

**TO:** Wayne Perryman  
**FROM:** Joan Berman  
**SUBJ:** **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS 2009-2010**

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**HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Collections:** Major activity centered on the Palmquist, McKay, Becking and HSU Public Affairs collections. Each of the first three entailed some form of grant support, including time base augmentation for Edie, a research trip to the Beinecke Library at Yale to compare our respective Palmquist collections, and hiring Adrienne Harling to work on the Becking collection for 18-24 months. Work on the Public Affairs Collection was related to publication in May of the book by Katy Tahja and the major exhibit created by 3 student interns.
- **Humboldt Room:** Hours for the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor service point leveled out at 24 hours/week, the first full year at this decreased rate (including dropping Sundays for half of the semester). Predictably, both Humboldt Room use measures were down: items reshelved went from 5046 to 4015, and HR reference count went from 1519 to 1180 (see 5 year chart at end of report).
- **Virtual Humboldt Room:** Online use increased dramatically. Total searches of the combined photos and maps database went from the relatively average 23,039 last year to **40,503** searches this year, above even the initial 40,469 searches in 2005-06 when the Shuster collection went online. This is in addition to **38,812** searches of Humboldt Room content via the California Digital Library/Online Archive of California (which does not include the Shuster collection but does include the Roberts Indian related collection images and the Northwestern California Forest Communities collection as well as Ericson). We continue to add content to the Special Collections/Humboldt Room website, a well-used subset of the Library's website.

**NARRATIVE**

After the flurry of activity surrounding the National Geographic Magazine October issue on redwoods, highlighting work by HSU's Professor Steve Sillett and the Redwood Transect conducted by Michael Fay and Lindsey Holm, photographed by Nick Nichols (yes, Edie's hands holding a glass plate negative made it into the issue!), we settled down to "life after." The first direct outcome was the donation to the Humboldt Room by Mike and Leslie of their Redwood Transect documentation. This is still a work-in-progress, but it opens a new era of collection processing, based on georeferenced data that will ultimately be presented via the web.

Then in November we received word that the grant to process the Becking Collection was successful ([Humboldt State Now press release](#)). Work began in February, with funding for 2 years. An important component of this grant is implementation of the “MPLP” (“More Product Less Process”) approach to archival management, which we are finding useful in addressing our remaining backlogs of unprocessed collections.

Following up on the overall environmental history theme of this grant, Edie prepared a list of potential donors and collections appropriate for addition to the HSU Library, with the encouragement of the Library Interim Dean. Decisions have been made on a number of the collections at a time when our space issues, which have hindered active donation solicitation over the past 13 years, are taking a new turn.

While space has been an ongoing primary concern driving many Special Collections activities since 1997 when Edie and I began our service in this department, the picture is a bit brighter this year as the Library Basement Policy Task Force Recommendations were developed in the spring and are beginning to be implemented. We have also successfully installed additional archival shelving in the basement and are able to separate processed from unprocessed materials more efficiently and productively. (It does help that the bulk of the Becking Collection processing is occurring off-site.) And finally, at the end of the year, Edie was allocated temporary space (former copy service office) where she can complete work on the McKay Papers over the next year. Notably, Edie received the long requested reclassification to Library Assistant IV at the beginning of the year.

As Edie and I are approaching retirement we are looking at closure to a number of projects and also at what challenges and opportunities we might leave to our successors. We are especially pleased to be involved in the mentoring and training of future special collections librarians and archivists, through our active student assistant and internship program, as well as outreach activities with our regional cultural heritage repository partners, including the Native American tribal libraries and archives communities as well as CICD and ITEPP here at HSU. We also very much appreciate the direct support provided to Special Collections by Cheryl Connor (web pages), George Wrenn (original cataloging) and Systems folks (database and scanning).

## **PRESENTATIONS, PUBLICATIONS AND MORE** (in rough chronological order)

- ***Boyle Photograph Collection.*** 1,795 digital images from this collection were added to the ***Humboldt Room Photograph Collections*** database at the beginning of the year, doubtless contributing to the increased use of the database; however they still need to be uploaded to the ***California Digital Library***.
- ***National Geographic & Redwoods 1899-2009.*** In October, in conjunction with the ***National Geographic Magazine*** issue on Redwoods and the HSU Symposium, Special Collections staff prepared a major exhibit in the Library using materials from the Humboldt Room. We also facilitated ordering and installing a promotional banner which hung from the campus Clock Tower from October through April.

