

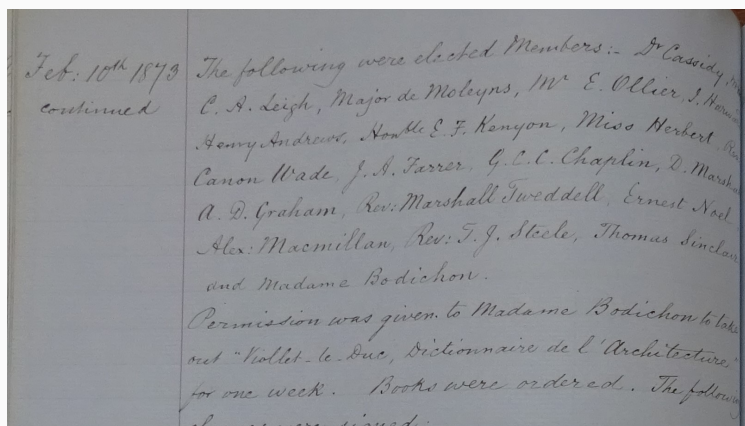
THE  
LONDON  
LIBRARY

## London Library *Supporters' News*

Stories from the Stacks

**Welcome to the latest edition of The London Library's supporters' newsletter.** This edition includes some recent finds from the Library's archive, the 2020-21 Annual Report, an update about the Red Staircase loos refurbishment and a reminder of upcoming Supporters' special events.

## News and Announcements

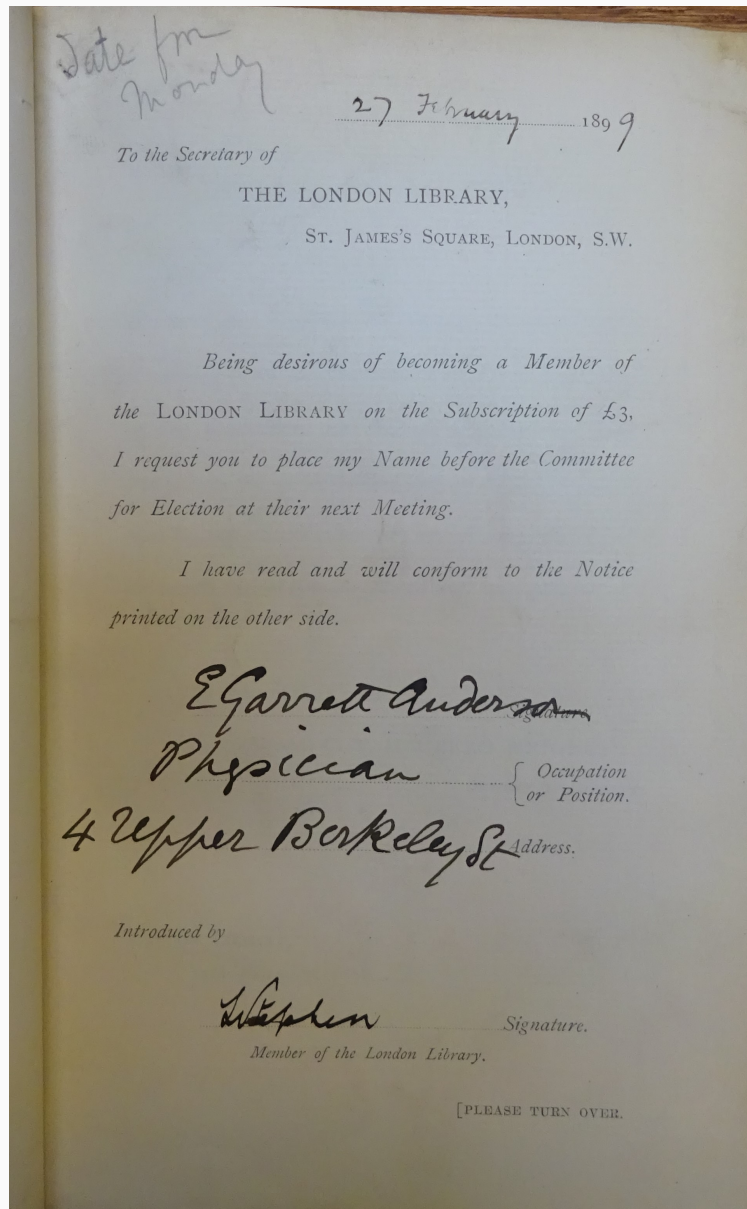


**Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon** was an artist, educationalist, leading mid-19th-century feminist and women's rights activist. She is notable for co-Founding the English Women's Journal in 1858, as well as co-founding Girton College, Cambridge as part of a scheme to extend university education to women. She published her influential Brief Summary of the Laws of England concerning Women in 1854, which was crucial in the passage of the Married Women's Property Act.

