ILLINOIS
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

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PRODUCTION NOTE

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library
Groundbreaking Set for New Library Facility

After more than a decade of planning, the Library's newest building finally is becoming a reality.

On October 9, groundbreaking will occur for the new College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences Library, Information and Alumni Center. The building should be ready for use by 2000.

The facility will more than double the amount of space available to what used to be called the Library's Agriculture Library, which includes the collections of the former Home Economics Library as well.

The project is the result of a partnership between private donors of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES), the University Library, and the State of Illinois. Design of the building was also done in consultation with the University Library.

Private fundraising was completed several years ago, garnering more than $10 million in support, but the state's matching funding was stymied by unrelated problems in the state legislature in 1995. In 1996, the state released $1 million in planning funds; the remaining $9.5 million was finally appropriated last winter.

"[This facility] is an investment in our future, in the people who will have an impact on agriculture and will feed Illinois, America, and the world," said Gov. Jim Edgar at a February ceremony during which he formally released the state's $9.5 million contribution to the project. "It's also good for the economy of the state."

Essential to the state, yes, but even more essential to users of the Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences Library.

"We are very desperate," says the unit's head, Robert "Pat" Allen, from his cramped quarters in Mumford Hall, where the unit has been located since 1924.

Some of our staff use office space down the hall from the library because there's no space in the library itself. We have part of the collection in remote storage in the old Home Economics Library in Bevier Hall. The lower level just got its second electrical outlet, which has overloaded the circuit. There are jagged hunks of metal protruding from the ceiling of the second floor stacks area, which is a problem if you're over 5 feet 10 inches, which I am. And the air conditioning doesn't always work. Basically, it's a terribly outdated facility which is not well-suited for public use."

In 2000, however, the Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences Library will take over approximately two-thirds of the space in a new, five-story, state-of-the-art structure, increasing the unit's space from the current 12,600 square feet to more than 30,000 square feet.

"This new building will allow us to consolidate our collections from storage and from Mumford Hall so that they're all together," says Professor Allen.

In addition to shelving, seating, reading, circulation, and office space, the building will also provide advanced-technology areas, an information instruction laboratory, electronic information workstations, and a number of group study rooms. "It's been difficult to insert that kind of infrastructure into a 1920s... Continued on pg.3
Northern Russia and Manchuria, 1918-1921, Documented in New Archives Collection

The University Archives has received a collection of personal papers that provide first-hand accounts from two of this century’s most turbulent areas—Russia and China, from 1918 to 1921.

They are the papers of Watson Lewis (1882-1949), who worked for the “YMCA in Russia” program south of Archangel, Russia, from 1918 to 1919, while American forces were participating in the Allied North Russian Expeditionary Force; and in Harbin, Manchuria, from 1920 to 1921.

The papers include the letters Lewis wrote home almost weekly to his wife Mildred, reports to the YMCA administration, correspondence from Mrs. Lewis and a Russian friend from Harbin, and several dozen photographs taken by Lewis, primarily of the Vladivostok and Harbin areas.

Lewis’s accounts of his work in northern Russia complement several other collections in the United States and England of letters written by British and American soldiers from the expedition. Lewis’s letters from Harbin, however, are among the very few eyewitness accounts in English of activities in that area.

“It’s relatively rare to find someone who moves around like this, so that you can get a perspective over a period of time,” says Russian scholar Jonathan Bone of the University of Chicago. “It’s also rare to find constant letter-writing over a long body of time, and quite rare to find material in English from Harbin.”

The YMCA had long had a presence in Russia, and its work did not stop despite the Russian Revolution in 1917. Russia’s role in World War I, however, did stop, leaving the Germans free to focus only on the western fronts. This led to the British desire to mount an expedition to the northern Russian port of Archangel, purportedly to prevent the Germans from taking a large supply of war material. Shortly before the end of the war, the British convinced the United States to send 5,000 men to Archangel to serve under the British. Only two months later, armistice was declared, but the troops stayed until the next spring.

As soon as the troops were sent, the YMCA made plans to set up a station for them, headed by Watson Lewis. He arrived that December and quickly found that neither he nor the U.S. troops knew why they were there, nor could they correspond about their doubts and disgust because of strict censorship of their mail by the British.

