



# KONFERENSIE 2002 CONFERENCE

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Die Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) Konferensie is vanjaar in Port Elizabeth, die vriendelike en winderige stad, gehou, en het Port Elizabeth nie hierdie beskrywing gestand gedoen nie. Die eerste aand toe ons na aandete die steil trappies na die hotel toe aandurf, moes ek aan die heining vasklou en my optrek, só sterk was die wind. Die volgende oggend het ek gou gaan kyk of die heining nog staan en vind toe boonop uit dat die wind amper teen 120 kilometer per uur gewaai het!

This conference was the biggest LIASA Conference to date with more than 800 registered delegates. It was extremely well organised and held in the Feathermarket Hall in the city centre. The building has been restored and is a joy to behold. Mrs N Balindlela, MEC of the Eastern Cape, Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture, welcomed the delegates with a rousing speech and promised support for libraries in the Eastern Cape. At the end of her speech she sang a Xhosa song which soon had the delegates singing and clapping along.

The keynote speaker was Ross Shimmon, the president of International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), who announced that the 2007 IFLA Conference would be held in Durban, the first one in some 40 years since the last conference was held on the African continent.

The two most relevant papers for public libraries during the third session on Tuesday were delivered by Naresh Sentoo, titled *Labour pains* dealing with the increasing importance of continued human resource competence and Hilda Kruger's paper titled, *I, Librarian*, a fascinating account of the information society in the not too distant future. The highlight of Tuesday was a visit to the oceanarium and a performance by Lindi the seal and Dolly the dolphin and her family. Afterwards we visited the museum, snake park and aquarium and of course, they gave us food!

Wednesday's sessions had parallel sessions for the different interest groups. Obviously we attended the Public and Community Libraries Interest Group (PACLIG). The main topic of discussion was the future of public and community libraries in South Africa in the light of the new dispensation brought about by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1998). Graham Dominy, director of the national archives gave an excellent analysis of the situation in his paper, entitled *The public library scenario*. The morning session ended with Johan Swiegelhaar, Tommy Mathee, Ms Gugu and Ramesh Jayaram elected to draw up a motion to be presented at the PAGLIC annual general meeting (AGM) on Tuesday and at the LIASA AGM on Friday morning.

The PAGLIC AGM was held on Wednesday afternoon. Two motions were submitted which resulted in a heated discussion. Eventually both were accepted and submitted to the LIASA AGM where they were also accepted. The motions approved by PACLIG were as follows:

- To sensitise the national ministers of Arts and Culture, Local

Government and Finance to the situation pertaining to libraries before end November 2002.

- To elect a task team to draw up a document explaining the background and a solution to the problem facing public/community libraries in South Africa.

Several other interest groups had parallel sessions on Wednesday, such as the Acquisitions Interest Groups, School Libraries and Youth Services Interest Group, Interlending and Support Staff Interest Groups. Unfortunately we were unable to attend.

Woensdagaand se fun run is byna in die wiele gery toe die Cosatu staking veroorsaak het dat ons geen busvervoer van die Veremarsaal terug na ons hotelle toe gehad het nie. Een arme kombi moes die klomp mense vervoer, maar gelukkig is Port Elizabeth se spitsyd redelik kalm en kon die fun run soos beplan voortgaan. Om klaarblyklike redes het die uwe nie deelgeneem nie!

Donderdag was ons laaste dag. 'n Groot deel van die tyd is natuurlik bestee aan 'networking', gesels met ou kennisse en nuus uitruil. Dit was verbasend hoeveel van die ou Noord- en Oos-Kaap biblioteekdienspersoneel nog in die rondte is en ook die konferensie bygewoon het. Daar was opmerklik min afgevaardigdes van die Wes-Kaap en ons sal 'n plan moet maak! Tee- en etenstye was natuurlik 'n groot sosiale geleentheid, veral omdat daar 'n klomp pryse uitgelooft is waarvoor mens in aanmerking kon kom as jy al die uitstallers se handtekeninge op die inskrywingsvorm bekom het. Die eerste prys was 'n Wheelie Wagon geskenk deur Afribuka - met boeke en al - en ten spyte van my harde werk (wat natuurlik 'n geselsie met almal insluit!) het die Noordwes Provinsie uiteindelik met die prys weggeloop. 'n Mens kan ook nie nalaat om die skouspel wat deur 'n groep tradisionele dansers gedurende die teepouse aangebied is, te noem nie. Die storie van Xhosa gebruike en tradisie is vertel deur middel van dans en het die afgevaardigdes in vervoering gehad.

'n Spesiale vergadering is Donderdagmiddag tydens die etensuur belê deur Peter Lor en aangebied deur Mary Nassimbeni, en het gehandel oor die insameling van nasionale statistieke met betrekking tot biblioteke. Rae Pienaar van die Universiteit van Kaapstad het die agtergrondinligting verskaf, maar almal was dit eens dat daar nog heelwat donkiewerk moet plaasvind voordat so 'n stelsel van die grond af sal kom.

Thursday's afternoon session included two extremely interesting papers, one by Dr Machet on *Family literacy* (a video on the Family Literacy Project is available) and Bev May's *A vital sign: adult literacy promotion*.

Unfortunately we had to leave at 16:00 to catch the plane back home, but it was a wonderful experience to meet colleagues from throughout South Africa.

Some of the papers will be reproduced in the **CL**, but all the papers will be available on the LIASA website at [www.liasa.org.za](http://www.liasa.org.za).

