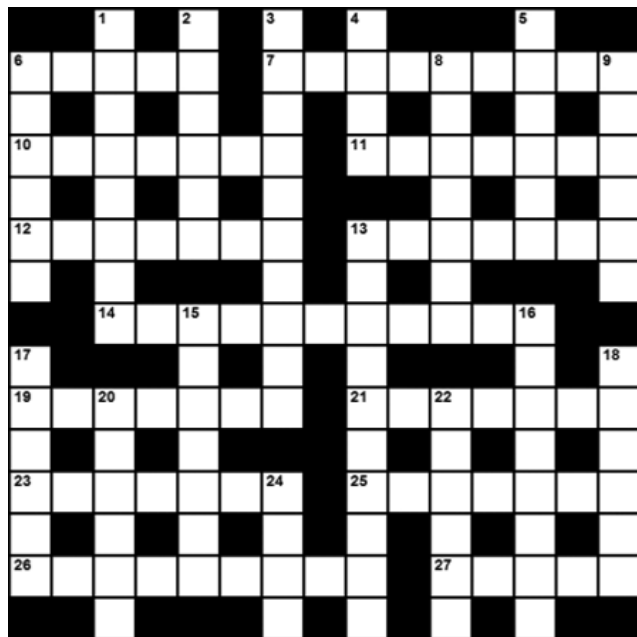


Win tickets to see on stage

Senders of the first three correct crossword solutions opened will each win a pre-Christmas treat – a pair of top-price tickets to *The Ladykillers* at London's Gielgud Theatre. The famous Ealing comedy comes to life on stage in a hilarious and thrilling new adaption by **Graham Linehan** (writer of *Father Ted*), directed by **Sean Foley** (*The Play What I Wrote*). The stellar cast includes **Peter Capaldi** (from *The Thick of It*), **James Fleet** (*The Vicar of Dibley*) and **Ben Miller** (*The Armstrong and Miller Show*). **Marcia Warren** plays the

sweetly innocent Mrs Wilberforce who, alone in her house, is pitted against a gang of criminal misfits who will stop at nothing.

The tickets will be valid for performances between Monday 19 and Thursday 22 December, subject to availability. There is no cash alternative. Include your name, address, membership number and a telephone number or e-mail address so that the theatre's representative can contact you if you win. **Closing date: 7 December.**



Solution to autumn puzzle:

Across: 1 Husbands, 5 Arabic, 10 Canst, 11 Boston spa, 12 Baseballs, 13 Gasps, 14 Arnold, 15 Pen name, 18 Reforms, 20 Wesker, 22 Troop, 24 Constrict, 25 Neediness, 26 Omaha, 27 Elapse, 28 Irish Sea.

Down: 1 Hecuba, 2 Sans serif, 3 Autobiographies, 4 Dabbled, 6 Reorganisations, 7 Basis, 8 Clansmen, 9 Uses up, 16 Americans, 17 Pretence, 19 Secret, 20 Windsor, 21 Ithaca, 23 Opera.

The five winners who received CDs of *The Writing Life*, were: Donna Foster of Sutton, Susan Pomeroy of Harpenden, Jean Tarry of Bury, Elizabeth Woodruff of Seaford and Dr Edward Brett of Hampstead.

Across

- 6 (with 14) Crowning glories lit up in Library show (5,11)
- 7 This goes around twisted body parts as a measure of substance (9)
- 10 Saint penetrated by sharp object in disorder, and it hurts (8)
- 11 Auden's caused joy for girl and boy, amongst others (7)
- 12 Foolish Amin has nothing before a twitch (7)
- 13 He's immortalised in Oxford showpiece (7)
- 14 (see 6) (11)
- 19 Descartes married and was quite restored (7)
- 21 World body adds garment only to remove it (7)
- 23 US video cunningly mixed (7)
- 25 Lenin gets awkward (7)
- 26 Fat welder turned to old pots (9)
- 27 Monsters emerge from bog resurrected (5)

Down

- 1 Meredith's intellectual dandyism (8)
- 2 When the words here do this, you've triumphed (3,3)
- 3 Type to suggest a new slant on a story (10)
- 4 Philosophical grinder (4)
- 5 La Serenissima and her local entourage (6)
- 6 Mend it by becoming a couple again (6)
- 8 Sailboat rises saucily (7)
- 9 One of Anton's three (6)
- 13 Upset babies blur basic fault under new wallpaper (3,7)
- 15 Play up and play the game, he urged (7)
- 16 Milton has him telling tales under the hawthorn (8)
- 17 Shortly, old-fashioned Labour leader did a deal (6)
- 18 Judge whether ship (without name) will end up amid turbulent seas (6)
- 20 Fifty in assorted ovens – Aga sagas? (6)
- 22 A dab toy has short surgical procedure (6)
- 24 Junk mail, but meaty (4)