Nevertheless, Lewis wrote home nearly weekly in letters that still manage to describe news of “Bolo” (Bolshevik) attacks (he lost all his belongings in a hasty retreat from Shenkurst), the isolation, (“We are absolutely isolated,” he wrote on March 7, 1919. “All the wireless news is cut and just unimportant fragments are given us”), and the hardships faced by the troops.

“There is not much enjoyment in lying out in the snow for 24 hrs. with no fire and only one blanket. A box car is a palace alongside of that.”

However, he did manage to send one unenclosed letter, dated September 24, 1919, which he sent via a friend who was returning to the States.

“They [the Americans] did not know what they were in Russia for. Who their enemy was and their government had never considered it necessary to tell them why they were fighting,” he wrote. “...They were willing to help the Russians get their freedom but they were not willing to help the British re-establish a monarchy in Russia or to build up a commercial prestige or to help collect a debt for rich bankers either at home or in England.”

The September 24th letter also excoriates the British for heavy drinking and recounts British atrocities committed against Russians, particularly in dealing with the mutiny of the Dyers battalion, whose members included several of Lewis’s “best Russian friends.”

Although firmly anti-British and anti-monarchist, Lewis also distrusted the Bolsheviks, claiming they were too idealistic. However, he gained a great admiration for the Russians themselves, which made him eager to work with them again.

Thus it was that after spending the fall of 1919 with his family in Minneapolis, the YMCA sent him to Harbin, Manchuria, via Hawaii, Japan, and Vladivostok.

Harbin was a main junction on the Chinese Eastern Railway, the line built by the Russians to link the 3,000-mile Trans-Siberian Railway with its Pacific port of Vladivostok. As such, it was actually two cities in one—a Russian city of more than 34,000 in late 1920 and a Chinese city of 300,000. The YMCA had begun a small presence in the Russian part of the city and wanted Lewis to start a boy’s program there.

Their timing, however, coincided with some of the most chaotic events of the civil war that had engulfed Russia since the revolution.

Although the Russian civil war was almost over elsewhere, in the Russian far east it was still aboil. Vladivostok had seen several Bolshevik and anti-Bolshevik governments since 1917. When Lewis left San Francisco to start his voyage on January 5, 1920, Vladivostok had been ruled by an anti-bolshevik government, famous for its atrocities, for over a year; by the end of January, it had been overthrown by pro-Bolsheviks. Two weeks later, Lewis landed at Vladivostok, where he stayed for three months.

Although Lewis described Vladivostok as “peaceful and quiet as a country church yard,” it proved to be a tumultuous period. His letters recount the demonstration of 30,000 people on March 15 to celebrate the anniversary of the abdication of the czar (“the real revolution,” as Lewis called it). He then documents the ‘undercurrent of unrest’ and fear of Japanese attacks that led up to a surprise attack on Vladivostok by the Japanese on April 4-5.

The Japanese, who had had a sizable presence in the area since the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, were retaliating for a Bolshevik massacre of Japanese elsewhere in the Russian far east. They swept into the city to annihilate the Bolsheviks and install an anti-Bolshevik government. In an undated letter home, written around April 7, Lewis recounts the events he witnessed.

“When we were about to retire Sunday night the machine guns...began to come out of the stillness of the night,” he wrote. “...Monday morning when the firing had ceased we ventured out. The crimson flag of the Russians had everywhere been torn down and flaunting from every pole was the red sphere on a white back ground which the Japanese visualize as the rising sun...We walked along and found them in possession of all the buildings and watched them dash hither and thither to arrest Russians. We saw them club more boys in the face with their rifles and shove women about like so many dumb beasts... We will probably never know how many
were killed for the dead were hastily picked up and dropped into holes. It was a dirty business quickly dispatched.

Three weeks later, he left for Harbin, Manchuria. "This is a Russian city in a Chinese country," he wrote his wife on May 6, 1920. "The Russian section of the city is just as typical of Russia as any city could be while the Chinese city is just as Chinese as any place in northern China."

It was at Harbin that Lewis first came into contact with the former Russian aristocracy, who had followed the Trans-Siberian railway east in their attempts to flee the civil war. Although he admired and worked with some, he despised most of the others.

"They pity themselves here. I am disgusted with the whole lot of them," he wrote on August 15. "Only a few really have any love for Russia as a country. They love their easy soft life which has now gone never to return. They resemble a profiteer in America who has been robbing women and children all his life and resents any thought of taking away such privilege."

