

footnotes

SPRING 2008 VOLUME 33 NUMBER 1



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On the cover Carving from the Eloise W. Martin Reading Room, Deering Library. Photograph by Peter Kiar.

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Writer: Nina Barrett

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Library celebrates Deering's 75th anniversary

Very early in the morning of January 3, 1933 — the first day of classes after the winter break — a Northwestern student determined to complete an unfinished German assignment headed for Lunt Library. Then he remembered that this was the day the University's newly constructed library, the Charles Deering Library, was to officially open. The first student to arrive that morning, he pushed open the big wooden front door facing on to Deering Meadow, and entered the building. As he recalled years later, with still-palpable wonder:

An ornate set of double swinging doors in the center of the room caught my eye. I cautiously approached them, opened one of them, and after taking a peek, I stepped cautiously into what appeared to be the center of some kind of vaulted cathedral with a lengthy double series of long well-lighted tables and armchairs instead of pews to the right and to the left. Yes, even many shelves of books added to the splendor!...

I seated myself at one of the Library tables to the left to begin my studies, but I never did complete the German assignment that day. For the next hour I watched members of the student body as they entered the reading room through those same swinging doors. I wish I could have made camera recordings of the variety of their expressions of awe as they first witnessed the magnificence of this new educational environment.

This year, as Deering Library turns 75, its long career as a treasure-house of scholarly resources, an intellectual and social meeting-ground for students, and an architectural gem of the Northwestern campus



Photo by Jim Ziv

From left William A. Gordon, chair of the Library Board of Governors; Sarah M. Pritchard, Charles Deering McCormick University Librarian; and Daniel Linzer, University Provost

will be honored with a series of celebratory events and by the publication of a lavishly illustrated volume, *Deering Library: An Illustrated History*.

Living history

The source of the opening-day anecdote above, *Deering Library* draws heavily on a wealth of resources from University Archives and a stunning portfolio of original color photography to tell an engaging story in words and pictures that begins in the 1920s. Vibrant and full of ambitious expansion plans, the Northwestern of that time was fast outgrowing the physical landscape of its not-too-distant youth — and a well-timed bequest from Charles Deering (1852–1927) was allocated to build a much-needed monument to his love for books and reading.

In the book, a chapter on architect James Gamble Rogers explores the way the Library's design reflected a prevailing fondness on college campuses of that

era for the Gothic style. The narrative is framed by contributions from assistant University librarian for special libraries Jeffrey Garrett, who considers the treasures in the Library's collections, and by Charles Deering McCormick University Librarian Sarah M. Pritchard, who looks toward the Library's future. University President Henry S. Bienen contributes thoughts about Deering's place in the Northwestern community, and a foreword by Charles Deering's great-granddaughter and Library Board of Governors member Nancy McCormick Vella describes her family's relationship to the Library over the course of many generations.

An excerpt and photo spread from the book, covering the original vision for Deering and its execution through architectural, sculptural, and artistic details, begins on page 4 of this issue of *Footnotes*. Copies of the book can be ordered from Amazon.com, from your local bookstore, or directly from Northwestern University Press

(www.nupress.northwestern.edu). Members of the Library's Deering Society of donors will each receive a complimentary copy.

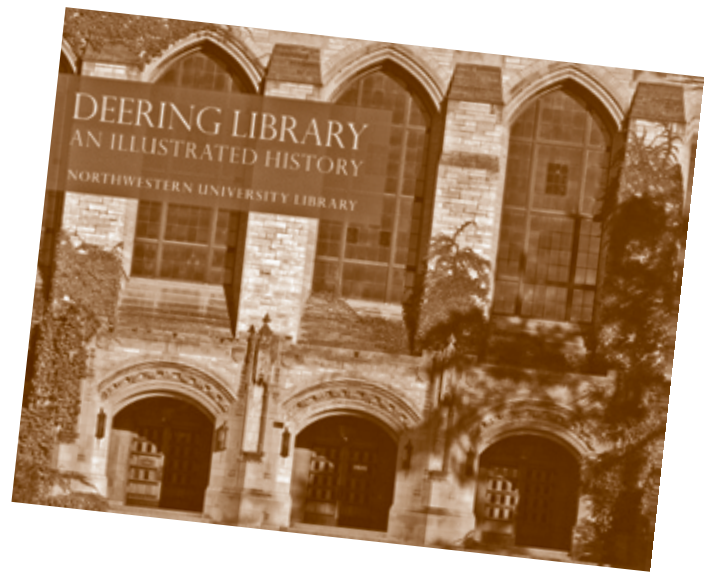
Fulsome festivities

As event programming for the anniversary unfolds throughout the year, it will, says Pritchard, both celebrate pride in Deering's past and engage its community of supporters in excitement about its future. "Over the years, Deering has come to house many of our most valuable special collections," she says, "and now, as we come to formalize that identity, we need to evaluate the need for enhancements to the building in terms

of its space, storage, environmental, and security features."

Much of the anniversary programming is intended to focus attention on the unique nature and holdings of these special collections. Other programming focuses on the building itself, such as the spring lecture featuring Aaron Betsky, director of the Cincinnati Art Museum, a prominent architectural historian, and the author of the definitive book on Deering architect James Gamble Rogers.

