Friends Corner
Southern Oregon University Friends of Hannon Library

The 2007-08 Friends of Hannon Library Lecture Series is underway. On October 18, Oregon Shakespeare Festival Artistic Director Bill Rauch presented "As Boundless as the Sea: Shakespeare’s Influence in My Life." Bill talked about his experiences with Comerence Theater, through which he brought Shakespeare to small-town America. Speaking to a crowded room, he shared inspiring stories of the theatre’s productions.

On November 15, Southern Oregon Historical Society Curator Suzanne Wimer presented "Women Photographers in the West, 1870-1920." Her fascinating lecture covered female photographers of the Wild West, including Maude Engelvige, Klidall Mahs, whose photographs recorded people and historic moments in southern Oregon history.

Two programs remain in the lecture series:

January 17, 2008, 4 p.m.
William Stafford Poetry Event with Readings by Local Poets
March 6, 2008, 4 p.m.
Susan Reid, "Pear Packing: A Season of Women’s Work"

The Friends of Hannon Library is already purchasing books and other resources for the library. In addition to committing $3,800 for the purchase of newly published Shakespeare titles for the Magny Bailey Collection, the Friends acquired a display rack for the new paperback book exchange, one of the many student-centered initiatives the Hannon Library is undertaking.

As you prepare your tax returns in the coming months, please keep in mind that the Friends of Hannon Library has added to the Oregon Cultural Trust list of cultural organizations that are eligible for an Oregon tax credit. For more information, visit www.culturaltrust.org.

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The SOU Friends of Hannon Library is a membership organization that was established in 1975. The Friends are committed to improving the Hannon Library collections and adding OsF Chautauqua Materials. From the 1890s to the early 1920s, the Ashland Chautauqua summer lectures and performances were hosted on the site of today’s Oregon Shakespeare Festival Archives. From 1899 to 1902, the Ashland Chautauqua summer lectures and performances were hosted on the site of today’s Oregon Shakespeare Festival Archives. From the 1890s to the early 1920s, the Ashland Chautauqua summer lectures and performances were hosted on the site of today’s Oregon Shakespeare Festival Archives. From the 1890s to the early 1920s, the Ashland Chautauqua summer lectures and performances were hosted on the site of today’s Oregon Shakespeare Festival Archives.
The institution we know as Southern Oregon University can trace its beginnings to the foundation of the Ashland Academy in 1869, a private preparatory school established by the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1895, the institution was officially renamed Southern Oregon Normal School and held classes on a site located about a mile south of the present campus. In 1909, the state legislature voted to withdraw funding for all state-normal schools. Southern reopened in 1926 and was headquartered in Churchill Hall.

In 1926, the mission of the library was to provide resources for the training of teaching professionals, including a collection of the best children's literature of the day and “books of general culture.” The library of 1926–27 was located in one large room on the first floor of Churchill Hall, which also housed administrators and classrooms. Students had access to the library's complete collection of books, documents, and periodicals. Materials were classified by the Dewey Decimal System, and a card catalog was provided. The library collected a total of seventy-five-periodicals and several daily and weekly newspapers. It was open through-out the school day and evenings during the week, as well as on Saturday mornings. By the early 1930s, the library collection had grown to 6,000 volumes, including a reference section. Periodical subscriptions had grown to eighty-five.

World War II created a crisis in enrollment at the school, culminating in 1941 with a total student body of only forty-five in the academic year 1945–46. Combined with the 119 journals that were archived in the JSTOR collections are especially valuable since they include earlier ranges of prestigious journals beginning with the first issues. Combined with the 119 journals that were archived in the JSTOR collection in 2007, this addition brings Hannon Library's offerings to 243 JSTOR titles.

In response to space issues and a dramatic growth in enrollment, a new Library Classroom building (now known as Central Hall) was completed in 1951. On moving day, a “book brigade” of students and faculty carried 32,000 books and 300 periodicals to their proper locations. The library was housed on the second floor and had open stacks, microform reading facilities, reading rooms, typing rooms, and staff offices. The children's literature and curriculum collections were on the first floor. Though this new facility provided more space, it was soon outgrown.

In 1967, a 45,000-square-foot, three-story library building opened its doors. A modern facility for the time, this building remains part of the current library. Resources and services continued to expand as enrollment grew and more degrees were offered. Librarians began instructing students in the 1970s. The first computer for searching online databases was purchased in 1984. Housed in its own room, this IBM PC XT was used by librarians in consultation with the patron. The library's online catalog (then called RogetLink) became available to the public in 1993. By this time, the once-modern building of 1967 had become outmoded.

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A new president, Elmo Stevenson, took over in 1946 and inaugurated an ambitious period of development that continues today. By 1948, the library had expanded to several crowded rooms on the first floor of Churchill Hall. It housed nearly 21,000 volumes of books and bound periodicals, as well as map and document collections. The core collection of reference and "professional" volumes comprised 14,500 works, and 159 periodical subscriptions were taken. The library also held a collection of public textbooks and offered a statewide interlibrary loan service.

In 1951; newly constructed Library in 1967; the new stairwell; administrators; moving books from Churchill to Central Hall.