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IAALD: The First Fifty Years

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IAALD: The First Fifty Years

Notes/Citation Information

This article is a revision of "IAALD: Forty Years of Progress" by Harald Haendler and Antoinette Paris Powell.



IAALD: *The First Fifty Years*

Antoinette Paris Greider

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ABOUT 60 DELEGATES from thirteen different countries attended the birth [of IAALD], at Ghent, of the new organization whose purpose is to promote, internationally and nationally, agricultural library science and documentation, as well as professional interests of agricultural librarians and documentalists, the term 'agriculture' being interpreted in the widest sense, so as to include forestry, agricultural engineering, veterinary sciences, fisheries, food and nutrition, agricultural and food industries, etc. (*Quarterly Bulletin of IAALD*, 2 (1):1.)

The Early Years

In the chaos after the Second World War—especially in Europe and naturally in Germany—several scientists felt that no progress could be achieved without an intensive and efficient exchange of scientific information. The political situation during that period had isolated the German scientists from their colleagues in other countries. As often in history, when the need is great,



Former President Joe Howard, Acting President Pam André and Incoming President Peter Ballantyne (l-r) cut IAALD's 50th Anniversary Cake.

ways will be found to overcome the obstacles and pioneers appear to show the way out of the tribulation.

Among the foresighted scientists in the field of agriculture, was one man who had not only a vision of what should be done, but also the energy to correct the situation against all obstacles. This was Walther Gleisberg, a German agricultural professor.

Mr. Gleisberg wrote several memoranda in order to convince ministries, administrations, and others to realize his ideas of promoting in-

formation transfer and exchange. He sought contacts with colleagues in other countries in order to establish an international organization for agricultural information. Through this process he found a staunch ally in his colleague, a former German, the Austrian agricultural professor Sigmund von Frauendorfer.

S. von Frauendorfer was born in Munich (Germany). He studied philosophy in Munich, later agricultural sciences in Hohenheim (near Stuttgart, Germany) where he earned his doctorate degree and worked as an assistant professor. He then went to the United States to study library science at the University of Illinois, where he acquired his master of arts. With this broad background von Frauendorfer was appointed as director of the library of the International Institute for Agriculture in Rome, today the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Library, a position he held for sixteen years. After the war he was appointed as professor for agricultural history in Vienna, Austria, and

What Is a Documentalist?

The term documentalist was coined by Samuel C. Bradford, mathematician and librarian at the Science Museum in London, in 1948 (originator of Bradford's Law of Scattering). Bradford described documentation as "the process of collecting and subject classifying all the records of new observations and making them available, at need, to the discoverer or the inventor" and the documentalist "is enabled to put before the creative specialist the existing literature, bearing on the subject of his investigation, in order that he may be saved from the dissipation of his genius upon work already done."

—Oxford English Dictionary Online

worked there as a librarian. With this background he was an excellent champion of Gleisberg's ideas.

In spite of major difficulties, Gleisberg succeeded in preparing an international meeting at Frankfurt (Germany) in March 1955. Beside W. Gleisberg and S. von Frauendorfer, the meeting was attended by Th.P. Loosjes, the librarian of the agricultural collection in Wageningen (Netherlands). Loosjes was another effective promoter of scientific information, who later wrote one of the first handbooks on documentation and played a key role in the further development of the newly established association. Other participants in the meeting were representatives of the United Kingdom, France, Sweden, Norway, and the FAO. Gleisberg, who was the host, refused to chair the meeting, "by historical reasons" as he said. Thus Dr. von Frauendorfer was elected as chairman. The language of the meeting was German.

The meeting decided to form a new organization, which not only would be a revival of the former International Committee of Agricultural Librarians but would include documentation

as a new practice for efficient information provision. The new organization would be named "International Association of Agricultural Librarians and Documentalists" (IAALD). The participants agreed to look for links to other international organizations like FAO, International Federation of Libraries Association (IFLA), and United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In addition, D. Gleisberg was asked to prepare a constitution for IAALD. The group then outlined a program for the foundation meeting of IAALD, which took place in the same year.

