

# HISTORIC LIBRARIES FORUM

## BULLETIN NO. 16, April 2010

The most significant development to report since the last *Bulletin* is without a doubt the news that an agreement has been reached that secures Cardiff Public Library's Special Collections from the threat of dispersal. An innovative collaboration between Cardiff Council, Cardiff University, the Welsh Assembly Government, and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales has secured the future of these jaw-dropping collections at Cardiff University. A brief report on the deal can be found on p. 4, with a much fuller report due in our next *Bulletin*. The Forum has been a vocal campaigner on behalf of Cardiff's Special Collections since news first broke of the proposed sale and members should feel some pride in having played an important part in securing its future. Twenty years ago a sale like that proposed at Cardiff might have raised concern in a few specialist circles, received a smattering of press attention, but would probably have gone ahead regardless. The growing awareness of the part historic libraries, their buildings and their collections play in communities, championed by organizations such as The Historic Libraries Forum, has changed the way in which libraries under threat are perceived. With 500 vocal members we are able to apply considerable lobbying pressure, which is increasingly being noted and acted upon.

Less happy news has recently emerged from Scotland, with news that Angus Council have closed a number of part-time libraries. Ignoring for a moment issues surrounding library provision for those affected, one of the libraries closed is that at Edzell, a superb historic library gifted to the community by Lieutenant Colonel Inglis in 1898. Edzell is one of the best-preserved examples of a late-nineteenth-century public library in the UK and is important for a number of reasons. The collection was selected by Inglis and remains virtually intact, offering fascinating research opportunities for those interested in the development of the public library. Architecturally, the books remain within the building constructed to house them, a feature increasingly recognised as significant, and a key argument in the ongoing negotiations over Hurd's Library at Hartlebury (see p. 5). Furthermore, many of Edzell Library's original features survive, including one of only two remaining examples of the Cotgreave issue and indexing system.

Many will remember the valiant efforts of the then Library History Group to secure Edzell's future in 2003/4. Despite assurances given at the time by the then Head of Library Services at Angus Council that the library would be preserved in perpetuity, it is once again under threat. The Forum has written to register its objections and to offer help in finding a solution. More news to follow in the next *Bulletin*.

Ed Potten  
Chair, Historic Libraries Forum

**HISTORIC LIBRARIES FORUM ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 27 NOVEMBER  
2009**

**You're Nicked! Security in the Special Library**

Sixty-six delegates attended the annual conference of the HLF at the Royal Asiatic Society, London, on Tuesday 17 November, on the challenging theme: *You're Nicked! Security in the Special Library*. Given the subject, it was entirely appropriate that the event should have been sponsored by Ecclesiastical Insurance.

Following the welcome and time for networking, the morning session chaired by Helen Cordell, opened with a talk on collection security from Judith Barnes, Collection Security Co-ordinator at the British Library. She outlined the British Library approach and experience in managing the protection of collections. She discussed the risks, measures that were taken to mitigate those risks and posed the question: 'Have we learned?' The speaker outlined the shift in the BL away from an emphasis purely on collection security to a risk management approach which involved the setting up of a strategy steering group and an operational group along with a process review. There was a necessity to be open and honest (no 'cover ups'!) and implementation of a strict policy of 'zero tolerance'. A recent conviction had damaged the bond of trust with users and this needed to be rebuilt. Various flaws in procedures had been identified: - poor 'housekeeping'; poor compliance with existing policies; a delayed discovery of thefts. There were also the issues of reputational damage and of repeat victimization – there was a well recognized pattern of the vulnerability of a library which had suffered losses to further thefts, as the example of the Dulwich Art Gallery showed.

Judith discussed examples of notorious recent thefts from libraries, including those by Forbes Smiley and Oliver Fallon. She outlined the types of thieves who could steal from libraries. These comprised common criminals, the merely opportunistic, collectors, internal ('inside') or external contractors. Practical measures to mitigate the risk included: developing a greater knowledge of who has access (digital photos, valid passes, a requirement of two proofs of identity, and retention for a long period of the information collected); making conditions of use mandatory on all new readers; keeping an audit trail of collection use which could be used as later evidence in court and investigation of other sources used by a reader if necessary to establish a pattern of misuse; physical measures – bag and lap top searches, strict invigilation in reading rooms; the soliciting of help by engaging with readers and asking them to report problems and encouraging staff colleagues to be vigilant; identification of vulnerable items in advance e.g. maps; working closely with the police and the criminal justice system; management of publicity.

