

Annual report for CENL

July 2004 / June 2005

Key facts

- collection security was at the forefront of Library concerns and is continuing to mobilise energies and thinking;
- the digital offer is in line with a new dynamic and a newspaper digitisation programme was launched;
- since the first half of 2005, the thinking initiated by the BnF president concerning cultural heritage digitisation projects and his proposal for a European initiative in response to the Google agreement with five libraries have received a wide audience, produced intense debates and, at a national level, have led to the creation of an adhoc committee.

Other highlights

- important activity producing and co-ordinating exhibitions in the French regions and in other world capitals;
- the renewing of the scientific council of the Library and widening its scope to include personalities from the scientific education and research world;
- the importance of donations of works and personal archives from authors, whether donated by themselves or by their family.

Some figures for 2004

- 60,972 books, 1,390,872 serial issues and 97,770 specialised, printed and audio-visual documents were received by publishers' legal deposit, which was 8% up on 2003;
- 1,066,049 visits were made to the reading rooms and 1,3 million documents were delivered;
- 8,4 million people visited our web site <http://www.bnf.fr>; the trend is still upward and was 28% up on 2003;
- around 5,000 original documents were shown to the public in 18 on-site exhibitions and 2,320 documents were loaned to 176 off-site exhibitions in France and abroad;
- 125 colloquia and conferences were organised by the BnF, representing 800 hours of programming.

Management of the Library

The strategic action of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, explicitly implemented in the three-year strategic plan (2001-2003), is now followed up and reinforced within the framework of a 4-year action plan. This plan, drawn up in collaboration with all the departments, sets out 3 orientations leading the library up to 2007: strengthen the core missions of the institution; work towards a stronger presence for the BnF within the national and international cultural and scientific community and also regarding its users; improve management. The implementation agenda is defined for each action set forth and the carefully estimated indicators are linked to it. A three-month progress report will continue to punctuate the follow-up and evaluation procedures.

Staffing Matters

There are 2,749 library staff members. This number is slightly higher than in 2003 and this slight increase in employment levels is a result of the plan to reduce casual work, which has allowed non-tenured staff to be given tenure thanks to various internal examinations, particularly for the library stack attendant career ladder. In 2004, the library completed a review of its procedures to reduce the number of contract workers in order to harmonise the career advancement rules for tenured and non-tenured staff within the establishment. In parallel, the library is committed to compiling a list of skills and professions, which will constitute the future management tool of skills, whatever the library employee's status.

To accompany the professional projects of staff and the inclusion of non-tenured library staff members, a considerable effort was made to set up training to correspond to each professional career path for which an examination was also organised.

Human Resources management at the library was marked in 2004 by the first staff satisfaction survey which elicited their opinions on their working conditions and environment. This operation, which is likely to be repeated, is part of a process that aims to enhance different forms of social dialogue, evaluate actions undertaken and define improvement strategies. Over 50% of staff took part in this survey and filled in the questionnaire.

Funding

The 2004 budget amounts to 144.9 million euros (M€): 114.7 M€ for operating expenses (+ 1.7%) and 30.2 M€ for investment (-9.6%). The main State grant amounts to 102.86 M€ (+ 0.7%) for operating expenses and 13.3 M€ (-32%) for investment.

Buildings

On the historic site of the library, rue de Richelieu, pending the start of renovation operations for which the phasing study was completed in 2004, work focused on developing the new reading room of the Performing Arts Department. Its collections, which were housed for many years on the Arsenal Library site, have now been transferred to the Richelieu and François-Mitterrand sites. Essential renovation work to meet new safety standards was started at the Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal in November 2004.

On the François-Mitterrand site, a new library presentation area is currently being created which will present the history, missions, offer, professions, public and latest news of the library's different sites. This will serve as a test area for the planning study for the library entrances and reception halls, which the library undertook in 2004 in order to rationalise the reception of users.

The developing urban environment, especially the proximity to the new metro line and new university buildings, means that the symmetry of the building is out of step with the public flow, with a much greater number of visitors using the East Hall of the building.

As the life of an establishment also involves more lighthearted events, 2004 also saw the installation, at the top of one of the towers on the François-Mitterrand site, of two roosts for a couple of falcons, birds which are allies in the fight against damage caused to the garden by the swarms of starlings which fly there every evening during migration periods. This operation was made possible as a result of co-operation with the French bird protection league, the Ligue de protection des oiseaux.

