



International Leads

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No library Is An Island: Libraries in Rarotonga, Cook Islands

By Pat Kittelson

Last year, with funding from the Harold Lancour Scholarship for International Travel from Beta Phi Mu, I had the opportunity to spend time in the Cook Islands touring the libraries in Rarotonga and visiting with librarians.

The fifteen islands that comprise the Cook Islands lie between Tonga and the Society Islands (Tahiti) in the South Pacific Ocean. In 1965 the Cook Islands achieved self-government in a unique partnership with New Zealand. Today, the Cook Islands independently handle all internal matters. Cook Islanders remain New Zealand citizens and rely on the New Zealand Government to carry out defense functions and external affairs in consultation with Cook Islands representatives. The libraries are internally managed and independent of the New Zealand library system.

The National Library. Cook Islands Prime Minister, Sir Jeffery Henry, established a new National Library, Archives, and Museum located not far from the original Cook Islands Library and Museum. This new facility receives funding from the government and reports to the Minister of Culture and Education. I met with Justina Nicholas, librarian at the National Library. Justina described the National Library's mission as currently evolving from providing resources and materials to primary and secondary schools to becoming a repository for Cook Islands and Pacific government documents and reports. She envisions one day that the National Library and the National Archives (housed in another building) could be merged into a unified collection preserving Cook Islands culture and heritage. Because much of the history of the Cook Islands is oral in nature, an oral tradition collection has been collected on audiotapes and transcribed. Justina sees possibilities in digitizing that collection and providing research access for Cook Islands genealogists and scholars. Currently she is exploring possible funding sources for such a project.



Runanga Puka/Cook Islands National Library in Rarotonga. (Photo: Pat Kittelson, November 2002)

The Cook Islands Library and Museum. It was established over 30 years ago, the most visited library in the Islands. The collection contains over 6,000 items, including children's and adult fiction and non-fiction, a large Pacific Island collection, and a small special collection of early Cook Islands books, newspapers, and Pacific magazines. Johnny Frisbee is the part-time librarian of this self-sufficient enterprise. With no government support, the library relies on donations and membership fees to cover the costs of wages, insurance, power, telephone, and an Internet connection. Books and materials are donated by individuals and also through a unique network that winds its way across the Pacific and into the state of Oregon in the United States. "Books for the Cooks" is the motto of a small book and video donation program led by Bob and Dot Pailthorp of Depoe, Oregon. Over the past seven years, the Pailthorps have

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collected nearly 7,000 pounds of used books and VCR tapes, boxed them up, driven them to Los Angeles International Airport, and delivered them to Air New Zealand. Air New Zealand then transports the books when space is available as a courtesy to the Cook Islands Library. Once the materials arrive in Rarotonga, the Cook Islands Rotary Club picks up the parcels and delivers them to the library in Avarua where library staff and volunteers process them for circulation.

Parliamentary Library. The library was established in 1969 by the Cook Islands Parliament as part of an Act to establish a Legislative Service in late 1960s. The Act states that the Legislative Service is "authorized to establish a library service for the benefit of members and officers of the [legislative] Service." The library is closed to the general public, but at the discretion of the Parliamentary Speaker, may be made available to researchers. The collection is a mix of Cook Islands political and constitutional material as well as documents from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and neighboring Pacific Islands. With a materials and travel budget of less than \$2,000.00 (NZ) annually, funding for additional materials is scarce. The library benefits from donations from Australia and New Zealand. With an Internet connection and an account established for the library in 2001, global access to online information has improved remarkably.

Science and Technical Libraries. I had the opportunity to visit two dynamic science libraries serving the Ministry of Marine Resources and the Ministry of Environment. Located in downtown Avarua, these two libraries work in close partnership and as part of a fascinating Pacific information initiative, the South Pacific Resources for the Environment Project (SPREP), a



Interior Cook Islands Library and Museum. (Photo: Pat Kittelson, November 2002)

regional organization comprised of twenty-two South Pacific nations, as well as New Zealand, Australia, France, and the United States. Its goal is aimed at cooperative efforts to protect the Pacific environment and promote sustainable development. SPREP has projects in the areas of nature conservation, pollution prevention, environmental education, policy and planning, human resources, and communication and information. An integrated library project has been developed as part of SPREP's communication and information project.