The foundation meeting was held at Ghent, Belgium in September 1955. About sixty delegates from thirteen countries attended the meeting. IAALD was born as a "new organization", whose purpose is to promote, internationally and nationally, agricultural library science and documentation, as well as professional interests of agricultural librarians and documentalists". The constitution, formulated by W. Gleisberg, was approved unanimously with some slight modifications. The meeting

declared itself as the first General Assembly and included the election of the members of the Executive Committee. Elected were F.E. Mohrhardt (USA) as president, S. von Frauendorfer (Austria) as vice-president, Th.P. Loosjes (Netherlands) as treasurer, H. Jenssen (FAO) as secretary, and D.H. Boalch (United Kingdom), L. Frykholm (Sweden), G. Genie (Belgium), W. Gleisberg (Germany), D. Kervegant (France) E. Zink (Brazil) as members. The General Assembly then discussed a working program for the new organization. Several working Committees were created, among them was a committee charged with preparing a periodical bulletin of the association, which evolved into the *Quarterly Bulletin*. The secretariat of IAALD was located at the FAO Library in Rome for the first five years.

One year later it was obvious that "IAALD has made considerable progress—more progress, at any rate, than the pessimists predicted". The membership had grown to 180 members from 35 countries. Well over one thousand copies of the first issue of the *Quarterly Bulletin* were sent out

IAALD Facts

- IAALD membership no. 1 was issued to Rothamsted Experimental Station in Harependen, Herts, England.
- Membership fees for IAALD in 1956 were 10SF (US\$2.50) for individual members, 50SF (US\$12.50) for Institutions.
- The *World Directory of Agricultural Libraries and Documentation Centres* published in 1960 contained 2531 libraries from 100 countries and sold for US\$8.00 with a 25% trade discount and US\$2.50 to individual IAALD members.
- *Agricultural Information Resource Centers: A World Directory 1990* contained 3971 centers from 250 countries and sold for US\$120.
- *Agricultural Information Resource Centers: A World Directory, 1995* contained 4892 centers from 293 countries and sold for US\$140.
- *Agricultural Information Resource Centers: A World Directory, 2000* contained 3935 centers from 217 countries and was sold in print, CD, and online versions.
- In addition to the *Quarterly Bulletin*, *IAALD News*, and *IAALD Lettre d'Information*, IAALD has published or supported 10 major publications.
- IAALD has organized 9 World Congresses and 12 regional meetings, symposiums or workshops, an average of an event every 1.9 years.
- IAALD has held meetings on 6 of the seven continents.
- IAALD has given ten even honorary memberships: D. Kervegant (France); D.H. Boalch (UK); Th.P. Loosjes (Netherlands); E.J. Mann (UK); F.C. Hirst (UK); M.T. Martinelli (Italy); H. Haendler (Germany); J.H. Howard (USA); J. van der Burg (Netherlands); P. André (USA).

to agricultural and kindred libraries throughout the world. The first meeting of the Executive Committee took place in Munich (Germany), where, among other things, the performance of the *Quarterly Bulletin* was discussed, and plans were formulated for the preparation of a "World Directory of Agricultural Libraries and Documentation Centres".

The IAALD World Congress and the General Assembly of 1960, the first one after its foundation session, was held in Hohenheim (near Stuttgart, Germany). The Assembly was chaired by IAALD's vice-president S. von Frauendorfer. At the election of the new Executive Committee, F.E. Mohrhardt and S. von Frauendorfer were confirmed as president and vice-president respectively, and Th. P. Loosjes as treasurer. D. Kervegant (France) was elected as second vice-president, D.H. Boalch (U.K.) as editor, and H.D. Griesau (Germany) as secretary, so the secretariat of IAALD was located in Germany for the next five years. The new secretary, Dr. Griesau was active in continuing Gleisberg's ideas for promoting the German agricultural documentation network and later worked as state secretary in the German Federal Ministry of Agriculture.

Five years later, 1965, IAALD found its way to another continent and the World Congress took place in Washington D.C. The General Assembly re-elected F.E. Mohrhardt as president, elected Th.P. Loosjes as vice-president, and H.C. Hirst as secretary and treasurer.