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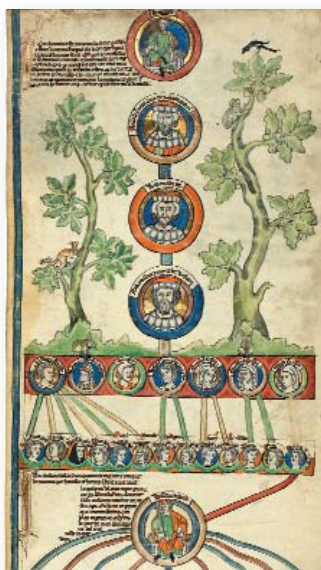
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Crowning glories of illumination

Some of the Library's most magnificent treasures are revealed in its latest major exhibition, which opened in the PACCAR Gallery on 11 November. *Royal Manuscripts: The Genius of Illumination* shows the cream of the manuscripts collected by medieval and Tudor monarchs. Most are from the Old Royal Library, presented to the British Museum by George II in 1757. (Not to be confused with the King's Library, acquired 66 years later, now housed in the tower that forms the focal point of the St Pancras building.)

Edward IV can lay claim to be the founder of the Royal Library and the first section of the exhibition is devoted to his collection. Although his reign was dominated by the Wars of the Roses, he found time to commission nearly 50 spectacular manuscripts, mainly on historical themes. Of these, 16 are on display, including one that portrays the author, Jean de Wavrin of Bruges, presenting the book to the King.



The next area examines the interaction between the Christian church and the monarchy. Here can be seen one of the oldest items on show, a charter drawn up in 964 to commemorate King Edgar's introduction of Benedictine rule at New Minster Abbey in Winchester, with a glorious depiction of Christ in Majesty. Fast forward nearly 500 years to a superb psalter commissioned by Henry VIII, in which he is identified with King David.

The third section is the central part of the exhibition, with royal identity as its theme. Among

several documents aimed at establishing the legitimacy of the Norman monarchy, the most intriguing is a genealogical chronicle of the English Kings, compiled in England in the very first years of the fourteenth century (pictured).

Written and illustrated on a roll of parchments glued together, it starts with the Anglo-Saxon kings and moves on to the early Normans, with William the Conqueror identified as William the Bastard, as he was known at the time.

A small group of manuscripts devoted to the instruction of future monarchs features a poem, *The Regement of Princes*, written in 1411, offering political advice to the future Henry V. The highlight of the next section, on the diffusion of knowledge, has sections of Matthew Paris's celebrated map, drawn at St Albans in about 1250, depicting the pilgrimage route from London to Jerusalem, with spirited illustrations of the buildings and natural features that the pilgrims would have encountered (pictured).

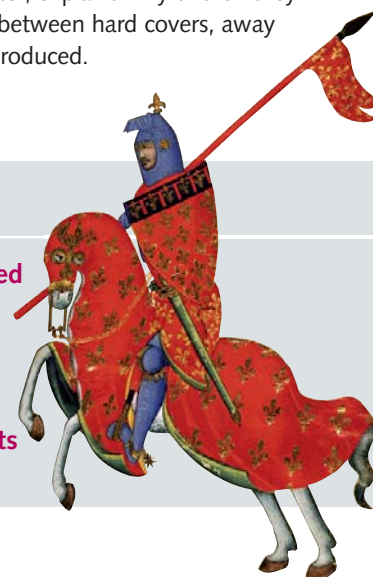
The final section deals with the affinities between England and mainland Europe and includes one of the most famous manuscripts from the Old Royal Library, *The Shrewsbury Book*, given to Margaret of Anjou, the wife of Henry VI, by the Earl of Shrewsbury in about 1445. It is notable for its powerful frontispiece images and for the forthright presentation of Henry's claim to be the rightful King of France.

Remarkably, nearly all the manuscripts are in near-pristine condition, their colours as vibrant as when first revealed to their royal owners. Dr Scot McKendrick, the Library's Head of History and Classics and the exhibition's curator, explains why this is: they have, for the most part, been stored between hard covers, away from daylight, ever since they were produced.

Continued on page 2...

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- Page 8 **Win theatre tickets**



Don Prichard dies

Don Prichard, deputy chairman of the Friends from 2002 to 2007 and later acting co-ordinator of the volunteers, died in September at the age of 79. On page 2 Graham Allatt, our treasurer and a close friend of Don's, writes about his life and enthusiasms.

