

# focus

on International Library  
and Information Work

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# ILIG

International Library  
& Information Group



## Editorial

Welcome to another Open Access issue of CILIP ILIG Focus! 2019 is rapidly coming to an end and it has been a lively year for us at CILIP ILIG, with many new faces on the committee, plenty of projects to get involved in, and a host of events - culminating in a very successful “Decolonising library collections and practices” conference in Cardiff last month. 2019 also saw the launch of CILIP’s Working Internationally scheme - an exciting Arts Council-funded initiative to promote collaborative working between libraries here in the UK and their international counterparts: <https://www.cilip.org.uk/page/workinginternationally>

In a climate of ongoing political uncertainty, this is an important commitment to internationalism from CILIP. One stated aim of the scheme is to [#BuildBridgesNotWalls](#) – an idea which remains pertinent given the continued prominence of divisive politics, even despite the Berlin Wall having been torn down some thirty years ago now.

This issue features three examples of international librarians converging in Europe. The summer saw the international mobile library community convene in Hannover, Germany. Former CILIP ILIG Chair Ian Stringer presented at the International Mobile Library Conference and gives us his spirited take on the event in this issue. We also have a feature from our current Treasurer, Sarah Brain, who attended the Consortium of National and University Libraries (CONUL) Erasmus Staff Mobility Week in Dublin in June. But first we have

**CILIP** SPECIAL  
INTEREST  
GROUP



our Alan Hopkinson Award winner - Laura Cagnazzo - with her report of what it was like to attend the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) World Library and Information Congress as a first-timer.

On a more sombre note, it was very sad to hear that Shane Godbolt, former librarian and Director of Partnerships in Health Information (Phi), passed away last month. She was a passionate advocate for international librarianship and an ex-member of the CILIP ILIG Committee who has done incredible work and will be sorely missed. I knew Shane personally - she was also a regular visitor to the Royal College of Nursing Library and Heritage Centre where I work. Though she was always extremely busy, I admired how she would always find the time to stop and talk to me about projects she was involved in and I invariably found these chats hugely inspirational. We intend to include a full tribute to Shane in a future issue of CILIP ILIG Focus but in the meantime she also recently reflected on her distinguished career in a feature for CILIP's Information Professional magazine. I highly recommend a read:

<https://www.cilip.org.uk/news/479978/Reflections-on-international-collaboration-enthusiasm-commitment-resilience-It-is-all-about-dive.htm>

Thanks for the feedback on the first ever Open Access issue of Focus earlier this year – it's been great to see the change has been so warmly received. Lots more to follow next year. Enjoy the festive period in the meantime and all the very best for a great start to 2020!

**Philip Segall, Editor**

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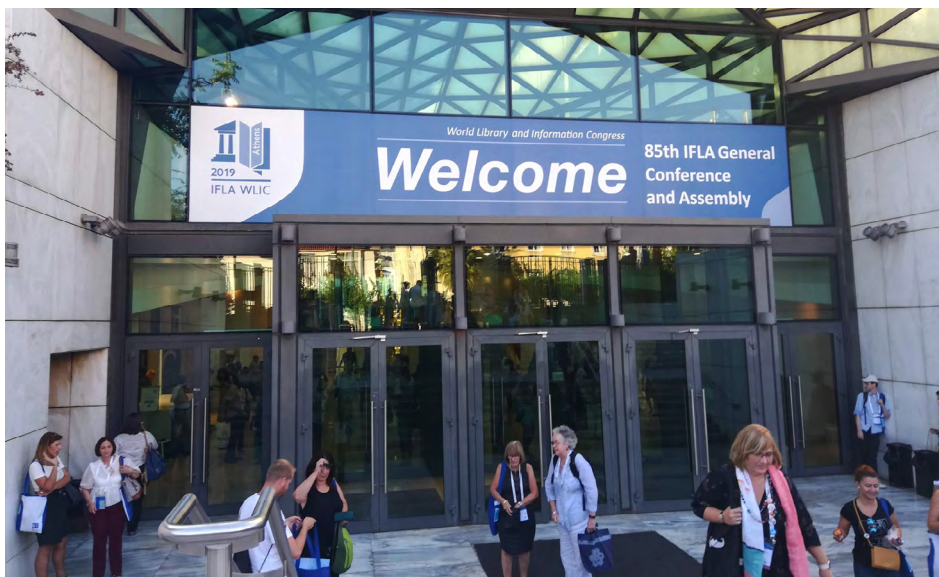
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Front cover image courtesy of NASA

# Attending IFLA WLIC 2019: a dream come true

by Laura Cagnazzo\*

I am finally now, after about two months since the end of the 85th International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) World Library and Information Congress (WLIC), held in Athens 24-30 August 2019, finding the time to write about my experience as an attendee. Quite an incredible experience, I would say! I literally struggle to believe that I actually went all the way to sunny Athens, in Greece, and took part in one of the largest, most important international gatherings of librarians and information professionals.



*Outside the Megaron Athens International Convention Centre (MAICC) - host venue for the 85th IFLA WLIC Conference*



\*Laura works as a Repository and Research Data Librarian at the University of the West of Scotland having graduated from the University of Strathclyde in 2017. Her professional interests include metadata and linked data as well as Open Access.