Theology Libraries. Two small libraries containing religious and theological books are located in Avarua. At the Catholic Administration Centre located next to St. Joseph's Cathedral, a small donated collection of religious books are kept. Lacking cataloging, the books are arranged in order by subject. Most of the books have been donated by clergy and church members. A few years ago, the original mission Diocesan archives (1891-1993) were microfilmed by the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau at the Australian National University. An inventory to this collection is available at the Catholic Administration Centre and copies of the microfilm are located there and in Australia. These archives contain Parish Records for the Cook

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Gary E. Strong Receives 2003 Humphry/OCLC Forest Press Award

Gary E. Strong, Director of the Queens Borough Public Library and soon-to-be University Librarian at UCLA, is the recipient of the American Library Association's International Relations Committee 2003 Humphry/OCLC Forest Press Award. The award is presented to a librarian or other person who has made significant contributions to international librarianship, classification and subject analysis, and/or library work in Third World countries.



Mr. Strong earned a Master of Library Science degree (MLS) in 1967 at the University of Michigan and a Bachelor's degree in Education in 1966 at the University of Idaho.

Between 1980-1994, Mr. Strong was the State Librarian of California, founding member and director emeritus of the board of directors of the California State Library Foundation. He served as CEO of the California Library Services Board; chaired the California Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act board; a member of the California Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act Finance Committee; Executive Director and ex-officio member of the board of the California State Library Foundation; chaired the Governor's State Literacy Collaborative Council, and established the California Literacy Campaign and Families for Literacy Program. Between 1979-1980, Mr. Strong was the Deputy State Librarian of the Washington State Library. In addition, he has held leadership positions in the Everett (WA) Public Library (1973-1976); the Lake Oswego (OR) Public Library; and the Markeley Residence Library at the University of Michigan (1966-1967).

Mr. Strong is the recipient of numerous professional honors,

including the Public Library Association's Charlie Robinson Award; a 21st Century Librarian National Award from Syracuse University's School for Information Studies, and the Queens Business Person of the Year-Large Business Award by the Queens Chamber of Commerce, 1996 Chinese American Librarians Association Distinguished Services Award, to name just a few.

Mr. Strong is the author/editor of many journal articles on library and literacy issues, and was recipient of the H.W. Wilson Periodical Award for his editorial work on the California State Library Foundation Bulletin between 1982-1994.

Mr. Strong has an outstanding record for contributions to international librarianship. Certainly, his work as Co-Chief Executive Officer of the 2001 IFLA Boston National Organizing Committee was a very significant contribution to international relations with other libraries and librarians. He not only has served in other important capacities, e.g., IFLA Representative to the United Nations, Organizer of the Second China/U.S. Conference on Libraries, and the IFLA Committee on Copyright and Other Legal Matters,

but he has also done pioneering work at his own library, the Queens Borough Public Library. In 1996 the Library signed agreements of interlibrary cooperation with the Shanghai Library and, a year later, with the National Library of China. He has expanded these agreements by arranging partnerships with libraries in Paris, Argentina, and Croatia. Mr. Strong has always involved his staff in all of these efforts. For example, these arrangements have not only served the international library community, but he has been careful to match the needs of his patrons from those regions of the world. In addition, he encouraged his library staff to develop a multi-lingual interface to the World Wide Web. He arranged foreign librarians visiting on fellowships to assist library patrons. He was able to organize a major exhibit of rare Chinese cultural artifacts which was reviewed favorably by the *New York Times*.

As Director of the Queens Borough Public Library since 1994, Mr. Strong continues to contribute to all aspects of public librarianship and community services. He leads an extensive staff in addressing major social issues and challenges of a public institution as well as its role in adult literacy, electronic equity for equal access to information, diversity in a pluralistic society, intellectual freedom, privacy and censorship, and fundraising for public institutions.

Mr. Gary Strong will be presented as the recipient of the 2003 John Ames Humphry/OCLC/Forest Press Award at the ALA's International Librarians Reception to be held on June 23, 2003, in Toronto. (*Provided by Thelma H. Tate, Chair, IRC Humphry/OCLC/Forest Press Award Jury Subcommittee*)

IRRT and IRC Programs and Meetings at 2003 ALA Annual Conference in Toronto (June 19 – 25, 2003)

Programs

Preconference:

“State of North American Librarianship”

Friday, June 20, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Toronto Public Library

International Librarians Orientation & Welcome Reception

Friday, June 20, 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

Metro Toronto Convention Center - Room 718A

“Want to Be a Librarian in Tegucigalpa?”

