

Nordic Public Libraries in the knowledge society



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Nordic Culture Fund

This book has received financial support from
Nordic Culture Fund, and is published by
the Danish National Library Authority

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Published in 2006
by the Danish National Library Authority
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1553 København V
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Cover photo: Thure Gunnarsson
Layout: Stæhr Reklame & Marketing, Aarhus
Print: CS Grafisk A/S, Aarhus
ISBN: 87-91554-77-2
Electronic ISBN: 87-91554-78-0

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Preface

■ The present book is intended as an introduction to Nordic public library service, and a description of the libraries' efforts in meeting the challenge of turning themselves into modern and essential contributors to the knowledge society. Nordic in this context means Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as the three autonomous areas the Faroe Islands, Greenland and the Aland Islands.

The initiative for the book was taken by the public library authorities who together publish *Scandinavian Public Library Quarterly*. The authorities: The Danish National Library Authority, The Ministry of Education in Finland, The Ministry of Education in Iceland, The Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority and The Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs are responsible for the selection of the national articles.

The book is the second of its kind. The first: *Nordic Public Libraries – The Nordic cultural sphere and its public libraries* from 2002 was built on national chapters. Since then digital and library development has expanded so fast, that we considered an updated edition advisable. This time the structure of the book is thematic, and the principle of the articles selected has been to give some examples of best practice. The theme for the illustrations is recent library building activities and innovative projects.

The book has received financial support from Nordic Culture Fund to whom we extend our sincere thanks.

Jens Thorhauge
Danish National Library Authority



Halmstad Library, Sweden
Inaugurated in 2006
Architects: Schmidt, Hammer & Lassen
Photo: Thure Gunnarsson

Nordic public libraries in the knowledge society

An introduction

The Nordic countries and the Nordic public libraries

Nordic public libraries have a strong profile and have to a certain extent been a source of inspiration to library systems in other countries. In that context you may ask – what does 'Nordic countries' mean – and what is special about Nordic public libraries?

Colloquially, *Nordic* countries may be synonymous with *Scandinavian* countries: Finland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Denmark are independent states, whose history and culture have been interwoven since the early Middle Ages. Even though we have different languages, they are related to each other, which is a strong basis for cultural similarity and common traditions. After the Second World War co-operation between the countries has been intensified within the frames of The Nordic Council.

The interest in the Nordic countries and our institutions on behalf of the rest of the world is mainly related to our model for a welfare society with its generous public spending on cultural, social and educational institutions and services.

Today all the Nordic countries are highly developed and at the forefront when it comes to exploiting ICT-possibilities in all spheres of society. Likewise we are all in a period of transition towards globalised knowledge societies, and in that process we are creating strategies for handling the competition from cheaper labour markets as well as the growing information gap and functional illiteracy; effects – among others – of the information society development.

How do we handle library development in that context? Generally speaking, libraries are being transformed from collection-based institutions into networking service spots in a coherent library system which is becoming ever more digital. This process may be of interest to colleagues in other countries.

What, then, is so special about Nordic public libraries? Even if the public libraries in all the Nordic countries are the responsibility of the local municipalities, there is a strong national interest in libraries, mirrored in library legislation and national funding for development and superstructure.

Nordic public libraries have an immensely strong tradition, originally with inspiration from the American free public libraries at the beginning of the 1900s, but soon with a specific Nordic profile, characterised among other things by a close interplay between the libraries and their public enlightenment movements and with a strong political commitment both locally and nationally in the public libraries.

In the second half of the twentieth century Nordic public libraries developed into being among the most frequented – and used – in the world, to have the best budgets, and generally speaking, to have a high quality level, both as regards collections, buildings and services. All the Nordic countries also have a strong tradition of professional library training.

Until the mid-eighties professional discussions tended to focus on choice of materials and collection management. But then things changed, and the question of the future of the libraries became the centre of attention, and that has been the case ever since. The new information technology and its impact on the industrial society – to begin with on production methods, later to a great extent also on culture and life patterns in a broader sense – has led to a fundamental confrontation not only with methods, but also with the library's values. It requires prolonged debate.

The transition of libraries

Like in other parts of the world Nordic public libraries have been subject to the transition movement characterised as a shift of paradigm, because a number of basic work methods, values and organisation models have changed radically.

You can observe several steps in this transition movement, but two are particularly significant: beginning with the introduction of databases and OPACs in the eighties, and the breakthrough of the Internet in the mid-nineties, where seamless library services and the hybrid library concept came within reach.

Over the past ten years Nordic public libraries have been busy developing new – in particular digital – services

within that context. Likewise a strong movement to improve systems and infrastructure has worked. Last, but not least, libraries have been working on branding and promotion of services in a way that indicates that libraries are struggling in a new social and political context.

This book presents some glimpses from the development in recent years. In my introduction I present the main elements in the transition.

Public library discussion today centres around the future role of the library. In fact this discussion started twenty years ago, just about the time when futurologists like Naisbitt and Alvin Toffler put the question of the industrial society's transition into information society on the agenda worldwide. The explosion of the information technology is without doubt the main change in the conditions of the libraries, but increasingly also the cultural changes play their part in the western world. Anthony Giddens terms this "reflexive modernization" where traditional frames are replaced by constant choices which very quickly have an impact on cultural and behavioural patterns. One might say that the traditional collection-based public library, centred around a well-structured catalogue and organised as an independent – and to a great extent – detached institution (although taking part in interlibrary loan cooperation), begins its fundamental transition process in the mid-eighties. Library development in the North could be a good showcase for Giddens's theory.

The libraries' real and symbolic value is still strong, even if all through the period public debate has predicted that libraries will stagnate and die, because dissemination of information becomes digital and is taken over by other suppliers. The libraries' real and symbolic value is seen both in relation to the still very high circulation figures and the fact that new and spectacular libraries are still being built all over the world – also in the North.

Seen in a wider global perspective this debate is being carried out with increasing intensity, but without providing the ultimate answer. The library is still the subject of debate; there are suggestions for virtual solutions, for closer cooperation between libraries, archives and museums, both virtual and real. Some advocate an improved profiling of

the libraries' structured data as an alternative to Google – probably the web service that has made the most significant dents in the libraries' monopoly of systematic information dissemination. And there are some people who advocate an intensive cooperation with Google, so that searching in the library catalogues is integrated in Google searches.

Nordic public libraries are hybrid

This book is a contribution to the global discussion about the public libraries' role and tasks, illustrated by projects and services, and this chapter seeks to single out some general tendencies.

In the Nordic countries there has been a fairly high consensus on the hybrid library model, and the strategic and developmental work done has focused on good virtual library services: search and order facilities in the catalogues, e-ask a librarian service 24/7, access to e-texts, music files and projects aiming at giving the same access to streamed video.

The more successful these e-services turn out to be, the more necessary it becomes to change the physical library as the virtual services gradually replace the traditional ones. Gradually – as we are dealing simultaneously with user groups who will reject any e-service at all, and vice versa other groups who do not use anything else. In the long run the virtual users will win. We can tell by analysing the changing patterns in the library behaviour of children, youngsters and students.

One expression of national involvement in the public libraries is the preparation of national strategies and white papers on library development. Norway has just completed work on a white paper. Sweden published a white paper a couple of years ago, and Finland and Denmark have prepared national strategies for public library development, in Finland in 2003 and in Denmark in 2006. These policies operate with the concept of the hybrid library, they deal with networking and interplay between local and national or regional assignments.

The Nordic countries have been among the fastest in the world to implement strategies for the information and knowledge society. The number of households and persons

having access to the Internet is likewise among the highest in the world. This means an intensive societal focus on ICT-development. Salaries also belonging among the highest in the world, the Nordic countries are typical representatives of the standard bearers in the globalisation strategy, exporting a vast number of jobs to China, India and other countries with a considerably cheaper labour force, while in return endeavour to further innovation in the remaining companies with a view to creating new jobs and new products. The means to guarantee a positive development like this is to strengthen universities and other places of research and education, to improve primary and secondary education and to work systematically with innovation at all levels in society.

Library strategy everywhere in the North aims to support this general social-political development. In future the development will be greatly influenced by the globalisation policy, which varies slightly from country to country, but which includes at any rate three areas already endorsed by the libraries where their efforts can be intensified: First of all to help strengthening and enhancing research and education, secondly to contribute to innovation at all levels of society, and thirdly to encourage cultural coherence. None of these can be done without systematic access to new knowledge.

New services

The public libraries have faced up to the challenges by providing a number of web-based services and effecting changes – first of all, of course, a continued development of online search and order facilities. The OPAC is developing into portals with many functionalities.

Like the rest of the western world, Nordic public libraries aim to integrate access to value-adding information as directly as possible in people's everyday lives, as it can improve the individual's possibility to exploit both knowledge and cultural products. From researcher to pupil. This functionality operates to a great extent within the research library area, with password-based access to licensed e-resources, primarily periodical articles and reference works.

The public libraries have fewer relevant e-resources, because the market for information in Nordic languages is incommensurable with the English-speaking market. Estab-

lishing a critical mass of e-resources relevant to the users of the public libraries is a strategically important task. There are models for loan of e-books in the libraries, and i.a. in Denmark new business models are under way, because the publishers have given The Danish Library Centre the contract for the organisation of an e-book portal with textbooks.

The loan of music files via the public libraries has started in most Nordic countries. In Denmark the State and University Library in Århus (national library for sound recordings) has digitised all published Danish music, and an agreement has been made between the libraries and the rights holders, which makes loan of music files possible for a day or a week for citizens in those municipalities participating in the license. Loans are still free for everyone. The file simply disappears when the loan period expires. Obviously download to Ipods and similar devices is a fast growing market, and the decline of the CD is a fact. A similar model for streamed video is under preparation on a project basis.

Another trend is the establishment of new web-based services, where the libraries themselves produce the content, like for example chat and e-mail-based ask-a-librarian services. The idea is for a number of libraries to cooperate on running the service as a national service – accessible to all. The inquiry services have two essential challenges: First of all to ensure a branding as the basis for a greater awareness of their existence, and secondly to test more differentiated models with inquiry services that raise their profile in relation to different target groups. Other library-produced web services range from actual portals to Internet guides and subject gateways with links collections.

An efficient Internet guide is a quality alternative to Google – where quality web sites have been selected for a large number of subjects. Portals and subject gateways basically provide specialist information that apart from links can contain considerable volumes of digital information in the form of encyclopaedia, monographs, periodicals digitised for that purpose, and images.

A fourth type is e-zines where information on writers and recent literature or new music is disseminated. These are

also produced in a collaboration between a large number of libraries and individuals who deliver content in the shape of reviews and articles.

The library space

In terms of the physical library, there are several fundamental common strands of development. Over the past 15 years a considerable number of branches have been closed in the North, an estimated 1,500. They are predominantly small branches with limited opening hours and limited resources, but the tendency will presumably continue: The demands levelled at a professional library increase, and the resources are gathered together in larger places, a development parallel to other service areas.

It is also generally understood that increased web access to the library changes the use of the physical library. There is an increase in the number of patrons visiting the library without borrowing anything, but who use the Internet access, read the papers and magazines, do some work or meet each other, participate in events and courses or visit exhibitions.

But if the digital development tends increasingly to eliminate paper-based media and other physical media, the need will arise for an even more definite alternative to the classic library space. The main challenge is to abandon the 'book depository hall' as organisational principle for the physical library, and replace it with an interior design principle that allows for the library being a multi-functional house with room for both the classical free space for being, reading and working – while at the same time making room for many more scheduled activities than today – exhibitions, events, computer classes and many other learning initiatives, and meetings. And finally, a place that still signals that help is available to find the right information, and that produces a forceful cultural promotion both of the new books and of subjects of topical interest.

It is to be assumed that virtual services will increasingly be produced at national level in order to gain sufficient professionalism and volume, while the local library will become a

service point for national services as well as a cultural centre that will be able to adapt itself more freely to local needs than is the case today.

We find some excellent examples of special initiatives regarding library service to immigrants where the libraries offer language service of various kinds, help in applying for jobs and communication with authorities, schools etc., help-with-homework cafés for school children, reading the newspapers together (reading practice and cultural education).

The basis for this kind of service is not the classical library offer, but an analysis of the users' needs. Such analyses have been done in relation to other user groups: children, older people, smaller businesses, and subsequently special offers have been designed for these groups.

The fact that the libraries, like the majority of user groups and society as such, find themselves in a transitory phase also makes heavy demands on branding. For many people the image of the library is identical with the cosy children's library of their childhood. But reality is not like that – and that is something that needs to be told.

Branding can happen in many ways. One is national library campaigns, but also campaigns that are aimed rather at special target groups or specific conditions. Reading campaigns directed at children and the young with competitions, choosing the book of the year, reading and narrating competitions are other ways. Establishing kindergarten libraries, or just special servicing of kindergartens and their users by the local public library, is yet another method.

The transition process is complicated. Its success – the realisation of a new, more digitally orientated hybrid library system – depends on overall strategies, the will to stick to them and also that the necessary competencies are available. At the beginning of the new millennium these elements are part of everyday work in the Nordic libraries.

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Translated by Vibeke Cranfield



Linköping Library, Sweden

In 1996 the library was burned down. A new library was inaugurated in 2000.

Architects: Nyléns arkitektkontor

Photo: Ahmet Kurt

The public library's core service – the loan of books – under pressure but still in demand

■ The core service of the library, the loan of books and other printed materials, is under pressure. Over the past decades the choice of media has expanded so that instead of talking of books only, we now talk about the libraries' physical materials. Music, film and multimedia have arrived on the scene, and have turned the book into just *one* among other physical materials for the libraries to offer on loan. In the recent past electronic loans have become part of the libraries' mediation, thereby again reducing the loan of physical materials to become one of two forms of loan. As the spectrum of the libraries' collections of materials has become increasing broader, the spectrum of the libraries' services has similarly broadened.

To a greater extent than before, the libraries now offer not only the loan of materials, but also help to exploit the knowledge inherent in the materials. The public libraries' collections have become one among several tools to fulfil the libraries' mission: Support of learning and cultural activity.

This development, which makes the public libraries' loan of physical materials an increasingly smaller part of library service, while at the same time it is commonly held that the library's position regarding access to information knowledge has likewise been reduced, puts the libraries in a quandary. Traditional services are still the most sought-after, but they are also the ones to have suffered the greatest decline. Analyses of the population's media habits, such as the study of Danish cultural and leisure time habits from 2004, also clearly point to the fact that potential library users of future generations will undoubtedly be very avid users of the new media.

How are the libraries to succeed in complying with electronic developments and at the same time meet the demand for traditional materials? Can the demand for books be associated with a combination of a moribund generation and an as yet not sufficiently developed electronic media offer, and thereby be curbed? – or it is a question of putting the emphasis on a stronger promotion of the book as an inestimable source of experience and as the medium which for example enables children to become proficient readers?

Professor Niels Ole Pors from the Royal School of Library and Information Science refers in one of his columns in *Scandinavian Public Library Quarterly* to British library statistics that show a fall in the loan of books of 40 % over ten years.

Nordic libraries' lending statistics to a great extent reflect the same development – albeit not quite as dramatic and not at quite the same rate. The general picture is that the loan of book is decreasing, but that to some degree this is counterbalanced by an increase in the loan of other physical materials. The addition of electronic loans also brings about an increase in the collective loans figure. In Sweden and Denmark the loan of books has fallen over a period of years. In Finland and Norway, on the other hand, the decrease did not start until 2005.

The reason for the predominantly falling tendency in the loan of books is undoubtedly rather complex. The competition from other media is bound to play a part. Another factor might be the purchasing power of the population, which means that many people *buy* books instead of borrowing them. Finally there is the dilemma of the libraries' use of acquisition budgets. Are the libraries to a certain extent 'guilty' of favouring investments in electronic developments which they deemed necessary? Or have they just adapted their acquisitions to a dwindling demand? A kind of chicken and egg complexity which it is difficult to disentangle. It is at any rate a fact in Denmark that the libraries' acquisition of books has fallen dramatically over the years.

The Danish minister of culture, Brian Mikkelsen, wants to promote the libraries' loan of books, and part of the Danish National Library Authority's Development Pool was set aside for this purpose. Projects were run to show whether there is a connection between purchased titles/copies of books and the loan of these. At the same time the projects were supposed to develop and test new forms of mediation and initiatives. Scholars from the Royal School of Library and Information Science have monitored the projects and have been able to conclude that all in all it is highly probable to generate a great number of loans as well as high



Næstved Library, Denmark
Inaugurated in 2004
Automatic return machine
Architect: Jan Amby maa,
Tegnestuen AK38
Photo: Shade//Light

circulation figures of a chosen material through focused acquisition and promotion.

Another point is that in this way lending figures can be augmented, not only in terms of popular material, but also in the case of more exclusive quality literature. It is quite clear, however, that it is not sufficient for the libraries to have the books in stock. Particularly literature that is not at the top of the list needs an imaginative exposure, and promotion is essential in creating bigger lending figures. If the libraries are to ensure increasing lending figures for

books in the future, they have to start by acquiring more books. This – and a more effective exposure – will do the trick.

In any case, whether the budget is small or large, it is necessary to concentrate on rationalising operational procedures and optimize loan of books and other physical materials.

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Translated by Vibeke Cranfield

Recent system developments of public libraries in Iceland

Iceland is in the unusual situation of having a shared library management system both for cataloging and circulation, which serves almost the entire country. All the leading libraries, including the National Library and scores of municipal, university and school libraries, have chosen to subscribe to the system. The scope of the project calls for increased cooperation between member libraries, and it offers interesting opportunities, e.g. in the field of inter-library loans, of patron privileges, and in cataloging.

The Icelandic Library Consortium

In November 2001 a group of shareholders, representing several municipalities and the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, founded a company to run a new library system for Iceland. At the time, Iceland was estimated to have approximately 400 libraries, and the new system was expected to serve all of them, providing for services such as cataloging, circulation and inter-library loans.

When the company was founded, the Aleph 500 library system from Ex Libris Inc. had already been purchased. The main task of the new company was to implement Aleph 500 and run it under service agreements with the libraries and their owners.

The project was unusual in many ways. This was the first time a computerized library system was implemented on this scale in Iceland. Even if it turned out that it was not realistic to expect all 400 libraries to join, 200 libraries are now participating and a great majority of those that aren't, are small or very small libraries. Each member municipality has the right to use the system for all of its libraries. A look at the number of inhabitants these municipalities indicates that it now serves over 90 % of the population of Iceland.

The project was also extraordinary from the system point of view, since it involved libraries of different types. Our current customer categories are the national library, public libraries, university libraries, primary and secondary school libraries, research libraries, government libraries and association libraries. Among the larger libraries are the National and University Library of Iceland, and the public libraries of all the larger towns. The system also serves around one

hundred school libraries, libraries of the ministries, the Alþingi (parliament), the Central Bank, the National Museum, and the Árni Magnússon manuscript institute.

Finally, this project was unusual from the organizational point of view, since the company founded to run the system was a shareholders' company, which is currently an uncommon form of cooperation between the state and the municipalities. The company owners intend to assess the structure and results of the company in the near future, and in doing so they may consider some form of privatization or outsourcing.

A few milestones

In our current work, we have reached a few major milestones. The implementation of the system includes several project phases. Aleph is a client-server based system with a web interface (web OPAC), and one of the first tasks was to translate key components of the Windows-based client to Icelandic. System tables had to be configured based on individual library needs. Designing, translating and coding a web interface came next. Migrating data from legacy systems was a huge task which could only have been completed with active participation on behalf of member libraries. Furthermore, the company had to provide training for librarians, run a help desk, provide statistics on the system and much more.

Here are some of the key milestones on our journey, so far:

- June 2002: Hosting of the system starts, as a result of a public tender
- May 2003: The system, now called Gegnir, is opened to the public as gegnir.is, with data from ten libraries, including the National Library (select English)
- April 2004: Around one hundred public libraries and school libraries join the system
- December 2005: Work on authority control for the system is finished.

And here are some of the tasks we have ahead of us:

- Upgrading the system to version 16
- Adding several secondary school and research libraries to the system

- Setting up a Z39.50 server
- Implementing a link server (SFX from Ex Libris) for member libraries.

Benefits and opportunities

We all know what an immense role the Internet is playing in the distribution of information and entertainment in our part of the world. Using the web has created lots of opportunities for librarians, but running a country-wide library system like we do in Iceland offers some additional opportunities.

Member libraries generally use the same library card, but the card may or may not give the owner borrowing privileges in a given library, depending on whether the annual fee has been paid or not. Recently a few public libraries in neighboring towns of Reykjavik started sharing their resources by granting privileges to each others' patrons. This means, for instance, that if someone has paid the annual fee in the Public Library of Hafnarfjörður, he or she can borrow books in the Public Library of Kópavogur without paying a fee there too. If these libraries are satisfied with the results of this project, others might follow in their footsteps. Eventually all public libraries in the country might choose to unite in sharing the fees, so paying for privileges in one library would give you automatic access to all public libraries in Iceland. This would certainly make life easier for the general public.

Having one shared library system opens up other opportunities. Obviously, cataloguing is already much more effective than it used to be. Cataloguers now enter the bibliographic data only once for all of the 200 libraries, which saves a great deal of redundant work. However, the cataloguing process needs to be controlled carefully to ensure quality of the data since more people rely on its quality now than ever before. We also hope to make cataloguing more effective through collaboration with SVUC, the Scandinavian Virtual Union Catalog.

Having a centralized library system makes maintenance of the patron records easier. Domicile data are retrieved from the National Registry centrally on a regular basis, so librarians do not have to worry about maintaining patron data in dozens of different locations. The government-sponsored personal ID is also the key ID in the library system, so your patron ID is the same no matter which library you are dealing with.

The system also opens up for more effective handling of 'delinquencies', and the libraries could benefit from defining a collective policy in that area, so they do not end up with time-proven 'delinquents' moving freely from one suffering library to the next.

