

TO: Teresa Grenot
FROM: Joan Berman
SUBJ: SPECIAL COLLECTIONS 2012-2013

NARRATIVE

Challenges. The major challenge for Special Collections this year was the replacement of archivist Edie Butler who retired on August 1, 2012 after 15 years in the position. This was accomplished on a temporary basis for 2012-2013 and has been extended through 2013-2014. The major challenge for next year is planning for the future of Special Collections as librarian Joan Berman is approaching retirement. An attempt by the Library this year to secure approval for replacing her position, effective 2014-2015 as a dedicated 12 month Special Collections Librarian was not successful.

The transition to new (temporary) staff members, Librarians Katie LaSala (1.0, January 2013 to date) and Carly Marino (.5, August 2012 to date, .6 after January 2013), was accomplished seamlessly, with Special Collections Librarian Joan Berman providing extensive training and mentoring throughout the year. Katie and Carly each worked one 3 hour weekly shift on the Library Research Help Desk in addition to scheduled Humboldt Room reference service. In spring semester they participated in the weekly Instructional Services training meetings that then morphed into work on subject libguides and Library website content review. They also helped out with the instructional load featuring Humboldt Room materials during spring semester, each meeting with one or more classes.

Statistics. The statistics table (see below) shows that *reshelving* is down (possibly reflecting less frequent shelving, a policy implemented this year with less student assistant time but also as individuals and groups came back successively, such that items were used several times in the room without being reshelved – and counted – in between use). It is satisfying to see that our *digital use*, particularly from the Special Collections website, continues to grow, this year's spectacular increase from 40,925 to 63,303 searches likely reflecting the collections added at the end of last year. Our digital content on the California Digital Library/Online Archive of California has not been added to since 2007, but still continues to command many searches, especially for such terms as redwoods, Carson Mansion and Yurok. The unavailability as well as the ambiguity of the *reference question count* after the Library implemented a revised reference question database two years ago led us to develop an Excel-based form to capture information specific to Special Collections use. Cheryl did the first pass at it and Katie and Carly have refined it. We have data for end May-June and will be continuing with this for next year. As an example, we can now state that for that period after the end of the semester in May through June, when we were open for a limited 8 hours/week we had 39 visitors to the Humboldt Room and a total of 58 reference questions were answered, whether in person, by email, or by phone. We can also identify who are users are (HSU,

community, out-of-the-area) and what collections they (or we) used (HCC, University Archives, Docs, Other) as well as what level of reference question was handled (directional, skill based, simple, complex) so that the figures can be easily incorporated into Library and CSU statistics as needed. This form satisfies a long felt need to be better able to quantify and categorize Special Collections use.

Collections. In off-desk hours, Katie worked primarily on University Archives collections, including the College Elementary School ([CES](#)) Collection; 2,231 items were added to University Archives Pamphlet Collection. She also completed processing the [EPIC](#) /Headwaters Court Cases and Shuster Photograph collections, the latter having been identified by Edie as a high priority collection to add to the original Shuster Aerial Photograph Collection. Carly oversaw revision of the Disaster Response Plan for Library Materials and took responsibility for the major [HCC Pamphlet Collection](#) (1,488 items added to the collection) and its future direction; she also began processing the Bayside Grange Collection, selected because it relates to two different upcoming exhibits, one in the Library and one at the Clarke Historical Museum.

Student assistants play a very important role in Special Collections and we are especially pleased that this year's student Tessa Cervantes is headed to University of Washington to pursue her MLIS. Our spring volunteer, Kathryn Beckley, is now on payroll and is also showing career interest in our profession.

Predicted requests for photos and objects to be used in promoting the HSU Centennial, as well as help researching university history topics kept us all busy throughout the year. Regrettably, my third-time request for Loyalty Fund support to digitize the *Lumberjack* was still unsuccessful. Keyword searchable digital access to the *Lumberjack* would significantly improve researcher access to Humboldt State history and activities going back to 1930. I did however manage to provide table-of-contents searchable access to the [HSU News Releases](#) and News Clips series of the [HSU Public Affairs Collection](#). Additionally, I resolved long-standing issues with two senior thesis collections and created a new collection page for [HSU Theses and Projects](#).

