

TALES OF YORE: IAMSLIC PAST PRESIDENTS ROUND-TABLE

Edited by
Eleanor S. Uhlinger
Pell Marine Science Library
University of Rhode Island
Narragansett Bay Campus
Narragansett RI 02882 USA

IAMSLIC Presidents

1975-78
Carolyn Winn
1978-79
Francis Swim
1979-80
Beth Avery (formerly Fuseler)
1980-81
Kimberly Douglas
1981-82
J. Elizabeth Sutherland
1982-83
Carolyn Winn
1983-84
Kris Metzger
1984-85
Ruth Grundy (deceased)
1985-86
Mary Jane Beardsley
1986-87
Judith Brownlow
1987-88
William Goff
1988-89
Cecile Thiery
1989-90
Sharon Thompson
1990-91
Kay Hale
1991-92
Tom Moritz
1992-93
Eirikur Einarsson

1993-94
Beth Avery
1994-95
Eleanor Uhlinger
1995-96
Natalie Wiest
1996-97
Janet Webster
1997-98
Peter Pissierssens
1998-99
Pauline Simpson
1999-00
Stephanie Haas
2000-01
Linda Pikula
2001-02
Susan Berteaux

From the 25th Annual Conference Program:

IAMSLIC — The Beginning
by Carol Winn
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

(Reprinted from the IAMSLIC Proceedings of the 15th Annual Conference, 1989)

“How did IAMSLIC get started?” is a frequent question posed by new members. With *IAMSLIC at A Crossroads*, I will give you a short description of our roots. May it encourage the membership to great accomplishments in the future. What started somewhat as an accident caught fire from the enthusiasm and dedication of the individuals involved, and the magic has never been lost.

The International Association of Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers began in 1975 under the name East Coast Marine Science Librarians. As the newly hired librarian at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, with the assignment to provide library services and given a clean slate to design on, I asked Jane Fessenden, Librarian at the Marine Biological Laboratory, to join with me in sponsoring a meeting of marine science librarians from the east coast of the U.S. and Canada. I needed their advice. Invitations were sent out to every library I could identify, and the meeting was set for October 9-10 in Woods Hole.

The program was set up as a series of workshops, tours of the scientific libraries in Woods Hole, a boat trip around the Woods Hole area and a demonstration of computer-based information retrieval (NOAA's NODC). The workshop topics were Sea Grant

publications (National Sea Grant Depository), interlibrary loans (general discussion), collected reprints and exchanges (Alan Baldrige, Miami), archives (history of oceanography, maps and charts (general discussion), and International publications (ICMRD/URI).

Attendees included 23 librarians from the U.S., three from Canada and one from Bermuda. Local attendees from MBL, WHOI and the National Marine Fisheries Center swelled the number to 49. There were no conference fees or dues. Lunch was prepared and served by the MBL and WHOI Library staff members. Charter members who have continued to participate and who can add their own memories to mine to give you a fuller picture of the early years are (1975) Kristen Metzger, Alan Baldrige, Louise Dean, Ken Morse, and Susan Barrick; (1976) Francis Swim, Judy Brownlow, and Sylvia Churgin.

From that first meeting, the Association has belonged to its members. The attendees agreed that we should continue to meet each year, that we should expand our membership, and that we should work on cooperative projects. The first projects suggested were a directory of the East Coast Marine Science Libraries with a description of their collections; a union list of oceanographic atlases; sharing of serial lists; and a duplicate exchange clearinghouse. International cooperation was a theme that threaded through all the discussion. In that first meeting, we were ambivalent about becoming a formal association, but decided to solicit participation in 1976 from the Gulf Coast and Caribbean marine science libraries.

Our second meeting was also held in Woods Hole in late September, 1976, hosted by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the Marine Biological Laboratory and supported in part by the U.S. Office of Sea Grant and the NOAA Office of Coastal Management. The Gulf Coast libraries were well represented, and the participant from the Caribbean came from the University of Puerto Rico.

In 1977, we met in Washington, D.C., under the sponsorship of the libraries of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. It was at this meeting that the membership voted for a formal organization under the name of Marine Sciences Libraries Association. A by-laws committee was named. The membership determined to keep the dues structure as low as possible to encourage participation by libraries in developing countries.

In 1978, the Association met in Woods Hole and, after a boisterous debate, changed the name to International Association of Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers (IAMSLIC), accepted a set of by-laws, and elected a slate of officers.

