

volume 8/ issue 2

Winter
2012

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 ... Notes from the
Library Director
- 3 ... Library Operations
& Development
- 4 ... W&L Publications
- 5 ... News from Special
Collections
- 7 ... Behind the Books

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
COMMITTEE (2011-2012)

Françoise Frégnac-Clave,
Chair

Edward Adams
Krzysztof Jasiewicz
Barry Kolman
Kenneth Lambert
Richard Marks
Adam Schwartz
Angela Smith
Yanhong Zhu

Shaun Devlin '14
Michael Doobin '14
Julia McCormick '13

Terry Metz, *Ex Officio*
Karin O'Callaghan, *Ex Officio*

Library Letters

Washington and Lee University Library

library.wlu.edu



Antique Scientific Instruments Show How W&L Students Used to Learn

Posted on the W&L website on
November 27, 2011

by News Director Sarah Tschiggfrie

Prisms made by Dubosque in Paris.

An exhibit of 19th-century scientific instruments on the main floor of Leyburn Library shows how students used to study physics, chemistry, mathematics, surveying, and other scientific disciplines.

Yolanda Merrill, humanities librarian and associate professor, originated the idea for the exhibit after noticing similar instruments on display in the library's Boatwright Room. "I thought they were very pretty, but I never knew where they came from," she said.

Tom Williams, who retired last May after teaching physics at W&L for almost 40 years, told Merrill that many more such instruments lay unidentified and uncategorized in the attic of W&L's Science Center. "Every physics department has an attic filled with this stuff because physicists can't throw anything away," admitted Williams. "Some of the items, like those on display in this exhibit, are well worth keeping and chronicling."

Williams and Merrill collaborated in selecting items for the exhibit, concentrating on those that were most interesting, aesthetically pleasing and practical. "We had to move a lot of dusty items to get to other dusty items," said Williams.

Merrill, who acknowledges she has no scientific background, cleaned the selected items for exhibit and prepared captions with the assistance of Williams and Tom Greenslade, professor emeritus of physics at Kenyon College, who researches the history of science.

"One thing I learned was that hardly any of these are stand-alone instruments," said Merrill. "They all have to be attached to something else such as a jar or a pump in order to work. That's why I can't do demonstrations with them. But all these instruments do turn and move and you're allowed to touch them." (CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

WASHINGTON AND LEE
UNIVERSITY

Lexington, Virginia



NOTES FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Terry Metz, University Librarian
metzt@wlu.edu

ARCH. 378.755 W317/i61
v.8 2012 no.2 (Wm.)

Focus of a University Librarian's Energy

During my first five months serving as your University Librarian, I've met individually with all members of the University Library staff. I'm also gradually getting to know more W&L students, faculty, and staff.

In addition to meeting many of you, I've also busied myself with understanding the state of library operations for both the Leyburn Library and the Telford Science Library. Based upon what I've learned thus far, I've elected to focus most of my thinking and effort in five areas for the balance of this, my first, academic year at W&L:

(1) Library Program Planning (LPP)

I use the term "program" to refer to all aspects of the constellation of services a library provides to its user community. For example, program-related inquiries might include: "What's the demand for the various array of library services available today at W&L?" "What will that demand be in five years' time?" I use the term "planning" to indicate that a library needs a foundation, a framework, or starting point for guiding future library action. W&L can use a library program plan as a gauge or navigational tool for determining how well the university library is aligned with our environment at any given time.

We must carefully manage change and embrace it with a critical eye, rather than allowing change to occur haphazardly, with little thought to the future implications today's choices represent when they're made.

Thus, one important value of an LPP Statement (LPPS) is as a tool to measure consensus of direction both internally among library staff and externally among students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, trustees, and benefactors. The LPPS also operates as a lens or prism through which we can examine our current practices and expectations, and make judgments about how tightly we choose to preserve (or how quickly we choose to jettison) these practices and expectations.

(2) Point-of-Service Presence

The University Library maintains three primary physical service points where our staff provide direct, person-to-person help for library users: the Information Desk in Leyburn Library, the Special Collections Reading Room (also in Leyburn) and the Service Desk in the Telford Science Library. Our librarians also visit classrooms when faculty request their expertise.

