

CULIB - Cambridge University Libraries Information Bulletin

ISSN 0307-7284 Edited by Kathryn McKee, Mary Kattuman, Lyn Bailey, Lindsay Jones and Fiona Mossman

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Issue 82, Lent 2018: Beyond the library walls

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EDITORIAL

Present day library services transcend the physical boundaries of the library building. Many collections and services are used remotely. This issue looks at how librarians have reached out in innovative ways to provide and promote library services. Kirsten Lamb shares with us her experience of taking researchers at Engineering on a journey in which they discovered that librarians armed with their information skills and knowledge of the regulatory and ethical frameworks around research, can actually be partners in research. She believes that more of us could start embedded librarian programs and gives some pointers on how to do it. She will be running a workshop on the topic.

Lindsay Jones shares her experience of running a drop-in session on e-resources and e-books away from the library, with lessons for future sessions. Tracy Deakin and Robert Athol speak about the workshops they ran for postgraduates, introducing them to the riches of archival material right here in Cambridge. More workshops, including those for undergraduates, are on the way. The Medical Library staff have been pioneers in taking the library outside. Jo Milton and Veronica Phillips describe how they set up pop up libraries and training sessions inside the hospital. They welcome new NHS readers in the Fitness Centre! Their novel idea of introducing an online advent calendar – following the cycle a researcher would take in a systematic review – proved to be very popular not just in Cambridge but across the world. On a light-hearted note, Mark Hurn introduces us to Astronimouse, the astronomical mouse, who has popularised the Institute of Astronomy library with a lively Twitter feed.

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EMBEDDING LIBRARY SKILLS IN RESEARCH

For me, it started with curiosity.

When I joined the [Engineering Library](#) two and a half years ago, we were fighting dual misconceptions that 1) libraries are about books and 2) Engineers don't use books so they don't need a library. As a team we firmly believe that our job is to support the information needs of every Engineering researcher and student, whether they set foot inside the library or not, but this raised a question: how would we know what our researchers need?

Through the teaching and training we gave to members of the Department we had small windows into what our researchers were doing. We also used UX methods to delve into the mind-sets driving those behaviours, but we were aware that we were only seeing a fraction of the information behaviours and needs in the Department. So the questions started to transform into a possible plan of action: What if we could sit alongside our researchers and provide services more directly? What would those services look like? What needs would we discover that aren't obvious from our day-to-day interactions with researchers? And, most urgent in my mind, can information skills that librarians have supplement the research process?

We quickly made contact with a willing group of researchers with whom I spent three months, and during that time I had a desk in their office and a seat at the group meetings. I worked on various projects for them, identified areas where they could improve their practice and spotted an opportunity for them to communicate their research to policy makers. At the same time, I was recording my impressions and receiving weekly diary entries from some of the researchers as part of an ethnographic, Action Research study on the experience. When I returned to the library full time I'd learned more about what it's like to be a researcher, and those insights helped us develop new services and new ways of framing the skills we teach. Perhaps most powerfully of all, sitting with a research group and helping them do their work better helped transform people's stereotypes about librarians. My favourite quote from our ethnographic study was this:

My perception of a librarian was someone that sat behind a desk and sorted out books ... Now I think about a librarian as someone who is able to handle knowledge, not just books, but knowledge in any form.

I have been lucky enough to embed in projects outside the library twice now and in my limited experience, our skills can absolutely fit into the research process. I have yet to need in-depth knowledge about any specific Engineering concepts, but my skills and experiences in searching the literature, knowing the regulatory and ethical frameworks around research and making connections – information skills – have been valuable in both instances. As the academic and information landscapes become more complex, most groups could benefit from close contact with someone whose focus is on these wider issues. We can make interdisciplinary leaps in our searches and signpost to other parts of the University. We can get everyone up to speed with the latest research information platforms and ways of increasing their impact. We already know that the information skills that many of us teach and signpost are essential to researchers, but I have been excited to find out that we can situate ourselves as consultants, collaborators and partners with researchers as well.

