

This for the Taylorian Library – an integral part of the Taylor Institute. It is also part of the Bodleian group of libraries. The Taylorian occupies the east wing of the building which also houses the Ashmolean Museum on Beaumont Street and it has its main entrance on St Giles.

Named after its founder Sir Robert Taylor, the institute is the University's centre for the study of European languages and literature – other than English itself.

Sir Robert was a renowned 18th-century architect who designed grand houses for the wealthy and became architect to the Bank of England. In 1769, he was appointed Architect of the King's Works and could name John Nash and Samuel Pepys Cockerell among his pupils.

Although it is not recorded anywhere, James Legg, Taylor Librarian, thinks that Taylor was likely to have travelled extensively to study European architecture, perhaps undertaking a Grand Tour, part of a well-to-do young man's education in the 18th century.

What is certain is that he developed a deep interest in European culture and languages and, finding himself disapproving of his son's somewhat profligate lifestyle, Sir Robert, who died in 1788, left the bulk of his estate to the University of Oxford for "establishing a foundation for the teaching and improving the European languages".

Unsurprisingly, his son, Michael Angelo, contested the will and the case rumbled on in true Dickensian style. It was not until 1834 following Michael Angelo's death – he was said to give the best dinner parties of any man in London – that it was possible for the disputed money to be put to its intended use, the creation of what is now the Taylorian Institute.

Linguistics, Film Studies and Women's Studies also occupy the St Giles site and East European collections are held in the Taylor Bodleian Slavonic and Modern Greek Library site at 47, Wellington Square.

The university employed Charles Cockerell, the son of Taylor's old pupil, to design a building to house the Randolph Galleries (the University's art gallery) together with the Taylor Institute and it opened in 1845. At that time the Ashmolean was still in its first home in Broad Street and it did not move to Beaumont Street until 1900.

An extension was added to the Institute on the St Giles side which was opened by the then Prince of Wales (Edward VIII) in 1934. A rare bust of the Prince resides in the entrance hall in memory of the occasion.

Cockerell's masterpiece is the main reading room which is a perfect cube with an upper gallery accessed by a staircase and balcony and long windows looking out over St Giles. This room, seen with the light filtering in through ultra-violet protection, must surely be on a shortlist of the most beautiful reading rooms in Europe.

The Taylor Institute, to the best of James Legg's knowledge, is the largest dedicated centre in the country for the study of European languages.

It has 25 members of staff, 12 of whom are specialist librarians and encompasses a great range from the obvious modern languages to Old Church Slavonic, the earliest Slavic literary language, and Celtic – whose specialist librarian is Janet Foot. The

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As the Bodleian Library prepares for the opening of the £80m Weston Library, Linora Lawrence continues her all-access tour around this celebrated institution

An A-Z of the Bodleian



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Hungarian specialist librarian, Zsuzsanna Varga could tell you the difference between Proto-Uralic and Finno-Ugric languages. Finnish, Estonian and Hungarian are the best known, but there are many more in various regions of Russia. Uralic refers to the Ural mountains.

Interestingly, James points out, the institute has specialist librarians in languages the university does not necessarily teach, 'future proofing' he calls it.

The Taylor Trust enables the library to buy books which is essential given that the Bodleian copyright agreement extends only to books published in Britain. They are also very grateful for bequests from scholars who have, in their time, formed their own collections.

James said: "The Taylor is developing a role in Digital Humanities, an example of this is the digitisation of some audio tapes made in the 1960s of a now lost dialect of Bulgarian spoken by a group of refugees who became isolated in part of former Yugoslavia."

The Sir Robert Taylor Society is a supportive focus for language teachers from state and independent schools, plus university lecturers, many of whom attend the annual conference held in September each year.

Also under James's care is the Sackler Library, west of the Ashmolean, at 1 St John's Street. Financed by Dr Mortimer and Teresa Sackler this library opened in 2001 and incorporates the collections that formed the Ashmolean's own library.

"It is an art and architecture library," said James. "Six scattered libraries brought together under one roof: the Western and the Eastern Art Libraries, the History of Art Library, the Griffith Institute Library, the Classics Lending Library and the Coin Room Library."

This is for Treasures. Many of the Bodleian's books and manuscripts are classed as national treasures and have appeared in exhibitions over the years.

The opening of Blackwell Hall (the ground floor of the Weston Library) in March will give the Bodleian the necessary space to run ongoing exhibitions so there will always be something on for visitors to see and, because the exhibitions will be regularly refreshed, something new to see for Oxford residents coming more than once.

There will be two galleries. One will be the permanent Treasures exhibition area and the other will continue the Bodleian tradition of running two themed exhibitions a year.

