Editorial
Digitisation in the UL – past, present and future
Preservation in the Cairo Genizah
Lines of Thought – an anniversary exhibition
The Scientific manuscripts and archival collections of Cambridge University Library: a succinct overview
Celebrating 600 years: outreach events and initiatives from Cambridge University Library
Timelines of Thought
Reminiscences
Times remembered – the University Library over fifty years and more
People
In the next issue
Contact the Editors

This issue celebrates the 600th anniversary of the Cambridge University Library (universally known as the UL). The UL grew from a collection of 122 manuscripts stored in book chests in 1416 to a collection of 8 million items today. In this issue Huw Jones looks at how digitisation has led to the democratisation of information and the even more exciting things on the horizon. Ben Outhwaite describes the famed Genizah Collection we are so privileged to have. The desire to preserve everything, however trivial it may seem, is what makes the Genizah unique. He adds that it is something that the UL shares and it is a principle that pays rich dividends in research. Emily Dourish talks about mounting the Lines of Thought exhibition which will kick start the anniversary celebrations. The exhibition proudly displays some of the Library’s celebrated holdings on six themes – communication, gravity, genetics, faith, literature and anatomy. Adam Perkins describes the enviable collection of scientific manuscripts which includes the prized Darwin Papers.

Lizz Waller-Edwards has much to say about outreach events being held to celebrate the anniversary – some of which include liaising with the public libraries and taking the collection to the public. Lucy Welch describes the creation of a timeline to highlight the significant events of the Library. Due to the sheer wealth of information she often had to be quite ruthless about what to leave out. We also have a couple of reminiscences – from a former undergraduate turned librarian and a retired librarian. We end with the People section.

The role of the UL is changing. Its collections need to be visible and usable in the rapidly digitising world. But it will always remain one of the greatest resources of the University. In the words of Lawrence Clark Powell, former University Librarian of UCLA Library – “No university in the world has ever risen to greatness without a correspondingly great library ...”
turns up at Charlemagne’s court. In some ways we are just using the latest technology to achieve the same purpose – high resolution digital photographs replacing parchment and ink, and the internet replacing the sending out of manuscripts on long journeys by land and sea.

One of the primary aims of our digitisation programme is to use this latest technology to increase access to the Library’s special collections material. From 3,000 year old Chinese oracle bones through to the handwritten notes of Isaac Newton and Charles Darwin - from the earliest known copy of the Ten Commandments to the wartime diaries of Siegfried Sassoon, our holdings span the ages and the globe. Some of the items are world famous, but large parts of our collections are undiscovered or little known – a recent project to catalogue our Sanskrit manuscripts found 600 more manuscripts than expected, with unique texts among those brought to light. And in our work on the Board of Longitude archive we discovered an astonishing letter from William Bligh apologising somewhat passive-aggressively for the loss of the ship’s timekeeper in the mutiny on the Bounty. One thing all of the collections have in common is that until recently they were only accessible to a small number of academics. This began to change in 2011 with the launch of Cambridge Digital Library, and just over three years later we are turning the old, restricted access model on its head with over 25,000 unique or rare items available online, to anyone, anywhere in the world, for free.

Our basic model is to take massive, superb quality pictures of the material, wrap them up in expert description, and try to put the whole package a maximum of two clicks from a Google search. The result being that a school child who has been learning about Isaac Newton can search for “Isaac Newton Notebook” and in seconds be reading Newton’s handwritten notes from his own time as a student. This democratisation of information is a very powerful model – we don’t just want to extend the audience for our collections, we want to open them up to whole new audiences, with completely different opinions and insights. Which is not to underplay the Digital Library’s significance to research – we have seen that around 18 months after we put a collection online there is a significant spike in academic publication on that topic. The pattern we see is that when we make a collection public it receives a lot of attention, then people start talking/writing/tweeting about it, which draws more attention, more conversation and the whole thing goes on in a kind of virtuous circle. The transition from hidden treasure to public resource is immediate and extreme – and it’s very exciting to ‘press the button’ and see the results!

The Digital Library is very much a collaborative endeavour. Within the Library we rely on the help and specialist knowledge of curators, conservators, reading room staff and fetchers on a day-to-day basis. In the wider world, we collaborate with academics, subject experts and institutions on a national and international scale. Our current Darwin Manuscripts project is a case in point, with the images being produced here in Cambridge, and the descriptions and transcriptions of the material by a team at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Unfortunately, Skype limits the opportunities for transatlantic trips, but it’s still pretty amazing to see material produced so far apart come together so seamlessly on the site. We are always eager to work with anyone who has an interest in our collections, and it’s this blend of expertise, enthusiasm and technical know-how which makes the Digital Library such a rich and useful resource.

Of course, technology is always moving, and we’re already looking at the next developments in digital photography, in particular multi-spectral and 3D imaging. The first results of our experiments in these areas should be coming onto the Digital Library soon – so watch this space!

Huw Jones
Digital Content Specialist
Cambridge University Library
PRESERVATION IN THE CAIRO GENIZAH

The Taylor-Schechter Genizah Collection sits in Cambridge University Library’s manuscripts stacks, neatly organised by class mark and sealed in plastic. While the removal of more than 190,000 manuscript fragments from the old Islamic capital of Egypt, Fustat, to 19th-century Cambridge owes much to the initiative and industry of one determined Cambridge scholar, Solomon Schechter, the thousand-year pre-history of the Collection is founded on one overriding concern, a concern that the UL can understand and share – an almost excessive respect for the written word.

