

## The origins of IATUL

At the 19<sup>th</sup> IFLA Session/Council in Vienna in 1953, Dr E Hemlin, Director of the library of Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden, proposed that a section should be established within IFLA to represent technical university libraries. The President of IFLA asked Dr Hemlin to make a preliminary investigation and to report back to the IFLA meeting in Zagreb in October 1954.

Dr Hemlin's suggestion arose from the growing importance of such libraries. Dieter Schmidmaier, in his paper *The Publications of IATUL from 1955 TO 1965* remarked that this was a "library type which was, for a long time, neglected by the stream of development of the ancient university libraries. The importance of the technical academic institutes and technical/technological Universities increased in times of rapid scientific and technological development. This was accompanied by a very considerable increase in the volume of technical scientific literature. Libraries belonging to technological universities were lacking in acceptance and did not play a role in the international exchange of experience".

Dr Hemlin circulated a letter to 42 potentially interested librarians around the world in April 1954. In it he stated that he imagined "this section as a union with practical co-operative purposes as well as a forum for the discussion of all theoretical matters relating to these technical university libraries where international co-operation would be necessary and useful". Correspondents were asked to reply before the end of May 1954, giving their opinion on the proposal and indicating cases where "practical co-operation would prove valuable to our library work"

Dr Hemlin's subsequent report to the 20<sup>th</sup> IFLA Session/Council in Zagreb, October 1954, described the issues and the responses. His first difficulty was whom to address. The character of technical universities varied internationally. The concept was well established in Scandinavia, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Germany. But in many other countries higher technical education took place in faculties within more general universities. He decided to limit his proposal to "public or private independent technical universities with a right to grant a doctor's degree". The letter was sent to librarians in 30 European countries, including the then communist countries of Poland and Yugoslavia. The greatest number (8) for any one country, because of the definitions used, went to Germany. Nine went to librarians in North America, and one each to Israel and Turkey. Thirty replies were received, almost all of them favourable. The German technical universities were unanimously positive. The responses also indicated specific areas where co-operation would be practical and useful. Dr Hemlin proposed that if IFLA were to support the recommendation, an executive committee be appointed to carry it forward. He nominated the following to join him: Dr. W Grunwald (Hanover), Dr P. Scherrer (Zurich), Mr C.G. Wood (Glasgow), Dr L. J. Van der Wolk (Delft). IFLA approved the report and recommendations and the executive committee began its work.

The committee met in Zurich, 21 October 1954, in Hanover 22 October 1954, and in Dusseldorf 1-2 June 1955. At the final meeting the committee was joined by all the directors of German technical university libraries, who were attending the annual conference of West

German university libraries there at that time. The timing and location was probably no coincidence, given the overwhelming support for the proposal which had come from the German libraries. This meeting unanimously decided:

1. that a “federation be established” to address the questions raised in the Zagreb report.
2. That the federation be confined to libraries connected to independent “polytechnical” universities with a right to grant a doctor’s degree.
3. That a petition be presented to the IFLA council, “requesting that the federation of the technical university libraries be recognized and adopted as a section of IFLA at the Council meeting in Brussels in September 1955.
4. The meeting concluded that the new federation would be “defined as an organ for international co-operation between member libraries and as an organization for contact between, and work on problems of a purely library nature in, the member libraries”

The questions referred to in para. 1 above, were actually the specific areas where co-operation was deemed to be possible and fruitful, and would influence IATUL policy in future years. They arose from Hemlin’s request to his correspondents to identify such areas, and were taken directly from replies. The final list was:

- a) Exchange of information and experience
- b) Information on recruitment and training
- c) The position of technical libraries within their parent institutions
- d) Staff exchanges and visits
- e) Fostering of personal relations
- f) Lists of library senior staff
- g) Information on new library buildings
- h) The relations between university technical libraries and special technical libraries within individual countries
- i) Exchange of information on automation of library processes
- j) Standardization of international loans
- k) Information on relevant forthcoming literature.
- l) Exchange of accession lists
- m) Exchange of publications
- n) Exchange of duplicates

IFLA accepted the proposal, and IATUL was formally admitted as a section within the organization at its meeting in Brussels in September 1955. Dr.E Hemlin was elected the IATUL President.

## IATUL to the end of the 1960s

### Presidency of Dr. E Hemlin 1955-1962

The Association's initial activities focussed on investigating its membership. At the end of 1956, a questionnaire was sent to all members. Its aim was to gather information relating to the "task[s], equipment and general evolutionary trend of the libraries of technical universities". At around the same time another detailed questionnaire was circulated, on the theme of the legal position of Directors of technical university libraries. There is a sense of the Association feeling its way in its early years. The Report on activity for 1958/59, given at the IFLA Council in Warsaw in September 1959 has a flavour of this. The main actions had been the promotion of contacts between members and, on the practical level, the setting up an exchange mechanism for duplicate periodical issues. At this stage IATUL had 36 members in 17 countries, most of them European.

However, there was a change to a more ambitious range of actions in the early 1960s. The process began with detailed discussion on a future IATUL programme in Trier, June 1960 and Malmo/Lund, August 1960. Contact with members was deemed to be a priority so a questionnaire was sent to members to gather information on preferences and interests.

The feedback from this latter questionnaire had an influence the following year, when activities began to take a more structured form at the Delft IATUL conference of April 1961. The conference, in the form of a workshop, was an event organised in great detail, and required active participation from the 40 attendees. But in addition to conference business, the Board decided to place its future activities within an overall programme. An eight point plan was agreed, which crystallized prior discussions:

- IATUL would widen its statutes to admit more members
- It would continue to prioritize the co-ordination of world technical university libraries to promote co-operation
- It would publish regular bulletins
- It would circulate more widely its Reprints and Publications
- It would promote instruction for students in use of libraries and use of literature
- A committee for telecodes for libraries would be established
- IATUL would provide courses of 3-4 months duration for qualified librarians
- The library of Delft technical university would co-operate with the newly established IFLA committee on library buildings
- A statistical survey of members would be published annually.

These objectives would be re-considered and re-formulated in 1962, a year in which there was radical change in the organization

The Report on activity for 1961/2, composed by President E. Hemlin and reported to IFLA in Berne in August 1962, noted that during IATUL meetings in Delft and Edinburgh in 1961 there had been discussion on IATUL activity. Arising from these discussions, Dr. Hemlin had formulated a long term programme for the organization which had been approved by the IATUL General Assembly in Berne (up to this point many IATUL meetings occurred within IFLA meetings).

The programme proposed by Hemlin was substantially that agreed in Delft in 1961 and described above. One addition was a reference to co-operative purchasing and acquisition of materials, for which the Skandiplan would be investigated as a model.

The General Assembly fulfilled immediately one very significant element of the proposed programme. The IATUL Statutes were amended to extend full membership to libraries of institutions with broad teaching and research portfolios, but which had significant science and technology departments. Formerly only libraries of technical universities had been eligible. Membership increased from 38 institutions in 1962 to 93 in 1966 partly as a result of this change, and partly from new initiatives under Dr. L.J. Van der Wolk, whose Presidency covers this period.

### **Presidency of Dr L. J. Van der Wolk 1963-1966**

Developments in IATUL in the early 1960s were partly driven by a change in personnel. Dr E Hemlin stood down as President after the Bern meeting. Dr L. J. Van der Wolk, Director of Delft University of Technology library, who had been involved in the formation of IATUL from its beginnings, was elected President at the General Assembly in Bern and took up office in January 1963.

