

Koninklijke Bibliotheek, National Library of the Netherlands

Annual report 2001 to the Foundation CENL

Koninklijke Bibliotheek

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Management of the library

In the recently published Strategic plan 2002-2005 the KB describes its policy decisions for the following years. The KB intends to enhance its image as a national library by concentrating on Dutch history, language and culture. At the same time, the KB hopes to increase the accessibility of its products and services for use by scholars and students, secondary school teachers and pupils, and a broad interested public. National and international cooperation, communication and marketing, through such avenues as the website, play an important role in the KB's strategic orientation. In the context of the 2000-2003 strategic marketing plan the KB has invested extra resources; the project activities will be embedded in the standing organization. The main features of the policy decisions with regard to the KB's primary responsibilities are:

Enhancing use and services

- The option of searching through a large number of the KB's digital files by means of a single interface and in a single search operation is being extended to other files.
- By outsourcing the digitization of the card catalogue, all the KB's holdings will have been recorded in the online public catalogue within a space of three years, so that all information concerning the collection will also be accessible by means of the website.
- A reading room is being furnished with a large open assortment of books and magazines having to do with Dutch history, language and culture.
- The exhibition area is being rebuilt and made suitable for a semi-permanent exhibition of the unique, valuable and interesting works from the KB's holdings. A cultural

programme is being created that will combine as many activities as possible, such as lectures, special receptions, tours and workshops.

Building up digital knowledge domains and files

- The KB is building up a knowledge domain in the field of Dutch history, language and culture, oriented towards researchers and other interested persons. The knowledge domain consists of a single structure: one integrated entrance point to a variety of information sources, including other websites. The KB will facilitate the input of other organizations such as libraries, archives and museums.
- The national Memory of the Netherlands programme will only begin to experience synergy when a large number of collections from various knowledge and national heritage institutions are digitized. The programme will be financed until 1 January 2004. In order to reach the desired effect, the external financing of the national programme should be continued for a period of at least three years.

Long-term digital archiving

- At the end of 2002 the KB's deposit system will be completed. This system forms the technical heart of the Electronic Deposit (E-Deposit). Further steps in making the E-Deposit operational will require a great effort in the coming years. The technical system will also have to undergo further development and expansion. To this end, the KB is furnishing an experimental environment for carrying out additional research in technologies and procedures for long-term preservation and accessibility. As in the last period, efforts will be made to ensure that the research is internationally rooted and to continue close cooperation with important ICT players. Knowledge about metadata, cataloguing, bibliographical records and formats, conversions and XML will be concentrated in the Metadata Knowledge Centre.
- In the coming years, the KB will archive web publications on an experimental basis. A collection policy is being developed, and selection criteria are being established. A test-bed is being furnished for the acquisition of practical experience.

Handling of electronic publications and formats

As the national library, the KB is responsible for keeping electronic publications in permanent storage and making them accessible for the long term. The KB follows a two-track approach. First, the KB gains direct practical experience, which has resulted in its attaining a prominent position, both nationally and internationally. Second, the KB works with publishers in an international context in searching for solutions to problems of long-term access for electronic publications.

In 2001, considerable progress was made on the construction of the system for storage, permanent preservation and accessibility of electronic publications: the E-Deposit system. The development of the deposit system was made possible thanks to the Ministry of Economic Affairs, which until the end of 2001 financed a project to put the Dutch Deposit of Electronic Publications (DNEP) into operation. The functional design will comply with the ISO 'OAIS' standard (Open Archival Information System) and with the Nedlib guidelines. The [deposit system](#) being built by IBM and the KB is a world first and will form the heart of the KB's e-deposit facilities. When the system is completed at the end of 2002, it will have a storage capacity of 12 terabytes and an option to grow to at least 340 terabytes. In December 2001, IBM completed the first functions so they could be tested by the KB. Along with the construction of the deposit system, IBM and the KB together conducted research on long-term access to electronic publications.

Funding

In terms of finances, 2001 was an expansive year for the KB. In 2001 the KB made the largest investment in its history: the acquisition of the IBM storage and management system for the [electronic deposit library](#). Purchase of the system and system software involved a sum of € 2,858,000, with an additional € 1,897,000 needed for advice and software development.

The government grant from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science was given a substantial increase in 2001 to cover the rental and service costs of the KB building resulting from the change in the government housing system. The budget for 2001 includes the third instalment of the housing funds for maintenance of the KB building. In September 2001, this structural amount of € 957,000 was added to the 2001 government grant with retroactive effect. The KB trusts that the fourth and last instalment will be granted in 2002.

Substantial amounts were also involved in the continuation of the Metamorfoze and Memory of the Netherlands projects. It can be concluded that in terms of finances, 2001 was an expansive year for the KB. The financial administration had already switched successfully to the euro in October 2001, so that the transition to the new currency as of 1 January 2002 took place as seamlessly as possibly.

Buildings

A change in the National Housing system makes it possible to be more independent when dealing with the planning of maintenance projects. An important milestone was reached when the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science gave permission for the expansion of the deposit collection. In 2005, the first phase - 3,000 square metres of floor area - will be ready.

