This is a challenging and exciting time at the Ancient India and Iran Trust. Since it was founded in 1978 to fill a perceived gap in British cultural and scholarly life, it has grown into a thriving, well-loved institution and has gained a firm reputation both in the UK and many parts of the world. This is why, to mark the 30th anniversary of the Trust in 2008, we decided to launch an Appeal to raise money for a new resource centre to be built as an extension to our premises. This will provide better (and more spacious) lecture and conference facilities, increased book storage and a dedicated exhibition space for the Trust’s collections of manuscripts, coins and works of art, which at present cannot be displayed.

The resource centre has been under discussion for some years now during which the need for it has become more pressing. Our lectures are increasingly well attended and often quite a squeeze; due to space restrictions most of our conferences have to be by invitation only and our library, with over 25,000 volumes and over 100,000 photographic images, continues to grow and attract valuable bequests, most recently from Ralph Pinder-Wilson and Professor Mary Boyce. It is rapidly becoming one of the most distinguished collections in the Western world.

The Appeal was launched in June 2008 at a two-day conference on Zoroastrianism, one of our special 30th-anniversary events (for more about these, see pp. 2-3), and the fund was kick-started with a donation of £25,000 from the Zartoshty Brothers, presented by Dorab Mistry from the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe. Our aim is to raise £3.5 million to pay for the new centre and increase the Trust’s endowment to meet future running and staffing costs – even without the new building, we need a full-time Curator/Librarian (in addition to our part-time Assistant Librarian) and to increase the Administrator’s hours to full-time.

Of course, we have a long way to go (and, needless to say, now is not an ideal time in which to try and raise such an amount), but the response so far has been encouraging. John House, who has been volunteering at the Trust since 2007 is busy working on applications to various grant-making organisations and we hope to put in an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund soon. Except for a grant 12 years ago specifically linked to cataloguing, the Trust has received no public money. Experience has taught us that although it is important to cooperate with other institutions, we should remain independent. We believe that this is the best way we can serve scholars and anyone else with an interest in this field.

If you would like to make a donation, however modest, or feel you can in any way assist us with our efforts, please get in touch. A lot of effort has gone into building the Trust from its early days and as we have come so far we can only hope to go further. With the parts of the world we seek to promote an understanding of increasingly in the news, the importance of our work, and of extending its reach, becomes all the more obvious.

**Appeal Fund Donors**

We would like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their donations to our Appeal Fund:

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‘ZOROASTRIANS PAST AND PRESENT’
7-8 JUNE 2008
JESSE PALSETIA

Organized by the Ancient India and Iran Trust’s Honorary Secretary, Dr Almut Hintze, this two-day conference brought together scholars, notable Zoroastrian community leaders and members of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE) and of the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO), as well as graduate students from Britain, Europe, North America and India, with an interest in Zoroastrian and Parsi studies. The conference was held to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the AIIT, a jewel of Cambridge, and took place in its intimate Victorian quarters at 23 Brooklands Avenue.

The range of talks given at the conference included topics on Zoroastrianism, Iranian philology, and Parsi history. Opening the first of six sessions, Dorab Mistry, former President of the ZTFE, eloquently noted the illustrious history of Parsis in leadership capacities in various areas of endeavour, and appealed to Parsis to strive for greater leadership roles in present-day politics. Professor John Hinnells noted the accomplishments of Dadabhai Naoroji in Britain between 1885 and 1905, and Dinyar Patel gave a detailed account of M.K. Gandhi’s complicated relationship with the Parsis of India. In session 2, Dastur K.M. JamaspAsa discussed the past and present state of Zoroastrian religious study. His appeal for continued scholarship in Zoroastrian studies was aptly answered by Professor Maria Macuch, who provided new insights into property and law in the Pahlavi marriage contract. Professor Mitra Sharafi brought her legal and historical understanding to an analysis of the Parsi Chief Matrimonial Court of Bombay from 1893 to 1929, and detailed patterns of use of the courts. In session 3, Professor Jesse Palsetia elaborated on the role of the Parsi businessman and philanthropist Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy in the public culture of nineteenth-century Bombay. Mr Khojeste Mistry delivered a passionate defence of Zoroastrian identity against the acculturative influences being adopted in India and the diaspora.

