

SLA Europe AGM 12 July 2005

The City Club, 19 Old Broad Street, London

Attendees: Board members: Kate Arnold, Liz Blankson-Hemans, Marjorie Gagnon, Sue Hill, Neil Infield, Veronica Kennard, Rachel Kolsky, Barbara Robinson, Sylvia James

SLA members: Claudette Archer, Steve Borley, Vicky Connor, Lesley Cox, Sue Edgar, Olivia Freeman, Kathy Jacob, Lyndsay Rees-Jones,

1. **Apologies:** Board members: Helen Clegg, Penny Leach, Jane Macoustra, Gill Voisey. SLA members: Helen Day
2. **Minutes of previous AGM held at Savoy Tup, Strand on 7 July 2004.**

Minutes of this meeting agreed and signed off.

Sue Edgar asked about progress of the Endowment grant application. Sue Hill and Sylvia James confirmed that this was not pursued last year because of complications in the application process. Sue asked if it was possible to see minutes of the Endowment Committee and a list of award recipients.

Action: Board to ask about seeing Endowment Committee minutes and list of award recipients.

It was noted that since the AGM in 2004 SLA Europe has seen its assets double, its website revamped, officially confirmed name change for chapter and seen chapter members involved in the development of the private equity section of Business and Finance division.

3. **Annual board report for 2004-2005 from:** (for more detail please see reports which follow these minutes)

- **President**

Liz provided an overview of achievements this year. She said the year had been very successful. It had been a year of re-branding and refocusing on issues that matter to information professionals. Re-branding from 'European Chapter' to 'SLA Europe' meant we were more clearly aligned with our parent organisation.

Liz welcomed two new board members welcomed 2 new members Sue Hill (country representative chair) and Penny Leach (EIP award chair). And thanked 2 board members who stood down this year, for their contributions: David Thew and Jan Whittington.

Liz noted that a highlight was the drive to increase membership. Although the increases were small for year on year numbers, they were none the less very impressive in comparison to other chapters. During 2005 SLA had a membership drive and SLA Europe achieved double awards for membership

recruitment. SLA Europe won the award for chapter who got the most new members. While Rachel Kolsky won the award for the individual who recruited the most new members during the campaign. Rachel's prize was dinner with Ethel Salonen, Linda Broussard and Janice Lachance at the CN Tower during the Toronto conference.

This year saw the re-branding of the ESLY award as EIP (European Information Professional) award. Re-naming the award and increasing publicity led to the highest number of applications ever. Steve Borley was chosen as this year's winner.

Liz continued by mentioning several events and seminars that had taken place, these included Online breakfast, which had the best attendance ever, 3 personal development seminars and the ever popular winter warmer quiz.

Liz concluded her report by thanking all those who had sponsored events over the last year: Factiva, Dialog and Swets plus new for this year: Esmark, EOS, Global International and Prenax. She also gave special thanks to all the board members.

- **Membership Chair**

Rachel Kolsky confirmed that since she took on the membership role in October 2004 membership numbers have seen a small increase from 263 to 275 in January 2005 to 267 in June 2005.

- **Country Representative Chair**

Sue Hill confirmed she had made contact with the majority of country representatives, and was going to provide them with regular updates of information from Board meetings and events.

Sue also stated the Board intended to be proactive in assisting with organisation of events in continental Europe during the next year, possibly providing speakers at them or offering some form of funding.

Sue concluded by summarising reports from a selection of country representatives: Germany, France, and Denmark.

Following Sue's report Barbara Robinson asked about whether the Board had thought about seeking potential sponsors for activities in continental Europe from by-partisan groups such as Anglo-German group. Steve Borley suggested considering sponsorship with groups such as the British Council.

4. Audited financial statements of Treasurer for the year ending 31 December 2004

Sylvia James gave the Treasurer's report for year ending 31 Dec 2004. SLA Europe spent £1400 more than its funds, this is because of an outstanding invoice of £2000 for sponsorship and because the chapter subsidised the stand at Online for the association.

As of July 2005 SLA Europe has £7,000 in the bank, and has received £10,000 in sponsorship since the beginning of 2005.

5. Resolutions passed at SLA Annual Conference 2005 regarding electronic voting and change of association year to match financial year

Liz outlined the main resolutions passed at conference and explained their implications.

SLA members at annual conference voted unanimously to align fiscal year (which currently runs for a calendar year) with governance year (which currently runs June-May). In practice this means from Jan 2007 fiscal and governance years will run together from Jan-Dec. Practical implications are that the President for 2006/7, Rachel Kolsky, will be in office from June 2006-Dec 2007.

The other resolution that membership voted on at conference was to change the byelaws to allow electronic voting. Members voted to approve this proposal. SLA HQ hopes to have secure electronic voting system in place by end of year.

Liz added that annual conference attendance was up by 37% on the previous year.

6. Installation of President for 2005-6 Association year

Liz formally handed over the President's role to Gill Voisey, although Gill was actually not in attendance at the meeting.

Veronica Kennard formally thanked Liz for all her hard work in the last year.

