The New Waldo Library

The newly expanded and renovated Dwight B. Waldo Library opened its doors to the University community on July 15, 1991, and to the public on Monday, August 5, 1991. Maps and tours of the new building were made available to the public and library staff as well. For those of us who have worked in Waldo Library for many years, it was surprising to find we needed maps to find our way around. Library staff were as amazed and delighted with the new library as the public.

The new addition, constructed along the south and west sides of the building, has an enclosed bridge featuring a clock tower which connects to the new computer center built immediately to the west. Waldo Library was built in 1958 and expanded in 1967 for a total of 153,000 square feet. Originally designed to house 500,000 volumes and accommodate 2,000 seats, the library grew to 1.8 million print and non-print items and 820 seats. The new addition added 104,000 square feet to the existing building, expanding the library to 257,000 square feet and providing room for the expanding collection as well as 1,900 student stations.

The exterior facade for both the library and the computer center is heather and off-white glazed tile with reddish-brown reflective glass for the windows. The new main entrance is the rotunda, which features a stunning atrium extending upwards three floors with a skylight as its pinnacle. With a special four-color terrazzo floor design and walls of the same glazed tile as the exterior, the new entrance reflects the beauty one finds throughout the new library. The predominant color throughout the building is bordeaux, a wine shade in various hues, which complements the heather tile and the beautiful terrazzo floor of the rotunda. This color can be seen in the carpet, the furniture and the end panels of the bookstacks.

Pictured on this page is a view of the plaza with the entrance to the Waldo Library rotunda on the left, the clock tower in the center, and the new computer center on the right. The library renovation and addition was funded by $15 million from the state with $4.3 million currently being raised from private sources.
As many of you may know, the original plans for the library building addition and renovation called for library services to move around within the building with the renovation taking place around us. As it became clear that in order to complete the remodeling within a reasonable time period the library would have to be evacuated, plans were made to move library services to other locations both on and off campus. Due to an asthmatic condition, I was among the first to leave the building and I didn’t see the interior of the building again until we were nearly ready to return fifteen months later.

During the time that we were out of the building, we received regular progress reports. There was discussion about the interior design, colors, carpet color, accents, furnishings, whether the circulation desk top should be real or faux marble, etc. And, as in all such undertakings, the colors changed, the carpet changed, and the accents changed. Decisions were made and reports started coming back about how the library looked. The consensus was that it was going to be beautiful. My reaction was "Yeah, right. I’ll believe it when I see it."

Finally, after fifteen months, I decided to make a brief foray into the building. The change in the building was amazing. It was beautiful! More than that...it was unrecognizable. In fact, our first job as staff was to find our way around. Unless one knew the old building very well, it is now impossible to tell where the old and the new parts meet.

At first, the size of the building was overwhelming. This reaction diminished after more of the books were moved back into the building. It’s amazing how fast books fill up space. It works that way at home, too. Another reason for the feeling of size is that the building has been reoriented. The main entrance is at the west end of the building rather than on the south side of the building, as it was previously. The wall colors are white or a light grey, adding to the overall feeling of size.

That first afternoon I explored the lower level, giving special emphasis to my areas of responsibility: Technical Services and Systems. Having checked out the “lay of the land,” I returned a few days later to double check my initial observations about the lower level, and this time I toured the main floor. When we had moved Technical Services and the Administrative Offices back into the building, I completed my initial tour of the whole building. Gradually, we have all settled in, making changes as we all do when moving into a new space.

I would like to invite you to visit our new home and take a tour. There are a number of nice touches in the new library you may want to note when you take your tour. In the atrium entrance, one of the focal points of the library, the light plays on the dome and creates some wonderful shadows on the walls. The faculty carrels are nicely appointed, functional, and hotly contended for. Throughout the library there are lounge areas with comfortable furniture for reading or studying. For the first time, we have an appropriate space for our rare book collection that is staffed and accessible to the public. As you tour the library, you will notice other areas and special touches that I have not mentioned, and I think that you will be as overwhelmed and impressed as I was on returning to the building.

