



EUROPEAN CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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Summer & Autumn 1998



President's letter By Michelle Darraugh

The last few months have been very busy one for the European Chapter. First, we had the June conference in Indianapolis at which we presented the 1998 European Special Librarian of the Year Award. This year's award, kindly sponsored by



Information Access Company (IAC), went to Liselotte Lindskog, head of information services at Celsius Tech Electronics AB in Sweden. The award, seeks to recognise outstanding achievement in special librarianship in Europe. The award itself was presented to Ms. Lindskog by John Burke Richardson, Deputy Head of the European Commission Delegation to the United States, at a gala reception in Indianapolis.

The awards continued at our annual Summer Soiree in London, this year kindly sponsored by Derwent Scientific and Patent Information. The Summer Soiree is one of my favourite European Chapter events. It allows members to get together on a balmy summer evening over a glass of wine to chat about the main conference.

This particular gathering also gave us the opportunity to present the European Special Library Innovation Prize to the Institute of Petroleum (IP) Library and Information Service. Sponsored by Resources Exhibitions Ltd., the selection panel felt that the IP website showed enterprise and initiative as it is developed entirely in-house by Catherine Pope and Catherine Cosgrove.

We also heard from Liz Blankson-Hemans about her experience as a first-timer at the Indianapolis conference. Since then, we on the Board of the European Chapter have been busily planning new events for the rest of this year. Suggestions and ideas for events are always welcome – but rest assured we already have quite a few things planned. Watch this space!



A first timer's view of the annual conference By Liz Blankson-Hemans

I attended my first SLA Conference this year in Indianapolis, which for me was lucky since I was a relatively new member, having only joined SLA at the beginning of the year. My initial reaction when I found out I was to attend conference in Indianapolis was one of some excitement that I was going at all, but also



Liz Blankson-Hemans giving a first-timers view of the SLA annual conference in Indianapolis

uncertainty about the venue. It could have been New York, San Francisco, Seattle, but Indianapolis? And for six full days, which added to a day's travel on either side would be a full week. Still, I thought, some travel and six days out of the office! It had to be worth my while going all that way to stay for a week.

My first experience of conference was receipt of the

preliminary conference programme and booking forms. I was staggered to put it mildly! Having no idea at all of the scale of the conference, I found the programme overwhelming and it took me a full week to understand the way the programme worked. In order to prevent myself getting cross-eyed, I eventually did what I am sure old hands at conference probably now do, which is to pick out your Continuing Education (CE) courses, workshops and socials and rewrite your own programme, cross-checking with the original as necessary. Tip one from me to any would-be first-timers out there. (The second would be to get your booking in nice and early, if you want to be allocated anything near your preference!) By the time I had worked out what I wanted to attend, and which socials to attend I was very much looking forward to it.

I know that organising any conference must be a fraught experience for the organisers and I expected that a conference on the scale of SLA (as I was beginning to realise from the documentation received

and from the Web site) would have its hiccups. As a first timer, let alone one coming from across the Atlantic, I hoped that my bookings and preferences would be accommodated and I was prepared to complain about not receiving my first choice of hotel as I had initially been led to expect. However, when I arrived at conference and saw the scale of it, the number of attendees and the preparation that had gone into it (as well as hearing some tales of accommodation bookings that had truly gone horribly wrong), my complaints paled into insignificance and I thought it would be petty to mention them.

Information workers on this side of the Atlantic (especially those who have never been to SLA) may think we have some 'big' conferences such as the Online conference or even EBIC, but if you want to see BIG, then go to SLA. It is truly an experience. It is huge and yet you don't feel lost. Everything is well signposted. The name badges clearly spell out who you are and where you've come from, but one very

Congratulations to the Institute of Petroleum (IP) Library and Information Service which has won the European Special Library Innovation Prize, sponsored by Resources Exhibitions Ltd. The selection panel felt that the IP website showed enterprise and initiative, as it is developed entirely in-house by the library team. Have a look at their work at <http://www.petroleum.co.uk/> to see what information professionals can produce when they turn their hand to HTML and web design.