It was evident that Van der Wolk wanted to inject more energy, and a more structured method of working, into the organization. This is clear from his first letter as President to the Board in January 1963. It stated that the IATUL plan was to be implemented by Working Groups, composed of young enthusiastic librarians. There was to be an IATUL workshop in 1964, similar in nature to the Delft meeting of 1961. He included a draft of a proposed IATUL newsletter, which would appear irregularly and would be an "excellent medium" for informing members and linking them to common goals. Finally, on IATUL's relationship with IFLA, he wrote "I propose that we do not arrange complete IATUL meetings during the [IFLA] congress....An international meeting on our own would be more efficient". This marks the beginning of IATUL's independent development as an organization. From this time, only the IATUL President and Secretary needed to attend IFLA meetings

These activities were placed in the context of an overall strategy, described as a Statement of IATUL Policy. It was appended to the second IATUL Newsletter, released in June 1963, but agreed by the Board in March 1963. The policy stated that IATUL was an International organization, so projects would be of international or regional character and would be distinguished by involving international partners. There would be projects in the fields of daily library practice, member contacts, and special services to members; projects would also involve library research, and work undertaken by international library organizations.

The working programme was a very ambitious undertaking, both in its extent and in the nature of individual projects. The programme also went beyond that formally approved by the General Assembly in August 1962. There were 17 named projects, each with a leader and some with other supporting individuals. The agreed projects were:

1. Canvassing potential members. Libraries of non- university technical institutes etc could have Observer status.
2. Establishing a telecode for libraries. This was a priority, as telex was then an advanced technology
3. Establishing a new library periodical, based on new library developments
4. Initiating the IATUL newsletter
5. Reprints and publications. Limiting this to reprints only. All original articles to be published first in library journals.
6. Producing an annual report, to include statistical data
7. Collation of information on library research in progress.
8. IATUL/IFLA sponsorship of research projects
9. Co-operation in acquisitions on the Farmington or Skandia model
10. Co-operation in cataloguing
11. Producing a policy for the standardization of pricing for photoreproduction
12. Setting up an IATUL/IFLA seminar on library technology
13. Facilitating the international exchange of librarians
14. Setting up programmes for instruction in the use of libraries for students
15. Compiling statistical data on IATUL libraries
16. Facilitating the interchange of duplicate materials between IATUL libraries
17. Exchanging information on IATUL parent institution programmes and strategies.

The programme was notable for its focus on several specific areas of co-operation; for emphasizing communication with members; for its activism in the areas of staff exchange and training; and for promoting and supporting library research.

It was also managed in a formal, businesslike way. The IATUL Board had its first meeting under the new President in March 1963, where the Working Programme took up much of the discussions. Van der Wolk convened a first meeting of members of the Working Group the following week, also in Delft, at which the responsibilities of the project leaders and group members were specified, reporting procedures were clarified, and time lines established.

It is useful to move forward to January and February 1964, where progress on the projects was reviewed with the Working Group (January) and reported to the Board with suggestions (February). There are echoes of similar IATUL initiatives down the years, with significant achievement in some cases (telecodes and telex addresses, IATUL Newsletter; library training for students), very little progress by some groups, and minimal communication from others. Some project leaders stepped down or were replaced. Some projects, such as data gathering (project 15), were found to have serious cost and procedural implications and would require Board approval if they were to be continued). Others need clarification before proceeding further (Project 11). In general, a broad progress was achieved, sufficient for the Board to agree to additional projects, as well as amendments to those remaining, for a further year.

When the Board, at its meeting in Delft in December 1963 reviewed IATUL activities for the previous calendar year, the span and detail of its work are impressive. Besides the Working Programme activities, the Association, mainly through its President, maintained relations with IFLA and related organisations, and sought new relationships. However, it also aimed,

as a relatively young institution, to clarify its identity. The substitution of “Technological” for “Technical” in the English version of its title was one sign of this. Another was the remark in the Board minutes that while IATUL would have a session at the forthcoming IFLA meeting, this would be for information, and the audience would be informed that any matters raised would be brought to the IATUL Board for decision. The Board meeting also reflected a desire to widen membership. Earlier in the year the President had written to the Board suggesting that three USSR institutions should be approached as potential member. Efforts to recruit American librarians to the Board were described. They quickly found success, with Professor Locke of MIT elected Vice President in 1964 and Dr Mack of Lehigh University elected President of IATUL in 1966.

The following years of Van der Wolk’s presidency, to the summer of 1966, were filled by the development and amendment of the 1963 Working Programme. An indication of the activity involved is given by the project numbers (24 by June 1966, some having been completed, or dropped), and the meetings of the Working Committee. These are recorded as having taken place in Delft in January 1964, Stuttgart in September 1964, and in Delft in March 1965 and January 1966. There is perhaps a suggestion of the burden of these projects in a sentence from the Activity Report for the Year 1964-1965: “IATUL has continued to work out in detail these projects... to a point where they may be appropriately submitted for sponsorship, or for further development, to IFLA”

Members were kept fully briefed on these and other IATUL initiatives by one of the most successful projects of that programme, the IATUL Newsletter, which was conceived as a means of improving communication with members and involving them more actively in the Association. Three numbers appeared in 1963, four in 1964 and four in 1965, until the final number in December 1965. These were substantial bulletins, running to five or more pages.

These achievements of Van der Wolk’s presidency were matched by a dramatic increase in the number of members, and a spread in their geographical distribution. As noted above, membership increased from 38 in 1962 to 93 in June 1966. But perhaps as significant is the wider distribution. IATUL was born as a mainly European organization. The emphasis in the 1963 Statement of IATUL Policy, on the *international* character of the Association, was deliberate. Subsequent membership recruitment sought to fulfil this aspiration. Its success can be measured by a breakdown of the June 1966 membership numbers: of the 93 full members (Observers were not counted) 62 were European, 25 North American, 5 were from Asia, and 3 from Australia. (Numbers quoted from Activity Report for the Year 1965-6. There is a discrepancy between the total and the analysis). 56 Members were libraries of Universities of Technology, and 35 were university libraries of institutions with broad curricula but which supported substantial science and technology departments. The increase in North American representation was no doubt helped by an IATUL study trip to the USA in September and October of 1965, which concentrated on the east coast.

Before stepping down from the IATUL Presidency in June 1966, Van der Wolk had secured Board agreement, and begun planning, for the first IATUL seminar on library methods. It had its origins in the Working Programme, and had developed as a planned initiative with IFLA. In the end IATUL came to be the main agency for the initiative. Young qualified librarians were invited to apply for one of 20 places available, on a course running from 1-9 September 1966. The intention was to provide exposure to the most advanced thinking and

practices in modern university libraries, and to disperse these effects when the attendees returned to their home institutions. The seminars (there were to be four, annually from 1966 to 1969, all in Delft and of roughly the same duration) required considerable organization and resources. The first had a financial deficit of approximately \$1000, which was met from institutional support and IATUL reserves. But this probably does not take in to account fully costed administration by the host institution.

### **Presidency of James Mack's 1966 -1969**

A change of Presidency inevitably alters the direction of an organization. This was evident from the Activity Report for 1966-1967, the first full year of James Mack's presidency. In his first presidential address, September 1966, his two main themes were that IATUL should do more to aid libraries in developing countries, and that it should promote, where appropriate, the extension of automation in libraries.

### **Statues and membership**

The report also noted that the IATUL statues were being reviewed to align them more closely with those of IFLA. In fact the Statues were reviewed regularly in the following years, particularly where changes could stimulate increased membership. The category of Sustaining Member was proposed by Mack at the Board meeting in the USA in April 1968. The Board felt that despite the need for more income to support activities, the subscription cost could not be increased without losing members. Therefore this corporate/institutional membership category was introduced, at the considerable rate, for the period, of \$150 p.a.

