

Collections

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Collections

The Brienz Woodcarving School requested an independent opinion on the condition of their drafts and drawings; the Monastery Münstair created a new magazine. Just two of a number of cases from the previous year where SNL experts were requested to provide expert opinions. – The SNL will use its technical knowledge to establish a centre of excellence for paper preservation.

The product group *collections* includes the three products *acquisitions*, *catalogues* and *preservation and conservation*. On-going production in 2006 was slightly higher than the previous year for all three categories. The ground work was also laid to shorten the interval between acquiring a book to when it can be loaned out. The competence of the SNL in establishing electronic collections is increasingly recognized by specialists in the field – national as well as international. Furthermore, SNL is one of the leading institutions for the conservation of paper: some 70 specialists in deacidification took part in the professional symposium *Save Paper! Today's Experiences – Tomorrow's Perspectives* in February 2006.

Acquisitions

Swiss book production increased 17 percent in 2006, from 10,128 to 11,875 titles. The collection (excluding SLA) has grown by around 60,000 items and the SLA and PDD were able to acquire important collections and individual works (refer to the chapter on “Outstanding acquisitions”, pg. 12). The collection (excluding SLA) was 3.85 million items at the end of 2006; including more than just a few treasures, although the SNL has only been collecting since the founding of the Confederation in 1848. A systematic inventory was created for these items during the reporting period; it may require special conservatory treatment in the future and will be presented to the public in a suitable form.

A point of focus for the current reporting year was to delineate the SNL collection from associated institutions with the dual goal of conserving and preserving Helvetica in an optimum manner and eliminating duplication of effort. An agreement was reached with the Swiss National Sound Archives in Lugano that, with the exception of just a few items, all sound media will be acquired, catalogued, preserved and made accessible there; with a few exceptions, sound media already in the collection of the SNL will be loaned to the National Sound Archives. An agreement was reached with the Swiss Federal Archive (SFA) to clarify the collection of official publications: the SNL collects publications targeted at a wider public, with the SFA focusing on collecting documentation pertaining to administrative activities. We continued according to plan for automating the administration of periodicals; currently a quarter of the total collection of some 10,000 continuing resources are managed in the library online system and can be queried by users via Helveticat (end of 2005: some 10%).

The establishment of an electronic collection, as part of the e-Helvetica project since 2001, is also progressing according to plan. Whereas 2005 was the year that the system for long-term archival was commissioned together with the SFA, 2006 saw the start-up of the ingest module allowing publishing houses to automatically supply electronic publications to the archive. It is scheduled to be operational in 2007. The foundation for the *Web archive Switzerland* was established in cooperation with the cantonal libraries. In the future, websites from the cantons, canton capitals and district seats will be collected. Each cantonal library will further define representative topics for their cantons to be used in collecting web resources. The National Library will be responsible for long-term archiving of the selected websites. – The e-Helvetica project was presented at numerous professional symposiums at home and abroad and garnered broad recognition among professionals. The SNL repeatedly received queries from publishing houses and institutions interested in examining the possibilities of having the SNL assume long-term archiving of their collections.

Catalogues

35,082 publications were catalogued in 2006, subject indexing was assigned to 17,136. There is currently no backlog in cataloguing; and just a small backlog for subject indexing. Compliance to a uniform standard is not only essential for cataloguing, but also to ensure the accessibility of the collection. As a consequence, SNL employees participate in various international standardization bodies.

New processes were introduced to shorten the period required to record new acquisitions. The Swiss national bibliography, *The Swiss Book*, was modernized and changed to meet changes in user behaviour. It can be queried online via Helveticat as of January 1, 2006, at the same time offering extended search functions. The printed version of *The Swiss Book* will be discontinued at the end of the 106th edition (2006); the number of subscribers has declined continuously over the past few years as research has been increasingly conducted online. As a result, the expense for the printed version versus income generated was becoming disproportionate. A PDF version (previously password protected) will be provided to the public at no charge as a replacement.

We reviewed offering for sale bibliographical data from the SNL to other interested parties as a supplementary service beyond the statutory defined mission. A careful analysis of the market, however, indicated that investments in this type of project would never pay for themselves. We decided therefore to forgo the sale of data. Cataloguing work at the SLA and PDD is reported on pages 22 and 24.

Preservation and conservation

We processed a total of 38,673 new publications, produced 5,176 protective jackets, repaired 435 books and had produced 22,637 hard covers by external bookbinders. 54,734 documents with a total weight of 38.5 tons were deacidified. Documents were prepared for the *Patricia Highsmith* exhibition, and loans were prepared for external exhibitions.

In addition to day-to-day activities, the focus was on participating in the new construction of the underground stacks West, on recording the state of the collection and the Save Paper symposium. An optimum management of storage facilities required us to outsource the storage of low-demand items in the collection until we can move into the new underground stacks. The outsourcing was designed so that even externally stored items can be provided to the user within 24 hours of the order.

The symposium *Save Paper! Today's Experiences – Tomorrow's Perspectives* once again enhanced the international recognition of the SNL in the area of paper deacidification. Some 74 professionals from 15 countries met from February 15 – 17, 2006 to present and discuss the latest trends in this field. Fifteen lectures at the highest level were held and then published in the online symposium volume¹¹.

The symposium can be viewed as preparation for the establishment of a Swiss centre of excellence for paper conservation as provided for under the Swiss National Library strategy 2007 – 2011. As the examples above illustrate, external institutions are already taking advantage of the consultancy services provided by the SNL.

¹¹ www.nb.admin.ch/slb/slb_professionnel/erhalten/00699/00700/01402/index.html?lang=en