Spring 2007

Connections Newsletter Spring 2007

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SHOWGIRLS  
Special Collections and Web Digitization Departments Bring Latest Project to Life  
By Peter Michel, Director of Special Collections

The showgirl, with her lavish costumes, personifies the glitter and glamour of Las Vegas. The first resorts — neon lights on a stretch of desert highway — beckoned with offers of gambling, drinking, food, and entertainment. From the 1940s onward, this entertainment has usually involved showgirls. Since that time, imaginative designers have used feathers, sequins, and rhinestones to create dazzling costumes for the statuesque beauties that have come to epitomize the extravaganza of Las Vegas entertainment.

Commemorating and documenting the history of those memorable costumes, The University Libraries recently launched its newest digital project, Showgirls, at http://www.library.unlv.edu/showgirls. The project offers a behind-the-scenes view of the emergence of a cultural icon, available for the first time in the form of a fully searchable digital library.

Showgirls, continued on page 4…
FROM THE DEAN

In the six months since our first issue of Connections, we’ve made some truly amazing strides. Digitizing one of our most vibrant collections, Showgirls, and making it available online is another step toward making Las Vegas’ unique history readily accessible to scholars the world over. News from our Architecture Library underscores the importance of the physical library as a place that fosters the intellectual life of the community. The article from board member Al Esbin demonstrates how the Libraries enrich the quality of life of their community members in ways we can seldom measure.

We continue to explore how to provide our users with improved levels of convenience and functionality, especially via the web. Redesigning the University Libraries home page is the start of a full website redesign. We were able to share our new home page with the Libraries Advisory Board in February in the form of a hands-on demonstration. Board members were able to search the Libraries’ collection of online newspapers, seeking an issue from the day they were born as a sample search. Not everybody chose the same way to find their information, but they all are now more aware of the depth of information we purchase and make accessible that is not available via Google.

We asked our readers from the UNLV Community, members of the Libraries Advisory Board, and other friends and library supporters to complete a survey about the inaugural Connections newsletter last fall. We wanted to be sure that this new publication was both useful and interesting. The consensus was that you wanted more, and shorter, news stories. In response, we’ve added more news and more photos. Most of the UNLV community would prefer to receive the newsletter electronically, and we’ve made that happen as well.

Your feedback and your support are vital to the University Libraries’ mission of connecting people and information. As always, thank you for your support.
ITALIAN WORKS DONATED TO LIBRARIES

Bondanella Collection Includes Hard-to-Find Literature and Films
By Priscilla Finley, Humanities Librarian

A small sampling of the more than 4,000 books in the Peter and Julia Conaway Bondanella collection.

When a pair of prominent scholars of Italian literature and film decided to retire to St. George, Utah, they wanted their extensive collection of scholarly works on Italian literature and hard-to-find DVDs of Italian films to be both close by and available to students and scholars who shared their passion.

Peter Bondanella and Julia Conaway Bondanella, both from the department of French and Italian at the University of Indiana, Bloomington, amassed a substantial personal collection of Italian literature, literary criticism, film criticism, and popular culture scholarship over the course of their distinguished academic careers. UNLV Libraries were the fortunate beneficiaries of nearly 4,000 books and 300 films, many in Italian and difficult to find in the United States. Film students and scholars will enjoy access to an extensive selection of resources related to the work of filmmaker Federico Fellini.

The Bondanellas’ gift reflects their academic projects: For example, the broad history of Italian literature was the scope of their authoritative Cassell’s Dictionary of Italian Literature. Julia Conaway Bondanella’s interest in Petrarch and lyric poetry was evident, as was Peter Bondanella’s recent work on the semiotics of Roman and Italian cultural reference points and representations of Italian-Americans in contemporary American popular culture. Both scholars also published translations of works by a number of important Italian authors, including Benvenuto Cellini, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Giovanni Boccaccio.
SHOWGIRLS
continued from page 1

Drawing on the Libraries’ unique special collections of costume-design drawings, illustrations, and photographs, this digital theatrical collection documents the history of the Las Vegas show and its producers from the nightclub dance lines in the modest showrooms of the early hotels to the high-tech amphitheaters of today’s Strip.

