

Great libraries of the world

by George M. Eberhart

THESE 250 LIBRARIES are notable for their exquisite architecture, historic collections, and innovative services. If you find yourself on vacation near one of them, be sure to stop by for a visit. In addition to the websites cited, you can also take an interesting visual tour of all of these libraries through the *American Libraries* Pinterest board, [Great Libraries of the World](#).

United States

California

[Athenaeum Music and Arts Library](#), La Jolla. A nonprofit membership library, the athenaeum was founded in 1899 and is devoted exclusively to music and art. It has an extensive collection of artists' books, art periodicals, popular sheet music, and music scores, and it holds frequent exhibitions and concerts.

[Doe Memorial Library](#), University of California, Berkeley. Named after its benefactor Charles Franklin Doe and completed in 1911 in Beaux-Arts neoclassical style by John Galen Howard, the Doe serves as the university's reference, periodicals, and administrative center. The north façade includes a monumental Corinthian colonnade, while the east and west façades display giant Roman-arched windows. The great Main Reading Room, 210 feet long and 45 feet high, features a coffered, elliptical, barrel-vault ceiling.

[Geisel Library](#), University of California, San Diego. Designed by architect William Pereira in the late 1960s as an eight-story concrete structure sited at the head of a canyon near the center of the campus, the library was renamed in honor of Audrey and Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss) in 1995 for their contributions. Its tower is a prime example of brutalist architecture, rising to a height of 110 feet. The entryway is the site of an art installation by conceptual artist John Baldessari titled *Read/Write/Think/Dream*. An addition by Gunnar Birkerts in the early 1990s was designed to be subordinated to the strong, geometrical form of the existing library.

[Huntington Library](#), San Marino. In 1919, retired railroad magnate and book collector Henry E. Huntington and his wife Arabella transferred their ranch property, artworks, and rare book collection into a nonprofit educational trust. The art museum, gardens, and library opened to the public in 1928. The library's collection of books, manuscripts, photographs, and maps specializes in British and American history and literature. Among its treasures are the Ellesmere manuscript of Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, a Gutenberg Bible on vellum, the double elephant folio of John James Audubon's *Birds of America*, and a major collection of materials on the American West. Its botanical gardens cover 120 acres, and the theme gardens contain rare plants from around the world.

[Mechanics' Institute Library](#), San Francisco. This historic membership library, cultural event center, and chess club was founded in 1854 to serve the vocational needs of out-of-work gold miners. Its collection today covers all subjects with special strengths in literature, fine and performing arts, history, philosophy, business, finance, and periodicals that are difficult to find in electronic format. It also houses the oldest continuously running chess club in U.S. history.

[William Andrews Clark Memorial Library](#), University of California, Los Angeles. The library and its collections were established by William Andrews Clark Jr. as a memorial to his father, William Andrews Clark, U.S. senator from Montana. The current facility, designed by architect Robert D. Farquhar, was built in 1924–1926 and willed to the university upon his death in 1934. The library has extensive holdings in 17th and 18th-century English literature and history, pre-1750 music, Oscar Wilde, and British and American fine printing.

Colorado

Anythink Brighton, Rangeview Library District, Brighton. A new Brighton branch opened in September 2009 as part of the Brighton Cultural Center and took on the library system's Anythink brand. In 2010, it became the first carbon-positive library in the U.S., due to a combination of its 108-kilowatt photovoltaic system, geothermal heating and cooling, sustainable building features, the purchase of carbon credits, and the collaborative spirit of the project.

Connecticut

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven. The library, designed by architect Gordon Bunshaft, is the largest building in the world reserved exclusively for the preservation of rare books and manuscripts. Six stories of book stacks are surrounded by a windowless, rectangular building with walls made of a translucent Danby white marble, which provides protection from direct light. Three floors of stacks extend below ground level. Since its opening in 1963, the Beinecke has become a repository for books printed anywhere before 1601, books printed in Latin America before 1751, books printed in North America before 1821, newspapers and broadsides printed in the United States before 1851, European tracts and pamphlets printed before 1801, East European and Asian books through the 18th century, and other special collections.

Olin Memorial Library, Wesleyan University, Middletown. Wesleyan's second general library, Olin was designed by Henry Bacon of McKim, Mead, and White and completed in 1928. It was named after alumnus Stephen Henry Olin by his widow Emeline, who donated the funds for its construction. The central feature of its 163-foot wide façade is the marble portico of six Ionic columns surmounted by a pediment and capped by a balustrade. Additional space for the book stacks was furnished in 1938, and in 1983–1986 a U-shaped addition was wrapped around the stack extension.

Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, New Haven. Yale's largest library is a Gothic Revival facility designed by James Gamble Rogers and adorned with some 3,300 stained glass decorations by G. Owen Bonawit, including 673 painted medallions. Rogers created the library in the image of a cathedral, modeling the circulation desk after an altar. The main entrance is adorned with symbols and writings in various ancient languages, the work of sculptor Rene Paul Chambellan, who also made the gargoyles, interior panels, and other ornamental designs. Completed in 1930, the library was named after attorney and alumnus John William Sterling, who donated much of his fortune to Yale.

District of Columbia

Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Georgetown. This Federal-style mansion was built in 1801 and for a time was the home of Secretary of War John C. Calhoun. It was purchased in 1920 by art collectors Mildred and Robert Woods Bliss, who redesigned the home and grounds and renamed it Dumbarton Oaks. The research library has superb collections in the areas of Byzantine studies, Pre-Columbian art, and garden and landscape design. In 1940, the Blisses moved to California and donated the estate and collections to Harvard University.

Folger Shakespeare Library. The Folger has the world's largest collection of the printed works of William Shakespeare—including 79 copies of the 1623 First Folio, published seven years after Shakespeare's death—and is a primary repository for rare materials from the early modern period (1450–1750). The library opened in 1932 and was established by collector Henry Clay Folger and his wife Emily as a gift to the American people. It holds more than 256,000 books, 60,000 manuscripts, 250,000 playbills, 200 oil paintings, some 50,000 graphics and photos, as well as musical instruments, costumes, and films.

Library of Congress. The nation's oldest federal cultural institution, the library serves as the research arm of Congress. It is also the largest library in the world, with 745 miles of bookshelves. Its

collections include more than 34.5 million books and other print materials in 470 languages; more than 66.6 million manuscripts; the largest rare book collection in North America, including the rough draft of the Declaration of Independence and a Gutenberg Bible on vellum; over one million government publications; one million issues of world newspapers spanning the past three centuries; 16.7 microforms; over 6,000 comic book titles; 5.5 million maps; 3.4 million audio materials; and more than 15.7 million prints and photographic images. Housed in the Capitol building at first, in 1897 the library moved into the Thomas Jefferson Building, which contains some of the richest public interiors in the United States, a compendium of the work of classically trained architects John L. Smithmeyer, Paul J. Pelz, and Edward Pearce Casey. Its 23-carat gold-plated dome capped the “largest, costliest, and safest” library building in the world at the time. An elaborate entrance pavilion and Great Hall gradually lead into the monumental Main Reading Room. The Jefferson Building underwent a restoration for its 100th anniversary in 1997. The library’s other three facilities are the John Adams Building (1939), the James Madison Memorial Building (1980), and the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center (2007).

Florida

Baldwin Library of Historical Children’s Literature, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville. The library has more than 100,000 volumes published in Great Britain and the United States going back to the 17th century. Strengths of the collection include 300 editions of Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, 100 editions of John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, fables, juvenile biography, 19th-century science and natural history, 19th-century alphabet books, moral tales, fairy tales, juvenile periodicals, 19th-century boys’ adventure stories, 20th century boys’ and girls’ series, Little Golden Books, and juvenile publications of the American Sunday School Union.

Illinois

Charles Deering Library, Northwestern University, Evanston. This library opened in 1933 and served as the university’s main library until 1970. The Gothic Revival building was designed by architect James Gamble Rogers, whose thematic inspiration was King’s College Chapel in Cambridge, England. The library features 68 magnificent window medallions designed by G. Owen Bonawit and superb wood and stone carvings by sculptor Rene Paul Chambellan. It currently houses special collections, art reference, music, maps, government publications, and the university archives.

Feehan Memorial Library, University of Saint Mary of the Lake, Mundelein. The library’s philosophy and theology collection is housed in a luxurious space constructed in 1929 that resembles a 16th-century Italianate palace with a central court surrounded by three stories of arcades.

John Crerar Library, University of Chicago. Industrialist John Crerar died in 1889, leaving \$2.5 million to establish a free public library in Chicago. His executors decided to make it a science collection that would not duplicate the holdings of other Chicago libraries. The library functioned independently from 1897 until 1984, when it was consolidated with the University of Chicago’s science collection. Although the Crerar’s rare books were transferred to the university’s special collections center, the current facility, still open to the public under some restrictions, has extensive holdings in science, medicine, and technology.

Newberry Library, Chicago. A private, noncirculating collection that is open to the public, the library was established in 1887 through a bequest by businessman Walter Loomis Newberry. The current building opened in 1893 and was designed by its first librarian, William Frederick Poole, and architect Henry Ives Cobb. The library’s holdings span the history and culture of Western Europe from the Middle Ages to the mid-20th century and the Americas from the time of first contact. It is particularly strong in cartography and Native American history.

Indiana

Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington. One of the largest rare book and manuscript libraries in the United States, the Lilly was founded in 1960 with the donated collection of Josiah K. Lilly Jr., former president of the Eli Lilly pharmaceutical company. Its holdings are particularly strong in strong in British and American history and literature, Latin Americana, medicine and science, food and drink, children's literature, fine printing and binding, popular music, medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, and early printing. It also has special collections of comic books and graphic novels, books and periodicals on puzzles, documents of the French Revolution, chapbooks, and American sheet music.

Iowa

Iowa State Law Library, Des Moines. Located in the Iowa State Capitol, the library provides lawmakers with a specialized collection of books. Ornate balconies and spiral staircases with wrought-iron railings lend it grandeur. The tile floor and stained glass ceiling date back to 1884.

Maryland

Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore. Founded in 1882 by industrialist and banker Enoch Pratt, the library opened its central building in January 1886, followed by four branches within the next three months. The current facility was constructed in 1931–1933 and significantly expanded and renovated in 2003. The new wing contains the Maryland and African American departments, as well as special collections and extensive materials related to the life and work of Baltimore journalist H. L. Mencken.

George Peabody Library, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. The historic collection of the Peabody Institute, established in 1857 as a music conservatory, since 1982 the library has served students at the Johns Hopkins Peabody campus. It opened in 1878 and was designed by Baltimore architect Edmund George Lind in collaboration with Nathaniel H. Morison, who described it as a “cathedral of books.” The Greek Revival interior features an atrium that soars 61 feet to a latticed skylight surrounded by five tiers of ornamental cast-iron balconies and gold-scalloped columns. In accordance with the provisions of George Peabody's original gift, the library is a noncirculating collection open to the general public.

Massachusetts

American Antiquarian Society, Worcester. The society operates an independent research library founded in 1812 that is devoted to American history from the colonial era to the end of Reconstruction in 1876. It is the third oldest historical society in the United States and the first to be national in scope. The library owns copies of two-thirds of all the books printed before 1820 in the United States, including the 1640 *Bay Psalm Book*.

Bapst Library, Boston College. The library has been called the “finest example of Collegiate Gothic architecture in America.” Designed by Charles Donagh Maginnis and completed in 1928, it was named after Johannes Bapst, the first president of the college, and served as the main library until 1984. An interior foyer features stained glass windows depicting Shakespearean themes and bas-reliefs of Jesus, Louis Pasteur, Nicolaus Copernicus, Fra Angelico, Michelangelo, Albertus Magnus, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, and Augustine of Hippo. The Kresge Reading Room has a richly decorated beamed ceiling supported by two rows of stone columns. Since 1993 it has served as the college art library.

Boston Athenæum, Boston. Founded in 1807 as a membership library for a literary society, the athenæum opened the doors of its current building in 1849. Charles Ammi Cutter, librarian from 1868

to 1893, was the first to use loan cards placed in a pocket glued to the inside of the rear book cover, home deliveries to housebound patrons, and a system of Expansive Classification (now known as Cutter numbers) that he developed as part of an effort to restructure the library's catalog. The library's holdings are primarily on Boston and New England history, biography, British and American literature, and fine and decorative arts.

Boston Public Library, Boston. The library was the first publicly supported municipal library in the United States, the first large U.S. library open to the public, and the first public circulating library. It opened its doors in 1854, and in 1895 it moved to a structure built by architect Charles Follen McKim, who drew on the designs of the Bibliothèque Ste.-Geneviève in Paris for its Copley Square façade and the 16th-century Palazzo della Cancelleria in Rome for the central open-air courtyard. Murals include recently restored paintings by John Singer Sargent on the theme of *The Triumph of Religion*. The library's research collections include early editions of William Shakespeare, the George Ticknor collection of Spanish literature, records of colonial Boston, the 3,800-volume personal library of John Adams, the papers of abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, and materials on the 1920 Sacco and Vanzetti murder case.

Provincetown Public Library, Provincetown. In 2005, the town library moved into the former Heritage Museum building, bringing new life to the 1861 wooden structure. During Boston's Old Home Week Celebration in August 1907, tea merchant and sporting enthusiast Thomas Lipton offered a cup for a fishermen's race in Massachusetts Bay. The schooner *Rose Dorothea* swept to victory in the race and brought the Lipton Cup back to Provincetown with great fanfare. Not only does the library possess the original Lipton Cup, which was never again contested, it also boasts a half-scale (66.5 feet) model of the schooner built by Capt. Francis "Flyer" Santos in 1977–1988 that is ensconced in the second-floor children's room.

Thomas Crane Public Library, Quincy. The town's library was built in four stages: the original 1882 Romanesque building by architect Henry Hobson Richardson; additional stack space and stained glass in 1908 by William Martin Aiken; a major 1939 expansion by architects Paul A. and Carroll D. Coletti, with stone carvings by sculptor Joseph A. Coletti; and a 2001 addition by Boston architects Childs Bertman and Tseckares, which doubled its size. Richardson considered this library one of his most successful civic buildings, and *Harper's Weekly* called it "the best village library in the United States." It also features two stained glass windows by American artist John LaFarge, *The Old Philosopher* and *Angel at the Tomb*. The grounds were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted.

Widener Library, Harvard University. Cambridge. The centerpiece of the largest university library system in the world, Widener commemorates Harry Elkins Widener, a 1907 Harvard graduate who was a book collector and victim of the *Titanic* disaster in 1912. The Beaux-Arts facility was designed by Horace Trumbauer and houses some 50 miles of bookshelves.

