



# capital translator

Newsletter of the National Capital Area  
Chapter of the American Translators  
Association - May 2004.



## Translating & Interpreting for the Government Seminar

Hamilton Crowne Plaza, Washington, DC. April 3-4, 2004

**Sponsored by ATA and NCATA**

By Donna H. Sandin

The ATA event was a big success. About 180 people signed up. The ATA HQ staff was there in force - Maggie Rowe, who has been at ATA HQ longer than anyone, I think, plus Teresa Kelly, Walter, and Mary David. A lot of people were happy to meet Maggie, as she's the main phone call fielder. She never travels. On Sunday Terry Hanlen and his assistant Regina were there, as proctors for the 40 people who took the certification exam. The hotel was beautiful, so nicely restored, built in the late 20's.

Those who've been around Washington for many years may remember it as the Manger Hamilton. The room we were given was large enough, but not too large. The acoustics were good, though everyone had to use a mike and there were one or two problems with that. I was pleased that each speaker actually had real public speaking ability! And no one had much trouble staying within the time limit. They adhered well to the announced topic. Bob Sette (an ATA board member) was assigned to give time signals and he sat in a central position to do so, and no one took offense at being reminded. People universally obeyed instructions to hold their questions until the Q & A session, which was a great relief.

During the coffee hour before we started the sessions attendees mingled around very well and new people seemed to be blending in nicely. The hotel staff was visible and ready to replenish the coffee. IDB books brought a modest selection, mainly Spanish, and I think they sold quite a few and took orders for others.

I'm pretty sure everyone was happy with the event. We finished at 5:30 and the cash bar and minimal but good munchies were ready for us (the hotel service was very good!). A lot of people left fairly quickly, probably headed home since for many it was a one-day event. But still it was a good idea to have the cocktail hour.

Our own event on Sunday was very well attended - did Scott tell me 80 people? We sat at long tables this time, since the room had been reconfigured for the afternoon exam. Alexandra had me and Giovanna Lester sitting in the front row to take pictures and I didn't get a good look at the audience, but there could have been more than 80. Ninie and Flori did well on the desk and making more copies of handouts. I'm certain that the fact that an exam was given the same day helped encourage people to attend the second day.

We started at 10, after a one-hour coffee and pastries session. We had to clear the room by 12:15 so our schedule was a bit tight, as I had predicted. Each speaker had a half hour, a brief break between the first two and the second two. It was discovered that we had, after all, no timekeeper, because Ninie and Flori were kept busy outside the hall. I got signals from John when Cheryl Fain went on a bit too long, and I was in the line of sight, so I took over that task. It would have been better had this been worked out before we got started, so the speakers would know who to look at and the audience would understand that this was going to happen!!! And the timekeeper would know how much time the speakers were supposed to have. The speakers all did well and were well received. Alexandra included the vital information as to how one might get started on work as freelancer or staff translator for international orgs. I would have liked the other three lecturers to explain how they got their jobs for embassies. Perhaps John's and Bob's presentations could have been expanded to 45 minutes to cover more of the topic, but the handouts were useful. Alexandra's was a perfect fit time wise, or appeared to be!

There wasn't any time at all for questions during our session, and due to the short break and the fact that participants were either taking the exam (which started shortly after our session) or heading home, so probably only the most persistent got their questions asked out in the hall (the speakers WERE all there, available afterward, as they were the evening before in the cocktail hour).

Donna H. Sandin  
Reston VA USA



*Over 100 people registered for the NCATA-sponsored seminar on "Translating for Foreign Governments".*



*NCATA speakers Bob Feron of the Brazilian Embassy, Cheryl Fain of the Swiss Embassy, Alexandra Russell-Bitting of the IDB and John Vazquez of the Spanish Embassy."*

## Italian Language Presentation, April 27th

The NCATA held its first language-specific event of 2004. On Wednesday, April 28, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., an Italian language presentation/meeting event took place at the offices of National Geographic Television in Washington, DC.

The speakers were Elisabetta Savigni Ullmann, and Alessandra Cortese de Bosis and Camilla Bozzoli Rudolph.

Elisabetta Savigni Ullmann, an Italian interpreter at the highest level, studied at the Interpreting School in Florence and worked at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NATO, and, after moving to the United States, at the State Department and the White House. She has covered the G7 and G8 meeting for the Italian, American, Canadian and Japanese Governments, the Olympic games in Atlanta, Sydney, and Salt Lake City and has been a reviewer for the Italian edition of National Geographic Magazine.

In her presentation she spoke about the basic difference between interpreters and translators and the importance of the interpreter as a mediator between cultures.

Alessandra Cortese de Bosis studied at the Interpreting School in Rome and worked as a Translator and Head of the Translation Division at the Press and Information Office of the American Embassy in Rome. Since moving to the United States, she has worked on a free-lance basis for the World Bank and other organizations and has been a reviewer of the Italian edition of National Geographic Magazine.

She spoke about the challenge of using the correct terminology in interpretation, commenting on the more common used opening and closing expressions in Italian and in English during conference interpreting. Camilla Bozzoli Rudolph received her doctorate in Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Bologna and a Master from the University of Ca' Foscari in Venice. She worked as a free-lance translator at the European Community, the Italian Embassy, the World Bank and the UNDP. She is a staff translator at the National Geographic Society and language instructor for Romance Languages at Georgetown University.

## In Memoriam

On April 27, 2004, the world of translation and interpretation lost one of its most colorful and respected figures. After a long and courageous fight, Dr. Margareta Brosch Bowen finally succumbed to cancer at her home in Arlington, Virginia. An interpreter of unsurpassed skill, she was perhaps best known for her 30 years at the helm of the Division of Interpretation and Translation at Georgetown University, where she and her late husband, David, trained a generation of translators and interpreters from around the world. Their students have gone on to hold permanent and freelance positions at most major international organizations and many government agencies.

She and her husband co-authored the widely-used textbook *Steps to Consecutive Interpretation*, edited *Interpreting: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* for the American Translators Association Scholarly Monograph Series, contributed to numerous specialized journals, and produced *The Jerome Quarterly*, which had a run of 13 years. The publication began as an outreach newsletter to disseminate information on the various facets of interpretation and translation but grew to become a widely cited source of research and reflection. It was in large part thanks to Dr. Bowen's personality and her extensive contacts with other educators, professionals, and alumni that the JQ was able to draw on such a talented pool of contributors over the years. Prior to her arrival at Georgetown, Dr. Bowen had served as Chief Interpreter at the United Nations

Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and frequently interpreted for major conferences of the European Community and the International Atomic Energy Agency. (Drawing on this experience, she later enjoyed "separating the wheat from the chaff" in her classes by subjecting her students to very complicated speeches on nuclear technology.) Her work as a conference interpreter included assignments around the world, with stints in Australia, Iran, Japan, Morocco, Europe, and throughout the United States.

Dr. Bowen was a long-time member of the prestigious Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence (AIIC). For many years, she was also active in The American Association of Language Specialists (TAALS) and the International Permanent Conference of University Institutes of Translators and Interpreters (CIUTI). She gave presentations at several ATA conferences mainly on aspects of interpreter training. After her retirement she remained active professionally and continued to co-revise the German-language version of the International Monetary Fund's Annual Report.

Her Georgetown "family" appreciates the outpouring of support received from her friends, colleagues, and former students. Their special memories and entertaining anecdotes have been very comforting at this time of sadness as we cope with the loss of a brilliant mind, a respected colleague, and a good friend.

Kathleen Forest Chamberlain,  
May 1, 2004



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For more information on upcoming events organized by NCATA, please visit our website at [www.ncata.org](http://www.ncata.org).