With commentary by Peter Michel, University Libraries director of Special Collections, Showgirls’ digital collection provides a visual history of a unique genre of entertainment and theatrical production defined by Las Vegas. Among its hundreds of images, it features unique drawings and photographs from Donn Arden, producer of Lido and Jubilee!, and from the Sands Hotel collection, including rare photos of a young Frank Sinatra rehearsing with the famous Copa Girls in a Las Vegas revival of the original Ziegfeld Follies.

Showgirls is just one of many digital collections and exhibits available online at http://www.library.unlv.edu/speccol/.

BEHIND THE SCENES:
A Backstage Look at the Making of the Showgirls Project
By Cory Lampert

Showgirls began with an idea, but many folks were involved in making that idea a reality. In general, work behind the scenes occurred in three main phases.

Digitization
Each of the unique original items was carefully scanned to create a digital image. Did you know? It takes roughly five minutes to digitize one image. It took more than 20 hours of scanning to convert the entire collection of originals to digital form.

Metadata
After an image is scanned, it is researched and accurately described. This descriptive information, called metadata, enables the collection to be found on the web or in the library catalog. Staff had the difficult task of identifying show names, producers, and dancers in these old photographs as well as researching places and dates. Did you know? This was the most time-consuming step of the project. It took three people several months to complete. If you’ve ever gone through old family photo albums, you can probably relate.

Web Design
The Web & Digitization (WDS) unit worked on the web pages and the database that powers the site behind the scenes. Did you know? The current web design was revised five times before it was finalized.

Nine library staff members contributed to the project (2005–06):

Author and Content Provider:
Peter Michel, Director of Special Collections

Metadata Consultant:
Kathy Rankin, Special Collections Cataloger

Project Team:
Kee Choi, Web Technical Support Manager
John Fox, Information Systems Specialist
Linda Ittenbach, Graphics/Multimedia Designer
Cory Lampert, Digitization Projects Librarian
Annie Satler, Digitization Technician/Indexer
Michael Yunkin, Web Content/Metadata Manager
Hong Zhang, Application Developer
EVERY COLLEGE STUDENT’S DREAM JOB
A View From Libraries Peer Research Coaches
By Alyssa Ventura and Gina Cassaro

A generous salary.A laptop. Inspiring mentors. The chance to learn something new — and useful — every day.

These are the benefits of being University Libraries Undergraduate Peer Research Coaches. The program, now in its first year, is designed to help meet the academic research needs of students just like us. As coaches, we work to master library resources. We are taught how to answer the toughest of reference questions; we have even presented a workshop on research databases to a professional audience.

Our mentors, librarians Lateka Grays and Susie Skarl, along with the creator of the program, Victoria Nozero, head of Research and Information, have greatly influenced our academic and personal success.

The most impressive benefit of the program is that it allows us to focus mainly on graduating while also doing meaningful work. As first-generation university students, we appreciate how flexible schedules and the collegial atmosphere of the library lessen the amount of stress typical college students endure.

We don’t have a typical workday. One day we could be hosting a library tour, and the next we could be assisting a graduate student with challenging research. We assist at the reference desks and during instruction courses. This has taught us to adapt to different situations as well as broadened our academic horizons. Nothing compares with this opportunity. One of the best ways to learn is to teach others, and with this job, the opportunity is handed to us every day.

We’ll be involved with the program until we graduate. In fall 2007, two new students will join us as Peer Research Coaches. Each coming year, two more students will join the program. For more information on the Undergraduate Peer Research Coaches Program, contact Victoria Nozero at victoria.nozero@unlv.edu.

Nothing compares with this opportunity. One of the best ways to learn is to teach others, and with this job, the opportunity is handed to us every day.
Let me tell you about my greatest friend in Las Vegas. We met 11 1/2 years ago, when another friend of mine told me that the most famous footprint in the world is in the Old English version of the King James Bible. He told me that Shakespeare wrote the psalms when he was 43 years old. “All one has to do,” my friend said, “is go to Psalm 43, count 43 words from the beginning, and the word shake is there. Count 43 words from the end, and spear is there.”

Now I didn’t know if this was true or not. But I knew I had to find an Old English version of the King James Bible and look for myself. I was aware the UNLV library was recognized for its great collection of gaming books and archives, but Bibles? To my surprise, I found the most amazing collections of religious works, including an outstanding Judaica collection honoring pioneer Las Vegas businessman Nate Mack.

Thus began my relationship with my greatest friend: the UNLV Libraries. Through the Libraries, I met many interesting folks and made many more friends. I enrolled in Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) and now am one of the coordinators of “Religion: An Historical Perspective.”