IAALD continued to thrive and by 1960 the organization had 400 members from 53 countries. Working committees were established to further the objectives of the organization. These committees were the *Quarterly Bulletin*; agricultural bibliographies; classification; exchange of materials; professional and educational problems. The early years were not without their difficulties. There were problems with the secretariat and the inequitable distribution of the burden of work. Getting

the working committees going was a slow process and in a history published in 1960, the author was concerned that members did not make full use of the facilities provided to them. (*Quarterly Bulletin of IAALD*, 5(2):69) In spite of this complaint there was networking among early members that included exchanging ideas to solve problems. This was and continues to be one of the great strengths of IAALD.

Activities

The chief lines of work for the organization were outlined as follows:

- Production of a bulletin designed to disseminate information and to maintain contact between members in the intervals between general assemblies.
- Work on agricultural bibliography.
- Study of classification problems.
- Intensify the exchange of publications.
- Examination of professional and educational questions.

These lines of work continue in some fashion 50 years later. The first *Quarterly Bulletin* was issued in January 1956, four months after the founding of the organization. The editorial office was set up in the Library of the Rothamsted Experiment Station and the publication was edited by D.H. Boalch, who held the position for 15 years. The *Quarterly Bulletin* is now in its 50th volume and continues to be a priority for IAALD. The bulletin continues to disseminate information and offers opportunities for agricultural information professionals to publish articles. It continues to be the major contact by IAALD with members between world congresses and for some members it is the only communication they have with the organization.

Publications

In addition to the *Quarterly Bulletin*, IAALD has had an aggressive publication program. Its accomplishments in the publishing arena are

Presidents of IAALD

- 2005–**
Peter Ballantyne (The Netherlands)
- 2003–2005**
Pamela Q.J. André (USA)
- 1995–2003**
Jan van der Burg (The Netherlands)
- 1990–95**
Joseph Howard (USA)
- 1985–90**
Ernest Mann (UK)
- 1980–85**
Ernest Mann (UK)
- 1975–80**
Philippe Aries (France)
- 1970–75**
Philippe Aries (France)
- 1968–70**
Th.P. Joosjes (The Netherlands)
- 1965–68**
Foster Mohrhardt (USA)
- 1960–65**
Foster Mohrhardt (USA)
- 1955–60**
Foster Mohrhardt (USA)

Editors of IAALD

- 2000–**
Debra L. Currie (USA)
- 1990–2000**
Antoinette Paris Greider (USA)
- 1985–1990**
Susan Harris (Mexico; USA)
- 1980–85**
Valerie Howe (UK)
- 1980**
Richard A. Farley (USA)
- 1977–80**
Richard A. Farley (USA)
- 1975–77**
Govert de Bruyn (The Netherlands)
- 1970–75**
Govert de Bruyn (The Netherlands)
- 1965–70**
D.H. Boalch (UK)
- 1960–65**
D.H. Boalch (UK)
- 1956–60**
D.H. Boalch (UK)

many. A major accomplishment of the organization has been the publication of three editions of the *World Directory*. The first *World Directory* was a successor to a similar publication produced by the International Institute of Agriculture in Rome and was supported with a grant from the John Deere Foundation. The *World Directory of Agricultural Libraries and Documentation Centres* was published in 1960 with a revision of the edition planned. This revision did not come about and the material collected was turned over to the European Community and was incorporated into the EC's *Directory of Agricultural Information Systems*. Twenty-five years later, at the VIIth World Congress in Ottawa, a working group formed to produce another world directory. This working group, consisting of Carol Boast (now Robertson) of the University of Illinois, Rita Fisher of Washington State University, John Beecher of North Dakota State University, Julia Peterson of Carghill Information Center, and Jane Johnson of the University of Illinois, began the arduous task of pulling this work together. At the VIIIth World Congress in



Rita Fisher (left) and Carol Boast (now Robertson) present IAALD President Joseph Howard with a check for US\$40,000 from the sale of the *Agricultural Libraries and Resource Centers: A World Directory, 1995*.