Although her Library form is lost to history, we know that Bodichon was a Library member from meeting records like the one pictured above and from the fact that she appears as a nominator on multiple Library membership application forms, including Jessie Boucherett. On 21 November 1865, Jessie Boucherett with the help of Barbara Bodichon and Helen Taylor brought up the idea of a parliamentary reform

**Elizabeth Garrett Anderson**, among her many accomplishments, was an English physician and suffragist. She was not only the first woman to qualify in Britain as a physician and surgeon, but also the first dean of a British medical school, co-founder of the first hospital staffed by women, the first woman in Britain to be elected to a school board and, as mayor of Aldeburgh, the first female mayor in Britain. Garrett Anderson was also active in the women's suffrage movement. She joined the first British Women's Suffrage Committee in 1866 and later became a member of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage in 1889.

Garrett Anderson first became a Library member in 1877, but left the Library shortly after. Pictured below is the membership application form from when she re-joined in 1899, nominated by none other than the writer Leslie Stephen, former President of The London Library and father of Virginia Woolf.



The Library has over 3,000 archival objects inventoried, including the borrowing histories of members over the last 200 years. Among these histories are **Charles Darwin's records** prior to publishing *On the Origin of Species* and those of Victorian female readers who defy the stereotypes of women of the time.

We are currently seeking philanthropic support for an ambitious archive project to make the Library's archives accessible, and to that end will soon submit an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), and raise matching donations.

We plan to conserve all of the archive objects and digitise the most important of these to widen access as part of a public engagement programme we are calling

'Hidden Histories', focusing on the Library's rich history of writers and thinkers. This programme will include talks, displays, public workshops, and partnerships with state schools, who have told us this project could help them to access resources beyond their normal budgets and help A Level students research for EPQs or History coursework. This project aims to reach those who do not have the means to access the archive, ensuring a wide range of people can benefit through remote and on-site access.

We are seeking matched funding for this project, a requirement of NLHF - if you would like to support this project or find out more about how you can help with Hidden Histories, please get in touch via [fundraising@londonlibrary.co.uk](mailto:fundraising@londonlibrary.co.uk).



### **Red Staircase Toilets Update**

As many of you remember, our 2019-20 Library Fund appeal raised nearly £70,000 to refurbish the Library's red staircase toilets. While we had originally planned to complete this project in the summer of 2020, the disruption of the pandemic resulted in the project being delayed until the end of 2021, with work finally beginning in October 2021.

The initial plan was a general refurbishment of the toilets, however, as the work progressed, the team uncovered a surprising depth of history behind the area and materials used. As a result the project expanded to include more conservation work on the original features, substantially increasing the scope of the project. Aside from essential work to replace lead piping, improve lighting, and resolve water supply and drainage problems, extensive work has been carried out to conserve and restore original features and reverse decades of unsympathetic building and repair. These features include cream-coloured glazed brick walls cleaned and repaired by stone masons, antique Victorian locks and latches which

have been refurbished, and the revelation of an original Victorian cubicle door that had been disguised as a paneled partition in the gentleman's urinals.

Happily, the contractors are now putting the finishing touches to the refurbished toilets, and we anticipate they will be open for use in mid-February.

Thank you again to all of you who donated to the Library Fund in 2019/20, helping to make this project possible. The Library Fund is an annual appeal that aims to improve how Library users access, experience and enjoy the Library and we look forward to opening the refurbished bathroom facilities on the Red Staircase soon.

This year the Library Fund is raising money to install a modern and energy-efficient lighting system in the bookstacks, which will greatly improve the experience of using the stacks, protect the book collection from damage and significantly reduce the Library's energy use. Visit the **Library Fund webpage** to find out more about a new lighting system for the Library stacks and **donate online**.



## **2020 - 2021 Annual Report**

2020-2021 was truly a year without parallel for the Library, its staff and its members, as we navigated two periods of closure and continuing restrictions on operations. In spite of these disruptions, we saw growth in membership for the third successive year in a row, with a net increase of 105, which takes the total to almost 7,300 and exceeding 7,000 members for the first time since 2014.