Catherine Pope (left) and Catherine Cosgrove receiving a cheque for £500 and a plaque from Joy Bussell of Resources Exhibitions Ltd who sponsored the award.

good feature was the coloured ribbons which indicated whether you were a first timer or a speaker or attending the President's reception etc. It made for a very good ice breaker, as if Americans in general need it. I was made to feel very welcome.

Delegates would come up to me or would remark when I visited the exhibition stands "All the way from London?!" or "Love your unique accent". I felt a bit like a novelty, but at least I didn't feel isolated or lonely.

I learnt the art of networking in a manner never known to me before. I gave away a whole box of contact cards and received an equal number in return. The CE programmes, division workshops and seminar were all very educative, topical, interesting and ideal opportunities to network.

The beauty of the SLA conference was that there was so much to choose from, and one of the hardest things for me was deciding which parallel sessions to attend as they all looked interesting. Sometimes I left the decision to the last minute and even then whilst I was sitting in one albeit interesting session, I would be agonizing over whether or not I should have gone to the other. I could now see why the conference was fixed over six days. By the time you had fitted in lunch, time at exhibitions, socials and 'open house' events organised by the various divisions, you were ready for your bed each night. And what a bed! American double beds can sleep three people comfortably (Not that I tried it, but I imagined you could).

Another big experience for me was the amount of coffee consumed and the portions of food served. At one 7.30 am breakfast meeting, we were served broccoli quiche with cheese sauce and roast potatoes. After taking one look at it, I only managed the coffee. (I had by this time given up drinking tea. Definitely not their strong point!).

The SLA conference organisers had done a good job of booking a wide range of speakers for general sessions and other division meetings and I was able to listen to luminaries like Tom Stewart, Doris Kearns Goodwin and Stan Davis. If I had had any doubt as to the scale of the conference, it was confirmed for me at the general session which Stan Davis addressed. I am sure there were nearly 5,000 people in the hall. In spite of the size, there were enough seats for everyone. I have since been told by old hands that having a conference in an exciting city venue could be a double-edged sword as there are so many attendees that finding seats at sessions or obtaining good accommodation can be tricky.

My third tip would be - if you are going to go to conference, choose one at a venue that many would perceive as unexciting because slightly reduced

number of attendees could work to your advantage. Also, information professionals being who we are, we have a knack for finding out exciting places to visit in cities others might find uninspiring. I can honestly say that I was not bored in Indianapolis. Receptions and dinners were held at venues like the Native American Eiteljorg Museum or the Indiana Rooftop Ballroom. Visits to attractions like the Indy 500 Motor Speedway or 'Brickyard', the Eli Lilly Museum, the Children's Museum etc. were all on the agenda. I even found time to shop in spite of all this activity.

I found the whole experience positive and exciting and I would say to anyone who has the chance to go to an SLA conference - grab it, with both hands, wherever it may be!



Chemistry Information: Global Linking

By Peter Hoey

An abridged adaptation of a talk given to the SLA European Chapter session in Indianapolis.

Things really began before computers. In 1660 the Royal Society was founded covering the general and philosophical aspects of science as they were then. In 1754 the Royal Society of Arts began to address the specifics in its mission statement which said it existed "To embolden enterprises, to enlarge science, to refine art, to improve manufacturers and to extend our commerce.". Evenso as time went by, groups of scholars wanted more specificity, so in 1841 the RSC was founded as the Chemical Society. From these beginnings, it has always had active connections with other chemical societies in Europe and the World, including American Chemical Society after that was formed.

