

THE P'yeer



NUMBER 36 AUTUMN 2011

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

'The true University of these days is a collection of books'

Thomas Carlyle

It has been a very busy summer. Having decided we needed an Administrative Assistant whose sole task would be to provide support and service, we advertised on the University website for a suitably qualified PhD student and had a massive response of over 40 applicants, finally reduced to a short list of five.

After a thorough interview process we appointed Samantha Walton who is doing a PhD in literature. She has extensive administrative experience and we feel certain she will be a valuable addition to the team. We now hope to be able to follow through the ideas we have for recruiting new

members as well as fulfilling the expectations of our present ones.

I would be delighted to receive any ideas or suggestions as to how we might expand and improve the Friends into an organisation which is involved with its members and engaged in a productive dialogue that enables us both to support the Library and to create a distinctive and enjoyable identity for our members.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will read of the importance of the Library to the University as demonstrated by the Chancellor's recent visit.

There have been many dire

predictions about the death of libraries as the life of the printed book evolves. Yet the use of the Library has increased beyond all expectations and I was delighted recently to have to queue for the first time in over twenty years to gain admittance. We have also had good attendance for the delightful 'Singing the Reformation' exhibition in the ground floor exhibition space for which the Friends purchased the beautiful display cases.

I think we can look forward to an interesting and stimulating year.

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



HRH the Princess Royal with, from left to right, Dr John Scally, Arnott Wilson, The Lord Provost, Vice-Admiral Sir Tim Laurence, Professor Nigel Brown



An Administrator for the Friends



The successful candidate, *Samantha Walton*, takes up her post as part-time Administrator with immediate effect.

Samantha is currently completing her doctoral research at Edinburgh on the representation of psychology in golden age crime fiction. She is interested in the medical aspects of Victorian literature, early twentieth century women's writing and popular modernism; she also teaches on the Literature department's degree course, Scottish Literature 1750–1950. Before coming to Edinburgh, Samantha took a BA in Literature and Language at King's College London and an MSc in Political and Social Theory at Birkbeck, University of London. She has worked at the Hay Literary Festival, for the publishers Simon and Schuster, and has volunteered for the social and environmental think-tank, New Economics Foundation. Here in Edinburgh, she co-ordinates the postgraduate reading for the James Tait Black Award, recently co-organised the poetry conference 'ConVersify', and is now excited to be working with the Friends of the

Christmas Card and Calendar

2011 Christmas card

Cards are sold singly at 80p each or £5 for 6 or £10 for 14.

They can be purchased by:
email: friends@ed.ac.uk, by phone: 0131 650 8379 (CRC reception) Mondays and Wednesdays 12noon – 2pm when Samantha Norton will be available. Please state how many you wish and whether you will pick them up from Reception on Ground Floor Main Library, or wish them to be posted to you. Cards can also be purchased at the University shop.

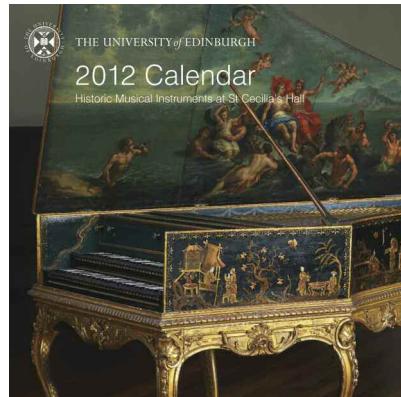
The illustration on the card is from *Biblia* (Nuremberg: Anton Koberger, 1483). This early German Bible contains numerous interesting woodcuts with contemporary colouring. They were made originally for Heinrich Quentell's 1478 High German Bible, printed in Cologne. EUL Special Collections: Inc.45.2. Bequest of James Cathcart White, 1943.



