

Summary

Main editor *Anna Mauliņa* poses the question **“If, when and how will school libraries be included in “Lightnet”?”** in her Editor’s Column. She emphasizes the necessity of modernizing school libraries and incorporating them into the VVBIS (State Intergrated Library Information System). Complications arise because of disagreement about who will bear the costs. On the one hand, the Ministry of Science and Education is responsible for the content of education in the country, which school libraries help to provide. On the other hand, schools and school libraries belong to the local authorities. As a result of the implementation of VVBIS and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation project, regional libraries have a modern ICT infrastructure, and trained and qualified information workers. These could supervise school libraries merging into “Lightnet”, school libraries supplying bibliographic records of their holdings to regional union catalogues, editing and maintenance of these records on central servers, training of school librarians and offering consultative services. Nevertheless, regional libraries cannot accept the delegation of such a sizeable and responsible new function without an increase in staff and finances. A.Mauliņa emphasizes that exclusion of school libraries from the electronic environment is a threat not only to education and development, but also to the future of the national economy.

The lead article in *World of Libraries* No.45 is *Jana Dreimane’s “Finnish libraries — lessons from the economic crisis”*. It tells of the strategy adopted by Finland in the mid-1990s, which enabled this small Scandinavian country to recover after the economic decline and to form a more stable structure for its economy. The Finnish government established a new knowledge economy, in which priorities were determined by the knowledge intensive industrial sectors. The government provided significant investment in research and education, including public libraries, which were recognized as the basis of an equalizing and qualitative education system. Financing was provided for their construction and renovation. In three years, public libraries were online and contributing to the World Wide Web. The economic crisis and the management of its results have changed the attitude towards knowledge of the whole Finnish society. Knowledge is recognized as the most important route to success.

As a result of high costs and limited library finances, joint libraries (also called combined libraries) are becoming more popular as a solution to the problem. In **“Joint use libraries: opportunities for success”** *Marlēna Krasovska* explains the reasons for integration of public and higher education libraries. She analyses success factors and benefits, as well as risks and shortcomings of such libraries. The author concludes

that, given the challenges of the 21st century, joint libraries have great potential. About one third of the article is devoted to two joint use libraries in Latvia — in Valmiera and Ventspils.

In the section “Computerization, digitization, internetization”, *Marlēna Krasovska* reports on a meeting with *Inga Grīnfelde*, about the Latvian **“National Digital Library “Letonica” collection “Periodika”**”, which was started in 2007. Information is given on the history and range of contents in “Periodika”, as well as its search options, access possibilities and use. There is a special Latvian gothic script recognition module, using ABBYY FineReader from ABBYY Software House. Programs for handling historical texts and a dictionary were developed in collaboration with the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory of the University of Latvia Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science. “Letonica” plans for the near future include: incorporating about two million newspaper and magazine pages to “Periodika”; digitization of art magazines and Latvian publications from the World War Two refugee camps in Germany; a large scale project for digitization of books; digitization of the old-style 78rpm “shellac” records and vinyl records in the National Library of Latvia (NLL) Department of Music and Sound Recordings; development of integrated access to all NLL digital resources, as well as those of other memory institutions in Latvia; implementation of an electronic accounting system.

The section “Conferences, seminars, meetings” starts with *Marlēna Krasovska’s* article **“The power of unity in a changing world”**, which was also the title of the annual meeting (17–19 October 2008) of CombiLib, a network of joint libraries in the Baltic and Nordic countries. This network was founded in November 2005 at Härnösand Joint Library in Sweden for the purpose of sharing experience, knowledge and ideas on joint use libraries. In 2008, members of the network met at the newly opened Valmiera Joint Library. Topics for discussion included: organization of cooperation in joint-use libraries, financing, role in lifelong learning, training in use of information resources for users of different age levels.

In **“Reflections after the Nordic Book Science Conference in Copenhagen 10–12 September 2008”**, *Lilija Limane* briefly describes the history of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP) as well as the conference “Published Words, Public Pages — SHARP Copenhagen”. Among the topics discussed were: the link between book science and other disciplines, connections between historical and current problems; the culture of small nations in the global context of reading, the book trade and education; the analysis of runes and

traditions of publishing them, editions of the sagas in Great Britain; the circulation of electronic publications; traditions of the Gutenberg period reflected in the IT era; dissemination of modern literature. Latvian delegates to the conference presented papers on "Latvian feminine literature in the second half of the 19th century (Lilija Limane) and "Theses of Riga Gymnasium's graduates: 17th century" (Renāte Berga).

Aivars Liepa in "**Library information technologies**" reports on the international seminar "Newest Information Technologies. A Contemporary Library Model", which was organized by the CJSC "Company LIBER" (Moscow) and the Latvian Academic Library. It was held at Saulkrasti 9–12 September 2008. Topics discussed included: electronic books and their inclusion in online catalogues; organization and use of digital collections; compatibility of library information systems.

