



**SOUTH AFRICAN
LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND**

MAKWENZEKE

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SALB

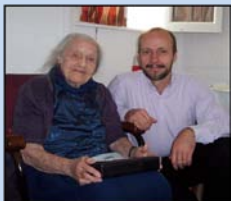
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A YEAR OF CELEBRATIONS

2009 is a momentous year for the South African Library for the Blind (SALB). Not only are we celebrating the bicentenary of Louis Braille's birth but the Library is also celebrating its 90th anniversary. Because these two occasions are so significant and historical, it was decided to celebrate them jointly through various planned events during the year.

The first of these events took place on the 2nd of June when the Library hosted a Gala "Dinner in the Dark" at the Settlers Monument in Grahamstown. It was a splendid affair attended by more than 100 invited guests from 15 different organisations covering 7 Provinces.

The tone of the evening was set with a street function in front of the Library building in High Street where guests enjoyed a drink, conversation and entertainment by a local marimba band. This event involved the unveiling of three very significant signs. For many years passersby could read the big black letters on the front of the building stating the name: South African Library for the Blind in Afrikaans and English. As the South African constitution acknowledges all 11 languages of the country, it was decided to reflect at least one of the indigenous languages next to the other two names. The Xhosa name **Ithala leencwadi labangaboniyo loMzantsi Afrika** was therefore unveiled, since isiXhosa is the language of the Eastern Cape.

In celebration of Louis Braille's birth 200 years ago, it was decided to take the street signage a step further. The braille version of the Library's name is now proudly displayed next to the big steel letters. The braille dots are also made of steel and the size of each dot is about the size of a teaspoon. The sign is clearly visible and readable from a distance. It has already attracted much attention and positive comments from passersby.

The highlight of the street function was the unveiling of the Library building's name. The Chair of the SALB Board, Justice Zak Yacoob unveiled the "Josie Wood Building" plaque at the front door of the building. He gave a moving account of Josie Wood as part of the unveiling. The name is in commemoration and acknowledgement of Josie Wood, the founder of the Library during 1919 in Grahamstown. Her immense efforts to grow and develop the library created a more than sound foundation for current and future generations to build on.

This brought the street function to an end and the guests moved to the impressive Settlers Monument, where one of the halls was prepared for the gala dinner in stylish fashion. Prior to being escorted into the darkened dining area, guests were entertained by the Graeme College Steel Band for drinks and snacks. The program of the evening started on a very dramatic note with the launch of the Library's new logo to the music of Richard Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra* during a slide show. The meaning of the logo was explained by the Director, Mr Hendrikz. An explanation on the logo can be found on page 3.

Dr William Rowland, a former chair of the SALB Board, gave an informative account of Louis Braille and how his genius and historical "coincidences" brought light and hope to blind people with the development of the braille reading and writing system.

The current Chair of the Board, Justice Zak Yacoob, gave an inspirational talk about the Library, its history, the importance of reading and the challenges still facing blind people to access the printed word. An excellent suggestion made during his speech was the need to put together a proper researched history of the Library. This will serve as a permanent record for all those interested to read, understand and appreciate where the Library came from and the effort that accompanied it.

During the last item on the program, the Library recognised the work of six long-standing braillists and narrators. Alida Blom, Eileen Manning, Dale Meiring, 'Blommie' Visser, Brian Llewellyn and 'Vink' Roux received personalized trophies and certificates to acknowledge their effort, skills and contributions over the years.

It may sound as if guests had nothing to eat! This was not the case — the starters to the dessert were deliciously prepared and flawlessly served. Between the formal items on the program, the guests enjoyed dinner and drinks and were entertained by live music which included a String Quartet.

The evening was a resounding success. We were fortunate to have so many friends, supporters and staff of the Library to join us in this celebration. The occasion was a very special and memorable one and set the bar for the challenge the Library will face in ten years when it celebrates its 100th anniversary.

DIRECTOR'S COMMUNIQUE



What have you done?