2012 Calendar theme: Historic Musical Instruments at St Cecilia's Hall

Size: 30 x 30cm. Drilled hole for hanging. Full colour. Price: £10

Online orders: www.giftshop.ed.ac.uk



The calendar can be purchased at the CRC reception on 6th floor, Main Library or at the University shop at Charles Stewart House: price £10 per copy. Orders can also be made by using the accompanying form. Also available from St Cecilia's Hall, Cowgate (for opening times see www.music.ed.ac.uk/euchmi/sch/)

Graduates' Association Film Night

You are invited to a Film Show by Panamint Cinemas

Tuesday 29 May 2012 at 7pm: Playfair Library Hall

Three short films from 'Films of Scotland': *Northern Capital* (1937, b/w), *Lothian Landscape* (1948), *Waverley Steps* (1974), all about Edinburgh and East Lothian and *Emma's Dilemma*, a comedy by Rikki Fulton (made in the 1950s in the style of 1920s silent films). Wine and nibbles served from 7pm: programme begins 7.30pm Tickets: £10 available from Joan Meikle, EUGA Assistant Secretary: gradassoc.admin@ed.ac.uk Telephone: 0131 650 4292: send payment to EUGA, 24 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh, EH8 9LN



A Royal Occasion for the Library



The Chancellor in the Conservation Studio talking with Caroline Scharfenberg
Photograph: Douglas Robertson

On 29th July 2011 HRH the Princess Royal paid a visit to the University. It was not her first, but it was the first to the Main Library and her first since the announcement that she would become Chancellor, following in the footsteps of her father, HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

'It was a great honour for the Library to have a visit from HRH the Princess Royal shortly before she was formally installed as Chancellor. It confirms that the Library lies at the heart of the University.' The Director of University Collections, Dr John Scally, reiterated the thoughts of everyone who was present on that day in July when the Princess Royal as 'Chancellor elect' spent considerable time on a tour, looking at items from within the Archives and generally, from Special Collections.

As the royal party came straight from the airport, George Square was the first place they visited in Edinburgh and so, as protocol would demand, the Lord Lieutenant and Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, the Right Honourable George Grubb, welcomed Her Royal Highness and her husband, vice-admiral, Sir Tim Laurence. Then Professor Nigel Brown, as Senior Vice-Principal and Sheila Cannell, as Director of Libraries, showed the Princess Royal and her party the mesostic circle at the front entrance.

The royal party arrived twenty minutes early and remained beyond their scheduled stay and all who met them felt that their interest was considerable and the questions extremely relevant and indeed, incisive.

Arnott Wilson, Head of Special

Collections and University Archivist, was delighted to highlight some of the very special and significant items within the Library's collections. 'During her visit to the Centre for Research Collections, the Princess was shown some of the University's greatest treasures including the 11th century Celtic Psalter, which may have belonged to St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland. The effective starting point of the University, the charter authorising the town council to establish a college teaching in the liberal arts, dated 1582, was a particularly appropriate item on display in view of HRH Princess Anne's impending installation as Chancellor.'

The Chancellor and her party were also given a preview of a new project 'Women Firsts' relating to the history of women at the University of Edinburgh. As the first female Chancellor in the University's history HRH the Princess Royal will now go down in the history books as part of that particular aspect of the history of women and, in due course, when the project is officially launched, there will be a panel to the new Chancellor in the Main Library alongside those of other women who have played a significant part in this history.

The Chancellor and her group also talked with students at the study pods and met representatives of EUSA before joining benefactors and others associated with the Library at a reception. It was truly a great honour and a most enjoyable occasion, and all connected with the Library hope this visit will be the first of many.



A Wonderful and Unexpected Boost for Special Collections

In March 2011 the College of Humanities and Social Science awarded the Library an additional £100,000 to spend on books and manuscripts for Special Collections. This was welcomed enthusiastically by the curators who set about the task of spending this sum before the end of July.

