

## Annual Report of the VTLS Users' Group, 2006

The annual meeting of the user's group took place at The University of Tennessee—Chattanooga, from May 3-5. Our hosts at Lupton Library (<http://www.lib.utc.edu/>), Theresa Liedtka, Dean, and Jon Ritterbush, Assistant Professor and Head, Library Information Technology and the meeting's chair of local arrangements, helped make our stay at UT both educational and enjoyable. The choice of lodging at the Choo Choo Hotel (<http://www.choochoo.com/>), whose lobby is a renovated train station, was appropriate, considering the importance of train travel in Chattanooga's storied past.

Marshall Breeding (<http://staffweb.library.vanderbilt.edu/breeding/>), Director for Innovative Technologies and Research at Vanderbilt University in nearby Nashville, joined us as our keynote speaker. His presentation was entitled "Trends in Library Automation: Meeting the Challenges of a New Generation of Library Users." Marshall's abstract provides an excellent summary of his talk:

"Till now, the library automation business and technology trends have evolved at a leisurely pace. Today libraries face incredible challenges as non-library entities encroach into traditional library territory. Library users are more Web savvy than ever and have high expectations for information providers. We are in a time of urgent need to make rapid advances in library automation."

Marshall's presentation is available online at: <http://www.vtls.com/Corporate/VTLS-IUGM.shtml>.

Vinod Chachra, Chairman and CEO of VTLS, spoke on the vision of VTLS and its products, and we had six show and tell sessions given by customers of VTLS and a representative of Talking Tech, a VTLS partner. Mark Ellis of the Richmond Public Library spoke about extending and integrating Virtua at his library; Francie Mrkich, Head of Copy Cataloging at New York University, told us about using MARC21 holdings for monographic multi-part sets; Catherine Brown, University of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, Australia, talked about the importance of partnerships in implementing VTLS remote management; Barbara Weir, Swarthmore College, spoke about Verify, an electronic resource management system marketed by VTLS; and via CD, we heard a presentation from David Groenewegen of Monash University, in Australia, on ARROW and VITAL.

Our social function was a two and one-half hour dinner cruise on the Tennessee River on the Southern Belle Riverboat (<http://www.chattanoogariverboat.com/www>).

The twentieth annual meeting of the European User's Group took place at the Bibliothèque Universitaire Moretus Plantin at the University of Namur (<http://www.fundp.ac.be/>) in Namur, Belgium, September 6-8. Although the keynote speaker bowed out at the last moment, the meeting nevertheless was very successful. More than 140 names were on the roster of attendees, representing a number of countries,

including Belgium, Sweden, Uganda, France, Switzerland, England, Poland, Slovakia, the Netherlands, Greece, and the United States.

Especially well done were the five breakout sessions that focused on specific modules of Virtua. Enhancements were discussed, often at length, and a representative from VTLS was present to respond to all questions. Show and tell sessions included presentations on an automatic stack request system that VTLS was developing, consortium management; archives management in Virtua, and the ARROW project and VITAL, which was a repeat of David Groenewegen's Chattanooga talk.

Attendees enjoyed an evening barbeque at The Arsenal in Namur, a short walk from our meeting site, and a dinner at Léon et Les Jardins du Luxembourg (<http://www.lesjardinsduluxembourg.be>), a splendid restaurant outside of Namur in Thon-Sansom, called one of the most beautiful villages in Wallonia.

The next European meeting will be at Uppsala University Library, Uppsala, Sweden (<http://www.uu.se/english/>).

The VTLS User's Group Executive Committee lost some members during the year. Jon Ritterbush moved from his job in Chattanooga to a position at Regent University in Virginia Beach, Va., and Francie Mrkich left New York University to head uptown to Columbia University where she became Head, Document Delivery Services and Interlibrary Loan at Butler Library. We welcomed Theresa Liedtka from UT—Chattanooga and David Perry from NYU as able successors. In addition, Catherine Brown, Australia's longtime representative on the executive committee, resigned because she was about to assume a new position at Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia.

The executive committee met at the Elmer Holmes Bobst Library at New York University (<http://www.nyu.edu/research/libraries.html>) on October 14. Discussions focused on organizational matters and the venue for our the next North American meeting, which will be held at The Inn at Virginia Tech and Skelton Conference Center (<http://www.innatvirginiatech.com/>) in May 2007. As this is being written, much of the agenda and meeting activities are still being planned.

Many thanks to you all for your continuing support!

E. Richard McKinstry  
Chair  
VTLS Users' Group

Andrew W. Mellon Senior Librarian  
Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum