

100,000 visitors to Cathedral Library in lockdown

St Davids Cathedral Library is closed to the public during the current pandemic, but Mari James, Cathedral Library Development Officer, is welcoming more visitors than ever

There are pages, images and extracts being shared from some of the Rare Books in the eclectic library collection. There are links to the library section on the new cathedral website and a new Cathedral Library Blog. Our catalogue is not online, but I have access to the computerised version and can let researchers know what can be made available once physical access is again permitted.

The Cathedral Library Twitter account has had a regular following since its conception, but that has increased greatly during the lockdown, when, during the first full month, there were over 100,000 virtual visitors to @StDavCathLib. Some of these have never been to the cathedral or St Davids at all, and they have got engaged in conversations on issues ranging from Pope Calixtus' declaration of two pilgrimages to St Davids being worth one to Rome to Thomas Tomkins' music.

One of our most important publications is *The History and Antiquities of St David's* published in 1856, written by former Bishop of St Davids, Basil Jones, and E A Freeman. The book was part of the process of drawing attention to the perilous state of the building in the 1850s and potential restoration. Approximately 20 of the illustrative plates are being shared via @StDavCathLib. Some are being matched up with what that location looks like now and produce interesting comparisons.



The hashtag #HandASTDavids is being used for all the extracts and plates, so that they can be followed by virtual visitors. This book inspired George Gilbert Scott in his work on restoration of the cathedral and extracts of his reports are also being shared on this hashtag.

Over the weekend of 16th and 17th May, the Cathedral Library will be doing a Twitter

Takeover of the Ecclesiastical History Society (EHS) account. Tweets for @EcclesHistSoc over this period will be coming from us and will focus on some of our Cathedral Library research subjects, including the 400th anniversary of the 1620 Esgob Parry Welsh Bible and the centenary of the disestablishment of the Church in Wales. It is a privilege to join forces with the prestigious EHS, which we hope Followers will enjoy and find interesting.

So, while you cannot visit the Cathedral Library, you can join the 100,000 others by Following @StDavCathLib, looking up #HandASTDavids and sending enquiries to Library@StDavidsCathedral.org.uk