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Editorial

by TRIX BAKKER

This double issue is rather extensive, covering the LIBER 36th Annual General Conference European Integration: Conditions and Challenges for Libraries which took place in the Warsaw University Library and the National Library of Poland in Warsaw, 3-7 July 2007. The conference was very well attended. There were about 200 participants from 28 different countries.

The Pre-conference Co-operation among Europe's Research Library Organizations was devoted to a review of activities that can be coordinated at a national and international level and a discussion of the new opportunities and possibilities for cooperation with support from LIBER. Timothy Mark (Canadian Association of Research Libraries, CARL) was invited to speak from the viewpoint of a non-European national research library association. He stressed the fact that the most powerful form of cooperation is advocacy at national and international levels. For research library associations it's essential to work together at the political level to move their agenda forward. According to Mark a real leadership opportunity for LIBER is to assess scholarly communication issues common to all European research libraries and to engage in a long-term advocacy programme to advance the interests of LIBER members. Peter Fox (Vice-President of LIBER) was the last speaker and elucidated LIBER's plans for international collaboration.[1]

As usual, the sessions were organised by the four Divisions of LIBER. The first session (Library Management and Administration Division) consisted of two parts: 1) "Measuring Quality in Libraries" and 2) "Succession Planning". The first paper by Didar Bayir and Bill Simpson was based on the proceedings of the seminar 'Measuring Quality in Libraries' held at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris on 23 March 2007. The themes of this seminar were: Tools for Quality Measurement, Standards and Performance Indicators, Benchmarking and Auditing. The second paper by Pierre-Yves Renard was about how the international standards ISO 2789 and ISO 11620 can be used as reference documents and strategic tools in a performance assessment process. Anne Murray had an interesting paper about developing leaders through succession planning. She illustrated this with the succession planning strategy developed at the Cambridge University Library. The session ended with a kind of sceptical paper by Henryk Hollender about who will take over the libraries of the New Europe.

The second session (Collection Development Division) was about the "Impact of Electronic Collection Development". Kristiina Hormia-Poutanen's paper was about a project carried out by university, polytechnic and research institute libraries as well as public libraries in 2006 to define the core electronic resources necessary to improve access to information in Finland. The resulting proposals were received positively by the Ministry of Education and from now on the idea of core electronic resources for research and innovation will be part of the national research infrastructure programme. The next speaker Hazel Woodward outlined the National E-Book Observatory Project by the E-Books Working Group (EBWG) of the JISC Collections Team based on a feasibility study on the acquisition of e-books by higher education (HE) libraries and the role of JISC. The last speaker of this session was Michael Cotta-Schønberg. He spoke about the changing role of the subject specialist: from subject specialist to information specialist.

The third session (Preservation Division) had as theme "Recent Development in Preservation and Conservation". Helen Shenton had a very lively presentation with many pictures of the new British Library Centre for Conservation which was officially opened by HRH The Princess Royal on 10 October 2007. This project was more than just a building project and led to a greatly improved working environment for staff, as well as the best possible conditions for the conservation of books and for audio engineering. The next speaker Dennis Schouten spoke about the new perspectives for the Dutch Metamorfoze Programme. Government archives are now included in the programme as well and Metamorfoze is shifting from microfilming towards digitization as a conversion method for mass-preservation. Instead of a paper from the last speaker of this session, Lars Björk, you will find a review of the LIBER "Think Tank on the future value of the book as artefact and the future value of digital documentary heritage", National Library of Sweden, Stockholm, Sweden, 24-25 May 2007, by Andrea Langendoen, Dennis Schouten and Helen Shenton. This two-day Think Tank started with the question "does the book have a future at all?" and ended with the conclusion (by Ola Larsmo) that "the book in its present form will be with us for many years to come, despite of, and as well as, the tremendous growth of digital information."[2]

The fourth session (Access Division) was about "Breaking through the barriers". The first speaker Frank Scholze had an interesting paper about measuring research impact in an Open Access (OA) environment. He focused on current initiatives and projects aiming to provide a suitable infrastructure, including publisher data and data collected from OA

repositories. The next presentation by Richard Davies was about the LIFE (Lifecycle Information for E-Literature) Project which has developed a methodology to model the digital lifecycle and to calculate the costs of preserving digital information for the next 5, 10 or 100 years. Three case studies were chosen to test the LIFE methodology. The first phase of the LIFE Project ended in April 2006 with an international conference at the British Library. Currently the LIFE Project is in its second phase (LIFE2), an 18 month project running from March 2007 to August. LIFE2 aims to refine the lifecycle methodology and to add a greater range and breadth to the project with four additional case studies. Jens Vigen presented a business model for Open Access journal publishing in High Energy Physics (HEP). In this new model, the publishers' subscription income from multiple institutions is replaced by income from a single financial partner, the Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access Publishing in Particle Physics (SCOAP[3]), a global network of HEP funding agencies, research laboratories, and libraries. Each SCOAP[3] partner will recover its contribution from the cancellation of its current journal subscriptions. The last speaker, Tamar Sadeh, presented Ex Libris' Primo, a one-stop solution for the discovery and delivery of local and remote resources, such as books, journal articles, and digital objects.

The local session about "Polish Research Libraries - strategies for the 21st Century" had three presentations of which only one is published. Ewa Dobrzyńska-Lankosz presented an overview of the levels of cooperation between libraries, examples of joint initiatives, local consortia, the organisation and funding of cooperation, and international cooperation such as the co-operation between the NUKAT Centre and OCLC.

I end this editorial with a personal note. I've been editing LIBER Quarterly for four years now and I did this with great pleasure. Next year, from January on, Inge Angevaare, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, National Library of the Netherlands, will take over as editor. She will introduce herself in the first issue of 2008.

WEB SITES REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

BLCC - British Library Centre for Conservation. http://www.bl.uk/conservation

JISC - Joint Information Systems Committee. http://www.jisc.ac.uk/

JISC Collections E-Books Working Group (EBWG). http://www.jisccollections.ac.uk/workinggroups/ebooks.aspx

JISC National E-Book Observatory Project. http://www.jiscebooksproject.org/

LIFE - Life Cycle Information for E-Literature. http://www.life.ac.uk.

Metamorfoze. http://www.metamorfoze.nl

NUKAT - a union catalogue of Polish research and academic libraries. http://www.nukat.edu.pl/

OCLC - Online Computer Library Center. http://www.oclc.org/

Primo. http://www.exlibrisgroup.com/primo.htm

SCOAP3 - Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access Publishing in Particle Physics. http://www.scoap3.org/

NOTES

[1] See the Development Plan 2007-2010 on the LIBER website: http://www.libereurope.eu/node/59

[2] The papers from the Think Tank will be published by the National Library of Sweden.