

This newsletter is sent because you requested to be on the mailing list. If you no longer wish to receive it please send an email to olaf.janssen@kb.nl Feel free to pass this newsletter on to anyone you think might be interested.

Snippets

November and December have flown by mainly with views of Europe from inside planes and trains. Starting with a visit to Luxembourg as part of the negotiation for TEL-ME-MOR. This was a successful meeting and we are looking to sign a contract for the work in the first couple of months of 2005 and to start in the first quarter. The funding is aimed at bringing the New Member States into The European Library and addresses issues such as metadata standards, multi-linguality and marketing to the end user. More details on TEL-ME-MOR will be given in the next newsletter.

The next port of call was the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze to talk with Dott. Antonia-Ida Fontana and Giovanni Bergamin about the inclusion of the BNCF into the Google pilot and to discuss their collection submissions. London then beckoned with a visit to the British Library to cover similar subjects and the marketing plan for The European Library, fitting in a conference talk at Online Information 2004 to talk about how we are moving from a project to service under the title 'Beyond Virtual Reference'. The session was well attended and generated some good questions and thoughts. The presentation can be seen at www.europeanlibrary.org.

The last voyage for this year was a day trip to Paris to present The European Library to the Directorate of the Bibliothèque nationale de France and to discuss the inclusion in the Google pilot, marketing and collection descriptions.

All these meetings were very useful for me as I learnt more about the libraries and hopefully communicated some of the issues, thoughts and needs of The European Library Office.

Management Meeting

On November 2nd the second The European Library Board Management was held. Discussion focussed on the new version of the portal, designed by Fabrique, the marketing plan and whether to allow Google and its fellow search engines to crawl The European Library, as they have requested. This latter was subsequently sent as a series of questions to the 9 National Libraries involved in the launch of The European Library. 8 of the 9 responses were positive so we will now invite Google to crawl our OAI harvested Index from launch of the site onwards and evaluate the results. The Management Board also conducted a useful session on constructing a vision and mission statement for The European Library, led by Lynne Brindley, CEO of the British Library. The group generated some ideas that are currently being word crafted to create a mission statement for inclusion on the site and so that a 3 year product plan can be completed in January 2005. The final version of the Marketing & Communications Plan will be available for members on www.europeanlibrary.org in January 2005.

Working Groups

The Contacts Working Group (CWG) met physically for the first time the following day on 3rd November. Work was done on guidelines for Collection Descriptions. These guidelines aim to improve the quality of The European Library Collection Descriptions and to create a standard for all future partners in the portal. The new guidelines have been incorporated as help text into the Collection Description form, the full text of the guidelines will be loaded into the Handbook from January 4th. This group agreed that it would meet once a year as it works well virtually, such as in the creation of the Marketing & Communications plan. The final version of which will be published on www.europeanlibrary.org early in the New Year. The Contact Group, together the newly created **Editorial Working Group**, then courtesy of Olaf Janssen's organisation went to see the old Leiden Observatory and to meet up with the

'fathers' of Gabriel. The final Board meeting of Gabriel was held on the Thursday morning with Dr. Elisabeth Niggemann giving words of Thanks and Appreciation to Marco de Niet and Olaf Janssen for all the dedicated hard work and creativity they had put into Gabriel. Gabriel will be frozen for new content on January 10 and taken off air after the launch of The European Library in March.

The **Language Working Group** has decided to remain a virtual group and will not hold a physical meeting unless one proves necessary.

Project Status

In the New Year a 'Call for Expression of Interest for Joining The European Library' will be issued by Dr. Elisabeth Niggemann and Jean-Frederic Jauslin to all CENL members. The cost of full participation will be based around library budgets and will be explained in full in this letter. We would like to be able to take on some new participants from the middle of 2005.

The prototype was tested on real users in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek using an external usability test company. The results were quite revealing and have pointed us towards an even simpler site. A new version of the prototype will now be programmed and should be ready for testing towards the end of January. At this point we will contact all of you who were kind enough to volunteer your services as testers and ask for your feedback. If anyone else is interested in helping us test the usability of the site please email Olaf.Janssen@kb.nl

The content management section of the site, containing the Gabriel material such as who and where the National Library is, it's opening hours etc, will be ready for all members of CENL to load and check content in the middle of January.

As mentioned above we have created some guidelines for the writing of collection descriptions and additional help text. Again I would make a plea to update all of your collection descriptions so they comply with the new guidelines and are of use to the user. Please also load any that are missing within the next month. If you have any problems please contact Julie.Verleyen@kb.nl or Sally.Chambers@kb.nl after January 4

Latest Developments

The Verity search engine is currently being applied to the OAI harvested data and collection descriptions. An index will be created over the next couple of weeks and this functionality will be available for testing by the beginning of February.

Symposium in Portugal

The next TWG will be in Lisbon, courtesy of the Biblioteca Nacional, Portugal on February 10th. There will also be a symposium on February 9th. This is being organised by Jose.Borbinha@BN.PT please contact him for further details.

Thanks

I would like to thank all those who further disseminate this newsletter via their blogs and list servers etc.

Wishing you all the very best of the seasons greetings and a happy new year.

Jill

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