Dan Sheffield closed the first day’s presentations with a well-researched analysis of the Parsi priest Mulla Firuz.

Day two highlighted research on Zoroastrian religious studies and Iranian philology. Professor Prods Oktor Skjærvø noted the challenges in translating and understanding concepts from the ancient Zoroastrian literature. Bahman Moradian gave an informative account of the state of the Iranian Zoroastrians and the Daxme of Iran and Professor Jean Kellens provided a new analysis of the Yasna ceremony. Session 5 began with Dr. Yuhan Vevaina’s masterful analysis of Zoroastrian eschatology. Arash Zeini discussed ‘Composition Prior to Performance: Orality and the Gāthic Poet’ and Leon Goldman elaborated on the role and function of females in religious life discernible from the religious literature. Professor Helmut Humbach, renowned for his translation of the Gathas of Zarathushtra, provided an analysis of the Rabatak inscription, a rock inscription written in the Bactrian language and the Greek script, discovered in 1993 in Afghanistan, which highlights the rule of the Kushana king Kanishka and his use of regional, religious and royal symbolism. Dr Elizabeth Tucker analyzed an Avestan term of the so-called Zoroastrian Confession of Faith (Yasna 12.9 fraspaiatox德拉), while Dr Almut Hintze provided an analysis of the Avestan ‘ghost’ word auuah or ‘water’.

The presentations highlighted the tremendous on-going scholarship and commitment to Zoroastrianism, Zoroastrian literature, and the history of the Parsis of India and the diaspora, and the involvement of the Zoroastrian community and organizations such as the AIIT augur well for the future of Zoroastrian academic studies.
BACTRIAN CHRONOLOGY WORKSHOP
NICHOLAS SIMS-WILLIAMS

In January 2008 the successful completion of the Bactrian Chronology project, which had been based at the Trust since 2004, was marked by a two-day workshop. This brought to the Trust a distinguished group of scholars from as far away as the USA and Japan as well as the Afghan ambassador, H.E. Dr Mohammad Rahim Sherzoy, and representatives of the BBC World Service. Among the presentations were talks by all three members of the project team – Nicholas Sims-Williams, François de Blois and Johnny Cheung – on the results of the project, including dramatic evidence that the starting-point of the era used to date the Bactrian documents was the foundation of the Sasanian dynasty of Iran in 223 C.E. As a result of this discovery, it is now possible in many cases to calculate the exact year, even the exact day, on which a document was written.

The event also included a reception at which two new books were launched: *Arabic documents from Early Islamic Khurasan* by Geoffrey Khan; and the second volume of *Bactrian documents from Northern Afghanistan* by Nicholas Sims-Williams (for which the author has since received a ‘Book of the Year’ prize from the President of Iran).

PS. The rooms at the AIIT previously occupied by the Bactrian Chronology project now house a new project directed by Dr Erica Hunter and entitled ‘The Christian library from Turfan’. Watch this space for further news!

INSTITUTE MEMORIAL LECTURE
JAMES CORMICK

We were very fortunate to have the Bailey Memorial Lecture, ‘Why write on pots? Reflections on Medieval Persian Ceramics’, given by Professor Robert Hillenbrand, a world authority on Islamic art and architecture, in December 2008. He showed a series of photographs of inscribed Persian bowls, the most beautiful of which were decorated with a white slip on a terracotta body with slender black Kufic writing painted around the rim, such as the 10th century bowl from Nishapur shown here.

There were several answers to the question ‘Why?’. In the strict Islamic tradition the portrayal of living creatures was forbidden and so calligraphy became the preferred decoration of art objects. It also had the advantage of delivering a message, which could be dedicatory, religious or proverbial. For example, this bowl warns: ‘Planning before work protects you from regret’.

