

**The Dictionary Society  
of North America  
XV Biennial Meeting  
Boston, MA  
June 8-11, 2005**

The fifteenth Biennial Meeting of the Dictionary Society of North America will take place at Boston University, in the New England area where American lexicography had its beginnings. In addition to the meeting, members will be able to attend events at the offices of the local dictionary publishers Houghton Mifflin and Merriam-Webster. Papers will be given on a wide range of topics in lexicography and lexicology. Presentations are twenty minutes, followed by five minutes for discussion, and there will also be a forum on dictionary usage open to the public. The conference will include tours of Merriam-Webster and the American Antiquarian Society, and of Harvard University's Houghton Library and the Boston Public Library's Rare Book Room, as well as a reception hosted by Houghton Mifflin. New England has played an important role in North American lexicography and continues to do so today. It is fitting that lexicographers from around the world will convene here and learn about the modern publishers of American dictionaries and have an opportunity to see documentation of the history of lexicography including American lexicography leading up to the present.

**David Jost**

DSNA President  
<http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/dsna/DSNABostonMtg.html>

who would not necessarily have attended previous congresses could come along. Many of these will join the association, and will also come to Turin, where Italian lexicographers will bring a new Italian outlook to the next event, and from there on, who knows? Europe has such a wealth of lexicographical practice to share; our wealth of languages underlines our rich cultural diversity. EURALEX is far from an English-speaking club; whatever language someone chooses to present in, there will always be an audience eager to listen.

**Organisation**

Now we can get down to business. What happens in the two years between congresses?

**Acceptance**

The first stage is that an offer to host the following event must be accepted by the general assembly, which always meets during the congress. Prior to this, offers will have been discussed by the board so that some arbitration can be done if there is a plethora of potential venues; this also helps planning ahead even if the plans rarely work out.

Once the offer has been accepted serious planning can start. This means setting up a local committee and handing out tasks. This more than takes up a first year as the website and databases are built, the call written, contacts made with local authorities, including the tourist board, contacts established with the press, et cetera. Each organiser knows that the previous organisers can be relied on for assistance, but local needs generate new problems, which may require local solutions. We took on two students to help us through this first year, which culminates, with the summer board meeting.

**Launching the machine**

By the time of the board meeting, which always takes place at the new host institution in the summer preceding the congress, all the infrastructure must be in place, as by June the first call for papers must go out. The call should be in at least two languages, we used three, with English and Breton in addition to French. The inclusion of Breton was important to us, as being able to include one of Europe's lesser-spoken languages underlines our concerns for all the languages of the EU.

As the call goes out in the *International Journal of Lexicography*, advance planning is essential as paper-publishing deadlines are obviously different from those of electronic lists. The journal reaches a different audience than the electronic

lists, and EURALEX members must be informed first. In addition to the journal, we try to cover all the major electronic lists, the aim is to widen the circle to all those interested in lexicography.

The call will go out at regular intervals up to the final deadline for the receipt of papers. There is obviously a limited degree of flexibility, but the deadlines for the review process are very short. Whereas in some congresses review is done on short abstracts, EURALEX requires full abstracts so that a rigorous selection process can be carried out and the whole proceedings be in print before the event. This puts a lot of pressure on the organiser.

At this point I must reiterate the fact that the organiser is still doing their fulltime job. It is very unlikely that they will get a reduced teaching or research load, in fact the opposite generally occurs as those dynamic enough to organise a major event must be able to take on something else, *n'est ce pas?*

**The review process**

The reputation of a congress is paramount to success; if the selection is seen as anything but rigorous then the congress will no longer fulfil its purpose of disseminating knowledge. It is all too easy for a congress attached to an association to be seen as a sort of club where it is sufficient to be a member to speak. Such a situation is clearly disastrous, as a small group of people would only ever listen to themselves and over time the circle would inevitably diminish and the debates become sterile. This is far from the case with EURALEX, as we have a strict process of double-blind review, which ensures rigorous selection. For those who do not know the process I shall explain.

As can be seen from the call, every EURALEX congress has a programme committee, these are the people who will make the final selection, but on the basis of reports supplied by the review panel. The review panel consists of experts in different fields of lexicography who agree to read and comment on a maximum of 5 proposals. The organiser has of course the lists from previous congresses, but will also add in more reviewers from their own circle of professional acquaintances, as a new venue will require a greater weight in some language combinations. Management of this panel is complex, as unlike many congresses that only have English as their working language, EURALEX is very multilingual. This means taking into account both speciality and language combinations; a far from