Francis Swim (NOAA-LISD) became the first elected President. Each element in the new name of the Association was selected (insisted upon) by different constituencies. It was the sequencing of these elements the IAMSLIC appeared, and we have been proud of our acronym ever since, albeit with a grin when observing newcomers' reactions to it. The

membership grew faster than our ability to keep track of the additions. Each new member has brought new skills, new insights and, most of all, new strength to the Association. Members from Monaco, Fiji and Panama gave impetus to the international character of the group. The future holds exciting prospects for IAMSLIC as we continue to increase our membership throughout the world.

IAMSLIC — The Continuing Story

Judy Ashmore, Compiler, Carol Winn, Editor

Marine Biological Laboratory/Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Library

As the years and annual conferences pass “The Beginning” turns into the intervening years. Carol Winn’s “description of our roots” brought us through the 70’s with all of the enthusiasm and dedication reported by Carol in the first meeting of the East Coast Marine Science Librarians. The early years were also outlined by Kristen Metzger in an *ICLARM Newsletter*, April 1984. So, having covered the first ten years, let’s begin again in Woods Hole at our 10th annual meeting in 1984.

The *IAMSLIC Newsletter* has been an invaluable aid. It started in February 1979—just in time! In the March 1984 Newsletter treasurer, Ilene Zaleski, reported a bank balance of \$3,105.60, and Membership Chair, Alison Chesney, a total of 148 members from a broad array of libraries in sixteen countries.

For the 1984 meeting, Ruth Grundy was our Program Convenor and the staff of the MBLIWHOI Library and NMFS our hosts. Looking back through fifteen years of growth dramatically emphasizes how far we have come technologically. We were discussing electronic mail systems, front-end software, gateway services, telnet applications for the first time in the fall of ‘84, and as we had so much to discuss, we decided to lengthen our annual meetings to allow more time to talk. Kristen Metzger became our Newsletter editor, a job she would hold for nine prolific years. The *Union List of Serials* (MUSSEL) was about to be published, Carol Winn was updating our *IAMSLIC Directory*, Janet Mitchell had designed our logo, Norman Howden was working on a *Union List of Atlases*, and we published, for the first time, the *Proceedings of the Annual Conference*.

The International Cooperation Committee was formed in 1986, under the Chairmanship of Tom Moritz, to promote international cooperation among aquatic science libraries. This one action defined much of the organization’s mission in the following years.

Allen Varley and David Moulder hosted the first meeting of EURASLIC at Plymouth, England in 1988, and in the following year that group discussed regional membership in IAMSLIC. In 1989 the IAMSLIC brochure was printed in French and Spanish as well as English. We had our first President from outside North America, Cecile Thiery, from Monaco, and in 1990 Kay Hale attended the Thirteenth session of the IOC Technical

Committee on International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange at the United Nations.

1991 was a watershed year. We became the International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers. IAMSLIC remained our much-loved acronym but our name changed to better reflect our many members working with freshwater information organizations, especially those members of EURASLIC. The same year we officially recognized EURASLIC (European Marine and Freshwater Sciences Librarians, Information Scientists and Documentalists), CYAMUS (North American West Coast Group), SAIL (Southeast Affiliates of IAMSLIC Libraries), the West African Regional Group, and we began to form ties with PIMRIS (South Pacific Regional Group).

After a three-year struggle, Kristen Metzger succeeded in overcoming the financial, bureaucratic and political barriers required to bring our first Russian delegate, Ivan Bukhanevich to our 1991 conference in Galveston. The twinning policy, which provides support through a “buddy” system for libraries that cannot afford membership, was approved. We formed the ad-hoc Internet working committee, established an electronic conference on the Internet, and discussed electronic document delivery. As we expanded and strengthened our organization and integrated our international members, we planned our first European meeting at the Alfred Wegener Institute in Bremerhaven, Germany.

By 1992 our IAMSLIC brochure, the harbinger of our expansion, was printed in Chinese and Japanese. Tom Moritz represented us at a meeting of UNESCO’s Group of Experts on Marine Information Management (GEMIM) convened under the Committee on International Oceanographic Data Exchange (IODE) of the IOC. Over the years we have become heavily involved with this group’s work on standards, surplus documents, and the *Global Directory of Marine Organizations, Libraries and Scientists*.

David Coleman and Sandra Abbott-Stout hosted our 20th anniversary meeting at Waikiki Beach in Hawaii in 1994. This celebration was the culmination of a long “swim” from our origins. At the anniversary banquet, Carol Winn was honored for her role in our genesis, and her twenty years of leadership. Over the years the organization has given special recognition to several members. The Guin Fund, to aid participants from developing countries, was setup in 1990 to honor Marilyn Guin, our deceased colleague. In 1991 two honorary members were named—Allen Varley and Eric Marshall. In 1998 a sustaining membership in memory of Ruth Grundy was created, and the plans for the 25th anniversary celebration include a reception to honor all our past presidents.

