

Annual Report to CDNL 2005 – 2006

Name of Country : UK
Name of Library : The British Library
Name of Chief Executive : Lynne Brindley

British Library report for CDNL

1. Management of the Library

Strategy: this year we have published the Library's strategy for 2005-08, having reviewed research and disciplinary trends and consulted widely with our users. The six priority areas which will guide our activities over the next three years are:

- Enriching the user's experience
- Building the digital research environment
- Transforming search and navigation
- Growing and managing the national collection
- Developing our people
- Guaranteeing our financial sustainability

We have also begun two substantial reviews looking at the intellectual and practical challenges of determining the right collection development strategy for the Library and the right skills and knowledge mix for our collection experts in the future.

2. Electronic publications and formats, including new legislation

Following the passage of the Legal Deposit Libraries Act in 2003 we have been preparing for the implementation of the Act. As co-chair of the Joint Committee on Legal Deposit the Library has played an active role in the UK Government's consultation exercise prior to the establishment of a Legal Deposit Advisory Panel. The Panel will further define the terms of the 2003 Act.

Working closely with the other Legal Deposit Libraries, we've begun developing the supporting technical architecture, and the Library is addressing the complexities of managing e-journals through a pilot scheme with publishers.

3. Buildings

Additional storage programme

We have received planning permission for construction of a high-density, fully automated low-oxygen storage solution on our freehold property at Boston Spa in Yorkshire. The building is likely to be the largest of its type for library and archive use in the world, and is the first phase of work to provide us with 260 linear kilometres, sufficient storage until 2018. Work is planned to commence in 2006 with the building scheduled to be ready for occupation in the autumn of 2008

Centre for Conservation

We have received planning permission for a purpose-built Centre for Conservation immediately to the north of the Library's existing building at St Pancras. The Centre will provide a world-class facility for all aspects of book conservation including education and training, as well as state-of-the art technical facilities for the nation's Sound Archive. We have nearly reached the capital fundraising campaign target for this project of £12.5million. Construction is expected to commence in August 2005 and the building is scheduled to be ready for occupation in early 2007.

Business & Intellectual Property Centre

We have received £1m funding from The London Development Agency, the Mayor of London's agency for business and jobs, to transform our Business & Intellectual Property Centre from a successful pilot project to a permanent resource. The Library is targeting this service at small businesses, entrepreneurs and innovators in London and beyond. Over 25,000 researchers and business people have used the Centre in the 12 months since it opened. This first phase of the Centre is due to be complete in Spring 2006.

4. Digital library

Digital Object Management Programme

Work has continued to develop the core storage functionality of our Digital Object Management (DOM) System. Our vision is create a management system for digital objects that will store and preserve any type of digital material in perpetuity, provide access to this material to users with appropriate permissions and ensure that users can, where possible, experience material with the original look-and-feel.

Digitisation

We have begun work on our two major projects: Archival Sound Recordings and British Newspapers. These will digitise c. 4000 hours of audio and 1.8m pages of British national, regional and local newspapers. Material will be available for academic communities to access in late 2006.

Web Archiving

The UK Web Archiving Consortium, of which the BL is a lead partner, launched in June 2004. Comprising six UK institutions, the UKWAC is working on a permissions-based experimental system for archiving selected key UK websites. The BL has selected 1018 sites and obtained permission to archive 269 of these. We have archived 117 sites to date, including sites relating to the 2005 general election and the tsunami. The consortium as a whole has archived 358 sites to date.

As a member of the International Internet Preservation Consortium we are leading the procurement of an automated smart crawler with the Bibliotheque nationale de France, contributing to the development of an integrated Curator Tool, and actively participating in various working groups.

UK e-infrastructure

We are playing an active part on the e-infrastructure group being led by the Office of Science and Technology. This group was set up in response to recommendations in the UK Government's 10 year science and innovation investment framework. The remit of the group is to review the UK's current e-infrastructure in light of future requirements. We are jointly funding a piece of consultancy work with JISC and eScience to develop an e-infrastructure 'roadmap', which will be used to identify strengths and weaknesses in the UK's current provision, ultimately leading to recommendations. It is anticipated that these will be used to lobby government to recognise the importance of e-infrastructure to UK research and innovation.

Web initiatives

Some of the new web-based initiatives launched last year include:

- Shakespeare Quartos: digitised versions of 93 copies of early quarto editions of 21 plays can be viewed and compared with one another at: www.bl.uk/treasures/shakespeare/homepage.html
- Texts in Context: a major new online resource containing a wide selection of different types of text from the Library's collections for students to explore how English language and style have evolved and changed over time.
- Turning the pages: two more treasures were converted to the Turning the Pages (TTP) format - the 'Golf Book' (a 16th-century Flemish Book of Hours) and Jane Austen's manuscript of 'The History of England'.
- We have opened up a significant proportion of our catalogue data and information about our 20,000 most heavily used journal articles to search engines. This means that our content is more easily discoverable via web searches.