Budapest in 1990, *Agricultural Information Resource Centers: A World Directory 1990* was presented to Ernest Mann, President of IAALD. This directory was supported by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), Carghill, and the University of Illinois and all the profits from the sale were to be used for education and training. In 1995, at the IXth World Congress in

Melbourne, Australia, Rita Fisher and Carol Robertson presented Joe Howard, President of IAALD with a check for US\$40,000 to be used for IAALD Education and Training activities. A second edition of the *World Directory*, compiled by Jane Johnson, Rita Fisher, and Carol Robertson was published in late summer of 1995 and a third edition was published in 2000.

The funds from the *World Directory* were not the only support of education and training given by IAALD. In 1967, IAALD published *Primer for Agricultural Libraries* by Dorothy Parker, F.C. Hirst, Th.P. Loosjes and G. Koster. This *Primer* laid out the basics in establishing and maintaining an agricultural collection and was made available to developing countries. The *Primer* sold well and a second edition edited by Olga Lendvay was published in 1980. IAALD continues its publication of useful guides with the initiation of a Training Aid Series in 1995.

In keeping with one of its chief lines of work, IAALD has been concerned with agricultural bibliography. To further this end, *Current Agricultural Serials* was published over the period of 1965–1967. This major work contained over 12,000 serials relating to Agriculture (excluding forestry and fisheries) and

IAALD Publications

- IAALD Blog: <http://iaald.blogspot.com/>
- IAALD Website: www.iaald.org
- *Agricultural Information Resource Centers: A World Directory 2000*, 2000.
- *Agricultural Information Resource Centers: A World Directory 1995*, 1995.
- *IAALD Training Aid*, 1995–
- *IAALD Lettre d'Information*, 1994–
- *Agricultural Information Resource Centers: A World Directory 1990*, 1990.
- *Primer for Agricultural Libraries*, second edition, 1980
- *IAALD News*, 1980–
- *Primer for Agricultural Libraries*, first edition, 1967
- *Current Agricultural Serials*, 1965–67
- *World Directory of Agricultural Libraries and Documentation Centres*, 1960.
- Sample issue of *World Agricultural Economics Abstracts* (now *World Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology Abstracts*), 1959–
- *Quarterly Bulletin of IAALD*, 1956–

was a standard reference tool in agricultural libraries worldwide. IAALD also played a large role in *Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology Abstracts*. This CABI publication has its roots in *World Agricultural Economics Abstracts* which was published under the auspices of IAALD and the general editorship of Sigmund von Frauendorfer. The first volume was issued in 1959 with funding from IAALD and the Council of Economic and Social Affairs of New York. This launched the publication that is still thriving today.

The study of classification has also been a focus of IAALD over the years. In the early days IAALD was involved in the work of the Universal Decimal System, and during the 1990s IAALD was an active participant in the development of the Universal Agricultural Thesaurus.

Education and Training

Education and Training continues to be a focus for IAALD and has been since the beginning. The themes of the various world congresses reflect the professional issues of concern of the time. Various regional congresses addressed a specific issue and were held in different parts of the world and the *Primer for Agricultural Libraries* was designed to provide training in agricultural librarianship. In 1965, IAALD established a scholarship for travel to agricultural libraries. The scholarship was in the amount of US\$500 and was offered biennially beginning with 1965. The scholarship was to be used for traveling expenses in studying agricultural libraries in other countries and was to serve as a supplement for travel. A report on the journey was to be published in the *Quarterly Bulletin*. In 1990, with funding from the sale of the world directory, IAALD formed an Education and Training Committee to make recommendations on how to spend the money. The Committee took some time to become established but in 1994, under the leadership of Marie-Josée Jehl of the

