

INFORMALIA

*Newsletter of the
Malta Library and
Information Association (MaLIA)*

*Issues 108-109
April-June; July-September 2004*

EDITORIAL

This newsletter covers two quarters as it has been issued late. During this period MaLIA's Council met to discuss, draft and launch two projects which address library issues in different ways:

A Register of Qualified Librarians which seeks to recognise the status of qualified librarians in Malta. This register has been activated as it had been dormant for several years. The bye-laws are in the process of being finalised and will be launched in the coming months.

A Report on Maltese Libraries which will give MaLIA a clear picture of the current situation in local libraries by providing facts and figures. It is hoped that this will help us identify strengths and weaknesses and propose improvements and solutions. Data for this exercise will be carried out through visits to a sample number of libraries by members of the MaLIA Council. We hope this report will help formulate MaLIA's vision, strategy and activities and ensure that these are relevant to the needs of its members and the profession it represents.

Within this issue, snippets from letters to the press have been reproduced to throw light on grievances which have been aired so many times over, year in and year out without tangible results. Indeed human and financial support are lacking in all sectors and certain structures need to be addressed by government authorities. Only recently has the Archives Bill been presented in parliament and is now in its second reading. We hope the authorities will in turn do the same for the long-awaited amendments to the law on Libraries.

It would have been the same wish for those who have served in the library field in Malta for many decades. I refer to three members of the profession who passed away over the last few months. Rev. Anthony F. Sapienza SJ, one of the association's founding members, Ms. Hella Jean Bartolo and Mr. John Spiteri Fiteni. The profession has lost three of its long-standing and valued members who will be remembered for their discipline and indefatigable work as well as their common sense and charm which they have passed on to their colleagues.

The Association hopes to rally support for its concerns through the recently-elected MEPs. We look forward to informing ourselves and participating in programmes and initiatives that will give make Malta a better stronghold in managing, conserving and disseminating its information base. Without a well-coordinated strategy, Malta's information services will remain fragmented.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

People News	2
Appreciation	3
Publications	4
MaLIA News	5
Libraries	6
Literacy Projects	8
Initiatives	9
Appreciations	10
More Library News	11
Donations	12
Archives	13
Library Acquisitions	14
Weblinks	15
Book Review	15
Calendar	16

INFORMALIA

INFORMALIA is the newsletter of the Malta Library and Information Association (MaLIA), published quarterly. The first issue of **INFORMALIA** appeared in May 2003. It was formerly called "Newsletter" until the last issue Number 103 published in December 2002.

Editor: Anita Ragonesi

All correspondence should be addressed to:

**The Editor, INFORMALIA
c/o University of Malta
Library, Msida MSD 06 –
MALTA**

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views expressed by the Editorial Board and/or MaLIA's Council but only represent the author's views as forwarded to us.

The Malta Library and Information Association (MaLIA), formerly known as the *Għaqda Biblijotekarji*, is the association that gathers within its ranks all information workers such as librarians and includes archivists. MaLIA is the oldest established association (1969) on the local information scene enjoying wide experience in this sector. Individuals interested in joining as members should write to the Secretary at the above address.

MaLIA is a full member of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), the Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA) and the European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations (EBLIDA).

This Newsletter is available on-line. Visit our web-site at:

www.malia-malta.org

Ruth Muscat, Assistant Librarian at the Reference Department of the University Library, obtained an MA in Library and Information Studies from University College London. Her dissertation was entitled 'The role of the academic library in promoting information literacy : a critical evaluation of changing trends'. She has just taken up a post as Principal Library Assistant at Wellcome Library, Imperial College, London.

Louis Cini, Assistant Librarian at the Cataloguing Department of the National Library, recently obtained a B.Sc. (Econ.) (Hons.) in Information and Library Studies through correspondence from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Silvio Cortis, Senior Assistant Librarian at the University Library in charge of online searching services, inter-library loans and overseas photocopying services, last year graduated with a B.Sc. (Hons.) in Information & Library Studies through correspondence from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. He is pursuing a Masters degree course in Management Studies with the same University.

Lina Farrugia, librarian at San Andrea Senior School, Imselliet, was awarded The School Librarian of the Year 2003 Award. This annual award is an initiative of the Malta School Library Association in collaboration with the Department of Student Services within the Education Division. The nominees were judged on various criteria with regard to library management and initiatives to encourage reading and effective library use within their school.

Claudio Laferla, librarian at St. Martin's College, Swatar, received the School Library Award for 2003 from the Education Division for providing an excellent service to staff, students and parents as well as developing an information

literacy skills programme using multimedia. On a personal level he also won the Jean Lowrie Leadership and Development Award from the International Association of School Librarianship.

IASL website: www.iasl-slo.org.

Noel d'Anastas has joined the staff of the National Archives and works at the Archives at the Banca Giuratale in Mdina which is now open on a daily basis.

Hella Jean Bartolo, Archivist and Records Manager at the Central Bank until a few years ago, passed away on June 3rd. She served on the MaLIA Council in the late 1990s and was co-founder of The Friends of the National Archives.

See appreciation on p. 10.


Heather Brown is back in Malta for another year at least, having enjoyed her three months here in 2002. She is serving on the MaLIA Council, assisting with the organisation of its archives and perhaps in time, will make some contribution to the promotion of literacy. While in the UK she helped establish a cooperative link between CILIP (The UK librarians' professional body) and the Malta Library profession. She looks forward to meeting up with acquaintances and any MaLIA members. Tel:212346592; Email: heatherclematis@yahoo.co.uk

Rev. Anthony F. Sapienza SJ, co-founder of the Malta Library Association and of the *Malta National Bibliography*, passed away on August 16th.

See appreciation on adjacent page.

John P. Spiteri Fiteni, a part-time librarian at the Cataloguing Department of the University of Malta and a MaLIA member, passed away on August 7th.

See appreciation on p. 10.