Woburn Public Library, Woburn. The library was built in 1876–1879 following the death of Charles Bowers Winn, who bequeathed \$140,000 to the town. The first of architect Henry Hobson Richardson's series of library designs, the building's front façade of rough-dressed stone conceals a long, single-story stack area on the left with high, column-separated windows forming a strip below its peaked roof; a projecting, three-story set of reading rooms with entryway and Gothic Revival tower at center right; and a picture gallery and octagonal museum on the right.

Michigan

Law Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Completed in 1931 and designed to seat just over 500 students, the library's grandiose reading room in the Gothic Legal Research Building is graced with 50-foot vaulted cathedral ceilings, tracery stained glass windows, oak wainscoting, and cork floors for quiet passage. The 1981 Allan F. and Alene Smith Law Library Addition was built below ground to avoid clashing with the distinctive historic architecture of the Law Quadrangle. The Joseph and Edythe Jackier Rare Book Room, opened in 1996, is wrapped in custom makore woodwork trimmed with Honduran mahogany and bathed in specially designed incandescent ambient and task lighting.

Minnesota

Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, St. John's Abbey and University, Collegeville. Founded in 1965, this Benedictine monastery library houses the world's largest collection of digital and microfilm images of religious manuscripts from both the Western and Ethiopian Christian traditions. In 2003, it broadened its focus to include Armenian, Syriac, Christian Arabic, and Slavonic manuscripts. The library is also the home of the seven-volume *Saint John's Bible*, one of the few handwritten and illuminated bibles produced since the invention of the printing press, commissioned in 1998 and completed in 2011 by British calligrapher Donald Jackson.

Missouri

Linda Hall Library, Kansas City. The largest independently funded public library of science, engineering, and technology in North America, the library was established in 1946 through the philanthropy of Linda and Herbert Hall. It is located on a 14-acre arboretum on the site of the Halls' former mansion. The collection began with the purchase of historical materials from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in Massachusetts. Edward W. Tanner and Associates designed a new library building in 1956 with an interior featuring large windows and oak woodwork. In 1973, its rare book room doubled the space for its rare treasures, which include original editions by Isaac Newton, Johann Bayer, Galileo Galilei, and Robert Hooke. *The Tazza*, one of the largest pieces of malachite sculpture in North America, is the focal point in the main reading room.

St. Louis Public Library, Central Library, St. Louis. Funded by Andrew Carnegie and completed in 1912 by architect Cass Gilbert, the library features a Beaux-Arts neoclassical style with an oval central pavilion surrounded by four light courts. The Olive Street front resembles a colossal arcade with contrasting marble bas-relief panels. A projecting three-bay central block provides a monumental entrance similar to a triumphal arch. The ceiling of the periodicals room is based on Michelangelo's ceiling in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence. The library began a restoration project in 2010 and reopened in its centennial year of 2012.

New Hampshire

Baker-Berry Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover. Completed in 1928, the Baker Memorial Library was designed by Jens Frederick Larson, modeled after Independence Hall in Philadelphia, and funded by a gift to the college by financier George Fisher Baker in memory of his uncle, Fisher Ames Baker. Mexican artist José Clemente Orozco painted a fresco, *The Epic of American Civilization*, in the lower level from 1932 to 1934 while he was an artist in residence. Renovation work in 1998–2003 doubled its size with the addition of the Berry Library, and all of the reading rooms were carefully restored.

Class of 1945 Library, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter. Built in 1969–1971 by architect Louis Kahn, the library is the largest secondary school library in the world, rising nine levels and housing some 160,000 volumes. Its most notable feature is a dramatic central hall with enormous circular openings that reveal several floors of metal book stacks behind white oak panels. The hall is flooded with natural light from large unbroken expanses of glass on two sides, as well as from clerestory windows at the very top of its 70-foot height.

New Jersey

Firestone Library, Princeton University, Princeton. Named after tire magnate Harvey Samuel Firestone, the library opened in 1948 as the first large American university library constructed after World War II and one of the largest open-stack libraries anywhere. The library was designed to resemble a rambling country house with an array of reading rooms in which students could interact. The rare

books department includes the privately owned Scheide Library, which holds significant collections of bibles in manuscript and print, medieval manuscripts and incunabula, a large collection of Old English homilies, printed books on travel and exploration, and music manuscripts of Johann Sebastian Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven.

New York

Butler Library, Columbia University, New York City. The university's largest single library, the structure was completed in 1934 and renamed in 1946 for Columbia President Nicholas Murray Butler. It is home to the university's collections in the humanities, with particular strengths in history, government documents, social sciences, literature, philosophy, and religion.

Coller Rare Book Reading Room, New York Academy of Medicine, New York City. The library began with the donation of a set of Martyn Paine's *Commentaries* during the second meeting of the academy, which was founded in 1847. Since that time, the collection acquired some 32,000 medical volumes of the 15th–18th centuries. The manuscript collection includes the Edwin Smith Papyrus, an Egyptian work on surgery written in 1700 B.C.; and the 1363 *Chirurgia magna* of Guy de Chauliac. The historical collections were established in 1928 with the purchase of the Edward Clark Streeter collection.

Frederick Ferris Thompson Memorial Library, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie. The Thompson building was completed in 1905 by Mary Clark Thompson as a memorial to her husband, a Vassar trustee and banker. Built in Perpendicular Gothic style, the library consists of three wings around a central tower. Below a frieze of university seals in the central hall hang five 17th-century Flemish Gobelin tapestries portraying the tale of Cupid and Psyche. In the west wing, a stained glass window depicts Elena Cornaro Piscopia, the first woman in Europe to earn a doctorate in philosophy. The Media Cloisters were created in 1999 as a state-of-the-art space for collaborative learning and instructional technology exploration.

Frick Art Reference Library, New York City. The library was founded in 1920 by Helen Clay Frick as a memorial to her father, industrialist and art collector Henry Clay Frick, and to serve “adults with a serious interest in art,” among them scholars, art professionals, collectors, and students. The library's book and photograph research collections relate chiefly to paintings, drawings, sculpture, prints, and illuminated manuscripts from the 4th to the mid-20th century by European and American artists.

Grolier Club Library, New York City. The club, a society of bibliophiles established in 1884, maintains a research library specializing in book history, bibliography, and bibliophily; the history of printing, binding, and illustration; and booksellers' catalogues. It has been housed in its current facility, designed by architect Bertram Goodhue, since 1917.

Morgan Library and Museum, New York City. Established to house the private library of financier J. P. Morgan in 1906, the library was designed by architect Charles Follen McKim, who took his inspiration from the Villa Giulia in Rome. Before it became a public institution in 1924, the library was the place where Morgan resolved the financial Panic of 1907 by locking his fellow bankers inside and refusing to let them leave until they agreed on a rescue plan. The library continues to focus on historical manuscripts, early printed books, Old Master drawings and prints, examples of ancient writing, important music manuscripts, and early children's books. In 2010, the McKim building underwent an extensive restoration of its interior spaces, resulting in expanded exhibition space.

New York Public Library, Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, New York City. One of four research libraries in the library system, the Main Branch at 5th Avenue and 42nd Street—with its two iconic stone lions sculpted by Edward Clark Potter and named Patience and Fortitude by Mayor Fiorella LaGuardia in the 1930s—was planned by its first director, John Shaw Billings, who wanted a huge reading room with seven floors of bookstacks and a fast system for getting books into the hands of readers. This new New York Public Library—primarily an amalgamation of the Astor and Lenox libraries—instantly became one of the nation's largest libraries and a vital part of intellectual life of America. The library has many special collections, among them illuminated manuscripts, photographs

and prints, the personal papers of many writers and statesmen, the Arents Tobacco Collection, the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature, the Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, and the Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division.

Othmer Library, Brooklyn Historical Society, Brooklyn. Founded in 1863, the library has a premier collection of research materials on the history of Brooklyn, family histories and genealogies, rare books, journals, historic maps and atlases, the personal papers of abolitionist clergyman Henry Ward Beecher, institutional records, and oral histories that document the borough's many different ethnic groups and neighborhoods. It was renamed after Donald and Mildred Othmer in 1992 for their funding of a major renovation.

Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester. This Greek Revival building dates from the university's relocation to the River Campus in 1930. Named after Benjamin Rush Rhees, university president from 1900 to 1935, the original library contains the university's historic rooms, as well as the old stacks and a 186-foot-high tower that houses the Hopeman Memorial Carillon. The library has a number of stone owls perched around the tower, in the cornice, and in other architectural details. In 1969, a substantial and more modern-styled addition was attached to the back and part of the sides of the original building.

Stephen B. Luce Library, State University of New York Maritime College, Bronx. Named after the founder of the Naval War College, the library is housed in the north wing of historic Fort Schuyler on the Throggs Neck peninsula and has a special strength in marine engineering, naval architecture, marine transportation, oceanography, transportation economics and management, and meteorology.

Uris Library, Cornell University, Ithaca. Cornell's first architecture student, William Henry Miller, designed this building, which became the university's first dedicated library in 1891. Built in a Richardsonian Romanesque style, its central feature is the large Dean Reading Room with natural lighting from 29 windows and 20 clerestory windows. Within Uris is the Andrew Dickson White Library, a study space that features three tiers of wrought-iron stacks created to house the extensive collection of Cornell's first president. Adjacent to the library is the 173-foot McGraw Tower, built by Miller to house some of the stacks and the university chimes. Renamed in 1962 after alumnus and trustee Harold Uris, the library has since served as the university's undergraduate library.

North Carolina

ImaginOn: The Joe and Joan Martin Center, Charlotte. A collaboration of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library and the Children's Theater of Charlotte, this innovative learning center opened in 2005. It hosts the Spangler Children's Library, the Teen Loft for teen reading and activities, a computer center, a multimedia recording and animation studio, the Hugh McColl Family Theater, and the Wachovia Playhouse.

Roy J. Bostock Library, Duke University, Durham. Completed in 2005 as part of a renovation of the Collegiate Gothic William R. Perkins Library, Bostock was configured to create an environment conducive to study, learning, and research. Special features include the two-story Carpenter Reading Room, the Center for Instructional Technology, an abundance of natural lighting, open space design, and the seamless integration of technological services. Integral to the relationship between Bostock and Perkins is the gateway that joins the two buildings on three different levels.

Vanderbilt Library, Biltmore Estate, Asheville. The two-story, walnut-paneled library at Biltmore House contains some 10,000 volumes and a fireplace surrounded by a carved, black-marble mantel. A private, unused library owned by the Vanderbilt family, most of the books are not particularly rare except for their provenance. Built between 1889 and 1895 by George Washington Vanderbilt II, the house ceased to be a residence in 1954.

Ohio

Duns Scotus Library, Lourdes College, Sylvania. Completed in 1950, the library was named for the 13th-century Franciscan scholar, John Duns Scotus. The large stained glass window in its reading room features the seals of four European universities, and its walls are adorned with tapestries, paintings, mosaics, and maiolica medallions. The Franciscan Room houses a collection of rare books on the life and writings of St. Francis of Assisi.

Timken Science Library, College of Wooster. The oldest branch in the system, the library in Frick Hall served as the library for the college from 1900 to 1962. The building reopened in 1998 with substantial funding from the Timken Foundation of Canton, Ohio, and now primarily serves students in math and sciences. The facility includes new ground-level entrances north and south and a dramatic makeover of the high-ceilinged reading room.

William Oxley Thompson Memorial Library, Ohio State University, Columbus. Named after the university's fifth president, the main library building, designed in Renaissance Revival style, opened in 1913. The grandeur of the building was diminished by two inelegant additions in 1966 and 1972, but an extensive renovation in 2006–2009 restored much of its splendor and maximized the space for both quiet study and interactive group learning. It houses several special libraries covering the fields of East Asian, Eastern European, Hebraic, medieval Slavic, Middle Eastern, Latin American, theatre research, and American fiction studies. The rare books department contains special materials on *Don Quixote*, the English Renaissance, James Thurber, John Glenn, the Reformation, polar regions, cook books, and science fiction.

Oklahoma

Bizzell Memorial Library, University of Oklahoma, Norman. Built in 1929 in Collegiate Gothic style, the library features special collections in business history, biblical studies, and history of science. The beautifully decorated Evelyena D. Honeyman Ante Room serves as a spectacular entryway to the Peggy V. Helmerich Great Reading Room, where the walls are lined with carved bookcases that hold theses and dissertations of university graduates, and the ceiling sports intricately carved angels.

Pennsylvania

Amelia Givin Library, Cumberland County Library System, Mount Holly Springs. Built in 1889 by architect James T. Steen in Richardsonian Romanesque style, the library features broad round arches, towers with conical roofs, rusticated ashlar masonry, battered foundation walls, deeply set windows and doors, and squat columns. The interior woodwork was crafted by Moses Y. Ransom, an Ohio artisan who reinterpreted Victorian ornamentation to create elaborate Moorish spiral fretwork.

Anne and Jerome Fisher Fine Arts Library, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. The university's first library building was designed by architect Frank Furness, in consultation with librarians Melvil Dewey and Justin Winsor. Dedicated in 1891, the library was one of the first with a specialized reading room lit by skylights and clerestory windows, as well as detached bookstacks designed for fireproof storage. In 1962, it was turned over to the Graduate School of Fine Arts with collections focusing on contemporary and historical aspects of art, architecture, city and regional planning, historic preservation, landscape architecture, studio art, and urban design. Major restoration work was carried out in 1987–1990, and in 1992 the library was renamed in honor of its principal donors.

Athenæum of Philadelphia. The Athenæum is a member-supported, not-for-profit, special collections library founded in 1814 to collect materials “connected with the history and antiquities of America, and the useful arts, and generally to disseminate useful knowledge” for the benefit of the public. Its current building, designed in 1845 by John Notman, is widely hailed as a seminal American structure in the Italianate style and one of the first Philadelphia buildings made of brownstone.

Library Company of Philadelphia. An independent research library specializing in American history and culture in the 17th–19th centuries that is open to the public free of charge, the Library Company houses a noncirculating collection of rare books, manuscripts, broadsides, ephemera, prints, photographs, and works of art. It was founded in 1731 by Benjamin Franklin as a subscription library supported by its shareholders, as it is to this day.

