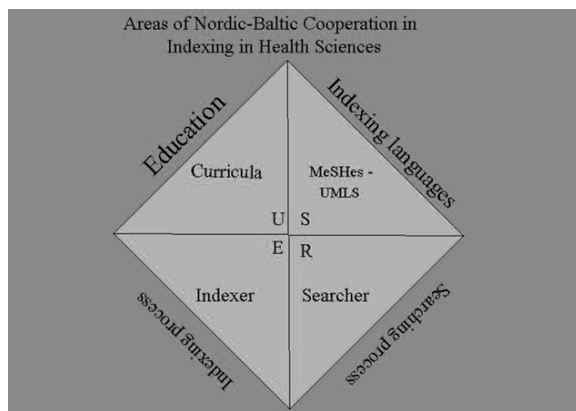
News from our Colleagues

The Finnish MeSH **FinMeSH**, on the other hand, has been developed and produced by the **Finnish Medical Society Duodecim** for the use of clinicians – the Society has a hundred year tradition of promoting the use of the Finnish medical language. The translation, started in 1989, has been done by a medical doctor, backed by a team of medical specialists, working systematically category by category from A to Z; the **National Library of Health Sciences - Terkko** has been coordinating the project in the library field and reporting on its progress since 1996, while the **Finnish Association of Medical Librarians BMF** has been promoting the project on various occasions. The 2002 version of FinMeSH contains 18000 terms; most of the MeSH headings and all the subheadings have been rendered into Finnish, but no MeSH scope notes. FinMeSH is primarily used for indexing and searching Finnish journal articles for the Physician's Database (LCD) available on the web (<http://www.duodecim.fi/lcd/finmesh.html>).

Its indexing capacity has been tested with the material indexed in the Finnish medical bibliography **Medic**, and a solution to utilize its bilingual (English/Finnish) function for indexing and searching is being investigated in cooperation with the Karolinska Institute Library.

FinMeSH is one of the 26 source vocabularies of the **Unified Medical Language System UMLS Metathesaurus** (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/databases/leased.html>).

The **Finnish 'CareMeSH'** is a 'MeSH-frameworked' Finnish vocabulary for indexing and searching Finnish nursing material. It has been developed under the auspices of the **Finnish Society for Nursing Education** and by a team of nursing science experts.



In contrast to FinMeSH and SweMeSH, the Finnish 'CareMeSH' was started in 2000 by selecting the appropriate nursing terms from MeSH and evaluating and defining them through four Delphi rounds (<http://www.iit.edu/~it/delphi.html>). The 2002 version of the Finnish 'CareMeSH' contains 500 nursing terms grouped under ten theme headings from the **International Classification of Nursing Phenomena ICNP** (<http://www.omv.lu.se/icnpbeta/dbrun/np01.asp>). Its validity for indexing nursing material, journal articles and scientific publications, to the Finnish medical bibliography **Medic** is being tested, as well as its functioning as a component of FinMeSH.

An **Estonian** version of MeSH is in progress, so is a **Lithuanian** version; a **Latvian** version may follow in due course. What about a **Norwegian** or a **Danish** version or an **Islandic** version? Cooperation between the Nordic-Baltic countries could enhance setting up a common interface for all to benefit from the multilingual capacity of the Nordic-Baltic MeSH community.

As a result of the presentations as well as the discussions that took place during the seminar and after it, all who were present became aware of the importance of sharing experiences and working more closely together as a Nordic-Baltic group. It was agreed that this would apply especially to learning from each other in utilizing

- 1 - Advanced technology for virtual education and training;
- 2 - The indexing language systems and instruments developed by the US National Library of Medicine: Medical Subject Headings - MeSH and Unified Medical language System - UMLS, as well as the vernacular versions of MeSH;
- 3 - The changing environment of the indexing process;
- 4 - The changing environment of the searching process.

The seminar was concluded with a call for a Nordic-Baltic follow-up in the near future focusing on one of these four facets/areas of indexing in health sciences.

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Reflections on Medical & Healthcare Libraries In Ireland

Ireland has a population of approximately four million people, a third of whom live along the eastern seaboard close to Dublin, the capital city. About 75% of the health service in Ireland is publicly funded mainly from general taxation and 25% is funded through voluntary health insurance premiums. Public health expenditure makes up approximately 20% of government expenditure. Private health expenditure accounts for almost 25% of health expenditure and approximately 2% of GNP. The Irish healthcare system is a mixture of a universal health service, free at the point of consumption and a fee based private system, where people subscribe to private medical insurance to cover their medical expenses.

People are entitled to free or partially free health care services based on their ability to pay. Approximately 37% of the population have full eligibility for health services. Those eligible, receive a medical card which allows them access to the full range of health and hospital services. 63% of the population are not eligible for free GP services, dental or aural services but they are entitled to free maintenance and treatment in public hospital wards. Almost half the people in this latter group take out private medical insurance, thus paying twice for what they are entitled to free of charge.