There were one or two difficulties in the process, however. The earliest form of writing in the Arabic script was not only without vowels but also without the dots that in later Arabic distinguished B from T or TH, or S from SH, and so on. The Persian pottery painter might also have had the further difficulty of not knowing Arabic, with the result that the Kufic inscriptions are often indecipherable. In fact, in extreme cases, the painter might not have even bothered with getting a message across but just concentrated on creating an attractive calligraphic pattern. Interestingly, this is still in practice in non-Arabic speaking parts of the Islamic world. In the 1970s in Afghanistan I bought a beautiful metal pot incised with Kufic letters, which I was later told were completely meaningless.

Professor Hillenbrand’s talk ended with a very interesting discussion of just how the painters managed to paint letters on the rough surface of the pot. His suggestion was that they used stencils, which not only prevented smudging, but also gave the painters authentic texts which were reproducible for the mass market.
NEW HONORARY FELLOWS

We are delighted to announce the appointment of two new Honorary Fellows of the Trust, Professor Robert Hillenbrand and Professor Minoru Hara.

Robert Hillenbrand, who gave the Bailey Memorial Lecture at the Trust in December 2008, is Emeritus Professor of Islamic Art, University of Edinburgh. He was educated at the universities of Cambridge and Oxford and taught at the Department of Fine Art, University of Edinburgh from 1971 until his retirement in 2007. He has published some 120 articles on aspects of Islamic art and architecture and his books include *Imperial Images of Persian Painting, Islamic Art and Architecture, The Architecture of Ottoman Jerusalem, Studies in Medieval Islamic Art* and the prize-winning *Islamic Architecture: form, function and meaning*. In 1977 he curated one of the largest exhibitions of Persian miniature painting ever held.

Minoru Hara, a member of the Japan Academy, is Emeritus Professor of Sanskrit Language and Literature, University of Tokyo and, for ten years, was also Professor of the International College of Advanced Buddhist Studies. He studied Sanskrit at the University of Tokyo and Harvard and worked with the late Professor John Brough in Cambridge, whose *Collected Papers* (1992) he co-edited with J.C. Wright. He is the author of *Tapas in the Mahabharata* (Tokyo, 1979, in Japanese) and *Pasupata Studies* (Vienna 2002) as well as over 100 articles in English and Japanese.

DISABLED ACCESS

We are very pleased to let you know that the Trust now has a wheelchair ramp and a dedicated disabled parking space. It has taken several years to fulfil this long-held intention due to a shortage of funds and the extremely complicated logistics of the whole project. We got there in the end however (with some financial help from Cambridge City Council), and it all looks rather nice!

The ramp was inaugurated before our Friday lecture on 1 May 2009 by Professor John Hinnells, a close associate, who thanked the Trust for the considerable amount of money – and willpower – it had put into the project, and City Councillor Claire Blair, Chair of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee. The all too enticing sight of a big pair of scissors, bright red ribbon and a photo opportunity also proved to be irresistible for Rubi Ahmad-Cooke, who overcame her bashfulness in an instant and raced up the ramp just in time to seize the limelight and ‘help’ with the ceremonial snip.

LIBRARY NEWS

The Library has received some valuable bequests in recent months. Before his death in October 2008, Ralph Pinder-Wilson, a noted specialist in Islamic art and Persian had donated 281 books, about 200 sale catalogues and 32 exhibition catalogues. In November, we received a further 300 books in addition to approximately 10 boxes of his working papers and slide collection.

We have also received a donation of 151 books from the library of the late Dr Patrick Considine (1935-2008). Paddy Considine, who taught for many years at University College London, was a specialist in Armenian and the books donated by his family will add considerably to the importance of the Trust’s Armenian collection, most of which was was originally collected by Sir Harold Bailey.

Mr Cyrus Mehta gave us a collection of 58 early twentieth-century Indian postcards. These have since been digitised by one of our volunteers, Syd Turington, who is now working on a description of them for us.

