Developing Research Collections

Planning for the future while building on the past, the Libraries is developing its collections in Native American studies, one of the Institution's oldest research interests and the focal point for the planned National Museum of the American Indian. A gift from Ruth Lawson Webb has enabled the Libraries to acquire several significant and rare books and maps useful for research in anthropology and history of pre-nineteenth-century Native American life. An 1832 book on Greenland Inuit cultures with hand-colored plates and a large map contains evidence extremely useful for both research and exhibit, since Inuit cultures across North America closely resembled one another in the material traits that appear in the illustrations. Two early maps depict respectively eastern North America (by John Senex, 1710) and the locations in 1757 of many tribes and Indian settlements within the modern United States. Both maps have fine decorative cartouches and William C. Sturtevant, Curator, Anthropology Department, National Museum of Natural History, comments that the plates and maps "are remarkable ethnographic and historical documents." Describing another recent purchase from the gift, Sturtevant noted, "The facsimile of the Codex Veytia includes its unique painting depicting the principal Aztec deity. It is a remarkably fine facsimile of an eighteenth-century version of a lost sixteenth-century illustrated Mexican manuscript, accompanied by a careful modern critical study of the manuscript." The volume joins the Libraries' nearly complete collection of facsimile editions of central-Mexican Indian painted books. Mrs. Webb's gift also made possible the purchase of a now-rare 1927 book with reproductions of thirteen European drawings of Aztecs taken to Spain in 1529—all drawn from life. These library materials are now being used by research staff of the Anthropology Department, and will serve as significant scholarly resources and exhibition materials for several Smithsonian museums.

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SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION LIBRARIES

Fall/Winter 1993

SIL ENDOWMENTS

The Smithsonian Institution Libraries established its first two endowments this year: The S. Dillon Ripley Library Endowment was established with some $300,000 on September 20, 1993, to honor the former Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution who founded the Libraries twenty-five years ago. The endowment was established on Mr. Ripley’s eightieth birthday with contributions from over 250 well-wishers, and the fund will support acquisition of library materials in the eighteen-branch system.

A Special Collections Endowment was established earlier in the year with $343,000 from the sale of duplicate books in the Smithsonian Institution Libraries’ natural history collections. Proceeds from the endowment will be used to purchase materials for the Libraries’ Special Collections.

CELEBRATING THE LIBRARIES’ TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

The enabling legislation that established the Smithsonian Institution in 1846 authorized funds for “the gradual formation of a library” and the first librarian, Charles Coffin Jewett, was appointed in 1847. Joseph Henry, the Smithsonian’s first Secretary, wanted to focus the Institution’s energies on research, and perhaps believed that Jewett’s vision of the library would overwhelm the young Institution and thwart his goals. Henry fired Jewett, perhaps the best known and most respected bibliographer and librarian of his generation, and Jewett went on to a distinguished career at the Boston Public Library. Secretary Henry had the library’s copyright depository status removed soon thereafter. In 1865 a great fire in the Castle destroyed a number of the library’s volumes and this catastrophe prompted Henry’s decision to transfer the entire collection to the Library of Congress. The Smithsonian library was not re-established until 1881 when Secretary Spencer F. Baird donated his own extensive collection of books and journals to the newly established National Museum. For the next eighty-odd years, however, the Smithsonian’s ‘library’ remained an uncoordinated group of collections residing here and there in the various museums.

In August 1968 Secretary Ripley created the Smithsonian Institution Libraries with the goal of making “the widest range of library resources continuously and fully responsive to the needs of each user.” Since then the library system has grown to eighteen branches which serve the needs of users working on the Mall and as far away as Panama. Ripley’s founding memorandum reflected his understanding of the implications of the efficiencies computers would bring to libraries. The Libraries’ online system has proved invaluable in assuring that the Institution’s scarce resources are used judiciously, and library users can locate information about holdings anywhere in the system. The Libraries continue to respond to the ever-changing needs of the Institution. In the next few years, a rare book library will be added in the National Museum of Natural History and a branch library is planned for the future National Museum of the American Indian.