The Health Act (1970) set up a regionalised system of health service provision with the establishment of eight regional Health Boards which are responsible for allocating resources to the services in the region. Until recently the Department of Health & Children funded separately the thirty-four public voluntary hospitals, but these have now come under the control of the Health Boards. In addition to the sixty acute hospitals within the public healthcare sector, there are also eighteen private hospitals in Ireland. It is interesting to note that despite its small size, Ireland is almost top of the league in relation to the provision of free access to health care services. In terms of overall standard of care it is high, and according to an OECD Report in 1997, compares favourably with that provided in much wealthier countries

The private healthcare sector in Ireland is intended to act mainly as a top-up to the public health care system in Ireland. Such a mixture allows both sectors to play a complementary role in the provision of healthcare in this country. The co-existence for example of public and private practice in publicly funded hospitals helps to ensure that the same consultant staff are available to both public and private

patients. There is a much more limited service available in the private sector. Accident and emergency services for example are almost exclusively provided in the public sector, while most admissions to private hospitals are elective.

Healthcare Libraries

The earliest healthcare libraries in Ireland are those of the two Royal Colleges. The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (1698) and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (1784). Today there are some sixty-five healthcare libraries in Ireland ranging from small hospital libraries to university medical school libraries. There are five medical schools in the Republic of Ireland three in Dublin (Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin, The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland) one in Cork (University College Cork) one in Galway (National University of Ireland Galway) and one in Northern Ireland, at Queen's University Belfast. There is no national library of medicine in this country. All of the major teaching hospitals in the country would have a healthcare library but some of the smaller hospitals might not.



The clocktower on the Mercer building which houses the RCSI library.

The modern development of healthcare libraries in this country probably goes back to an initiative by the Postgraduate Medical & Dental Board in the 1970-s when it brought together the librarians of the main medical schools in the country, with a view to producing a union list of medical journals and a directory of Irish medical libraries. This little "Red Book" as it was known was a union list of Irish medical journals together with a directory of healthcare libraries. It was a useful tool for medical libraries in Ireland in the 1970s and 1980s. About that time too the Postgraduate Medical & Dental Board made it obligatory for all teaching hospitals to have access to "adequate library facilities". Their continuation as

recognised teaching hospitals today still has “access to adequate library facilities” as a criterion for recognition. This is also one of the criteria used by the Royal Colleges in giving recognition to individual hospitals today.

In 1982 the *Health Sciences Libraries Section* of the Library Association of Ireland was founded. This provided a forum for healthcare librarians in Ireland to get to know one another and to discuss common issues and needs, in relation to the provision of healthcare library services. This was a period of extreme financial restrictions and budgetary constraints in the provision of healthcare services and the funding available for healthcare libraries was very inadequate as it still is today.

Most Irish healthcare libraries went to the British Library for their document supply and it was proving extremely costly. Members of the Health Care Libraries Section of the Library Association of Ireland met regularly for continuing education programmes and training. Lack of co-operation between healthcare libraries in this country was discussed as a major issue, particularly in relation to inter library loans. Irish healthcare librarians felt that a percentage of their requests could be supplied from other Irish libraries quicker and cheaper than from the BLLD, but the necessary bibliographic tools, schemes and systems did not exist.

A group of healthcare librarians under the auspices of the Health Sciences Libraries Section of the Library Association of Ireland decided to establish a co-operative inter lending scheme. In 1991 the Irish Healthcare Libraries Inter-Lending Co-operative (IHLILC) was established as a not for profit document supply service (primarily journal resources) between healthcare libraries in the Republic of Ireland. There were eleven founding libraries, ranging from one-person operated small libraries to the larger university medical school libraries. Today, membership has risen to sixty-five libraries. The Irish Health Care Libraries Inter-lending Co-operative was successful from the start. Articles could be supplied within the country, at a faster response rate and at a lower cost. Its success was due in no small part to the good will of library staff and the willingness among them to help each other out.

During the 1990's there was an increase in the number of healthcare libraries established in Ireland. This was partially due to the changes in nursing education, the publication in 1994 of *The Future of Nurse Education and Training in Ireland* by the Irish Nursing Board. It presented twenty-eight recommendations for fundamental change in the organisation, education, training and resourcing of nurse

education. A change in the status of student nurses from being employees in the health services to full time student status and the establishment of a national curriculum and framework within the higher education sector was recommended. Nurses began using healthcare libraries more for their studies and continuing education.

