



Bodleian Libraries
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Hilary Term 2013 Update from the Bodleian Libraries
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Dear Colleagues,

In Michaelmas Term we sent you the first of what will be regular, informal bulletins about new services and changes taking place in the Bodleian Libraries. This Hilary Term newsletter provides information on topics I hope will be of interest to you. I welcome your feedback on whether or not you find the updates useful. Please let me know if you have questions about these or other Bodleian Libraries' activities.

1. Library buildings, capital projects & news

New Bodleian (Weston) Library Refurbishment

The contractors are scheduled to return the completed building to the Bodleian in August 2014, and services for readers will be available in Michaelmas 2014, with the formal opening in March 2015. Deputy Librarian Richard Ovenden has been making the rounds of Committees on Library Provision and Faculties with a presentation on plans for the Weston. If your Faculty or Department would like to have a presentation on the New Bodleian renovation and Weston Library, please contact richard.ovenden@bodleian.ox.ac.uk.

What's happening behind the hoardings? The casting of the two service cores has now been completed, having reached the level of the rooftop plant rooms. The ground floor has been cast successfully, and concrete works have moved on to the construction of the floating stack that bridges between the two cores. Temporary propping now fills Blackwell Hall, and this will remain in place until the structure of the floating stack has been completed. In the basement, the encasing of columns continues, and work has begun on putting down a new basement screed, prior to the installation of the floor drainage system. In the office areas most of the new openings for doorways have been completed. The burn tests to prove the capability of the high pressure water misting system proved entirely successful. Design work continues on both galleries in preparation for tendering for the exhibition case manufacturer. The competition to design a new chair for the Weston Library has had an excellent response, and a short-list of entries will soon be announced.

Libraries staff continue to plan for the occupation and start-up of the building. Teams are meeting regularly to consider such areas as catering, security, reading rooms and collections. New sub-teams have been formed to cover the book stack, Admissions and IT systems. A consultant has been appointed to assist in identifying the IT requirements for the building.

Approximately £70 million towards the £80.4 million refurbishment is in hand, with several proposals for additional support under consideration by prospective donors.

Radcliffe Camera

Throughout 2012 changes to the Radcliffe Camera were considered as part of an extended public consultation. The plans address four initiatives: modifications that are necessary to permit access to the Lower Camera for those with mobility impairments; management of the circulation of books and readers to improve security; creation of a consolidated desk service at the proposed south entrance to the Camera to improve reader services and security; and creation of a consolidated service desk in the Old Bodleian. The present north entrance would become an emergency exit. Planning permission for these changes was obtained in August but to ensure ample opportunity for comments, a consultation period ran for nearly six months, from June until 1 December 2012, during which 18 individuals submitted comments.

The plans were reviewed and approved by 17 Committees on Library Provision. Curators of the University Libraries reviewed the plans and consultation documents on 21 January 2013 and recommended that the plans be implemented, subject to obtaining the necessary University approvals. Detailed plans for library operations and staffing are being developed in consultation with Libraries' staff and will be presented to Curators in March. Much of the construction will be scheduled during the Long Vacation to minimize disruption.

The Radcliffe Observatory Quarter (ROQ) and planning for space across the Libraries

The Bodleian and the Humanities Division are together undertaking a review of the programme for the Humanities Building planned for the ROQ. In the Humanities Division, consultations are taking place across the Faculties. The Bodleian is reviewing its needs for space in anticipation of the opening of the Weston Library; at the same time it is updating its programme for the Humanities and Maths Library to reflect changes that have occurred since it was formulated several years ago, such as the decision to create a China Centre Library at St Hugh's. We will be consulting with academics, students, college librarians and staff in Trinity Term and will use the information gathered through interviews, focus groups, consultations and surveys to define user and staff requirements. The outcome will be a Masterplan for Bodleian Libraries' space. We expect to collect information on a website that will be available in Trinity Term and to circulate plans for consideration in Michaelmas 2014.

Book Storage Facility

We recently discovered how well our emergency systems and procedures work when a water sprinkler head was activated in an area of the Book Storage Facility last month. This immediately triggered an alarm to which the onsite security guard responded by calling out the fire brigade, BSF managers and University Security Services. The sprinkler head was rapidly isolated and affected material quickly moved to the ancillary hall. In total over 5,000 books from a wide variety of collection areas were affected and immediately sent for freezing and drying, the standard preservation treatment for such incidents in libraries. There was no evidence of a fire, and Estates staff are meeting to determine the cause. The BSF returned to normal operations within 48 hours, and the affected collections will be returned for circulation in about four weeks.