Free admission agreed

The Library has agreed to allow Friends free admission to its charged-for exhibitions from next summer, in the belief that this will result in a significant increase in our membership. Earlier this year, faced with a cut in its Government grant-in-aid, the Library decided that it would have to charge for the twice-yearly major exhibitions in the PACCAR Gallery, most of which had hitherto been free. Smaller exhibitions, including those in the Folio Society Gallery and the Sir John Ritblat Treasures Gallery, will remain free of charge.

The first charged-for exhibition is *Royal Manuscripts: The Genius of Illumination*, which has just opened and is described on page one. The full price of admission is £9, or £7 for the over-60s. Because the

agreement on free admission was not in place when the charging structure for this exhibition was finalised, Friends will be admitted to it at half the price they would otherwise have paid: in other words for £4.50 or £3.50 respectively. For subsequent exhibitions, Friends will be admitted free, under an agreement that was expected to be ratified by the Council soon after this Newsletter went to press.

Christopher Wright, our deputy chairman, comments: "We believe that this will be an important tool in recruiting new members, in particular from among people attending the exhibitions. The more new members we recruit the more we shall be able to increase the value of our grants."

Crowning glories of illumination (continued)

Says Dr McKendrick: "They are a window into a now remote world and an insight into the aspirations of those for whom they were made – the English royal family."

While nearly all the exhibits are from the Library's own holdings, a few exceptional items have been loaned from elsewhere, including a portrait of Edward IV from the Royal Collection, an exquisite tapestry from the Burrell Collection in Glasgow and the skull of a lion dug up at the Tower of London. A television series based on material in the exhibition, *The Private Lives of Medieval Kings*, is being broadcast on BBC4.

The exhibition will run until 13 March. As we report on this page, Friends will be admitted at half price, pending the implementation of the agreement for free admission to exhibitions which comes into effect later next year.

Obituary

Dr Don Prichard

Dr Don Prichard, deputy chairman of the Friends from 2002 to 2007, was a wise and energetic member of the Council and was instrumental in professionalising the organisation of the Friends and improving relations with the Library during his tenure. After standing down from the Council he agreed to act temporarily as co-ordinator of the volunteers.

Don had a tremendous breadth of knowledge, an inexhaustible fund of anecdotes and the gift of being able to talk to anyone and everyone. Whether speaking to Library staff, volunteers on the desk or other Council members, he always had a friendly word. He also had a clear vision of the right way forward, and did a lot of work behind the scenes to ensure the Council's decisions were implemented effectively. The Friends owe much to him.

Don was born in 1932 in Gravesend. He was educated at Borden Grammar School, leaving at 16 to join Bowater as a laboratory assistant but continuing his education by studying chemistry at night school. After completing his National Service with the famous East Kent Regiment, the Buffs, he qualified as a chemical engineer at London University. In 1957 he married Beryl; they were the perfect partners for over 50 years.

He moved first to ICI at Middlesbrough (where his two sons were born) and then



to Dow Chemical, where he remained for the rest of his career.

At Dow, Don was initially designing and commissioning chemical plants but in 1974 he went to Madrid to run the human resources function in Spain. With his tremendous people skills, this played to his greatest strength. He became fluent in the language and developed a love for all things Spanish. After a few years he moved to Zurich to run Dow's human resources operations for Europe and in 1988 went to Hong Kong as HR director for the Far East and Australasia. He retired in 1993 and came back to London to live in the Barbican.

Don was determined to be just as active in retirement as he was during his working life. He immediately embarked on studying for an MA at Birkbeck College, London University. As if this were not challenging enough, he followed it with an MPhil in History, followed by a PhD and an MSc in the history of science.

Don and Beryl led an active social life. They found time to travel widely in Europe, on walking tours and to music festivals and art galleries. Don was

particularly fond of hearing baroque music in the buildings where it would originally have been performed.

It was through this musical passion that I met him, and it was he who introduced me to the Friends. He and Beryl befriended me during a baroque music festival in northern Spain. I happened to mention that I was looking to take on additional voluntary work: within five minutes he had recruited me as treasurer.

Of many fond memories, two in particular stand out. The first is an oft-repeated image of Don striding out over the Spanish Pyrenees, setting a cracking pace at the front of our party. This was despite his being the oldest in the group, conceding 30 years to some of the younger members.

The second is when one of our walking parties had a reunion at St Paul's Cathedral, because a member was singing choral evensong as part of a visiting choir. Don kindly arranged to conduct a tour of the triforium for all concerned, and with characteristic vigour and enthusiasm regaled us with tales of the cathedral, its architect and its construction. The very next morning he was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia, but there was no hint of any ailment during our visit. His bravura performance was a measure of the man.