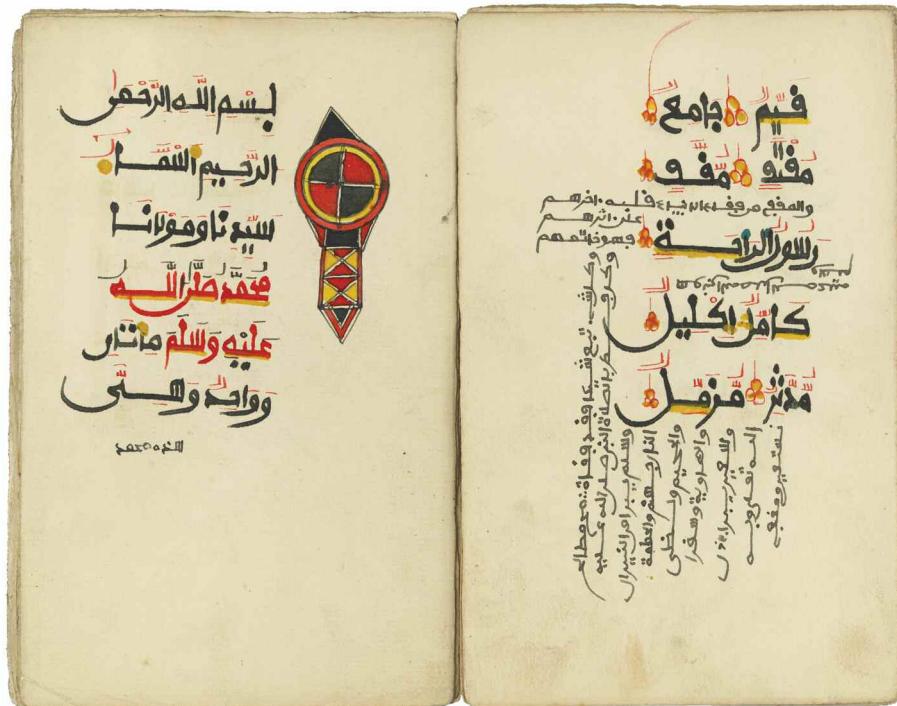
With this money we acquired a fantastic range of material, much of which relates to the Library's existing collection strengths, and some of which takes us into new and exciting

areas. Some of the more 'typical' Scottish material includes a manuscript by the poet Norman MacCaig, several nationalist pamphlets from the 1970s, the only copy in Scotland of the first separate publication by Muriel Spark and an example of Robert Louis Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses* with an autograph letter from the author. The more exotic material includes a collection of 40 original Arabic and Turkish manuscripts, an album of photographs showing Russian street

scenes and Goethe's edition of Ossian. We made an effort to find something for all the different departments that make up the College that would be relevant to their particular teaching, learning and research needs.

Thinking about the growing importance of our international student community, and the range of international topics studied in the College, we selected a number of important non-British items. A beautiful Japanese children's book,





Opposite. Kobayashi, Eitaku (Shutaro). Japanese paintings – children's games. Tokyo, 1894. This is an exquisite work by Kobayashi (1834–1890), an artist of the Kano school and one of the most talented of the whole Meiji period. Only one other copy is known to exist. Shelfmark: RB.FF.63

Above. Nigerian Islamic prayer book. Mid 19th-century. African material is one of the little-known strengths of Edinburgh University's collections. This acquisition is an illuminated prayer book, written in what is now northern Nigeria. The climate in West Africa has ensured that there are relatively few manuscripts available for study. Shelfmark: E2011.23

Right. *Emblemes amatoria: emblemes d'amour en quatre langue.* [Netherlands, c.1682]. Emblem books are a genre poorly represented in our collections. This major acquisition does something to redress the balance. The theme is love in its many guises, and Cupid is the main character depicted. Shelfmark: RB.S.667



hand-coloured volumes on the costume of China and Russia, plus an exquisite Dutch emblem book of the 17th century, all give us examples of items you might not expect to find in Edinburgh University Library's collections. We also acquired a Nigerian manuscript and a book printed in New Zealand, in the hope that we can start adding to our strong African and Australasian collections again. In terms of the date range, the earliest printed item we bought was a French incunable printed in 1491 – the most recent was some new work from the private Old Stile Press in Llandogo. Many of the items bought were unique and unrecorded.

This is a particularly good time to be buying antiquarian material, as some major institutions have had to make cutbacks in this area. These books were acquired in a variety of ways – from professional catalogues, at auction, from sales and private sellers. Good relationships were formed with booksellers which will hopefully develop over the next few months and years. It is an excellent way of investing in the future of the University, strengthening the collections for future generations of scholars and enhancing the 'draw' of Edinburgh as a place where researchers can find material available nowhere else. We hope to continue the buying strategies developed over the last few months with a view to keeping the collections alive and growing.