What do we celebrate as the 25th year of the Libraries closes? We celebrate a record of service responsiveness, technologically advanced systems, and impressive development of collections to serve the Institution’s basic needs, with particular strengths in the fields of contemporary African art, the history of science and technology, natural science, and the history of flight. We celebrate a dedicated staff and supportive users. We celebrate a growing number of donors who have generously responded to Secretary Ripley’s vision for a distinguished library system. We celebrate the establishment of the Libraries’ first two endowments, the S. Dillon Ripley Library Endowment honoring its founder, and the Special Collections Endowment ensuring that the strong collections in rare and unique materials will continue to grow to benefit research in all fields of Institutional interest. We celebrate, under Secretary Adams, the Smithsonian’s renewed commitment to the Libraries, its development, maintenance and the preservation of the intellectual heritage represented in its collections.

Barbara J. Smith

DEVELOPMENT WATCH

The Atherton Seidell Endowment awarded the Libraries $19,000 to organize, preserve, and make available the Mel Heinz Collection of some 60,000 trade catalogs from 2,000 machine-tool and metal-working companies. The collection, donated in 1991 by Mrs. Maxine Heinz of Berkeley, California, has become a part of the Libraries’ trade literature collection, estimated at some 350,000 pieces. The Seidell Endowment is administered by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for the Sciences at the Smithsonian.
The Smithsonian Institution Libraries has eighteen branches, all of which provide library services for the research and program staff of the Institution as well as for visiting students and scholars and interested members of the public. Two branches, one at the zoo and the other at the ecological research center near Chesapeake Bay, serve institutions that study living species.

Angela Haggins, Librarian of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) Branch, serves more than eighty Smithsonian staff and many visiting scientists at the center which was founded in 1968 in Edgewater, Maryland, seven miles south of Annapolis. Situated in a rural setting on the Rhode River, surrounded by farms, SERC today spreads over some 2,600 acres. Local trails lead visitors on Beaver Pond and Discovery Nature tours, and the Java History Trail reveals land-use history from the time of Native American habitation to the present. Researchers concentrate on on-site studies of plant and animal life and several discipline related to the ecology of the Chesapeake Bay area. The first library was established in 1977, and the collections today number 3,600 books and 120 current journal titles in the fields of ecology, environmental management, eco-systems, land use history, evolution, and studies monitoring solar UV light.

Kay Kenyon, Librarian of the National Zoological Park (NZP) Branch in Washington, oversees a library of 5,500 books and 250 current journal titles with collections in animal husbandry and related fields. The collections date back to 1889, the year the zoo was founded, and today the library is used by 320 NZP staff users and numerous visitors. The collections are housed in the branch library located in the zoo’s Education Building, at the Animal Hospital and Bird House on the grounds of the zoo, and at the Conservation and Research Center in Front Royal, Virginia. With its special collection of publications from other zoos, the branch serves as a major link in the national network of zoo and aquarium libraries. Ms. Kenyon chairs the Librarians Special Interest Group of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums, and has produced a number of publications and directories for the association.

An online catalog of the collections is in SIRIS, the Smithsonian Institution Research Information System, and the branches offer database reference searching and interlibrary loan services. The branches are open except on Federal holidays as follows: NZP Branch, Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm; SERC Branch, Tuesday - Friday, 8:00 am - 3:30 pm. For an appointment, call NZP Branch at 202-673-4771; SERC Branch, 301-261-4190.
S. Dillon Ripley Library Endowment

The S. Dillon Ripley Library Endowment was established September 20, 1993, with contributions of some $300,000 from more than 250 individuals, foundations and corporations. The endowment honors the Secretary Emeritus (eighth Secretary of the Smithsonian, 1964-1984) who established the Smithsonian Institution Libraries in August 1968. To celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary this year, the Libraries worked with the Office of Development to raise the funds for the Ripley Library Endowment which will support the acquisition of library materials. Each book purchased with endowment funds will carry a Ripley Library Endowment bookplate, designed by Crimilda Pontes. The establishment of the endowment was announced at a gala birthday dinner to honor Mr. Ripley on his eightieth birthday.

Honorary Chairmen for the Ripley Library Endowment were the Honorable Anne Armstrong, David Challinor, Thomas Lovejoy, Paul Mellon, and the Honorable Elliot L. Richardson. A National Committee was formed to lead the fund-raising effort. Benefactors include The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Hitachi Ltd., Paul Mellon, and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Watson, Jr. Special contributions were received from eighteen Donors, and some 300 supporters contributed to the endowment.

