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# DBI SECRETARIAT ANNUAL REPORT

1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2009– 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2010

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DEAFBLIND INTERNATIONAL was formerly known as THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF DEAFBLIND PEOPLE

**DbI** - THE WORLD ASSOCIATION PROMOTING SERVICES FOR DEAFBLIND PEOPLE

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2009/2010 has been a lively year for the DbI Secretariat and numerous actions have been accomplished. On several occasions we have received great praise for the manner in which Senses Foundation is managing and undertaking its responsibilities and duties as the DbI Secretariat.



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## MEMBERSHIP

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The Dbl Membership is integral to the success and livelihood of the Organization. Without the support of its members, Dbl could not continue to promote awareness and services that it currently achieves worldwide. To maintain the level of membership support, the Secretariat takes care to nurture the members, keep in regular contact, make certain the database contacts are accurate and up to date and ensure its members feel they are valued and important to the organization.

All active members, Corporate, Individual and Libraries were contacted in February 2010 inviting them to renew their membership and pay the relevant membership fee. Members were also asked to complete a membership renewal form to assist in checking the contact details and membership requirements against the database and ascertain why organizations value being a member of Dbl. This information can be useful when considering a re-structure of the membership tiers. The renewal response was very positive and we were pleased to welcome several new members to the organization.

Membership statistics for 2009/10

| <b>Member Category</b> | <b>Active &amp; Paid</b> | <b>Awaiting Renewal</b> |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Individual</b>      | 81                       | 2                       |
| <b>Mini Corporate</b>  | 0                        | 1                       |
| <b>Small Corporate</b> | 30                       | 17                      |
| <b>Large Corporate</b> | 6                        | 6                       |
| <b>Libraries</b>       | 6                        | 1                       |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>123</b>               | <b>27</b>               |

Contact with the Finance Office increased and the reporting process was fine tuned. A new reporting system was established to streamline the efficiency of cross checking the membership information.

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## HANDOVER OF THE INFORMATION FUNCTION & DBI REVIEW

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The term for the outgoing Information Officer came to an end in January 2010. The Secretariat was instrumental in facilitating the process for appointing a new Information Officer. The call for *Expressions of Interest (EOI)* for the Information Officer position was sent in mid 2009 however as no suitable applications were received it was agreed that the EOI needed to be re-circulated. This provided an opportunity to inform potential applicants that a sum of money was now attached to

assist with the set up of this position. High on the Secretariat agenda was to manage this whole process in a timely and effective manner. Information was circulated far and wide and an agreed upon process was followed.

Once a suitable candidate was selected, the handover was completed in May 2010 and since then the Secretariat has worked closely with the new Information Officer to implement changes to the website, make improvements to the existing layout and assist in providing information and articles for inclusion in the Dbl Review issues #44 & #45. For the first time in our term as Secretariat we were proud to provide a Spanish version of the Dbl Review #45 to our Latin American and Spanish speaking members. We hope this will encourage more members from that region to join Dbl.

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### **WEBSITE**

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As we progress into our term as Dbl Secretariat, it has become more and more apparent how vital the website is for our members. We are dedicated to keeping the information relevant, up to date and informative. In particular the *What's New* section is closely watched and updated to ensure we are providing as much relevant and appropriate information as possible. We also take pride in keeping the contact information of our corporate members, Networks and organization leaders accurate to ensure members can make contact with the right people at any time. With the Strategic Plan now in force, we are excited at the prospect of future funding to further improve the website and create a cutting edge, world class portal for the Deafblind community.

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### **NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

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The Nominations Committee was elected at the Council meetings in Senigallia, September 2009. The Secretariat has supported the Committee and worked closely with the Chair to circulate the Call for Nominations for President, Vice Presidents & Board Members. A timeline has been devised to see the process through to the World Conference in Brazil, September 2011.

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### **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE & COUNCIL**

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A significant portion of the Secretariat role is spent on duties surrounding the ManCom & Council.

Much work was completed in the lead up to the European Conference, calling for then circulating reports and assisting in collating the travel itineraries. The hard work paid off when we attended and successfully executed the Dbl ManCom and Council meetings as well as an Extraordinary General Assembly.

Similar work was completed in the lead up to the ManCom and Conference Planning meetings in Brazil 24<sup>th</sup> February – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2010. All the meetings were successful and a significant amount of work was accomplished. Meeting face to face with the ManCom members and having the opportunity to meet with the Conference planning committee was very beneficial and further strengthened our ties. We were given the opportunity to tour the conference facilities, meet with the appointed agency and received a presentation of the progress they have made so far in preparation for the World Conference. This instilled in us strong confidence that they will execute the conference professionally and represent Dbl in the light to which it aspires.