Please call ahead (616-387-5156) so we can schedule a tour guide for you. Plan on about an hour for the full tour. We look forward to seeing you in the new Waldo Library.

—Helen Healy
Assistant Dean for Automation and Technical Services

Dr. Light Donates Unique Journal

The Rare Books Room in the renovated Waldo Library recently received a special book, Journal of a Seaplane Cruise Around the World, August 20, 1934 to January 24, 1935. Signed and donated by Dr. Richard Upjohn Light, this book, written by Dr. Light and Robert French Wilson, reproduces the journal the two young men kept during an around-the-world seaplane trip, comparable to Amelia Earhart’s.

Dr. Light is known by many in the Kalamazoo community for his service to Kalamazoo College as Chairman of the Board of Trustees under former President Hicks. Now retired as a physician, Dr. Light has been very active in the American Geographical Society, and was instrumental in establishing Kalamazoo College’s foreign study program.

This journal is the daily record of Light’s and Wilson’s adventures flying (with frequent layovers) from take-off at New Haven, Connecticut, on August 20, 1934, to final landing in College Point, New York, October 24, 1935. Their flight was generally eastward, with stops in Maine, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Greenland, Iceland, the British Isles, Scandinavia, most countries in Europe, Greece, the Middle East, the Far East, the South Pacific, Northwest Canada, the west coast of the United States, Mexico, Cuba, southeastern United States, and finally, New York State. The journal includes a verbatim log of thousands of telegraphic messages sent by Robert Wilson as well as the very exciting, sharply observed, sometimes hair-raising, sometimes humorous, sometimes emotionally moving narrative by Dr. Light.

The library has a circulating copy as well as the Rare Books Room copy of this very special book.
New Faculty

One of the purposes of Gatherings is to inform our readers about some of the things which make our staff such a varied and interesting group. In this issue we are going to give you some clues about four of us and see if you can guess who these librarians are.

First Librarian:
- He and his wife are one of several husband/wife teams in Beta Phi Mu.
- He is partial to Cairn Terriers, having owned several.
- He was educated at Ashland College, Illinois, and Florida State.
- He jogs each noon and has joined Zest-for-Life.
- He is an accomplished black/white and color photographer who does his own processing.
- He is a native of Ohio.
- His scholarly interest is making use of data collecting and research to improve decision making.
- His favorite season is fall.

Second Librarian:
- She likes gardening and grows orchids.
- She is an avid Boston Red Sox fan.
- She was educated at Hollins College and the University of Toronto.
- She has worked for an archeologist in Rome and Pompei.
- Her scholarly interest focus on Anglo-Latin literature, 1100 to 1300.
- She knows how to crochet, knit, and tat.
- She has three cats and hails from Virginia.
- Her favorite month is November.

Third Librarian:
- He is interested in Sherlock Holmes, not just the stories, but also the commentaries and criticism.
- His father was a GI and his mother was an English war bride.

Fourth Librarian:
- He has lived in such interesting places as Illinois, California, Ohio, and Ireland.
- He is a railroad buff who likes to visit railroad museums.
- He is a history major who took his library degree from Kent State.
- Like most of our other contestants he is a photographer who takes excellent pictures of the railroad equipment he sees when he is museum hopping.
- He is into old movies, collecting films and posters.
- He has an almost complete collection of Robert Benchley’s writing and a number of his movies in 16mm format.
- This hobby has led to a scholarly interest. He is at work on a Benchley bibliography.

If you guessed that all of these people are new to the staff you are on the right track. They are Galen Rike, Head of Reference; Anna Kirkwood, Rare Books Librarian; Dennis Strasser, Education-Nontraditional Student Services Librarian; and Gordon Ernst, Assistant Cataloging Librarian. Stop in and meet these exciting additions to our staff.

Retirements

Dr. Necia Musser has retired from the University Libraries after twenty-nine years as Acquisitions Librarian and Assistant Dean for Technical Services.

When asked what she planned to do once she actually retired, she had very precise plans for the next several months. September will be devoted to some remodelling in her house, which has been put off because of the press of work. October will be devoted to leaf raking. Necia is one of those persons fortunate enough to live in a grove of maple trees. With the coming of snow, she plans to do a good deal more cross country skiing.