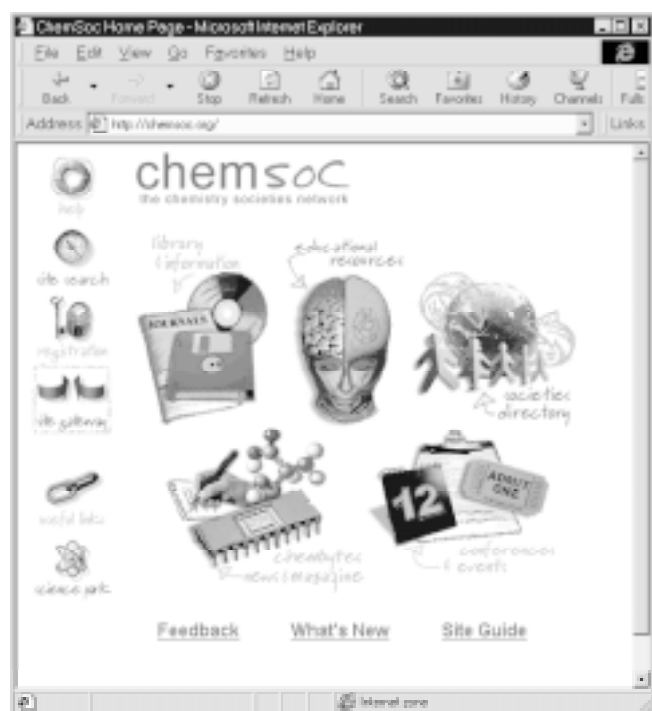
Under its Royal Charter it has several detailed obligations related to the dissemination of chemical knowledge; advancing the standards of competence and conduct of those who practise chemistry as a profession; and to advance the science or practice of chemistry. From the European viewpoint, and in chemistry in particular, the situation was that experts travelled between countries, worked and talked together, and presented papers to small groups, passing information in what are nowadays called "invisible colleges". This process was probably mirrored all over the world. Examples of this way of working can be seen in the RSC's archive of manuscripts from Sir Henry Roscoe, the Society's President from 1880-1882. This holds about 500 letters from fellow chemists all over Europe and the USA.

Moving on in time, in 1935 the Chemical Council was formed. This linked the Chemical Society, the Institute

of Chemistry and the Society of Chemical Industry "especially for co-ordination of scientific and educational publications, the publication of new discoveries in chemical science and of their applications to the arts . maintenance of a library". More recently, in 1970, the Federation of European Chemical Societies (FECS) was founded to promote co-operation in Europe between those non-profit-making scientific and technical societies in the field of chemistry whose membership consists largely of individual, qualified chemists and whose interests include the science and/or practice of chemistry. 50 member societies representing 200,000 qualified chemists in 33 countries in Europe (not just the European Union) are embraced by FECS. Chemists communicate with one another by and through the work of eight FECS Subject Divisions.

There is now a EurChem qualification open to members of FECS member societies. European Chemist denotes academic qualification plus approved professional experience. There were 656 European Chemists at the end of 1997. Another example is that of the Alliance for Chemical Societies and Technologies in Europe, AllChemE. This draws together professional societies, trade associations and European Union technical committees. The RSC Library was founded in 1841. Long before computers arrived, it had over 100 exchange arrangements in place, ranging across 50 countries, 25% of which were outside of Europe. In the last 10 years, for chemistry, the RSC Library and Information Centre (LIC) has taken on the responsibility of maintaining collections so that users can access information, despite cuts in other major libraries.

Being conveniently located in the centre of London, it is easy for technical consultants, academics and



business specialists to use in the traditional ways, as well as by the use of the latest information technology. This latter extends the service to users who cannot travel or who lack traditional skills in tracking down chemistry information. Some of these comprise an almost totally new group of users. The LIC books and images catalogue is available via the Web and so are its serials holdings. This makes it easy for serious researchers to conduct their work and for copies to be supplied fast. There are of course bigger units which cover wider fields, such as the British Library, but they suffer the disadvantage of not being personal in approach and having collections which are inaccessible to the 'casual' visitor.

The latest effort by the RSC to meet its charter objectives to foster and encourage the growth and application of chemical sciences is a new website called Chemsoc.org. This site sets out impartially to link all chemical societies the world over, both individually and as groups of them e.g. European and Asian. In 1998, ninety societies were included. Pages will be created for societies without their own facilities. Do visit this new site and see how the tradition of links between those working with chemistry the world over, is being continued.