Would you believe that I have yet to prove that story (urban legend?) about Shakespeare’s footprint? To this day, I visit my library friend at least once a week and continue to be amazed by what a 75-year-old can learn. One thing I learned is that you have to be willing to search out the facts from all the information that is out there — and the UNLV Libraries are a great place to do that.

Al Esbin, a former garment manufacturer in New York, now resides in Las Vegas and has served on the University Libraries Advisory Board since 2006.
FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP COMPILATION TOPS 8,000

One measure of a research university is the quality and quantity of the intellectual output of its faculty. Eva Stowers, medical librarian, received a Stimulation, Implementation, Transition, and Enhancement (SITE) award to develop a bibliography of UNLV faculty publications.

The bibliography lists 8,321 items to date. The earliest article dates from 1962, when UNLV was the Nevada Southern Regional Division of the University of Nevada. The article, by Harrie Hess (Psychology), was titled “Frequency and duration characteristics of speech and silence behavior during interviews” and appeared in the Journal of Clinical Psychology.

“It is fascinating to see the research done at UNLV over the years,” Stowers says. “The project has consumed more time than I expected,” she adds, “but I’ve enjoyed the hunt for information.”

The bibliography contains 692 books, the oldest of which were published in 1968 when the university was known as Nevada Southern University. One of those titles was Jerome Vallen’s (Hotel Administration) The Art and Science of Modern Innkeeping.

Stowers continually searches for articles and books from UNLV’s early years. If you are aware of any early faculty publications, please contact her at eva.stowers@unlv.edu. Current or past UNLV faculty members may contact Stowers to view the list of their publications in the database.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES CELEBRATES UNLV AUTHORS

Over the last five years, the University Libraries has celebrated the success of hundreds of University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) faculty members whose books have been published.

This year’s event, honoring faculty authors whose books were published during 2006, was held in Lied Library in April, with President David B. Ashley as special guest speaker.

For more information on the Fifth Annual Celebration of UNLV Authors event, visit www.library.unlv.edu.
KLAI JUBA LECTURES OPEN MINDS

By Jeanne Brown, Head, Architecture Studies Library

The UNLV School of Architecture Klai Juba Lecture Series, held in the Architecture Studies Library (ASL), is a wonderful example of bringing world-class speakers on vital topics to UNLV and Las Vegas.

John Klai and Klai Juba Architects are the generous sponsors of this series, which started in 1998. John Klai is well known in Las Vegas, both as an architect of such buildings as the Four Seasons Hotel at Mandalay Bay and Panorama Towers and as a philanthropist. For his contributions to the profession and the community, he was awarded the 2004 AIA Distinguished Service Award.

The Klai Juba lecture series for 2006–07 has been an exciting one. The speakers for fall were selected by School of Architecture faculty member Alfredo Fernandez-Gonzalez. Speakers for spring were selected by faculty member Daniel Ortega.

The theme of this fall’s series was “The 2030 Challenge: Environmental Design in the Face of Climate Change.” Speakers were Ed Mazria, Pliny Fisk III, John Reynolds, and Sue Roaf. In a unique enhancement to the lectures, and again with the generous support of Klai Juba Architects, three of the four speakers offered in addition to their lectures half-day workshops open to the public.

Spring 2007 lectures centered on the theme of emerging voices in architecture and design fields, and they featured Peter Yeardon, Greg Lynn, and Mark Rios. For a complete list of the Klai Juba lectures, visit the ASL website at http://www.library.unlv.edu/arch/events/lectures/klaijuba.html. The ASL has DVDs of the lectures available for viewing.
NEW HOME PAGE BOOSTS WEBSITE FUNCTIONALITY

By Darcy Del Bosque, Web Services Librarian

A new University Libraries home page, www.library.unlv.edu, debuted in January. Its new look, incorporating the UNLV look and feel, is designed to be more visually appealing. More importantly, the website makes it easier to find the information you need. A search box at the center of the page allows you to search for books and journals directly from the front page, while the right side of the page offers up-to-date library news and access to new collections.

This is just the first step in revising the website to make your research and learning experience easier, faster, and more enjoyable. Please send comments on the new home page and suggestions for features you would like to see on our website to darcy.delbosque@unlv.edu.