In origin a genizah is a repository for sacred writings, texts containing the name of God that should not be left to idly rot or fall into the hands of unscrupulous people who might profane them. The Cairo Genizah was a two-storey storage room in the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Egypt that filled up with such discarded texts, deposited by the Jewish communities of Fustat and Cairo over a thousand years. Even on a Sabbath, when an observant Jew may do no work – and the strictures against work are rigorous: work, for instance, includes putting water out for doves (but not geese) or carrying enough onion leaves to the size of a single dried fig, - it is imperative to take action and save holy texts. This clear exception to the strict laws of the Sabbath puts it on a par with saving human life, another type of ‘work’ that is not only exempt from the Sabbath restrictions, but an imperative on all observant Jews.

The evidence of this zeal for the preservation of holy writ lies stacked in the University Library, row after row of black plastic ring-binders containing tens of thousands of Bibles, prayer books and other manifestations of the word of God. Preserved here are, at least, twenty-five thousand pages of Bibles, ranging from calligraphic leaves of model codices — many the equal of the famed Aleppo Codex or Leningrad B19a — to the poorly written, badly constructed quires of self-copied Bibles, whose owners lacked the means to acquire a professional-written copy, but nevertheless aspired to Bible ownership. While these may be aesthetically challenged, and of questionable value to textual criticism of the Old Testament, they are a gold mine for the medieval interpretation of the text and for the different pronunciation traditions of Hebrew in the Middle Ages.

Such texts, even when of poor workmanship, are to be expected, given the laws as set out in the Mishnah. What is more surprising, and what makes the Genizah unique, is the propensity of the medieval inhabitants of cosmopolitan Fustat to inter, alongside their Bibles and prayer books, their personal papers, their letters, their poetic compositions, their ephemera.

A small letter, written on Egyptian rag paper, around 1090 CE, in a clear, Byzantine Hebrew hand: ‘To the honourable, great, holy, glorious crown and diadem, to our master and our teacher Eli the Charity Administrator, the Trustee, the wise and the discerning, the righteous, the pure, the upright man who has done me many favours since my arrival. I, his blind servant,’ fast every Monday and Thursday, and it has been a year since I last ate meat. I pray for you and for your son, master Efraim, day and night that God may grant you the opportunity to see male children from his loins and to delight in them. Amen. Your servant presents his supplication before the Lord and before you to act kindly with me by holding a collection for me since my wife and my children, who are due to come up from Alexandria, have written to me to say that they lack the cost of the boat ride. So do me a kindness this time too and make this last kindness greater than the first ‘and decide on a matter, and it will be established for you, and light will shine on your ways’ (Job 22:28). Do not neglect your servant. ‘Do not let the oppressed return in shame’ (Psalms 74:21). And may the God of Israel give you a good old age and a good end, and may you spend your days in prosperity and your years in delight. May your wellbeing increase forever. Amen.’

Now, the sender of this letter to the administrator of the public charity would have had no idea that people would take an interest in his words more than 900 years later. This letter, and thousands of others like it, is a goldmine for our knowledge of life in the medieval Middle East, showing at first-hand how life was lived in the lands of Islam. It’s full of initially
innocuous, but fascinating detail, and is one of hundreds of begging letters, a major genre in a community with a large indigent immigrant population. Such correspondence, coming from the poorest end of the social spectrum, rarely finds its way into archives and never in such a pristine and direct manner. Yet the Genizah has preserved this and many others like it: why? Is it that it invokes the name of God, an inevitability in most medieval correspondence, or that it quotes the Bible, similarly a regular occurrence in all but the barest of texts? Or is it that the Jewish community of Fustat having, at the back of their minds and drummed into them from their principal books of law, a Preservation Policy not unlike the University Library's own, felt they had no choice but to store away all pieces of writing generated in their community, no matter how ephemeral, innocuous or seemingly insignificant?

* Did he write the letter himself? If so, it’s quite an achievement, being blind, but the handwriting is known from a number of other begging letters, so it appears to be the work of a scribe who worked pro bono for the indigent Byzantine community in Fustat.

Ben Outhwaite
Head of the Genizah Research Unit
Cambridge University Library

LINES OF THOUGHT: AN ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION

As you will be aware, the University Library is celebrating its 600th birthday in 2016 with an exciting programme of events and activities. Launching in March is the anniversary exhibition Lines of Thought: Discoveries that Changed the World. The multi-disciplinary and multi-media display traces the ways in which the Library’s collections both reflect and have been central to some of the greatest intellectual, cultural and scientific activities in human history.

The first mention of a University Library comes in two wills proved in March 1416, those of William Hunden and William Loring. We are very fortunate to have been permitted to borrow the original manuscript containing Loring’s will from Lambeth Palace to open the story at the very beginning. We are also borrowing an early example of a medieval book chest, used to store books and other valuables in the very early days of the Library, from the Old Schools.

