

DUNEDIN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS POLICY 2012

SCOPE

This policy is concerned with the Special Collections, held by the City Library of the Dunedin Public Libraries network. Its provisions do not extend to archival material for which a separate policy, the Heritage Archives Collection Policy 2011 exists.

1. Collection Scope

A number of different collections make up the Special Collections. However, their intrinsic nature is such that they do not fit within the ambit of the Operational Collections and being international in scope rather than of New Zealand provenance, the materials do not fit with either the McNab New Zealand Collection or the Alfred & Isabel Reed Collection.

2. Collections Purpose

The Special Collections add to the City's cultural heritage by providing access to a number of discrete collections of historical, literary or cultural interest. Most of these were given to Dunedin Public Library because the donors wanted them to be available to the people of Dunedin.

3. History

In addition to the Alfred and Isabel Reed Collection, and the McNab New Zealand Collection, the Dunedin Public Library's Heritage Collections have been augmented by a number of other significant donations made since 1927. These donors and their collections (in round brackets) include: Dorothy Stewart (W. H. Trimble Walt Whitman collection), Esmond de Beer (Sir Walter Scott), Eleanor Farjeon (the Farjeon family), and Jennie Johnston (H. Johnston). In 1985 a substantial donation from Emeritus Professor Colin Gibson established the Colin Gibson Hymnology Collection, which was augmented in 1992 by a further addition of approximately 1200 hymn books, donated by Professor Gibson and the Reverend Ross Wards of Wellington.

In addition to the above donations the Library acquired a collection of books and archival material of New Zealand author and journalist Hector Bolitho in 1975.

4. Collection Descriptions

4.1. Literary collections

- Hector Bolitho
Collection of books and archival material relating to New Zealand author Hector Bolitho (1897–1974), as well as books from Bolitho's collection not penned by him. The archival material includes: some correspondence, newspaper clippings, diaries, scrapbooks, photographs and photo albums, printing blocks, unpublished works, and magazine articles written by Bolitho.
- Frank Boreham
Fiction and non-fiction titles by Frank W. Boreham (1871–1959). Boreham was a Baptist minister and resident of Mosgiel from 1894 to 1906. The collection currently consists of 72 volumes and is currently housed in the Mosgiel Library.

- **Robert Burns**
Numbering more than 300 items, the Library's collection of Burnsiana includes: the anthology *A Selection of Original Scottish Airs* (1793–1818) once owned by Gilbert Burns, brother of the poet and father of Rev. Thomas Burns; a first Edinburgh edition of *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (1787); and a manuscript of Burns' poem 'To Mrs Kemble', the only manuscript in the poet's hand held by the Library.
- **Benjamin and Eleanor Farjeon**
The collection holds more than 240 volumes of the works of Victorian novelist Benjamin Leopold Farjeon (1838-1903), and of his talented family, of whom the best-known is children's writer Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965). The collection includes a first edition of Benjamin Farjeon's *Shadows on the Snow* (ca. 1865), one of the earliest novels printed in New Zealand.
- **H. Johnston**
A collection of 33 published items, mostly the works of J.M. Barrie and Henry Johnston who were close friends, and an autograph letter album. The album includes 137 letters by such literary, artistic and political figures as Anthony Trollope, George MacDonald, and W. E. Gladstone.
- **Sir Walter Scott**
The collection numbers 170 items at present. Many of the titles are first editions of such classic literary works as *Ivanhoe* (1820), *Waverley* (1814), and *Rob Roy* (1818).
- **Walt Whitman**
The collection consists of more than 680 volumes, including numerous editions of Whitman's classic work *Leaves of Grass* from the 1856 second edition to modern publications. The majority of the items held were the property of William Haywood Trimble. One of the most interesting items in the collection is the *Concordance of Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass*, a typescript in two volumes, compiled by Trimble and his wife, totals 61,201 entries.

4.2. Book Sale Records

A collection comprised of more than 950 antiquarian book dealer and auction house (primarily Sotheby's) catalogues, and including some historical consolidated pricing records, such as Bookman's Price Index, American Book Prices Current, and Book Auction Records. The majority of the catalogues are from British and North American dealers, with some catalogues from dealers based in Australia and New Zealand.

4.3. Dunedin Gaelic Society

The collection numbers approximately 235 items, including primers and dictionaries, song books, scrapbooks, resources on learning Scots-Gaelic, and religious works such as a nineteenth-century edition of the *Gaelic Prayer Book*.

