The Biologische Anstalt Helgoland (BAH) celebrates its centennial this year. Founded in 1892 as the German Marine Biological Station, it belongs to the "classical" institutions of marine research which were established during the last decades of the 19th century throughout Europe.

The Zoological Station in Naples was the first and most renowned institution of its kind, and served as a model for the foundation of the Biologische Anstalt Helgoland. At the end of the 19th century, a period of considerable scientific unrest and creativity, marine biological research was stimulated by Darwin's publications on evolutionary concepts. It was also a period when many artists and intellectuals were fascinated by biology. Many of them, such as the famous painter Paul Klee, visited the Biological Station of Naples.

The foundation of the BAH had a considerable influence on the development of marine sciences in Germany. Scientists - or better: naturalists at this time - had investigated marine life in Germany since the beginning of the 19th century. The rocky island of Helgoland, located in the south-eastern part of the North Sea (the German Bight), with its great variety of marine life, has always been an attractive location for the study of marine life. The foundation of the BAH as "Königlich-Preußische Biologische Anstalt auf Helgoland" was possible only after the British island of Helgoland was given back to Germany in exchange for the island of Zanzibar in 1890. In the beginning scientific work concentrated on studies of the local flora and fauna and in population studies for marine fisheries.

In 1945, the BAH, with its very valuable library, was destroyed by bombing. But was gradually rebuilt after the war. Today, the BAH is supported by the Federal Ministry of Research and Technology; its head office is in Hamburg. Marine stations are located on the islands of Helgoland and Sylt. The BAH concentrates primarily on ecological marine research relating to the North Sea. From the beginning, the BAH had a library, which was intended to provide an extensive collection of books and periodicals. Again, the famous station of Naples served as a model.

In the first year, the budget amounted to 9300 Reichsmark. Part of the money came from the visiting scientists, while were no fees for using the laboratory, visitors were expected to contribute an appropriate amount of money to the library budget. Scientific societies, private scholars, and publishers, such as the publishers Parey and Fischer, to mention only two, also made donations. Unfortunately, the library was
destroyed at the end of World War II. Only few bibliographic treasures which have survived give evidence of the valuable old collection. Since the war, the marine special library has been rebuilt. The library holdings cover marine zoology, marine botany, marine microbiology, marine and coastal water ecology, oceanography and marine pollution. The collection currently contains about 120,000 volumes, distributed in the central institute in Hamburg, the marine station on Helgoland, and the Wadden Sea station in List/Sylt. The administration is maintained by the central library in Hamburg.

The books are arranged according to a "home-made" system, which offers rough subject groups, an alphabetical catalogue, a classified subject catalogue, and an English alphabetical subject catalogue are available. The basis for the alphabetical subject catalogue is the ASFA-thesaurus. At the moment all catalogues still consist of conventionally printed catalogue cards. A change to electronic data processing will not occur before the Hamburg University Library decides on a suitable system which can be used in all university institute libraries. A common system would allow the libraries in the Hamburg region to communicate better. There would also be an opportunity to exchange catalogue data with the participants of the North German library network currently being built.

The BAH publishes two periodicals, the *Helgoländer Meeresuntersuchungen* and the *Berichte der Biologische Anstalt Helgoland*, which are exchanged for 415 of the library's 640 periodicals. Library administration is still carried out conventionally. Only the list of the periodicals is compiled electronically. Literature searches can also be conducted with the ASFA-CD-ROM system.

Due to its special marine collection, the library participates, as one of only a few libraries in Hamburg, in the German interlibrary-loan system. Ordering literature directly from the owning libraries thus becomes possible, which spares the long-lasting way through the hierarchy of libraries.

Being a library of an independent scientific institute, not supported by the university, the BAH library is mainly responsible for the literature demands of the scientists working at the institute, as well as guest scientists. Other users are welcome, but they have to accept that the library is a reference library. Exceptions to the non-circulating policy are made only for interlibrary-loan purposes, and supplying copies is preferred. For the near future the goal of BAH library is the introduction of a computerized catalogue system, which will support, as we hope, cooperation with the libraries of the Hamburg area and with the other marine libraries, which will be described to you in this session.

I would like to finish by mentioning a particular invention of our library concerning theft prevention, the introduction of a two-stage optically-based theft prevention system (TSOBTPS).