

SELWYN COLLEGE ARCHIVES STRATEGIC PLAN 2007

Mission statement

The Strategic Plan provides the framework within which Selwyn College Archives will deliver and develop its services over the next five to twenty years. It represents a continuation of the Archive's programme of development of recent years and complements the strategic plan for the College Library.

This plan is a living document. It will be reviewed and updated regularly.

Introduction

This paper follows a visit to the Archives in 2006 by Dr Anthony Smith, from the National Advisory Services of the National Archives, when he provided advice and guidelines for the development of the Archives. Now that the College's 125th Anniversary has arrived, which may have an additional impact on the Archives, it is time to consolidate and look ahead to the future. In view of the current College development plans it is assumed that the Archives will be housed in the existing buildings for the next twenty years.

The Strategy document must be read in conjunction with all the policy documents for different aspects of the Archive service which have been issued previously:

- Records management policy
- Photographic preservation
- Reproduction Policy
- Collecting Policy

Elizabeth Stratton, College Archivist, November 2007.

1. Purpose of Selwyn College Archives

1.1 To collect, preserve and promote archival material which documents the history of the College, including written documents and all related records in other formats in secure storage, and to conserve, catalogue and present the material in accordance with best professional practice.

1.2 To make archival material freely available to researchers at all levels.

1.3 To be achieved through:

- Appropriate storage for the Archive collections and space for research
- Appropriate knowledge of staff
- Appropriate handling and preservation of material

2. Key assumptions

- The Archives will continue to be staffed by a professional Archivist and will provide a service to users from within and without College.
- The 125th Anniversary may have an impact on the Archives through increased visits and workload on the part time Archivist
- The Archives will be expected to encompass advances in ICT such as increased electronic archives and provision of catalogues and electronic surrogates, in particular in the area of photographic archives.
- The purchase of Archive supplies and conservation work will continue to be prioritised within the limited funding available.
- Archive collections will be catalogued and made more widely available via the Cambridge Archives “union” catalogue Janus.
- The Archives will continue to work closely with the Development Office and play an important role for the College. The Archives will also play a role in the Archival networks of Cambridge and across the UK.
- Unless there is a sudden change to available funding, it is assumed that there will be no new building to house the Library and Archives for at least 20 years.

3. Critical success factors

- The Archives must continue to be staffed by a professional Archivist.
- The Archives must maintain good relations with members of College at all levels, including staff, fellows, students and alumni.
- The growth of the Archive collections will depend on close relations with student societies, heads of departments and Fellows, including Fellows in Class E.
- The Archives must continue to be housed in safe, secure storage.
- The College must remain a member of the Cambridge Conservation Consortium in order to benefit from the expertise and services provided for conservation of materials.
- It may be necessary to undertake further profile raising activities for the benefit of the Archives.
- On the assumption that there will be no increase in the budget alternative and additional funding sources may have to be identified.

4. Major risks to success

- Any reduction in funding to what is already a very limited budget would prevent adequate provision of core services: care of the collections and the provision of research services. It is possible that a focus on fundraising for the College may prevent additional funding for the Archives.
- Any reduction in staffing would also impede the provision of Archive services.
- A major disaster of any kind, such as flood or fire, would have a devastating affect on the Archives.

5. Strategic Goals

References to time periods are for short term (1-3 years), medium-term (3-7) and long-term (7-20).

5.1 Appropriate storage facilities for the Archives

The majority of the paper-based Archives are housed in a room in the Hall complex built in about 1909 which is subject to fluctuations in temperature and humidity. Further Archival material is now housed in a basement store in Ann's Court, which though far more recent, is not ideal for long-term storage of vital material. Both rooms have been subject to minor water leaks. The growing collection of electronic Archives and in particular photographic Archives are currently stored on two of the College's network drives. Options for additional or alternative storage continue to be considered.

Short/Medium-term

Archive material and photographic material will continue to be housed or re-housed in appropriate storage boxes and envelopes within current limitations. Digital Archives will remain on the College networks for the time being.