Notable donations received during the year included our first "born digital" collection, the Arcata Historical Resources Survey 2012. This came to us as an external hard drive along with an exhibit that will be installed in the first floor Library display cases for the summer and is appropriately Centennial-themed. We also received a particularly handsome ledger, Hammond Lumber Company General Information (through 1956), as well as transcripts of an oral history project "Voices of the Timber Industry" from the Timber Heritage Association, and the papers of the late local historian, Lynwood Carranco.

Space. The campus migration to digital-only submission of theses and projects was also the excuse/opportunity to address perennial space issues. I chose to remove all non-Northwestern California content theses to storage in the basement, thereby freeing up shelf space for another three years possible growth in the Humboldt Room. This is a great incentive to clear as much as possible of collection backlogs for cataloging during

the next year. At the end of the year I ordered record box storage units to be placed in the basement to address the safety issue noted in spring 2012 (boxes stored too high); this will also give us some additional shelving space for processed collections. Processing space continues to be an issue and is addressed on an ad-hoc basis: Library 208 was used for exhibit preparation in June 2013 and Library 207 has been requested for collection processing during 2013-14. (For more information on space needs see Special Collections Annual Reports on the Library Intranet, especially the Space Report from 2004 and the Annual Report for 2005-06, each of which provides an alternative space proposal, the first in the Library lower level and the second on the second floor of the Library, new wing.)

Professional development. Joan and Carly attended the CSU COLD sponsored IPI workshop in Sacramento, resulting in purchase of 3 Preservation Environmental Monitors, now installed to be gathering temperature and humidity data for our collections areas. Joan and Carly attended the Society of California Archivists annual conference (connecting with former students and colleagues – Christina (Velasquez) Fidler and Adrienne Harling). Joan was the keynote speaker for the annual meeting of the Eureka Heritage Society, discussing Humboldt Room collections related to Eureka’s architectural history; Katie provided the visual support for this presentation.

2012-2013 Goals accomplished included:

- Inventory and make processing plans for collections related to University Archives, making as much as possible available for Centennial research.

Informal inventory completed, CES Collection processed, numerous small collections integrated into Archives Pamphlet Collection (2,231 items added), [News Releases/Clips](#) made accessible (stats, items added to Archives Pams)

- Re-evaluate location of retrospective Archives copies of theses, given the Fall 2012 campus decision to require all Master’s theses and projects be entered into Humboldt Digital Scholar (HDS) and to cease requiring any print copies for the Library. It will also be an opportunity to address the long-standing space needs in the Humboldt Room.

39 linear feet of theses (non-northwestern California subject content, 13 shelves) moved to basement storage, freeing up space in the Humboldt Room to accommodate anticipated collections growth in the public reading room for 3 years; [HSU Theses and Projects](#) collection webpage created and longstanding geology and environmental resources engineering senior theses problems resolved

- Investigate use of Archivists Toolkit/Archon as hosted by California Digital Library/Online Archive of California both for collections inventory and for creation of finding aids.

Ascertained that Record Express can be used for entry to OAC; but continuing to evaluate use of AT for multiple purposes

- Review policies and procedures relating to Special Collections operations as new staff are working in the Humboldt Room.

Policies and Procedures Manual created, continuing to be evaluated especially as it is being used to train new staff

GOALS FOR 2013-2014

- Survive Centennial, while continuing to make more of those University Archives collections available; create the amalgamated University Archives Pamphlet Collection finding aid
- Implement recommendations regarding the HCC Pamphlet Collection and update the Northwestern California Newspapers website
- Add/update finding aids on California Digital Library/Online Archive of California
- Address two additional format/genre areas, maps and oral history, preparing summary collection descriptions and identifying additional collections to be processed
- Clear up as much as possible of backlogs inherited from predecessors as well as those generated by Joan and Edie over the last 15 years, employing MPLP principles, and fully documenting all that remains for our collective successors
- Plan for future staffing of Special Collections

STATISTICS

	Reshelve	HR ref/ 3 rd count	Photo Searches	CDL/OAC Searches	AY Hours Open M-F
2012-13	3626	n.a.	63,303	51,539	18/wk
2011-12	4097	n.a.	40,925	113, 125	18/wk
2010-11	3695	1350/1356	31,304	109,680	22/wk (18)
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