Introducing OLIS at Christ Church

At present the main catalogue and all management functions of our library are run via Heritage 3.1 This is a DOS-based library management system.

The Library is currently in the process of preparing the migration of all holdings onto OLIS, the Oxford Libraries Information System. At the moment only part of the early printed books collection is available in OLIS.

OLIS is the library catalogue and library system of the University of Oxford. It contains records for over eight million items (mainly books and periodicals) held by libraries within, or associated with, the University of Oxford.

It can be searched using the internet and is open to the general public, not just members of the University. It contains both bibliographic data, such as an item’s author and title, and Oxford-specific holdings data, for example which OLIS libraries have a copy and whether these copies are currently on loan.

Welcome to the Library

This spacious College Library is an important resource centre, primarily intended to provide undergraduate and graduate members of the college with the books needed for their courses. We are happy to have you among our readers and we’ll do everything we can to help. For queries, book recalls, book suggestions, please ask any member of the staff at the front desk.

Upper Library Tours

Undergraduates and postgraduates are invited on Saturday of 0 week to a tour of the Upper Library. If you could not join in at the date mentioned above, please find a member of staff on your first visit to the Library so that you can be given a quick tour.

Admissions Policy

All current members of Christ Church may use the Library. Members of the college may not bring non-members into the Library without the express permission of the Librarian or the Assistant Librarians.
Introducing OLIS at Christ Church

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OLIS is already available at Christ Church as part of OxLIP (Oxford Libraries Information Platform), an interface providing access to several hundred subscriptions to bibliographic, reference and full-text databases.

Although the general user only sees the catalogue, behind the scenes OLIS is a complex integrated library system and library staff use it for ordering books and journals, recording loans and reservations, and registering journal issues. For example OLIS can automatically send out overdue notices to borrowers and generate invoices when librarians purchase new books.

When implemented, with both early printed books and modern collection holdings represented on OLIS, the college holdings would be fully integrated within the University network and Christ Church users will have a single database to look for books, serials and other materials in Oxford. However, apart from the early printed books, which are accessible to everybody using the system, the titles of the all the other collections will only be visible to College members.

Also, for reasons related to data protection, in OLIS it is no longer possible to see who has titles out. But you can reserve a book on the system, at which point the staff will receive your input and activate an automated recall sequence. You can alternatively, let us know of the book you need either by an email or personally at the front desk as you currently do.

We will keep you informed on the progress of OLIS implementation, and we will organize inductions to explain how the system works and have guide leaflets ready for everybody if needed. C.N.

New computers in the Library

All computers in the East and West Libraries have been replaced. You can now enjoy a whole set of new machines, faster, quieter and offering the advantage of TFT screens. They have been set up so that you can access both Heritage (which currently holds the Christ Church Library catalogue) and OxLIP (Oxford Libraries Information Platform) simultaneously.

New computers brief user guide

Username newsearch
Password searchnew

1. To enter Christ Church Library catalogue on Heritage (DOS interface) click on Advanced Revelation 3, wait for Heritage to load then type: E Enquiry Menu
   3 Advanced Search
   S [before initiating a search]
   D [for displaying the results]

2. To enter OLIS (the catalogue of Oxford Libraries) click on OxLIP. This will open OxLIP, which provides access to both the telnet and web versions of OLIS, as well as to several hundred bibliographic, reference and full-text databases

Printing :
For any printing jobs you would like done, please, fill in the forms provided. The cost of one page is 6p. You will be charged on battles at the end of the term.

Christ Church antivirus policy :
Both the floppy disk drive and the CD-ROM on all machines have been disabled.

What’s on

Exhibitions in the Upper Library

Beauty and the Book
Treasures of Christ Church Library

From 15 September 2004

Currently on display in the Upper Library is an exhibition of illuminated manuscripts, engravings, photographs and drawings. They have been chosen from among the most precious collections of the Library. The exhibition focuses on revealing to you some of our most famous masterpieces of illumination, as well as representative Renaissance bookbinding and landmarks of printing. Here are a few details about the treasures in the exhibition.