Best practice measures in Archive preservation will continue to be employed at all levels of the Archive service. A Disaster Plan for the Archives needs to be prepared and then reviewed at regular intervals.

Options will be investigated to improve the environmental conditions in the Archive room and the Records Store. Regular monitoring of the conditions will be undertaken in both areas. The temperature in the Archive store and the fire-proofing and lighting in the Record Store are particular concerns that need investigating.

Options will be investigated to improve the use of the storage area in Records Store in Ann's Court and to make it more efficient and to guarantee "business efficiency".

Long-term

The ultimate goal for the Archive collection is its relocation to a new Library and Archive building with modern Archive facilities. The building will follow all modern guidelines for new Archive facilities and in particular will conform to BS:5454. This is part of Phase 3 of the College's master plan and is envisaged for 10-15 years time. The building would provide separate areas for an Archive office, research spaces, secure storage for the collections and an exhibition area.

5.2 The cost-effective management of resources

Short-term

The Archives has to operate within its budgetary limits and it is unlikely that extra funding will be available.

Medium/Long-term

To implement a fundraising campaign in association with Development Office after the 125th anniversary year for special projects such as conservation work of the photographic collections. An initial survey was undertaken by a specialist conservator in 2006 and if funding is available all the photographs would be conserved in the next five-ten years.

Additional Archive funding sources such as EEMLAC will also be investigated to supplement the Archive budget.

5.3 Collection Development

Short-term

The Archive catalogues will be improved and will include listings for all Archive material. Collection level descriptions for Personal papers are in progress at present and full catalogues will be made available online via Janus and other resources in the next five years.

An enhanced edition of the Selwyn Papers catalogue is also in progress and will be made available in the 125th Anniversary Year. Further collaboration will continue with all curators of Selwyniana.

Medium-term

The College records management policy will continue to be developed for all administrative departments. Regular transfers of material to the Archives will be arranged from all College departments.

Regular transfers of material in paper and electronic format from student clubs and societies will also be arranged.

Medium/Long-term

The use of electronic storage will be developed for certain classes of Archives including some of the Photographic collections and other College records such as Committee minutes. The recently created “minute bank” will also be exploited.

A project to select and digitise images from the Archives for use in **Selwyn Celebrated**, the 125th Anniversary book, has been in progress for the past two years. The next stage is to develop an online gallery of images in liaison with the IT department.

The catalogue of the College Pictures Collection will be developed in liaison with the Paintings Committee and an illustrated resource will be made available.

Improve access to Archive finding aids and other resources e.g. transcriptions of Admissions Book and Fellows’ interviews

The Collection Development Policy will be reviewed every five years.

5.4 Access to Archives for researchers and visitors

Short/Medium-term

All Archive researchers and visitors will continue to be assisted to the highest possible standards within the current limitations. The majority of researchers consult material in the Archive room under supervision; occasionally researchers may consult material in the Library under supervision.

Long-term

A new Library and Archive building would provide appropriate dedicated study space for researchers which can be easily supervised.

5.5 Exhibitions and outreach

Short/Medium-term

Regular Archive displays will continue to be arranged to provide opportunities for members of College and visitors to see items from the Archive collections. The 125th Anniversary has already provided additional opportunities for special displays of the Archives such as at events during the Alumni weekend and the staff celebration event. Additional displays will be provided for other events such as Reunion dinners and Boat Club events.

The collections will be promoted through the Library & Archive web pages and through Archive networks at a local, national and international level (Cambridge Archivists Group, Society of Archivists and ANZLAG).

Long-term

A new Library & Archive building would provide a special exhibition area which could be used for displaying Archival material as well as for hosting alumni events.

5.6 Development of knowledgeable and skilled staff

Short/Medium-term

The Archivist will continue to keep abreast of all relevant knowledge and training for the appropriate management of Archival collections as well as noting changes to legal issues and the way in which they affect Archive collections, in particular Copyright, Data Protection and Freedom of Information (FOI)

Long-term

It may be necessary to review staffing for the Archives, particularly after the end of the Anniversary year when its impact on the Archives has been considered. Subsequent reviews of staffing will be undertaken at regular intervals.