

BROMLEY HOUSE CATALOGUING PROJECT

Application for Funding to the Heritage Lottery Fund

Summary of the Application Form

Section Two - Your Project

2a What is the heritage that your project focuses on?

Our collections (approximately 40,000 books) have been collected and read since the Library opened in 1816. Some of these items are older than the Library itself, as there was always a policy of collecting key items, especially those relating to the local area, and the Library has been gifted books of antiquarian interest.

The collection is unique in representing what local people read over a 200 year period and includes books, manuscripts, and other items which would not otherwise be available to local readers. But much of our collection is not widely known about, is underused and relatively inaccessible as the only approach to the collection is via the Library's incomplete card index system devised in 1900. The Library is setting out on a programme to catalogue its whole collection electronically and for that catalogue to be made available on line.

The collections are classified by an unusual pre Dewey system which started with the foundation of the Library and is an important part of our heritage.

While our whole project is to catalogue the entire collection, the subject of this application focuses on the cataloguing of the following key elements –

- Early literature- (including through to 1970) -this includes a strong representation of Victorian Literature, and many early three volume editions. These are not available elsewhere in Nottingham. An example of their importance is that research for the television series "Cranford" was undertaken in the Library, as we have important early editions of Mrs Gaskell's novels.

There are first editions (for example) of novels by Jane Austen, Dickens, Disraeli and the Bronte sisters.

- Local history – an important collection, much by local authors and printed locally over three centuries and strengthened by two special collections, the James Ward Collection, presented to the Library in 1919/24 and the deposited Michael Dobbin Collection. Included is a selection of c. 200 works from the library of the Nottingham poet Philip James Bailey (1816-1902), the Sherwood Forest Book (with the records of the Forest's administration from the 14th to 18th century), and the autograph manuscript, with additional notes, of Charles Deering's pioneering Nottinghamia Vetust et Nova, published in 1751, and other historical manuscripts.

- Fine Art- A quality collection of highly illustrated works, featuring local artists, the Arts and Crafts movement, and architecture, especially Georgian, supporting interest in our Georgian home.

- “Miscellanies” - An eclectic mix, mainly 19th century, including sport, social history, Victorian personal improvement, manners and customs. Examples are, Booth on Poverty, William Penn (of Pennsylvania) essays, Staunton on Chess, and Classical literature. Wider knowledge of the detail of this group will generate considerable interest. Because of its disparate nature, fascinating material lies unused due to lack of good indexing.

- Economics, politics and law- reflecting our predecessors’ preoccupations- the “Empire”, trade, historical trials, sometimes in surprising ways (Karl Marx’s Das Kapital alongside works by Tawney, G.D.H Cole and Adam Smith).

- Egyptology – The George Fowler Collection- some 75 volumes on Egyptology collected in the early 20th century by this Nottingham engineer, including first editions by authorities in the field. Works illustrated by Howard Carter of Tutankhamun fame.

- Rare books collection including some 200 pre 1800 examples – Philip Sidney’s Arcadia (1633) Gerard’s Herball (a rare first edition of 1597) Dante’s Opera (1578) – all not otherwise available in Nottinghamshire.

Alan Sillitoe’s library - following the death of our president Alan Sillitoe in 2010, the first part of his personal book collection was presented to us by his widow, the poet Ruth Fainlight. The collection represents his wide and varied interests. Presently uncatalogued, cataloguing it will enable access to Nottingham’s most important literary figure of the second half of the 20th century.

These collections total some 15,000 volumes. They are the books/ collections which are, in our judgement, of the greatest potential interest, The collections, taken as a whole, represents a unique part of our local heritage. They are collections that will require specialist knowledge and expertise to catalogue.

2b What is your project?

Our project is to catalogue the books and documents which comprise the Library’s collections. The catalogue will

1. • identify individual books and their location.
 2. • provide detailed subject, keyword, author and title searching.
 3. • be to an recognised standard, using the second edition of the Anglo American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2) and guidelines for rare book cataloguing (DCRB).
- include information on local authors, publishers, printers, Bromley House acquisition history etc.

The catalogue will be accessible both within the Library and via the Internet, to publicise the Library’s holdings and make them more widely appreciated and used.

The process of cataloguing will include an assessment of each book’s condition, allowing future conservation needs to be determined and prioritised, and so inform the Bromley House book conservation programme.

2c What are the aims of your project?

Tell us about the specific aims of your project. Your aims should relate to your heritage and also to the people involved.

Remember to make sure that they also relate to our 'learning' aim and either one or both to our aims of 'conservation' and 'participation'.