Francesca Galligan has been a curator at the Bodleian for eight years now. She is looking forward to the scope Blackwell Hall will offer her. "There will be one huge opening exhibition taking over both galleries," Francesca explained. The exhibition, entitled *Marks of Genius: Treasures from the Bodleian Library*, curated by Stephen Hebron, has been having a 'practice run' at the Morgan Library in New York for the past four months. Now back home in Oxford it will run for six months from

March. When that finishes the permanent Treasures gallery will open and also the first themed exhibition, *Armenia: Treasures from an Enduring Culture*.

What might we expect to see in the Treasures gallery?

"The things everyone wants to see," said Francesca. "Shakespeare's First Folio, papyri that are unique witnesses of Sappho's poems, dating from the second century AD, the Gutenberg Bible, the Kennicott Bible (pictured above), Audubon's *Birds of America* – probably the most expensive book published in the 19th century. It undertook to make lifesize images of the birds – it is so large it takes three people to lift it!"

Another obvious choice is the Magna Carta. Spoiled for choice, the Bodleian has four copies in its possession. The good thing about having multiple copies is that one can always be on display. It is important that every item has a 'rest' period in order to preserve it from light pollution.

Francesca goes on to tell the tale of Shakespeare's First Folio (1623) which came to the library free under Bodley's copyright agreement with the Stationers' Company. In those days most acquisitions left the printers' workshop unbound, sometimes just a collection of loose sheets or perhaps roughly stitched together. Its acquisition was entered into the Library Daybook as was the fact that it

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was sent out with some other books to William Wildgoose with a list of titles and a note saying 'These books following to be bound 17 February. 1623[1624]'.
 In due course it came back, was duly chained and put on display. Sometime in the 1660s, probably when the library received the Third Folio, they disposed of the first, no doubt thinking it out-of-date.

In 1905 a student visited the Library with a dilapidated copy of the First Folio under his arm and enquired whether it might be valuable. The book was brought to the attention of a member of staff, Strickland Gibson, who had taken a great interest in the history of bookbinding.

He was able to identify that this was the actual First Folio the library had disposed of approximately 245 years earlier.

Gibson consulted old bindery records and found that consecutive waste leaves from the same early printed book which Wildgoose had used to line the covers of another book in that 1624 batch, were present in this First Folio, thus proving that this was the Bodleian's original copy.

It is good to know that the folio was bought back for the library with money raised by public subscription. It was a much-thumbed copy with marks indicating the most looked at plays – the most popular being *Romeo and Juliet*.

Other items that will be displayed will include the lavishly illuminated Bodleian Bestiary, J R R Tolkien's drawings for *The Hobbit*, Mary Shelley's manuscript draft of *Frankenstein*, Holst's autograph manuscript of *The Planets* and Wilfred Owen's manuscript of his famous First World War poem, *Dulce et Decorum Est*.

During a 2011 exhibition visitors were asked to vote for their favourite treasures. The winner by far was Tolkien's drawing, *Conversation with Smaug*, and the Gough Map (the earliest road map of Great Britain) was the 'people's choice'.

The Treasures exhibition will contrast items that are somehow linked over the centuries, for example, an extremely early manuscript from the 10th century – known sometimes as the Caedmon Manuscript of poetry – written in Old English (Anglo Saxon) will be put alongside Jane Austen's manuscript of her novel, *The Watsons*, on the basis that, in the opinion of many, Austen represents a pinnacle of English literary writing.

Another pairing will be a letter written by Benjamin Disraeli reporting on his first meeting with Queen Victoria contrasted with Sir Geoffrey Howe's resignation speech which triggered the downfall of Margaret Thatcher's government.

The Talbot archive was recently acquired by the Bodleian. William Henry Fox Talbot, the pioneer of early photography particularly liked Oxford and visited it to take photographs, four of which will be on show.

There will also be a large showcase devoted to examples of bookbinding from luxury items, such as the Queen Elizabeth I Bible (pictured).

This bible was exquisitely bound in velvet and decorated with pearls and silver thread for presentation to the Queen. Contrasted with these 'treasure' bindings will be precious fragments of manuscripts recovered from book bindings. It was a common practice for many years to use leaves from discarded manuscripts



The Queen Elizabeth I Bible, which came to the Bodleian in a collection left to the library by Francis Douce

and printed books to line the inside of a board or to support a spine. Another case in the Blackwell Hall will complement the existing showcase in the Proscholium for shorter topical exhibitions.

Uis for underground. Stories about miles of tunnels under the library seem to grow in the telling. There is a tunnel running from the basement of the Radcliffe Camera, under the Bodleian and under Broad Street to the basement of the Weston Library.

Until recently there was a conveyor system which moved books between what was the New Bodleian building to the old, main Bodleian. It did not continue to the Camera so books for those reading rooms had to be taken on the last stage of their journey, somewhat unromantically, in shopping trolleys.

The conveyor was quite something in its time, collecting and delivering books up and down the 11 storeys of internal storage in the New Bodleian to reading rooms across the site,

but a conveyor belt is what it was – not a little train as was sometime rumoured over the years. There are a few offices underground, the library engineers for example and the stationery store.

