

OBITUARY: MICHAEL FOSTER

Michael Foster who died on 28th April 2011 aged 81 was an active member of the SCOLMA Committee in the 1970s (standing down in 1979) when he was Librarian of the Commonwealth Institute in Kensington. He will be remembered particularly for being joint organiser and host to the major SCOLMA Conference "Progress in African bibliography" held at the Commonwealth Institute, 17 & 18 March 1977. This was to mark 15 years of SCOLMA's existence and specifically to review developments in the decade since the International Conference on African Bibliography held in Nairobi in 1967 under the auspices of the International African Institute. The Conference was by far SCOLMA's most ambitious venture to date and attracted 140 delegates from 22 countries.

On the SCOLMA Committee Michael always sought greater involvement in SCOLMA's work by U.K. public libraries serving multicultural communities. His most notable professional work was probably in pursuing this particular interest on the international scene. In 1983 he joined the founding committee of what was then the IFLA (International Federation of Library Association)'s Working Group on Library Services to Multicultural Populations. In 1985 he became its Chairman, and in the following year at the 1986 IFLA General Conference in Tokyo, the Working Group became a full IFLA Section of which Michael continued as Chairman until 1989. To mark the arrival of the new Section in 1987 he arranged and hosted an IFLA Satellite Meeting in London preceding the 1987 IFLA General Conference in Sydney entitled "Multiculturalism and libraries: issues and trends".

In retirement Michael lived in Castle Acre, Norfolk.

John McIlwaine