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Merrill-Cazier Library, Utah State University

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Patrick Dougherty’s latest willow sculpture, *A Restless Spell*, greets visitors to the library this fall.
Spending an early Sunday morning hiking with my two dogs, Jackson and Bisbee, on an empty canyon trail 15 minutes from my house reminds me of why many of us love living in Cache Valley. Likewise, the start of the fall semester, when the emptiness of campus is all of a sudden permeated by the arrival of thousands of excited students, reminds many of us why we enjoy teaching and working at Utah State University Libraries.

As usual when the fall semester arrives, we hit the ground running. This year, wearing new T-shirts that exclaimed “Where Learning Meets Success - USU Libraries,” we welcomed the largest freshman Connections class to the university and the library. As part of their university orientation, Connections students spend one session learning about our wonderful library resources. This influx requires an “all hands on deck” approach for the three days of classes. The week before the freshman hit campus, we met with faculty from the different departments and colleges in order to continue an ongoing dialogue with our faculty colleagues about the library’s place in the university’s academic endeavors. The welcoming and inclusivity at USU is one of the university’s best assets.

This fall, in the atrium of the library is a wonderful exhibit about USU Homecoming traditions entitled Where the Sagebrush Grows, and downstairs is an amazing exhibit, Stickworks, featuring photographs of stick-built sculptures of North Carolina-based artist Patrick Dougherty. Dougherty’s newest creation will be built this fall in front of the library. An appropriate ending for USU’s Year of the Arts.

Our fall Friends of the Library lecture will feature John Shivik talking about his recent book Mousy Cats and Sheepish Coyotes: The Science of Animal Personalities (more to come). And speaking of the Friends, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Blythe Ahlstrom who has led the Friends board for many years and is passing the torch to our new Friends president, Joseph Anderson.

We hope that you will be able to stop by the Merrill-Cazier Library this fall and enjoy all we have to offer.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

-Brad Cole
Lindsay Ozburn is the new Assessment Coordinator for the University Libraries. Prior to her appointment at USU, Lindsay held data and information management and administrative roles for the Center for Global Studies Library, International and Area Studies Library, Center for Global Studies, and European Union Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Lindsay holds a master’s in European Union Studies and a master's in library and information science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is currently serving as the editorial assistant to the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions Journal. Lindsay’s research interests include assessment models for library initiatives that assist at-risk populations both domestically and internationally and the utilization of open source software to streamline data collection and analysis for assessment, among other topics. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling to explore new cultures and places, learning new languages, and has recently taken up hiking to explore all the natural beauty in the area. Lindsay is also an avid chef, baker, and taste tester for all the fabulous culinary traditions the world has to offer.
As part of the 2018 Homecoming celebration at Utah State University, the Merrill-Cazier Library presents an exhibit, *Where the Sagebrush Grows: A History of Homecoming Traditions at USU*.

Beginning with alumni reunions, USU has a long tradition of inviting graduates back home to campus. Customary homecoming celebrations began on college campuses in America during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Festivities included banquets, dances, parades, and most of all, football games. The first Homecoming celebration at Utah State was held in 1930 and, except for 1943, has been an annual celebration ever since. Each generation has seen changes to the way Aggies celebrate Homecoming, but it has remained a strong campus tradition.

The exhibit, curated by university archivist Robert Parson and student curator Frankie Urrutia-Smith, uses material from the Merrill-Cazier Library’s Special Collections & Archives to illustrate the rich history of Homecoming on campus, including the legacy of the football team and the evolving traditions for students and alumni.

The exhibit’s grand opening featured a talk by historian and USU professor emeritus Ross Peterson titled “Homecoming at USU: Why Homecoming Makes a Difference to Aggies.”

*Where the Sagebrush Grows* will be on display at the library through November 16th.

A member of the Student Homecoming Committee meets with members of the Alumni Association to discuss invitations for the 1948 Homecoming Ball.
USU history major and student curator Frankie Urrutia-Smith stands with an exhibit panel featuring the original lyrics of “The Scotchman,” composed by a USU student in 1918. The song has since come to be known by students, faculty, and alumni alike as USU’s famous “Scotsman.” 2018 marks the 100th year since the song’s creation.

The 1965 Homecoming parade travels down Logan’s Main Street.

View the corresponding digital exhibit at exhibits.usu.edu/exhibits/show/sagebrush
Last fall, Merrill-Cazier Library lost a great friend and supporter in Richard “Dick” Merrill. For those of you who did not know Dick, he was the son of library namesake, Milton Merrill. Dick worked in the USU library bindery before heading off to Columbia University in the late 1950s. Dick eventually received his law degree from Columbia and ended his legal career as Dean of the University of Virginia School of Law. Dick and his wife, Elizabeth, established the Milton R. Merrill Library Collection Endowment in honor of Dick’s father. This year funds from the endowment enabled us to purchase the Louis Postif papers, which contain approximately 200 letters from Charmian London, Jack London’s wife, to Louis Postif, a French translator of Jack’s books. The Merrill legacy lives on at USU! Contributions to the endowment in honor of Dick would be welcomed.

-Brad Cole
As he prepared to retire in 2000, Max P. Peterson greased the administrative skids on campus, enabling me to become library faculty. It was the last of many, many favors Max did for me. As we put together my first role statement, I asked Max what he thought. He shrugged characteristically, laughed and smiled. “I think role statements should be limited to three words,” he said, “works in library.”

