

Issue 6 – April 2010

Last year we started a Collection Moves programme of moving low to nil use items to a new storage facility at our Boston Spa site, in West Yorkshire. It is the largest programme of moves we have undertaken since the opening of St Pancras in 1998 and it is intended to secure the condition of these items for the long term.

Latest news on Collection Moves

The moves are taking place in phases and with the first phase we are currently exceeding our expected speed for transferring items into the new Additional Storage Building. Jane Hildreth is the Collection Moves Manager and has the latest update on the project:

Firstly, what material is being moved and why?

'It's low to nil use collection material from buildings at Woolwich, Micawber Street, Colindale, St Pancras and Boston Spa; the material is a mixture of serials, monographs, patents and a small number of newspapers.'

The material is being moved to the new Additional Storage Building in Boston Spa because the Library's collections are continuing to grow and we have insufficient storage space within the existing buildings. The leases of Woolwich, Micawber Street and 120 Colindale are expiring at the end of 2010 so those collections need a new home.

The items stored at Woolwich will be moving shortly, and we'll be giving you details in the next Collection Moves Reader News Bulletin in May.'

How has the transfer been progressing?

'When we started the moves last year, we were originally expecting to move about 300 metres of material a day. The move rate we're achieving is higher than that and we can actually move up to 450 metres a day.'

In London we have teams of staff who are doing preservation preparation work prior to the collections moving. Small parts of the collection are being cleaned and boxed to make sure they're in the best possible condition before the transfer; we have another team who are collecting data relating to those collections – shelfmark information, years, volume and part information – which they collect and enter onto a database. That information is then used for the Library's warehouse management system, so that once the collections are in the new building at Boston Spa we can track exactly where they are stored.

We're using two articulated lorries a day to transfer material, between them delivering 450 containers of books. Once the containers arrive at the Additional Storage Building, the collections are checked and loaded into bespoke storage containers on a conveyor, undergo a check to make sure the contents are the correct height and weight, because we have a strict weight limit for the containers. Once the checks are all positive the containers are sent into the storage compartment, and collected by one of the cranes to be deposited into the racking.'

How does the Additional Storage Building operate?

'The new building here at Boston Spa is unique – it's a high-density storage building. The racking is in seven aisles, each 21 metres high and 75 metres long, with a crane in each aisle. It's a low-oxygen environment for fire suppression, with strict controls over temperature and humidity, so this makes ideal storage conditions for the Library's collections.'

We have brought together a large amount of different technologies that have not been used jointly before. The racking system is one of the most complex and dense that's been carried out in Europe, ever, and it's been quite a task to integrate, install and commission this, to allow us to carry out the moves from London.'

The BBC recently visited the new Additional Storage Building, and news footage on their website provides an insight on how the site operates – you can see this on

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/west_yorkshire/8393248.stm and also on

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8393710.stm>

So, when will the embargo from this first phase finish?

'This first phase of moves is scheduled to be completed by the end of May 2010 at which point material already transferred to the new building will become available to Readers once more.'

This list shows which items have been successfully transferred, and which are currently being moved. It must, however, be noted that this sequence may be subject to change.'

Shelfmark of items/categories transferred

H
PP 7000
PP 8000
P
Oversize P
STI Abstracts
PP 02 – PP 4970
PP6000 – PP 7900
BY – BW STI Periodicals
WP
Novels
Patents

Shelfmark of items in the process of being moved

	Due to be moved
XP XB STI Periodicals	Apr 2010
STI Serials	Apr 2010
STI Periodicals	Apr 2010
Patents oversize	May 2010
WP oversize	May 2010
STI Monographs	May 2010
SA 1TH singles	May 2010

We will give you more details of when material in this embargo will be available again in the May Collection Moves Reader News Bulletin.

What are the next steps?

'Our next steps are to build a newspaper building which will be a very similar facility, for storing the newspapers in a controlled environment that the Library currently holds at 130 Colindale Avenue. We've received a commitment of £33 million from the Government to implement this ambitious strategy to preserve our newspaper collection and make its contents accessible to researchers through digital and microfilm surrogates.'

In the meantime, part of the Library's newspaper collection is due to move to the Additional Storage Building from May 2010. These are:

- The print copies of the UK national newspapers collection, currently stored at 120 Colindale
- Newspapers Shelfmarks LD1 – LD26, currently stored at 130 Colindale

Both of these will continue to be available at the Newspaper Library in Colindale, in microfilm or digital format.

Two million pages of fully searchable 19th century newspapers are available through a micropayment site at <http://newspapers.bl.uk/blcs/>

As mentioned above, in the next Collection Moves Reader Bulletin in May, we'll be giving details of the material that will be moving from Woolwich.'