### **Conferences**

An interesting fact to emerge from the 1966-67 report concerned the name of general meetings. IATUL had held general meetings for members since being formed in 1955. Initially these were part of IFLA Council meetings. So the meetings in Munich 1956 and Fulda in 1958 followed the IFLA calendar. However, the first IATUL conference to be so called was convened in Delft in 1961 and began a triennial series, continuing to Stuttgart 1964, Haifa 1967, et seq until 1973, when a bi-ennial series began, which was succeeded by annual conferences from 1995. In 1966-1997 there was still obviously confusion about the names of these events, which continued to be called Triennial Working Parties in the IATUL literature. The Board took the decision to refer to them henceforth as conferences when it reported on the Haifa conference of 9-16 April 1967.

### **Working Programme**

The Activity Report for 1966-7 noted that the existing Working Programme was under consideration by the Board. By April 1967, there were 17 projects in progress. These were discussed at the Board meeting in Haifa of that month, and would be discussed again at the Triennial Conference which followed shortly after. Clearly there was concern about the viability and direction of a number of the projects. By the time of the Board meeting in the

USA in April 1968, the Board had decided that each of the projects should be examined and those that were inactive should be stood down. An informal note from the meeting recorded that “IATUL plans and efforts have to be evaluated and concentrated on a few worthwhile projects” There was a sense that with the change of Presidency and senior officers , and perhaps also the change of administrative style from the Netherlands to the USA, that the Working Party and Committee structures were problems to be resolved. However, some members, such as future President Tony Evans, noted that the Working Groups were valuable because they were the one IATUL initiative which had involved a wide range of staff from member libraries; all other IATUL activities were limited to Directors or substitutes.

This was a criticism of the IATUL seminars, a project which grew out of the original Working Programme, although it was not one shared by all Board Members. The seminars became annual events in Delft, and were largely managed by Dr L. J. Van der Wolk. However, by 1968 they seem to have acquired such a degree of autonomy that the Board, at its meeting in April 1968, had little information about that year’s event and had taken no part in its planning. The situation was similar the following year, when the final seminar took place. With the retirement of Van de Wolk from his post in Delft that year, the series ended. Subsequently, there was regret that this should have happened, as it was recognized as a valuable activity, but such an event required an energetic champion, and none subsequently came forward.

The questions around the Working programme would morph into a general discussion about the purpose of IATUL, which took up a great deal of Board time in the late 1960s and 1970s, and only found some resolution towards the end of the latter decade. Already in 1968, at the Frankfurt Board meeting (August), when James Mack suggested some alternative structures, Tony Evans made the point noted above, about involving all staff from member libraries in IATUL activities, and put this in the context of the purpose of the Association. The topic was raised again by the Board at its meeting in Hungary (April 1969), with evidence of vigorous debate. For example James Mack felt that the IATUL seminars “don’t do anything but talk about librarianship”. He suggested that the Association should focus on practical areas of collaboration, such as direct interlending between member libraries.

By the end of the 1960s, much of the early enthusiasm and vigour of the Association seemed to have dissipated. Many initiatives had been attempted under the 1963 Working Programme, and while some had produced practical outcomes, others had become moribund. The persistence of the question about the purpose of the Association, raised repeatedly by Board members in meetings towards the end of the decade, indicated a loss of direction. Indeed, at the last Board meeting of the 1960s (Copenhagen August 1969) the question was raised again, and deferred for fuller discussion to the forthcoming conference in Loughborough, UK, when a new President Professor Tony Evans, who would assume office in January 1970, would lead the debate.

## IATUL in the 1970s

### Presidency of Professor Tony Evans 1970-1975

#### Activities and membership

The first Board meetings of the new Presidency took place in Loughborough, UK, in April and in Helsinki in August, 1970.

Some legacy issues were concluded. The idea of Standing Committees was dropped. The IATUL seminars were discontinued. There was discussion as to whether confining seminar attendance to Directors, as noted above, was a limiting factor.

However, the meetings also addressed issues which were to recur throughout the decade of the 1970s. Conferences were becoming more important and would absorb increased Board attention over the succeeding years. Subscriptions were raised in 1970, despite concerns about the effect on membership numbers, which had remained relatively static since the mid 1960s. Various ways of increasing membership were suggested. An IATUL research grant, in the form of a travelling scholarship worth \$600, was one such initiative, agreed by the Board in September 1971, and awarded to two recipients the following year. An essay prize was also launched, but failed to attract any entries. During the Loughborough meeting an opinion was voiced that the term Technological in the IATUL name “repelled” some potential members, a comment that provoked disagreement.

Publications, especially the IATUL Proceedings, became a constant agenda item. The Proceedings had succeeded the IATUL Newsletter in 1966. It was a more formal publication, containing serious articles on library issues. However, from its beginnings, there were difficulties in attracting material of sufficient merit, and it was a costly publication to run. At the Berlin Board meeting of 1974 it was decided make the Proceedings a communications medium with members rather than a scholarly publication. However, the name remained. It was ironic that while so much effort was devoted the IATUL Proceedings, published copies of the IATUL Conference Proceedings went from strength to strength during the decade, especially when the biennial conferences began. By May 1975, the Board was able to report that Proceedings of the 5<sup>th</sup> Triennial conference in Copenhagen had almost sold out, that more copies were to be printed, and that a profit was made on the publication. This trend would inform discussions on the future of IATUL in the later years of the decade.

#### Institutional relationships

Relationships with other organizations were a constant theme. At the Board meeting of August 1972, the President reported strengthened relationships with IFLA, ICSU (International Council for Science), and UNESCO. The most important of these, and the most problematic, was the relationship with IFLA. There were attempts to integrate IATUL more closely into IFLA events. In 1973 the idea was raised of having IATUL conferences coincide, or even to be held within IFLA meetings; or at least to have some IATUL sponsored papers delivered within IFLA meetings. The latter was approached with this general suggestion, to be trialled at the forthcoming IFLA Washington meeting in November 1974, but it came to nothing. The Association also took note of newly formed and possibly competitive or

overlapping organizations. LIBER was probably the most important of these in the early 1970s, and the President reported in April 1971 that he had made contact with it.

### **Purpose of IATUL**

But the main issue in the early 1970s, and one which was referred from the Mack presidency, was that of the purpose of IATUL. All the discussions on publications, conferences, membership etc. were subsumed under this over-riding concern. To a certain extent it affected the composition of the Board. In 1972 Professor Tony Evans was asked to serve a second three-year term, until the end of 1976. And in the Board meeting in Copenhagen in June 1973 it was decided that as there would be "long and complex" discussions on the future of IATUL in the near future, the Board would retain existing membership, despite some offices being left unfilled, to provide continuity and stability.

