

THE *Piper*



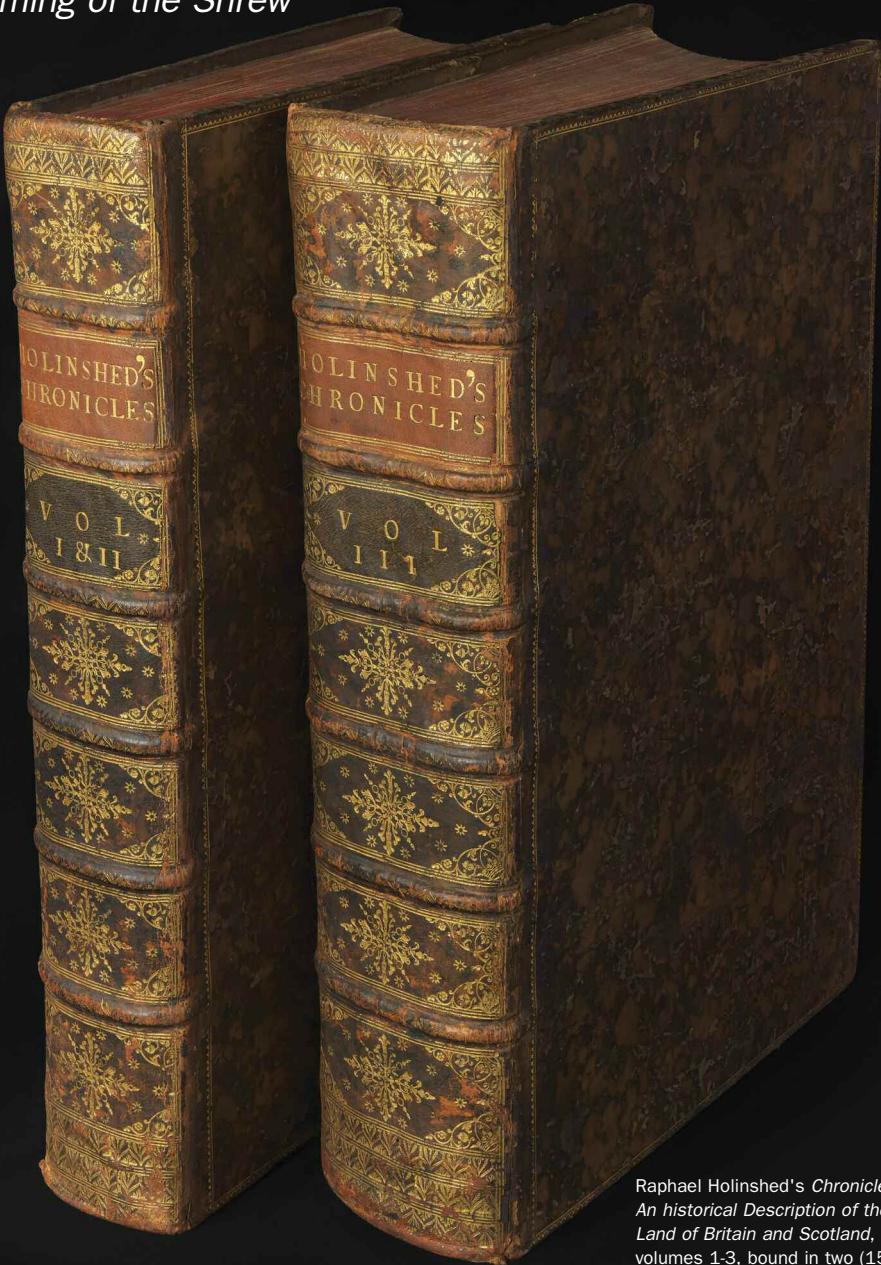
NUMBER 35 AUTUMN 2010

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

'Look in the chronicles ...'