We in the library value interpersonal relationships and believe they're essential to delivering high quality library service. Wherever practicable, we offer personal service for our users, and we learn people's names and focus primarily on their needs. Thus I believe we in the library must be particularly attentive to gathering and assessing feedback from library users during these face-to-face encounters. Doing so enables our library to continuously improve the services it makes available to its community

(3) Virtual Presence

The importance of our library's ability to serve users who are not physically within our library's walls is rising rapidly. For example, we must increase the library's capability for digitizing content from its various collections that currently aren't available in electronic form and establish effective

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

FEB 16 2012



OPERATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

Karin O'Callaghan, Operations and Development Manager
friendsofthelibrary@wlu.edu



Friends of the Library Update

As of December 31, 2011, the Friends had 270 **active** members, 369 individuals and couples have joined since the group was founded in March 2005. The Friends have provided almost \$150,000 in funds to the University Library; this money has been used primarily to purchase books or databases that the library could not afford otherwise. Just for a change, the Friends also purchased the patio furniture that was placed in 2009, in celebration of the renovation of the Main floor of Leyburn.

Mark your calendars now: Thorns Craven '62 will speak to the Friends on May 12 at 2 p.m. in Northen Auditorium. Thorns was a founder of Jargon Press and will be discussing its raucous history. **More news later!**

Book Sale Update

Despite the nice weather during Parents and Family Weekend, the annual Library Book Sale took in over \$3800 this year, just under last year's record of \$4,000+.

We say "despite the nice weather" because bad weather drives people into the library more than nice weather does during the Fall family reunion. All funds go directly to the acquisition of unbudgeted material for students and faculty.

Go green for interviews!

Have an interview to give or take? Look professional! Don't hunch over a lap-top or squint into a desktop computer. Use the high-tech small study rooms at Leyburn Library.

M40, 41, and 42 can be arranged for long-distance two-way communication. Whether it's a small group webinar, a job interview, or just a one-on-one teleconference, be comfortable and professional in one of these rooms designed for just this type use.

Just reserve the room online at:

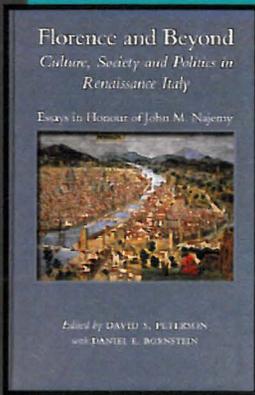
library.wlu.edu/services/RoomReservations.asp

If you're using M40 or M42 talk to the helpful people at the Information Desk to have them set up the appropriate equipment for you. M41 already has the audio, video, and computer equipment in there. Save travel time and money, reduce your carbon footprint, look high-tech yourself, and relax. What could be better?



LIBRARY LETTERS EDITORIAL STAFF

Mary Abdoney, Yolanda Merrill, Karin O'Callaghan, Vaughan Stanley, John Tombarge
& Elizabeth Anne Teaff



W&L Publications Count

In October 2010 the library launched our W&L Publications wall display and online listing. The online listing records publications by anyone affiliated with W&L. As of Dec. 31, 2011 the listing shows 1006 records of items published, whether books, articles, book sections, edited books, music, DVDs, or anything else. The listing includes 211 W&L associated authors/producers. Most of the records are from 2010 and 2011 and a few earlier ones.

A new physical display is created each month on the Main floor of Leyburn, just opposite the Information Desk. The current display has photos of authors who were published in 2011.

It's so easy to be included. Just send notification of your recent or forthcoming publication to Karin O'Callaghan at ocallaghank@wlu.edu. Library staff will do the rest. We look forward to "hanging" you on the wall soon .



Many of the 2011 Authors

NOTES FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

methods for making these newly digitized materials available via network access. And we must also ensure an overall satisfying experience for library users whose primary means of accessing library services and resources is accomplished via the Internet.

(4) Physical Space

During the past two decades, the physical square feet devoted to library space at W&L has eroded as sections of the building have been converted to other uses. Leyburn, Telford, and Special Collections continually encounter space constraints. Unless more collection space is identified, the library must either:

- store more print materials off-site, remote from the library— and potentially remote from the campus,
- shift more of our print collections into high-density shelving,
- withdraw unneeded materials from our print collections more aggressively,
- reduce or limit the number of print items the library acquires, or
- implement some combination of these alternatives.

Our W&L community must begin evaluating these various courses of action now, before W&L undertakes any significant library redesign.

Our most pressing space concern involves the Telford Science Library. The university submitted a Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) grant proposal in October 2011 to create an Integrative/ Quantitative (IQ) Center on what is currently the lower floor of the Telford Science Library. If that grant is awarded, we must determine how to continue providing an appropriate library program for Telford within the two remaining floors.

(5) Budget Awareness and Preparation

Finally, of course, I must understand the nuances of how W&L prepares both its annual capital and operating budgets. With this knowledge, I collaborate with other library staff to allocate our financial resources as wisely as possible.



The following biographical sketch is of Robert E. Lee during the Winter of 1862.