Master of Cardinal Wolsey, Epistle-Lectionary (England, 1528). One of a pair of Lectionaries (at present in the collections of Christ Church and Magdalen College in Oxford), commissioned by Cardinal Wolsey. The manuscript was on display as part of the Illuminating the Renaissance exhibition organized by the Getty Institute in Los Angeles and the Royal Academy of Arts in London.

The Treatise of Walter de Milemete, De Nobilitatibus, Sapientiis, et Prudentiis Regum England (1326-27). Milemete wrote his book on the nobility, wisdom and prudence of kings as an offering to Edward III. The binding is of beechwood boards, covered by red patterned (possibly) 15th century velvet with ornaments embroidered in gold and silver thread. The illumination which has attracted most attention is that of the cannon. It is the earliest extant representation of this type of weapon.

Esther Anglois, Le livre des psaumes, escrites en diverses sortes de lettres (Lislebourg en Ecosse, 1599). The manuscript exhibits an incredible variety of styles of handwriting, each in different sizes and some incredibly tiny. The binding is of velvet, originally a deep red, decorated with seed pearls and gold thread, and displaying the royal arms.

The Hours of St Denis (France, 15th century). This extensively illuminated manuscript contains the hours of Dionysius the Areopagite. The manuscript came to Christ Church Library via William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury (1716-1737).

Sarum Hours (Paris: per P.Pigouchet pro S.Vostre, 1501). Many of the volumes (like this example) were printed on vellum in Gothic type, and were illuminated in the tradition of earlier manuscripts. Special issues on vellum were typical of 15th and early 16th century printing.

Biblia Sacra (Paris: Robert Estienne, 1545). The binding of this Bible bears the arms of Queen Elizabeth I. It forms part of the library of Richard Allestree, bequeathed in 1681 for the use of the Regius Professor of Divinity and his successors.

The Book of Common Prayer. Translated into Malabaric (Tamil) by Benjamin Schulze, Protestant Missionary, 1726. This translation of the Book of Common Prayer is written on palm leaves.

Selection of photographs and 3 versions of the ‘Mouses’s Tale’ by Lewis Carroll: the proof sheets for the facsimile edition of Alice’s Adventures Under Ground, and those for the first published edition of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland. Also the text cut and re-pasted by the author in the now familiar curve. C.N.

Forthcoming
Tudor England
From 13 October 2004

Notes on the Upper Library

The present building was started in 1717 and completed in 1772. It was intended to match the great classical libraries of Trinity College, Cambridge and Trinity College, Dublin, and to attract aristocratic students to Christ Church. The building was probably designed by Dr George Clarke of All Souls, and the master mason was William Townsend (1668?-1739).

The ground floor was originally intended to be an open loggia, but while the building was still under construction, Christ Church was given a large collection of pictures by John Guise (1682-1765). The lower storey was filled in to house them. Today these rooms house the modern books used by Christ Church undergraduates.

The Upper Library is nearly 150 feet long, and contains around 40,000 books. It is lit by large Venetian windows at either end, and by three sash windows facing onto the Peckwater Quadrangle. Originally it was intended that the shelves should be placed across the building, but large bequests of books arrived while the building was under construction, and the present wall-shelving and gallery were inserted to house them. The interior and fittings mostly date from the 1750s; the plasterwork is by Thomas Roberts of Oxford. The names above the books commemorate: Dean Henry Aldrich (1649-1710); Canon William Stratford (1672-1729); Archbishop William Wake (1657-1737), and Charles Boyle, 4th Earl of Orrery (1676-1731). All bequeathed large collections of books to the library. Otho Nicholson gave money to buy books in 1613, and paid for the refitting of the Old Library in 1610-11, and John Morris (d.1648) was Regius Professor of Hebrew, and set up a trust fund to buy Hebrew books.
TANNER (1674-1735), canon of Christ Church, energetic collector and bishop of St Asaph; William Howley (1766-1848), canon of Christ Church in 1804, and in 1809 appointed regius professor of divinity, who, in 1813 he was consecrated archbishop of Canterbury; and Edward Pusey (1800-1882), student (1819), canon and regius professor of Hebrew at Christ Church (1828).