I am by no means the first librarian to approach this type of role in Cambridge – to our brilliant clinical librarian colleagues, for example, collaborating with researchers is commonplace – but what I will say is that there is room for more of us to do it. Our skills can complement the research process more directly than signposting and training. Just as a decade ago librarians who owned the descriptor of "teacher" were in the minority; I believe that collectively we need the confidence to call ourselves consultants and collaborators in the research

process. If it's something you're interested in, why not talk to researchers and see how information skills fit into their work and where they might benefit from support. See if there are any projects that make you think, "Librarians could do that."

It all starts with curiosity.

How to start an embedded librarian programme in your department:

- Speak to your line manager about why you think it's important and how you could make it possible
- Ask around the academics and administrators to try and identify interested parties
- Ensure that all involved parties are on the same page about how much library staff time will be used, for how long and with what desired outcomes
- Prioritise projects that suit your skills and interests
- Have an open mind and get ready to use and develop your information skills!
- Capture and feedback what you learn about researchers to your library
- Consider how your service could transform

Kirsten Lamb

Deputy Librarian (Research)

Department of Engineering

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ERESOURCES AND EBOOKS AT THE ALISON RICHARDS BUILDING

Introduction

Every year in Michaelmas term, the eresources team (sometimes assisted by ebooks@cambridge) provides an introduction to the eresources landscape for new and returning students and researchers. This introduction has traditionally taken the form of presentations held at the UL, with eresources and ebooks staff setting the agenda as regards content and coverage.

This academic year however, we decided to try something different. ebooks@cambridge had had some positive experiences in previous years reaching out beyond our UL home and running ebooks lunchtime drop-in sessions within faculty and departmental libraries, and so eresources and ebooks decided to join forces to run a couple of such sessions in the foyer of the Alison Richards Building over two lunchtimes in late October and early November.

Rationale for the sessions

Why did we choose the Alison Richards foyer? Firstly, the location has high footfall at lunchtime; it's just outside the popular ARC café and at the foot of the staircase to various teaching rooms, not to mention on the way to the toilets. Secondly, thanks to the very helpful building receptionists, we were able to pre-book a group of sofas and tables at which to base our session and display our wares (of which more later).

The decision to join eresource/ejournal and ebook forces was a bit of a no-brainer; working together we would be able to deal with a broader range of queries effectively by pooling our knowledge and playing to our strengths in

answering different types of queries. Furthermore, the organizational structure of the UL might separate ebooks and eresources/ejournals, but this is not necessarily a divide that students recognise. In addition, we enlisted the support of a number of college and faculty librarians with a keen interest in ebooks and eresources, who were to prove invaluable in answering some of the broader, non-eresource questions that inevitably came our way.