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Indy Conference note by Karen Thorshaug

I'd like to express that I found the Conference interesting and that I made contact with people that I later may turn to for advice or opinions. It's nice to have met or seen some of the faces behind the NewsLib Mailing List, which I find very useful. Coming home from the conference, I was met by a request to correct mistakes in the electronic archive, thus making it possible for the web-journalists not to reproduce old mistakes. Regarding this request, I find the ongoing discussions in the News Division very useful.

The session on training of the journalists was also very good. I hope to be able to offer some courses on Internet searching to the Newsroom soon.

I'm generally impressed by way news librarians in the US discuss all sorts of questions relevant to news libraries so openly, seemingly without worrying about giving away information to competitors.



Managing Patent Information by David Mort

At the SLA European Chapter's Summer Soiree in August, the event's sponsors Derwent Information made available copies of their recent report *Managing Patent Information: the Gulf between theory and practice*. Based on a survey of 360 European companies by SLA European Chapter board member David Mort of the Information Research Network (IRN), the report reveals major contradictions between the theoretical value that companies place on patents and their poor management of this vital business resource in practice. This can lead to massive patent litigation costs and wasted R&D expenditure and, surprisingly, senior managers in large companies were less aware of this situation than their counterparts in SMEs. The survey also showed that the UK lagged behind the rest of Europe in recognition of these problems.

The survey notes that 82% of respondents say that they appreciate the value of patents and 90% say that they are important to the R&D process. 54% of respondents state that a patent has significantly changed their company's fortunes but 71% also admit that they have still wasted R&D expenditure through patent mismanagement. 84% of companies have a patent policy but only 42% carry out regular patent audits.

More detailed results and analysis are in the report available free from either Derwent or IRN:
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Tel. +44 171 424 2347 salesup@derwent.co.uk
Information Research Network, David House, 129 Wilton Rd., London SW1V 1LD.
Tel. +44 171 416 8107 irnxxx@easynet.co.uk



Fat free meetings -a new form of diet? by Stella Trench

"Reducing liquids. This process is used mainly to intensify flavours: a wine, a broth, or a sauce is evaporated and condensed over lively heat. A so-called double consommé is made in this way, the food product being half the original in volume." Joy of cooking. Rombauer & Becker. New York, Scribner, 1995.

How well this reduction can be applied to intensify the meetings experience was well illustrated in one of the SLA summer conference's more lively sessions. The meeting room was packed to the gunwales (I had to sit on the floor and could not see the speaker!) for Burt Albert's exposition on how to better run meetings and how this will improve every aspect of your business life.

A more committed speaker I have not heard in a long time. Passionate about his subject matter, Albert says that training in leadership of meetings can increase productivity by 58%. He suggests putting assessment of meeting management skills into the performance appraisal process of every organisation. I pass on some highlights of his performance (it can only be called that).

"A meeting without an agenda is a call to chaos." How true these words rang. The call to a meeting must include exact details about the purpose, preparation, the time the meeting will take and the agenda. Remember - W.I.I.F.M. "What's in it for me?". There needs to be a clear benefit statement so that the person attending the meeting can see of what use it is to them. Most meeting callers only think about the benefit of the meeting to them. Preparation statements are also helpful. "Before the meeting, please.." saves time. The agenda must be "action driven" i.e. not just a list of subjects, but what is to be done about these subjects.

The meeting caller should never accept representatives instead of invitees. They will distort messages and will be unable to make decisions. An interesting point, this one - many of us must have sent people or been sent in the place of somebody else. Dealing with difficult attendees was another point I could identify with, from 'motormouth' to the 'silent saboteur' - haven't we met both types? However, it is important to consider the differences between extroverts and introverts and their preferred method of communication. The meeting organiser may need to use both written and verbal communication methods to meet the needs of both types and include everybody who can contribute. "Fat free meetings are free of time wasting, costly behaviour and attitudes that weigh most meetings down and doom them from the beginning." Oh boy, you said it!