Harbin, luckily, was far from any fighting, but the intrigues were never far away. As early as July 1920, he was writing home about "a group of monarchists, all officers, who may try to get the Japs to help them float another revolution." By February 1921, he was writing, "...I think that hereafter I shall judge men by their reaction to the injustices of life and not by how much they pray or how pious they act," he wrote on January 21, 1921. "Sometimes I think that if my ideals of Christianity were not so firmly fixed in a real theory of life that I would have lost my religion over here because of the false narrow doctrines I have been forced to listen to..."

"It looks as though the Japs will endeavor to start another offensive over here and it will be interesting to see what kind of excuse they will have to offer," he continued. "They will use Russian officers to carry the story and it will be known as a Russian offensive but of course it will be Jap money to gain Jap territory and trade. More starvation and blood shed for the good of the banking group."

Lewis's letters also include descriptions from 1919 and 1920 of his stays in England, Scotland, and Ireland; his descriptions from 1920 of sugar and pineapple plantations in Honolulu; and his sightseeing tour of Japan.

The University Archives is now seeking a volunteer with subject expertise to create a more detailed finding aid to help researchers use this fascinating collection.

Sure enough, in May 1921, the Japanese helped anti-Bolsheviks in Vladivostok to overthrow the city's current government, installing a government friendly to the pro-monarchists.

Lewis's letters also document the flood of Russian refugees flowing into Harbin, which swelled from approximately 34,000 Russians in 1920 to well over 165,000 by January 1921.

"As you may know there are thousands of refugees in this city many hundreds of them without money food or clothing," he wrote on September 15, 1920, "The winter is going to be very hard on all of us here...The schools are overcrowded and many cannot go because of no funds and lack of clothing and food."

This caused Lewis to set up a school in the YMCA building for needy refugee children. "They are to come to school at 9 A.M., have a warm bath if necessary, have instruction and a big bowl of hot soup and plenty of bread...A group of Russian women headed by the highest ranking Prince here will secure volunteer teachers, solicit clothes...The work will be done by the intelligensia for the poor. Such things as that if done enough would do much to bring the factions here together. At least they will have less time to worry about their politics."

Lewis also wrote home about his observations of the Chinese and their customs. The Chinese, he wrote on May 1, 1920, had "little shops like the Japs...[which] correspond to the front porch of our houses. The sewer is open under the sidewalk. There is little privacy in personal attention. Wherever you happen to be seems to afford sufficient toilet facilities for the men at least."

And living conditions for many, he noted, were horrendous. "I never saw any people living so wretchedly as the Chinese coolies down in the Chinese town," he wrote a month later. "Some of them live in just holes in the ground."

Says Mr. Bone of these descriptions, "It is social commentary like this, the description of everyday life, of how people are trying to cope, especially in the Asiatic community, that is often ignored by occidental commentators. This alone makes this collection worthwhile."

By the time Lewis left Manchuria in the spring of 1921, he had become cynical about Russians, Chinese, politics, even religion, whose missionaries (or "religionists," as he called them) worried more about the sins of card-playing or dancing than the Ten Commandments. "I think that hereafter I shall judge men by their reaction to the injustices of life and not by how much they pray or how pious they act," he wrote on January 21, 1921.
Two New Donations Highlight Importance of Small Endowments

The Library has received donations to create two new endowments—$10,000 from Tracey B. Weissberg, in conjunction with a matching gift from her employer, the Lee Corp., to create the Tracey B. Weissberg Library Endowment Fund; and $10,000 from Barbara H. Noel to create the Barbara H. McMurtry-Noel Library Fund.

"Most people hear only of our very large endowments, created with $100,000 or even $1 million, so people may not realize that endowments can be created with just $10,000," notes Joan M. Hood, the Library's recently retired director of development and public affairs.

"Fewer still realize that if their employer has a matching program for charitable contributions, it becomes even easier to create an endowment, as Mrs. Weissberg has done. No matter what the size, however, every endowment provides a steady source of funds that is greatly appreciated by our librarians, especially in light of our constantly changing state funding."