Beginning as an instructor/cataloger in 1965, Max Peterson worked nearly every aspect of USU’s library. Even in areas where he had no official administrative duties, Max left an indelible imprint. The Fife Folklore Archive in Special Collections is a testament to his wide-ranging interests and ability to see beyond the horizon. From Technical Services, to Associate Director of Public Services, and becoming Library Director in 1984, Max P. Peterson worked at USU Libraries for 35 years.

Leaning back in his swivel chair, feet perched on the desktop, Max’s administrative style was cordial, inviting. Going to his office was like visiting an old friend. I believe he thought of us all in that way. We were friends; we were family. While Max was best giving congratulatory pats on the back, he was also capable of a good swift kick to the pants, when warranted. There was a lot of cowboy in Max Peterson. Happy trails.

-Robert Parson
Book artist Brent Wilson has deep roots in Cache Valley, having grown up in Fairview, Idaho, and graduating from Utah State University in 1956 with degrees in art and education. Now a professor emeritus in the School of Visual Arts at Penn State University, Wilson has enjoyed a prolific career as both an educator and an artist. Wilson’s career focused on research questions surrounding art education, but he is also known as a well-respected book artist.

Dr. Wilson generously donated a series of his original works to the Merrill-Cazier Library. The artist books in this collection are Wilson’s visual interpretations of both his own early life in Cache Valley, and the life of his great-grandmother, Lerona Abigail Martin Wilson, who experienced visions related to her faith as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. These large-scale works incorporate acrylic paint on handmade paper and often employ accordion binding techniques.

The collection is housed in Special Collections & Archives, but the library recently digitized each volume and they are now available through our website. Additionally, the 12-folio work Before Birth (2007) is currently on exhibit at the Springville Museum of Art in Springville, Utah, through November 30th.
The USU Native American Mentorship Program (NASMP) aims to improve the retention and representation of Native American students in four-year degree programs with a focus on research in academia. This program is based out of USU Eastern’s Blanding campus, which borders the Navajo Nation. Students from USUE Blanding spend one month on the USU Logan campus, where they gain hands-on experience either with their own research projects or actively participate in on-going research programs.

In May 2018, Lindsey Burbank (right) and Bryonna Chee (left) joined the USU Libraries and worked closely with librarians in Special Collections & Archives, Learning and Engagement Services, and Digital Initiatives on a variety of projects. Bryonna and Lindsey identified projects based on their interests and brought their curiosity and skills to ongoing library efforts. The results include a globally accessible online exhibit highlighting the papers of Edmund Hyatt Garrison and a new video and in-depth online tutorial that teaches student research skills. At a poster session for NASMP interns, both Bryonna and Lindsey presented their experiences, highlighting what interested them most in their research projects and the skills they gained through their work at the library.
This year, the Merrill-Cazier Library’s Special Collections & Archives received a grant from the Utah State Legislature to curate a year-long, traveling exhibit in partnership with the Utah Division of State History. The exhibit commemorates the 150th anniversary of the Union and Central Pacific Railroads joining at Promontory Point on May 10, 1869. Titled *A World Transformed: the Transcontinental Railroad and Utah*, the exhibit highlights Utah’s financial and labor contributions to the building of the railway. The narrative also showcases the cultural, economic, environmental, and political effects on Utah that came with the railway’s completion.

Principal exhibit curators Dan Davis and Frankie Urrutia-Smith examined the literature and combed the research collections at Utah State University and other regional repositories to provide a narrative that reveals how building and completing the railroad introduced sweeping changes nationally, as well as in the individual lives of Utahns. A rich selection of historical photographs, lithographs, maps, and artifacts links visitors to the material culture of the time and complements the story.

The exhibit is scheduled to display on the fourth floor of the Utah State Capitol beginning in January 2019. The celebration continues with subsequent showings slated for Logan, Cedar City, and Park City. The project team, led by Tess Cramer, also designed and fabricated a small traveling exhibit to circulate through the “Traveling Exhibit Program” sponsored by the Utah Department of Heritage and Arts.
In celebration of the Merrill-Cazier Library’s participation in the events commemorating the 150th anniversary of the joining of the Transcontinental Railroad at Promontory Summit, including the installation of *The World Transformed* exhibition, the Friends of the Library have generously purchased three rare works of Americana for Special Collections & Archives.

Fisk & Hatch was the financial agent of the Central Pacific Railroad, and in 1867, two years before the wedding of the rails, produced detailed information on the Transcontinental Railroad for potential investors. Their *Railroad Communication with the Pacific, with an Account of the Central Pacific Railroad of California* includes a fine map with the principle portion of the Central Pacific's main system line. Similarly, the Union Pacific Railroad Company produced *Progress of the Union Pacific Railroad West from Omaha, Nebraska, Across the Continent...* in 1868, including a similar map of the UPRR’s projected path and promises of financial gain to investors. The final acquisition is a small volume authored by Robert Tomes, a friend of Herman Melville, who made several voyages between San Francisco and Panama. In *Panama in 1855: An Account of the Panama Rail-Road...* Tomes describes what many scholars have called the first American transcontinental railroad, even though it traversed only the narrow isthmus connecting North and South America.