Rev Anthony F Sapienza who died on Monday 16 August at the age of 72 was a founder of the *Ghaqda Bibljotekarji* - today's MaLIA (The Malta Library and Information Association), librarian of the Maltese Jesuit Province since 1965 and perhaps one of Malta's most practical operators in the field of librarianship with an unusual commonsensical approach to the subject.

Fr Sapienza lived up to his name's association with books in Malta. Besides organising on a professional level the various libraries scattered throughout the Maltese Jesuit institutions in Malta and Gozo and giving a helping hand to other libraries belonging to other religious and lay institutions, Fr Sapienza's lasting monument will undoubtedly remain the Pope John XXIII Library of which he was founder and director. In this library of close to 24,000 volumes one can see the wide vista encompassed by the subject *religion*. It is an institution that lays wide open the cultural and spiritual panorama embraced by the Roman Catholic faith and so many ancillary and marginal subjects ranging over various social sciences. This library is the place where once can dig deep into subjects ranging from communism to Vatican II. Over the years the library owing to the charisma of Fr Sapienza and ever-increasing interesting subject-matter, managed to build a considerable corpus of faithful users.

Fr Sapienza's pragmatic approach to librarianship and information science can also be seen from his main publications which are bibliographical tools aimed at assisting the user in looking up and identifying subjects required. In 1970, he compiled the *Union List of Serials* dealing with theology and related subjects; in 1977 there was *A Checklist of Maltese Periodicals and Newspapers in the National Library of Malta and the University of Malta Library*, and the *List of Periodicals currently Received* (5th ed). In 2002 he published his last major publication - *Books by Maltese Jesuits: a Bibliography*, based on a special collection at the John XXIII Library.

Fr Sapienza graduated MA in Library Science from Rosary College, Illinois, USA. As far as I know he is the first Maltese professional librarian to have graduated in that field from the United States.

Fr Sapienza's sterling work in the formative years of the *Ghaqda Bibljotekarji*, set up in 1969, continues to be felt to this day. Its administrative set-up and its various educational and cultural objectives still form the *raison d'être* of MaLIA today. The imprint of Fr Sapienza and his fellow founder-members still drives on the association in its aim to foster the profession of librarianship and anything connected with books and information in Malta.

PUBLICATIONS

Giucoco d'Arme

During a musico-literary evening on the 20th April the National Library launched a facsimile edition of Bernardo Giustiniani's translation of Claude Oronce Fine's *Giucoco d'Arme di Sovrani e degli Stati d' Europa* printed in Naples in 1725. This rare book was dedicated to Grandmaster Antonio Manoel de Vilhena and his coat-of-arms emblazoned on its first frontispiece. It contains a 52-card game used as a means of education to combine knowledge on coats of arms with the history and geography of the European states existent at the time.

Sources of Maltese History

At the end of May, Malta University Services (MUS) announced the launch of a new book in the series *Documentary Sources of Maltese History, Documents in the State Archives, Palermo, no. 2: Cancelleria Regia, 1400 ? 1459* edited by Stanley Fiorini. For further info: mupl@mus.com.mt

Dun Karm manuscripts on CD

This is a digitized facsimile of the Dun Karm papers kept by the University of Malta Library. The project was sponsored by the Maltese National Commission for Unesco. Available at LM 5 from the University of Malta Library. Orders: 23402416.

DR. THERESA M. VANN

Dr. Theresa M. Vann, Curator of the Malta Study Center at the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library, Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota (http://www.hmml.org/centers/malta/malta_start.html), is in Malta between October and the end of February 2005.

She is here as a Fulbright professor attached to the Division of Library & Information Studies in the Centre for Communication Technology at the University of Malta. She will be offering a number of short courses in Malta and Gozo to be announced in the media in due course. She may be contacted on: theresa.vann@cct.um.edu.mt.

Gozo Cathedral Archives catalogue

The Gozo Cathedral has produced a catalogue of books and manuscripts at its archives. Cathedral archpriest Mgr Joseph Vella Gauci said the catalogue had been long overdue mostly due to lack of qualified and professionally trained personnel. The job was eventually entrusted to Horatio C.R. Vella, a senior University lecturer in classics. Apart from being an indispensable tool to researchers and historians, Dr Vella's catalogue will serve as a much-needed inventory of all items contained in the archives.

Literacy for School Improvement - Value Added for Malta

This study by Charles Mifsud, Rowena Grech, Dougal Hutchison, Jo Morrison, Peter Rudd, John Hanson, was published in April by the Literacy Unit of the University of Malta in conjunction with the Education Division and the UK's National Foundation for Educational Research.

It is the second national literacy survey to be held and shows how aspects of pupils' home backgrounds facilitate or inhibit their literacy progress between Years 2 and 5 and that state schools from the inner harbour region lag behind other schools in this respect. These schools have not made as much difference to their pupils' attainment as they should have, and need even more support than they are already

Membership database

All members are asked to help us update our membership database by filling in the attached form.

A second circular addressed to all unpaid members is enclosed asking them to settle their dues. As agreed in this February's AGM, MaLIA's annual membership fee is now LM5. We count on your cooperation.

Register of Qualified Librarians

MaLIA's Council appointed a sub-committee which for the past months has been working on the re-establishment of MaLIA's "Register of Qualified Librarians" as set down in our Statute (Para. 2 (x)).

As indicated in past issues of our newsletter, MaLIA intends to revamp this Register which has been dormant for several years. A draft revision of the Register's byelaws is being discussed. This includes the criteria for entry into the Register as well as the process and logistics for the system to operate effectively. The Register will recognise the status of qualified librarians in Malta. MaLIA members will be notified in an official circular when the Register is ready to be launched.

Report on Maltese Libraries

MaLIA's Council is preparing a data collection exercise to assess the current state of play of Maltese libraries.

A scientific sample of libraries and information units has been extracted from all areas and interviewers appointed by the MaLIA Council will be personally visiting the selected libraries to collect the required information between October and December. It is expected that the report will be published early next year.

