

# HISTORIC LIBRARIES FORUM

## BULLETIN NO. 25

July 2013

The last few months have been busy ones for the HLF. In this bulletin you'll find a write up of our cataloguing and volunteers event in April, kindly organised and hosted by Bromley House Library in Nottingham. I was one of the participants, and thoroughly enjoyed my day, appreciating the networking opportunities we always try to provide at HLF events, as well as the chance to see how the Bromley House cataloguing project had been completed so successfully. By the time this bulletin is published we will also have held another over-subscribed rare books cataloguing workshop, hosted by Lambeth Palace Library. This was advertised to those members whose email addresses we have, and was fully booked within days of first being advertised, so it is well worth letting us know your email address for future mailings to ensure you find out about events first, as well as helping to keep our costs (and thus the costs of future events) down.

As always, do get in touch if you have any workshop topics that would be of particular interest to you and your library, or if you can offer us a free or low cost venue for a workshop. Workshops coming up later this year include basic book conservation, and you'll also find details in the bulletin of this year's conference in November on collection management.

Collection management is a particularly pertinent topic at the moment, following the distressing sale of 300 of the most valuable books from the Mendham Collection in June. Despite attempts by many people, including the HLF and its members, to stop the sale, it went ahead. There is a report later on in the bulletin, but at the moment, it is unclear how many of the books that were sold have passed into private hands, or, indeed, what will happen to the rest of the collection, including some items that didn't sell.

We've had various changes to the committee in the last few months, as several members stepped down due to pressure of work. If you are unsure who to contact now please check our website, where the contact details of all the committee members may be found:

<http://www.historiclibrariesforum.org.uk/hlf/committee.html>

We're also pleased to welcome to the committee our new representative from the Library and Information History Group, Renae Satterley, whom I'm sure many of you will already have come across. We welcome news and articles from member libraries for future issues of the bulletin. Please get in touch if there is something you'd like to share.

Katie Flanagan, Chair

## RECENT EVENTS

### **Bromley House Library – Visit and exchange of experience for the HLF**

Bromley House Library was founded in 1816 as Nottingham Subscription Library and continues today as Bromley House; an independent, private subscription Library. Via an unassuming doorway off a busy Nottingham street, we ascended up the magnificent staircase of a 1752 townhouse (one of only a handful remaining in the city) into the Library itself. Despite having read up about the Library and seen the pictures on its website, it was hard to imagine quite what to expect. What was most striking, perhaps, was not the beautiful reading room and elegant features of the cornicing and spiral staircase, but the atmosphere of the whole place. Nestled away as a haven of calm in the city centre, it's clear to see why the Library's one thousand members value and appreciate it as being something quite different from the normal library experience.

Upon arrival, we were graciously welcomed over coffee by the staff before a short introductory talk about the Library and its fascinating history. The first catalogue of the collection was published in 1816, with only one extant copy known, which the Library has now digitised. Several further printed volumes followed until 1900, when a card catalogue was started to prevent the issue of the bound volumes being instantly outdated. This card catalogue remained in use for over 100 years until the retrospective computer cataloguing project began at the start of 2011. Although no longer being added to, the cards remain in situ to allow an adjustment period for members and as a reminder of this important part of the Library's history. The Library currently owns around 40,000 books, to which 700-800 are added each year, with around a 50% split between fiction and non-fiction titles. Some weeding of the "light" fiction collection does take place to allow space for new titles to be added. Although the Library has now automated all of its cataloguing, it has maintained a manual borrowing register in order to retain a more personal level of service between staff and members.

We were then led on a tour around the building. As the Library and its collections grew, so did the rooms it inhabited, expanding organically as more space presented itself. The difficulties of working in such a space, were clearly explained to us; examples such as no power sockets in the attic rooms obviously prevented cataloguing in situ, as did the temperature, which dips to as low as 3 degrees in the winter. To the general ear, these would probably seem very unusual working conditions, yet to most Forum members they probably seem quite normal and part of working in historic environments! The usual problems of space were explained to us, but with the caveat that the Library's current development project would go some way to alleviate this, allowing split sequences of books to be reunited. There were additional features of interest, such as the Meridian line "clock" (one of only four in the country) running through the members' coffee room and a beautiful unsupported spiral staircase, descending down from a book-lined gallery into the catalogue hall. The courtyard garden was a lovely additional benefit for Library members to use.