The Library was proud to continue its postal loans service with normal postage charges waived for much of the year. Postal loans increased five-fold to 23,000, representing more than half of all books loaned. Digital resources also saw a significant increase in usage, with members accessing 189,000 articles in JSTOR - an increase of one third from last year.

Overall, the Library's funds increased by £2,409,000 and amounted to £30.4 million, of which £5.2 million represents Endowment Funds. The deficit for this year was £361,215, continuing its steady reduction since 2018. We are encouraged by this trend but anticipate the pandemic's lasting effects will impede progress in the medium-term. The Trustees have decided to extend the goal of eliminating the operating deficit by one year, setting the new target for March 2024.

We want to thank the continuing support and commitment of members and donors, whom, along with staff and trustees, have helped the Library withstand the most challenging period for many decades.

The **2020-2021 Annual Report** is **available online as a PDF download**. To see previous Annual Reports, please visit our **website**. If you would like a hard copy of the report, please get in touch with us via **[fundraising@londonlibrary.co.uk](mailto:fundraising@londonlibrary.co.uk)** or telephone 020 7766 4795.

## Events

We're delighted to welcome you back in-person to the Library with our exciting Spring 2022 events programme. If you'd like to RSVP, please get in touch with us via **[rsvp@londonlibrary.co.uk](mailto:rsvp@londonlibrary.co.uk)**.

### Director's Drinks

(Virtual)

**Wednesday 9 March 2022**

**6:30pm-7:30pm (GMT) or 1:30pm**

**- 2:30pm (EST)**

**Zoom link to follow**

### Director's Drinks

(In-person)

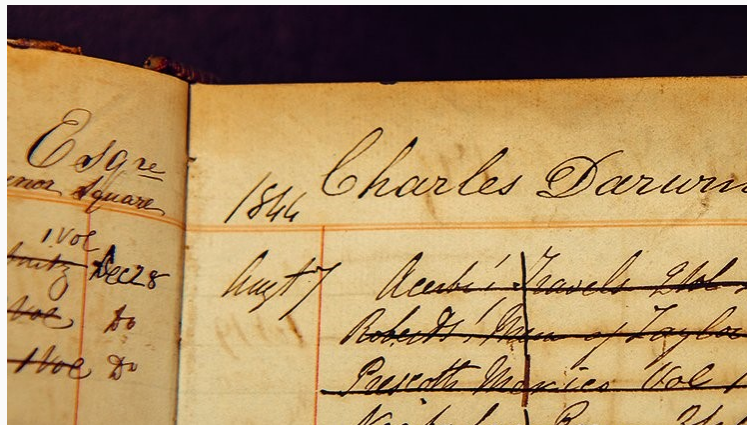
**Thursday 31 March 2022**

**6:30pm-8:00pm (GMT)**

**The Reading Room, The London Library**

Join Library Director, Philip Marshall for a virtual drink and hear the inside track about upcoming Library plans for the future and upcoming projects, as well as an overview of the last financial year.

Join Library Director, Philip Marshall for an in-person drink, meet other patrons and supporters, and hear the inside track about upcoming Library plans for the future and upcoming projects, as well as an overview of the last financial year.



## **Discovering Darwin at The London Library - Save the Date**

**Wednesday 4 May 2022**

**7:00pm-8:30pm (BST)**

**The Reading Room, The London Library**

Dive into Charles Darwin's borrowing records and uncover the books that shaped his life and work with London Library Archivist, Nathalie Belkin. This event will be hosted in collaboration with The Natural History Museum, with more details to follow.

## **Join The London Library Patrons' Programme**

The Founders' Circle Patrons' Programme brings together a group of supporters who regularly give to The London Library and through access to Library experts, behind the scenes updates and exclusive events, patrons gain a deeper involvement with the Library, its people, collection and its work.

Patrons' support is vital to ensuring that The London Library continues to inspire future generations of readers, writers and thinkers, and that the collection remains available to all.

To find out more please contact the Fundraising team via [fundraising@londonlibrary.co.uk](mailto:fundraising@londonlibrary.co.uk), by telephoning 020 7766 4795, or by clicking on the button below:

**FIND OUT MORE**



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If you would no longer like to receive supporter updates and news, you can unsubscribe by getting in touch with us at [development@londonlibrary.co.uk](mailto:development@londonlibrary.co.uk).

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