To complement the establishment of the endowment, the Libraries is honoring Mr. Ripley with a commemorative exhibition in the Library Hall. In three cases, the exhibition presents mementos of Mr. Ripley’s research interests and publications in ornithology, and records of his contributions to the Institution in the twenty years he served as Secretary. The exhibition is curated by Leslie Overstreet, Reference Librarian, Special Collections, who acknowledges with thanks the assistance she received. The photographs, drawings, and documents are courtesy of the SI Archives and additional photographs and the bird specimen are from the research laboratory of the Secretary Emeritus. The Ripley Library Endowment exhibition will remain up through January 1994.
Ripley's 80th Birthday Dinner

More than 250 friends and colleagues gathered on the eve of Mr. Ripley's birthday for a dinner held in the S. Dillon Ripley Center following cocktails in the National Museum of African Art. Mr. and Mrs. Ripley remained in their Litchfield, Connecticut home, designating their three daughters as the family representatives. Julie Dillon Ripley Miller, Rosemary Ripley Lanius, and Sylvia Ripley Addison graciously received the crowd of well-wishers, and with their husbands and five of their children, represented the immediate family at the celebration.

Secretary Robert McCormick Adams welcomed the endowment supporters, and introduced the Honorable Anne Armstrong, who read the Tribute to Mr. Ripley. Dr. Barbara J. Smith, Director of the Smithsonian Institution Libraries, announced the establishment of the endowment, noting "With the approval of the Board of Regents and the support of the Honorary Chairmen, the National Committee and your many friends, the S. Dillon Ripley Library Endowment is established. As of this evening, the endowment holds well over $250,000." She presented Ripley's daughter Julie Dillon Ripley Miller with the certificate to give to her father to "put among [his] many mementos" The certificate carries the Smithsonian seal and reads, "S. Dillon Ripley Library Endowment, established September 20, 1993, in recognition of his contributions to the Smithsonian Institution and its Libraries." It is signed by William Rehnquist, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in his capacity as Chancellor of the Smithsonian Institution. Dr. Smith read from a letter sent by Russell Shank, SIL's first director and the man Mr. Ripley chose to launch SIL. Shank wrote that his work with Mr. Ripley was "the highlight of my life." Dr. Smith remarked that, "as we celebrate your birthday, Mr. Ripley, we celebrate your vision in establishing the Smithsonian Libraries twenty-five years ago . . . and we continue to build on that foundation." She thanked Mrs. Mary Livingston Ripley for her help in planning this special evening. Julie Dillon Ripley Miller, Rosemary Ripley Lanius, and Sylvia Ripley Addison accepted the certificate and mementoes on behalf of their parents.

Birthday toasts to the honored Secretary Emeritus followed, with Thomas J. Watson, Jr. and Calvin Cafritz doing the honors. The crowd raised their glasses of champagne with David Challinor to wish Mr. Ripley a happy birthday. A musical tribute followed, with Sylvia Symington at the piano and James W. Symington singing original lyrics. The program concluded with celebratory remarks by Thomas E. Lovejoy.

The evening ended with the crowd singing "Happy birthday, dear Dillon," and five of his grandchildren blew out the candles on his birthday cake. The cake was in the form of three stacked books, and decorated with the titles of Ripley’s most distinguished publications. The Office of Special Events coordinated the evening with assistance from Office of Development, Office of Photography and Printing Services, and Horticulture Services.
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Barbara J. Smith presenting Certificate to Julie Dillon Ripley Miller (Richard W. Strauss)

Rosemary Ripley Lanius and Mrs. Arthur M. Sackler (Richard W. Strauss)

Robert S. Hoffmann signing Birthday Greetings book (Hugh Talman)

Sylvia Ripley Addison with Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert C. Greenway (Richard W. Strauss)
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George Lindsay and Marco Ballesteros
Litchfield Garden Club
The Honorable Patricia Gates Lynch
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Robert Malloy
John and Adrienne Mars

Frances and David Dibner, The Dibner Fund, with Vija Karklins, Libraries’ Deputy Director, and Ieva Karklins (left) (Richard W. Strauss)