The financial year of the South African Library for the Blind (SALB) starts on 1 April of each year and comes to an end on 31 March the following year. This is in line with the Government financial year since the SALB is a Public Entity and complies with the Public Finance Management Act. All budgeting and planning activities are therefore planned to take place in this period. The Library is currently in the process of putting together its Annual Report. The Library's finances are scrutinized by the Office of the Auditor-General in the finest detail. Audits are no longer restricted to financial matters alone.

The performance of the Library is also considered. Since the Government attaches a certain strategic value to the Library, it provides funding to enable the Library to perform its core function. The funding amounts to approximately 80% of the Library's total budget - for the rest the Library raises its own funds for specific projects. Treasury therefore need to know whether there was value for money in the various activities performed by the Library.

End of year periods are a time for reflection, confirmation and planning for the next performance period. Looking back over the past two financial years, that is 2007/2008 and 2008/2009, the Library is proud to say that progress has been made on various levels. I would like to share only a few statistical comparisons in this regard.

In the past financial year we have added 1,014 audio titles to the collection, which was almost 400 titles more than the previous year. We have also added 271 braille titles, an increase of 106 titles. These are just numbers, but what it means is that the Library's collection is continuously developing and we are offering our members more titles to choose from. For a library this is a never-ending activity and we can only grow our collection with the inputs from our members. These figures compare very favourably, and in some cases are even better than the collection growth of the average public and school library.

The Library's combined membership, audio and braille members, for this year totals 5,244 compared with 4,888 for the previous year. This increase in membership is remarkable if one takes into account that the Library is busy with a process to clean up our

database of members who have not been active for several years. One of the main reasons for this increase is the implementation of the Daisy digital books replacing the old 4-track tape system. The quality of sound and the fact that one compact disc contains a complete book has encouraged people to join the Library. We also believe that our outreach programs with public libraries and other organisations have stimulated an interest in people to join the Library.

We circulated 91,508 audio books during the past year. This represents an increase of 1,805 books over the previous year. Unfortunately, the circulation of braille titles dropped by 311 titles to 1,974. The decrease may not be huge, but it is still a concern. The decline in braille reading is not unique to South Africa. It is an international phenomenon and there may be many reasons for this. The Library is paying a considerable amount of attention to the promotion of braille as a reading and writing system. As part of the international Louis Braille Bicentenary celebrations, the SALB and Braille SA have launched a braille essay writing competition. From the number of submissions received, it is clear that braille is by no means dead. As a matter of fact it is quite inspiring. We will report on the outcome of this competition in the next edition of *Makwenzeke*.

The figures highlighted above are just a small sample of the various statistics kept by the Library to monitor progress and performance.

Visitors to the Library are always surprised by the variety of activities going on and the level of complexities linked to a supposedly fairly simple process that goes into, for instance the

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What have you done?

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production of a braille book or dispatching a book to a member.

The Library exists because of its members but services could not be rendered if it were not for the dedicated and committed staff of the library. From our own statistics and the feedback we continuously receive from our members it is

clear that the SALB is dynamic and growing. Like all living things — we will make mistakes which have to be addressed, but in the same breath — it is important that we acknowledge small achievements.

As we enter a new financial year, we would like to say: “We will do our best!”

Francois Hendrikz

OUR NEW LOGO ...

The South African Library for the Blind is proud to present its new logo. The logo was launched during a gala dinner on the 2nd of June as part of the 90th anniversary of the Library and the Bicentenary celebrations of the birth of Louis Braille.

At first glance the new logo conveys an image of a person with arms wide open. The body of the person is represented by “an open book” with the head of the person represented by a round shape positioned in the middle above the “open book”. The logo depicts the following elements:



1. People
2. The book
3. Braille and accessibility
4. Reaching-out and receiving
5. Growth and development

- The left page of “the book” is a solid colour which fades from left to right. This depicts the printed book full of information but inaccessible to the blind person.
- The right page of the book is full of dots. This represents braille as the medium which makes information accessible. The dots also fade to the right indicating the use of other technologies to make reading material accessible.
- The outstretched arms of the person, depicted by the way the book is shaped represents a person giving (the Library offering a service) and a person receiving (the users of the Library)
- Finally, the bottom spine of the book is shaped to make it stand on a short “stem”. This gives the book, with the two pages serving as leaves, the look of a new plant as it sprouts and emerges through the soil. This is a portrayal of the growth and development that takes place when people are exposed to books and reading.

