

# HISTORIC LIBRARIES FORUM

## BULLETIN NO. 19 February 2011

The HLF Annual Conference in November proved as popular and successful as ever, with 60 attendees and nine speakers covering a very wide range of topics and detailing their experiences of encouraging and promoting outreach. A full report can be found on pp. 2-5, and preparations are already underway for next year's event on managing historic libraries in a challenging financial climate. Preparations are also well advanced for our latest series of workshops, with the ever-popular antiquarian cataloguing training session to be repeated again, and sessions on provenance and identifying prints planned. We also plan a trip to view the Hurd Library at Hartlebury Castle in 2011, with an associated programme of talks. Full details and booking forms for all events will be posted on our website: <http://www.historiclibrariesforum.org.uk>.

News that the Roman Catholic seminary for the North of England, Ushaw College, is to close in June 2011 raises serious concerns about the future of the collections housed there. Since the report on p. 9 was written a further statement has been issued by the College. In essence, this states that the trustees have now established a steering group, chaired by Bishop Mark Davies, with members of teaching and non-teaching staff at Ushaw College and a representative of the Patrimony Committee of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales. The remit of the group is to look strategically at the entire estate, including its buildings, land, libraries, archives and collections, and provide a report to the trustees about options for its future. Recent sales from the Library at Ampleforth Abbey (Sotheby's, 1 December 2010) are equally concerning, and the Forum has written twice to the Abbott to express our sadness and concern at recent events. From John Crawford's report (see p. 6) on the current situation at Edzell it appears that dialogue continues around the future of the library and building, largely down to the activities of the Edzell Library Action Group.

Libraries at risk have been a cornerstone of the Forum's work over the past three years, and in lean times it is to be expected that our services will be called on more over coming years rather than less. With this in mind, the announcement that CILIP's Library and Information History Group will host a conference on libraries under threat in 2011 is particularly welcome.

Finally, the Forum welcomes two new members to its Committee – Thomas Gordon, from The John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester, and Naomi Percival from Lambeth Palace Library.

**Ed Potten, Chair**

**GOING PUBLIC: HOW OUTREACH CAN BENEFIT YOUR LIBRARY  
HISTORIC LIBRARIES FORUM ANNUAL CONFERENCE HELD AT THE  
BRITISH LIBRARY ON 23 NOVEMBER 2010**

The topic of this year's conference provided a timely reminder of the importance of outreach when, with so many digital resources available and with cost-cutting in mind, some people question the need to maintain libraries at all. But, as our host from the British Library, Adrian Edwards, reminded us, the opportunity offered to work with original materials, sometimes located in their original setting, is one that cannot be matched by virtual alternatives. How can librarians convey these advantages to the public and to funding bodies? This question was admirably answered by a range of speakers in a packed day's programme.

Sheila Hingley from Durham University Library reminded us that an elitist image of historic libraries is no longer sustainable or desirable. Durham has worked hard to open its collections to the public. Thanks to a £500,000 grant from the Wolfson Foundation, a refurbished exhibitions hall with alarmed and environmentally controlled cases will shortly open. (*See our News section below*). There will be a permanent exhibition of treasures alongside temporary exhibitions with guest curators, the first of whom will be Bill Bryson, the university's Chancellor, who has chosen to focus on Shakespeare's first folio as his theme. A second exhibition space is planned, dedicated to the history of the book and to the history of the university and its place in the town, alongside a café area. Two new posts of Exhibitions and Access and Learning Officers contribute greatly to the outreach programme. The Access and Learning post, which also provides academic support, has been instrumental in many projects: working with gifted and talented children on history of science material; setting up *4schools*, an online resource for teachers which provides guidance on interpretation of historic resources and which has now been rolled out further afield with UNESCO funding, and working with schoolchildren using methods such as dressing-up, drama, handling reproduction museum objects, and storytelling. A project for young offenders who spent time with members of a pensioners' lunch club listening to their wartime memories resulted in moving pieces of creative writing on themes of separation and isolation. The library also works with local history societies and NADFAS groups, has organised a storytelling project for the local African population, and provides stands at local Family History days.