My path towards this IFLA WLIC adventure started a while back, over a year ago to be precise, when chatting to someone who has attended this event on several occasions; they warmly recommended I should go, stressing how inspiring and refreshing the whole experience is. Fully aware of the fact that I would not be able to afford the costs on my own, I then set my mind on keeping my eyes peeled for bursaries or grants that could help me cover the expenses. When I saw about the [Alan Hopkinson Award](#) offered by CILIP International Library and Information Group (ILIG) I knew it was my golden ticket and I quickly started working on my application. I was not expecting - I am being very honest here - to ever being selected for the award, so when the notification email arrived I was over the moon!

I hope that, with my report, I will be able to give those who did not get the chance of attending in person, a flavour of what IFLA WLIC is about. For those interested, the full text of the papers presented is available from the [IFLA Library](#)<sup>2</sup>. I would also strongly recommend to check out the Twitter hashtag - I [#WLIC2019](#) have posted quite a lot of tweets myself during the congress, so have a look at my Twitter page too: [@LauraFCagnazzo](#). Flicking through the [conference photos](#), it is like being there again and it feels quite emotional!

The numbers of IFLA WLIC are impressive and can give you an idea of the breadth of the event: over 3,600 participants from more than 140 countries, over 500 speakers, 60+ exhibitors and a venue spanning 143,000 square metres.

The theme of this edition was *Libraries: dialogue for change* and this resonated through all the sessions. Athens, the birthplace of democracy, of the first public library, of dialogue as methods for reasoning - thanks to the great philosophers Socrates and Plato - was just the perfect location for this year's IFLA WLIC.

## Feelings

I cannot deny that the size of the event - the number of people and the number of sessions on at any one time - was slightly overwhelming. That is why I found the Newcomers session particularly informative in getting an idea of how to best approach this experience.

Visiting Athens had been on my bucket list for a long time: I have a background in classical studies, so I have always felt I should pay a visit to Greece. I truly enjoyed the opening ceremony; a captivating performance directed by Sofia Spyratou brought fond memories back to me of the years spent studying Ancient Greek literature, art and culture.

I thought I would be knackered by the end of Congress and willing to hide



myself from the rest of the world. Instead, I was gutted when it was all over! I clearly remember that the level of excitement was equal during the opening and the closing ceremonies, although during the second one I had that unpleasant feeling of something good coming to an end.

During the IFLA WLIC week I felt inspired, energised and proud to be part of the information profession. I went back home excited to have ideas and notions to share with my colleagues.

## Sessions

I took a huge amount of notes - definitely too many to share them all here.



*The opening session at IFLA WLIC 2019*

Therefore, I will focus on a few talks I found particularly interesting. A topic that linked most (if not all) sessions was the need for change, transformation and updating of skillsets.

The keynote speech stressed the need for dialogue, diplomacy and collective wisdom to carry out the transition to a more multi-polar and possibly multilateral

world order, with common rules. We can no longer ignore the key challenges represented by climate change, information technology - big data, access to information and artificial intelligence; we need to act now! We need regulations for the Internet, which has become a means to spread fake news and hate speech. The speaker called for “a strong and united library field, empowering literate, informed and engaged societies”, which, looking at the most recent IFLA strategy, seems to be the direction of travel.

Particularly relevant to my current role were those sessions on Open Science and on library integration into the research lifecycle. I have recently taken on the role of Repository and Research Data Librarian at the University of the West of Scotland and I am very keen to explore the ways of improving this relationship between academic libraries and research. A strong need emerged for the repositioning of academic libraries in order to align them with research priorities. Once again, dialogue was invoked to enable understanding among the stakeholders. Libraries should be in the position of providing tools and expertise to help researchers throughout the research lifecycle; and, above all, libraries should be able to communicate what they can do, since lack of awareness is still the biggest obstacle that hinders the uptake of library services. The concept of the “embedded librarian” was formulated: the professional moves outside the library to participate more actively in the research lifecycle. This illustrates perfectly my current role; I work in close collaboration with the research office at my institution, as well as working directly with the researchers, to provide training and guidance. New roles equal the need for training. Staying ahead of the times to remain relevant is the key challenge that libraries have been facing since the outset of librarianship and this has been the case more strongly in recent times.

Natalia Manola, the Executive Director of [OpenAIRE](#)<sup>3</sup> illustrated why making scientific research open is a social responsibility; research should be transparent, accountable and reproducible. This is to enable and speed up innovation, create more opportunities for collaboration and avoid duplication. Research libraries play a critical role in supporting Open Science.

The workshop focussing on [Plan S](#)<sup>4</sup> – which I found out at the time stands for “Shock” - sparked my interest. An enthusiastic and informed discussion took place around our table, which helped me gain a different perspective on this initiative - does Plan S risk of further weakening the weak, leaving less developed countries behind and hindering the growth of small publishers? Are measures to avoid this being taken?