The main body of the exhibition covers six concepts at the heart of the lived human experience; Communication, Gravity, Genetics, Faith, Literature, and Anatomy. The Library has exceptional holdings relevant to all of these concepts, and the items selected show the development of ideas from over 4000 years ago to the present day. We are also inviting visitors to contribute by tweeting using the exhibition hashtag #ULLinesofThought, so that their tweets will become part of the virtual exhibition. The physical display includes 85 items and for the first time the exhibition extends into the Entrance Hall, where Loring’s will and the medieval chest will be on show. The idea behind the exhibition was to be more than just ‘treasures’; it traces the linear development of the six concepts from the earliest items in the Library to work being undertaken in those areas in the twenty-first century. The theme of Gravity begins not as might be expected with Newton (though he does, of course, feature prominently); we start with the revolutionary and controversial 1543 De revolutionibus by Copernicus in which he suggested that it was around the sun, not the earth, that all visible planets revolved. The exhibition traces the reception of this idea through other great thinkers, and continues to the present day with cosmological research undertaken in the University by Jocelyn Bell Burnell and Stephen Hawking. The LIGO observation of gravitational waves came just too late to be included in the exhibition, unfortunately…

The full virtual exhibition has a total of 140 items; this is a much larger undertaking than any previous exhibition, and we have been enabled
through the generous support of the Howard and Abby Milstein Foundation to provide this content to viewers around the world. In addition we are mounting iPads within the exhibition space so visitors can interact with both the physical and digital content at the same time.

It’s been an absolute privilege to work on this exhibition, assisted ably by a team of specialist curators who know these collections like the back of their hands. They are Jacky Cox, Will Hale, Anna Jones, Suzanne Paul, Alison Pearn, Adam Perkins and John Wells. As well as this curatorial expertise, the Library is hugely fortunate to have a highly skilled in-house team of conservators whose imagination and willingness to experiment grow with each exhibition. Ten years ago we mounted objects flat in cardboard cradles, as was the standard in library exhibitions. Thanks to the technical skills of the Conservation team we now display objects in far more exciting and innovative ways: books show multiple openings; items are upright so viewers can see contents and bindings simultaneously; and the many layers of the unique pop-up manikin figure in Vesalius’s Epitome can be seen separately [see online version]. Behind the scenes of an exhibition there are also many other staff involved, from the photographers who produce the beautiful images that will decorate the walls and publicity material to the carpenters who are mounting exhibits on the walls outside the cases for the first time. Last but not least I’m very grateful to the team of volunteers who are hosting visits every week for the whole six months of the exhibition. Lines of Thought opens on 11 March and runs until 30 September, and will kick off the 600th anniversary in spectacular style. See you there!

Emily Dourish
Deputy Head of Rare Books
Cambridge University Library

THE SCIENTIFIC MANUSCRIPTS AND ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS
OF CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY: A SUCCINCT OVER-VIEW.

The University of Cambridge has for centuries been a pre-eminent place of scientific learning and endeavour and it follows that its University Library reflects the University’s status. As Isaac Newton is our most celebrated natural philosopher and mathematician it is not surprising that the central event in the development of our collections of scientific manuscripts was the transfer made to the University in 1872 by the 5th Earl of Portsmouth of Newton’s mathematical and scientific papers. Lord Portsmouth wrote that his purpose was to advance the interests of science by placing these Papers at the service of the University. Though in 1872 he made it clear that he was lending the papers so that they could be assessed for scientific importance he signified, in respect of all but personal papers, his intention that he was willing to make them over to the University and this transfer was in effect completed in 1888 with the publication by the University Press of the first catalogue to what has since been known as The Portsmouth Collection.

Though not the first accession of scientific material, the amount and substance of the Portsmouth Collection has been the kernel around which have accrued the papers of many other major figures in world science. The donation directly to the Library in 1936 of the papers of Sir William Thomson, who accepted Britain’s first ‘scientific ennoblement’ as Lord Kelvin, by Sir Joseph Larmor is one of the most important examples of these accessions. It typified and by example arguably gave rise to very important later accruals:

• In 1963 the Department of Geology (since subsumed under the Department of Earth Sciences) transferred the papers of Adam Sedgwick (1785-1873), one of the founders of the science of geology.

• This was followed by a remarkable tranche of transfers of the papers of some of the ‘founding fathers’ of 19th century and early modern physics made by the Cavendish Laboratory in May 1964:
Sir George Gabriel Stokes (1819-1903).
James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879).
Sir Joseph John Thomson (1856-1940).
Ernest Rutherford who became Lord Rutherford (1871-1937).

- In 1970 the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology transferred the large body of the multi-faceted papers of the pioneering anthropologist Alfred Cort Haddon (1855-1940).

In a gesture of the highest importance and generosity, by a donation directly comparable to Lord Portsmouth’s of some seventy years before and with the assistance of The Pilgrim Trust, in 1942 the principal body of Charles Darwin papers were donated to the University Library by Charles’s direct descendants. The Darwin papers are now the most read of all our scientific collections consisting, as it now does after many further accruals from the family, by donation and purchase, of more than 95% of all the surviving manuscripts of Charles Darwin.

Additionally, and to demonstrate that the University and the Library are eager to acquire important new collections in science and the history of science, not twenty years ago the Macclesfield Collection of further papers of Isaac Newton and other 17th and 18th century scientists was, after a fund-raising appeal, purchased at considerable expense.

In all, the Curator for these collections in the Department of Manuscripts in the Library deals with the papers of over two hundred individuals including those of mathematicians, geneticists, engineers, ornithologists, meteorologists, botanists, astronomers, archaeologists, physicians, psychologists and ethnologists.

