

## **BFWG SYBIL CAMPBELL LIBRARY TRUST FUND CHARITY No. 273043**

### **OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE BFWG SYBIL CAMPBELL LIBRARY 1928 - 2009**

The British Federation of University Women (BFUW) was founded in 1907. It changed its name to British Federation of Women Graduates (BFWG) in 1992.

BFUW set up The Crosby Hall Association in 1925 for the purpose of acquiring Crosby Hall, setting up a residential wing for post-graduate women students and running it on behalf of BFUW, the parent company. The remit included the foundation and maintenance of a library “calculated to advance research and study”.

HM Queen Mary opened the Hall of Residence in 1927. The Library at Crosby Hall was opened in 1928.

In 1955 BFUW created the Crosby Hall Library Trust Fund, the purpose of which was to buy books for and maintain the Crosby Hall Library and its furniture. BFUW was named as Trustee in the Deed and from the outset appointed two Trustees to act for it. This Charitable Trust, operative from 1955, was formally registered in 1977 (BFUW Charity No. 273043). In 1959 a New Wing was opened at Crosby Hall with a purpose built room for the Library, now called the Sybil Campbell Library.

The Crosby Hall Association became a charity in 1971. It remained a Company limited by shares and a wholly owned subsidiary of BFUW. In 1975 Regulations were set down to make clearer what was implied by the Crosby Hall Library Fund Deed of 1955. The regulations state that the Governors of the Crosby Hall Charity should make over to the Library Fund “all gifts and donations they receive that are specifically designated for the benefit of the Library”.

In 1992 the Lease on Crosby Hall was sold. The Crosby Hall Association paid for the Library’s books, book stacks and furniture to go into storage. In 1995 the new BFWG Charitable Foundation (charity number 312903) was set up to replace the Crosby Hall Association Charity. The Charitable Foundation Memorandum and Articles of Association declared it to be incorporated as a company limited by shares and remaining a wholly owned subsidiary of BFWG. It had the power to “...accommodate a library and storage and with a power to grant a licence to any charity or charities for the purpose of a library at less than the full market value”.

It was agreed that the Charitable Foundation would manage the Library Committee, would appoint its members and continue to be responsible for the care of the books and other Library assets. The Library Trust Fund would remain in the Trusteeship of the Federation and continue to contribute to the costs of running the Library. All Library bank accounts were and are Sybil Campbell Library Trust Fund accounts.

The Sybil Campbell Library was re-opened at 28 Great James Street, Bloomsbury, in 1998.

In 2001 the Trustees of the SCL Trust Fund were successful in their application to the Pilgrim Trust for a grant of £12,000 towards a cataloguing project costing £20,000. In 2003 they were successful in their application to the Pilgrim Trust for a grant of £10,000 towards a book conservation project costing £15,000. Unless the Library were kept in its entirety, as a discrete unit, for a period of five years after the receipt of each grant the Pilgrim Trust could exercise its right to reclaim the grant.

Between 1999 and 2006 the Sybil Campbell Library Committee encouraged researchers and visitors to use the library. They paid a part-time cataloguer for nine months in 2001-2002 to make progress with the catalogue database. They worked intensively, in the two overcrowded basement rooms, at shelving and cataloguing the books. They conserved books either professionally or by SCL fully trained volunteers and set up the Adopt-a-Book scheme to raise funds for the two projects. They held lectures, open days, seminars and book groups, produced newsletters and monographs, set up the SCL web site and put the catalogue online. See the web site: <http://sybilcampbelllibrary.org.uk/> . Eventually, after the books were moved, they dismantled the shelving and sold it along with small items of furniture and arranged for the large bookcase and tables to be auctioned.

The overall aim was to transfer the Library in its entirety to an academic institution where it would be globally accessible. It was established that the bulk of the Library belonged to BFWG for this reason. Neither BFUW nor the Crosby Hall Association was a Charity when the Library Trust Fund was set up in 1955. Therefore all items acquired for the Library from 1955 onwards were charitable assets and required by law to be the property of the Library Trust Fund. Library assets acquired before 1955 belonged to the Charitable Foundation. By reference to Library records, it was estimated that about 13% of the books in the Library in 2006 were acquired before 1955: the Charitable Foundation gave books and other assets acquired before 1955 to BFWG by Deed of Gift in March 2006. The Library was now wholly owned by BFWG.

In June 2006 the Sybil Campbell Library was moved on long-term loan to the University of Winchester. In this academic setting it is more available to scholars throughout the world, widely used by students and researchers. Professors from New Zealand and India have recently travelled to Winchester to consult the records. A recent seminar, based partly on research at the Library, told of work done by BFUW with refugees in the years leading up to the second world war and afterwards. Some think this is the finest contribution the Federation has made to society.

The books are valuable in several ways. Certainly some 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century volumes are rare, beautiful and have market value. Others books are valuable for their provenance, for the writers or other famous people who gave them. Above all the Library reflects for the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the entry of women into the professions, the academic, scientific, medical, legal and business worlds. It reflects the politics and social aspirations of that period and the part academic women played internationally. There is also very interesting material on Crosby Hall and Chelsea. The book bequests of those early BFUW members reflect the books and the historical works they were reading.

BFWG has appointed Library Trustees since 1955. The Library Treasurer works with the Trustees in managing SCL Trust Funds

The Trustees are fully involved in the work of the Library. They sit on the University of Winchester Sybil Campbell Library steering committee which involves six or seven meetings a year. They make regular visits to the Library and attend associated events arranged by the University of Winchester. From March to September 2008, they worked two or three days a week, along with Winchester BFWG volunteers, at re-shelving and ticketing the books. They liaise with the university and BFWG in planning and publicising the programme of lectures and seminars. They have expressed their concerns about conditions in the basement storage area and improvements have now been made. They have recently commissioned the professional digitisation of early, fragile, BFUW Annual Reports to make them more accessible and have offered a prize for the best undergraduate dissertation based on the Sybil Campbell Collection. In such ways, whilst aiming to maintain the capital assets of the SCL Trust Fund, they continue to use the dividends to support the Library. Library Trustees are essential to the smooth running and preservation of the BFWG Sybil Campbell Library.

*Cynthia Richmond, SCL Trustee, 24<sup>th</sup> April 2009*