



SIG Library History (LIBHIST)

BRIEF NOTE ON LIBHIST SIG's PROJECTS FOR THE IFLA CENTENARY

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2022-07-31
Updated 2023-06-13

1. Introduction

This is an updated version of notes compiled in July 2022 for a meeting of IFLA Officers, concerning the projects of the Library History (LibHist) Special Interest Group' (SIG) for IFLA's centenary celebration in 2027. This update is intended for the information of newly elected members of the SIG, and sets out the status of our projects as at the time of handover to the new SIG Committee.

The information presented here can be found on the SIG's Basecamp site in the Handover 2021-2013 folder

<https://3.basecamp.com/3833672/buckets/26555434/vaults/6213400125>

2. Oral histories

Since 2018 the SIG has been planning to record oral histories for persons associated with IFLA's history. This is being done in collaboration with a number of other professional units of IFLA, including the Preservation and Conservation Section and the Cataloguing Section. Three groups of interviewees have been identified:

- IFLA President
- IFLA Secretaries General
- Other significant IFLA personalities

Documents, including a copyright release for signature by the interviewees, letters of invitation, and question scheduled have been drawn up. A modest number of recordings have been made, allowing the SIG to test its procedures. At its business meeting on 26 July 2022, a number of questions of methodology, preservation and access were raised and discussed. Since then, a sub-group on Oral Histories (Anna Maria Tammaro, Russel Lynch, Ahava Cohen, Polly Boruff-Jones, Jeffrey Wilhite, Martha Attridge Bufton, Lei Wang, and Peter Lor), has been examining these issues and has provided some specific procedural guidelines for the Oral Histories project, including an *Oral history rights agreement* and an *Oral histories workflow document*. These can be found on the SIG's Basecamp site at the Oral history documentation folder:

<https://3.basecamp.com/3833672/buckets/26555434/vaults/5156072880>

The untimely death of former IFLA President Donna Scheeder recently underlined the importance and urgency of recording oral histories. In response to a request on IFLA-L, some material on Donna's service to IFLA has been collected with a view to creating a virtual memorial. More material will be welcomed. This matter needs a volunteer to finalize issues relating to the preservation and accessibility of the material. This collection, as well as the collection of interviews already carried out, has highlighted the need for a workflow for the management of digital objects, in which activities and people involved (members of SIG and IFLA HQ) are integrated into the management and access to

oral histories . Library History SIG together with Marketing and Management has prepared a draft of Best Practices for Oral histories to be shared with other IFLA Sections.

3. Publications to mark the IFLA centenary

A centenary is an appropriate time to assess and celebrate the history and achievements of an organization. Officially IFLA traces its founding to a meeting held in Edinburgh in September 1927. Therefore, we still have four years to prepare for IFLA's centenary. As IFLA's primary professional unit concerned with library history, the Library History Special Interest Group (LibHist SIG) will play an important role in preparing for the celebration. Following discussions within its committee and in an open session held on Tuesday 26 July 2023 during the Dublin WLIC, the SIG is developing specific proposals for submission through the appropriate channels. The following are under consideration:

3.1 Scholarly centenary volume: The SIG proposes to compile and edit a book of contributed chapters on IFLA. Chapters will be solicited through a call for chapters to update the book published in 1977 to celebrate IFLA's first half-century (Koops and Wieder 1977). We have learned informally that De Gruyter would want to publish such a work in the IFLA Publications Series. We have put together a planning committee which will seek contributions on the history of selected professional units and on selected historical themes. The members are Anna Maria Tamaro, Jeffrey Wilhite, Steve Witt and Peter Lor. A broad framework will be drawn up, and intending authors will be invited to write essays of a scholarly nature. It is envisaged that a satellite conference in the form of an authors' seminar will be held in 2025, to which authors will be invited to submit their draft chapters. Authors of the selected chapters will then be asked to revise their work and submit their chapters by February 2026. An editorial panel will review the chapters, make a final selection, and oversee their final revision for submission to De Gruyter for publication and launch at the centenary WLIC in 2027. The Planning Committee will also draw up a proposal and seek sources of funding for the publication. This should include funding for authors to attend the authors' seminar in 2025.

Whilst the SIG's session (or a satellite meeting) in 2025 will be earmarked for the presentation of draft papers, it was decided that the SIG's sessions in 2023 (Convener Steve Witt) and 2024 (Convener Kaisa Sinikara), would not be about the centenary as such, but each year awareness of the coming centenary should be raised. In the meantime, a **satellite conference** has been organized at the Mundaneum in Mons, Belgium, from 17 to 19 August 2023. with the theme *Preserving our origins: Approaches to the organization, curation, and historiography of the record of national and international organizations in libraries, information, and documentation*. Whilst not specifically about IFLA's centenary, it addresses issues that are relevant to the historiography of IFLA as well as that of other LIS associations. More information can be found here: <http://expositions.mundaneum.org/en/conference/preserving-our-origins-world-library-and-information-congress>

3.2 Popular celebratory publication:

Discussion at the SIG's open session at the 2023 WLIC indicated that, in addition to a scholarly book, there is a demand for a more popular celebratory publication, possibly in the form of an e-book, with less formal content, for example, reminiscences of IFLA personalities, photographs, sound clips and video clips. The SIG suggests that one or more professional units such as the Management and Marketing Section and the Management of Library Associations Section be invited to work in collaboration with the SIG and be provided the opportunity to lead this aspect of the project.