Programming culminates in a Deering Anniversary Celebration, to be held in



September on Deering Meadow, to which all Northwestern University Library donors will be invited. "We want to have a chance to thank everyone who supports us so generously," Pritchard says, "including members of the Deering and McCormick families, who have continued to maintain a very important presence in the life of this Library."

A year of celebration: Calendar of Deering anniversary events

January 30 Anniversary Kick-off Open House in Deering's lobby featured refreshments, vintage film footage of the Deering dedication ceremony in 1932, and a photo exhibit documenting the building's construction process.

Mid-April Publication of *Deering Library: An Illustrated History*. Free to members of the Deering Society and available from Amazon.com, your local bookstore, or Northwestern University Press (www.nupress.northwestern.edu).

May 15 Annual Deering Society Dinner, with presentation of the Deering Family Award. By invitation only to members of the Deering Society.

June 18 Lecture by Aaron Betsky, director of the Cincinnati Art Museum and an expert on Deering architect James Gamble Rogers. Presented by the Library Board of Governors. By invitation only to Library contributors.

Summer and fall, ongoing Guided tours of Deering Library and its special collections, including the Art Collection, Government and Geographic Information and Data Services, the Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections, the Music Library, and University Archives. Open to the public.

September 26 75th Anniversary Celebration on Deering Meadow, featuring Northwestern University President Henry S. Bienen as keynote speaker. Enjoy food and drinks on the lawn and explore Deering Library. By invitation only to Library contributors.

For more information about these events, contact Clare Roccaforte, director of public relations, at 847-567-5918 or c-roccaforte@northwestern.edu. For information on making gifts in support of Deering's anniversary — and its future — contact Alex Herrera, director of development, at 847-467-7129 or aherrera@northwestern.edu.



This excerpt from *Deering Library: An Illustrated History* takes up the story in 1930, when Northwestern formally announced that \$1 million in gifts from Charles Deering, his widow, and their children, would be used to fund the construction of a new library to be named for him. The University Librarian, T. W. Koch, who had been lobbying for a new facility since arriving at Northwestern in 1919, leapt immediately into the planning. His vision, sensibility, and passion for the project profoundly influenced even the smallest details and can still be detected in Deering's unique stained glass windows, decorative statues, carved inscriptions, and furnishings as well as in its overall architecture. Photography by Peter Kiar.

Koch's vision for the new library

University Librarian T. W. Koch threw himself with joyful energy into planning the library he had dreamed of for so long. As architect James Gamble Rogers (1867–1947) worked on his designs, Koch visited numerous academic libraries and consulted with additional university librarians and experts by letter. The stamp of his taste and ideas was visible in every aspect of the project.

Koch expressed his vision for the new structure and its functions in numerous articles. In a two-issue newsletter, the *Charles Deering Library Bulletin*, Koch addressed

While Koch stressed the practical, modern features of the design, he could not resist frequent references to its aesthetic and abstract aspects, especially the feelings that the building was meant to evoke. His conception of the Library was holistic — he worked to bring out both the concrete and the metaphorical implications of the design at every turn. To Koch, the appeal of the Gothic was in its emotional and dynamic elements. Gothic architecture, he wrote, “is essentially emotional, whereas classic architecture is intellectual ... Gothic architecture is dynamic.... If you knock out the flying buttresses the vaults overthrow the walls.

From vision to Gothic reality

Excerpt from *Deering Library: An Illustrated History*

topics ranging from a defense of the Gothic style to the configuration of the plumbing, from the meaning of the carved inscriptions to the specifications for chairs and tables, and from advances in library technology to anticipation of patrons' feelings of awe and inspiration upon entering the reading room.

If you knock out the vaults the buttresses will push the wall in.”The combination of the dynamic and the emotional made the Gothic appropriate for an academic building, especially a library, because “no other architectural style, unless it be the Greek, has expressed more adequately the upward-reaching of man's spirit.”

The site chosen for the Library, along the crest of a low ridge paralleling Sheridan Road, had previously been occupied by Heck Hall, a yellow-brick dormitory used by the “Bibs,” as Garrett Biblical Institute students were called. Heck Hall had burned down in 1914. The buildings near the site were Memorial Hall to the north, which housed the commerce and journalism schools, and Annie May Swift to the south, home of the School of Speech (known as the School of Oratory until 1921). The book stacks of the new Library would face the Lake Michigan shore, with the main façade fronting Sheridan Road, although set back about 400 feet from the street. University President Walter Dill Scott saw the new Library as the centerpiece and architectural keynote for a future grouping of buildings, to be designed by Rogers, which would transform the Evanston campus. Koch, whose aspirations for the new Library matched those of President Scott in scope, agreed that this site would provide the thousands of people passing along Sheridan Road with a “glimpse of the Evanston campus of the future.”

Construction

Deering Library was built, decorated, and trimmed with many varieties of stone and wood from all over the country, and despite its construction at the early years of the Great Depression, the finishing touches — carvings, paneling, and stained-glass window insets — evoke an impression of opulence.



