

Library Update

University Libraries, University at Albany
State University of New York

Spring 2003

Message from the Dean



This academic year has been filled with fiscal challenges as the University and our

Libraries experience the fallout from New York State's deficits and the nation's declining economy. In the face of hard economic times, you, our friends and donors, have once again demonstrated your loyalty and your generosity to our Libraries. Your Annual Fund gifts have helped us make positive, productive changes in our teaching, in the acquisition of information resources, and in the rapid delivery of needed materials. In this brief *Library Update*, you will read about new information literacy programs, such as the one given by Dewey Librarians in partnership with the School of Social Welfare. You will also learn more about the Science Library's Colloquia Series, our spring symposium about scholarly publishing on the Web, and the programs we sponsor with our dedicated Friends of the Libraries.

We continue to reach out to larger audiences and greater numbers of users, as we advance our mission. Currently, we are working to transition to a SUNY-wide integrated "virtual library" for all SUNY faculty and students. In addition to full-text access to thousands of online journals and databases, SUNY-Connect will provide direct circulation and overnight delivery to the more than 18 million volumes in SUNY libraries.

The University will announce a new five-year capital campaign in April 2003. The Libraries have identified key priorities for our part in the campaign. These include building a stable and strong financial foundation to ensure our long-term innovation, growth, and development. Our campaign will focus on building endowment support for Library collections; for advancing our technological resources; and for facilities enhancement and expansion of the Dewey Graduate Library.

Endowments are created by people who care deeply about the centrality of the Libraries to the University at Albany, past, present, and future. In this issue, we will introduce you to two people who have each established endowments. Both emeriti professors, Ken Birr and George Martin offer great reasons for their choices.

We know we can count on our friends to sustain us in times of challenges and choices. We thank you for supporting the Annual Fund as well as for helping us build endowments. We need you now more than ever to ensure our continued vitality in the 21st century.

Meredith A. Butler

Libraries Sponsor Fifth Symposium on Scholarly Communication

The University Libraries will sponsor a day-long symposium on "Scholarly Publishing and Archiving on the Web: New Opportunities" on April 7. Nationally known researchers Professor Stevan Harnad of University of Southampton, U.K.; Simeon Warner of Cornell University; and Rob Kling of Indiana University; will explore emerging models for Web self-publishing. They will discuss the implications of electronic publication for the future of scholarly communication as well as new possibilities for creating institutional repositories of archived research. Other speakers will present examples of sustainable models for electronic storage and distribution of scholarly content.

This is the fifth in a series of programs on Scholarly Communication in the Digital Age hosted by Albany's University Libraries. This year's symposium is co-sponsored by the Offices of the Provost and the Vice President for Research. Provost Carlos Santiago is enthusiastic about the program: "We are very fortunate to host such distinguished scholars and engage our faculty in these cutting-edge issues of scholarship in the digital age." Meredith Butler, Dean & Director of Libraries, agrees. "The Web offers us the chance to think anew about the current model of scholarly communication and its unsustainable publishing model. We are delighted to provide an opportunity for faculty to learn more about these vital issues." Contact: Lorre Smith (518) 437-3966 or lsmith@uamail.albany.edu.

In This Issue

What's New in the Libraries 2

People Who Give:
Kendall Birr & George Martin .. 3

What's New in the Libraries

Albany's University Libraries continue to expand their course offerings in information literacy. Head of **Dewey Graduate Library Barbara Via** reports that the Dewey Librarians, all of whom teach, provided information literacy instruction to more than 800 students in fall, 2002 on the University's downtown campus.

A wide variety of information literacy courses were offered, including some that were designed with specific students and their needs in mind. Dewey librarians partnered with the School of Social Welfare to create courses and workshops for students in the School who are earning their Masters degrees. Professor **Zvi Gellis**, School of Social Welfare, actively worked to make the course and workshops a requirement. All students in the program must complete the Social Welfare Library Research Seminar by the end of the first 15 credits. Two other information literacy workshops selected from 12 offered must be completed by the time students complete 31 credits in their MS program. "This program provides the foundation for research capabilities," says Gellis.