Linderman Library, Lehigh University, Bethlehem. Designed by Philadelphia architect Addison Hutton and built by founder Asa Packer in 1878 as a memorial to his daughter, Lucy Packer Linderman, the Venetian Gothic library was made of iron and several varieties of stone, with white-tile walls that amplified the gas illumination and a central rotunda that featured a hand-painted stained glass window. Extensive renovations in 2007–2009 added new classrooms and seminar rooms, a humanities commons, new computer technology, climate controls, collaborative student spaces, and a glass wall between the 1878 library and its 1929 addition that allows people to see the old library as they walk in.

Pennsylvania Hospital, Medical Library, Penn Health System, Philadelphia. The hospital was founded by Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Bond in 1751, making it the first in the North American colonies. The first library book was donated in 1762 by John Fothergill, a British physician and friend of Franklin's. The collection continued to grow and in 1847 the American Medical Association designated it as the first, largest, and most important medical library in the United States. It now includes the most complete American collection of medical books published between 1750 and 1850.

Rare Collections Library, State Library of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg. This state-of-the-art, climate-controlled facility opened in 2008 to preserve the state's bibliographic treasures, among them the 422-volume Pennsylvania Assembly Collection purchased by Benjamin Franklin in 1745, books and pamphlets published in the state from 1685 to 1845, handwritten hymnals from the Ephrata Cloister, and early commonwealth newspapers.

Rhode Island

John Carter Brown Library, Providence. An independently funded center for advanced research, the Brown Library possesses a premier collection of rare books and maps relating to the European discovery and settlement of the New World up to 1820. It began in 1846 as the private collection of bibliophile John Carter Brown and was kept in a special fireproof room in the Brown family house until 1901, when it was transferred to the Brown University campus.

Redwood Library and Athenæum, Newport. The Redwood is the oldest membership lending library in America and the oldest library building in continuous use in the country. It was founded in 1747 by Abraham Redwood and 45 others based on the principle of "having nothing in view but the good of mankind." Architect Peter Harrison used a Roman Doric temple with portico and wings as a model for this neoclassical building. Although more than half of its original volumes were lost in the British occupation during the American Revolution, the library now has replaced about 90% of the missing books.

Tennessee

Thomas Hughes Public Library, Rugby. This small library, established in 1882 for a British community founded by social reformer Thomas Hughes, presents the same appearance, inside and outside, as the day its doors first opened. It contains more than 7,000 volumes—one of the best representative collections of Victorian literature on public view in America. The floor-to-ceiling shelves contain no books published later than 1898, with most dating from the 1860s through the 1880s, as well as a fine collection of Victorian periodicals.

Texas

Armstrong Browning Library, Baylor University, Waco. This research center houses the world's largest collection of books, letters, manuscripts, and memorabilia pertaining to the English Victorian poets Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, as well as a substantial collection of primary and secondary materials related to 19th-century literature and culture. Completed in 1951, the library went through major renovations in 1995 and 2001.

Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas, Austin. Founded in 1957 as a humanities research center by University Vice President Harry Hunt Ransom, the library's major emphasis is the study of the literature and culture of the United States, Great Britain, and France. The center offers scholars the opportunity to examine such rare items as 13th-century Italian verse, early map renderings of the moon, European broadsides, 17th-century English dramatic poetry, early examples of microphotography, avant-garde theater design, modern French musical composition, literary portraiture, the art of caricature, censorship in Hollywood, and the work of contemporary African novelists.

Utah

Family History Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City. Founded in 1894 to gather genealogical records and assist church members with their family history research, this facility is the largest public genealogical library in the world. The current building opened in 1985. Staff and volunteers assist patrons with family history work, including reading and translating genealogically relevant documents in 30 languages. The library is in the process of digitizing and indexing its entire collection of 2.4 million rolls of microfilmed genealogical records.

Vermont

St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, St. Johnsbury. Presented as a gift to the town in 1871 by banker and industrialist Horace Fairbanks, the athenaeum is built in Second Empire style with a mansard roof, tall windows, and elaborate woodwork. The original library collection consisted of 9,000 finely bound books selected by noted bibliographer William Frederick Poole. In 1873, Fairbanks added an art gallery, now the oldest gallery still in its original form in the United States, the design of which was determined by the placement of an enormous 10 by 15-foot painting by Albert Bierstadt, *The Domes of Yosemite*.

Washington

Seattle Central Library, Seattle. Designed by Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas and Seattle architect Joshua Prince-Ramus, the new library opened its doors in 2004. The 11-floor facility has an unorthodox shape that consists of several discrete floating platforms seemingly wrapped in a large steel net around a glass skin. Its innovative features include a "books spiral" that displays the entire nonfiction collection in a continuous run through four stories, a towering "living room" for readers with a sloping glass wall that stretches 50 feet high, phosphorescent yellow escalators, first lines from books in many languages embedded in the floor at the front desk, and markers in the floor that indicate the call numbers.

Suzzallo Library, University of Washington, Seattle. The library is named for Henry Suzzallo, university president from 1915 to 1926. Designed by Seattle architects Carl Frelinghuysen Gould and Charles Bebb, the first wing with its famous reading room was completed in 1926. A 1927 article in *The Pacific Builder and Engineer* proclaimed, "This room has been pronounced by experts to be the most beautiful on the continent and is ranked among the most beautiful in the world. It is comparable only

to the nave of a cathedral.” Oak bookcases in the reading room are topped with a hand-carved frieze representing native plants of Washington State.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison. The oldest historical society in the United States to receive continuous public funding, the society’s library, which also serves as the library of American history for the University of Wisconsin–Madison, has the second largest collection of newspapers in the United States after the Library of Congress. The reading room dates from 1900 and was restored to its original grandeur in 2010.

Canada

British Columbia

Vancouver Public Library. The central library is one part of the block-long Library Square, built in 1993–1995 by architects Moshe Safdie, Richard B. Archambault, and Barry Downs. The structure is a nine-story rectangle containing book stacks and services within a free-standing colonnaded ellipse resembling the ruins of the Colosseum in Rome. Reading and study areas are accessed by bridges spanning skylit lightwells. Its rooftop garden (not open to the public) was designed by landscape architect Cornelia Oberlander and is planted with ornamental grasses and kinnikinnick in a pattern that replicates the flow of the Fraser River.

Ontario

Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo. Opened in 1976 and named in honor of the university’s first chief librarian, this special collections library houses some 60,000 books. Nationally known for its holdings on the history of Canadian women, dance, and ballet, the department also owns significant treatises in architecture, fine printing, urban planning, and the German and Mennonite heritage of the Waterloo area.

Great Library, Osgoode Hall, Law Society of Upper Canada, Toronto. The library houses the largest private legal collection in the country, primarily statutes and law reports from Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and other common law jurisdictions. It has a small rare book collection that includes pre-confederation statutes and early Upper Canada imprints.

Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. The National Archives of Canada (founded in 1872) and the National Library of Canada (created in 1953) have occupied the same building on Wellington Street since 1967, but they were administered separately until 2004 when the government unified their collections, services, and personnel through the Library and Archives Canada Act. Its special collections include a portrait gallery of famous Canadians, more than 21.3 million photographic images, early Canadian maps and prints, resources created by or about Aboriginal peoples, Canadian sheet music and recordings, the archives of the Canadian concert pianist Glenn Gould, and national and provincial newspapers. LAC’s Preservation Centre in Gatineau, Quebec, contains collection storage areas with optimum environmental conditions and laboratories for preservation activities.

Library of Parliament, Ottawa. The library is the main research center for the Parliament of Canada. Designed in Gothic Revival style in 1876 by Thomas Fuller and Chilion Jones, the library’s circular shape and its galleries and alcoves were touches added by the first librarian, Alpheus Todd, who also wisely advised that it be separated from the central building by a single corridor to protect it from fire. A 1916 fire destroyed much of Parliament, but the quick action of library clerk Michael MacCormac in securing the iron doors to the corridor before the fire could spread saved the collection. In 2002–

2006, Thomas Fuller Construction supervised a major upgrade that enhanced or restored the building's 1876 features.

Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto. The library houses the university's Department of Rare Books and Special Collections and its official archives. Built in 1973, the facility was named after an early settler of Upper Canada whose great-grandsons Sidney and Charles Fisher donated their own collections of Shakespeare, various 20th-century authors, and the etchings of 17th-century Bohemian artist Wenceslaus Hollar. Other rare items held are the *Nuremberg Chronicle* (1493), Shakespeare's First Folio (1623), Isaac Newton's *Principia* (1687), and Charles Darwin's proof copy (with annotations) of *On the Origin of Species* (1859).

Quebec

Literary and Historical Society of Quebec Library, Quebec City. Canada's oldest historical society was founded in 1824 with the objective of preserving the colony's historical records. It has been in its present location since 1868. In the 20th century, the society evolved into a private community library. In 2000, it established the Morrin Centre, dedicated to preserving the English-language heritage of the city.

Osler Library of the History of Medicine, McGill University, Montreal. One of the most important scholarly resources on the history of medicine in North America, the Osler opened in 1929 to house the collection of rare medical books donated by physician and McGill graduate William Osler. The library also has a large number of incunabula, an outstanding collection of editions of the works of the 17th-century British medical scholar Thomas Browne, and a collection of 19th-century French medical theses.

Central America

Mexico

Biblioteca Francisco de Burgoa, Centro Cultural de Santo Domingo, Oaxaca. Named after 17th-century Dominican historian Francisco de Burgoa and now a part of the Universidad Autónoma Benito Juárez de Oaxaca, this library collection includes some 23,000 books (including 11 incunabula and early Mexican printed works) originally held by monasteries in Oaxaca state.

Biblioteca Palafoxiana, Puebla. The library was established in 1646 by Juan de Palafox y Mendoza for the Puebla seminary, making it the first library in New Spain. He donated his own collection of books as the library's starter collection. The main reading room was constructed in 1773 by Bishop Francisco Fabian y Fuero, who named the institution after Palafox.

José Vasconcelos Library, Mexico City. Named after early 20th-century Mexican philosopher and politician José Vasconcelos, this public library designed by Alberto Kalach was a pet project of President Vicente Fox, who dedicated it in 2006. Built primarily of glass and metal and surrounded by botanical gardens that buffer it from urban noise, the library houses half a million books, 750 computers, a children's room, a multimedia laboratory, and a modern facility for the visually impaired. Unfortunately, construction defects required it to be shut down for remodeling in 2007–2008. The library features several sculptures by Mexican artists, the most striking of which is Gabriel Orozco's *Ballena*, a painted gray whale skeleton placed prominently in the central corridor.

Public Library, Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, Morelia. This Baroque building, built in the Tuscan style in 1660, was originally a cathedral attached to the Palacio Clavijero, a Jesuit college. It served a variety of functions over the years until 1930 when it became a joint-use library. It contains collections from the Franciscan Convent of San Buenaventura, the papers of 19th-century journalist and writer Mariano de Jesús Torres, and a collection of 18th-century Jesuit manuscripts.

South America

Argentina

National Library, Buenos Aires. The library was established in 1810 as the city's public library. In 1884, it redefined its mission and became the national depository library. It is currently housed in a T-shaped brutalist concrete structure designed in 1961 by architects Clorindo Testa, Francisco Bullrich, and Alicia Cazzaniga. Completed in 1992, it stands on the site of the Quinta Unzué palace, the residence of President Juan Perón and his wife Eva, and is surrounded by plazas and parks. The library features a large newspaper archive, photo library, map collection, and rare books that include a first edition of *Don Quixote*.

Brazil

National Library, Rio de Janeiro. The largest collection in Latin America with some 9 million items, the library was founded in 1810 after Napoleon's invasion of Iberia when the Portuguese royal family transferred its court and 60,000 of its books to Brazil. Although King John VI took many of the holdings back to Portugal when he returned in 1821, the remaining books in the royal library were acquired by the newly independent state of Brazil in 1825. The current neoclassical building with its marble staircases and columns opened on the library's 100th anniversary in 1910. In the lobby are two murals by American artist George Biddle and two bronze bas reliefs by his wife, sculptress Helena Sardeau Biddle, given to Brazil by the United States in 1942.

Real Gabinete Português de Leitura, Rio de Janeiro. Established in 1837 by Portuguese immigrants, this library contains depository copies of all books published by Portuguese authors, making it the largest collection of Lusophone literature outside Europe.

Chile

National Library, Santiago. Founded in 1813, the library is housed with the National Archives in a neoclassical structure that opened in 1913. Among its valuable holdings is the collection of early American printed works and Chilean nautical, geographical, and ethnographic history donated by bibliographer and historian José Toribio Medina. Other treasures include the first map of Easter Island in 1770, a 1498 copy of Sebastian Brant's *Ship of Fools*, and Luis de Valdivia's *Sermon on the Language of Chile* published in Spain in 1621.

Peru

Monastery of San Francisco Library, Lima. The library of this 17th-century Franciscan monastery houses more than 20,000 books and manuscripts from the 15th–18th centuries resting on beautiful hardwood shelves.

Europe

Austria

Admont Abbey Library, Admont. The ornate library hall of this 11th-century Benedictine abbey was built in 1776 by architect Josef Hueber. It is the largest monastery library in the world. Its white-and-gold bookcases are filled with 70,000 rare printed works. More than 7,000 diamond-shaped flagstones of white, red, and gray marble are cleverly arranged in geometric patterns so that they can be viewed as ribbons, zigzag lines, cubes, or steps, depending on perspective. Seven ceiling frescoes created by

Bartolomeo Altomonte in the central cupola show the steps in man's exploration of thought from the sciences to religion. Greater-than-life-size sculptures by Josef Stammel depict the "Four Last Things"—Death, the Last Judgment, Heaven, and Hell.

Altenburg Abbey Library, Altenburg. The library in this 12th-century Benedictine abbey was rebuilt in Baroque style in the 1730s by architect Joseph Munggenast. A fresco by Paul Troger in the central dome depicts the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon, while paintings in the other domes are by Johann Jakob Zeiller.

Franciscan Monastery Library, Schwaz. This early 16th-century monastery boasts a collection of 467 incunabula, as well as the collections of the Innsbrück monasteries that were abolished in 1785 by Emperor Joseph II.

Klosterneuburg Abbey Library, Klosterneuburg. This 12th-century Augustinian abbey has the largest private research library in Austria. The library hall was completed in 1842 when the abbey was rebuilt. The library owns a prayer book and a 12th-century bible belonging to the abbey's founder, St. Leopold III, margrave of Austria.

Kremsmünster Abbey Library, Kremsmünster. A library dates back to the founding of this Benedictine Abbey in 777. The library was famous even in the Middle Ages, drawing eminent scholars to study and write at the abbey, where histories of the bishops of Passau, the dukes of Bavaria, and the abbey itself were compiled. The current facility was built in 1680–1689 by Italian architect Carlo Antonio Carlone. Its most famous manuscript is the richly decorated 9th-century Codex Millenarius, which contains all four gospels in Latin written in solemn Carolingian uncial script.

