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### Snippets

The European Library will speak at this year's Online Information in London, under the title 'Beyond Virtual Reference', the session is on Wednesday 2, December 2004 at 3.30.

An overview of planning and meetings for TheEuropeanLibrary.org was published and is available on the project website at [www.europeanlibrary.org](http://www.europeanlibrary.org). The schedule included a round of visits to the CENL libraries, commencing with a visit to ICCU while in Rome at the Annual CENL conference. Besides covering some work issues, such as collections to be made accessible, and new digitising projects, we managed to fit in some serious cultural highlights such as the Vatican Library and Castel Sant'Angelo. This was also the case during a more recent visit to Narodna in Univerzitetna Knjiznica in Slovenia. Where as well as discussing collections to be made available in cartography and music on TheEuropeanLibrary.org and gaining some insights into some innovative representation of music scores, some sampling of the excellent Slovenia wine, its Karst and Alpine scenery was de rigueur.

We are pleased to announce a new recruit to The European Library Office. Sally Chambers is another English national wishing to decamp to Holland, must be the people, it's certainly not the weather! Sally will work part time for the Office and will talk to many of you as she spends her time chasing you for complete, quality controlled collection descriptions and updating of the Guide material. Sally is a librarian, so many of you may breathe a sigh of relief that at least one person in the Office might know what a collection is now.

### Working Groups

**The Technical Working Group (TWG)** held its second meeting with items such as Google crawling, the submission form for collection descriptions and a demonstration of the Xopus software on the agenda. The group discussed and decided to adopt the Dewey Decimal subject classification for implementation in TheEuropeanLibrary.org. UDC was obviously an equally strong contender, but DDC was chosen as it has an operational service behind it. The TWG also discussed the possibility of creating a universal standard and access mechanism to allow search engines to crawl The European Library and maybe eventually its SRU and z39:50 targets. TWG also agreed to merge the 2 groups of ONE/CENL and TWG as requested at the CENL Annual meeting, because the overlap of work between the 2 groups was high. It was agreed that TWG would add to its remit the mantle of 'watching developments in standards and technological change.'

**The Contacts Working Group (CWG)** meets physically for the first time next week to discuss their individual roles and to work on guidelines for Collection Descriptions. These guidelines will aim to improve the quality of The European Library Collection Descriptions and to create a standard for all future partners in the portal. So far this group has worked very well virtually, creating the list of collections that will be available at launch and involving the relevant people in their libraries in the formation of the Marketing & Communications Plan.

There will also be a first meeting of the **Editorial Working Group** to be formed from the ashes of the **Gabriel Contacts**. This group will be responsible for continuing the work of Gabriel to ensure that all libraries within in CENL are visible in The European Library for their online services and their library details.

**The Language Working Group** has yet to be officially convened. Its first meeting is scheduled for January 2005 and at that point it will have its work cut out creating and checking translations for launch.

## **Project Status**

The Management Board meets next week. Part of its agenda will be to create a mission statement for The European Library. This should help in the development of the 3 year product plan. The Board will also discuss the draft Marketing & Communications Plan for 2004/2005 and a subscription model for other members of CENL wishing to become full participants of TheEuropeanLibrary.org. The results of these discussions will be available on the project website [www.europeanlibrary.org](http://www.europeanlibrary.org) and will be summarised in the next newsletter.

The design for the prototype was shown at the CENL annual conference and received some good feedback. We are now creating a working prototype for testing internally and on some real users during November. This is a couple of weeks later than originally scheduled but should not cause any real delays in the longer term.

The use of Xopus, has suffered a slight set back, in the need to develop its own environment, this has caused a bit of delay in its programming but at the moment we are still fairly confident that we will have a useable version for testing and then data input according to schedule.

The number of collections available and accessible for launch will be around 150, consisting of approximately 5 million digitised items and 13 million catalogue records. Currently 20% of these have descriptions and are accessible. A concerted effort is needed by the partners to make sure that the interim target of 50% is reached by the end of November. The Office will be undertaking a very active chasing (nagging!) programme from the middle of November. So to avoid our dulcet tones in your ears, a redoubling of your efforts in this area is necessary.

## **Latest Developments**

A multilingual interface has been developed for The European Library, so at launch the site will be available in as many languages as CENL members manage to translate.

LEAF has been used effectively in the prototype to demonstrate how useful the name authority file will be to researchers. A good example is the searching for Gete, which is the Serbian name for Goethe, where in the background TheEuropeanLibrary.org was able to perform a LEAF search to suggest the received spelling to the user.

## **New Features for Testing and Comment**

The prototype will be available for testing by CENL on November 16<sup>th</sup> 2004. All TWG members have been asked to test and give feedback and we have employed the services of an expert in this area; Christien Booij of Happyuser.com to conduct a series of real user tests on the prototype. The idea being to test on the target audience at an early stage whether the portal features and functionality work to the satisfaction of the researcher. If anyone is interested in contributing comments, please email Olaf [Olaf.Janssen@KB.nl](mailto:Olaf.Janssen@KB.nl) and he will send you a url for viewing.

The multilingual interface has already had a Finnish translation. We are looking forward to the rest – please contact Julie Verleyen [julie.verleyen@kb.nl](mailto:julie.verleyen@kb.nl) if you would like to translate the interface into your language.

Best Regards, Jill

## **Contact Details**

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