Sylvia Symington and Thomas J. Watson, Jr., with James W. Symington and Loraine Percy in background (Hugh Talmam)

James and Sylvia Symington’s Musical Tribute to the Ripleys (Richard W. Strauss)
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Mrs. James E. Webb
Mrs. Alexander Weinecke
Sylvia H. Williams
Mrs. Gay F. Wray
Junzo Yoshimura
Mr. and Mrs. Sidney S. Zlotnick

Charles H. Percy (Richard W. Strauss)

David Challinor with Peter Powers (Richard W. Strauss)

Mr. Takashi Chiba and Mr. and Mrs. Masayuki Yamada of Hitachi, Ltd.
with Barbara J. Smith (Hugh Talman)

Elliot L. Richardson
(Hugh Talman)

Thomas J. Watson Jr. and Alice Green Burnette (Hugh Talman)

Ruth O. Selig and Patricia L. Fiske (Richard W. Strauss)
“Tunnels!” Exhibition Links Antiquity with Future

The exhibition “Tunnels!” draws visitors into the Exhibition Gallery through an entrance inspired by the Hoosac Tunnel (built in 1874). The show presents highlights from the history of tunneling, focusing on the technology, social goals, and written records from antiquity to the present day. The exhibition, curated by Ellen B. Wells of the Libraries and Jeffrey Stine and Paul Forman of the Museum of American History, can be seen in the Libraries’ Exhibition Gallery in the National Museum of American History through March 1994. Its displays of books, manuscripts, and objects feature classical and renaissance studies of tunnels, and note the 150th anniversary of the Thames Tunnel in London and the 180-year history of planning for the Channel Tunnel linking England and France (now expected to open in 1994). Scale models and Environmental Impact Statements complement the case devoted to construction of the Super Conducting Supercollider. A display of the legendary John Henry and a steam drill are attracting crowds. An illustrated brochure with a list of further readings is available at the exhibition.

The Libraries hosted the opening reception on September 10 in cooperation with the U. S. National Committee on Tunneling Technology of the National Academy of Sciences. Among the 200 guests who attended were members of the executive committee of the International Tunneling Association, in town for a meeting, and representatives of many of the twenty-one corporations and foundations which provided financial support for the exhibition. Members of the Smithsonian Society and the Women’s Committee of the Smithsonian Associates were also in attendance.


The Tunnels! Exhibition was made possible by

The Robbins Company
Transmanche-Link
American Underground Space Association
Guy F. Atkinson Company of California
CH, M Hill
Dillingham Construction Company
FOSROC, Inc. Celite Tunneling Division
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Cooper-Hewitt Museum Branch Exhibition

Best known for his colorful illustrations of *Beauty and the Beast* and other popular children’s fairy tales, English designer Walter Crane believed in teaching children to recognize the quality of good design. “Walter Crane: Design for Children” which opened November 2 at Cooper-Hewitt, National Museum of Design, New York City, examines the themes of fantasy, education, ornament, and technique as they relate to Crane’s work from 1865 to 1914. Curated by Stephen Van Dyk, Branch Librarian at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum Library, the exhibition features twenty children’s books that best illustrate Crane’s mastery of drawing and his whimsical imagination. Throughout his career Crane served as an advocate for literacy, working with educators to create “early” readers. Like his contemporaries in the English Arts and Crafts movement, Crane sought to raise the level of taste of the middle class and make good design affordable. The exhibition remains on view through May 1, 1994.

[adapted from press release, Cooper-Hewitt, National Museum of Design.]

Cooper-Hewitt Museum Branch Benefits

The New York City gallery of Kurland-Zabar held a champagne opening for its exhibition and sale, “Christopher Dresser: The Power of Design” on April 28 which benefitted the Cooper-Hewitt Museum Branch of the Smithsonian Institution Libraries. It was the first American exhibition of metalwork, ceramics, glass, and other decorative objects designed by one of the most influential and progressive British nineteenth-century designers.

*Interior Design* magazine honored its retiring Publishing Director Lester Dundes with a dinner at the Rainbow Room on June 21. More than $39,000 has been raised for The Lester Dundes Fund which will support acquisition of design materials for the branch library to maintain its research collections in the decorative arts.

