Summer 2009

Marginalia no. 26

Merill-Cazier Library
Utah State
The academic year which has just concluded may well have been the most difficult budgetary year that USU has ever faced. The Library has confronted the same demands as all academic units on campus. We have lost several librarian positions and several staff have chosen to take advantage of the Voluntary Separation Incentive Plan by retiring or leaving the University, but counterbalancing that, we have had very significant support from the University administration in protecting our collection budget. So, we have become leaner in staffing, but have maintained our collections and even moved forward in adding to collections. The University administration continues to affirm its commitment to the Library as a central resource.

The Library’s centrality to the students was emphasized and demonstrated in two ways this year. Over the past few years, we have been the beneficiary of a student fee that generates significant income for the Library and is used in ways that directly benefit students. This year we went to the students to request an increase of $2 or $3 per student per semester. The reaction from the student committee was, “No, that’s not enough!” And at their insistence, a request went forward for a $6 increase. We were overjoyed with the generosity and support the students had for the Library. This increase in student-supported funding will make a real difference, particularly when we are faced with the possibility of future cuts.

We were further surprised and greatly honored to have been named the recipient of the Gerald R. Sherratt Award, one of the annual Robins Awards. This award is selected solely by the students who felt the Library truly marks the physical, academic, and intellectual center of Utah State University. They noted that it is a treasure house of books, journals and online resources, but for many students it is the helpful librarians who make the Library the best destination on campus. Ever willing to spend time with students, our librarians patiently help undergraduates and graduates alike with research projects and find the information they need for class projects. The students lauded the Library staff for always being available to help, and even more, they noted that USU librarians come into many classes and work with students on how to use the Library to succeed. That, they noted, is key—the Library exists to ensure student success. So in spite of grim economic prognostications,
About the Leonard J. Arrington Historical Archive at Merrill-Cazier Library

Leonard and Harriet Arrington established The Leonard J. Arrington Historical Archives at Utah State University in 1995. The purpose of the LJHA is threefold: to provide a home for Leonard J. Arrington’s personal and professional papers, to house historical materials and papers from other members of the Arrington family, and to serve as a repository for the papers of other scholars in the field of Mormon History.

The LJHA currently holds two major collections, the Leonard J. Arrington Papers (LJHA MSS 10) and the Conway Sonne Papers (LJHA MSS 8).

2008 Leonard J. Arrington Writing Contest Awards Presented

The winners of this recent writing contest were announced on March 27, 2009 at the Friends of the Merrill-Cazier Library Spring Lecture. First place prize of $1,000 went to Kelly Lelegren, a student in the History Master’s Program here at USU, and graduating this May. The second place prize of $500 was awarded to Alyson Bernhisel, a sophomore at USU majoring in English Teaching. With a prize of $250, third place went to Trenton Olsen, who is an English major at USU working on his master’s degree.

Students from the Intermountain region who attend the Leonard J. Arrington Mormon History Lecture and submit an appropriate essay are eligible to win the prizes. This year’s entrants attended the lecture given by William P. MacKinnon, on September 25, 2008, at the Logan Tabernacle. The title of his lecture was “Predicting the Past: The Utah War’s 21st-Century Future,” and addressed who will look at future study of the Utah War. Students who entered wrote a 2,500-word essay related to the lecture topic including a one-page lecture synopsis, a bibliography, and using a minimum of two outside research sources that could include books, articles, newspapers and primary documents.

The writing awards and lecture are sponsored by Utah State University, the Merrill-Cazier Library, USU’s Special Collections and Archives, the Leonard J. Arrington Lecture and Archives Foundation, the Mountain West Center for Regional Studies and USU’s College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences.
A new Utah State University web portal launched fall semester 2008 gives worldwide access to USU’s scholarly output and preserves it for future generations of scholars. Called DigitalCommons@USU, this institutional repository offers research reports, publications, images, data sets, selected student work, and courses produced by Utah State University faculty, staff, students, and others. Coordinated by the Merrill-Cazier Library and powered by the Berkeley Electronic Press, USU’s Digital Commons joins with universities worldwide in the ongoing development of new knowledge.

One of many extra features Digital Commons offers beyond archiving and access to scholarly works is the support of online journals with a product called Edikit. This web-based journal management system efficiently handles article submissions, peer-review, revision, and publication (either print or electronic) of the journal. USU has two journals coming online this year: a brand new journal called *The Intermountain Journal of Religious Studies* and a second journal, *Utah Science*, which has been published by USU since 1940.