The exterior is of Lannon stone, a very hard limestone from Wisconsin, trimmed with grey Bedford limestone from Indiana on the corners. The stone was shipped to Joliet, Illinois, and hand-cut (due to its machine-resistant density) in the workshop of Adam Groth & Sons. (The same Lannon stone was used in the Women’s Quadrangle and the [Seabury-]Western Theological Seminary.) Bedford limestone was also used on walls and trim on the Library’s interior, varied with ocher-toned Ohio sandstone. Granite slabs for ground-level window ledges and the steps leading to the main entrance came from Cold Spring, Minnesota. The travertine marble for the inside staircases was quarried in Winona, Minnesota, while gray marble from Tennessee was used in other parts of the building. The loggia was paved with George Washington sandstone from Alexandria, Virginia. Buff-colored pressed brick from Pennsylvania was used on the walls of the ground floor and corridors. Concrete floors were

overlaid with terrazzo on the ground floor and Romany red clay tiles on the first floor (in other places, linoleum or rubber flooring was installed). Aside from stone, about 65,000 square feet of Appalachian white oak from Louisville, Kentucky, kiln-dried and wire brushed, was used for wood trim, doors, and bookcases.

Behind the solidly medieval surfaces, modern materials and building methods were employed, although often disguised. As Koch said, “Since . . . Gothic architecture is a style of continual growth it is fitting that the Gothic now being employed at Northwestern University should depart somewhat from the older forms in order to conform to the materials now being used, [and] to the recent developments in construction.” The majestic ceiling in the main reading room on the second floor was supported by steel and cement beams, painted to look like wood. Steel beams also supported the window frames and the buttresses that defined the Gothic style.

Inside and out, every surface and finish was carefully chosen and embellished. Plastered ceilings were painted and stenciled in medieval style. Wood trim included ceiling beams, linen-fold paneling on walls and wainscoting, and bas-relief and three-dimensional sculptures. Stone over the arches on the exterior, and as corbels, pillars, and trim inside, was carved with inscriptions or figures. Sixty-eight stained-glass medallions were set into the huge multi-paned windows on the first and second floors of the building.

Both René Paul Chambellan, the sculptor who designed the wood and stone carvings, and G. Owen Bonawit, the designer of the stained-glass medallions, had worked with James Gamble Rogers on other projects. The team had managed to inject humor and fancy into the design elements of their previous collaborations. When it came to choosing motifs for the Charles Deering Library, they found an eager conspirator in bibliophile Koch, whose traditional tastes and appreciation of craftsmanship were accompanied by a strong whimsical streak. Koch threw himself, his staff, and the books in the Library’s



collections into the task of selecting design motifs that reflected — sometimes in a humorous way — the educational aspect of the building, with references to culture, literature, history, and the academic tradition.

Carvings, statues, and inscriptions

American sculptor René Paul Chambellan (1893–1955) studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and at the Académie Julian in Paris. A leading practitioner of what was called the French modern style, he specialized in architectural sculpture.

For his work on Deering Library, Chambellan created plaster models for the carvings, sent them to Rogers for approval, and then commissioned the artisans at Groth & Sons to carve the stone in Joliet. Additional carving and finishing was done on site in Evanston. Carved motifs included symbols of knowledge: an owl, a lamp, a pen, books, a scroll, an hourglass. Stone or wood borders of carved vines, fruit, and flowers were used liberally. Of Chambellan's many creations, the ones most fondly associated with Deering Library were the largest — the three-dimensional figures of a monk and an Arab scholar that are seated at the turns of the staircases leading up to the second level of the building, statues representing the spread of religious and scientific knowledge in medieval times. Bas-relief portraits of Charles Deering, T. W. Koch, and Walter Dill Scott, and the seals of the State of Illinois and Northwestern University, were also prominently placed. Stone

mice crept into stone books, impish reading figures served as corbels to support beams, and three-dimensional wooden animals, inspired by Aesop's fables, guarded the doors into the reading rooms.

Koch gave much time and thought to selecting the inscriptions carved at strategic points throughout the building. For the cornerstone, he chose a phrase found on Roman libraries: *Nutrimendum spiritus* — “Food for the mind.” The north and south exterior arches feature the proverbs “The fountain of wisdom flows through books” and “Happy is the man that findeth wisdom.” Inside, carved mottos defined the purpose of the Library and described the work of the scholar. Framing the interior entrance was the injunction *Aut legere scribenda: aut scribere legenda* (“Either to read something worthy of being written, or

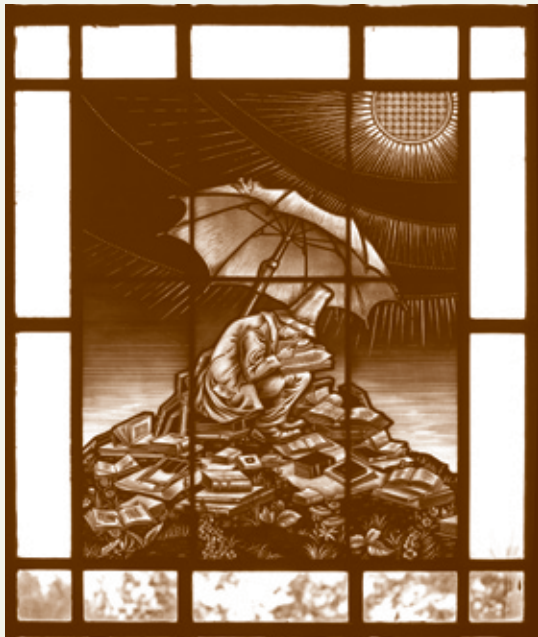
to write something worth being read”).