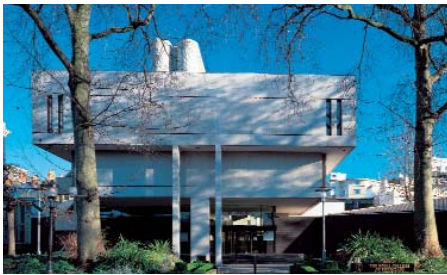
Graham Allatt

Secrets of medicine, science and movies

To book for the following events please use the form enclosed with this Newsletter. No need to book, though, for the AGM and lecture on 12 March.

SHOPPING EVENING CANCELLED

Please note that the annual Christmas Shopping Evening, which we announced in the last issue as scheduled for 1 December, has unfortunately been cancelled. You can, however, still take advantage of an additional discount in the Library Shop between 1 and 4 December. See page 3 for further details.



ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS

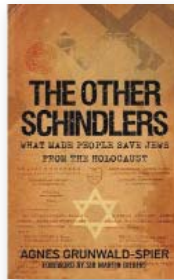
11 St Andrews Place, London NW1
Monday 30 January, 2pm, £11
Limit 25 places

The Royal College of Physicians of London was founded in 1518 as the College of Physicians by royal charter of Henry VIII – the first medical institution in England to receive a royal charter. The main functions of the college, as set down in the founding charter, were to grant licences to those qualified to practice and to punish unqualified practitioners and those engaging in malpractice. Its original headquarters, near St Paul's Cathedral, was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. The college now occupies a splendid building in Regent's Park designed by Sir Denys Lasdun in 1964 – one of the very few post-war buildings to be Grade 1 listed. Its collections help to place the history and development of medicine and health care in its widest context, and include portraits, silver, medical instruments and anatomical tables. Our group will be given a guided tour and refreshments.

THE OTHER SCHINDLERS

A talk by Agnes Grunwald-Spier
British Library Conservation Centre
Tuesday 7 February, 2pm, £8
Limit 35 places

Agnes Grunwald-Spier will discuss her book, *The Other Schindlers*, in which she tells the moving stories of 30 non-Jews who rescued and protected Jews in ten



German-occupied countries during the Second World War. Born in Budapest in July 1944, Agnes as a baby was herself saved from the horrors of Auschwitz by an unknown official, and is now a trustee of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. Her book is an uplifting account of how some good deeds really do shine in a weary world.

ST CUTHBERT'S GOSPEL

Private view and talk
British Library Conservation Centre
Wednesday 22 February, 2pm, £10
Limit 25 places

The Friends have pledged £50,000 to the Library's appeal for funds to purchase this seventh-century Gospel, the earliest known bound book to have remained intact (see page 4). The Gospel will be on display for viewing and a talk will be given by one of the curators, giving an insight into its origins and history. The appeal for funds continues.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY

6-9 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1
Wednesday 29 February, 2pm, £13
Limit 20 places

On 28 November 1660, a group of 12 "natural philosophers" met at Gresham College, after a lecture by Christopher Wren, the Gresham Professor of Astronomy, and decided to found "a college for the promoting of physico-mathematical experimental learning". This became the Royal Society, the world's oldest scientific academy in continuous existence, at the forefront of enquiry and discovery since its foundation. It has been in its present premises since 1967, where its library contains over 70,000 titles, published from the 1470s to the present day.



© The Royal Society

Title page of Thomas Sprat's 1667 *History of the Royal Society*.

FRIENDS' AGM AND ANNUAL LECTURE

British Library Lecture Theatre
Monday 12 March 2012, AGM 5.30pm,
lecture 6.30pm. Free, no need to book

We are pleased to announce that the Bishop of London, the Right Rev. Richard Chartres, will be the guest speaker after the Annual General Meeting. His many other official positions include president of the Bible Society, Honorary Bencher of the Middle Temple and chairman of the Church Buildings Division of the Church of England. He deputises for the Archbishop of Canterbury as chairman of the board of governors of the Church Commissioners and is responsible on behalf of the



Archbishop for relations with the Orthodox Churches. Further details of the AGM will be circulated in due course.

THE CINEMA MUSEUM

2 Dugard Way, London SE11
Monday 26 March, 2.30pm, £11
Limit 20 places



London's Cinema Museum is devoted to keeping alive the spirit of cinema from the days before the multiplex.