Dr Joseph Marshall,
Rare Books Curator



All Sing Together with a 'Cherful Voyce'



The exhibition, 'Singing the Reformation', has just recently closed but the project which made it possible is of such importance that it is worth giving the Friends a brief retrospective here.

'Singing the Reformation' was the most ambitious display yet to be mounted in the Library's new exhibition space and it was the result of a project – The world of Reformation Britain as seen and heard in the Wode Psalter – led by Professor Jane Dawson with funding of over £300,000 from the AHRC.

The Reformation of 1560 was a major event in Scottish history and the Wode Psalter, one might argue, resulted directly from it. Named after its creator, Thomas Wode, who had been a monk at Lindores Abbey until the Reformation, and then vicar of St Andrews, this is a rare and extraordinary work consisting of eight Part Books of which Edinburgh University Library is privileged to hold five of these.

In a way the Reformation opened up the possibility of music: congregations were now able to sing the psalms in church and, indeed, this became something families also did



Left. The composer, James Macmillan with an instrument from the exhibition.

Right. A view of the exhibition with portraits of George Buchanan and Lord James in the background.

Bottom. An opening showing the Treble singer, Cantus [Set 1], EUL, La.III. 483,p.iv

at home. The purpose of these Part Books was to record the four-part harmonies for 106 metrical psalms.

The four singing parts were *cantus* or soprano; *altus* or alto; tenor and *bassus* or bass. Additional parts were written into a *quintus* or 5th part book. Thomas Wode, 'ane man of mekill modestie', created two sets of part books of which eight have survived – the other three being in

the British Library; Trinity College, Dublin; and Georgetown University, Washington DC.

A labour of love over twenty years, Wode not only copied the music for these psalms but also illustrated the pages delicately with images of singers, musicians, instruments and flowers. This was virtually a Reformation version of the medieval Books of Hours.





Masterpieces abound in the University Library

For the project all eight extant Part Books were brought together and then displayed for the first time along with other relevant items which set the books in context: such as the wedding portraits of Lord James Stewart ('wha efter wes Erle of murray and 'regent') – who had been Wode's patron – and his wife Annas Keith. Also displayed were musical instruments, a portrait of George Buchanan, a map of St Andrews of the period, as well as many other items setting this in a wider context.

Other fascinating objects included examples of 'stitching' of the period which could be seen in the portraits and had been specially recreated by Nancy Bailey.

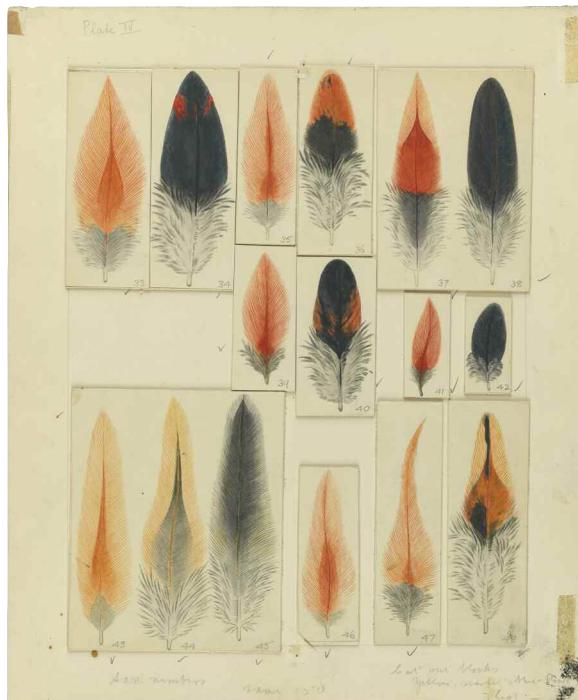
The final touch, providing a true period atmosphere, was the music which hovered in the air while visitors studied the material in the cases. As the composer, James Macmillan, who opened the exhibition, said: 'Wode's work shows that Scotland, in spite of everything, was connected to a wider world, and absorbent of the most important European music of the day'. Indeed, the composers were not only Scots such as David Peebles, Andro Blackhall, Robert Johnson and Jhone Angus but continental Europeans such as Lassus and Palestrina as well as the Englishman Thomas Tallis.