Dibner Library Lecture

More than sixty people attended an illustrated public lecture supported by The Dibner Fund on “Animal Encounters of The Emblematic Kind: Rewriting the Book of Nature in the Late Renaissance” on May 13. William B. Ashworth, Jr., Associate Professor of the History of Science at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, spoke on natural history and emblematics and how visual images of animals in late-sixteenth-century emblem books influenced a resurgence of interest in natural history during the Renaissance. Professor Ashworth showed the audience slides from the Dibner Library collections which illustrated his theme. He is author of a number of publications in Renaissance and seventeenth-century science on such topics as astronomical allegory, patronage and science, and natural history illustration and emblems. Topics for his frequent public lectures are early zoological museums, moon maps, and botanical emblems, and he is consultant for the history of science at the Linda Hall Library of Science and Technology, Kansas City.

Retirement

Sylvia Churgin, Librarian, Museum Reference Center, retired July 30. Mrs. Churgin joined the Libraries in 1975 as the librarian for the Museum of Natural History branch; she served as Acting Assistant Director, Research Services Division, and librarian of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute Branch.
SIL News Digest

The Libraries opened its eighteenth branch on July 30 at the National Postal Museum, located in the old City Post Office (designed in Beaux Arts style by Daniel Burnham in 1911) next to Union Station in downtown Washington. Timothy Carr, Branch Librarian, will serve the user community with a collection of 6,500 books and numerous catalogs from auctions and exhibitions as well as price and stamp catalogs, and the files of associations, services and individuals. He is assisted by six volunteers who are helping with organizing and sorting the collection to make it more accessible.

The National Museum of Natural History Branch hosted a preservation program open to SI and SIL staff on September 16 which was sponsored by the Preservation Working Group of the Federal Library and Information Center Committee (FLICC). Six preservation videos were shown during the course of the day, including “Murder in the Stacks” and “Slow Fires: On the Preservation of the Human Record.” Robert Schnare, Director of the Naval War College Library, gave a slide presentation on his experience with preservation activities in libraries of Kiev and St. Petersburg in Russia, and the Budapest, Hungary, libraries. Ann Juneau, Librarian of the National Museum of Natural History Branch, is a member of the FLICC Preservation Working Group.

SIL’s Best (Laurie Minor-Penland)
Acquisitions staff were given Special Act awards and T-shirts for their assistance to the Museum of American History Branch, shifting library collections. Pictured are Lawrence Hyman, Christine Skelton, John Dick, Ed Sweeney, Darren Moody, front row Willie Dillard, Joyce Swayne. Absent Ned Kraft.

User Advisory Committee

The User Advisory Committee met in September to consider the draft report of SIL’s Electronic Information Resources Task Force. In the coming year, they will assist in a review of space planning and in designing a procedure for an upcoming serials review. New members for the Fiscal Year 1994 term are Michelle Smith of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Dominick Pisano of the National Air and Space Museum. Continuing members are Chuck Gallegos, Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Bryan Kennedy of the Smithsonian Institution Press, Rodris Roth of the National Museum of American History, and George Zug of the National Museum of Natural History.

IN BRIEF

Smithsonian Year 1992 is available online via Smithsonian Online, recently launched by America Online, a for-profit computer network with 250,000 subscribers nationwide. Information about shows in SIL’s Exhibition Gallery in the National Museum of American History is noted in the Visitor Information Section.
Calendar of Exhibitions

SIL Exhibition Gallery

National Museum of American History, first floor, west wing
10:00 am - 5:30 pm daily (except December 25)

Through March 1994
Tunnels!

Opening Spring 1994
Balloons: The First Decade of Flight, 1783-1793
Thomas Crouch and Alex Spencer, National Air and Space Museum, Curators

SIL Library Hall

National Museum of Natural History, first floor, east hall
Restricted access. Call Director’s Office, 202-357-2240 for appointment to view

Through January 1994
S. Dillon Ripley Library Endowment
Leslie Overstreet, Libraries, Curator

Cooper-Hewitt, National Museum of Design

Second Floor, 2 East 92 Street, New York, New York
For museum hours, call 212-860-6868

Through May 1994
Walter Crane: Design for Children
Stephen Van Dyk, Libraries, Curator

Smithsonian Institution Libraries
Natural History Building 22, MRC 154
Washington, D. C. 20560