During the more recent years, IAMSLIC has striven to formalize its goals and organization, promote cooperation and sharing of resources, and more fully facilitate communication among the growing aquatic science community. In 1996 Natalie Wiest represented IAMSLIC at a joint meeting of GEMIM and IODE in Athens, Greece, and in that year our treasury was sufficiently full to partially support regional group activities

and projects. Peter Brueggeman graciously offered to provide a permanent server site for us at Scripps Institution of Oceanography. A trial project supported by IAMSLIC, on the use of the Internet for document delivery was launched between PIMRIS and Scripps in May of 1997, and a new edition of our Directory will be published in multiple volumes with the support of IOC.

Our 24th annual conference in Reykjavik, Iceland was held jointly with the Polar Libraries Colloquy. This was a rare opportunity to visit Iceland and meet with information specialists with an interest in Arctic ecology. This year, as our “Beginning” turns into the “Present” we are planning the 25th annual meeting in Woods Hole. We have 296 members, double the 1984 count, and our treasury balance has grown fifteen fold. We’ve expanded, grown, and traveled, but remain true to the cooperative spirit engendered by those original twenty-three librarians who met in Woods Hole in 1975.

May the future years exhibit the same growth, global outlook and enthusiastic involvement of all our members.

Tales of Yore

Carol Winn regaled us with the tale of how the organization that grew to become IAMSLIC actually began. Newly arrived in her job at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Library, she organized a meeting to bring her regional colleagues together so she could learn what it meant to be “a marine science librarian.” From this meeting came another and another until the group decided to “formalize” itself, write bylaws, and elect officers.

Francis Swim was IAMSLIC’s first elected President. It was during her tenure that the acronym “IAMSLIC” came to be. She told the tale of lively discussions about what the new organization should be named. As each ‘element’ of the name was selected, and defended by different constituencies, Ken Morse dutifully wrote down each word and rearranged them until an acronym was born. No matter how hard he tried, he simply could not find anything to top “IAMSLIC”!

Beth Avery told about IAMSLIC’s first “joint meeting,” which was held with the Council for Biological Editors in Charleston, South Carolina. [NOTE: IAMSLIC waited until 1997 to hold its second “joint meeting,” this time with the Polar Libraries Colloquy in Reykjavik, Iceland.]

Kimberly Douglas was President from 1980-81 when the Annual Meeting was held in La Jolla, California. The Executive Board wanted to create a logo for the newly named organization. It was decided to offer a \$25 prize for a winning design to be voted/selected at the Scripps-hosted conference. There were two submissions, much discussion, and ultimately it was decided to pass the issue along to the next Executive Board! Also during Kim’s tenure IAMSLIC decided to limit the newsletter distribution to those who were

paid members--at that time there were 50 paid-up members and over 300 on the distribution list. [NOTE: by September 1999 there were 296 IAMSLIC members!] During her tenure many other Bylaws-related issues were addressed. [While observing the Business Meetings in Woods Hole this year, Kim realized what a great job has been done over the years to provide consistency and continuity coupled with effective mechanisms for change. Congratulations to all of the members].

Betty Sutherland expressed the opinion that one of the most rewarding things about being IAMSLIC President was the opportunity to organize the Annual Conference. It was her first such experience and she has since built on the organizational skills she gained and has gone on to organize other large conferences for other professional associations.

Kristin Metzger recounted a “simpler” time when the Executive Board had few members and Board meetings were held in members’ hotel rooms, rather than in large conference rooms. Of course this frequently led to interesting moments and amusing anecdotes...and everyone who missed the 25th Annual Conference should know that they missed a terrific *Tale of Yore* that shall not be printed here...you had to be there!

Mary Jane Beardsley also expressed that one of her most gratifying professional experiences came from organizing the Annual Conference. Mary Jane obtained grants-in-aid from a number of international agencies and brought people from other countries (mostly developing countries) to the IAMSLIC Conference...making it our most international conference to date.

Cecile Thiery was the first European and non North American to be selected as a candidate. Apparently there was no other candidate that year which made Cecile humbly state that as a result she considered that her election was not extremely democratic! She also recounted how, during the whole meeting for which she had prepared the program, her fear was that people would talk too long. IAMSLIC was not yet using the fancy traffic signs to yield and stop speakers, and actually, some of them had been impossible to stop! [The traffic signs were designed and made by Pam Mofjeld’s sons for the 20th Annual Conference.] Sessions running over time nearly made us late for the beautiful field trip to the mangroves and coral reefs (after all, it was Miami!)—and oh, what a sea trip that was...just ask anyone who ventured out on the glass-bottom boat!