William Shakespeare: *The Taming of the Shrew*

This issue of The Piper gives details of the wonderful acquisition of the three volume Holinshed Chronicle on behalf of the Friends for the CRC. This was made possible by the bequest of a legacy and it seemed appropriate that something rare should be purchased. It adds to the many other items purchased by the Friends over the last few years that greatly enhance the intellectual capital of the University, which is even more important in these restrained times as a marker of the lasting value of the inherited past in the form of printed text. Over the last few years the Friends, through the Committee, have acquired an amazing range of books, documents and manuscripts that would otherwise have eluded the University's grasp: accounts of the College riots of 1838 (students not academics), poetry manuscripts, letters of Patrick Geddes, a manual of Insects written by the first woman entomologist, Eleanor Ann Ormerod to be given a degree (admittedly an Honorary one) in 1900, medical diplomas issued in the 18th century to future professors. Investigate the Friends' website to uncover these and more treasures.



Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles*:
An historical Description of the Land of Britain and Scotland, volumes 1-3, bound in two (1587).



All have filled in bits of the jigsaw of Edinburgh University intellectual history and bibliographic life in ways in which would not otherwise have been possible. Joe Marshall and John Scally have given wise advice and exercised much skilful detective work in hunting down such diverse

and delightful items on behalf of the Friends. It has given the wider intellectual resource of the University much colour and interest. The committee and I are very aware we are entrusted with the task of acquisition. We try to ensure this is fulfilled in ways that mean the

Friends can help secure items that reflect the diversity of the membership and their commitment to the University.

**Lady Caplan, President,
Friends of Edinburgh University
Library**

28 The Epistle.
ting you with so meane a gift, proceeding from one, although unknowne to your Lordship, yet not without experience of your bountifull goodness extened towards those, to whom I reckon my selfe most beholden. At what is he within this realme almost of ane degree, which findeth not himselfe bounden to your Honor, either in his owne caues or his friends? For such your inclination to pleasure all men, as the same maye become a peculiar vertue planted in your noble heart, moving you so much to deposite therin, in no time is thought by your Honor better spent, than that which you employ in doinge good to others.

But least I should enter into so large a discourse, as might be fram'd of this and other your excellent vertues (matter farre exceeding my simple knowledge) I will ceasse to speake further therof, till the same is spread over all, as well this as other regions: for where doo want great numbers of such as haue abundantly tailest of your exceeding courtesies. In making you owner therof by this abstrall of the Scottis histories, I most humbly beseech your Honor, if anie thing be amisse, to impute the same to the imperfection and defect of better instructions, and with your benigne and fayable interpretation to haue me therein excus'd. Such as it is, I addresse it to your good Lordship with so dufiful a mind as may be imagined, beseeching God to preserue your Honor with plentifull increase of wisedome, vertue, and all wifel full proffertie.

Your Honors most humble to be
commanded *Raphael Hollinshead*

A detailed woodcut-style illustration of a central figure, possibly a deity or a personified virtue, standing on a pedestal. The figure is surrounded by elaborate, swirling architectural elements and foliage, including stylized acanthus leaves and flowers. The entire composition is framed by a decorative border.

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A Most Significant Purchase

In the spring of this year a fine copy of Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles: An historical Description of the Land of Britain, and Scotland*, volumes 1-3, bound in two [1587], came on to the market through the booksellers, Bernard Quaritch. The volumes had been purchased from the Earl of Macclesfield's collection which had gone on sale in 2007.

The volumes were found to be in splendid condition with very little foxing and with a fine 18th-century binding, and thus a decision was made by the Friends to purchase them at a cost of £25,000. Although this is a second edition of Holinshed, heavily revised and augmented – the first being published in 1577 – it is of great importance as it is the edition

used by Shakespeare.

Dr Joseph Marshall, Rare Books Librarian, said: 'this was a unique opportunity to acquire possibly the finest copy in private hands of this essential source book for the most important English history plays. In making this purchase, the Friends and the University have shown a determination to add great books to the collections – for research, teaching and the long-term heritage of the University.'

In February 1587 the printers were ordered, by the Privy Council and the Archbishop of Canterbury, to delete nine passages containing unacceptable accounts of recent history. Three of these were in volume II pertaining to Scotland, and

six in volume III concerning England. Thus the printers had to cancel 82 leaves in all and most surviving copies of the original work were 'castrated' to order. Some copies, however, escaped with original leaves still intact and this was evidenced in the Macclesfield copy of volume III. One such remaining leaf is a report detailing English support for the Duke of Alençon's departure from England in 1582 to assume sovereignty of Zeeland. This had been seen as a failure in Elizabeth's policy in the Low Countries and therefore should have been excised. *Spin* existed over 400 years ago!