Information Literacy Skills Course

As featured in our last newsletter, MaLIA is liaising with CILIP's International Office on the organisation of an information literacy skills course with the participation of a UK speaker. MaLIA hopes to offer this course early next year.

MaLIA Council members

Ms Ruth Muscat has resigned from her post as Hon. Secretary of MaLIA as she is now working in the UK. Mr. Joseph R. Grima has kindly accepted to serve as Secretary until the next AGM. Mr Eman Grima has resigned from MaLIA Council, due to work commitments, and no longer forms part of the editorial team.

E-Bulletin

MaLIA has launched an E-Bulletin on current news relating to libraries and cultural activities which is compiled and maintained by Ms. Martes Paris. This is available to all members and any interested individuals and organisations.

Please fill in your email details on the attached form and you will automatically be placed on the Bulletin's emailing list. Non-members wishing to receive this Bulletin are to send an email to: martes.paris@um.edu.mt.

A Committee has recently been set up to formulate guidelines on giving local libraries falling under local councils greater exposure in a bid to encourage people to make better use of them and to read more. The guidelines would be aimed at making better and more intelligent use of the media.

The committee aims to:

- Suggest a better system to identify the quality and type of books which should be put on library shelves;
- Ensure that resources and sources of distributors and donors are coordinated;
- Encourage adults to read more and to make use of libraries.

With the help of the Malta Library and Information Association, an information skills course is being organised for people who manage local libraries on a voluntary basis.

Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, said that local councils should be encouraged to allocate a share of their annual budget to buying books. There are 48 public libraries in Malta and 10 in Gozo. 10 localities do not have a library, while 2 - Birkirkara and Qormi - have 2 libraries each. About 15 of the libraries have reading areas.

The members of the committee are Natalino Attard, Director of the Department of Local Councils, Philip Borg, Director of libraries and archives, Robert Mizzi, Chairman of the Malta Library and Information Association. Oscar Grech will chair the committee.

Suggestions from the public should be mailed to the Local Councils Department, Archbishop Street, Valletta.

National Library

Editorial, *The Times*, 6th May 2004

In recent years the National Library of Malta has certainly made progress in certain areas. It is no longer a battle-field for schoolchildren engaged in writing projects, checks are being made on all readers, and it has produced a number of publications, including a recent one on CD-ROM to facilitate use of its collections.

On the other hand, it remains bedevilled by a dearth of high-class professional staff and, of course, by miserably poor funding. Indeed, Malta's main libraries have now been suffering for some years from serious money problems. The University Library has now joined the National Library in its dire financial straits. These two great libraries are on their way to becoming book museums instead of dynamic modern libraries.

Poor funding is due to cash problems at the Ministry of Finance, but another failing at the National Library of Malta is due to its management's current policies regarding use of its collections, policies that have rightly been attacked by the Malta Historical Society". In particular, it said objections were made by various researchers over the last years with regard to the regulation that newspapers could be viewed only on microfilm. Apart from the fact that the service of microfilm reading left much to be desired, the refusal to allow the viewing of newspapers in the original was time consuming and counter productive.

It added that the holdings of the National Library were highly vulnerable to the ravages of the bookworm, more so since, for many years, the library had not employed any book cleaners. Another "annoying" rule was that which disallowed researchers from requesting more than eight manuscripts or books a day. The society also remarked that the library material, however precious it might be, was worthless if it was not properly studied and consulted. "It is preserved precisely for this purpose and not to become a mere monument in an empty cemetery," the society remarked.

Law Courts Library

The Times, March 2004

During a two-day conference in March for the judiciary and lawyers on Applying EU Law in Malta the Chief Justice Vincent De Gaetano, made these comments in his introductory speech, "the library at the law courts is still without even the minimum requirements in terms of EU legislation and books on EU law. "We need more full-time judicial assistants or other research officers well versed in EU law to assist the judiciary. And we also need a qualified person who can act as an EU liaison officer or co-ordinator in matters concerning the EU."

University Library

The Times, 20th May 2004

The [University] library had hardly bought any books in the last two years. It had just about enough funds to pay for the journals it was subscribed to, although it was even cutting down on these.

Editorial, *The Times*, 29th May 2004

Students have been hit hard by the University Library's financial inability over the past two years to buy anything near the number of new books the institution needs to support its courses. At the same time, the government is urging the university to take in more students, including students from non-EU countries who can be charged fees and are certainly not entitled to stipends. How can the university expect foreign students to enrol when its library cannot keep the collections on its shelves up to date?

San Gwann library

Letter to *The Times*, 22nd May 2004

Tony C. Cutajar, San Gwann

As the editorial of *The Times* commented on May 6, it is indeed "time to revamp libraries", especially some forgotten ones. Here I am referring specifically to the San Gwann library. It is not enough to lament and deplore that the Maltese do not read enough, that they do not make use of libraries, that Maltese books are not being read. Anybody who goes to the San Gwann library loses interest outright to go anywhere near the books.

For the 13,000 inhabitants of San Gwann, a one small room library in the primary school is far from ideal. And this is more so when the room is shabby and cluttered with books and boxes. The shelves are old and rickety, loaded with books and in danger of collapsing. The books are squeezed so tight that if you try to pull one out you may pull the shelves on top of you! And what about the books, especially the Maltese books? They are in such a bad state that the whole lot should all be burnt and replaced. This so-called library is a real disgrace. I dare the competent authorities to pay a visit and see for themselves why San Gwann residents do not feel like going anywhere near it.

More letters in the press appeared on this subject.

Gozo Library

The Sunday Times, 5th September 2004

In Gozo, the only public reference library/archive available is found in the upper floor of the complex overlying the Victoria primary school in Vajringa Street. Although, the library is equipped with rich and up-to-date material, there is still room for improvement as far as the availability of research material and documents is concerned. One must say that the staff do their utmost to meet customer enquiries.

