IDP20

IDP is celebrating twenty years of successful endeavours at the British Library with a series of activities and events. Details are attached and can also be found on the IDP website [http://idp.bl.uk/events/idp20.html]. We hope many of you will join us in our celebrations.

MANUSCRIPT AUDIT AND MOVE

IDP has been particularly busy over the past quarter helping colleagues throughout the Library with auditing, packing and moving the manuscripts to another secure location in the Library. This was to enable routine maintenance work to be carried out in the strongroom where they are normally held. The work on the fire damper systems included an element to enable access to the systems from outside, so that the manuscripts will not need to be moved again. However, this was an ideal opportunity to carry out a complete audit of the collections and to assess the storage. As a result, more storage space has been created in the strongroom, in anticipation of future growth of the collections following conservation and rehousing of some of the material. The work was completed on time and the manuscripts are now available again for readers (as of 17 November).

FUNDING

The Dunhuang Foundation, a US-based organisation founded to support the work of the Dunhuang Academy and related activities, generously gave $12,100 to IDP and the Needham Research Institute to digitise and catalogue photographs and archives relating to Joseph Needham’s two visits to Dunhuang in 1943 and 1958. Once online, The Dunhuang Academy will help with further identifications of the subjects of the photographs.

STAFF

We welcomed Lizzie Vickery and Sarah Wall to IDP in August. They will be working in the studio as Digital Imaging Assistants.

PUBLICITY

• Susan Whitfield (SW) was interviewed by Tianjin TV (China) and China Central TV for their forthcoming programmes on Dunhuang, looking especially at Stein and Needham’s visit. She also helped the BBC for their Culture Show programme on the Chinese painting exhibition currently on display at the V&A, London.
• SW was interviewed by Jacob Mikanowski for a New Yorker blog, which appeared on 9 October.
• The Italian publication, Archeo [http://www.archeo.it] ran a special issue on the Silk Road including an interview with SW.

CONFERENCES AND LECTURES

• 19-21 September: SW, Vic Swift (VS) and John Falconer (JF, Lead Curator, Photographs), attended the final workshop in the AHRC-funded Silk Road Network, organised by Nottingham University. JF presented a paper.
• 24 - 27 September: SW and Sam van Schaik (SvS) both gave papers at a conference in St Petersburg on the life and legacy of Sergei Oldenburg. They also met with curators from the State Hermitage Museum and IDP Berlin partners for ongoing discussions of potential collaboration.
• 21 October: SvS lectured to students on a SOAS Diploma course on Indian art.
• 24 October: SW lectured to students on a Christies’ Diploma course on Chinese art.
• 30 October: SW lectured to students on the SOAS MA in Art and Archaeology of the Silk Road.
VISITORS AND MEETINGS

• 7 August: SW met with Niyati Mehta, Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, to discuss IDP and view the Diamond Sutra.
• 10 August: SW and JF met with Declan Hayden to discuss the Desmond Parsons’ archive and Parson’s visit to Dunhuang in 1935.
• 19 August: Emma Goodliffe (EG) and Josef Konczak (JK) met with Haitham Sayed Osman, Head of Imaging for the TIFDAK Project in Cairo, to discuss imaging techniques and introduce the work of the IDP Studio.
• 27 August: EG met with the scholar Dr Liu Zhengcheng and his daughter Cynthia Liu to discuss Dr Liu’s publication on Chinese calligraphy based on the Dunhuang manuscripts.
• 10 September: a group of scholars visited the BL to view a selection of Manichaean manuscripts, and SW helped Ursula Sims-Williams with the Show and Tell.
• 23 September: EG and JK provide a studio tour to visitors from the National Archives of Japan.
• 26 September: EG acted as interpreter for the Chinese State Archives Show and Tell at the British Library.
IDP’S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

To celebrate IDP’s 20th anniversary we will be organising a series of events and activities over the next year. Brief details are given below and full details will be posted on the website and blog. From November 1 our blog will also feature ‘A Few of Our Favourite Things’, a weekly post showcasing IDP collection items selected by twenty of IDP’s partners, supporters and users.

http://idp.bl.uk
http://idpuk.blogspot.com

Please contact idpevents@bl.uk for more information.

1 NOVEMBER 2013
18.30–20.30
FREE ENTRY
Conference Centre
The British Library
96 Euston Road
London, NW1 2DB

LECTURE: ‘MAPPING THE SILK ROAD’
In recent years a team of experts have conducted research into the Silk Road’s sites and routes as part of the Silk Roads World Heritage Serial and Transnational Nomination in Central Asia project. Tim Williams, archaeologist at University College London (UCL) and leader of the UCL Ancient Merv Project, has been working on this project for several years. In this lecture he will discuss the considerable challenges of mapping the Silk Roads and their sites.

6 JANUARY – 14 FEBRUARY 2014
MONDAY–SATURDAY
FREE ENTRY
Royal Geographical Society
1 Kensington Gore
London, SW7 2AR

EXHIBITION: ‘AUREL STEIN AND THE SILK ROAD’
Between 1900 and 1916 the archaeologist and scholar, Aurel Stein, led three expeditions to the Taklamakan and Lop Deserts of western China in search of the sand-buried settlements of the Silk Road. He excavated scores of sites and took over 5000 photographs. These photographs of ancient Silk Road settlements, stupas and forts in the Taklamakan Desert are shown alongside modern images and video taken on recent British Library expeditions to record the changes of the past century.

12 MARCH 2014
10.00–17.00
FREE ENTRY (BOOKING REQUIRED)
Foyle Centre and IDP Studio
The British Library
96 Euston Road
London, NW1 2DB

OPEN DAY: CONSERVATION AND IDP STUDIO
Archaeologist and scholar, Aurel Stein excavated scores of sites and discovered numerous artefacts including over 40,000 manuscripts and early printed documents in over twenty languages and scripts. The amount and variety of this material poses serious challenges for both conservation and digitisation that curators and conservators at the British Library have been addressing for two decades through international collaboration and under the auspices of IDP. This open day offers a chance to meet the conservation and digitisation teams and to learn about their work on the Stein Silk Road manuscripts.

FROM MARCH 2014
DAILY
FREE ENTRY
Sir John Ritblat Gallery
The British Library
96 Euston Road
London, NW1 2DB

EXHIBITION: ‘THE DIAMOND SUTRA AND EARLY PRINTING’
The Dunhuang Diamond Sutra, the world’s earliest, dated, complete printed book, will be on display at the British Library for the first time since a programme of long-term conservation was completed. It will be shown alongside other examples of early printing in Asia.

11 APRIL 2014
14.00 – 20.00
£12 (£8 CONCESSIONS)
Conference Centre
The British Library
96 Euston Road
London, NW1 2DB

LECTURES AND RECEPTION: ‘SILK ON THE SILK ROAD’
Over a century of archaeology on the eastern Silk Road has resulted in thousands of textile finds, preserved by the dry desert air. In their variety — of material, dyes, designs and weaves — they demonstrate the richness of cultural and technical exchanges among the peoples of the Silk Road. This afternoon of lectures by scholars, curators and conservators is intended for a general audience, and will introduce the Silk Road and the textiles collections held in London and worldwide. The lecture will be followed by a drinks reception.