Set in historic surroundings in Kennington, close to the Elephant & Castle, the museum houses a unique collection of artifacts, memorabilia and equipment that preserves the history and grandeur of cinema from the 1890s to the present day. Its collection encompasses every aspect of going to the pictures, from the architecture and fittings of cinemas themselves to the ephemeral marketing materials that promoted the films of the moment. It includes more than a million photographic images, featuring pictures of cinemas and cinema-going; a large collection of posters and original artwork; projectors from every era, both professional and amateur; cinema staff uniforms; fixtures and fittings and more than 17 million feet of film. A fascinating archive of printed publications includes periodicals, fan magazines, trade magazines and cinema sheet music.

Lost Conan Doyle novel published

Arthur Conan Doyle's first novel, *The Narrative of John Smith* was completed in 1884 but remained unpublished until last September, when the Library repaired the omission. Partly autobiographical, the work anticipates in some respects the first Sherlock Holmes novel, *A Study in Scarlet*, published just three years later: for example, Smith has a garrulous landlady, Mrs Rundle, who shares several character traits with Mrs Hudson, Holmes's housekeeper at 221b Baker Street.

The novel has a curious history. Doyle, who had achieved a small reputation as a writer of short stories, intended to submit it to a publisher but the manuscript was lost in the post. He then rewrote it from memory but did not resubmit it. The four notebooks in

which he wrote the text were acquired by the Library with much other Doyle material in 2004 and one of them will be on display in the Treasures Gallery, along with the letter in which he describes losing the manuscript, until 5 January.

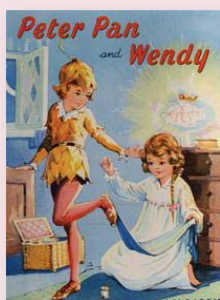
The book is available in the Library Shop at £9.95 and an audiobook, read by Robert Lindsay, costs £20. Friends receive the usual discount on both. Another forthcoming Holmes-related event will be a talk by Anthony Horowitz, who has been commissioned to write a new novel featuring the legendary detective. It will take place in the Conference Centre at 2.30pm on Sunday 27 November. Tickets are on sale at the Library box office.

Captured images

An exhibition of work by the American photographer Michael Katakis is in the Folio Gallery, on the Library's upper ground floor, until 20 November. Katakis and his wife, the anthropologist Kris Hardin, have travelled in Africa, America and other parts of the world recording everyday life and emotional moments with a subtle eye.

The couple have donated their archives to the Library and the exhibition coincides with its publication of their book, *Photographs and Words*, available in the shop for £25 before discount. Says John Falconer, Lead Curator of Visual Arts: "In an era when the boundaries and meaning of photographic truth become increasingly confused, Michael Katakis' works retain a refreshing and moving commitment to the values of 'straight' photography, for which the central requirements have always been an inquisitive eye and an open spirit."

Adopt a Book for Christmas

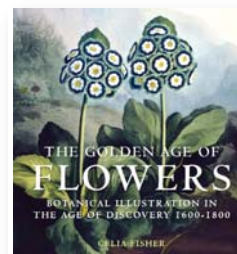


Adopt a Book has been at the heart of the Library's giving programme for many years and makes a great gift for friends and family. Your gift helps the Library's conservation team protect the world's knowledge for future generations. The online booklist has been updated for Christmas and includes an illustrated edition of JM Barrie's classic *Peter Pan and Wendy*, celebrating its centenary year.

The beneficiary of your gift will receive a customised e-certificate in grateful recognition of your generosity. For details visit: <http://support.bl.uk/Page/Adopt-a-book>

Flower power

One of the Library's most seductive new books is *The Golden Age of Flowers*, Celia Fisher's selection of more than 100 of the finest examples of botanical illustration from between 1600 and 1800. It includes the work of the renowned Maria Sybylla Merian and illustrations from such ground-breaking books as *Hortus Eystettensis*, Thornton's *Temple of Flora*, Banks's *Florilegium* and Sibthorp's *Flora Graeca*. The flowers are arranged in alphabetical order and the accompanying text outlines their origin, the derivation of their name and the properties for which they were most valued. This beautiful book, which will appeal to anyone with an interest in flowers and gardening, costs £20 before the discount.

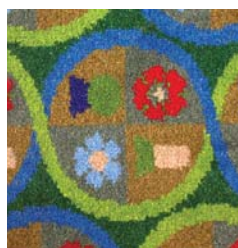


Laying down the law

Two years ago the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom was established, taking over the role of our highest court of appeal from the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords. The panel of 12 senior judges moved across Parliament Square to the highly ornate neo-Gothic former Middlesex Guildhall, designed by James Gibson, which had been used as a crown court centre since Middlesex ceased to exist as an administrative entity.