Deborah Bernhard and **Mary Jane Brustman** began teaching these courses in fall 2002. "Our collaboration with Social Welfare tripled the number of workshops we teach here at Dewey," says Bernhard. "We begin with the Research Seminar to start them with basic skills so that they can be



oriented in the resources." Approximately 120 MSW students took the research seminar last fall; 20–30 more students are anticipated to take the course this spring. Workshops include such topics as "Privacy and the Internet"; "Basic Library Research on Federal Public Policy"; and "Introduction to Research Databases."

Mary Jane Brustman notes that "Social Welfare students come into the Library out of proportion to their numbers; they are constant and consistent Library resource users." The Dewey teaching staff enjoys the new courses: "We like the one-on-one contact that we get with these students who are totally focused on their discipline," says Bernhard. Brustman agrees, adding that "This coursework creates a friendly relationship between students and librarians. We want to be helpful for future research projects."

New acquisitions for the **M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives** include the papers of **Ray Falconer** and the papers of **U.S. Representative Gerald Solomon**. Ray Falconer, who was known as "the dean of weather forecasting" and the unofficial "voice of the University," donated his papers December 2002. A noted meteorologist, Falconer worked at the G.E. Research Laboratory in Schenectady from 1946–1957. He began working at the University's Atmospheric Sciences Research Center in the early 1960's. One of the pioneer weather forecasters, he gave daily radio forecasts from 1962–1988.

Republican **Gerald B.H. Solomon** represented the 22nd Congressional District from 1978–1998. He served as a member of the New York State Assembly from 1973–1978. His papers, recording his formidable public life, have been acquired by the University Libraries. There are approximately 50 cubic feet of materials in this collection that comprises a record of Mr. Solomon's career as a public servant.

Brian Keough, head of the Grenander Department, recently published "Documenting Diversity: Developing Special Collections of Under-Documented Groups," in *Library Collections, Acquisitions, and Technical Services*. The article explores theoretical and practical developments in archival documentation planning for under-documented groups, and concludes with an assessment of the University Libraries' experience with collecting these archival records. **Karen Brown**, head of the Preservation Department,

developed and co-authored an ARL SPEC Kit titled "Integrating Preservation Activities" (October 2002) to determine the effectiveness of library preservation programs. **Mary Casserly**, Assistant Director for Collections, published "Developing a Concept of Collection for the Digital Age" (October 2002) in *portal: Libraries and the Academy*.

Two spring events round out the second year of the **Science Library's Colloquia Series**. On March 20, Amir Aczel, professor of mathematics at Bentley College, will discuss techniques for presenting mathematical concepts to lay readers in "Making Mathematics Make Sense." On April 3, Jon Beckwith, professor at Harvard Medical School, speaks about scientists' special social responsibility, which he has written about in *Making Genes: A Social Activist in Science*. This event is co-sponsored by the New York State Writers Institute.

Gregg Sapp, head of the Science Library, has recently published *A Brief History of the Future of Academic*



Libraries (Scarecrow Press, 2002). The idea for the book came from the author's observation that, from the 1970's through the 1990's, hundreds of articles predicted what

libraries would be like at the turn of the millennium. The book categorizes and analyzes more than 600 of these articles. Contrary to what some experts predicted, the book is not dead, nor has paper disappeared. But some writers were correct in predicting that libraries would not only accept technology, but become innovators in its use of it. Sapp's conclusion—that as of 2003, the information technology revolution is far from finished—is worth contemplating.

University Archivist **Geoff Williams'** article "Records of Physics and Atmospheric Physics at the University at Albany, SUNY," appears in the fall 2002 issue of *Center for History of Physics Newsletter*.

