

AIIT Update



ANCIENT INDIA & IRAN TRUST NEWSLETTER NO. 2 DECEMBER 1999

IMPROVEMENTS TO BROOKLANDS HOUSE

The most important news is that the upgrading of the basement is now complete making available virtually another floor of the front part of the house. Adjustable shelving has been fitted throughout and the lift for transporting books installed and working. The strong room for storing manuscripts and other items too is complete.

Work has begun on the area adjacent to the van Lohuizen Library where an additional toilet is being constructed, the kitchen and scullery are also being refurbished. It is hoped that everything will be completed in time for the Bailey Centenary Conference in December.

This has all been made possible by a substantial grant from an anonymous donor.

The next target is the Van Lohuizen library where we plan to install moveable shelving, which we calculate will increase the capacity by 40%, and enable further material to be included.

THE LIBRARY CATALOGUING

The cataloguing of Sir Harold Bailey's Library is now complete. The Cataloguer, Mr Wieslaw Mical, has written a paper about the unique character of its contents, which follows this section.

Meanwhile he has now embarked on the cataloguing of the van Lohuizen library, which he estimates could be completed by October 2000.

The Bailey offprint collection is being catalogued by Mr James Rankin, who offered his services voluntarily, having attended the previous year's Heritage Fund Open Day. He has catalogued some 3,000 to date.

Work has also begun on the Bailey Archive. Mrs Patricia Flett has recently begun work on this project under the guidance of Dr Almut Hintze.

BAILEY LIBRARY AT THE ANCIENT INDIA & IRAN TRUST

It's distinguishing features and academic utility (an insider's view) by W Mical

The Bailey Library numbers 13,400 books. Although its chief specialised areas of Iranian and Indic studies (with special prominence given to comparative linguistics) claim the largest number of books, the library as a whole is as diverse as its academic orientation would allow, representing virtually every aspect of Asian and general philological studies. Its main subject-sections have already been enumerated/described in our leaflets as well as web-site. I will therefore concentrate on some of the many aspects and features that make the AIIT library unique.

In comparison with other independent libraries of similar size in Cambridge (and Britain in general), the Bailey library is distinguished by a particularly high ratio of old books, books in "unusual" languages, and of books the copies of which cannot be found in most major libraries of the world. The oldest printed book in the library is dated 1546 (in the colophon), with "1553" embossed on its vellum cover. It is an anthology of Latin pastoral poetry; *En habes lector Bvcolicorum avtores xxxviii*. Older materials are only in manuscript form. The number of 17th-18th century books is not great, but it is significant; books from the 19th century constitute quite a substantial proportion of the library (it should be possible to provide statistics at a later stage); the bulk of it though dates roughly from the

first half (up to the 1960s) of this century, the central decades being perhaps the period when Sir Harold's book-buying activity was at its peak.

As for languages, more than a hundred are represented, usually both in the form of textual material and analytic presentation. There are many among these whose names would be recognizable only by a language scholar.

While cataloguing, I found no matching records in the Research Libraries International Network and Consortium of University Research Libraries databases for up to 10% of the library's total holdings. This means, in ordinary language, that not even the first few hundred of the world's leading libraries hold copies of the books in question. The provenance of these rare books varies. Many are of limited editions (of, sometimes, as few as 50 or 100 copies), which were often distributed to select collectors rather than sold. A large contingent originates from Imperial Russia, and also, in the post-revolutionary period, from the southern and south-western republics of the Soviet Union. Many, again, being obscure publications (often in non-Roman scripts), have found their way to the library only because of Sir Harold's personal contacts in many countries. To possess all these little or unknown books is very exhilarating, but ►

THE ANCIENT INDIA

The aim of this Newsletter is to keep Friends of the Trust and other interested in the realisation of its aims and objectives informed of what is happening.

 IRAN TRUST

understandably, bibliographic obscurity being a double-edged sword, one cannot expect such items to be regularly consulted by readers, as very few would know of their existence (how many would look, for example, for a particular Pushto book published in Kabul?). Another rare category is of typescript copies of works by Sir Harold's professional friends and students, many of these never published in print. I should like to add here, that apart from these rare items, the library has of course many standard and well known works, some of them long out of print "classics".