The workshop on Wikimedia brought a wonderful discovery to my attention:

**Scholia**, a project to present bibliographic information and scholarly profiles of authors and institutions using Wikidata. This is the product of the encounter between the Semantic Web and scholarly literature. Although this is still a work in progress, its potential in terms of enhancing the reach and impact of research is perceptible.

I made sure to include in my schedule presentations that were less relevant to my experience, in order to broaden my knowledge of the information profession. For example, I had never heard about the **Offline Internet Consortium**<sup>5</sup> and I probably had never stopped to reflect on how areas with no online access can benefit of the information stored on the Internet. Therefore, discovering initiatives such as **Kolibri** and **Kiwix** and the work of the Consortium towards the development of an Offline Internet Platform, was enlightening. The lesson that this session taught me is that there will always be something to learn, something that I have not considered; but, most importantly, that there is a solution to almost any issue; it just takes will, creativity and hard work.

Furthermore, the session on measurement of impact of libraries in metropolitan areas gave me some food for thought: all libraries' initiatives should be designed with a specific and clear idea of the impact they aim to achieve on the community and how to measure this.

## Networking

IFLA WLIC is about building meaningful connections and that is what I tried to do during my time there. I had the best time chatting to people I met over lunch or coffee breaks, those sitting at the same table as me during the workshops and delegates, those who were with me on the library tours and at the social evenings.

I have also made many social media friends: one particularly funny example was when I tweeted about a meeting I was at and another person in the same room tweeted something very similar - we liked each others' tweets, raised our heads and nodded to each other in acknowledgement!

## Comments

The conference venue was wonderful, but quite scattered and slightly mazy! The offer was so vast that it was quite difficult to choose which session to attend. The IFLA WLIC app was a useful tool to have handy; this enables attendees to select preferred sessions, create their own schedule, obtain information and connect to the other participants.

I attended many sessions and a couple of business meetings too. Now, I have





*Laura with conference attendees in traditional Greek costume at IFLA WLIC*

to confess: it was warmly recommended I attend as many business meetings as possible, but the ones I attended did not exactly meet my expectations... I am sure that being an active member of the groups puts things in a different perspective; however, being a spectator, while the group discusses matters such as name changes, admin, bureaucracy...is not too exciting. It was still informative to witness the process of defining the scope of a new group. Nevertheless, by being present at the business meetings, I was able to identify some experts in the field and make new contacts for potential future collaboration.

It may or may not be the case that my experience with these meetings meant I then particularly appreciated the talk by Catherine Isberg, who highlighted how the business meetings of IFLA CPDWL ([Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning Section](#))<sup>6</sup> have been transformed to take the format of a workshop, with less bureaucracy, less resistance to change and more action planning. “Do more, speak less and listen to others” has become my professional mantra!

Listening to the voices of thousands of librarians across the globe is exactly what the [IFLA Global Vision](#)<sup>7</sup> has achieved; it was particularly interesting to see

the final results presented, since I had myself contributed to the discussions when attending the CILIP Conference 2018 in Brighton, UK. Among the key recommendations announced: the need for more collaboration, partnerships and ensuring that developing countries have their say.

## Highlights

Among the key moments of the congress was the launch of the new [IFLA Strategy 2019-2024](#),<sup>8</sup> produced with the input of librarians from over 190 countries, which enabled active and widespread participation. This year's conference also saw the IFLA President, Glòria Pérez-Salmerón, stepping down and welcoming the newly-elected President, Christine Mackenzie. I made a note of some of Gloria's quotes from her speeches – here are some which I found particularly inspiring:

“To change the world we must be ready to change ourselves”

“I am so proud to be a librarian!”

“Libraries are an investment, not a cost”.

A brief summary of my congress highlights is below:

- Meeting professionals working at the Library of Congress - it may sound silly, but I was really excited to meet some of them in person for the first time!
- Meeting Miriam Bjorkhem from the National Library of Sweden, whom I had previously watched in a YouTube video while presenting at the Library of Congress the work that her institution did using linked data
- The stunning sunset from the terrace of the National Library of Greece (see photo below)
- Visiting the [Onassis Library](#)<sup>9</sup>
- Visiting the Acropolis, a life-long dream

## Post-conference

Reading about the previous Alan Hopkinson awards receivers and listening to the stories of professionals who attended IFLA WLIC, I was aware that my presence at the congress may bring some interesting opportunities and I was not disappointed. I was first approached by the people behind *Library Planet*, a very interesting crowdsourced initiative for libraries around the world, who asked me to write a blog on the National Library of Greece - <https://libraryplanet.net/2019/12/05/the-national-library-of-greece-a-classic-collection-in-a-shiny-new-home/>



*The sun setting outside the conference*

Furthermore, CILIP invited me to write a blog post highlighting the value of international visits for librarians as part of their new “[Working Internationally for Libraries](#)”<sup>10</sup> project. The post will be included in the Information Professional as well as on the project’s page on the CILIP’s website. You may find this useful if you are looking for tips when writing grant applications:: <https://www.cilip.org.uk/news/479876/How-to-write-effective-travel-and-study-grant-proposals-.htm>

I also wrote a post on my experience at the congress for the blog I author together with two other librarians, [We Only Stamp Books](#)<sup>11</sup> - check it out!

