

WASLI Newsletter 2007 - 10



WASLI is committed to the development of the profession of sign language interpreting worldwide

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INTRODUCTION

The Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters celebrated 25 Years on 5-6 October 2007 in the beautiful city of Edinburgh; a landmark for any organisation and one that is reported on below.

In addition, this newsletter brings you news from around the world including an update on what is happening in the new Balkans Region.

WASLI AT THE SASLI 25 YEARS CELEBRATIONS, EDINBURGH

Marco Nardi, WASLI Europe Regional Representative represented WASLI

Another event that I have attended this year was SASLI's AGM/Conference in Edinburgh (Scotland). This year they were celebrating their 25th Anniversary, the association was in fact established in 1981.

The event attracted about 140 participants from 13 different countries: Scotland, England, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, France, Belgium, Italy, Netherlands, United States of America, New Zealand, Australia, and sponsored guests from Malawi and Swaziland.

Many were the topics of the conference: "Development of the Interpreting Profession"; "Engaging with the Deaf Community" and workshops on "Ethics and well-Being", "Improving access to public services", "Team interpreting and sharing experiences", "Historical and future perspectives", "Maintaining quality standards" as well as one of the most important "Development of Deaf Interpreters".

Presenters were many and from different background and experiences, Deaf and hearing, interpreters and non-interpreters. Amongst them was Liz Scott Gibson (President of WASLI) and Maya de Wit (President of efsli).

Reports from their countries were also given by the guests from Malawi: Betty Wisiki and Erick Chiunda; Swaziland: Mbongwa Dube and Makhosini Makhubu.



Betty & Erick (Malawi)



Liz S.G. (WASLI) & Helga McGilp (SASLI)



Mbongwa & Makhosini (Swaziland)

An important point to mention is that although the current convener is Rosie Addis, that introduced and summarised the event, the Director is Helga McGilp (in the picture above) and she is possibly the first Deaf person to be in charge of a Sign Language Interpreters Association in the world!

As part of the celebration we all enjoyed a wonderful gala dinner as well as a fantastic ceilidh (Scottish dances).

The slogan of the whole event was "Sharing the Silver". Silver is the precious metal used to represent the celebration of 25 years anniversaries, but it also indicate value like experience and knowledge, therefore sharing the silver stands for, not only supporting new generation of colleagues, but also colleagues in neighbouring countries and further afar."



JAPAN – REPORT ON WASLI 2007

The National Research Association of Sign Language Interpretation (NRASLI) of Japan held their Summer Workshop 2007, 3-5 August 2007. This was a huge success with more than 1,000 participants. The International Department of NRASLI had a session of a lecture, where all the staff, especially those who attended WASLI 2007, made arrangements and presented video messages from the WASLI President and Secretary as well as scenes from the conference. Participants enjoyed it very much.

Emiko Ichikawa
WASLI Asia Regional Representative

BALKANS REGION REPORT

The information provided is taken from the Balkans Regional Report to the WASLI Executive Board by Selman Hoti (Kosovo)

KOSOVO

In Kosovo we have two groups of students. The first group now is at the final year of interpreter training and the second group is at the advanced level of interpreter training (which means in the second year). We are planning to have to set up an accreditation body early next year. The international expert will be contracted by FAD (Finnish Association of the Deaf) to set up the accreditation body. The Interpreter working group tomorrow will finalise the first draft of KASLI (Kosovo Association of the Sign Language Interpreters) statutes. We are hoping to establish KASLI in early 2008. At the same time the Kosovo Association of the Deaf is lobbying for the interpreter services to be paid by the government and the training to be provided by the public sector in Kosovo.

SERBIA

I was in closely contact interpreters from Serbia, Desanka Zizic and Vera Jovanovic, and I supported them on drafting the programme for sign language interpreters in Serbia. They are trying to get the Project from the Serbian government and closely with Deaf Association to establish the first proper programme of interpreters training. We are hoping that the Serbian government will support and fund this project for next year.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

EGYPT

Cairo / - The *Middle East Online* website has reported that there are only three volunteer Islamic sign language interpreters in the country's mosques for the estimated to 2 for 4 million deaf people in Egypt. Hundreds attend the mosque of Sayeda Zeinab every Friday where the main prayer session is interpreted into sign language. Alaa al-Din al-Sayed has set up an organization called "Sarkha" (The Cry) to serve Deaf people such as his sister.

