

TO: Sharmon Kenyon
CC: Martha Johansen
FROM: Joan Berman
SUBJ: **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS 2003-2004**

HIGHLIGHTS. (The second part of this report, Review of 2003-2004 Accomplishments and 2004-2005 Objectives, will be completed at a later date.)

Northwestern California Newspaper Project.

The final report for this one-year project funded by the California State Library was submitted on July 28, 2004; it is attached. The goal of developing a model for what it might mean to have been "surveyed" by the California Newspaper Project, as we were in summer 1999, was accomplished. We will be continuing for at least the next year to implement the primary portions of the model while looking at ways to further the project.

Collections.

The photograph collections continued to be in the forefront of Special Collections activities this year. We received from the Palmquist family the working file of negatives (plus some copy prints) that Peter had maintained to continue researching northwestern California topics; this will be an invaluable contribution to regional photographic history once it is processed. As a first step towards that objective, Edie Butler and I were able to visit Yale University and see firsthand how the Palmquist Collection is being curated at the Beinecke Library.

We created an Access database for the Humboldt County Photograph Collection thanks to the availability of a very skilled and motivated volunteer intern. She went on to enter the legacy data for all 2,844 photos into the database. Edie hopes to begin the proofing and add subject headings early in fall 2004. With the addition of this database to those for the Ericson and Swanlund-Baker Photograph Collections, we were ready to seriously request and receive help from Library Systems staff to make these three collections web searchable in a single interface. This single searchable database will greatly increase both staff and patron access to our photograph collections; in addition, the 497 digital images in the Ericson Collection will be available in the database as well as continuing to be accessible through the Online Archive of California.

We continued to plan for the preservation and digitizing of the Shuster Aerial Photograph Collection. I received a grant of \$5,000 from the campus to pursue this objective during 2004-05. On another front, I collaborated with Carolyn Mueller, the Library's designated grants writer, to prepare an application to the National Endowment for the Humanities for \$5,000 to purchase map filing cases and supplies to expand and more adequately house the Humboldt Room Map Collection.

Use of the Humboldt Room collections, as measured by reshelving statistics, continues to grow: 6,734 items this year. Last year's count was 6,688 items, up significantly from the prior year's 6,412 items. A major accomplishment was the addition of 985 new items to the Pamphlet Collection.

Humboldt Room Procedures and Staffing.

In last year's annual report I noted several concerns in this area. To begin to address these concerns, and as a staff training effort, I updated and expanded the procedures manual for Humboldt Room desk staff. This has heightened staff awareness of the issues. The second objective for this goal was to develop student internship opportunities to help address the collections supervision issues as well as the complex referral issues for in-depth research questions. I worked with Dennis Fitzsimons in Geography whose fall semester class yielded two (non-paid) interns and a relatively successful experiment, including data input for the Thornburgh Timber Map Collection. The above mentioned summer volunteer on the photograph database became a paid student in fall semester and was very helpful in providing supervision and referral help as she was able to work scheduled hours when neither Edie nor I was on the desk. Yet another student volunteer (later paid) with library school in her future was able to help Edie with the pamphlet collection while also helping to oversee the Humboldt Room. We have certainly proven we can utilize students (and volunteers) effectively both to help processing collections and to provide necessary oversight for the Humboldt Room.

Space.

Within the context of Library-wide planning for space needs and the possibility of recovering all or a portion of the Basement ("BSS Phase 2"), I prepared a three page report on space usage and needs for the Humboldt Room and Special Collections; it is attached. Whatever the outcome is of this planning, the shorter term needs for space - for public access, storage of collections, and efficient processing of materials and collections - are approaching crisis level and will need to be addressed in the coming year.