Inter-library loans have been implemented in the system, but more work is needed in that area. While ILL functions offered by the system certainly need to be streamlined, administrative issues are also involved, since it would be very helpful if all the libraries could agree on a common ILL tariff. If all library users knew that an inter-library loan inside Iceland costs e.g. the equivalent of 5 euros, regardless of library, they would be more likely to want to use the resources of distant libraries. Users, who find books in Gegnir, expect to be able to get these books into their hands, and it would be a poor excuse if the librarian says (s)he's sorry but this book belongs to another library. The customer will simply think: "Okay, I found the book in Gegnir, now I want it!" Thus, the new library system is bound to encourage more cooperation between the country's libraries, which, needless to say, will be a great blessing for the users.

Generally speaking, librarians are knowledgeable users of the Internet. But information sources on the Internet compete fiercely with information in paper format. As long as libraries are not planning to shut down their paper-based operations, they should make every reasonable effort to distribute paper-based information efficiently. When writing literature reviews or working on school papers, most users start looking for information on the Internet, then check out library books, and finally may resort to manuscripts if that happens to be relevant. For most of us, this order describes different levels of ease of access. Now that Icelandic library catalogues are available on the Internet, we should further enhance the ease of access to printed materials – and, for that matter, to manuscripts too. A single and country-wide library fee, a single and universal tariff for inter-library loans and enabling people to order inter-library loans over the Internet are important steps, capable of helping the printed stuff we love so dearly in surviving competition with e-data.

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Development in national catalogues and loan cooperation

■ For more than ten years Denmark has had one shared national union catalogue, DanBib, covering both public and research libraries. Since the end of 2000 it has formed the basis for library.dk, which provides free access for all Danish citizens to order any kind of material from all the country's public libraries to be collected from the borrower's local library. The shared catalogue is also the basis for several initiatives to streamline the interlibrary loan process. Automatic updating of requests from DanBib directly into the local library systems has been established, and turning requests from library.dk into automatic request is not far away.

DanBib is the common bibliographic superstructure system for the collective Danish library system and the professional tool for library staff. DanBib is both the national union catalogue and the libraries' digital infrastructure and includes the national bibliography as well as the stock of all public libraries and major research libraries. The system also contains common functions concerning dissemination of loan cooperation, reuse of bibliographic data, verification and transfer to foreign databases. Common technical and bibliographical standards link together DanBib and the libraries' local systems both through reporting of data from libraries and by technical support of interlibrary loan cooperation.

The idea of letting a common base replace former specific public and research library bases was originally launched at the first joint library directors' conference in August 1990, following the establishment of the Danish National Library Authority as the common agency for both sectors

DanBib was established in 1994 on the basis of an agreement between the government, i.e. The Ministry of Culture, The National Association of Local Authorities and Copenhagen and Frederiksberg municipalities – named together: the DanBib Commissioners. The task was delegated to the Danish Library Centre (DBC) in an agreement between DBC and the commissioners.

In the first instance DanBib replaced the research libraries' joint base, and later the public libraries were likewise cove-

red by DanBib. Right from the beginning DanBib was accessible according to the standard at the time via TELNET and other services such as direct modem call and Datapak. The first test web version was established in 1997, and DanBib at last went on the air in 2002 with a fully operational web interface with www.netpunkt.dk

DanBib is financed by subscription payment. In case of public and school libraries the payment depends on number of inhabitants. State libraries subscribe via the Danish National Library Authority and payment depends on library type and number of employees. The Authority provides funding for the research libraries' subscription to the extent of about 2/3 of the total subscription fee. Other subscribers pay according to usage.

The DanBib base is built on material from the following sources:

- Danish research and public libraries
- Danish national bibliographic records
- NOSP (Nordic Joint Catalogue of Periodicals)
- ISSN Register – International register of periodicals
- British National Bibliography 1981 ff
- Library of Congress, cataloguings 1981 ff.

The data model in the DanBib base builds on the principle: 'One title, one record'. Ideally this means that for each version of a material one only gets one hit in DanBib, however many cataloguings have been submitted of the material. All records entered in DanBib should therefore be matched with already existing records.

The research libraries take part in the DanBib cooperation by reporting new, altered and deleted records to the union catalogue. Another model applies to the public libraries, where new records are submitted separately and go through a central validation process. Apart from that all public libraries submit a separate report on their holdings.

In practice the interface [www.netpunkt](http://www.netpunkt.dk) acts as a gateway to central databases and tool for the library staff and here primarily DanBib. At netpunkt.dk one can do a simultaneous search in several bases at the same time, or you can transfer searches from one base to another.

Access to DanBib is also available via Zpunkt, which gives libraries with a Z39.50 client the possibility of switching to some of DBC's bibliographic services with a view particularly to search and download.

In connection with DanBib a great variety of services have been developed over the years. In 2003 these were segregated from the general DanBib subscription and named 'DanBib+', and the libraries now pay only for the services they actually use.

bibliotek.dk

Since October 2000 library patrons have had the opportunity of searching, reserving and ordering books, CDs and other material whenever they want and from whichever library they want via www.bibliotek.dk. bibliotek.dk contains material available in the public libraries and public Danish research libraries as well as all national bibliographic records. It is free of charge to use bibliotek.dk, as the service is financed by the state. An English version is also available at www.library.dk

The foundation for bibliotek.dk is the statement in *Act regarding library services* from May 2000: "The government strives to ensure that as far as possible the national common library catalogue is made available to everyone by access via the Internet".

Practical preparations for bibliotek.dk had started a year previously, which was the reason for bibliotek.dk being ready for opening to the public already on 30. October 2000.

Although bibliotek.dk is fully state-funded, the development of the service was negotiated with local government representatives and carried out in agreement with them. This happened through negotiations with the DanBib commissioners where it was agreed that bibliotek.dk could build on top of DanBib. It is in fact basically the same software that is used for the running of both DanBib and bibliotek.dk

The Danish National Library Authority was from the beginning entrusted with the administration of bibliotek.dk and Danish Library Centre with the day-to-day running of the base.

Some key figures on bibliotek.dk:

- 10 mil. records
- 221 public libraries (all)
- 170 research libraries
- 1,4 mil. requisitions in 2005
- 3,6 mil. visitors in 2005
- Unique visitors/week max. 100,000
- 8000 users on mailing list
- National Budget Allocation: 9,4 mil. DKK in 2006.

From the beginning the facilities in bibliotek.dk have been search and requisition. Apart from general search you have advanced search with Boolean combination and a command search with the possibility of writing CCL commands. Apart from this there are four search possibilities associated with material: music, articles, sheet music and net documents. Every resident in Denmark can use bibliotek.dk to order material to be collected at any library in the country.

My library.dk is a general facility with personalisation of collect library, favourite library, search method etc. The user interface is adapted according to the chosen library's decision.

Several versions of the same title in the same language are shown together, and it is then up to the user to choose before submitting his request.

New material is included in bibliotek.dk (and in DanBib) as soon as it is registered at DBC – typically just a few days after being received there. If there are no localisations in the record, a warning is given when the request is received.

The library professional committee on bibliotek.dk discusses i.a. annual development plans, which after a public hearing are discussed with the library directors' associations in December each year.

Interlibrary loan

The central function in interlibrary loan cooperation in Denmark is the BOB-base (base of requests), where all requests from end users are collected and all requests between libraries. A number of libraries use BOB for the administration of requests, but the individual library can also receive requests via email. The library can also receive interlibrary loan requests as direct updates directly in the local lending system with ILL requests via Z39.50.

This direct update started operating in autumn 2004 and has led to considerable rationalisations in the more than 50 libraries using the function. During one week in September 2005 Herning County Library thus received 1,857 requests, of which no less than 99,6 % were dealt with by automation: Reservation, ready for print-out on pick-up list or rejection.

Number of interlibrary loans from Danish public libraries (including renewals) has during the years 2001-2005 increased from about 1 mil. to over 1,6 mil.!

The development plan for bibliotek.dk includes user-initiated interlibrary loan without staff. The idea is for a library to set up a number of parameters, whereupon bibliotek.dk requests, which fulfil these, are automatically turned into an interlibrary loan request.

Trimming possibilities are i.a. type of material, year of publication and supplying libraries. A manual test going through 1,000 bibliotek.dk requests showed that 75-80 % of requests for non-music materials could be done as automatic interlibrary loans – and that only five per thousand would entail ‘error requests’ after trimming. This project therefore looks to be able to rationalise interlibrary loan procedures considerably.

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Translated by Vibeke Cranfield

The Transportation Scheme

As support for the lending cooperation on physical materials between the libraries in Denmark and with the aim to create a seamless distribution as a follow-up to bibliotek.dk, the National transportation scheme was established in Denmark in 2004.

The scheme is intended to ensure that all physical materials are transported efficiently and cheaply between the libraries nationwide.

The scheme is built as a pivotal solution, where 10 major county libraries and 2 university libraries are pivotal points. Each night five times a week there is transport between the 12 pivotal points, and the next day the materials are transported via regional routes organised by the pivotal point. This means that the material reaches its destination in approx. 24 hours.

The scheme is partly financed by the users and partly by the state. The state pays for the national part and for 2 days' transport to all municipal central libraries. In addition to this the municipalities can purchase more days after negotiation with their regional pivotal point. The educational libraries negotiate their participation in the transportation scheme with the regional pivotal point according to The Danish National Library Authority's guidelines, while state libraries with obligations in terms of lending cooperation pay per dispatched material.

By the end of 2005 all public libraries had joined the scheme, as had the largest state libraries and a fair number of educational libraries. In all 350 libraries with 860 service points.

Collaborate across borders

■ *Visit a library and access them all! Such is the motto these days of all libraries in Värmland, regardless of whether they are hospital, university or regular public libraries. The collaboration is extensive and crosses the border to Østfold in Norway.*

Collaborative venture

- No one need be shuffled back and forth between libraries. The service offered should be the same wherever it is being sought, says Inga-Lill Walander Olsson, project leader at Bibliotek Värmland.

- We wish to make it easier for the users or our visitors as I prefer to call them. Inga-Lill goes on to say that not everyone comes to the library to borrow books.

The underlying theme of the project is that they all interconnect – all libraries funded by tax money. So why not offer those people it is meant for the very best service we can? However, it is not only a solid service-minded approach that lies behind initiation of the project. It is also a matter of economy.

- We are aware that there is no more funding to be had. Instead we need to reflect upon what we have and how it can be put to better use. And our belief is of course that more can be extracted if you work together, instead of doing the same things on parallel courses.

Bibliotek Värmland

What is Bibliotek Värmland? Well, it is a collaborative venture between all 16 of Region Värmland's public libraries, hospital libraries and university libraries and the county's AV-Center (a media-pool that supplies schools and institutions with, among other things, educational films). One of the results of this collaboration is that the visitor can use the same library-card at all libraries. Returning books or other media can be done at any library in Värmland. The libraries borrow from one another across the borders. On the web site www.bibliotekvarmland.se the user gains access to all library catalogues and other media such as e-books, e-music, films and databases. Is not such an approach quite the obvious choice? Should not all the libraries of Sweden have pursued this goal a long time ago?

Inga Lill Walander Olsson maintains that it takes time to instigate collaborative ventures across administrative borders. Each local authority has a strong sense of self-determination; the hospital libraries file under the county councils and the university libraries under state regulation. Collaborative measures across such boundaries are not made over night.

Norwegian prototype

The prototype of this collaboration lies several miles to the west, across the border and into Norway. To be more precise in Østfold. This is where Svein E. Nielsen is the appointed county librarian.

- Yes, we got going a bit earlier. But, we discussed solutions from an early stage and this has simplified matters for Värmland once they decided to set these ideas in motion, using us as a reference. We have always maintained a high degree of visibility with regard to our activities, says Svein E. Nielsen.

- Collaboration across the borders widens our perspectives. Media is flowing freely between Värmland and Østfold. As a consequence of this collaboration the cultural exchange between the two countries has increased.

We have a border calendar informing about cultural activities on both sides of the border. We also wish to expand on the collaboration enabling public- and school libraries to sit down and discuss mutual possibilities and solutions, says Svein E. Nielsen.

Inga-Lill Walander Olsson confirms that Østfold has inspired Värmland and she goes on to exemplify.

- The premise of each discussion has been to view all the media collections as one mutual pool of reserves. From these discussions various questions and solutions have come to the fore. How, for instance, do Norway and Sweden resolve the logistics between the libraries and coordination of the different computer systems? Who's responsible for the web portal? And how does one, through smarter collaboration, render the keeping of book stacks more effective?

To continue after project

The project was initiated in 2003, funded by the Ministry of Finance, Region Värmland, and the Swedish National

Council for Cultural Affairs and the National Library of Sweden. The project has now reached its end, but has fared well and will be established as a permanent fixture, funded by Region Värmland.

There are in particular two things that have been vastly improved upon, and which the users appreciate. One of them is that loans can be returned anywhere. The other is the borrower's card that can be used throughout the county. Another outcome of the collaboration is that the selection of films has increased. After a few weeks they are taken to another library. This approach offers the visitor a wider range of films. But the great stumbling block in this project, as in many other projects, is how to reach the general public and inform them of the implemented improvements and expanded service.

- It is an ongoing situation which we in the library sector have to do battle with. Much of what is on offer in the portal is not getting through, such as the possibility to borrow e-books and e-music. But maybe it is a case of demand not being quite on the scale we imagined.

However, Bibliotek Värmland has blazed a trail and made a simple yet clear pronouncement of its collaborative approach. These days the telephone catalogue has a mutual page for all the libraries in Värmland. Several other counties are now latching on to this.

The user in focus

An important aspect of the developmental work has always been to apply the guiding principle of placing the user in focus.

- Our work must not be organised according to the librarian's perspective; instead we must consider what is best for the user. There have been times when we got bogged down in our discussions and were tempted to fall back on routine procedures. Whenever we reached that stage, we simply turned it around and asked ourselves what was best for the user. This would usually relieve the tension says Inga-Lill Walander Olsson.

Points of view from outside

So, what do staff and users have to say about Bibliotek Värmland?

Jan Schützer is head of the hospital libraries in Värmland.
- I'm of the opinion that it works satisfactorily and that my colleagues are on the whole positive. It is an important initiative; we need to show that we are improving our service facilities. Hospital libraries assume a natural place in this collaborative venture as we are the only medical libraries in the county with a lot of literature and information for patients and their relatives.

All the staff has participated in working teams during the project. One of them is Jimmy Jansson, librarian in Torsby.
- It is important that we get together throughout the county. If we can feel and act like a unit then the users will stand to gain.

There are many that subscribe to a conservative point of view regarding libraries, but they tend to take heed when they see how far ahead we are in our services and IT-technology. They can now download films and music from us. And it remains crucial that we are fast and available if we want to keep people asking for our services.

He also feels that there is a lack of strategic marketing for the services being offered.

- Perhaps one had hoped for more general awareness of what we have to offer; it looks as if a lot of people have not received this information.

The elderly visitor Herwig Berger in Hagfors is one who is pleased with the increase in library service.

- When I occasionally visit Karlstad, a visit to the library is a must. I am constantly finding new titles and authors which I borrow. To be able to return them in Hagfors is something I appreciate a lot.

Eva Bergstedt, freelance journalist
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Translated by Jonathan Pearman



Ski Library, Norway
is located in Ski Storsenter (a shopping mall),
next door to the kinoe. Inaugurated in 2004.
Photo: Anders Ericson

The development of Sámi library service

■ *The Sámi Parliament was inaugurated on 9 October 1989 in Karasjok, Norway. The Sámi Parliament is the national elected parliament for the Sámi in Norway, designed to strengthen the political position of the Sámi people and contribute to their fairer treatment. The Sámi Parliament has therefore been given the leading role in the future political development of the Sámi people.*

The Sámi special library is a part of the Sámi Parliament's administration. In the Sámi Parliament's policy it is a superior aim to give all of the Sámi people a satisfactory library service. To have a better Sámi library service will contribute to more knowledge and information about the Sámi people and Sámi culture to others. As a national cultural institution, the Sámi special library has the overall responsibility for all Sámi library services in Norway, and it functions primarily as a libraries' library.

The Sámi Parliament in Norway

The Sámi are a minority in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Norway officially defines the Sámi as an ethnic minority and a separate people who are at the same time also Norwegian citizens. This has not always been the case. From the 1850s onwards, the Sámi people were exposed for a long period to discrimination, and different kinds of reforms to assimilate the Samis were introduced. The situation improved during the 1960s, and since 1980 the legal status of the Sámi has improved considerably. The Sámi Rights Committee produced its first provisional report in 1984. Their recommendations laid the foundation for the Norwegian National Parliament's decision of 1987 to enact a special Sámi act and thereby establish the Sámi Parliament. The Sámi Parliament was inaugurated on 9 October 1989 in Karasjok, Norway.

The Sámi Parliament is the national elected parliament for the Sámi in Norway, designed to strengthen the political position of the Sámi people and contribute to their fairer treatment. The Sámi Parliament has therefore been given the leading role in the future political development of the Sámi people.

Every nation has a right to own and manage its own history. The Sámi people are no exception. Development of Sámi culture has to be done on the culture's own premises. It is the Sámi people who have to exercise and develop their own culture. The Sámi Parliament's overriding aim is to secure the Sámi people a real possibility to protect and develop the Sámi culture. To make this possible, separate art galleries, theatres and libraries are required. The Sámi people of Norway already have several Sámi national institutions. I will just mention some of them, like the Sámi theatre, the Sámi art gallery, Sámi cultural institutions with library and museum functions, and the Sámi Parliament's library: the Sámi special library.

The Sámi special library is a part of the Sámi Parliament's administration. The library's main tasks are acquiring, preserving, organizing and providing access to books and other materials in the Sámi languages, and about the Sámi situation in any language. It also functions as the administrative library where the Sámi Parliament's administration and politicians can find all the information they need in their work.

The library was established in 1954, and has been a fully government-funded institution since 1983. As a national cultural institution, the library has the overall responsibility for all Sámi library services in Norway, and it functions primarily as a libraries' library.

Sámi literature in competition with the majority literature

Historically, the Sámi people have a long oral tradition. The first book written in a Sámi language by a Sámi was published in northern Sámi in 1910. Two years later, the first fiction book was published. Words and language are important in every culture, and the effort to ensure the Sámi languages a status equal to other Nordic languages is essential. Therefore, it's important to encourage Sámi writers to use their own language. Today it's getting more usual to write in the Sámi languages. There are municipalities in Finnmark where Samis form the majority of the inhabitants, and the Sámi language is an obligatory subject for all pupils in the local schools.

But the situation for Sámi literature is still difficult. As with other minority languages, books in Sámi have got to compete with the majority language's literature in libraries and bookstores; for visibility and acceptance as good literature, and also to be produced and distributed.

Development of Sámi library service

There is a great need for more information about Sámi library service in Norway. However, there have been some positive developments during the last few years. Several conferences about Sámi library service and Sámi literature have been offered. Participation has been increasing, and many libraries have shown a growing interest in Sámi language, culture and society.

The Sámi parliament's budget includes a grant meant to support the collection development of Sámi library materials in public and school libraries throughout the country's municipalities. The intention is not to relieve the municipalities of their responsibilities concerning investing in Sámi material, but rather to contribute to a strengthening of service to the Sámi population and motivate local libraries to take responsibility for their Sámi patrons. The applications from the libraries for this funding have been increasing each year, which is very positive.

The area of Sámi settlement covers four countries. In an effort to give a Sámi library service to all Sámi people, library buses serve Sámi municipalities on both sides of the

Swedish-Norwegian and Finnish-Norwegian borders. The library buses are an excellent way of giving a complete library service, because the buses seek out people where they are, and it is possible to give this service also across the borders, no matter where the library is situated.

The Sámi Parliament has emphasized the importance of giving financial support to the whole Sámi settlement, and not only certain parts. This kind of support to preserve and develop Sámi library service is essential in rural areas. The financial support for library buses is transferred to the Sámi Parliament, as a part of the subsidies the Parliament already administers. All together six buses get this financial support.

There is a continued need for further development of Sámi library services, and many more development projects could certainly be initiated. A few should be mentioned here:

- Translation of subject heading lists into Sámi.
- Establishing a common Sámi bibliography reference database (this is an ongoing project with participants from Norway, Finland, Sweden)
- There are very few librarians with knowledge of Sámi language and Sámi culture and society. An important work would be to inform pupils in Sámi schools about the library education, and the opportunities for work in libraries.

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Ålandic network

■ *Katrina* is the title of the best known Ålandic novel, which was written by Sally Salminen (1906-1976), first published in 1936 and translated into some twenty languages. *Katrina* is also the name of the collective database of Ålandic libraries.

The media collection of all the Ålandic municipal libraries is in the *Katrina* database. Additionally, the collections of 26 specialized libraries of different types and sizes are registered. The catalogue is accessible on the Internet at <http://www.katrina.aland.net>, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Book borrowers themselves can control which books are available, submit a reservation and control his or her own book loan and book return times. Book borrowers receive a message about reserved books via text message, e-mail or regular mail. The library user also has the possibility to receive a message via e-mail when the library has received a new book in the book borrowers field of interest.

Åland has 16 municipalities, of which Mariehamn is the largest, with a population of 10,780 and Sottunge is the smallest, with a population of 127. Each one has its own library. The number of loans per resident varies greatly, with Kökar clearly leading with 29.7 loans/resident and Mariehamn holding strong in second place (26.9).

As the central library for Åland, Mariehamn City Library's responsibilities include coordinating library activities in public libraries and in the provincially maintained research libraries and functioning as an information center.

Being available to help municipal libraries with technical or other problems and organizing classes in the art of using the library system (now, Bookit) in the best way are also important functions. A few times a year, large, half-day classes are arranged, for example, in how to collect one's own statistics. Municipal librarians are also invited to the small,

informal run-through of routines, which the city library staff rather impertinently refers to as 'morning prayers' – one hour in the morning now and then.

New technology does not only deal with the library system, but to a large extent also with the new media, which is being developed more and more rapidly. E-books, downloading of books or music in mp3 format, new systems for talking books and newspapers – all of these are challenges on which libraries all around Scandinavia must take a stand and find forms for, even in a small region like Åland.