Organisation and staffing matters

The projects in which the KB participates fall under the Research & Network Services division, which until recently had been part of the Collections & Research division. Because these projects are becoming more and more important in terms of both strategy and content, the directorate decided that a re-positioning within the KB organization was necessary. A new main division was created, Research & Development, to which were added the microfilming and digitizing production units, previously part of the Conservation & Optical Technology division. The changes were completed during the first quarter of 2002 by transferring the microfilming and digitization production units to a joint venture set up by the KB and the American OCLC.

Information technology and networks

In order to provide better systems management and to be more flexible in anticipating questions from the organization, it is important that automated systems and infrastructure be furnished with a clearly standardized design. In the past year, ICT staff members made a start by 'levelling up' the designs of the various systems. In addition, a search began for a standard storage structure that can be expanded with relative ease. To this end, a SAN (Storage Area Network) was purchased at the end of 2001. This storage structure will be operational in early 2002. In addition, the first steps have been made for a similar solution to the problem of backing up the growing amount of data. To raise the ICT organization's professional level, the provision of internal ICT service to the divisions of the KB as well as to the other organizations in the KB building was formally arranged by means of service-level agreements

The digital library

Service via the internet is becoming an increasingly important part of the KB's responsibilities. The KB website, which was re-designed in 2000, was tested for functionality and user-friendliness during the past year. The test revealed that the site provides an outstanding picture of the KB's wide-ranging scope. On the basis of recommendations from the test, various elements of the site have been adjusted. An improved version of the comprehensive catalogue KBcat was produced in 2001, to which more files were also added. With the financial support of the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO), the KB has been working on *Bibliopolis*, an information system dealing with the history of the

printed book in the Netherlands. The system includes an overview of the history of the printed book, a biographical section on the book trade, a bibliographical component, a list of terms and an illustration bank. In 2001 the various components were completed and the construction of the first version was begun. In March 2002 the beta-version was put online, whereas the official site will be launched at the Bibliopolis conference in The Hague in November 2002. The *Digital Historical Atlas* pilot project, which is being carried out by the KB together with the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum, is producing a website that offers access to digital reproductions of pamphlets, prints and medals from the 17th century. This project is a test case for the large-scale digitization of full collections of complex cultural and historical heritage material. This cross-sector cooperation among libraries, museums and archives works to the user's advantage because it makes such a variety of materials available in integrated form.

A new feature of the website are the KB dossiers on current topics. The dossiers provide a brief introduction to each topic and a literature list, compiled from the KB collections. User figures show that the dossiers are a good means for publicizing the rich and varied Deposit Library collection.

Furthermore, the English-language website *Medieval illuminated manuscripts* was launched. This site provides access to almost 8,000 unique reproductions from 325 medieval illuminated manuscripts from the KB collection. The website was developed with the financial support of the NWO. The site has something for everyone, from specialists in medieval art to ordinary appreciators of beautiful pictures. Searches can be executed by place name, artist's name, period and iconographic themes, or by a combination thereof.

Acquisitions

The acquisition of publications for the Deposit Library of Dutch publications is proceeding extremely well. On a voluntarily basis Dutch publishers supply more than 90% of the publications to the KB free of charge. Since it was established, the Deposit Library has received an average of 40,000 books and approximately 100,000 issues of current subscriptions per year. In 1996 the KB began with the storage of electronic publications in the Deposit of Netherlands Electronic Publications (DNEP). In 2001 the KB entered into an agreement in principle with Elsevier Science, by which the number of electronic periodicals to be deposited in the KB by Elsevier Science will be increased from 351 to all 1,500 electronic periodicals being published by Elsevier Science. Kluwer Academic Publishers deposited 743 titles with the KB.

The Special collections were enriched with numerous gifts. At the end of 2001, the KB was given an exceptionally fine book of hours by an anonymous donor. The book was made in the southern Low Countries in around 1460-1470. The value of the manuscript is estimated at almost six million euros. As far as we know it is the most expensive private gift ever donated to a cultural institution in the Netherlands. The donor was advised to name the KB as beneficiary because of the importance that the KB attaches to researching and preserving medieval manuscripts, and the expert and enthusiastic role of the curator.

Preservation & Conservation

Metamorfoze is the Netherlands national programme for the preservation of materials from the period 1840-1950. The paper used in the printed or written sources from this period is threatened by acidity, causing it to become brittle. The second phase of the programme began in 2001 and will run until the end of 2004. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has made a total €10,200,000 available for this project. With the new subsidy, a number of projects from the first phase of Metamorfoze could be continued in 2001. The preservation of the literary collections was extended in 2001, as was the Preservation of Dutch Book Production. In the coming four years, 20,000 books from the period 1900-1909 will be put on microfilm. The KB and the Amsterdam and Utrecht university libraries are once again taking part in the project. In addition the deacidification of the books themselves is also being

continued, using the results of a study that was carried out in 2001 on the advantages and disadvantages of the de-acidification process.