Matters came to a head at the Copenhagen meeting. The protracted discussions on the future of the Association had not produced results. In an atmosphere described as "very pessimistic" (*A Short History of IATUL from 1967 up to 1977*), the Board considered the position. Of the possible courses of action (inaction was also considered!), several involved a closer relationship with IFLA. Finally the Board decided that the best course was to consult the membership, and to invite them to vote on three possible options on the future of IATUL. The options were: 1. To leave IATUL as it was. 2. To have IATUL absorbed into IFLA. 3. To do nothing. The difference between options 1 and 3 is not clear. There were 46 replies from a membership of 94 institutions. Only 36% had voted for the continuation of an independent IATUL, and 60% for integration into IFLA. However, when the replies were analysed, the picture was not so clear. Many of those who had voted for integration into IFLA also wanted IATUL to continue to have an independent identity. Furthermore, they also wanted IATUL conferences to continue, and indeed to be more frequent. The Board (Berlin 1974) interpreted the results as indicating that conferences were now a core activity, and began to focus on regenerating the Association through the medium of its conferences. They were to be scheduled more frequently, every two years from 1975 instead of every three years. The Board took a closer interest in their management. It became the norm in the 1970s for the conference host to be joined by Board members, usually the President and one other, to form a committee to oversee the preparations for the conference. In addition the Board selected the conference venue, and prepared the conference theme several years in advance. As will be seen, such close attention was necessary whether for financial or political reasons. The immediate beneficiary of this new emphasis was the 1975 conference, which the Board decided to subsidize to the sum of \$7,000. This covered speaker costs, the cost of the conference dinner, and the costs of the attendance of two members from developing countries.

The mid 1970s saw some consolidation of this position, although the debate about the purpose of IATUL was deferred rather than resolved. But there were positive developments. The relationship with IFLA, which had seemed to alternate between autonomy and dependence from the late 1960s, was clarified if not settled. The membership survey of 1973, and an IFLA proposition in 1975 that associations like IATUL could integrate into the larger body but without separate voting rights, led to this conclusion at the Board meeting, University of Twente, November 1975: "IATUL must keep its own identity". In financial terms, unlike the late 1960s, the Association was in a comfortable position. Assets

amounted to \$20,000 in May 1975 (Board meeting, Zurich), and as had been previously noted, the main publication series, the Conference Proceedings, was selling well and was modestly profitable.

This was the situation during Professor Tony Evans' last year as President in 1975. He was replaced by Mr G. A. Hamel of the University of Twente in the Netherlands from January 1976.

## **Presidency of G. A. Hamel 1976-1980**

### **The Purpose of IATUL**

While some sense of direction had been given to the Association by focussing on the success of the now biennial conferences, other matters had been left in abeyance and still needed to be addressed. The core issues of identity and activity were clearly under discussion when the Board decided at Leuven, March 1976, to publish a pamphlet, ***What is IATUL***. In August 1976, at the following Board meeting, it was decided after long discussion that each Board member would compose a list of problems and projects and these would then be co-ordinated to identify common themes.

Board member Dr Sydler, Director of the ETH library, Zurich subsequently circulated a detailed paper. He began by asserting that it was not sufficient for IATUL simply to be a conference association. IATUL member libraries had common characteristics and therefore common problems. IATUL could act as a co-ordination agency to promote collaboration between member libraries which were experiencing similar problems, or were working separately on similar projects. He produced a list of potential areas for such co-ordination, which included: automation of documentation (SDI or Selective Dissemination of Information services), co-ordination of collections, exchange of information on subject headings. He finished by writing that "the aim of the exercise is to find a list of problems which would interest members of IATUL and in this way restore life to the Association".

This paper strongly influenced subsequent IATUL policy. The Board decided to circulate a document to members in preparation for an "Open Board Meeting" at the biennial conference in Leuven in 1977. It was entitled "Towards an Action Plan" and suggested future lines of development, many drawn from Sydler's paper. Members were invited to give their responses at the open meeting.

Towards an Action Plan was composed by Board member M.W. Hill and circulated in May 1977. It noted that IATUL was a small Association but nevertheless embodied a widely representative membership. It was an effective informal international network whose members shared a "common level of high professional expertise and a common product". It should explore and when fruitful implement links between members "based entirely on the voluntary collaboration of those members". Some collaborations could be general, others might involve only a few members. "The role of IATUL was to act as a focus as....it cannot at present undertake work" since it lacked the staff and an administration to do so. Some IATUL members were unaware that they were working independently on the same issues. Such areas should be identified, and sent to Dr Sydler who would co-ordinate a list. Areas mentioned in the proposed plan, for general collaboration, included SDI, interaction with

on-line cataloguing services (BLAISE, OCLC), standards for measuring effectiveness. Areas where a small number of institutions might take a lead and then involve the general membership when sufficient work had been done included: collaborative acquisition, access to theses, round rules for staff exchange etc. Members were invited to send in their own suggestions, and to indicate their preparedness to lead, or to participate in collaborations. Members were also invited by the Board to endorse these proposals.

The document was discussed at the “open Board Meeting” at the IATUL biennial conference in Leuven in May 1977. Despite subsequent Board minutes (Leuven September 1977) noting a “low level of discussion”, the Board concluded that “it was clear that members wanted IATUL to remain a relatively small organization”, that there was no disagreement from members on the main lines proposed, and that therefore efforts should be made “to make progress on the lines indicated”. Another questionnaire was sent to members asking for information on projects/programmes which could be co-ordinated. This initiative came to be known as the IATUL Long Range Programme, and although mentioned in Board discussions towards the end of the decade, there were no analyses of outcomes at this time.

### **Conferences**

Although Dr Sydle had asserted that it was not sufficient that IATUL should be just a conference organization, there is no doubt that the conferences were at the centre of the IATUL identity at this time. They had been the one really successful activity in the early 1970s, measured by membership response, or the quality of the meetings as reflected in the demand for the conference proceedings. And the move to biennial conferences in 1975, a decision taken to regenerate the Association, seemed to be justified by subsequent attendance.

However, as noted earlier, managing more frequent conferences became a significant burden for the Board. The conference host was joined by two or three Board members in a committee, usually including the President in this decade, to oversee conference planning. Such close attention was often necessary, in the political climate of the period, and when costs could be a significant issue.

The latter proved to be troublesome when in May 1975 Trondheim was selected as the host for the 1977 conference. By the Board meeting in November 1975 it was thought that there might be about 40 attendees, and by March 1976 the Board was seriously concerned by the “huge” costs, due to local economic conditions. By December 1976, less than a year before the conference was to take place, it was acknowledged that the location would have to change, because of high costs, and a clash of dates. Leuven was chosen instead.

Politics too could be an intrusive factor. When in September 1977 the Board chose Hungary as the host country for the 1979 conference, it noted that it would need to “seek and get assurances that there would be no immigration restrictions” on conference attendees. By March 1978 it had become evident to the Board that these conditions could not be met, so another host was sought. An Israeli institution was then considered, but in Board discussions (London, March 1978) the safety of delegates, and the absence of restrictive conditions were raised as concerns. They proved to be insuperable, so in November 1978, the university of Twente, Enschede was chosen. This was another very late selection, less

than a year before the conference and following an obviously difficult process. It is surely not a coincidence that Twente was the home institution of the IATUL President at the time.

Despite these difficulties, IATUL conferences continues to thrive, and by 1995 would become annual events

### **Institutional Relationships**

Although IATUL had concluded, in 1975, that it must retain its own identity in its relationship with IFLA, the precise terms of that relationship remained under review. In September 1977 at Leuven, the Board decided that an application would be made for international membership of IFLA. This was subsequently successful. IATUL also sought to act in concert with the university library section of IFLA, and unsuccessfully applied for representation on the section standing committee. It also took note, probably with some concern, of a proposed IFLA Special Libraries sub section on technology libraries. It proposed to contact the section in order to “influence any decision”.

## IATUL in the the 1980s

### **Presidencies of Dr Syder 1981-1983, Dr. Westberg 1984-1985, Dr.Shaw 1986-1990**

These Presidencies can be considered together, as some were short-term through force of circumstances, and the main themes of IATUL development in this decade were carried forward by Presidents who had acted on them in the other IATUL offices of Secretary or Treasurer prior to their Presidency.