Mark Purcell, Libraries Curator from the National Trust, explained that Trust libraries hold some 230,000 books in 400,000 volumes, their significance deriving partly from the fact that these books are often to be seen in their original physical surroundings. They range from grand collections such as Blickling to writers' libraries with annotated and presentation copies down to smaller family libraries like Townend, home to one family of farmers for 400 years. Since the libraries are geographically scattered and the Trust has the equivalent of only two full-time library curators, assisted by a small team of peripatetic freelance librarians, conventional exploitation can be difficult. A major cataloguing project lies at the heart of the outreach programme and has increased awareness of the collections. Since most cataloguing takes place in public areas, this becomes in itself a type of outreach. Cataloguers are encouraged to engage with visitors who often express interest in the work which entails detailed examination of books and provenance, annotations and bindings.

Exhibition space is limited, but the interactive digital display of the Sarum Missal, owned by the Legh family at Lyme Park since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, points towards a new type of outreach, while a pilot scheme to provide guided tours of the library at Chastleton has proved popular and will be rolled out elsewhere. On the academic front, the Trust has launched a PhD Trust in collaboration with the Department of Music at Southampton University and the AHRC. In addition, staff publish interpretations of the collections, and regularly give talks and interviews on their work.

Laura Phillips, Community Partnerships Manager at the British Museum, and her team of three aim to encourage local residents who might not naturally be inclined to visit the museum. Working in partnership with local organizations who understand the needs of the target audience and are able to sustain projects after the initial input by the BM, the team devises activities based on the BM's collections. Such initiatives might include object-handling, debate and dialogue alongside opportunities for socialising. Laura sits on local committees so is able to harness ideas for future collaborations from the communities themselves. Some projects are large-scale, such as the Bangladeshi family day, others smaller, sometimes taking place outside the museum in venues such as the Camden Chinese Centre. The work is highly motivating with plenty of positive feedback. Volunteers play an essential role in this work, for example offering older people on the *Shared Experiences* project the opportunity to visit galleries they might not be able to access on their own. All projects are filmed, which provides evidence to help gain funding for future work.

Lunch provided an opportunity for the participants to network, and was followed by an extremely full afternoon of short case studies which are briefly summarised below.

Karen Attar, Head of Special Collections at Senate House library, described the way in which she and her colleagues promoted the donation of the M.S. Anderson collection of writings on Russia published between 1525 and 1917. Anderson, Professor of International History at the LSE, acquired some 2000 items over a 40 year period. These items were catalogued and uploaded to public databases as appropriate; a website was created; a book of the month selected for promotion; while a small display created based on suggestions made by the donor's widow led to a larger exhibition in spring 2010 and a 50 minute introductory lecture on the collection by Dr. Attar. Scanned images from the collection were displayed on panels in the conference area, and a selection of Victorian bindings from the collection was curated by David Pearson. In addition, tutors on the *History of the Book* MA and the London rare Books Summer School were encouraged to select items from the collection to illustrate their seminars.

Gabriel Sewell of Lambeth Palace gave a warts and all account of the successful *Treasures of Lambeth* exhibition which highlighted many of the significant acquisitions since the founding of the library under the terms of the will of Archbishop Richard Bancroft in 1610, in particular concentrating on provenance and with special attention to the early years of the library. A feasibility study in October 2009 led to the appointment of a freelance project manager. Keen to avoid a repetition of the failure of an earlier large exhibition commemorating 1400 years of Christianity in Britain which unfortunately coincided with the death of Princess Diana, the library put a great deal of time into preparing press releases, stressing in particular the royal

material on display such as the warrant for the execution of Mary Queen of Scots and controversial items. As a result of this effort, a stream of journalists arrived on press day and an interview was arranged on the *Today* programme. A large number of leaflets were sent out to libraries and other public places, and advertisements appeared in publications such as the *TLS*. The library had been advised, incorrectly as it turned out, that the public would want to pre-book tickets through an agency, but in fact most visitors paid on the day and despite what is now acknowledged to be a rather short lead-in time, the exhibition attracted more than 24,000 visitors, mainly retired people, families with children, and group visits, such as NADFAS. With more time, school visits would have been arranged. Visitors received an audio guide as part of the entry price. Volunteers proved an invaluable asset in dealing with so many visitors; security guards were necessary to keep them away from the private parts of the building.