A secondary impact that has been made on the Library’s scientific collections is in the accrual of institutional archives such as the Cambridge Scientific Instrument Company’s papers and parts of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society’s holdings. Of greatest significance amongst this class of records are the Royal Greenwich Observatory Archives, transferred to the Library 1989-1990 when the parent body moved to the Madingley Road site adjacent to the Institute of Astronomy from Herstmonceux Castle in East Sussex. This permanent deposit was made principally by reason of the associative strength of the Library’s scientific collections.

This is not to ignore other associated collections within the University, notably the University Archives housed in the Library in which are held the administrative records of the scientific departments themselves, the Archives Centre at Churchill College and the Cambridge college collections, for instance at Trinity, St John’s and King’s Colleges.

Taken together with the collections of rare books in the University Library and the University’s departmental libraries the wealth of unique and special material in scientific scholarship is unrivalled and we are visited by scholars from world-wide locations to study in the many fields of research represented by these papers.

Adam Perkins
Curator of Scientific Manuscripts
Cambridge University Library

CELEBRATING 600 YEARS: OUTREACH EVENTS AND INITIATIVES FROM CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

In March 2016 Cambridge University Library will celebrate its 600th anniversary. This provides a unique opportunity to raise the profile of the Library amongst audiences who haven’t used (or even heard of) the Library before, and to consider what the UL can offer: to individuals, to schools and to community groups. There are also challenges: to date, the UL hasn’t had a dedicated Outreach or Education co-ordinator, and the public events we have offered are linked to University festivals such as Open Cambridge and...
the Festival of Ideas, so starting to foster contacts from scratch can seem a daunting prospect.

The Library’s major exhibition, Lines of Thought, which will run from 11 March – 30 September 2016 is a great place to start. Access to the Milstein Exhibition Centre is free and open to everyone, and this year information within the display will be supplemented by a free publication, a series of workshops for young people aged 7-11 during the summer holidays, and a self-guided trail for families. There are also opportunities for people to interact with the exhibition by submitting their own ‘lines of thought’ via social media.

As part of the celebrations there is also a drive to take collections from the UL out to members of the public, rather than rely on people visiting the Library in person. For the first time the UL will partner with Central Library in the Grand Arcade to host a small display of material within the Cambridgeshire Collections area on the third floor. Whilst Lines of Thought will showcase some of the most iconic treasures, the Central Library display provides an opportunity to highlight the diversity of the UL’s collections, for example, by focussing on material amassed during World War One, including postcards, novels and training manuals.

Work with Cambridgeshire public libraries will also extend to a series of 19 sessions for EngAGE groups across the county highlighting “unexpected treasures” from the UL’s twentieth century collections. EngAGE group talks are aimed at people aged 65 or over and provide an opportunity for participants to view material from the UL, including women’s magazines (from the 1930s-1980s), baby books (dating from 1903) and cookery manuals, to find out about 600 years of library history and ask any questions they may have.

The UL’s Conservation team – in co-ordination with Cambridgeshire libraries – will be running a series of heritage book making classes at public library venues across the year. The team have offered similar events for the Science Festival 2014 and to visiting school groups, both of which have proved to be very popular. These classes will enable participants to find out about heritage book making techniques, use authentic tools and materials, such as parchment, and create a book to keep. For younger audiences who would like to be involved in a craft activity, the UL will also be offering a ‘make your own papyrus scroll’ activity at Linton Children’s Book Festival in May and at the Big Weekend on Parker’s Piece in July. It isn’t often that librarians get to work under canvas, but this is a wonderful opportunity to raise the profile of the UL amongst family audiences who may not have considered a visit to the Library’s collections, in person or online.

We are delighted to have been awarded Heritage Lottery Funding to support and facilitate many of these initiatives. The funding will enable staff to travel to venues outside of Cambridge city, to deliver engaging workshops and activities and to evaluate these initiatives. Above all, we hope this is just the beginning. Whilst the 600th anniversary has provided a catalyst for starting outreach and education work at the UL, the contacts fostered, the expertise shared, and the activities enjoyed will hopefully continue beyond 2016.

Lizz Edwards-Waller
Former 600th Events & Outreach Co-Ordinator
Cambridge University Library

TIMELINES OF THOUGHT

As part of the University Library’s 600th anniversary celebrations, staff members were invited to come up with projects and ways to celebrate this anniversary. Having just been across to the English Faculty Library for a Librarians in Training event demonstrating the Library’s excellent use of timeline software, I had a bit of a brainwave and proposed that the UL have its own timeline, showcasing significant events that have occurred through its (very long) life. The response to this idea was very positive, and I was asked to take the project on and create a timeline.
The timeline was intended to explore and reveal the Library’s history by highlighting significant events, donations and collections across the centuries. The natural starting point was one of the highlights of the upcoming Lines of Thought exhibition; the first mention of a University Library in Cambridge that gives us our 600 years, in the wills of William Loring and William Hunden. The Historical Sketch penned by J.C.T. Oates (http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/history/) provided some excellent information, although the details did have to be trimmed. One of the biggest challenges proved to be deciding what could and couldn’t be fit in – quite a lot can happen in 600 years. With the timeline we were limited in how many entries could be used, so we had to be quite ruthless at times with what we left out. There was some fascinating detail regarding the subject biases of the collections; perhaps predictably, more than half the volumes in the earliest surviving library catalogue were dedicated to theology and religion.