We would also like to thank the following for their donations to the Library:

- J. Amrolia
- Bi Bo
- Brepols publishers
- Johnny Cheung
- Gerry Coldham
- James Cormick
- Elizabeth Gershevitch
- Éva M. Jeremiáš
- Agnes Korn
- Cyrus Mehta
- Minoru Hara
- Gita Hariri
- Almut Hintze
- Sam Lieu
- Jo McGregor
- Raymond Mercier
- Takao Moriyasu
- Ellen Raven
- Rong Xinjiang
- Nicholas and Ursula Sims-Williams
- Dan Waugh
- Yutaka Yoshida
- Zhu Yugi
BOOK PRIZE

We congratulate Nicholas Sims-Williams, one of our Trustees, and Christine van Ruymbeke, one of our Friends, who were amongst this year’s winners of the ‘World Prize for the Book of the Year’ offered annually by the Islamic Republic of Iran. At a ceremony in Tehran on 7 February 2009 Nicholas and Christine received their prizes personally from President Ahmedinejad. Their winning books were Nicholas Sims-Williams’ *Bactrian documents from Northern Afghanistan* and Christine van Ruymbeke’s *Science and Poetry in Medieval Persia, the Botany of Nizami’s Khamsa*.

On his recent 60th birthday, Nicholas was also presented with a Festschrift, *Exegisti monumenta*, edited by Werner Sundermann, Almut Hintze and François de Blois. This contains 40 articles related to Iranian studies, contributed by leading scholars, and is part of the *Iranica* series edited by Maria Macuch.

SOGDIAN CLUB

Since spring 2008 the ‘Sogdian Club’ has been meeting regularly at the Trust to read texts in Sogdian, the mediaeval Iranian language of Samarkand. Led by Professor Nicholas Sims-Williams a group of scholars and students has been reading a variety of Christian, Manichean and Buddhist texts. The photograph shows some of the participants on a visit to the British Library, where they are looking at one of the oldest known Sogdian documents, a letter written by a Sogdian merchant at the beginning of the 4th century.

NEW LOOK WEBSITE

Some of you will hopefully have noticed that the Trust’s website (www.indiran.org) has had a bit of a makeover. Some content has yet to be added and updated, but you should be able to find the information you are looking for. Our thanks go to Charles Malcolm-Brown for his design template and Helen Sims-Williams for all her work in putting the new website together.

Also coming soon to the site is the Howard Wilson Sri Lankan Archive, a collection of around 2000 slides centred on Buddhist art in Sri Lanka. The late Professor Howard Wilson held the Chair in Trans-Cultural Studies at Capital University, Ohio and the slides have been painstakingly digitised by his widow Marti Wilson over the last 3 years. We would like to thank Marti for bringing this collection to the Trust and for all her work in digitising it, and Bryce Mildenhall for so skillfully adapting it for the web. We are very excited that this project is now approaching fruition, not only because it will make this valuable collection available to researchers online, but because it is a pilot for a number of future projects involving other significant photographic collections held by the Trust. These include the collections of Joan van Lohuizen, James Harle, Raymond and Bridget Allchin, and Penelope Betjeman, which are at various stages of being catalogued and amount to around 60,000 images. Christophe Roustan Delatour, Assistant Curator at the Museum of Cannes, is at present cataloguing the Himalayan section of the Betjeman collection (around 3,4000 prints and 1000 slides), which he describes as ‘an unequalled, indispensable resource for the study of architecture and sculpture in the Western Himalayas’. Also, Dr Ellen Raven from Leiden University is working on the Joan van Lohuizen collection.