When the Church Commissioners decided to sell Hartlebury Castle, home to the bishops of Worcester since the thirteenth century, the future of the magnificent Hurd library built by Bishop Richard Hurd in 1782/3 to house his collection of 5000 books, was put in jeopardy. The books themselves are preserved in perpetuity under the terms of Hurd's will for use by succeeding bishops of the See of Worcester, but part of the significance of the collection lies in its unique architectural setting of an 18<sup>th</sup> century working library and which would be lost should the books be moved. The Historic Libraries Fund was instrumental in raising awareness of this threat. Friends of Hartlebury Castle and the Hurd Library are currently working to raise funds to buy the castle and to maintain the library in situ. Christine Penney, Hurd librarian, described some of the treasures in the library, which include 40 books annotated by Alexander Pope. She listed the many ways in which she and her colleagues have worked to exploit both tourist and research potential of the library. The library has hosted lectures and study days, while an exciting recent development is an HLF funded collaborative project with the University of Worcester which will lead to the cataloguing of the library and an uploading of its early material to ESTC.

John Maiden from the Open University's Department of Theology described his involvement in *Building on History*, a knowledge transfer project funded by the AHRC, which results from a collaboration between the Diocese of London, Lambeth Palace Library, Kings College London and the Open University. The aim is "to contribute to the self-understanding of the Diocese of London by transferring the insights of historical research into the people and buildings of the diocese and encouraging new historical enquiry amongst people within the diocese". It encourages parishes and schools to use historic records as means of understanding their own history and to create their own contemporary records and histories. To this end the team held seminars and workshops and created online and other resources.

Joanna Bowring, Head of Public Libraries in the British Museum, described the outreach activities of the Paul Hamlyn library which contains some 50,000 books and 100 journals intended to inform museum visits by the general public. The collection covers all areas represented in the BM, and was originally housed in the Round Reading Room. However, as this is temporarily being used as an exhibition space pending the construction of additional facilities, the library has been moved to the site of an earlier library, albeit with a resulting reduction in reading spaces. In addition to rare books, it contains every British Museum publication and piece of ephemera, a popular children's collection, family resources and teachers' resources. Joanna

explained that outreach is in collaboration with other work in the museum, such as that organized by colleagues in the Learning Department. Books are bought to support current exhibitions and, in partnership with the local council, her team works with reading groups, working men's colleges etc., in addition to organizing storytelling sessions, object handling sessions, and providing backpacks of resources for families. Of particular interest are the ESOL sessions arranged for people learning English as an additional language: these are often highly-educated refugees, professionals in their own country, who are offered the opportunity to engage in gallery-based activities. The library has also exploited its proximity to the London Review of Books Bookshop to act as a venue for World Literature Weekend events.

Patti Collins from Manchester Central Library, currently closed for rebuilding, described the wealth of treasures in the city's Special Collections: some 30 incunables, 40,000 tracts, an important theatre collection, literary collection etc. At one time the Council adopted a not unfamiliar stance in local authorities towards these, declaring rare books collections to be élitist. Fortunately, this attitude no longer prevails, and no doubt the library's approach to outreach has helped to modify the council's views. Concentrating on the "wow" factor, books with a strong visual impact are promoted in other libraries and venues around the area with the public encouraged to handle items where possible.

This year's conference was extremely successful, offering the 60 participants much food for thought. The enthusiasm of the speakers for their work was inspiring. Many thanks to the organizers.

Felicity Stimpson

*A version of this report was published in the Library and Information Newsletter in January.*

## **HISTORIC LIBRARIES FORUM ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2011**

The 2011 conference is provisionally entitled *Hard times: making a little go a long way*. It will be held on Tuesday 15th November 2011 at the Royal Asiatic Society. Further details will be available later in the year, but make a note in your diaries now!

## **WORKSHOPS**

The Committee is planning a programme of workshops for the coming year, covering such topics as provenance, prints and cataloguing. One of the cataloguing workshops will be held at York Minster library. We also hope to organize a visit to the Hurd Library which was until recently under threat. We shall be advertising these events by email and on our website.

