

THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL – November – December 2009

In this issue, it's the turn of Ingibjörg Steinunn Svverrisdóttir, Director of the National and University Library of Iceland (BOK), to act as Chief Editor.



DIRECTOR'S CORNER - Ingibjörg Steinunn Svverrisdóttir, Director of the BOK

"The National and University Library of Iceland (BOK) is a great source of knowledge for everyone. It serves the Icelandic community in all areas of reference and academic discipline and plays a leading role in the collection, preservation and dissemination of information. In its role as an information hub it makes a vigorous contribution to culture, research and creative work in the country. The Library was established in 1994 with the union of the National Library of Iceland (founded in 1818) and of the University Library of Iceland (founded in 1940).

It now has about 100 employees and holds nearly one million physical items, print, manuscripts, audio recordings and other multimedia. Subscriptions to databases and access to electronic journals is extensive and the Library gives access to national heritage material, both digitized and born digital through its websites. The Library opened in a new building in 1994. The building is 13.000 sq. metres on five floors. There are approximately 500 seats, 100 computers and audio-visual equipment. The staff plays a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth running of the library. They provide hands on help with reference services, searches, inter-library loans and information-seeking courses.

The BOK has adopted a [new strategy for the years 2009-2012 under the banner 'Access to Knowledge for Everyone'](#). The main focus areas are: services to the Library's users, electronic solutions, the harvesting and preservation of digital materials and collaboration with other parties in the same sphere. Also the BOK aims to take a more leading role in the library and educational system of the country and in the preservation and dissemination of national culture and heritage.

Involvement in Nordic and international collaborations and projects is vital for the Library. And with this ethos at the forefront of our work we are proud to have been a full partner in The European Library since 2007.

TOP 3 SEARCH ENTRIES ON THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY - NOVEMBER 2009:

1. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart - German composer, 1756 – 1791,

2. Paris - The French capital also called City of Light or Fashion Capital of the World depending whether you are an electrical engineer or a designer...

3. Pablo Picasso, Spanish painter and major 20th century artist, 1881 – 1973.

[Launch your own query!](#)

OUR TIPS

Discover the **exhibitions held in the great national libraries of Europe** through a [single access point](#)



Send an [e-postcard](#) from the national libraries of Europe. Celebrate reading and deliver your own literary note!



IN FOCUS – Sverrisdóttir shows us the exhibitions to get excited about at the BOK.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION: Financial Fallout in the 30s

Considering the current world financial fiasco, this exhibition of newspapers, journals and books from the Great Depression of the 1930s should strike a cord for many modern day Icelanders.

The newspaper headlines from over 80 years ago are strikingly similar to those covering the collapse of Iceland's economy in 2008. In the Great Depression the Bank of Iceland went bankrupt and the media, much like today, made a meal of financial corruption and greed of bankers and businessmen.

Visitors also get the chance to peruse the personal belongings of a man who was forced to turn to making moonshine to support his young family and listen to audio-recorded accounts from others who fell victim to the financial fallout.

DAY OF THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY: BULGARIA TAKES TEL TO HEART



The National Library of Bulgaria St. Cyril and Methodius and the National Library of Romania will be hosting 'Day of the European Library'. The event aims to highlight the services of The European Library and the TELplus project in its country.

- The activities in Bulgaria will take place on the 30th November, 2009.
- The activities in Romania will take place on the 9th December, 2009.

And the Icelandic Woman Gained a Voice...: Early Women's News and Views in Print

This exhibition of Icelandic womens' magazines and newspapers, dating back to the 1890s, provides a peak at feminist and feminine activity among the country's female fraternity.

Pride of place goes to publications from pioneer writer and artist Torfhildur Þorsteinsdóttir Hólm, who began her career by publishing a yearly magazine called Draupnir in 1891. Also on show are stories from Iceland's oldest women's magazine, Húsfreyjan (The Housewife), which focuses more on family matters than fanning the flames for feminism.

Visitors can take a peak at what was going on politically and in polite society for 19th century Icelandic ladies long before designer dresses, diets and dalliances became favoured magazine fodder.

YOUR SAY

"Thank you very much for opening a whole new world of resources to me". Eva – Poland – Subscriber since June 2009

CREDITS

The editorial content of the Newsletter was gathered with the kind cooperation of **Ingibjörg Steinunn Sverrisdóttir** and **Sonja B. Jónsdóttir** from the BOK & put together by **Magali Mermet, Tiziana Fazio, Justine Maybank** and **Aubéry Escande** from The European Library Office.



