

A newsletter for the Friends of the Geisel Library

January 2009

From the Librarian

By Joseph W. Constance, Jr.

As we await the beginning of spring semester, I would like to thank all of you, once again, for your generous support of the Geisel Library over the course of the past year. Without you, we would not be able to provide our students and faculty with the materials they need to continue their research, and make important contributions to their respective fields.



Dr. Joseph Chiang

Our fall event, featuring Dr. Joseph Chiang, was an immense success with an audience that included students, faculty, friends and many folks from the greater Manchester community. Dr. Chiang is a highly respected anesthesiologist at the University Medical Center in Houston, Texas and a specialist in alternative healing techniques, particularly acupuncture. Dr. Chiang has studied acupuncture extensively both in the United States and in China, and has won important grant support for his work. His presentation utilized a fascinating series of slides which detailed the history of acupuncture and its applications throughout history to the current day. Dr. Chiang also detailed for the audience a number of interesting procedures of his recent patient histories and their most positive results. Our audience included a number of nursing students who listened to the presentation with great interest.

We are now in the process of planning our spring program, including our annual Saint Bede's Day Dinner as well as our usual partial sponsorship of Shakespeare's birthday in April. It is our sincere hope our weather will be more cooperative than it has been in recent weeks here in New Hampshire. As many of you may know, we experienced a terrific ice storm in mid December, which caused absolute consternation with our exam schedule at Saint Anselm. Just after that we were repeatedly hit by several snow storms which made an ever greater mess of things.

We will, of course, keep you abreast of all coming events and like always, I look forward to hearing from you. ❄️



Internet: The Next Generation

By Jeffrey H. Waller, Head of Reference and Instructional Services

In the early years of the World Wide Web, the vast majority of its users were mere consumers of the information. In recent times, however, the information superhighway has truly become a two-way street. In this new "Web 2.0" environment, users not only read but also write. The Internet now offers numerous opportunities for people to contribute information, sharing their knowledge and opinions with other interested parties. This has made the Web into more of a democracy, enabling millions of voices throughout the world to mingle with one another.

Below are some of the most prominent websites through which you can make yourself heard. In most cases, free registration is all that is required to take part.

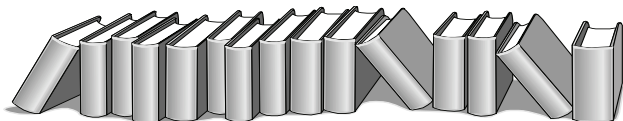
- 1) **Write reviews:** Offer your impressions of books on Amazon.com (or its more community-oriented affiliate, Shelfari.com), movies on IMDB.com (the Internet Movie Database), hotels and tourist attractions on TripAdvisor.com, and just about any consumer product on Epinions.com. Of course, you don't have to participate; reading reviews written by other people helps you spend your money more wisely.
- 2) **Share your expertise:** On Allrecipes.com, you can post your killer recipe for stuffed peppers, and then browse the top-rated recipes submitted by other amateur chefs. Or offer the world your expert advice on how to grow orchids or install recessed lighting on EHow.com or WikiHow.com, then search those same websites for tips in areas you know less about.
- 3) **Show off photos and videos:** Youtube.com gained some notoriety in 2007 when the candidates for President responded to questions posed by ordinary citizens via self-produced YouTube videos. It's a great place to find videos of last weekend's sports highlights or vintage performances by the Rolling Stones, but you can also upload your digital home movies and share them with distant relatives. Similar is Flickr.com, where you can store your digital photographs and give them captions so you can remember the who, when, and where.

But what does this have to do with libraries? People increasingly expect their Internet usage to be a participatory experience, and may be disappointed if library websites merely deliver

(Internet: The Next Generation, continued on page 2.)

information, with no opportunity for users to offer anything back. Some libraries have already stuck their toes in the Web 2.0 waters. For example, some public library online catalogs now allow users to post reviews and ratings of books, just like on Amazon.

Last year, my colleague Sam Urtz created a web-based resource guide for the college debate team that enabled team members themselves to add sources they find, annotate them, and insert links to useful websites. In the future, we hope to experiment with making certain web guides for classes “interactive” in this way. After all, who better than the students themselves to determine which resources were most useful for an assignment? Plus, the web guides they develop could make life easier for the next group of students who take the class.*



Friends Gift Memberships Available

Expand our circle of “friends” by giving a gift membership in the Friends of the Geisel Library Society. Membership is a nominal \$15 per person per year. The recipient will receive a special acknowledgement noting your gift, as well as all of the benefits of a membership.

All Friends members receive the newsletter *Friends Forum* and have the opportunity to attend meetings with notable speakers. Friends also receive advance notice of special events, as well as an invitation to the annual Saint Bede Dinner.