Finally, I have been invited to Mexico by a delegate I met in Athens, so that may be a future holiday destination: IFLA WLIC is not merely about the profession!

I want to seize this opportunity to thank once again CILIP ILIG for having granted me the Alan Hopkinson Award and I warmly invite you all to apply next year, since it is a once in a life-time experience awaiting you!

Laura Cagnazzo  
[@LauraFCagnazzo](#)

## Further reading:

<sup>1</sup>IFLA (2019) CILIP ILIG Alan Hopkinson Award 2019 [Online] Available at: <https://2019.ifla.org/2019-alan-hopkinson-award-cilip/> [Accessed 29 October 2019]

<sup>2</sup>IFLA (2019) IFLA Library [Online] <http://library.ifla.org/> [Accessed 1 November 2019]

<sup>3</sup>OpenAIRE (2019) Open Scholarship: Our organization, our project, our future [Online] Available at: <https://www.openaire.eu/about> [Accessed 4 November 2019]

<sup>4</sup>Plan S (2019) Plan S: Making full and immediate Open Access a reality [Online] Available at: <https://www.coalition-s.org/> [Accessed 4 November 2019]

<sup>5</sup>Offline Internet Consortium (2018) Offline Internet Consortium [Online] Available at: <https://www.offline-internet.org/> [Accessed 4 November 2019]

<sup>6</sup>IFLA (2019) IFLA Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning Section [Online] Available at: <https://www.ifla.org/cpdwl> [Accessed 4 November 2019]

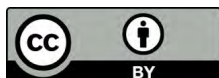
<sup>7</sup>IFLA (2018) IFLA Global Vision: Our vision, Our future [Online] Available at: <https://www.ifla.org/node/11900> [Accessed 4 November 2019]

<sup>8</sup>IFLA (2019) IFLA Strategy 2019 - 2024 [Online] Available at: <https://www.ifla.org/strategy> [Accessed 4 November 2019]

<sup>9</sup>Onassis Library (2019) Onassis Library [Online] Available at: <http://onassislibrary.gr/en/> [Accessed 4 November 2019]

<sup>10</sup>CILIP (2019) Working Internally for Libraries [Online] Available at: <https://www.cilip.org.uk/page/workinginternally> [Accessed 4 November 2019]

<sup>11</sup>Cagnazzo L (2019) We Only Stamp Books: The Adventures of a Wee Italo-Scottish Librarian at the Big Scary IFLA WLIC 2019 (24-30 AUGUST, ATHENS, GREECE) [Online] Available at: <https://weonlystampbooks.blogspot.com> [Accessed 29 October 2019]



# CONUL ERASMUS Staff Mobility Week

## Dublin, 17-21 June 2019

by Sarah Brain\*

In June this year I was fortunate enough to participate in the Consortium of National and University Libraries (CONUL) Erasmus Staff Mobility Week hosted in Dublin, Ireland. Erasmus mobility weeks are an opportunity to meet with librarians across Europe and participate in a programme of library and cultural events. The number of participants is usually around fifteen to twenty, which means that during the course of the week it is possible to get to know almost everyone. All participants are usually required to give a presentation on a specific topic as part of the programme. A diverse range of themes were covered during the week, including Space, Information & Digital Literacies, Cultural Heritage and Unique & Distinct Collections, Enabling Research, Customer Service and Responding to Change. This meant that there was something for everyone and we were all able to learn from each other.

CONUL was our host in Dublin. 'Established in 1971, CONUL is an all island body with focus on research libraries and currently has thirteen member institutions. It provides a framework for improving library services and enriching the collections of its member institutions. CONUL acts as a platform for an international presence for Ireland's research libraries. Each day was based in a different Irish institution within Dublin and all hosts made us feel welcome. I don't think I have visited so many different academic libraries in the space of one week! Altogether we visited eight institutions, nine libraries, one chapel and one Norman castle.



\*Sarah joined the CILIP ILIG Committee as an honorary treasurer in January 2019. She also works as a Subject Librarian for Economics, Finance and Management at the University of Bristol.

The programme was thoughtfully put together, often including visits to historical and newer libraries on the same day, providing interesting points of comparison. I was particularly struck by our visit to Maynooth University, where in the morning we experienced a brand new library, complete with sleep pods, newly commissioned artwork and community spaces. Study seats were functional and no-nonsense because that is what students had requested. The environmental aspects of the building included a rooftop





Maynooth University new library exterior

lawn that catches rainwater for use in the building and a bat house to enable the safe passage of bats along the river. In the afternoon we walked just a few minutes across the campus to visit the Russell Library. This is where the pre-1850 collection is housed. It includes approximately 2,500 bibles in nearly 600 languages and the oldest artefact held is a collection of Babylonian clay tablets from Mesopotamia, dated 3,500-1,900BC.

During an afternoon at the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) we found out about the collections and exhibitions that take place there. A highlight was the Cathach, which being dated 6th century, is the oldest extant Irish manuscript of the Psalter and pre-dates the Book of Kells. It is reputed to have been copied by St Columba without the permission of its owner. A dispute arose from this and it is believed to be the earliest known case of copyright law.