At the top of the staircase on the second floor, researchers were reminded of the time-consuming process of sifting through sources and discerning the best ones, with the inscriptions *Inter folia fructus* (“Among the leaves, fruit”), and *Non multa, sed bona* (“Not many, but good”). Even the fireplace in the University Librarian's office had its motto: “Old wood to burn, old books to read.”

Stained glass

G. Owen Bonawit (1891–1971) apprenticed in his uncle's stained-glass workshop, and by 1918 had established his own firm in New York. His commissions included windows and medallions at Yale and Duke Universities and in churches, office buildings, and homes.





In some cases, the stained-glass images reflected the specific purpose of the room. In the Commerce Reading Room on the south side of the main level, imagery was drawn from transportation and industry, with an emphasis on the Midwest: medallions depicted an Indian fur-trader, a Conestoga wagon, a locomotive, a Great Lakes steamer, and an airplane, in addition to a binder, harvester, and thresher — produced by the Deering-McCormick family company. Images of medieval copyists were placed in the librarians' workroom on the south side of the second floor.

Appropriately for the window

Bonawit's designs for the 68 stained-glass medallions in the Deering windows were based on suggestions made by Koch and Library staff, using books and manuscripts from the Library's collections, as well as from the artist's own knowledge and imagination. The result was an eclectic assortment of subjects drawn from literature, fable, philosophy, world religions, and history. Most of the medallions were done in subdued monochromatic tones, since Koch felt that excessive use of colored stained glass would be garish.

Medallion images were grouped in the Library's rooms by theme. The windows in the reading room on the north side of the main level pictured the history of the Midwest, with portraits of Native Americans, French explorers, and Lincoln. Figures representing ancient Hindu, Roman, Greek, Hebrew, Assyrian, Chinese, and Egyptian culture were placed in the windows on the northeast end. The seminar room windows along the south wall held printers' marks and seals from American and British universities — including King's College Chapel, Cambridge, the inspiration for Deering Library's design.

in the order department, a medieval bibliophile perched on a massive pile of books. On the north side of the second floor, Don Quixote watched over the secretary's desk in the administrative offices.

The medallions in the windows of the great Reading Room were meant to inspire the students who studied there. The philosopher Lao-Tzu stood beside the gods Brahma and Vishnu, the goddess Artemis, the Angel Gabriel, and French hero Roland. Also depicted were scenes from the *Arabian Nights*, Hans Christian Andersen, Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*. Symbols of the medieval trivium (Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric) represented the foundations of a medieval university education. And the elusive Holy Grail was placed in one of the windows of the Treasure (Rare Books) Room. Cards identifying the medallion images, and the sources from which they were drawn, were originally placed in holders beside each of the windows; sadly, all but a few of these have disappeared over the years.

Copies of *Deering Library: An Illustrated History* can be ordered from your local bookstore, Amazon.com, or Northwestern University Press (www.nupress.northwestern.edu).

Donor spotlight

Donald and Dorothy Hall on planned giving

Don and Dorothy Hall (both '59) met at Northwestern. He was in the undergraduate School of Business, and she was a psychology major in the Weinberg College of Arts



and Sciences. "The fraternity and sorority houses were noisy," Don recalls, "and senior year you had a lot of papers to write. Dorothy and I spent a lot of time together in Deering Library."

Now retired and living in North Carolina, the Halls have been members of the Deering Society since it was established in 1997. "Giving to the Library made sense to us because we were alumni of two different schools, and this was one Northwestern institution we could both support," he says.

In terms of estate planning, Don says their goal was to take care of their two children and then leave a tax-free estate by supporting nonprofits that are important to them. "Northwestern is important to both of us," he says. "I took Melville Herskovits's anthropology class and William Montgomery McGovern's political science class, and Dorothy took Bergen Evans's English class. College was fun in those days."



What are they? Six issues of a South African comic book series documenting and dramatizing the life of Nelson Mandela, published by the Nelson Mandela Foundation with the goal of “draw[ing] the memory resources around Mr. Mandela’s life, values, and work into a dynamic African centre of excellence.” The comic book format is a frequent educational medium in Africa because it can reach out widely to a population with minimal literacy skills. Such comics are commonly distributed free in schools, public libraries, and community centers.

Where are they? Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies

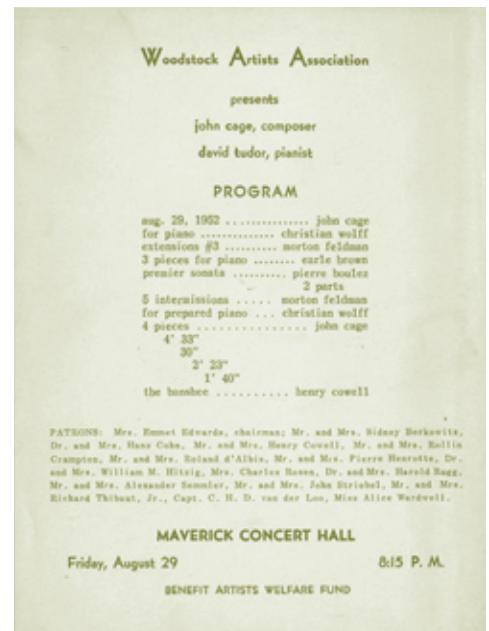
Why do we have them? Individual issues have been given to the Library by contacts in South Africa or collected by Herskovits Library staff on visits there. The Library makes a point of collecting materials in the wide range of nonbook formats (e.g., comic books, textiles, posters, buttons) that reflect the popular communication channels most often used in African societies.