The next Dbl meetings are scheduled to take place in Aalborg, Denmark in September 2010 and preliminary arrangements have been made to prepare for these. The Agenda is currently being developed and as these will be the first Council meetings since the new constitution was ratified there will be some new procedures to establish.

Aside from the actual meetings, the work undertaken to support the Council and ManCom over the year have included:

- keeping track of Matters Arising from past meetings;
- taking Minutes at meetings then editing and circulating them;
- Re-formatting and reviewing content of Strategic Plan and making some suggestions for inclusion relating to the Secretariat work;
- Supporting the President in drafting responses;
- Liaising with International liaisons officer to provide support for deafblind people in developing regions with limited resources;
- Supporting the Secretary where required;
- Devising and booking travel arrangements for Secretariat to attend meetings around the world;
- Facilitating the process of selecting a new host for the 15<sup>th</sup> Dbl World Conference following the withdrawal of India;
- Promoting other Dbl conferences or Network Events to the membership.

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## **CONFERENCES**

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### **European Conference, Senigallia, September 2009**

Following the ManCom & Council meetings in Senigallia, the Secretariat represented Dbl at the Dbl booth during the Conference, promoting Dbl, encouraging memberships and selling Dbl pins.

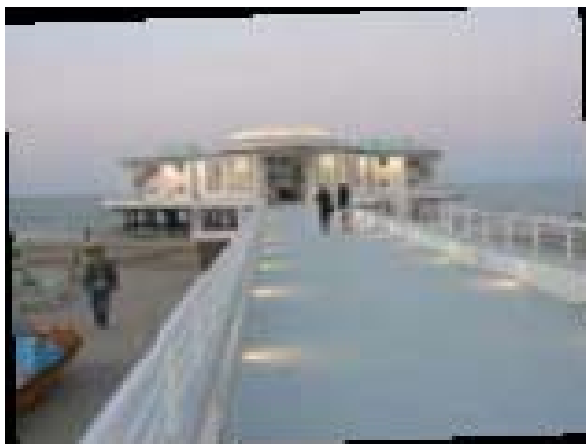
A few participants were selected by Dbl to be supported financially to attend the conference in Senigallia. The Secretariat played a pivotal role in taking care of arrangements for sponsorship

recipients and was the face to face contact on-site to assist with the payment of registrations, meals and other sponsored activities and to provide additional support when required.

Attending the meetings and conference functions was very valuable for me in my role as Secretariat Manager. Meeting with the members of ManCom & Council provided a great opportunity to build on the relationships that I had formed with these people over email and iron out some issues that have been lingering for many months. It was great to really feel part of the team and contribute my knowledge. I was able to take away with me a sound understanding of the way the organization is run and gain a much better insight of the upcoming goals and objectives of DbI for the future. I am very grateful to have been given this opportunity.



**Welcome Reception, European Conference Senigallia**



**La Rotondo, historic location in Senigallia**



**DbI booth at European Conference**

## **National Deafblind Conference, Melbourne, April 2010**

Attending the 8<sup>th</sup> National Deafblind Conference in Melbourne provided a great opportunity to meet with deafblind people, family members and service providers in the field of deafblindness. Meeting up with some of the members of the Dbl Management Committee was enjoyable and provided a good opportunity to follow up on some outstanding Dbl matters. It was also good to learn more about the services and products that Senses Foundation provides and work closely with the management team in promoting Senses Foundation to the National Community.



**International keynote speakers and Dbl colleagues at National Deafblind Conference in Melbourne**

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## **PLANS FOR 2010/11**

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In the coming months significant time will be spent preparing for the meetings we are hosting in Aalborg, Denmark. Liaising with the local hosts, supporting Council members and ManCom with travel arrangements and preparing and circulating the Agenda and reports.

The implementation of the Strategic Plan will gain momentum and with future funding being allocated in the coming months, we may have some opportunity to be instrumental in changes and improvements for Dbl via the website and possibly the membership structure. With this funding may come the opportunity to significantly develop the e-function and assist in the production of the first e-magazine to replace the old paper copy.

Financial reports will be prepared for the CPA in the Netherlands detailing the membership uptake for the past year and membership renewal invitations will be produced.



**Dbl Secretary & Secretariat Manager**

It is with great enthusiasm I approach the next year and look forward to the challenges and achievements to come.

Bronte Pyett  
Secretariat Manager  
Deafblind International  
Proudly managed by Senses Foundation (Inc)

*Senses Foundation - providing services to people with disabilities including unique services for people who are deafblind. Enabling, Enriching. Empowering.*



*Ending the isolation.*

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