

# **REPORT ROYAL LIBRARY OF BELGIUM**

**1998**

## **1. Automation, public services and IT.**

### **1.1. Existing hardware**

Mailserver, main WWWserver and sec. DNS SUN netra/Solaris  
DNS server  
PC Pentium/Solaris  
DNS server  
Samba CD-ROM server  
PC Pentium/Solaris

### **1.2. New in 1998 :**

Main database server  
SUN Ultra Enterprise 450 2X300MHz/Solaris Netra-j server for 100 network computers  
WWW server for OPAC  
PC Pentium NT4 workstation  
Network administration  
PC Pentium NT4 workstation  
Migration from former SIEMENS to Sun hardware

### **1.3. New network :**

Fiberoptic network with individual 10MHz lines to the clients Upgraded 256K connection to the WWW  
The Z39.50 server (version 3) is under development. It will be operational in 2000.

## **3. Retroconversion**

Retroconversion of the Belgian Bibliography has been done for the period 1931-1973. The period 1875-1930 will be finished at the end of 1999.

## **4. The Belgian Bibliography on CD-rom**

In 1998 the Belgian Bibliography appeared only on CD-ROM ! The printed version does no longer exist. The Belgian bibliography is now available on CD-rom for the period 1931-1998.

From 2000 on, the complete Belgian bibliography (1875-1997) will be available on CD-rom.

## **5. Conservation and preservation**

During the year 1998, the Royal Library staff charged with the follow-up of this problem studied the various evolutions in the field of mass deacidification, microfilming and digitizing. The decision was taken to consecrate each year a sum to the preservation by substitution of nineteenth-century Belgian brochures.

In the main reading room, each reader has to inscribe the author, title and reference of the work he is going to photocopy in a register to allow the staff to control the application of interdictions concerning the age and the state of conservation of the books.

In 1998, the Royal Library attended the meetings of EROMM.

In 1998 a private company began scanning approximately 15,000 nineteenth-century pamphlets, mostly originating from Belgium, printed on paper of very poor quality and that may rightly be considered as "endangered". These pamphlets are bound in volumes on the spine of which is mentioned a common theme of all the titles brought together. Scanning: 300 dpi, bitonal, storage in Tiff G 4. The images are delivered on CD-ROMs that will be copied in the Royal Library's central database to allow for consultation through its internal network and later on the Internet. For the moment, access shall be minimal: by means of the shelf-number and the 'theme' mentioned on the volume. The intention is to proceed next year with developing a metadatabase on the basis of the delivered CD-ROMs.

This "digitization policy" has a double purpose:

1. To make rare documents accessible on a larger scale.
2. To make "endangered" documents accessible by providing a substitute copy.

Regarding the microfilming of newspapers, the phase of microfilming newspapers of the First World War has been completed.

## **6. National cooperation and research projects**

The Royal Library, together with two other libraries (the Library of the Free University of Brussels and of the University of Antwerp) and the software company IRIS (Image Recognition Integrated System), has set up the VIRLIB-project, which aims to create the virtual library (including document delivery) based on telecommunications technology. The project will run for 4 years and has started in October 1995. The prototype has been developed in the first phase which ended in september 1997. The Royal Library ensures the coordination of the project.

The VirLib projects is a cooperative project between the Royal Library Albert I, the libraries of the the University of Antwerp and the Université Libre de Bruxelles and IRIS, a company specialised in digital image processing. It aims at creating a virtual library infrastructure using stateoftheart telecommunications technology. The main emphasis is on the transparant integration of bibliographic retrieval (local catalogues) with electronic document ordering and delivery. User interfaces will be developed using WWWtechnology.

The project started his second phase. The developed software will be tested by the three libraries of the Consortium and 6 other university libraries.

VIRLIB is a modular system wich means that it can be implemented independently from the informatics structure of a library. More information : <http://www.kbr.be/virlib2>.

## **7. International activities**

### 7.1. CERL

The Royal Library participates in the CERL-project.

### 7.2. DELICAT

The Royal Library is one of the partners in this European project which will try to solve the problem of errors in bibliographic databases. Other library partners are the British Library and the Bibliotheca Nacional of Spain. In 1997 the first prototype has been developed. The projects ended in 1998.

The software application at the heart of DELICAT is a knowledge-based system designed for use on PCs connected to library networks. The package allows the examination of files of MARC records, formatted according to the ISO 2709 standard, using up to 45 errortype tests. The tests developed for DELICAT range from simple ISBN validation to detailed examination of MARC structure and compliance with national name authority files. The partners conclude that the cataloguer's time spent to detect errors can be reduced from 25 % to 10 % by using DELICAT to detect errors

### 7.3. ELAG (European Library Automation Group))

The Royal Library coordinates the organisation of the ELAG activities and chairs the yearly meeting. ELAG brings together once a year colleagues involved in library automation in leading European libraries and information centres. The last seminar (Bled, Slovenia 1998) was on 'Managing Multimedia Collections'.

### 7.4. Bibliotheca Universalis

### 7.5. EROMM

## **8. Public relations and exhibitions**

### 8.1. Public relations

Public-relation policy contains : guided tours 'on measure', the yearly 'Open House day', the publication of the semi-annual Bulletin, participation in the Brussels cultural events and the participation in bookfairs.

### 8.2. Exhibitions and concerts

#### **Exhibitions in 1998 :**

'Guillaume Wielant or Willem Vrelant, miniaturist at the Burgund court', 'Posters from the Belle Epoque', 'The story of the plants and the Portuguese exploratory expeditions', 'Stefan Zweig', 'Peter Handke', 'Facsimiles from Graz', 'The *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* of Abraham Ortelius and the origin of the atlas'

#### **Concerts in 1998:**

One of the aims of the midday concerts at the Royal Library is to present rarely performed compositions to the public, the scores of which are conserved in the Music Department. In 1998, 6 concerts were organized.

Willy Vanderpijpen