However, not all customers can use the resources available. The elderly, and the wheelchair-bound are unable to make use of the library facilities due to the long flight of steps, so a lift should be installed. One can notice the lack of shelving space for the continuous inflow of new stocks of publications. The library and archive are bursting at the seams with the volumes of reference works and documents. Many people make use of the new publications but complain about the lack of space available to conduct research, especially in those circumstances when a table would have to be shared by two or three persons. Moreover, even the library clerks had to put their desks in the main hall's corners to carry out their clerical work. Even the principal's office is situated in a corridor.

The library is busy practically every day of the week and frequented by school students. However, the opening hours lack sensible organisation especially during the winter months. Furthermore, students do not find it convenient either because they have to postpone their research work for Saturday mornings in an overcrowded library.

In view of these inconveniences, which are beyond the control of the staff, the authorities concerned should overhaul the current library organisation at Vajringa. The whole edifice, including the primary school, should be wholly earmarked for the library and archives facilities. On the other hand, the primary school may be easily transferred and established at L-Ewropa Street by the government sports facilities. This will create enough space for decent staff quarters and offices. There will also be more shelving space, thus avoiding more damage to the collections of books and other rich publication material which will avoid overcrowding.

Finally the only Gozo reference and archive sections lack the necessary security similar to that found at the entrance of the Malta National Library in Valletta. The Gozo library is renowned for some of the rare publications which are not even available in Malta. It is time for such over-due reforms to be implemented without further inconveniences to the public.

LITERACY PROJECTS

Gozo Literacy Centre

This year the Hon. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo, inaugurated the Gozo Literacy Centre housed in the Education Office in Victoria. Thanks to funds provided by the National Curriculum Council, the centre is mainly furnished with books for primary pupils including those with learning difficulties. The centre is an important tool for class teachers and complementary teachers and is run by Ms. Irene Vella, a Literacy Teacher.

Adult Literacy Pilot Project

Earlier this year the Hon. Louis Galea, Minister of Education, launched an Adult Literacy Project initiated by the Adult Learning Section within the Department of Further Studies and Adult Education.

This was done in collaboration with nine local councils, namely, Birzebbuga, Gharghur, Gzira, Manikata, Mosta, Naxxar, Qormi, Zebbug and Zurriq. Lessons are held in premises of the local councils, away from the school ambience. At present the project is focussed on the teaching of English with classes in Maltese and numeracy to be introduced later.

Literacy ... Lend a Hand

Lend a Hand is an initiative promoting voluntary work in summer. This year University staff and students were invited to teach basic English and Maltese in a literacy programme for children and adults on a one-to-one basis, at the Paulo Freire Institute in Zejtun. Co-ordinated by the Chaplaincy's Justice Commitment Group, this took place in the five weeks following the 16th August. Other areas of voluntary work may be offered in due time. For further information send an e-mail to chaplaincy@um.edu.mt or phone 2340 2341.

The Paulo Freire Institute

The Paulo Freire Institute was established by the Society of Jesus in Malta for the promotion of literacy and community development. It carries out a number of activities to promote literacy. A number of children attend weekly literacy sessions on a one-to-one basis and are assisted in developing their reading and writing skills as their parents were unable to give the necessary assistance at home.

The Institute in Zejtun organises three, four-month-long courses for a total of 45 unemployed adult participants. These classes are organised together with the Employment and Training Corporation and the Literacy Unit of the University of Malta.

Band Club runs Child Literacy Programme

Through a two-year sponsorship agreement with the HSBC Cares For Children Fund, the Maria Regina Band Club of Marsa is running a literacy programme for young children who are struggling at school. This is believed to be the first of its kind to be established by a Maltese band club.

Josef Camilleri from HSBC said the fund's commitment to fighting child illiteracy in the inner harbour area included the sponsorship of the *Hilti Tezor* programme, run by the Foundation for Educational Services, as well as support for individual schools and agreements with local councils. HSBC has been very active in supporting different literacy programmes in Valletta and the Three Cities. About 25 youngsters from Marsa have started taking part in literacy and basic skills lessons at the band club's premises.

MINIPLANS AND IN ANGIEN HERITAGE

On the occasion of International Museum Day, and to commemorate Malta's accession to the EU, ICOM (International Council of Museums) Malta organised a seminar on May 22nd at Heritage Malta's head office at the Old University Building in Valletta with presentations relating to Maltese Intangible Heritage. These include stories, songs, rituals, language and other aspects of national identity.

The following themes were discussed:

- The National Memory Project - Charles Farrugia, Head, National Archives
- Working in an Historic House in England - Marquis Nicholas de Piro
- The Museum of the Maltese Language - Kenneth Gambin, Curator, Ethnography, Heritage Malta
- The Mediterranean Voices Project: Intangible heritage in an urban context - Rachel Radmilli, Anthropologist, University of Malta
- Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza, Firenze: making a collection accessible to all - Martin Spiteri, Manager Projects, Heritage Malta

ICOM Malta chairperson Theresa Vella said that it plans to launch a local website where people can meet and exchange knowledge and urges people involved with heritage and/or interested in its preservation to join the organisation and lend their support. Membership enquiries: malta@melitensia.org

See write-up on *The Sunday Times*, 30th May 2004.

The 22nd March issue of *The Times of Malta* carried a statement by Joseph J. Meli, Chairman of *Kopjamalt*, member of the International Federation of Reproduction Rights Organisations. Malta should look into the protection of intellectual property, unless it wants to support piracy of the printed word.

A parliamentary question revealed that from 1995 to 2000 (until September) Malta had in use 76,571 reprographic apparatus contributing to over 750 million A4 copy pages, although not all of these would be of copyright material. However, even if this amount is calculated to be

THE TIMES DIGITISATION PROJECT SOON COMPLETE

A five-year project that enabled every issue of *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*, along with their predecessors, the *Times of Malta Weekly*, the *Times of Malta* and the *Sunday Times of Malta*, to be digitised, will soon be complete.