However, some centuries proved to be more challenging than others to highlight, with the 1800s being a particularly difficult time period to find high points. However, one of the most fun parts of creating this timeline was finding out fun facts about the Library that I had never heard before! For example, the Library’s first rule turns out to date from 1471, which banned unaccompanied Undergraduates from entering the Library after they had abused its contents. I also learned a lot more about the history of legal deposit, something that I’ve spoken about quite often during tours but now really feel I understand. And, in the relatively sparse 1800s I found out about the Cockerell competition and the long-lasting contributions of Henry Bradshaw. The 1900s and 2000s were full of exciting collections such as Francis Jenkinson’s ambitious and successful endeavour to collect World War I periodicals, pamphlets and ephemera, and the formation of the world-famous Taylor-Schechter Genizah Project. It was also essential to us when creating the timeline that the Affiliated Libraries, and the affiliation process, be highlighted. One of the most rewarding aspects of working at the University Library is collaborating with fellow librarians around the University. It was a little challenging to find a picture though, so I ended up creating a collage! It was wonderful seeing how many diverse libraries there are here (and I found myself wondering if there are more pubs or libraries in Cambridge).

Assisting with this project were two excellent colleagues, Lizz Edwards-Waller and Liam Austin, who volunteered to help me out. We were also helped along the way by invaluable contributions from our colleagues in the Library; Jacky Cox, Francesca Harper, Andrew Corrigan and Ben Outhwaite. While this timeline ends with the 600th anniversary, it was illuminating seeing how the collections have changed through the centuries. The University of Cambridge in 2016 is very different to the University of 1416, but the enduring presence of a library throughout the centuries says a lot for the continuing importance of all libraries.

Lucy Welch
600th Events & Outreach Co-Ordinator
Cambridge University Library

REMINISCENCES

If it had not been for the fact that my Director of Studies took me, and my five fellow Historians from Churchill, around the UL, in the first week of MT in 1986, I’m not sure I would have dared set foot in the building. Truly, a formidable massif of masonry, surmounted by a veritable Dark Tower of Despair.

The Issue-Desk staff were emphatically not furry-and-lovely in 1986. Rather, their mission, as sulphurous dragons, was to keep little undergraduates in order (and, with the benefit of thirty years’ hindsight, I’m not at all sure they weren’t right).

Having submitted one’s card to close scrutiny (no automatic turnstiles in 1986), one ascended the grand stair, to the catalogue hall. Which contained
no less than six computer catalogue terminals. (I am reliably informed that one could connect to the catalogue remotely, in 1986, via a telnet connection...but I knew nothing of such technological wizardry). Admittedly, you could only search online for books published from 1978 onwards, but nonetheless, this was very exciting. Why, the computers’ very appearance suggested Servalan plotting intergalactic domination. Any book published pre-1978 was located using (1) the great green guard-books, and (2) the glazed panel which cross-referred classmarks to Library locations. Ah, the ‘ker-thump’ of a guard-book on its padded lectern, the entries pasted in, scrapbook-style, the pencils dangling on pieces of string...Proustian madeleines of my distant past.

Of course, one frequently mixed up one’s Norths and Souths, resulting in long walks; discovered that North and South Front only connected on floors 1, 4 and 6 (and that 4 was locked on Saturdays); and, that if one descended in a lift too far in South Wing, one might pop out amid a congeries of cataloguers. The art-deco lifts offered other excitements...the cabin was open on one side, the lift-shaft wall sliding past as you ascended. Possibly ‘Health-and-Safety’ was somewhat deficient in 1986...

Accessibility? What stuff! No undergraduate was allowed to borrow until their third year; the Library closed at 12.45 on Saturday; requests for Reading Room material could only be placed by completing a form in duplicate (or possibly triplicate)...which was only available in the Reading Room, which didn’t open until 9.30. By the time the book arrived, it would be 10.30, and we’d be in the Tea-Room, anyway (see below). Incidentally, no undergraduate of my acquaintance ever dared enter the dreaded West Room. It is pleasing to hear of undergraduates of today who won’t go there either – it’s always gratifying when a Great Tradition goes on and on.

One need not dwell on the bookstacks, which have remained practically unchanged to this day, and I daresay since 1932... the egg-timer light-switches and the tubular radiators. All the building lacks is King Kong climbing the Tower.

‘Electronic resources’ being unheard-of, we sat in the Wings and Fronts, taking notes by hand from each book or periodical volume, before (like worker-bees moving on to the next dusty flower), taking up another volume. Incidentally, since we automatically condensed and re-wrote when we made our notes, and since we wrote our essays from our notes, (not from the books), plagiarism was unheard-of. But naturally, all this brain-work worked up a tremendous appetite (remember, I was a growing boy), so at 10.25 the stacks emptied, as we descended to the Tea-Room.

This was located one floor below the Catalogue Hall, with French windows which (in summer) opened onto a grassy courtyard, with a magnolia tree in the middle. Hot fruit scones and cheese scones were piled on two platters...ladies of a certain age staffed the counter...smokers were shut up in a yellowed glass cabinet at one end, along with a framed map of Roman Britain. I remember one summer’s day in 1988, sitting outside with my supervisor, discussing my ill-fated undergraduate dissertation – truly, I was not cut out to be an academic. What I did not realize for another seven years was that I was destined to be a librarian. Sometimes you can’t see what’s under your very nose! For that matter, I had no idea that my undergraduate days would one day become a Period Piece, as much ‘of their time’ as the days of Gwen Raverat’s youth.