One of the highlights of the week was listening to presentations from the other participants. In addition to the Irish hosts and delegates, there were seventeen of





Delegates at the Russell Library Maynooth



Russell Library special collections



Delegates at the Royal Irish Academy (RIA):

us from a range of European countries including Belgium (1 delegate), France (2), Greece (1), Czech Republic (2), Germany (3), Spain (4), Poland (1), Norway (1), Italy (1), Sweden (1), UK (1). During the week it became clear that we shared a lot of the same concerns, with many issues in common, transcending borders, cultures and nationalities. This included grappling with how to increase space and maximise its use for collections and study. A collaborative project between multiple scientific libraries including Ghent University to pool collections was one approach taken, whilst at the Ionian University in Corfu we heard about the redesign of a library and the introduction of closed stacks in order to cope with several libraries co-locating into one building.

Another shared issue was how to raise the profile of our libraries and encourage students and staff to make full use of the facilities and services provided. An interesting approach was taken in two different institutions from Germany and the Czech Republic, both involving coffee. At the former, coffee lectures are offered to all students on a range of themes. At the latter, 'coffee in the library' sessions are provided to welcome new researchers. At the University of Alicante two important archives have been made available; one of them contains approximately 805 open reel tapes from Radio Paris, with French television broadcasts in Spanish between 1958-1975. The collection was donated by radio presenter JA Ramirez in 1999 to promote the historical study of Spain

during the Franco dictatorial regime. Most of the presenters were republicans in exile and include many famous writers and intellectuals of the time. The second archive comprises more than 35,000 vinyl records of a local radio music station, Alicante Cadena Ser. The library would like to see the usage of these archives increase and is currently looking at how best to promote them.

There were also some differences between us, not least of which were those where geography dictated. At the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL) for example, there are five campuses which are separated by several hundred kilometres. Most journeys between them involve a ferry, with the longest journey taking approximately seven hours.

All presentations from our Dublin hosts were inspiring and provided a showcase for current developments in Ireland. For example, delegates from two institutions, Dublin City University and Technological University (TU) Dublin, spoke about how their libraries became Open Access publishers in their own right. At TU Dublin the library was approached by the editor of the Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies because it had lost its funding. The library agreed to publish it using the journal publishing module in their Open Access repository Arrow. The success of this has meant that the offering has grown to thirteen journals, all of

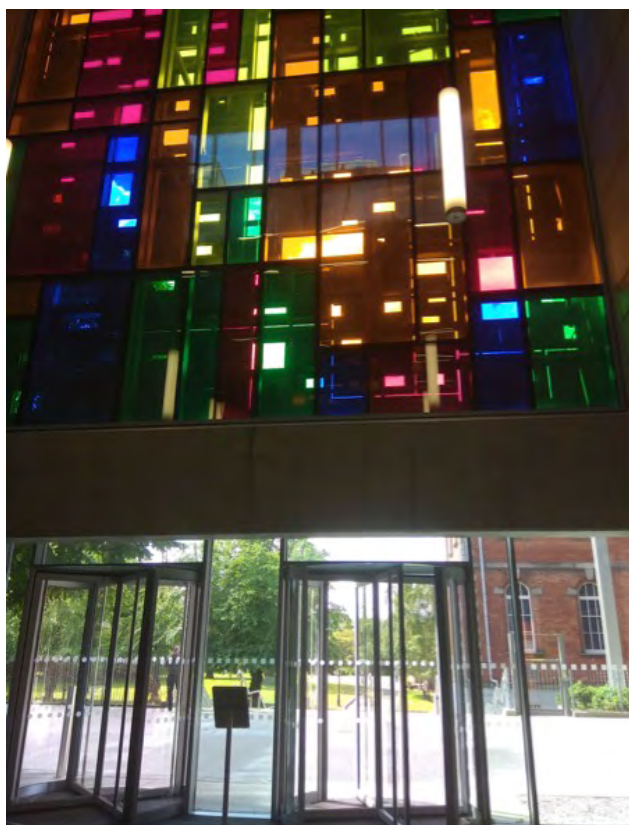


Royal College of Surgeons Ireland (RCSI) computers and study pods

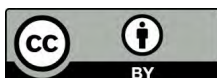
which are accessible through the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). This was an inspiring example of how libraries can take hold of opportunities such as this and make a success of it.

A huge thank you to CONUL and all of the host libraries and institutions for an enlightening and culturally enriching experience. I would wholeheartedly recommend this to anyone looking to broaden their cultural and library horizons.

For details of the full programme for the week see <http://www.conul.ie/session/17-21-june-2019-erasmus-staff-mobility-week/>



Dublin City University (DCU) library building entrance





# She Said “No!” to Trump and “Yes!” to a Mobile Library:

## A view from the Hannover Mobile Library Congress

I had the pleasure of attending a Mobile Library Congress in Hannover, Germany in early September 2019. Whilst mobile libraries seem to be on their way out in the UK, it's a different story in mainland Europe. Twenty-seven vehicles from several countries converged on the historic city of Hannover, along with about 250 delegates from fifteen different countries.