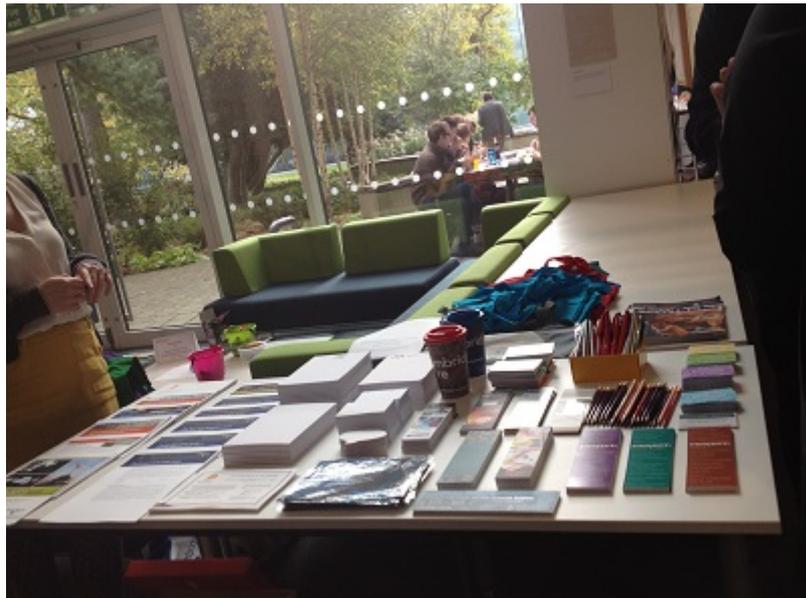
Preparation

We advertised the sessions in advance through Twitter, encouraging faculty and college librarians to retweet and spread the word. We also advertised the sessions on the [Cambridge University Library Training website](#) and had an A1 poster printed which was placed in the foyer an hour or two before the sessions. Students were encouraged to bring along their laptops or mobile devices and come armed with questions or issues they had encountered in relation to ejournals, ebooks and databases.

Another key bit of preparation involved contacting a number of suppliers and publishers for giveaways that we could use on our stand in order to raise awareness of the eresources to which we subscribe. Several of our suppliers proved extremely generous (and obviously keen for the opportunity to market their platforms and publications direct to our students – something they achieved so successfully that a number of students thought that we represented publishers).

On the day

On the days of the drop-ins, having set out our stall with a copious array of eye-catching freebies, and armed with various mobile devices, we waited for the passing lunch trade to take the bait. Things



got off to quite a slow start on both occasions (hungry punters were making a beeline to the café without stopping), and we quickly realized that we would have to be proactive in luring in passers-by. One of our number proved extremely talented at hooking people in with the offer of an attractive bag or pencil and converting the hook into a useful conversation about electronic resources.

As time went on, business increased and we received a variety of questions/interactions including:

- What have you got to tell me about/what do I need to know?
- Can you show me how to access e-resources?
- Do you have access to x database/journal?
- Giving feedback about iDiscover
- Giving general feedback about experience using ebooks
- Recalling specific problems encountered

- An enquiry from a librarian about off-campus access and the various routes to e-resources
- General, non e-resource questions about Cambridge libraries
- A whistle-stop, tailored, one-to-one induction for a Masters student, covering information about the physical library spaces available to him, Raven authentication, reference management software as well as information about eresources (the student spotted us on his way in to lunch and returned afterwards with his laptop and questions).

Reflections

Speaking personally, the sessions didn't go quite as I had anticipated. I had imagined that we would be operating something like an on-the-road helpdesk for eresources. The reality was that we received relatively few queries, those that we did receive were as likely to be about general library services as about eresources, and many, if not the majority, of conversations were initiated by us. It seemed as much a question of selling our services persuasively by converting a request for a snazzy pencil into a useful conversation about eresources as it was an exercise in trouble-shooting or answering specific enquiries.

What went well:

- Publisher freebies made the stand attractive and pulled in passers-by/started conversations.
- So did sweets!
- The location was excellent: just outside a café, at the bottom of the stairs – i.e. a real thoroughfare.
- Enquirers were able to receive individual, tailored guidance.
- Pooling our expertise (ebooks, ejournals/eresources and college and faculty/departmental librarians) increased what we were able to help with.

What didn't work so well:

- At the first of the two sessions, several students/researchers revealed that they didn't know where we were from. Some thought that we represented a publisher, probably due to all the giveaways displayed on our stand and the fact that our poster didn't make clear that we were a library service. We rectified this on the second session by borrowing the libraries@cambridge banner used at Freshers Fairs and displaying it prominently.
- Students were more willing to engage with us on their way out of the café than into it. This meant that the sessions got off to a slow start.
- Personally, I found engaging casual passers-by in an informal conversation about eresources, and library services in general, to be quite a challenge. I am much more comfortable in instruction-giving or problem-solving mode.

What did we learn?

