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FROM: Joan Berman
SUBJ: SPECIAL COLLECTIONS 1997-2001: Five Year Plan

Readers of this report should note that a five year plan has been stated as a goal in each of the annual reports I have prepared since assuming responsibility for Special Collections in July 1997. This would appear to be a good time to summarize what has been accomplished in fulfillment of that projected five year plan and to articulate the goals guiding those accomplishments. Here are three approaches, with the third actually being the plan.

YEAR - BY- YEAR- REVIEW

1997-1998. Edie and I were both new to our positions at the beginning of this year. The annual report was very detailed, prepared to cover the transition from Rena's to Sharmon's leadership role. It included reference to, and copies of, nine documents I had prepared in that year. The learning curve was steep, but the enthusiasm and energy levels were high. This year definitely proved that student assistants could be utilized very effectively in the accomplishment of goals for the collections. We also developed a set of web pages, submitted two grant applications to the State Library for processing collections, began work on the Clausen Collection after a many year hiatus with additional salary funding for Edie from the President's office, and crafted a mission statement for the collections.

1998-1999. The annual report for the second year was much more modest, probably reflecting the effect of having my attention diverted from Special Collections to the 3rd as well as 1st floor seismic retrofit and construction requirements. Grant writing continued, this time more successfully, the result of experience. Web pages were expanded and links were made to the Online Archive of California for three of our collection finding aids. The two restrooms on the third floor were retrofitted as storage/work rooms for Special Collections; as a result Edie prepared abbreviated finding aids for the Genzoli Collection which allowed us to open it on a limited, appointment basis to users for the first time since acquired in 1985. Work continued on the Clausen Papers, thanks to \$10,000 negotiated by John Sterns which allowed for buyout of some of Edie's time at the end of this year and the beginning of the next.

1999-2000. This was the year of major grant activity, with implementation of two grants from the State Library/LSTA. The work began in October and carried through into the following year. Again, some of Edie's time was bought out and we hired an external project manager, Jean Perry, and student assistants for the

second grant. A minor water leak during reroofing of the building served as a wake-up call regarding the Library's preparedness to handle disaster response (for materials). Edie played a major role in the resulting work on this issue which carried over to 2000-2001 and resulted in a formal disaster preparedness document under her editorship.

2000-2001. This year might be characterized as one of picking up the pieces. Although LSTA funding ceased by November, additional work remained to be completed, primarily because of new materials which surfaced after the projects got underway and a broadening the Ericson Collection project scope to include digitizing of the glass plate negatives; final work on this is still ongoing. Using the basement as a workspace for one of the grants highlighted the need to organize that space more effectively; this was verified by the comments from the contracted preservation site visit and report by Amigos. Implementation of the recommendations from that report has begun including a campus minor cap proposal for compact shelving for the basement. Cataloging of new items for HCC and Archives remained current by providing funds to continue hiring Calista through grant buyout of a portion of Edie's salary. Progress recommenced this year on Archives. Collaboration with the newly developed Museum Studies Certificate program to provide student project and internship opportunities is resulting in web pages and online exhibits for specific collections. Major collection donation opportunities continued to present themselves.

THEMES FROM POSITION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Special Collections Librarian: "Maintain and actively collect for the University Archives and the Humboldt County Collection...both are considered supervised use collections....Evaluate new technologies with respect to some of our collections and begin to investigate ways to make them accessible utilizing the new technologies....Some collections have not been processed at all, and they too will need to be evaluated not only for optimal processing, but also with an eye towards obtaining additional funding sources, i.e., grant writing."

Special Collections Assistant: "Duties include, but are not limited to the following: Preparing collection level finding aids and processing significant collections for the Humboldt County and Archives Collections. Digitizing portions of the Special Collections, especially involving photographic collections, for the dual goals of preservation and access...."

The quotes are from the position announcements under which I was appointed Special Collections Librarian and Edie was hired as Special Collections and California Documents Assistant, both commencing in summer 1997. The themes here involve collections, processing, technology, access and grant writing. I have been loathe to "actively collect" until we had a better handle on what we have and why we hadn't been able to process it. In spite of this a number of significant collections have come in search of us and have forced the issue of clearer

definition of the scope of our collecting. I have gotten a handle on processing published materials, through dint of much perseverance and collaborative work with Merry as well as grant funding (buyout of Edie's time translated into Calista's time). Several major manuscript and/or photograph collections have been processed using grant funds. Collection plans have been made for other collections and they have been processed to the point of being accessible at least on an appointment basis. The obvious goal is to be processing more material in a year than we are taking in if we are to make any progress on providing access to the rather substantial inherited unprocessed collections. Technology has been utilized in a variety of ways, e.g., creating and placing finding aids on the Online Archive of California, developing web pages containing both textual/image content and links, scanning of selected images, using Access databases in a variety of applications.

FIVE YEAR PLAN, 1997-2001

Goal 1: Collections

Assess existing holdings and define the appropriate scope of the collections.

Objective 1

Prepare an annotated, prioritized list of collections for planning purposes and make some form of it publicly available.

The original list was prepared in 1997 and served as the basis for prioritizing and preparing grant applications to process selected collections. A public version is on the Humboldt Room web page (July 2001). Forty-two collections are listed. Scope, size and level of processing and accessibility are included. Twelve have links to individual collection web pages. Twenty are unprocessed and not available for use; several more are partially processed and/or available by appointment only.

Objective 2

Prepare a mission statement.