FOCUS ON: Ground and First Floor Renovations

These days, even as a newcomer to Edinburgh, it's difficult to miss the University Main Library in George Square as the huge block with the word LIBRARY engraved upon it stands out like a beacon of stone, reflecting the original granite.

Walk past that and the new glass front to the 1960s Basil Spence building reflects the colours and movements of the trees in the gardens, and beyond it's possible to see through the glass to the other side and to the Meadows, thus bringing 'the outside in' in a remarkable way.

So it was that Barry Croucher,

Help Services Manager, introduced me to the building on a tour of the Ground and First Floors. Another new element of the renovation programme might not be so obvious to those visiting for the first time, yet it is a crucial and fascinating link with the past – a mesostic circle on the pavement in front of the entrance contains the letters 'thair to reman', the phrase used in his will by Clement Litill, the first donor, and founder, of the University Library when he bequeathed his books to the Town Council in 1580. And there they remain almost four and a half centuries later.

Just inside the main entrance is a computer where members of the public can now register online to gain access to the Library. On the other side a Reception Desk provides information and guidance and facilitates access for members of the public, visitors to Edinburgh, and academics and students from other institutions who may wish to use the Library for research purposes or even just find out more about what it offers. This is an important area as, with any organisation, the first contact strangers make provides their first impressions. By the reception desk is a machine for





Below. Shelfends in the Hub in the Library colours.

returns, placed conveniently near to the entrance, making it possible for readers to return books without even having to enter through the turnstiles.

These turnstiles have been equipped with moving glass panels making the whole entrance more open and accessible. The first thing that hits the visitor in this space is the vastness of it – like the entrance to a cathedral or great hall. This was probably Sir Basil Spence's intention to magnify the glory of the Library with such an entrance and the 21st-century architects have certainly emulated this with their adaptation of the space: from the glass walls and doors of the entrance through to the windows at the south side, the space is open and again reflects the outside world.

Another 21st-century innovation is the introduction of 'holopro screens'. 'Based on hologram technology, images are projected onto these clear-glass screens from black boxes above the helpdesk' As Barry Croucher explains, 'these "screens" are actually a sandwich of holographic lenses which redirect

the projected light in all directions, so viewers at every angle see an image, apparently on the screen.' Information is supplied on a frequently changing basis: the top thirty key words being entered by users on the University's Edinburgh Research Archive and on the Library Catalogue are highlighted, acting as a proxy for intellectual activity in the building. Images from Special Collections are also shown here along with events such as graduations and even a live feed from the Large Hadron Collider at CERN. The other striking aspect of this renovated area is the furniture; stools, benches, chairs, all arranged in an informal, flexible manner to allow people not only to sit and talk in this area but also to move chairs into social groupings.

The elliptical-shaped desks which form the Helpdesk highlight this informal approach preventing the more daunting, barrier aspect of a straight line, yet they are easily visible. And, at busy times, a call-forward system can be used for those waiting for help. Above, in the high ceiling, the lighting strips have