A note on dates: at this period Board membership, and therefore terms of office, ran for calendar years according to the IATUL constitution. However, there were anomalies. For example, Dr Shaw stepped down in the summer of 1990, and the new President, Dr Tornudd Chaired her first Board meeting as President in August 1990.

### **Seminars**

One of the more marked areas of IATUL activity in the 1980s was the increasing frequency of seminars, in addition to the biennial conferences.

There were two main kinds of seminar; themed seminars and regional seminars.

The themed seminars could be seen as a continuation of the IATUL seminars begun by Van der Wolk in Delft in the 1960s and 1970s. The first of these was held in Gothenberg in 1982 on the theme of User Education in the Online Age. A second seminar on the theme was hosted by Delft University of Technology in 1984. Board minutes record that the organization of the Delft seminar would be the responsibility of the university, but that a full set of documentation would be sent to the IATUL Secretary for the Association records. This approach reflected the earlier IATUL relationship with the Delft seminars, although in this case the Association would provide an advance of 4000Dm towards seminar costs. The seminar was a success, with an attendance of 62 delegates from 13 European countries. In September 1984 the Board approved a third seminar on same theme, to be held in Compiègne in 1986. However, in this case there is evidence of much closer Board involvement. Unlike the case of Delft in 1984, it was not left to the university to organize the seminar arrangements. The Board, meeting in Aachen in October 1985 decided that the seminar, as with other IATUL events, should be self-financing, and that the costs should be covered by fees from 50 or more attendees. Papers might be delivered in French provided that there had been a translation beforehand, but the official language of the seminar would be English (The official language of IATUL from its beginnings had been English). The Board considered an application for a seminar in Hungary in 1988 at the same meeting, and this would in fact proceed. It held in Veszprem in July 1988, with an attendance of 79 delegates from 20 countries. These seminars, with an international complement of speakers and delegates, extending over several days, were now achieving the same number of delegates as biennial conferences.

Regional seminars, although not always so named, had occurred in North America in the 1970s. Another in this series was held at MIT in Cambridge Massachussets in July 1984 and

hosted 25 attendees. This seminar stimulated applications for membership from North American institutions, as such events usually did, but more notably it also led to a proposal for a formal IATUL North American regional group. In April 1985, at its meeting in Oxford, the Board considered the request and agreed to “proceed cautiously” in formalizing arrangements. It concluded that the group should be self-financing, that it should not hold meetings exceeding two consecutive days in years of IATUL biennial conferences, and that a member of the IATUL Board would be invited to all such meetings. In time these arrangements were formalized. The activities of Board member Dr Jay Lucker, Director of the MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) Libraries on behalf of IATUL were very influential in strengthening this relationship, as was the visit of IATUL President Dr Dennis Shaw to the USA and Canada in 1986. These efforts led to annual seminars in North America in the second half of the 1980s, and to the holding of the 14<sup>th</sup> biennial conference in MIT in 1991. A second regional grouping was forming in Australasia, and was marked by the first IATUL Pacific seminar, held at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in 1988 (Melbourne was the location of the general IFLA meeting that year). The seminar attracted 40 delegates from 8 countries, and stimulated calls for an Oceania regional grouping.

In addition to these main classes of seminar, there were frequent one day events, held to coincide with IFLA or other meetings at which there was a substantial IATUL presence.

### **Conferences**

The pattern of the 1970s, that of meetings becoming the principal IATUL activity, was sustained in to the 1980s, despite the earlier efforts of Seydl and Hills to broaden the Association’s purpose.

The increasing importance of seminars has been described. The conferences also went from strength to strength and it was clear that the decision to move to biennial gatherings was well taken. The pattern of conference organization, involving a working group of senior Association officers overseeing the local conference organizers, was sustained and proved effective.

It was especially necessary when conferences took place outside of western Europe, such as that held in Lubljana, Yugoslavia, in 1989. The local Organizing Committee, headed by Dr Nada Cucnik-Majcen, had taken on a significant burden in hosting the conference as finance was not as readily available as in other IATUL regions. There were special issues in ensuring a good attendance from local delegates, who might not be able to afford the full residential conference fee. Perhaps for this reason, in addition to the normal conference working group, there was also a finance committee appointed. In the event, this conference was a considerable success, attended by 66 participants from 18 countries.

Conference organization at Board level began with the selection of an appropriate theme, and then moved to financial considerations. During the 1980s, finances seemed to be based on the conference costs being covered by the fees from 50 delegates. Any number above this would generally produce a surplus. Only rarely was a ceiling put on attendance; such was the case with the 1985 Oxford conference, when it was decided that there would be a maximum of 100 delegates. (The actual attendance was 60 delegates, which appears to be

the norm for the decade). The care taken with the selection of conference venues, and with the subsequent organization, led to successful and financially sound conferences during the 1980s, but at the cost of absorbing a great deal of Board time.

The Oxford conference of 1985, for which there is a good documentation, gives an insight into both conference preparation and the detail of the conference programme. The local organizing committee consisted of Dr Shaw (of the Radcliffe Science Library and then Secretary of IATUL), Dr Maurice Line, Mr Warren, Mr Hill and Mr Lambe. The conference was arranged around themes (Industrial use of Information, Local access to information, Access to information in electronic form, the Future for the scientific journal and electronic publishing, the Future of grey literature, and Information access in the electronic age: central planning versus free enterprise), with an invited speaker for each theme, and then papers labelled “communications” which were contributions from IATUL members. Invited lectures began each half day session, had a 30 minute duration, and were followed for 2 hours by communications and discussion. The conference ran from Monday pm and to Friday am and allowed for some 30 communications papers from members. Wednesday was given over to a study tour. Papers were read by delegates from 15 countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, East Germany, England, Finland, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Sweden, USA, West Germany, and Yugoslavia. Conference participants came from 22 countries, mainly from Europe but also from South America and South Africa.

### **Membership and Finances**

IATUL regional and other activities had a marked effect on membership in the 1980s.

In 1985 the Association had 120 members in 32 countries, covering Europe, North America, Asia, and Australia. By 1989 total membership had increased to 182, of whom 141 were Ordinary members. Of the total, 104 were European, 37 North American, 16 were from Asia, 13 from Australia, 10 from Africa and 2 from South America.

Membership applications began to come from regions in which IATUL hoped to have an increased presence, particularly Asia. Two sustaining memberships were granted to ISTIC (Institute for Scientific and Technical Information of China) institutions, Beijing and Chunking, in 1984.

Increased membership helped to improve finances in a virtuous cycle; more income allowed more promotional activities. And as already noted, conferences and seminars were tightly managed and usually broke even or produced a surplus (for example the Oxford biennial conference of 1985 produced a £3,000 surplus). By the end of 1987, there was a credit balance of 95,000Dm declared in accounts for that year, which included a surplus of 12,000Dm for 1987.

This funding allowed the Association to promote itself in various ways. Brochures were composed and distributed regularly. By the mid-1980s, versions were appearing in French, German and Russian, as well as English. Essay prizes were regularly offered, even if at times there was a poor response. Research projects in Oxford and Gothenberg were given modest

support (£1,000 for an Oxford project examining the use of periodical literature in the biological sciences). IATUL was also promoted by travel by senior officers. Dr Shaw made visits to North America, in 1985 in his capacity as Secretary of the Association, and in 1986 as President. These were partly funded by the Association. Senior officers also visited Hungary, Australia and China, among other destinations, often combining travel for other purposes with an IATUL mission, with partial, and modest, IATUL financial support. These trips seem to have been particularly important in increasing membership in Australasia and North America.