By contrast, in the East Library there is a very different selection of paintings. As you enter, on the right, there is a late 16th century Netherlandish school Adoration of the Shepherds (initially catalogued as Venetian by Borenius). Close to it, there is a spectacular Panorama of Venice from the Lagoon. This picture is an early example of the kind of view-painting produced by Northern artists in Venice from the late 16th century onwards. On the right of the stairs leading to the gallery, by the portrait of Robert Hay Drummond (1711-1776), we have hung the Allegory of Painting by Girolamo Troppa. If you look carefully, in the background on the left you will notice a representation of Time unveiling Truth, which may be inspired by Bernini’s famous group in the Borghese Collection. Finally on the left, by the second window, there is Diana and Acteon. This is a painting originating from the studio of Carlo Marratti (1625-1713). Following the principles of the Carracci, Marratti was one of the most representative and celebrated painters of the late Baroque period in Rome. C.N.

TALES FROM THE BASEMENT

Let me tell you a story. Are we sitting comfortably? Then we’ll begin.

Once upon a time there was a set of the complete works of Charles Dickens. This was a distinguished set, none of your cheap paperback fare, £2.99 from the Works. This set was the real deal.

Now, despite years of valuable service to Christ Church undergraduates, the books in question were eventually removed from the shelf, branded with the letter “J” and taken on a long and arduous journey. They plumbed the depths of the earth, moving through labyrinths of “caves” before being left in their final resting place. Early retirement was their fate, superseded by a shiny new “complete works”, dust covers and all.

Years have passed since that terrible day, but the old “complete works” live on, clinging to the hope that one day they will emerge, to be used once more. They will rise again my friends, but only with your help. “J” is brand of the basement – book hell. Books prefaced “J” are all available for use, it’s just that you have to ask a librarian for them. It’s not just Dickens either. There’s science, theology, art, music, you name it. You can save these books from their peril. All you have to do is ask for them! J.P.A.

Library news

Old Masters in the West and East Libraries

You may have noticed that the East and West Libraries walls look somewhat different. This is due to Jacqueline Thalman, curator of the Picture Gallery. She had the idea (which we all embraced with enthusiasm) of housing a series of relevant pictures in the library. So, if you cast your eyes over the bookcases in the West Library, you will see many more portraits of past masters.

William Howley, by Th. Lawrence, 1815

Among these, there is a painting of Richard Robinson, Baron Rokeby, Archbishop of Armagh (1707-1794), by Sir Joshua Reynolds (on the left side of the the third window from the door in the West Library). This is one of several portraits of him that Reynolds painted. Robinson matriculated at Christ Church on 13 June 1726, and graduated BA in 1730 and MA in 1733. In 1748 he was awarded the degrees of BD and DD. He became archbishop of Armagh and primate of Ireland on 19 January 1765. The Canterbury Gate is one monument to his munificence.

Another face you might recognize is that of Dean Henry Aldrich (1648-1710), one of the Library’s main donors. He matriculated from Christ Church on 19 July 1662. He became a tutor at Christ Church (under John Fell), then dean, in April 1689. By 1670 he had probably come into possession of the collection of books and manuscripts assembled by Christopher Hatton, first Baron Hatton, which included several printed music scores, which became the core of his music collection. He left his collections of books (3000), prints (more than 2000 engravings), and musical manuscripts (estimated at more than 8000 compositions, including many pieces of Italian origin) to the college.

Other portraits in the West Library include Tobias Matthew (1544?-1628), archbishop of York, , appointed dean of Christ Church from 1576; Thomas Ravis (b. in or before 1560, d. 1609), bishop of London, appointed to the deanery of Christ Church on 19 June 1596; Thomas