

Feria Internacional del Libro

THE Book Professionals Conference in Guadalajara, Mexico, brought together librarians, publishers and booksellers from practically every country in North and South America — and one lucky Australian! I carried official greetings, in Spanish, from then LAA President, Alan Bundy, to the organizers of the Guadalajara International Book Fair (better known as FIL: Feria Internacional del Libro), as well as a selection of LAA publications for display at the fair.



Fabian Gonzalez, who was responsible for the Academic and Cultural Program, and Margarita Sierra, Director of Public Relations, discuss the program for the Guadalajara International Book Fair.

The theme of the conference was 'The Book: One Product, Many Different Users'. Sessions were wide ranging, and included information literacy, copyright infringement, new technologies in publishing, distribution across continental

borders, interlibrary information systems, the problems of university presses, information services in Latin America, and book design. Those of greatest interest to English speakers had simultaneous translation available through headphones.



The exhibition included displays by over 600 publishers and distributors. I came home laden with Spanish language posters, dictionaries and texts, but had to leave behind some fantastic children's books which, unfortunately, weighed just too much.

The Mexican Association of Librarians was exceptionally hospitable in allowing me to display the LAA publications on their stand. Following the exhibition, the books were donated to libraries at the University of Guadalajara and the University of Nuevo Leon.

The conference built bridges at many levels, most importantly, amongst publishers, booksellers and distributors, librarians, educators and authors, but also between people from many different countries.

Concurrent with the exhibition was a free cultural festival, featuring ballet folklorico groups, rock and reggae bands,



Delegates at the opening session of FIL.

plays, folk singers, art exhibitions, book launchings, authors' seminars, visits to libraries, films, round-table discussions, children's activities, and public lectures on a wide range of current political and academic topics.

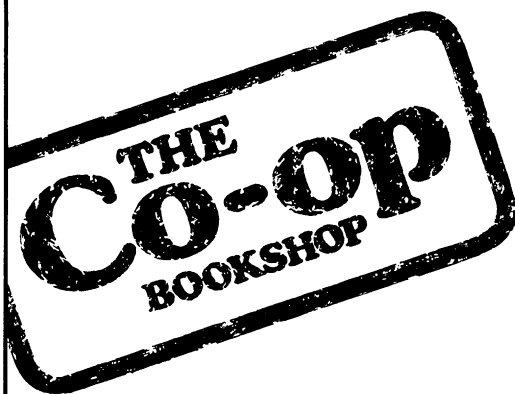
In only its second year, FIL was a most impressive conference and exhibition. The number of participants at the Book Professionals Conference — 307 from abroad and 734 from Mexico — was a 400 per cent increase over 1987. The fair itself generated the equivalent of some one million US dollars in business transactions during the week.

The dates for FIL '89 are November 25 through December 3. I am organizing a 3- to 4-week Mexican study tour on 'Books, Libraries and Culture' through Canberra CAE, which will incorporate The Book Professionals Conference at FIL. Please let me know if you are interested, and I will keep you informed of the tentative itinerary and costs.

Viva Mexico! Viva FIL!

Nancy Lane
Head,

Centre for Library and Information Studies
Canberra College of Advanced Education



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