International Association of Law Libraries: 
History and Goals

_Igor I. Kavass*

Established in 1959, the International Association of Law Libraries (IALL) is a professional organization of lawyers, legal information specialists, bibliographers, and law librarians around the world. Its goals and objectives are best described in Article II of the Constitution:

The purposes of the Association are to promote on a cooperative, non-profit and fraternal basis the work of individuals, libraries, and other institutions and agencies concerned with the acquisition and bibliographic processing of legal materials collected on a multinational basis, and to facilitate the research and other uses of such materials on a world-wide basis.

Extending over sixty countries on five continents, IALL membership is composed of individuals and institutions specifically interested in the acquisition and distribution of law-related information—legislation, jurisprudence, and other law publications—throughout the world and in international cooperation concerning the exchange of legal documentation. In order to further these purposes, IALL is affiliated with such other important international organizations as the International Federation of Library Associations and the Federation for International Documentation. IALL regularly participates at the general conferences of the International Federation of Library Associations. IALL is also developing close working relationships with such specialized legal or library organizations as the Association of Parliamentary Libraries, the Association of Administrative Libraries, the Association of International Libraries, the International Law Association, and the International Bar Association.

The main purpose of IALL is to emphasize the pooling and dissemination of legal publications and documentary sources among its members as well as lawyers, law librarians, and legal biblio-

*Dr. Kavass is the president of IALL.*
graphers generally. This purpose is advanced through a vigorous and active publication program and regular institutes, workshops and conferences.

1. Organization

IALL was established by a small group of law librarians interested in international and comparative law research who met in New York during the annual conference of the American Association of Law Libraries in June, 1959. Most of these persons happened to be multicultural and multilingual. They were American-trained law librarians but, as refugees from Europe, they also had extensive educational and professional roots on that continent. It is this multiculturalism which enabled the IALL to manifest all of the qualities of an international organization despite the fact that all of its founders were United States law librarians. Soon, however, many eminent European law librarians began to join the association as well. The combined enthusiasm of these original members from Europe and the United States enabled the objectives of the IALL to be placed on a solid and sound professional foundation so that the association could survive the usually difficult first years of its existence and then grow into a recognized international scholarly organization. Professor William R. Roalfe, Law Librarian and Professor of Law at Northwestern University, Chicago, was elected the first president of the Association when it was established in 1959. Subsequent presidents were:

William B. Stern, Foreign Law Librarian at the Los Angeles County Law Library (1962–1965)
K. Howard Drake, Librarian, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of London (1965–1968)
Gerhard J. Dahlmanns, Institut für Rechtsvergleichung, University of Marburg (1974–1977)
Igor I. Kavass, Director, Legal Information Center, Vanderbilt University (1977–1980)

In addition to the president, the IALL executive consists of first and second vice presidents, a secretary and a treasurer. The eight-person Board of Directors is the supervisory body of the asso-
ciation, and it participates in the shaping and development of IALL policy. The membership of the Board is represented by persons from different parts of the world. Present board members come from Australia, Canada, Britain, Japan, the European Communities, Barbados, The Philippines, and South America. Officers of the association for the current three year term (1980–1983) are:

President: Igor I. Kavass, Vanderbilt University Law School, Nashville, Tennessee, U.S.A.
First Vice-President: Klaus Menzinger, Bibliothek für Rechtswissenschaft, University of Freiburg, Federal Republic of Germany.
Secretary: Adolf Sprudzs, Law Library, The University of Chicago, U.S.A.
Treasurer: Arno Liivak Law School, Rutgers University, Camden, New Jersey, U.S.A.

IALL Headquarters are usually located at the institution of the IALL president’s affiliation. Thus, the current address of the headquarters is Vanderbilt University Law Library, Nashville, TN, 37203, USA.

The IALL has also several advisory councils and working committees. They include regional advisory councils in Australia, Europé, Israel, and the United States as well as several ad hoc working committees: a committee to establish an International Bureau of Law Library Appointments and Career Opportunities under the direction of Professor Betty Taylor of the University of Florida Law Library; a committee on the Law of the Sea, Bibliographic Research, chaired by Professor Christian L. Wiktor, Dalhousie University Law Library; a committee to examine the possibilities for international exchange of microfilmed government gazettes under the guidance of Mr. Earl Weisbaum of the Los Angeles County Law Library, a Rare Books and Special Collections Committee, chaired by Professor David Combe of Tulane University, and a planning and steering committee for the adoption of minimum standards for collection holdings in international law, headed by Professor Igor I. Kavass, Vanderbilt University Law Library.

