



# The Sybil Campbell Collection

at the University of Winchester

NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

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The Library was founded at Crosby Hall in 1928 by the British Federation of University Women, now the British Federation of Women Graduates

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## Sybil Campbell Collection Annual Lecture 2013

**The 2013 lecture will again take place at the University Women's Club on Thursday 17 October at 6.30. Dr Helen McCarthy will speak on 'A Women's Place is in the Embassy: The History of Women in British Diplomatic Life'.**

Dr Helen McCarthy lectures in History at Queen Mary, University of London. Dr McCarthy's interests span politics, diplomacy, gender, work and identity. Her book, 'The British People and the League of Nations: Democracy, Citizenship and Internationalism, c1918-1945' was a study of internationalism in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s.

Dr McCarthy is currently completing a new book manuscript to be published in

1914 entitled *Women of the World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat*. This is the first serious attempt to explore the place of women in British diplomatic life since the 19th century. It traces their influence and experiences as wives, patrons, experts and eventually as diplomats in their own right. The research uses personal papers and interviews with members of the first generation of women to join the Diplomatic service after the Second World War. Dr McCarthy's lecture will draw on her research for this book.

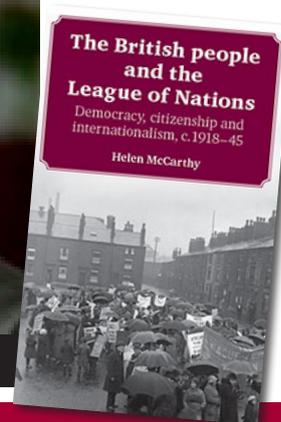
Dr McCarthy is a member of the editorial board of *Reviews in History* and of the Editorial Group of *History and Policy*, which works to connect historians, policymakers and the media. She is a Reviews Editor for *Twentieth Century British History* and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. She also writes a blog, *Past Notes* (<http://pastnotes.blogspot.co.uk/>).

Lecture including a glass of wine and sandwich £20 (students £10). Please contact Dr Stephanie Spencer, Faculty of Education, Health and Social Care,

University of Winchester, SO22 4NR to book a place, or for further information. [Stephanie.spencer@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:Stephanie.spencer@winchester.ac.uk)



Dr Helen McCarthy



# The Sybil Campbell Collection Personal Memories 1999 to 2012 by Cynthia Richmond

**The Sybil Campbell Collection Steering Committee has put on record formally the huge debt the Sybil Campbell Collection owes to Cynthia Richmond for her outstanding service to the Sybil Campbell Library and Sybil Campbell Collection from 1999 to 2012. Cynthia chaired the Library Committee, was a Governor of the Charitable Foundation and a trustee of the Sybil Campbell Collection on its move to the University of Winchester. During this time Cynthia undertook a number of roles. These included editing the Sybil Campbell Newsletter, compiling the Sybil Campbell Collection database, engaging in book conservation and acting as treasurer. Cynthia also took oversight of the move of the Library to the University of Winchester. In recognition of her key position in the more recent history of the Collection, the Sybil Campbell Collection Steering Committee asked Cynthia to put on record her personal memories of the Library and the Collection.**

An October evening in 1998, two brightly lit basement rooms in a Georgian house in Bloomsbury, mahogany bookshelves, a grand William Kent bookcase, books on display on every surface and books on shelves from floor to ceiling. Trustee Miriam Alman was deep in conversation with writer Sybil Oldfield (who in 2003 gave a totally absorbing lecture on the life of "The Forgotten Heroine, Mrs Nassau-Senior"). Nancy Edwards was proudly showing a precious John Rocque map from the 'Survey of London' 1748. The seminal work by Virginia Woolf 'A Room of One's Own', published in 1931 at the Hogarth Press, was on display. Virginia Woolf herself had donated it to the Library. There were so many books, biography, history, fiction, poetry, art, philosophy, science, most in English, some in foreign languages, books classical and modern. Of



Cynthia Richmond

course there were records of BFUW, IFUW and women's organisations. This was my first visit to the Sybil Campbell Library.