Reflecting on the sessions, some thoughts emerge which might inform our user support in future (and which could be helpful for those planning a drop-in session, taking support beyond the library building or a combination of both):

- When you're outside your normal 'space', be prepared for a broader range of questions. You're an eresources specialist? You're just as likely to get questions about opening hours, referencing and iDiscover as you are about Bluefire Reader, Science Direct or ejournals A-Zs. It also matters little that you work at Library X; with outreach, the boundaries are definitely down and you will need to know at least a little about Libraries Y and Z too.
- People who can benefit most from drop-ins might be those who already have some library experience and come with specific questions in mind (not to mention confidence to ask for help), such as postgraduates, researchers or undergraduates at later stages of their degree. Library newbies are unlikely to

Our aim was to give students an idea of the quantity and variety of archival materials available to them in Cambridge, how they could potentially use those records in their research and what they could expect their archive 'experience' to be like.

Describing the types of material found in colleges and special collections followed by a brief introduction to external search tools like the National Archives' [Discovery](#) catalogue provided a basic background, whilst the pros and cons of undertaking archival research were adeptly recalled by current and recently qualified PhD students who we asked to speak at the event.

This, we felt, was a fitting way to engage students directly with what we were promoting, rather than just delivering a talk from Archivists saying how wonderful Archives are (which of course we are bound to do!).

Following the talks we held an audience Q&A session which featured live searches on [JANUS](#) and [Discovery](#). This proved to be quite popular – if a little disconcerting when a search turned up nothing!

The final part of the workshop offered students the chance to interpret some documents from the [St John's College archive collections](#). Once divided into small groups the participants were given scans of original material dating from the 15th to 19th centuries. They were asked to answer four questions on each of the documents. The groups were looking to determine the age of the document, its language and what it was (a letter, an invoice etc.). For some students this was the first time that they had encountered original documents, so it was an ideal opportunity to inform them that documents are here to be used, but that they are not always the easiest of items to interpret, particularly when there are palaeographical barriers.

Feedback from the students via Moodle for the event has also helped us shape future sessions and has clearly shown that we have filled a gap in research advice available to students.

This proved to be extremely popular with postgraduates so we decided to expand to offer two undergraduate sessions in Lent term.

This is something we see occurring annually for both postgraduates and undergraduate students. For more information about the sessions please contact the Archivist (archivist@joh.cam.ac.uk)

We will be holding our first thesis fair aimed at new MPhil and PhD students on 2 November at St John's. The day will provide students with the opportunity to meet Special Collections librarians and archivists from Cambridge and to find out about the wealth of material available on their doorstep. If you're interested in manning a table please do get in touch. We will also be holding three more research skills workshops, one in November and two further workshops in the Lent term 2019.

Tracy Deakin
Archivist
St John's College

Robert Athol
Archivist
Jesus College

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BEYOND THE LIBRARY WALLS: OUTREACH ACTIVITIES AT THE MEDICAL LIBRARY

At the [Medical Library](#) we have a culture of going out and about to promote our library service and engage with Medical Library users. A standard outreach activity is the fortnightly new user inductions. In addition the Medical Library adopted and adapted other "Beyond the Library Walls" endeavours during a period of building refurbishment when the physical library space was limited.

Some of these articles appeared in the March issue of [Cambridge Library Community Newsletter](#) (access to Cambridge University librarians only). There is additional information contained in this piece.

Beyond the Library – Don't worry we'll get it for you!

The Medical Library is a large space offering print resources, computers and spaces to work. During refurbishment the library was unavailable to users. In order to continue to provide a book service, a daily fetching service was implemented. Users completed an on-line request form and provided this was received by 11am books were fetched from the collection. (Due to renovation work access was possible at designated times only.)

As building work was ongoing library staff were suitably attired in hard hats and issued with shopping trolleys which were used to transport the books.

Once the book is back in the usual location, where members can access the collection for themselves, we continue to offer a fetching service. This is particularly useful for students on placement and NHS staff working anti-social shifts.