2. Publications

From 1960–1972 the IALL published the IALL Bulletin, which evolved from a vehicle to distribute membership news to a
brief information guide, containing short articles and bibliographies of interest to members. The first editor of the *IALL Bulletin* was Dr. Bartholomeus Landheer, the former Head of the Palace of Peace Library, in The Hague. Subsequent editors were Dr. Wilhelmina Peletier, (The Netherlands), Jacob D. Korevaar, (now Director of the UNCITRAL Library in Vienna, Austria) and Dr. Ivan Sipkov (Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.).

In 1973 the *Bulletin* was expanded and re-named *International Journal of Law Libraries*, (*IJLL*) appearing three times annually. The *IJLL* concentrated on publication of in-depth analyses of the laws of various countries, articles on the improvement of research and bibliographic techniques, surveys of current legal literature, extensive bibliographies, and book reviews. Mr. Klaus Menzinger, Director of the Bibliothek für Rechtswissenschaft, University of Freiburg, Federal Republic of Germany became the Editor-in-Chief when the journal began publication in 1973. The *IALL Newsletter* began publication on an irregular basis in 1975 to fill the need for a faster source of information about the expanding activities of the IALL, and other items of professional interest. At first it appeared irregularly but more frequently than the journal. Responding to membership needs for current up-to-date information on the ever-changing world of legal publications, the *IALL Newsletter*, with the transfer of IALL Headquarters to Nashville, Tennessee in 1977, expanded its format to include information on legislative developments, new law books, law journals, documents, and other legal publications, IALL activities, meetings and projects of related organizations. Until its merger with the journal it was also published more frequently. The demand for more frequent and permanent information about legal literature and documentation compelled the association once again to revise its publication policy.

In 1980, the *International Journal of Law Libraries* and the *IALL Newsletter* were each combined into one publication—an impressive and scholarly journal published six times a year and containing about sixty informative, factual pages in each issue. The new *IJLL* features one or two major articles or bibliographies in each issue, and includes shorter information about current legislative developments, law reform, legal periodicals, law books, conferences, etc. Responsibility for the management and production of
the journal was assumed by Professor Arno Liivak of Rutgers University in Camden, New Jersey, who became the Managing Editor, and Mr. Klaus Menzinger of Freiburg University in the Federal Republic of Germany remained the Editor-in-Chief. An expanded editorial board was established. The more frequent appearance of the journal promises to be an important step in the more efficient dissemination of information as one of the major goals of the IALL.

The IALL also publishes a DIRECTORY of its personal and institutional members. The general value of the DIRECTORY is that it constitutes the only regularly updated listing of specialists in international legal information throughout the world. A new edition of the DIRECTORY is in preparation. It is expected to become available in late 1980.

3. IALL Institutes

A formal program of institutes was inaugurated by IALL in 1964. These institutes address a wide range of legal research, bibliography, and documentation subjects. In the early years such institutes were held at Harvard University (1961), The Hague (1965), Uppsala (1966, in conjunction with the 7th International Congress of Comparative Law), Geneva (1967), Heidelberg (1970), Rome (1972), and Washington (1974). Since 1975 the following institutes have been held:

1975: Workshop on selected problems of the law of the European Communities; in Bergisch-Gladbach, Federal Republic of Germany. Roundtable discussion on the law library profession, held in conjunction with the International Federation of Library Associations General Conference; in Oslo, Sweden.

1976: Roundtable conference on the significance of legal literature and documentation in developing countries; in Lausanne, Switzerland (in conjunction with IFLA meeting).

1977: IALL course on the legal literature of socialist countries; in Budapest, Hungary. Roundtable discussion of law library development in conjunction with IFLA meeting at Brussels, Belgium.

1978: Workshop on Japanese law and legal literature; in Tokyo, Japan.


1980: Roundtable symposium on the development of law library collec-
tions in Southeast Asia and other developing areas of the world (in conjunction with the 47th IFLA Conference, Manila, The Philippines).

Preparatory plans are in process for the conduct of future IALL institutes and workshops in Australia (1981) the Caribbean, and the United States on a variety of topics dealing with legal research and its methodology, including sources and methods of research in international law, research of law in developing countries, and international trade law materials.