Continuing Education Library

The Rewley House Continuing Education Library was rewired over the Christmas break. New lighting throughout has brightened the Library and has environmental benefits as well. Additional power and data points have enabled us to reorganize the desk, area which will improve service to readers, and have provided more workspaces where laptops can be used. The Bodleian Libraries wireless network will soon be available in other areas of the Library.

2. New projects & services

Bodleian Libraries website redevelopment

In our recent survey of readers, many of you commented on the need to improve Bodleian Libraries websites. For almost two years we have been working to redevelop www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk and its 30 associated websites to improve usability, functionality and design. Plans for the redevelopment and the subsequent build process were informed by wide-ranging user consultation. We are now just weeks away from the full launch of the first three sites: the Bodleian Libraries group website (www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk), the Bodleian Library website (www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley) and a new visitor-focused website which promotes the Libraries' range of public exhibitions, events and activities (URL will be www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/whatson). Beta versions of these three sites went live on 30 January and we hope they will replace our existing sites before the end of February. Over the next six months we will be transitioning the other associated websites to the new format. Feedback forms are available on the beta sites at <http://beta.bodleian.ox.ac.uk> , <http://beta.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley> and <http://beta.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/whatson> .

Coming up: Saturday book deliveries from the BSF

To improve our services and access to materials, beginning during Trinity Term our book delivery service from the Book Storage Facility in Swindon will be expanding to offer Saturday deliveries. This will improve our turnaround time for items ordered from the BSF so that books previously ordered on Friday afternoons and available for consultation on Monday will now be available on Sunday. This service will be offered in term time only and initially will be offered at the Old Bodleian, Radcliffe Camera, Radcliffe Science Library and Social Science Library.

Bodleian Library of Commonwealth and African Studies

In anticipation of the movement of collections and services to the Weston Library when it reopens, a project is currently underway to barcode the 5,000 metres of printed and microfilm material located in the Rhodes House stack. This material will be transferred to the BSF in order to create the space necessary to allow work on archival and manuscript material to be carried out in preparation for its relocation to the Weston Library. Barcoding began on 21 January 2013 and will continue until early June 2013. The move of printed material to the BSF will be completed by May 2014, allowing our rare books, manuscripts and archive material to be relocated to the Weston Library in August and September 2014. During this time we are working to minimize the impact of this project on readers. Stack material can be requested and delivered to readers at any point until it is removed from the shelves to be taken to the BSF when it will be unavailable for a short period of time. Once it has been safely housed in BSF it can be called back to reading rooms for consultation as normal; we have planned these moves to avoid the need for sustained periods of closure.

Digital Bodleian

We continue to make a number of enhancements to SOLO, our online catalogue, and to develop unique digital resources:

- Usability enhancements to SOLO include the presentation of results in clusters and the combination of the request & locations tabs. We are also currently installing the next major release of SOLO (Primo v.4) for evaluation. This offers the prospect of the return of much-requested 'browse indexing' and the addition of personalised search features (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDly9qPpPYQ> .)
- We are working on a project to digitize theses with over 2,000 DPhil theses now digitized for release to ORA.
- Libraries staff are working on the Shan Manuscript project, which will see the creation of a collection of metadata and a search interface for approximately 2,000 Buddhist manuscripts. The works will be described using the Shan and Burmese fonts, and the collection of data and associated images will

be available through a custom search interface allowing for search and display of data in the native language. Development work will be carried out over the next twelve months.

- We recently launched Serica (<http://serica.bodleian.ox.ac.uk>), a resource that includes access to Bodleian pre-modern Chinese holdings, including parts of the collection that have been digitized. The holdings of this resource will increase over time as more items are catalogued. This project has been funded by the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation.

3. Strategic planning & reporting

Draft Strategic Plan 2013–17

As I noted in last term's newsletter, Libraries have drafted a Strategic Plan for 2013–17 outlining our broad goals for the next five years. We received feedback on the plan from readers at three open meetings held in Michaelmas Term, and we also received input from Committees on Library Provision, Faculty Boards, sessions with Divisional representatives, Libraries staff, surveys and focus groups. We are now working to develop the Strategic Plan in more detail and will circulate for review in Hilary Term. We are paying particular attention to language in the hope of avoiding disparagement for being too corporate. The final version will be prepared for approval by the Curators of the University Libraries in Trinity Term.