A truly magnificent project and exhibition which deserves to travel the world.

For further information go to:
www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/wode

Wode Team in Edinburgh

Jane Dawson, Timothy Duguid, Andrew Grout, Jenny Gypaki, Karoline Maclean, Noel O' Regan, Jessie Paterson, John Scally, Scott Spurlock



Original artwork for J.P. Chu, 'Studies on Plumage in the Male Brown Leghorn Fowl', *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, 59 (1938-9). Special Collections: E.2009.10

No matter how splendid the building a library is about its contents and Edinburgh University Library contains collections amongst the finest in Europe, if not even the world.

Part of the new approach has been to dedicate a small area on the ground floor to exhibitions open, not only to members of the Library and to the Friends, of course, but also available to a wider public to share and enjoy.

This is proving very successful with figures for the most recent exhibition reaching almost 4,000. These visitors include many from

outwith the university and thus the University of Edinburgh can share some of its masterpieces with an even wider audience and provide knowledge and pleasure for many in the community.

The Friends have played an important part in this in many ways but especially providing funds for the purchase of these state-of-the-art display cases which not only offer a splendid showcase for precious items but also are extremely secure and sufficiently sophisticated to provide excellent environmental control for rare, delicate items.

Masterpieces II

Open 31 March – 30 July 2012

Following on from the success of Masterpieces I, which illustrated the beauty, richness and diversity of the University's collections, its sequel, Masterpieces II, will showcase treasures from the University's collections.



A Good Friend has Departed

Brenda Elizabeth Moon 11 April 1931 – 7 March 2011



It is appropriate here to mention the sad loss of Brenda Moon who was appointed chief librarian of the University of Edinburgh in 1980, becoming the first woman to hold such a post in Scotland, and one of the first in a major UK research library.

A pioneer, she brought the library into the late 20th century, with a clear vision of the transformative influence digitisation would have on libraries. But for Brenda, libraries were above all about collections and she re-invigorated the special collections, incorporating books, manuscripts, archives, museum objects and art works. She brought major collections too, including the papers

of poets such as George Mackay Brown, Norman MacCaig and Hugh MacDiarmid, materials on WH Auden, the Arthur Koestler, and the Corson–Sir Walter Scott collections.

Born in Newcastle-under-Lyme, she studied at St Hilda's College, Oxford and then worked in Sheffield University Library and in the University of Hull's Brynmor Jones Library serving under Philip Larkin. On the occasion of the library's 50th anniversary in 1979, he laid a poem on her desk, 'The daily things we do'. He also wrote, at her behest, another poem, 'New eyes each year'.

Brenda cared for her library staff as her family, and many remember with affection the interest she showed. At meetings, there was always a homemade treat – scones and lemon cakes stand out in my memory. She also took a great interest in, and re-invigorated, the Friends of Edinburgh University Library.

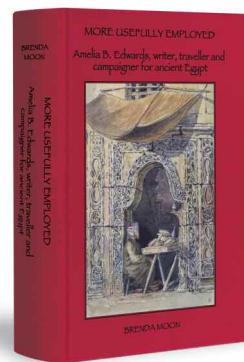
An active member of several library organisations, both Scottish and international, she was a co-founder of CURL (Consortium of University Research Libraries, now RLUK). Elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE), she

became curator from 2002–2005.

In 1987 she gained her MPhil from Leeds University with a thesis on Marianne North, and later her PhD from the University of Hull on Amelia Edwards – subsequently published as *More Usefully Employed: Amelia B Edwards, writer, traveller, and campaigner for Ancient Egypt* (2006).

A great traveller and an accomplished photographer of flowers, I spent many evenings in her house, or her garden, seeing photographs of her recent trips. In retirement, she travelled widely with her dear sister, Mary who, after the diagnosis of a brain tumour, came to Edinburgh and cared for Brenda fulltime.

Sheila Cannell



Come and join us!

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



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