Along with some travel, long range plans include the possibility of moving back to Grand Rapids, where she grew up. We shall miss her and we congratulate her on her long and dedicated service.

The Personality column is a regular column in Gatherings which features a member of the University Libraries staff. This issue features our Education Librarian, David Netz.

David feels that branch libraries are the perfect place to try out new programs. Their size makes innovation easier than the much larger main library where a project can easily get lost in the shuffle. That work "innovation" is a key to David’s numerous interests, that and the fact that he likes people. May I enumerate a few of the many activities which make for a rich life:

David is the proud father of three children. The oldest, a daughter, was recently married; the second, a son, just graduated from high school; and the youngest, a daughter, is an eighth grader. He does a great deal of volunteer work. He especially likes to help groups to function more efficiently.

He confesses to being somewhat older than before and has therefore recently switched from tennis to golf as his participant sport of choice.

David is the proud father of three children. The oldest, a daughter, was recently married; the second, a son, just graduated from high school; and the youngest, a daughter, is an eighth grader. He is justly proud of the fact that they are all readers. He says, "If I could leave a legacy to my children, I would want them to be readers. In a rapidly shrinking world, only the reader has much of a chance to cope and lead a meaningful life.” The Netz children will have a fighting chance.

David Netz
Gifts Needed for Library Expansion

The magnificent renovation and expansion of Dwight B. Waldo Library is nearing completion. The library is open and thousands of students and faculty and area businesses and residents are already taking advantage of the significantly improved facilities and services. Unfortunately, we are still far from our goal for private gifts to fund this important addition to our University.

Expansion and renovation of our library facilities is part of the University’s $55-million Campaign for Excellence. In less than three years, 90 percent of the overall goal has been received in gifts and confirmed pledges, including seven gifts of $1 million or more. This past year, the WMU Foundation successfully completed an $8 million private-gift goal for the new building for the Haworth College of Business.

Although we have received some exceptional gifts for the library, support for the library project has not kept pace with the other capital building projects included in the campaign. Like the new business building, the library project is being funded with a combination of support from the State of Michigan ($15 million) and private gifts. Our goal for private support is $4.3 million. To date, we have received $1.5 million, or approximately one-third of our goal.

This is an important opportunity for those who care about Western Michigan University and the vital role our library plays to help see that this “new building” is dedicated without a mortgage. Major contributors to this project will be permanently recognized in the renovated library, which will serve our University well into the next century.

Gifts of all sizes are needed. As you may be aware, it is possible for Michigan residents to make a gift of $2,000 for as little as $100 a year, after taxes. A pledge of $2,000 paid over five years is $400 per year. On a joint return, Michigan residents can deduct up to $200 from their state income tax (50 percent of a $400 gift to a qualifying university). With additional tax deductions on federal income tax, the after-tax cost of the $400 annual pledge payment may be $100 or less.

There are many ways that larger gifts can be structured to help ensure the largest possible tax deduction for the donor. For more information about this important project, or options to consider when making a contribution, contact the Western Michigan University Foundation at (616) 387-6163 or toll free at (800) 848-7014.

The Friends of the University Libraries Steering Committee met for the first time Wednesday, November 6, in the new Waldo Library. Members present at this first meeting included Dr. Peter Krawutschke, Mrs. Hazel DeMeyer Rupp, Dr. Andrew Targowski, Dr. Gordon Eriksen, Dr. Robert Hegel, Ms. Judy Canaan, Mr. Bill Smith, Dr. Anna Kirkwood, Dean Charlene Renner, and Asst. Dean Bettina Meyer.

The Committee reviewed the purpose of an academic library Friends organization and the steps necessary to establish the group. A sub-committee was established to draft a set of by-laws and a constitution for the Friends. The action taken at the November meeting opens the way to an exciting, challenging, and productive year.

The Steering Committee will be meeting on January 15, February 19, and March 18 in preparation for the initial meeting of the Friends of the University Libraries in April, 1992. The Steering Committee meetings are open to all interested Friends of the University Libraries.