The project began in 1998 when the microfilms of these publications were obtained from the National Library of Malta as a large part of the entire library (including the photographic library) of Allied Newspapers Limited, was burnt in a fire on October 15, 1979. By mid-2000 all newspapers were scanned and converted into high-resolution images. *The Times of Malta* is now offering an image-based archive service against payment. The search interface has a handy preview facility to check the context of your search result. Follow the link available at www.timesofmalta.com.

According to figures released by the National Statistics Office in March, the private sector spent over Lm17 million on books, newspapers and magazines last year, an increase of 34% from Lm13 million in 1993. By contrast the importation of printed material last year stood at 3.9 million items, a drop of 14% over the previous year. Another NSO survey released in March 2002 revealed that 56% of those sampled said they had not read a single book in one year and 44% said they did not even bother to read a magazine.

The NSO delved into the imports of printed matter; the amount Maltese spent on printed material; public library acquisitions; loans and membership and a profile of the Maltese publishing scene. The NSO insisted that while it was making no claims of comprehensiveness for these figures, it believed it painted a very adequate picture of this industry. An interesting statistic is that nearly 229,000 books were borrowed last year from the seven regional libraries, a substantial increase of 69% over 1998.

Gozo library lending has seen over 48,000 books loaned last year, as against some 34,000 books the previous year. However book purchases by the Public Library system went down by 37% between 1998 and 2003. This was offset by an increase in book donations which more than tripled.

The state, government departments and related bodies emerged as the most prolific publisher in Malta, making up a 36% of the surveyed published output last year. Commercial publications constituted 26%, while 11% was published by individual authors. Maltese was the language of 56% of publications, while English accounted for 38%. Children's fiction made up 24% of literary genres and 23% of publications related to all aspects of Maltese culture.

HELLA JEAN BARTOLO WINSTON

Charles J. Farrugia

The connection of Hella with archives developed quite late in her lifetime. She was employed at the Central Bank of Malta where the need of converting the registry into a records management services unit was implemented in 1988. Hella was sent on a short course in Records Management in the United States from where she came back charged with initiative to introduce the concept of records management in Malta.

In 1994, Hella was awarded a Masters Degree in Records and Archives Management from the School of Library and Information Studies at University College London. Her thesis 'A Records Management programme for the Central Bank of Malta' was implemented by the Central Bank, her employer and sponsor of the course. On her return to Malta, Hella established a records management programme at the Central Bank. She lectured at University as part of the Diploma in Librarianship and Information Studies. She was the first Maltese to become a member of the Society of Archivists of UK and of the American Archivists and Records Managers of the US (ARMA). She was also the only foreign archivist to be approved as Director of one of the Chapters of ARMA.

On the local scene, Hella served for a number of years on the Council of the Library Association (*Għaqda Bibliotekarji*), now re-named MaLIA. She also served on various committees appointed by the Government to propose reforms in Archives. In 1996 she was appointed on an Action Committee on Libraries and Archives. After the change in Government, Hella was appointed Deputy Chairperson of the National Archives Advisory Committee.

Hella used her contacts abroad to put Malta's archival heritage on the international scene. Some years back, through her contacts with the World Bank, she managed to get an approval for \$10,000 for the Maltese Government to build a records centre. Unfortunately such an opportunity was not exploited by the local authorities. In 1997, she also managed to get funding for a study of the records management system at the Ministry of Education. This survey was conducted by experts from the International Records Management Trust whose excellent report ended on the shelves of a few conscientious individuals who cared to preserve it. In August 2001, Hella convinced Mr Geoff Mowlam from the Genealogical Society of Utah to come over to Malta and negotiate sponsorship for a microfilming project. Luckily enough we managed to build a long standing relation which is most beneficial to the National Archives.

In July 2000 Hella was one of the founding members and first President of the Friends of the National Archives of Malta. This voluntary organisation is helping the National Archives accomplish its mission and has proved indispensable at a time when the National Archives is suffering from severe shortages in human and financial resources. It is painful to see that the archives reforms she worked so hard to see implemented are still on paper. Her spirit of commitment, determination, and initiative will inspire us all for many years to come.

JOHN P. SPITERI FITENI

Josephine Spiteri

It was with stunned disbelief that we read the news of the death of John Spiteri Fiteni, our former colleague at the University Library. It had only been just over a month since the Library staff had gathered to wish him a happy retirement after a very long career, which had lasted until he was well into his seventies. He was in fact one of a group of Maltese professional librarians who had obtained their qualifications abroad.

I first met him on joining the Library thirteen years ago. "Is-Sur Spiteri", as everyone called him for short, came in every Wednesday morning in order to process books on science, technology, economics and education, as well as all books destined for the Junior College Library, which he did at an astonishing speed. Apart from his exemplary hard work, as a character he was truly lovable. Since we shared the same surname, he had early on "adopted" me as his niece, but he was looked on as an uncle by almost everyone. His sense of humour, his dry witticisms, his jokes, his cheerful outlook on life made everybody look forward to Wednesdays. All the library staff of whatever age came in with a smile to wish him good morning and exchange a few words and possible a joke as well.

There was also a serious side to him, when discussing serious issues. He was a person whom one could trust. He never complained about anything. When he spoke of his family, it was always as a devoted husband and father. We shall miss our "Mr. Wednesdays" for a very long time to come. His family must be missing him much more. But at least he is now with his wife, whom he had missed deeply after her death.

MORE LIBRARY NEWS

Returning a Library Book After 42 Years

Reuters, 21st April 2004

A former British Royal Air Force employee has returned a history book to the Malta public library 42 years after he borrowed it and was given a cup of coffee instead of a fine. Ernie Roscouet, a resident of the Channel Islands, inadvertently packed the book when he left Malta in June 1962 and returned it when his wife gave him a holiday to Malta as his 65th birthday present. Although he expected a fine he was given a cup of coffee instead. "Perhaps this story will encourage others to bring back overdue books," librarian Joe Debattista said.