Lambach Abbey Library, Lambach. The library in this 11th-century Benedictine abbey was built around 1691. Its importance lies not only in the rich collection of monastic archives, but also in its 18th-century Viennese music scores, among them a symphony by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, the Lambacher Symphony (K.45a), recorded as a gift by Mozart himself in January 1769.

Lilienfeld Abbey Library, Lilienfeld. Founded in 1202 by Leopold VI, duke of Austria, this Cistercian abbey library was refurbished in the early 17th century. Ceiling frescos by Johann Jakob Pianck were added later. Despite the loss of much of its collection in 1789, the library currently owns 40,000 items, among them a 14th-century biblical concordance by Ulrich von Lilienfeld.

Melk Abbey Library, Melk. The abbey was founded in 1089 when Leopold II, margrave of Austria, gave one of his castles to some Benedictine monks, and the library soon became renowned for its extensive manuscript collection. It is also well-known for its ceiling fresco, painted by Paul Troger in 1731–1732, which depicts an allegory of Faith surrounded by the four Cardinal Virtues. In his 1980 novel *The Name of the Rose*, Umberto Eco named one of the protagonists "Adso von Melk" as a tribute.

National Library, Vienna. The library dates back to 1368 and the personal collection of Albert III, duke of Austria. The Baroque Great Hall (Prunksaal) was built in 1723–1726 to house the Habsburg imperial court's manuscripts, incunabula, books, maps, and globes until late in the 19th century. It is decorated with statues of Emperor Charles VI and other Habsburg monarchs by Peter and Paul Strudel and ceiling frescoes by Daniel Gran. The court library became the Austrian National Library when the republic was established in 1920. Its treasures include the largest Egyptian papyrus collection in Europe, a 6th-century Greek illuminated manuscript of *De Materia Medica* by Dioscorides, a museum of 380 globes and scientific instruments from before 1850, and a map collection that includes the 17th-century *Atlas Blaeu-van der Hem*, a 50-volume set of more than 2,400 maps, prints, and drawings.

St. Florian's Priory Library, Sankt Florian. Construction of the library wing of this 9th-century Augustinian monastery was begun in 1744 by Johann Gotthard Hayberger. The library owns 952 incunabula and 800 medieval manuscripts. The ceiling fresco by Bartolomeo Altomonte and Antonio Tassi shows the marriage of virtue with knowledge.

Vorau Abbey Library, Vorau. Founded in 1163 by Ottokar III, margrave of Styria, this richly ornamented Augustinian library has an impressive collection of manuscripts from the 11th–18th century, including the 12th-century *Kaiserchronik*, a poetic history of the Roman and German

emperors from Julius Caesar to Conrad III. Next to the entrance stand two statues symbolizing wisdom and knowledge, and the ceiling is adorned with three frescos that represent philosophy, theology, and jurisprudence.

Belgium

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven Library, Leuven. The university and its library were established in 1835, shortly after Belgium acquired independence from the Netherlands. The library was completely destroyed in a fire purposely set on August 25, 1914, by German troops occupying the town at the beginning of World War I. Hundreds of thousands of irreplaceable books and manuscripts were lost. A new Renaissance Revival structure, designed in 1921 by American architect Whitney Warren and featuring the controversial inscription *Furore Teutonico Diruta: Dono Americano Restituta* (“Destroyed by Teutonic fury, restored by American gifts”) on its façade, was dedicated in 1928. The building and most of its collections were again destroyed on May 16, 1940, during the German invasion of Belgium, although apparently not deliberately. The losses included specimens of every incunable printed in the Netherlands and many books and papers on socialism and anarchism written by German scholars in the 1920s. The library was rebuilt after World War II in accordance with Warren’s design.

Hendrik Conscience Memorial Library, Antwerp. The first official library of the city of Antwerp dates back to 1481. Since 1883, it has been housed in the Sodaliteit, a 1622 building that once belonged to a Jesuit monastery. The exhibit hall (Nottebohmzaal) houses the rare materials, which include 17th-century terrestrial and celestial globes made by Willem Blaeu, an Egyptian storage cabinet and collection of books by German archaeologist Karl Richard Lepsius, and busts of famous writers from Antwerp and other cities of Europe.

Plantin-Moretus Museum Library, Antwerp. Originally a collection belonging to the renowned 16th-century printers Christophe Plantin and Jan Moretus, the library is located in a museum at their former home and workshop. Their proofreaders constantly needed new dictionaries and other reference works, and by the early 19th century the firm owned 10,000 volumes. Sold to the city in 1876 as a printing museum, the library also has a modern collection of books on graphic design.

Croatia

Franciscan Monastery Library, Dubrovnik. Rebuilt after a devastating earthquake in 1667, the Franciscan library owns a first edition (1521) of the epic poem *Judita* by Marko Marulić and a manuscript of the Croatian Baroque epic *Osman* by Ivan Gundulić. Historical manuscripts of medical prescriptions from the monastery pharmacy, in use since 1317, are also kept in the library. On permanent exhibit are a 15th-century silver-gilt cross and silver thurible, an 18th-century crucifix from Jerusalem, a 1541 martyrology by Bemardin Gucetić, and illuminated psalters.

National and University Library, Zagreb. The library began as a Jesuit collection established in 1611. It was attached to the Zagreb Academy chartered by Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I in 1669 that was the predecessor of the modern University of Zagreb. It became a depository library in 1837. Its most notable location was on Marko Marulić Square from 1913 to 1995 in a Viennese Secession-style building that now houses the Croatian State Archives. The current building, with six upper floors providing a panoramic view of the city, was designed by Croatian architects Velimir Neidhardt, Davor Mance, Zvonimir Krznarić, and Marijan Hržić to accommodate its 2.5 million volumes.

Czech Republic

Klementinum Library, Prague. The Klementinum is a historic group of buildings that originated in an 11th-century chapel dedicated to St. Clement. A Jesuit college stood here from 1556 until 1773, when Empress Maria Theresa confiscated the property and established the collection as the Imperial-Royal

Public and University Library. This sumptuous Baroque library was probably completed in 1727 by Czech architect Kilian Ignaz Dientzenhofer. Its collections include significant materials on Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Tycho Brahe, and John Amos Comenius, as well as historic examples of Czech literature. In 1990 it became the National Library of the Czech Republic.

Strahov Monastery Library, Prague. This library dates back to the establishment of the Premonstratensian abbey in 1143, although most of its collections were plundered by the Swedish army in 1648 at the end of the Thirty Years' War. After the Peace of Westphalia, the monastery's books were housed in the Theological Hall built in 1671–1679, a splendid Baroque room with a beautifully ornate ceiling painted by Siard Nosecký; the room is now lined with astronomical globes and displays a facsimile of the 9th-century Strahov New Testament with its bejeweled 17th-century binding. The expanding collections required the construction of additional space, completed in 1783–1797 and known as the Philosophical Hall, where Franz Anton Maulbertsch painted a ceiling fresco in six months in 1794 with the help of just one assistant. The richly gilded and carved walnut bookcases are the work of carpenter Jan Lahofer. The highest rows of books are only accessible from a gallery; hidden spiral staircases, masked with false book spines, lead up to the corners of the gallery. An adjacent Cabinet of Curiosities features the preserved remains of an extinct dodo bird, sea fauna, insects, minerals, handcuffs, and Hussite peasant weapons. In 1953, the library was nationalized as a Museum of National Literature, and the monastic archives, music collection, picture gallery, and exhibits were dispersed to other state institutions. Soon after 1989, following the collapse of state communism, the library was returned to the monks.

Vyšší Brod Monastery Library, Vyšší Brod. Established in 1750, the collection in this Rococo Cistercian library contains parchment manuscripts going back to the 8th century. The reading room is decorated with frescos and topped with a ceiling adorned with gold leaf.

Denmark

Royal Danish Library, Copenhagen. The library was founded in 1648 by King Frederick III, opened to the public in 1793, and became part of the University of Copenhagen system in 1993. The central library consists of two buildings, a neoclassical one completed in 1906 by architect Hans Jørgen Holm, and a new building, linked to the older one by three passageways, and completed in 1999 by the firm of Schmidt Hammer Lassen. Its angular glass and black granite exterior has earned it the nickname "Black Diamond." An electroacoustic sound ornament titled *Katalog* by the Danish composer Fuzzy plays for three minutes every day, changing each week with different selections inspired by one of the library's treasures.

Finland

National Library, Helsinki. The library is the oldest and largest research library in the country. Established in 1640 as the collection of the Royal Academy in Turku, the library was destroyed by fire in 1827. The 800 books that remained were moved to Helsinki, where a new neoclassical university library, designed by German architect Carl Ludvig Engel with lavish interior Corinthian columns, opened in 1845. As part of the University of Helsinki, it served as the main library until 2006. The bulk of its collection is stored in a 57,600-cubic-meter underground bunker drilled into solid rock, 59 feet below the library.

France

Bibliothèque Condé, Château de Chantilly. The library was built in 1876–1877 by Honoré Daumet, the architect for the rebuilding of the entire castle, to house the rare collection of bibliophile Henri d'Orléans, duc d'Aumale. Maps, folded down in front of the shelves, were used as blinds to protect the books from light. The library contains more than 12,500 printed volumes and some 200 medieval

manuscripts, with a collection of the letters of Pope Gregory from 983; the famous *Les Très Riches Heures* of Jean, duc de Berry, from 1410; and 40 miniatures from Jean Fouquet's 1461 *Book of Hours of Étienne Chevalier* taking pride of place. Daumet built a second library in 1880 in the former castle theater to house the duke's working collection of recent books.

Bibliothèque Humaniste, Sélestat. The library consists of two collections that were acquired by the city in 1547: the humanist Latin School Library founded in Sélestat in 1452, and the collection of the 16th-century Alsatian scholar, Beatus Rhenanus, the only Renaissance humanist library remaining virtually intact. In 1888, the two libraries moved into a former corn exchange building along with the municipal archives. Its treasures include a 7th-century Merovingian reader, a 12th-century prayer book in Carolingian miniscule, and a manuscript copy of Otto of Passau's *The 24 Elders* from 1430.

Bibliothèque Mazarin, Paris. Initially the personal collection of Cardinal Mazarin, the library has been open to scholars since 1643. Upon his death, Mazarin bequeathed the collection to the Collège des Quatre-Nations, which became the Institut de France in 1805. Among its collections is a copy of the Gutenberg Bible known as the Bible Mazarine. The ornate reading room, with its bust of Mazarin by Louis Lerambert, was restored in 1968–1974.

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris. The library has its origins in the royal library of King Charles V, founded at the Louvre palace in 1368. It opened its doors to scholars in 1692. After the government seized the private collections of aristocrats during the French Revolution, the library became known as the Bibliothèque nationale in 1792. It is currently housed in two building complexes—one on the Rue de Richelieu with an elaborate oval reading room constructed in the 1860s by architect Henri Labrouste, and the other on the east side of the city that opened in 1995 as the Site François-Mitterrand. Another unique collection, the Library of the Arsenal, was the private collection of the 18th-century master of artillery, Antoine-René de Voyer, marquis de Paulmy puis d'Argenson; it was acquired by the national library in 1932 and is housed on the Rue Sully. The BnF was also the first major library to provide full-text online access to some of its materials through a digital library, Gallica, in 1997.

Bibliothèque Ste.-Geneviève, Paris. Completed in 1851 by architect Henri Labrouste, this library inherited the collections of the Benedictine Abbey of Ste.-Geneviève, said to have been founded in 502 by the Frankish King Clovis I. The iron structure of its reading room has been praised by Modernist architects for its introduction of advanced technology in a monumental building. It is now part of the University of Paris 1.

Bibliothèque de la Sorbonne, Universities of Paris. Built as the library of the University of Paris in 1770 after the university acquired the college of the Jesuits, who were expelled from France in 1763, the library closed in 1793 during the French Revolution and its books and holdings were transferred elsewhere. The current building by architect Henri-Paul Nénot was completed in 1897, three more stories were added in 1932, and a basement level was put in place in the 1970s. The Collections Patrimoniales contain the university archives up to the Revolution, historical manuscripts, the papers of philosopher Victor Cousin, the papers of the dukes of Richelieu, and some 100,000 pre-1801 imprints. The library now serves five of the universities of Paris.

National Assembly Library, Palais Bourbon, Paris. Established in 1796 in a hall of the National Assembly and remodeled by Jules de Joly in 1826, the library can be seen by prior appointment even when the Assembly is sitting. Its 22 ceiling paintings depicting the history of civilization were the work of artist Eugène Delacroix in 1838–1845. The library contains more than 350,000 volumes, as well as the original records of the trial of Joan of Arc and the Aztec Codex Borbonicus. In 2009, it signed a partnership agreement with the Bibliothèque nationale de France to digitize some of its rare manuscripts, including a copy of *Le Roman de la Rose* and an autograph copy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Julie, or the New Heloise*.

Salle de La Chapelle, Municipal Library, Alençon. Housed in a former 17th-century Jesuit church, the city's rare-books collection consists of 723 manuscripts, at least 125 of them from the Middle Ages, and 57,000 rare books dealing with the history and culture of Normandy.

Germany

Abbey of St. Peter im Schwarzwald, Sankt-Peter. Built by Austrian architect Peter Thumb in 1737–1739, this Rococo library is decorated with paintings above the bookshelves that illustrate the major areas of knowledge. Much of the collection was lost in 1806 with the coming of secularization, but it has retained volumes on geography, astronomy, and literature of the Enlightenment.

Carmelite Monastery Library, Straubing. The library was founded in 1368 and completely restored in 2008. The main hall is famous for its dazzling frescoes of scholarly Carmelites painted in 1715 by an unknown artist.

Duchess Anna Amalia Library, Weimar. The library, a public research center for German literature and art and music history, is named for Anna Amalia, duchess of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, who arranged in 1766 for the books belonging to the ducal court to be moved into her remodeled residence. A major part of the collection was destroyed or severely damaged by a fire in September 2004. The Rococo hall was restored and reopened in 2007, along with a modern reading room called a “Book Cube”; some of the damaged volumes have now been replaced or restored.

Francke Foundations Historical Library, Halle. Founded as a charity in 1695 by the Pietist cleric August Hermann Francke, the Francke Foundations possess a library with a strong emphasis on religious and cultural history. The collection, which includes a cabinet of curiosities, has been housed in a well-preserved building dating from 1728.