Copyrights are also a "hard nut to crack" for Åland, which belongs to Finland's copyright jurisdiction, but with its Swedish-speaking population has a extensive demand for Swedish material.

The central library collects and makes accessible as much literature about Åland and Ålandic authors as possible in the local collection, *Alandica*. With the exception of the collection of the physical media, this work has come to a great extent to be displayed virtually. On the website of Mariehamn City Library, under the heading *Alandica*, one will not only find books and other media, but also presentations and collections of links about Ålandic phenomena, such as Midsummer, Bomarsund and holiday traditions. The Ålandic authors heading at <http://www.mhbibl.aland.fi/forf/> features the closest we have come to an index of Ålandic authors. The work now continues in association with Åland's museum and Åland's provincial archives, so that we can eventually produce an ABM (Archives, Libraries and Museums) partnership of which we can be proud.

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Translated by Turun Täyskännös

Reading is fun – at any age

Organised reading is popular: Lots of people are doing it!

The Danish National Library Authority's communication consultant describes how the first season turned out in a new cooperation between the Authority and Radio Denmark on the establishment of reading circles in Danish libraries. Parallel with this initiative, but under its own steam, the nationwide campaign on Children and Literature carried on into its third year. The campaign aims to support and develop children's experiences with literature.

The year of the novel

Cooperation between the Danish National Library Authority and Radio Denmark P2 was a success right from the start.

“Thank you for the excellent initiative. Valby Library would be very pleased to participate ...”

“Thisted Library joins the scheme with the greatest enthusiasm ...”

“Rønne Library would like to join in and is eagerly expecting to receive posters and PR-material ...”

Libraries all over the country were brimming with enthusiasm and praise when the Danish National Library Authority in early September 2005 invited them to join a new collaboration with Radio Denmark P2. The collaboration was christened: P2 Prose fiction club.

The literary magazine *Alphabet* on Radio Denmark has since 1999 awarded the P2 Novel Prize – a prize given to the listeners' favourite choice among each year's publications. The magazine and the Danish National Library Authority were together blazing a new trail with this initiative of establishing book clubs in libraries round about the country. The local book clubs were to meet once a month to discuss the nominated novel of the month. The literary discussion from one library would be recorded for *Alphabet*, and the author would subsequently be confronted with

excerpts from the debate and the programme would then be broadcast on the radio. In order to get as much diversity in the seven chosen novels, they had to reflect - within their particular genre – both the popular and broadly appealing aspect and the one appealing to the minority. Radio Denmark's marketing department created posters and bookmarks, which were sent to the participating libraries to attract attention to the collaboration.

Literatursiden.dk – the libraries' net magazine on fiction – prepared material for each title as an inspiration and introduction for the clubs such as for example portraits of the authors and recommendations.

Organisation of the collaboration

It soon became clear that variations on the theme 'establishment' of local book club' were numerous. Most libraries by far wanted to take part in the reading of the first novel. Other libraries wanted to participate a couple of times, and others joined at the turn of the year for the reading of the fourth novel.

Recordings for the radio

Right from the start *Alphabet's* editorial office put great emphasis on the listeners' experience of the discussions. The criteria were therefore: Five participants and one chairman at the microphones, a broad age spectrum, and that men, too (“We must insist on at least one” argued the *Alphabet* editorial office) would voice his opinion during each recording.

The recordings took place in seven libraries geographically distributed right across the country, so that every region was represented: Nykøbing Falster County Library in October, then Vejle Library, Frederiksberg Library, Godthåbsvej branch library, Middelfart Library, Regional Library of Northern Jutland, Herning County Library and finally in April Birkerød Library.

Each month *Alphabet* has marked the culmination and the end of the discussion of the novel of the month.



Hjørring library, Denmark

The book *Whatever* by Bente Olesen Nyström is being scrutinized and compared to KarnapNok, which is a faithful copy from the book. KarnapNok is also a different example of a book case, it contains fairy-tale books on the back.

Photo: Carl-Hermann Hansen

The jury votes

This year the eight member jury was appointed among those readers who participated in recordings for the radio. A weekend in May was set aside for the recording of the jury's intensive debate and discussion, and the Music Library at Brandts Klædefabrik in Odense was chosen as the scene for the recording, the final voting and awarding of points. The recordings were subsequently broadcast on *Alphabet* – and the winner of the P2 novel prize revealed. On 29. May the winner, Morten Ramsland with his successful novel *Hundehoved*, was presented with the P2 novel prize. The members of the jury and the nominated authors were invited to the festive event at Danish Radio.

Prose fiction club to continue next season

Radio Denmark P2 and the Danish National Library Authority resume their cooperation with Prose fiction club in the coming autumn. On the basis of the 55 participating libraries' response to an electronic questionnaire about the initiative, Radio Denmark and the Authority will be summing up the experiences gained during this first season. Next season starts some time in September.

Children and literature

– a campaign about children, young people and books

The meeting between the good book and the good reader generates the good experience

The objective of the campaign *Children and literature* is to further children and young people's pleasurable meeting with literature of good quality – fiction as well as non-fiction and literature of high artistic quality as well as literature of great practical value and relevance to children and the young.

The *Children and literature* campaign was launched on the minister of culture's initiative in 2003 and has since May 2004 been an inter-ministerial campaign for reading run by the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Family and Consumer Affairs.

Guiding stars during the first three years

The most important 'guiding stars' for *Children and literature* are the good experience, the good book and the good

reader. Projects and activities under *Children and literature* stem from these guiding stars and reach the objective via three tracks:

- Centrally determined projects
- Financial support for local projects via special pools
- Knowledge-sharing through i.a. publications and annual conferences.

Beacons and projects

In all the years local projects have been specifically prioritised in the campaign's budget. Right from the beginning the interest was keen to the extent that in 2003 more than 60 projects were given financial support, and following the third round of applications nearly 120 projects have received money to encourage local children and young adults' zest for reading.

The concrete, local *Children and literature* project often gives rise to a closer dialogue between politicians, professionals and the broader public, and it may also fuel the desire to build on previous experiences, to adjust and to explore new avenues.

Each year *Children and literature* puts focus on selected areas and activities, the so-called 'beacons'. One of them is the Orla Prize, awarded for the first time in 2005.

Orla Prize 2006

The Orla Prize is unique, because it is the result of children and young people's own choices within four categories: Picture books, children's books, books for the young and cartoons. The prize is named after Ole Lund Kirkegaard's figure and children's books' classic *Orla Frøsnapper*; 'the boor and king of the gun' Orla is chosen as front figure, because in his rough and humorous way he can encourage children and young people to take an interest in books – without admonishing finger-wagging.

The Orla Prize is a collaboration between *Children and literature*, Radio Denmark and several other partners: The Publishers' Association, the Danish Association of Booksellers, Danish School Librarians, the Union of Danish Librarians and the net libraries Dotbot & Ask Olivia.

The idea of the prize is to highlight children and young people's choice of books and to obtain a greater exposure of books for children and young people.

The total of 40 chosen titles will be the object of Radio Denmark's production on radio, TV and on the net – and Radio Denmark will put spots on radio and TV to ask children to vote on the homepage www.dr.dk/orla. The prize-giving was broadcast live on TV on 24. May.

Ready-Steady-Deliver

One of the successful local projects which also acted as a beacon in 2005 – and again in 2006 – is the quiz Ready-Steady-Deliver (in Danish: Smart-Parat-Svar).

The idea is that by taking part in Ready-Steady-Deliver pupils in the sixth form become aware of the riches to be explored in the world of books and will then be able to act as attractive role models for their contemporaries. The quiz is supposed to make it smart and trendy to read, and highlight the potentials of reading. Children are given the opportunity to be “with it”, to be part of the media image in a different way from the usual competitions in dancing and singing.

Last year campaign activities reached far into the realms of school and library. More than 70 libraries played hosts to the quiz in the introductory municipal round, where about 3,560 quiz teams competed. Including the audience of the teams' classmates about 13,000 11-12 year olds were involved in the first round. Many libraries got generous local press coverage, and several of them have made arrangements with local sponsors as to prizes – books, gift tokens etc. More information about the quiz can be found at www.smartparatsvar.dk.

Knowledge-sharing

During the *Children and literature* campaign a large number of publications have been produced, which in an attractive and accessible way present research-based knowledge and practical experiences about children's reading and writing. The publications are very popular, and their content and form seem to meet a largely uncovered need for knowledge.

Finally the annual *Children and literature* conferences are immensely popular among children's librarians, school librarians and all who are involved with children and reading. The conferences are free; they are of a high standard and enjoy political support through one or several ministers' participation.

The value of the campaign

Children and literature has attracted attention to children's reading and has made positive inroads all over the country. The many local projects give the campaign a certain impact and a great variety of expressions and forms, and both projects and the promotion of knowledge and experiences have meant happier and more enthusiastic voluntary child readers as well as more knowledgeable adult cultural educators.

Chief coordinator for *Children and literature* in the Danish National Library Authority is consultant Anna Enemark Brandt. More information about *Children and literature* and the campaign programme at www.laeselyst.nu.

Sine Storr, communication consultant
Danish National Library Authority

Translated by Vibeke Cranfield

Words on the run: Promoting literature in Norwegian libraries

■ *Literature has escaped from the books! It is spreading at break-neck speed along the digital motorways, appearing shakily on the walls of Oslo's underground railway and exploding from the mouths of poetry-slam participants. It has also been observed on the inside of public toilet doors and in the lunch packs served on flights between Oslo and Stavanger.*

Some literature is still showing caution but has nevertheless found a place on the pavements, rack upon rack of soft, pocket-book covers staring cheekily at the passers-by. Literature can also seduce through an iPod or a CD.

Has literature gradually escaped from the library at unsupervised moments or has it sprung from the printed page through some magic from Hogwart's School of Witchcraft and Wizardry? An even more important question is why should we bother to make literature available in libraries, when it can be found in so many other ways and places?

Finding a needle in a haystack

“To ask why we need libraries at all when there is so much information available elsewhere is about as sensible as asking if roadmaps are necessary now that there are so very many roads.” (Jon Bing, professor of information technology Law)

Although the Internet can open the door to literary experiences, it is still mainly used as a means of localising literature, either in libraries or through Internet book dealers. Literary advice from librarians is also in the process of being digitally extended. *Ønskebok.no* is an electronic aid for young readers, allowing them in an entertaining way to choose for themselves how scary a book should be or where in the world they would like the story to be set. This programme, which is still under development, is a Norwegian version of the British *whichbook.net*. 24 readers are at work creating a database to ensure that from the autumn of 2007 it will be possible to search for exciting, sad, surprising and fantastic books.

Legislation and cultural policy

The public library system is the only promoter of literature in Norway subject to legislation. The Library Act declares

that the material “made available” shall be noted for its quality, versatility and topicality, that the activity shall be outwardly directed and that the service shall be publicised. Has any library ever been prosecuted for breaking this law? No, the Norwegian library system has taken its responsibilities very seriously. Fiction, mainly in the form of novels, represents more than 50 % of adult borrowing and, together with biographies and historical works, most of what is read by Norwegians. The purchasing programme of the Arts Council Norway ensures that every year public libraries receive a wide selection of new, Norwegian literature for both adults and children. The state finances the purchase of 1,000 copies of all new literature for distribution to libraries. The arrangement also covers a certain amount of non-fiction.

Since 2003 there has been a strong political initiative to promote culture in schools.

A government report that year clearly confirmed that reading is considered to have a unique place among the multitude of media. Many public libraries cooperate with schools in their efforts to promote the pleasure of reading. Arrangements are made for pupils to meet various professionals skilled in the presentation of literature and a follow-up programme is designed to increase their interest in reading. A talk in the library by a philosopher can provide food for thought and the inspiration to think and read more.

These are among the many initiatives included in the so-called Cultural Rucksack, a state-financed programme aimed at giving all school children interesting cultural and artistic experiences.

The library as a literary centre

In recent years the focus has been increasingly on promotion and communication.

The challenge of being visible in a cultural landscape mainly dominated by experiences of the moment lies precisely in daring also to communicate ideas that are valid beyond the short-term. In Norway the book trade's reluctance to maintain reserve stocks has led to an increased turnover of best sellers and shorter lives for the great majority of titles.



The public library becomes even more important as a living space of literature, a place where both old and young can read broadly and in depth in order to appreciate context and relationships

This development makes the public library even more important as a store of literature, a place where both old and young can read broadly and in depth in order to appreciate context and relationships. The Norwegian public library system is heading towards a more differentiated situation in its methods of promotion. Other channels of communication are being taken into use, cooperation is being extended to include new partners and more arrangements and exhibitions are being organised than ever before. Public libraries have registered an increase in visitors, while lending figures since 2001 have increased slowly but surely, particularly with regard to children's books. Promoting literature does in fact work!

Norsk kulturråd. Litteratur. Innkjøpsordningene (Arts Council Norway. The State Purchasing programme for contemporary Norwegian Fiction and Non-Fiction)
<http://www.kulturrad.no/> (select English)

Filosofi i skolen (Children and Youth Philosophers)

<http://www.buf.no/prosjekter/skole/index.php?page=hejpm>
(select English)

Den kulturelle skolesekken (*The cultural rucksack*)

<http://www.denkulturelleskolesekken.no/index.php?id=om>

Gi rom for lesing!: Strategi for stimulering av leselyst og leseferdighet 2003-2007. (Make space for reading!)

http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/templates/udir/TM_Tema.aspx?id=475 (select English)

ABM-utvikling. Statistikk for folkebibliotek. <http://www.abm-utvikling.no/prosjekter/Interne/Bibliotek/statistikk/Folkebibliotek/index.html>

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Translated by Eric Deverill

Among digital supermarkets and customised digital services

Some time in the near future the Norwegian National Library might be able to invite its end-users to pick and choose among millions of Norwegian books, newspapers, broadcasting programmes and other types of information – all available through the average household PC.

30 March 2006, the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten*¹ announced that the National Library was about to launch one of the most impressive digitisation projects in Europe. Its ultimate goal is nothing less than digitisation of all the library's material, regardless of format. According to the National Librarian obstacles, especially those concerning copyright and commercial interests, will be dealt with along the way. This ambitious initiative is a reaction to Google's recent digitisation programme and the European Commission's subsequent plan of establishing a European Digital Library.

In similar ways the other Nordic countries have all in recent years focused on finding ways to cope with the digital challenge at a national level and have with variations established initiatives such as libraries.fi and bibliotek.dk, both projects under the management of their respective public library communities.

In an article in the *New York Times*² the newspaper reports that e-books are “the fastest growing segment of the comparatively static publishing world”. One of the reasons for this increase in the output of e-books is mobile phones and other hand-held devices. These two relatively new inventions in their respective fields now complement each other in a way no one could imagine only a few years ago.

The New York Public Library, the newspaper observes, “introduced its first e-book collection on Nov.1 [2004] with 3000 titles. “We put it on the web site and almost immediately in the middle of the night people started checking it out” a library spokeswoman said. The *Kama Sutra*, the classic Indian sex manual, was one of the most popular books the first week”.³

There are no signs that the pace of the development of modern information technology will slow down and this

challenge must be faced boldly by librarians. Dinosaurs had their glorious days some time in the past and wrong decisions or outright rejection of the new technological paradigms could force the libraries of today to join this unholy group of extinct beings tomorrow.

Fortunately in this battle for survival the public libraries have three arrows in their quiver – their skills and general competence as collectors of knowledge resources, their ability to act as knowledge facilitators and lastly a desire to invest in functional⁴ and beautiful library premises.

Kirsten Drotner stresses⁵ that gently but firmly we are urged to “shift attention to the virtual, rather than the physical library”. The end-user is used to accessing digital resources both at her leisure time and at work. She will expect that the same formula is valid when she turns to a public library for help – whether through her PC at home or by visiting the library in person. The library's digital resources need to be updated, broad-spectred in range, easily accessible and representing both licensed and open-access sources.

Furthermore, within the knowledge society the librarian will have to play down her former role as a ‘cultural custodian’⁶, and embark on another much more challenging role as a mediator between the resources and the end-user. Or to rephrase it: “when a search engine isn't enough, call a librarian”⁷. The core of competence needs to shift from traditional ways of collecting and retrieving material to helping the end-user to navigate through the vast amounts of digital resources and enabling her to make sense of the information retrieved.

Splendid virtual services are, however, not enough for a modern public library. As Karl Karlseth puts it “... in order to succeed, both the physical and the virtual library must offer stimulation and excitement to the customer, thereby providing knowledge-sharing and knowledge growth”.⁸ Well-functioning and exciting virtual services should ideally be reflected in a modern and inviting physical library building, where the emphasis on virtual delivery of many traditional services could liberate the librarians from former tasks.

Nordic public libraries have cooperated in various fields for many years even before the digital era, and history, geography and partly language have formed a certain Nordic entity that it would be prudent to continue supporting within the frames of digital networking, interlending and other major initiatives.

As an example the Norwegian Digital Library programme has profited from close cooperation with its Nordic neighbours. In itself this programme is being designed to overcome technical, commercial and administrative barriers in order to make it possible for users to exploit the quality-assured information that is now available at many places and from many owners and suppliers.

An important challenge to all Nordic countries is to preserve and defend the diverse native languages from the aggressive influence of English on almost every aspect of modern-day life. Other major European tongues also feel the threat within the domain of digital resources and are preparing to protect themselves by setting up digitisation projects for their own language material. This problem is also addressed by Viviane Reding 29 September 2005⁹ as member of the European Commission responsible for Information Society and Media.

She stresses the importance of protecting the European languages, and continues: “we need to improve the tools for the digitisation and indexing of texts, particularly for non-English languages and for old materials and fonts.” This is an attitude inhabitants of the Nordic language regions must definitely second.

Empowered Nordic public librarians, well-equipped and comfortable with new technology have a promising future in the information society. And this cutting-edge future is nicely reflected in a story published in the *New York Times* from a public library on the outskirts of Detroit. The librarians are equipped with tablet PC's linked to library and Internet resources through their Wi-Fi network. With the tablets in hand they can freely wander the building and offer help to visitors, “sometimes even before they are asked”. “We call it roaming reference” said Holly Hibner, adult services librarian.”¹⁰

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¹ Kulturskatter i boks: 90 000 hyllemeter digitaliseres. *Aftenposten* 30.03.06

² An idea whose time has come back. *New York Times* 05.12.04

³ An idea whose time has come back. *New York Times* 05.12.04

⁴ Library innovation for the knowledge society. – Kirsten Drotner,. – *Scandinavian public library quarterly* (2005:38)2

⁵ Library innovation for the knowledge society. – Kirsten Drotner,. – *Scandinavian public library quarterly* (2005:38)2

⁶ Library innovation for the knowledge society. – Kirsten Drotner,. – *Scandinavian public library quarterly* (2005:38)2

⁷ When a search engine isn't enough, call a librarian. *New York Times* 05.02.04

⁸ The special library: bridging the physical and digital arenas. – Karl Karlseth. – *Scandinavian public library quarterly* (2005:38)4

⁹ The role of libraries in the information society. – Viviane Reding. - <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/566&fo> [lesedato 30. mars 2006]

¹⁰ Into the stacks, tablets in hand. – *New York Times* 09.12.04

Joint ventures and local endeavors

■ *Online library services compete successfully with other public sector services as well as with the private sector – the online catalogue of the metropolitan region in Finland recently came second in a competition for the most respected online brand, right after Google. Mobile services, SMS and WAP connections, are used to check and renew loans, to be notified of due days or reservations, even to pay charges online. Interactive digital TV library services will include library information and news and also accessing the archives of the Ask-A-Librarian service. Half of the libraries declare that they are planning to expand their services in a near future.*

The history of public library networked services in Finland started some twelve years ago when a couple of librarians recognised the potential of the Internet as a communication and information channel. One of the initial ideas was that the decimal classification system could be made more comprehensible for users by the means of hypertext, and at the same time, the Internet would facilitate the exchanging and sharing of knowledge between library staff all around our sparsely populated country. This was the beginning of Libraries.fi.

Today, the portal is financed by the Ministry of Education and is run by several staff members at Helsinki City Library, the Central Library for Public Libraries. Libraries.fi now comprises several channels which serve librarians and the public alike. The editorial staff update and develop the different services while most of the contents are produced in the local libraries.

Involving all public libraries

The Libraries Channel started out as a database where all Finnish public libraries could enter information about opening hours, library buildings and architecture, contact information, details on special collections etc. All libraries got a user name and a password for maintaining and updating this and the other jointly produced services as early as in 1997.

The next service to open was the Link Library where library staff did what they do best: they selected, catalogued and indexed reliable, good-quality links in a database which

could – and still can – be searched in several ways. A national reference service, *Ask-A-Librarian*, was created in 1999. In April 2006 there were 50 participating libraries, 14 of which were research libraries. The answers are archived, and since all answers are classified and indexed, the archive has become a useful source of information.

Helsinki City Library also operates its own online reference services which are available to all library users. The iGS, the Information Gas Station, is both an online service and a movable information desk which people can encounter at fairs as well as the central railway station. The questions are answered either by phone, fax, e-mail or, as is fit in a country of millions of mobile phones, by SMS. The national Ask-A-Librarian service and the local services of Helsinki complement each other, sometimes in very concrete ways. If the staff at iGS cannot answer a question, they ask for help from the nation-wide circle of participating librarians, and vice versa. There is also a library mailing list where difficult questions can be sent.

The latest additions are the Literature and Music Channels where the editors list relevant links and publish news and interviews. The Music Channel has its own editor who works as head of a public library music department in Central Finland. All the services are thus a mixture of centralised and decentralised contents production. When it comes to updating the database containing information on municipal libraries, the active role of the libraries is crucial. All libraries are welcome to take part in maintaining the Link Library, the Ask-A-Librarian service or publishing material on any of the channels. This is probably one of the reasons behind the established position the whole portal has acquired in the library field.