"When we were first allowed to give prayers in sign language, the faithful were supposed to be put to the back but I asked for them to be allowed to sit in front of the imam so that they are integrated with the rest of the believers," Alaa al-Din al-Sayed said in the article. "I learned sign language and launched the project to translate prayers and to put an end to discrimination, here and elsewhere." He also criticized the Egyptian government for not enforcing a law that requires the 5% of government jobs go to people with disabilities and hearing loss.

JAPAN - Comedian Issues Apology To Sign Language Interpreter

The *Mainichi Daily News* has reported that Japanese comedian Sanshotei Yumenosuke has issued a apology for prompting a sign language interpreter to leave the stage during a performance, claiming that the interpreters movements were putting him off. The incident occurred in a government-run hall in Yasugi Prefecture on September 17. The local association of deaf filed a protest with the Yasugi Municipal Government and the comic, saying in the *News* that the action was "a slap in the face to participants who couldn't hear." The Yasugi municipal government also apologized to the three deaf people who attended the event.

USA - New Social Networking Website For Sign Language Interpreting

Washington, DC / VLI / - Visual Language Interpreting (VLI), a provider of sign language interpreting and CART services, has added more features to www.BlapNET.com, a brand new social networking website for stakeholders of the Sign Language Interpreting field, the site that is the first of its kind. It is now possible to rate and review employers of interpreters, including interpreting agencies and Video Relay Service (VRS) providers on BlapNET, so that other interpreters will be able to determine their compatibility with these companies. Sign language interpreting professionals, students, as well as those interested in the field of sign language can share comments on a specific service provider with each other with each submitted review.

Additional features include: a *Business Showcase* featuring companies involved in this industry, *Featured Members* featuring individuals, and the *Spotlight Gallery* with pictures from various events. These sections will feature businesses, colleagues and glimpses of peers at various events and activities. Also, some current posts include an analysis of ethics as it relates to

interpreting; personal updates from professionals within this community; and pictures from the recent 2007 RID Conference.

BlapNET was launched early August 2007 in time for the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Conference in San Francisco. Since then, the site has registered over 600 members, some of whom have proclaimed enthusiasm for their virtual meeting place. A member posted a comment saying, "Loving BlapNET! ... A resource to connect and network. Keep up the good work!" Website: www.vli-dc.com

USA - Interpreter Recognized For Work During Recent Fires

San Diego / - A sign language Interpreter has been recognized for interpreting up to 20 hours straight of TV coverage during the fires in the San Diego area. According to a KPBS interview on October 31st, Joane Cosentino was hired by the county and was seen at every county press conference. The interview stated her appointment came after complaints from the Deaf Community that the deaf and hard of hearing were not notified about the fires. "People who work with San Diego's deaf community say it's an outgrowth of the Cedar Fire when San Diego's deaf and hearing impaired were left to fend for themselves for emergency information."

NEW ZEALAND - BROADBAND HELPS THE DEAF

Deaf university students can now be connected to teachers all around the world through the wonders of broadband technology

<http://tvnz.co.nz/view/page/411419/1385706>

USA - DEAF WOMEN CLAIMS HOSPITAL VIOLATED HER RIGHTS

"The doctor said they couldn't get me an interpreter and I was very upset," said Gutierrez

<http://www.team4news.com/Global/story.asp?S=7144680>

USA - ACTIVISTS FAULT DCF IN DEAF MOM'S CASE

The lack of a qualified interpreter in a crisis has focused attention on a widespread problem

http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/local/lake/orl-deaf24_107jun24,0,4612862.story?track=rss

SOUTH AFRICA - THE DEAF SPEAK

The president of the Botswana Association of the Deaf (BOAD), Maggie Mapharing says she will raise the issue of communication breakdown at the up-coming conference on 'Deaf Women and HIV/AIDS in Africa' in South Africa

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200706190972.html>

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