

Services

The Department offers a number of services beyond simple access to the collections. Enquiries relating to any aspect of our holdings are welcomed, in writing or by email; we aim to answer all enquiries within 20 working days. A range of classes within subject areas relating to the collections and the expertise of departmental staff are provided, complemented regularly by opportunities for academic staff to offer hands-on experience of relevant items from the collections to their students.

We have excellent reprographic facilities, and can offer a range of digital copying options for academic, private or commercial purposes subject to copyright. By prior arrangement, we can provide special study sessions and tours for visiting groups. We offer a range of publications and other items for sale, derived from, or of relevance to, the collections and their subject areas. We have a regular programme of exhibitions highlighting aspects of the collections, which take place both within the Library and in a variety of external venues. It is also sometimes possible to arrange for the loan of items for exhibition purposes.

For details of the collections, catalogues, and all of the services we provide, please refer to our website.



About the Special Collections Department

Our primary role is to facilitate the teaching and research activities of the University. Our staff are pleased to share their expertise by providing guidance and suggestions to help you to pursue your research more effectively. It is expected however, that you will conduct your own research, and there is a limit to the amount of time our staff can spend on each enquiry. There is an extensive reference library to help you.

Opening Hours

Termtime:	Monday – Friday	9.00 am – 6.00 pm
	Saturday	9.00 am – 12.30 pm
Vacation :	Monday – Friday	9.00 am – 5.00 pm

The Special Collections Reading Room is to be found downstairs on Level 1 of the University Library. There is no charge for access. When you first arrive you will be asked to register as a reader and photo ID will be requested. No bags are allowed in the Reading Room and only pencils are to be used. Original materials are fetched for you upon request. If you are visiting on a Saturday or are likely to require specialist advice, please enquire beforehand. Wheelchair access is available – please ring in advance.

Department of Special Collections

University of St Andrews Library
North Street
St Andrews
Fife KY16 9TR

T: 01334-462339
F: 01334-462282
E: speccoll@st-andrews.ac.uk

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/speccollections



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St Andrews

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University Library Special Collections



The Special Collections Department

The Special Collections Department aims:

- to preserve and develop the collections in its care
- to make the collections accessible to both academic and public audiences
- to market the Department's services and resources
- to support the Library's strategic mission, and the University's aims of excellence in teaching, learning and research.

The Department is home to the Library's collections of rare and early printed books, manuscripts, photographs and the University's institutional archive (muniments). Each of these collections is described more fully in a separate leaflet. The holdings of the Department form a superb resource for research and teaching in a wide variety of disciplines across the arts and sciences.



Access

The Department is situated within the University Library, and is open for access to all. Undergraduate and postgraduate students and staff of the university form one constituency of use, but the department is also freely open to members of other Universities and institutions, and to the general public.



The collections are generally available for consultation, although certain items and collections can be subject to limited access for reasons of confidentiality or preservation. Access is provided within the Special Collections Reading Room - a dedicated, supervised room with provision for the use of laptops. In the interests of the safe-keeping and security of the collections, certain standard rules apply for the use of this room. Further details will be provided upon registration as a reader.

Catalogues

Catalogues of the Department's holdings are available in a variety of formats. Many of the rare and early printed books can be located through the Library's online catalogue, SAULCAT; work is ongoing to increase the proportion of these collections which are catalogued in this way. Until this work is completed, the page catalogues should also be consulted. Manuscripts and Muniments are catalogued in both electronic format and in a number of paper lists. A dedicated database and website for both collections is currently under development, and, once completed, will provide greater public access to these resources. The Photographic Collection can be accessed via an online database, providing the first point of departure for any research. This resource offers free access to over 60,000 images with full catalogue records, while most of the rest of the Photographic Collection is accessed through a variety of hard-copy indices. Any person requiring assistance in gaining information about holdings should contact the Department: the staff are very willing to help. Otherwise, for more information please see our Special Collections website.