Bob Johnson, Technical Survey Manager, and Clare Purdy, Fine Art Underwriting Manager, both in Ecclesiastical Insurance, gave the next presentations on the insurer's perspective. Bob discussed issues relating to the general security of a building and the obvious need for libraries to strike a balance between access and security. Insurers counted on all reasonable preventative precautions being put in place. Librarians needed to be aware that many thieves were not looking to steal books but furniture, pictures and, above all, computers and technical equipment. He raised questions as to the management of security and access control - the need to 'slow down' thieves. He

discussed the relative merits of electronic and mechanical locks, intruder alarm systems, CCTV, and safes, codes and keys. All safes were not equal and it was best to go for quality.

Clare spoke on the fine arts side of insurance. She discussed valuations – ‘What have got?’ ‘When was it last valued?’ The aim should be to protect and value the most important items in a collection. When books went out on loan, it was important to record how they were stored, how they were covered. It was necessary to have an idea of the extent of a borrower’s insurance. Care needed to be taken in handling and display with awareness of environmental conditions. Disaster planning policies needed to be regularly updated to take into account new circumstances. During questions to both speakers, the point was made that replacement copies for a lost item were often an inadequate response. The issue of provenance was vital and made particularly copies of books unique.

The afternoon session, chaired by Ed Potten, following the AGM, opened with a talk on security marking by Peter Hoare of the National Trust. Security marking of books was an obvious deterrent against theft whether from the casual/opportunistic or deliberate/professional criminal who had knowledge of the value of what was being stolen. It served a very good purpose in identifying stolen property and proving ownership in court. Both the Library of Congress Preservation Division and American Library Association have issued guidelines on ownership markings for paper-based material. Security markings could take various forms: book plates (these could be easy to remove in some cases); ink-stamps (perhaps the best method of marking); embossed stamps (‘blind’ stamps); perforated stamps; microdots and invisible ink. The speaker discussed the best place or places to mark the book with an ownership stamp.

**Peter Nockles**

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## **HISTORIC LIBRARIES FORUM ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2010**

This year’s annual conference will be on the theme of outreach. The date and conference programme will be on our website soon. Please do get in touch with us if you have ideas for topics that you would like to see discussed.

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## **SAVING HAITI’S LIBRARIES**

The HLF has made a donation of £300 to the Saving Haiti's Libraries fund working for endangered rare book libraries in Haiti. Details can be found here: [http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/John Carter Brown Library/haiti/index.html](http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/John_Carter_Brown_Library/haiti/index.html)

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## **CARDIFF PUBLIC LIBRARY SECURED**

The future of the unique collection of around 14,000 rare books assembled by Cardiff Public Library during the late 19th and early 20th centuries has been secured. The collection was put up for public sale, leading to fears that it would be dispersed. A joint initiative between Cardiff Council, Cardiff University, the Welsh Assembly Government, and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) has secured the books' future at Cardiff University. The University has provided £500K towards the total cost of taking ownership of the collection and will care for it on behalf of the nation. Cardiff University's Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students, Professor Jonathan Osmond said: "Cardiff University has made a substantial financial investment in partnership with the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government to help secure a significant rare book collection for the University, the city of Cardiff and for Wales. A permanent home will now be found within the Arts and Social Studies Library making it available to members of the community from Cardiff, Wales and beyond. A full report will appear in the next Bulletin.

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## **UPDATE ON THE HURD LIBRARY AT HARTLEBURY CASTLE**

The University of Worcester has become an official partner of one of England's few internationally important 18th century research collections. The University's Early Modern Research Group has launched a partnership with the Hurd Library at Hartlebury Castle in Worcestershire, which will see the unique collection of more than 4,000 items digitally catalogued for the first time. The Hurd Library, a unique example of a working library, was formed in 1782-3 by Richard Hurd, Bishop of Worcester. The Library remains on its original shelves in the original room built for it. Christine Penney, Librarian at the Hurd Library, said: "The partnership with the University of Worcester is an excellent development for the Hurd Library. The research by scholars and students which will now be possible is certain to make this internationally important collection far more widely known." Further information is at [www.hartleburycastletrust.org](http://www.hartleburycastletrust.org)