The Postgraduate Medical & Dental Board and the Royal Colleges and Faculties stipulated during the early 1990s that adequate library facilities were essential in all hospitals providing training programmes for doctors. In 1994, the Department of Health & Children published its first national health strategy *Shaping a healthier future*, which set out objectives and targets for the reorientation of the health services based on three main principles of equity, quality of service and accountability. A four-year action plan set out a range of organisational reforms involving legislation and resource allocation at national level. Great emphasis was placed on the concepts of health and social gain in service planning and delivery, by making use of improved data collection and analysis. Comprehensive and good quality information was recognised as essential for the success of these objectives. Most of the objectives of this Strategy have been achieved and The Department of Health & Children are about to publish another updated Healthcare Strategy in the next few months. In addition there is an Irish Health Information Strategy in progress the first draft of which has no mention of access to the knowledge base of healthcare or of the role of healthcare libraries.

The general lack of primary data on the information needs of staff working in the health services, together with an inconsistency and unevenness in health care library development led the Library Association of Ireland to implement two new initiatives in the early 1990s. The publication of *Standards for Irish Healthcare Libraries* (1994) formulated by the Health Sciences Libraries Section of the Library Association of Ireland was significant, highlighting as it did, the importance of having professionally qualified librarians in charge of healthcare libraries. It was presented to the Minister of Health in March of 1994. Work has begun to revise and update the *Standards for Irish Healthcare Libraries*.

Simultaneously the Association decided that it was important to review current levels of access to library and information services by healthcare professionals, and to make recommendations for their development and improvement. Funding of £20,000 was made available by the Department of Health and Children, with money raised from the National Lottery. The Library Association of

Ireland appointed a research committee, with representatives from all sectors of the library community in Ireland, and within a short while the Committee interviewed and appointed an independent, experienced researcher Dr. Jennifer MacDougall. One of the main research objectives was to make recommendations for the future development of health care library services in Ireland.

The Research Report *Information for Health: access to healthcare information services in Ireland* by Jennifer MacDougall published in 1995, identified serious deficiencies in access to, awareness of, and availability of health care information for both healthcare professionals and the public in general. The research revealed an unsystematic and uneven approach to the provision of health care library facilities in the country in general. Health care professionals and patients, particularly in rural areas are severely disadvantaged in their access to up to date healthcare information though with access to consumer health information on the Internet this is somewhat improved. The lack of appropriate resourcing and recognition from central government of the importance of access to the knowledge base of healthcare and appropriate information technology has meant that the development and co-ordination of health care information services has been restricted.

The Report also recommended that a national healthcare library and information service should be developed to include an integrated multi-disciplinary health sciences library network with an emphasis on shared resources. The need for central government to commit to the provision of a professional library and information service for all healthcare professionals and a recognition of the value of professional library and information specialists as being vital to the process was also included. This has in fact been recognised by the Department of Health & Children. Subsequent to the MacDougall Report some seventeen posts of healthcare librarian have been established and filled throughout the health services in Ireland. A number of Regional Healthcare Librarian posts has also been established. The other significant recommendation which has not been implemented, is that the Department of Health & Children and the Library Association of Ireland should set up a panel to develop a national health care library and information strategic plan.

Well Read: Developing Consumer Health Information in Ireland was another initiative of the Library Association of Ireland which was again funded by the Department of Health & Children with money from the National Lottery.



Students and faculty in the branch library of the Beaumont Hospital

The earlier report by Dr. MacDougall *Information for Health* revealed a lack of adequate information for the public, patients and their carers. Dr. MacDougall was again appointed to carry out the research in this respect under the direction of a research committee appointed by the Library Association of Ireland.

The Report revealed that the demand for consumer health information in Ireland is increasing, yet access to it is often limited. An urgent need for a co-ordinated approach to the provision of consumer health information both regionally and locally within health boards and hospitals, and at national level by government, voluntary and statutory bodies was identified. The development of a National Consumer Health Information Strategy for Ireland was also recommended. A National Consumer Health Information Resource Centre to focus on the development of consumer health information was identified by Dr. MacDougall as being of prime importance. The Report is still under review by the Department of Health & Children.

There has been a new Freedom of Information Act in Ireland and with it, the Health Boards have an obligation to provide health information to the general public. The Irish Society of Public Health Medicine have noted this, and suggest that this information should be made available through the public library system in Ireland or in association with Health Boards and Hospital libraries.

In 1999 the Irish Library Council published a major Report called *Joining Forces: delivering libraries and information services in the Information age*. The Report singled out healthcare libraries as having a particularly important role

to play in the development of the information society and in supporting healthcare research. Taking access to healthcare libraries as a case study, the Report emphasises that changes in medical practice and in the education and training of healthcare professionals, have increased the demand for access to healthcare information. Evidence based practice, and problem based learning in medical curricula are demanding new skills of students and doctors with much greater emphasis being placed on proficiency in information handling skills, literature searching and on the effective use of the evidence from the medical literature in their daily practice. Because of the greater reliance by clinicians who practise evidence based medicine on access to the knowledge base of health care, librarians have an increasing key role to play in the advancement of evidence based practice.