Meetings in the broadest sense were discussed and included comments on how to deal with the plethora of emails we all receive. Emails are described as "vomit on the screen" and "electronic warfare" but they remain an important communication medium if handled correctly. Meetings with customers, suppliers, staff meetings, team meetings, project meetings, reviews, meetings to draft documents, training meetings, is there no end to the ways we can improve? Apparently not! Drafting minutes, meetings follow-up, the psychological aspects of meetings - we need all of this sound advice.

Have I wet your appetites for this recipe for self improvement? Read the book, I recommend it even if you have to take a pinch of salt with some of the advice. *Fat Free Meetings: how to make them, fast, focused and fun*. Burt Albert. Princeton: Peterson's, 1996. www.petersons.com.

Patent wise web site by Reita Smith

WWW.Derwent.com is a new, informative and completely updated website. Visitors to this key Internet resource for patent and scientific information will quickly appreciate the value of patent information and how it can help them.

A new addition to the site, the Customer Area, gives users fast access to the very latest information for information professionals together with help and advice on products and services. The latest news updates will be highlighted on the front page of the Customer Area so that regular visitors to the site will be immediately made aware of essential new material.

With a variety of products and formats available, customers can even have products individually tailored to their precise information requirements.

Derwent also offers search services to help busy information professionals, particularly when they are stretched. These are invaluable especially when researching new and unfamiliar areas, need a second opinion or wish to make full use of their indexing systems. These include chemical polymer searching and graphical searching of chemical compounds or engineering drawings.

For more information, please contact: Kim Rabbits, Derwent Information, Tel: +44 (0)1767 681828 email: krabbits@derwent.co.uk

New European corporate finance directory by Nick Jaspán, Newsco Publications

Newsco has an established reputation for publishing acclaimed business publications. Between ourselves and Financial Times Information, we have created a unique publication providing comprehensive information on all of continental Europe's quoted companies, deals transactions, economic statistics and profiles of leading professional firms.

We undertook two years research before deciding to launch the publication. The research indicated that the market for such a publication existed because:

- * cross-border activity is becoming increasingly common
- * the growing effect of European monetary harmonisation
- * European professional firms are becoming more accustomed to the Anglo-US practice of disclosing information once deals have been transacted
- * people want pan-European information on quoted companies
- * there is no other single publication which covers

M&A, venture capital and IPOs

- * there is no single guide to corporate finance practitioners in Europe transacting the above deals
- * there is no single other publication listing every quoted continental company

Initial feedback has been tremendous. If you have any questions or have any suggestions to make, please call me.

Interested readers can obtain a copy through Newsco at £85 each. A web site containing the information in the publication on an interactive basis will be ready later in the year.

European Chapter profiles

In order to get to know each other a bit better we will be printing biographies of European Chapter members. Please send yours to the editor at n.infield@hermes.co.uk.

To start us off we have Chapter Archivist Wendy Foster.

Wendy is the Information Resource Centre Manager at Halliburton Brown & Root where she is responsible for the provision of technical, commercial and business information.

She began her career in information provision by working for a design engineering company in the energy business but then she moved into the financial sector where she worked for a variety of city institutions, specialising in setting up information units from scratch. However, seven years ago, when she moved to Brown & Root, she returned to engineering.

Throughout all of this she has been an active member of her profession. Apart from SLA she is also a member of the Library Association, the Institute of Information Scientists, and the Information for Energy Group at the Institute of Petroleum. She has been a member of the Library Association Council and also the Institute of Information Scientists Council, she was a founder member of the City Information Group, and she is currently the Chair of the Information for Energy Group. She is the archivist for the European Chapter of SLA.

Halliburton Brown & Root is an international engineering company working in the energy sector and civil engineering, so when she's not working Wendy tends to escape into the world of the arts enjoying classical music and visiting art galleries. She also likes to garden, growing much of her own fruit and vegetables. Finally she is the proud owner of three chickens who keep her well supplied with eggs!