## **CATHEDRAL LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE**

Wednesday 23rd to Friday 25th June 2010

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This year's triennial conference is at Norwich Cathedral, following a theme of Education and Outreach. Norwich Cathedral has recently completed a ten-year building project, and the conference will offer an opportunity to see the new buildings: Hostry visitor and education centre, Refectory, Library reading room; and to find out how we are developing our education programmes to utilise these facilities. Speakers from other institutions will be present to give other perspectives on education in their own contexts. There will also be visits to the Norfolk Record Office and heritage organizations in the city of Norwich. Further information is at <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/librariesandarchives/cathanddioceslibs/claa2010a gm.html>

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## FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES, LECTURES AND SEMINARS

### **Sandars Lectures 2010**

***From printer to publisher: Cambridge University Press transformed, 1950 to 2010***  
**Dr. Gordon Johnson**

*Monday 26 April*

Taking stock: CUP in the mid-twentieth century; crisis and recovery, redefining the role of an academic

*Tuesday 27 April*

The academic editor: shaping the fields of study; the changing relationship between author and publisher

*Thursday 29 April*

The role of the publisher transformed: maintaining the standard and reaching the reader: technological innovation, marketing and publicity

*Lectures take place at 17:00 in the Morison Room, University Library. They are free of charge and all are welcome to attend.*

### **Seminar on the History of Libraries (2009-10)**

*Room G 37, Senate House, Malet St., London WC1E 7HU; Tuesdays at 5.30pm.*

This series of research seminars, which are freely open for anyone to attend, has been organized at the Institute of English Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London. The seminars are jointly sponsored by the Institute of English Studies, the Institute of Historical Research, and the Library & Information History Group. Information concerning the Institute of English Studies may be found on its website, or email [ies@sas.ac.uk](mailto:ies@sas.ac.uk).

Seminar convenors: Giles Mandelbrote (Librarian and Archivist, Lambeth Palace Library); Dr. Keith A. Manley (Institute of Historical Research, University of London); Professor Simon Eliot (Institute of English Studies); Professor Isabel Rivers (Queen Mary); Professor Henry Woudhuysen (University College).

*Tuesday 27 April*

Scott Mandelbrote (Peterhouse, Cambridge): The history and archaeology of a seventeenth-century library: Peterhouse, Cambridge, from Andrew Perne (d. 1589) to John Cosin (d. 1672)

*Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May*

Stephen Massil (National Trust): Libraries of the National Trust: some houses in Kent and Sussex.

*Tuesday 25 May*

Visit to Dulwich College Library. **Numbers will be limited. Bookings for this event only to [keith.manley@sas.ac.uk](mailto:keith.manley@sas.ac.uk)**

*Tuesday 1 June*

Michelle Johansen (University of East London, Bishopsgate Institute, Birkbeck): An 'unglamorous' profession?: the public librarian in late-Victorian London

*Meetings will take place in Room ST 275 at Stewart House, unless otherwise stated. Stewart House is located at the Russell Square entrance to Senate House. The June meetings will take place in Room NG 15, Senate House North Block.*

**From Books to Bezoars: An international conference celebrating the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Sir Hans Sloane, physician, naturalist and collector**

7 June-8 June 2010

British Library Conference Centre

The conference showcases work by curators and historians on Sloane and his collections. It marks the achievements of the current phase of the Sloane Printed Books Project, generously funded by the Wellcome Trust, which aims to re-create electronically Sloane's voluminous but now dispersed library (available at <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/sloane>.)

Tickets can be booked through the British Library Box Office will open mid-April 2010. The cost of the conference is £50 for two days and includes all refreshments and lunch. Further information is at

<http://www.bl.uk/whatson/events/event108568.html>

**75 Years of Penguin Books: An International Multidisciplinary Conference**

29 June – 1 July

University of Bristol

In 2010, Penguin Books will be 75 years old and Puffin Books will be 70 years old. Organized by the AHRC Penguin Archive Project, the International Penguin Conference will seek to cover the diversity of Penguin's publication history.

Further information is at:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/penguinarchiveproject/2010-conference>

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## **PRESERVATION ADVISORY CENTRE**

The Preservation Advisory Centre (formerly National Preservation Office) supports the preservation of library and archive collections of all types through the provision of preservation management tools, training and information services.