Stephen Howe
Assistant Librarian
Classical Faculty Library

TIMES REMEMBERED - THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY OVER FIFTY YEARS AND MORE

“Tell me, who wrote Gray’s elegy in a Country Churchyard?” So ran one of the questions I was asked by Mr Creswick, the University Librarian, when I was interviewed for a post of Graduate trainee assistant early in 1966. “Thomas Gray” I naturally replied, and the interview continued, HRC pausing only to throw a cough sweet out of the fourth floor window to
some hapless hacking reader on the steps below. I began to warm to him, as I had already warmed to the Library itself when in October 1963 as a first year Girtonian, and (naturally) wearing my gown, I had crept in, past the magnificent and much-loved eighteenth century portraits adorning the Entrance Hall, up to the catalogue room.

I realised even then that this was the University’s unique and magnificent treasure-house of learning: its mighty reading room still evokes for me an awe comparable only to King’s College Chapel. The building was less than thirty years old. Every detail, down to the door handles, said Mr Creswick, had been personally designed by the architect, Giles Gilbert Scott. He had wisely positioned the tables in the Reading Room to run from East to West, not, as they now do, from North to South, to make best use of both the morning and afternoon light, pouring in first from one side and then the other as the day wore on. The linoleum panels (still to be seen outside the stone stairs on the way to the Tea Room) were the only floor coverings. Their distinctive smell especially on a Monday morning, was similar to that of the buttermilk soap provided in the washrooms. Yet it could be cold, draughty and dark: electric lighting was minimal.

During my year’s traineeship I worked as a fetcher in the Anderson Room, in those days the reading room for Manuscripts, Rare and “select” Books, the last now fetched to the West room. The room had a distinguished readership: frequented not only by Senior Scholars of the University from Queenie Leavis to Dom David Knowles, but by PhD students such as our currently best-known feminist, or a future director of the Tate Gallery, with others about to distinguish themselves as art historians and writers. I also found myself meeting a growing company of young library officer staff, many of a scholarly bent, round the Staff Room Coffee table which I was privileged to join and subsequently re-join when, after three years’ absence I came back in 1970 to work on the medieval manuscripts. I still value those friendships after many years.

Mr Creswick’s successor as Librarian was Mr E.B. Ceadel, a very different personality, and a born administrator. He expanded the scope of the library and its staff. But while staff increased, the old-fashioned sharp distinction between Assistants and Officers remained, and graduates were fewer. Those Assistants promoted to Officers could, and did take their MA degrees when they became eligible, a privilege far more prized then than now. Notable among these were the late Peter Gautrey, who had begun with the junior rank of “boy” aged 16 and became an internationally known authority on the Charles Darwin Collection. For twenty years we shared an office frequented by every known Darwinian scholar, aspiring or established.

Further afield, there were some really distinguished members of the senior staff. I remember with gratitude the kindnesses of Arthur Owen, Keeper of Manuscripts and his wife Dorothy, a formidable curator in ecclesiastical archives, and eventually Keeper of the University Archives in succession to the equally formidable Miss Heather Peek. I found Mr J.C.T. Oates, Keeper of Rare Books and eventually Deputy Librarian and a Fellow of the British Academy to boot, fairly terrifying. Not so his gentler friend and colleague Frederick John Norton, head of the Foreign Department, who had worked at Bletchley during the war and was well known, not least in Spain, as an authority on early Spanish printing, in recognition of which he was invested with the Grand Cross of the Order of Alfonso X the Wise by the Spanish Ambassador, on behalf of the King of Spain.

These are all sadly dead as are many others who could be named with them. Look inside one of the elegant volumes in the catalogue room, and see what a beautiful job the University Press made of printing entries for books acquired in the 1950s and earlier; an evocation of a gracious past.

Jayne Ringrose
Deputy Keeper of Manuscripts (Retired)
Cambridge University Library
PEOPLE

Pembroke College, Trinity Hall and Peterhouse have jointly hired Adriana Celmare as their new Rare Books cataloguer.

At Murray Edwards, Samantha Percival has replaced Jan Waller, who retired on 31st October 2016, as Assistant Librarian. Lizzy Ennion-Smith, the Archivist and Records Manager, will begin her maternity leave on April 6th.

Girton College Library is pleased to welcome Catherine Ascough as part-time Library Assistant and Naomi Sturges as part-time Archives Assistant. Stephanie Skene has left Robinson College Library to return to Northumberland.

Catherine Sutherland, the part-time Deputy Librarian of the Pepys Library at Magdalene College, will carry on in her role on a full-time basis from Lent Term 2016. She has been awarded a Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia Scholarship to attend a week-long course at the Rare Books School in the United States.

Adam Crothers, Library Assistant at St John’s College, has had a collection of his poems, titled Several deer, published by Carcanet.

We congratulate Liz Osman, Librarian of Homerton College, on her marriage in November. Her surname remains Osman.

The Architecture and History of Art Library welcomed a new member of staff on the 11th January, when Sophie Fletcher joined as a Library Assistant. Sophie previously worked in the libraries of Emmanuel College, the Philosophy Faculty and the Cambridge Theological Federation.

Jillian Wilkinson retired from the Divinity Library after 12 years; we will miss so much more than her supplies of chocolates. Jane Thorpe is to leave the Divinity Library at the end of Lent Term 2016; she had been working as a Library Assistant for more than 5 years. We will miss her keen eye for book conservation, and for spotting annotations in books.