## **EDZELL LIBRARY**

In 1898 Inglis Memorial Hall and 5000+ books were gifted to the community of Edzell in Angus, by the son of a local minister who went on to earn his fortune working in the London Stock Exchange, Lt. Colonel RW Inglis. The Hall and Library were to be held in trust under certain conditions by the local council. Some of the original stock still survives along with the original Cotgreave Indicator and the loans which were recorded still survive and were researched during the middle of the last decade by students from Robert Gordon's University's Department of Information Management in Aberdeen. At the time of the Library's foundation a printed catalogue was produced, according to the British Museum rules which is still one of the finest examples of a public library printed catalogue ever produced in Scotland. The survival of these important artefacts means that the library has the potential to be a museum of librarianship, something Britain does not currently have. The Inglis Memorial Hall itself is an outstanding example of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century community building and is far more impressive than an ordinary village hall and has a right to preservation because of its architectural importance. For the last 30+ years a county lending library has also been housed in the building, alongside the original Victorian library. However in March 2010 Angus Council closed the county lending library (along with its three other rural libraries) and replaced it with a two hours a week mobile library service. The Victorian books and the Cotgreave Indicator currently remain in place but the library rooms are shut. Some other parts of the hall still are available for hire. Some concerns exist for the state of preservation of the historical aspects, particularly for the old books.

A local pressure group, the Edzell Library Action Group (ELAG) has been trying to get the county lending library reinstated in the Inglis Memorial Hall and although it has been in correspondence with and has had meetings with Angus Council the decision has not been reversed. Both Professor Peter Reid from RGU and I have given information to the local and regional press emphasising the Library's historic importance which has been published. ELAG believes that it would be desirable if the County lending library was reinstated thus enabling a combined museum and library service to be instituted, with volunteer input but staffed by the Council. I have offered to supply training, free of charge, but a group of volunteers has yet to be formed.

At the time of writing Angus Council plans to hold a meeting for community groups and local businesses on February 7<sup>th</sup> to discuss the future management and use of Inglis Memorial Hall. ELAG feel the creation of a combined museum and library service is the best course of action for the historical library and building and believe that, in line with the original Deed of Gift, Inglis Memorial Hall should continue to remain under the Council's care and have offered the Council a high level of help to assist them in their work. ELAG welcomes all offers of support. For more information, including details about the virtually nationally unique historical aspects, visit ELAG's "Save Edzell Library" facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=117715884932059&v=info>

Dr John Crawford, Former chair, Library and Information History Group  
Email [polbae2003@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:polbae2003@yahoo.co.uk)

## EXHIBITIONS AND CONFERENCES

### THEIR OWN DEVICES: BRITISH PRIVATE PRESSES

Eton College Library, November 2010 - June 2011

This special exhibition presents a selection of beautiful books from the library's collections, ranging from the late 19th-century renaissance of fine printing to 21st-century private presses. Excellent craftsmanship, fine materials and inspired design are brought together in these volumes, which embody the individuality and ideals of printers and artists including William Morris, Lucien and Esther Pissarro, Robert Gibbings, Eric Gill and Will and Sebastian Carter. The exhibition is open Monday to Friday, 9.30-1 and 2-5, by appointment.

Eton College Library, Windsor, SL4 6DB, 01753 671 221

[collections@etoncollege.org.uk](mailto:collections@etoncollege.org.uk)

### DURHAM UNIVERSITY TREASURES EXHIBITION

A rare Shakespeare First Folio stolen from Durham University 12 years ago will go on public display in January 2011 for the first time since its theft. The 17<sup>th</sup> Century Folio will form the centrepiece of a new exhibition – *The Treasures of Durham University* – which will open to the public at the University's Palace Green Library, in Durham. The exhibition, which will include a number of other University treasures and manuscripts, is the inaugural exhibition in the new Wolfson Gallery, which has undergone a £2.3m refurbishment, funded in part by a £500,000 donation from the Wolfson Foundation.

The star exhibit will be the First Folio, which was stolen while on display in Palace Green Library in December 1998. It was returned to the University in the summer of 2010 following the conviction of Raymond Scott, of Wingate, County Durham, for handling stolen goods and removing stolen property from the UK. The book, which has an estimated value of £1.5m, is the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays and is thought to be one of around 230 in existence. Published in 1623, it was acquired by John Cosin, former Bishop of Durham, and was part of the library he established in Durham in 1669. After its theft, the Folio's binding and first and last pages were removed. The Folio will be on display until March 2011 when it will be conserved by Durham University, which employs some of the UK's expert conservators of rare books. Alongside the Folio will be displays outlining its standing in English literature and the story of its theft and subsequent return to the University. Bill Bryson, Chancellor of Durham University and author of an acclaimed book on Shakespeare, has agreed to be the exhibition's guest curator. He said: "It is a tremendous thrill to have the Shakespeare First Folio back in Durham. This book is clearly one of the most important in the English language and I look forward to seeing this national treasure on public display once again, alongside the many other fabulous treasures of Durham University."