BURSARIES

In the last two years, AIIT bursaries have been awarded to:

- Samra Azarnouche (EPHE, Paris)
- Professor Iain Gardner (University of Sydney)
- Ross Burns (Macquarie University, Sydney)
- Dr Ellen Raven (University of Leiden)
- Christophe Roustan Delatour (Museum of Cannes)

Bursaries of up to £500, to help with travel and accommodation costs, are available for people wishing to come and use the Trust’s library for a specific project. A bursary in the name of Ralph Pinder-Wilson was also announced at a recent memorial event held for him at the Trust (see p. 7). For details of how to apply, please see our website or contact our Administrator on 01223 356841 or info@indiran.org.
**Ralph Pinder-Wilson 1919-2008**

**James Cormick**

On Saturday 17 January 2009, on what would have been his 90th birthday, a large number of Ralph’s friends went to Our Lady of Victories Church in Kensington to attend the 12:30 mass, which was being sung in his memory. It was a gloriously sunny afternoon in the middle of winter and at the appropriate moments in the mass when the choir, accompanied by the organ, was singing parts of Mozart’s Requiem, the stillness in the church was sad and beautiful and full of memories. It was as Ralph would have liked it.

Ralph’s nephew, Richard Robinson, organised the service, and the director of music at Ralph’s church, Charles Cole, provided the choir and organist. And they are just the first of the many names I shall mention in this tribute. It is not an official obituary (for that, see Michael Roger’s excellent piece in *The Times*, 10 November 2008), but more a mustering of the troops, of those whose lives were in some way affected by Ralph.

First of all his family. Ralph had three brothers and one sister. Ralph and his brother Bill remained unmarried, but his sister Julia married and produced three children: Jonathan, Richard and Sally; his brother Alan two: Caroline and Vanessa; and his brother John one: Johanna. A large family, therefore, and one which no doubt provided Vanessa; and his brother Bill remained three brothers and one sister. Ralph (for that, see Michael Roger’s excellent piece in *The Times*, 10 November 2008), but more a mustering of the troops, of those whose lives were in some way affected by Ralph.

As for the rest of us, Ralph touched our lives in different ways. Raymond Allchin, one of the founding trustees of the Ancient India and Iran Trust, first remembers him at Westminster School before the War, where Ralph was the exact contemporary of Raymond’s older brother. Another founding trustee, Sir Harold Bailey, who like Ralph was an Oxford man, although of an earlier generation, was both a colleague and a good friend. I remember Sir Harold recollecting with delight a long journey by car he, Ralph, and another Orientalist (whose name, unfortunately, I don’t remember) took to the West Country in the late 1950s (one can’t help thinking of *Three Men in a Boat*). Ralph was the driver and they travelled through Wiltshire, Sir Harold’s home county, and Dorset, where, among other things, they visited the grave of T.E. Lawrence in the churchyard at Moreton, and chuckled over the most peculiar recumbent effigy of Lawrence by Eric Kennington in St. Martin’s Church in Wareham.

Another more recent friend of Ralph’s, Alan Rush, the Middle-East historian, who was also a fellow congregant at Our Lady of Victories, has discovered a reference to Ralph at about this time in *Letters from the Middle East* by R.W. Hamilton (1992, p.190). That Hamilton is full of praise for Ralph comes as no surprise:

18 July 1959 Harran (Turkey): Ralph Pinder-Wilson is the nicest person imaginable, who carries kind-heartedness almost to the point of caricature – e.g. this evening I left my dark glasses on the site and said ‘damnation’ (or words to that effect) when I discovered it having reached home. He instantly offered to go and fetch them for me because we had been discussing something together at the time on the site.

My own friendship with Ralph started in 1977 in Afghanistan. I was there on British Council/Ministry of Overseas Development business, trying to reform the English Language curriculum in the Afghan educational system. The British Embassy in Kabul gave me a very handsome house in the Little Compound, which had originally been the Doctor’s House. And I was soon to be joined in the compound by the British Institute of Afghan Studies (BIAS), who were offered what had originally been the Hospital. Ralph had recently been appointed its Director and was pleased to arrange its removal to the more salubrious quarter of Karte-Parwan and the relative security of the British Embassy Compound, which was guarded by a contingent of fierce Gurkhas.