The main purpose of the visit was to share experiences about the Library's retrospective cataloguing project, which has been completed with the support of Heritage Lottery Funding (the other HLF!) and an army of volunteers. Lottery funding provided money to appoint a project manager and four part-time qualified librarians to lead the cataloguing and support the volunteers. Forty volunteers were recruited directly from the Library's membership, with taster sessions provided to allow them to judge what would be required. Each week was split into ten morning or afternoon sessions with a qualified member of staff always present to supervise and assist making sure the volunteers felt supported. This development of skills for the volunteers formed an integral part of the HLF's stipulation for the granting of the award and had been promised by Bromley House. To keep the project on track, the Project Manager stressed the importance of constant reference to the project objectives to satisfy the HLF's criteria of the award. The volunteers were each provided with a job description so it was clear what was expected (no Library duties or rare books cataloguing, for example) and a compact (a "softer" version of a contract) which outlined what the Library promised to offer in return.

The Library decided to aim for a high level of bibliographic description, working at a level of detail much greater than most BL/COPAC records, but with the support of the cataloguers, the volunteers quickly picked up the necessary skills and understanding to produce these detailed records. The Fiction collection was chosen as the first section to catalogue as this allowed an easier introduction for volunteers, giving time to learn how to catalogue books without the requirement of subject headings. What was not anticipated was the low quality of imported records for this stock, or lack of a record at all. One very useful tip was the information provided about the "Volunteers' Handbook", a simple, yet effective document detailing the basics: logins for PCs and Heritage, book handling rules and a field-by-field cataloguing guide. This was a working document which could be amended as new issues arose and as use of the LMS evolved.

The Library's early printed books were worked on separately by professional staff with a more expert eye. Although many of the most valuable items had been sold during the 20<sup>th</sup> century in order to keep the Library afloat, there are still around 200 pre-1801 imprints remaining in the collection, and there are particularly strong local history holdings, including some titles which are not represented anywhere else. A much higher level of cataloguing was undertaken for these items with extremely impressive detail of binding, marginalia, provenance and condition. All records were double-checked by a second cataloguer which was valuable experience for staff as well as enforcing quality control measures. Several variant copies from existing ESTC records were noted and reported with new entries then being added which helps the Library take its place in the wider world of scholarship and raises the Library's profile.

The session talking about the fundraising and interaction with the HLF was particularly interesting. The Library acknowledged that it simply would not have been possible for the existing staff to undertake such a project without the support of the HLF and after some informal discussions and the formal application process, were awarded £43,400, but significantly, were required to provide matching funding from their own revenue streams. Some was provided from the Library's own funds and the remainder from charitable trusts and individuals. Applying to these funds takes time however, so the importance of really

only applying to things that seemed relevant was emphasised and to tailor the application to the goals of each trust. The HLF themselves enforce certain stipulations about the grants; for example, the paid posts *had* to be an open competition and were not automatically offered to existing staff. They will not offer funding for things that they think should be happening anyway – in this instance, they would not fund the implementation of the Heritage LMS. Outreach and legacy for the project are two main goals and this has allowed the Library to involve itself both in the local community, reaching out to new audiences and communities, even those who aren't potential members and within professional circles with events like this one. This requires a cultural change within any organisation, but one that seems to have happened very successfully at Bromley House. A huge benefit to the Library is now having a ready-made network of the forty volunteers, many of whom want to remain involved, not only as members, but in promoting the Library and in acting as mentors to other members learning to use the computerised catalogue.

Many thanks to all at Bromley House for making us feel so welcome and for such an interesting, informative and thought-provoking visit.

Steven Archer  
Christ's College Library, Cambridge

### **Heritage Alliance debate - "*Heritage & Television: who profits more?*"**

On 12<sup>th</sup> June, at the Merchant Adventurers' Hall in York, a panel of experts - Dr Anna Whitelock from Royal Holloway, Dr John Goodall, Architectural Editor of *Country Life*, and Ed Taylor, producer of ITV's 'Britain's Secret Homes' - spoke on the relationship between heritage and television, and a lively discussion followed.

