



ARL Bimonthly Report 229

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ARL Membership Meeting Focuses on Libraries as Place and Space

by Judith Matz, ARL Communications Officer

The Universities of Kentucky and Louisville warmly welcomed representatives of one hundred seven institutions to Lexington for ARL's 142nd Membership Meeting on May 14-16. The theme of the meeting, "A Community Commons: Libraries in the New Century," was a popular one and clearly reflected the interests of research libraries.

Library Architecture in Developing Community

The meeting program examined the connections between research libraries as place and as space and how both identities contribute to a sense of community in academe and beyond. The program examined the role of library architecture in developing a community. Paul Willis (University of South Carolina) spoke about "The Kentucky Concept" that guided the development of the William T. Young Library. He described the importance of the library as a gathering place for students, providing them a sense of community in an era of remote access. Sarah Thomas (Cornell University) followed with a virtual tour of libraries that have used architecture to build community, creating libraries that are warm, welcoming places for students. Stephen Murray (Columbia University) presented a virtual tour of cathedrals and churches in medieval France and spoke about the relationship between space and community in medieval architecture.

Emergent Roles for Research Libraries

Wendy Pradt Lougee (University of Minnesota) spoke about the library as part of a collaborative enterprise, woven into the fabric of the university. Rather than being defined only by its collections or services, the library works as a diffuse agent within the broader community, weaving its expertise throughout the learning, teaching, research, and services of the parent institution. Expanding on the vision of library participation in the research community, David Messerschmitt (University of California, Berkeley), a member of the National Science Foundation panel recommending a new Advanced Cyberinfrastructure Program, addressed the expertise that libraries could bring to the creation and preservation of shared data repositories. Lorcan Dempsey (OCLC) followed with an analysis how digital content management is changing the library concepts of place, collection, and service.

Insights into User Behavior

To better understand how people use information resources and libraries, Brian

Schottlaender (University of California, San Diego) presented findings from the University of California Collection Management Initiative that examined journal use at different campus libraries. In all disciplines and at all libraries, the use of digital resources far exceeded the use of print materials. Fred Heath (Texas A&M University) reached a similar conclusion. By looking at the findings from both the LibQUAL+™ and Outsell research on library user perceptions and values, he said it was clear that library users see electronic access to information as crucial. They may still want to read from paper but finding and receiving information electronically is identified as a priority.

GPO Depository Library Program

Judith Russell, the new U.S. Superintendent of Documents of the Government Printing Office, addressed the Federal Relations luncheon. She spoke about future directions of the Depository Library Program and urged ARL directors to become part of the ongoing decision-making process for redefining the program.

Additional Highlights from the Meeting

The University of Kentucky hosted a reception, tours, and dinner at the impressive new William T. Young Library. Three new ARL directors were introduced and welcomed to the ARL community: Mark Haslett (University of Waterloo), Ruth Jackson (University of California, Riverside), and Carol Diedrichs (University of Kentucky). In addition, the University of Louisville hosted a reception and dinner at which members bid farewell to three ARL directors who are retiring: Harold Billings (University of Texas at Austin), Joan Gotwals (Emory University), and Murray Shepherd (University of Waterloo).

Discussion sessions were held on:

- "A New Culture of Service Delivery: A Case Study of the National Library of Canada and the National Archives of Canada," led by Ingrid Parent (National Library of Canada)
- "Combining and Redefining Service Points," led by Nancy Baker (University of Iowa)
- "Promoting Open Access: The Information Program of the Open Society Institute," led by Jean-Claude Guédon (Université de Montréal)

Background papers, slides, and summaries of all the meeting presentations are available on the ARL Web site at <<http://www.arl.org/arl/proceedings/142/>>.

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