Clare Trowell is the new Marshall Librarian at the Faculty of Economics. Clare was previously a Faculty Librarian at the University of Sheffield. She will be working to provide a subject-based library service to support teaching, learning and research in the Faculty of Economics. She looks forward to contributing to the broader strategic and policy development of the Library through the membership of the Humanities and Social Sciences group of affiliated libraries.

Judith Brown has taken over as Library Information Supervisor from Diane FitzMaurice at the Department of Psychology. Diane is now a Teaching Assistant at Mayfield School. Some time ago, Judith worked at the Faculty of Philosophy and at Sidney Sussex College libraries but for the past 8 years has been engaged with school librarianship. Most recently she was at Impington Village College where she managed their library and archive service.

Tyndale House has welcomed back CULIB editor Kate Arhel after her maternity leave. Kate will continue as Assistant Librarian on a job share basis with Dr Rachel Johnson, who so capably covered her maternity leave. Rachel was formerly the Research Librarian (retired) at the University of Worcester, and is still Associate Researcher with the International Forum for Research into Children’s Literature, University of Worcester.

The Whipple was very pleased to welcome back Dawn Moutrey from maternity leave in January 2016. Dawn is now working 3 days a week; Clare Matthews, who provided Dawn’s cover last year, is staying on to cover the remaining 2 days and also spends a further 2 days a week on special collections projects.
The Fitzwilliam Museum Reference Library has welcomed Suzan Griffiths as a temporary part-time project assistant to work on a collection management project.

Peter Lund joined the Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI) as Librarian on 1st August 2015. He was formerly Research Support Manager at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. Sarah Middle, Senior Library Assistant, left to take over as Institutional Repository Manager at the UL in November 2015. Martin French will succeed Sarah in the post of Senior Library Assistant following success in the recruitment process this month.

After 14 years of dedicated service Xiaohong Zhao left the Engineering Library in September 2015 to relocate to sunnier California; her knowledge of the library and its internal workings are greatly missed. Samantha Percival also left in September 2015 to go to the bigger and brighter post of Assistant Librarian at the Rosemary Murray Library at Murray Edwards College. In November 2015 Mehves Dignum, who had worked temporarily at several Cambridge based libraries, became one of the two permanent Library Services Administrators on the team. Engineering also welcomed Kirsten Lamb as their new Assistant Research Support Librarian in November, she comes to them from Trinity College Library.

The Information Services Manager, Chris Michaelides, will be retiring from her leadership of the Library at the Cambridge University Careers Service in March 2016. She took up her post in November 2000. During her time at the Careers Service she made the printed and online resources of the Careers Service richer and more useful for clients and staff. She was a strong supporter for her staff, and will be missed.

Congratulations to Emily Dourish who is now Deputy Head of Rare Books, and to Suzanne Paul who is the new Keeper of Manuscripts and University Archives.

The Office of Scholarly Communication is delighted to welcome Claire Sewell to the new post of Research Skills Coordinator. Claire will take ownership of the Supporting Researchers in the 21st century programme and will organise training for library staff in the area of scholarly communication. She will also be looking at staff professional development. Sarah Middle is the new Repository Manager for Apollo (formerly DSpace@Cambridge). As well as managing the day to day aspects of uploading and curating several thousand digital items, Sarah will be part of the team guiding the repository through integration with other University systems. They also welcomed Agustina Martinez who will be the Repository Integration Manager.

The library welcomed Mark Purcell who joins the Senior Leadership Team as Head of Research Content and Strategy. Before coming to Cambridge, Mark was the Libraries Curator to the National Trust for fifteen years. We are happy to welcome Andrea Crossman who is the Executive Assistant and PA to the University Librarian and Deputy Librarian. Welcome to Kimberley Greed who has joined as the Friends Co-ordinator.

The Digital Library bid farewell to Antonietta Casciano. The Digital Library Program bid farewell to Rekha Rajan and Lei Zhang. Wojciech Giel has joined Digital Services as Senior Technical Specialist. Oladeji Famakinwa has joined the LMS Program as Senior Systems Librarian.

Journal Co-ordination bid farewell to Catrin Dean and Operations bid farewell to Sonia Krajičiova. Kim Phillips joins the Genizah Research Unit as their new Research Assistant.

Andrew Alexander is on secondment to the Judge Business School from the Map Department. His initial appointment was as Information and Library Project Co-ordinator but following the move of Georgina Cronin to Betty & Gordon Moore Library as Research Librarian, Andrew has taken up the post of Deputy Information & Library Services Manager. In the meantime, the Map Department is very pleased to welcome Liam Austin from Reader Services.
The Reader Services Desk welcomes Amber Rockwell and Julian Fuller, both on secondment from the Rare Books department. They also welcomed back Hannah Haines after her maternity leave.

Sadly Lizz Edwards Waller (Operations Co-ordinator - 600th Anniversary Outreach & Events) who had been busy organising the events for the anniversary had to leave due to relocation. Operations were happy to welcome Lucy Welch who quickly assumed the role.

Building Services welcomed Simon Halliday as their new Building Services Supervisor. He had previously managed a team of Custodians at the History faculty and prior to that he was Duty Manager at the University Centre for several years. In addition to his solid training in compliance and standards, Simon has a particular interest in carbon reduction initiatives and will be helping us achieve our carbon reduction priorities for the main UL building over the coming years.

Kristin Williams takes over as Head of Japanese Section. She has a PhD from Harvard University. She has catalogued rare Japanese books at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and has also worked as a reference assistant in Boston College’s main library.