The library began its existence as a private one, and therefore reflects academic interests (and genius) as well as (sometime idiosyncratic) collecting habits of the late Sir Harold. One of the many salient characteristics is that he liked to collect one and the same text in every possible language, and as many editions of it as possible. Thus, the library has got between 150 and 200 copies of the Bible or its portions (25 of them in the Armenian language alone), 96 of the Avesta (including 41 of the Yasna), about 30 of the Prajnaparamita, 20 of El Cid, etc. Might it be that Sir Harold had unwittingly created an opportunity for someone to study Buddhism or Zoroastrianism from their original textual sources.

Also unique is the way in which the readers, or many of them, have been availing of the library's resources. At the Trust, they encounter a situation where each subject-section has a long-standing association with a particular scholar: Iranian with the late Prof. Sir Harold Bailey, Prof. Sims-Williams, and Dr A Hintze; Indic studies with Dr R Allchin; history of South Asian civilisation with Drs R and B Allchin; Zoroastrian, Ossetic and Armenian also having their "associate" scholars. Each of these sections contains some books either written or edited by its respective "keeper" and, in some cases, published by the Trust. The most prolific among these "in-house" contributors are the late Sir Harold, Drs Allchin and Prof Sims-Williams. Thus, for many a reader, his research work at the library has entailed not only the consulting of books but also liaising with and benefiting from the academic expertise of the aforementioned scholars. The spirit of this tradition is kept alive by the remaining founding trustees. Thanks to this human factor the library continues to evolve as an integral whole, a living organism as it were, where books are a part of scholarship.

FUND RAISING

DONATIONS

A donation of £10,560 has been received from Mr Nigel Chancellor as a contribution to refurbishing the India Room and preserving the books it contains.

ESTABLISHMENT OF PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES

Mrs Marti Wilson is presenting the Trust with her late husband, Professor Howard Wilson's photographic collection, consisting of images of South Asian religious, architectural, and art historical subjects. This will be accompanied by a donation of \$30,000 to include the cost of digitization. Efforts are being made to raise the further funding needed to carry through the Photographic Archive Project outlined in the AIIT 'Shopping List'.

BRITISH LIBRARY GRANT

Since the first Newsletter appeared the Trust has received a grant of £6,320 from the British Library Manuscript Conservation Fund towards the cost of preserving Persian manuscripts in the Bailey collection. The grant has enabled Dr Nicholas Hadgraft to begin conservation work on two more important Persian manuscripts from the collection, the Masnavi of Rumi and the Diwan of Hafiz.

AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE AIIT COMMITTEE

The Chairman and Secretary attended a meeting of the American Friends of the Ancient India and Iran Trust in New York in October. The meeting was cordial and constructive. The small Brochure to which some of the Friends had contributed was accepted and approved. Plans for the Madingley Hall Meeting, April 5th-7th were discussed and a number of constructive suggestions made.

A number of valuable suggestions were put forward about possible sources of funding. These are being followed up. In all the Chairman and Secretary spent a month in the States carrying out a previously made plan to make new contacts and explore a number of potential funding sources.

VISITING FELLOWS

Dr Upinder Singh of St Stephen's College, Delhi (our 1999 Wallace India Visiting Scholar) complete her Wallace India Visiting Fellowship in June. She continued her research into the history of Indian archaeology in the 19th century, with special focus on the work of Alexander Cunningham and his assistants, and made good use of material in the AIIT Library, the University Library and the India Office Section of the British Library. Before leaving she completed her research on Beglar and Carlyle (two of Cunningham's assistants) and wrote chapters dealing with their work.

EVENTS

● Garden Party

We had a lovely day for the June Garden Party which was most successful, and was deemed by those who attended as perhaps one of the best ever.

● Heritage Open Weekend

The Trust once again took part in the Heritage Lottery Open Days—September 11th and 12th—which attracted 77 visitors, higher than in the previous two years.

● Bailey Centenary Conference: Indo-Iranian Languages & Peoples

This will be held from 16th-18th December at Brooklands House, with invited speakers from many parts of the world.

● Brooklands House Symposium: Treasures Preserved

This will be held at Madingley Hall from 5th-7th April 2000, with the object of demonstrating and promoting the work of the Ancient India and Iran Trust.

Promotional Publications

1. Large illustrated brochure, (folder plus text).
2. Small brochure.
3. Small illustrated brochure, pre-eminently designed for use in USA.
4. Trust Library Booklet (Currently being updated and revised).
5. Handlist of Iranian manuscripts (Maria Szuppe).
6. Handlist of Bailey Armenian manuscripts. (Armenian text by Dr V Nersessian; Cowe translation)
7. Newsletters Nos. 1 & 2 for 1999.