In 1999 Vivienne Rubinstein, outgoing Library Chairman, invited me to join the Library Committee and I was immediately asked to edit the Sybil Campbell Newsletter which I did until 2006, producing two or three newsletters a year which I printed and mailed myself. I was also Treasurer from 2000 to 2003 when Sheila Stevens became Treasurer. Nancy Edwards was Committee Chairman from 2000 to 2003 and I succeeded her as Chairman from 2003 to 2006.

The books from the spacious Sybil Campbell Library at Crosby Hall had been put in store in 1992 and moved out into Great James Street in 1995. The two basement rooms and vaults were packed from floor to ceiling. A re-evaluation of the purpose and future of the Library was taking place in 1999. It now had a dual function as a historical archive and a research resource on the development of women's lives, interests, education and achievements. Our long term aim was to raise its profile, repair books which

were in poor condition, put a catalogue on line and place the Library in an academic setting where there would be a professional librarian and where it would be freely available to researchers.

Guidelines were prepared of what should be kept and what disposed of. Some books were sold and some given away. The Library became a cultural centre for a time. We held lectures and seminars, book groups and guided Bloomsbury walks, visits to Dickens House and the Bedford Centre at Royal Holloway and to the newly opened Women's Library. We had visitors from University College, Goodenough College, The Institute of Education, Royal Holloway, The British Library, The Women's Library, The Institute of Historical Research, Local Association groups, individual BFWG members and friends. Several researchers worked at the Library, mainly interested in the work of BFUW with Refugees in the 1930s.

Funds were needed for book conservation and cataloguing: we made grant applications. In 2001 The Pilgrim Trust gave a grant of £12,000 towards a cataloguing project of £20,000. The Charitable Foundation gave £2,000. In 2003 The Pilgrim Trust gave £10,000 towards a conservation project of £15,000. The shortfall came from generous donations from members and friends, the Adopt-a-Book Scheme and Gift Aid. We hired a first class book conservator to train volunteers in book conservation on the understanding that the trained volunteers would then spend time repairing Library books. We had precious books professionally repaired. We hired a librarian as part-time cataloguer for several months.

At this stage I need to explain what the Charitable Foundation is. You may have heard about the BFWG Scholarship Fund which gives Awards for excellence to postgraduate women. That is quite different from the Charitable Foundation.

The Charitable Foundation is a company which was originally the Crosby Hall Association charity. In 1992 the proceeds of the sale of the lease of Crosby Hall, about three million pounds, became the assets of the Charitable Foundation for them to invest. In place of providing a hall of residence for post graduate women their remit is now to provide Grants for postgraduate women as a contribution towards living expenses on the basis of proven need and academic calibre. They give Foundation Grants to women in the last year of their doctorate to enable them to complete their degree. They also give Emergency Grants for postgraduate women facing unexpected crises to enable them to continue with their studies. The main criterion is financial need. The Board is made up of some BFWG members but also of bankers, lawyers, financial experts whose duty it is to make sure the capital increases in value and to maximise investment income. The investment income provides the grants (in 2011 they awarded £249,921 in grants). Around 1994 the Charitable Foundation bought the house in Great James Street and, by agreement with BFWG the parent company, provided accommodation, heat and light in the basement for the Sybil Campbell Library.

In 2002 there was a recession. It was clear that the Charitable Foundation was having difficulty in providing funds for the grants. The maintenance of the house was too expensive. All the rooms in the house were rented out. The Board also needed income from the basement where our books were kept. The Library was little used by researchers. Perhaps we could sell or give books to other charities and dispose of the rest.

So began a period of concentrated activity of work days, shelving, cataloguing and conservation, trying to buy time to save the Sybil Campbell Library, to keep it together as an entity. The number of work days in 2004 and 2005 increased until we were working three or four days a week.

As Chairman of the Library Committee I also became a Governor of the Charitable Foundation. There was some pressure for speedy action to move the library but I managed to persuade them to be patient for a little longer. In 2005 I had the catalogue on line and was ready to write to Colleges and Universities we thought would perhaps like to have the Library on long term loan. There was a good response, a lot of interest in certain parts of the Library but few were able to

house it as a separate entity. Fortunately the University of Winchester put in an excellent bid and the Library was moved there on long term loan on 26th June 2006. We were happy, Professor Goodman was happy and so were the Governors. I was asked to do another three years on the Board and was in the happy position of taking part in the discussions about the sale of the house. It was sold for a very good price in 2007.