Frederick the Great’s Library, Schloss Sanssouci, Potsdam. The circular library room in Prussian King Frederick the Great’s 1740s summer castle is accessible through a narrow passageway from his bedroom. The walls and alcoved bookcases are paneled with cedarwood and augmented with rich gold-colored ornamentation. Frederick’s 2,100 books were removed for safety during World War II and finally returned in 1992 after reunification.

Freising Cathedral Library, Freising. The cathedral’s Baroque library hall became the first Catholic public library in Bavaria when it opened in the 1730s. A new building was created for the collection in 1974, but the original library, which contains a statue of Apollo from 1780, is still in use.

Göttingen State and University Library, Göttingen. Founded in 1734, the library was soon considered one of the leading research libraries in Germany. Serving not only as the library of Göttingen University, this facility is also the central library for the German State of Lower Saxony and the Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Humanities. It also houses the Center for Retrospective Digitization and the GBV regional library consortium offices.

Herzog August Library, Wolfenbüttel. Founded in 1572 by Julius, duke of Brunswick-Lüneberg, the library was named for Duke Augustus the Younger who built up the original collection. It became a famous research library where scholars collaborated on various projects. Its librarians have included the philosophers Gottfried Leibniz and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. The primary building in the complex of eight opened in 1887. Its holdings include many treasures, including the 12th-century Gospels of Henry the Lion, the 7th-century Codex Carolinus, and the 12th-century encyclopedia Liber Floridus.

National Library, Leipzig. Formerly known as the Deutsche Bücherei, this branch of the National Library system is the largest library in Germany. Established in 1913 to collect all German-language imprints, the library was designed by architect Oskar Pusch in 1914–1916 and features the portraits of Otto von Bismarck, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and Johannes Gutenberg on the façade. It merged with the German Library in Frankfurt in 1990 to form a reunified National Library. The building underwent a major expansion and renovation in 2007–2011 by Stuttgart architect Gabriele Glöckler to accommodate the collections of the German Music Archive housed in Berlin.

St.-Nikolaus-Hospital Library, Bernkastel-Kues. Philosopher and scientist Nicholas of Cusa built this hospital in the 1450s. Its library was established upon his death in 1464 and contains 314 manuscripts in all fields of knowledge dating from the 9th to the 15th century, as well as Nicholas’s entire works, drafts of his sermons, and astronomical equipment.

Schussenried Abbey Library Hall, Bad Schussenried. The library hall in this 12th-century Premonstratensian monastery was built in 1748 and features two levels of locked bookcases and ample ambient light. The doors of the bookcases resemble the spines of books and contain hidden wooden reading stands and seats. The ceiling fresco completed by Franz Georg Hermann in 1757 depicts the work of divine wisdom in the Apocalypse, the sciences, art, and technology. After secularization, the library books were removed in 1809 and the monastery served successively as a castle, a foundry, and a lunatic asylum. Since 1998 it has been used as an exhibit hall and event center.

Upper Lusatian Science Library, Görlitz. The library was created in 1951 by combining two collections, the Johann Gottlieb Milich City and High School Library founded in 1727, and the Upper Lusatian Scientific Society founded in 1779. Housed in a baroque building owned by the society since 1804, the library moved in 2010 to allow for a complete renovation of the facility, which will be used for the Saxon State Festival in 2011. Its volumes include the most extensive collection of works about the German mystic Jakob Böhme.

Waldsassen Abbey Library, Waldsassen. The current library of this Cistercian monastery was completed in 1727. The four ceiling frescoes were painted by Karl Hofreiter, and the 10 wooden sculptures of life-sized figures that seem to be holding up a second-floor balcony were created by Karl Stilp.

Wiblingen Abbey Library, Ulm. Originally designed as a reception hall in 1744, the former Benedictine library's multicolored marble Corinthian columns are topped with gilded capitals that support an elaborate balustrade. The library is exquisitely decorated with scholarly iconography filled with theological and philosophical references by artist Franz Martin Kuen and sculptor Dominikus Hermenegild Herberger.

Greece

Gennadius Library, Athens. Opened in 1926 with 26,000 volumes from diplomat and bibliophile Ioánnis Gennádios, who spent a lifetime collecting first editions and illuminated manuscripts, the library now holds a diverse collection of books, archives, manuscripts, and works of art on the Hellenic tradition and neighboring cultures. The library is one of two attached to the American School of Classical Studies.

Iviron Monastery Library, Mount Athos. The library of this 10th-century Eastern Orthodox monastery is one of the richest of the 20 on the mountain. It holds 2,000 manuscripts, 15 liturgical scrolls, and 20,000 books, most of which are in Georgian, Greek, Hebrew, and Latin.

Monastery of St. John the Theologian Library, Pátmos. This Greek Orthodox monastery was established in 1088 by Hosios Christodoulos. Its library includes a wealth of Greek bound manuscripts, scrolls, early documents, printed books published between 1535 and 1845, the Golden Bull of Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos that granted the monastery, and 33 leaves of the 6th-century Codex Petropolitanus Purpureus.

Hungary

Archbishop's Library, Kalocsa. This diocesan library is located in the archiepiscopal palace near the city cathedral. Established by Archbishop Ádám Patachich in 1784 from his own book collection and the cathedral's medieval holdings, the library's reading room is surrounded by adjustable shelf units topped by 12 grisaille carvings by Franz Anton Maulbertsch showing the great thinkers of the ancient world. The library's oldest manuscript is the St. Fulgentius Codex dating from 1040, while the oldest in its rich collection of medical codices is a 1330 *Compendium medicinae*.

Ervin Szabó Library, Wenckheim Palace, Budapest. Budapest's central library is housed in the former Baroque Revival Wenckheim Palace built in 1887 by architect Arthur Meinig. The palace was converted to a library in 1927 after the city council acquired it. The living spaces were turned into

stacks and offices and the large ballroom was converted to a reading room, which features stucco ornamentation with gold tracery, enormous chandeliers, and finely worked wooden staircases. The library is named for social reformer Ervin Szabó, the city librarian from 1911 to 1918, who modernized library services along American lines. A major renovation in 1998–2001 added two more connecting buildings.

Pannonhalma Archabbey Library, Pannonhalma. This neoclassical Benedictine library holds the 11th-century founding charter of the Tihany Abbey, which features the earliest written sample of the Hungarian language.

Ireland

Bolton Library, Cashel. The library, housed in a former chapter house of St. John the Baptist Cathedral, contains a collection of antiquarian books, many of them once owned by Theophilus Bolton, Protestant Archbishop of Cashel from 1729 to 1744. It includes a 13th-century vellum manuscript and works by Dante Alighieri, Jonathan Swift, John Calvin, Desiderius Erasmus, and Niccolò Machiavelli.

Chester Beatty Library, Dublin Castle. The library was established in 1950 to house the collections of American copper magnate Alfred Chester Beatty, who had amassed a remarkable collection of Asian art and books. The collection's treasures include 260 copies of the Qur'an by master calligraphers; biblical papyri from the 2d to the 4th centuries that are the earliest known copies of the New Testament in Greek; the Coëtivy Book of Hours, an illuminated 15th-century French prayer book; early and fine books and bindings; the largest collection of jade books from the Imperial Court outside China; Japanese painted scrolls from the 17th and 18th centuries; and woodblock prints by ukiyo-e artists Hiroshige and Hokusai.

Marsh's Library, Dublin. Built for Dublin Archbishop Narcissus Marsh in 1701, this was the first public library in Ireland. Designed by William Robinson, the library is one of the few 18th-century buildings in the city still used for its original purpose. Many of its collections are kept on the shelves allocated to them by Marsh and Élie Bouhéreau, the first librarian, when the library opened. The interior has beautiful dark oak bookcases, each with carved and lettered gables topped by a miter, and three elegant wired alcoves where readers were locked in with rare books.

National Library of Ireland, Dublin. Designed by Thomas Deane, the library opened in 1890 to house the collections of the Royal Dublin Society. The first-floor reading room (where James Joyce located the literary debate in *Ulysses*) features a magnificent dome reminiscent of the British Museum.

Trinity College Library, Dublin. Dating back to the college's founding in 1592, the library is the largest in Ireland. It has benefited from legal deposit legislation of both the Republic of Ireland since 1922 and the United Kingdom since 1801, accounting for much of its collection of 5 million volumes. The Old Library opened in 1732; its main chamber is the Long Room, and at nearly 65 meters in length it is filled with some of the library's oldest books. The most famous of its manuscripts, the 8th-century Book of Kells and the 7th-century Book of Durrow, were presented by Henry Jones, bishop of Meath and former vice-chancellor of the college, in the 1660s.

Italy

Archiginnasio Public Library, Bologna. This library began operations in 1801 when the city began collecting books owned by religious orders that were disbanded during the Napoleonic Era. In 1837–1838, the collection moved into the upper level of the Archiginnasio, where the University of Bologna was once located. The reading room opened to the public in 1846. The library now focuses on the history, politics, and culture of Bologna, but it also has some 3,500 incunabula and 15,000 rare books from the 16th century.

Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan. Named after St. Ambrose, bishop and patron saint of Milan, the library was established in 1609 by Cardinal Federico Borromeo, who wanted it to be a center for Catholic

scholarship open to the public. His agents scoured Europe looking for books, acquiring the manuscripts of the Benedictine Bobbio Abbey and the library of scholar Gian Vincenzo Pinelli of Padua, whose large collection of ancient Greek manuscripts included a 5th-century illuminated copy of Homer's *Iliad*. Other treasures are a copy of Virgil's *Aeneid* with marginalia by Petrarch, the 12-volume Codex Atlanticus of Leonardo da Vinci, a 7th-century Latin list of books of the New Testament (the Muratorian fragment), an original copy of Luca Pacioli's treatise *De divina proportione*, and the earliest known copy of Sibawayh's Arabic grammar. The building and some of its holdings were damaged during World War II, but it was restored in 1952 and 1990–1997.

Biblioteca Angelica, Rome. Established in 1604 by Bishop Angelo Rocca adjacent to the Basilica di Sant'Agostino, this library owns collections related to the works of St. Augustine of Hippo and the history of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. Since 1940, the library has housed the archives of the literary Academy of Arcadia.

Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome. The Dominicans of the Monastery of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome opened this library to the general public in 1701 after the death of Cardinal Girolamo Casanata, who had bequeathed his collection of rare volumes. Now managed by the Ministry of Culture, many of the library's books are housed in the Salone Monumentale, a fine example of early modern library architecture. Included are many musical libretti and scores, among them unpublished works by Niccolò Paganini.

Biblioteca Malatestiana, Cesena. Established by the condottiero of Cesena, Malatesta Novello, in 1447 for the use of Franciscan monks, the library is considered the first public library in Italy. Upon his death in 1465, Malatesta entrusted the library's management to the city. The architect Matteo Nuti da Fano designed the well-preserved interior in the style of a basilica, with three aisles separated by two rows of columns. The entrance portal, created by sculptor Agostino di Duccio, is topped by a pediment with the figure of an Indian elephant, and the elaborate walnut door was carved by Cristoforo da San Giovanni in Persiceto, who subdivided it into 48 small panels decorated with the Malatesta family coat of arms.

Biblioteca Marciana, Venice. Named after St. Mark, the patron saint of Venice, the library began with Byzantine Cardinal Basilios Bessarion's 1468 donation to the city of around 1,000 books, codices, and manuscripts. The collection came to be housed in the neoclassical building known as the Libreria Sansoviniana constructed on the Piazza San Marco by Jacopo Sansovino and Vincenzo Scamozzi from 1537 to 1591. Its two floors are linked by a staircase decorated with frescoes and gilded stucco. In 1904 the collection was moved to Sansovino's adjacent Zecca (built in 1537–1547 as a mint), but it soon expanded back into its earlier quarters. The ground-floor vestibule has a ceiling painting, *La Sapienza* (1560), by Titian, which was restored to its original brilliance in 1986.

Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence. The library is housed in a building commissioned by the Medici family for their private library, planned and partially built by Michelangelo in 1523–1534, and continued by others for its grand opening in 1571. Notable holdings include the Nahuatl-language Florentine Codex, a major source of Aztec life before the Spanish conquest; the 6th-century Syriac Rabbula Gospels; the Codex Amiatinus, which contains the earliest surviving manuscript of the Latin Vulgate Bible; the Squarcialupi Codex, a primary source for 14th-century Italian music; the fragmentary Erinna papyrus containing poems by a friend of Sappho; and a 1351 sea atlas showing an accurate outline of Africa.

Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, Milan. A public university library serving the Academy of Fine Arts of Brera, founded in 1772 on the site of a former Jesuit school, the library has two magnificent reading rooms: the Maria Theresa Room, with two levels of exquisite walnut bookshelves designed by the architect Giuseppe Piermarini and two huge Bohemian crystal chandeliers reconstructed from the remains of ones that lit the Hall of Caryatids in the Royal Palace of Milan, damaged by Allied bombing in 1943; and the Theological Hall, once used by the Jesuits as a study room, with portraits of two Habsburg emperors.

Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, Florence. The library was founded as the Biblioteca Magliabechiana in 1714 with the bequest of a collection by Antonio Magliabechi, bibliophile and

librarian to the grand duke of Tuscany. In 1743, it became a depository for Tuscan imprints and opened to the public in 1747. After Italian unification, it was renamed the National Central Library of Florence. Since 1935, the collections have been housed in a building located along the Arno River, which flooded on November 4, 1966, and damaged nearly one-third of the library's holdings including prints, maps, posters, newspapers, and a majority of works in the Palatine and Magliabechi collections. Unfortunately, 46 years later, many of the damaged books are still in storage awaiting repair, binding, cleaning, and reassembling.

Biblioteca Palatina, Palazzo della Pilotta, Parma. Primarily serving the students and faculty of the University of Parma, the library was founded in 1761 by Philip, duke of Parma. It has a large selection of incunabula, a substantial collection of music manuscripts, and Spanish and Hebrew collections.

Biblioteca Reale di Torino, Turin. Located on the ground floor of the Royal Palace, the library was established in 1840 by King Charles Albert to house the rare materials collected by the House of Savoy since the 18th century. It focuses on the history, culture, printing, and coinage of Savoy and Sardinia, but also possesses numerous original drawings by Leonardo da Vinci.

Biblioteca degli Uffizi, Florence. The library was housed in the former Medici theater from the late 18th century and specializes in the art of the Uffizi Gallery and history of the Florentine museums. In 1998, it moved to the restored site of the former Biblioteca Magliabechiana in the Via dei Castellani.