The term "heritage" was not closely defined, and was mainly used in very broad terms, but many interesting ideas were raised concerning the interactions between the public and all kinds of historic buildings, collections, and knowledge. The Heritage Alliance will be producing a full report, so here I shall give a brief overview of the ideas and themes discussed which seemed of most relevance to libraries.

History is increasingly popular on television but there is always great competition for audience so history tends to be packaged with other topics to provide entertainment: for instance the draw in *Who Do You Think You Are* is celebrities, and the draw in *Horrible Histories* is comedy. Heritage organisations can exploit this increasing demand for their own ends, though they need to be aware that their aims in a joint venture will not be the same as those of the TV company, and that television productions will not want to assume any prior knowledge on the part of viewers.

Television is a key vehicle for attracting public interest, and may form a good springboard for people to engage more fully both in real life by visiting or contacting an organisation directly, and via internet research and social media. People are more likely to engage if it is made easy for them to do so, and television may be a medium for kickstarting the process, though organisations will need to facilitate the continuing process themselves. Television is

a broad, but blunt, tool, and is best used as a means, not an end. It should inspire people to go and find out more and get involved for themselves. Audiences are increasingly formed from digital natives – people who expect organisations to be accessible via apps, podcasts, Twitter, and so forth.

Television researchers and producers do not necessarily know much about the specifics of the topic, and may have to be guided. There are opportunities here to exploit expert knowledge from librarians, curators, academics; but pressure is often put on experts to tell the story the producer wants to tell, regardless of its truth. Do the programmes have a responsibility to be truthful and factual? Do audiences always assume a spin is being put on things? Various narrative conventions are used to sell heritage via television which the organisations could themselves use in outreach programmes, such as a focus on the stories of individuals, and the use of jeopardy to increase interest.

The questions of ownership and functions of heritage were a recurring strand through all three talks and through the discussion that followed. For instance, why do heritage organisations make things available to the public; what do they hope to achieve? What responsibilities do they have to the public? Should everything be accessible to everyone? How should development of public interest in history be facilitated? A lot of these questions come down to the age-old problem that many information professionals face: What does the public want from this organisation, and how can we provide that?

Naomi Percival  
Lambeth Palace Library

### **Teaching the history of libraries**

The history of libraries is no longer a standard feature of library school courses. In 2013, the London Rare Books School (<http://www.ies.sas.ac.uk/london-rare-books-school>) addressed the deficiency with a new course on the History of Libraries from the Middle Ages to the present to supplement courses on publishing 1450-2000, book illustration, bindings, books in the ancient world and in the Middle Ages, bibliography and others. Taught over twenty hours, from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> July, the course covered the following:

1. Introduction: the nature, purpose and philosophy of libraries.
2. The mediaeval library.
3. The Renaissance library.
4. The ecclesiastical library.
5. The early modern private library.
6. The national library.
7. The subscription and circulating library.
8. The dissenting academy library.
9. The university library.
10. The nineteenth-century private library.
11. The public library.
12. Describing books in libraries et al: library management through the ages.
13. The future of libraries and library history.

Convened by Karen Attar and taught by Karen Attar, Keith Manley, David Pearson, Kyle Roberts, David Rundle, David Shaw, Nicholas Sparks and Ian Willison, the course demonstrated the lively interest in the history of libraries. It further provided a context for those researching in a particular area of library history, and an understanding of the past to inform the future. Running through it were connections between the history of libraries and other kinds of history, from architecture to censorship. And it opened avenues for further exploration. We hope that the course may continue as an annual feature, to encourage and to support the current interest in library history.

Karen Attar  
Senate House Library

### **Association of Independent Libraries conference** ***“Sustainability and relevance in the twenty first century”***

The 24<sup>th</sup> annual AIL conference, held from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> June 2013, was hosted by the Linen Hall Library in Belfast, who organised an excellent programme and made for generous and welcoming hosts.