Journals are also included, with nineteenth- and early-twentieth century editions of *An Gaidhel* and a run of the periodical *Tinne* from 1986 to 1994.

4.4. Colin Gibson Hymnology Collection

Numbering more than 2,200 items, this collection of hymnals, carol books, reference works, periodicals and archival material is the largest gathering of

hymnody resources held by any institution in New Zealand. Its special strength lies in its New Zealand material, but the collection also has international and complementary features related to hymnbooks and studies for the use of scholars and the general public.

4.5. Left & Right Book Clubs

The Left Book Club was established in 1936 by Stafford Cripps, Victor Gollancz and John Strachey, and published reprints of contemporary socialist and 'progressive' classics. The Right Book Club was launched as a conservative response to the Left Book Club in February 1937 by Edgar Samuel, who worked for the bookselling firm W. & G. Foyle, and his father-in-law William Foyle.

The Library holds 255 of the 259 titles published by the Left Book Club and 112 titles of an unknown number published by the Right Book Club. It is intended to form a complete collection of both publishing runs.

4.6. Naseby Athenaeum and Portobello Library Collections

The early Naseby Athenaeum and Portobello libraries were formed as part of the 'Otago Public Library' circulating scheme under John Hislop (1821–1904) and the Otago Education Board during the 1860s and 1880s.

The Naseby Collection numbers over 1,600 volumes and the Portobello Collection 721 respectively. Combined, they form a significant resource for studies of literacy and social history in the development of the Otago Region.

4.7. Osborne Collection

A limited series of facsimile editions (29 titles published) of early English children's books from the Osborne Collection of the Toronto Public Library issued jointly by The Bodley Head in London and Holp Shuppan in Tokyo.

4.8. Sonnenschein Collection

The Library has identified from its older holdings more than 3,000 titles listed in the third edition of Swann Sonnenschein's *Best Books* (1935). While titles are still transferred from the lending collections, there is no intention to develop a comprehensive Sonnenschein Collection. The aim is to establish a discrete collection, which will preserve a representative selection of works held in high regard in the early part of the twentieth century.

5. Collection Management

Responsibility for the management of the special collections rests with the Rare Books Librarian.

5.1. Selection Tools

Resources used to aid selection include:

- Trade, library, general, and special interest magazines – print and online
- Booksellers' catalogues – print and online
- Special interest websites
- Listservs including EXLIBRIS-L and ABAA-L
- Auction catalogues

5.2. Selection Guidelines

Selection will take the following criteria into account:

- Enhancement of existing collection strengths
- Relationship to other collection items
- Suitability for exhibition
- Ability to fill a known subject gap in the collections
- Literary or artistic merit
- Value for money
- Item significance or uniqueness
- Condition of the materials and their preservation requirements
- Special cataloguing or other needs
- Space or special housing needs

5.3. Collection-Specific Criteria

- Sir Walter Scott Collection
Additions to the Scott Collection are restricted to works published during the author's lifetime (Scott died in 1832) with an emphasis on securing first and early editions. Significant posthumous publications are also sought.
- Robert Burns Collection
Additions to the Burns Collection are restricted to works published during the author's lifetime (Burns died in 1796) and significant posthumous editions.
- Sonnenschein Collection
Additions to the Sonnenschein Collection are restricted to works listed in W. S. Sonnenschein's *Best Books* (1935) only. Transfer of material from operational collections must have the approval of the Rare Books Librarian or Heritage Librarian if the former is unavailable.

5.4. Replacements

The replacement of significant items which are damaged, lost, or stolen may be undertaken if it is considered more important than the purchase of items new to the collection.

6. Deselection

An item may be deselected, if the following criteria apply:

- Material is an exact duplicate
- The donor or vendor had no right to give or sell them to the library
- They have physically deteriorated & conservation is not possible, or is actively placing other parts of the collection at risk
- The items are transferred to the original party or to a third party with the agreement of the original party
- Items do not fit the stated scope and aims of the collection

7. Acquisition and Purchasing

Funding for special collections acquisitions comes from the Library budget.

8. Standing Orders

A single publication, *The Walt Whitman Quarterly*, is received on standing order at present.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed within five years

Endorsed by the Senior Management Team, 19/06/2012