TALKING BOOKS



Title: The Eleventh Commandment

Author: Jeffrey Archer

Accession No: DA985

Narrator: Peter Marinker

Category: Thriller

There's nothing like a good book for some winter fireside enjoyment. This one, a tale of espionage, shows us great insights into the machinations of the CIA and it's Russian counterpart. It would seem that the writer, Jeffrey Archer, had confronted narrator, Peter Marinker, with an incredibly difficult task, but the BBC (true to form) have pulled out all the stops to engage an exceptional voice artist. The story begins in Colombia, where the drug lords are in supreme control. An election approaches and one of the candidates is assassinated by a superb marksman. Was it the CIA? FBI? Or another drug lord behind this operation.

This gripping tale moves to Washington, and the headquarters of the CIA, where the ruthless director, Helen Dexter unleashes all her cunning abilities to mastermind yet another assassination in Russia. Who but Jeffrey Archer could describe the rundown Russian opponents and a resurrected Tsar. This book will keep you on the edge of your seat as plot and counterplot ensues. The story is complicated but completely feasible in this day and age where super powers are severely threatened by weapons of mass destruction. A much recommended book and it's on Daisy!

Reviewed by Jeremy Dawes

Title: The Convoy Commodore

Author: Phillip McCutchan

Accession No: A6521

Narrator: Clifford Norgate

Category: Sea Story

A fellow named Nicholas Montsarrat became famous for his story of the ship *Compass Rose*. He was pretty well known around the Joburg Northern suburbs as a rather suave young gent of the post second world war years. Most of the young men of that era also remember him as the owner of a very smart E-type Jaguar (a drop head coupe).

Not quite so famous is the name Philip McCutchan, but his story revolving around an aging Commodore John Kemp, is equally riveting and deals with the dilapidated convoy ships, which plied the Atlantic ocean at the outset of the last war.

This sort of story always sends shivers down the spine of one who swiftly becomes engrossed in the precarious lives of those aboard ships and submarines. In this tale the enemy is Nazi Germany which soon takes control of the skies and the seas, between Nova Scotia and the UK. This is a gripping wartime novel with all the facets aboard those early oil burners. The fear of U Boat packs begins and ends as the torpedoes cripple Commodore Kemp's convoy of ships. The Convoy Commodore by Philip McCutchan was recorded in Bath, England in 1990.

Reviewed by Jeremy Dawes

NEW DAISY TITLES 2009

Please note that this list serves as an indication of the latest available titles

TITLE	AUTHOR	Category	Acc No.	TITLE	AUTHOR	Category	Acc No.
After the dance	Kobie Kruger	Travel	DA 994	Na hoer hoogtes	Marijke Greeff	Fiksie	DA2279
Red sky in the morning	Tami Oldham	Memoire	DA 2285	Deur trauma boek 5	Maretha Maartens	Self help	DA271
Weary	Sue Edbury	History	DA2552	The prince: A novella	Francine Rivers	Religious Fiction	DA638
Louis Braille: A touch of Genius	Micheal Mellor	Biography	DA2485	Before I die	Jenny Downham	YAF	DA2384
Three cups of tea	Mortenson, G & Relin, D.O	Biography	DA2139	Some of my best friends are white	N Ngcobo	Essays	DA877
Iran awakening	Shirin Ebadi	Biography	DA1905				

PLEASE QUOTE THE ACCESSION NUMBER WHEN ORDERING YOUR BOOK CHOICES

ABUSE OF DAISY DAB PLAYERS

Your DAISY Digital Audio Book player is a highly sophisticated piece of equipment. It is in most cases as clever as any personal computer. The DAISY player will “look” at a CD and instantly recognise the compression format which was used to create the CD. It will instantly change its own internal playback parameters to allow the reader to listen to almost any CD while delivering mostly studio quality sound.

It is an expensive piece of equipment and should be treated with respect. Remember it is mass produced and mostly made out of plastic. Try not to drop the player, even though accidents do happen. The power supply is unique to the DAISY player and must be treated with the same respect as the player itself.