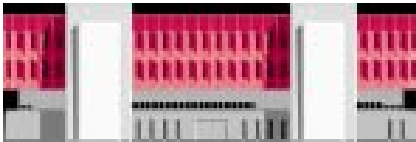


ESPERANTO: One Language for the World

It's hard to believe that over one hundred years have passed since the first text-book in esperanto was published in Iceland. Although the language's popularity has since petered out, this exhibition looks at the life and work of the book's author, the economist, Dr. Þorsteinn Þorsteinsson. As a great enthusiast for the universal language, Þorsteinn led the esperanto movement in Iceland as well as being heralded as the first head of Statistics Iceland in 1914.

And for those who still have a soft spot for this special language, here's the Esperanto version: Unu lingvo por la tuta mondo

Okaze la de centjarigho de la eldono de la unua lernolibro de esperanto en la islanda lingvo okazas en la Nacia Biblioteko ekzpozicio honore al la verkinto, d-ro Þorsteinn Þorsteinsson ekde la 15-a de oktobro. Þorsteinn estis la unua direktoro de la Statistika Oficejo de Islando. Per sia libro Þorsteinn Þorsteinsson farighis la pioniro de esperanto en Islando. En la antaŭparolo de la libro li skribis: "Post kiam la latina lingvo chesis esti helplingvo de edkukitaj homoj la bezono de iu alia lingvo por tiu rolo kreskis jaron post jaro. ... Nun la afero tiel staras, ke ne estas nur la kleruloj, kiujn bezonas tian helplingvon, sed ankaŭ la ordinara publiko. Tial tia lingvo devas estas facile lernebla, sed tiel estas nur pri malmultaj lingvoj. ... Tia lingvo estas Esperanto." Esperanto estas neutrala lingvo planita por internacia komunikado, origine kreita de L.L. Zamenhof. La lingvon Zamenhof aperigis en 1887 kaj nuntempe ghi estas la plej multe uzata planlingvo de la mondo.



IN DEPTH: BOK's digital dynasty

Sverrisdóttir sheds light on BOK's digital demands.

"The creation, conservation and dissemination of digital materials has been growing in importance since the Library was founded in 1994. In order to keep up with digital demand the Library's databases and websites are constantly under development. The Library has focused on the use of open standards such as OAI for identifying and describing its collections on the Web and has actively participated in various national and international organisations and projects in developing its digital resources. The Library is firmly committed to the ideal of providing open access for everyone to its collections and has designed its digitisation projects with the users needs in mind

(<http://landsbokasafn.is/uploads/stefnuskrar/Digitization%20Policy.pdf>).

Two of the main pillars of the Library's online services are joint projects involving other Icelandic libraries. In 2000, Gagnir, an online national catalogue for most libraries in Iceland, was implemented. Gagnir is operated by Icelandic Library Consortium and can now be searched from the European Library as well. In 1999, Iceland Consortia for Electronic Subscriptions was established in order to manage national subscriptions to digital journals and databases and run a countrywide access portal, hvar.is. Currently all Internet-users in Iceland have access to the full text of about 14.000 journals and 12 databases through the portal.*

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The Library has also participated in international digitization projects. It uses its digital imaging production line to provide online access to Icelandic maps (kort.bok.is), saga manuscripts and their printed publications (sagnanet.is) and newspapers and journals (timarit.is). Another project is harvesting of Icelandic websites in collaboration with the International Internet Preservation Consortium, of which the Library is a founding member. The web archive was opened to the public in 2009 (vefsafn.is).

In addition to these projects, work on online access to old printed books and a unified online catalogue for Icelandic manuscripts (handrit.is) is underway. Preparations for long-term preservation and access to various digital born materials like academic dissertations, music and PDF-documents are also in the pipeline. Currently the Library's online digital collections contain about 20 terabytes of data stored on mirrored disks with backups on tape.

Gagnir, the old maps, saga manuscripts, newspapers and journals are available through the European Library and the maps, newspapers and journals are also available in Europeana."



IN BRIEF – Exhibitions across Europe

Points of view: capturing the 19th century in photographs.

The British Library is showcasing its extensive collection of 19th century pictorial gems from its huge archives. Visitors are taken on a tour through some of the major themes of this pivotal period in history, from industrialisation and science to major changes in society. Peruse everything from Queen Victoria sitting side-saddle, to Oscar Wilde and a hippo at London Zoo. The exhibition runs until 7th March 2010. [More info...](#)



Fading sound: timely salvation

The National Library of Serbia helped celebrate UNESCO's World Day for Audiovisual Heritage 2009 (27th October) with a short film tribute to some of Serbia's oldest sound recordings. 'Fading Sound- Timely Salvation' features recordings from local artists, composers and performers for present and future generations to enjoy.

[More info...](#)



Grigore Vieru: a tribute

The National Library of the Republic of Moldova presents a virtual exhibition dedicated to Moldova's greatest contemporary poet – Grigore Vieru.

[More info...](#)

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