FRIENDS OF EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Report for the Year to 30 September 2014

The Friends of Edinburgh University Library is a charity registered in Scotland, No. SC001518

MEMBERSHIP

We are sad to have to record that six long-serving members died during the year; we extend deepest sympathy to their families and friends. We have been delighted to welcome ten new members who joined during this year. At the end of the year the membership stands at 213 life members and 61 annual members, a small increase on last year’s figure.

A Strategy Group, chaired by the President and assisted by Lord Cameron and Dr Ann Matheson, reviewed the Constitution of the Friends, which was adopted at an Extraordinary General Meeting on 12 March 2104. It also recommended a vigorous membership recruitment campaign, including the creation of a new category of Student Membership at a reduced subscription, the revival of meetings and events for members during the year, and the redesign and publication of a new membership leaflet, all of which have been put in place.

PURCHASES AND DONATIONS

After the high level of contributions towards purchases for the Library last year, purchases this year have been at a lower level. Only two were made but are very interesting, and complement two of the Library’s Special Collections.

Manuscript Medical Receipt and Commonplace Book. [Edinburgh]: 1817-49.
Clearly written by a woman, this fascinating two-volume manuscript gives detailed information about cures and courses of treatment gathered from a range of published and private sources. It shows the writer to be well informed about medical practice and current approaches in early 19th-century Scotland.

The Library has been collecting the output of this private press for several years and, with funding from the Friends, recently acquired this finely-printed volume to mark 100 years since the poet's birth. It contains engravings and drawings by the artist John Petts.

Collection of publishers’ bindings
The Library accepted the gift from a member of the Friends of a collection of 170 volumes in decorated publishers’ bindings for the growing Bindings Collection, of which we look forward to hearing more in the future.
MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Annual General Meeting, 19 November 2013, Main Library
After the business meeting, Lindsay Levy, former Rare Books Cataloguer in the Faculty of Advocates’ Library, addressed the meeting on ‘The Great Unknown Cataloguer: George Huntly Gordon’, who was Sir Walter Scott’s amanuensis and the first cataloguer of his library at Abbotsford.

Extraordinary General Meeting, 12 March 2014, 2014, Main Library
The meeting adopted the revised Constitution of the Friends.

Fifty Years, Fifty Books: Purchases by the Friends of Edinburgh University Library, 1962-2012, 28 March – 14 June 2014, Main Library Exhibition Room
A splendid exhibition displayed fifty of the finest and most interesting items purchased by, or with the help of, the Friends during their first fifty years. Members were invited to a preview on 27 March. Lady Caplan, President of the Friends, opened the exhibition.

Visit to the Edinburgh and Scottish Collections of Edinburgh City Library, 19 June 2013
This visit to the newly refurbished collections proved so popular that a second visit was arranged. We are very grateful to the ECL staff involved for accommodating us so well.

The World History of Rashid-al Din: a Masterpiece of Islamic Painting, 1314, 1 August 2014, Main Library Exhibition Room
Members were invited to the preview of this magnificent, and the first ever, exhibition devoted to the Library’s greatest Oriental manuscript, which was opened by Professor Hugh Goddard, Director of the University’s Alwaleed Centre for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World; 2 August – 31 October 2014.

PUBLICATIONS

The Piper, numbers 40, 41 and 42 were published during the year, bringing the publishing schedule back on track. They focused on the Rare and Special Collections of the Edinburgh College of Art, on fifty years’ acquisitions for the University Library by the Friends, and on the London Olympia Book Fair, staff changes in the Centre for Research Collections, and Rashid al-Din. We congratulate Mrs Fiona Graham, Mr Mark Blackadder and the staff of the Library’s Digital Information Unit on producing such a beautiful and readable newsletter. Recent issues of The Piper can now be seen in full colour on the Friends’ website (see below).

For a second year the Committee decided that there would be no new Christmas card, but that again packs of cards from previous years would be available for purchase at an advantageous rate. These sales increased significantly this year.

The Friends welcomed the Library’s production of a new calendar for 2014, with historic black-and-white and sepia photographs of Bygone Edinburgh from the University Collections; it appeared just in time for Christmas. They have warmly welcomed the production during August of the 2015 calendar, in full colour,
showing *Images from the David Laing Collection*, and covering fifteen months from October 2014 to December 2015.

The Friends’ website ([www.friendsofeful.wordpress.com](http://www.friendsofeful.wordpress.com)) goes from strength to strength and continues to grow under the meticulous and inspired care of Dr Andrew Grout, to whom we continue to be grateful for its development and maintenance. Members are encouraged to contribute to the blog at the foot of the home page, especially with comments on how they would like to see the website develop even further.

**FINANCE**

The Friends’ ended the year with a financial balance of £24,741, a reduction of about £2,000 on 2013, but this includes a greatly reduced deficit in the Statement of Receipts and Payments during the year. The Friends are very grateful to those members who gave donations over and above their financial obligations. Their generosity has created a very useful additional income stream. The investments showed a welcome increase in market value of £62,739, compared with £58,957 in 2013. There is still a great need to increase income by increased membership, as well as replacing the reserves on which we have drawn to make important purchases in recent years.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2014**

Joyce Caplan, Lady Caplan (President)
Lord Cameron of Lochbroom
Professor Ian Campbell (Talks & Events Officer)
Mr Peter Freshwater (Secretary)
Mrs Fiona Graham (Editor of *The Piper*)
Dr Andrew Grout
Mr Ivor Guild
Dr Ann Matheson
Dr Murray Simpson (Treasurer)

*Ex Officis:*
Vice-Principal Jeff Haywood, Librarian to the University
Dr John Scally, Director of Library and Collections
Dr Joseph Marshall, Head of Special Collections

**Administrator**
Ms Alason Roberts

**Independent Examiner**
Dr Neil K Dickson, AICB ACIE

Peter B Freshwater
Honorary Secretary
October 2014