Silvija Tretjakova shares her impressions of the IFLA 74th general conference "**Libraries Without Borders: Navigating Towards Global Understanding**", which was held 10–14 August 2008 in Quebec. One of the themes emphasized at the conference was the possibility of partnerships for exchanging scientific resources online. One such initiative is the establishment of the Biodiversity Heritage Library, which is a digital project undertaken by ten US and British leading natural history museum libraries and other research organizations. This project intends to document more than two million animals, plant and other life forms that are in the collections of different institutions and to make the information globally available.

The IFLA Public Libraries Section introduced its new professional report "Libraries, archives and museums: trends in collaboration and cooperation, 2008". It analyzes and provides examples of cooperation of these institutions at world, continent, national and regional level, as well as offering guidelines for successful collaboration.

The IFLA overview also acquaints readers with The IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto, gives results of the logo competition for "Global information literacy", reveals who received the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation "Access to Learning Award", and describes visits to Quebec's main public libraries.

In "**Librarians and readers in the virtual environment**" *Marlēna Krasovska* reports on impressions from the 11th Meeting-Conference of the Vidzeme Section of the Library Association of Latvia, which was held in Bīriņi 16–17 July 2008. There was an extensive programme of professional development presentations, which included: public library experience with accreditation; public relations in libraries; the significance of libraries as places for communication and social interaction. Traditionally, an important part of the programme is devoted to the history, surroundings and cultural heritage of the area where the meeting is held, as well as familiarization with

the libraries of the region. As always the participants enjoyed the comprehensive cultural programme.

The section "Children and young people in libraries" starts with British reader development expert *David Kendall's* article about young people and reading in today's world called "**Unleashing the joy of reading**". He explains how a child becomes a reader and emphasizes the importance of reading in personality development. D.Kendall analyzes the influence of IT on reading, stressing the necessity of encouraging reading. There are separate sections on organizing reading in groups, teenagers in libraries and work with 'problem children'.

Martina Leschner is one of the creators of the 'Freestyle' public library project in Düsseldorf, which is described in her "**Freestyle**". The author characterizes today's young people and emphasizes that, because of increased stress and workload, they prefer to devote free time mostly to relaxing activities. They also visit libraries mostly for entertainment and recreation. This is how the idea of 'Freestyle' libraries emerged, where young people can feel free to read or take part in other activities. M.Leschner provides practical advice on devising 'Freestyle' libraries and describes how they are used in Germany, also analyzing some of the errors made during the implementation of the project.

In 2007, there were more than 100 books by non-Latvian authors published in Latvia. More than forty of these were aimed at teenagers. *Sandra Okuņeva* discusses these in "**Literature translated into Latvian in 2007: offering for teenagers**". In addition to translations by well-known authors (e.g., Charles Perrault, Enid Blyton, Jacqueline Wilson), some unfamiliar author's works are revealed (Henri Loevenbruck, Steven Isserlis, Ernst H. Gombrich). S.Okuņeva also introduces "manga" (Japanese style comics), popular outside Latvia, but not well known in this country, although some have now been published here. The author concludes that there was enough variety of choice for Latvian teenagers from the array of literature translated in 2007. However, it was observed that authors prefer to write fantasy rather than giving a realistic description of teenage life.

The section concludes with a paper "**What do we expect from literature for young people?**", which was read by *Māris Rungulis* at the conference "Libraries — Interesting for Young People" (16–17 May 2008). The author sought the answer to his question by surveying young people in four libraries in Latvia. He reached the conclusion that satisfying young people's requirements was as impossible as getting the proverbial camel through the eye of a needle. They have their own literary criteria that are relevant to their age and to the environment in which they live, but they do not want to be lectured or nagged.

Under the heading "Past times and reflections" is *Aina Štrāle's* report about her research — "**Through**

the eye of the censor's needle: Jānis Medenis (1903–1961)", which is about the poet Jānis Medenis, who was oppressed by the Soviet powers, and problems with the publication of his works in the 1950s. The Soviet regime had an obsessive fear of what they considered dangerous content in literature, e.g., nationalistic ideas, ideologically unacceptable treatment and ambiguous interpretation of historical events, and other features deemed undesirable in Soviet verse. Nevertheless, they did not want to completely abandon contributions by talented authors. For Communist Party functionaries it was essential for propaganda purposes to publish works by oppressed authors. Still, these authors had to endure the censors' 'literary terror' and countless humiliations before their works were published. Texts were crudely deformed. For example, the censors, often with the cooperation of the authors, eliminated words and ideas, which expressed the author's political point of view and, thus, the censored poems radically altered their meaning. As pointed out by exile literary historian Jānis Rudzītis, an author was forced metaphorically to crawl through the eye of the Latvian State Publishing House censor's needle as well as that of the Riga Writers' Union. A.Štrāle mentions several examples of censorship in J. Medenis's poems, thus revealing the ruthlessness Soviet censorship.

As in previous issues, there is an extensive section under the heading "Abroad", beginning with *Jana Dreimane's "Overview of overseas library events (July–September 2008)"*. She starts with news about the restoration of the largest monastic library in the world (the Admont Benedictine Monastery Library and Museum), which cost five million euros. Her description provides a virtual mini-tour, looking at the library as a high work of art, showing it as an achievement of architecture, painting, book art and sculpture.