Joining Forces the Report by the Library Council in Ireland also identified a number of issues in Healthcare library services that need attention. In particular, the training and development of healthcare librarians. Healthcare Library staff need to develop further their:

- Teaching information handling skills;
- Search technique skills for web based and other electronic resources;
- Skill in using statistics and performance indicators;
- Techniques for critical appraisal
- IT skills in general

The need to develop a strong indigenous research culture in our health care libraries and information services was also stressed. New ways of delivering Library and information services to users is also necessary. Even greater co-operation between healthcare libraries in Ireland to optimise existing resources is also essential.



The RCSI Library occupies three floors in the Mercer Building

The Health Research Board in Ireland has recently published its strategy for Health Research in this country. Entitled *Making Knowledge Work for Health* it provides a framework for the development of health research to enhance the quality of health service provision and the quality of life in general. The Report reflects the consultation process and emphasises the importance of a partnership approach to building a research culture for health. The importance of access to the knowledge base of health care for research was acknowledged in the Report and the fact that libraries provide a key support service in the areas of healthcare research and education. The need for a national health information service in the form of a virtual library relying on electronic links between existing healthcare libraries was acknowledged. The existing collaboration between healthcare libraries in relation to access to research collections provides a model for further development of this concept. The Minister of Health & Children in the Report, supports such an initiative and will ask the person to be appointed as R & D Officer to the Department of Health & Children, to plan the establishment of such a service with the relevant interests. The Report also points out that funding has been provided in the National Development Plan to improve information technology in the health services. By improving access to information technology for health services staff, research in the health services will be supported.

Conclusion:

Today there are a number of issues of major concern to librarians working in the health services in Ireland. Adequate funding at national and local level has not been provided for libraries. Recognition of the important role played by librarians in providing access to the knowledge base of healthcare is needed at both national and local level. Our Department of Health & Children has not had a Librarian in charge of its own Library for the last year, so there is no great emphasis being placed at national level on the importance of filling vacancies in health care librarianship. There is no national library advisor to the Department of Health & Children nor are there any plans for such a person as far as I am aware. There is great need to establish appropriate grading, pay and career opportunities for professionally qualified librarians working in the health services. All Library staff at present have been paid and graded on clerical/administration grades. In an attempt to improve pay and career opportunities a Health Service Librarians Vocational Group has been established recently within IMPACT the Public Sector Union.

Healthcare administrators need to be educated and given a better understanding as to how a healthcare library functions in the 21st century and that libraries are not just places to lend books. With greater emphasis on evidence based practice, and the importance of healthcare professionals being up to date with the latest research findings, the role played by the Library in providing electronic access to the knowledge base of medicine cannot be over emphasised. Electronic resources have increased the demand from healthcare professionals to learn how to access these resources and in particular to be familiar with the evidence based databases now available. These databases and electronic resources are not easy to use and more and more of the time of the healthcare librarian is being spent on teaching healthcare professional information handling skills. Healthcare library staff need to develop their teaching information handling and teaching skills in general., though there are quite experienced librarians in Ireland in this respect. For example, in the last six weeks one of my own staff was involved in teaching information handling skills for twenty six hours, which is a huge commitment in addition to his normal library duties, in this case as Deputy Librarian.

The present Irish Healthcare Libraries Inter-Lending Co-operative (IHLILC) needs continuing monitoring in regard to costs and services. More electronic delivery may be the way forward. While the university libraries in Ireland have established a consortia in relation to purchasing journals the Health Sciences Libraries in this country should do likewise.

There is also a need to establish a national medical or healthcare library in Ireland, which would encompass the whole island. A central repository for back runs of journals and for older printed books to enshrine and safeguard the rich inheritance of Irish medical literature is desirable. It may be that the Department of Health & Children's commitment would be to develop a national electronic library rather than a physical one. There is certainly a need for something like the UK National Electronic Library for Health and all healthcare librarians in this country would be supportive of such a facility.

Acknowledgement:

I am indebted to Gay Doyle, Librarian, St. Luke's Institute for Cancer Research, Margaret Dillon, Librarian, Regional Medical Library Service, Limerick, Hugh Brazier, Deputy Librarian, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and of course the work of Dr. Jennifer MacDougall, in the preparation of this paper.

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Study trip to the Czech Republic

Membership in EAHIL gives us many opportunities for professional development, but it is also a way of developing social and cultural ties with colleagues throughout Europe. I experienced this to the full last autumn when I received an email from Jarmila Potomková inviting me to hold a lecture on Internet resources for nurses at a seminar in Olomouc, the Czech Republic in November 2001. Jarmila is the EAHIL council member for the Czech Republic and is head of the Palacký University Medical Library and Information Centre, Olomouc. Together with the members of the organizing committee of the seminar, Jarmila planned a 6-day study trip for me with visits to five medical and health libraries. There was also time for some sightseeing, including the battlefield at Austerlitz where Napoleon triumphed over the Russian and Austrian armies, and the splendid 18th century library at the Strahov Monastery in Prague. My Czech colleagues, Jarmila Potomková and Eva Lesenková, took good care of me during the whole visit.