Priceless books restored

The Times, 8th July 2004

APS Bank has contributed financially to the restoration of priceless books held at the Capuchin province library in Floriana. The project involved the restoration of 100 volumes from the Migne collection of the Latin and Greek Fathers (Patrologia) of the Church. The restoration was coordinated and supervised by Fr Francis Azzopardi, OFM Cap. The work, which was finished recently, started in May 1999 by Joseph Schiro and was continued by Joseph Zammit.

The Capuchin province library has in its possession various books of extraordinary importance and value, some even dating back to the late 16th century. Though the library is of a private and monastic character, lay scholars and researchers are admitted by appointment and offered all possible assistance and help.

New electronic reference works at University Library

In May the Reference Department of the University Library added one new electronic reference work and two electronic databases to its collection. The Global Education Digest 2003 is the first in an annual series of UIS (Unesco Institute for Statistics) global statistical reports that provide the latest key education indicators from early childhood to higher education. This resource is available in Room 115, Reference Department. The Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts (ASFA) and Sociological Abstracts are available on the three electronic database workstations in Room 115, Reference Department.

Virtual medical history museum

Malta still lacks a dedicated Medical History Museum, but there are a number of collections with a medical history import scattered around the Islands. The University and the Medical School has a number of

items that reflect various aspects of medical history. Unfortunately because of present physical space limitations, it is difficult to collect and present these items in an ordered sequential form under one roof as a permanent exhibit.

The Library and Museum Sub-Committee of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery have set up a virtual Medical History Museum cataloguing and illustrating various items of historical interest, held by the Medical School. This can be viewed at:

<http://home.um.edu.mt/medsurg/museum>

Eurocentre at Junior College

On March 22nd Education Minister Dr Louis Galea and the University Rector Professor Roger Ellul Micallef inaugurated a Eurocentre at the Junior College, Msida which is to provide up-to-date information to academic and non-academic staff and students related to EU educational projects as well as staff and student mobility. The centre includes a library and will be run by the college administration with the support and co-operation of the Socrates Office at the University.

Duchesne Library 35 years old

One of the first children's libraries on the island, the Duchesne Children's Library was opened on April 15, 1969. On the last Saturday of April, a number of children experienced a different sort of visit to the library. Not only did they borrow books but they stayed on to celebrate its 35th anniversary. They made beautiful cards and some read poems and other texts. A reading marathon was launched inviting members to read for 35 minutes non-stop. The library was really en fête! Balloons brightened it up. The highlight of the afternoon was the cutting of a cake by the founder of the library, Sr Tessie Agius rscj. The library is at 14, Sacred Heart Avenue, St Julians. Membership is open to all. A one-time enrolment fee of 75c is charged, and borrowing a book costs 2c.

Membership now stands at 5,070. In the last 10 years the library has registered an annual average of 130 new members, 75% of whom join in July/August. A characteristic of the library which is much appreciated is its caring attitude. All members are known by name and given that individual attention when it is needed. Children are professionally guided to choose books according to their age, ability, interests and needs. Most enjoyable have been the storytelling sessions. Care is taken to keep the stock comprehensive and up to date. The society has been investing in quality books to satisfy any need. Rag books, board books, picture books, videos, several fiction genres and award winners have delighted hundreds of children over the years.

World Book Day donations

On the occasion of World Book Day and Copyright (UNESCO), books were donated by the American Embassy, the Chinese Embassy, and the Italian Embassy. Books were also presented by Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, while the local committee of the Labour Party presented books published by the *Sensiela Kotba Socjalisti*.

Rabat Council Library

In April Rabat Local Council inaugurated a substantial upgrade of the Notary Francesco Catania Regional Library. The Council invested in hundreds of new books of interest to all age groups and introduced a specialised section providing a selection of educational CD ROMs. The investment doubled the volume of book capacity at the library.

Children's books

In April the British High Commission and Agenda bookstores together donated Lm300 worth of children's books to the Missionaries of Charity (the Sisters of Mother Theresa) to be used at the *Dopo Scuola* centre which they run in Cospicua.

This centre helps underprivileged children of all ages who live in the vicinity of Cospicua, with their studies and homework for two hours in the afternoons.

Eurocentre at Junior College

Dr Mark Sammut, honorary consul for Latvia, presented the newly-set up Eurocentre at the Junior College with books on the history, art, architecture and folklore of Latvia on behalf of the Ambassador of Latvia in Rome. The embassies of the 24 EU countries have been solicited to donate books.

University Library

In April books on Engineering and the rapidly expanding area of information technology were generously presented to the University Library by the Engineers' Centre bookshop representative Mr. J. Borg.

In April the University of Malta Library received a bequest by Mrs. E. Shaw of a collection of books belonging to her late husband Dr. David Henry Shaw, covering aspects of English history, literature and linguistics.

Antoinette Zarb of Valletta, on behalf of her sisters presented the University Library with a selection of papers belonging to her maternal grandfather, the late poet and lexicographer Vincenzo Mifsud Bonnici (1871-1929).

Mifsud Bonnici was a prolific writer, some of whose works have appeared in *Il-Habib*, *Il-Kotba tal-Moghdiija taz-Zmien*, and *Il-Malti*. The manuscripts include a draft *Dammet il-Kliem u l-Ghajdut Malti*, a collection of verse, and *Nisel il-Kliem*.

In July, book presentations to the University Library were made by the French Ambassador Patrick Chrismant, Professor Alain Blondy, and Dr Franco Pellegrini. The French Embassy's donated texts in French literature and art, while Professor Blondy presented material bearing on French history as well as a 1926 copy of Jean Vignard's novel *La Maison du Maltais*. Dr Pellegrini donated an interesting range of French literary texts belonging to his late father, novelist, poet and playwright Dr Vincenzo Maria Pellegrini.

In the summer, Mr. Eman Pulis from the Malta University Sports Club presented the University Library with a number of books covering physical education, economics, and history.

Paulo Freire Institute

In August British High Commissioner Vincent Fean and Pierre Portelli, representing Agenda Bookstores, jointly donated Lm300 worth of children's books to Fr Edgar Busuttill SJ, executive director of the Paulo Freire Institute. The books will be used for the institute's literacy sessions for children and will form part of its library.