IAALD World Congresses

- *XIIIth World Congress*, 2010, Montpellier, France.
- *XIIth World Congress*, 2008, Tokyo, Japan.
- *XIth World Congress* on the Globalization of Information: Agriculture at the Crossroads May 15–19, 2005, Lexington, Kentucky (USA).
- *Xth World Congress* on Challenges Facing the Agricultural Information Community in the Third Millennium, 24–28 January, 2000, Dakar, Senegal.
- *IXth World Congress* on Communicating Agricultural Information in Remote Places, 23–26 January 1995, Melbourne, Australia.
- *VIIIth World Congress* on Information and the End User, 28–31 May 1990, Budapest, Hungary.
- *VIIth World Congress* on Information for Food, 2–6 June 1985, Ottawa, Canada.
- *VIth World Congress* on Agricultural Information to Hasten Development, 3–7 March 1980, Manila, The Philippines.
- *Vth World Congress* on Information Networks, 14–18 April 1975, Mexico City, Mexico.
- *IVth World Congress* on Acquisition and Exploitation of Information in the Fields of Food and Agriculture, 20–25 April 1970, Paris, France.
- *IIIrd World Congress* on Worldwide Cooperation, 3–9 October 1965, Washington D.C., USA.
- *IInd World Congress*, Working Conference on International Cooperation in Agricultural Librarianship and Documentation, 25–28 April 1960, Stuttgart, Germany.
- *Ist World Congress* on Founding of IAALD, 1955, Ghent, Belgium.

Netherlands, an IAALD workshop on networking was held in Sri Lanka. A complete list of the workshops and programs can be found on page 20. In 1995, the first IAALD training aid was published to provide information on various topics. The first aid dealt with selecting library automation software and the second aid gave tips on indexing.

Congresses and Meetings

The IAALD World Congresses have been held all over the world and dealt with papers on various topics. The first world congress was held in Ghent, Belgium and concentrated on the organization and business of IAALD. The second world congress was held in Germany and focused on international cooperation. The third world congress was held in the USA

and once again focused on cooperation worldwide. For the fourth world congress, IAALD moved to France and concentrated on acquisition of information. In 1975, IAALD moved back to North America and held its fifth world congress in Mexico City and the programming dealt with information networks. The sixth world congress was held in the Philippines and the theme was agricultural information to hasten development. Once again IAALD moved back to North America for the seventh world congress, this time to Ottawa, Canada. Information and food was the theme of that congress. The VIIIth world congress moved to Eastern Europe and delegates assembled in Budapest, Hungary to discuss information and the end user. IAALD then moved to the southern hemisphere for the IXth world congress

