

CENL 1999. Kungl. biblioteket, National Library of Sweden.

Report of activities of major interest during the year 1998. Tomas Lidman

Management

1998 has in many respects been a very successful year for the Royal Library (KB). Many of the tasks that remained unsolved during the very long rebuilding period (1992-97) were now given high priority. Due to a good financial situation the KB has played a major part in library development within the country and also in co-operation with other Scandinavian and European libraries. Important projects within digitization and preservation has been initiated. A comprehensive user study of the library showed that, apart from being used by researchers and scholars, 15% of the visitors each day were newcomers. The proportion between men and women was equal. The more often you visited the library the longer you stayed. About 200 000 visitors were registered during the year.

National library network

KB has a strong position in the national library network. The national network system LIBRIS - with more than 80 000 visitors *each day* is maintained and developed by KB. Since 1997 it is on the web free of charge and can be used by anyone interested everywhere. A new combined software and hardware for the system was bought in December and the choice fell upon Horizon. It will be introduced in September/October next year. Another development worth to be mentioned within this sector is ongoing the merge between the LIBRIS system and the public libraries' systems BURK. The public libraries tend to use LIBRIS more and more and some ten libraries also uses it at the same premises as the scientific libraries. This is a development very much subsidized and encouraged by the Government. At the same time, it also put more pressure on KB to develop and maintain the system properly. A task which demands proper resources

Legal deposit

A new legal deposit law was proposed by a governmental committee in September. The report suggests that KB get the responsibility for collecting Swedish electronically published material on the www. Sound and audiovisual materials should be collected by the National Archive for Sound and Moving Images (ALB). Only very restrictive access to legitimated researchers was proposed. That caused strong protest among the libraries around the country. The overall meaning was that access to the electronic material should be equal to the access of the printed. No formal law has yet been presented to the Parliament and will not be expected to exist before the end of 1999.

IT and new technology

Some more strategic projects concerning digitization were introduced during the year. One more overall, which aims to standardise and build a platform for all digitization projects in the whole country. It deals with access, technical development, standards etc. On the other hand, the selection of the categories of material to be digitized is the task for another group to solve. Together with these ambitious projects KB also runs a few more practical ones. Old Swedish prints (before 1700), historical pictures and maps, heavily used manuscripts and letters, journals from the end of the 19th century are amongst them. The results can to some extent be found through the homepages of LIBRIS and also via GABRIEL.

Publishing and exhibitions

Stockholm was the Cultural City of Europe 1998. This meant that the exhibition activities were strong during the year. The themes were widespread from Swedish children's books and cartoons to very beautiful book-bindings. The 100th birthday of the Swedish novelist Wilhelm Moberg was notified by a large exhibition and also intellectual links between France and Sweden after the Second World War were displayed on a separate exhibition just before summer.

An important contribution to the *Acta Bibliothecae Regiae Stockholmiensis* was the publication *Die Stammbücher der Königlichen Bibliothek Stockholm* by Lotte Kurras and Eva Dillman. It is a catalogue of all the old student diaries which KB possesses. A beautiful description of KB in its restored new building was also published during the year, *Kungliga biblioteket. Byggnaden och samlingarna*. Together with the "Friends of the KB" a semi-scientific journal was established during the year: *Biblis*. Four numbers per year will be published and the content will be a mixture of articles in book history, book binding, graphic design, book collecting etc. together with reviews of more important monographs.