What was my time at the Library like for me personally? I enjoyed being treasurer and producing the Newsletter - the presentation improved as time went on with the addition of banner headlines, colour and photographs.

Administration increased considerably when I became chairman in 2003, arranging work days, writing regular reports for BFWG Executive and AGM and for each Board Meeting. I personally wrote to everyone who had given to the Adopt-a-Book scheme, told them about the book they had adopted for conservation and also sent a hand made certificate with calligraphy by Elizabeth Bown.

The first work day task at Great James Street was to empty the tanks of the three dehumidifiers, which were always full. Usually Margaret Roake and Nancy Edwards would be shelving and sorting, putting piles of books and papers on the table for me to catalogue or to modify records. On conservation work days there could be ten or a dozen of us. Vivienne Rubinstein had written the grant applications and now managed the conservation work, assisted by Elizabeth Cader Cuff. We enjoyed our short lunch breaks, bringing our own sandwiches. Usually one or other of us would bring a salad or fresh fruit such as strawberries and cream to share. We invariably had a glass of wine. Towards the end of the day we often did a bit of housekeeping, dusting or vacuuming. On one occasion I washed the narrow Venetian blinds in the front basement: I don't think they had been dusted for decades. I usually left about 5.30 or 6 pm to get a bus to Waterloo station and the train home to Southampton.

The cataloguing! I already knew that data entry was very time consuming and we were recording a lot of data about each item, twenty six fields per record at the last count. Our well qualified cataloguer had set up a good relational data base system using Microsoft Access 2000. When he finished in March 2001

I took over the cataloguing. There was over optimism that the cataloguing was completed. Far from it! Many items remained to be catalogued. Whatever work was being done in re-shelving, re-designating Dewey classification, books being repaired professionally and by volunteers and books being disposed of, all of this had to be recorded on the computer and volunteers had to be reminded that they must tell me each time. Also, the system was designed for a real library where you were usually looking for a particular book. Our system was for virtual browsing so that you could see what material we had. Much of our material was made up of eighteenth and nineteenth century publications when authors would write a whole paragraph by way of a title, ending with the volume number. I had to abbreviate such titles for economy of space on line and so that the volume number was displayed. Then again, unless each book in a set was entered in exactly the same way with exactly the same spacing it would not appear as a set at all. Consistency in spelling was crucial - Chekhov was sometimes spelt with a 'C' and sometimes with a 'T'. I was however able to modify the Dewey system to display effectively the different categories of BFUW and IFUW material. While ever you are working on the books you have to keep the catalogue up to date. It was only at 6pm on the evening before the Library was put into the removal van that I found in the back vault the bound copies of the early BFUW Annual Reports.

They were happy days at Great James Street – I don't think there was a cross word the whole time. I was so impressed at how people just turned up to help, London Association members, even members from the Midlands and beyond. One or two were not even members: I don't know how they knew about us but they came and helped anyway. The committee members did more than their fair share, were sensible in their decisions and creative in their thinking. It would have been so awful if we could not have found a university to take the Library as an entity after all this effort. Then Professor Goodman came to visit. She stared at our BFUW and IFUW material and it was clear that it was like gold dust to her. She and the Centre for the History of Women's Education at the University of Winchester were going to cherish our Library, use it in their research and spread information about it at their conferences and in their writing. This was an excellent outcome.

We were happy to see the books go and to dismantle the shelves and sell the furniture. The William Kent bookcase was sold at Sotheby's for a good price. We called it the Erica Holme bookcase. It was given to the Library by Sybil Campbell to house a special collection of books in memory of Erica Holme, Secretary of IFUW from 1935 to 1940. The little bookcases and cabinets were advertised at the British Library and went like hot cakes. An Oxford professor bought the book shelves for his personal library. One lady bought the twelve foot long base bookshelf from the front room. She released it from the wall, opened the window, pushed it through the window and through the railings up to the ground floor pavement and trundled it on her

trolley the one mile to her home.