The reception on the first evening of the conference was a chance for attendees to meet and do some networking, before proceeding to sample some of Belfast’s famous nightlife. But the main business of the conference occurred on the Saturday, starting with the Presidential Address by Dr Robert Anderson.

Robert noted that we face a bleak cultural future, with public resources for arts and culture being slashed. Public libraries are being closed, while many of those that remain endure significantly reduced resources and are being subjected to a process of “dumbing-down”. Robert pointed out that this scenario is highly relevant to the interests of independent libraries. Independent libraries thrive in a culture of generally high education and learning, and a strong public library system is an underpinning of such a culture. However, independent libraries could potentially also find that with local public library services being cut or “dumbed-down”, demand for a more traditional library experience may draw people towards independent libraries. Robert encouraged attendees to ensure that their libraries maintain relevant statistics so they can chart whether subscription levels change in response to changing public library provision in their areas. He also emphasised that the AIL needs new members, and highlighted the recent improvements in the AIL newsletter and forthcoming new website as important opportunities for publicity and outreach.

Gerry Deveney, a volunteer at the Linen Hall Library, gave a very interesting and engaging talk about the history of that remarkable institution, which celebrates its 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Gerry discussed the origins and early history of the Library, when it was intimately connected to the political tumult in Ireland following the American and French Revolutions. Gerry spoke about the growth and development of the Library as Belfast became industrialised in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and its historic role at the heart of Belfast’s cultural life.

Recent decades have been eventful for the Linen Hall. Gerry described the origins and development of the Northern Ireland Political Collection, a collection of some 300,000 printed items documenting the “Troubles”. The collection was started by the Librarian in 1968 during the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement, and documents every tendency across the entire political spectrum. It is the type of collection that only an independent library could maintain, as it is not subordinate to the agendas or priorities of a parent organisation. As such the Library has gained a reputation as a neutral space in the context of Northern Ireland’s divisions.

Siobhan Fitzpatrick, Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin, discussed the challenges of managing historic collections in the modern environment. The RIA has extensive historic collections in science, literature and antiquities, including considerable journal holdings. The Library has a considerable focus on Irish antiquities and the Irish language, and is funded by central government. Although the Library has a membership, it also has a focus on open access and widening participation across its activities. To this end, Siobhan spoke about the Library’s outreach efforts, including digitising photographs and manuscripts, as well as developing an online resource to enhance access to historic recordings of Irish speakers.

John Killen, Librarian of the Linen Hall Library, discussed digitisation and the opportunities and challenges it brings. The Linen Hall digitised a number of eighteenth-century pamphlets on theatre, serving to record and promote Belfast’s impressive dramatic tradition. John emphasised the multiple benefits of digitisation such as widening access, preserving fragile originals and generating revenue. John described the 2011 project where the Library collaborated with Ulster Bank to commemorate the bank’s 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary, digitising the historical theatre material to develop a learning resource for formal and informal learners.

John explained that the Linen Hall sees this kind of activity as increasingly important going forward, as traditional income streams continue to decline.

Sadly, the vicissitudes of plane travel meant I had to leave before the screening of the documentary on the history of the Linen Hall Library, and I also missed the scheduled trips to the Merchant Hotel and the Ulster Museum. However, the presentations and discussions made for an enjoyable and rewarding conference, and it was a pleasure to meet current collaborators and make new acquaintances among the independent library fraternity.

Ed Weech  
Bishopsgate Institute

### **Sale of books from the Mendham Collection**

As members will by now be aware, the Mendham Collection of about 5000 volumes was bequeathed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the Law Society by Joseph Mendham. Particularly strong in incunabula and sixteenth-century books, the collection formed an important resource on religious controversy in England, particularly the Reformation. Since 1984 the books have been under the custodianship of the University of Kent and Canterbury Cathedral Library, but last year the Law Society made the decision to sell some of the most valuable items to

plug a hole in their finances. Around 300 volumes were removed by Sotheby's in July 2012 and sold on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

The sale comprised 142 lots of manuscripts, incunabula and other early printed books, of which 36 did not sell (though some were purchased by institutions after the sale, as we will see). The total amount raised was £1,180,875. The most expensive lot was an interleaved copy of Thomas Martin's 1554 treatise on the marriage of priests, with extensive notes in the hand of John Ponet (Bishop of Winchester 1551-1553); as such, it forms what is essentially the manuscript of his reply, published in 1555. Lot 104, a Sarum Missal (Rouen: 1510) containing unique printed prayers for the phantom pregnancy of Queen Mary, sold for £86,500.

