Planned Collection Shifts: 6/19/2018

We continually seek to improve the quality of our collections and to promote easy access and discoverability for our browsers. Our performance on the first measure is at an historic high. A broad group of professional selectors with expert support and guidance from the Collection Services Team make proactive, nuanced decisions based on acquired expertise about what the community wants. Staff are trained across the system in shelving and merchandizing best practices to replicate the excitement of an excellent bookstore.

When we opened in 2009, we experimented with pulling out sections of Dewey. Parts of the 600's and 700's were separated to form the Home & Health Collection, Computer Books were placed in the Information Commons while Foreign Language, Travel, Literacy and ESOL went to the Mezzanine. On the second floor, Career, Business and Poetry were highlighted on separate shelves.

After almost nine years in the new building, we evaluated how successful our experiments with Dewey have been. The answer is mixed: Poetry and Travel have been the most successful and Home & Health the least. Staff report that patrons are frequently confused to find parts of Dewey missing from the second floor and have to be re-directed to other areas of the Library.

The following plan is split into two natural sections: the first is the ordinary business of moving collections in response to feedback from our patrons, and the second phase is shifting to make room for the STEAM renovation on L1. Both phases share the goal of creating new arrangements that facilitate intuitive access for our patrons. No collections will be reduced in order to effect these changes. In fact, over the last 6 years, the adult collection has grown in size by 10,000 volumes.

Phase 1: Reincorporate Most Nonfiction on the Second Floor:

Reincorporate the Home & Health (H&H) collection back into the Dewey sequence on 2

- There are presently gaps in the shelving on 2 as a consequence of the 3-year project to assess and rebuild the nonfiction collection, so shifting is the natural and necessary next step.
- We will interfile the 600's and sections of the 700's that have been in H&H.
    - While the H&H shelving is empty, we will add shelf lighting.

From the mezzanine, we will bring:

- Travel to the custom built in shelving near the tennis courts that has been underused.
- Foreign Languages will remain together at the end of the shelving (abutting the study rooms).

On the Mezzanine:

- Launch Pads will be shelved following the Great Courses.
- The entire Large Print Collection will fill the balance of the shelves.
    - This collection struggles, with less than 10% of it out at any given time. It is not helped by its current location; this brighter, more prominent exposure should promote browsing.

In the Information Commons:

- Computer Books will remain where they presently are in the built-in shelving under the windows.

Mass Market Paperbacks:

- This collection is being scaled back due to lack of use. Trade paperbacks, which are more "literary titles," are what circulates well in Cambridge.
- New Romance paperbacks will be placed on a third custom spinner original to building on G.

Phase 2: Shifting in Support of STEAM at the Library:

H&H Area:

- Move the Mystery collection into the H&H shelving with its improved shelf lighting.

Reading Room:

- Replace 10 missing wooden shelves in this historic area.
- Add 3 additional 9' ranges of shelving between the Reading Room and H&H.
    - This area at the foot of the staircase is underused and too noisy for seating.
    - The ranges will be parallel to the H&H ranges, and be symmetrical to the H&H shelving with regard to the walkway from the Connector to the Information Commons.
    - At only 9', they will leave a generous amount of room in the area near the staircase.

- Move the Science Fiction and Fantasy collections into the Reading Room ending on the 3 new shelving units.
    - This will unite the Mystery and Science Fiction/Fantasy collections in a natural pairing that will create a cohesive swath of collections pulling those three areas together in an intuitive whole for the first time.
    - It brings two popular collections upstairs where they have great visibility.

L1:

- Graphic Novels and Manga stay where they currently are on L1.
- Add an additional row of free standing shelving in the Mystery Room that was on the original plans.
- Repurpose 39' of shelving from the fiction area to the long wall that runs toward the elevators.
- The Fiction collection will begin in the former mystery area and wrap out and down the wall.
    - This both announces the collection and ties together the innovation space and literature.

Note:

The Board of Library Trustees supported the adoption of this placement of adult collections for the Main Library at their meeting on June 5th, 2018.