Going digital

The latest development in the national online services is their transition to digital television. Simplified versions of the services have already been tested but more services will be available when the analogue TV network is switched off in August 2007. The interactive digital TV library services will include library information and news and accessing the archives of the Ask-A-Librarian service. The more advanced

equipment for receiving digital broadcasts will also allow sending questions to the reference service and searching the library catalogues.

National statistics made easy

The statistical database is a national service on the Internet where the Ministry of Education gathers detailed information on public libraries each year. While the data were earlier gathered by using fill-in forms, the libraries have updated the database since its creation in 2002. The statistics can now be published earlier in the year, the information is more reliable, and the search facilities are versatile. In addition to helping the libraries themselves in their self-evaluation the database also provides invaluable information for the central and provincial governments. Also the media have welcomed the speedy service which enables innumerable comparisons between municipalities or regions and budgets or circulation.

A lot of useful and informative online services are also produced at the regional and local levels. Having a national portal means that all of the contents and materials produced in different parts of the country can also be made available through the one-stop shop at Libraries.fi. The regional central libraries all have their regional databases which usually consist of several more or less integrated services: the library catalogue, a directory or database on local authors and in many cases a separate search for local materials.

In most areas, the regional libraries together with the research libraries are developing joint portals for simultaneous searching of all the library catalogues. As there are several different library systems in use in Finland, this has not been the easiest of tasks, despite all the modern standard requirements.

One of the first regional portals to open was Pohjanportti, the portal of the northernmost regions of Finland: Lapland, Oulu and Kainuu. The portal combines the online catalogues and other databases of three regional public libraries, two university libraries and three polytechnic libraries. The user can either search all the catalogues simultaneously,

or one or more at a time. Registered users of the public libraries can use the 'remote loan' system where the libraries send the material by post for a fee of six euros. Similar portals have lately opened in other parts of the country as well.

Libraries go mobile

Although the municipalities are free to choose their library system, most of the online catalogues are nowadays joint catalogues for several, in some cases more than 20, municipal libraries. The library systems can not only be browsed and searched online, but users can also renew and reserve material, make requests, update their personal information or create personal profiles for notices about new acquisitions. In some library systems the users can check and renew their loans from a mobile phone by using text messages or a WAP connection. In most library systems it is possible to choose whether the user wants to be notified of due dates or reservations by post, e-mail, notice via the library catalogue or by SMS. Library charges can soon be paid online, too. 97 % of all public libraries offer mobile and online services in connection with their catalogue and half of the libraries are planning to expand these services in the near future.

Back to basics: libraries and literature

The broadest of the several databases and directories on Finnish authors is probably *Sanojen aika*, The Era of Words, which is produced by Helsinki and Hämeenlinna City Libraries. It contains biographical and bibliographical information with references to reviews and further reading, and each search first produces a random text clip by the author in question. As parts of the database are also available in Swedish and English, some of the text excerpts have been translated. Many of the contemporary authors have written a personal presentation on themselves and their writing.

The Turku City Library's author database differs from many others in its design as it combines three different databases. It includes biographical and bibliographical information and text samples, but it is also integrated into the library catalogue and the regional reference database on newspaper and journal articles. When looking up an author the user



Vadsø Library
Finnmark Public Library.
Vadsø, Norway
Photo: Sonja Siltala

gets direct links to the works of the author in the library catalogue and to any articles on the author.

Educating the next generations of users

Online services for children are certainly among the most difficult to design. One of the oldest children's library pages is *Kirjatti*, BookCat, which was created by Tampere City Library almost ten years ago. Today it is jointly produced by 16 municipal libraries in the Pirkanmaa region. The Book-Cat includes quizzes, puzzles, games and reading tips for the target group of 6-8 year olds. One of the main aims of the BookCat is to encourage children to read. The games and quizzes also act as library instruction for the smaller children.

The libraries in the metropolitan region of Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen provide a children's interface to their catalogue. The colourful interface offers different search options and ready-made searches on several topics such as 'the middle ages and knights' or 'where do babies come from'. Another example of regional cooperation between the same libraries is the Information Literacy Skills Portal for Teachers which the librarians have developed together with teachers from different schools in the area.

At the forefront

All these fine and innovative services are obviously not much use if the public does not know about them. In a recent survey on the use of municipal online services, the library services proved to be the second most popular right after the news section. In another survey conducted by the Ministry of Interior the public libraries were found to be equally popular when compared with other public sector services on the Internet. But the online services of public libraries also fare well when compared to the private sector services: the online catalogue of the public libraries in the metropolitan region became second in a competition for the most respected online brand, right after Google.

It is clear that the local library sites are the most important online library services for the users. At the same time, the local libraries act as gateways to the regional and national portals. This means that marketing the joint services should also happen at the local level. Still, the cooperation at different levels is the key to providing the best possible mix of useful online services. To quote the vision of Helsinki City Library, it's a question of "serving locally, acting nationally".

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SFL-Search*Find*Locate

Wherever the search goes... the semantic web looms ahead ...

The world is changing quickly. The amount of information is growing like wild fire and being recorded in a global information network of millions of different servers. Search engines are trying to keep up with the dispersed information by developing search systems and by ranking search results. Sometimes they are successful, but often the information searcher is left with thousands of identical-looking search results.

The semantic web is seen as one solution. With the technology of the semantic web, the ontologized glossaries of various fields can be included to yield more in-depth and refined information searches. There is already a demand for the semantic web in libraries, as users wish to have precisely specified search results.

The semantic web is being actively researched and developed in Finland. The FinnONTO project has already produced one semantic web application for the net which has attracted extensive international attention: MuseumFinland.

FinnONTO is a large research consortium promoting public administration, culture and business which is mainly funded by the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation.

SFL-Search*Find*Locate is based on the semantic web concept. It is represented in FinnONTO's management group and participates in project work with Libraries.fi. The first version of the service was released in January, 2006. The project is coordinated by a steering committee, in which all Finnish library sectors – public and research libraries and polytechnic and specialized libraries – are represented.

The technological base for SFL is the publishing system Meteor, which is based on Microsoft.Net technology. The software company Sininen Meteoritiitti Ltd is responsible for the development of the system. Sininen Meteoritiitti Ltd: <http://meteoritiitti.com/>

Network services produced by Libraries.fi

SFL is an independent information search network service, which also works as part of the *Libraries.fi portal*. The por-

tal can be seen as a rainbow, with a channel structure beneath which is compiled network information and services related to the library branch. In addition to a professional sector, the portal contains many search-related network services.

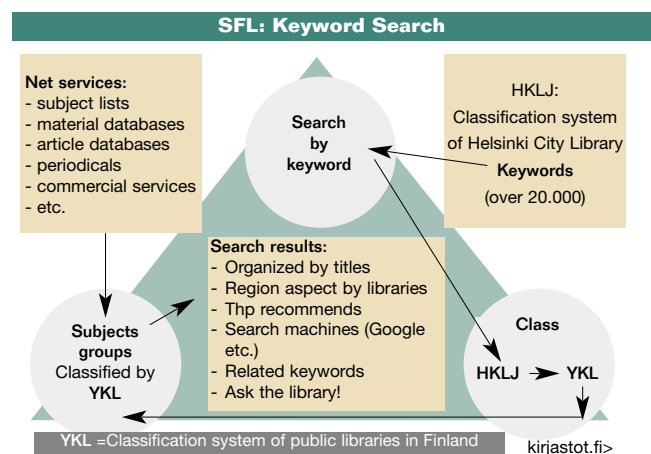
Over 20,000 keywords and dozens of subject groups ensure that information can be found by searching many different areas. The pertinent results are compiled under different headings. Library staff is always at hand to help – questions can be asked via e-mail, chat or by phone.

The primary content emphasis is on network materials produced in Finland and Scandinavia. SFL does not have its own information content; with the help of the database-oriented structure, the user is provided with routes and links to actual information sources or to reference information provided by material databases. The user interface for SFL is in three languages: Finnish, Swedish and English.

Keyword search

The basic search in SFL is the keyword search, which is based on the Helsinki City Library's classification system and its subject list of over 20,000 terms and their various aspects.

Figure SFL: Keyword Search



Every keyword has a precise library classification. By combining library classifications, subject groups are formed, which are the core of SFL's operation, because all of the net services in the search results are described together or in several subject groups. Many keywords belong to a subject group by virtue of the classifications and when the patron uses a search term, all relevant network services are 'summoned' to the search results.

Search engines

Search engines play a central role in SFL search results. Why deny their existence when people have become accustomed to using them and almost always get search results when using them? Ideally, they will complement SFL search results.

There is a place reserved for search engines on the right hand side of the page called 'Other search engines'. The search engine's name is an active link which initiates a search using the search word in question. The search word is enclosed in quotation marks, so that the search will result in more precise search phrases on Google and other search systems.

Related keywords

Semantic web ideas are best brought out through 'Related keywords'. If the keyword used belongs to one of the library classifications, there will be other keywords belonging to this same classification and SFL will display them. For example, the search term 'blues' will show all other keywords in the same classification: Barrelhouse piano, Boogie woogie, Chicago blues, Soulblues, Country blues etc.

Public sector searches and electronic transactions

SFL's front page also has the headings 'Public sector and Electronic transactions'. They are presented together with

the essential network services in Finland which comprise them. When doing information searches, these network services are easier to find with keyword and subject searches.

Experiences with use and statistics

SFL's user statistics for the first two months vary between 500 and 1,500 users per day. Compared to Google and other search systems, the user numbers are not high, but they do show that people outside of library staff have already found the service.

The future

SFL is nearing completion as an information technology application. In the future, focus can be placed more on the development of contents. For SFL, both new and existing important network services will be added to the search results. The integration of SFL into the Libraries.fi portal's information service system will continue, as will the development work with the FinnONTO project's semantic applications. Cooperation with Finnish information providers, especially in the public sector, is also important.

The goal for SFL is to do its part in promoting unobstructed passage to users in quality network services which are mutually identifiable to one another.

SFL- Search*Find*Locate:
<http://tiedonhaunportti.kirjastot.fi/> (select English)

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Translated by Turun Täyskännös

Network Nordatlanten

– some cultural heritage objects

“Modernism started some time in the 1700s!” This was the opening statement from professor in children’s culture, Beth Juncker, when she gave a discourse at the Royal School of Library and Information Science in autumn 2004. This is exactly where I wish to pick up the thread, and demonstrate why I think it may be interesting to focus on the literary, North Atlantic cultural heritage, and to refer to the fascinating epoch in North Atlantic book and library history at the time when books were sent to ‘the dependencies’, and the seeds were sown of the three – now modern – North Atlantic regional libraries, in the years 1818, 1828 and 1829 respectively.

It was on the initiative of secretary of the Danish Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, C.C. Rafn (1795-1864) that people began to collect books and send them to what later developed into Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn in Reykjavík, Føroya landsbókasavn in Tórshavn and Nunatta Atuqaateqarfia in Nuuk. Since then there has been intermittent and more or less active cooperation between these three library institutions in the North Atlantic.

Considering the length of time, one is forced to admit that the cooperation has perhaps not been exactly something to write home about! Distances and tough weather conditions have, certainly in previous times, prevented any substantial collaboration. However, it was not only the long distances from the Faroe Islands to Greenland or from the Faroe Islands to Iceland that turned the scales. The fact that all the time the pivotal point was in Copenhagen made the distances seem even longer and everything more unreal. One used the Danish post and telegraph services, all postal matter from e.g. the Faroe Islands to Iceland and Greenland was for several hundred years physically sent via Denmark, and when talking to other people, one communicated in ‘Danish’, just to mention some quite elementary things that have to do with the identity of the individual. There was, in fact, a very, very long distance between the three island kingdoms in the North Atlantic – both physically, but perhaps even more mentally – and on top of that they were all physically placed very far from the pivotal point. And therefore, I can only agree with the professor – modernism did start some time in the 1700s. This was when the man was

born who became instrumental in introducing the then – as indeed it still is – very modern medium, *the book*, quite literally into the North Atlantic. Fortunately, he was not on his own. He had his efficient networks, and together with some influential cultural ambassadors, stationed in the right places and at the right time, he managed to create the foundation for what we in the virtual world today call ‘VESTNORD a digital library’. As partners in this pioneering team we should mention i.a. Icelandic politician and scholar Jón Sigurdsson (1811-1879), Faroese county chartered accountant, librarian Jens Davidsen (1803-1878), and Greenlandic inspector P. H. Motzfeldt (1774-1835).

Vestnord

Bearing in mind this preparatory work that stretches right back from the days of Rafn and up to the turn of the century, it was very easy for the three regional libraries on the threshold of the 21. century to sit down at the oval table and deal with the proposal for an agreement of cooperation in connection with a digitisation project of West Nordic newspapers and periodicals. As a consequence of this, and by request from the Icelandic national and university library, the Faroese and the Greenlandic regional libraries entered into an agreement of cooperation in 1999 with the Icelandic sister institution on the digitisation of old newspapers and periodicals. The project was named the VESTNORD project.

The purpose of the project, which started in 2000 and were to be completed in 2003, was to establish a digital library of historical newspapers and periodicals from the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland and make them available to users in these countries – and for that matter to users all over the world – via the Internet. The most recent technology within this particular sphere is being used, and with new methods and services the idea is to limit the use of the original material as much as possible.

To begin with, it involved all Faroese, Greenlandic and Icelandic newspapers and periodicals published during the period 1773 till about 1920, initially estimated at a total of about 190,000 pages. This estimate has currently been re-examined as in some cases the project has been extended to



Torshavn, The Faroe Islands. Photo: Hans Jákup av Skarði

also include younger material. The total number of pages was then estimated as being close to 300,000 pages.

This positive development only turned the project even more global on the local premisses. Very briefly, I should mention that what has been written in some of the oldest North Atlantic periodicals, is i.a. the first attempts to establish a literary language in these three languages. In these periodicals we meet the first poems and short stories clad in Faroese, Greenlandic and Icelandic language, here the first songs are printed, and here the first attempts at more lengthy prose texts are published. Here we find the foundation of the literary cultural heritage, and this is a tentative start to the globalisation of the present time and the future. At an official event at the Faroese regional library in September 2002 the Faroese minister of culture pushed the green button to mark the start of this new West Nordic database. Like every other database today, this one will never be finished, certainly not within the near future; it must be updated, enlarged and maintained. Being of great benefit to the user and making life a lot easier for the library staff, digital development in the global world has undoubtedly come to stay. Now the base has to be tended with gentle hands, and it must be fed with sound economy. Use of the library is still free of charge, as it was in the days of C. C. Rafn; we needed sponsors then, and in fact we still do. Even though collecting the material itself is free according to present legislation, it is far from being without expense to store, handle and make available the collections. This requires considerable economic resources, physical facilities and last, but not least – human competence.

Heritage, heirlooms and heirs

With this North Atlantic cooperation one might say that the three countries in the West Nordic Countries have

joined in a common project, which i.a. aims not only at preserving, but also globally making available that part of the literary cultural heritage that has to do with historical newspapers and periodicals in the West Nordic Countries until 1920. This is truly a global heirloom assignment with visions. The purpose of the project is to establish a digital library where citizens in the three countries, via the Internet, can gain access to thousands of digitised pages of the printed cultural heritage, which is already being preserved and stored in the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland. The material is free of charge, and the media technology used is brand new, but rather costly. Use of the old and often fragile material will now change completely, and at the same time the user can employ brand new research methods which will help produce much sounder and more result-oriented research findings.

Apart from being able to use one of the three countries' own languages, the user can also choose to be taken through the system in Danish or English. In the case of some periodicals it is already now possible to search on single words. The OCR-reading is a phase continually being developed, but it offers quite staggering possibilities for research and work in general, seeing that one can now work several hundred years back in time and several thousand pages backwards, and perhaps the most impressive aspect of this project is that a distance of several thousand kilometres away from the original material does not as such influence the result in any way.

So, one may today sit at home at one's home computer in Sukkertoppen in Greenland and read Greenlandic or Faroese periodicals or all the back issues of Iceland's biggest newspaper *Morgunbladid* from 1913-1963 – and all this without having to pay more than the cost of the power

supply for your computer. So in a way the three regional libraries in the North Atlantic are now repaying the descendants of the pioneer Rafn for the work he started about 200 years ago. One might also say that this is part of the answer to the question whether there are heirs to the literary, North Atlantic cultural heritage. Like all heirs, these are scattered all over the world. So it is certainly not the case that heirs to the literary North Atlantic cultural heritage today are only to be found here in the North Atlantic, reading their literature. In fact some are sitting a great distance from here. They might even be on the other side of the globe, because as the Icelandic writer Einar Már Gudmundsson (b. 1954) said at a conference on the promotion of Nordic literature in Malmö in October 2004, the fact is “that all this about centre and periphery is just a lot of nonsense, because we have the same globe as a football beneath our feet”. Danish professor Lars Qvortrup (b. 1950) confirms this when he maintains “that the crucial change is not immediately due to computers and IT. The crucial change is that we are leaving a society with one centre in favour of a society with a multitude of centres.”

The periodicals in the VESTNORD project illustrate that *the languages in the North Atlantic* have been a very important catalyst in the work with collection, preservation and promotion of the literary cultural heritage, and with the languages as a time machine the heirs to the literary, West Nordic cultural heritage have themselves been equipped to write their own testament and read their own deeds, both in their own languages. That cannot be bad!

So one must conclude that there is no danger neither of there being no heirs to West Nordic literary cultural heritage, nor that modernity will globalise this literature away. On the contrary, one might well maintain that with modernisation this literature is confronted by new challenges. Challenges which can move balance points in the risk society, producing new challenges which in the immediate future can develop this literature so that the characteristics of the cultural heritage can be extended with yet another factor – digitisation. By radical organisation it is possible to raise collection, preservation and promotion of the literary cultural heritage to an even higher professional level in order to reach an even greater part of the global network.

The periodicals in ‘VESTNORD a digital library’ have underlined their cultural importance as cultural heritage objects, before and now, and will belong in the local and delimited library as well as in the global and virtual library.

With VESTNORD the collaboration started the hitherto largest digitisation project within the library field in the North Atlantic, both in terms of capacity, quality, and quantity and last, but not least – in terms of economy.

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Translated by Vibeke Cranfield

Online music loans from Danish libraries

Under the slogan 'Borrow and listen – it's easy and it's legal' a large number of Danish libraries opened up for the loan of music via the Internet in September 2004. Access came about via a national two-year preliminary agreement made between the company Phonofile and a consortium consisting of six county libraries, the State and University Library in Århus and the Danish National Library Authority. Most Danish libraries have joined the scheme and after a tough pioneering campaign www.bibliotekernesnetmusik.dk can now offer Danish citizens a wide repertoire of Danish and international music of all genres from rock to classical. From Anastasia to Amadeus.

Background and organisation

Bibliotekernes Netmusik (The Libraries' Net Music) was developed as a national platform on the basis of a number of libraries' individual experiments with loan of digitised music, and collaboration between the libraries in the consortium and Phonofile. The Danish National Library Authority has instigated this collaboration, supported the process of negotiation between the consortium and Phonofile, and also supported the development financially.

The association Phonofile represents more or less the entire Danish music trade (composers, performing artists, music houses and music distributors), and it was formed as a consequence of declining sales figures for CDs. The aim is to create legal access to downloading music from the net through a system that guarantees the right holders their due remuneration. To that end, a technical infrastructure has been developed for the promotion of all Danish-produced music legally deposited and digitised in the State and University Library. The structure is specially geared to the sale of music, but as the Ministry of Culture has supported the project financially, Phonofile agreed to facilitate library-lending of the music to the public.

The State and University Library has been in charge of the project and has, together with Phonofile and the other consortium libraries, been responsible for development and launching of the lending system. Furthermore the State and University Library has developed solutions for connection

to the libraries' user registers, adapted to the various library and registration systems.

Content of the base

The Libraries' Net Music provides access to a large part of Danish music, defined as music composed by, having texts by or being performed by Danish artists. In practice this means Danish CDs from 1982, when the first CD was produced in Denmark, and up until today.

Since then international music has been added to the base, so that it now contains 210,000 pieces of music. Due to recent agreements Libraries' Net Music will be able to offer access to more than 300,000 tracks from September this year.

Another extension of the platform is the access to download of printed music, covering a broad spectrum, but with the main emphasis on jazz and classical music.

Initially the license agreement was made through Phonofile on behalf of all the suppliers. It has been necessary to change this arrangement, so that the consortium now negotiates with the music publishers individually. This has made it possible to attract some of the big multi-national publishers. An agreement has just been reached with EMI and SonyBMG, as well as Danish publishers MBO and Steeplechase. We reckon that we have now collected a critical mass which means that it will be much easier to persuade other suppliers to join.

A model for lending

The Libraries' Net Music allows you to borrow individual tracks for seven days at a time. The system has a quota for each borrower for a limited period of time so that the libraries are able to monitor and control usage. Apart from being able to borrow, patrons are also offered the chance to buy music files. Links are created from the record at hand, to the equivalent record in online music shops. Thus the libraries will act as a display window, and in this way they might help boost sales.