The newest feature associated with the Digital Commons is Selected Works, personalized web pages for faculty and staff [http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/swgallery.html]. Selected Works web pages conveniently showcase publications, presentations, awards, areas of expertise, and other information about the author. These webpages also provide RSS feeds and email lists for announcing new works and communicating with authors.

The Digital Commons provides a number of new-fangled Web 2.0 features for users to bookmark and share the items they find. These include Twitter, Digg, Facebook, MySpace, Delicious, LinkedIn, and many more. Edikit provides a feature that allows users to comment on the articles they read in the journals. Users can also set up customized alerts that let them know when an item matching their search terms is added to the Digital Commons.

Come browse the diverse materials in Digital Commons such as electronic theses and dissertations, OpenCourseWare courses, faculty and staff publications, conference presentations, Government Documents, research reports (including associated images and video) and more. Future offerings will include older electronic theses and dissertations, honors theses, grant projects, and conference proceedings in addition to the ever-growing collections of faculty and staff publications, journals, and discipline-specific bibliographies. Available at http://digitalcommons.usu.edu.

Heather Leary, Institutional Repository/Digital Imaging Coordinator
Cheryl Walters, Head of Digital Initiatives
Three new books have been purchased for the Special Collections and Archives Division by the Milton R. Merrill Library Collection Endowment and the Cazier Library Endowment.

The Cazier endowment purchased a fine press edition of *Phisicke Against Fortune as well prosperous as adverse, forty-six dialogues by Francesco Petrarca*, translated by Thomas Twyne and published by Foolscap Press. This beautiful volume includes reproductions of Hans Weiditz’s wood cuts (shown below). The book is printed letterpress on Lana Royal paper and is bound in quarter goatskin.
The Milton R. Merrill Library Collection Endowment made their first purchases this past year. The endowment purchased the seminal Richard Burton book *The City of the Saints, and Across the Rocky Mountains to California*. This particular copy is a beautiful first edition bound in quarter leather with marbled boards and carries the book plate from the “Library of the Royal Artillery, Shoeburyness.” Burton spent three weeks in Salt Lake City during his western travels. During his stay he became acquainted with the Mormon way of life. Burton’s indulgent view of Mormon polygamy, founded on his exposure to African cultures in which wives were numbered in the hundreds, earned him the reprobation of contemporary reviewers.

The second item purchased by the Merrill Endowment is *The Lands of Utah*, by Edward Colburn. (Shown Left). This 24 page Denver and Rio Grande Railroad promotional brochure published in 1911 details information about the economic opportunities of settling in Utah. Promotional brochures such as this one are important to understanding the development of Utah in the early 20th century as the state gravitated toward becoming part of mainstream America.
A personal gift from Kathryn Caine Wanlass, a preeminent supporter of the arts at Utah State University, provides a direct link to a prominent practitioner of the Bauhaus philosophy of art and craft.

“Thanks to Kathryn’s generosity, the university and the Merrill-Cazier Library at Utah State University are the recipients of the personal library of James L. Prestini,” said Brad Cole, director of the Library’s Special Collections and Archives division. “This collection is important because Mr. Prestini’s view of design was global.”

Wanlass made the donation approximately four years ago, and the staff at the Merrill-Cazier Library has been actively preparing the collection for use. With support from the president’s office at USU, a full-time person was hired to complete the cataloging of the collection. More than 700 boxes of books and documents were acquired.

While work is still ongoing, the catalogued portion of the Prestini Collection is fully available. It will fill the core of the Kathryn Wanlass Design Collection housed in the Library’s Art Book Room and Special Collections and Archives.

“Kathryn has a keen sense of style and an interest in design,” Cole said. “We greatly appreciate this important gift. Our intent is to build an entire design collection.”

Kathy Schockmel, manager of the art and music collection in the Library, assembled biographical information on the Prestini collection. The late James L. Prestini (1908-1993) was professor emeritus of architecture at the University of California at Berkeley where he taught beginning design classes and helped develop the design laboratory. Prestini, an engineer-turned-artist, is considered to be the father of the wood-turned object. He was known as a superb teacher and an internationally known sculptor and craftsman. He was a practitioner of the Bauhaus philosophy of art and craft.

