

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Just as the *The International Calendar*, introduced in the last issue, is an effort to encourage personal interaction among colleagues, so too is the *Book Review Section* intended to serve as an equally important tool for professional dialogue. Among the book reviews featured in this issue, for example, is *The Quest for Law*, a recent study on the impact of technology and globalization on law libraries and a vision of the future of legal information. The review is written by *IALL Director of Communications Richard Danner*, *Senior Associate Dean for Library and Computing of the Duke University School of Law*. The author, **Peter Wahlgren** of the *Stockholm University Faculty of Law* and the *Swedish Law and Informatics Research Institute (IRI)*, is an authority in the field, and has published widely during the past two decades, both in Swedish and in English.

The main research for the article on the history of the *1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict* was done at the *Law Library of Congress* in Washington, D.C., during the author's tenure as scholar in residence. **Anthi Helleni Poulos** is the founder and President of the *Institute for Law and Culture*, a Washington-based non-profit think-tank of legal scholars, historians and art professionals, and she serves on the *American Bar Association's International Cultural Property Committee*. The historical analysis is a part of a forth-coming larger study.

Parliamentary libraries constitute a rather exclusive club. No one is more familiar with their various roles and practices around the world than **William Robinson** of the *U.S. Congressional Research Service*, who for four years served as Chair of the *IFLA Section on Library and Research Services for Parliaments*. As an expansion on the theme of parliamentary libraries, **Mary Anne Neilsen**, *Senior Legal Information Specialist*, describes the role of the *Australian Department of the Parliamentary Library* in Canberra, and how her country in the past few years has emerged as a world leader in providing freely accessible public legal materials to become a model of transparency for an open democratic society.

To benefit a larger audience and to continue to meet the needs of readers for current tools in the rapidly changing information climate, this issue includes a series of foreign legal research guides. The guides are all based on papers delivered in connection with the 92nd *Annual Meeting of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL)* in July 1999. **Ruth Bird's** paper on legal research in Australia provides an ideal precursor and complement to the upcoming *Journal* issue, volume 28:2, which will include the proceedings of the *18th Annual IALL Course on International Law Librarianship*, held in Melbourne, Australia, in September 1999. Ruth, the Director of the *University of Melbourne Law School Library*, was also one of the key players behind the scenes who helped to organize the very successful meeting.

The *AALL Special Interest Section on Foreign, Comparative and International Law*, which sponsored Ruth Bird's presentation, was also responsible for the day-long pre-Convention *Workshop* entitled *Meet the Legal Specialists: Expert Advice on Research and Acquisition of Foreign Law in the Vernacular*, held at the *Library of Congress*. The title's "legal specialists" refers to the unique cadre of 24 foreign-born and trained lawyers currently on the staff of the *Law Library*. While their primary duty is to provide foreign, comparative and international law research for the U.S. Congress, they also serve the Executive and Judicial branches of the U.S. Government, as well as assist members of the public. The staff members who contributed written guides for the research session of this Workshop include **Nicole Atwill** (France), **Ruth Levush** (Israeli law), **Peter Roudik** (post-communist Russia), **George Sfeir** (Islamic law), and **Wendy Zeldin** (China).

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