



Being a specialist library worker

Do you remember the thrill of getting your first library job? How the idea of using your newly found interests motivated you to apply?

Then perhaps you can experience again that passion through working in special libraries. In my career I've been lucky enough to see, learn, and grow professionally through positions in some inspiring organisations. They have taught me far more about my abilities and capabilities by showing me to how these can work within dedicated fields of expertise, as well as introduce me to new ways to use my skills within specialised frameworks.

But perhaps the below will whet the appetite far more than a personal reminiscence would ever do.

History

The Sherman Library is a research library located in Corona Del Mar, which specialises in collecting and preserving materials about the Pacific southwest, in particular California, Arizona and some parts of Nevada. With approximately 25 000 printed items as well as microfilm, photographs, and maps, the library is used by academic researchers (from 7 to 70), as well as those studying the changes in the area for diverse needs such as history texts, environmental geography, and fiction writing. Open three days a week, with a single staff member, the main building is an extension to the original adobe building that was originally a home before becoming the library.

Website: http://www.slgardens.org/the_library/default.asp

Mystery

The Milford Mystery Library started its life as being part of the larger public library. However the bequest of a building by a local resident gave birth to an extraordinary set of circumstances. If the building is not used as a library, it defaults to the local Episcopal Church; and when the Clermont County Public library decided to move the main public library in 1983, a decision was made to keep tenancy on the building through the development of a crime and mystery library. Staffed by volunteers, this dedicated library of intrigue is open to armchair detectives four days a week in the city of Milford, Ohio.

Website: <http://milfordmysterylibrary.org/default.aspx>

Cookery

The Bibliothèque et musée de la Gormandise, located in Hermalle-sous-Huy, is the largest gastronomic library in Belgium with over 17 000 items about food. Unusually for a research based library, it offers bed and breakfast accommodation for those wishing to view the collection at Ferme Castrale (where the library is located). Staffed by volunteers, who are slowly cataloguing books on to a computerised database, this relatively youthful library began in 1997 and is considered to be one of 20th largest libraries on food within Europe.

Website: <http://www.gastronomica.be/>

Movies

The library at the Deutsches Filmmuseum in Frankfurt has over 80 000 publications on the history of film, including film novels, movie scripts, programs, magazines, film theory,

and the film industry itself. It is the largest collection on cinematic studies in Europe, and includes 6500 films on video and DVD within its archive, many of which are shown within its own cinema.

Website: <http://www.deutschesfilmmuseum.de>

So, if you have an interest in a specific subject, who knows where it may lead?

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