Librarian Barbara Jones, head of the Rare Book and Special Collections Library, couldn't agree more. "We have one small endowment geared specifically to a particular author," she says. "The endowment allows us the opportunity to build on a collection strength by looking in auction and dealer catalogs on a regular basis. Without this endowment, we would have had to say, 'That book would be nice, but we simply can't afford it,' and that would be too bad. With the endowment, we've been able to add some really cool items every year."

Still not convinced that the income from even a $10,000 endowment makes a difference? Ask Robert Burger, head of the Library's world-renowned Slavic and East European Library, which is the beneficiary of a small endowment. "If you look at book prices that are always going up four or five percent a year, and serials that go up nine or ten percent every year, then $400 in endowment income means we can keep our collection from deteriorating due to inflation. Otherwise, there would be a constant erosion."

And because many people choose to create an endowment for a specific purpose, endowments often enable the Library to collect in areas it might otherwise have neglected.

"There are many areas—often cutting-edge areas—not covered by state funding," notes Documents librarian John Littlewood, who manages the income from a small endowment for gay literature. "In my case, the budget for this area is only $1,000, so the $600 or so I receive from the endowment nearly doubles what I'm able to spend. And a small endowment is also a good way to honor or memorialize someone, which may be appropriate even if you don't have millions to donate."

Professor Littlewood should know—he recently established an endowed professorship in the name of himself and a deceased friend. "That was certainly in my mind," he says. "It's a way to give yourself a little piece of immortality."

The Library Is Looking for...

$225 to purchase Infections Diseases, 2nd ed., for the Veterinary Medicine Library. This in-depth, definitive textbook received excellent reviews and will be an excellent quick guide for students and faculty alike.

$100 to purchase microfilm of the 1902-1903 Boston Guardian, an African-American newspaper. These years are particularly interesting since the paper chronicles the sentiment of the anti-Booker T. Washington faction in the African-American community.

$1000 to purchase the proceedings of the 30th International Geological Congress, Beijing, 1996. Each of the 26 volumes covers an area of current interest and research.

$450 to purchase Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland, vols. 15, 16 (pts. 1 and 2), and 17 (pts. 1 and 2) for the History Library. These are valuable source works for the history of late medieval Britain and Ireland, as well as for the papacy.

$395 to purchase 1998 Index and Directory of Industry Standards for the Grainery Engineering Library Information Center. This eight-volume work is an essential reference tool.

Illustration from the first American edition of Dickens' Dombey and Son (1848), purchased with funds from the James M. and Mary Marsh Givens Endowment Fund.

New Online Catalog to Debut in August

Time to shake yourself out of your com- placency—the Library's venerable, 20-year-old online catalog has undergone a complete overhaul and will debut its new features during August.

The system will include such long-desired functions as the ability to narrow a search to one particular library unit, instead of having to search all 9 million volumes; instant access to your own library record, including information on overdue books and fines; and the ability to search many indexes and combine search sets.

The system also will track more accurately books that are requested from library units on campus or through the statewide consortium and provide computerized check-out for many departmental library reserve collections. The system also will be able to han dle the 'year 2000' problem, something the old LCS/FBR system could not.

The change is all part of a complete overhaul of ILLINET Online, the statewide online catalog, using the software and expertise of DRA, a St. Louis-based company which has converted online catalogs of other major libraries throughout the country.

The final product will be an interactive, point-and-click, Internet-based catalog that will look and act like most World Wide Websearch engines.

Initially, however, users wishing to use many of the new features will have to use a temporary text-only telnet version; items such as the ability to limit searches, searching of some indexes, combining searches, and real-time checking of book requests will be incorporated into the web-based version over the next twelve- to eighteen months.

To access the telnet version, go to pac.ilcso.uiuc.edu. The experimental web version is accessible via the Library's "Gateway" home page, at www.library.uiuc.edu; or directly at pac.ilcso.uiuc.edu.
Databases for Wells, Merwin, Sandburg, and Spanish Civil War Collections to Hit the World Wide Web

If you've ever had occasion to try to find a particular letter or artifact in some of the special collections held by the Rare Book and Special Collections Library, you know it hasn't always been easy.

Unless you happened to know in advance what particular item you wanted to see, you probably had to wade through hundreds, perhaps thousands, of individual items to find what you wanted.

That's a situation the unit's librarians have been working to change. Thanks to support from the Library's NEH Challenge Grant endowments, the results should soon be available worldwide for four of the unit's most important holdings—the H.G. Wells Collection, the W.S. Merwin Archive, the Spanish Civil War Collection, and the Carl Sandburg Collection.