The Clarendon Building, designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, was built to house the University Press. It has basement rooms and passages but does not connect to the main tunnel. When the Press moved to Walton Street in the early 19th century the university took the premises, but it became part of the Bodleian Library in 1975.

One legacy from the past is that the University Security Department retained an office in the basement and one of the small rooms was a cell in Victorian times. In those days the university police could detain ladies of the night in the cell if they were caught 'bothering' students.

One of the library's most exciting finds (in 2005) was a box in the basement of the Clarendon Building addressed to Falconer

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Madan, Bodley's Librarian from 1912-19. Inside the box were engraved printing plates with musical notation.

Peter Ward Jones, then head of the music section, was able to identify them as probably the earliest surviving examples, some dating from as far back as the 1760s, which had somehow been preserved despite the fact that such plates were normally melted down for reuse when a book went out of print.

There were 92 plates containing words and music for a hymn book designed for use at the London Lock Hospital. It was initially compiled by an ancestor of Madan and went through many editions between 1762 and the 1820s.

A charitable institution, the Lock Hospital in London was opened in 1747 near Hyde Park Corner. It was established for the treatment of venereal diseases and led to similar Lock hospitals in other cities such as Manchester.

They had a policy of admitting patients only once and it is thought today the treatments were ineffective. Patronising these hospitals and rescuing 'penitent female patients' was a fashionable thing to do and the hospitals either had a chapel or were near one.

Religious observance was considered part of the 'cure' and the selling of hymn books was, no doubt, a good fundraising exercise. The name 'Lock' was handed down from the old leprosy hospitals and either comes from the loques (Old French) or rags (lint) that were used to cover patients' sores or it may simply refer to the lepers being locked away to prevent contagion.

Another thing that is underground at the Bodleian is a number of water tanks under the Old Schools Quadrangle. These were put in during the Second World War as a source of water should Oxford be bombed.

More recently, in the 1990s when former US president Bill Clinton was visiting Oxford and going to speak in the Sheldonian Theatre,

his security people sent a diver down to inspect the tanks prior to his being driven into the Old Schools Quadrangle.

The Gladstone Link is home to two underground reading rooms created in 2011 out of former book stack space between the Radcliffe Camera and the Old Library. They are surprisingly popular study areas perhaps bringing out the 'inner mole' in some of its readers. There are open access areas where books are shelved and these include part of the History Faculty Library books and print journals (the rest being in the Radcliffe Camera).

Vis for Venue hire. Yes, parts of the Bodleian can be hired out for events and, as most of us know, for filming. There cannot be many people who haven't seen parts of the Bodleian, inside and out, in ITV's *Morse*, *Lewis* or *Endeavour*. Filming is usually done on Sundays or at night to minimise disruption as the needs of the library users, along with university ceremonies, always come first.

The really exciting thing is that these days the Bodleian is licensed for weddings and civil partnership ceremonies which can be held in either the 15th-century Divinity School (pictured above), the 17th-century Convocation House where Charles I's parliament was held, or Chancellors Court.

Alice Ogilvie, Head of Venue Services, explains that people sometimes hire all three spaces which are, of course, interlinked. This is especially appropriate if they are having caterers who will need preparation space.

Dining tables may be set up and decorated in the Divinity School, which can take 200 guests standing or 100 seated.

To hire all three spaces for three hours (a typical length of time) would cost £500 per hour, plus VAT.

Alice comes from a background with the National Trust, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Royal Academy of Arts. She is experienced at balancing the duty of care that must be given to a historic building with giving clients a unique experience whether for business, corporate hospitality or a special family event.

An additional add-on is the option of a private guided tour to Duke Humfrey's Library (after 7pm when the library closes to readers, and for a small number of guests) and another possibility is having the current exhibition room opened for an extra hour in the evening.

Alice is very excited about Blackwell Hall in the Weston Library which will also be available for hire when the ground floor opens for business in March.

She said: "It will be an exciting space in a completely different way to the historic buildings. It will accommodate 250 people seated and 500 standing. It will be wonderful to have contrasting venues both old and new, on offer."

For more information visit the website www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/whatson/venue-hire

Tours of the Bodleian are tremendously popular. A team of guides consisting of 15 paid members of staff and 40 or so volunteers, conduct at least seven tours a day – this figure can double at busy times.

Guides are encouraged to develop their own particular scripts so the information is given in a warm and personal way. There are standard tours and extended tours.

The winter months are a great time for locals to go when there are less tourist parties around. Look out for the *Explore the Reading Rooms* tour on Sundays at 11.15am and 1.15pm and *Upstairs, Downstairs at the Bodleian* tours on Wednesdays and Saturdays at 9.15am.

You can find full details at the website: www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/whatson