*Stadtbibliothek  
Hannover's own  
book bus*



*At Hannover Mobile Library Congress*

Ian is the former Chair of CILIP ILIG and has worked in Huddersfield, Dewsbury, Kirklees and Barnsley Public Libraries in the United Kingdom (UK). Ian's specialism is mobile libraries and he has given talks on the subject in twenty four different countries, on all six continents. Ian has set up three library projects in South Africa, Burkina Faso and Ghana to supply books in folding boxes to remote areas (Caterpillar Project). Ian was awarded CILIP Honorary Fellowship for this work. You can read about Caterpillar Project on the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) website here: [www.ifla.org/files/assets/public-libraries/projects/caterpillar-project-report.pdf](http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/public-libraries/projects/caterpillar-project-report.pdf)

The first day was at the city's insurance company headquarters - a splendid venue! Apparently quite a few German cities have their own insurance company for council and residential insurance, in a similar way that some UK towns have credit unions. The home speakers talked in German naturally but we had excellent simultaneous translations. Most of the lectures were given in English:

- Andreas Mittrowann from Germany gave a view of the “Mobile Libraries of the Future”, concentrating on green ideas around sustainability.



*The greenest library in Germany!*



- Vanda Fritschova told the history of mobile libraries in her native Czech Republic, specifically Prague from the years 1939 – 2019. She highlighted how the mobile library service had endured through various different regimes.
- Jyri Wuoristo and Teemu Hiltunen gave us a warts and all story highlighting the difficulties involved in getting an electric mobile on the road in Turku, Finland. Despite trying gamely to use Finnish coachbuilders, they ended up using a Chinese builder. European firms have just not got electric truck chassis that can cope with the Finnish winter and long distances driven. Using a Chinese chassis and Finnish body was a nonstarter as off-the-peg vehicle bodies are made to fit specific chassis, so the body would have had to be bespoke built. The asking price of €800,000 ended that idea. The Chinese company have built it for €400,000. A mobile library is actually a good example of a vehicle that can go all electric, as with regular long stops it could be recharged easily. We had an electric at the event but that had come all the way up from Ljubljana in Slovenia. This was on show to prove that long distances are possible.
- Guðríður Sigurbjörnsdóttir talked about the Reykjavik City Library Bookmobile which has been in service for fifty years. The Icelandic capital is another place where mobile libraries are expanding their services.
- Lutz Steiner, a German engineer working for a Finnish coachbuilder, looked at what would drive mobile libraries into the future. He felt that the lean clean diesel would dominate the market for years to come. His argument was that clean diesels don't put out as much carbon dioxide as petrol and electric vehicles are no good if the electricity is generated by coal or oil. Whilst clean diesels still emit small particles, so are bad in cities, he contends this is not a problem in rural areas.
- Nuno Marçal gave an insight into Portuguese mobile libraries. His service has just completed fifty years. They were all started when philanthropist Calouste Gulbekian gave about fifty mobile libraries to towns throughout Portugal. Nuno gave a good insight into the importance of a wi-fi fitted mobile library in remote parts of Portugal.
- Gerald Schleiwies talk was on "A BiBus for Saarbrücken and France". Saarbrücken is only ten kilometres from France and enjoys lots of co-operation with its Gallic neighbours. His libraries are part of a European Union (EU)-wide initiative for border regions. All over the EU neighbouring authorities get together in joint projects. Ironically we were



*A “Bücherbus” from the Cuxhaven district of Germany*

told one of the most successful was between Derry and Donegal, which of course may have to be abandoned. [Editor’s note: this refers to current uncertainty regarding Brexit in the United Kingdom.]

- Jennifer Gräler spoke about “Discovering Stories in Books and Games - Gaming and Reading in a Book Bus”. As a former children’s’ book bus driver, I was very interested in hearing how gaming is now used on the vehicles.



*A Dutch mobile bibliotheek at the conference*

- Julie Greub from Switzerland told of her success in persuading her town to buy a new vehicle. She used advertising, sponsorship and crowdfunding to set up a financial package that she could present to her committee as a deposit towards a new mobile. She raised £30,000, mainly from crowdfunding which made her council realise that the public really wanted a new vehicle. She had a word of warning: crowdfunding should only be used once for a project, otherwise the town council will just leave the whole funding to crowdfunding.



*Sometimes people make mistakes in assembling their products ;-)*

All through the day I had a large collection of my mobile library pictures on display and there was great interest in the lunch hour, as well as for nearly an hour after proceedings had finished at the end of day one.

The following day was the day for the mobile libraries to be put on display right by the City Market. They were open to the public and the city's events bus set up its stage. There was constant family entertainment; rock bands, folk singers,

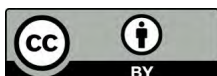
acrobats and comedians. I enjoyed looking round the mobile libraries.

On the Danish Mobile library was picture of Queen Margrete sat comfortably in their mobile. Yes indeed, when President Trump cancelled she had a free day and visited the vehicle instead. So we toasted the Queen with special Danish rum!