A number of children attend weekly literacy sessions. The institute also organises courses for a number of unemployed adult participants.

NEWS ON ARCHIVES

The Banca Giuratale

Following a 15-year struggle to get permanent staff for the Banca Giuratale, Mr Noel d'Anastas (ex-METCO) and Mr Mario Camilleri (ex-Ship Building) were deployed with the archives. This made it possible to open the reading room at Mdina and the National Memory Project on a daily basis. The records in Mdina are Law Court records for the period 1530 to 1899.

Filming of documentary

A Turkish television crew recently filmed a number of documents from the National Archives related to a group of Turkish deportees who were in Malta during the First World War. The aim was to put together the history of this event in video form.

Donations

In the absence of a specific vote for the National Archives, all books acquired come from voluntary donations and bequests. During April and May the late Hella Jean Bartolo Winston donated to the archives more than 300 books that will soon be available to the public as the Hella Jean Bartolo bequest. Another book donation came from the *Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti*.

Mr Salvinu Lombardi donated a series of books written by Emilio Lombardi.

Dr. Theresa Vann, Curator of the Hill Monastic Library, donated copies of microfilm reels of seven volumes from the Magnia Curia Castellena

Old medical records set on fire

The Times, 26 July 2004

The Friends of the National Archives have expressed relief that the authorities have promised to try and rescue what remains of thousands of hospital documents torched during a recent act of

vandalism on a building in Mtarfa. The shabby and dilapidated building, once forming part of the former Mtarfa Hospital, was set on fire and most of its contents - hospital records from the 1970s - reduced to ashes.

The building, constructed in 1924, was once used by the Health Department to store thousands of files and documents, furniture and linen, among others. Most of the items had been transferred from St Luke's Hospital in the mid-1970s. Although most of the documents were partially burnt, many are still legible. Since it is impossible to save most of the documents it was suggested that at least a record would be kept of the documents destroyed, a detailed report of which will be passed on to the FNA.

Notarial Archives

The Times, 30 August 2004

The notarial archives in St Christopher Street, Valletta are a glaring example of how this country treats its cultural treasures: abysmally. Some of the volumes have been nibbled by mice while others have been attacked by other pests including bookworm, not to mention the damage done by the water that penetrates the building when it rains. A considerable number of the volumes are held together with string and are merely covered loosely with brown paper. The state of conservation is terrible. The volumes are embedded with dirt.

Two balconies, one in St Christopher Street and the other in St Paul Street, serving the same room, have had the stone slabs forming the flooring removed because they were in a dangerous state. The slabs have not been replaced.

On the other hand, the archives in Mikiel Anton Vassalli Street are kept in ship-shape condition. Up till this day, notaries are legally bound

to provide the original of the contracts they compile to the archives office in Anton Vassalli Street and a copy to the archives office in St Christopher Street.

[At the latter archives the] reading room lacks the very basic needs for a researcher to work. There are no facilities to hook up lap top computers. The palazzo where the archives are kept is literally falling apart. The ground floor looks very much like one of the most maligned tenement houses in Valletta, with rising damp, flaking paint and total disorder. There is little or no security as regards who enters the building: visitors are not asked for a form of identity and no note is kept as to who makes use of the archives. There is no closed circuit television.

A plan to have a new building that would house under one roof the notarial archives and the archives at Santu Spiritu in Rabat has not been approved under the EU 2005 Transition Facility Programme. The plan will be submitted again under other EU financial assistance programmes.

Archives Bill reaches Parliament

On Monday 27th September, the Hon. Louis Galea presented a new Archives Bill for First Reading before Parliament. The Friends of the National Archives Committee did most of the ground work for this new legislation. The Bill still has to pass through the discussion phase and become law.

Archives Awareness Week 2004

11-17 October

Theme: Preserving Memory ... Promoting Knowledge

12 Oct-4 Nov:

Exhibition: Maritime Heritage in Maltese Archives

13 October: Education Day

15 October: Launch of audiovisual presentation - Political Personalities of Malta 1800-2004



Ref. ZJ

Introduction to reference work in the digital age / Joseph Janes. - Neal-Schuman, 2003. - xviii, 213 p. ISBN 1-55570-429-8

Ref. ZMJ1

Official Internet dictionary : a comprehensive reference for professionals / editor, Russ Bahorsky ; contributing editors, Jeffrey Graber, Steve Mason. - Govt. Institutes, 1998. - vi, 227 p. ISBN 0-86587-606-1

Ref. ZCQ

Information books for children / edited by Keith Barker. - 2nd ed. - Scolar P., 1995. - xiii, 269 p. ISBN 1-85928-072-2

Z716.3.D472 2002

Marketing concepts for libraries and information services / Eileen Elliott De Saez. - 2ed. - Facet Publishing, 2002. - xvci, 224 p. ISBN 1-85604-426-2

Z665.A32

Adapting marketing to libraries in a changing and world-wide environment / edited by Rejean Savard. - Saur, 2000. - 89 p. - (IFLA publications). ISBN 3-598-21811-7

CD971.C73

Archival appraisal : theory and practice / Barbara Craig. - Saur, 2004. - x, 224 p. ISBN 3-598-11538-5

Z695.F47

Subject analysis / Bobby Ferguson. - Libraries Unlimited, 1998. - xi, 135 p. ISBN 1-56308-645-X

Z679.E399

Libraries and learning resource centres / Brian Edwards with Biddy Fisher. - Architectural P., 2002. - xii, 227 p. 8 p. of plates. ISBN 0-7506-4605-5

Z674.75.I58M87

Basic Internet for busy librarians : a quick course for catching up / Laura K. Murray. - American Library Association, 1998. - xiv, 137 p. ISBN 0-8389-0725-3

Z675.P87R45

Reinvention of the public library for the 21st century / edited by William L. Whitesides. - Libraries Unlimited, 1998. - xxvi, 302 p. ISBN 1-56308-628-X