Many of Lee's letters may be viewed online:

<http://dspace.nitle.org/handle/10090/18509>



As 1862 began Robert E. Lee was posted in Charleston, South Carolina, to oversee the defenses of the South Atlantic seaboard. Lee had not yet acquired the fame and lofty reputation that he would have later in the war. He arrived in the southeastern war theatre at just the time that the Federal army was making inroads in maritime defenses. He had a tall task before him. His military and personal fortunes were at a low ebb but he retained the strong support of Confederate President Jefferson Davis.

Lee now realized that his family would never be able to return to Arlington House, the Lee home just across the Potomac where Federal troops had now been buried. He was even giving thought to purchasing Stratford in Westmoreland County. Lee had been born there on January 19, 1807. He wrote to his daughters Annie and Agnes that Stratford “. . . is the only other place that I could go to, now accessible to us, that would inspire me with feelings of pleasure and local love . . . I wonder if it is for sale and at how much.” As it turned out Lee would not be able to purchase Stratford which by 1862 was no longer owned by any Lee family members and was in declining condition.

Lee was thinking about his past in another way in early 1862. In January he visited the grave of his father on Cumberland Island, Georgia. Henry “Light Horse Harry” Lee had been buried there where he died in 1818. Lee's memories of his father were few and complicated. Henry Lee had twice served time in debtors' prison and had abandoned his family (including six year old Robert) for the West Indies after a near fatal fracas in Baltimore. Lee was never to see his father again and always strove for family stability as his father never had. Today father and son are together again in the family crypt of the Lee Chapel.

Lee was not to remain long in his post overseeing coastal defenses. Jefferson Davis recalled him to Richmond in early March. Lee was now 55 years old and his hair was turning very grey. He grew the short beard that would characterize his appearance for the rest of his life. His military fortunes and reputation were soon to take a dramatic turn for the better as he led his army to victory in the Seven Days campaign.

Antique Scientific Instruments Show How W&L Students Used to Learn (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Williams said that one of his favorite instruments among those on display is the Wimshurst electrostatic generator. "This device has a crank handle that you turn and through an arrangement of pulleys it turns and rubs metal discs against a brush and generates electricity, the same way you might in scraping your feet against a rug in winter time and touching a doorknob," he explained.

Williams added that Benjamin Franklin used an electrostatic generator to make public displays of electrical experiments to shock people. "He would have five or six people hold hands and one touch here and another touch there and they would all be shocked. It was also a popular entertainment to show sparks and how things moved because of electricity," he said. He went on to describe how in the 1970s he and Taylor Sanders, W&L emeritus professor of history, took this particular electrostatic generator on tour. "Taylor lectured on the college curriculum in the sciences in 18th-century America, and I did a series of electrical experiments. We would put this item in the trunk of our car and carry it around as part of our show and tell," he remembered.

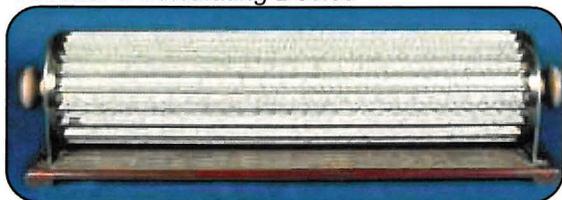
Both Merrill and Williams pointed out the attraction of another instrument, Thacher's Calculating Device, on display in a glass cabinet. "It's quite fun," said Williams, "It's a precursor to the slide rule, which is a precursor to the calculator and the computer. It's not only historically interesting but pretty to look at. We've also displayed the instruction book that came with it." Other favorites are the optical devices and prisms displayed in a cabinet near the front entrance. "They are gorgeous," said Merrill. Williams pointed out that such items are still used quite often in class and demonstrations today. "But they are not nearly as pretty as these prisms, which are French and beautifully made," he said.

Unable to identify one of the items on display, instead of a caption Merrill wrote "What is this?" on a card. Williams noted that one person wrote that the item was a string model of a hyperboloid. "That is correct," he said. "It was a way of demonstrating a three dimensional surface by simply stretching strings and attaching them to different points."

Williams explained that although computer demonstrations have displaced much of what used to be the standard way of teaching, many of the instruments on display could still be used in teaching today. Merrill added that she hopes the exhibit will make students curious as to how people 100 years ago used these instruments to try and achieve the same things students do now on high tech computers. "In a way it was a much more joyful way to understand science," she said.