What is it? Original program from the premiere of John Cage’s famous “silent” piece *4’33”*, performed by pianist David Tudor on August 29, 1952, at Maverick Concert Hall in Woodstock, New York. *4’33”* asks performers to remain silent and play not a single note during the time specified, encouraging listeners to become aware of the natural sounds all around them. This became Cage’s best-known work, and it remains one of the most controversial musical compositions of the 20th century.

Where is it? Music Library

Why do we have it? Cage began donating materials to the Library in the early 1970s, and today Cage’s manuscripts, correspondence, and other materials make up the John Cage Collection.

Who uses it? The Cage Collection is used by scholars from around the world.

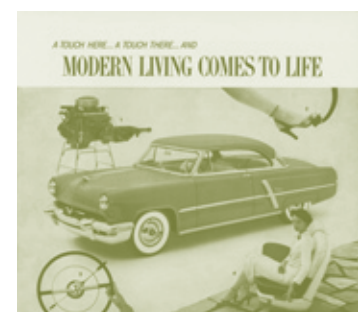


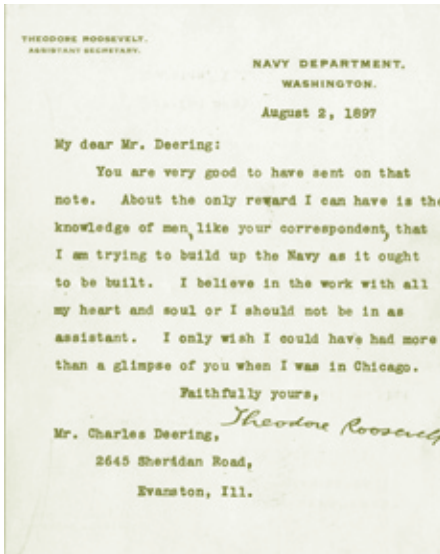
What are they? Twenty-two issues of the official program of the Chicago Auto Show dating from 1953 to 1983. They contain both factual information, such as exhibitor lists and specifications for the year’s new models, and irresistible bits of historical color. For instance, the 1953 show — “Stars of Motordom” — involved two revolving stages, a color scheme of marine blue and shell pink, and, according to that year’s program, “enough satin and sateen

to make 3,000 gowns — more than 20,000 yards — as well as 10,000 yards of other materials such as voile, velour, and sheetings.” This year marks the Chicago Auto Show’s 100th anniversary. Only one other library appears to hold a collection of its programs, so this one is extremely rare.

Where are they? Transportation Library

Why do we have them? The programs came to the library as a gift.





What is it? A note from Theodore Roosevelt (below) to Charles Deering, dated August 2, 1897, when Roosevelt was assistant secretary of the U.S. Navy. Deering was an 1873 graduate of Annapolis and served in the Navy until 1881. The note succinctly summarizes Roosevelt's ambition to project American power across the globe through the agency of the Navy.

Where is it? University Archives

Why do we have it? The note is from a collection of papers left to the Library by William Deering and his descendants.



What are they? A pair of small late-19th century portraits painted on cobwebs. One depicts Phillipine Welsler, a celebrated beauty who secretly married Archduke Ferdinand II of the Tyrol; the other is of a Tyrolean peasant. Painting on cobwebs seems to have been a practice that originated in the Tyrolean Alps in the 16th century. Such pictures were often marketed to the tourist trade. Ingenious,



unnecessary eccentricities, they are perfect examples of the occasional triumph of whimsy over practicality and of the survival in a modern university library of the heritage of the *Kunstkammer*: the Cabinet of Curiosities.

Where are they? Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections



What is it? The official souvenir sheet music for “Any Bonds Today?” — the 1941 theme song written by Irving Berlin for the National Defense Savings Program. The chorus goes: “Any bonds today?/Bonds of freedom that’s what I’m selling/Any bonds today?/Scrape up the most you can/Here comes the freedom man/Asking you to buy a share of freedom today.” Stamped by the Morale Committee of the Chicago Area’s Office of Civilian Defense, the publication serves as a vivid reminder of how everyone — including the famous — was involved in supporting the World War II effort.

Where is it? Government and Geographic Data and Information Services

Why do we have it? Northwestern University Library was a War Key Information Center and received thousands of World War II–related publications from many sources.



Digital university

**With electronic resources proliferating,
the Library works harder to illuminate them**

News flash from our students: The college lecture is, like, dead. The old ritual that involved the professor standing at the podium for an hour consulting pages of typewritten notes and maybe — if you were lucky — at least showing a couple of slides is as out of date now as the notion of going to find a phone booth when you need to make a call. The cool professors have PowerPoints as professionally polished as Pepsi ads, and they utilize “personal response systems,” electronic clickers that let their students instant message answers to polls and quiz questions directly to a screen at the front of the classroom.

