

INTERNATIONAL LIBRARIANSHIP

Gracious Queen. I have read the story of the William C. Miner (a surgeon in an asylum in the USA who was one of the main editors of the *Oxford English Dictionary*) – and here I was beside a box of his original OED slips.

C.S. Lewis personally oversaw productions of early editions of his *Alice in Wonderland*. This was unusual for an author but he insisted on being involved. We saw the original printing blocks for his mouse script. This would have been extremely difficult and painstaking to produce. There are many other versions in different editions but this one has the best symmetry.

In London I visited the British Library (special exhibition of illuminated manuscripts), British Medical Association Library, and House. A doctor showed me through the editorial areas for the BMJ and Clinical Evidence. An unexpected highlight was the medicinal garden. I am a great fan of the author Charles Dickens and he used to live next door and strolled through this garden. This is not visible from the road, nor is it open to the public – so this was another special unexpected treat.

I met several colleagues in Bangalore (India) to encourage them to attend ICML in Brisbane. I toured the library of the vast National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences and saw many familiar books and journals. The librarian also manages the IT department, electronic resources, and library university courses. This is the national centre for rehabilitation medicine so I was especially interested to engage in discussion. I also met the Indian agent for many of our suppliers. He showed great foresight to establish his business 20 years earlier when IT was only just developing.



Library of Celsus, Ephesus

Apart from the modern National Library in, the other libraries I visited were all in ruins but fascinating all the same. The Library of Celsus in ancient Ephesus (Turkey) held 12 000 scrolls in galleries designed to prevent damage from damp (a precaution that did not stop the Goths burning them all when they sacked the area in 242 AD). Celsus Polemaenus is entombed there.

The acropolis once housed Pergamon's famous library which, at its peak of 200 000 books, rivaled Alexandria. The Egyptian kings, alarmed at the growth of the library which they saw as a threat to their own, banned the export of papyrus – of which they were the sole producers – thereby attempting to stem the library's expansion.

Eumenes II offered a reward to anyone who could come up with a replacement and writing on parchment was revived. This led to the invention of the codex (paged book) since you could not roll up parchment like papyrus. The library was ransacked by Mark Antony who gave the best items to Cleopatra as a gift, but enough remained for the library to be used until 4th Century AD.

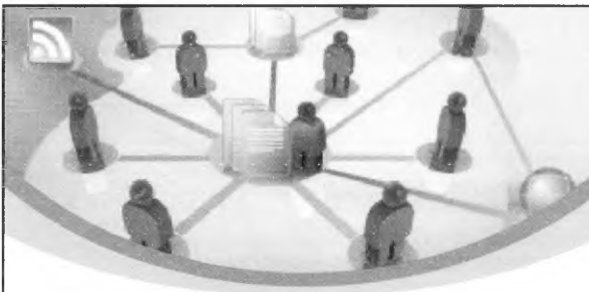
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Libraries in the Digital Age (LIDA)

May 25–30, 2009. Dubrovnik and Zadar, Croatia

The annual conference, now in its tenth year, provides a good mix of papers presented in a beautiful environment. It is co-hosted by the University of Zadar and Rutgers University, New Jersey. This approach enables a wide range of speakers and topics, including big names from the US – this year the invited speakers were Marcia Bates and Michael Buckland, together with Peter Ingwersen from Denmark. The conference attracts around 200 participants and runs for a week, starting and ending with workshops covering a range of topics including working with Dublin core tools and an introduction to the Digital Library Reference Model. The first two days were held in Dubrovnik, a jewel of a city and, this year, extremely warm. The organisers then moved everyone to the University itself in Zadar – another Croatian town set on the water's edge. Again, a beautiful setting with the university in a prime location and chandeliers in the lecture theatres!

Presentations were wide ranging and international, including Marcia Bates thought-provoking paper entitled "On heritage




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University of Zadar

and the information disciplines"; an entire session on modelling bibliographic data and FRBR; a paper on the administration of e-resources and staffing implications; a study of Danish children's use of the International Children's Digital Library; and this author's paper on archiving television in the digital age.

LIDA is a small but surprisingly high-powered conference that provides an opportunity to gain a perspective outside the usual UK/North American axis. I was the only Australian there I think but can recommend attendance – at 200 Euros, registration is a bargain! Currently only hard copies of the papers are available (I know, the irony isn't lost!) – but the digital versions will be available shortly.

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Libero Consortia — An Italian success story

The LIBERO Consortia and Resource Sharing concept has been successfully executed in many regions throughout Australia and Europe. The latest LIBERO Consortia success story can be found in Padova, in the Veneto region of Northern Italy. The region consists of 104 communities which are grouped into five major regions covering over 2000 sq kilometers. These communities joined to form a consortium to service a combined 80+ branch libraries throughout the entire region.

Promoted by the Department of Culture of the Province of Padova an extensive process was undertaken to review all library policies. This process determined the necessity to create a unified catalogue in order to achieve a more complete and efficient research instrument. This would then allow searches to be far more comprehensive and effective thus improving the activities of circulation and acquisitions.

The Padova project not only involved the libraries; four additional parties were required to make this project possible. Given the enormous scale of the project it was necessary to roll it out over three stages. Phase one of the project was essentially the developmental stage which began in 2004. Phase two involved the implementation of the Federated Search module allowing members to search across one complete regional catalogue. Phase three saw the consolidation of individual LIBERO software to a unified system.

The benefits achieved are of considerable importance for both the library staff and its members. An overview of just some of

the many benefits achieved include the ability to do a single search on a unified catalogue and return a list of all materials available at each of the participating libraries in the province; uniformity of cataloguing; reduction of costs of cataloguing with data about a book catalogued within one network immediately available to other networks; guarantee of managerial autonomy for each individual network enabling individual library identity. With the unified catalogue it is now possible to know the lending availability of titles and thanks to one card per member in the Province of Padova members are able to borrow from any participating library within the region.

For further information on LIBERO or Consortia and Resource Sharing, please visit <http://www.libero.com.au>.

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An Australian in Samoa: celebrating Library Week Samoa "weaving knowledge"

Samoa is known for its beautiful beaches, rugby players, coconuts, *fafaline*, friendly people, *siva ali*, harmonised singing, Christianity, and the year-round humidity of the tropics.

It is not known for its libraries. But the Library Association of Samoa (LAS) plans to change that.



Susanne is second from the left

As I write this we are in the midst of a really successful National Library Week. Our theme for the week is 'weaving knowledge', which relates to traditional Samoan woven fine mats that are valued highly and passed from generation to generation. We want Samoan stories, literature, and traditions to be similarly valued and shared, and for Samoans to have access to the information they need to gain knowledge.

For a tiny Pacific island with only one public library serving the entire population, the response to Library Week Samoa has been incredible. This is only the second time Samoa has held a library week. The first was held in 1988, and was by all accounts a modest affair.

I have spent the last four days being overwhelmed by the interest in and passion Samoa has shown for libraries.

From having over five hundred Samoan children dressed as their favourite book character parade through town to the public library, to 106 original short stories and poems about Samoan life entered