IAALD Programs

- XIII Reunion Interamericana de Bibliotecarios y Documentalistas Agrícolas (RIBDA), 22–25 September 2003, Antigua, Guatemala.
- Fourth Conference of EFITA (European Federation of Information Technology in Agriculture, Food and the Environment), 5–9 July 2003, Budapest/Debrecen, Hungary.
- 9th Central and Eastern European Roundtable Meeting on “Food Safety and Quality in Transition Countries”, 24–26 March 2003, Nitra, Slovak Republic.
- International Conference on “The Development of Agricultural Information Management, Technology and Markets in the 21st Century”, 3–6 November 2001, Beijing, China.
- 4th AgroWeb CEE Workshop, 24–26 September 2001, Zagreb, Croatia.
- 8th Central and Eastern European/Central Asia International Conference and Roundtable, 21–26 May 2001, Kiev, Ukraine.
- Workshop on Agricultural Information Management and Technology, 9–11 October 2000, Hangzhou, China.
- 3rd AgroWeb Central and Eastern Europe Workshop, 7–8 June 2000, Rome, Italy.
- 7th US/Central and Eastern European Agricultural Library Roundtable on “Stabilization and Development of Human Resources in Agricultural Information Systems in Central And Eastern European Territory”, 23–28 May 1999, Moscow, Russia.
- 2nd AgroWeb Central and Eastern Europe Workshop, 12–15 April 1999, Godollo, Hungary.
- IAALD Regional Conference on The Role of Information in Decision Making in Agricultural Research and Practice, 2–5 June 1998, Freising, Germany.
- International Workshop on Developing Practical Skills in Internet and CD-ROM Technology, 20–24 April 1998, Nitra, Slovak Republic.
- Workshop on Agricultural Information Management, 18–20 October 1998, Beijing, China.
- Joint USAIN/IAALD Conference on “The Information Frontier, Linking People and Resources in a Changing World”, 3–6 April 1997, Tucson, Arizona, USA.
- 6th Central and Eastern European Roundtable, 6–7 April 1997, Tucson, Arizona, USA.
- IAALD Central and Eastern European Chapter established, Michal Demes was elected President, 29 November 1996, Nitra, Slovak Republic.
- Workshop on Accessing Research and Business-related Agricultural Information, September 1996, Santiago, Chile.
- Training Workshop on Information Management with Special Emphasis on Provision of Computer-based Information Services, 15–19, April 1996, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.
- *Agricultural Information Resource Centers: A World Directory, 1995* compiled by Jane S. Johnson, C. Rita Fisher and Carol (Boast) Robertson and published jointly with CTA, 1995.
- First IAALD training aid published with *Quarterly Bulletin*, volume 39, number 4, 1995.
- Melbourne, Australia. 9th World Congress on Communicating Agricultural Information in Remote Places, Jan van der Burg (The Netherlands) elected President of IAALD. IAALD World Directory Committee presents IAALD with a check for US\$40,000 for the Training and Education Fund, 23–26 January 1995, Melbourne, Australia.
- IAALD Training Workshop to Support the Agricultural Information Network in Sri Lanka, 25–20 December 1994, Sri Lanka.
- European Regional Congress (Symposium) on New Information Technologies in Agriculture, 10–12 November 1993, Bonn, Germany.
- IAALD/Francophone Roundtable, 26–30 July 1993, Rabat, Morocco.
- IAALD/Francophone Roundtable on Information Transfer in a World Economy, 20–24 January 1992, Bordeaux, France.
- North American Regional Congress (Symposium) on Advances in Information Technology, 16–20 September 1991, Beltsville, Maryland, USA.
- Asian Regional Congress on Strategic Issues in Agricultural Information, 21–24 November 1988, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- African Regional Congress on Education and Training for Agricultural Library and Information Work, 7–12 March 1983, Nairobi, Kenya.
- European Regional Congress on Modern Systems and Networks on the Reliability of Information, 17–22 April 1978, Hamburg, Germany.
- European Regional Congress on Progress and Prospects in Agricultural Librarianship, 14–18 May 1973, Wageningen, The Netherlands.
- “International Day in Cooperation with IAALD” at the GBDL Congress, 9 June 1972, Berlin, Germany.
- European Regional Congress on Information Services in Great Britain, 3–9 July 1963, Wye, England.
- OEEC/IAALD Seminar on Agricultural Documentation, 20–23 April 1960, Stuttgart-Hohenheim, Germany.

and discussed communication of information at a distance. This congress was held in Melbourne, Australia. The Xth World Congress was held in Dakar, Senegal with the theme of the information challenges of the third millennium and the XIth congress was held in Lexington, Kentucky USA and celebrated IAALD's fiftieth year by focusing one of the major challenges of the third millennium, the globalization of agricultural information.

In between world congresses IAALD has held various regional conferences. The first regional conference was held in Stuttgart-Hohenheim Germany and was a joint seminar with the Organization of European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) on agricultural documentation. In 1963, IAALD organized a regional congress in, Wye, England and concentrated on the information services in Great Britain. In 1972, IAALD joined forces with the Gesellschaft für Bibliothekswesen und Dokumentation des Landbaues (GBDL) in Germany to do an "International Day in Cooperation with IAALD" at the GBDL Congress in June. In 1973, a European regional congress on progress and prospects was organized in the Netherlands and another European Regional Congress on modern systems and networks was held in Hamburg, Germany in 1978. In 1983, IAALD moved to the continent of Africa for an African regional conference on education and training in Nairobi, Kenya and then in 1988 to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for an Asian regional congress on Strategic issues. In 1991, IAALD turned its attention to technology and its associated problems and organized the IAALD Technology Symposiums. The first was held in Washington, DC, USA in 1991 and then moved to Bonn, Germany in 1993. In 1992 an IAALD/Francophone Roundtable was held in Bordeaux, France and dealt with information transfer. During the past decade IAALD was a sponsor of four Central/Eastern European Roundtable meetings; three AgroWeb work-

shops; and 8 additional workshops on various topics in Tanzania, Chile, China, and the Slovak Republic.