Two dozen Friends, visiting the Court in September, gathered in the entrance hall which, while maintaining its essential Gothic character, has been subtly modernized, with glass panels and doors adorned with the court's emblem and key phrases from the judicial oath. From there Morag Calderbank, our highly informative guide, took us up to the second floor to Court Room 1, the largest of the court rooms, where as many as nine judges can hear a case. Originally used as the council debating chamber, it has the appearance of a medieval great hall, complete with minstrels' gallery.

There we were shown a video in which Lord Phillips, the Court's president, explained its workings. There were, he said, several advantages in the new arrangement. Most importantly, it reinforces the separation of the judiciary and the legislature: formerly the Law



Lords were entitled to take part in debates in the House of Lords, although in practice they seldom did so.

Morag led us down to Court Room 2, a smaller room where only five judges sit. By contrast to Court 1 this is an uncompromisingly modern space, with large windows and a dramatic view of Westminster Abbey. It features a carpet designed by Sir Peter Blake incorporating the floral symbols of the four countries that make up the UK – a rose, a thistle, a leek and sky blue flax (pictured). The floral motif is also featured in a set of gigantic wall hangings, stretching more than 20 feet from ceiling to floor, designed by the Scottish studio Timorous Beasties.

The reference library occupies what used to be the principal court in the building's crown court days. It is an impressive room with an elaborate carved ceiling, its walls carrying slogans about the values of justice from such as Cicero, Disraeli and Martin Luther King. Finally we visited Court Room 3, where the judges sit as the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, hearing appeals from those former colonies and independent Commonwealth countries that choose to recognise it as their highest court.

Why I help the Library I love

Sian Best describes the joy and fulfilment of being a volunteer on the Friends' desk in the lobby

It always feels a little presumptuous to describe oneself as a friend of such an august institution – like claiming intimacy with someone famous and powerful to whom one was just introduced briefly at a party. But my current relationship with the Library is really a culmination of a life-long friendship with libraries of all kinds.

The first library I remember using is the tiny (very) part-time branch in the small Welsh town where I grew up. I had soon read through the shelf and a half of well-worn books which comprised the junior section and I can still feel the rush of joy when my father took me to the much larger children's library in Haverfordwest, the county town. There were, it seemed, row after row of book stacks, all filled with hundreds of lovely books I hadn't read yet – I could hardly believe in all this treasure. "Is this really all for me?" I asked.

I remember having the same sort of feeling as a student in the English library at University College, London, knowing that all the material you need to find out about the things that really matter to you is freely available – all in one place, carefully arranged and organised for ease of discovery, with a little leeway for the occasional serendipitous delight. So, of course, I became one of those arrangers and organisers myself, to spend over 40 years in college, school, prison and special libraries.



While qualifying as a librarian, I first heard of Antonio Panizzi, prince of the profession who, in the mid-nineteenth century, transformed the British Museum's Department of Printed Books from a collection of titles into a wonderful research resource. He insisted: "I want a poor student to have the same means of indulging his learned curiosity, of following his rational pursuits, of consulting the same authorities, of fathoming the most intricate inquiry as the richest man in the kingdom, as far as books go..." With a slight adjustment to include poor female students, it still seems a superb rationale for any national library.

So now, in retirement, I travel to London from Cardiff twice a month to sit as a volunteer at the Friends' desk. Volunteer duty in the lobby has many joys – it must be one of the best spots in London for people-watching, with a wonderfully diverse parade of scholars and tourists from all over the world: it's fascinating to hear their stories and comments, and if they decide to sign up as Friends that's an excellent bonus.

My only cavil is that I dearly wish that the many handsome artworks in the lobby and piazza included a rather more prominent reference to Panizzi, so that he might receive due gratitude from all those poor scholars who are still delighted to visit the Library and find that all this really is for them.

The Friends are always looking for more volunteers. If you have time and enthusiasm and want to make an extra contribution to the support we give the Library, please contact Jean-Anne Ashton on 020 8964 2292 or email her at ashtonjeanne@aol.com

From the Membership Secretary



The interest shown by Friends in our events programme continues to amaze me! We had 250 people apply for just 30 places to visit the newly refurbished St Pancras Renaissance Hotel this month. It would be great if we could arrange extra tours for those of you who missed out – but we have to take our place in the queue behind other organisations who want to visit.

I know how much so many of you enjoy our events, and especially our annual shopping evening. Unfortunately, as you should already know from a separate mailing, we have had to cancel the event this year due to potential industrial action on 30 November.