7. A.O.B.

Veronica wanted to acknowledge, and thank, SLA colleagues around the world who had contacted members in London last week following the bombings in London on 7 July. The contacts reiterated the benefits of being part of this global network.

Meeting ended at 1750



PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2004-2005

Overview

By any account, 2004-2005 has been a very successful year for SLA Europe. It was a year of complete rebranding and re-focusing on the issues that matter to information professionals in Europe, as well as making a concerted effort to grow the size of the association generally. The biggest benefit that SLA brings to its members is the wide network of contacts and associations, and along with the board, I am proud to report our activities for 2004-2005.

SLA Europe Re-branding

One of our first activities during the year was to look at our identity as a branch of the wider SLA organisation. As many of you will know, SLA has undergone an extensive rebranding exercise in order to "internationalise". The board decided that our identity was better served by renaming ourselves as SLA Europe, to show that we are the European side of the organisation, rather than the old name of European Chapter as "Chapter" does not mean a lot to non-US members. This name change was formally ratified at the June 2005 Annual Conference in Toronto

New Board Members

Two new members were voted to the board during 2004-2005. They are Sue Hill, who is currently serving as country representatives' chair, and Penny Leach who has responsibility for organising the annual SLA European Information Professional award. During this period, we also said goodbye to David Thew and Jan Whittington. We thank them for their contribution to SLA Europe.

Membership Recruitment

One of key focus points in 2004-2005 was a drive to increase membership of the chapter, along with the wider SLA goal. Although we have fluctuated from month to month, there has been a small increase in membership over the year, and in comparison to the rest of SLA, whilst we cannot rest on any laurels, we are doing pretty well, as SLA Europe was nominated as the chapter with the most increase in members during the 2004 Member Recruit campaign. SLA Europe's membership chair, Rachel Kolsky was also nominated as top new member recruiter for personally recruiting 12 members during the campaign. Further details on membership figures and trends will be presented by the membership chair further in the agenda.

SLA Europe Information Professional of the Year Award

In line with our re-branding to SLA Europe, and in order to open the award up to as many people who work in the information industry as possible, we also re-branded the annual award previously known as European Special Librarian of the Year (ESLY). This was one of the first tasks undertaken by new board member Penny Leach and fellow board member Helen Clegg. Together, they worked very hard to position and publicise the award, sponsored by Factiva, to the widest arena possible and succeeded beyond our wildest imagination. We received the highest number of nominations ever, and were very pleased to announce Steve Borley, of the Royal Bank of Scotland, Edinburgh as our first European Information Professional of the Year. He was honoured at the annual conference in Toronto.

Events & Seminars

In addition to our annual breakfast at Online, which was the most successful to date in terms of attendance (so much so that for the first time we moved to the Pillar Room at Olympia), we also held our ever popular “Winter Warmer” quiz in January 2004, and 3 other personal or professional development seminars during September 2004, and March and May 2005. Along with these were participation in a panel discussion on careers development at Online, and a visit to Sheffield University by some members of the board to highlight the variety of career options open to students.

In order to spread the influence of SLA Europe further afield than just the UK, we also assisted two of our country representatives to hold breakfast meetings alongside local conferences, to follow on our highly successful meeting at Inforum in Prague during 2003. This growth in activity outside the UK is one goal we are keen to develop as a chapter going forward.

In addition to all this of course, is participation by board members at Leadership Summit during the winter, and by all attending members at Annual Conference, and along with SLA Europe’s strong participation in the International Reception at conference, where the SLA EIP award is presented, for the first time, we also participated as a sponsor at the Annual Diversity Breakfast at conference. By the very nature of our chapter, Diversity is one area that we are keen to emphasise.

Country Representatives

We welcomed a number of country representatives during 2004-2005, two of whom, Birgit Rabitz in Denmark, and Elka Sloan in Germany, are off to a running start with trying to galvanise members in their respective countries into participating more at local events and conferences. More on this important facet of our goals from new country representative chair, Sue Hill, later in the meeting.

Sponsorship and Finance

I will leave details of our finances to our treasurer to report, but I would like to add that during 2004-2005 a concerted effort was made to develop stronger relations with our information partners and to increase our sponsorship network. I would like to thank our existing and long term sponsor partners, Alacra, Elsevier, Factiva, Swets and Thomson Dialog, but also extend the warmest welcome and thanks to our newest partners – Esmerk, EOS International, Global Insight and Prenax. Of course we are always open to welcoming new ones, so if you have an interest in partnering with us, please speak to our sponsorship chair, Veronica Kennard.

I could go on and on, but I have to end somewhere, but not before saying a huge thanks to the other members of the board who have worked so hard to enable me to stand up and present such a report to you. I have not forgotten all the other routine things like newsletter production, publicity and promotion efforts and also the revamping of our website, so thank you all very much.

And to all members I say, this is an exciting group to belong to, so get involved and give us your ideas.

Membership Report 2004/2005

1) Since I began collating the membership statistics in October 2004 the number of members in SLA Europe has ranged from 263 in October 2004 to 275 in January 2005. This reflects the membership drive in December and the success of recruitment at Online.