The proceedings from many of the various conferences have been published in some form. The papers of the sixth world congress were published by the library of the University of the Philippines, those of the seventh world congress were published by the International Development Research Center on microfiche. The proceedings from the fifth, eighth and ninth world congresses were published by IAALD and the latter two were published as an issue of the *Quarterly Bulletin* to insure all members had access to information from the world congress. Some of the proceedings from the regional meetings were published as well. The papers from the African Regional Conference were published by the organizing group and selected papers from the Asian Regional Congress were published in the *Quarterly Bulletin*. All of the papers from the technology symposiums were published in the *Quarterly Bulletin* with the financial help of CTA in the Netherlands and ZADI in Germany. The trend continues even in this age of electronics with IAALD publishing partial papers of the conferences.

Challenges

That IAALD has survived for 50 years is a testament to those members who believe in the organization. As IAALD has no paid secretariat or publications staff, most of the work has been done voluntarily. The accomplishments and activities of the organization have been phenomenal but not without its struggles. From the early days, IAALD has struggled to build its membership base but keep its membership rates affordable. The membership grew steadily for a number of years but then leveled off between 500 and 600 members and then began to decline during the last decade. Getting member input has been a problem and even in the early days, IAALD officers felt that members

were not taking advantage of what they offered. IAALD has sought to be a multi-language organization but in 1990, realizing the cost of multiple languages, made English the official language. This was not done without dissension in the ranks and while English is the official language of the organization, IAALD continues to accommodate other languages. In 1992, the IAALD Francophone Roundtable was organized for the French speaking members of IAALD. The summaries of this conference were published in the *Quarterly Bulletin* in French. Abstracts to articles in the *Quarterly Bulletin* continue to be published in French and Spanish and articles in these languages are also reviewed for publication in the *Quarterly Bulletin*. In 1994, the IAALD *Lettre d'Information*, a newsletter of the IAALD Francophone group began publication.

At the VIIIth World Congress, IAALD underwent a name change. The membership voted to change the name of the organization from the International Association of Agricultural Librarians and Documentalists and became the International Association of Agricultural Information Specialists. This was done to reflect the changing profession and to attract related professions. The acronym IAALD was retained. The members also ratified a new constitution. The present constitution was designed to reflect the changes in the profession but still continues much of the work done by Dr. Gleisburg.

In 1995, IAALD began to chart its course by developing "a business plan". At a planning session in Washington, D.C. in June 1995, a strategic plan was laid out for the organization for the next five years. This plan was reviewed and updated in 2000 for 2000–2005. The plan was ambitious but it was the first time that IAALD had a clear direction of what the organization should be doing.

The Past Decade

IAALD's business plan had four main areas: promote the agricultural

information profession; support professional activities; foster collaboration, and provide for information exchange. Even though the last ten years has seen a decline in members and an unanticipated change in leadership, IAALD has held the course and advanced in all areas of this plan.

The last ten years have been turbulent ones for IAALD. Membership in the organization has steadily declined and there has been a “graying” of the membership as individual members tend to be members more established in the profession. IAALD has been successful in recruiting members for developing countries so while the membership is smaller, it is much more diverse than it was even 10 years ago. The continuity in leadership in the organization was disrupted when long time IAALD EC member, Jan van der Burg had to resign as president and the IAALD the leadership passed to Pamela André, who had recently retired from her position as Director of the National Agriculture Library. This disruption caused a minor set back but IAALD was soon on track under the able leadership of Pamela André and IAALD Secretary/Treasurer, Margot Bellamy.

IAALD began looking for a new organization model during the last ten years. The organization was taken to the local level and IAALD chapters were formed in Central and Eastern/Europe (1996) and China (1999). IAALD also began forming partnerships and alliances with formal affiliations by renewing its membership with the International Federation of Libraries Association (IFLA) and became a founding member of the International Network for Information Technology in Agriculture (INFITA) in 2003. During these years IAALD also sponsored various activities including supporting conferences such as the Fourth International Conference of Asian Federation of Information Technology in Agriculture (AFITA) and the Second World Congress of Computers in Agriculture and Natural Resources in 2004. IAALD



