

UNITED KINGDOM: ENGLAND

BRITISH NATIONAL LIBRARY

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ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2003 - 2004

EXTENSION OF LEGAL DEPOSIT

The Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 is now on the statute book, having received Royal Assent on 31 October 2003. It was introduced as a Private Members Bill by Chris Mole MP in December 2002 following a campaign to bring the law up-to-date with the current world of publishing which was led by the British Library, on behalf of all the legal deposit libraries and in association with Government. The Act extends previous legal deposit legislation passed nearly 100 years ago and enshrines the principle that electronic or e-publications and other non-print materials will be deposited in the future under secondary legislation. It ensures that these publications can be saved as part of the published archive - and become an important resource for future generations of researchers and scholars. The British Library is a lead member of the working group which is developing plans for the implementation of the Act.

RESEARCH LIBRARIES NETWORK

The Research Libraries Network (RLN), to develop, prioritise and lead a UK-wide strategy for the provision of research information, is well under way with the funding group establishing an executive team which will operate the Network, initially for three years and based at the British Library. The creation of the Network marks a huge achievement, which will bring UK research to the fore globally and ultimately enhance both the quantity and quality of research in the UK.

BRITISH LIBRARY DEVELOPMENTS

ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Library commissioned an independent economic study to estimate the British Library's impact on the UK economy. The study showed that for every £1 of public funds it receives the Library generates over £4 of value to the UK economy. The findings also show that the Library adds £363 million of value to the UK economy each year - £304 million indirectly and £59 million directly. The results of the study, will help inform the Library's programme of modernisation and innovation and will also form a useful benchmark for further studies.

STRATEGY

We have completed the first phase of strategy work at the Library and have begun the next stage with an in-depth analysis of the Library's strategic context. We are talking to people involved in research at all levels and across all disciplines, broadly grouped into three main studies covering science, arts and social sciences. Through our consultation we are finding out about the future shape of research and the types of service our users will need. The assessment will help us fix the strategic priorities that will guide our development in the coming years

COLLECTIONS

During the past year the library has strengthened its modern literary archives with the acquisition of seven previously-unpublished Virginia Woolf autograph manuscripts, the papers of Laurie Lee, Ted

Hughes' correspondence with Leonard Baskin, and the Punch Magazine Archive, which includes letters from Dickens and Thackeray as well as cartoons and drawings from the magazine's 160 year history.

SERVICES

The Library has launched the Business & Intellectual Property Centre (formerly Science Reading Rooms 1 and 2 North). The Centre is aimed at innovators, entrepreneurs and small businesses within the scientific and creative industries. We will test new ideas and proposed services so that we can evaluate what works and what doesn't and gain valuable feedback from users. The lessons we learn help us shape our business case for an Innovation Centre, which we plan to open to support small businesses and entrepreneurs, particularly from the creative and scientific industries.

The Library has launched a Wi-Fi service to provide fast wireless internet access in the St Pancras restaurant, café, and Conference Centre. Initially there will be a two-month free trial when users will be encouraged to take advantage of the new service to help gauge demand and performance of the system.

The Library has made available its bibliographic catalogue records to Amazon.co.uk, so that rare, antiquarian and pre-ISBN books can be made easier to identify and to buy online. The BL has added details of over 2.55 million unique bibliographic records to the Amazon.co.uk books catalogue, with 1.7 million of these dated before the 1970 introduction of ISBN.

INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM

Good progress is being made on the Library's new Integrated Library System (ILS). Work to convert, load and de-duplicate the data to ILS from our current legacy systems has been completed and staff training is underway. The new system will go live later in the year.

INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS / RELATIONSHIPS

The European Library project (TEL) concluded successfully in January 2004 with the signing of an agreement and commitment of €1m over three years to provide integrated access to catalogue data and digitised resources in major European national libraries, including the British Library.

Members of the New York Public Library and British Library executive teams met in London last summer to discuss potential areas for knowledge sharing and future collaboration. This has been made possible by funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

The Executive Teams of the Bibliotheque National de France and the British Library met for a full-day meeting in October 2003. A number of activities for future collaboration were identified and a return visit is planned within the next 18 months.

The BL was invited by the National Library of Russia to a bilateral seminar in St Petersburg in October. The seminar was themed around digital developments, and a number of presentations were given by both libraries on topics related to this theme.

WEB DEVELOPMENTS AND OTHER DIGITAL PROJECTS

A number of new web-based initiatives were launched in 2003/4. These included:

Illuminated Manuscripts – a digital catalogue of illuminated manuscripts. A pilot site has been launched and eventually all of the BL's 9,500 western illuminated manuscripts will be represented.

<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts>

Digitised treasures online – during the year the Library has put online digital versions of:

- The first two editions of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales
- The Library's two copies of Johan Gutenberg's Bible

- Ten treasures - now online in Turning the Pages format – including the *Diamond Sutra*, *Lindisfarne Gospels* and Leonardo da Vinci's L.
- Sound archives: over 11 hours of recordings of Northern English speakers are available on the *Collect Britain* website (www.collectbritain.co.uk).
- Digitisation: The JISC Committee for Content Services has agreed to allocate £3 million to the British Library to support two digitisation projects in 2004-06. The first project will digitise some 1.8 million pages from 19th-century British newspapers and the second nearly 4,000 hours of recordings from the Sound Archive.
- The British Library has joined the Digital Library Federation making it the Federation's first partner outside the United States. This will enable the BL to share information and explore the potential for collaboration on digital information resources.

EXHIBITIONS

Major exhibitions during the past year include:

- *Chinese Printmaking Today* – which features almost 200 artworks which demonstrate how traditional woodblock printing has been re-interpreted for the late 20th century. Over 73,000 visitors attended the exhibition.
- *Illuminating the Renaissance*, a collaborative exhibition between the Royal Academy, the Getty and the BL. The show featured over 130 works of art, including illuminated manuscripts items from the Library's own collections.
- *The Silk Road: Trade, Travel, War and Faith* is the library's major show this year. The exhibition brings together some 400 objects from the Library's own important collection, from other national institutions (including the British Museum), and from China, India, France and Japan. The exhibition tells the story of people who travelled along the route linking Europe to Central Asia 1,000 years ago. To complement the exhibition itself, the Library has organised a varied events programme, including open air celebrations on the Piazza with dance, music, storytelling and acrobatics.

PUBLICATIONS

Vocal treasures from the BL sound archive were published in a series of CDs: Poets, Writers and Children's Writers. The poets & writers CDs feature rare and early sound recordings of writers such as Robert Browning (1889) reading their own works. The Children's CD features 10 of the best-loved children's authors, including the only known recording of A.A. Milne reading 'Winnie the Pooh'.

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