2) Present membership in June 2005 is 267

3) The narrow range of membership numbers and the small increase over the number in October 2004 is surprising in view of two achievements of SLA Europe during 2005

i) SLA Europe was announced as chapter with the largest increase in members during the "2004 New Member Click Campaign", recruiting a total of 12 members during the campaign.

ii) The Membership Chair of SLA Europe, Rachel Kolsky, was awarded the accolade of being the most successful recruiter in the same campaign.

4) Geographically, SLA Europe covers much of Europe, CE&CIS and the world. We have members in 29 different countries.

5) An analysis of the country of residence of SLA Europe members confirms the UK centric nature of the Chapter. 46% of members are from the UK.

6) For non-UK countries this averages out to 5 members per country. Considering the information industries in some of the European countries this number is woefully low.

Country Representative Report 2004/2005

Annual board report for 2004-2005 from: Country Representative Chair (Sue Hill)

I have now made contact with the majority of Country Representatives. Regretfully none were able to attend the AGM and Soiree this evening. It is our intention to be proactive in assisting with the organisation of events throughout the next calendar year, possibly speaking at them or offering some form of funding. I will continue to pursue this with each Country representative.

Reports to hand are enclosed.

Germany – Elka Sloan

Elka has been in touch with almost all current members, asking them what their reasons had been for joining, and what they were getting out of their membership. Additionally she is in the process of talking to potential members - particularly to colleagues in large multinational/global companies - asking them why they were not members. To date most of them have answered that they feel very well represented by a number of local outfits. There is a working group for about every specialization known to man, the most active ones being the pharmaceutical/life sciences people.

The general perception of SLA in Germany is that of a national US organization - most people know about it because their American colleagues are all members.

The largest organization for information professionals in this country is DGI, the German Association for Information Science and Information Practice. If this sounds very academic - yes it is. It is headed by Prof. Gabriele Beger, who is Head of the Berlin Public Library, one of the largest ones in the country. Ms Beger indicated that there are talks of merging this organization and the Working Group of Specialized Libraries in order to become a more effective professional body.

The USP for SLA in Germany is that it represents people in business and offers them ideas for their specific issues. Business Librarianship and its issues are under-represented in the local organizations. This was quoted as a reason for their membership by quite a few German members.

NB: There will be a meeting of the Special Librarians in Munich in September we hope to do something there to increase visibility.

France - Dominique Robine

The next event for information professionals will be on 31st May and 1st June 2006 in Paris. It is called I-expo. The 2005 one took place on 1-2 June in Paris

A presentation at the next professional event is interesting but do note that French is the preferred language of communication.

Another point to bear in mind is that the French SLA potential market is limited since the information professionals have been organised for a long time.

There are 2 long-established and well regarded professional organisations:

- ADBS : Association des Professionnels de l'Information et de la Documentation <http://www.adbs.fr/>
- ABF : Association des Bibliothécaires Français <http://www.abf.asso.fr>

One key incentive to attract new SLA members would be to offer SPECIFIC SERVICES to French professionals such as the translation of resumes or individual help to write a CV in English. This could be made perhaps through a partnership with ADBS.

Donimique met with Carolyn Draughn whose colleague is Elka Sloan our German rep.

They decided the following:

- After his annual leave (14th July- 6th August), he will contract the other SLA members in France and ask them about their expectations and what common projects they would like to carry out.
- We plan to be present at the next i-expo event in June 2006 (French equivalent of Online). The contents of our event is not definite yet but we want to do something in connection with language skills and recruitment. We believe this topic would be appealing to a French audience.

Spain – Alice Keefer

Alice reports: sorry for my silence. However, I don't think that there are other SLA members beside Tomas and myself (and perhaps 1 person in the Canary islands). I don't think there is much room for growth here, unless SLA were to join up with the local group, SEDIC,-- joint activities, publications-- but I don't know if SLA would consider this.

Sweden – Anders Martenson

Iceland – Anna Magnúsdóttir

Finland – Armi Lankelin

Denmark – Birgit Rabitz

Birgit Rabitz, the Danish country rep, arranged a meeting in Denmark on "Communication". We are reimbursed the cost of their refreshments for the event, and she will write up a short report for the next newsletter. She is also attending conference in Toronto and will write about that too.

Italy - Jean Philippe Decraene

Belgium - Philippe Z Van Lint

Czech Republic - Stanley Kalkus

Israel - Eilat Navon

Ukraine - Vasyl (Bill) Pawlowsky, MLIS

Vasyl Pawlowsky, the Ukraine country rep, has spoken to a number of librarians he had previously worked with on special projects, while there are a number of individuals who could understand the benefits of our organization, few could afford to pay the fees. With most libraries falling under the Ministries of Culture and Education, most librarians are civil servants and make less than the cost of membership in any given month. He intends to see if can encourage some of the librarians he knows to have their institutions even pay for a virtual membership for their institutions, if this will be allowed by the board. He is hoping that he can arrange SLA member Rachel Kolsky, to meet with some of his colleagues when she is in Kyiv on business in the fall. (He hasn't approached Rachel about this yet, but will be in the days to come.)

U.S.A. - Ann Cullen