The music is protected by a technology called DRM (Digital Rights Management), developed by Microsoft, and can

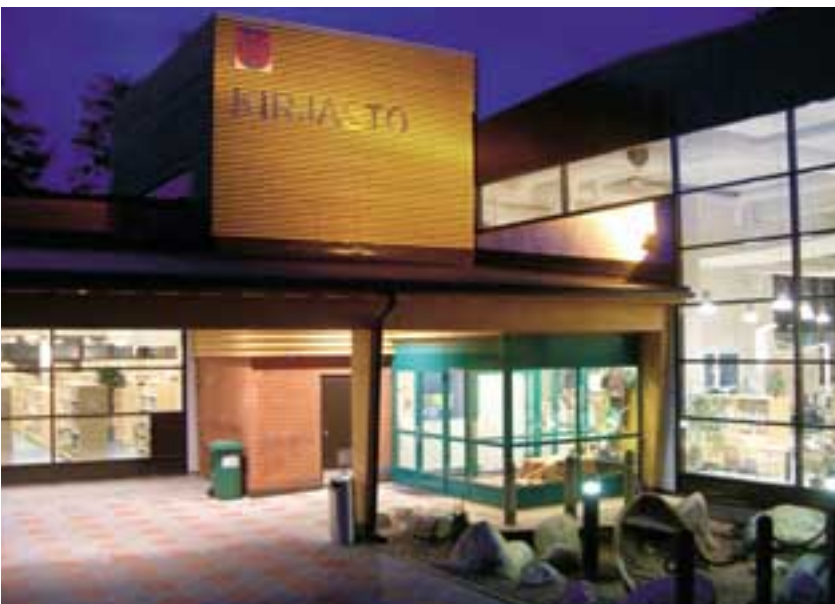


The City Library of Lohja, Finland

The library comprises 2,700 m² and was completed in 2005. Lohja is situated in southern Finland and has c. 36,000 inhabitants. The library offers 30 computers with Internet connections and eight with access to regional library databases. Library visitors can borrow laptop computers and connect to the library's wireless network and portable CD-players are available for loan. The library is automated; the users themselves can deal with borrowing and returning library materials. There is a café in the building, a hall for art exhibits, a reading room, group room and research room.

Architect: Ilmari Lahdelma

Photo: Hans Koistinen



Asikkala Library, Finland

Inaugurated in 2004. The municipality has 8,500 inhabitants, loan figure is 19/inhabitant and library visits are also c. 19/inhabitant.

Architect: Kari Järvinen

Photo: Kari Järvinen

therefore at the moment only be played on a PC with the Microsoft control system Windows.

The new agreements will also make it possible to use mp3-play backs that use Microsoft's DRM system, thereby maintaining the rule that one can only listen to the music during the seven 'licensed' days. Another improvement is the fact that streaming becomes possible, i.e. direct listening to the music without downloading.

Acceptance by library patrons

Library patrons did not, regrettably, embrace the Libraries' Net Music as quickly as originally expected. There are several reasons for this. One might be that the libraries' offer was launched before online sale of music got a breakthrough in Denmark. Another barrier has clearly been instability in the technical process. The slightly cumbersome procedure with download, which furthermore can only happen via a PC, has no doubt presented an obstacle for some users. Finally repeated user surveys have also shown that in particular content volume is a decisive factor. Futile search for their favourite track or band has made the users abandon their attempts.

A change of technical platform in the spring of 2006, guaranteeing stable operation, has been reflected quite clearly in the loan figures which now amount to about 2,000 in any 24 hours. The new agreements, which will provide considerably more content, and the possibility of transferring to the portable recorders that any young person with respect for himself now owns, also provides ground for optimism. In the autumn the portal will be re-launched, followed up by invigorated marketing. We know from experience that this works.

From physical to digital promotion

Digital promotion of music as well as texts offers many advantages to the libraries' promotion activities. First of all the Libraries' Net Music has increased the volume of music

which the individual library is able to offer. Access has been given to a great part of Danish cultural heritage within the field of music, while only a small part is available on the CD market.

On the other hand, this form of promotion does break with some fundamental values in the public libraries. It is, for example, impossible to perform a selection from such a wealth of material. The license agreements mean that one buys the 'whole package'. Another difference from well-established Danish library tradition is a break away from the principle of free borrowing rights, which means that citizens are free to borrow from any library in the country in case of those types of material that are obligatory according to the library act (i.e. all materials except videos and feature films on DVD). To ensure the libraries' budget control it has in this case been necessary to limit the service to borrowers in those local authorities that have joined the scheme. A problem which is expected to be considerably minimized in connection with the structural reform which from 2007 will make Danish municipalities considerably larger, and thereby give all municipalities the chance to participate and 'close any remaining gaps' in the national promotion.

One thing is for sure – societal development means that increasingly the emphasis is moved from the libraries' traditional loan of physical material to digital loans. This does not make the libraries superfluous. But it does mean a major process of change which touches upon the most fundamental values in library work. The librarian's competencies in providing professional and active mediation must be the crucial factor to ensure the libraries a role in the promotion of music in the future.

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Translated by Vibeke Cranfield

Digital films for Norwegian libraries – online

■ *The Norwegian Film Institute is building up its digital film archive with a view to increased distribution of the Norwegian film heritage and international film history for libraries, schools, museums, private individuals and cinemas. In 2002 we started our digital distribution of educational films in DVD quality to a selection of Norwegian schools (ip-tv). In 2004 we opened our Internet portal Filmarkivet.no with distribution of films to private individuals via the net as a fee-based service. In November of that year we opened the service Kinoteket in collaboration with Deichman Central Library, Oslo.*

Kinoteket is based on the video-on-demand service Filmarkivet.no, and offers the libraries a number of good films in DVD quality. The dissemination is so-called ip-tv and is done via broadband (fibre). When you want to watch a film you can just choose a title from a TV menu with your remote control, and watch the film straight away. It is quicker to change films on ip-tv than with a DVD player, and you can decide when to stop, play and wind/rewind. All the films carry extensive metadata, and are searchable on title, year, category etc. It is also possible to find films via free text search.

In the libraries that have joined the scheme, you can watch films on a flat screen in the foyer or you may borrow your own show room, an e-cinema. On presenting your borrower's card you are handed a remote control and headphones if you want to use the flat screen, or you get a remote control and a key in case you want to borrow the e-cinema. By using the remote control you can call up all the films you want, without having to pay for it, as the libraries have already paid for a subscription to access to the Film Archive. If you want to use the e-cinema, you can bring along friends, family, a class of school children, a history group, etc. The e-cinemas have from 15-30 seats. Here the films are shown on a screen with a video canon and there is an excellent audio system.

Some libraries make their own selection of programmes, advertise in the local press and arrange special evenings where they might invite for example a stage manager or an author who will introduce the film and invite people to discuss it afterwards. This arrangement is very popular. In May 2006 Kinoteket opened in Deichmann branch library at Grünerløkka in Oslo, where also the digital 'utekino' – cinema in the park – was launched. This is one of many creative ways of using Kinoteket.

It is important that Norwegian film history is made as accessible as Norwegian literary history. It is therefore essential that films are made available in the library, in the same way as books are. Right now more than 400 Norwegian films and a number of foreign films as well, are available online. The titles are evenly distributed on feature films, short films, documentaries and educational films. The oldest goes back to 1911 and the youngest is made in 2006. As per May 2006 Kinoteket can be found in seven libraries in three Norwegian towns. Libraries in a further 15 Norwegian towns have so far indicated their interest in implementing the service.

The Norwegian Film Institute will continue to extend the selection of films on offer. First and foremost this applies to Norwegian films, but also to important foreign films. Several countries are interested in establishing a similar service, and the Norwegian Film Institute has suggested setting up a joint Nordic portal for the exchange of national films across the frontiers.

The Norwegian Film Institute's long-term goal is for all Norwegian libraries and schools to have access to the Film Archive via Kinoteket, in order to make sure that films will be as accessible as are books.

Ole A. Werring, Development manager
Norwegian Film Institute

Translated by Vibeke Cranfield

BIBCAST – the libraries’ broadband cinema

■ *Soon it will be possible for Danish library patrons to watch video on demand at home via the local library. This is going to happen when www.bibcast.dk – the libraries’ broadband cinema in Denmark in the autumn of 2006 writes the next chapter in the Danes’ digital diary. When that time arrives, Danish short films and documentaries need no longer collect dust on the shelves of the film workshops – via BIBCAST they will now be available to all Danes. If the film directors and the distributors want it, that is.*

Two years of intensive work have been spent on project BIBCAST which was launched in September 2004. The secret behind this innovation was the establishment of a high-speed network of 100 Mbit in the second largest city in Denmark – Århus. Fibre net like the ones that are right now being unfolded in a large number of cities all over Europe.

Video on demand – in DVD quality

At the beginning the project focused on getting technology and cooperation between the libraries involved, producers and suppliers to work. At the moment of writing, the technological challenges have been dealt with successfully. The fibre net is in place, and BIBCAST has – in collaboration with the firm DigiEyez – developed a technical platform which is valid and well-functioning. A platform that makes sure that the copyright of the directors is not infringed and guarantees that the production companies that deliver films to the project may rest assured that their films cannot be downloaded or cut in any way. Last, but not least, BIBCAST has created a platform which can form the basis for the development of an actual business model for libraries in terms of video on demand.

Today the project streams 225 films in three technical qualities: 512 Kbit, 1Mbit and 2Mit. At the moment the films are only streamed to selected libraries in Copenhagen, Århus, Randers and Silkeborg, as we are talking of a pilot project, financed by the Danish National Library Authority. But in principle the films could be streamed to any library in Denmark, if the individual library’s unique IP-address were written into BIBCAST’s content management system.

‘Narrow’ films for a broader audience

BIBCAST has successfully induced production companies of short films and documentaries, as well as information, educational and local historical films to support the project. Today the project streams films from about 25 different producers and more are being added to the list all the time. The latest addition is a new Nordic collaboration with the Swedish film site www.glimz.net, which in fact means that Danish library patrons can now watch Swedish short films and documentaries in the library. Danish and foreign feature films are among the most popular DVD materials in Danish libraries, which might be the reason why only a few feature film producers have up till now agreed to letting their films be incorporated in BIBCAST’s repertoire. This is the reason why BIBCAST is developing into a portal with “narrow films for a broader audience”.

Film loans via borrower’s card

It now remains to convince the large Danish suppliers that digital distribution is ‘state of the art’ and is a practical, valid and revolutionary way of distributing films to the Danes.

The first step will be made in autumn 2006 when BIBCAST, in collaboration with a number of independent producers and as the first film site in Denmark, will offer the users free, legal and direct access to a large number of Danish short films, documentaries and features via their borrower’s card.

If all goes well, it won’t be long before BIBCAST – the libraries’ broadband cinema can fulfil the vision of making all the libraries’ films available to end users in their private sitting rooms.

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Translated by Vibeke Cranfield

Literaturesite.dk

■ *Literaturesite.dk* is the Danish libraries' net magazine for fiction. 60 public libraries take part in the networking collaboration, and more than 160 librarians produce content for the site, which is financed by the participating libraries and the Danish National Library Authority.

By writing recommendations or discussion papers for the literature site, the librarians take on a more offensive role: Here they are not only mediating other people's texts, but they take their own personal stand and become themselves producers of content.

The literature site also cooperates with external players, and this has i.a. lead to collaboration with TV channel dk4 on interviews with authors. Dk4 pays the production costs, while the literature site handles interviews with authors.

In 2005 1.853,213 visited the site, and this figure is constantly rising.

The Demotek

■ The Demotek is a project offering young people in the southeast region of Sweden the possibility to express themselves and produce material using text, film or sound recordings etc. The results can then be circulated to other interested parties. By collaborating with libraries, young people can submit their works to 50 libraries as items for loan. The idea and the development of the Demotek concept are credited to Reaktor Southeast. Reaktor Southeast is a resource centre for film and young communication in the southeast of Sweden, in close collaboration with the County Library in South East Sweden and the Regional Library of Kalmar. Making the products of young people available to the general public also makes it easier for them to connect with each other's creativity. Out of this new networks transpire; generating new modes of expression and art forms.

Alongside loans there are also mutual activities rooms at the libraries. Among other things, there is a MANGA workshop in which young people and library staff constitutes a unit. The project also allows for young persons to visit other libraries and instruct the staff about young communication, in other words, how young people communicate aided by new technique such as bloggs, sms, games, web sites for young people etc. The libraries are thereby adapting themselves to this new knowledge, resulting in new target groups discovering libraries and not only to borrow from the shelves of the Demotek.

www.demotek.se



The Municipal Library of Akureyri, Iceland. Photo: Finnbogi Marinósson. The library in Akureyri was first built and inaugurated in 1968 by architect Gunnlaugur Halldórsson. It was later extended and designed by Guðmundur Jónsson and inaugurated in 2004. Architect: Guðmundur Jónsson

Iceland Consortia for electronic subscriptions

■ *The Iceland Consortia for electronic subscriptions (hvar.is) serves all of Iceland as the name implies. Unusually, it does not only serve academic and research institutions but each and every computer in the country that connects to the Internet through an Icelandic Internet Service Provider (ISP). This means access to 8,000 journals in full-text, 2,000 journals in A&I and 12 databases are open in all of Iceland around the clock, irrespective of location or affiliation. The main reason for this arrangement is that Iceland has a population of 300,000. It is tiny even in comparison to other Nordic countries.*

The project stems from a public policy developed in 1998 and 1999. In the years 2000 to 2002 Iceland signed agreements with Blackwell, Elsevier, Karger, Kluwer, ProQuest and Springer for subscriptions to their electronic journals and with ISI Thomson for access to the Web of Science. This work was carried out by an executive committee and an administrator working in the National and University Library of Iceland. These subscriptions form the nucleus of the Iceland Consortia along with subscriptions to *Britannica Online*, *Morgunbladid* article collection, *Grove Art* and *Grove Music & Opera*. On top of that, some companies and institutions sponsor countrywide access to collections from American Society of Civil Engineers, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, EiVillage with Compendex and OVID. In 2002, the executive committee finished its work and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science signed a service agreement with the National and University Library of Iceland that has run the project since.

The basis for this project is on the one hand the public policy and on the other the willingness of vendors and publishers to enter into an agreement for this kind of access. The Iceland Consortia provide vendors with a list of IP numbers like in any other consortium and access is granted for every computer in the country serviced by an Icelandic ISP. Multinationals and foreign ISPs were excluded to evade risk of unmetered access in other markets through the Iceland Consortia contracts. In such a small market, the vendors profit from having only one point of contact for the whole country, diminishing administration and marketing costs.

Funding comes mainly from around 30 university, health and research libraries. Great changes in user behaviour were seen as specialists used the opportunity to access peer-reviewed journals from home. Survey on the usage statistics from 2003 indicated 60 % of all usage was home use. It also showed the majority of usage was for journals added in the 'Big Deal' packages, i.e. journals that had not been previously in print subscription. These new titles numbered 80 % of all titles and represented 41 % of Blackwell usage, 59 % of Springer usage, 77 % of Kluwer usage and 80 % of Karger usage. Institutions found it difficult to justify expenses for electronic subscriptions when countrywide access meant staff usage was getting impossible to measure. Precise measurements of usage would involve huge acquisitions of data on a personally identifiable scale at great cost. Information gleaned from it would provide relatively little understanding of the benefits reaped from countrywide access, but could deliver much on individual information behaviour.

Funding is by consensus on each and every countrywide subscription. A six-member committee, the acquisitions committee, is formed by representatives from six different sectors; university, health, research, secondary schools and public libraries plus one from the National and University Library, the single largest contributor. Another large contributor is the Landspítali University Hospital. Central funding covers 28 % of the costs today. University, health and research libraries contribute 64 %. The remaining 8 % is provided by public service institutions, public libraries and secondary school libraries along with a few contributors from the private sector. As each subscription is evaluated by usability for each sector, the sectors pay differently to each and every database or journal collection. Out of each decision comes a sum, which is summed up for all subscriptions. Inside each sector, this sum is divided by different criteria. For instance, the public libraries pay per capita in municipality, while the schools pay per student.

As every library in the country is a part of the consortia, it can be argued that they have unsurpassed electronic access at a small price. In a typical small town in the country, the

public library, the secondary school and the health institution pay a small sum each towards the consortia. In return, they get access to over 10,000 journals and 12 databases. They are also party to considerable discount agreements with the publishers, should they want to purchase any journals in print from them.

The single largest benefit from countrywide access is undoubtedly time savings. Anecdotal evidence indicates 20-30 minutes of work saved for each article retrieved. In fields where article retrievals are part and parcel of all work, over 400,000 articles have been downloaded a year in the last years. This means somewhere between 160,000 and 240,000 hours, or 100-150 working years used for other purposes. This applies to people working in research and development, health institutions and university tutors.

Equal access over the whole country is in many ways the logical way to purchase access to foreign databases. It erases artificial or institutional borders in the country. Almost all library funding is with public money and the public have a right to access in return. This model does not always apply.

The publisher or vendor has to benefit from the deal as well, otherwise there is no basis for one. If the vendor has greater revenue from sales to single institutions or does not want to grant access for the whole country, it does not belong in the countrywide access. Databases in Icelandic rarely belong in the countrywide access. If they were there, the consortia would in many cases be the only buyer and could just as well be the publisher. The Morgunbladid article database has an embargo of three years and over a thousand subscriptions to the embargoed part. A part of the countrywide subscription agreement was that public and school libraries would get access to the embargoed part at a favourable price.

The countrywide access and the Iceland Consortia are experiments that succeeded. As such, they will live for years to come. They were answers to technological changes and aimed to reap benefits for the country, which they have proven to do.

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Kópavogur Library, Iceland
Photo: Torsten Henn

The physical library space

Old library romanticism or postmodern functionality?

■ *The physical library space would have been quite an unnecessary specification only ten years ago, although a new thinking was on its way already, as library collections were no longer limited to what was housed within the walls of the library. There were those who predicted that in a computerized world libraries and their services would not be needed any more. All information and knowledge ever needed was soon to be on offer just by pressing a few buttons.*

Much has changed, but there is still a need to expand the physical library networks apart from the virtual ones. There is, more than ever, a need for library professionals. And the books are still there, traditional reading skills are still essential, literary experiences still enrich people's lives. Bookshops keep books in stock for two-three years, libraries build collections.

A new paradigm brought new roles for librarians because library users started to behave differently. They came to the library with their own views of what they needed, no longer ready to accept suitable-for-all answers. Experts were now to be found on both sides of the library counter. This fundamental change of attitude, foreseen by Lyotard already in the seventies in his treatise *The Postmodern Condition – A Report on Knowledge*, has changed library work just as much as later on the computers, influencing, like the information technology, the use of the physical library space.

Architects should begin the planning of a new library building by spending some time just watching how the users and the personnel move around in what could be called a modern library choreography. Much of what used to take place at library counters now takes place at loan and book return machines, via the Internet or by SMS. Routines are swiftly handled, but people still spend much more time in the library than before. The library has become a common space in the urban – or rural – landscape.

Library visitors look for information independently, when they need help they want to communicate with the librarian, preferably person-to-person by the computer, not from the other side of the library counter. The library staff moves around a lot.

Visitors are drifting in and out, some visitors seem to spend most of their day in the library. A considerable number of people use laptops connected to the wireless network. The computer area is crowded, people wait for their turn. Librarians teach visiting groups, ranging from school students to pensioners, how to use the library catalogues, how to search the web.

Portable CD-players are often available for loan, just as laptops. The users can move around as they like, browse the book shelves or read newspapers while listening to music.

New trends and new thinking certainly influence library architecture, there are spectacular new library buildings to be seen and admired in all Nordic countries. Interiors, however, sometimes tend to reflect the past, not taking into account how automatisations, computers and the need for dialogue influence the daily use of the library space.

Libraries can be located in shopping centers, in the vicinity of or in the same building as schools and other educational institutions, or combined with cultural buildings and sports halls. The library is a good and desirable neighbour. Problem areas have been dealt with through the opening of a new library. City planners know that neighbourhoods that are deserted after the end of the workday become revived in the evening when a library is included in the plans. Patrons will find their way there, each one with his or her own reason for visiting the 'physical library'.

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Translated by Turun Täyskännös



Frederikshavn Library, Denmark
Ordkloveren (The Quibbler) – an installation that rouses one's curiosity in relation to letters, words and reading.
Photo: Nils Lund Pedersen

Updated content in a relevant social context

■ Since the early 1990s Internet and digitisation have revolutionised society in terms of communication and information dissemination. The library system is closely associated with these concepts and consequently the change of the conditions of the library has been pronounced. From the mid-1990s each new library building activity has inspired hopes of physical frames that might aid the development of a library concept where the collection of physical materials is no longer the prime element. Time and again disappointment has set in; conservative architects together with conservative politicians have overruled feeble directors, creating library buildings that generally speaking have become more and more classic and therefore more and more antiquated throughout the last decennium. 2005 and 2006 have, however, produced new, progressive main libraries and barrier-breaking branch libraries. At the same time more and more local authorities transform part of the library into an experimentarium where new forms of dissemination are being tested in close cooperation with the users.

Frederikshavn

Together with Hjørring Public Library and with financial support from the Danish National Library Authority's Development Pool, Frederikshavn Public Library has been creating completely new 'spaces' in the library. First phase of the project was the establishment of The Round Room at Frederikshavn Library. Here one can experience the new installations The quibbler, and The Animation where you can produce cartoons, The Critic where you can record reviews, The Sandpit – a place to play and a show window and The Hyper Horse which can tell a good story and other elements. The Round Room is not an actual room, but is defined by light and spatial elements. The point is that the form interacts with curious children.

In The Frederikshavn Room you are introduced to municipal and non-municipal projects. This makes it possible to react to the information and suggest ideas, and put forward questions and opinions both in physical and digital form. In design as well as content the library associates to the political space in Frederikshavn and contributes by way of diversity, actuality and updated interactive dissemination to democratic and cultural processes in Frederikshavn Municipality.

Hjørring

In Hjørring the new experimental place for children is called Round2. A change of the children's library from an anachronistic book depot into a visually appealing centre of experience. The inspiration comes from museums and centres of dissemination, like for example The North Sea Museum and The Experimentarium.

The Dissemination Room is like a theatre. The effects are conscious colour scheme, structured and quality-accentuated design containing a number of fantastic elements like for example The Big Book where you can record reviews or listen to other people's reviews, Head on the Shelf and The Film with sound and pictures help to create a special atmosphere in the children's library. You can play, you can learn and you can be.

Aalborg

The Regional Library of Northern Jutland in Aalborg has for many years been working on the physical expression in the libraries.

In the local libraries it is a question of profile and activity in an interplay with citizens and institutions in the local area.

Previously the 14 local libraries were copies in varying sizes of the main library. Now we talk in terms of differentiated and relevant libraries.

A splendid example is Haraldslund Library in Haraldslund Water and Culture Centre, inaugurated in 2002. Previously this was a classic, solitary-situated book library in the western part of town. Now a synergy effect has been achieved with swimming pool, fitness centre and meeting and activity facilities in beautiful, attractive surroundings. Opening hours have been extended considerably, the figures for visitors and loans have increased markedly.