Beyond the Library Walls - Welcoming new users

Every fortnight a team of two leave the Medical Library and venture to the Frank Lee (Leisure and Fitness Centre). Why, you may ask do we leave the warmth and comfort of the Medical Library? To welcome new NHS staff as part of their induction day.



We take a portable display board, registration forms, library guides, information on NHS resources, plus some goodies such as sweets and pens. During the tea break the new staff can visit all of the stalls and discover what facilities are available for them.

Groups will vary in size and roles. Medical Library staff have the opportunity to promote library services and answer quick general questions. It is an excellent engagement opportunity and we always post a photo on the library Twitter account. An additional benefit is that staff feel more comfortable when they visit the Medical Library, as they have already met with some of the staff and have been given some information on using the library.

Beyond the Library Walls: Taking the library to You! - Pop-Up Medical Library at Addenbrookes

During 2016-2017 the Medical Library was temporarily relocated. The library space was very small, with no opportunities for a substantial book collection, training or promotion activities.



To raise awareness we began to take a 'Pop-Up' library to the main concourse area of the hospital. Resources included two staff, a portable display board, library registration forms and leaflets, some books to highlight different subject areas, a laptop to help with searching and illustrating some of the electronic resources available, and some freebies.

We visited different areas of the concourse and the staff canteen and at different times, mid-morning, lunchtimes and afternoons. The response was very mixed. We had some great sessions helping existing users with their queries and signing up new members. At other times we were fortunate to speak to a couple of people.

I did wonder if there would be much interest from patients/general public. We had one enquiry from a patient so took the opportunity to show them the information for patients' area on our webpage. I have heard Pop-Ups seem to be the library version of marmite, they either work very well or not at all.

Beyond the library walls: Training in Addenbrookes

Whilst training generally happens in the dedicated Medical Library training room, for groups, or an office for 1-2-1 teaching, there have been occasions where the training team have left the library space and run training sessions in Addenbrookes Hospital space.

As the hospital has a different network and Wi-Fi our team had to be prepared and would take a kit with them. Challenges included rooms not ready for set up so the training started late, attendees forgetting logins and the connection speed.

In the training room up to 10 people could be accommodated; this contrasted with a maximum of 4 in the hospital as the training team had to provide laptops. Despite this testing environment, training numbers increased and confidence within the team grew.

Whilst we are back to using the Library training facilities, we now provide laptops for loan and our team often travel to more central University sites to deliver training to pathology and pharmacology students.

Beyond the library walls: Drop-in sessions

I hold regular ebook drop in sessions in the student common room. I think it is important to move out of our environment and go to areas that our users frequent.

The drop-in sessions are held termly for each year group. The timetabled session is over the lunch period where I can be competing with free pizza. No guesses which is the most popular, at least for a short time!

The initial focus of the sessions was to raise awareness and confidence in using ebooks. This is of particular value as the clinical students are away on placement for most of their course. Even though they will have access to hospital libraries and the Medical Library when at Addenbrookes.

There are generally two members of staff scheduled for the session which is usually an hour long. We promote the sessions prior to the start time and take handouts, sweets and a variety of devices with which to demonstrate ebook access.

It is made clear that staff are from the library and available to help with any questions not just ebooks ones. As with any drop-in event engagement is mixed. On occasions we have been left talking amongst ourselves, whilst at other times the two staff have been inundated and have had a queue of students waiting to talk to us.

Whatever the response, I consider these opportunities important to go beyond the library space and meet with users on their familiar ground.

Jo Milton
Collection Development Manager
Medical Library
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[@cam_med_lib](#)

Beyond the library walls: outreach with online advent calendars

It's not always easy to reach library users – emails get lost in overcrowded inboxes, posters and leaflets get missed, and library websites go unnoticed. In an attempt to draw users' attention to the range of support for systematic reviews offered by the Medical Library, we took a more festive approach: a [systematic reviews advent calendar](#). This calendar followed the cycle a researcher would take when conducting a systematic review, from planning the review through to publication and beyond. Each day, a new resource was revealed, with links back to the Medical Library and any relevant support and training provided. The calendar was promoted via the library website and its social media accounts, and remained visible and accessible after the initial 24-day period of reveals.