Kathryn James is the new Munby Fellow. She is Curator for Early Modern Books and Manuscripts & the Osborn Collection at Yale’s Beinecke Library. She is also a Lecturer in the Yale History Department and the co-chair of the Yale Program in the History of the Book. Her project for the Munby fellowship is entitled “Reading the Dissolution: Loss and the English Imagination”. In a series of five case studies, the project explores the long response to the dissolution of the monastic collections, and the ways in which loss, real and imagined, has been a method of canon formation in English Literature.

Sadly the Bindery department is now closed. We were very sorry to bid farewell to Philip Donnex, Sabrina Gill, Barbara Gill, Peter Kiley, Stephanie Prythergh-Hemphill, Louise Murden, Joe Rusin, Barry Smith, Julie Smith, Ian Turner and Penelope Whitehead, many of them had been working here for many years.

Sophie Jaggard retired after 45 years in the UL. She joined the Duplicate Catalogue department which took care of the guardbook catalogue. They were like giant scrapbooks with catalogue records pasted in, and heavily used at that time. The guardbook volumes needed constant repair. And she was later in charge of Catalogue maintenance. When the guardbook catalogue was closed, Sophie joined the Retrospective Conversion department, supervising the scanning of the guardbook and the conversion of those images into 1.3m catalogue records. She later joined the Tower Project, which catalogued all the books in the tower published between 1800 and 1925. There she took responsibility for cataloguing the very smallest sized books. When the Tower Project ended Sophie moved to the English Cataloguing department, cataloguing and classifying the most recently published books. Certainly a richly varied working life!

Noboru Koyama retired after 30 years as Head of the Japanese Department. At the time of his appointment, the Japanese and Chinese Departments shared an office on North Front Three. As well as putting the Japanese collection in order and vigorously acquiring new accessions, Noboru made excellent use of his personal contacts to further the interests of the Library. This was fortunate for the Library. One of the regular summer visitors who came to use the Japanese books turned out not only to be a teacher at his old university in Japan, but also the wife of Mr Tadao Aoi, owner of a well-known chain of department stores. It was she who persuaded her husband to provide the funds which enabled the building of the Pavilion which bears his name and now houses under one roof, all the Japanese and Chinese books, hitherto scattered in various parts of the Library, as well as offices for the respective staffs. Thankfully we have not seen the last of him, as he has already registered as a reader and will be coming often during his retirement to continue his research which has already resulted in several noteworthy publications, notably in the area of Anglo-Japanese relations.
Arthur Illes

Arthur Illes, formerly Senior Under-Librarian in the University Library, died on 21 July at the age of 87. During his national service in the army, which included a period of duty in Egypt, he served under the future Librarian, Fred Ratcliffe, and afterwards came up from his native Cheltenham to Cambridge, where he read history at Trinity. He then acquired his professional library qualifications and worked in the city library in Birmingham, one of the country’s most important and influential public libraries. In 1959 he joined the staff of the University Library as an Assistant Under-Librarian, and with his wife Joan, moved to Barton, where he lived for the rest of his life. Although he was at first uneasy with the old-fashioned ethos of the Library he soon established himself as an influential figure. He was the deputy to Mr Ansell, the long-serving head of the Copyright Department, which was responsible for legal deposit and for the cataloguing of all modern English-language books, including purchases. His interests were in acquisitions and he took some delight in saying that he had never catalogued a book! He soon succeeded Mr Ansell as head of department and was in charge of legal deposit for the next 30 years, playing a major role in the national system and, on behalf of the other legal deposit libraries, in the management of the Copyright Agency in London.

In his long career he developed a detailed knowledge of the U.K. publishing industry. In the 1960s and 1970s he played a particularly influential role in the Library, advocating and implementing what were initially regarded as revolutionary policies, such as purchasing American books, encouraging the staff to obtain professional qualifications and employing SCONUL trainees. He retired in 1994 but for the next 15 years came into the Library almost every day, for morning coffee and lunch, until illness prevented him from cycling in from Barton. He regarded the library staff as his family, especially after the death of his wife 30 years ago, and cherished friendships with a wide circle of former colleagues across generations. As well as being renowned for his loud voice and, sometimes, for his uncompromising opinions he was also appreciated by many for his kindness, his concern for others, his encouragement of younger colleagues, and his devotion to the Library. As a long-standing supporter of the Leukaemia Research Fund he raised many thousands of pounds, not least through his sales in the Library. He was an accomplished gardener and had a particular expertise in cacti. In retirement he played an active part in the life of Barton and enthusiastically followed cricket and rugby, of which he had an expert knowledge.

Stephen Lees

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The theme of the next issue of CULIB will be circulation. If you would like to contribute an article, please contact the CULIB editors. The deadline for submission is 31st August 2016.

CONTACT THE EDITORS

Cambridge University Libraries information bulletin (CULIB) is distributed free, twice a year, to libraries within the University and its Colleges, and to others on request. CULIB is edited by Kathryn McKee km10007@cam.ac.uk at St John’s College Library, Mary Kattuman mpk1000@cam.ac.uk at the University Library, Lyn Bailey lkb24@cam.ac.uk at the Classics Faculty Library and Kate Arhel at Tyndale House Library kma30@cam.ac.uk (01223 566605). Kate produces the online version of CULIB. The editors may be contacted at ucam-culib@lists.cam.ac.uk