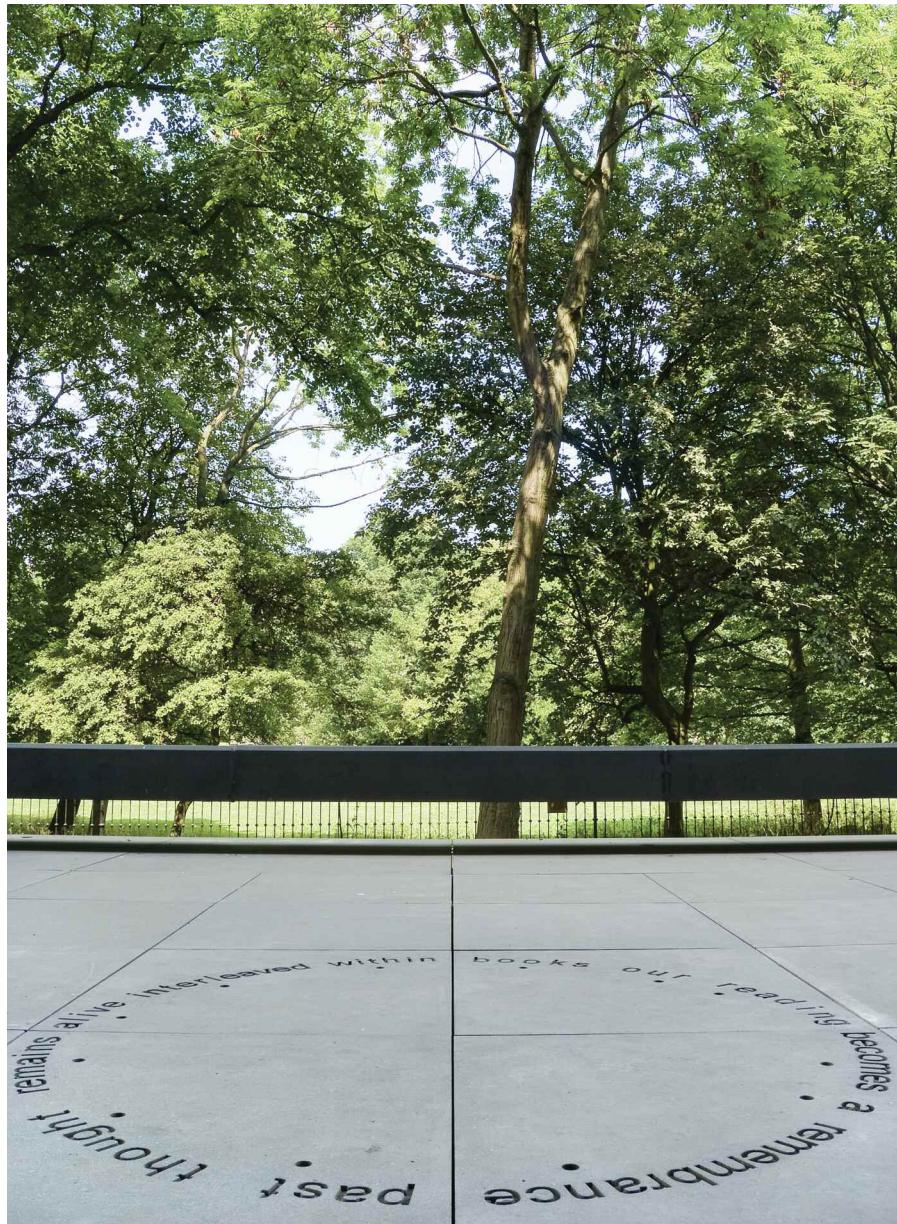
been carefully and imaginatively created to reflect the external features of the building. Indeed, as Barry Croucher reminds me, 'all the new design of the renovation is sympathetic to the original concept and design of Sir Basil Spence himself'. And the new café too – a busy addition to the Ground Floor – 'has an imaginative interior design and a variety of spaces.'

Another interesting feature is the usage of the Ground Floor which, as Barry Croucher says 'has now been totally inverted and the only staff space is the Helpdesk, everywhere else is open. Behind the Helpdesk the "HUB" has 45,000 lending volumes, a combination of the most used general items and the former reserve list. Now about fifty percent of our book issues come from this collection ensuring that the upper floors are quiet for serious study.'

Other mesostic typographic designs have been introduced created by the poet and artist, Alec Finlay. An example of these: 'silence changes changing silence', highlights the difference of approach on this Ground Floor from what was once



A view to George Square gardens with the mesostic circle in the foreground.



expected. And here too the shelfends are all in the pastel shades now associated with the Library. Another aspect of the change in use of these areas is the corner at the south-east of the Hub, where seats have again been arranged in social but flexible groupings for browsing and conversation with a magnificent view onto

Buckleuch Place, beyond to Salisbury Crags and then south to the Meadows.

There are two points on this Ground Floor where books can be served through an automated returns machine. Rather than using up the time of specialist staff this mechanical system performs the

necessary operations to return a book.

‘User Behaviour’, my guide informs me, ‘is very important and is highlighted on “menu of behaviour boards”, as it has changed so much in recent years. Now on these lower floors ‘group and conversational study is perfectly acceptable and encouraged, mobile phones are allowed, and even bottled water and covered hot and cold drinks.’ On other floors different codes of behaviour apply.