The author also reports on the suspension of sale of Cardiff Central Library's rare book collection in reaction to protests from the people of the city. Cardiff City Council had intended to sell the special collection as "surplus to stock" in order to raise funds for a modern ICT infrastructure for the new library building. A campaign to protect the rare books collection was undertaken by the specially formed advocacy organization Cardiff Heritage Friends Group. Established in 1863, the Cardiff Central Library is one of the oldest public libraries in the UK, with an internationally significant rare books collection. It was once a candidate for the status of National Library of Wales.

J. Dreimane introduces the "Universal Service Directive" (2002/22/EC) and the "Directive on privacy and electronic communications" (2002/58/EC), which were accepted on their first reading of changes on 24 September 2008. The latter says that EU countries will have to provide their inhabitants with comparable information on electronic communication services and their costs, thus simplifying a service provider's choice. Standards for the level of service quality are defined, as is a ban on user or service provider

contracts being more than 24 months. These are basic rights to be observed in the electronic communication environment.

From 27 September to 4 October 2008, the annual Banned Books Week was observed at libraries and bookshops in the United States. Its goal was to draw everyone's attention to restrictions on dissemination of information, so exhibitions of banned books were organized, together with discussions and interviews about censorship. According to American Library Association (ALA) statistics, more than 400 books were tried to be banned in 2007. The ALA website for Banned Books Week gives a list of the 10 most challenged books of 2007.

As part of the Leonardo da Vinci programme mobility project "Services to students in university digital libraries", *Anita Bakēvica* and *Sandra Ranka* were in Iceland 8–15 September 2008. They describe their trip in "**Experiences from an exchange visit to libraries in Iceland by University of Latvia Library staff**". They outline the aims, functions, collections and services of the National and University Library of Iceland, as well as provide information on collection development, cataloguing, acquisition and use of electronic resources, and the work of the Department of Audiovisual Publications. Another interesting department was the Women's History Archive, which reflects the lives of Icelandic women during various time periods and historical events. A considerable part of the article is devoted to the library's digitization projects: ancient maps of Iceland; Icelandic literature of the Middle Ages; periodicals published in Iceland until 1920. In the future the library hopes to digitize all books, periodicals and maps published in Iceland up to 2000, as well as harvesting materials about Iceland available on the Internet. Other libraries visited were the University of Iceland University College of Education, the Árni Magnússon Institute Library, Reykjavik University Library and Kópavogur Public Library.

In the article "**Do books have a future?**" *Jana Dreimane* introduces readers to research carried out 10–21 September 2007 by the international network of auditing and consultancy companies "Pricewaterhouse Coopers", which studied the attitude to books, their sources of supply, reading, and Internet use. Results of the research showed that the biggest enemy of reading was not the Internet, but television, especially among people with a low educational level. The polarization of readers and non-readers is becoming wider. The author is happy that the report found that the most enthusiastic readers are children, especially in rural areas. The majority of people involved in the research, adults and children alike, preferred printed books rather than e-books; it seemed that downloading books from the Internet and reading them online was not very widespread in Germany. The research also revealed that education and parents had an influence on reading, and on the use of the Internet in relation to reading, and on habits of book buying.

The section "Old and new book trade" has an article by *Genovefa Barkovska* on "**The prehistory of the repeat edition of "Terra Mariana"**". "Terra Mariana" was a magnificent publication that was given to Pope Leo XIII in 1888 as a gift from the Catholics of Latvia to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood and his tenth year as pope. The publication was produced in only one copy, with text in Latin by Gustav Manteuffel (1832–1916), the well-known 19th century researcher on Latgalian history. The volume provides extensive illustrative and textual information about Livonia: the area, its bishops, churches, castles, famous families, etc. From the very beginning it attracted great interest from researchers and art scholars. So that the volume could be available to a wider audience, the National Library of Latvia (NLL) decided to publish a repeat edition. On 22 May 2007, the NLL signed an agreement with the Vatican Apostolic Library to produce a facsimile edition, with added translations and commentary in Polish, German, English and Latin. This edition of "Terra Mariana", which will be in only ten copies, will be distributed to the most important libraries in Latvia. However, there will be 1000 copies of a smaller size edition, so that this unique publication will be available to anyone interested in the cultural history of Latvia.

Under the heading "Miscellaneous information", *Ilze Egle* remembers events from the "**National Library of Latvia at the 2008 Göteborg Book Fair**", which in this year had Latvia and Latvian literature as its focus. There was also an exhibition called "The Swedish–Latvian Wall". The fair was an unforgettable experience for the Latvian participants.

Marlēna Krasovska provides "**A review of library events in Latvia (July–September 2008)**". The section also includes *Kristīne Deksnė-Jerohina's* list of "**New acquisitions in the LIS Reading Room of the National Library of Latvia Library Development Institute**" for the same period.