

MINUTES OF THE 95th MELCOM UK MEETING

50th ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL JUBILEE

MELCom as a committee first convened in 1967 in Cambridge as a small group of bibliographers, librarians and academics from around the UK. In 1979 MELCom International was founded as a separate European committee convening at a 3-4 days travelling annual conference while MELCom UK continued to co-exist as a group within the British Isles. Thus 2017 marked the 50th anniversary of the commencement of MELCom. For the 95th meeting of Melcom UK in July 2017, both branches joined in MELCom's "birthplace" for the occasion of celebrating 50 years of a successful association of librarians around the world, with special recognition given to the founders. A special celebration of the founding members was intended to express our gratitude and respect to their work and personalities and reflect upon our current roles and activities.

This year the programme featured prominently a special panel in celebration of the MELCom UK Jubilee. This was held in Cambridge on Tuesday 4th July 2017 at 9.30am, on the second day of the 39th MELCom International conference which took place from 3rd to 5th July 2017 at the Cambridge University Library in the UK.

The Pearson Memorial Lecture was delivered in three separate talks by founding MELCom members in a "jubilee" panel entitled "**MELCom UK: 50 years of Middle East librarianship**", incorporated in the MELCom International conference academic programme. These talks delved into MELCom's past and present, highlighting aspects of change and the role as Middle Eastern librarians, on the example of Exeter University and SOAS University of London.

Derek Hopwood (MELCom UK founder and its Chairman and Secretary from 1967 till 1985, MELCom International President 1980-1990), Paul Auchterlonie (MELCom UK Chairman 1985-2010, and founding Secretary of MELCom International) and Peter Colvin (MELCom UK Secretary 1995 -2008) gave insightful, entertaining and invigorating perspectives on the development of Middle Eastern librarianship in the UK.

This special panel was followed by a round table discussion animated by the current Chair of MELCom UK, Yasmin Faghihi. The sessions of the programme on either side of this MELCom UK Jubilee panel were tightly linked with the topic of Middle Eastern librarians as socially and politically engaged agents of change, through their mission of facilitating research and knowledge of the Middle East region and countries, and engaging in cross-regional and international cooperation to bring out ever better study and research resources.

The text of some of the talks of the Pearson lecture is available on the MELCom International website (link below), and it will be soon available also on the MELCom UK website.

https://www.melcominternational.org/?page_id=160&year=2017

MELCom UK members past and present who attended the Pearson lecture

Dominique Akhoun Schwarb, SOAS University of London

Catherine Ansorge

Paul Auchterlonie

Peter Colvin, SOAS University of London /Fihrist

Mastan Ebtehaj

Mohammad Emami, Wadham College, Oxford

Yasmin Faghihi, Cambridge University Library

Waseem Farooq, The Joint Library IIS-ISMC, London

Celeste Gianni, al-Furqan, London

Diana Grimwood-Jones

Derek Hopwood

Shah Hussain, The Joint Library IIS-ISMC, London

MariaLuisa Langella, Middle East Centre (MEC) Library, St Antony's College, Oxford

Daniel Lowe, British Library, London

Asma Rezaei

Wassilena Sekulova, Bodleian library, Oxford

Ursula Sims-Williams, British Library, London

Edward Weech, Royal Asiatic Society (RAS), London

Lydia Wright, Bodleian Oriental Institute, Oxford

9. Date and place of next meeting.

The next meeting of MELCom UK will take place on Tuesday 31st January 2018 at the joint library of the IIS-ISMC (Aga Khan University), London.