The advent calendar took the Medical Library outside the library's own space, and proved very popular with a wide range of users – not only Cambridge staff and students, but also people from all around the world. It caught the attention on Twitter of the broader research community (including the local NHS research team, and PRISMA, the body responsible for creating guidelines regarding standards for published systematic reviews), and the calendar itself received hundreds of hits every day from all over the world. It has proved to be one of the most successful outreach projects conducted by the Medical Library, both highlighting library services and support, and operating as one of the public faces

of the library, visible to researchers who might never venture inside the Medical Library building.

*Veronica Phillips
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THE ASTRONOMICAL MOUSE AS AN EXERCISE IN LIBRARY OUTREACH

OR, THE ASTRONIMOUSE STORY by Me! @Astronimouse

I first had the idea for an astronomical mouse in 2014. I was due to give some talks about the history of the Observatory at our Open Day. I knew the Open Day at the [Institute of Astronomy](#) attracts families with children and so I wanted to make my talks a bit more light hearted. The idea was to take pictures around the Observatory, library and telescopes, with a little knitted mouse in each picture. So while I was relating the history to the adults, the children could search each picture for the mouse. This worked very well at holding the attention of both audiences.

This is ridiculous, as if I was something imagined by The Librarian for a talk! My true history is much more exciting! I was a mouse in a behavioural laboratory, I discovered that I was far more intelligent than the other mice, and I escaped! I had lots of adventures round Cambridge, but settled on the old Observatory to live. I have a nice home in an electrical junction box, and good access to astronomy books and journals, and the internet too!

Then in August 2014, I decided that Astronimouse could become a character on Twitter. The idea was that he could encourage use of the Library by mentioning new books and journals as they were received, and generally providing news about the Library. I know this was not an original idea, as other libraries and institutions in Cambridge also have their 'characters' on Twitter.

Honestly, if you listened to The Librarian, you would think HE invented Twitter! He does everything he can to stop me getting online. Why do you think he goes round switching off the computers at 5.00 o'clock?

Astronimouse really took off on 21 June 2017. It was the summer solstice and I took a photograph of him next to a model of Stonehenge I constructed out of Arachaeoastronomy books. This has been my most successful posting to date, it received 48 replies, 1,200 RTs, nearly 3,000 likes and 277,530 impressions. I was



a bit disappointed that this didn't result in many more followers, he has been stuck at about 300 for some time now.

*If it was just
The Librarian
he wouldn't
even have
TEN
followers! It's
ME they're
interested in
NOT him!*

It does
amuse me
when



'Astronimouse' has online interactions with very serious organizations (I won't name them to save their blushes). He does act as a kind of alter-ego for me, saying some of the things I maybe wouldn't (shouldn't?) say myself.

So I get the blame, right?

People keep suggesting that I should write an educational book for children about astronomy, where Astronimouse visits the planets etc. But writing is hard, and there is much more to producing a book, than there is to appearing on social media.

Is that cheese I can smell under the fridge in the Obs kitchen? ...

*Mark Hurn
Departmental Librarian
Institute of Astronomy*

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PEOPLE

Dennis Duncan is the new Munby Fellow in Bibliography at the University Library. Earlier he was a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at the Bodleian Centre for the Study of the Book in Oxford, and a Junior Research Fellow at Jesus College, Oxford.

Congratulations to **Katrina Dean** who has moved from her role as Curator of Scientific Collections and taken up the post of Keeper of Archives and Modern Manuscripts. **Liz Goddard** has taken up the role of Learning and Development Manager at the University Library.

The Reader Services Desk bid farewell to **Jane Whelehan**, and also to **Megan Kelly** who has relocated to Cheltenham. They have been joined by **Eleanor Greer** and **Christopher Robinson**.