Service pods exist on these two lower floors for photocopying and printing – all in the same position for ease of access. And computers here have a different range of software, providing, not only printing facilities for posters but also for huge plans of the sort architectural students would require. There are 450 fixed pcs in the building, all with wireless facility, but students can also bring in their own laptops.

The Signature Room on the Ground Floor, near to the communal computer area, offers yet another quiet, comfortable space for chatting and relaxing with a fascinating extra feature. A wall of signatures highlights a select few of the famous alumni of Edinburgh University with celebrated names such as David Hume, Charles Darwin, Robert Adam and Sophia Jex-Blake.

On the First Floor an attractive mezzanine space offers further opportunity for conversation and relaxation while a small room next to this area will display new books, newspapers and some current journals.

As Barry Croucher explains, ‘the



Top. Relaxing and browsing area at the south-east corner of the Hub.

Bottom. Students enjoy interaction, and even coffee, while working in one of the pods.



study space next to this has been carefully chosen. Students have been accommodated at the edge of the building where it is light and open.'

There are eighteen pods on the Ground Floor and twelve on the First Floor which are not at the edge for obvious reasons as they are communal and conversational. Fifteen study rooms on the First Floor have also been placed internally and are run in association with the disability service for those with special needs.

The proof that this renovation has been successful is found in the increased footfall. 'Previously, the greatest number of users at any one time was 1,300. Now this has increased to an average of 1,600 with the highest recorded usage being 1,900. Our maximum target is 2,100, in terms of available seats.'

At the end of the tour it is clear, as the Help Services Manager proudly states, 'this Library is a beacon for the University'.

Fiona Graham

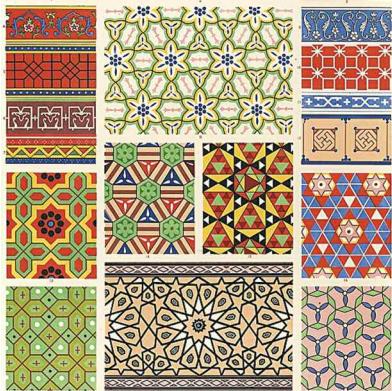


Barry Croucher, Help Services Manager

A graduate of Swansea University, Barry began working in academic libraries in 1996, firstly at Kingston University and then at the Bodleian Library in Oxford. After 5 years as Deputy Site Librarian at St. Peter's Library, University of Sunderland, Barry moved to Edinburgh where he managed the IS Helpdesk in the Main Library and now heads the Help Services Section of User Services Division of IS.



The University of Edinburgh Collections Calendar 2011



Above. An image from *The Grammar of Ornament* that appears in this year's calendar.

Theme:

Treasures from the University Collections

Size: 30 x 30cm. Drilled hole for hanging
Individually shrink-wrapped

Price: £10 (+ £2 p&p within the UK)

To order your calendar see the enclosed order form.

Come and join us!

For a membership form, telephone 0131 651 3814
or email: laura.macpherson@ed.ac.uk
or go to: www.lib.ed.ac.uk/about/friends

The Friends of Edinburgh University Library Christmas card 2010



A detail from plate LXV of Owen Jones, 'The Grammar of Ornament' (London: Day and son, 1856). The architect and designer Owen Jones (1809–74) published *The Grammar of Ornament* as a summary of his design theories. He intended it to document the 'best' examples of ornament and decoration from world cultures throughout history. This detail from a large plate illustrating Celtic designs shows 'spiral patterns from the Gospel of Lindisfarne', a characteristic Celtic pattern that the antiquary J.O. Westwood in his introductory text describes as evidence of 'the national genius' of these islands. EUL Special Collections: Z*3.6. To order your Christmas cards see the enclosed order form.

You can make a difference:

By becoming a Friend you can help to support the existing collections of Edinburgh University Library and fund new acquisitions. You could even be remembered eternally by leaving a legacy to the Friends.



The Piper is the newsletter of the Friends of Edinburgh University Library, and is published twice a year.

ISSN 0963-4681

Scottish Charity Number:
SC001518

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Managing editor:
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Photography:
Edinburgh University Library
Digital Imaging Unit

Design:
Mark Blackadder

Print:
University of Edinburgh
Printing Services