Information Technology and bibliographic issues

New functionalities and changes were developed in the Information System in order to take better account of the requirements of the public and the staff of the BnF.

3 new priorities for the next 3 years were defined:

- designing and testing a strategic piloting tool (infocentre) in order to produce useful data to control and pilot activities, calculate indicators and analyse trends: a prototype for the preservation activities has been developed during the first 3 months of 2005;
- automating the specialised collection catalogues located at the Richelieu site and the migration of BN-OPALINE bibliographic databases to the BN-OPALE Plus single catalogue: the studies led before the detailed specifications of the developments are now complete;
- developing an archiving, preservation and management system for electronic data : the technical feasibility studies have been completed and a tender for the infrastructure was launched in April.

The Digital Library

In 2004, the BnF clearly defined the development directions and the document selection rules for its digital library. The new documentary policy for Gallica is based on digitising representative corpuses, covering all areas, focusing on rare documents or those, which are not easily consultable.

Moreover, some priority programmes were defined, in particular the 19th Century Newspaper Digitisation Project. It aims to digitise, over 5 years, more than 3 million pages of 1 Regional - *Ouest éclair* - and 26 National newspapers - including *Le Figaro*, *Le Temps*, *La Croix*, *L'Humanité*.

Legal Deposit of Materials

The Library is carrying out an overview of the evolution of legal deposit both within the framework of the revision of the law concerning off-line material as well as the issue of electronic materials. Concerning the latter, the Library is processing technical experiments for harvesting online materials and is currently implementing a robot for the comprehensive capture of French websites for archiving purposes. Harvesting

of the Regional and European elections (from February to July 2004) and the fr.domain in mid-December for a 1-month period was also carried out.

Acquisitions and publications exchanges

The 74 200 monographs ordered and 64 300 received illustrate the slight increase in acquisitions. The 2004 budget endowments allow the implementation of the library's priorities in favour of the specialised departments, notably the progressive constitution of a common reference collection on the Richelieu site. However, the rising cost of serial subscriptions is leading to a constant decrease in the number of acquisitions, which represents a real concern.

The rising cost of the art market has also considerably reduced the Library's capacity to purchase rare books, manuscripts, photographs and engravings. The autograph manuscript of Paul Verlaine "*Sagesse*" and a set of documents concerning the invention of photography from Janine Niepce's collection are some of the outstanding acquisitions which enriched the holdings thanks to the support of the Cultural Heritage Funds (Fonds du patrimoine).

Preservation, security and safety of collections

The production of security copies plays an important role in preservation: 4.7 million microfilm images of printed materials and analogical audio-visual surrogates were produced. Digital preservation continues to gain ground on microfilming and the BnF has a programme under way for the archival, preservation and migration of digital files.

The 2003 collection security plan aims to protect the collections against malicious actions such as theft, damage or even destruction by the staff in charge of the documents. In 2004, a BnF staff member was charged with theft after the disappearance of some ancient manuscripts. A report, drawn up by the president of the BnF in September 2004, outlines the measures taken or planned in order to maintain the best security conditions for collection preservation. This document sets out 4 priorities:

- "To know" (mainly by carrying out regular inventories);
- "To keep watch over" (to reinforce access control, improve the video-surveillance system, etc);
- "To punish" (to systematically register a complaint when a valuable document is confirmed missing);
- "To recover" the works (the BnF plays a pivotal role within the international distribution procedures for cultural heritage based on export certificates although international law is incomplete for stolen materials).

Services to readers

The BnF is committed to providing better access to its buildings, collections and other activities with a particular focus towards disabled users. This was illustrated by training and communication actions, building improvements made to the François-Mitterrand site as well as by purchasing specific hardware and software. A project to recast the data processing of the public workstations (around 500 PCs and terminals), was completed in September 2004. It aims to improve and develop web versions for the following applications: catalogue consultation, seat and document reservations as well as private data management.

The web site version, launched at the end of 2004, presents a new homepage to express an editorial policy focusing on a greater visibility for news and cultural events. This development was accompanied by the complete reorganisation of the site and by enhancing the following areas: creation of a section dedicated to press professionals, development of services for library and information science professionals as well as a new interface for the Signets de la BnF (a bookmarks application).