Student feedback on the exhibit has been positive. "I've had several students tell me that this is the most awesome exhibit they've seen," said Merrill. Merrill is a member of the University Collections of Art and History committee, and she pointed out that one of their missions is to highlight university collections. "This was part of the collections that was sitting in the dark and unseen and I wanted to bring it out," she said. She is also creating a website as an online inventory of the items on display that will last after the exhibit concludes at the end of the academic year.

Thacher's Calculating Device



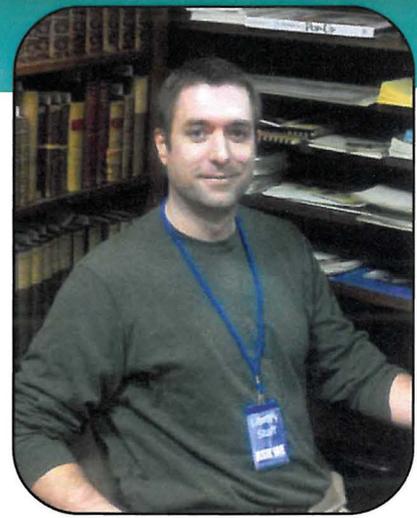
Cenco Wimhurst Machine



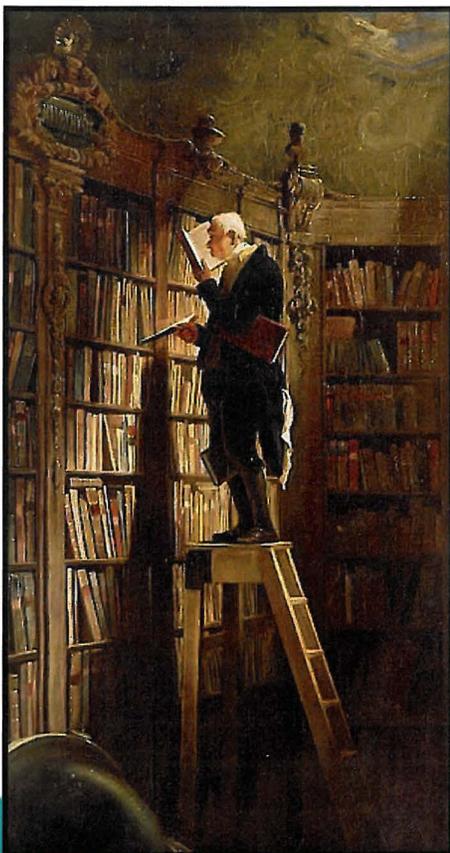
BEHIND THE BOOKS!

Meet Seth McCormick-Goodhart

Seth McCormick-Goodhart carries a positive attitude with him wherever he goes. Since 2008 he has been with Special Collections helping our patrons and working on the digital repository. He is currently transcribing the newly acquired Paxton Diaries and inputting the Robert E. Lee Papers online. Seth enjoys the interaction with patrons and doing research, a habit he acquired when investigating his family's genealogy. He also is skilled at exhibits and in 2010 he put together a very fine exhibit on the late Tom Riegel, legendary W&L journalism professor. Seth loves all things concerning material culture and has done several house and barn restorations including his own home near Lexington which dates back to 1827. He is an expert on historical photography and has helped our researchers in many ways with this knowledge.



Seth was born in Lexington and graduated from old Lexington High School in 1991. He went on to study at Hampden Sydney and is a 1996 graduate. His wife, Jennifer, was an All-American at Denison College in lacrosse, a sport Seth also loves and coaches. Jen and Seth have two daughters, Eleanor (age 4) and Ruby (age 3). And as part of his rich life, Seth is a student in the Masters of Library and Information Science program through North Texas University.



“The Bookworm”

If you haven't seen it yet, stop by the Book Nook in Leyburn and see the print restored and dedicated in memory of former University Librarian Barbara Brown. Barbara was a devoted book lover and librarian. The print is a copy of an 1850 painting by Carl Spitzweg the print was found in the University Collection of art just before Barbara died in August 2011. Yolanda Merrill restored it and the Friends of the Library paid for the framing and the plaque. The print hangs near the collection of Lance Hidy library posters that Barbara donated to the library at the time of its partial renovation in 2009. We know she would be pleased.



Professor Denny Garvis, Business Administration, finds Leyburn M47 perfect for his classes.

“I like being able to reconfigure the room to meet the needs of each lecture; sometimes we need small groups, sometimes it’s a horseshoe. Having the tables and chairs on wheels makes moving them a snap.”



February is Love Your Library Month!

Show your appreciation by stopping by the W&L libraries and seeing what’s new! You might be amazed.

Find us on Facebook
[Washington and Lee University Library](#)



Follow us on Twitter
[@W&LLibrary](#)

Watch us on You Tube
[UniversityLibraryWLU](#)