IAALD Conference Scholarship Awardees included (left to right) in front: Narisi Mubangzi (Uganda funded by DFID Crop Protection Program UK), Shuchun Pan (China funded by IAALD), Rosaline Njike (Cameroon funded by CTA), Margaret Sraku-Lartey (Ghana funded by CTA), Mila Ramos (Philippines funded by IAALD), Conference Chair Toni Greider, H. V. Mote (India funded by IAALD); in back: Joseph Kiplang'at (Kenya funded by CTA), Eva Wamala (Uganda funded by CTA) Paul Mwanzilo (Kenya funded by CTA), Annette Smith (Jamaica funded by CTA), Clement Entsua-Mensah (Ghana funded by CTA), Vera Kroftova (Czech Republic funded by IAALD), Osvaldo Tuya (Argentina funded by IAALD), Widharto (Indonesia funded by IAALD). Missing: Chinnakalappagari Sugunavathy (India funded by IAALD).

also became a member of the Agricultural Networked Information Center (AgNIC) and formed closer ties with the Japanese Association of Agricultural Librarians and Documentalists (JAALD) by having a named official liaison to the IAALD Executive Committee.

IAALD continued to promote the agricultural information profession and support professional activities through scholarships and workshops. During the last decade 10 training sessions or workshops were held in 9 countries and scholarships to both World Congresses were given to deserving professionals. IAALD formed a partnership with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the US National Agricultural Library and managed to provide the resources to bring 14 librarians from developing countries around the world to the XIth Congress in 2005.

To stop the decline in memberships, IAALD began an aggressive membership campaign in the latter part of the decade. Membership

booths were staffed at the United States Agricultural Information Network (USAIN) Conferences and at the AFITA conference. New membership rates were introduced allowing members to pay for multiyear memberships at a reduced rate. An e-mail membership survey was done in 2004 and was used as the basis for the 2005–2010 strategic initiatives. Group memberships were funded for organizations by ASARECA/RAIN in East and Central Africa with a plan to be more aggressive about marketing that option.

Perhaps the greatest accomplishment by the organization in the last decade has been moving the organization into the electronic age. IAALD produced one more edition of the *World Directory* in 2000 but added a CD ROM version along with the printed version. Over the course of its publishing, the *World Directory* earned the organization approximately US\$100,000 for training and education thanks to a partnership with CTA.



Departing Executive Committee members Margot Bellamy, Pam André, Jodee Kawasaki, and Qiaoqiao Zhang (l-r) display their Certificates of Appreciation.

The CD version of the *World Directory* was just the beginning of electronic products for the organization. The Executive Committee began doing its business over a listserv and a listserv was developed to communicate with members. The building of the IAALD homepage began which has led to the establishment of the IAALD.org address. The AgroWeb network, facilitated by IAALD's Central and Eastern European Chapter became a primary source of agricultural information. The News from IAALD section moved from print to a file on the home page to a BLOG that captures news items and stories concerning the practice of agricultural information. IAALD now has its own e-mail address,

info@iaald.org

and now conducts most of its transactions by electronic means.

IAALD's mission continues to be a community of practice for the practitioner in agricultural information. From its Germanic roots, IAALD has found its way to all parts of the world. IAALD was confronted with new situations, with new problems and new techniques of information processing and transfer. IAALD's World Conferences at different places

—Paris, Mexico, Manila, Ottawa, Budapest, Melbourne, Dakar, Lexington—and several regional Conferences, can be regarded as milestones in a changing world of scientific information. It became clear that an efficient flow of information and the ability to receive agricultural and related information from all parts of the world within a short period of time is an essential prerequisite to solving the problems of nourishing a growing world population and to overcome hunger and misery of mankind. It is a great challenge to meet these tasks. IAALD was and is prepared to do this because foresighted people acted at the right time in the right way. Today IAALD has many active and experienced members in all parts of the world, and it can be hoped that the future generations of the association will continue the tradition in the spirit of the pioneers by adapting to the changing information environment. The challenges are great but the energy is there for IAALD to accomplish its goals. The basic principles laid out by the founding fathers continue to be a driving force for the organization. IAALD continues to have an aggressive publication schedule, continues to be involved in issues

dealing with agricultural bibliography and continues to examine professional and educational questions.

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