The date was moved once, due to a clash with a British Library event, and because of the exhibition opening times and the proximity to Christmas it has not been possible to find a suitable alternative date. The good news is that the Library Shop has kindly agreed to allow Friends to enjoy the additional discount that is normally offered for the shopping evening. So if you come in between 1 and 4 December you can claim 20 per cent off the cost of purchases instead of the usual 10 per cent. You need to take along the voucher on the bottom of the cancellation notice sent out at the beginning of November.

I have every intention of running the event as normal in 2012 and I am very sorry to have to cancel it this year. The best part of my job is getting to know the Friends, and I hope to continue to see you all at events throughout the year and in the Friends' Room.

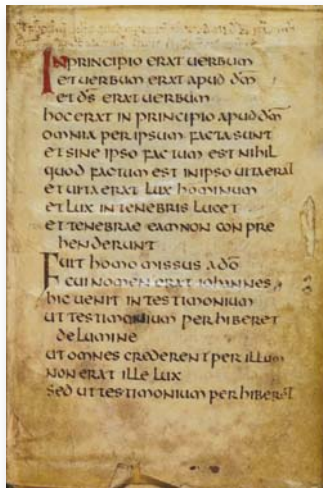
Gift memberships are always very popular at this time of year and are available from me in the Friends' Office. Please get all orders in for Christmas delivery by 19 December. You can purchase a gift membership by post, phone or email. Memberships can be sent directly to the recipient or to the giver for direct giving. Gift members get a presentation pack including past issues of the Newsletter, postcards, bookmarks, and a Friends of the British Library canvas bag. Of course, gift memberships are available year-round for birthdays and other anniversaries, and are becoming increasingly popular as leaving or retirement gifts.

Finally, the Friends' Office will be closed from 11 November to 28 November due to staff leave. I wish you and your families all the best for the holiday season.

Nickie Chapman, Membership Secretary



Friends' legacies support St Cuthbert appeal



The generosity of members who left money to the Friends in their wills has enabled us to make an exceptionally large grant of £50,000 to the Library's ongoing appeal to raise the £9m needed to acquire the Gospel of St Cuthbert, the oldest surviving intact European book. Half of the purchase price is being contributed by the Heritage Lottery Fund and it is hoped that the rest will be raised before the end of next year.

Dr Christopher Wright, deputy chairman of the Friends, comments: "The fact that we are able to

contribute to the appeal through our legacy fund underlines the importance of legacies to the work we do. We would have been unable to make such a large grant solely from the revenue from membership fees and events. This is why we are urging members to consider whether they can include the Friends in their wills."

Although our grant is a small proportion of the total cost, Dr Kristian Jensen, the Library's Head of Arts and Humanities, told the Friends Council that its value to the appeal will be immense, because our involvement is likely to encourage other donors to come forward. He gave an assurance that, should the book be acquired, it will provide the focus for one or more special events for our members, one of which could take place in Durham, where the book was kept until the dissolution of the monasteries and where the Library has agreed to display it regularly. It will also be available digitally for scholars, researchers and enthusiasts to study.

A small, hand-written copy of the Gospel of St John, it was produced in northern England shortly before it was buried in Lindisfarne in AD698 alongside the body of Cuthbert, a venerated leader of the early English church who spent some years as a hermit

before being appointed Bishop of Lindisfarne in 685. He died in 687 but his body was reinterred 11 years later when he was elevated to sainthood. In the tenth century, to escape Viking raids, the coffin was moved to Durham, where in 1104 it was opened and the book was discovered.

After its removal from Durham in the 1530s the Gospel disappeared until the eighteenth century, when a collector in Oxford donated it to the Society of Jesus, its present owner.



Dr Jensen added: "The Gospel's association with Cuthbert is of immense historical importance and closely links the volume to the Lindisfarne Gospels – perhaps the greatest treasure in the Library's collection – which is said to have been written in Cuthbert's honour."

A unique feature of the book is that it retains its original red goatskin binding. "Decorated leatherwork dating from before AD1000 is extremely rare," says Dr Jensen, "and although the structure of the bookbinding is fragile it is in outstandingly good condition and preserves elements of the original pigments used . . . It is an outstanding example of late seventh-century workmanship."

There will be a private view of the Gospel for Friends on 22 February. See page 7 for details.

How to keep books healthy



The Friends have renewed their commitment to the Library's scheme to train library professionals from overseas in the skills of preserving and restoring books and other documents. Last year we gave £8500 to support Avijit Chakrabarti from Calcutta (pictured) in a six-month voluntary placement in the Collection Care department. We have now allocated £10,000 for two three-month placements, which will be advertised on the Library website and with other relevant bodies this year. It is envisaged that the

successful candidates will start their courses next February and September.