The following Preservation Advisory Centre Training Day may be of interest to members:

### **Promoting good handling**

Monday 17 May 2010 £95 + VAT <http://www.bl.uk/blpac/handling.html>

British Library Centre for Conservation  
96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB

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## **EXHIBITIONS**

### **York Minster's Library, Archives, Collections and Conservation**

2010 marks the 200th anniversary of the housing of York Minster's library, archives, collections and conservation studio in what has recently been renamed the Old Palace, a 13th-century building which was originally the archbishop's residence.

To celebrate the bicentenary, a special exhibitions and events programme is being organised for this summer, in addition to the usual arrangements for visitors and researchers. For more background, see the Minster's recent press release at:

<http://www.yorkminster.org/news/story382/the-old-palace-a-new-name-for-york-minsters-library-archives-collections-and-conservation.html>

### **Treasures of Lambeth Palace Library, 1610-2010**

Treasures of Lambeth Palace Library, 1610-2010 celebrates the 400th anniversary of the foundation of the collection. Featuring outstanding items from the historic library of the Archbishops of Canterbury, the exhibition includes exquisite items rarely seen by the public: Archbishop Henry Chichele's beautiful fifteenth-century Breviary, the earliest surviving printed book to have reached England, an English translation of the Epistles produced by the Westminster Company in the making of the 1611 King James Version of the Bible, letters concerning Bishop George Bell's condemnation of the obliteration bombing of German cities during the Second World War and material from the Mothers' Union Archive.

In 1610 Archbishop Richard Bancroft bequeathed his books ‘to my successor, and unto the archbishops of Canterbury successively forever’. His rich collection of over 6,000 books and manuscripts included magnificent items such as a tenth-century text of Aldhelm’s *De Virginitate* from Waltham Abbey and the *St Albans Chronicle*, an illuminated fifteenth-century history of England. Bancroft’s successor, George Abbot accepted the terms of the bequest and Lambeth Palace Library was formed. The preservation of the library by subsequent archbishops enabled it ‘to descend from age to age, and from succession to succession, to the service of God and his Church, of the Kings and Common wealth of this Realme, and particularly of the Archbishops of Canterbury’. One of England’s oldest public libraries, the collections are freely available to thousands of researchers and enquirers each year. This year the Library will complete a project to make all existing descriptions of its archive and manuscript collections available online.

Other highlights of the exhibition are manuscripts owned by English monastic houses dissolved at the Reformation including the *MacDurnan Gospels*, written and illuminated in Ireland in the ninth century, and the *Lambeth Bible*, a masterpiece of Romanesque art. Landmark texts in the history of the Church of England and books used by Richard III, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I are displayed with the ivory chalice from which Archbishop William Laud made his final communion before his execution. The exhibition also reflects the post-war development of the Library as a record repository which brought into its care the vast archives of the Faculty Office, Vicar General and the Court of Arches.

The generosity of the Friends of Lambeth Palace Library is recognised with a display of some of the many books and manuscripts donated by them, including a 1559 *Book of Common Prayer* and the only surviving copy of the warrant for the execution of Mary Queen of Scots. From its significant collection of *Hebraica* is included an exceptionally rare edition of the *Babylonian Talmud* printed by Daniel Bomberg at Venice between 1526 and 1548 which came to Lambeth on the closure of Sion College Library in 1996.

An illustrated book, *Lambeth Palace Library: Treasures from the Collection of the Archbishops of Canterbury* edited by Professor Michelle Brown and Dr Richard Palmer and published by Scala accompanies the exhibition. A paperback edition will be on sale at the exhibition at the special price of £15.

*Treasures of Lambeth Palace Library: 400th Anniversary Exhibition 1610-2010 from 17 May to 23 July 2010* [www.lambethpalacelibrary.org](http://www.lambethpalacelibrary.org)

### **Publications**

*The Oxford Companion to the Book*, Michael F Suarez and HR Woudhuysen eds. (Oxford University Press, 2010) £175

This unique work of reference covers the broad concept of the book throughout the world from ancient to modern times. Including traditional subjects such as bibliography, the history of printing, editorial theory and practice, and textual criticism, it also engages with newer disciplines such as the history of the book and the electronic book. The work has been written by a team of over 400 scholars from 27 countries.