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Dear colleagues

Because I am the first time in the Arlis meeting, and no one other from our museum has taken a part in these meetings for a while, so I don't know what to say about, what has happened since the last time the meeting was held. Instead, I thought I tell a little about our library in the Finnish museum of architecture.

Our library was in the concept of organisation of Finnish architectural museum at the very beginning, when Mr. Ålander, the founder and first director of the Museum, was thinking the different functions in the museum. Indeed, the library has been a real information centre, when its collections started to grow by donations and acquisitions. One decisive donator was The Association of Finnish Architects, Safa, which gave its monograph collection to the museum in 1970. It was after that the collection of the museum library was large enough to be open to the public.

Today we have 8 different collections. The main collection is so called Fennica-collection, to which we collect books and other material about Finnish architecture, especially modern (from the late 19th century onwards). Monographs consist of about 32 000 volumes and quite large collection of journals, some of them from the 19th century onwards.

One strength of the library is in information services. We have received questions concerning architecture, its theory and history, modern architecture and different architects, physical planning, environmental planning, landscape design, gardening, art and design, questions between heaven and earth. To all these areas we have classes in the bookshelves.

Other strength is that the library is a public library, not only a reference library inside the museum. There is a municipal library quit near us, but they don't collect so much architecture, because they know we concentrate on that. They forward their customers to us. Another architectural library is in the connection of Helsinki Technical University, Department of Architecture. It is situated outside Helsinki, in Espoo, Otaniemi. Many of its students of architecture are our clients.

Part of our library collections are at the present in internet to be searched on our home sites. Plans are to continue the work and to move them also for more wider public access in the future, that is to the Linnea union catalogues, which is common database to university- and other science libraries and public libraries in Finland.

One problem has grown especially difficult during the two last years, namely the lack of financial resources for acquisitions. We get many donations, the latest one from the end of the last year included over 1000 monographs, but these donations don't always compensate for the newest literature selected by the librarian or asked by the customers.

Our museum is financed by the Ministry of Education. The museum library gets its share from the common budget, which is divided between four departments. The share is very little but fortunately we have a special donation, the Library Foundation, which gives us little more space. Wider dissemination of information of this Library Foundation would enlarge the scope more, but we don't quite know how to do that, because marketing the library is a field not very familiar to us.

Here is my news at the moment, nice to see you at the meeting!

Anna-Liisa Alho