Z668.A44

E-learning and teaching in library and information services / Barbara Allan. - Facet Publishing, 2002. - xiv, 273 p. ISBN 1-85604-439-4

Z711.L559 A/V

The virtual reference librarian's librarian's handbook / Anne Grodzins Lipow. - Library Solutions P., 2003. - xxiii, 199 p. + 1 computer laser optical disk. ISBN 1-55570-445-X

Z711.R672

Conducting the reference interview : a how-to-do-it manual for librarians / Catherine Sheldrick Ross, Kirsti Nilsen, Patricia Dewdney. - Facet Publishing, 2002. xiii, 242 p. ISBN 1-85604-468-8

Library Juice (ISSN 1544-9378) is a biweekly online magazine for librarians, library and information science students, and other interested people. It includes discussions, commentary, announcements, humor, web links and news affecting the library world. Much of the material is about librarianship as the servant and protector of the public sphere; intellectual freedom and social responsibility as central to the profession. Library Juice is not a discussion list but a digest of material from a variety of sources.

Is this a great time to be a librarian, or what? A discussion on PUBLIB.

Link:http://libr.org/Juice/issues/vol3/LJ_3.16.sup.html

The Framework of Guidance for Building Good Digital Collections provides a set of high-level principles as a framework for identifying, organizing, and applying existing knowledge and resources to collections of digital resources. It was originally prepared under the auspices of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and released in 2001. However, since its release it has received wide-recognition in the library and museum communities and the endorsement of the Digital Library Federation.

Link:<http://www.niso.org/framework/forumframework.html>

Inspiring Learning for All, a web-based resource - www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk - was launched last March by the UK Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). This is a pioneering programme central to the development of modern education by enabling museums, libraries and archives to review and develop learning activities based on a framework of best practice and measure their impact on learners.

This online resource was developed over three years, in consultation with over 500 professionals. The University of Leicester led the important research project, which has enabled *Inspiring Learning for All* to develop a methodology which allows museums, libraries and archives to identify and quantify learning described in users' feedback. A central message of *Inspiring Learning for All* is that to deliver effective learning organisations must address social inclusion.

Academic research on the Internet: options for scholars and libraries / edited by Helen Laurence and William Miller. New York, NY: Haworth Information Press, 2000. ISBN: 0-7890-1177-8.

Starting off from the premise that it is unreliable and potentially dangerous to assume that academic research needs can be wholly satisfied via the World Wide Web, this book seeks to assess the true worth of the Internet for scholarly research. Helen Laurence's introduction points to the Web's greatest problem, which is its lack of organisation in the form of a standardised classification system. Add to that the fact that even the most comprehensive search engine only covers about 16% of Web pages, an it becomes obvious that retrieving quality information from the Internet is not the simple affair received wisdom would have us believe.

In the first paper in this collection, Carol Tenopir addresses the question of the value of free versus fee-based resources. There is much valuable material which is freely available, chiefly disseminated by government agencies, professional societies, medical support groups, museums and libraries. However classification and organisation, systematic archiving, overall quality, technical support, online help for users and efficiency of service remain overwhelmingly the province of fee-based services. Tenopir comes to the conclusion that complete information services will need to include both Internet and fee-based online services, as well as print resources.

The rest of the papers in this collection offer a detailed guide to Internet resources in various subject areas, effectively acting as an annotated directory to the best subject-specific Internet sites and resources, both free and fee-based. Although the book was published in 2000, the overwhelming majority of the resources reviewed are still in existence and with the same URL. This is an invaluable resource both for individuals researching a particular subject are and as a selection tool for libraries setting up or augmenting their online services.

Mid-September-December; February-May
Koperattiva Zjarat Kulturali Plus

Sunday morning half-day cultural guided
 tours from 9.00 am onwards
 Bookings: Tel. 21236963/7
 Mon-Sat 7.00 -11.00 am

Every 2nd Thursday of the month
Talks by Din l-Art Helwa
 Further details in the press.

mid-October-November

Exhibition of Maltese Medicinal Herbs
 University of Malta Library in collaboration
 with the Lija Local Council and the
 Department of Maltese
 University of Malta Library

11-14 November

Malta Bookfair
 Tradefair grounds, Naxxar
 Further details in the press.

19-28 November

Salesians Bargain Bookfair
 St. Patrick's School, Sliema
 9am-12.30pm; 2pm-8pm
 Info: Tel: 21337572 or 7949 2555

25 November

An Introduction to Records Management
 1-day course organised by DMI(Malta) Ltd.
 Malta Enterprise Building, San Gwann
 Fee: LM 75
 Info: Tel: 21332090/1
 email: sales@dmimalta.com

end November

Talk by Dr. William Jackson
American guest librarian
 Further details to be announced later.

December

Doulos bookshop visits Malta
 Further details in the press.

30 November-2 December 2004

Online Information
 Olympia Grand Hall, London
 Conference and exhibition
<http://www.online-information.co.uk/o104/index.html>

CILIP - Chartered Institute of Library and
 Information Professionals
 Check training workshops in 2004 and 2005
<http://www.cilip.org.uk/training/training/directory/>
<http://www.cilip.org.uk/training/training/2005calendar.htm>

ASLIB - The Association for Information
 Management, UK
 Check courses in 2004
<http://www.aslib.co.uk/training/calendar/calendar.html>

14-18 August, 2005

71st IFLA General Conference
 Oslo, Norway
<http://ifla.org/IV/ifla71/index.htm>

**LIBRARIES AND
 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Five years have almost passed since the
Ghaqda Bibljotekarji conference 'Libraries
 and National Development' held on the
 11th December 1999.

Members are invited to leaf through the
 conference proceedings published in
 2000. The concerns raised are still more
 than valid. Equally so are the conference
 resolutions all of which except one have
 not yet been taken in hand.

Five years on we resound our appeal to
 the Minister of Education to take urgent
 action on several longstanding library
 issues.