This was developed in 1998 and is on the Humboldt Room web page; it is reproduced here:

"The Library's Special Collections complement the resources of the general Library collections. They are acquired and maintained in support of the University's curriculum with emphasis on the natural resources, native peoples and primary industries of Northwestern California, including the history, growth and development of Humboldt State University. The two areas of collection, Humboldt County Collection and University Archives, include written, pictorial, cartographic and oral history materials. Access to the collections is provided primarily through the Library's catalog and the Humboldt Room web pages. Materials are available for use in the Humboldt Room by visiting scholars and the general public as well as HSU students, faculty and staff."

Goal 2: Access

Provide access to the collections to the broadest possible range of users.

Objective 1

Streamline physical access for users.

Physical changes within the Humboldt Room included intershelving two call number sequences and rearranging filing cabinets to provide easier access to maps. Circulating copies of all theses and many other cataloged materials were removed to greater accessibility in the Main Collection.

Objective 2

Increase intellectual access for users, both locally and at a distance.

We developed web pages for the Humboldt Room. We created and/or placed finding aids to major collections on the Online Archive of California and prepared collection web pages. We added table of contents to the catalog records for significant collected volumes. We are continuing to add content to the web pages, e.g., a FAQ file, full text of finding aids, Pamphlet Collection subject headings, HSU chronology, online exhibits, etc.

Goal 3: Infrastructure

Develop policies and initiatives to ensure adequate space, processing, preservation and reference service for the collections.

Objective 1

Evaluate existing spaces occupied by Special Collections and project future needs.

The initial space crisis – full shelves such that even if the backlog of new theses were cataloged there would be no space for them in the Humboldt Room – was resolved both pragmatically as well as philosophically by relocating duplicate copies of all theses and circulating copies of many other items to the Book Stacks. This bought an additional 3-5 years of growth. Additional space was found by creatively retrofitting the vacant rest rooms on the third floor for both storage and processing. Basement space has been reviewed and assessed with a minor cap proposal submitted to the campus for compact shelving, primarily to house processed archival collections. Such storage will provide improved preservation for processed archival and manuscript collections as well as released space for processing newer collections. The Amigos preservation report encourages an overall review and reorganization of the use of space for Special Collections: this is an excellent opportunity to consolidate the various stop-gap measures which have been implemented to date.

Objective 2

Review and revise existing policies and procedures and prepare new ones as appropriate.

I attempted to revise the two collection policies (Humboldt County Collection and Archives) into a single policy for Special Collections. The

introductory mission statement was not questioned and it has been on the Humboldt Room web page since 1998. However the draft policy revision was not completed due to conflicting desires of the University Librarian (Rena) and the Collection Development Committee. Three forms were reviewed with the University Librarian (Sharmon) in Spring 1999 and are in place. The first, for patron request for duplication, including scanning, of materials, was a minor revision of a long standing form. The other two provide for brief and extended versions of Deeds of Gift. Gift policies and procedures have been discussed on several occasions, beginning in fall 1997 and most recently in spring 2001, with the Library Dean, the Development Librarian and the Collection Development Librarian.

Objective 3

Identify existing procedures and habits for preparing Special Collections materials for use and representation in the Library's catalog and modify these to improve user access to materials in a timely fashion.

I inherited a backlog of uncataloged materials languishing in the Catalog Department and a tradition which relegated "gift" materials to the bottom of the processing queue and a lack of consistency with regard to cataloging materials for the Humboldt County Collection and Archives. Since almost all material for these collections are "gifts," whether it be theses or documents obtained by personal negotiation with the authors, and require original cataloging, the likelihood of rapid turnaround time for them was traditionally nil. This had even impacted the decision process over the years as to what would be added to the Pamphlet Collections with the tradeoff being speed versus bibliographic retrieval via the Library's catalog.

Exploration and negotiation with the Catalog Department has been immensely successful and been bolstered by utilizing various grant funds generated by buyout of part of Edie's time to hire Calista to catalog materials for the Humboldt Room. This mutually beneficial arrangement has been in place for the last three years and has allowed us to completely demolish the backlog of uncataloged materials which existed in 1997. In addition, it has allowed us to catalog a number of items which had previously been placed in the HCC Pamphlet Collection due to the low priority placed on cataloging of gift items. There remains a concern, however, as to what will happen in the future: Calista will continue to be hired for this function with funds from Merry's 10 month year savings for 2001-2002.

Objective 4

Improve preservation of Special Collections materials, both those which are processed and those awaiting processing.

Preservation has been improved for the Genzoli, Fountain, Ericson, Swanlund-Baker, President Gist Collections. The general Humboldt

County Photograph Collection has been relocated into better conditions with replacement of wood and non-archival folder storage and placing each photo into an archival envelope. Compact shelving in the basement, if achieved, will improve preservation for processed archival collections. The recommendations from the Amigos preservation site visit provide "best practices" for us to continue to implement to improve our preservation efforts; we still have quite a ways to go in this arena. A major irony is that metal shelving is the preferred medium, over wood, for preservation purposes, for housing books.

Objective 5

Evaluate the current model for reference service for the supervised use collections accessible through the Humboldt Room.

The most difficult issue is being tied to a combined 3rd floor service point and the assumption that service to the Humboldt Room supervised use collections is provided by the same person and at the same time as service to the Documents Collections. The conflict is not well understood, especially as the separate collections are developing in different ways at least partly in response to different mandates and the different ways in which they are being affected by continuing technological advances. From the perspective of the Humboldt Room, we have made a conscious effort to increase access to users by placing circulating materials in the Book Stacks and by providing content on the web pages. Concomitantly we have by design decreased hours the room is open by a total of eight hours during the main academic year and further decreases of another eight hours would bring us more in line with hours provided for Special Collections at other CSU Libraries. One issue is what level of service is to be provided when the room is open to users and how much referral is necessary. Summer service hours have not been treated consistently.