The main library in Aalborg was opened in 1980 and following a major reconstruction and renovation it was re-inaugurated in 2000. 2006 saw the introduction of The Zone. The Zone, which the user meets upon entering the library, can be described as a refined and technologically updated version of The Market in the three-tier library from about 1990. The Zone is a meeting place, an inspirational place and a structured point of reference for experiences around the big library. In the video sofa there are

unobtrusive trailers from films in the library – the sound is directional. In the library in general digital resources, events and local features are presented on two mega screens in the large circulation hall and on a large number of plasma screens in the main library and well as in the local libraries.

Aarhus

The experimentarium areas in Aarhus Public Libraries are to be likened to laboratories that do research into library services, i.a. by the aid of model development. The knowledge gathered is to be integrated in the municipality's future Multi-media Centre on the harbour front, which is expected to be ready in 2012. Work on the development of tomorrow's library concept goes on in branches and in the main library, and Aarhus possesses a special competence in that to a large extent they involve partners at an advanced technological and theoretical level in the projects.

Since 2004 the main library has been focusing on a large foyer area, becoming available after the automation of circulation processes. The foyer constantly changes character in a dynamical interplay between the room, users, staff, physical objects and new technology: LITERATURE room, NEWS room, MUSIC room and FREE room. The latest initiative is The Info Gallery from March 2006. In the future users will encounter info galleries in all the municipality's libraries, displayed on large and small screens for them to interact with and gain inspiration from. In this way the screens highlight the libraries' possibilities and resources, so that they are not just tucked away on the Internet. If the user finds something of interest and wants to go ahead with this, he can take away the information by sending it to his own e-mail address.

The new info galleries are developed in a unique cooperation between Aarhus Public Libraries, The Royal Library and The Info Gallery, which is a development project under the Alexandra Institute A/S. The concept builds on research results from Centre for Interactive Space, ISIS Katrinebjerg in the project Hybrid Library of the Future. It is thus an example of research in the library of the future having turned into a concrete product, and the libraries representing an exhibition room for research and testing of new technologies.

New library in Næstved inaugurated in October 2004

Næstved municipality's new main library is placed on top of a large supermarket. The large lounge area at the front with newspapers and journals offers spacious seating and many workstations. Linkage to the entrance is precise and the view through the large northwestern glass section is impressive. The signal is crystal clear: The lounge is an important element in Næstved Library.

Instruction of users, i.a. in the potential of digital library services, is an integrated part of activities in most Danish public libraries. This functionality is handsomely exposed – to some extent due to a classroom with all the relevant equipment and two study cells.

A large number of computers are in constant use. There is also Hotspot in the library, so you can bring your own laptop and work wherever you like, e.g. in 'The Eye of the Storm', a centrally placed screened area intended for concentrated study.

AV-materials: talking books, film, CD-ROM, computer games and music are all clearly exposed and both before moving in and after, their relative share of the collected library budget has increased considerably. Further down the large one-room library one encounters the books, the further into the library the more compact the shelving arrangements – with a view to making room for exhibitions and seating.

New library in Kolding inaugurated in February 2006

In Kolding the hybrid library has been realised to a great degree. Focus is on processes: Learning, play, study activities, meetings and cultural experiences. The processes are underpinned by the architecture, including integrated information technology.

The firm of architects Arkitema has designed the privately financed building on four floors, also containing hotel and private apartments, a neat and standardized look.

Once inside things begin to happen. After having returned your material in the automat wrapped in a glasshouse on two floors, you can take a look at the News Wall. Six international, national and local TV stations present current topical events, a Listening Post with dedicated head sets is not yet in place, but the signal is clear: Comprehensive and topical information dissemination. Then on to the Square, a



Kolding Library, Denmark
Inaugurated in 2006
Architect: Arkitema
Photo: Nils Lund Pedersen/Jonna Holmgaard Larsen

large central space that provides an overview of the library including the first floor and offers information on digital notice boards. Here you find newspapers and journals – including those on the net – and a number of exhibitions are staged here. The ground floor also contains the children's department with two independent rooms attached. '0-5' with a view of the lake is filled with picture books for this age group, and there is a staircase/plateau construction intended for reading séances. 'Children X' is a workshop-orientated room with big screen, projector, a number of computers and accessories related to the actual subject, for example clothes for dressing up. 'Children X' is for the most part crowded until bursting point by playing and experimenting children.

Next to the children's library you will find IT-Lab, housing 25 computers with different programmes. Apart from IT-Lab there are two meeting rooms in association with the circulation area, to be used for example by groups of students and for introductions. Both rooms have smartboards. All booking takes place via the net.

The two large departments 'Facts' and 'Fiction' are on the first floor and like in all the other departments shelving and presentation are well-planned, accentuated by plasma screens for subject-related presentation, films etc. Contact to the ground floor is one of the great experiences on the first floor. And then there are the orange seats facing the castle lake: high class. All over the library you find many oases for sitting down, where one can work alone or in groups, read or just relax. The oases are well defined and furnished with classic furniture.

The conclusion is that at the moment Kolding Library is second to none in Denmark. To an extremely high degree the library meets the demands that the citizen can rightly level at the hybrid library anno 2006.

The library is the most frequently visited arena in Denmark, society's open forum for learning, cultural inspiration, democratic processes and qualified meetings between people.

Innovation and knowledge closely linked to reflection and recreation. The library is a diverse space for the development of 'Bildung', identity and context, for each individual as well as for society as a whole. The library is a living symbol of integration in Danish society as well as in a global perspective.

The library belongs to the public and to the public's potential opportunities for improved quality of life.

Libraries that are not currently being updated technologically, in terms of competencies and physical frames very soon become uninteresting to the users. It is therefore positive to witness a strong innovative tendency in many libraries in Denmark in relation to physical frames, including interplay with digital resources. Work goes on with experimental zone, integration in relation to other institutions and functions, context as regards content and strategy, visualisation of digital resources as well as film and TV, interactivity and learning. Last, but not least, efforts are concentrated on the library as a cultural and identity-developing forum in the local community, and a vital point is that libraries to a very great degree evolve with focus on the citizens' needs and in an interplay with the citizens.

Bibliotekspressen	www.bibliotekspressen.dk
Experimentarium	www.experimentarium.dk (English)
Frederikshavn Bibliotek	http://bib.frhavnkomb.dk/
Hjørring Biblioteket	www.hjoerringkom.dk/sw4105.asp
Det nordjyske Landsbibliotek	www.njl.dk (select English)
Haraldslund Bibliotek	www.njl.dk (select English)
Kolding Bibliotek	www.koldingbib.dk/
Nordsømuseum	www.nordsoemuseet.dk/ (English)
Næstved Bibliotek	www.naesbib.dk/
Aarhus Kommunes Biblioteker	www.aakb.dk/ (English)

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 and reviewer of library buildings in *Bibliotekspressen*
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A children's library or a library for children?

■ *A children's library has to differ slightly from an adult's library. Children need space to play and move about in, but they also need space to attain stillness and a sense of calm. In October 2005 the Room for Children was launched at Kulturhuset in Stockholm. It is a library adapted to young visitors, catering to their requirements.*

Starting point

Since 1997 the Kulturhuset in Stockholm has housed a children's library with the customary cosmetic approach taken to adapting interiors to children. The colour scheme was of a light tone, amusing cut-out figures graced the ceilings and soft cushions filled all corners. However, the children found it difficult navigating their way among the books. Books stood solidly packed, row after row sorted in a seemingly abstract manner; a secret language only known to librarians. Children became dependant upon the aid and good intentions of adults, and thereby loosing their freedom of choice.

Children's library – the term obliges and should imply something very different from an adult's library in miniature. We, who worked at the library, wanted to create a library where children were allowed to be children; with all their playfulness, competences, abilities and needs.

Funding

To realise a dream the appropriate funding becomes crucial. Room for Children found a committed partner in the Swedish chain of department stores, Åhléns. They contributed more than SEK 3 million. We also received funding from the Foundation for the Culture of the Future and the Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs. There were also investment loans from the City of Stockholm. With such all-encompassing funding we were able to work swiftly and have our pick of the very best carpenters. We have collaborated with experts such as Ylva Ellneby, expert in developmental psychology and pedagogies, Susanna Ekström, literary expert and Professor Martin Ingvar in the field of brain research.

Pace

The project was realised in less than a year. We undertook study trips to Lund, Linköping, London, Copenhagen and Amsterdam. We visited libraries, theatres, museums and schools. We studied bookstores and frontage details on buildings and fountains. The short time span made drawn-out decision-making processes in the larger context, impossible. The distribution of work was clear-cut as was each and everyone's area of responsibility.

Three settings for three different groups

In the old library we observed how children of varying age groups disturbed each other. As a consequence we divided the room up into three sections, all different in order to accommodate different age groups.

0-3 years, together with adults

you discover the world using all senses

In the room for those from age 0-3 there are soft toys, low furniture and the possibility to find books in the most unexpected places. There is a small swing and several books about children for the adults. There is room here for the grown-ups and children to mingle and stay close to each other. A room for being together.

4-7 years, can do and want to know – now!

In the room for 4-7 year olds there are books on strange shelves filled with challenges. There are books close to the floor and just below the ceiling. Books can be read by headlamp in hovels below the bookshelves or seen for miles using a telescope from a small observatory. Children of this age group enjoy using their minds and there are plenty of challenges here to meet their requirements. Spread across the room there are numerous tricky little things to solve during their stay at the library and then there are games to take home as loans. There are books on natural science for the inquiring minds. This is the time for children during sensitive periods to display close to a limitless interest in specific subjects. We wish to meet the children in their quest for knowledge and answers.



OLIVIA



Children should be able to acquire information in the same manner as adults. They can interpret images before they can read. We work with images in our sorting system. Books are divided into categories based on how children ask for books. Each shelf is adorned with an image. On the shelves there are objects to identify the kind of books to be found there. Books are found under groupings such as siren books, party books, funny books, books about stars etc. Children are more than able to orientate themselves in this system, which to them makes perfect sense. Being able to find books on their own enables them to grow. The librarian's task becomes that of helping the child to solve as many of the tasks as possible on his own. We have printed a map showing the library. This is given to all the children who enter the room providing them with the means to orientate themselves and practise their spatial abilities.

8-11 years, a little peace and quiet

In the room for 8-11 year olds emphasis is placed on reading and calm surroundings. There are books sorted into categories such as vital, exciting books, the whole world and horses. There is the Star-room for story-telling and a reading environment with a calming influence. Swings slowly cradling the visitors into a state of calm while they look out over the city.

Games are always available. A lot of children need to simmer down after entering the library from a hectic outdoor

environment. A game of chess or Ludo has a soothing influence and stimulates the ability to focus.

We have chosen not to have public computers in the library for several reasons:

- Small children do not need to acquaint themselves with computers from an early age in order to understand them later on. On the contrary they need to practise their 'analogue' abilities, what Martin Ingvar calls "the slow activities".
- Most children have computers at home or at their nursery school.

Hardly any children have asked for computers. They are busy enough as it is during their library visits.

Children's Convention

We wanted to create a room where children can orientate themselves, find books and take part in activities on their own terms. We believe that children are prone to want to find books on their own. To find a book means that one can find a book one did not know about. Or, dare to borrow a secret book. To find a book by oneself helps one to grow.

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Translated by Jonathan Pearman



Kulturhuset
Stockholm, Sweden

'Rum för barn' in Kulturhuset in Stockholm is a children's library with a difference. There is room for play and movement, but also for silence and peace. The room is adapted to young visitors and their needs. The children climb the specially designed furniture to search out books and crawl onto the shelves to read. Since the inauguration in 2005, 300,000 children have visited the library

Library Access 2010

■ *By 2010 Sweden, along with many other countries, intends to be a society where people with mobility impairments can fully participate on equal terms and where the perspectives of disabled people permeate all sectors of society. By immediately instigating plans of action aimed at setting about reaching a society based on all-inclusive access, it becomes very likely that we will reach this goal this year. The goal also applies to public libraries.*

What is meant by access?

In 2010 Sweden will be a society of open access where all citizens regardless of mobility impairments can participate on equal terms. But what is meant by access? An answer is of course dependant upon what kind of mobility impairments we are talking about – but the starting point is that all public activity is intended for everyone and a mobility impairment need not necessarily be a disability.

Disabled people are entitled to the same rights and obligations as everyone else. This was established in 1993, in the UN's *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*. Sweden has approved the standard rules and undertaken to comply with them. The Swedish policy on disability is therefore the responsibility of society as a whole.

Surveys and courses of action

In 1997 the Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs was assigned to produce a survey and deliver a plan of strategy to promote the participation of disabled persons in cultural life. The survey is accounted for in the report *Funktionshindrades tillgång till kultur* (1998:3).

The survey revealed that exterior access is fundamental. Our cultural institutions lacked both knowledge as to how to improve upon physical access to premises and activities and financial resources to implement the necessary conversion of buildings and adapting new technique. Measures to increase access were not firmly supported in goal documents and programs of action. There were lapses in their contacts with organisations for disabled people. A number of institutions would like to see further substantial

wish lists from people with mobility impairments as to how activities can be shaped. The Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs delivered a tangible proposal to promote those with mobility impairments to take a more active part in cultural life. Since then the Council has at its disposal SEK 9,5 million on an annual basis for this purpose.

Sector responsibility

In 2002 the Government appointed certain authorities to what has been termed Sector Authorities. These Sector Authorities have a special responsibility in catering for the goals of the disabled person's policy and their attainment within respective spheres of activity. The Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs is appointed by the Government to carry into effect the cultural policy goals and has therefore been appointed Sector Authority overseeing access to cultural life for mobility impaired persons. This requires the Council to act in a supportive, gathering and instigating role in relation to the regional cultural institutions, among them the county and regional libraries. The county libraries' main undertaking is to assist the public libraries with complimentary media supplies, guidance, information, further education measures and special services. The disability perspective will therefore permeate this work.

Public library access

In 2001 compulsory annual referring reports became a reality for regional cultural institutions. They are instructed to account for what efforts have been pursued to increase access to culture for disabled people.

A number of municipal libraries have during the past year initiated plans of action with concrete proposals to pursue increased access for disabled people. These packages also include increasing awareness about different disabilities in order to receive them in the most appropriate manner. Main library access with regard to information, premises and activities is the goal for 2010.

To enter the actual premises where cultural activities take place is a crucial requirement. Architects will visit the premises of the municipalities' main libraries in all counties. In certain instances this will also include the local branches and book buses to make an inventory of how accessible

they are. The inventory has resulted in proposals to take measures including eventual costs in pursuing them, with the aim of increasing physical access. What has surprised the local libraries is the fact that it is not always major changes and funding that is needed to pursue these goals. A few doorstops, markers for staircases and higher visibility for signs are often all that is needed to achieve improved library access. Major changes are noted in the plans of action and their recommended costs are entered in forthcoming budget proposals.

Encounters

Information and activities are other crucial aspects aside from physical access, to an improved reception of people with mobility impairments. Information access requires, among other things, that digital and printed information is available for people with reading disabilities – in other words, the information needs to be available in both spoken form and written words in an easy to read Swedish language version. Information material should also contain information whether it is possible to use the library's services even if there is a disability hindrance. The disabled perspective should also be part of the library activity. There

are many instances in which activities are adapted to a special target group, either on the premises or in a visiting capacity. Another important aspect, for user and librarian, is that library staff remain informed about various kinds of impairments, in order to make them feel at ease in their professional roles when receiving users.

The plan of action should function as a tool, partly to identify what needs to be done, partly as an aid to reach concrete goals. Presenting plans of action often coincides with libraries presenting their library plans. As far as coincidences go, it is a fortunate one. Plans should not be construed in isolation from each other; on the contrary they should be integrated. Numerous local authorities are of the opinion that increased accessibility for disabled people are a part of the regular public sector service and therefore a part of the overall content of a library plan.

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Translated by Jonathan Pearman



Pettson-Library, Aarsunda Church School, Sandviken, Sweden

A library at the very core of the school. The library is designed in the spirit of Pettson and Findus, famous characters created by the writer of children's books, Sven Nordkvist.

Photo: Ingrid Berglund

Mobile hybrid library

Library services are being brought to those who love to read and acquire information via nearly all possible means of transport in the world: on camel-back, donkey-drawn covered wagons, boats, ships, bicycles, backpacks and mobile libraries.

Library buses complement the library network

The objective of Finland's library legislation is to provide the population with equal opportunities for education, exposure to art and literature, continuous development of knowledge, skills and civil preparedness, internationalization and lifelong learning. Areas sparsely populated and long distances set great challenges for the provision of equal access to information and library services. Not every village has fixed library services.

Municipalities receive aid from the state for the purchase of a mobile library for up to 50 % of the purchase price. A population base of about 10,000 is considered to be the minimum number of inhabitants to ensure the operation of the bus. The municipality can sell its mobile library services to other municipalities, in which case the price of the service is usually calculated according to the number of loans.

Municipalities may have jointly purchased mobile libraries, in which case the routes are planned beyond municipal borders. Problems arise when two different library systems have to be made to work in the same bus. The solution to this problem could be NISO Circulation Interchange Protocol, which enables the transfer of loan and patron information.

Municipalities may also work together to specialize the buses in their services and in their collections. If the region has several buses, one bus could become specialized, for example, in children's library services.

Mobile libraries cross national borders. The municipal bus of Muonio also serves the municipality of Enontekiö as well as the residents of Kiruna in Sweden and Kautokeino in Norway. A computer system which is in an off-line connection with the libraries' main systems has been built for the tri-national bus. Utsjoki has a joint bus with Karasjok and Porsanger in Norway.

The peak year for mobile libraries was in 1991, when the country had 234 buses operating. In 2005, there were 182 buses and 15,000 bus stops in about 40 % of the municipalities.

Fast communication connections a challenge for mobile libraries

According to Library Strategy 2010, citizens' information acquisition requires hybrid libraries; in addition to traditional library material and services, libraries must also offer electronic material and services. About 20 % of the buses have an online connection with the library's computer system. The most common wireless form of connection is GPRS, which works on GSM mobile phone networks. Two-thirds of the buses have an offline connection to the library system. Only a few buses, as well as Finland's only library boat, have no connection at all to the library computer system.

Currently, 12 % of the mobile libraries offer patrons the opportunity to use patron terminals equipped with Internet connections. Over a period of three years, the Ministry of Education will be allotting regional governments a special grant for libraries to purchase Internet patron terminals, to improve Internet connections and to promote electronic transactions. Libraries are also being tempted to purchase patron terminals for the mobile libraries with this money.

With Internet patron terminals becoming common, citizens can use electronic banking and other electronic services also in the bus. In addition to computers, mobile libraries have to have fast and secure enough connections and make sufficiently long stops.

The newest mobile libraries not only include wireless Internet connections, but also CD-ROM equipment, video machines, the possibility to listen to music, wheelchair lifts and air conditioning and a rear-view camera for driving comfort.

Mobile library services are basic services

Mobile libraries are partially filling in the void of school libraries. Most mobile library stops are at daycares and

schools, in which case all school classes visit the bus. The buses support school education by delivering additional material and by procuring literature for the different stages involved in learning to read. Knowledge of literature is brought to life by story hour and puppet theatre and activating a general interest in reading in the children.

The mobile library is a loyal patron servant and a reliable co-worker of the library employee. This is why it is not just any bus, but it may have its own name, a name which indicates something about the history of the district or the library.

Typically, mobile libraries are built on the chassis of passenger busses. As a new alternative, delivery vans have been purchased for use as mini library buses. For example, the mini library bus which serves children, the elderly and special groups in Oulu does not have a fixed schedule, so the bus can flexibly add new places to visit.

Mobile libraries do their bit to keep rural areas alive and add to their vitality. Good library services may play a significant role when someone is considering purchasing a holiday residence or a permanent residence. There are municipalities in Finnish Lakeland, especially, where summers are a busy time for libraries. Summer vacationers with summer cabins crowd libraries and line up at mobile library stops. The mobile library creates a culture-friendly image for the municipality.

The social significance of the mobile libraries is at least as great as their cultural significance. In the villages they are regular and awaited guests, perhaps the only concrete municipal service actually provided within the village. The most atypical library patron could be the most typical mobile library patron. Mobile libraries visit hospitals, prisons and homes for the elderly.

Especially in sparsely populated North Finland, mobile libraries provide municipal library and information services as well as other services. An excellent example of this is the Kemijärven Kulkuri. Kulkuri is a mobile library which also functions as a joint service center. The employment office,

the Social Insurance Institution of Finland, the jurisdictional district office, the local bank and phone operator provide services in cooperation with different departments of the City of Kemijärvi. Patrons are instructed in the use of information technology and making electronic transactions in the bus. The objective is to prevent marginalization and inequality, to bring modern welfare services to inhabitants of remote districts. The European Regional Development Fund has been involved in funding the operation of Kulkuri.

Libraries and mobile libraries have been operating in many districts as advance voting locations in both national and local elections. Over the years, the buses have also been providing more specialized services, for example, parish pastors have made their rounds with the bus to outlying villages, nurses have taken blood pressure readings and provided health information, even opportunity for online betting has been provided. When the shop and post office have disappeared from a village, goods and post have been transported with the mobile library.

Different forms of activity tested on mobile libraries

The greatest advantages of mobile libraries are their capacity for modification and their economic efficiency. With a relatively small investment, sparsely populated regions can be guaranteed access to library and information services. In the biggest cities, mobile libraries could function as pioneers in trying out different forms of activity for segmented groups of patrons.

In Helsinki, administrative borders were crossed when the library, bureau of education and youth office combined their forces to establish a joint mobile library tour. The bus was named Lempibussi (“favorite, or love bus”) and had the task of reaching 7-9th graders in primary school. The theme was the diverse development of young people, which was addressed using media literacy, literature and cooperative learning assignments. The library bus book recommender presented literature dealing with growing up, emotions, sexuality, love and relationships. Sex educators discussed sexual rights, their significance and the many dimensions of sexuality with the students.