New parts of the *Metamorfoze* follow-up phase include the preservation of important collections of cultural, historical and international value in Dutch heritage institutions and of periodicals. In 2001, seventeen projects were started for the preservation of collections that had been subjected to inventories during an earlier phase. A start was made on the microfilming of 35 public periodicals, for instance. By using the collections owned by different libraries, archives and private individuals, films can be made of complete series of the periodical itself even though no library has such a set.

In addition to preservation by means of microfilming, acid-free packaging and storage, the accessibility of the filmed material is now also being improved by means of digitization. In 2001 two major projects were started for the digitization of previously filmed literary collections. The KB will make the results available via a separate website.

Services to readers

More of the public is finding its way to the KB, and the number of visitors has risen by almost fourteen percent in the past year to 77,300, thus surpassing the policy goal of an annual ten percent increase by a comfortable margin. This increase may be partly due to the library's good computer facilities, including rapid internet access. Sizeable growth has also been observed in the use of remote access services. The website is being visited more frequently (over 5m 'transactions' in 2001). For more than forty percent of the visitors the most important area of attention is the humanities, particularly history and art history. A quarter of the interest is focused on law and social sciences. The KB continues to work on improving remote access to these collections.

Certain internal changes were carried out in 2001 to improve customer services. A shift seems to be taking place in patron demands: from requests to borrow or peruse information sources such as books and journal articles to requests for the specific information itself. The KB is taking advantage of this development by instituting the idea of the single service point. The service points are now organized in such a way that the patron is able to obtain a direct and complete answer to his question, both in the library itself as well as by means of remote access (via internet, telephone, letter or fax). The staff members' job descriptions are also geared to this development. A great deal of energy is being channeled into job training to increase service quality.

The number of questions being asked via the internet is steadily rising and at the moment amounts to nineteen percent of the total number of questions asked by remote access. In order to better absorb the growing flow of questions coming in via the internet, work was done in 2001 on preparations for a software supported Digital Reference Desk, to be launched at the beginning of 2002. The main goal of this project is to provide each questioner with a good answer as quickly as possible, and to make sure that no question is needlessly set aside. At the same time a knowledge bank is being built so that repeated questions can be processed more quickly.

Cultural events, exhibitions and publishing

Preparations for *Wonderland*, the exhibition of children's books to be organized by the KB in 2002 in the *Kunsthal Rotterdam*, are fully underway. The KB is working closely with various social organizations and commercial partners in order to complete the exhibition, the largest ever to be held in the *Kunsthal*. A comprehensive educational programme is being developed with the *Reading Foundation* in support of visits to the exhibition by primary schools. Several different publications will be issued in conjunction with the exhibition. A special *Wonderland* website will be launched to support the promotional campaign and the educational programme. The opening of *Wonderland* will coincide with the opening of *Children's Book Week 2002*.

In 2001 the first ideas were developed for the *Boulevard van het Actuele Verleden* (*Boulevard*

of the Present Past). The Boulevard is to be a meeting place where people are made curious about the significance of the past on the basis of current themes. The initiators are the KB, the General State Archives, the Literary Museum, the Netherlands Institute for Art History and the Central Bureau for Genealogy, all located in the KB building complex and the State Archives. The plan was occasioned by the decision of the city of The Hague to clean up the area around the Central Station, which gave the institutions a fantastic opportunity to reach a much larger public than is now possible. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science voiced its support for the initiative, and Minister of Education, Culture and Science gave the order to develop the idea into a concrete plan.

Library co-operation

Since 2001 the KB has collaborated with the Hague Public Library, the library of the Hague 'Hogeschool' (professional training college) and Leiden University library on a joint programme for upper secondary school pupils in The Hague and surroundings. The KB gave tours to groups of pupils from upper secondary school programmes (known in the Netherlands as the 'second phase'), whose pupils qualify for a free year pass. These activities are a first step in KB's efforts to modify its position from that of an exclusive academic library.

On a national level, the KB was one of seven academic libraries involved in supplementary collection building in the humanities, with financial support from the NWO. In 2001 the NWO decided to make additional funding available for the period 2001-2004, with the stipulation that the seven institutions themselves also contribute a substantial amount. The contribution from the NWO is € 2,500,000; that of the seven institutions is € 700,000. Half of this amount is being reserved for the joint purchase of licences for electronic publications, particularly periodicals. The other half is being made available to the institutions for purchases specific to this discipline. The funding will become available in the spring of 2002. The KB is serving as secretary and administrator of the NWO contribution.

The KB greatly values the internal co-operation between libraries. For the project The European Library, for which the European Commission made m€ 1,2 available, the KB conducted a survey among all 41 national libraries in Europe. The result is an overview of the agreements that have been made concerning the depositing of electronic publications and a look at the actual practice. Following that, a survey was prepared in order to learn more about the publishers' viewpoints. The joint committee of CENL and the Federation of European Publishers (FEP) functions as an advisory committee for this part of the project. The national libraries of Europe present themselves jointly on the Gabriel website, whose management is in the hands of the KB. This website was visited almost 285,000 times in 2001. In 2001 the structure and design underwent important changes. Gabriel will play an important role in The European Library.