And by the way, that other old academic tradition — publishing the results of your research as a book — that too is just so 20th century. The most cutting-edge work today gets published as a nonlinear, multimedia, audiovisual, interactive web site.

While this is a world that undergraduates — who were practically born wired — seem to navigate with great ease, it doesn't come so naturally to everyone on campus. For much of the faculty and many graduate students, whose own educational experience has been mainly lecture based, the digitization of academia poses some urgent questions: How do you create an engaging lecture using all this new technology? How do you make sure the technology actually fosters your learning objectives? How do you make your research interesting in a nonlinear, multimedia, audiovisual, interactive way (as though finishing your dissertation wasn't overwhelming enough)?

As a major sponsor of learning technology on campus, the Library has assumed an increasingly active role in helping the



Rick Gaber

Northwestern community grapple with these questions. “It’s another way the revolution in electronic information has caused us to redefine what we do and who we are,” says Charles Deering McCormick University Librarian Sarah M. Pritchard. “It didn’t used to be part of the mission of a research library to train its users in how to use a book, because everyone knew how to open it and start reading. But now we’re providing the community with all sorts of information in formats for which they may need substantial education just to find the content and use the new technical tools — whether they need to teach, pursue research, or publish.”

One of the best examples is the annual Teaching, Learning and Technology (TLT) Workshop, which the Library sponsors with the University’s Searle Center for Teaching Excellence and Academic Technologies.

The program enables a dozen Northwestern faculty members to spend a week designing

or revising a course curriculum to take advantage of the latest technologies.

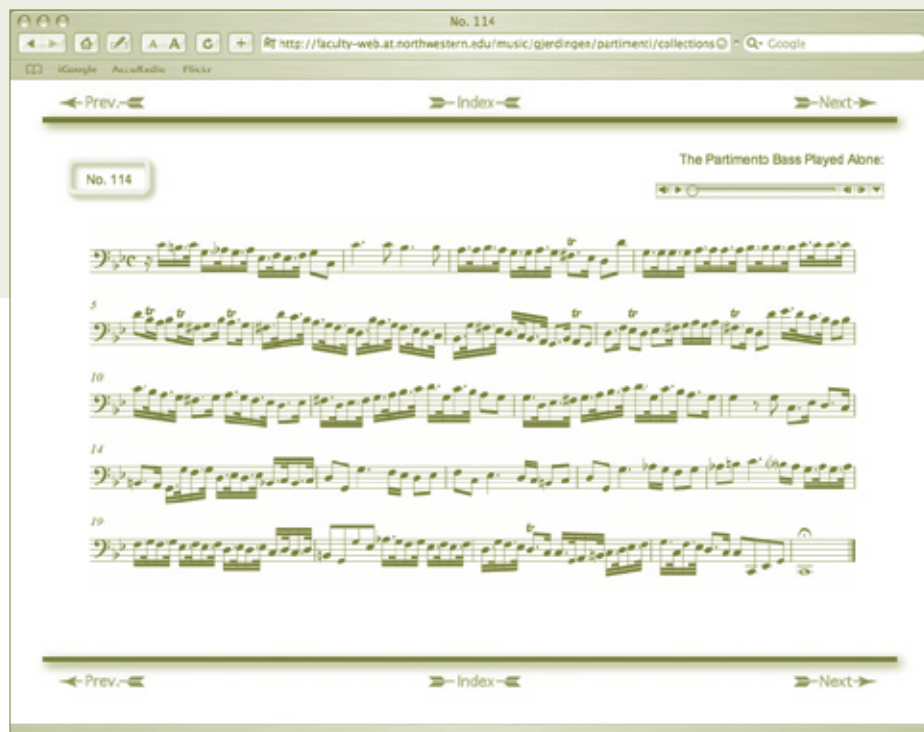
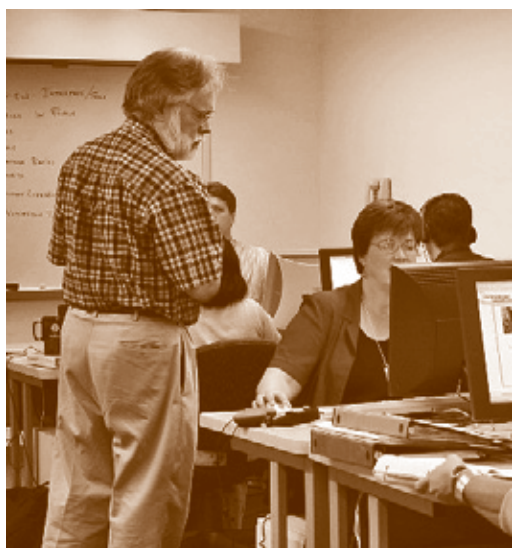
The week includes demos and lectures — equally informational and inspirational — as well as hands-on training sessions.

Genetic material

On the first day of the most recent TLT workshop in August 2007, Rick Gaber, professor of biochemistry, molecular biology, and cell biology in the Judd A. and Marjorie Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, had been invited to demo his use of PowerPoint. A geneticist specializing in biochemistry, molecular biology, and cell biology, Gaber acknowledged that the course content he needs to present is highly technical and tough. “This class is taught entirely out of primary research literature, and that scares the bejeezus out of the students for the first two or three weeks,” he told faculty colleagues gathered in the Library’s Ver Steeg Lounge.