Joint Mobile services in Lapinjärvi and Varpaisjärvi. The bus chassis has a Scania LB 94 IB 4X2 rear engine and the body was manufactured by Kiitokori. The painting on the bus was designed by librarian Kirsi Kämäräinen, from Lapinlahti's main library. The total length of the bus is 11 meters, with c. 85 meters of shelf space and there is room for 3,200 – 3,600 volumes in the bus. There are also Internet terminals for patrons to use in the bus.

Tampere City Library's bus Netti-Nysse, as a net bus, is entirely devoted to developing the Internet skills of citizens. It functions as a door-opener to the information society. <http://www.tampere.fi/kirjasto/nettinysse/english.htm>

Multi-professional staff

Mobile library staff actively develop the services of their bus and of their own work. The Kärrihurja manual is a guide for the trusteeship and occupational safety of the mobile library staff. In addition, the annual bus days have featured competitions for the most attractive and most functional buses, as well as a driving skill competition for the bus drivers.

Although the driving competition is for fun, it reflects requirements set for the mobile library staff. The driver/clerk should have as a minimum the license to drive a commercial vehicle and the professional competence of a library clerk.

Last year, the mobile library of the municipality of Leppävirta in East Finland received the region's Junior Chamber of Commerce Palveluhelmi ('service pearl') award as the area's best service industry organization. As grounds for the award, it was stated that Leppävirta municipality's mobile library always provides good service, patrons obtain information about the library's activities and the patrons' information needs are always met. The council presenting the award wanted to emphasize that it is possible to provide very good customer service, which exceeds expectations, even within the public sector and in sparsely populated areas.

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Translated by Turun Täyskäännös



A smaller mobile library from Oulu, serving children or other groups, according to the situation

Cooperation crowned with a new library bus

The library functions of Lapinlahti and Varpaisjärvi municipalities were joined together on 1 January 2005 into Lapinlahti's municipal library. The new library establishment includes Lapinlahti's main library and Varpaisjärvi's local library, along with a library bus.

The inaugural celebration of the municipalities' new, joint mobile library was held in April 2006. This is the first mobile library in East Finland to be owned jointly. There are a total of 118 stops in the two municipalities.

The bus chassis has a Scania LB 94 IB 4X2 rear engine and the body was manufactured by Kiitokori. The painting on the bus was designed by librarian Kirsi Kämäräinen, from Lapinlahti's main library. The total length of the bus is 11 meters, with c. 85 meters of shelf space and there is room for 3,200 – 3,600 volumes in the bus. There are also Internet terminals for patrons to use in the bus.

A place in the sun

In Drammen, a city situated about 25 miles south of Oslo, the prestige project *Riverside Knowledge Park* will soon be a reality.

The county library, the town's public library and the Drammen College of Higher Education will become one entity – a total library. It is in fact the very first time in Norway that a municipal library, a county library, a state library and a private library have agreed to pool their resources in this manner. The merger has been met with a certain scepticism. Students may well find it difficult to understand how a kindergarten visiting the library can have a positive effect on their examination results. On the other hand, regular borrowers have expressed horror at the thought of “drowning” in a horde of students. Practical problems of this kind are partly solved by placing user groups with conflicting needs on different floors of the building.

Leader of the project, Kari Fagerjord, explains that the most important advantages of placing the libraries in the same building are a better use of resources and improved services to all user groups. When several libraries become one, the librarians will have at their disposal many more relevant books, periodicals and, not least, electronic resources.

It will be interesting to see if the libraries attract more visitors after the merger.

DDV (Deichman's Digital Lab)

Three multimedia-labs have been made available to the general public to provide users with experience in the handling of digital media and use of digital media editing-tools. Users have access to high-end video, graphics and audio soft- and hardware, coupled with in-house staff supplying tutoring and support. The media-labs also serve as venues for public events, ranging from courses in media

literacy and filmmaking, to book-releases and theatrical presentations. In addition the media-labs are used for internal training.

Public events held in these labs are broadcast live over the Internet, and simultaneously recorded digitally for subsequent transfer to the labs' website.

verksted.deichman.no



Asikkala Library, Finland

Inaugurated in 2004. The municipality has 8,500 inhabitants, loan figure is 19/inhabitant and library visits are also c. 19/inhabitant.

Architect: Kari Järvinen

Photo: Kari Järvinen

Meeting places in real and virtual rooms

When attempting to gain a serious grip on the issue of increasing segregation; a fully functional library is exactly the kind of neutral, open-minded, non-commercial meeting-place that is needed. Where else would representatives of conflicting parties across the world sit side by side? Where else can well-established, middle-aged representatives from the private sector meet with children and young people from all corners of the world? In this respect the function of a library has been widely known and much appreciated ever since modern day public library service entered the stage a hundred years ago in the USA of the immigrants. The principle of integration was the driving force that lie behind the occurrences of public libraries, along with the desire to give everyone, regardless of economic or cultural background, equal opportunity and that of personal development.

For a library to function in this regard it needs a well-maintained base service to make it appealing to everybody. Otherwise, it will be seen as a library adapted towards a particular constellation of people or some kind of special interest groups such as children, young people, students, newspaper readers or immigrants.

Sweden has nearly 1,400 public libraries and it is fair to say that they are a necessary prerequisite to safeguard the citizenry's access to IT and their democratic rights. The public libraries alleviate the use of the public sector's services in an efficient and egalitarian manner. To invest further in an already established 100-year old structure used by a majority of people who have confidence in it, should be obvious from both an economic and a democratic point of view.

When service functions previously offered by banks, post offices and insurance companies are either shut down or passed onto the Internet, the local library gets to an extent to take over these services. In many cases people are referred to other, commercial and publicly funded, institutions such as libraries as this is where they can find assistance in paying their bills, look for jobs, book tickets for events and fill in their tax forms. There are no political decisions, except in some instances, stating that libraries should

function as a citizenry's office. Despite the lack of political decisions in the matter, the citizens still expect it. Henceforth the libraries face a *fait accompli*.

Technology advances quickly. Discussing what level of IT the libraries should offer is a democracy and financial issue. IP-telephoning can supply the library with the option of offering their users access to free phone and video conferences. Radio and TV via the web supply access to the ether-media from many parts of the world. Is it the library's function to give their users the possibility to stay in touch with friends and relatives? Is this kind of access, to a previous country of origin's culture, relatives and friends, a necessary requirement for successful integration into the society?

These new claims on IT access as seen from a citizenry's perspective are juxtaposed against the number of students growing at a fast rate. There are fewer courses that have their own libraries and courses on all levels require access to the Internet. It remains for each municipality to assume responsibility in this new role that public libraries are faced with – a responsibility that varies from municipality to municipality.

Aside from this there is the public library's cultural policy as a meeting place for local cultural life – as a forum for thought and opinion. And the original adult education principles, what is now termed lifelong learning, must not be buried beneath ones and zeroes and the demands claimed by students in higher education. There is an overwhelming risk that the multiple, congenial, complex yet blurry assignment will be drained and broken up to better suit the simple messages of the times such as individualisation and adapting to market forces.

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Translated by Jonathan Pearman



Mimers Hus, Kungälv, Sweden

A centre for people wanting to learn, for cultural experiences and leisure activities.

Mimers Hus also contains upper secondary school, exhibition hall and theatre. Inaugurated in 2004.

Architects: Wingårdh Arkitektkontor AB.

Photo: Katrin Glimstedt

The local global library – reflections and experience from a Swedish suburb

■ *To overcome the divides in access to information and knowledge is the basis of most library activity, among which are the libraries of Kortedala and Gamlestaden in Gothenburg. Ca 40 % of its population is either born outside Sweden or has other citizenships than Swedish. And yet, the opinion held in Kortedala and Gamlestaden is that integration and multiplicity are terms that only serve administrative purposes; never in relation to users and visitors. No one is in themselves a representative of a social or an ethnic group; all are unique individuals. During the past ten years an extensive process has been pursued from a democracy perspective in Kortedala and Gamlestaden, targeting those that do not speak Swedish and aiming to provide them with access to IT and IT-based information.*

Kortedala district Committee in the municipality of Gothenburg, Sweden, has ca. 26,000 inhabitants and consists of three separate districts, Gamlestaden, Kortedala and Utby. Gamlestaden, with its 6,000 inhabitants, is the cradle of industrialism in Gothenburg, built around the factories of Gamlestaden and SKF. Work immigration and the reception of refugees have dominated the area since the first Italians arrived in 1947. They were followed by Estonians, Hungarians, Finns, Yugoslavs, Turks, Greeks, Latin-Americans, Iranians, people from Somalia, Arabic-speaking peoples, and now recently Russians. Most of them enjoy and remain in Gamlestaden – busy international small towns with a large contingency of day-labourers as there are plenty of workplaces in the area. The library was inaugurated in 1960 and in its well-kept interior of the fifties there is ongoing integration in the fact that people meet and enjoy themselves.

In the recurrent polls it is shown that following better means of communication, the library and the local hospital is valued the highest. Unfortunately it is not always an idyllic situation. The library cannot be an isolated oasis amidst a problematic reality. Occasionally there are problems with youth gangs who sabotage, disrupt and prevent people from visiting the library. The library attempts to deal with this by collaborating with schools, the social services, security services and the police. Employees of libraries need to convin-

ce themselves that they neither represent the police nor the social services, but are instead in pursuit of an activity based on trust and solidarity.

The other library in the district is the largest in Gothenburg. It lies in Kortedala; a working-class district entirely designed and built on the ideals of the Swedish welfare state. Today there are 14,000 inhabitants of Kortedala of equally mixed origins as those of Gamlestaden. As Gamlestaden it has a population above the municipal average with regard to bad health, unemployment, early retirement and its share of those on social benefits. Yet they are below the average when it comes to education, income and in possession of a car. Ca. 40 % of the population of Kortedala and Gamlestaden is either born outside Sweden or has other citizenships than Swedish. All in all there are more than fifty languages spoken.

Kortedala library buys literature in Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian, Danish, English, Finnish, French, Chinese, Croatian, Kurdish, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Russian, Serbian, Somali, Spanish and German. The aim is to acquire a basic collection of non-fiction in every language, in what one of the staff calls “the everyday manuals”, such as medical books, cookery books, books on raising children, psychology, history, lexica, atlases etc. whenever possible, instructional literature the equivalent of elementary school and college level so as to ensure those in adult education acquiring the terminology in their own language. As to the purchases of books in English and French, this happens because to many of those from third world countries these are their main reading and studies languages.

The assignment of the local library is not primarily about integration, but about adapting the library’s activities to those who live or work in the area. Integration and multiplicity are terms that are used higher up in the organisation and never in relation to users and visitors. A single person is not a representative of neither a social category nor an ethnic group but a unique individual. The library’s assignment is to bridge the gaps that appear in information and knowledge, and it applies to each individual visitor regardless of origin.



Mimers Hus, Kungälv, Sweden



In Kortedala and similar regions there are many who are in need of learning Swedish and breaking the cultural codes as well as the codes of bureaucracy. At the same time it is necessary to keep in touch with their native languages and the culture it is connected with. For that reason the library in Kortedala is pursuing an activity, which aside from keeping regular opening hours and lending books, is about language and the exchange across linguistic and cultural boundaries. For many years focus has been on that of songs, music, storytelling, book clubs and literary events.

Throughout the last decade it has been about IT. It began when the library and six compulsory schools applied for project funding to develop an extensive IT-competence. This was followed by a project where the primary target group was adults with other linguistic background than Swedish and its purpose was to supply access to those familiar with information technique.

During the autumn of 1999 free courses in the use of computers and the Internet were initiated for beginners in Swedish as well as other languages. The courses are still being provided and more than 2000 people have participated. The courses have been given in Persian, Somali, Arabic, Finnish, Spanish, Serbian, Bosnian, Croatian, English, Kurdish and

Chinese. As there are always two teachers to every ten students there are great opportunities for individual instruction. This teaching method is much appreciated by those who have nowhere to take their 'silly' questions about IT or even dare approach a computer.

The project Bridge of Words followed, which was a collaborative venture involving three county libraries and the International Library in Stockholm. A consequence is the electronic reference service Ask the Library, which now serves in several languages – a service that should be international!

The work continues. During the autumn of 2006, Kortedala library, in a collaborative venture with study librarians, the Adult Education Board, have a 'learning milieu' which involves more computers and more media aimed at those in adult education programmes. It mainly targets those who are unfamiliar with study processes and lack knowledge of the Swedish language.

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Libraries as gateways to Danish society

Libraries all over the country are portals of knowledge to Danish society. At the same time they are places where people of all nationalities meet and use a wide variety of facilities: international newspapers, literature in foreign languages, access to the Internet etc. We know from various surveys that ethnic minorities are among the most frequent library users.

The role of libraries is increasingly acknowledged among politicians as an important tool in the integration process.¹ The Danish minister for integration issues, Rikke Hvilshøj has pointed out in which areas libraries can support better integration:

- Libraries as learning centres
- Public places offering specific services to groups with special needs
- ‘Nurseries’ of democracy, citizenship and informal education
- Cultural meeting places.

Municipal libraries

Over the past three years the library sector has increased its focus on integration services to ethnic minorities. This has resulted in the development of new types of services and new ways of working. Libraries have for instance established external partnerships with organisations, volunteers and other sectors within the municipalities.

Among the most successful models that have emerged are support to children’s homework, language stimulation for children below the age of 10, clubs for girls and meeting places for women – not to mention initiatives that support the development of Danish citizenship.

Particularly municipal libraries situated in areas with a high density of ethnic minorities have well developed services for ethnic minorities. In the forefront of new initiatives are Aarhus and Odense.

In order to reach new target groups among the ethnic minorities it can be necessary for librarians to be more proactive in their strategies. To improve efficiency and gain inspiration from new methods it is advisable to cooperate or network with other partners - most likely local and/or municipal ones like social services, and employment servi-

ces. Some ongoing projects show that success is also more likely to occur when dedicated persons with an ethnic minority background are involved.

Activities specially designed for women

Many ethnic minority women are isolated in Danish society. At the same time we do know that the women are very important in the development of the family’s integration into Danish society. These two facts are the reason why the libraries particularly wish to attract women and girls by way of special integration initiatives. Several projects for women have gone through an experimental and target-group-oriented process, resulting in completely new working methods in the project libraries.

The projects were based on the immediate needs of the target group, and its desire for social contact, activities, information, competence development, guidance and advice. Through personal contact with the user it is assessed which competencies are required, which qualifications are needed, and which roles are most appropriate to assume in each individual situation. This working method challenges the familiar librarian role, but it also generates great satisfaction in the job when the usefulness of the library service becomes immediately apparent.

Somali women’s group – an example

Rødovre Public Library’s collaboration with a Somali women’s group is a good example of adapting one’s project work to actual needs. Originally the project was intended to be a ‘conversation café’, but the Somali mothers wanted to learn to cook simple and healthy Danish food, like the food children eat in day nursery and kindergarten. The librarians accepted this challenge, and the Somali women learned to cook Danish dishes with a team of pedagogues and librarians. Later these experiences were used to write a cookery book, and while preparing the book the women learned something about word-processing and photo technique. Thus the project developed into a working partnership with Danish as the common language, where the library was supporter and the librarians process consultants.

It is necessary to “hold the hand all the way” in order to catch the target group, and this kind of pedagogics can be a



At the city library in Lyngby, Denmark, a group of mentally handicapped – together with a couple of pedagogues – run a café which in one year has become a resounding success. Photo: Kristian Djurhuus

bit too much for some members of staff. But it can also be very inspiring for staff to work in this way as well as help to extend their competences, and the libraries gain invaluable insight into the target group and its needs in relation to library service.

We read the newspaper – TOGETHER – an example

Odense Central Library has developed a learning concept particularly designed for ethnic minority groups whose information literacy and command of Danish as a second language are limited.

The concept is about empowerment and has three subsidiary goals. First of all, the information literacy of the target group must be extended, and this happens through reading the newspaper, through lectures and excursions. Improved information literacy helps to strengthen the target group's active citizenship. Secondly, the target group's common information requirements should be the decisive factor in the learning process. Here the 'operative workshop' comes into force. And then the participants' communicative competency must be developed. This does not happen through language tuition, but through communication coaching. The concept was developed in a test sequence, lasting three months, where the participants met three mornings a week. Together with a librarian, the women went through articles from a local newspaper and from *MetroXpress*. The women themselves chose the articles that became the starting point of an informal learning session to improve their information literacy and locate supplementary information. The communication coaching happened via actually practising the language, while at the same time learning how to

conduct a discussion and enter into a dialogue with one another. And then there were study tours to relevant places and people, like for example the School of Health and Social Care, maternity wards in the hospital and a café for language practice.

19 women took part in the test run, the majority coming from Somalia and the Middle East. The women had lived in Denmark for about 10 years; generally they had no education, were not in touch with the Danish labour market and had poor language qualifications. Their different life stories became the basis for many discussions. Most of the subjects chosen by the women had to do with women's lives in general, health, children, family life, education, work in Denmark, racism and language qualifications. But also subjects like globalisation, religion and politics were given an airing. Two librarians and an assistant from the library were in charge of the project.

Reading the newspaper in particular helped to increase the information literacy of the target group to an unexpected extent, considering the length of the course. There were many indications that the participants changed their behavioural pattern, and that they are now regular readers of Danish newspapers. By the end of the test run the majority of the participants expressed an increased interest in working life culture and Danish cultural and social conditions.

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Translated by Vibeke Cranfield

¹ Integration can be understood in many different ways. It is here used in the sense of adjustment to rights and obligations of Danish society. The justification of libraries' integration initiatives is first of all that libraries - according to the Danish Act regarding library services (2000) - are obliged to provide information and support education and cultural activities.

Idealism and the emergence of marketing strategy

■ *Contemplating the present situation for a small Swedish public library a few things become obvious. Are the libraries without an image? Perhaps public libraries are suffering from an identity crisis? Could it be that the perception of themselves no longer coincides with how they are perceived outside the library sphere? Boden municipal library in northern Sweden has over the past few years developed some activities reflecting a change of attitude towards assignments and demand.*

I am still here in a small office at the same small library and in the same small town in the most northern part of Sweden that I arrived at thirty years ago as a newly qualified librarian. How did this come about? What happened on the way?

At a conference some years ago I heard a futurologist declare that the set of standards we acquire in youth are those that in principal will trail us the rest of our lives. Against such a backdrop one might well reflect on what kind of perspective those of us who were young during the 70's have when viewing today's world with an ever so slight sense of indulgence.

The library world in 1975

The Swedish cultural policy of 1974 made us see issues through rose-tinted glasses. Chants of everyone's right to good literature seemed to echo everywhere! Delay charges were dispensed with. If books were not returned one simply bought new ones. The main principle was to spread good literature to one and all.

The idea of adult education still reigned supreme and a number of librarians suffered from self-delusional grandeur, seeing themselves as missionaries. Workshop libraries were initiated and library branches flourished as never before. Computers had yet to make an appearance in libraries; on the other hand there were these massive catalogue cupboards where we spent most of our working hours filling in and picking up catalogue cards.

Dark clouds

In the middle of the 80's, the media grants failed to cover what was considered to be necessary in a well-stocked libra-

ry. Rents and staff costs took more than their fair share of the grants and very little remained to support any other library activity.

At the library in Boden, we agreed that perhaps we would benefit if we focused on our core services instead of striving for a wide span of badly performed services. Branches shut down and public libraries ceased to exist. Our ranks thinned out and there was actually a number of services we stopped performing.

But did we honestly administer our decreasing funds to the best of our abilities? Should it not have been feasible to improve our service to the public despite reduced financial funding?

Our discovery

Despite the frustration at not being able to purchase the media required by the public, we could nevertheless confirm that the collections exceeded the library's storage capacity. As in so many other public libraries, the sorting out of old stock had not been a priority and the common approach had been to store any old material as long as there was room. We began to realise that a quality library did not necessarily imply a vast media output. Rather, it was a question of having the 'right' kind of media. Slowly, but surely we realised that we were not quite sure as to what needs our users had in relation to the service we tried to supply.

A project aimed at increasing service quality

On being told about a project called Manual for methods of assessment, which involved the participating libraries to quantify twelve different performance indicators during a three year period, we felt this to be exactly what we had been waiting for. The following years were characterized by intensive quantifying. There was a survey as to how many books were misplaced on the shelves. We performed time studies on how long it took a book from being ordered to delivery and reaching the end user. We surveyed the degree of utilization, i.e. the relationship between the size of the collection and the number of loans. We counted the number of reference queries made to the information counter. We ventured into the streets asking passers-by how often

they had used the library or its electronic resources during the past year. These are but a few examples. We surveyed something each month over a period of three years. The staff was not exactly jubilant about the extra chores, but they remained surprisingly loyal when it came to the crunch and it was probably due to the fact that they, despite all, were excited about taking part and analyzing the results. Following the completion of the project we could compare our results with the other participating libraries. What were we good at and what were we not so good at? What could we have improved upon during these three years?

Media planning

It was around this time that we began our media planning and yet another piece of the puzzle fell into place. Now in 2006 we have managed four such media plans, detailing each part of the library with regards to degree of utilization, age, target group and how we aim to improve our service facilities. By analyzing the data we can establish that 68,000 volumes have been sorted out as loans have increased and the degree of utilization has steadfastly increased. We can verify that our collections have undergone a marked rejuvenation.

Previously, there has been a tendency to blame deficiencies on matters difficult to influence, such as the demographics of a region, small media grants, a library being in the wrong area etc. Instead, we try to focus on matters that we can influence.

The ultimate goal of our efforts in media planning and participating in the manual-project, is to supply the inha-

bitants of the municipality of Boden with a library that has a composite media collection adapted to local needs and to supply faster and efficient service facilities.