Saturday, June 21, 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Toronto Marriott Eaton Center - York

International Papers:

“Creative Fundraising Ideas: Strategies Used by Librarians Around the World”

Saturday, June 21, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Metro Toronto Convention Center - Room 206 C/D

“Libraries and Librarians in Cuba”

Saturday, June 21, 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Metro Toronto Convention Center - Room 715B

International Poster Session

Monday, June 23, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Metro Toronto Convention Center, Exhibit Area

“International Programs Spanning the World: U.S. & International Libraries in Action”

Monday, June 23, 1:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Delta Chelsea Hotel - Wren

International Librarians Reception

Monday, June 23, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

The Elgin and Winter Garden Theater Center

Meetings

International Relations Committee

Meeting I

Friday, June 20, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Metro Toronto Convention Center - Room 714A

Meeting II

Tuesday, June 24, 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Metro Toronto Convention Center - Room 714A

IRC/IRRT All Subcommittee Meeting

Saturday, June 21, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The Fairmont Royal York - Upper Canada

IRRT- Executive Committee Meeting

Sunday, June 22, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Metro Toronto Convention Center - Room 204

Russian Librarians Discussion Group

Saturday, June 21, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Metro Toronto Convention Center - Room B213

Welcome New IRRT Members!

Debra Bailey	Maria Ovalles
Kay E. Carley	Mary Rathke
Karen Chopra	Jean Smart
Ann Doyle	Barbara Spivey
Anthony Ferguson	Veronica L. C.
Mary Ann Gillispie	Stevenson-Moudamane
Laura Gottesman	Elizabeth Sullivan
Deborah A. Hysell	Denice M. Thornhill
Athalie Kirschenbaum	Heather Ward
Shawn Martin	Heidi Maria Weinkam
Aida E. Montero	Roberta Whipple
Linda A. Morrissett	Susan White
Sheri A. Myers	Norman H. Williams
Larry R. Oberg	Alhaji Yahaya

Program

On IFLA Committee Membership

The election cycle to fill vacancies on the various standing IFLA committees for the 2005-2009 term will start this fall. ALA and CLA members are invited to join a panel discussion about IFLA standing committee membership on Monday, June 23, 2003, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., in Salon B of the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. Current members of some of the committees will speak about their experiences as IFLA committee members. Information about the nomination process will be available, and there will be time for questions and answers. The meeting is sponsored by the ALA International Relations Round Table and the international relations committees of the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services, the Association for Library Service to Children, the Association of College and Research Libraries, the Library Information and Technology Association, and the Public Library Association.

2002 Hong Kong Book Fair

By Christine Cundall

Last July I had the privilege of attending the 2002 Hong Kong Book Fair along with other librarians from the U.S. It is certainly everything that Frank Xu and Carol Alabaster described in *International Leads* (September 2001). Frank Xu led the U.S. delegation last year. Many of the seventeen delegates were there for at least the second visit and all but two of us spoke Chinese. I do not speak Chinese and this was my first book fair in Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) was a wonderful host. It works closely with joint Publishing who coordinates and ships the purchases. It also provided each of us with an assistant. In my case, Janice Ching was invaluable. She is an editor, designs book covers, and, most fortunately for my library, reads fiction. There are many non-fiction titles in Chinese. We do not collect these at present although I did find a few bilingual titles to try.

This time many young people were again enjoying the book fair. Teenagers frequently sat at the edge of their hall reading their purchases. It seemed quite the place to be socially. Many young families made the colorful children's area very busy. The quantity of educational material in English was also impressive. All the halls were busy at the book fair, especially during the weekend.