### **Publications**

In the early 1980s there were two Association publications, the IATUL Proceedings and IATUL Conference Proceedings. Both were successful. In 1984 the IATUL Proceedings had a run of 500-700 copies per issue, and both publications were self-financing. Also in 1984, there was a surplus of SKr 16,000 in the publications account. However, there is no doubt that the Editorial Board had much work to do. The Proceedings required both a refereeing process, and a significant amount of work in preparing final drafts in English.

In 1985, the Board took the decision to merge the two publications, naming the new journal the IATUL Quarterly, and it entered into a profit-sharing agreement with Oxford University Press for its publication. By June 1987, two issues of the new journal had appeared, but the editorial work associated with its production became an increasing burden, requiring financial support in the form of paid staff. In addition, circulation of the new journal did not match expectations. By May 1989 it was reported to the Board that of each print run of 1,000 per number, only 300 were being taken by subscribers, and the surplus was accumulating in the publisher's warehouse. The position had become serious by 1990. The existing contract with OUP was due to expire in 1991, and there was a possibility that the Association would have to meet its share of potential losses of the publication. It was suggested that a sinking fund was set up in anticipation of such an outcome. The Board "expressed concern about future publication of the journal" at its meeting in October 1990, and began to look for other publishers. This matter would be resolved in the early 1990s.

### **Institutional Relationships**

One of the reasons for IATUL's activities outside Europe in this decade was the recognition that the Association was still in danger of being identified as a European rather than an international organization.

Consequently there were attempts to strengthen formal links with other international organizations, as well as the more informal relationships sustained by conferences and personal visits.

Dr Shaw was a member of the IFLA Science and Technology Libraries Section from 1985 to 1993, and was its Chairman for the period 1987 to 1991. By 1989 this Section included 27 IATUL members.

In 1986 the Board successfully sought membership of the International Council of Scientific Unions, and Dr. Shaw was appointed to membership of the ICSU Press in 1990.

IATUL and UNESCO moved into a closer relationship during the decade. UNESCO sponsored an IATUL seminar in Chalmers University, Gothenberg in 1987. Yves Courier of UNESCO was a speaker at the IATUL seminar in Compiègne (France) in 1987, and in his presentation covered the Unisist programme (related to user education in relation to library resources) in which, according to Dr Shaw, "IATUL was a prime mover". This institutional relationship would be developed further in the following decade under IATUL President Elin Tornudd, who had held positions of responsibility within UNESCO.

At this period the Commission of the European Communities was actively involving libraries in its research programmes. IATUL had Observer status at a meeting held in Luxembourg in 1989 at which an Action Plan for Libraries was presented and approved; it was to be supported by funding of \$100 million.

## IATUL in the 1990s.

### Presidencies of Dr. Tornrudd 1990-1993, Dr Van Marle 1993-1996, Dr Fjallbrant 1996-2000

#### Conferences

Conferences/seminars continued to be the principal activity of IATUL in the 1990s. Their popularity is reflected in the numbers, and the geographical spread, of the conference delegates. The 1990 seminar in Turku Finland attracted 60 delegates from 19 countries, and the 1992 seminar in Talinn had 100 participants from 15 countries. The 14<sup>th</sup> biennial conference, held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1991 was attended by 93 participants from 18 countries; the 1996 conference at Irvine, California, welcomed some 130 delegates; the 1998 conference, hosted in Pretoria South Africa, attracted 244 registrations from 26 countries.

Actually a number of trends are apparent from these data.

Firstly, the seminars, held in alternate years between the biennial conferences, were becoming indistinguishable from the conferences, in terms of attendance, themes and duration. This is especially clear from the detailed documentation concerning initial preparation for the Irvine seminar. The ambitious themes, the seminar duration and the need for sponsors to support the expense, had been features of such seminars for a number of years. Therefore, at the General Assembly of 1995 the following Board proposal was accepted: "As the distinction between the IATUL conferences and seminars no longer existed in practice, the Board proposes that from 1996 all IATUL conferences/seminars would be known as conferences." The General Assembly would henceforth be held annually at each conference.

A second trend is apparent in the location of the conferences/seminars in the 1990s. All biennial conferences of the 1980s had been held in Europe. The first conference of the 1990s, as noted above, was held in the USA. Subsequent conferences of the decade would be hosted in the USA (1996), South Africa (1998) and the first of the following decade would be held in Brisbane, Australia (2000). Board membership began to reflect the same trend. Tom Cochrane, of Queensland University of Technology (which would be the host institution for the IATUL conference of 2000), was elected to Board membership at the 1991 General Assembly.

Conference preparation continued to absorb much, if not actually most, of Board time, especially after 1996 when the annual pattern was established. There were two main areas of work. The first was approving a list of forthcoming conferences, and for much of the decade two if not three of the future host institutions had been confirmed at any one time. Confirmation required consideration of a formal application, especially the critical judgement as to whether the candidate institution had sufficient resources to support a week long international event. Subsequently, as the conference neared, the Board continued the former pattern of seconding one or more Board members to work with the institutional conference organizers. One of their key tasks was to ensure that all the guidance in the conference manual (which had been established to capture Board decisions and to provide continuity of planning) was appropriate and was being followed. Conference

finances were always testing, especially when the international pattern of hosting became established in this decade. Sponsorship continued to be very important, and was a major task for local organizers. Nevertheless, conferences continued to produce a small surplus of receipts over expenses for the decade.

Finally, conference themes began to address specific issues arising from technological developments during a decade when the internet emerged as a fully connected secular world network, and electronic information became a daily reality in the working library environment. At the start of the decade the Board had formally decided that email would be an appropriate communications medium. By 1996 the conference theme for the Irving meeting was “Networks and networking: implications for the digital library”. And in 2000 the theme for the Queensland University of Technology conference was “Virtual libraries, virtual communities”

### **Marketing and Finance**

IATUL’s main marketing efforts at the beginning of the decade concentrated on the traditional print media, and the periodic review of such publications as the IATUL brochure. There was also a major review of IATUL publishing, which is covered separately below.

But the Association moved quickly into electronic media; by 1997 the Board was considering plans for setting up an IATUL web site. Dr John Fjallbrant of Chalmers University was tasked with building the site, at an initial cost of 81,300 SEK. This work would continue to the end of the decade.

IATUL finances continued to be reasonably healthy, although publishing and other costs at the beginning of the decade may have led to a subscription increase to 160 Guilders in 1991. By the mid-decade, some annual deficits were recorded.

The Treasurers role in IATUL was particularly difficult in the 1990s because a confusion had arisen, among IATUL members, between publication subscriptions and Association subscriptions. The cessation of the IATUL Quarterly, and the launch of two new non-subscription titles, described below, was a necessary first step, but it took several years to clarify the situation. Matters came to a head in the mid-1990s, when there was a brief moratorium on Association subscription arrears. Subsequently, new arrangements were made to ensure that the Secretary and the Treasurer were working off the same membership lists, by periodic exchanges of data on cancelled and new subscriptions.

This episode demonstrated how reliant IATUL had always been on the goodwill and work of its officers. IATUL was unusual in that for several decades it did not have any central secretariat, so all the administrative work had fallen on the shoulders of a small group of unpaid officers, who had onerous professional responsibilities in their institutional roles. When difficult and demanding episodes occurred, requiring lengthy and detailed work, such as those experienced by the Treasurers in the 1990s, it put a great strain on the organization, a strain which was not always obvious to the Association members.

