

For the library, 2020 has been about agility, responsiveness, and proactive strategy. We adapted rapidly to extraordinary circumstances, and the OLEUDU\ ÁRXULVKHG E\ GHOLYHULQ in new ways, which sought always to place the UHDGHU DW WKH YHU\ FHQWUH RI R wave of the pandemic, we repurposed our service offering and our website, particularly towards online content and services. We transformed our loans service into a postal loans service, and introduced a 'home-delivery' book purchase request service for our students and academics, to ensure continuity of provision irrespective of where in the world they were working. Both services were heavily accessed:

around 850 books were despatched to students at the height of the pandemic alone. Very quickly, we were receiving feedback from students that spoke of their sense of thanks and relief that their studies could continue to be well-supported by their college library. In the words of three New College students—an undergraduate, a Master's student, and a DPhil student: 'I speak on behalf of all the students when I say we are really grateful for all the support New College Library is providing'; 'I can tell you how grateful everybody is to you for keeping this going: it has saved our studies, and established a much-needed contact point with the college we left'; 'off to read the books that have just arrived from the indefatigable New College Library' After a period of temporary closure, during which we delivered all our services remotely, we reopened the physical building with a trio of services, 'Browse & Borrow', 'Click & Collect', and 'Stay & Study', which were at the forefront of library provision in Oxford over 2020. A Covid-secure environment and service operation were paramount for us, along with the determination to serve our readers well, despite the challenges. Both required from us an innovative approach. We utilised up-to-date book quarantining protocols to deliver the best combination of safety and accessibility to our physical collection. Consequently, the value of our physical collection and the physical spaces we provide were even more fully recognised this year, also in part due to the heavy restrictions on accessing books and space within the Bodleian Libraries.

3ULRU WR WKH ÀUVW ORFNGRZQ ZH GHOLYHU WUHDVXUHV ZKLFK GUHZ PXFK SUDLVH DQG ZKLFK manuscripts, archives, photographs, and coins. The college's collection of Greek and Roman coins is he(e Roo of sers he(t22 Td [(manhsns. The ll,)]Tyk-0.002 tIs. Tso7e

Oxford and Durham universities on ultraviolet and multi-spectral examination and photography of some of our most important manuscripts.

Other outreach work continued over the year. Working alongside colleagues in the chapel and IT, we delivered a ‘New College Reads To You’ podcast series, which is continuing into 2021. Our starry array of New College alumni and fellows provided 34 superb readings over the course of the year, which also served to help the library establish or strengthen relationships with important writers and notable old members. A New College Library Fund was set up in 2020, initially to help fund the new ways in which the library was supporting our students. It has since been repurposed to support purchases to our teaching and research collections, to sustain our digitisation and conservation activities, and in particular to add to our world-renowned special collections. We are grateful to all who have FRQWULEXWHG VR JHQHURXVO\ ZLWK ÀQDQFLDO JLIWV have given books to the library this year. Notable acquisitions have included the gift of over twenty books (in author-signed copies) written and donated by our alumnus Professor Irfan Habib, one of the foremost historians of South Asia. \$QRWKHU KDV EHHQ RXU SXUFKDVH DW DXFWLRQ RID YH only New College play from the age of Shakespeare to survive in its entirety, *The Sophister* (1639) by lawyer and college fellow, Richard Zouche (1590–1661), thanks to the generosity of Dr Mark Byford, sometime Salvesen fellow. We have also much increased our efforts to purchase important copies of books by or once belonging to eminent New College alumni.

Looking forwards to 2021, we aim to reprioritise work to produce a catalogue of our collections of manuscripts—one of the University’s great collections—and to develop our publications programme. We have been able to plan and initiate a couple of new titles for the imprint that we established in 2019. The library produced during 2020 two further issues of the college’s open-access e-journal, *New College Notes*, whose prominence and usage are growing. With the temporary closure of the physical library throughout 2020 and the restrictions the pandemic placed on some of our operations, a meaningful comparison using our performance indicators, over the full year for services across the board, is not

Hilary 2018 (a 35% rise). This is an extraordinary increase for a year such as this, but is testament to the value the college library adds to the college's academic mission and to the student experience. As would be expected, our social media channels have been even more important this year than last. The number of our follows on Twitter increased by 70% this year, and the amount of reactions to our Facebook posts has increased by some 525%, the latter down to the success of 'New College Reads To You' and the attractive content we have sought to produce for it.

Our primary challenge for next year will certainly be ongoing core service delivery and maximising access to our collections, as the pandemic waxes and wanes in ways yet unknown. But I am hopeful that, with the team of dedicated and committed staff who work in the Library and Archives—irrespective of the staff

Back cover illustration:

The Rota nova is found—in full, partial, or fragmentary form—in only four manuscripts; the fullest version is the one held in the Library of New College, Oxford.

A wheel of fortune—Guido Faba, enthroned at the top, receives a wing from an angel. The text refers to ‘wings’, representing sections of intellectual progress.
\$URXQG WKH FLUFXPIHUHQFH RI WKH ZKHHO DUH WKUH
and one cast off below the wheel.

New College Library, Oxford, MS 255, f. 1r
‘Incipit ala prima que angelica dicitur’

Guido Faba, Rota nova (The New Wheel)
Spain, c. 1275–1300

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