Then he launched into his demo, which was as close to a July Fourth fireworks display as a lecture on genetics will possibly ever get. A click of his remote, and up popped the journal article he intended to discuss. *Click*: There was a photo of the scientist who did the research, which Gaber found online and included because he thought it would humanize the research to the students. *Click*: The journal article was magnified, so that a paragraph, or a page, or a diagram became easily readable from the back of a lecture hall. *Click*: A list of important vocabulary terms appeared on the screen. That would stay there throughout the class, he said, with the term he was currently discussing highlighted but the others still visible, so he could refer back to them and bold them again as he began to tie the important terms and concepts together.

Click, click, click. The information on the screen kept changing; he never once turned his back to the audience to write something down on a blackboard or



Above A page from Robert Gjerdingen's web site, *Monuments of Partimenti*

Below Brian Nielsen

looked down at a set of lecture notes, demonstrating that everything both he and the students need was up there on the screen. That allowed him to stay continuously engaged with his TLT colleagues, who peppered him with questions as he went along. He made the discussion of his subject — which is itself so technical and scientific that it wasn't always clear what the actual subject was — so entertaining that at the end, his colleagues burst into a round of spontaneous applause.

"Rick is a perfect model for what we want the participants in this program to achieve," says Brian Nielsen, the Academic Technologies facilitator for the program. "It's not just that he knows how to use this technology in a way that's both entertaining and engaging for students in this generation. It's also that he's also making the best possible pedagogic use of the technology."

By this Nielsen means that a learning goal is being achieved

through the use of the technology that could not have been achieved — or at least, achieved as well — through old-fashioned methods. The articles on Gaber's PowerPoint slides come from journals he and the students can access instantly through the Library's subscription databases. They contain up-to-the-minute research, as opposed to what Nielsen refers to as "the greatest hits of the last decade" or the predigested forms of research that tend to appear in textbooks, so they challenge students to do their own digesting.

"That gets students to a level of confidence about making sense of something for themselves — which is what scientists really do — rather than having something poured into their brains," Nielsen says.

Multimedia scholars

Besides getting faculty comfortable with the technology, the other goal of the TLT workshop is to help them design classes that will encourage their students to "practice scholarship." Nielsen says one of the best projects he's seen come out of the workshop in the past few years was a curriculum by



Robert Gjerdingen

a professor of social policy who went on to have her class create a wiki about the Supreme Court.

“This wasn’t some very basic use of technology, like having students write papers and then turn them in over the web,” Nielsen says. “This was actually creating the web. This was a site with sound, with pictures, with text. So then your students aren’t just readers — they’re authors.”

This is important training, since more and more of the really interesting scholarly work is being published in web formats that offer multimedia dimensions. For Northwestern’s incoming graduate students, this development creates two urgent needs: to be able to find the most important resources in their respective fields, and also to understand how multimedia formats and other technological innovations have the potential to shape the work they will go on to publish.

Meeting those needs is the goal of the Electronic Resources Forum, a daylong program sponsored by the Library just before the start of each academic year. Last September about 100 new graduate students chose from among two dozen sessions on topics like “Finding Primary Sources Online: The Marriage of Technology and Archives” and “Religion in Cyberspace,” most of them cotaught by a member of the Library’s staff in partnership with a faculty member.

A session for music students, for instance, was team taught by D.J. Hoek, head of the Music Library, and Robert Gjerdingen, professor of music studies. Hoek introduced the Library’s resources, reminding students that not everything worth looking at is available online — yet. “Only a handful of libraries in the country collect music manuscripts extensively,” he told them, “and we’re one of them. And the reason for collecting them is that — especially if it’s a messy manuscript, with a lot of corrections — it tells us a lot about how a work was created.”

Then Gjerdingen took over, leading the students on a whirlwind tour of the web site *Monuments of Partimenti*, which he created with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The multimedia capability of the web allowed Gjerdingen to reconstruct a chapter of music history that had slipped largely into obscurity. As he told the students, *partimenti* — something like tiny sound-bites of music — were central to the way European court musicians were trained from the late 1600s to the early 1800s. The Italian conservatories of that era originated as orphanages, where children were taught singing and then rented out to opera companies to make money for the institution. Students not only learned to read music; their training also involved rote memorization of these small snippets of sound, so that later, in the manner of an improvisation, they could reassemble these building blocks to create compositions in the Italian style. Bach, Handel, Haydn, and Mozart studied or taught *partimenti* — as did many other great maestros who were equally famous in the 18th century but have since faded from history. The web site Gjerdingen created not only collects and explains the instructional

methods of many of these maestros but, being multimedia, allows the user to click on any given *partimenti* and hear what it sounds like. (The site can be found at <http://faculty-web.at.northwestern.edu/music/gjerdingen/partimenti/index.htm>.)

Ericka Trevino, a School of Communication PhD student who attended several sessions of the Electronic Resources Forum, said the day was valuable for her in



Harriet Lightman

introducing “the knowledge that certain resources exist.” But more important, perhaps, was her introduction to the physical layout of the Library and to the staff. Months later, she says, when she came back to research a paper and couldn’t find the information she needed, she knew exactly whom to ask for help — and she got it.