Unfortunately the Technical Services section of the Library has had DAISY players in for repair, where it is obvious that readers have abused their players. Therefore, we would like you all to not attempt to do the following to your player and its dedicated power pack.

◆ Do not attempt to remove a CD which is stuck inside the player by inserting flat sharp objects into the slot of the CD-Rom player. If the player does not want to eject the CD, you can try the following sequence:

- turn the player off by pressing the power button for long enough to hear the double beep;
- wait about 15 seconds, and press and hold down the arrow head shaped eject button below the power button;
- while holding the eject button down, press the power button until you hear the single beep, which means the player has been turned on;
- release both buttons.

◆ If the player still gives trouble, or refuses to eject the CD, it will have to be parcelled up in its original packing material, and posted to the South African Library for the Blind, P O Box 115, Grahamstown, 6140, for professional repair.

◆ Do not leave the power pack plugged in and switched on in a wall socket unless the power pack is plugged into the player for the purpose of charging the player’s battery.

◆ Do not use the player’s power pack to charge other rechargeable battery operated equipment. The polarity is probably different and could cause the Ni-Cad batteries to explode in the equipment being charged, and/or ruin the rectifier circuit inside the DAISY player’s power pack, which will render it useless for charging your player’s battery.

◆ Never force any CD into your DAISY player’s CD-Rom drive. When the player is ready, it will pull the CD in and the player will be ready to play it.

◆ Do not twist any of the power cords, because eventually the insulation around the wires will break and cause them to short out, which will damage the power pack beyond repair.

◆ Do not leave your DAISY player in the sun, near a heater, stove, washbasin, bath, or in any area where there is a lot of dust.

By adhering to the above, your DAISY player will be a very reliable piece of equipment which will give you many hours of listening pleasure without requiring any servicing or repairs for quite a long time.

By Johan Nel (Head : Technical Services) and Ria Greaves (Head : Circulation)

BASIC PROCESSES OF AUDIO PRODUCTION



Pre-Production Stage

- ◆ Books for narration go through the book selection committee for selection.
- ◆ The Copyright Librarian then applies for copyright of the books that were selected by the committee.
- ◆ Once copyright is received, the books are catalogued and a production sheet is printed to go with the book to Production Support Services.
- ◆ Here the books gets entered into their data bases and passed on the Audio Production section.

Production Stage 1 - Structuring

- ◆ The books then get Chapter structured and send back to Production Support Services.

Production Stage 2 - Narration

- ◆ Books are now given to narrators according to the contents of the book, narrator's reading voice and style.
- ◆ Books are matched to narrators and vice-versa as best as possible.
- ◆ The books are narrated.
- ◆ An average book of 300 pages can take a narrator ±15 hours to complete, although the actual completed listening time will be a lot less.
- ◆ The narrators are responsible for correcting all their reading mistakes (edits).
- ◆ Training is given to each narrator, before he/she starts narrating their first book.
- ◆ Once the narration of the book is complete, the books are handed back to Audio Production.

Production Stage 3 – Quality checking and page insertion

- ◆ Print labels are now requested from the Circulation section and braille labels are produced.
- ◆ These labels will be placed onto the completed mailers.
- ◆ The production staff now go through the completed narrated books and while inserting the various page numbers, they also do a thorough quality and editing check of the narrated book.
- ◆ One production staff member will do the quality checking and page numbering, while another production staff member will check the previous person's work and prepare the book for CD writing and printing.

Production Stage 4 – CD writing and printing

- ◆ Once the book is checked and found to be in good order, the production staff member will write and print the CD copies.

Production Stage 5 - Labeling and boxing

- ◆ When all the CD copies of the books have been made, the Audio Production staff will place the completed CDs into their CD holders and place the necessary print and braille labels onto the holders.
- ◆ The completed "books" are then taken to the Cataloguing Librarian – for cataloguing and adding to stock.

Melton Kivitts
Head : Audio Production

GENERATOR INSTALLATION



Negotiations which had started with the Department of Arts and Culture during the early part of 2008 eventually paid off early in 2009 when the department announced that they would pay for the installation of an electrical power back-up generator. Quotes were organised and an order was generated and issued to the successful contractor to commence with the installation as soon as possible.