“Craft is the body of structure,” Prestini said in 1989. “Art is the soul of structure. Optimum creativity integrates both.”

The Prestini Collection was professor Prestini’s personal library. It is an eclectic collection containing many classic works on design, including some relatively rare and important titles, Schockmel said.

“Prof. Prestini’s collecting did not limit itself to the arts,” she said. “The collection touches on literature, trains and cars, weapons, wildlife and many other subjects. It is very visually oriented.”

While some of the items in the Prestini Collection duplicate books already in the Library’s holdings, the Prestini material often is in better condition and upgrades the quality of the Library’s collection, Cole said.

The Prestini Collection is presently housed in the Art Book Room located on the Library’s lower level. Most of the collection has been circulating, while some of the more unique volumes and Prestini’s personal papers are limited to in-house use. Functioning as a design library, the collection has become an integral part of the larger arts information environment at USU. It has already been discovered by many USU students and faculty.

“Not only is the collection of immense value to the Art, Theatre, and Interior Design programs, but there are programs evolving throughout the university curriculum that utilize art and design materials,” Schockmel said. “These diverse programs often apply methods from their respective disciplines to determine social, historical and cultural forces expressed in material and visual culture.”

Cataloguer Liz Woolcott has processed over 7,000 books in the Prestini Design Collection, now available for use. There are about one thousand books left in Professor Prestini’s library awaiting cataloguing. Meanwhile, the Design Collection will continue to expand. “This is a fabulous collection,” Cole said. “Anyone with library privileges can use these materials on site. The collection offers huge possibilities.”
Schockmel agreed. “This is another important addition to the Library,” she said. “Because of decades of support from the Marie Eccles Caine Foundation our art book collection is already exceptional, and the Prestini Design collection is another first-class resource for USU. We are so grateful to Kathryn Wanlass for her devotion to the arts and dedicated vision for the Library’s mission. The Merrill-Cazier Library is honored to become a caretaker of this superb collection.”

For information on the Prestini Collection, contact Cole at Special Collections and Archives, (435) 797-8268, brad.cole@usu.edu, or Schockmel in the Art Book Collection, (435) 797-2749, kathy.schockmel@usu.edu.

Contributed by Patrick Williams
Senior Writer, Utah State Today Editor

the Merrill-Cazier Library continues its central role and mission, buoyed by the significant support of USU’s administration and students.

People often ask me if I have any regrets having such a difficult budgetary situation to deal with in my first year. I answer, “No.” Of course we would all prefer to have good economic times. I am optimistic having now worked with the staff for almost a year, and I can only affirm what the students already know. The Merrill-Cazier Library staff is first-class, dedicated to service and united in purpose. We will almost certainly face further economic challenges, but I feel confident in leading such a dedicated group of professionals, that we can continue to meet the challenges of the digital age and ensure that the Library flourishes as the center of the University.

Dean Richard W. Clement
Dean of Libraries

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Yes! I would like to join Friends of Utah State Merrill-Cazier Library

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Friends of Merrill-Cazier Library
3000 Old Main Hill
Logan, UT 84322-3000

Thank you for your support!
For the past two years, I’ve had the opportunity to serve on the selection committee for USU’s Common Literature Experience book. This year’s selection is *Barefoot Heart* by Elva Treviño Hart (pictured at right). The literature experience is part of Connections, a course designed to ease transition for incoming freshman to Utah State, and one tool to do this is the literature experience.

*Barefoot Heart* is a lyrical memoir that tells the story of Elva Treviño Hart’s migrant childhood. Each chapter begins with a Mexican *dicho* (proverb) that sets the stage for the vignette (brief, literary account) from her life which follows. Using the storytelling tradition of her family and culture, Hart invites readers into a truck of migrant workers on their way from Texas to the fields of Minnesota and Wisconsin for work, into the fearful heart and mind of a four-year-old girl who must spend the summer away from loved ones to the local Texas school where Elva experienced academic success and discrimination. Determined to see his six children graduate from high school, Elva’s father taught his children about work, dignity and the quest for more. *Barefoot Heart* adds another layer to the face of the U.S. story. Ms. Hart will be on campus on Saturday, August 22, to share her insights with the incoming freshman and interested community members. Please join us in reading *Barefoot Heart*.

Randy Williams, *Folklore Curator, Special Collections & Archives*