

Making a difference – challenge to libraries

This special issue of *Signum* is composed by the International Relations Group of the Finnish Research Library Association. Its articles are based on the texts of the talks given by speakers of the so called Twin City Seminar *Making a Difference: Moving towards Library 2.0*, which was held in Helsinki and Tallinn 7th – 10th May, 2007.

The conference program focused on the concept *Library 2.0* from different points of views. *Library 2.0* brings up a new approach – libraries should serve users where they are; not expecting them to step into the library building but reach them on the Net.

Kimmo Tuominen gives an introduction to the basic concepts of *Library 2.0*. Tuominen emphasizes as a key issue that "something is profoundly changing in the ways in which we create and use information". *Library 2.0* facilitates us a new information environment where information is fluid and mixed and users create and add value to information. However, in this connection, the quality and use of information become crucial issues. Users need new skills and literacies to be able to understand their information environment and judge the quality and credibility of information.

Martyn Wade focuses on the staff skills and competencies. New approaches and standards have been developed to respond to the requirements of labour market. It is noteworthy, that these standards emphasize strategic thinking and understanding of work processes rather than management of routines of the certain area of work. The standards have also practical value. They can be utilized eg. for job descriptions, performance analysis, training needs and organization development.

Aira Lepik gives a review of the concept of marketing in libraries. Lepik emphasizes "relationship marketing" which is among the recent marketing trends. Libraries seem to have increasing needs to create meaningful relations – not only to customers, but within organization, to other related organizations, local community and to the information service and product vendors.

Anne Poulson concentrates on the change management. This issue could not be more current, since the whole sector of Finn-

ish higher education is presently going through the strong waves of change. When Poulson specifies the change factors among the institutions of UK Higher Education, we can recognize some common topics: structural changes, increasing competition, changes of financing structures and impacts of technological development.

These factors are really challenging libraries to make a difference and find their way in an increasingly complicated information environment.

The Seminar was jointly organized by the *Ministry of Education of Finland*, the *Library of Parliament in Finland*, the *Ministry of Culture of Estonia*, the *National Library of Estonia*, and the *Ministry of Culture of Scotland*, in companionship with CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals), United Kingdom, and the Finnish Library Association and the Finnish Research Library Association.

The Anglo-Nordic Library Conferences organized in cooperation with the Ministerial Offices and the Public Libraries of Great Britain and the Nordic Countries have been a tradition for many decades. The tradition was gradually dying down with lack of time and enthusiasm. During the IFLA Conference in Oslo, August 2005, Ms. *Barbro Wigel-Ryynänen*, the Councillor for Library Affairs in the Ministry of Education of Finland, contacted some colleagues from CILIP and from Finnish Library Associations to discuss about revitalizing the tradition and planning a new seminar in 2006.

The group met at lunch in a small restaurant called FIASCO. There were five of us, Ms. *Jill Martin* from CILIP, *Barbro Wigell-Ryynänen*, Ms. *Sinikka Sipilä* from the Finnish Library Association, Ms. *Ringa Sandelin* from the Finnish Swedish Library Association, and Ms. *Tuula Ruhanen* from the Finnish Research Library Association. During this discussion we decided to start planning a Finnish-British-Baltic library seminar. Within the past few years the collaboration between the librarians of Finland and the Baltic countries has become close, and so we asked Ms. *Tiiu Valm*, Director of the National Library of Estonia, to participate this team. *Jill Martin* also liked the idea of starting a new companionship with the Baltic countries. At the planning period, the Seminar was informally referred to as the "Fiasco-Seminar", because its birth was given at the Fiasco restaurant. Nomen est omen, but fortunately not this time!

The Chartered Institute of UK Library and Information Professionals CILIP was first represented by *Jill Martin* but later she had to get off the group, because of too many other duties.

CILIP named Ms. *Elaine Fulton* from Glasgow to the organizing group. She is Director of the Scottish Library and Information Council. Elaine is an efficient and dynamic person, and we really have to thank her for the success of this Seminar. *Tiiu Valm*, Director of the National Library of Estonia, accepted the idea of a joint seminar, and so we had a new set of the organizing countries: Estonia, Scotland, Finland and England.

The Library of Parliament in Finland has had a very long collaboration and cooperation with Estonian libraries. That is why the Director of the Library Ms. *Tuula Laaksovirta* and, after her retirement, her successor Ms. *Sari Pajula* were willing to join our organizing group. And, indeed, they had a major part in organizing this Seminar. They introduced the idea of the seminar in two cities, the Twin Cities Helsinki and Tallinn. In Helsinki, the Library of Parliament was the main organizing body and host of the Seminar: the premises of the new Annex of the Parliament House served as a splendid venue for the Seminar as well as for the fine reception of the participants.

The two days program and the background in beautiful and green Tallinn were very well organized by *Tiiu Valm* and her colleagues. The National Library of Estonia offered really comfortable seminar premises, and the reception in Tallinn Castle was unforgettable. Also, the colleagues from Tallinn had arranged many interesting library tours to the seminar participants.

*Tuula Ruhanen, Library Director
Library of Behavioral Sciences
University of Helsinki
email. tuula.ruhanen@helsinki.fi*