

Good News from FOTA

WHY THEOSOPHICAL ARCHIVES NEED FRIENDS

On Oct 21 2007, a fire near San Diego destroyed the stock, library and archives of Point Loma Publications. (Fortunately, much of the archives had already been copied by Alexandria West.) A year or two later, heavy rain came through the roof of a London library. It stopped one floor short of the bookcase containing Madame Blavatsky's own copy of "Spiritual Scientist" with her handwritten comments about the medium D.D. Home. Less fortunate were the birth records of Dr Eric Dingwall (biographer of Home) which had already been eaten by termites in Ceylon. Meanwhile, peacefully hundreds of Theosophical pamphlets rested in lodge bookcases in five continents. In silence their modern paper began to disintegrate, and their staples rotted.

There is a crisis facing Theosophists, as the original records since 1875 decay. There is a race against time to digitize and preserve electronically. Although there are handful of properly curated Theosophical archives, the general picture is serious. So a group of scholars, archivists, and prospective donors have joined forces to launch the Friends of Theosophical Archives which will take formal shape in various countries.

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