People Who Give: The Case for Endowments

Strengthening the Libraries' collection endowment is a priority that is shared by many donors. Some of our strongest support comes from Albany faculty who have used the Libraries' resources for their research and teaching. Emeriti professors Ken Birr and George Martin, both enthusiastic donors to Albany's Libraries, have sustained the Libraries' yearly initiatives through Annual Fund contributions, and both participated in the Campaign for the New Library (1997–99). In addition, both have established endowments for the Libraries.

Kendall A. Birr began teaching at



Albany in 1952 as an instructor in the Department of History and retired in 1990 as an emeritus

professor. Professor Birr's distinguished teaching, research, and service to the University has been recognized in his record of publications (several books, many articles); his administrative record (chairperson for several departments, associate deanships, chairperson,

“An endowment is my way of assuring that library collections be strengthened.”

Academic Senate); and his numerous professional affiliations. Ken relied on Albany's Libraries for his research materials. In the 1980's, he discovered that some works he needed were simply not a part of the acquisitions budget. Ken Birr established the History of American Science and Technology Fund in 2000 “to enable the Library to routinely buy 10–15 volumes published that year in that field. It was and is my way of assuring that Library collections

be strengthened,” he says. He intends to continue to support Albany's University Libraries through annuities and bequests.

Professor Ken Birr was named a Collins Fellow in 1985, and honored as Citizen of the University in 1993. Recently, **David A. Hardy '57** contributed to the History of American Science and Technology Fund, and wrote, “Dr. Birr was my first history professor at NYSCT back in the fall of 1953.” For Ken, that's the kind of recognition that really counts.

After his retirement, Ken wrote and published in 1994 *A Tradition of Excellence: The Sesquicentennial History of the University at Albany, State University of New York, 1844–1994*. In February 2003, he lectured, as part of the “Albany Heritage” series, on “Town and Gown in Albany 1844–2002.” His research material came in large part from University Libraries' archives and special collections. He is also actively engaged as a Board member for the Friends of the Libraries.

George

Martin earned his bachelor's degree in 1954 and his master's degree in 1955 from New York State College for Teachers, “back when it was the best school of its kind.” He spent a lot of hours studying in Hawley. After serving in the U.S. Army (1955–57) as a mathematician at Ballistic Research Laboratory, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, George went on to complete a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Michigan. He came to teach at the University's Department of Mathematics in 1966, and retired in 1998.

When you talk with this emeritus professor, he is quick to tell you why he created an endowment in 2001. “I couldn't have written my first book without interlibrary loan service.” Professor Martin's five books are all still in print and in use by scholars and students: four of them were published by Springer-Verlag, the world's leading publisher in mathematics.



The George E. Martin Fund contributes to the support of the Library's interlibrary loan services. This department obtains materials nationally and internationally, primarily from research libraries, but also from commercial document delivery vendors, archives, and other sources. These materials are requested by scholars and researchers here at UAlbany. So, too, Albany's Libraries reciprocate for scholars at other institutions. Last year, the department processed more than 40,000

“No library, no university; it's that simple.”

requests. Each request costs approximately \$20 per media transaction, according to **Suzanne Irving**, head of Interlibrary Loan. “The department has supported extensive research projects and provided support for numerous scientific grants at the University.” Irving also notes that “future endowment gifts could expand electronic document delivery options for remote users.”

George Martin supports other University initiatives and will continue to do so. He also is an enthusiastic Board member for the Friends of the Libraries. Here, he is able to pursue another passion, his love of music. He coordinates the group's annual trip to the Glimmerglass Opera, another organization that benefits from George's generosity.

Still, Professor Martin's commitment to the University Libraries is central to his philanthropy, and will continue into perpetuity through his support of an endowment. “The Library is, after all, the heart of any university. No library, no university; it's that simple.”

For more information about establishing an endowment or adding to an existing fund, please contact Dean Meredith Butler (518–442–3568) or Roberta Armstrong.

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For more information, contact Roberta Armstrong, University Libraries, at (518) 442-3540 or rarmstrong@uamail.albany.edu

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