The Sybil Campbell Collection arrived safely at the University of Winchester in June 2006 and there was a splendid launch party when Vivienne Rubinstein gave a lecture on the books and their provenance. The books and the archives are well used by Winchester staff and by researchers. Professor Goodman bases much of her research now on the Collection and the links to other research material. The Sybil Campbell Trust has become independent and has up to six Trustees. We work closely with Winchester on the Sybil Campbell Steering Committee and support the Collection in a variety of ways. We were still involved in shelving and ticketing the books in the basement

from March to September 2008, this time with Winchester Association members who rallied to our support.

What a retirement project this has been! I am happy to retire now knowing that I leave the Collection in safe hands and that it will flourish in the future, thanks to so many, past and present.

Cynthia Richmond, Sybil Campbell Collection Chairman of Trustees, 15th July 2012

Note: BFUW became BFWG in 1992. The Sybil Campbell Library became the Sybil Campbell Collection in 2006

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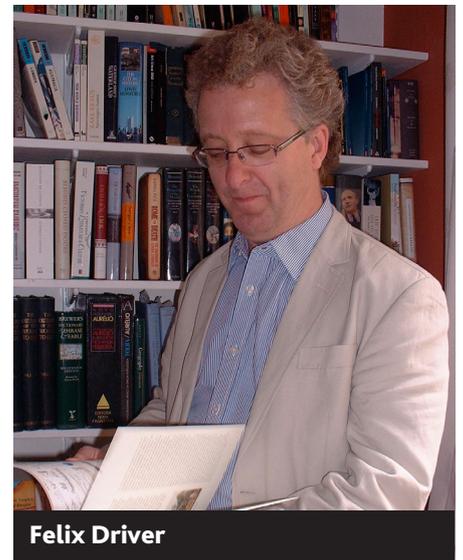
## The Sybil Campbell Collection Seminar

**The speaker for this year's seminar on Wednesday 15th May, to be held at the University of Winchester, will be Felix Driver, Professor of Human Geography at Royal Holloway College, London.**

He will talk about the life and work of Ivy Davison, the first female editor of The Geographical Magazine and cousin of Sybil Campbell. She had a long association with BFUW and bequeathed over a thousand books to the collection. For part of his research Professor Driver has used an, as yet, unpublished autobiography of Ivy Davidson which is lodged with the Sybil Campbell Collection. In addition, he will talk about

women and publishing in the interwar period (especially in editorial roles) and will also include a history of The Geographical Magazine. .

Professor Driver's research interests include Geography, Empire and Cultures of Exploration; Geography and the Visual Arts; and Imperial Cities. He is currently engaged in research on the Visual Culture of Exploration, supported by a Leverhulme Research Fellowship. He has recently completed an AHRC research project and exhibition at the Royal Geographical Society on Hidden Histories of Exploration, which includes Catherine Frere's sketches of women on an African expedition



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## Sybil Campbell Collection Recent Publications

**Mandy Smith and Stephanie Spencer, 'Winchester Research Apprenticeship and the Sybil Campbell Library Collection', *History of Education Researcher*, No.89, May 2012, pp.55-60**

As part of the WRAP (Winchester Research Apprenticeship project) for Sybil Campbell, Joyce Goodman and Stephanie Spencer, who had been part of the initial bid to bring the Collection to Winchester, worked with Mandy Smith, a final-year Education Studies undergraduate. The article is a distillation of conversations, written and spoken, between Mandy and Stephanie about the project. The project fed into papers and articles by Joyce and Stephanie and provided an undergraduate

student hands-on experience of archival work. Mandy's work on the Collection highlighted the diversity of the collection.

**'Just a Book in a Library? The Sybil Campbell Library Collection Fostering International Friendship Amongst Graduate Women', *History of Education*, volume 42, issue 2, 2013, pp.257-274**

In 1927 the British Federation of University Women (BFUW) established Crosby Hall in London as a hall of residence for women graduates from overseas. The Federation aimed to foster international understanding and peace at a time of social and political turmoil. Accessions to the Library at the Hall were on a

somewhat ad hoc basis and provide an intriguing historical source. Crosby Hall was sold, but the much loved library travelled first to Bloomsbury and ultimately to the Special Collections of a university. This article discusses the sensory power of a book collection for the historian drawing on recent reflections on the affective turn in history of education. Is it more than the sum of its parts? Does the collection hold more meaning if held separately rather than integrated onto the general shelves? What are the possibilities inherent in research on, rather than in, a collection such as this?

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/0046760X.2012.761732>

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