Two weeks after the order was generated, the plinth on which the generator would stand was considered to have cured and the unit was delivered and placed in position with a huge crane.

Another three weeks went by during which all the electrical wiring, power change-over box and cables were installed and then it was time to test whether there would be light at the end of the tunnel in the event of a power failure. The only glitch was that once the generator had started, it would not turn off - it was that keen to supply power to the Library for the Blind! However, a diesel mechanic working for the supplier, soon sorted out that problem and all was well. In the event of a power failure in Grahamstown now, the Library for the Blind stands out like a beacon of light to warn others that we do not stop serving the blind community because of a little power failure. The Library would like to thank the Department of Arts and Culture who has made this wonderful feat possible.

By Johan Nel
Head : Technical Services

TRIBUTE

We were deeply saddened to learn that Mr Graham Charles Lloyd Clarke from Howick died on 15th May 2009 at the age of 97. Apart from being a teacher and businessman, he was also an avid reader and member of the Library. He became our very first Daisy user in 2007 and recommended the digital reader and books with great passion. We miss him very much. Our sincerest condolences to his wife and family.

BIRTHDAY



Congratulations to Mrs Dorothy Randell, who celebrated her 100th birthday on the 29th of June. Mrs Randell narrated books for the Library before joining as a member. Since then she has read 477 books. She is a well-known artist and teacher, who resides in Grahamstown.

CIRCULATION SNIPPETS



I cannot believe that half of this pre-soccer year is gone and it is mid-winter. It is the usual bee-hive of activities here in the Circulation Section with phone-calls, e-mails and letters from members. We are all very excited about our new logo, which will soon be on our letterheads, application forms and other stationery.

NEW SUBJECT CATEGORIES

We have added more non-fiction topics to create a wider range of book choices for members. This is an excellent opportunity to broaden your reading experience. Contact us if you want us to add any of the new categories to your profile. Please quote the first word or phrase of the category:

- ◆ Aviation, war aviation, aeronautics, spacecrafts
- ◆ Archaeology, paleontology, fossils
- ◆ Braille manuals, Braille courses
- ◆ Disability, blindness, rehabilitation, eyesight disease
- ◆ Nature, conservation, environmental science, ecology, global warming
- ◆ Financial planning, entrepreneurship, personal money management
- ◆ General knowledge, encyclopedias, fact books
- ◆ Law cases, true legal stories, reference works on law
- ◆ Legends and myths
- ◆ True adventures
- ◆ Crime, true crime stories
- ◆ Sport

NEW BOOKS

A new accession list went out at the beginning of June. We are using another e-mail version and I had to enter all the addresses again! If you have not received the list or are not on yet – e-mail me at: ria.greaves@salb.org.za

MEET A MEMBER

Meet our special member for this edition:

Mrs Stella Grassman from Alexandria in the Eastern Cape. Stella joined our Library in 2001, when her sight deteriorated as a result of macular degeneration. She is a teacher and taught for many years at different schools in Cape Town.

Her reading preference was mainly Afrikaans until the Daisy player became available. She discovered the speed button and uses the feature to assist her in reading English books. "It is wonderful to enjoy books in English. I am now also able to speak English much better." Stella was also part of our pilot project for 'Huisgenoot'. She recommends the following books: Mixed blessings by Danielle Steel (DA 1571); Vaseline-tjie by Anoeschka von Meck (DA 1124); Dis ek, Anna by Elbe Lötter (DA 641).

Books read: 503

DAISY LOAN CONDITIONS

With increasing demands to replace stolen Daisy readers, or repair badly damaged ones, the Board of the SALB has approved specific loan conditions for Daisy players. We will send two copies of the loan condition document to all current members, as well as a cover letter in braille and in print. Please sign one copy and return it to us. The second copy is for you to keep. Please assist us with this enormous task.

PLEASE NOTE

A complete list of all the DAISY titles in electronic format (email) is available.

If you wish to have a copy sent to you, please contact Ria Greaves at :

ria.greaves@salb.org.za

CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 046 622 7226
Fax: 046 622 4645

We are on the web -
visit us @
www.salb.org.za