Aims

1. To create for the first time a full and complete catalogue of the Bromley House collections and to make that information available to Library users and over the internet to people who do not visit the Library. Additionally the process will allow us to explore and learn about the collections in detail so that progressively the Library can widen knowledge and use of the collections. b. The completed catalogue will allow readers who cannot visit the library (including the disabled) to access the collection, and request books to be sent by post.
2. To conserve the Library's heritage by securing the integrity of the collections for present and future generations
3. To enhance learning by-
 - a. Making knowledge of the collection available, via the catalogue, to those wanting to learn about, research, read or find particular items. The Library allows access to the collections for research purposes.
 - b. The training of staff, volunteers, and library students in the process of cataloguing, the research of a book's history etc, and the management of this complex plan. The training will include book conservation methods and assessment of a book's conservation needs.
 - c. Recording and reporting on the progress and methods used in the cataloguing programme to allow other libraries, with similar collections, to learn from Bromley House's experience- library students (Loughborough University) and representatives of other libraries will visit during the programme.
4. When the catalogue is complete to establish a group of volunteers who will learn about a particular area of the collections(ie "curators"). There will be multiple opportunities for the curators to spread knowledge of the contents of the collections within and beyond the Library membership via programmes of talks and lectures, publications, partnerships with local interest groups and education departments etc.
5. To inform Bromley House's conservation objectives by creating a list of books needing conservation, permitting a prioritised conservation programme to be created. (The Library has raised in excess of £24,000 for this programme in recent years).
- 6.To involve wide participation both in the implementation of the project and in the use and knowledge of the collections by a. Use of qualified staff in the cataloguing b. Use of qualified and non-qualified volunteers in the cataloguing- we envisage that at any one time 15-25 volunteers will be involved.

2e How did you get the idea for your project? Tell us what other options you considered and how you know there is a need or demand (or both) for your project.

Lack of an accurate, full catalogue hinders the operation of the Library and restricts knowledge and use of its collections.

The catalogue will have these benefits-

- Better knowledge of the Library's rich collections for the growing number of members and better control over the stock.
- Improved subject access will encourage use of the rarer and more specialised material, especially of the 19th and early 20th-century stock, and should be particularly useful in a local history context.
- A public-access catalogue provided via the Internet will spread this knowledge widely in the community – a valuable contribution to the Library's public benefit activities (Some details such as precise location of books will need to be password-protected for security reasons.). This will further increase use of the collections and create better awareness of the Library's place in the community. It will facilitate research both into the collections and the Library's heritage and the history of local taste and interest over the 200 years of the Library's existence.

Computer based cataloguing has been an objective of the Library for many years but beyond the Library's financial and administrative resources. Careful planning over the last five years, including enlargement of membership numbers, and alterations to the staff and administrative structure has prepared the Library for this large task.

We have researched many software solutions, taken advice from other institutions and have purchased Heritage Library Management Software from IS Oxford which we are in the process of installing.

Members of staff are being trained in its operation and we are using the programme for cataloguing new acquisitions. The acquisition and training costs amount to £9000 which we have paid out of the Library's resources.

The need for the catalogue has been proved to us in a number of ways-

- Proper administration of the Library requires that we have in depth knowledge of all the collections
- Persons using the Library have only a restricted method of accessing the collections,- resulting in demand for staff to search for material- and a major lack of knowledge of our resources, which limits their exploitation.
- Our objective of widening access to our collections is frustrated by lack of knowledge of what is in the collections, and the inability to access a catalogue from outside the Library itself.

A library without an accessible catalogue has a limited purpose. We see the catalogue as a foundation piece for the further development of the Library and the spreading of knowledge of our heritage.

2f What steps have you taken to make sure you have involved the community? Tell us if you have done any consultation or made efforts to invite the community to take part.

Cataloguing is a foundation step in our plans to widen involvement in Bromley House. Direct community involvement in this project is not widely appropriate.

Our wide membership (1100) has been informed of our intentions and invited to volunteer for cataloguing work, as have visiting groups to the Library, and groups addressed by Library staff – for example at Lowdham Book Festival.

When the cataloguing programme has a fixed timetable, we will advertise for participants. We are liaising with Loughborough University's Department of Information Science so that we can provide experience for those intending doing their librarian course.

Our regular work experience programme will be extended to the cataloguing project and we will share our project experience with libraries, archives and other organisations facing the same cataloguing challenges.

2g What will happen to your heritage if you do not get a grant from us?

Our plan is to complete the cataloguing over a 24/30 month period. That is the most efficient structure, and supports our roll out programme of the benefits of cataloguing.