Libreria Piccolomini, Duomo, Siena. This cathedral library features numerous frescoes painted in 1502–1507 by artist Pinturicchio that tell the story of the life of Pope Pius II. Cardinal Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini, who later became Pope Pius III, commissioned the library in 1492 as the repository for the books and manuscripts of his uncle and predecessor. The library ceiling also contains paintings by Pinturicchio of scenes from classical mythology. Beneath the frescoes, the choir books from the sacristy are in display cases carved by Antonio Barili in 1495–1496; these exquisite illuminations by Liberale da Verona and Girolamo da Cremona were executed between 1466 and 1478.

Vatican Library, Vatican City, Rome. Pope Nicholas V established the current collection in 1448 by combining some 350 Greek, Latin, and Hebrew codices inherited from his predecessors with his own library, as well as manuscripts from the imperial library of Constantinople. The Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana was established in 1475; its first librarian, Bartolomeo Platina, produced the first catalog list of 3,498 items in 1481. Around 1587, Pope Sixtus V hired Domenico Fontana to construct the library building that is still in use today. One of its treasures is the Codex Vaticanus, one of the oldest extant manuscripts of the Greek Bible written by hand in the 4th century. Another is the Bodmer Papyrus XIV-XV; written in the early 3rd century, it is one of the very earliest surviving witnesses to the text of the New Testament. The library was closed to scholars in 2007–2010 for a major renovation and installation of a new security system.

Lithuania

Vilnius University Library, Vilnius. The library has been located in the old university building since its establishment in 1570 as a Jesuit college. Pranciškus Smuglevičius Hall, named after the Lithuanian painter Franciszek Smuglewicz who decorated it in 1803, is one of the oldest parts of the library and today is used by the Department of Rare Books. A unique collection of historical globes and astronomical instruments is housed in the White Hall, which served as the university observatory in 1753–1883. Some 10,000 Old Lithuanian books are the pride of its special collections. The library's commemorative doorway was dedicated in 1997 for the 450th anniversary of the first Lithuanian book, Martynas Mažvydas's 1547 catechism.

Malta

National Library of Malta, Valletta. Begun in 1555 when Grand Master Claude de la Sengle decreed that the personal libraries of deceased Knights of Malta would become part of the common heritage of the order, the collection was declared a public library in 1776 and became a legal depository in 1926. Since 1976 it has been strictly a research and reference library with the largest collection of books, pamphlets, newspapers, journals, and audiovisual recordings by Maltese authors in the world.

Netherlands

Amsterdam Central Public Library. Designed by architect Jo Coenen, the 28,000-square-meter building opened in 2007 as the largest public library in Europe. It features more than 700 public computers, business meeting rooms, a theatre, restaurant, radio station, and pianos for users to play.

Artis Library, University of Amsterdam. Founded in 1838 as the library of the Royal Zoological Society, the Artis is now administered as part of the university's special collections. Its current building was designed by the architect Gerlof Salm in 1868. The library has extensive holdings in the fields of zoology, taxonomy, and history of science.

Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, Joost Ritman Library, Amsterdam. A private, independent library founded in 1984 by businessman and collector Joost Ritman, this collection brings together the earliest editions of esoteric works in the Christian-Hermetic tradition, which includes occult philosophy, esotericism, comparative religion, alchemy, mysticism, and Rosicrucianism. The collection was temporarily closed in 2010–2011 during a financial dispute with a bank, and some 300 items were sold at auction. However, the library reopened in December 2011 with the majority of its holdings intact.

Bibliotheca Thysiana, Leiden University, Leiden. The library was built in 1657 to house the book collection of the lawyer Johannes Thysius. Upon his death, he bequeathed funds to build a public library. Designed by architect Arent van 's Gravesande, the building is in the Dutch Baroque style and regarded as one of the jewels of 17th-century Dutch architecture.

DOK Library Concept Center, Delft. The city commissioned architects Liesbeth van der Pol and Aequo BV to renovate, expand, and redesign a gloomy 1970s building into an inviting, 21st-century music, art, and public library. The library that opened in 2007 is a vividly colorful, innovative space with futuristic computer workstations; listening pods for music; Xbox and PlayStation gaming kiosks; comfortable chairs; a circulating art collection; a video-based public information system on a Wii channel; current newspapers and magazines in different languages displayed in recyclable bins; movable bookshelves; elaborate signage at eye-level and on the floors; huge glass windows and glass ceiling; wireless internet connections; a technology training area; and youth areas where children and teens can read graphic novels, play with toys, or download information to mobile phones.

Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague. Founded in 1798, the library originated with the collection of Prince William V of Orange and other stadtholders of the Dutch Republic. King Louis Bonaparte designated it as the Royal Library in 1806. The collection contains almost the entire literature of the Netherlands, from medieval manuscripts to modern scientific publications. In 1982, the library moved into a new, shiny white building designed by the Delft firm OD 205 that features a Reading Room of the Netherlands with 65,000 books on the history and culture of Holland.

Old Library (Handelingenkamer), House of Representatives, The Hague. Built in 1883 by architect Cornelis Peters, the library contains all the Acts of the Dutch Parliament. To allow as much light into a building where gas fixtures were not permitted, the roof was constructed as a leaded-glass dome. Railings on the bookcases are ornamented with green velvet.

Rijksmuseum Research Library, Amsterdam. The Rijksmuseum has the largest art history library in the country. It has acquired auction and exhibition catalogs, trade and collection catalogues, and books and periodicals relating to the museum collections without interruption since 1885.

St. Walburgiskerk Library, Zutphen. The reading room, or Librije, of this 11th-century church features some 300 books that are chained to the reading desks. It was established in 1561–1564 by church elders Conrad Slindewater and Herman Berner as an intellectual stronghold against the popularity of Reformation ideas. The books were chained because the room was open to the public; anyone could obtain a key and study for as long as the church was open. In recent years, all the books have been restored with the help of the Koninklijke Bibliotheek.

Poland

Jagiellonian University Library, Kraków. Housed from 1515 to 1940 in what is now the Gothic Revival–style Collegium Maius Museum, the new university library facility built in 2000 is one of the largest in Europe. The origins of its collections are in the 14th century, but the library also has a large number of 16th-century items, including Nicolaus Copernicus’s *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (1543) and the Balthasar Behem Codex. During the Nazi occupation, Polish scientists and youths studying in secret were allowed unofficial access to the collection, thanks to the help of the Polish librarians, who also saw to it that the library did not suffer significant damage.

National Library, Warsaw. The library originated with the collection of Bishops Józef Andrzej Załuski and Andrzej Stanisław Załuski, opening in 1747. It was one of the first libraries in the world intended to amass the entire body of Polish literature and make it accessible to the public. After Russian troops invaded Poland in 1794, nearly 400,000 of the library’s volumes were removed to the Imperial Library in St. Petersburg. Other books were acquired after independence in 1918, but much of the new library’s holdings, in particular its special collections, was destroyed toward the end of World War II. After the war, it has once again built up its collection to some 8.7 million items.

Portugal

Ajuda National Palace Library, Lisbon. Three kilometers of shelves circle the walls from floor to ceiling in this 15th-century library. Despite losses from the 1755 Lisbon earthquake, a relocation to Rio de Janeiro (later partially returned), and mergers with other libraries, its collection of manuscripts remains impressive with its specialization in 18th-century chamber music and opera. In 2007, it merged with the National Library of Portugal.

Biblioteca Joanina, University of Coimbra. Built between 1717 and 1728 for King John V, the library is a showcase of 18th-century Rococo design, with three great rooms divided by decorated arches designed by Portuguese artists. The walls are covered with shelves decorated in gilded or painted exotic woods. The ceiling frescoes are by Lisbon artists Antônio Simões Ribeiro and Vicente Nunes. The library now houses books published prior to 1800; its treasures include a 48-line Latin Bible from 1462, a 15th-century Book of Hours, and a 1599 interpretation of the Song of Solomon by Dominican scholar Luis de Sotomaior.

Mafra National Palace Library, Mafra. Architect Manuel Caetano de Sousa built one of the finest libraries in Europe in the late 18th century for King John V’s monastery and basilica and decorated it with a patterned floor of rose, gray, and white marble. Rococo-style wooden bookcases stand in two rows, separated by a balcony with a wooden railing. Its collection of rare books are locally bound in gold-embossed leather bindings—including a first edition of Luís de Camões’s *Os Lusíades* (1572). The library is said to house insect-eating bats as a conservation measure.

Portuguese Red Cross Library, Palácio da Rocha do Conde d’Óbidos, Lisbon. The palace was built in the mid-17th century by Vasco de Mascarenhas, earl of Óbidos. The Red Cross purchased the building in 1919 for its headquarters. The library, rebuilt in 1935, has collections on the history of humanitarianism, military law, and national legislation. It features a paneled ceiling with ornamental allegorical paintings of the seven liberal arts; a central panel, painted in 1938 by Gabriel Constante, depicts Elizabeth of Aragon and King Denis of Portugal.

Romania

Romanian Academy Library, Bucharest. Founded in 1867, the library has been a depository collection since 1885. It has the largest number of 16th-century books in Romania, among them a 1508 Slavonic liturgical manual that belonged to the Bistrița Monastery and a New Testament printed in Târgoviște in 1512.

Russia

National Library of Russia, Saint Petersburg. The oldest public library in Russia, the National Library started out in 1795 as the Imperial Public Library, established by Catherine the Great, whose private collections included the domestic libraries of Voltaire and Denis Diderot. It is said to house more than 33 million items, including the earliest surviving handwritten Russian book (1057). A new modern branch opened in 1998 on the Moskovsky Prospekt.

Nicholas II Library, Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg. This room in the Winter Palace was designed by architect Alexander Krasovsky in 1895 and once constituted a part of the private apartments of Czar Nicholas II. The main decorative elements are the bookcases arranged along the walls, a second-level gallery reached by a wooden staircase, walnut coffers in the ceiling adorned with four-petal rosettes, panels of stamped gilt leather, a massive Gothic fireplace embellished with heraldic griffins and lions, and high windows with openwork sashes. It holds more than 600,000 books covering poetry, visual arts, and painting.

Russian Academy of Sciences Library, Saint Petersburg. One of the world's largest scientific research collections, the library was founded by Czar Peter I in 1714. Although part of the Russian Academy, it also includes the collections housed by specialized academic institutions in Saint Petersburg and other cities. Since 1783 it has served as a national depository. The library was housed in the Kunstkamera museum until 1924, when it was transferred to a new facility that had been built for the library in 1914 but used as a military hospital in World War I. On February 15, 1988, the library suffered a catastrophic fire that destroyed nearly 300,000 books and damaged about 3.6 million others, but it has recovered sufficiently to claim holdings of 20.5 million items.

Russian State Library, Moscow. Founded in 1862 as the city's first free public library, the State Library was first housed along with art collections in the Pashkov House palace near the Kremlin. A new library, designed by Vladimir Shchuko and Vladimir Gelfreikh, began construction in 1930 and finally opened in the 1940s. A 250-seat reading room opened in 1945, with further additions continuing until 1960. Called the Lenin State Library from 1925 to 1992, it retains the nickname "Leninka." It currently holds more than 43 million items in 247 languages, with special collections of note in maps, sheet music, audio recordings, newspapers, and dissertations.

Spain

Barcelona Athenaeum, Barcelona. In 1872, two cultural organizations in the city merged to form the Ateneu Barcelonès, which became a key element in the intellectual life of the capital of Catalonia. The athenaeum moved in 1906 to the Palau de Sabassona, an 18th-century neoclassical building that was remodeled by modernist architect Josep Maria Jujol to accommodate it. Its library features Jujol's elaborate glass-and-wood bookshelves and ceiling frescos by the 18th-century Catalan painter Francesc Pla, which were carefully restored in 2007. Its collection focuses primarily on humanities and social sciences in Catalonia.

Castilla-La Mancha Regional Library, Toledo. The library's Borbón-Lorenzana collection has its origins in the library established for the city in 1773 by Cardinal Francisco Antonio de Lorenzana that incorporates the works of the writers of the Church of Toledo. This collection was enriched in 1794 with the books of the future Cardinal Luis María de Borbón y Vallabriga.

El Escorial Library, Madrid. The library's holdings include the personal collection of King Philip II, who built the palace in 1563–1584 as part royal residence and part monastery. It is located in a great hall 54 meters in length, with marble floors and beautifully carved wooden shelves crafted by architect Juan de Herrera. The 16th-century ceiling frescoes depicting the seven liberal arts are by Pellegrino Tibaldi. The 13th-century song collection *Cantigas de Santa María*, St. Teresa of Ávila's manuscripts and diary, a richly illuminated gospel book of Emperor Conrad II from 1039, and an 11th-century *Commentary on the Apocalypse* by St. Beatus of Liébana are just a few of its manuscript holdings.

National Library of Catalonia, Barcelona. The library was established in 1907 as the library of the Institute for Catalan Studies and opened to the public in 1914. After the Spanish Civil War, it moved to its current location in the 15th-century former Hospital de la Santa Creu and was declared a depository library for Catalonia in 1981. Of paramount importance are its collections of medieval and early modern manuscripts, rare musical scores and documents, rare Catalan books, works by and about Miguel de Cervantes and Jacint Verdaguer, engravings, periodicals, prints, maps, and photographs.

Real Academia Española, Library, Madrid. Founded in 1713, the academy's purpose is to foster the Spanish language and regulate its grammar and spelling. Its library started out as the private collection of founder Juan Manuel Fernández Pacheco, 8th Marquis of Villena. It moved into its current premises in 1894. A unique collection of specialized books on Spanish and Latin linguistics, philology, and literature, the library was significantly enhanced in 1995 with the extensive private collection of historical books, manuscripts, and artwork donated by philologist Antonio Rodríguez-Moñino and in 1998 with the library of poet and critic Dámaso Alonso.

Salamanca University General Historical Library, Salamanca. The library dates from 1254 when the university was granted a charter by King Alfonso X of Castile. Its immense antique reading room features remnants of a fading astronomical ceiling fresco, *The Sky of Salamanca*, painted by Fernando Gallego in 1473.

Yuso Monastic Library, San Millán de la Cogolla. This 17th-century library holds a facsimile of the *Glosas Emilianenses*, marginal commentaries by a 10th-century monk in three languages—simplified Latin, medieval Navarro-Aragonese, and medieval Basque—earning the monastery its title of the birthplace of the Spanish language. The original document has since moved to the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid.

