April 18, 2013, may be one of those dates that will long be remembered—at least in libraries. That is the date on which the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) launched. Never heard of it? It’s worth knowing about and represents a massive potential to achieve a goal never before attained, the collection of all knowledge in one place. And in this instance that one place is everywhere, particularly your computer, tablet or smartphone.

The first attempt to bring all knowledge together was at the Library of Alexandria in the Ancient World, and that unfortunately burned. Attempts were made again after the invention of printing in massive bibliographies and encyclopedias, but it soon became evident that this was an impossible task, until now.

The stated goal of the DPLA is to be “an open, distributed network of comprehensive online resources that would draw on the nation’s living heritage from libraries, universities, archives, and museums in order to educate, inform, and empower everyone in the current and future generations.” This grand vision was only articulated about three years ago. At that time, I had the pleasure of attending the first plenary meeting for the DPLA at the National Archives in Washington, DC, but until recently we have not been directly involved. As you may know, USU is part of the Mountain West Digital Library (MWDL), which is sponsored by the Utah Academic Library Consortium. The DPLA has no content, but acts as a portal or gateway to content held elsewhere. Indeed this is also how the MWDL works. Not too long ago the DPLA began looking for content and of course the MWDL was a prime target with its hundreds of collections comprising over 700,000 items from over sixty partners in Utah, Nevada, Arizona, Idaho and even Hawaii.

The USU Libraries have been involved with MWDL from its inception. Unusual in its organization, the MWDL is distributed among a number of larger institutions that can serve as hubs for the smaller institutions. The Merrill-Cazier Library serves as one of these hubs, and our Digital Initiatives Department under the leadership of Cheryl Walters has been a major contributor to the design and infrastructure of MWDL. The central MWDL server is at the University of Utah. It serves as a portal and “harvests” information about collections that then allows a user or researcher to view the digital collections at the hub. Thus if I see an item in my search at the MWDL website that comes from USU, I can click on that item and view it on the USU server as presented in the USU Digital Library. All this makes little difference to most users, but it represents a distinct way of doing business. Most other large digital library projects have centralized their content in one location, but MWDL is spread out among the various hubs. The hubs work with smaller libraries, museums, and other organizations to help them digitize their
historical materials. For instance, USU has helped the city of Mendon digitize its historical records and hosts them in our digital library. Thus the Mendon materials are freely available here at USU in our own digital library and through the MWDL portal. Now the Mendon Collection is available to the nation through the DPLA portal. Forty-six USU digital collections and many materials from Digital Commons (our institutional repository) are now part of the DPLA.

You might ask, given the distributed nature of the DPLA, why the current Internet search engines that we all use every day won’t suffice to bring together the digital items we are looking for. The answer is not as simple as you might think. Yes, a standard search will bring up some of the materials you can find in DPLA (or MWDL or USU), but you will need to wade through countless hits and pages that are of questionable value. So by searching through DPLA (or MWDL or USU) you will know that the results are all valuable. Further, the standard Internet search engines cannot always drill down into our collections to find individual items and so you may never know they exist. But by going through the DPLA portal you can be assured that everything relevant to your search will turn up and from all around the country, not just one institution. And then it’s up to you to wade through the results, but at least they will all be potentially valid.


We stand on the threshold of accomplishing a task that has eluded us for millennia, the organization and provision of access to all knowledge. Technology has enabled this dream to come to fruition and USU is very much a part of realizing the dream.

Richard W. Clement
Dean of Libraries

Research Week, April 8-12, focuses on research and subsequent book publications from faculty and staff at Utah State University and affiliates. This list comprises those books published by faculty and staff members. These books can be found in the Richard Schockmel Lounge and are available for check out at the circulation desk.


Susan Andersen, Lecturer and Associate Director of the USU Writing Center, English Department and Bonnie Moore, Lecturer, English Department: Andersen, Susan & Moore, Bonnie. (Eds.), 2012. Voices: On Stage and in Print. Logan, UT: Utah State University English Department.


2012 Leonard J. Arrington Writing Awards

The Leonard J. Arrington Writing Awards are given each year in conjunction with the Annual Leonard J. Arrington Mormon History Lecture. The contest is open to all college students in Utah and surrounding areas. Entrants are required to attend the lecture; write a 2,500 word essay related to the lecture including a one page synopsis of the lecture and bibliography; and use a minimum of two outside research sources. The essay topic must relate to the lecture topic but may be expository, persuasive, or reflective, but not fiction. The essays are judged by a panel of five judges including both on campus and off campus experts. The 2012 essays were based on the lecture given last fall by Terryl L. Givens.

