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### PRESIDENT'S CORNER

For the consistently high quality of papers throughout the meeting, the Brussels' conference may well have been without equal in IASA's history. So it strikes me from the hindsight of ten annual conferences. The burgeoning professionalism was particularly marked among the younger and newer members who contributed so noticeably and so effectively during the week. This feature was a testimony to IASA's current health and augurs well for its future. It also illustrated how much the Association has to give to its own members and to the international communities of archives and libraries in the field of sound documentation.

The most tangible examples of the fruitfulness of IASA's work may be found in its current publications programme. A second and much expanded edition of the Directory of Member Archives has been prepared for printing and should become available to members before the end of 1982. The text of a book entitled Sound Archive Programmes: Their Planning, Organisation and Management is complete and has been handed to UNESCO, which has expressed an interest in its publication. Much needed by archives and libraries throughout the world, a Technical Manual has reached a sufficiently advanced stage in its compilation that we can confidently expect it to appear in print before very long. A Training Manual is a more distant prospect but its preparation is an integral part of the Training Committee's formal plans. The thorny but fundamental subject of Selection was firmly grasped at conference sessions in Budapest and Brussels. This subject will be embraced again at Washington in 1983 and the resultant papers edited to form the basis of a special publication which will appear within the next two years. A major bibliography of sound archive literature is also in preparation, the first element of which is included in this issue of the PHONOGRAPHIC BULLETIN. The recent extension of the journal's Editorial Board—with Joel Gardner (USA) joining it as Reviews and Recent Publications Editor and Peter Burgis (Australia) taking over responsibility for the News and Notes columns—holds promise of an expansion of the BULLETIN'S information role.

Up to 1978, the Association (then nearing a decade of existence) had published nothing other than the PHONOGRAPHIC BULLETIN. In that year a monograph on oral history and the first edition of IASA's directory both appeared as separate publications. During the subsequent five years the interest in new publications has quickened with the results and the projects already mentioned. Initiatives have generally been taken by individuals rather than by the Associations; that is to say IASA has tended to respond to the interest of an individual member in a certain field rather than systematically to plan a publications programme and then seek suitable people as authors or editors. Thus a Technical Manual will appear because Dietrich Schüller identified a need for it and felt motivated to fill that need. The Executive Board of the Association happily placed its seal of approval on such an undertaking. Helen Harrison's interest in Selection, similarly, is the main reason why this publication will also be published under IASA's imprint.

Individual inspiration then, not Association prescription, is at the root of our publications programme. Where else and where next will this *laissez-faire* policy lead us? The newer members of IASA, to whose energetic contributions at the Brussels' conference I drew attention in my opening paragraph, may stimulate us to take on new projects. All members ought to be encouraged by the pattern of our present programme's development, to feel that the Association is likely to be persuaded to accept new proposals that are enthusiastically and cogently presented.

Some of the needs are clearly evident. In the field of cataloguing, for example, no publications have so far been considered nor any projects put forward. The legal basis of sound archive work suffers from the availability of much specialised literature, but no major collection of relevant information may be found in a single volume. Different countries may pursue radically different philosophies and totally opposing practices for the administration of sound recordings and there is still not a single published study of the cost-benefits of any one of the alternative models let alone a comparative analysis. IASA has but a single monograph-- on oral history— relating to the disciplines which draw on sound documentation as a major source and this, perhaps, is the single most surprising deficiency.

This short list of fields in which there is a need for reference works of a good professional standard could go on and on. I hope it may stimulate other members to give— through letters to the Editor of the PHONOGRAPHIC BULLETIN perhaps— their own assessments of where the greatest needs lie and, better still, to offer to fill some of those needs which they identify.

To organisation and institutional finance officers, who have to be convinced that there is a real case for paying membership subscriptions to international associations, and to cynics who see attendance at international conferences as expensive disruptions to the routine work of their archives, an association's best answer is to publish. This, surely, is what international bodies such as IASA are primarily for— to register and to distribute individual or collective knowledge that serves a community of interest. How else may associations demonstrate or justify their professional existence? There is an obligation that, from the otherwise purely vaporous meeting places where we congregate, ideas should germinate, plans be laid and publications appear. This is how an Association is best able to serve the majority of its members who are unable to attend annual conferences and to offer more widely something of substance in the field of archivism that IASA exists to foster and to develop.

A relevant publications programme is a *raison d'être* of the Association. If the past pattern of its formulation remains the same in the future, then exactly what the character of our programme will be depends largely on the enthusiasms and interests of individual members. It will be interesting to see what this creative anarchy may reveal!

D. L.