We visited the HKTDC library that serves the HKTDC mission "to promote trade with and within Hong Kong." This special business/trade library produces several of its own publications, such as one-page trade guides to other countries. The library has 40,000 titles, 2,000 periodicals, 500 statistical tables, 160,000 newspaper clippings, videos and more. It is freely open to the public who makes good use of these resources, including the many database subscriptions. People starting new businesses and those with small businesses find the library particularly useful for the marketing and trade information, especially in areas that have strengths for Hong Kong, such as the fashion industry. Currently China's entry into the WTO is seen as a major opportunity. The government funds the organization and the library.

Our group outing was at the Lingnam University Library, Tuen Mun Province. The university libraries in Hong Kong organize themselves cooperatively in order to share their catalogues and purchase databases such as JSTOR. Lingnam University has just 2000 students, and 300,000 volumes. One interesting agreement at Lingnam is the availability of some local television programs in

digital format. Both Lingnam University and the new Public Library in Causeway Bay maintain collections in Chinese and English. Their libraries are light, spacious, beautiful, clean, tranquil, and well used. Computers, other than those for the catalog and databases, were in labs.

I would encourage everyone who buys books in Chinese for their libraries to seriously consider being part of the U. S. group to attend next book fair in Hong Kong. Not speaking Chinese is not a major problem. I found it very helpful to listen to my colleagues as they talked about their collections and experiences. *(Christine Cundall is Reference Librarian at Minneapolis Public Library)*



The librarians from the U.S. delegation gather outside of the Convention Center in Hong Kong.
(Photo: Christine Cundall, July 2002)



The librarians from the U.S. delegation are with their colleagues from Lingnam University.

(Photo: Christine Cundall, July 2002)



International Librarians Reception

American librarians and librarians from other countries gathered at the International Librarians Reception held at the ALA Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, June 2002.

(Photos: Sha Li Zhang, June 2002)



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Islands and Niue, manuscripts of a Dutch/Maori dictionary as well as the diaries of Monsignor Bernadine Castinie (French clergy 1921-1939).

Educational Libraries. There are three high schools or colleges located in Rarotonga, each having a library and computer centre. The elementary or primary schools in Rarotonga and the outer islands of Pukapuka, Manihiki, Rakahanga, Penrhyn, Mauke, Atiu, Mitiaro, Palmerston, and Aitutaki have small library collections which are managed by teacher-librarians. Justina Nicholas, librarian at the National Library is involved in the training of teacher-librarians. With little money for resources, most of the materials in the library are curriculum-based materials from the Cook Islands and New Zealand, or donated. Participants in the Global Volunteers Program have been

active in organizing these school libraries. Through the Ministry of Education, reading programs are being developed and encouraged throughout the islands.

The University of the South Pacific (USP). It has a small campus located in Avarua, Rarotonga serving approximately 200 students each semester. Tutai Parima works as the librarian and Internet operator at this campus. The small collection consisting of mostly reference and text

books is designed to support the local and distance learning programs offered through USP. The collection also houses a small Pacific collection and a limited number of journals.

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I was met by friendly librarians with an enthusiasm for their work and collection. I sensed a commitment to information sharing that extended beyond their shores to the greater Pacific region.



Matai Mokoroa and Rangit Tutai, librarians at the Ministry of Marine Resources, Cook Islands. (Photo: Pat Kittelson, November 2002)

Report from the International Relations Committee

By **Betty J. Turock, Chair**

ALA's commitment to international affairs has never been needed more than in the global society of the twenty-first century. The International Relations Committees (IRC) continues its dedication to advancing bridges that promote greater understanding and peace.

At the Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia, progress was reported in four ongoing activities and in three new foci. IFLA Council approved the Internet Manifesto at its annual conference. The Manifesto, which reaffirms that unhindered access to information is essential to freedom and equality, was previously endorsed by ALA's Council on recommendation of the IRC.

The IRC *Resolution on the Destruction of Palestinian Libraries, Archives, and Other Cultural Institutions*, passed by Council at: http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Our_Association/Offices/InternationalRelations2Awards_Activities_and_Exchanges/Resolution_on_the_Destruction_of_Palestinian_Libraries.htm recommended the creation of a group that would travel to the region to make an objective assessment and analysis of the damage. The resolution was sent to the UNESCO Director-General, who indicated his willingness to cooperate on a study similar to one previously undertaken by UNESCO and IFLA in Kosovo. Denmark and Norway promised fiscal support for the work.