- ***Searching for Place in the Humboldt Room.*** While updating this page for fall semester classes, I added new web pages for *City Directories* and *Census Information – California Indians*.
- ***Search Map Collections.*** This database, indexing the Thornburgh, Herrick and HCC Maps collections, went live in the fall, linked from the newly designed ***Humboldt Room Map Collections*** web page which also includes links to all of our digitized map resources.
- ***Special Collection Paintings.*** Three of the four Swanlund-Baker paintings exhibited last year were selected for installation on a permanent wall on the first floor of the Library.
- ***Open House for librarians and tribal archivists following the TALM conference.*** We hosted local librarians and archivists working with Native American collections on January 8 with a tour and discussion of Special Collections as a follow-up to the Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums Conference in Portland in October. A number of local tribal librarians/archivists attended the October conference and this was an opportunity for networking and sharing the HSU Library resources.
- ***Finding New Books in the Humboldt Room.*** An exhibit in the first floor Special Collections case, January - April 2010, highlighting the “finding new books” feature of the Library Catalog, was developed by Joan and implemented by student Katie LaSala.
- ***Archival internship to process the Thomas Buckley Collection.*** Current San Jose State University MLIS student Susan Gehr is volunteering with us to gain experience processing a relatively small collection. We selected the Buckley Collection as it relates to Susan’s interests and background in northwestern California Indian materials.
- ***Campus Lecture Series.*** Cataloging Librarian George Wrenn prepared a bibliography of HSU lecture series, with links to catalog records and ***Humboldt Digital Scholar***, for the Archives web page.
- ***Local Newsletters: From the Humboldt Room.*** Intern Kiri Clayton developed an exhibit of local newsletters for the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor case based on ***Newsletters in the Humboldt Room, HSU Library***, a bibliographic essay that she compiled for the Humboldt Room web site as part of her internship.
- ***Raising the Redwood Curtain: Merle Shuster Shows Us Post-WWII Humboldt Bay.*** The slides from another presentation by Jerry Rohde, in April 2010 at the Humboldt County Library, based on the Shuster Collection, were added to the collection web page.
- ***Humboldt State University.*** We held a book-signing in the Library May 14 for this book by Katy Tahja, published by Arcadia Press as part of its “Campus History Series.” The book is based on the photograph collections of the Humboldt Room.
- ***HSU Public Affairs Collection.*** The finding aid for this collection was completed in May and added to the collection web page in conjunction with the Tahja book-signing. Student Katie LaSala provided research support for Tahja, while continuing to help process the collection. She and two students from the Art Department’s Museum and Gallery Practices internship program, Ashley Rubay and Kiri Clayton, produced a major exhibit in the Library, May 11-August 30, 2010; Katie LaSala supplemented this with an additional exhibit case, *Part 2*.
- ***Research visit to the Beinecke Library, Yale University.*** Edie researched the relationship between the Palmquist collections at the Beinecke and at HSU, supported by a travel grant from the Humboldt Area Foundation for a week in May.
- ***American Library Association.*** Midwinter meeting, Boston, January 2010. (Joan attended, first ALA conference in a couple of years.)

- *American Society for Environmental History*. Annual conference, Portland, March 2010. (Edie attended, especially appropriate as we had just begun processing the Becking Collection under a CLIR/Mellon grant to uncover hidden collections in the area of California environmental history.)

## STATISTICS

	Reshelve	HR ref/ 3 <sup>rd</sup> count	Photo Searches	OAC Searches	Hours Open M-F
2009-10	4015*	1180/1110	40,503*	38,812	24/wk*
2008-09	5046	1518/1848	23,039	21,414	32/fall; 26/sp
2007-08	5804	1615/2574	22,196	32,064	42/wk
2006-07	5340	1525/2663	24,948	n.a.	42/wk
2005-06	6391	1858/2851	40,469	n.a.	42/wk

\*Decreased reshelving statistics may be reflecting less frequent shelving by our student assistants/interns as they are directed more towards project work. For example, we are tending to leave more items out for patrons over a longer period, thus the materials might be shelved only once, rather than several times during the course of a researcher's use of materials. And of course we were open fewer hours!

\*Increased database accesses are likely in part because of the increased content of the Boyle and Map collections; the Boyle finding aid, though not the images, was also added to the OAC.

\*In 2009-10 we were only open Sundays for the second half of each semester.