*Storm troopers outside a German mobile library*

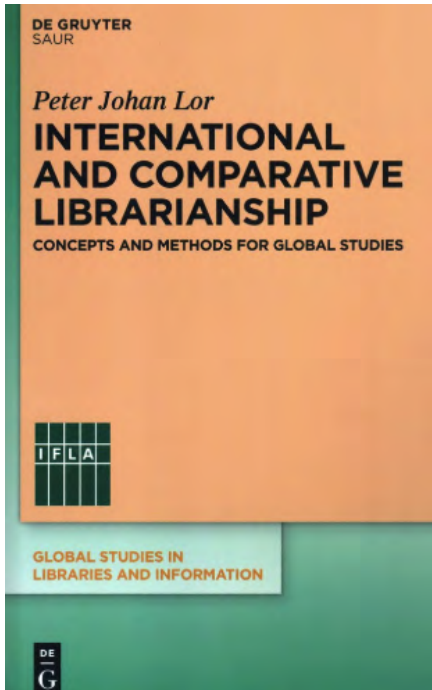
You can find out more about the Hannover Mobile Libraries congress, including presentations given at the event here: <https://www.fahrbibliothek.de/kongress2019/>





## Book Review

Lor, Peter Johan, *International and Comparative Librarianship: Concepts and Methods for Global Studies*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Saur, 2019. xliv, 905 p.



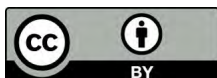
What do we mean when we talk about international and comparative librarianship? Is our approach to these two distinct areas sufficiently rigorous? How can we draw upon other disciplines to inform both research on and policy towards libraries across the world? These are some of the questions that permeate this magisterial volume by the former Secretary General of IFLA and the first national librarian of South Africa, Peter Johan Lor. In recent years he has been teaching international and comparative librarianship at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and this volume is ostensibly aimed at filling the gap that he found in the literature needed to support such a course. In fact its potential readership extends much further, from students, researchers and practitioners in all fields of librarianship to policy makers in government or NGOs.

Despite the rather daunting size of this volume, coming in at almost a thousand pages, it is a pleasure to read, written in a lucid and engaging style, even when dealing with complex questions of theory. It has a coherent structure, beginning with the history of international and comparative librarianship, the development of and issues with them as fields of study, and an analysis of key concepts. A substantial section is then dedicated to useful theoretical approaches drawn from the social sciences in general and international education in particular. What could in other hands be dry is punctuated with gentle but telling criticisms of the way that much current work neglects theory from LIS or any other disciplines in favour of simple, apparently objective, description. As Lor says, “many librarian-researchers may be surprised to find that they are positivists.” Had they read this book they would have had no excuse. In fact the frameworks he describes would often be useful to practitioners writing up their local projects without considering that other perspectives and approaches might be available, and that their outlook is not some global default.

The section on theory and method could easily stand alone, but it is followed by another, equally substantial, on the political economy of LIS, placing the development of libraries worldwide in their different political contexts and mapping trends in intellectual property, information flow, publishing, open access and open science, and many other areas. Each could of course be covered in much more detail, but Lor has given us the tools to do this ourselves, and that is effectively the challenge that he sets us. The final section, simply entitled influence, looks both generally and in specific countries at the impact on library development of empires of all sorts, from the British to the Soviet, and of international development and aid programmes, for both good and ill. While the current preoccupation with decolonizing libraries gets only a passing mention, this section should be key reading for anyone wanting to understand the impact of empire and colonialism more broadly on different models of library development, especially if they are involved in decision making about funding or international policy.

In his conclusion Lor loops back to the beginning, first asking rather sadly whether this field is in terminal decline, but then showing how the theoretical tools he has given us could help improve “the quality of both scholarly and practical international and global activities in LIS”. If anything could prove Lor’s initial pessimism misplaced, it is this volume, which could and should reinvigorate both scholarly and practical work on this neglected field. It certainly needs reinvigorating. A quick search across the websites of UK library schools for courses on international and comparative librarianship yields very little. The bibliography alone, extending to around 130 pages, will be invaluable for anyone wishing to explore these ideas further. We can only hope that Lor’s challenge is taken up and that this impressive volume is put to good use for future generations of students.

**Lesley Pitman**  
**London**





## CILIP ILIG Business

**Sad news** - the CILIP ILIG committee and many of our members were saddened to hear about the passing of Shane Godbolt who has worked closely with ILIG for many years, including her own time as a committee member. Our thoughts and heartfelt sympathies go out to her family at this time.

## Alan Hopkinson Award 2020: applications now open

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) and its International Library and Information Group (ILIG) invite applicants, particularly from outside of the United Kingdom, to attend the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Conference in Dublin from 15th-21st August 2020: <https://2020.ifla.org/>

This Award enables a qualified librarian who is a CILIP member to attend the IFLA World Library Conference. The Award covers the IFLA conference fee and £100 towards travel and accommodation.