“That’s certainly part of our agenda in sponsoring the program in the first place,” says Harriet Lightman, head of academic liaison services, who has been organizing the Electronic Resources Forum since its inception in 2001 in collaboration with Ruth Reingold, assistant dean for computing technology in Weinberg College. “No matter how sophisticated information technology becomes, we don’t want the technology to obscure the human face of the Library.”

“If anything,” Lightman observes, “the more these electronic resources proliferate, the greater the need for librarians to reach out to the community as professionals who can help our users make sense of it all.”

endnotes

TECHNOLOGY

Online Arabic manuscript catalog debuts

In January the Library launched an online catalog to the collection of more than 5,000 Arabic manuscripts and printed books from West Africa held in the Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies. This collection includes rare and valuable works of Islamic learning and mysticism, science, theology, literature, jurisprudence, and medicine. Most of the writings date from the 19th and 20th centuries, but there are much older holdings, including a handwritten 1595 work by a Timbuktu jurist dictated to his Moroccan students.

David Easterbrook, the George and Mary LeCron Foster Curator of the Herskovits Library, says the launch produced e-mail queries from scholars all over the world. “The one that impressed me most,” he says, “was from a Northwestern undergraduate who wasn’t an Africanist at all, but who was studying Arabic and was really interested in the works from a language point of view. I’m always glad to see our materials supporting learning on campus beyond our connection with African studies.”

Library staff collaborated with the Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought in Africa, part of the University’s Program of African Studies, to create the catalog, which was funded by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

To browse the catalog, go to <http://digital.library.northwestern.edu/arbms>.

COLLECTIONS

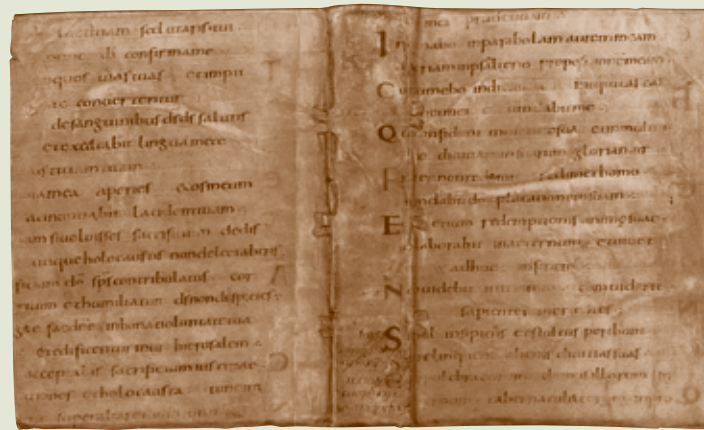
Rare manuscript discovered

One of the rare volumes in the McCormick Library of Special Collections — a work in Latin on gynecology and obstetrics that was printed in 1566 — recently delivered a big surprise. It had been bound with a document even older and rarer than the book itself: a manuscript fragment dating back to the ninth century that may well be one of the oldest specimens of European writing held in the United States.

The book belonged to a collection acquired by the Library in 1869 and had been shelved in a protective box for at least the last 20 years — its binding concealed — when a faculty member requested the volume and the box was opened. Sigrid Perry, a longtime special collections assistant with a background both in medieval literature and medieval handwriting, did a double take when she first saw the binding.

“It’s not that unusual for books of that period to be bound in manuscripts,” says Perry. “Once printing was invented, the old manuscripts became disposable, but they worked well for bindings because vellum is so durable, and the lettering was probably considered decorative.” The Library owns about a dozen other books bound in manuscripts, Perry says, but those date mostly to the 13th and 14th centuries, and this one struck her immediately as being much older.

Perry contacted Robert E. Lerner, the Peter B. Ritzma Professor of the Humanities in Weinberg College and a medieval historian, and he in turn sent a scan of the



manuscript to three experts on the Carolingian period. “None of the three knew what the others reported,” Lerner says, “but they all concluded the same thing: The writing dated from roughly the second quarter of the ninth century or slightly earlier. In other words, it probably originated in the reign of Charlemagne’s son Louis the Pious, or perhaps even in the reign of Charlemagne himself.” Charlemagne died in 814.

Lerner says modern handwriting started with the Carolingians, who made great efforts to develop legible script for the purposes of standardized communication. “It’s remarkable how readable it still is today,” Lerner adds that very few comparable manuscript fragments are held in North American libraries, “and Northwestern’s appears to be in a better state of preservation than many of these others.”

Jeff Garrett, assistant University librarian for special libraries, says the discovery is an example of “the treasures that can be found even in a fully cataloged collection.” “Not only books,” he adds, “but the bindings of books, can tell incredible stories.”



The Library Board of Governors present
“Pragmatic Lessons: Learning from
James Gamble Rogers”
A lecture by Aaron Betsky

Wednesday, June 18, 2008, 6 p.m.
McCormick Tribune Center Forum
1870 Campus Drive, Evanston, Illinois

Aaron Betsky is director of the Cincinnati Art Museum and author of *James Gamble Rogers and the Architecture of Pragmatism* (MIT Press, 1994). His lecture traces the development of Rogers’s architecture and asks what we can learn from the translation of pragmatism into the stone and brick façades of elite institutions.

For more information, contact Clare Roccaforte at 847-467-5918 or c-roccaforte@northwestern.edu.

footnotes

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