Liz Kline
Staff Assistant, Special Collections & Archives

First place: $1,000
Benjamin Harman

Ben is an undergraduate at Utah State University. He is an honors student and is currently pursuing a double major in philosophy and religious studies with a minor in political science. His main research interests are in philosophy of religion, philosophy of mind and history of Christianity. He also serves as an associate editor for the Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies.

Second place: $500
Peter Wosnik

Pete is a recent graduate of Utah State University where he received B.A. degrees in history and religious studies. During his time as an undergraduate, he served as the president of the Religious Studies Club and as co-president of the Mormon Studies Club. He also served as a copyeditor for the Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies and as an Undergraduate Teaching Fellow for Philip Barlow (Arrington Chair of Mormon History and Culture). Pete’s academic interests include: Mormon Studies, Christian history, and philosophy of religion. His senior capstone explored the influence of religious charisma and the Book of Mormon on early Mormon conversion in Kirtland, Ohio. In his free time Pete enjoys reading, playing music and traveling.

Third place: $250
Chad L. Nielsen

Chad grew up in the Ogden, Utah area. He is studying biological engineering at Utah State University while working as an intern on the side. His main hobbies include music, playing the organ and piano, singing, and ringing English hand bells with the Westminster Bell Choir in downtown Logan; spending time with his wife and family and reading and writing about LDS history and theology. His passion for Mormon history came into bloom while serving as a full-time missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Illinois and Iowa, near many important events of the LDS church’s past. Currently, he is working on writing a biography about Zerah Pulsipher—an early leader in the LDS Church—and hopes to continue to write about history for the rest of his life.
May Swenson’s 100th Birthday Celebration

Make time in the next few months to visit the Merrill-Cazier Library to view the current exhibit in the main atrium of the library. The exhibit, May Swenson’s 100th Birthday Celebration, will be on display from April until the middle of June. This exhibit celebrates May’s life as a poet and as a native Loganite. May was born and raised in Logan, graduated from Utah State University and started her writing career while a student at Logan High School. While the bulk of her adult life was spent in New York she never forgot her roots in the West. Much of her poetry is based on her life in the desert west and her love for nature. In her illustrious life as a poet May garnered many writing awards and fellowships, a Guggenheim and Rockefeller to name just two. This exhibit displays a sampling of her poetry along with family pictures, broadsides, and other ephemera. May was the author of eleven poetry books.

More of May’s poetry can be viewed in the May Swenson Lounge located on the fourth floor of the library. Primary research materials are located downstairs in Special Collections, “The May Swenson Papers” collection MSS 282 and the “May Swenson Book Collection” no. 32. Broadside and personal possessions of May are housed and may be viewed in Ray B. West 204H.

Vicki Read
Head of Patron Services

Take earth for your own large room
and the floor of earth carpeted with sunlight
and hung round with silver wind
for your dancing place

~ May Swenson

May Swenson Photos:
Merrill-Cazier Library Special Collections & Archives
The Merrill-Cazier Library celebrated Utah State University’s Founder’s Day with an exhibit and lecture. The exhibit in the atrium gallery displayed ten influential graduates from the university’s past. Bob Parson, University Archivist, addressed the standing room only audience. He spoke of the many changes at the university but also how the goals to educate remain the same. Bob also spoke of the library’s acquisition of the Hatch room which would house the first library archive and be the beginning of the current Special Collections and Archives.

Vicki Read
Head of Patron Services

“Once you are an Aggie, you are family.”
Bob Parson
University Archivist
The speaker for the 19th Annual Leonard J. Arrington Mormon History Lecture will be Gregory A. Prince from Potomac, Maryland. The lecture will take place in the Logan Tabernacle on Thursday, September 19, 2013, and is free and open to the public.

Gregory A. Prince is an American pathology researcher, businessman, author, and historian of the Latter Day Saint movement. Prince is the author of over 150 scientific publications in the field of infectious diseases. He has also published several articles on religious history and theology, as well as three books in the same field: *Having Authority: The Origins and Development of Priesthood During the Ministry of Joseph Smith* (1993); *Power from On High: The Development of Mormon Priesthood* (1995); and *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism* (2005), co-authored with William Robert Wright. The latter book was the recipient of four prestigious awards.

Liz Kline  
*Staff Assistant, Special Collections & Archives*
To build our collections, to raise visibility, to increase our offerings for students, the campus, and the community, an academic library needs Friends. In fact, Friends have never been more important than they are now: a time when the world is exploding with information and access is continually expanding while budgets & resources are often shrinking. Friends of Merrill-Cazier Library sponsor lectures, host receptions, and make special purchases possible. Our Friends help ensure the library’s continuing role as a cultural institution and the intellectual heart of Utah State University.