The International Relations Office (IRO), with support from the IRC Eurasia and Central Asia Subcommittee, embarked on a two-year project to improve access to academic libraries in the South Caucasus. The first event, a workshop in Yerevan, Armenia, brought together librarians and university officials from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia to discuss with American librarians the role of academic libraries in fostering a civil society. It was the first regional library meeting held outside of Georgia since the cessation of conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 1994. The second part, now underway, is to improve access to information at university libraries in Armenia and Georgia through increased Internet capability, access to databases, the donation of requested materials, and establishment of library partners in the United States.

The Campaign for the World's Libraries, a partnership between ALA and IFLA, continues to grow. Seven countries signed up since the ALA Annual, bringing the total participating countries to 19. The IRC and the Public Awareness Committee have established a joint subcommittee

to continue their collaboration on the campaign. It will hold its first meeting at the ALA Annual in Toronto.

With support from the IRC Latin American and Caribbean Subcommittee, ALA received a grant to bring five Cuban librarians to the Annual conference in Toronto, where they will present a program on Cuban libraries and librarianship, scheduled for Saturday, June 21 from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. in the Convention Center, Room 715 B.

In a plea to Council, the IRC reaffirmed its recurring requests for support to fulfill the Association's growing obligations for activities in the international arena. In the 2002-2003 operating year, the Director of the International Relations Office was reduced to half time. In the past, ALA's support for the IRO was sporadic and intermittent. In a global society where national library issues are increasingly interconnected and where the international library community turns with regularity to ALA for leadership, the necessity for an adequately staffed Office, capable of coordinating effective international activities in concert with other ALA units is crucial. All who agree with this position, should let ALA's Executive Director, Keith Fiels, know of their concern for the future of the IRO.

Interested in Doing a Fulbright?

The Fulbright Senior Specialists Program is a new Fulbright initiative offering short-term grants of two to six weeks to U.S. scholars and professionals. Overseas academic institutions worldwide request Fulbright Senior Specialists throughout the year. Applicants for the program apply to be included on a roster of qualified candidates in specific fields of study including library and information science. The Council for International Exchange of Scholars matches qualified candidates with incoming program requests. Some of the activities grantees in library science have participated in include: consulting with libraries on various issues such as automation, records; management and cataloguing; teaching courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels in information and library science; assisting in curriculum revision; assisting in the development of Masters programs in information and library science, and identifying and acquiring electronic resources. Additional program details are available at www.cies.org/specialists or e-mail to fulspec@cies.iie.org.

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Ms. Parima acknowledged the age of the collection and the desire for new books and materials. Again, with an annual materials budget of \$8,000.00 (NZ), the library barely manages to purchase needed textbooks and reference materials. Student use of the Internet is growing and in response to that need, the library provides three computers with Internet access which are linked to a printer. A photocopier is also available. Interlibrary loan services are provided from the University of the South Pacific's main campus in Suva, Fiji. Books are sent out once a week by air freight and there is no charge to the student.

Summary

At each library I visited in Rarotonga, I was met by friendly librarians with an enthusiasm for their work and collection. I sensed a commitment to information sharing that extended beyond their shores to the greater Pacific region.

Facilitated by the Internet, each librarian expressed the potential of this connectivity towards the global sharing of Cook Islands resources. The geographical isolation, the tropical climate on preservation issues, the lack of appropriate Pacific-based published materials (ranging from textbooks to fiction), are some of the challenges facing librarians in the islands. Nonetheless, what impressed me the most was each librarian's commitment to sustainability and measured growth for their library's collections. Recognizing the existing funding constraints, the librarians had clear, prioritized collection development plans appropriate to building and maintaining their libraries. At the same time the librarians were committed to connecting with each other to achieve access to a wide range of information resources. They see the Internet as the future of this connectivity. While the Cook Islands librarians primarily serve their local populations, it is the rest of the world that also benefits from their commitment. For to us, the



Student use of Internet is growing at the University of the South Pacific. (Photo: Pat Kittelson, November 2002)

advantage of increased access to their locally produced reports, documents, and literature is immeasurable.

(Pat Kittelson worked at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand from 1996 – 2001. The author is most grateful for funding provided by the Harold Lancour Scholarship for International Study from Beta Phi Mu, the International Library and Information Studies Honor Society.)

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