The Collections & Academic Liaison Department bid farewell to **Joanne Koehler**, **Chris Greenberg** and **Clara Panozzo Zénere** have stepped in to share the role of Hispanic Specialist. They welcomed back **Sonia Morcillo-García**, who has returned after the birth of her baby boy Oliver. Congratulations to **Cinthia Willaman Baltaxe** on obtaining her PhD. She has now left the Reference department.

Mary Chester Kadwell and **James Howe** have joined as Senior Software Developers.

Daniel Mciver and **Mel Kydd** have joined the Building Services Team. **Simon Barlow** has been seconded from the Haddon Library to take on the role of Building Services Assistant - Environmental Projects. **Brendan Nightingale** and **Andrew Nightingale** joined as Building Services Assistants (Helpdesk). **Joe Mills** joined as Building Services Assistant - Facilities and Security.

Zoe Walker-Fagg was seconded from the Faculty of Philosophy and has taken up the role of Project Coordinator at the Office of Scholarly Communication. OSC saw the departure of **Marta Busse Wicher** (Research Data Co-ordinator).

Kelly Saunders left the Off Site Storage Project to take up the post of Human Resources Co-ordinator within the Cancer Research UK Cambridge Institute. **Katherine Sendall** moved to English Cataloguing as Senior Library Assistant (Metadata). **Megan Green** has been seconded from Legal Deposit to LSF Ingest and Collection Logistics. **Paul Currie** and **Antony Orchard** have joined as warehouse supervisors and **Katrina Dring** joined Collection Management.

Rare Books bid farewell to their Chief Library Assistant **Sophie Defrance**. She is now splitting her time between Pembroke and Peterhouse college libraries.

Stephen Dale retired as Under-Librarian from eJournals. His library career spanned several decades. He worked at the Central Science Library for several years and after that closed he worked for the eJournals Team here in the main UL and the Betty and Gordon Moore Library. He was involved with the Journals Co-ordination Scheme from the very beginning.

Krystyna Jaskolowska retired from Materials Processing after 20 years at the UL. She had worked for Greensleeves (Retrospective Cataloguing Project) for several years before that.

Another retiree was **Richard Clark** from Collection Care. Prior to joining us in 2005, Richard worked for a number of notable companies including Grays Bookbinders, London and Cambridge University Press. We wish the very best to Stephen, Krystyna and Richard.

The Engineering Library has had a bit of a rejig; in December **Mehves Dignum** started her secondment at the MML Library as Senior Library Assistant and Romance Languages Specialist, and **Francesco Mannu** from Special Collections at the UL started his secondment as Library Assistant here in January. We also had **Lucy Welch** from the Office of Scholarly Communication/Reader Services Desk take up the new Assistant Librarian (Teaching) post in March.

In January 2018, after nearly twelve years of service, Faculty Librarian **Susanne Jennings** moved on from the Faculty of Architecture and History of Art Library to become Subject Librarian at the Woolf Institute, Cambridge.

In January **Jack Dixon** started as Librarian for the Whipple Library in the History and Philosophy of Science department. Jack was previously Assistant Librarian and Graduate Trainee at Corpus Christi College, and has also worked in Reader Services and Collection Management in the UL.

Jo Harcus has moved from Lucy Cavendish to take up the role of Librarian at the Faculty of Philosophy. **Ellie Short** joined the Education Library in December as Library Assistant.

At Sidney Sussex, **Kirsten Elliott** left on 31 January, and **Sarah Preston** has been appointed to the role of General Library Assistant in addition to her existing role as Library Assistant (Cataloguing).

Assistant Librarian at Christ's College, **Charlotte Hoare**, has left for a new job at John Rylands Library, University of Manchester. In her place, **Samantha (Sam) Hughes** began work at Christ's on 1 March.

David Baker has taken up the position of Projects Assistant (job share) at St John's College. David previously worked as a cataloguer on the royal collections at Windsor.

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Page last updated 05/06/2018