Thankfully, a number of institutional libraries purchased books at the sale, which goes some way to cushion the loss of many items into private collections. The British Library posted in a blog on 19<sup>th</sup> June that it had acquired five items in four lots. These include a mid-15<sup>th</sup> century Book of Hours made in Bruges for English use, to which verses by John Lydgate were added early in its history, a Papal bull of 1480, of which only one other copy is known, and a unique Book of Hours printed in London in 1555. The BL blog may be viewed here:

<http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2013/06/new-acquisitions-in-manuscript-and-print.html>

Cambridge University Library also made purchases at the sale, acquiring a unique Dutch incunabula (Andreas de Escobar, *Modus confitendi*, Zwolle 1480-1481) containing Joseph Mendham's annotations (this failed to sell at the auction, but was acquired after the sale), and a volume containing five rare works by Wessel Gansfort, printed in the 1520s and bound in Cambridge in the 1520s by Nicholas Spierinck. A post on these will appear shortly on the Special Collections Blog of the University Library.

Liam Sims  
Rare Books Department, Cambridge University Library

## Hurd Library developments

We have been reporting on the situation regarding the Hurd Library at Hartlebury Castle since 2008 and now, at last, we can say something positive. The Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust, founded in 2009, has been successful in its Stage 1 application to the other HLF (the one with the money). This has delivered £413,700 of development funding, which will be used to prepare the Stage 2 application for purchase of the castle and surrounding estate. The Trust is working in full partnership with the County Museum, which occupies the north wing. Success in Stage 2 will, we hope, ensure that the library (which is not for sale but will be loaned to the Trust), can remain in the room built for it at the expense of Bishop Richard Hurd in 1782.

It has taken 7 years to get this far and we must hope that the parallel with Jacob's labours ends here. The Trust has done us proud, but what the result shows above all is the power of

a village community. It all started with a handful of villagers meeting in a conservatory and working out what could be done to prevent the library being moved and 230 years of history disappearing. They never gave up, and it is thanks to our HLF (the one without the money but with the influence), that I became involved and landed myself with the dream retirement activity.

Chris Penney  
Hurd Librarian

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### **HLF Annual Conference, November 2013** ***“To have and to hold: guarding against dispersal of collections”***

We are pleased to be able to confirm the following speakers for the HLF's annual conference, at the Royal Asiatic Society in London on Tuesday, 19 November 2013:

David McKitterick (Trinity College, Cambridge)  
Ed Potten (Cambridge University Library)  
Katie Flanagan (Brunel University)  
Emma Greenwood (Jerwood Library)  
Christine Penney (Hurd Library)

More to be announced!

Further details, including information about how to book, will be available in the September issue of the bulletin and on our website (<http://www.historiclibrariesforum.org.uk/>)

Ed Weech  
Bishopsgate Institute

### **HLF Book Conservation training course**

The HLF is organising a book conservation training course, to be held in London in September, aimed at those who want to learn how to make repairs to the books in their care. Once the details are confirmed they will be advertised via the HLF mailing list; if you have any queries please contact Naomi Percival at [naomi.percival@churchofengland.org](mailto:naomi.percival@churchofengland.org)

### ***Locating Boccaccio in 2013***

John Rylands Library, University of Manchester, 11<sup>th</sup> July-20<sup>th</sup> December

On the 700th anniversary of his birth, this exhibition celebrates the enduring popularity of the works of the Italian medieval author Giovanni Boccaccio.

Taking a wide-ranging overview of his works, it 'locates' Boccaccio in different times, languages, and places, from the fourteenth century to the present day, in manuscript, print, and beyond. The exhibition showcases some of the riches of The John Rylands Library, along with loans from private collections, and a new series of artists' books specially commissioned to commemorate the anniversary.