Cultural events

- Exhibitions

The library was very active in producing and co-ordinating exhibitions both on-site and off-site.

The François-Mitterrand building hosted 5 of the exhibitions. *La mer, terreur et fascination*, realised in partnership with the associated centre for oceanography in Brest, focused on the relationship between the imaginary representations of the sea and the evolution of scientific knowledge. The *Jean-Paul Sartre* exhibition was devoted to his work and political engagement, on the occasion of the centenary of his birth and *Souvenirs, souvenirs : 100 ans de chanson française* was the most visited exhibition with 29,000 visitors. The exhibition of the *Terre humaine* collection was produced on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of its creation by Jean Malaurie and since June 2005, the printed work of *Pierre Alechinsky* has been presented.

In 2005, the South Hall of the Library was named "allée Julien Cain" to pay homage to this man who was Library Administrator from 1930 and 1940 and from 1945 to 1964. This year the Hall hosted 2 exhibitions: the first one, co-produced with the Cultural Heritage Division (Direction du patrimoine), presented photographs realised by France's General Inventory of Monuments and Art Treasures; the second one, in partnership with the journal *Architectural Design*, offered a selection of architectural images.

At the Richelieu site, the photo Gallery presented the work of two photographers: during Summer 2004, *Stéphane Couturier's* vision of urban landscapes and during Spring 2005, *Métamorphoses of Mario Giacomelli. Objets dans l'objectif*, showing until end of August 2005, is a selection of images of objects as an inspiration source for artists from 1840 to 1960. The exhibition *Capa, connu et inconnu*, in the Richelieu building as part of the «Mois de la photo» event, was a great public success attracting around 54,000 visitors. At the Mazarine Gallery, the 60th anniversary of *Agence France Presse* was the occasion to celebrate the art of photo-journalism.

The Crypt exhibition hall in Richelieu site, dedicated to presentations related to donations or one-off events, showed Coptic manuscripts and work of the scenographer *André Barsacq* and the composer *André Jolivet*.

The library of the Opera museum organised an exhibition of sets and costumes designed by *Derain* for the theatre. Prior to that, there was an exhibition of the work of *Gérard Uféras*, who explores the Opera world in Europe, both on stage and backstage while the Arsenal library paid homage to the poet *Gilbert Lely*.

The engravings of *Abraham Bosse* in the museum of Tours (France) and the *Bestiaire du Moyen Age* in the public library of Troyes (France) are just two of the off-site exhibitions organised in France.

The library and the Gropius Bau museum in Berlin co-organised the loan of the *Capa connu et inconnu* exhibition which opened there in January 2005; this heralds the beginning of a new era of collaboration between the two institutions. The Chanel space in Tokyo welcomed a set of photographs of the *Universal exhibitions in Paris* during the 19th century.

- Conferences and colloquia

A rich programme of conferences and colloquia was organised during the year and a new series, entitled "*a text, a mathematician*" has been surprisingly successful.

The Library strengthened its partnerships with the media by organising conference series: «Lessons on philosophy» with *France Culture* radio station; «Lessons on history» with the journal *L'Histoire*; discussions with foreign personalities about their relationship to French culture with the journal *Courrier International*; «Lessons on literature» with the *Magazine Littéraire* as well as «Writing/Filming» with *the Cahiers du cinéma* and which is also organising a meeting between a film-maker and a writer.

Co-operation between libraries

Territorial action, which saw the creation of a dedicated department, was given a new breath of life this year: the associated centres network was strengthened and the foundations were laid for shared digitisation and preservation.

A national fellow programme entitled "appel à chercheurs" has been set up in order to strengthen the national institutional links between the BnF and the academic and research world. It welcomes young academics whose research projects enrich the knowledge of the library collections and whose they in turn help promoting. 11 of them have been welcomed during the academic year 2004-2005.

At an international level, besides the exhibitions, the Library carried out on-demand expertise activities and organised and strengthened its welcome policy. Fifteen people – researchers, professionals and artists – were welcomed within the framework of the "Visiting Fellow" / "Profession Culture" programme, including 7 visiting fellows from 5 European countries (Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Turkey and Macedonia.).

At a multilateral European level, the Library confirmed its commitment in "The European Library". Finally, since the beginning of 2005, the mobilisation of the public authorities and other cultural actors around issues of cultural heritage access has given new momentum to the European opening of the Library.