

## **LIBRARY REPORT**

**For the period September to December 2017**

### **Thomas Manning Archive**

Deborah Manning generously donated Thomas Manning's copy of Julius Klaproth's *Description du Tibet* (1831), inscribed to Manning by the author. She also placed with us two letters to Manning, in French, on loan.

The Librarian gave a lecture on the Manning Archive to the Charles Lamb Society at the RAS in October.

The digitized Manning Archive will be a core collection on the RAS digital library when it is launched in January.

### **RAS Archives**

The sorting of the Institutional Records for Awards and Medals has continued. The Medal of the Oriental Translation Fund was blogged about, though we have no individual archives for the material. Work is now continuing on the Triennial Gold Medal – the material is sorted and currently being listed, but already having this material more accessible has helped two researchers – one working on Richard Winstedt and the other on Sukumar Sen, the only Indian to receive the medal. It is hoped that this material will be catalogued in the coming months.

The major cataloguing project of the last few months has been the Papers of Brian Houghton Hodgson. The material is now all listed, cleaned and repackaged (over 750 items) and one third of these items are now transferred to the cataloguing website. The Papers of Alexander Rogers have also been catalogued and are available on Archives Hub. The Papers of Ram Gharib Chaube's translations of Religious Songs in Romanized Hindi are also listed and his biographer contacted regarding the Papers. She was delighted to learn of 'new' material and hopes to be able to come to work on it in the coming year. The Barbara Ingham Papers have also been appraised.

Work has continued on the Miscellaneous Boxes including the cleaning of the Whish Archive. The glass slides have been returned from the conservators and are now all housed in the correct packaging material. An interim in-house digital repository has been created to begin to house some of our digital records safely.

Our social media interactions continue to grow. We currently have 4750 followers on Twitter and 405 people receive notification of a new blog post. The blogs are sent out weekly and have generated interest and research possibilities both amongst members and in the global

research community. Our “Nineveh film” was used by UCL researcher, Amara Thornton in a talk for Dan Snow’s new History Hit TV (<https://www.historyhit.com/>).

(Nancy Charley)

## **Brotherton Library**

We made contact with senior staff at the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, in the hope of generating new information and research about the collection of Chinese books which was transferred there from the RAS in the 1960s. In particular, it is important to note that the collection contains the libraries of two of Britain’s first Sinologists, Sir George Staunton and Thomas Manning.

## **Users and enquiries**

The library received 77 visits between September and December, and replied to 110 remote enquiries during the same period. The collections referred to most were RAS archives, Persian manuscripts, Indian art, and books and journals on India. We also received a steady trickle of enquiries about our copies of snakes and ladders.

The total number of visitors for 2017 was 189, down from 2016 (233) but up from the years prior (2015: 164; 2014: 154). The library answered 319 remote enquiries in 2017, up from 267 in 2016.

The two Collections Open Evenings held during the year also brought in many people to see material from the collections.

## **Cataloguing**

We added 1518 records to the online library catalogue between September and December. This included records for 469 books, 385 pamphlets, 461 photographs, 132 paintings and drawings, and 35 manuscripts. This is a significant increase on the same period for last year (976 records), thanks largely to the high number of volunteers.

## **Volunteers**

A great deal of work has been completed thanks to our volunteers and interns. Ian Scholey continued work on repackaging and listing the Barbara Ingham slide collection, while Amy Mathewson repackaged our Chinese glass slides and catalogued them on to the online catalogue to create our first Glass Slide collection.

Nyima Stewart continued to work on repackaging the Quaritch Wales photographs. Gehad Quisay continued to work on the W.E.D. Allen papers.

We welcomed two Alphawood Scholarship Interns from SOAS, Pawinna Phetluan and Aria Danaparamita, to work on our South and Southeast Asian Collections. Pawinna, originally from Thailand, was excited to discover we held Quaritch Wales primary resources and she listed and repackaged all his Personal Papers ready for cataloguing. Particularly useful was her ability to read Thai-language material in the collection, and her input means it can be more accurately catalogued. She also prepared a display in the Reading Room of his material for our Collections Open Evening.

Aria repackaged and catalogued some of our previously uncatalogued photos and artworks from Indonesia. She began with a small album of photographs of the Malay Federated States, before moving on to much larger collections of photographs of Javanese Antiquities and Borobudur. She also provided a display of photographs for our Collections Open Evening.

Pawinna and Aria worked together to check and catalogue our Baker Collection of South Asian Art.

Both interns blogged about their experiences, and Aria created a webpage about the photographic collection. We are very grateful to Alphawood for initiating the project, and to both interns for their hard work.

We welcomed James Povey as a new RAS Volunteer. James is a recent graduate of Persian and Old Iranian, and has been able to catalogue rare books and pamphlets in Persian, Arabic, and Russian. Roger Parsons has also continued to make a huge contribution by cataloguing books from our main sequence. Our other volunteer library cataloguer, Sarah Burrell, finished in December due to her other commitments.

Having finished cataloguing the Whish (South Indian Sanskrit) manuscripts, Kathy Lazenbatt moved on to identifying and cataloguing the Malayalam manuscripts in the collection, and also began to repackage the entire sequence. Kathy also wrote two wonderful pieces on the collection for the RAS blog.

Our NADFAS team continued to make an invaluable contribution by carrying out book repairs.

In December we held a well-attended Volunteer Appreciation Event to coincide with the Christmas festivities.

### **RAS Collections Open Evening**

We held an RAS Collections Open Evening in November, which was a great success. The evening was well attended and provided an opportunity to get out rarely-seen treasures from the collection. We are very grateful to all our speakers, as well as to everyone else who supported this occasion.

## **Conservation**

Eleni Katsiani, tutor on the Camberwell College of Arts conservation programme, visited to see if we have any material for MA students to work on for their 2018 projects.

## **Reprographic services**

There were 1144 digital images taken from RAS collections between September and December, including 657 images made by RAS staff, for which we charged £380.

## **Visits and conferences**

We were delighted to receive another visitor from RAS Shanghai, Vice-President Julie Chun. We welcomed the Historical Bibliography class from the UCL Library and Information Studies MA programme to examine books and manuscripts in different formats. The SOAS Sanskrit studies class visited to look at a selection of our Sanskrit manuscripts. The Charles Lamb Society also enjoyed a display of Thomas Manning material after their lecture.

## **Loans to exhibitions**

Our two loans to the *Illuminating India* exhibition at the Science Museum have been well received. The exhibition finishes at the end of March. Meanwhile, the exhibition at the National Library of Singapore, including our Malay manuscripts, finishes at the end of February.

The loan of the paintings of the Parsi shipbuilders to the Museum of London has been renewed, following a condition assessment.

Ed Weech  
Librarian