

Reclassifying a Whole Dewey Section – Public Worship (264)

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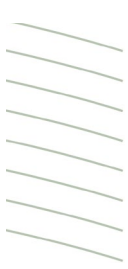
Challenges and solutions when turning a collection begun in 1906 into something fit for the 21st century.

St Francis College (Anglican College for Southern Queensland) began in 1897 in a disused Rectory. In 1906, it moved from the centre of Brisbane to an outer northern suburb, Nundah, into an old Anglican High School building. The College moved to its present, purpose-built home in Milton in 1934. The College's library dates from 1906 and some of the books I was dealing with in the public worship section were accessioned in 1906.

The Public Worship (Dewey number 264) section in the Roscoe Library is large (over 700 monographs, with ebooks too). The College only employed a qualified librarian from 1975. Several librarians have worked here since then. The 264 section has been added to since 1906 and by 2000 had developed into an inconsistent and haphazardly classified section. Many of the other areas in the Roscoe Library, such as Biblical studies (220-229), Church History (270-279) and Theology (230-239) have already been thoroughly weeded and in many cases given new, consistent Dewey numbers to achieve a coherent collection. The Public Worship section was overdue for such work.

Public Worship is used in several subjects taught at the College and also by some of our other categories of borrowers: clergy, laity, lay ministers, chaplains. Tidying this section and giving it clarity and consistency has been a desire for many years. COVID has given us time and space (with the Library being closed) to remove books and reorganize them.

Our task began with identifying those books still not on the electronic system and evaluating for retention. If a book was published prior to 1924 and freely available online, an empty record was created on the system with a link to the online version and the physical item weeded. Older resources both on or off the system were retained if still used or if they were thought to be of future use, or if necessary for retention because of status (e.g. we have items from the library of Benjamin



Within these sections, by far the largest, unsurprisingly, is the 264.03 section. Within that, we created a consistent number for the Book of Common Prayer (and books about the BCP), with extra numbers differentiating between the BCP in different countries. For example, 264.0300942 for the Church of England Book of Common Prayer (and its successors) and 264.0300993 for the New Zealand Book of Common Prayer. This has created a collection from a muddle of prayer books or books about prayer books under a huge variety of numbers and thus sometimes many shelves apart. We also found confusion between American and English BCPs and even confusion between denominations. (e.g. the prayer book used by the Church of Scotland is not an Anglican prayer book and, apart from not being 264.03, should also not have “Church of England” in any of its subject headings!). As well as reclassifying many items, records were tidied up for subject heading consistency and, for books about worship, but not texts of services, inclusion of Tables of Contents. (This is part of a larger project to ensure these are on all records to improve the library experience for remote users and enable more informed choices).

Out of date 20th century prayer books (e.g. The Alternative Service Book of the Church of England in use from 1980-2000) were moved to Stack.

There were also numerous copies of the Church of England Book of Common Prayer (mostly the version arrived at in 1873 and constantly reissued) and these were weeded or moved to Stack, if of special interest: for example the Coronation Prayer Book of King George V and Queen Mary which contains the form of service used for their Coronations in 1911.

264 also has sections on elements of worship (Prayer, Music etc.) which had been used haphazardly over the 100+ years of the building of this collection. These have now been clarified, reclassified for consistency, and subject headings reviewed and changed in many cases and finally, again, Tables of Contents added. Some books in these sections of 264 were moved out to 242 (prayer) or 781.7 (sacred music) or 782.3 (vocal music for liturgy).

Finally, books in 265 (Sacraments) which were denomination specific (usually Anglican) were moved into their denominational area within the 264s as Dewey recommends.

The Roscoe Library now has a Public Worship section which is consistent in its classification and has been weeded. As we have also enhanced most of the records, we now hope people using this section will have a better experience.