Other University treasures on display will cover topics such as culture and creativity, science and exploration, governance and rule, faith and religion, and local history. The treasures have been drawn from collections across the University, including the Oriental Museum, the Old Fulling Mill Museum of Archaeology, Durham Castle and Palace Green Library.

They include: first editions of *Oliver Twist*, by Charles Dickens, and *Pride and Prejudice*, by Jane Austen, a first edition *Dictionary of the English Language* by Samuel Johnson, Chinese Imperial textiles, the robe and sword of Ali Dinar, the last Sultan of Darfur, part of the University's Sudanese collection, a leaf of a Bede manuscript written in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the earliest history of Durham Cathedral written 900 years ago and 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> Century Durham Mint coins produced by the Prince Bishops of Durham.

Professor Chris Higgins, Vice-Chancellor of Durham University, said: "The Shakespeare First Folio is an iconic book and one of many culturally and educationally important treasures held by the University. Refurbishing and expanding our exhibition space allows us to open up our treasures, so they can be safely displayed for the benefit of our students, staff, visiting scholars and the wider public. It is wonderful to be able to share our treasures, including the First Folio, so that everyone can enjoy the rich experience offered by Durham University ... Since the Folio's theft, our security arrangements at Palace Green have been significantly tightened. The refurbishment of the whole Palace Green Library will ensure all our treasures are much more accessible while being fully protected both physically and environmentally."

The new exhibition space complements on-going work to renovate the University's Alms Houses, on Owengate, as a visitor centre for the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Durham Cathedral and Castle. The Centre is due to be completed in May 2011. The Treasures of Durham University exhibition is being held in the Wolfson Gallery, Palace Green Library, Durham, from Saturday, January 15, 2011. The Shakespeare First Folio will be on display until Sunday, March 6, 2011. For information about the exhibition, or opening times and prices, contact 0191 334 2972; email [pg.library@durham.ac.uk](mailto:pg.library@durham.ac.uk) or visit [www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/exhibitions/treasures/](http://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/exhibitions/treasures/).

### **HISTORIC LIBRARIES IN CONTEXT**

The Derry & Raphoe Diocesan Library: Past, Present and Future  
University of Ulster – Magee Campus 6-8 June 2011

This conference, organised by the University of Ulster, coincides with the conclusion of the Derry & Raphoe Diocesan Library Project, a 3.5 year project to conserve and publicise a collection heretofore relatively unknown to modern scholarship. The aim of the conference is to engage with bibliographers, historians and conservators, each with their own understanding of book culture, to identify future avenues for research within the collection, and within similar collections in general. We hope to generate an interdisciplinary discussion about the current and possible future uses of such libraries and the curatorial and preservation issues that have been raised over the course of the project.

### **TOOLS FOR PROVENANCE AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH**

CERL Workshop, Oxford, Merton College, T. S. Eliot Lecture Theatre,  
Thursday 3 March 2011, 9.30-13.00

To register for this event, e-mail: [secretariat@cerl.org](mailto:secretariat@cerl.org)

---

## NEWS

### UNIVERSITY OF READING SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Due to essential building works, a highly restricted service will operate in the University of Reading Special Collections Service reading room between Monday 21 February and Friday 11 March 2011. Many classes of material (including rare books, Special Collections archives, and parts of the library and archives of the Museum of English Rural Life) will be inaccessible.

**Please see full details on the UoR Special Collections website**

**<http://www.reading.ac.uk/special-collections/news/sc-news-2011-building-works-closure.aspx>**

### CLOSURE OF USHAW COLLEGE

On 8 October 2010 trustees announced the decision to close Ushaw College, the Roman Catholic seminary for the North of England, in June this year. The decision has implications for its very important heritage assets, including archival and library collections built up over a period of four centuries. Efforts are being focused on safeguarding the College's historic buildings and heritage collections. These involve a number of interested parties, Roman Catholic and otherwise. Among the latter, the University of Durham and Durham Cathedral have made it clear that they are especially committed to working with the trustees to ensure that the library and archives remain in the North-East.

It is understood that the College's trustees have now agreed to establish a steering committee, chaired by Bishop Mark Davies of Shrewsbury, to explore options for maintaining the College's heritage assets. A spokesperson for the College stated: 'We are aware there has been some debate among the wider community about the future of the historic collections of Ushaw College and of the buildings. We are acutely aware of the historical importance and heritage value placed upon the buildings, collection of books, manuscripts, letters and other items we have within our various collections and we are committed to ensuring that they remain intact.'