The seminar

The Czech Republic is preparing for membership in the European Union and the nursing seminar was a part of the plans to upgrade nursing education and practice to be evidence based. Over 100 nurses, nurse administrators and nurse educators from the whole country and from Slovakia participated in the one-day seminar, entitled *Information Sources for Nursing Research and Practice*. It is interesting to note that the seminar was planned and organized by representatives from medical and health libraries, namely the Medical Library, Palacký University, the National Medical Library, the Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education, the Institute for Life-Long Education in Healthcare and the Nursing Resource Center, Palacký University. The seminar was sponsored by the Czech Ministry of Healthcare and coordinated by Mrs Ivanka Kohoutová, Director of the Nursing Division of the Ministry.

The seminar was divided into four main sections: Systems Approaches in Nursing, Nursing Research in the Czech Republic and Abroad and the Role of Nurses, Writing Project Proposals, and Information Resources. It was followed by a panel discussion on communication in nursing. My presentation, which contained a large number of links to relevant web sites, was made available on the web for future reference.

Library visits

Olomouc

Olomouc is an old town with a great deal of history. It is situated about 200 km east of Prague. The old town centre has been preserved and is in the process of being restored to its former glory. Palacký University was founded in 1573 and occupies many of the beautiful old buildings in the city centre. Jarmila took me on a sightseeing trip around the town centre, including a visit to the University Library which is housed in a former armoury and is reference only. The joint union catalogue for several Czech universities was available on a large number of computer terminals situated throughout the library. In addition, there were two computer rooms where students had access to the Internet.

The Faculty of Medicine is situated at the Teaching Hospital just outside the town centre. The Medical Library and

Learning Resource Centre serves both the hospital and the faculty. Conditions for both the users and the library staff are cramped, but a new faculty building is being planned. An old storeroom has been ingeniously converted into a student reference library by the use of a steel gallery, with 30 computer workplaces above and books below. The library contains more than 150,000 books, 346 serial titles and a collection of audiovisual media. Full library services are offered, including literature searches, document delivery and interlibrary loans, and user education. The library also offers graphic reproduction services to the faculty and hospital staff, such as photographing medical specimens and making PowerPoint presentations. The library has a number of development projects underway in cooperation with the medical faculty.

The Nurse Resource Center is located in the same building as the medical library which was furnished with the help of an American aid organisation. Nurse educator Paula Holesinká runs the library in addition to her teaching duties. The collection consists of books, journals and videos, all of which are reference only and the University offers education to Bachelor level in nursing, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.



Foto: Vít Zrna

*The Strahov Library, Prague
(From left to right (standing): Helena Bouzková, Jarmila Potomková, Patricia Flor, Vít Zrna; in front: Eva Lesenková)*

Brno

The next stop on our trip was the Institute for Life-Long Education in Healthcare at Brno. The head of the library, Adena Drdulová, and her staff gave us a warm welcome. The institute has the responsibility of providing advanced studies for all types of health professionals with the exception of physicians who have their own institute in Prague. The library serves the staff and students of the institute, in addition to health professionals throughout the country. The collection consists of about 18,000 books and 100 serial titles and the catalogue is available on the Internet and it is possible for users to order online. The library offers translation and interpreter services on demand, and also translates relevant journal articles into Czech on a regular basis.

Prague

At the National Medical Library in Prague, the library director, Helena Bouzková, and three of her staff stood ready to welcome us despite it being late on Friday afternoon. The library offers a wide range of services to physicians and other health professionals throughout the country, including loans and literature searches. It also produces *Bibliographica Medica Cechoslovaca*, a bibliography of Czech medical literature. The library translated MeSH into Czech some years ago, and this is continually updated. The library is a WHO documentation centre and also has the role of coordinating cooperation between the various medical libraries in the Czech Republic and stimulating professional library development.

My last health library visit was to Eva Lesenková's library at the Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education in Prague. This visit took place on 17th November, the anniversary of the Velvet Revolution in 1989. Despite this being both a Saturday and a public holiday, Jarmila Potomková and Helena Bouzková also participated in this visit, along with my chauffeur and guide, Mr Vít Zrna. Once again an example of the marvellous hospitality I received on my trip.

The institute has its own hotel and conference centre, where, in fact, the EAHIL workshop in Prague was held some years ago. The library is attractive and modern, and I understand that Eva had more than a hand in its design. The library staff of eight offers services to the academic staff of the institute and to participants in their courses in information searching and computer skills for physicians and continuing education courses for librarians.