Highlights include the first illustrated printed edition of the Decameron, French, German, Spanish, English, and Welsh translations, privately printed and clandestine erotica, and the famous Rylands 'Roxburghe Decameron', once the most expensive book in the world when it was sold at the legendary Roxburghe sale in 1812.

<http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands/exhibitions/boccaccio/>

### ***The Lindisfarne Gospels***

Palace Green Library, Durham University, 1<sup>st</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> September

The Lindisfarne Gospels book is one of the greatest landmarks of human cultural achievement. Created by the community of St Cuthbert on Lindisfarne it is one of the best examples of medieval creativity and craftsmanship.

The Lindisfarne Gospels Durham exhibition presents for the first time the extraordinary full story of the Lindisfarne Gospels, exploring how and why this masterpiece was created, its influence on Medieval Europe and how artistic traditions from Britain and the Mediterranean mainland came together in North East England.

At the centre of the exhibition in Durham University's Palace Green Library is the gospel book itself, written in honour of St Cuthbert. In addition many fabulous artefacts from Anglo-Saxon England will be on show including ornate gold objects from the Staffordshire Hoard, intricately carved stone from Lindisfarne and silver from Hexham, alongside some very special medieval manuscripts such as the St Cuthbert Gospel and the Durham Gospels. These items place the Lindisfarne Gospels within a wider context of Anglo-Saxon creativity and show how incredibly complex and elaborate medieval craftsmanship was.

<http://www.lindisfarnegospels.com/lindisfarne-gospels-durham-exhibition>

**Preservation Assessment Survey Workshop**  
British Library, London, 24 September 2013

The Preservation Assessment Survey (PAS) is a preservation management tool that enables organisations to quickly gather information on the state of preservation of library or archive collections. It assesses the preservation measures in place (handling procedures, storage conditions, physical protection, environment, security, and emergency planning) alongside demand, usability and significance. Damage to items is also assessed. PAS has been widely used to provide evidence for funding applications, as a planning tool and to support collection management activities.

Designed for library and archive staff, this workshop introduces the Preservation Assessment Survey methodology and demonstrates the benefits of carrying out a survey. No previous knowledge of preservation is required. Participants will learn how to plan a survey, select a statistically valid sample, assess the condition of collection items and identify factors affecting their preservation.

Programme and registration details: <http://www.bl.uk/blpac/pasworkshop3.html>

**The Royal College of Physicians**

***The mirror of health: discovering medicine in the golden age of Islam***

1 May to 25 October 2013

An exhibition revealing the development of medical tradition in Europe and the Middle East from the collections of the Royal College of Physicians

First floor gallery exhibition. Open Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm (Summer closure, 5th to 30th August 2013). Free entry

<http://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/mirror-health-discovering-medicine-golden-age-islam>

***Medical notes: RCP treasures evening***

Monday 7 October 2013

An evening of medieval melodic delights from the RCP's collection, and physicians in folk song.

The RCP has a number of medieval music fragments, retrieved in the 20th century from bindings from the rare book and manuscript collections. This evening will explore why such material ended up as printers' scrap, and include performances of some of the reclaimed music.

The evening will also look at the depiction of doctors and medicine in folk songs. There will be live performances of some of these, along with some lyrics found in a 17-18th century manuscript receipt book.

<http://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/museum-and-garden/events/medical-notes>

### ***The Cranston Lecture 2013***

Monday 21st October 2013 at 7.30 for 8pm  
St Mary Magdalene's Church, Chart Lane, Reigate, Surrey RH2 7RN

Giles Mandelbrote on the 17th century libraries of Lambeth Palace and Sion College, and Sean Hawkins on the Revd John Newman Harrison, 19th century Vicar of Reigate and benefactor to the library.

If you would like to receive an invitation with further details nearer the time, or to join the mailing list for future Cranston Library news, please email [cranstonlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:cranstonlibrary@gmail.com)

Website: [www.cranstonlibraryreigate.com](http://www.cranstonlibraryreigate.com)

### **Aberystwyth Bibliographical Group Lampeter Symposium 6th-8th September 2013**

The Aberystwyth Bibliographical Group invites members and guests to a symposium to be held at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter, from Friday 6th September to Sunday 8th September. Lampeter is the earliest degree-awarding institution in England and Wales after Oxford and Cambridge, and holds a significant collection of rare books in its library.