### **Publications**

The decade opened with the future of the IATUL Quarterly in doubt. As has been explained above, the contract for its publication with Oxford University Press was about to expire and was not to be renewed. At its meeting in Turku, Finland in August 1990, the Board decided to investigate either an alternative publisher, or alternative solutions.

By the next Board meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts in July 1991, a decision had been made to discontinue the IATUL Quarterly and to adopt an alternative publishing programme. A new series of IATUL Proceedings would be launched. This would be an annual publication and would contain the text of papers from IATUL conferences, and other articles. There would be a guest editor for each number, usually from the host institution of the seminar or conference. The text of articles from these events would be refereed by the editor and their event assistants, and prepared for publication. IATUL would bear the costs of publication. The Board would have oversight of the process.

An additional publication would be produced four times a year, and would be called the IATUL Newsletter. Board member Nancy Fjallbrant from Chalmers University in Sweden would be the editor and would be assisted by Joan Hardy, who had worked on the IATUL Quarterly.

These decisions settled a difficult situation for the Association, and the new publications would appear regularly throughout the 1990s (In 1997 the Board decided, following a discussion at the General Assembly, that in future the IATUL Proceedings would be published electronically. The Newsletter would be published in both print and electronic formats). The IATUL Quarterly, as a fully peer reviewed journal, was an honourable initiative by the Association to promote its name, and the intellectual quality of its seminars and conferences, to a wider academic public. At the time of its inception, in the mid-1980s, the existing IATUL publications had a good circulation, as was noted above. However, the administrative burden of producing a fully refereed journal, from submissions in a number of languages, was considerable. And the learned journal market was also showing signs of stress at this time, with many institutions having difficulty funding their subscriptions.

### **Strategic Planning**

Although the IATUL constitution was amended in the early 1990s, by the end of the decade the Board decided that a more complete review of the Association was required. The first element of this was a strategic planning document called “Exploring futures for IATUL”, composed by Secretary Michael Breaks, at the request of the Board in 1999, and discussed at its meeting in Edinburgh in November 1999.

In an overview, the document noted IATUL’s strengths as: a small focussed and international organisation; it held attractive conferences, was financially stable and was attractive to sponsors; it had effective governance and communicated well with its members, notably through its web presence and Newsletters.

Its weaknesses were: a low profile, variable quality of conferences and uneven attendance by members, major gaps in membership and perceived complicated membership categories, and a heavy administrative burden on the Board in the absence of a central secretariat.

Opportunities for development were identified as: becoming a friendly interface between technological university libraries in developed and developing countries; could act as a gateway to international librarianship for younger professionals; could use its resources for new initiatives, and could achieve scaled effects by increasing membership.

The threats were identified as; many activists would be retiring in the coming years; IATUL was perceived as somewhat irrelevant by major libraries; and there were already conflicting expectations from the membership, which could grow if the membership were to increase.

In its recommendations the document started with membership. A first recommendation was to increase membership to 250-300. However in order to achieve this, the advantages of membership would have to be clarified and demonstrated, and this would be supported by a recruitment and marketing strategy. Membership categories had recently changed so no further amendment was sought. The category of Non-voting Associate membership had been dropped, and the remaining categories were: Ordinary, Observer, Sustaining and Honorary membership.

The document noted that IATUL activity centred on the annual conference. The nature of the conference was an IATUL strength. The Association was not a learned society but a professional organization, and therefore the variable quality of conference papers was not a critical issue. Conferences had been improved in the recent past by mixing keynote presentations by invited speakers with smaller/poster sessions for novice speakers.

The lack of a central secretariat was a major issue. The paper introduced several possible models, and recommended that in the near future a decision was made on financing a web service, and possibly also the production of the Newsletter and the management of the membership lists.

The paper recommended the establishment of a listserv for members, and the revival of fixed term Working Groups, based on the identification of issues of common concern. It might be noted here that such groups were a feature of IATUL in its first decades of existence.

Most of the recommendations were subsequently adopted, and many were achieved, especially those concerning central administration tasks. A number of working groups would be established in the following decade.

A larger membership proved to be the most difficult target; membership numbers hovered just under 250 for much of the following decade.

### **Institutional Relationships**

There were few developments in IATUL's relationship with other international organizations during the decade. The Board minutes refer to periodic considerations of the Association's relationship with IFLA, although these did not lead to any substantial changes. IATUL ceased to be a member of the ICSU, (International Council for Science) largely because of subscription fees. The Association became a member of ICSTI (International Council for

Scientific and Technical Information), an organization which included publishers and other interest groups, such as libraries, in its membership.

### **IATUL in the 2000s.**

**Presidencies of Michael Breaks 2000-2004, Gaynor Austen 2004-2006, Maria Heijne 2006-2009**

#### **Conferences and seminars.**

IATUL annual conferences continued to flourish in this decade. The international range of conference locations was maintained from the previous decade; besides those conferences held in Europe, there were conferences in the USA (2002 and 2010), Turkey (2003), Canada (2005) and New Zealand (2008). For the first time in IATUL's history, in this decade there were more conferences held outside Europe than within it.

The international reach of the Association was further achieved by the innovation of autumn seminars. There had usually been Board meetings in the autumn, but with Board members increasingly coming from outside Europe, travel for a Board meeting alone was rarely feasible (In this decade Board members from outside Europe came from Australia, New Zealand, the USA, Canada, Singapore, and South Africa). From 2004, seminars of approximately a day in length were held in addition to the Board meeting, as part of a strategy to increase membership in under-represented regions. In that year, the seminar and Board meeting in Oporto were seen as an opportunity to raise the Association's profile in the Iberian peninsula, and a good opportunity to make personal contacts in the more intimate environment of a small gathering. Subsequent autumn seminars were held in Dublin (2005), Alexandria, Egypt (2006), Krakow, Poland (2007), London (2008), Hong Kong (2009), Munich (2010).

Annual conferences thrived both in numbers of attendees and in financial terms. Conference numbers fluctuated, but were in general high: 163 in Kansas in 2002, 177 in Oporto in 2006, 158 in Stockholm in 2007, 170 in Auckland in 2008. All conferences in the period made a surplus; the Kansas, USA conference held at the University of Missouri and organized by Board member Lee Jones and his colleagues from the Linda Hall library covered its costs in sponsorship income alone.

Conference content reflected the choices of the local organizing committee, and to that extent was variable from year to year. As was observed by Michael Breaks in his strategy paper of the late 1990s, this characteristic was seen as a strength of an organization with a broad international reach. However, there was evidence of an increasing focus on precise themes in this decade. And many conferences attracted very high level speakers from domestic political, and the international academic worlds.

Two series of grants to support conference attendance should be noted.

The first was the IATUL travel grant. These were awarded for almost all conferences during the decade. They were strongly supported as a means of providing conference attendance for delegates from countries and regions where the Association wanted to foster contacts and membership. However, administration of the grants, which was managed by the local conference organizers on principles decided by the Association, was often problematic, and the rules governing their award were reviewed and amended frequently.

A second source of funding for attendance at the conferences was the Professor Tony Evans travel grant. This was funded personally by Professor Tony Evans and was awarded to a young professional librarian after a competitive procedure. There were three such annual awards, with the final recipient funded for attendance at the Stockholm conference in 2007.

The organization of conferences and seminars remained a significant burden of work for the Board, and the bulk of Board business, as reflected in the minutes, was concerned with reviewing immediately past conferences, and preparing for future conferences. The conference manual was almost continuously updated.