6th International Symposium on Information Science Knowledge Management and Communication Systems By Stan Kalkus

Organized by the Institute of Information Studies and Librarianship of the Charles University, Praha in cooperation with the Academic Association for Information Science (HI), represented by the Department of Information Science at the University of the Saarland in Saarbrücken November 4 - 7, 1998 Praha, Czech Republic

After the ISI conferences in Konstanz, Oberhof, Saarbrücken, Graz and Berlin, the 6th International Symposium for Information Science will take place from 4th until 7th November 1998 in Prague. This conference is organized by the Institute of Information and Librarianship (IISL) of the Charles University in Prague in cooperation with the Academic Association for Information Science (HI), represented by the Department of Information Science at the University of the Saarland in Saarbrücken.

Symposium Location - Institute of Information Studies and Librarianship, Charles University Prague, Karolinum, 110 00 Praha 1, Ovocný trh 3.

Full English version of the announcement is on our home page www.cuni.cz/~kvikvl/isi/call-e.html.

Gale, Primary Source, and IAC merge by Allen W. Paschal

Gale Research, Information Access Company (IAC), and Primary Source Media - three international leaders in the electronic and reference publishing arenas - have been merged into one company within The Thomson Corporation. The new company's name is The Gale Group.

Our new company begins as one of the world's pre-eminent publishers of academic, educational, and business research serving libraries, educational institutions, and businesses. We're active in all major international markets.

The integration of the three companies is, of course, a significant step in the lives of all of us at the merged companies and for the professional information industry as a whole.

But more important, we believe it will be a positive event for you as well. Combining the currency and contextual richness of IAC content with Gale's editorial expertise and its authoritative databases, along with Primary Source Media's depth of digitized primary research materials, The Gale Group will be able to develop the

new generation of compelling products that you and your constituents expect.

Our new products will be more powerful and comprehensive more intuitive and easy to use relevant to more people than anything ever offered by anyone, anywhere.

In the meantime, please be assured that we will continue to support all of our current products, and that all subscriptions will be honoured. There will be no abrupt changes ahead. Please tune into www.gale.com to keep up with our integration process.

We thank you for your support in the past, and for your support of The Gale Group now and in the future.

Allen W. Paschal, Chief Executive Officer, The Gale Group

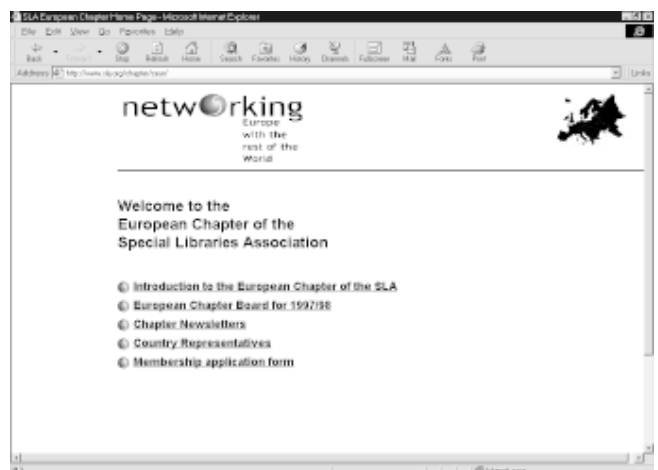
European Chapter web site news By Neil Infield

After many hours toiling late into the night the European Chapter web site is almost finished. Nearly all the hypertext links are now working which as any web site developer will know is the hardest part!

I have created the site using FrontPage 98 which makes web page and site creating fairly easy for someone without technical knowledge. So far I have only been able to test the pages using Explorer 4.01 and Netscape Communicator 4.04.

Once the site has been given the seal of approval from the SLA webmaster in Washington I will send an e-mail out to all members. I look forward to receiving your feedback and suggestions for development of the site and the kind of contents you would like to see added. I would also like to try and build up a set of links to other web sites and pages you find useful in your work.

Please contact me at n.infield@hermes.co.uk.



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