The soul of a public library

The past year has seen the chief librarians of the county Norrbotten networking on the issue of how, to a greater extent than before, present library activities to the general public and to those politicians with decision functions. Our curse is that despite the fact that the library is seen as an integral and organic part of democratic society, it also entails that our services are never questioned but taken for granted and as a consequence we fail to capture the imagination of the public. Are the libraries without an image? Perhaps public libraries are suffering from an identity crisis.

The challenge we face is to clarify our identity (how we perceive ourselves), our image (how we are perceived by others) and our profile (how we would like to be perceived).

The public libraries must be more forthright in their image making. We need to be better at informing about society's need for libraries and of what use we are to the individual user. If we fail in this respect, future libraries will run the risk of becoming synonymous with yesterday's book rooms, where the smell of dust-covered books remind us of our childhood libraries and will forever dominate the image of what a library is.

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Middelfart Library, Denmark
Inaugurated in 2005
Architects: Schmidt, Hammer & Lassen
Photo: Nils Lund Pedersen/Ann Poulsen

The library's role as learning centre for information literacy and the librarian as teacher/lifelong learning

The many faces of the librarian

The knowledge society and the rapid development of society in general require lifelong learning by the individual citizen. Qualifications and competences achieved through studies and occupational experience have constantly to be updated and developed. The Danish historian of ideas, Jens Erik Kristensen, describes the demand for competence development as a demand levelled at you "from cradle to grave". Lifelong learning can happen through:

- Formal learning, resulting in an examination certificate
- Non-formal learning, for example learning at your place of work and
- Informal learning – i.e. learning where learning is not the main purpose of the activity*

All members of society will be part of various learning processes throughout their lives.

Many people do no longer consider information to be in short supply. The Internet has extended access to information, and the library is not always seen as important in terms of access to information. On the other hand, many librarians find that citizens' competences in seeking information on the Internet could be upgraded, and that there is still a number of people who are not familiar with IT and the opportunities of the Internet.

So there is reason to further develop the role of the library and of the librarian to the benefit of the citizens' learning processes and level of knowledge. With financial support from the Danish National Library Authority's Development Pool Århus Public Libraries was given the chance in 2004 and 2005 to experiment with the library as an informal learning environment as well as developing the role of the librarian. This article is based on experiences from this project.

Libraries and learning

When the library wants to work professionally with supporting the citizens' learning processes, it becomes necessary to reflect on the question: What exactly constitutes good learning? The answer varies according to which paradigm and which learning tradition one takes as one's point

of reference. It is important to know different theories and traditions and to define the library's and its staff's common perception of learning.

At Aarhus Main Library we have been greatly inspired by Mads Hermansen's (doctor of pedagogics) theories on learning and learning processes. Based on these we take learning to mean: "Learning is when something you already know is being linked with something new. Learning leads to subsequently doing something else".

Learning is seen as a process where the user's personal participation and existing knowledge are important, and where the learning process hopefully results in the user being offered new opportunities and is able to act in different and innovative ways. The role of the librarian then changes into being to a greater degree a support for learning processes rather than delivering products.

Information literacy is a key concept in terms of the library as learning place. There is a variety of definitions of the concept, but by and large they could be described as definitions that concern competence: To be able to identify and define an information need, to search, to be critical and to be able to apply and disseminate the information – to turn information into knowledge. Information literacy, which is a basic competence in a professional librarian, is essential in a knowledge society, and a competence that librarians can teach the users – bearing in mind the users' qualifications and background as well as their special interests.

From service to learning

Focusing on citizens' learning and learning processes in the public library helps extend the repertoire of the librarian. For a number of years 'good service' has been the central issue, in the sense that the librarian provided the user with the right materials/products. The desire to support the users' learning processes means moving focus from service to learning. The idea is not for the user to get everything handed on a plate, but for him to participate actively in the process of finding and handling material, thereby developing his own information literacy.

Guidance

Individual guidance makes it possible to support the users' learning processes. When confronted by the user, it is essential for the librarian extremely quickly to establish an equal and appreciative relationship. As librarians we may sometimes overlook the fact that the user is vulnerable when he takes part in learning activities: there is something he is not very good at – but which he needs to learn.

By tradition Danish public libraries have inquiry and 'help' desks, but these may in fact create barriers to good learning processes. The desks signal distance between user and librarian. One alternative could be the librarian who walks around the library and is approachable to the users in the circulation department. The librarian must be recognisable to the user – e.g. by specific dress, large name badges etc.

User motivation and interest are essential when talking about guidance. The librarian must offer the user the chance of being active himself and use the keyboard. When it is a question of guidance that can be achieved via the library's own system, the guidance must be based on that system's user interface.

Not all guidance is aimed at turning the user into an academic. The important thing is for the user to take away with him one or more tools that were not known to him when he arrived at the library.

Instruction

The library's offers of instruction must be targeted at different target groups. The instructor should be well aware of the users' interests, motivation and existing competencies. The good instructor is not created out of sheer professionalism, it is also important that the library instructor is able to use different teaching methods. Personal manners are important as well – body language and voice should both inspire confidence and indicate approval.

The instructor plans the course in advance, but the participants ought to be involved as much as possible along the way, and be allowed to use the computers for example to solve any problems presented to them. Open workshop facilities available during the course are also a good idea, so that the participants can do their work on course materials there. Possible themes for courses that support the citizens' information literacy could be 'digital citizenship', consumer information, criticism of sources etc.

A sequence of courses is also a possibility, perhaps at a fee.

New roles – new competencies

When librarians have to support learning and learning processes to a greater degree than service and products, their pedagogical and psychological qualifications and competencies must be strengthened. We have to link our library professionalism with pedagogical and psychological professionalism, while at the same time bearing in mind that the users are the pivotal point and targets of our services. Librarians must see themselves as a 'relations profession', where establishing relations with the users is important. As librarians we should be able to design teaching and guidance courses, to communicate with the users, to apply relevant question techniques and create learning based on the users' motivation. And our personal conduct must support this role.

Librarians must forever reflect on their own role and their own preconceived ideas as to the manner of guidance and instruction. And via reflection and collegiate sparring we must continue to develop our role as librarians – librarians, too, have to go on learning all their lives!

* *Memo on lifelong learning. EU-Commission, 2000.*

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Translated by Vibeke Cranfield



The Sámi Special Library
Inaugurated in 2000
Karasjok, Norway
Architects: Stein Halvorsen
and Christian Sundby
Photo: John Marcus Kuhmunen

The new tasks of Library 10

■ The library of today must be lively, multiform and outgoing, just like its staff.

The people involved in Helsinki City Library's Library 10, are considering new approaches to operating the music library. Since music is being transferred more and more to the Internet for downloading, the library can no longer be content passively supply CDs and other material. By introducing the possibilities provided by new information technology alongside traditional music library activities, the library has become an interactive space where the patron is not only a listener of music, but a producer and performer as well.

The library as a place for creating and presenting culture

Approximately half of Library 10's patrons borrow material and it is certainly interesting to know what the other half of the patrons do in the library. In addition to reading magazines and newspapers and using Internet terminals, more and more often, patrons come to make their own music, edit pictures and videos or to watch and listen to the shows or music performed by other patrons.

This change in how patrons use the library also requires new skills by the staff. It is not enough for the library to provide the equipment and premises for doing things and performing. At least some of the staff must also know how to use the music and video editing equipment, sound reproduction and lighting systems. Arranging concerts and other events also requires skills. We have had good experiences with students as trainees who are studying the field, and next we will begin training a clerk through an apprenticeship agreement, who will be educated in both the library and media fields.

The library is competing for patrons' free time with many other entertainment and culture providers, so events and services must also be marketed effectively. Practicable, free marketing channels have been found, such as local radio, free newspapers, Internet discussion columns and blogs.

Cooperation with companies, organizations and patrons is increasing and taking place on a more and more concrete level. This naturally requires special skills, but, above all, the ability to organize things and to perceive the whole picture. Library 10's most important factor in special skill lies in the fact that 80 % of the staff are library professionals and all activities are marked by 'library' quality.

Material produced by patrons and the library's role

In addition to providing opportunities for creating culture, the library will also have to consider its role in classifying and distributing contents produced by patrons. The programs offered by Web 2.0 provide an easy way for users to save and share contents that they produce. Taxonomic and hierarchical classification in these Web 2.0 applications is usually abandoned and the users themselves define the contents they make with personally chosen words.

Will the future maintainers of these contents be blogs and Google, or will a large part of future libraries' digital material be produced by patrons and organized and distributed by professional library staff?

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Translated by Turun Täyskäännös



Library 10
Helsinki City Library
Finland
Photo: Pirjo Sallmén



meetingpoint@lasipalatsi

■ The Helsinki City Library's newest location, meetingpoint@lasipalatsi, does not have a single book. It specializes in providing consultation in using new electronic services, mobile services and digital TV. The job description of the staff working at the Meeting Point is very different from that of staff in traditional libraries; in addition to being able to deal with new media, plenty of marketing and pedagogic skills are necessary. Every day must be productive to ensure that there will be something to offer patrons at the Meeting Point, because there is not the flow of patrons in and out like in traditional libraries.

Events are produced in cooperation with external partners, in which case the library staff must also possess knowledge of the business world and its trends. You must be able to sense what is going on and bring it within the reach of patrons, for example, Internet phone calls. The Meeting Point supplies important information to service providers about the experiences patrons have of using the services in a real operational environment.

The Meeting Point is located in the most central place in Helsinki, Lasipalatsi. The location is good, but there is much competition. Every day we compete for customers in the entertainment and information fields. The threshold for patrons to participate in independent events has clearly risen. Each event must be sold separately.

To sum up, the following skills are more prominent in the new job description: marketing, knowledge of new technology, pedagogic skills, consultation skills and knowledge of the business sector. 'Skill fusion' is here and now.

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The public library as a social meeting place

■ *To what extent are public libraries seen as physical meeting places and do they have any special meaning in people's daily lives? These questions arise at a time when society is becoming ever more digitised, divided into sectors and segregated. In a digital, changeable age the need for libraries may well be questioned and doubts cast on their future as a public space in a pluralistic society.*

The concept of a meeting place

The concept of the library as a meeting place has received little attention in Norwegian library literature, although it is often mentioned in internal debates, reports and political speeches. In a way the concept is accepted as real, yet at the same time abstract. In an age when people have few public, social meeting places independent of generations, subcultures and sectors, the function of the library as a meeting place deserves to be defined and examined. What lies in the very concept of the library as a meeting place? Where do they exist? How do they come into being and what is their significance? What challenges do these questions represent for the public library sector in the development of society? My master's degree in library and information science involved a survey in 2004 of two libraries in Oslo. Librarians, users and local politicians were interviewed in depth.

Four different rooms – a basis for analysis

My study is theoretically rooted in the arguments presented among others by Jürgen Habermas and in his theories on the public space. Using the theories of Dorte Skot-Hansen I defined four different rooms or functions in a library. The value-based room where people meet to experience shared values and identity, such as older people introducing children from ethnic minorities to recent local history. The political room, encouraging critical debate, for example local politicians meeting inhabitants in open debate in connection with elections. The learning room, which supports life-long learning at various levels. Finally The social room for meetings in a communal spirit without obligation and with the choice to participate or leave at will.

The meetings which took place in the various, defined rooms had a significance for the participants at different

levels with regard to learning, reading, cultural awareness, integration and participation in community life and public debate. The meetings were set up on the basis of concrete projects which the libraries involved had actively initiated and promoted. This resulted in planned meetings for groups such as the Girls' group. Many of the activities were suitable for more than one room and most meetings led in their turn to more spontaneous get-togethers in The social room.

The social room

This particular room would appear to have greater significance than expected. The physical library space provides legitimacy for both peripheral and central participation in society. People can read newspapers next to each other without exchanging a word, but they can also discuss what they are reading. In spite of all the planned meetings, the majority of those interviewed came constantly back to the social aspect of the library as a meeting place. A place to be free, to relax, but also a place to see and interact with other people, either consciously or subconsciously. Sitting at home using a computer to find a book is not the same as visiting a library and browsing among the shelves. The physical library space offers an experience, an atmosphere and a sense of belonging.

'Bowling alone'

The sociologist, Putnam, claims that in almost every area people in US have become more occupied with self-realisation than with involvement in collective projects or social, civil life. People more or less 'bowl' alone. Putnam's point is that it is important for people from different strata of society to come together and participate as equals. Strong social networks disregarding traditional barriers between people lead to cooperation and a sense of trust, thereby heightening social involvement and the ability to act collectively. Informal 'face to face' relationships represent the 'glue' of society and result in greater involvement, and the so-called social capital which nourishes democracy. According to Putnam, the reduced supply of social capital in our present age creates a 'threadbare' democracy.

In the light of Putnam's assertions, the library as a meeting place has the potential to counteract an increase in the

number of 'lonesome bowlers'. Since public libraries are compulsory by law in all Norwegian municipalities, they are in a unique position to become the local community's public and social meeting place. It is important in relation to integration, cultural understanding and the furtherance of democracy that people from different social backgrounds should be able to meet others from outside their own particular subculture.

The challenge

The challenge lies in the extent to which public libraries are interested in placing greater emphasis on their function as a meeting place and using it as a frame of reference in relation to library development, financing by the authorities, organisation of the premises (quiet room/conversation room), logistics, ethics, marketing and their programme of arrangements. The majority should to a greater extent 'feel the pulse' of the local community with regard to any changes which are coming to the forefront, such as the needs of the ever-increasing older generation, the digital divide, etc. This will require greater competence among librarians and

a willingness to cooperate actively with partners outside the library sector.

Several interviewed called for a more active contribution from librarians towards developing their own library. They would like libraries to keep pace with technological advances while at the same time retaining the traditional characteristics of books, reading and a quiet environment. The physical library and the digital library do not necessarily exclude each other, but what happens tomorrow?

According to Habermas, the general public as a source of criticism still has a part to play in today's society. The same is true of the public library system in its role as an open, social meeting place offering a wide range of activities in an atmosphere of fellowship where nobody needs to 'bowl alone'.

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Translated by Eric Deverill



Tromsø Library, Norway
Inaugurated in 2005
Architect: HRTB A/S arkitekter MNAL
Photo: Mona Wiik



Dorotea Library, Sweden.
Inaugurated in 1999.
Architect: Torsten Sandgren



Malmö City Library, Sweden
Renovated and completed with modern extension. The new library was completed in 1999.
Architect: Henning Larsens Tegnesteue A/S.
Photo: Ahmet Kurt

Nýheimar Knowledge Cluster

Centre of education, culture and development at Höfn, Iceland

■ Saturday, 24 August 2002, was a memorable day for the town of Höfn, located in Hornafjörður municipality, Iceland. The Nýheimar building was then inaugurated, in the presence of the President of Iceland and other distinguished guests. This building houses the Secondary School of Austur-Skaftafellssýsla County, Hornafjörður Cultural Centre, Hornafjörður University Centre and the East Iceland Incubation Centre, as well as a cafeteria and other facilities for social gatherings.

This article tells the background of preparations and ideology for Nýheimar and also outlines the activities that the building currently accommodates.

Preparations

For a number of years, the inhabitants of Hornafjörður had been hoping to obtain new premises for their secondary school, which operated in difficult circumstances in facilities of the Nesjaskóli Compulsory School, about 10 km away from the town of Höfn. The secondary school had grown and developed for several years and had long since become too large for the buildings there. Serving first and foremost the surrounding county, which has some 2,300 inhabitants, the Secondary School of Austur-Skaftafellssýsla is one of Iceland's smallest secondary schools, with only somewhat over 100 students. The importance of the school for the local community, however, has grown year by year.

Around the middle of the 1990s, ideas were proposed as to the municipality sponsoring development efforts, with the objective of increasing diversity in the commercial sector. The outcome was that the municipal council promoted the foundation of a limited company for this purpose, which then worked toward establishing an incubation centre.

At the same time, municipal government discussions on improved facilities for museums and other collections were increasing in intensity; in fact, it was clear that the housing rented for the library and regional archives had long since become too small.

These threads of discussion gradually intertwined, and when the minister of education at that time, Björn Bjarnar-

son, was presented with the notion of a single building for accommodating Hornafjörður's educational, cultural and developmental activities, he found the concept so attractive that he not only proposed the national government approve the project, but continued to support it.

Incubation centre

During 1995 and 1996, discussions were conducted between the municipality and the Business and Regional Development Centre of East Iceland on finding a new avenue for municipal support of local industry. There was a desire to move away from the municipality providing guarantees and purchasing stocks, towards more general municipal support for business. Interest awoke in examining whether ideas could be applied in Hornafjörður on an incubation centre, in the spirit of science parks.

The incubation centre concept aimed at creating an environment to stimulate business innovation in Hornafjörður. It was anticipated that in addition to the municipality the project would involve the University of Iceland, the Business and Regional Development Centre of East Iceland, Secondary School of Austur-Skaftafellssýsla County, companies in Hornafjörður, and such research institutes as the Icelandic Fisheries Laboratories and the IceTec Technological Institute of Iceland. From the outset, a 600-square-metre building was envisioned which would be easy to convert as required on each occasion and which would offer common facilities, including a reception, meeting place and coffee lounge. The municipality's role was to provide for subsidised rents and take charge of financing the building.

Research and education

Participation by the University of Iceland was intended to ensure that the project would be linked to a centre of research and knowledge in Iceland. The secondary school already played a key role as a local body for post-compulsory education, and the participation of businesses secured a relationship with local industry, whose role might for example be consultation on individual projects.

At an early stage, the glacier Vatnajökull and its impact on the community and natural environment began to be seen

as a focal point for the University of Iceland. The emphasis on Vatnajökull has since then remained a certain mainstay in the university's area operations and in fact in still further regional fields such as tourism. The decision by Parliament to establish Vatnajökull National Park underscores the importance of an active local centre for knowledge and research.

After a period of preparation, the company Nýherjabúðir ehf. was established at the beginning of 1999 to make the incubation centre a reality. The foundation agreement states that the aim of the company is "to stimulate innovation and business development, especially among companies emphasizing knowledge and innovation, and to enhance industrial diversification. In addition to a board of directors for the new company, a special professional council was appointed.

The initial operations of the company were characterised by a large number of smaller tasks, for instance facilitating student assignments in connection with the incubation centre. Promoting the project also demanded time. Today between ten and twenty spin-off firms and knowledge-related projects are run under the auspices of the incubation centre.

Preparation and design

In March 2000, when the decision had been taken to build Nýheimar, the architectural firm Gláma-Kím was engaged as principal designer of the building. From the first day, the Nýheimar construction committee strongly emphasised to the designers that they would have to respect the dimensional and budgetary limits for construction. In accordance with this, the design contract contained strict provisions on observing costs and on designer responsibility for doing so.

The structure encloses two main areas, which are also open to the general public of the town; these are firstly the main hall or lobby, adjacent to the entrance, and secondly the library hall of the Cultural Centre. Both extend through two stories, connecting building activities horizontally as well as vertically and also allowing daylight to enter through broad skylights.

The cafeteria in the lobby area is open to everyone working or staying in the building, as well as to visitors. Adjacent to the cafeteria, a tiered lecture hall serves as one of the secondary school classrooms as well as for other building activities, including various lectures and conferences.

The lobby area connects directly with every other unit of the building. On the ground floor, the Incubation and University Centres are on the north side of the building, while the Cultural Centre reaches from the main hall to the eastern wall. The secondary school occupies the entire upper floor and links to other activities through the two main open spaces.

Nýheimar is located in the town centre, the busiest part of Höfn. The upper storey provides a panorama of the town and its surroundings. From both floors of the lobby area, there is a view west towards the glacial horizon that is such a prominent feature of Hornafjörður. The structure's total gross floor area is approximately 2,500 m², and it cost about ISK 460 million completed and fully equipped.

Library

Dedication day marked a milestone in library history for the county of Austur-Skaftafellssýsla. The county's first reading society was founded in 1837. There is, therefore, some truth in saying that the modern library at Nýheimar rests on a foundation that has matured for nearly two centuries, rendering it for certain one of the district's oldest institutions. And ever since the village of Höfn was first settled, over a century ago, its inhabitants have had the opportunity to borrow books.

Today the library bustles with activity from morning till evening, staying open 09:00-19:00 on weekdays and 13:00-17:00 at weekends. Ready access to computers is offered, along with a wide choice of information and entertainment media. A tourist information service is also located at Nýheimar, which adds still further to the number of visits. The regional archives are here as well, storing and supplying information on local history to the fullest extent possible. The library reception service is directly linked to a department for children and youths, located against an outer wall and in sight of the entrance. From the main library hall, a

circular staircase takes visitors to a reading and working space belonging to the secondary school and shared with the library.

The Nýheimar building features a great many works of art, e.g. paintings by the artist Svavar Guðnason, who was born in Höfn. The Cultural Centre acquired a concert grand piano on the occasion of its transfer to Nýheimar. This instrument has definitely proved its worth, attracting highly talented musicians to come. Both performers and guests have noted and expressed pleasure upon the quality of the acoustics.

Noteworthy success

The formula for founding the Incubation Centre at Höfn was a bold original idea, together with the unselfish efforts of many people in bringing it to fruition. These pioneers advanced under the banners of education and innovation,

leaving most people convinced that the Nýheimar Knowledge Cluster, as a centre of education, culture and development in Hornafjörður, will prove a future source of strength to the community.

Now there are almost four years of experience with the cohabitation enabled by Nýheimar. These four years provide a testimony to how felicitous the gathering of people engaged in education, culture, research and development can be for the surrounding community. Their work supports society and its growth, and local residents are well aware of the educational and recreational opportunities which Nýheimar has begun to offer.

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Nýheimar Knowledge Cluster Centre
Nýheimar, Iceland
Architect: Gláma-kim Arkitektar



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Nordic Culture Fund

This book has received financial support from Nordic Culture Fund, and is published by the Danish National Library Authority

The initiative for the book was taken by
The Danish National Library Authority,
The Ministry of Education in Finland,
The Ministry of Education in Iceland,
The Norwegian Archive, Library and
Museum Authority
and The Swedish National Council
for Cultural Affairs

ISBN: 87-91554-77-2

Electronic ISBN: 87-91554-78-0