Alan Hopkinson was an active member of CILIP ILIG from 2004 until his death in 2016. As well as regularly attending IFLA conferences, he was very interested in assisting young professional librarians from developing countries. He was involved in the Commonwealth Fellowship Scheme and in training young professionals from Eastern Europe. Following his death, a trust fund was set up for CILIP members outside the UK to attend the IFLA conference.

### **Applicants must have:**

- A maximum of five years post-qualification experience: the award is aimed at newly qualified professionals of any age.

### **The Panel**

A panel comprising three CILIP staff and/or members plus ILIG Committee members will consider applications. Their decision will be final and they will not enter into correspondence on it.

### **How to Apply**

Email: Anna Jablkowska, CILIP ILIG Secretary – [Secretary.ILIG@cilip.org.uk](mailto:Secretary.ILIG@cilip.org.uk) – with:

1. A formal proposal in English of up to 500 words (equivalent to 1–2 pages of

A4 paper) detailing how the visit will support their professional development within the context of their career to date and using the three headings of 'Visit objectives', 'Planned approach and content', and 'Application of learning post-visit'

2. A Curriculum Vitae (CV) of up to two pages in length, including the names of two referees in senior posts. Applicants are encouraged to seek the support of their line-manager or organisation, prior to submitting an application.

**Deadline:** Applications must be received by 31st March 2020. Applicants will be notified by the end of April 2020. The winner of the Award is expected to write a reflective report of not more than 4,000 words within six months of their visit, and a version for publication in *Focus on International Library and Information Work*, the CILIP ILIG journal.



# CILIP ILIG Committee Profile:

## Rachel Bickley

*How did you get into libraries in the first place?*

I started working in my local public library when I was sixteen years old; I wanted a Saturday job to do alongside my studies, and the library seemed like a much better prospect than working in a café or a shop! Funnily enough, I had no interest in becoming a librarian as my career (I fully intended to become a war-zone journalist at that point). Long story short, whilst working as a shelver in my university library I got to know what the Academic Liaison Librarians did, and I liked the idea of teaching without having to become a lecturer. I applied for a bunch of graduate jobs, including a graduate traineeship in the library at what was then Leeds Metropolitan University; I just accepted the first position that I was offered, which happened to be that one (I nearly became a contracts proofreader but they came in with the offer too late!) and it all snowballed from there.

*Why did you decide to join CILIP's International Library and Information Group (ILIG) committee?*

In 2016 I decided to take a career break to fulfil a long-held dream of going travelling. I went backpacking through Asia for eight months, then ended up spending two years in Australia on a Working Holiday Visa, working a varied series of temporary casual jobs and seeing the country in-between. Due to the



restrictions of the visa I was never successful in obtaining any library work whilst I was there, but I did attend some interviews for librarian positions. This gave me the opportunity to learn a lot about public and academic libraries in Australia and how they faced a mixture of similar and different challenges to those in the United Kingdom. This sparked an interest in the international LIS sector, and so when I returned home last year and went back into my career, joining CILIP ILIG seemed a logical step.

*What is your favourite library in any country you've ever been to?*

This is a tough one! I'm going to have to pick two, for very different reasons. The first is the tiny public library in the rural town of Tanunda in South Australia's Barossa Valley. I was living in a cramped, scruffy, damp working hostel in the town with around seventy five other backpackers, doing our three months of rural work in a vegetable factory to qualify for a second year of the Working Holiday Visa. The library provided a refuge for me and for many of the other people there; offering books, computers and reliable WiFi for planning onwards travels or looking for our next job, and a comfortable, safe space in a small town in the middle of winter where there wasn't really anywhere else to go. It really brought home to me the importance of a local public library for the community.

The second is Oodi, Helsinki's brand new central library, which I visited when on a brief trip to the city this summer. It's an attraction in itself, marked on the tourist maps, and rightly so. With books and magazines in multiple languages, lots of different study spaces and rooms (including rooms for playing video games), 3D printers and sewing machines which can be booked by library members, friendly staff, and a brilliant view of Helsinki from the rooftop café terrace, it's a fantastic facility for the people of the city.

*What do you enjoy doing outside of libraries?*

Outside of libraries I devote a lot of time to my travel blog – The Imagination Trail: <https://theimaginationtrail.com/>

Living in London with its excellent transport links allows me to travel frequently within the UK and Europe, and I love writing about where I've been and what I've seen, connecting with other bloggers and my readers, and hopefully showing that solo female travel is easy, fun and safe.

# **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

## **CILIP ILIG INFORMALS AND MEETINGS**

### **CILIP ILIG Informals at CLIP HQ**

**Commonwealth Professional Fellows  
Welcoming Event (TBC)**  
**Wednesday 12 February at CILIP HQ – 6pm**

**ILIG Informal**  
**Wednesday 11 March – details TBC**

**CILIP ILIG AGM**  
**Wednesday 13 May at CILIP HQ**

**ILIG Annual General Meeting with  
CILIP President Judy Broady-Preston**

### **OTHER EVENTS**

**IFLA World Library and Information Congress 2020**  
**15-21 August 2020**

**The International Federation of Library  
Associations and Institutions**  
**86th Annual General Conference and Assembly**  
**Dublin, Ireland.**

More information: <https://2020.ifla.org>