Codex Sinaiticus partnership agreement

The BL has signed an agreement with St Catherine's Monastery, Sinai; the University of Leipzig, Germany; and the National Library of Russia, St. Petersburg, the three other institutions holding parts of the Codex Sinaiticus, the world's oldest Bible. The agreement is a critical step towards realising a £1 million project which aims to reunify the manuscript in virtual form. The project encompasses four strands: conservation, digitisation, transcription and scholarly commentary to make the Codex available for a worldwide audience of all ages and levels of interest.

5. Acquisitions

Notable acquisitions of the past year include:

- The Sforza Leaf, *the last missing leaf from the Sforza Book of Hours*
- The literary papers of the novelist Anthony Powell
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle papers
- The Modell of Poesy by William Scott, *one of only four major treatises on poetry known to survive from the Elizabethan period.*
- The Oscar Wilde collection of the late Mary, Viscountess Eccles, which she generously bequeathed to the Library.

6. Services to readers

British Library Direct is a new service providing access to a fully searchable database of article titles from the top 20,000 international research journals. Records go back five years and currently number around nine million – with 150,000 new entries added each month. There is no need to subscribe to use the service. Articles can be paid for by credit card and full text can be delivered to the desktop within as little as 2 hours. Nearly 20% of the articles available can be downloaded instantly. Subject strengths include medicine, pharmacy, engineering, science, environment, law and education.

7. Cultural events, exhibitions and publishing

Exhibitions

Major exhibitions during the past year include:

- *The Writer in the Garden* – over 91,000 visitors saw this exhibition, which explored the interrelationships between writers, writing and gardens from the middle ages to the present day.
- *Hans Christian Andersen* – this exhibition uses tales such as *The Little Mermaid* to explore Andersen's life from his humble beginnings in Denmark to the overwhelming success of his first visit to Britain in 1847. It examines his contribution to the development of the fairy tale, his association with Charles Dickens, and his literary legacy and reputation.

Live Music on the Piazza

- Reflecting the vast array of world music held by the British Library Sound Archive, we held a season of free lunchtime concerts on the piazza. Featuring artists from the UK and abroad, the programme covered musical styles such as Trinidadian Soca, Celtic, and Indian, as well as Chinese classical music and Afro-Cuban jazz.

Publications

- *Voices of History CDs* – This two CD set features historic recordings from our Sound Archive of some of the most famous and influential people active from the early days of sound recording to the middle of the twentieth century, such as Prime Minister Gladstone (1888), Lenin, Roosevelt and Gandhi.
- To celebrate 'Einstein year' we released 'Albert Einstein – Historic Recordings 1930-1947', in which Einstein talks about his life and work, the Jewish people and the world of science.

8. Library co-operation

National

Research Libraries Network

The RLN was launched in July 2004 to ensure 'joined up' information services for UK researchers. Dr Michael Jubb has been appointed as Director of the RLN, based at the British Library, and Professor Robert Burgess has been appointed as Chair of the Advisory Board.

The title of RLN has been changed to the Research Information Network, so that it more accurately reflects the role and scope of the new organisation, which is intended to cover all kinds of information produced and used by professional researchers across all subjects and disciplines.

The RIN's draft strategy was approved at an initial meeting of the Funders' Group. Once finalised, it will be published in hard copy and on the new RIN website. The strategy reflects the RIN's mission to "lead and co-ordinate new developments in the collaborative provision of research information for the benefit of researchers in the UK".

In addition to the provision of advocacy and advice, key focuses of activity over the coming three years will be on co-ordination in the management and development of physical collections of research materials in libraries and elsewhere; on the development of catalogues and finding aids; on digitisation strategies; and on arrangements for the handling and management of research data, published and unpublished.

International

We have held discussions with and provided support to the Iraqi National Library and Archives in their efforts to reconstruct the lost collections of rare books and archives.

We are working with the Koninklijke Bibliotheek and other partners on a European Task Force to define a strategic framework for action on digital preservation in Europe. The aim is to develop a framework which can be

accepted and acted upon by stakeholders, including governments, libraries, archives and publishers. It is hoped that the work will ensure that the EU's 7th Research Framework Programme will provide space for research and development work in this critical area.

Members of the New York Public Library and British Library executive teams met in New York in February 2005 to discuss potential areas for knowledge sharing and future collaboration. This has been made possible by funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Endangered Archives Programme – in partnership with the Lisbet Rausing Charitable Fund we launched a £10 million joint initiative to help save the world's endangered archives. The programme will be administered by the British Library in conjunction with a panel of international experts. Institutions and academic researchers can apply for grants to help identify endangered records and re-locate them to institutional archives in their local region. A copy will be maintained in a master archive at the British Library to ensure no original material is removed from its cultural home. Copies will be accessible on an international basis. The Programme will also provide bursaries for overseas librarians and archivists for work attachments at the British Library to foster better archival management and preservation in the longer-term.

June 2005

Address : The British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB
Telephone and fax details : Tel: +44 20 7412 7273 Fax: +44 20 7412 7268
Web address of Library : www.bl.uk