Sweden

Bernadotte Library, Stockholm. The personal collections of the Swedish monarchs are housed in this library in the northeast wing of the Royal Palace, which took its name in 1952 from King Gustav VI Adolf of the House of Bernadotte. The library has been there since 1768, when it served as the de facto National Library. However, the royal collections (arranged on the shelves by monarch rather than subject) stayed behind when the National Library moved to Humlegården in 1877.

Carolina Rediviva, Uppsala. In 1841, the 200-year-old Uppsala University library moved into this specially designed building that houses 5 million books and manuscripts. The name was given in remembrance of the old Academia Carolina building, which functioned as university library for most of the 18th century. Its treasures include the 6th-century Codex Argenteus, a Gothic translation of the four gospels probably written for the Ostrogothic King Theodoric the Great; the Cancionero de Upsala, a volume of anonymous Spanish music printed in Venice in 1556; and the 1539 *Carta Marina* of Olaus Magnus, the earliest reasonably correct map of Scandinavia.

Leufsta Manor Library, Lövfstabruk. The manor house of 18th-century industrialist Charles De Geer now serves as a living museum. A portion of his library of scientific books is preserved here, although De Geer's collection was acquired by Uppsala University in 1989, where the more valuable materials are kept, including his impressive sheet-music collection.

Nobel Library, Swedish Academy, Stockholm. The public library of the Swedish Academy was established in 1901 to assist the evaluation of laureates to the Nobel Prize in Literature. It is one of the largest libraries of literature in Scandinavia.

Parliament Library, Stockholm. The Riksdagsbibliotek, created in 1851, is one of the few parliamentary libraries in the world that is open to the public.

Stockholm Public Library, Stockholm. A Nordic neoclassical building designed by Gunnar Asplund in 1918–1924 and completed in 1928, the library was Sweden's first open-stack public facility. Three levels of bookshelves surround the interior of the 23-meter-high rotunda. Asplund also designed 20 different kinds of chairs for the library. *The Sandman*, a painting by Post-Impressionist artist Nils von Dardel is in the children's room.

Trolleholm Castle Library, Svalöv. Set up by Wiveka Trolle in the late 18th century, the library in this 16th-century castle is Sweden's largest privately owned collection. Its elegant bookcases and galleries preserve the archives of the noble family of Trolle.

Switzerland

Abbey Library of St. Gall, St. Gallen. Although the 8th-century Benedictine abbey was largely destroyed during the Reformation, its library—the oldest in the country—was spared. The reading room, designed in 1758–1767 by Austrian architect Peter Thumb, is a stunning Rococo masterpiece. Its wooden floor is intricately inlaid, and the ceiling is decorated with stuccowork by Johann Georg and Matthias Gigl and trompe-l'oeil paintings by Josef Wannemacher. The monk Gabriel Loser was responsible for the wood carvings. Its holdings include an important collection of Irish manuscripts from the 8th to the 11th centuries. Books printed after 1900 can be borrowed, whereas older volumes can only be used in the reading room.

Central University Library, Bern. The library collections date back to the early 16th century. The most important historical holdings include the library of French scholar Jacques Bongars and the historical map collection of the Bernese statesman Johann Friedrich von Ryhiner. Prior to 2009, the library also served as the city and cantonal public library.

Einsiedeln Abbey, Einsiedeln. The Baroque library of this Benedictine monastery owns a 10th-century manuscript of the poem *Versus de scachis*, which contains the earliest mention of chess in Western literature. The 1738 library was restored in 1994–1998 and now holds 1,230 manuscripts, 1,100 incunabula and early prints, and 230,000 printed volumes.

Turkey

Archaeological Museums Library, Eminönü, Istanbul. Founded in 1891, the library contains the extensive collections of the museum's founder, archaeologist and artist Osman Hamdi Bey, as well as specialized works in science, archaeology, the history of art, and epigraphy.

Enderûn Library, Topkapı Palace, Istanbul. Built in 1719 by the royal architect Mimar Beşir Ağa on the orders of Ottoman Sultan Ahmed III for use by the royal household, the library is in the shape of a Greek cross with a domed central hall and three rectangular bays. Beneath the central arch of the portico is an elaborately ornamental drinking fountain. The exterior is faced with marble and the interior walls are covered in blue china tiles. Books on theology, Islamic law, and Ottoman scholarship in Turkish, Arabic, and Persian were stored in cupboards built into the walls. Now empty, all its rare books and manuscripts were moved to the palace's Mosque of the Ağas in 1928.

IRCICA Library, Yıldız Palace, Istanbul. The library was established at the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture on the initiative of Director General Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu in 1980. A reference library specializing in Islamic culture and civilization, the collection includes rare books from 1550 to 1800, early editions of translations of the Qur'an into European languages, the entire collection of the Mütferrika Press, the earliest printed works of the Ottoman Empire on history, and the transmission of knowledge from Europe to Turkey. Its archive of historical photographs contains

some 35,000 images of cities, monuments, and social life in the Muslim world taken at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

United Kingdom

Armagh Public Library, Northern Ireland. Founded in 1771 by Archbishop Richard Robinson, the library was built following the Georgian design of Thomas Cooley. The nucleus of the collection is Robinson's own library, which contains 17th–18th-century books on theology, philosophy, classic and modern literature, voyages and travels, history, medicine, and law. It has had museum status since 2001.

The British Library, London. The library's new facility in St. Pancras has 11 reading rooms, each specializing in different subject areas or types of material, where readers can access most of the library's 150 million items. Collections of British and overseas newspapers are available in another reading room in North London, and a research collection of 7 million items can be found in a third facility in Boston Spa in West Yorkshire. The Online Gallery provides access to 30,000 images from sacred or significant books, such as the Lindisfarne Gospels, together with certain exhibition items in a proprietary page-turning format. Among the library's treasures are the world's earliest dated printed book, the *Diamond Sutra*, from 868 A.D.; two Gutenberg Bibles; two copies of the 1215 Magna Carta; and the sole surviving manuscript copy of the Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf*.

Bromley House Library, Nottingham. The Nottingham Subscription Library was founded in 1816 and moved in 1822 to its present home in Bromley House. The library consists of a series of reading rooms with a spiral staircase, gallery, plaster ceilings, cornices, and overmantels.

Canterbury Cathedral Library, Canterbury. The first record of a library in the cathedral dates from the 10th century, although manuscripts were probably stored there as far back as the 7th century. The dissolution of the Cathedral Priory in 1540 resulted in the loss of most of its medieval books, but in the late 16th century the library collected printed materials. The Howley-Harrison collection is the largest in the library, originating from part of the personal libraries of Archbishop William Howley and his personal curate, Benjamin Harrison.

Chetham's Library, Manchester. The oldest free public reference library in the country, Chetham's was established in 1653 by the will of textile merchant Humphrey Chetham for the use of independent scholars. It holds 60,000 books that were published before 1851, as well as a rich collection of bookplates, postcards, chapbooks, broadsides, ballads, theatre programs, posters, trade cards, and bill heads. Chetham's was the meeting place of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels when Marx visited Manchester in 1845; the two studied together at the wooden desk in the window alcove of the reading room.

Duke Humfrey's Library, Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. When Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, donated more than 281 manuscripts to the Bodleian in the 1430s, this facility above the Divinity School was completed in 1488 to accommodate the library's growing holdings. Purged of all its Roman Catholic books in 1550 by a law passed by King Edward VI, the reading room is now used by scholars to consult manuscripts and papyri, rare book collections, local history, and Oxford University theses. The library served as the Hogwarts library in the first two Harry Potter films.

Durham Cathedral Library, Durham. The library originated in the collections of the monastery founded on Lindisfarne by St. Aidan in 635 A.D. The community moved to Durham in 995. After the dissolution of the monastery in 1539, the cathedral was reestablished under a dean who inherited what survived of the priory's collection of manuscripts and printed books. A Shakespeare First Folio stolen from a glass case in 1998 was finally returned in 2010 after British book dealer Raymond Scott was convicted of attempting to sell it to the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Francis Trigge Chained Library, St. Wulfram's Church, Grantham. In 1598, Francis Trigge, rector of Welbourne, gave £100 for a small library of books for the clergy and literate laity of Grantham. About 250 of the original volumes remain. Most of the books were originally chained, riveted to the fore-edge of the front covers. The 82 remaining chains run on rings along bars attached to the shelves.

Gladstone's Library, St. Deiniol's, Hawarden, North Wales. Former Prime Minister William Gladstone established this library in 1894. The largest residential library in the United Kingdom, it boasts an outstanding collection of more than 250,000 books, journals, and pamphlets with a focus on theology and Victorian studies. The heart of the library is Gladstone's own collection of more than 32,000 books, correspondence, speeches, and papers. Many of his books contain his annotations, some of which are extremely detailed.

Great Court and Reading Room, British Museum, London. Located in the center of the British Museum on Great Russell Street, the main reading room of the British Library has been restored to its original design, even though in 1997 the library actually moved to a new location in St. Pancras. Designed by Sydney Smirke following concepts suggested by Keeper of Printed Books Anthony Panizzi, the huge circular reading room was in continual use from 1857 until its temporary closure in 1997. Reopened in 2000, the room serves as a modern information center with a collection of books on history, art, travel, and other subjects relevant to the museum's collections, on open shelves.

Hereford Cathedral Chained Library, Hereford. Some 1,500 books are tethered by iron chains to bookcases as a precaution against theft. Two of the most valuable are a unique copy of the 13th-century Hereford antiphonary and an 8th-century Anglo-Saxon Gospel. A specially designed chamber in the new library building allows visitors to see the chained library in its original arrangement as it was in 1611–1841 and keeps the books under controlled environmental conditions.

John Rylands University Library, Manchester. This research library was founded by Enriqueta Augustina Rylands as a memorial to her late husband, textile millionaire John Rylands. Designed in Victorian Gothic style by architect Basil Champneys, the library opened to the public in 1900. Its collections feature exquisite medieval illuminated manuscripts, examples of the earliest forms of European printing, and the personal papers of distinguished historical figures including novelist Elizabeth Gaskell, physicist John Dalton, and Anglican cleric John Wesley. It also houses a collection of thousands of papyrus fragments and documents from North Africa and Greece, among them the 2nd-century St. John's Fragment, generally accepted as the earliest extant record of a canonical New Testament text. Since 1972 the building has served as the special collections division of the University of Manchester.

Kedermister Library, St. Mary's Church, Langley Marish, Berkshire. John Kedermister established a library in the church around 1613 for the benefit of vicars. A library catalog listing 307 volumes survives from 1638, and many of these are still on hand. Two of its treasures, the 11th-century Kedermister Gospel and a 1630 manuscript herbal, are on permanent loan to the British Library.

King James Library, St. Andrew's University, Fife, Scotland. The library, funded initially by King James I, was built on the site of the medieval College of St. John with the purpose of housing books bequeathed by Mary Queen of Scots, together with the university's existing collections. Completed in 1643, the building became a dedicated divinity library in 1977 when the general collections outgrew the space.

Lambeth Palace Library, London. Founded in 1610, this is the historic library and record office of the Archbishops of Canterbury and the repository of the documentary history of the Church of England.

Law Society Library, London. A private library for solicitor members of the Law Society of England and Wales, the library was founded in 1825 by a group of attorneys. A skylight illuminates the wall-covered shelves of legal publications relating to the British Isles.

Lincoln's Inn Library, London. The library was first mentioned in 1471 and originally existed in a building next to the Old Hall. The current facility was built as part of the complex containing the Great Hall, and was finished in 1845 by Philip Hardwick and extended in 1872 by George Gilbert Scott. It contains a large collection of rare books, including the complete collection of Sir Matthew Hale, which he bequeathed to the Inn in 1676, and the longest-running record series of any of the four Inns of Court—the Black Books commencing in 1422.

Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle upon Tyne. The society was founded in 1793 as a center for discussions about literature, art, and science. The current building with its magnificent reading rooms opened in 1825 and went on to become the largest private library outside London. The society

launched a music library in 1913 to collect scores of the great composers, followed in 1942 by a gramophone library of 78rpm records, which was later amplified with vinyl, CD, and DVD recordings.

Long Library, Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire. One of the longest (55 meters) rooms in a private home anywhere in the United Kingdom, the library was planned by John Vanbrugh and designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor in 1725 as a picture gallery. Charles Spencer, 3rd duke of Marlborough, altered it to house the Sunderland Library, which had been collected by his father, although the carved bookcases suffered from damp and sunlight. The Sunderland Library was sold in 1881–1883, but the hall was restored as a library in 1912 by Charles Spencer-Churchill, the 9th duke. The largest pipe organ in a private home was installed in 1891, built by Henry Willis. More than 10,000 books are currently kept on the bookshelves.

Mackintosh Library, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow. Designed by architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh in 1909, the library houses original Art Nouveau furniture and light fixtures. It serves as the school's reference library with a collection of historic books, periodicals, and journals.

National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The library was founded in 1837 as the Library of the Schools of Design, based at Somerset House. It moved to the site of the South Kensington Museum in 1857, which was renamed the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1899. The library's collections include those central to the work of the museum and include prints, drawings, paintings, furniture and woodwork, textiles, dress and fashion, ceramics and glass, metalwork, sculpture, and Asian art and design. The library also functions as a public reference library as well as the museum's curatorial department for the art, craft, and design of the book.

National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. Established by royal charter in 1907, this neoclassical library was built by architect Sidney Greenslade and first occupied in 1916, although the central block was not completed until 1937. It houses many rare books and manuscripts, such as the first book printed in Welsh (*Yn y lhyvyr hwnn*, 1546), the first Welsh translation of the complete Bible by William Morgan in 1588, the Black Book of Carmarthen written around 1250, and a manuscript of the works of Geoffrey Chaucer. The library's extensive National Screen and Sound Archive includes music and manifestations of the spoken word relevant to Wales.

Portico Library and Gallery, Manchester. This subscription library opened in 1806 as a combination library and newsroom. Primarily used by members and researchers, its exhibition gallery sits under an impressive Georgian glass-and-plaster dome.

Queen's College Library, University of Oxford. This superb library was designed by either Henry Aldrich or Timothy Halton in 1692–1695 to house new donations. The builder was John Townsend, the outstanding plasterwork was modeled by James Hands, and the stucco frieze was the work of John Vanderstein, who also created sculptures on the garden façade. A donation of £30,000 in 1841 by Robert Mason, who stipulated that the money had to be spent on library books within three years, required an expansion to accommodate the infusion of new materials. It now has one of the largest and most diverse collection of rare books in Oxford.