ARCHITECTURE STUDIES LIBRARY MOUNTS SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE ART SHOW

Faculty Art Opens Eyes

By Jeanne Brown, Head, Architecture Studies Library

The Architecture Studies Library (ASL) promotes experiences to enhance learning and broaden students’ perspectives. With that in mind, ASL Librarian Jeanne Brown suggested the School of Architecture Faculty Art Show as a way for students to see a different dimension of their teachers. They view their instructors in one context — the classroom — seldom having opportunities to see them as multifaceted individuals.

Judging from the comments on the show, which was held in February, she achieved her goal. Students went so far as to stop library staff and thank them for the exhibit. One faculty member mentioned that the show had generated some interesting discussions among the faculty.

The ASL offers changing exhibits throughout the year. Staff member Jason Aubin consistently puts together pleasing and sometimes dramatic exhibits. His placement of individual pieces pulls the eye and the feet from one piece to the next. Staff member Paulette Nelson uses the ASL website to give a taste of the show to those who can’t physically view it in the library. For a glimpse of this art show, visit http://www.library.unlv.edu/arch/events/2007artshow.html.

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new home pAge booSTS webSiTe
LIBRARIES DEAN’S ASSOCIATES ANNUAL CELEBRATION

In October, Libraries Advisory Board member Flora Mason and her husband, Stuart, opened their home to members of the Libraries Dean’s Associates. It was a glorious fall evening in a beautiful home overlooking Red Rock. It was the perfect setting for Dean Patricia Iannuzzi to thank these outstanding Library supporters and to introduce President David B. Ashley.

Guests also enjoyed displays from Special Collections, including materials from the Oral History Research Center and the Center for Gaming Research. Librarians working with the Undergraduate Peer Research Coaches were on hand to talk about the exciting new program, as was the first student selected for the program.

Ashley shares his enthusiasm for the future of UNLV and talks about the Libraries as one of the centers of excellence on campus.

Dean Patricia Iannuzzi thanks everyone for attending the event and introduces President David B. Ashley.
Lynn Rosencrantz and Stuart Mason

New Advisory Board Member Al Esbin with his wife, Esther (left), and Advisory Board Member Florence Bolatin

Rinaldo Tiberti (left) and new Advisory Board Members Melinda and Joe Kennedy look at the transcript of JA Tiberti’s oral history.

(Left to right) Tito Tiberti and Stuart Mason talk with advisory board member Mahlon Brown and Pat Cook.

Bill Brown talks with Melinda Kennedy (left) and Sandee Tiberti.

Blanche Zucker and Flo Mlynarczyk enjoy the party.

Mahlon Brown discusses new projects with Director of the Oral History Research Center Claytee White.

Iannuzzi and Ashley thank Flora and Stuart Mason for their wonderful hospitality.

Flora Mason (left) pauses with Elena and Libraries Advisory Board Member Lance Calvert.
WHAT’S NEW AT THE LIBRARIES

University Libraries Profile Arrives
In 2006, the Libraries created a whole new design family for its print materials and publications. The highlight of this newly designed collection, which includes everything from brochures to the Connections newsletter, is the University Libraries Profile. Just out, the Profile — a 16-page, full-color informative booklet with all new photographs — explains the role of the new librarian in our information-rich, global society. The Profile is an example of the Libraries’ new approach to communications. It’s available online at www.library.unlv.edu, or you can call the Libraries’ External Relations office at 895-2286 to request a print copy.

Patron Services Enhanced by Newly Created Department
By Chelle Batchelor, Head, Access and Delivery Services
Libraries’ Circulation and Document Delivery Services (DDS) departments merged in January into one new department within the Public Services Division called Access and Delivery Services (ADS). Integrating the functions of these departments into a single organizational unit will support the enhancement of current services such as ILLiad (interlibrary loans), e-reserves, and general check-out and delivery of resources.

It also will enable the Libraries to implement new services such as Link+, a consortia-based system that will allow UNLV faculty, staff, and students to borrow books from more than 40 libraries in California and Nevada, with delivery in three to four days. Link+ is merely one example of the future services the new ADS department plans to offer.

The Libraries Add Layer of Security for Privacy Protection
In January, the Libraries introduced a new PIN-protected system to perform self-check-out and certain online functions such as renewing books and placing holds. The system requires patrons to choose a four-digit personal identification number (PIN) that takes a few seconds to activate online. Patrons appreciate the additional security. To select and activate a PIN, library-card holders may visit www.library.unlv.edu and click on “Your Account.”