### **Activities and membership**

The activities of the Association were dominated by technological developments in the first half of the decade, and by a renewed focus of the provision of specific services and projects for members in the second half of this period.

The theme underlying these developments was a constant effort to sustain membership in areas where the Association had traditionally been strong, and to extend membership into new regions. Membership had been a key issue in the 1999 strategy paper. In 2001 there were 223 members: 132 were European; 45 were from North America; 38 were from the Asia Pacific region, mainly Australasia, and 8 were from Africa. This total and distribution did not change significantly during the period. Total membership in 2010 was 241. However, the Board noted with increasing frequency as the decade advanced that membership in the UK and the USA was declining in relative terms and sought to address this. For example the 2008 autumn seminar was held in London in order to raise the profile of the Association in the UK. The Board also continued its work to increase membership in Asia and South America. In this regard, conferences in New Zealand (2010) and Singapore (2011) were significant developments, as was the autumn seminar in Hong Kong in 2009. The increased geographical spread of Board members, noted earlier, helped to create networks and initiate contacts.

The development of the IATUL web site and related services absorbed a great deal of Board time at the beginning of this period. A web presence had been identified as essential in the 1999 strategy paper. The machinery for sustaining and developing this was a new departure for the Association, in that it required continuous servicing; heretofore, the activities between conferences and seminars had been discrete projects or publications. The responsibility for web maintenance was contracted to Queensland University of Technology for a fee, and in addition staff time was bought from the institution for administration of membership and other functions.

The new technology supported two main functions. One was the public web site. At the 2001 General Assembly, Gaynor Austen announced that the web site would contain, as well as membership information, digital versions of the Newsletter, conference proceedings, General Assembly and Board minutes. By the end of the decade the website supported all this information, plus sections on projects and Special Interest groups, and discussion lists. (The University of Purdue hosted digitized proceedings of IATUL conferences in its Institutional Repository from 2009). Website maintenance moved from Queensland University of Technology to Auckland University of Technology in 2006.

But in addition, the site supported the membership database, from which the membership information was generated. This was actually part of a distributed function, as there were several versions of the database. Another existed at this time to support the Treasurers role, and the complex task of managing subscriptions and financial information. For much of this period, reconciling the two datasets was a continuous problem, and a significant burden for those involved. This was especially so as the Association had a formal corporate identity ( in the Netherlands for the early years of the 2000s) and corresponding legal obligations regarding corporate reporting and corporate finances. These issues continued to generate much work until the membership and financial functions of the database were unified when the Treasurer's role was taken over by Dr Reiner Kallenborn (Technische Universitat Munchen) in 2005 and all software support was provided from there. Nevertheless, it took several more years until all matters, including that relating to the Association's charitable corporate identity, were resolved.

As these technical and administrative issues were settled, the Association began to re-focus on activities for members. In its early years the Association had been identified by its activities, and at one period in the 1960s, more than 20 concurrently running projects were listed. This level of activity may have been overly ambitious for a relatively small association and almost all project work subsequently lapsed. The 1999 strategy paper had referred to the desirability of fixed-term working groups but without any specific outcomes. In 2005, the Board, in the course of discussing how to increase membership, identified more services for members as a potentially fruitful approach and discussions continued on possible services over the next years.

In order to guide its deliberations, the Board conducted an opinion survey of members in 2007/8. There was a 47% response, which was in general positive. The main benefits of membership were perceived to be current awareness of library developments and networking. The most important current services were perceived to be the annual conference and the web page.

The immediate outcomes were the development of cross border collaboration projects; and the formation of Special Interest Groups on Information Literacy, Organizational Development and Quality, and Library Buildings. These groups usually met during annual conferences, and sometimes also during the autumn seminars. They also communicated in the interims, and posted project updates on the IATUL webpages.

TUM Munich also initiated an IATUL Twinning project, supported by a discussion list for the staffs of the universities concerned.

### **Constitution and Identity**

A number of constitutional changes relating to issues such as Board numbers and terms of office were made in this period. However a more significant change, of the Association's name, to *The International Association of Scientific and Technological University Libraries* was approved by the General Assembly in Leuven in 2009.

### **Archives**

In 1985 the then President Denis Shaw noted that the Association had provided no policy or home for an archive of its papers. There was a risk that much of the material which contained the Association's history would be lost, and in fact existing records were incomplete. A considerable quantity of material was preserved from that date in Chalmers university by IATUL Board member, and later President, Dr Nancy Fjallbrant. In the autumn Board meeting held in Edinburgh in 2001, it was decided that this material should be transferred to the Radcliffe Science Library in Oxford University, to be added to material already there. This was done in 2003. IATUL Board member Dr Sinikka Koskiala spent several weeks working on the archive from 2003 to 2006. The complete archive was transferred to Dublin City University, in Ireland, in 2007 and then to TUM Munich in 2011, where work on digitizing the content began.

### **Institutional relationships**

There were no major developments in institutional relationships in this period. The Association continued, as a member, to participate in IFLA events. IATUL also continues its active membership of ICSTI.

### **Conclusion.**

#### **IATUL in the 2000s**

The two main themes of AITUL development in the early 2000s – the establishment of a modern technical infrastructure to help the Association grow and to support its activities, and a renewed focus on projects which would provide a wider range of services to members- were actually continuing themes in IATUL's history.

From the beginning, IATUL had recognized that communication with its members was a core activity, and the passage from printed instances of this (the Proceedings and the Newsletters) to an active web presence, all achieved with considerable effort, reflects well on management of the Association's activities.

The revival of project groups in the late 2000s also connects with IATUL's early history, when, in the 1960s, there were many such groups, some of which achieved impressive results. It will be recalled that when Dr Hemlin initiated the steps which led to the formation of IATUL in 1953-1955, he cited "practical co-operation" between members as a founding principle of the Association.

The revival arose out of a debate in the mid 2000s about what kind of Association IATUL should be. This has been perhaps **the** continuous theme from IATUL's origins in the 1950s, and has been noted several times in this brief history. It was proper that an organization of institutions whose main business was the provision of information in science and technology, should have constantly reflected on its purpose during an era of continuous and disruptive technological and institutional change.

Yet it was also a constant that each IATUL gathering, whether conference or seminar, through bringing together people of sympathetic professional interests, refreshed the individual and the collective sense of common purpose, through debate, casual contact and friendship.

### **A note on sources, and acknowledgements**

This history is based primarily on IATUL Board minutes, papers tabled at Board meetings and related Board papers from the IATUL archives. It has also relied on General Assembly minutes and reports, and reports to associated bodies such as IFLA.

A former President of IATUL, Dr. Denis Shaw, noted in the mid 1980s that there were gaps in the IATUL archive, such as it was at that time, and that the Association needed to be attentive to the materials of its own history. Some gaps remain, but thanks to him, and to Dr. Nancy Fjallbrant and other IATUL members, a core of material came to be preserved at the Radcliffe Science Library, Oxford University. It was subsequently transferred to the library of Munich University of Technology, where I had an opportunity to work on it. I am grateful to Dr Reiner Kallenborn, and his colleagues at TUM, especially Regina Schmidmaier and Christine Friebolin, for facilitating access to the documents, and especially for digitizing those which I needed to study.

I am very grateful to all those members of IATUL who made my time with the Association, especially as a Board member, such a friendly and enriching experience. It has been intriguing for me, now retired, to write a history which came to include my own time of activity. I wish the Association renewed vigour, a long life, and above all the continued spirit of friendship which is such a feature its gatherings.