An application form is included in the newsletter for your convenience. Should you have any questions, please contact Pam MacPhee, Friends Secretary, at (603)641-7301, or e-mail pmacphee@anselm.edu. Our mailing address is Geisel Library, Saint Anselm College, 100 Saint Anselm Drive, Manchester, NH 03102.

Your ongoing support of the Friends organization is greatly appreciated.▪



Betsy's Books

By Elizabeth Holmes, Collections/User Librarian

When The Going Gets Tough...

You can't escape the headlines. Very real financial worries are causing unprecedented concern in the academic community. Historically, library usage rises in financially difficult periods, and this time is no exception. While the greatest increases are found in public libraries, there has been increased usage at Geisel Library as well. Yes, we have excellent collections, databases, and staff that bring students to our door, but perhaps also the availability of computers and printers, DVDs, CDs, and plenty of magazines to browse are helping students in an economic pinch. The commitment to superior library service and resources has a long history at Saint Anselm College; while researching this article I found how far reaching this history is.

R.W. Southern, a noted Medievalist and biographer of Anselm, spoke in 1976 on “A Benedictine Library in a Disordered World.”¹ In his speech he considered what contribution libraries, and specifically Benedictine libraries, have made in the past towards overcoming the disorders of the world. He begins in Italy about “at the moment of the most conspicuous collapse in ancient civilization,” about the middle of the 6th century. Southern first discusses Cassiodorus, a Catholic Christian who was born a few years after the formal disappearance of the Roman Empire in the West. Cassiodorus worked for the Ostrogoths for over 40 years, rising to the highest level in their administration with the intention that he could best “preserve the values and institutions he most revered by serving the barbarians who were trying to destroy them.” When Boethius was arrested and executed, Cassiodorus was given his position in the royal service. Despite his lifelong efforts, the ‘barbarians’ were no closer to adapting Christian learning or culture.

Late in his career, the Ostrogothic kingdom was destroyed by the Emperor Justinian and the court was transported to Constantinople; Cassiodorus was one of the exiles. It was not until he was 70 that he was allowed to return to Italy. Near the end of his life, Cassiodorus founded a library, finally realizing his goal of preserving and disseminating the knowledge and values to which he believed. He gathered a community of monks to help with building, copying, translating, arranging and preserving both Christian and earlier Latin and Greek materials that might otherwise have been lost. He wrote about the contents of the library, and more importantly, developed a classification system for its organization. His library served as a model for makers and users of libraries throughout the Middle Ages.

Cassiodorus understood the need for keeping books *in use* as critical to a library's survival. He wrote that a library must be “a place of peace and of a certain visual delight.” Sadly, his library disappeared not many years after his death, but his account of his books (including the library catalog) continued to influence the world, despite the chaotic times. Also, at least one of his books came into the hands of a man who understood what Cassiodorus had tried to do, and followed his example.

(When *The Going Gets Tough*, continued from page 2)

Benedict Biscop was an English nobleman from Northumbria. Unlike Cassiodorus, he was one of the “barbarians”, and was born around 150 years later, when the Gothic grip on Europe was complete. He was (barely) a second generation Christian and became a monk after spending several years as a brigand in a Germanic clan. His passion for books set him apart from other monks of his day. He was one of the first great collectors of books among Europeans of his time. He visited Rome on at least six occasions, and collected books that dealt specifically with the ancient Christian past.

His collection was not large by current standards, perhaps 300 volumes or so. Among the books was a special Bible, the specific volume that Cassiodorus arranged which was fundamental to his library. Additionally, the books Biscop collected contained everything that was at that time known of Christian learning of the ancient world. While there is no record of writings by Biscop, it is noted that he understood that “books were made to be used and that libraries must be used as a whole if they are to have their full effect.”

At Jarrow, Biscop’s monastery, his monks were the true heirs of Cassiodorus. They copied existing books and produced new works of the highest scholarship, which preserved and disseminated the contents of the library for future use. As Southern remarks, “the monastery at Jarrow must appear as the finest of examples of the power of a library to bring order out of chaos.” The library at Jarrow produced Bede, who through his study was able to understand and describe works of learning of the Christian and pre-Christian past. As Southern concludes, Bede “is and will probably forever be, the greatest example of Benedictine scholarship and of the use to which a Benedictine library can be put.”

Which brings us back to the present. Despite the persistent “doom and gloom” reports of financial meltdown or the bizarre weather global warming may inflict upon us, we will never return to the Dark Ages. *This* library will continue to be a place where learning is not just preserved, but made accessible to students and scholars. Many Benedictines, going back to Saint Benedict, have made libraries a priority, and with this tradition we proudly carry on. 📖

¹R.W. Southern. “A Benedictine Library in a Disordered World”. *The Downside Review*, vol. 94, no. 316, July 1976. p163-177.