Characteristically, under Ralph’s directorship, the BIAS house in the Little Compound became a social and cultural centre, rivalling the British Council offices in Share-Nau. The Embassy handed over its extremely good library to BIAS and Lavinia Davies, another very good friend of Ralph’s, came out to Kabul to help shelve and catalogue it. This was also the time when the Society of Afghan Studies was conducting a dig in Kandahar under the direction of Sven Helms, and when the diggers, who included Richard Blurton (now of the British Museum and a Trustee of the Ancient India & Iran Trust) and Warwick Ball (the co-editor of the festschrift for Ralph, *Cairo to Kabul*, 2002), came up to Kabul, the BIAS house was awash with youthful high spirits.

Ralph also generously accommodated others. Joseph Elfenbein was then carrying out research on the Baluch language in Pakistan and was a frequent and amusing visitor. Hugh Beattie was conducting social anthropological research in an Afghan village and was also to be seen on occasions looking rather
battered and back in Kabul for rest and recreation. But perhaps the most bizarre group of people to stay in the BIAS house was an entire team of rather impecunious Polish mountaineers, whom Ralph had taken pity on. Those were the days when people from other communist countries could travel cheaply through the Soviet Union. In the case of the mountaineers this meant flying by Aeroflot from Warsaw to Moscow and then from Moscow to Dushanbe in Tajikistan. They would then have to go by bus from Dushanbe to Termez in Uzbekistan, where they could cross the border into Afghanistan and carry on through Mazare-Sharif down to Kabul. I remember the mountaineers telling me that they were treated very suspiciously in those Central Asian republics until they made it quite clear they were not Russians – after which they were treated as welcome guests and fellow sufferers.

When the beastly Russians finally took over in Afghanistan, as is well known, Ralph got into trouble with the new regime. He was accused of smuggling antiquities, spying, and who knows what else, and put in prison. For those of us who knew the old Soviet Union, these were fairly standard accusations levelled at anyone the authorities had determined to punish or get rid of. Why Ralph? Well, the British Embassy officials were more difficult to attack, and Ralph was seen as influential not only among the European expatriates but the dissident Afghans as well. It is a measure of his courage and strength of character that he finally came out of his ordeal in the filthy and dangerous prison relatively unscathed.

In his latter years, in retirement, he was once again able to enjoy the company of his family and large circle of friends in London. He also became a great friend and Honorary Fellow of the Trust. He visited us frequently and decided to leave the Trust his very fine collection of books on Islamic Art. The last time we saw him was in September last year on one of his book-delivery expeditions up to Cambridge with Wak Kani and his sons. (Gertrude Bell, Poems from the Divan of Hafiz, 1897).

**AIIT MEMORIAL EVENT**

Sadly, the celebration planned at the Trust on 30 January 2009 for Ralph Pinder-Wilson’s 90th birthday had to be changed to a memorial event instead. But in celebrating Ralph’s life and work it was in many ways a joyful occasion.

Dr Barbara Brend gave a very engaging and beautifully illustrated talk entitled ‘Arts of Islamic Lands: a tribute to Ralph Pinder-Wilson’, in which she discussed the valuable and wide-ranging contribution Ralph had made to the study of this field. Many of Ralph’s family members were present and after the lecture his nephew, Richard Robinson, said how wonderful it was for them all to learn about his uncle’s work, about which many of them had known very little.

**FRIENDS OF THE TRUST**

Encouragingly, the Trust continues to attract new Friends which, for an annual subscription of £30 or a life subscription of £400, is one of the most helpful ways in which people can support our work.

As thanks for this support, we have been organising some events exclusively for Friends. In 2008, there were two such occasions: a screening of the 1937 Marathi classic Sant Tukaram, introduced by Professor Rachel Dwyer (SOAS), and a chance for Friends to learn about and take a closer look at the Trust’s Armenian manuscripts, presented by Dr Vrej Nersessian from the British Library.

