

## For the Love of Books: Collectors and Collections

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Q. What constitutes Special Collections? A. The entire book and manuscript collection within Special Collections, University of Otago Library, numbers some 28,000 items. The topics and formats are wide, ranging from medieval manuscripts, early printed pre-1501 books, and 18<sup>th</sup> century travel accounts, to scientific expedition reports, pulp and science fiction, and limited edition private press publications. Some of the books and manuscripts have been generously gifted to Special Collections; some have been made on site; others have been purchased over time.

***For the Love of Books: Collectors and Collections*** is an exhibition that offers a very selective overview of all the types of materials within Special Collections. It highlights the type of books amassed by collectors such as Willi Fels, Esmond de Beer, Charles Brasch, and the Rev. William Arderne Shoults, as well as those discrete collections such as the Scientific Expedition Reports, and the Pulp Fiction Collection. In essence, the exhibition is a taster. A brief but illuminating glimpse into what makes up Special Collections. And in 2019, on the sesquicentennial (150 years) celebrations of the establishment of the University of Otago, it is fitting to acknowledge the generosity of both past and recent benefactors to Special Collections. Importantly, we encourage use, and it is pleasing to acknowledge that the different collections that form Special Collections are used regularly by students and staff of the University, by national and international scholars, and by individuals from the wider community.

Special Collections is a treasure trove, and the books and manuscripts on display highlight just some of the delights that are in Special Collections. There are some real strengths; others tantalise. Collectors and collections represented include the John Evelyn and John Locke Collections amassed by Esmond de Beer; the Italian books collected by Willi Fels; the Charles Brasch Collection of some 7,200 books; the ecclesiastical books owned by the Rev. William Arderne Shoults; the James Hogg Collection from the Gilkison family; the Truby King 'Melrose' Library; Professor Fastier's Science Fiction, and Hal Salive's Science Fiction and Fantasy Collections. And much, much more. All are welcome.

*A great library contains the diary of the human race. - G. Dawson*

**Exhibition Times: 22 March to 14 June 2019**

**Venue: de Beer Gallery, Special Collections, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Central Library, University of Otago**

**Hours: 8.30 am to 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday**

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