"We've been working for twelve years, going through three versions of the old PC File program, to create finding aids with detailed item-level and folder-level information for more than a score of our collections," says Special Collections Curator Gene Rinkel. "We had been hoping all along that we'd be able to migrate to more advanced databases as they developed, and recently we've been able to do just that, using a program called Access. That's made it possible to contemplate mounting these databases on the World Wide Web, which is what we're hoping to do."

It was the unit's massive H.G. Wells Collection, with more than 70,000 items, that Professor Rinkel first tackled twelve years ago. Others, including the Proust and Rilke collections, also were tackled, all using fairly primitive formats.

When the unit received the Edwin Rolfe and Milton Wolff papers in 1990 and 1992, which were the beginnings of the Library's now-large Spanish Civil War Collection, it became clear that better software, more staff, and money to pay for that staff were needed to make these important collections available to researchers.

Luckily, the collections came just as the Library was beginning to allocate income from the endowments created during the National Endowment for the Humanities Challenge Grant project, whose purpose includes "bibliographic control" projects such as these.

It was after receiving approval to use income from one of the challenge grant endowment funds that Professor Rinkel and his graduate-assistant helpers, Jeff Brooks and Lynn Fors, started using a database called Access. Although originally designed for industrial inventory control, Professor Rinkel and his group have been able to customize it for library use.

The major benefit of the new program? All the old PC File database information could be transferred to it, and eventually the Access databases could be transferred to the World Wide Web.

Says Professor Rinkel, "This has really been a team effort involving our library technical assistant Mary Burke, a graduate assistant, students, and volunteers. Before this, we were just working on things piecemeal. Now, for the first time, we've really been making an all-out attack."

The result is a series of databases that provide folder-level and item-level information and the ability to search for particular criteria across many tables of information at the same time.

"Say, for instance, you wanted to find all the letters from a particular person to H.G. Wells, or from H.G. Wells to that person," explains Professor Rinkel. "Using our database, we could tell if we have some from an early period, then maybe none in the middle, and more during a later period. With the Spanish Civil War items, we can access not only by political content, but for the posters, we can even access it by the most prominent color!"

Items in these special collections are maintained in files according to type of item, such as letters or photographs, and are not kept in their original order. However, many scholars find the original order of papers to be of great importance to their research. Professor Rinkel has solved that problem by assigning each item—every sheet of paper, photograph, pamphlet, or artifact—an inventory number reflecting where the item was in the collection when it was first processed. Thus, using the database, the original order can be recreated.

"This has really helped us keep track of everything because there is just a massive amount of paper in these collections," he notes. "Once an item has its inventory number, then we can feel free to shuffle things around into an order that enhances preservation and makes sense to us."

In addition, each folder now notes how many sheets of material should be in the folder, which makes it easy for a clerk to make sure nothing is missing when a researcher returns a file. Right now, all the Rare Book and Special Collections Library's databases are available only to those able to telnet into the Library's online catalog or to those in the Library building itself.

By the end of the year, however, the four Access databases, for the Wells, Sandburg, Merwin, and Spanish Civil War collections, should be available on the World Wide Web, linked to online catalog information about the collections themselves. That work is being done by a group at the Library's Grainger Engineering Library Information Center, under the direction of librarian Tim Cole.

"We are really looking forward to this especially for security reasons," says unit head Barbara Jones. "When individual items cost thousands of dollars per piece, we want the world to know specifically what we own because theft is a big concern, and this is probably the best way there is to let the world know."
Calendar

EXHIBITS

August


"Women Printers to 1700." Rare Book and Special Collections Library

"Code of Ethics for Law Librarians." University Archives

"World War II Government Documents." Wall Cases, Main Corridor

September

"Advertising Collections at the University Library." Main Corridor

"Julian Steward, Premier Cultural Anthropologist." University Archives and Main Corridor (end of month)

Special Exhibit: Rare Book and Special Collections Library.

"Milestones in Library Automation." Mueller Exhibit Case

October

"Beta Phi Mu: Fifty Golden Years of Recognizing Library and Information Science Scholarship and Service." Main Corridor

Special Exhibit: Rare Book and Special Collections Library.

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