#### **Speakers:**

- Dr. Rhiannon Ifans: Welsh ballads
- Caroline Kerkham: William Pamplin (1806-1899) of Soho and Llandderfel, Bala: botanical agent and publisher/bookseller
- Rev. Dr. John Morgan-Guy: New insights on the donations of Thomas Phillips to the library at Lampeter
- Eiluned Rees: The wonderful world of bibliography
- Rev. Dr. David Selwyn: Some thoughts on Lampeter's Foundation and historic collections as a resource for the historian of the book
- Prof. David Thorne: Some place names in the Teifi Valley

There will be a tour on the Saturday afternoon of the historic parts of the College, and items from the Founders' collections will be on display in the Roderic Bowen Library. A book sale will be held during the weekend in aid of the Group's funds.

The cost of the symposium will be approximately £160 per person. This will include en-suite single-room accommodation in the College for two nights, breakfast, lunch, and a three-course dinner with waitress service on both evenings.

See <http://users.aber.ac.uk/das/texts/aberbibgr3.htm> for the booking form.

Please see <http://www.llgc.org.uk/?id=158> for events at the National Library of Wales.

**CILIP Rare Books & Special Collections Group 2013 Conference**  
***The Future of the Past: Digitisation of Rare and Special Materials***

Canterbury Cathedral Lodge, Canterbury  
4th-6th September 2013

The RBSCG conference this year will explore how digitisation can help us bring our collections to a wider audience. Our speakers are from a range of disciplines and will discuss projects as diverse as the digitisation of historic bookbindings, manuscript fragments and objects. The main themes are planning for digitisation, implementing projects, sustainability of projects and public engagement. More info here:

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/get-involved/special-interest-groups/rare-books/events/pages/annual-conference.aspx>

Please note: residential places are now fully booked on this conference. Plenty of day spaces are still available.

**Byron and politics: 'born for opposition'**  
Maughan Library, King's College London, Chancery Lane  
24<sup>th</sup> June – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013

Jointly mounted by the John Murray Archive of the National Library of Scotland and the Foyle Special Collections Library of King's College London, this exhibition brings together original literary and political manuscripts, private letters, printed editions and personal possessions of the poet, many of them never exhibited in public before. It has been conceived to coincide with the [39th International Byron Conference](#), held at King's from 1 to 6 July 2013.

On show are over 50 items from the National Library of Scotland (John Murray Archive) and the Foyle Special Collections Library, along with a number of private loans. Together they throw light on the many aspects of Byron's involvement in politics in Britain and later in Italy

and Greece and on his fascination with the triumphs and failures of his fallen hero, Napoleon Bonaparte.

Exhibits include Byron's own collection of spoils gathered from the battlefield of Waterloo during a visit in 1816; the manuscript and first printed edition of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* Canto III (1816); letters from Byron to his friend John Cam Hobhouse and his publisher John Murray II; an early manuscript draft of his parliamentary speech on Roman Catholic emancipation; and his deadly swordstick, a personal effect which recalls both Byron's lameness and his role as a man of action in the cause of freedom.

For information on access and opening times, see

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/library/collections/archivespec/exhibitions/maughan.aspx>

### **CILIP Library & Information History Group Essay Award**

The Library History Essay Award is an annual prize of £200 for the best essay on library history published in, or pertaining to, the British Isles, within the previous calendar year (2012). It is organized by the Library and Information History Group of CILIP and sponsored by Emerald. An author may put himself/herself forward for the prize. In addition, any member of CILIP may nominate a published essay for consideration. Closing date for entries 30 September. For full details see [www.lihg.org/awards](http://www.lihg.org/awards)

### **Temporary closure of The Queen's College Library, Oxford**

The Queen's College Library, Oxford is now closed for a major refurbishment project. We will not re-open until mid-October 2013 and the Upper Library will remain closed until mid-January 2014. All special collections will be inaccessible until mid-October. After October some items may be available but all manuscripts and Upper Library books will remain inaccessible until January 2014.

For further information please see <http://www.queens.ox.ac.uk/library/>