Librarian’s report for 2018–2019

The Meyricke Library currently holds 33,046 [last year: 32,997] books. During this academic year, 1,105 [1,185] books were added, including 234 [70] gifts and 160 [167] suggestions from students. The average number of readers present was 42 [41].

The Celtic Library holds 8,270 [8,488] books and journal volumes. There are 44 [43] registered readers. This year, 196 [92] books were added to the collection. Pressure of space required moving the Breton, Manx, and Cornish sections to the Librarian’s office.

6,195 [6,049] loans were made from the Meyricke and Celtic Libraries. Of 596 [582] students, 454 [396] (that is, 76% [68%]) borrowed from the Libraries at least once.

Three [3] e-books were purchased at our request through CLeF (the College Libraries’ e-Book Fund) and are now available to all University members.

Gifts included several books written by Harold Wilson and presented by his son Robin, and a bequest of over 100 books by and about T.E. Lawrence from Mr & Mrs Brown of Hastings. Fellows and Old Members continued to present complimentary copies of their books, as listed in the College Record, and the Librarian is grateful for their generosity.

Three groups of sixth-formers made visits to work in the Meyricke Library as part of the OxLibris outreach project, organised in conjunction with the Bodleian Libraries.

There were 12 [16] visits to the Fellows’ Library by researchers from outside College, with 9 [12] enquiries answered by email.

As usual, library and archives staff prepared displays from the special collections for current and former members of College as well as external groups. These included a new intercollegiate collaboration, Initial Impressions, showing 15th-century printed books; early Irish printing for the Oxford Bibliographical Society; and the role of women in Jesus before 1974. 381 [349] names were listed in the Fellows’ Library visitors’ book.

Descriptions of the College’s manuscripts are now available in the Medieval.Bodleian online catalogue. These currently reproduce the work of Coxe in the 19th century but they provide a basis for future expansion and revision. Six [12] authors were permitted to reproduce images from our manuscripts. The Red Book of Hergest was lent to the Bodleian Libraries’ exhibition Babel: Adventures in Translation.

The Oxford Conservation Consortium repaired damaged bookbindings including the 1674 Bodleian catalogue, supervised exhibition loans, and provided high-quality photography of library artefacts.

Oliver Miller continued part-time as library assistant while studying at UCL.

Owen McKnight
Librarian