Deborah Novotny, Head of Collection Care, describes the placements as "a unique learning opportunity for a professional in a busy library to develop knowledge and skills in the latest preservation and conservation practices". She said that Avijit's time in London proved hugely successful for both him and for the Library. Several Friends attended a talk in which he set out how much he had gained from the experience and thanked us for our support.

Ms. Novotny added: "Avijit found the placement to be a lifetime achievement and felt he would be able to help set an Indian standard in his own place of work. The Library benefited by gaining an insight into the hazards and problems that other countries face when trying to preserve their heritage material, especially when faced with problems arising from extreme temperatures and humidity."

So let's hear it for digitisation

Sam Leith (pictured) finds technical innovation no threat to manuscript culture

There have always been two British Libraries: a real one and a virtual one. There's the repository of physical books and there's the library of the imagination – the web of texts and commentaries, essays and ideas, stitched together by footnotes and citations, indices and catalogue entries, memories and associations. It lives in the world in the first form, and in the culture in the second.

As the Library enters the digital age ever more fully, there's anxiety in some quarters that the material library – and the physical books it gives us such pleasure to handle – is under threat. Manuscript culture feels on the back foot. It needn't.

Fears that search engines and hypertext will change the way we engage with texts miss the vital thing. They don't do something different: they just make it easier and faster by orders of magnitude to do what scholars have always done. The very existence of a library is testament to the idea that texts are vitally interdependent.

Take the hypertext link: that tinted phrase you click to navigate to another page. The analogue version of that is the footnote or the endnote: you click, as it were, with your eyes on a superscript letter and move off to another chunk of text at the bottom of the page or the back of the book. Bibliography entries, or footnoted citations, do a similar job – sending you off not to a paragraph or two but to a whole book, with its own host of footnotes and citations in turn pointing you further out, further on, into the virtual library.

Likewise, search engines allow us to scoot through a text finding, say, every instance of "gold" in the *Merchant of Venice*. But search engines have always existed – at least for a handful of writers at the top of the canon. They were called "concordances" – alphabetical indices of every word in a given body of work. Putting them together was the labour of a lifetime. Now, a concordance to the complete works of Harold Robbins could be assembled by a halfway competent programmer in less than an hour.

Digitisation brings a change not in kind but in degree; albeit so marked a change in degree that it adds up to a change in kind. Speed matters. It is democratising: if you really want to study Harold Robbins, you will now have the same analytical tools available as if you want to study Shakespeare. And if you want to bookworm through footnotes or bibliographies, the jump to



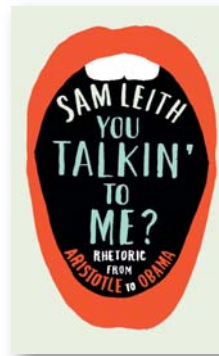
the next text is ever more likely to be instantaneous, rather than to involve a 48-hour wait while it is shipped down from Boston Spa. In the wider culture there are fears that digitisation – as Amazon and Google tailor the way they serve search results ever more tightly to the individual – will imprison us all in a sort of informational gravity well: we will learn about the world only what we already know. In a library, the opposite applies: the gravity well is pre-digital.

The more footnoted something is, the more likely subsequent scholars will be to find it and footnote it themselves: older and more canonical texts snowball in authority, while potentially

groundbreaking new work can struggle to enter the discourse. Electronic search means you are far more likely to come across new and less well-known journal articles. JSTOR opens floodgates.

So love manuscripts as we all may, we are fools to fetishise them. Digitisation makes the virtual library live in the world. That can only be a wonderful thing.

Sam Leith is the author of You Talkin' To Me? Rhetoric From Aristotle To Obama (Profile)



As others see us . . .

"Working at the long ranks of airy desks in Humanities 1 you feel part of some energetic and invigoratingly youthful enterprise. An oarsman in a fleet of galleys, perhaps – though there's no whip-wielding overseer, just the silent clock. Humanities 2, on the lofty mezzanine above, is the poop deck, but the real officer class is found in Rare Books ('Real Books' aka 'Raw Meats'). Nothing disturbs its profound professorial calm."

James McConnachie writing in The Author, the journal of the Society of Authors.



Humanities 1 Reading Room.

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Council members wanted

Members wishing to nominate candidates for the Friends' Council, our charity's administrative body, should do so in writing to the Honorary Secretary, c/o the Friends' Office (see back page for address) by Friday 16 December. Nominations should include brief biographical details of the candidate(s). The Nominations Committee will meet candidates early in 2012.