# Grant to Restore Rare Literary Gems

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An HLF grant of £50,000 was awarded to the Linen Hall Library to catalogue and restore its ‘Languages of Ulster’ collection, which consists of works in Irish, Scots and Ulster Scots as well as Latin, French, Spanish, German, Chinese and Italian. Dating from as early as the 15th century, the collection contains volumes that have never before been viewed by the general public, but that’s set to change as a result of the project.

In addition to creating a fully accessible online catalogue, the project will involve the professional restoration of a number of fragile volumes to preserve them for future generations.  The restoration and cataloguing processes are expected to last for 15 months and will significantly enhance and improve access to the collection.

The gems of the collection will be displayed in an exhibition and a series of lectures, workshops and a book-binding master class will be held to enable the wider public to learn more about this fascinating conservation skill. Several very rare volumes, such as the 1787 Belfast printing of the poems of Robert Burns and the 1722 Rathlin Catechism will be reprinted and distributed to local community groups, libraries, schools and museums, to increase access to these works.

Funding for the project was awarded through HLF’s ‘Your Heritage’ programme, which provides grants of up to £50,000 for projects that open up, protect and celebrate our diverse heritage. Head of HLF Northern Ireland, Paul Mullan, said: “We are delighted to be involved in this project to rediscover the hidden gems of the Languages of Ulster collection. The restoration and cataloguing processes will conserve these rare and fragile volumes and through the exhibition, workshops and distribution of reprinted editions, access to this historic collection will be increased for current and future generations to learn from and enjoy.”

Librarian of the Linen Hall Library, John Killen, said: “This is a most exciting and challenging project, which will bring to a new audience surprising and hitherto unknown material relating to our cultural history. One such item is a contemporary account of the Battle of the Boyne in Spanish.”

HLF has grant-giving programmes to support both large and small heritage projects, and since 1994 has awarded £135 million to projects across Northern Ireland.

For more information about HLF's funding programmes.

**Notes to editors**

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage.

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**Further information**

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