

ABSTRACTS INHALTSANGABEN

Ten years in the new home of the 110-year-old library

TÓTH Béla

After the flood had destroyed the city of Szeged in 1880, Esztergom prebendary, Károly Somogyi, donated his precious 43-thousand-volume library collection to the town struggling with the problems of reconstruction. The donation was not simple since the town Esztergom got offended, and Szeged people did not appreciate the gift of Somogyi either. It has become clear by now that he laid the foundations of the cultural development of the town. This had become the core of the county library collection assuming the name of the donator later on. The article is a brief, witty sketch of the time having passed since the donation, reflecting the severe financial problems of the present as well. (pp. 11-14)

The collection of Károly Somogyi in the Somogyi Library, Szeged

NAGY Erzsébet

It was in April 1880 that Károly Somogyi, Esztergom prebendary, offered his library to the book-loving town of Szeged. The conception of the founder involving culture and scholarship equally is exemplary even today. The encyclopaedic collection is priceless as a whole, and there are some real rarities in it, too. The library, that has become a 74 000-volume collection during the past century, retained its original function. It has been working in a new building since 1984. It has outstanding special collections like the Vasváry collection, and the clippings regarding Hungarians in America. (pp. 15-19)

Hungarian biography collection from Washington to Szeged

KÓRÁSZ Mária

The Vasváry Collection of the Szeged Somogyi Library, focusing on Hungarians in America, and the historical relations between America and Hungary, was supplemented with a Hungarian biography collection from the USA. The 3600-page collection on 930 Hungarians living in America was donated to the Vasváry Collection by the Library of Congress, Washington as a part of an exchange project. The collection of biographies had come into being when the Hungarian Reference Library (HRL), established in 1937 in New York, started to collect data in order to publish a Hungarian lexicon. However, the HRL was closed down, and its material was distrained in December 1941, when Hungary declared war upon the United States. The Library of Congress got hold of the material of HRL in 1953, but did not deal with the biography collection until 1991. It was decided at that time that the material be microfilmed. The conversion was completed in 1993. The 5 rolls of microfilm can be ordered from the Library of Congress. It was after this that the original documents got to Szeged where they have been available for researchers for one and a half years. (pp. 20-22)

The state and financing of research in book and library history. Research in library history at Szeged, 1980-1995

MONOK István

As is a world trend, a shift of humanities in the direction of theory can be observed in Hungary, too. Historical aspects are banned from academic training and research while there has never been a period in the history of science in which the sources of cultural history were studied systematically. The history of books and libraries was in an especially unfavourable situation, since there were no research and academic institutions specialising in this discipline.

In Szeged systematic investigations were started into the reading culture of Hungary in the early period of modern times 15 years ago. This research project is also suffering from the general difficulties arising in this discipline. However, the author of the present article gives an account of research organisation techniques by means of which the investigations, introduced as case studies, could be carried on until the present day successfully.

According to the author, the fundamental tactical issue of ensuring the success of research in the field of library history is that it has to be accepted as an auxiliary discipline to those ones that have research and academic infrastructure. Thus the reading history research in Szeged exists under the umbrella of studies and education in library history.

Library history investigations in the broadest sense are carried on in unity with investigations into the history of culture. Studies in the various aspects of library history (bibliography, the history of printing, library history, possessor research, etc.) have to be harmonised, and the results of these investigations should be published as a part of library work, and as an important element of local studies. Since Hungary means the Carpathian basin at the beginning of modern times, cooperation with Rumanian, Slovak, Croatian and Austrian researchers is important, and so is their joint involvement in European research projects. (pp. 23-29)

Proposal for the transformation of the Hungarian library system, and the rationalising of costs

ZSIDAI József

According to the author, the Hungarian library system requires transformation. Reasons: 1) the library structure has been stagnating for 40 years, 2) libraries are unable to work effectively due to difficulties in financing. The situation could be improved by rational economising, thrift, better utilisation of resources, and redistribution. One thousand million forints have to be saved within the sector, and used for the development of other fields of librarianship. The closing down of 5 national special libraries (technical, agricultural, medical, pedagogical and foreign language and literature libraries) is suggested, as well as the turning of county libraries into town libraries. The sums gained by the reorganisation should be used in the library system. In his proposal Zsidai gives an account of the activities of special libraries he suggests to be ceased, and states that these functions could be taken over by the academic libraries of the given fields.

Then leaders of the libraries involved tell their opinion of the proposal. All of them find it problematic that József Zsidai intends to close the libraries without listening to them, without a real knowledge of their state, operation and economic indicators, purely on the basis of assumptions. He did not take into account extra costs involved in the closing or reorganisation of these institutions, neither did he deal with the space shortage of university libraries, etc. It is also doubted that the money saved this way - shared by various departments - could be utilised within the library system, and that it could be invested right in the development of university and town libraries. (pp. 30-43)

Abroad

BERKE Barnabásné: 23rd international ISBN meeting. Report on the international application of ISBN and its state in Hungary.

(pp. 81-85)

ARMSTRONG, J.C. - MEDEWAR, K.: Investigation into the quality of databases in general use in the UK.

(Sum.: Drótos László) (pp. 86-95)

Applying SGML to publishing process.

(Transl.: Zsádon Béla) (pp. 96-98)

FÜLÖP Géza, M.: "Library to let". Review

(pp. 99-103)

Book reviews

Community information.

MATTHEW, Howard: Community information. A manual for beginners.

(Rev.: M. Fülöp Géza) (pp. 105-106)

It has to be started in childhood.

ROGERS, Rock: Teaching information skills.

(Rev.: M. Fülöp Géza) (pp. 107-108)

How much is the per capita book fund in British public libraries?

Public libraries and their book funds. A report from the National Book Committee

(Rev.: Szabó Eszter) (pp. 108-110)