This year’s event is inspired by the the 2009 celebrations of Edward Fitzgerald’s Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, marking both the 150th anniversary of the publication and the 200th anniversary of FitzGerald’s birth. On Friday 23 October, Bill Martin and Sandra Mason will be speaking on ‘The Music of the Rubaiyat’. Longstanding Friends of the Trust, Bill and Sandra are also the authors of The Art of Omar Khayyam: illustrating FitzGerald’s Rubaiyat (2007). They have a website dedicated to the Rubaiyat, (www.omarkhayyamrubaiyat.com), which also lists the special events taking place this year.

If you would like to become a Friend of the Trust, please contact our Administrator, Munizha Ahmad-Cooke, on 01223 356841 or info@indiran.org for an application form. You can also download a form from our website, www.indiran.org.
Many visitors to the Trust have commented fondly on its informal atmosphere and having been made to feel like part of the ‘family’. Indeed, over the last 30 years the Trust family has grown considerably extending to many parts of the world. Yet some very valuable members – our volunteers – who help us carry out work we would otherwise find it difficult to do, can be easily overlooked. With only three paid, part-time staff – our Custodian James Cormick, Assistant Librarian Jose John and Administrator Munizha Ahmad-Cooke – our human resources are stretched to say the least, but we have been very fortunate in attracting volunteers who have given us their time and skills consistently for a number of years. The longest serving of these are James Rankin and Lady Charlotte Pippard.

James Rankin visited the Trust 10 years ago on an open day in which several local establishments were participating. As well as having worked in the Middle East, he had visited both India and Iran and had a keen interest in the history of these regions. He was shown around the Trust and remembers our Chair, Dr Bridget Allchin, inviting him back for some of the curry she was preparing. He didn’t make it back for lunch but a couple of years later, following his retirement from the civil service, he revisited the Trust, which the Allchins had told him was quite hard up, and offered his services as a volunteer. Since then, James has completed several important and painstaking projects in our library including the listing of the Allchin Slide Collection, Sir Harold Bailey’s and Charles Bawden’s offprints and sorting through Sir Harold’s correspondence. He and his wife Grace, another longstanding volunteer of the Trust (who has also made a significant culinary contribution to our in-house celebrations), also spent a week in Germany sorting out Professor Emmerick’s offprints. James is currently carrying out a detailed stock check of the library. He says he has been able to adapt well to these somewhat laborious jobs because of his past auditing experience. He adds that what attracted him to the Trust was its ‘lovely, calm and friendly atmosphere’ and he has always enjoyed meeting the variety of people who come here to work on specific projects or use the library during the morning coffee break, which brings everyone together and has become an institution in itself.

Lady Charlotte Pippard, an experienced bookbinder, started volunteering at the Trust in 2004 and since then has quietly worked away at repairing our books and keeping them from falling apart. She first visited the Trust as part of a group of NADFAS volunteers (National Association of Decorative & Fine Arts Societies) who used to come every other week to dust the books. Charlotte started to come every week and continued coming when NADFAS stopped. It was known that she was a bookbinder and had rebound several catalogues for the Fitzwilliam Museum (she had to stop when she broke her wrist because they were so heavy). She started repairing books at the Trust and taking some home for rebinding. Charlotte, who chose to study bookbinding and calligraphy rather than fine art at college, says she loves using her hands and has to make things: ‘If a book is well bound, it is well bound and not subject to opinion like a painting’. She too emphasises the friendly atmosphere of the Trust and enjoys the Mondays she spends here, which have become a landmark in her week. Volunteering and doing charitable work, she says, gives her a warm feeling and she enjoys being able to do something she likes.

As well as James and Charlotte we have recently attracted a few more volunteers including John House, who joined us over a year ago and is now busy helping us fundraise for our 30th Anniversary Appeal, Shashi Sen, Syd Turkington, Heather Procter Smith and Lynn Welland, who are all assisting with various library projects.

The must-have of the season, the Ancient India & Iran Trust eco bag is proving to be very popular, and a snip at just £2! All profits go towards our 30th Anniversary Appeal, so pick one up when you next visit us or contact us on 01223 356841 or info@indiran.org if you would like to order one (a little extra for P&P will be added). Look out for more merchandise in the near future including postcards and mugs.