A New Plateau

2006 brought many changes to the Murphy Library environment and its collections. Included in this report are articles about our new Collaborative Learning Information Commons (CLIC) and the enhancement of recently acquired local historic negatives. Donations helped with the remodeling project for CLIC, improving wireless access in all areas of the library and purchasing another outstanding student work of art.

Endowment funds are also being used in support of an exciting presentation to be held April 25, 2007 on international children’s literature in schools. This program features speakers from around the state, including Ginny Moore Kruse, Emeritus Director of the Cooperative Children’s Book Center in Madison. Presented in cooperation with the UW-L School of Education, the event will be held in the Alice Hagar Curriculum Resource Center and will highlight our children’s collection. Separate presentations will be given to our School of Education students and to local educators and librarians.

In 2006 donors gave over $20,000.00! These generous donations plus investment gains brought the Endowment Fund total over the $250,000 mark to $272,659.18 as of 12/31/06. We cannot thank you enough for your generosity and continued support of Murphy Library! Without your contributions we would not be able to maintain the level of services our patrons deserve.

First Floor Changes Enhance Student Learning

Since spring of last year, the library’s first floor has been undergoing quite a few changes. The entire collection of bound periodicals was moved to the basement to make way for the Collaborative Learning Information Commons (CLIC), and construction on the new library café, Murphy’s Mug, which opened for business on March 19, 2007.

The CLIC area was designed to facilitate small-group learning using wireless technologies. It includes furniture designed to enhance group interaction, wireless laptops available for checkout, access to nearby reference librarians and library collections, and much more. Students inhabit this area eagerly and in great numbers. Thank you, donors, for your contributions, which helped make this area possible and so inviting!

Endowment funds also made it possible to purchase a new student work of art. For the first time the Endowment & Recognition Committee commissioned a painting depicting the library exterior. (See photo on the left). The committee contracted with Matt Duckett, a La Crosse native and UW-L art student whose media are oil and installation art, and worked with him for several months in the summer and fall to bring the work to completion. It now hangs in the CLIC area near the Administrative Office.
Endowment Fund Helps Glass Plate Negatives Come to Life

The Murphy Library Endowment Fund has made it possible for rare La Crosse photographic negatives to see the light of day for the first time in over 70 years. In 2006, Special Collections received a donation of 225 original, glass plate photographic negatives from the La Crosse Public Library Archives Department. These negatives had originally been the property of the La Crosse County Historical Society, but in 2005 the Society transferred ownership to the Public Library. The Public Library appraised the negatives, determined that most did not fit their collecting scope and offered them to Special Collections. We were glad to accept these rare glass plate negatives.

In order to make them accessible, copy negatives and prints had to be made of the originals. Special Collections received $1,200 from the Endowment Fund to pay the entire cost of making these copies. The original glass plate negatives, copy negatives, and prints have all been integrated into the Special Collection’s local photo collection.

The negatives document La Crosse and the surrounding area, circa 1900-1930. Images are varied and include people, businesses, schools, buildings, homes, and street scenes. Specific views include the Wisconsin Pearl Button Company, a foundry, a wrecked steamboat, the La Crosse Normal School baseball team, and a traveling circus with its big top tent. There are also a number of images of the Henry Bunting family of La Crosse, including family portraits, interior and exterior shots of their home, and daily activities. Two examples from the collection are featured in the sidebar on the left.

Honor with Books!

The fall of 2006 ushered in a new fund-raising project for the Endowment Fund called Honor with Books Program. For a donation of $50 Murphy Library will place a commemorative bookplate in a newly purchased book in a broad subject area of the donor’s choice. Cataloging staff will add the honoree to the online catalog record for the designated book, so the names will be displayed electronically. A notification of the gift can be sent to the honoree.

This is a wonderful way to honor a friend, relative, student or faculty member as you help enhance the library’s book collection with your tax-deductible donation.

Information and forms can be found on our website at http://www.uwlax.edu/murphylibrary/endowment/honorwithbooks.htm