The best source of information about the archives and manuscripts held by Ushaw College is a series of essays by Dr Michael Sharratt. These include:

'The Lisbon Collection at Ushaw', *NORTHERN CATHOLIC HISTORY*, 8, 1978, 30-6.

'The Lisbon Collection at Ushaw', *CATHOLIC ARCHIVES*, 1, 1981, 36-9.

'The Ushaw Collection of Manuscripts', *CATHOLIC ARCHIVES*, 4, 1984, 4-14.

'The origin and growth of the Ushaw library', *NORTHERN CATHOLIC HISTORY*, 24, 1986, 22-34.

'The Lisbon Room at Ushaw', *BRITISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PORTUGAL ANNUAL REPORT*, 28, 2001, 21-9.

'Theology and philosophy at the English College, Douai: a handlist of sources', *HISTORY OF UNIVERSITIES*, 18/2, 2003, 197-225.

### **THE FUTURE OF THE ROUND READING ROOM**

Members will know that the Round Reading Room at the British Museum is currently being used for exhibition purposes, pending the construction of a new exhibition area on the north-west side of the Museum. The BM is now seeking a further and final renewal of its planning permission for this "temporary" use of the Reading Room, for a further two years until 2014. This is because work on the extension was delayed owing to earlier planning disputes. The HLF is actively monitoring this situation and is engaged in consultation with the Museum.

### **THE RENAISSANCE LIBRARY CALENDAR**

The Renaissance Library Calendar, which since 2001 has provided delightful monthly illustrations of historic libraries from around the world, has been suspended by its publishers. Stocks of all ten calendars are still available to purchase, along with a range of other merchandise using similar illustrations, via the website <http://www.renaissancelibrary.com>.

### **CONSERVATION OF DURHAM'S FIRST FOLIO**

Experts from Durham University will use a combination of traditional techniques and up to date conservation methods to conserve the Shakespeare First Folio after it has been on public display. The First Folio was returned to the University in a poor condition earlier this year, following its theft in December 1998. The binding and first and last pages had been removed and the first few and the last pages consequently came loose from the sewing and became damaged along the edges.

Staff from the University's Conservation Unit, based at Palace Green Library, will begin working to conserve the First Folio after it is removed from display in The Treasures of Durham University exhibition in March 2011. To retain the shape of the book's original smooth gilded edges, the conservators plan to repair the sewing by laying new cords over those that remain. The damaged pages will be repaired with Japanese paper and wheat starch paste and re-sewn on to the new cords. New boards – the hard covers of books – will be made and laced on to the cords and the First Folio will then be rebound in dark blue goatskin. The previous binding, added in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, had been made from dark brown goatskin. Finally, the title will be lettered directly on to the spine with gold leaf and a drop back box, suitable for storing and protecting valuable books, will be made to protect the binding.

Liz Branigan, Senior Conservator at Durham University, said: "Working in Special Collections gives you the opportunity to work on many rare and interesting items like the Shakespeare First Folio. The damage caused to the book was upsetting, but we have put a lot of thought into our plans for its conservation so it can be preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.

### **OPEN UNIVERSITY BOOK HISTORY AND BIBLIOGRAPHY RESEARCH GROUP SEMINARS**

In association with the Institute of English Studies, this year's programme of seminars will be on the topic of *Reading and the First World War*. Seminars will be held from 14.00 to 17.00 on 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February, and the 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March in Room ST273, Stuart House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU. For full details see:

[http://www.sas.ac.uk/events/visitor\\_events.php?page=ies\\_seminars&func=results&aoi\\_id=316](http://www.sas.ac.uk/events/visitor_events.php?page=ies_seminars&func=results&aoi_id=316)

## **SEMINAR ON THE HISTORY OF LIBRARIES, INSTITUTE OF ENGLISH STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, UK**

At the last meeting of this seminar, held on 30 November, Professor David McKitterick (Trinity College, Cambridge) spoke on 'Libraries at risk'. He looked at a number of recent cases concerning historic collections in British libraries which have either been sold off, often without warning, or were/are at risk of dispersal. This talk is now available as a podcast on the website of the Institute of Historical Research at [www.history.ac.uk/digital/podcasts](http://www.history.ac.uk/digital/podcasts)  
<<https://webmail.lon.ac.uk/exchweb/bin/redir.asp?URL=http://www.history.ac.uk/digital/podcasts>>

## **RA EXHIBITIONS CATALOGUES 1870-1913 ONLINE**

The Royal Academy Winter loan Exhibition catalogues from their inception in 1870 to 1913 have now been digitised, thanks to funding from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation and are now available to the public online. For the first 100 years of its existence, the Royal Academy organised just one exhibition each year, the annual Summer exhibition. It wasn't until 1870, coinciding with its move to Burlington House, that the RA began organising an annual loan exhibition of Old Masters and works by recently deceased British artists, known from its inception and for many years as the Winter Exhibition.

