Smithsonian Libraries Adopt a Book program: a way to learn, preserve, and raise funds for your library collection
Introduction and History

• The Adopt a Book (AaB) program began in 2009 as a fundraising event showcasing our two rare book branch libraries, Dibner Library of the History of Science and Technology and Joseph F. Cullman 3rd Library of Natural History.

• In 2014, librarians with rare book collections in other branches began participating.

• In 2016, the program expanded for all 21 branches to participate.

• A working group was created to coordinate the adoptions on the website and in person events.
AaB Working Group

“The Working Group aims to provide transparent, effective, and responsive centralized services for the AaB Program, informing the growth of the online offerings as well as the event(s) associated with the Program”
More about AaBWG

• The AaBWG is made up of one representative from each of Digital Programs & Initiatives, Preservation Services, Advancement, and Discovery Services (Cataloging).

• In addition, AaBWG will have four representatives from Research Services, with one from each of Science, History & Culture, and Art, as well as a representative from a Special Collections library.

• Currently two members are serving as Co-Chairs and meet with the Deputy Director, Smithsonian Libraries on a regular basis to report about the program.
AaBWG responsibilities

• Workflows, procedures and training
• creating, maintaining, and sharing documentation associated with AaB
• ensuring that the AaB website continues to have a sufficient variety of options for donors
• Encouraging branches to participate in AaB (both online and for in-person events)
• serving in an advisory capacity regarding AaB events
• providing information to staff regarding successes, lessons learned, and future directions
Point of Contact in Branches

• Each branch library has a point of contact (POC) for the AaB program.
• This person coordinates book selection, writing the description, and providing images of the book.
Types of Adoptions

• **Build the Collection** is a way to raise funds to purchase books for your library. 90% of the revenue raised goes to acquisition funds, 5% to cataloging and 5% to digital services.

• **Preserve for the future** – our preservation staff reviews what work needs to be done on the book and prices it for an event or website. If adopted, they are given 90% to preserve the book, 5% for cataloging and 5% goes to digital services.
Build the Collection: Acquisitions

• POC or staff in the branch select the books
• Minimum price is $250.00
• Staff look for books that tell a story (author or subject of note, historical significance, nicely illustrated)
Preserve for the future

• POC or staff in the branch select the books.
• Staff select books that are valuable and essential to the collection – worth preserving
• Our book conservator reviews each book that needs preservation work and provides cost of treatment
Donor receives

- A traditional bookplate
- A virtual bookplate
- Adoption certificate
- Thank you letter
- If preservation, adopters get a treatment update from the conservator
- Some adopters even come to visit their book and tour the library
POCs – three key things to remember

• One yearly event and no more than one special call per year
• Maintain 10 items online for adoption per branch
• All book descriptions must be original to avoid plagiarism
Funds raised over the 10 years

- FY 2018 (end 9/30/2018)
- Acquisitions - $17,405
- Preservation - $29,350
- Cataloging - $2,337
- Digital Services - $2,337
One librarian’s perspective - mine

• Began participating in Adopt a Book with the November 16, 2016 AaB evening event at the Smithsonian Castle
• Theme that night : Food and Drink
Lessons learned

• Participating in Adopt a Book, I have learned about some unique works in the collection.
Two keys books I use to select books
AaB books

The desert garden, native plants of Phoenix and vicinity, Phoenix mountain park, camelback mountain, Papago Park, Squaw Peak, by Frances Lillian Hamilton (1933)
Gardening for profit: a guide to the successful cultivation of the market and family garden by Peter Henderson (1883)
AaB books

Save the date and thank you!

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  - AaBWG members
  - Natural Physical and Sciences staff