My Czech colleagues informed me about some of the interesting projects that were underway. These included a joint catalogue for foreign medical literature, coordinating of acquisition, plans to create a virtual medical library, Medvik, and continuing education programmes for librarians and end users.



*Backstage at the National Theatre, Prague
(Patricia Flor and Alexandr Lesenkov with guide(left))*

Foto: Vít Zrna

Later the same day, we all met again at the National Theatre. Vít Zrna had arranged a guided tour of the building, back stage and afterwards we settled in our box to enjoy a performance of Smetana's "The Bartered Bride".

Impressions

This was a very rewarding trip from a professional, cultural and social point of view. I learnt a great deal about Czech history and society, and gained an insight into the health service and nursing education, in addition to the organisation of medical and health libraries. My main impression of medical and health libraries in the Czech Republic is that they are run by enthusiastic and competent librarians who have been quick to exploit the possibilities that information technology has given us in recent years.

URL's of interest

Palacký University http://www.upol.cz/UP_En/

Institute for Life-Long Education in Healthcare, Brno
<http://www.idvpz.cz/index.html>

Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education, Prague
<http://www.ipvz.cz/english/index.htm>

National Medical Library, Prague
<http://www.nlk.anet.cz/english/>

Internet resources for nurses (presentation)

http://www.hit.no/bib/nurs_res-filer/frame.htm

Olomouc <http://www.olomouc-tourism.cz/index.asp?lng=en>
Prague <http://www.prague.cz/>

Strahov Monastery

<http://www.vol.cz/MONASTERY/infoeng3.html>

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German - Language Library Literature

Often the publishing industry advertises “summer time - reading time” in order to stimulate people to use their holidays for reading. So it might be of interest - possibly also in preparation of the Cologne event - to the many visitors coming from non-German speaking countries to take a look at the issues and topics covered in the library field journals in German speaking countries.

In between the very prolific Anglo-American production of library related literature, it is mostly overlooked that also other countries and languages have a high output in this field. [I would even go as far as to say there is a classical language bias in the Anglo-American library/information management related literature].

Though the research and university-base in Switzerland, Germany and Austria is historically narrow and has only expanded in recent years, the lib/doc/info professionals in these countries are very productive. Stockpiling the publications of one year could well reach three meters of paper, far too much to be completely covered.

The national backbone of library publications could be ARBIDO in Switzerland related to the **Swiss Librarians-Archive Association** <http://www.svd-asd.org> (It actually has no electronic equivalent at the moment but many items may be found easily through classical search engines to get an idea of its coverage), Bibliotheksdienst in Germany and VÖB-Mitteilungen in Austria have websites giving free access to their contents. There are about 30 to 40 different serial publications in German countries of which just from a personal viewpoint, I shall choose 4-5 giving link information to the others.

Bibliotheksdienst - <http://bibliotheksdienst.zlb.de/> appears monthly covering the classical library scene in Germany and appearing each month with about 100 pages (black/white) written only in German. It communicates important issues in the library field and as many short notices focusing on very different topics of interest and announcements of many seminars and giving a good overview on national and international congresses. It must not be overlooked that it contains regularly articles on activities or exchange programs with many countries in the world expanding readers' views. Three months after publication, articles are available in PDF format from June 2001 onwards.

Nowadays named “**Information Wissenschaft & Praxis**” - <http://www.dgi-info.de/> appearing monthly with about 50-60 pages (formerly known as NfD - Nachrichten für Dokumentation) is the journal of the German Documentation Society distributed mainly to its members and covering especially the fields that are of interest to information professionals working in industry, corporations or online/media. The contents, dedicated more to content workers or providers, is often demanding due to very new or research-near topics of the original papers; these have English abstracts. Besides lots of information, industrial news and forthcoming items, it offers a Table of contents-Section of many international Anglo-American serials in the field and lists of articles and books published. In my personal view it is somehow the research and economical interface among the German information management serials. While the full online version with abstracts and PDF files since 1999 is access-restricted to subscribers and members of DGI - a short e-version covering table of contents and German/English summaries of original papers is available in html back to 1995.

Some years earlier I would have listed **ABI-Technik** - <http://www.vnmonline.de/ZSmanagement/abi/startseite/startseite.html> here, which has a long and valuable position as a professional library journal with a focus on technical issues and library architecture and storage issues. You can find English abstracts of original papers published on their website. But today I would like to emphasize on **B.I.T online** - <http://www.b-i-t-online.de/> that has been around for some years: edited by a number of German-Swiss-Austrian library directors it has developed as an important information source. I personally have been attracted by a very valuable and comprehensive series of articles relating to the digital library and a further look through the annual indexes of the last two years have demonstrated many valuable information items for working professionals today. It is a commercial product offering texts as PDF only to subscribers. Table of contents are freely available back to January 1999. Subscribing libraries will receive IP-authentication.