Readers Survey 2012

Over October and November 2012 Bodleian Libraries ran a survey of users using the LibQual+ online survey tool. This survey has been used by over 1,200 academic libraries around the world and allows us to understand how our users perceive our service as well as to benchmark against other research libraries. We received 3,611 responses, a strong response rate of 9.43%, and want to thank all our readers who responded to the survey. Almost three quarters of the responses came from Oxford University academics and staff with the remainder from 'external' readers. Topline results have shown above-average satisfaction by Bodleian Libraries readers when compared against other academic libraries. The 1,653 freeform comments received have been particularly useful in understanding the detailed concerns of our readers. A summary of results will be circulated to staff and made available to readers later in February; however, the open comments will not be published for reasons of confidentiality/data protection. Results of the survey will feed into the recommendations outlined in our Strategic Plan. We will also develop a separate action plan to address specific issues that were raised in the survey.

4. Other Libraries news & activity

Fundraising for acquisitions

The Libraries continue to work to acquire and preserve items of cultural importance and scholarly interest. There are two exciting acquisitions for which we are currently fundraising. The first is the personal archive of William Henry Fox Talbot (1800–1877), the British 'founder of photography' and a polymath with interests in botany, languages, art, travel and history. His personal archive not only contains early photographs but artworks and illustrations, diaries, scientific instruments and artefacts, and it includes the first book illustrated with photographs and some of the first pictures of Oxford. The archive will be an essential resource for scholars on the history of photography, the history of science and a range of other disciplines. We are buoyed by the receipt of £1.2m from the National Heritage Memorial Fund towards the acquisition, and we now have until the end of February to raise the remaining funds. Over the course of this campaign we've received support from a range of key figures in the arts and photography sector and have been the focus of media interest including this article in the *Guardian* newspaper: (www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2012/dec/09/bodleian-library-bid-fox-talbot-archive).

We are also working on a very unique project with Cambridge University Library, a joint fundraising campaign to purchase the £1.2 million 'Lewis-Gibson Genizah Collection', currently owned by the

United Reformed Church's Westminster College. The collection comprises more than 1,700 fragments of Hebrew and Arabic manuscripts, originating from the Cairo Genizah and dating from the 9th to the 19th century. They represent an invaluable record of one thousand years of the religious, social, economic and cultural life of the Mediterranean world. While Cambridge and Oxford are already holders of substantial Genizah collections in their own right, this acquisition will significantly complement our holdings. We have already received a lead gift of £500,000 and are now appealing to donors to secure the remaining £700,000 necessary to buy the collection outright.

Transforming the Bodleian

A new publication detailing the major transformations that have taken place at the Bodleian Libraries over the last five years has recently been published by De Gruyter Saur. The publication comprises a series of essays written by senior Libraries staff, documenting the building of the Book Storage Facility, the Libraries' barcoding project and other major transformations as the Libraries worked to meet the requirements of 21st-century academic work. We expect *Transforming the Bodleian* will prove a useful resource for study in the areas of libraries, information management and culture. For more information visit www.degruyter.com/view/product/183440 .

Sunday Times Oxford Literary Festival 2013

This year the *Sunday Times* Oxford Literary Festival is to be staged more centrally in Oxford, with many lectures taking place within the Bodleian (Divinity School and Convocation House). The Bodleian will, of course, endeavour to minimize any potential disruption this may cause to its readers and we will provide regular communication and updates to both readers and staff.

We are pleased to announce that the Festival will offer a 10% discount on tickets for the lectures in the Divinity School and Convocation House to Bodleian Libraries' staff and readers. Readers and staff should state that they are a 'Bodleian Reader' when booking tickets to secure the discount. For more information visit <http://oxfordliteraryfestival.org> .

New senior posts in Libraries

The Bodleian has recently recruited for the post of Head of Assessment, a new, senior role responsible for leading evaluation of services and facilitating the development of a customer and client focus through a deeper understanding of user behavior, requirements and priorities. Frances Wilson will begin in this role on 15 April. Ms Wilson holds an MA in Experimental Psychology from Oxford (St. John's), an MSc in Information and Library Management (Bristol) and is currently completing a PhD (Brunel) on creating a culture of quality in academic libraries.

We are also recruiting for the post of Head of Social Science Libraries and Research and Learning. The deadline for applications is 11 February, and we hope to interview and appoint in March/April.

I will provide more details on Bodleian Libraries activities and projects in a newsletter during Trinity term. Please also look for the Bodleian Libraries 2011/12 annual report, which will be appearing in the 14 February edition of the *Gazette* and which will also be available on our website.

Kind regards,



Sarah Thomas
Bodley's Librarian