The catalogues for the early Winter exhibitions are extremely rare; apart from the RA Library set, there are only a handful of copies in existence. To access these, go to <http://www.royalacademy.org.uk> then select *Search the Collections*. (or go direct to [www.racollection.org.uk](http://www.racollection.org.uk)). From here, click on the *Exhibition Catalogue* link to view thumbnail images of the title pages of each catalogue. Click on a thumbnail image to display a large image of the title-page. Use the Next & Previous buttons to browse through the catalogue. You can also enter search terms in the **Search within the catalogue** box to search for artists, titles and lenders within the catalogue. This will display a list of the pages on which your search terms were found.

Below the catalogue pages you will also find thumbnail images of some of the works that were exhibited in the exhibitions. Clicking on a thumbnail image will take you to a page displaying a larger image and more information about that work.

At present this is a pilot project marking the beginning of a programme to digitise and publish further Royal Academy Winter Exhibition catalogues as well as the catalogues for the Summer Exhibition from its inception in 1768. Staff at the RA welcome any feedback you might have on this first stage.

## **GLADSTONE'S LIBRARY**

HLF members will be interested to learn that the trustees of St Deiniol's library have decided on a change of name to Gladstone's Library, feeling that this reflects more closely its heritage and work. The Library is based on Gladstone's bequest of 32,000 books and its current holdings of 250,000 volumes still concentrate on his interests of history and politics, current affairs and contemporary culture, theology and religious studies. Gladstone's Library also runs a programme of short courses based on these subjects.

In addition, the library has launched a new website which includes links to Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Peter Francis, the library's warden, says: "We want to be an institution that encourages people to come and visit but also pushed out information through these media – book and film reviews, comments, questions, debate, lectures, even prayers will all emanate from these feeds. We want to create an interactive community of those who share our Gladstonian values – or, at least, those who want to engage with them".

Further details can be found at [www.gladstoneslibrary.org](http://www.gladstoneslibrary.org) or by emailing [enquiries@gladlib.org](mailto:enquiries@gladlib.org).

### **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS HANDBOOK**

Facet Publishing have commissioned me to write The Special Collections Handbook: a practical guide to managing Special Collections. The book will be published in autumn 2011. It will cover care of collections, acquisitions and collection development, understanding objects, cataloguing and description, ethics and legal matters, user services, funding and fundraising, marketing and outreach ... I'll emphasise the potential of new technologies, partnerships, social media, and address the realities of tough times and minimal resources.

I would be really interested in suggestions from fellow Forum members: what do you think I should include? Have you any suggestions for case studies? You can share your ideas in public by posting to my blog Collections in a Cold Climate, or email me directly. I look forward to hearing from you.

Alison Cullingford

Email: [a.cullingford@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:a.cullingford@bradford.ac.uk)

Collections in a Cold Climate: <http://alisoncullingford.wordpress.com>

### **BIBLIOTEKMUSEET: A LIBRARY MUSEUM IN SWEDEN**

HLF members and library historians concerned about the future of several historic libraries in the UK, might be interested in a Swedish initiative which preserves the history of librarianship in Sweden and resulted in 1994 in the opening of a Library Museum in Borås. The aim was to preserve systems of librarianship: its furniture, systems of acquisition and lending and so on. Representatives from the Swedish Library Association and National Swedish Federation of Adult Educational Associations sit on the board. The museum has a permanent exhibition showing travelling libraries, parish libraries and study circle libraries and charting the progress from small collections to public libraries. Occasional temporary exhibitions are also held.

Sweden's first parish library was founded in 1799, although they remained small and only developed into publicly funded libraries as we would know them in the UK during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For further details see [www.bibliotekmuseet.se](http://www.bibliotekmuseet.se) which also has a page in English.