Kay Hale presided over IAMSLIC when the Association officially changed our name to include “AQUATIC”--one critical step in this process was retaining our acronym and logo while broadening our mission. We also organized and formed Regional Groups and EURASLIC, CYAMUS, and SAIL became the first IAMSLIC Regional Groups. Kay noted that, unlike recent meetings, the Business Meetings in the late 1980’s-1991 seemed to be endless - drawn out and full of conflicting opinions. Ken Morse, the former Parliamentarian, usually had his hands full. [...everyone who missed the 25th Annual Conference should know that they also missed a very “spirited” business meeting!]

Eirikur Einarsson was a real techno-guru for his time. Communication among the members of the Executive Board was a bit difficult in the beginning when the members of the EXEC were spread all over the world. We used OMNET for electronic communications but that worked only for those subscribing to OMNET and the difficulties were to get the messages to people on other networks. In 1992 more and more people were using BITNET. Long email headers with about 15-20 names were difficult to handle, especially when replying to messages. In 1993 Eirikur created a mailing list or a reflector <IAMSLIC-EXE@HAFRO.IS> which is still going strong. This reflector made all communications much easier and has made it possible to have the EXEC members from many countries.

Beth Avery served a second term as IAMSLIC President. Despite the fact she does not think she is the most organized IAMSLIC member...during her tenure she got IAMSLIC organized by drafting guidelines for the Guin Fund and drafting our first strategic plan.

Eleanor Uhlinger remarked that during her term Twinning Guidelines were established as part of the Guin Fund guidelines. ["Twinning" provides 3-year complimentary memberships to librarians/information professionals in developing countries—a great idea but, previously, an administrative nightmare.] She also recounted how she organized the First Guin Silent Auction to raise funds for the Guin Fund. [We've come a long way...the 1999 Guin Auction raised more than \$1,000 US. Kudos and thanks to all donors and bidders!]

Natalie Wiest expressed the opinion that the highest points of her professional career revolved around IAMSLIC. She convened the meeting held in Southampton, England, U.K. That meeting turned out to be the best international representation we've ever had at an IAMSLIC meeting and included representatives from every inhabited continent in the world! [40 or more countries were represented]

If that was not enough of a thrill for someone from the Gulf Coast of Texas, the next year Natalie represented IAMSLIC at the GEMIM (Group of Experts in Marine Information Management, an IOC/United Nations group) meeting in Athens, Greece, had to be the epitome. GEMIM was meeting as a part of IODE (International Oceanographic Data Exchange) in the Zappeion Conference Center - walking distance to the Parthenon atop the Acropolis in downtown Athens. For this IAMSLIC member, it was the professional experience of a lifetime.

Janet Webster touched upon 3 important impacts of her IAMSLIC Presidency. The first was on her personal environment. She was reminded, as she still is every time she reads the listserv <iamslic@ucsd.edu>, of our common issues. As head of a small library on the Oregon coast, Janet became more closely connected with others throughout the world.

Second was her impact on the IAMSLIC organization. During her Presidency, Janet developed guidelines for grants using the Guin Fund, published an open letter to publishers outlining our issues with serial pricing, and attempted to resolve the future of

Regional Groups in Africa. As is often true, we made some progress and tolerated some frustration.

Third was her impact on IAMSLIC's social reputation. The conference Janet chaired with excellent help from the Monterey Bay, CA, cohort was very successful. One of the most successful events of the Conference was a beach party on Agassiz Beach at the Hopkins Marine Station where we danced to the radio, keeping the graduate students awake and enhancing librarians' reputations forever in those students' minds.

Peter Pissierssens recounted his experience as the first non-librarian to be IAMSLIC President, which speaks to the diversity of our membership—librarians and information officers from a wide variety of institutions: non-governmental, governmental, private, university, and many others. During his tenure as President Peter brought two web-based directories to fruition--GLODIR (Global Directory of Marine and Freshwater Professionals) <http://ioc.unesco.org:591/glodir/> and the IAMSLIC Directory of Aquatic Science Librarians and Information Centers <http://ioc.unesco.org:591/idalic/>.

There were many other stories told about IAMSLIC and a fun question-and-answer session with the audience (which included first-time as well as long-time attendees). As a community of information professionals, and an organization run successfully for 25 years entirely by volunteer members, IAMSLIC really has come a long way. Through personnel and technological changes, through the addition of new members and the sad passing of others, we continue to strive to work together, to share information and ideas, and make our marks on our professions and institutions across national and political boundaries (after all...the oceans and rivers know no boundaries). This shared bond that IAMSLIC provides, through our meetings; newsletters and publications; social events and exciting field trips, allows us to build upon our strengths and interpersonal relationships and move forward. As we reflected upon our past, we all look forward to IAMSLIC's continued success in the next century.