The Austrian **VÖB-Mitteilungen** <http://www.uibk.ac.at/sci-org/voeb/vm/> being the printed communication tool of Austrian librarians shows the productive output of a relatively small professional community. Articles have been access free since 1995. The journal covers all topics of the library field with a special section covered by the Austrian Online User Group AOLUG which is related to online and database topics. This section is also obtainable as PDF.

Further important journals are e.g.:

Buch und Bibliothek - <http://www.b-u-b.de/aktuell/index.php>

Bibliothek Forschung und Praxis - <http://webdoc.sub.gwdg.de/edoc/aw/bfp/titel.htm>

AGMB aktuell - <http://www.akh-wien.ac.at/agmb/mbi/indexneu.html> - The journal of the German speaking medical librarians and organiser of the Cologne Event.

A comprehensive list of library journal links may be found under

http://www.bib-info.de/komm/knt_neu/fundgrub/zeit_deu.htm

Those interested in the "Digital library" topic may find valuable sources at the University of Zurich under

<http://www.hbi.unizh.ch/sites/linklib.html#DLIB> and a four parts series of articles by Diann Rusch-Feja under

<http://www.b-i-t-online.de/archiv/2000-02/fach4.htm>

(Links checked: July 6th 2002)

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Dear colleagues,

The papers suggested in my column are concerned with the quality of medical literature and e-journals. The first issue of June of JAMA (2002, 287, No.21) is devoted to the quality of reporting clinical trials, quality of peer review, publication bias and quality of electronic publications. There is considerable evidence that many published reports of randomised controlled trials are poor or even wrong; poor methodology and reporting are widespread (D.G. Altman, p. 2765). Anonymity for peer reviewers remains the overwhelming norm within biomedical journals and open review is ethically superior to anonymous review (F. Godlee, p. 2762). Evidence of publication bias on submitting and publishing preferentially manuscripts with positive results (C. M. Olson et al., p. 2825) or statistical significance (K. Dickersin et al., p. 2829). E-journals do not have the qualitative or quantitative complexity of traditional print journals (A. C. Weller, p. 2865).

Giovanna F. Miranda

JOURNAL ISSUES

Since the Newsletter of May 2002, the following journal issue of *Health Information and Libraries Journal* has been received: **vol. 19, 2002, no 2.**

E. Crumley, D. Koufogiannakis. Developing evidence-based librarianship: practical steps for implementation. p. 61-70
Evidence-based librarianship is an approach to information science that promotes the collection, interpretation, and integration of valid, important and applicable user-reported, librarian-observed and research-derived evidence. This paper describes a practical framework for the implementation of EBL.

J.D. Eldredge. Evidence-based librarianship: what might we expect in the years ahead? p. 71-77
This article develops a set of probable predictions for the development of EBL by the years 2005, 2010, and 2020.

M. Peterson, L. Harris. SALUS: online co-operation between South Australian health libraries. p.78-83
The paper describes the development of the SALUS project,

which enabled the online delivery of core health, clinical information, and bibliographic databases with full-text resources access South Australian government health services.

A. Poyner, A. Wood, J. Herzberg. Distance learning project-Information skills training: supporting flexible trainees in psychiatry. p. 84-89
The aim of the project was to provide one-to-one information skills training at their home enabling participants to improve their IT and searching skills and gain confidence through their continued use.

J. Crawford. A study of issues in administering library services to nursing studies students at Glasgow Caledonian University. p. 90-97
Nursing studies students seemed dissatisfied with the library service. These studies showed the concerns of nursing studies students to be similar to other students but more strongly felt.

Innovations online (B. Anagnostelis) p. 98
Research (A.Booth) p. 56

Publications & Products

BOOKS REVIEW

Men's health on the Internet. Eds. M.S. Wood and J.M.Coggan. The Haworth Press Inc. Binghamton, NY, USA, 2002. ISBN 0-7890-1924-8, \$ 39.95 hard cover, ISBN 0-7890—192-56 \$ 19.95 soft cover, pp.117.

The book is a guide to the best Web sites representing men's health organizations. The authors evaluate Web sites for content, clarity, and user-friendliness, and shows how to conduct a focused, subject-specific search.

Public Internet Access in Libraries and Information Services. Ed. P. Sturges. Facet Publishing, London, 2002. ISBN 1-85604-425-4, £ 34.95 hardback, pp.240.

This book is a guide for those who require a fuller understanding of the key areas as law and ethics. It is a step-by-step guide to developing an Internet access policy, including guidance on controversial aspects such as surveillance and monitoring of use, and software filtering and blocking.