We do not have the resources without HLF support to fund this programme.

No grant would mean that we will be delayed in widening access to our heritage, and held back in developing other projects to conserve the collections and our heritage.

Additionally cataloguing would be spread over a very long period of time, as resources became available either from within the Library or from third parties. Such delay will have knock on effects for the administration of the Library and its users and there would be a risk that the project might never be fully completed.

Running the project over a longer period of time will be more expensive, make the use of volunteers more difficult and risk a reduction inconsistency and quality.

Section Three - Project Delivery

3a When will your project start and finish?

By Christmas 2010- the cataloguing software will be operational and current staff trained. New acquisitions entered into catalogue continuously. However retrospective cataloguing will not commence until HLF funding approved.

Assuming HLF support is available, our preliminary timetable is as follows:-

January to April 2011- Project Team Leader appointed and recruitment of cataloguers (volunteer and paid professional) and their training completed. Additional lap tops acquired. Library cataloguing space allocated. Quality standards agreed.

May 2011 - commencement of retrospective cataloguing of the collections listed in 2 a above. August/ September 2011- final planning for cataloguing of remainder of collections, taking into account the experience so far learned (as to work rate and effectiveness of volunteers and fund raising for second years costs).

April 2012- completion of para. 2a collections cataloguing, and any additional cataloguing for which there is capacity and making available of catalogue for use in the Library.

May 2012- commencement of cataloguing of remainder of collection.

April to June 2013- completion of cataloguing, followed by launch of catalogue available on internet

3b How will you manage your project? Tell us about the skills and experience of the person who will lead your project and the people in the project team.

The project will be led by the Steering Group, consisting of the Librarian and the Library manager, the Library's chairman Victor Semmens and the Honorary Secretary, David Hallett. and Peter Hoare.

The group will have access to Adrian Henstock and Nigel Lowey - see 3c below.

The group will recruit a Project Team Leader whose role and qualifications are set out in the job specification included in attachment 7. Additionally we will recruit 1.5 (FTE) experienced cataloguers - see job specification in attachment 7.

The Librarian, Carol Barstow, joined the Library in 2005. Since that time she has been responsible to the board for the running of the Library and its staff. A summary of her CV. is as follows: Secretary to the Association of Independent Libraries and on the committee of the Historic Libraries Forum. Prior to working at BH Carol was a University Librarian, having worked at De Montfort University, where she gained her chartership, and at Nottingham Trent University. She started her career in Library and Information work as a technical indexer for the British Standards Institution. Carol has an MA in Local and Regional History, and researches food history.

The Library Manager is Sue Severn who has been with Bromley House for 10 years. Sue initially trained as a teacher, with a Certificate of Education from the University of Lancaster. Her teaching career was mainly centred on the education of young pupils with severe learning and

physical disabilities. She has a City and Guilds qualification in Library and Information Studies and experience in a variety of library environments including university, tertiary and public.

Victor Semmens is a retired solicitor, and an experienced businessman. He was chairman of the international law firm Eversheds, and is a non executive director of a number of commercial companies.

David Hallett is a qualified barrister and chartered accountant and was until 2003 a partner in PwC. He also practices as a mediator and an executive coach.

Peter Hoare, formerly Librarian of the University of Nottingham, ex-chair of the Historic Libraries Forum, an internationally respected authority on the history of Libraries and a rare book consultant and cataloguer to the National Trust.

3c What outside advice have you received or will you receive to help you manage your project?

In planning the project we have taken advice from various experts (including our board members, Adrian Henstock – previously the Principal Archivist at Nottinghamshire Archives, Peter Hoare- (see above), and Nigel Lowey- an IT project consultant) and from the Association of Independent Libraries, libraries which have similar collections, including the London Library, the Leeds Library, the Liverpool Athenaeum, the Portico at Manchester and the British Library. Adrian Henstock and Peter Hoare will be available throughout the implementation of the project, as will Nigel Lowey.

3d What will happen to things that your project has produced (for example, an exhibition or a spoken record of history) after the funding ends?

The catalogue will be continuously up dated with new acquisitions and the Library budget will include the funds required to maintain the software and keep the catalogue operational. There will always be off-site back-up copies of the catalogue to secure against calamity.

3e Does your project involve conservation of an item, land of property?

Yes

How you will maintain it so that people can continue to experience and enjoy it?

The catalogued collections will remain at BH and under the control of the library.

Our business plan allows us to have confidence in the financial sustainability of the library and of the physical security of our collections.

We have in place a continuous programme of book restoration, which will be hugely assisted by the cataloguing programme, which will reveal those books in urgent need of restoration.