Sibbald Library, Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. Established in 1682, the college library was the first in Scotland devoted to the study of medicine. The current home of the college was completed in 1848, and the new library, with its spectacular coffered ceiling, was built by architect David Bryce in 1876. It was restored in 1994, retains its original furnishings, and still houses part of the college's fine collection of medical literature and historical documents.

Wren Library, Trinity College, Cambridge University. Designed by architect Christopher Wren in 1676 and completed in 1695, the library's first floor is decorated with limewood carvings by sculptor Grinling Gibbons and furnished with a series of marble busts of college alumni by Louis-François Roubiliac, among them naturalist John Ray, ornithologist Francis Willughby, classicist Richard Bentley, philosopher Francis Bacon, and mathematician Isaac Newton. At the far end of the library is a statue of poet Lord Byron by Bertel Thorvaldsen. Some of the college's most notable manuscripts are displayed in the library, including an 8th-century copy of the Epistles of St. Paul, John Milton's shorter poems in his own handwriting, and the original manuscript of A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh*.

York Minster Library, York. The largest cathedral library in the country, the collection of books, tracts, and pamphlets had its origins in 1414, when Canon Treasurer John Newton bequeathed 40 volumes of manuscripts for a library. In 1629, the library grew to a collection of national significance with the gift of some 3,000 books by Archbishop Tobias Matthew. The old library resides in a former 13th-century chapel that was restored around 1810 to accommodate it; a new addition was built in 1998.

Africa

Egypt

Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria. Completed in 2002 as a tribute to the Great Library of antiquity, the library has space for 8 million books, as well as a conference center, art galleries, planetarium, preservation laboratory, and digital repository. Collections have been donated by countries from all over the world, and the library maintains the only external backup of the Internet Archive.

Saint Catherine's Monastery Library, Sinai Desert. This library of the oldest working Christian monastery contains the second largest collection of early codices and manuscripts in the world (some 3,300), outnumbered only by the Vatican Library. Its strength lies in Greek, Arabic, Armenian, Hebrew, Georgian, Syriac, and Udi texts. There are many early and important editions of the bible, patristic and classical texts, and Orthodox service books. The Syriac Sinaiticus palimpsest is one of only two manuscripts that preserve the text of the Old Syriac translation of the Gospels. The Codex Sinaiticus, a 4th-century manuscript that contains the oldest complete New Testament, was housed here until 1859 when the German scholar Constantin von Tischendorf removed it to Russia for study; it was sold in 1933 to the British Museum, where the greater portion of it now resides.

Morocco

University of Al-Karaouine, Library, Fes. Originally a madrasa for a mosque founded in 859 A.D., the school attained university status in 1947. Although it undoubtedly kept copies of the Qur'an and other religious manuscripts from the beginning, its library was formally established by Sultan Abu Inan Faris in 1349. Among its treasures are volumes of the Al-Muwatta compiled by Malik ibn Anas and written on gazelle parchment; the *Sīrat Rasūl Allāh* of Ibn Ishaq; a copy of the Qur'an given to the madrasa by Sultan Ahmad al-Mansur in 1602; and the original copy of Ibn Khaldun's universal history *Kitab al-'Ibar*.

South Africa

International Library of African Music, Rhodes University, Grahamstown. The largest archive of sub-Saharan African music in the world, the library was founded by ethnomusicologist Hugh Tracey in 1954 after 25 years of field recording and research. In 1978, ILAM moved to Rhodes University where it is now affiliated with the Department of Music and Musicology. Since 1999, the library has been working to digitize its entire collection of thousands of recordings.

Main Library, Port Elizabeth. The library is the only historic building in South Africa that was built as a public library and still functions as one. Completed in 1902, the Gothic Revival building features a stained-glass dome on the second floor and a terra-cotta façade that was manufactured in England. A majestic Sicilian marble statue of Queen Victoria that stands outside the front door was erected and unveiled in 1903.

Asia

China

National Library, Beijing. The Beijing city library opened in 1912 and began receiving depository copies of all Chinese publications in 1916. After it moved to new quarters just west of Beihai Park on Wenjin Street in 1931 (where its Ancient Books facility is currently housed), the library expanded significantly. Two new modern buildings adjacent to Purple Bamboo Park in the western suburbs were completed in 1987 and 2008. The East China Architectural Design Institute worked with the German architectural firm KSP Engel and Zimmermann on the most recent building, which was designed around the library's most prized possession, a copy of the 18th-century *Siku Quanshu*, the Qing dynasty's compilation of classic literature; the multivolume *Siku* is housed in a glass vault in the plinth of the library, and visible at all times. A "floating" steel roof, which looks like a book from the outside and like a computer microprocessor from the air, contains the media and digital sections of the library. Other valuable holdings are the inscriptions on animal bones and tortoise shells from the Shang Dynasty (oracle bones more than 3,000 years old); ancient manuscripts from the Mogao Caves near Dunhuang; copies of Buddhist sutras dating to the 6th century; and the *Yongle Encyclopedia*, a Chinese compilation commissioned by the Ming Dynasty Emperor Yongle in 1403–1408.

Shanghai Library. At 24 stories and 348 feet tall, Shanghai's public library is said to be the tallest library in the world. The building, with 32 reading rooms, opened in 1996 after the library merged with the Institute of Scientific and Technological Information of Shanghai to form a joint public services/sci-tech business information center. Founded in 1952, the library had merged in 1958 with the city Library of Science and Technology, the city Library of Historical Documents, and the Shanghai Newspaper Library to become the second largest public library in China.

India

Asiatic Society of Mumbai Library, Mumbai. Housed in the north wing of the neoclassical Town Hall since 1830, the library has a high ceiling, teak-paneled walls, and elegant cast-iron balustrades. Founded by James Mackintosh in 1804 as the Literary Society of Bombay, the society's collections include more than 3,000 manuscripts in Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Urdu, and Prakrit on both paper and palm leaf; a leather-bound, richly illustrated 15th-century codex of Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*; a Greek grammar by Constantine Lascaris, printed by Aldus Manutius in 1495; a 13th-century Sanskrit text on the life of the Jain Swami Vasupujya; and a valuable numismatic collection of 11,829 coins.

David Sassoon Library and Reading Room, Mumbai. Located in the Kala Ghoda district of South Mumbai, this Venetian Gothic library made of yellow basalt was completed in 1870 with funding by Anglo-Indian philanthropist Albert Abdullah David Sassoon and named in memory of his father, a Jewish merchant in Baghdad. It was intended as a mechanic's library and museum for architectural drawings and models, but owns rare books from the 19th century, many in regional languages like Hindi, Gujarati, and Marathi. The well-maintained garden behind the library serves as both a reading area and green getaway.

J. N. Petit Library, Mumbai. Established in 1856 as a membership library by a group of Parsi students studying at nearby Elphinstone College, the library's current facility was designed by architect Merwanjee Bana in 1898 and named after its donor Sir Jamshetjee Nesserwanjee Petit. It has western-style reading rooms with 30-foot ceilings and stained glass windows. Its eclectic collection includes rare Parsi and religious books dating from the 16th century, a rare copy of Ferdowsi's 11th-century epic poem *Shahnameh* illustrated with gold leaf, modern self-help books, and current copies of magazines such as the *New Yorker* and *Scientific American*.

National Library of India, Alipore, Kolkata. Since 1953 housed in the Renaissance Revival–style Belvedere House, the residence of the lieutenant governors of Bengal from 1854 to 1912, this library is the largest in India. In 1903, Governor General Lord Curzon merged the collections of the British Imperial Library (founded in 1891) and the former Calcutta Public Library (dating from 1836) into a new Imperial Library that was open to the public. After independence in 1947, this collection moved from its old location in Metcalfe Hall to Belvedere and was designated a national depository. The library has separate Indian-language divisions for Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu. The Sanskrit language division also collects and processes Pali and Prakrit books.

Oriental Research Institute and Manuscripts Library, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram. The library has more than 65,000 items, mostly palm-leaf manuscripts, as well as some on paper, copper plates, birch bark, Amyris bark, and textiles. About 80% of the collections are in Sanskrit. An invaluable source for the study of ancient scripts, the library originated with the palace library of Ayilyam Thirunal of Travancore, who in the late 19th century ordered that a copy of all manuscripts in the state be collected.

Iran

National Library of Iran, Tehran. The new library building opened in March 2005 in the Abbas Abad district north of the city center, with space for at least 4 million volumes. The collection had languished since 1937 in a facility adjacent to the National Museum of Iran. Further additions are planned through 2015. The new library blends traditional architectural features with modern information technology and has broad staircases, strategically placed skylights, fountains and waterways reminiscent of a Persian garden, an automated document-retrieval system, and state-of-the-art temperature controls for its rare materials.

Israel

National Library of Israel, Jerusalem. Currently located in the Givat Ram campus of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the library was founded in 1892 by B'nai B'rith as a world center for the preservation of books relating to Jewish thought and culture, assumed the additional functions of a general university library in 1925, and became the depository library for the state of Israel in 2007. Among its special collections are the personal papers of noted Jewish individuals and organizations; the National Audio Archive of Jewish radio broadcasts, commercial recordings, and traditions; the Eran Laor Map and Travel Book Collection of the Holy Land; the Edelstein Collection in the history of science; and the Gershom Scholem Collection of Kabbalah and mysticism.

Japan

National Diet Library, Tokyo and Kyoto. Established in 1948 to assist members of parliament with researching matters of public policy (a luxury unavailable to them under the Empire), since 1949 the library has served as the national library after its merger with the former Imperial Library. It has occupied its current location next to the Diet building in Tokyo since 1961. Two new branches opened in 2002—an international library of children's literature in northern Tokyo, and the Kansai branch in Kyoto, which houses foreign literature and scientific and technical reports. The library also has special collections in Japanese modernization (1868–1926), postwar occupation, maps, music, foreign-language materials about Japan, and premodern writings on astronomy and calendars.

Waseda University Library, Shinjuku, Tokyo. Unlike many other schools, the university and its library, established in 1882, escaped much of the destruction caused by U.S. bombing raids during World War II. Its collections are a primary resource for Japanese prewar history and include literary works from the Qing dynasty, books on the Ming dynasty, the correspondence of university founder

Shigenobu Ōkuma, Japanese and Chinese classical mathematical texts, rare books printed during the Tokugawa shogunate, books and manuscripts of the Tendai sect of Buddhism, and original manuscripts by the masters of renga collaborative poetry (Sōgi, Shinkei, Soboku, and Inawashiro Kensai).

Pakistan

Liaquat Memorial Library, Karachi. Named after Pakistan's first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, the library houses more than 170,000 books, manuscripts, newspapers, dictionaries, atlases, and technical reports. It was built in 1950 from donations commemorating Ali Khan's service to the nation and since 1986 has been administered by the Culture Department of the government of Sindh.

Singapore

National Library, Civic District. The library's new 16-story, energy-efficient facility on Victoria Street opened in 2005, replacing the much loved but overcrowded red-brick facility on Stamford Road where it had been housed since 1960. The library traces its origins back to 1837 when the library of the Singapore Institution was established, and it soon developed into a combination lending library, reference library, and museum by 1887 when it reopened as the Raffles Library and Museum. Bricks from the demolished Stamford Road building are incorporated into a wall along one of the two gardens inside the new facility, which houses both the Central Lending Library and the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library.

Australasia

Australia

National Library of Australia, Canberra. In 1901, a Commonwealth Parliamentary Library was established to serve the newly formed Federal Parliament. The National Library Act separated the library from Parliament in 1960 and a new building, designed by architect Walter Bunning who was inspired by the Parthenon after a visit to Greece, opened in 1968. The library features stained glass windows in the foyer by artist Leonard French that depict the planets and tapestries by French artist Mathieu Mategot that portray Australian life. Now the nation's largest library, its many collections include a Braille archive, Australian dance and performing arts resources, Asian materials, and oral histories of prominent Australians. In 2010, the library began setting up a Treasures Gallery to put on permanent exhibit the handwritten *Endeavour* journal of Captain James Cook, the original words and music for "Waltzing Matilda," the watercolor art and maps of the First Fleet of ships that landed in Sydney Cove in 1788, a page from a Gutenberg Bible, and Jørn Utzon's preliminary model for the shells of the Sydney Opera House.

New Norcia Monastery Library, Western Australia. Benedictine monks founded this community in 1846 and established a library soon afterwards. It owns more than 60,000 books, as well as documents, manuscripts, maps, photos, films, videotapes, and oral history tapes that have far outgrown the original library rooms, which are now only open to the monks and their invited guests.

State Library of New South Wales, Sydney. The library traces its origins to the opening of the Australian Subscription Library in 1826. The collection moved to its current location when the Mitchell Building opened in 1910 to house the unsurpassed collections of Australiana bequeathed by Sydney bibliophile David Scott Mitchell. The central section of the building includes a portico with Ionic columns, the main reading room, and an ornate vestibule with a reproduction of the 1644 Abel Tasman Map in marble mosaic and a contemporary glass sculpture created by Jon Hawley that is based on the earliest depiction of the stars of the Southern Cross in 1516. A Shakespeare Room

features richly embellished Tudor motifs by woodcarver Charles Sherline and a plaster ceiling modeled on Cardinal Wolsey's Closet at Hampton Court Palace. The Dixson Wing was added on the south side in 1929 to provide space for the extensive collection of colonial books, manuscripts, and paintings presented by William Dixson. The latest addition is the Macquarie Street Wing, completed in 1988 to house the General Reference Library.

State Library of Queensland, Brisbane. The library, established in 1896 as the city public library, has a significant collection of books, photographs, and newspapers that document every aspect of Queensland's history. In 2006, the library reopened after a three-year redevelopment project by architecture firms Donovan Hill and Peddle Thorp. The new facility doubled the library's former space and includes the *kuril dhagun* Indigenous Knowledge Centre, an activity area for young children, climate-controlled repositories, an auditorium, exhibition galleries, cafés, a business and conference center, and an underground parking lot.

State Library of Victoria, Melbourne. The central library of the state of Victoria, the library holds more than 1.5 million books, including the diaries of the city founders and the folios of Captain James Cook. Local architect Joseph Reed designed the building, which opened in 1856 as the Melbourne Public Library. The domed reading room, built to incorporate the best features of the British Museum and the Library of Congress, was added in 1913 in an annex. The library underwent major refurbishments between 1990 and 2004, including the construction of new space for its permanent exhibitions.

New Zealand

Parliamentary Library, Wellington. A striking example of 19th-century Gothic architecture, the library was designed by Thomas Turnbull and built in 1897–1901. Damaged twice by fire in 1907 and 1992, the library was completely refurbished and earthquake-strengthened in 1992–1995.