Guidelines for Herbal ATC classification. WHO

Collaborating Centre for International Drug Monitoring has published a draft of Guidelines for Herbal ATC classification. Remedies are divided into groups according to their therapeutic use, and whenever possible the level 1-4 codes in the herbal system are equal to the levels in the regular ATC system.

If you are interested in this publication contact Anneli Lennartsson, The Uppsala Monitoring Centre (e-mail: info@who-umc.org) for a copy or more information.

NEW JOURNALS

Journal of Electronic Resources in Medical Libraries.

Volume 1 n. 1 of the new journal is scheduled for publication in early or mid-2003.

The Haworth Press, Inc. announces a new peer-reviewed journal focused on electronic collection management and selection of appropriate electronic resources. Some of the covered topics are the role of medical librarians with PDA (personal digital assistant), enhancing electronic resource user services, archiving issues with electronic format, cost analysis of digital resources, etc. The electronic co-edition of this journal will be available through all major e-journal aggregators.

PAPERS REVIEW

Health information on the Internet. Quality issues and international initiatives.

A. Risk and C. Petersen, JAMA, 2002, 287, 2713.

Can you believe what you read?

F. van Kolfschooten. Nature, 2002, 416, 360-363.

Online use statistics.

N.H. Tannery et al. Medical References Services Quarterly, 2002, 21 (1), Spring 2002, 25-33.

The impact of location on the use of information system: Case study – health information kiosks.

D. Nicholas et al. Journal of Documentation, 2002, 58 (3), 284-301.

Continuing education needs of science and technology librarians: results of the 2001 STS Continuing Education committee survey.

C. M. Desai. Issues in Science & Technology Librarianship, No.34, Spring 2002.

Available: <http://www.istl.org/02-spring/>

INFORMATION SOURCES

Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Centre.

Established by the National Human Genome Research Institute and the Office of Rare Diseases, the Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Centre employs experienced information specialists to answer questions from the general public, including patients and their families, health care professionals, and biomedical researchers. The Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Centre offers free and immediate access to specialists who personally provide anyone who asks with accurate and reliable information about genetic and rare disease.

Further information: E-mail: gardinfo@nih.gov

<http://rarediseases.info.nih.gov/infocenter.html>

..... Web-based

Medical Photos. HelpMD offers an online library of medical-related images. Thousands of medical and scientific pictures have been assembled into one searchable web site. Illustrations cover all areas of medicine. <http://www.helpmed.com>

Major Histocompatibility Complex. The MHC Haplotype Consortium plans to post sequences for some of the most common varieties of MHC genes, which all lie on chromosome 6. The site is hosted by the U.K.'s Sanger Institute. www.sanger.ac.uk/HGP/Chr6/MHC

Science Archive. BioMed Central has launched a database of video autobiographies of eminent scientists. Films are indexed and searchable.

www.biomedcentral.com/sciencearchive

NEWS FROM PUBLISHERS

Ebsco supports continued learning and professional development opportunities by sponsoring librarians to attend the MLA Annual Conference and ALA Annual Conference.

Ebsco/MLA Annual Meeting Grants (four librarians) and **Ebsco/ALA Annual Conference Scholarships** (ten librarians) pay up to \$ 1,000 for travel and conference-related expenses.

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www.ebsco.com

Ovid Technologies, Inc. announces that it has signed an agreement with Taylor & Francis publishers to provide

access to 60 key medical and health science journals via Journals@Ovid. Moreover a new licensing agreement between Ovid and McGraw Hill Professional will make electronic versions of leading reference books in internal medicine, obstetrics, surgery, cardiology and many others specialties available through Books@Ovid.
www.ovid.com

ISI announces links between ISI Web of Science and Wiley InterScience. Mutual subscribers are now able to navigate between these two online resources.

A linking agreement between ISI and Swets Blackwell will allow users to link from the ISI Web of Science and ISI Current Contents Connect to the full text of journal articles available in SwetsnetNavigator. www.isinet.com

Forthcoming Events

18-24 August, 2002, Glasgow, Scotland

68th IFLA General Conference and Council

For further information: <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla68/index.htm>



16-21 September, 2002 Cologne, Germany:

8th ECMHL EAHIL Conference:

Thinking globally - acting locally

For further information: <http://www.zbmed.de/eahil2002/index.html>



16-18 September, 2002, Rome, Italy

ECDL European Conference on Digital Libraries

For further information: tarina@iei.pi.cnr.it

22-25 September, 2002, Lisbon, Portugal

EUSIDIC Annual Conference Lissabon Virtual Communities

For further information: <http://www.eusidic.org/Lisbon2002Web.html>

20-23 October, 2002, Nimes, France

The 14th International Chemical Information Conference & Exhibition

For further information: www.infonortics.com

3-5 December, 2002, London, UK

Online Information 2002

For further information: <http://www.online-information.co.uk>



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