The Flute Workshop at Saint Anselm College

By, Claudia Bissett, Head of Cataloging

What do you get when you put four students, one professor, and one librarian together with about 20 feet of silver tubing? A great sounding flute ensemble! New on campus this fall, the Flute Workshop provides an opportunity for anyone in the campus community who plays the flute to come together to make music.

At present, there are few instrumental groups on campus, but even campuses with large music programs often have difficulty finding places for all of the flutes because the instrument is so popular in high schools. A flute ensemble, or flute choir, fills this need for many flutists.

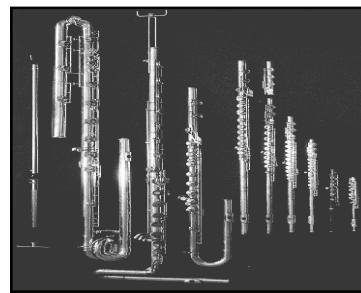
The Flute Workshop at Saint Anselm College, can't.

What is a flute choir? Thanks to technological advances in instrument design, there are flutes in many sizes and shapes. A flute choir, or orchestra, contains many of these: piccolo, E-flat soprano flute, concert flute, alto flute, bass flute, and perhaps contralto or contrabass flutes. With this range of instruments, a flute choir can perform much of the same music as a string orchestra.

The Flute workshop at Saint Anselm was conceived as a step in providing some musicians in our college community with an opportunity to learn and play. In addition to the Head of Cataloging at the Geisel Library, I am also a professional flutist and arranger who began playing in flute choirs in the early 1980's. Upon leaving the New England Conservatory of Music two years ago to join the staff of the Geisel Library, I hoped to be able to contribute to the musical community here at Saint Anselm outside of my regular professional duties. Because student organizations here must be started and run by students, with the approval of music professor Lisa Cleveland, I came up with the idea of beginning a flute choir in the form of a workshop. The advantage of having the ensemble in the form of a workshop is that it is open to the entire campus community instead of students only.

Last spring, an email was sent to the campus community announcing that the workshop would begin in the fall. Several students expressed interest, and the group is now a dedicated quintet including Dr. Susan Gabriel (Philosophy), Angela Bossio '12 (Psychology), Sabrina Christian '11 (Psychology), Sarah Gingerella '10 (International Relations), and Jessica Hamel '10 (Psychology). The members meet every Monday from 4:45 to 5:45. Presently, the students are playing concert flutes while Dr. Gabriel plays her new alto flute and I play bass flute and conduct. The group has played at a number of college and community functions during the holiday season including the Advent service at St. Raphael's and the faculty senate Christmas party.

If you are interested in participating in the flute workshop, new members are welcome. Contact Claudia Bissett at 641-7621 or cbissett@anselm.edu. 🎵



Contact Us.....

To notify us of a change in address or for more information on making a donation to the Geisel Library, please contact Pam MacPhee, Geisel Library, Saint Anselm College, 100 Saint Anselm Drive, Manchester, NH 03102. You may also telephone (603)641-7301 or e-mail pmacphee@anselm.edu.

Happy New Year!
2009

Theatre at Saint Anselm College

By Keith Chevalier, Archivist

Theatrical performances, in one form or another, have had an ongoing place in students' social life at Saint Anselm College since its founding. From its beginnings on a small stage in the basement of Alumni Hall to the large performance space of the Koonz Theatre in the Dana Humanities Center building, theatre at Saint Anselm College has a fascinating history. Student performers who once provided entertainment exclusively for the college and preparatory school students, now provide both the college and the greater Manchester community with professionally staged plays and musicals.



1915 Dramatic Society

In those early years, the works of Shakespeare were regularly showcased. *Richard III*, *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet* were repeated to audiences consisting of college and preparatory school students, the Benedictine monks, and the occasional religious visitors. In addition, various secular and religious plays were chosen to better serve the aims of this Benedictine college. Theatrical performances were also held at commencement exercises and alumni reunions. Indeed, these events provided an excellent opportunity to display the talents of the student performers.

The cast of characters for plays remained all male until about the 1930s. Prior to that time, any play with female leads would have been played by one of the male students. For example, during the May 29, 1909 alumni reunion (the second in the college's history), *Richard III* was "revised and adapted for male performers by the Rev. P. Benedict [Flum], O.S.B."³ Women were not featured in roles until the 1930s, when the college began performing with Mount St. Mary's College (formerly in Hooksett, NH). This interaction was taken a step further when, along with Rivier and Mount St. Mary's Colleges, Saint Anselm College formed a short-lived theatre group called the Little Theatre League. For a number of years, performances included actors and actresses shared from these colleges and Notre Dame College in a variety of roles. With the formation of the nursing program in the 1950s, Saint Anselm's College's participation with the other colleges' dramatic groups gradually faded due to the increase enrollment of women at the college.

Staging plays in the early years of the college was rudimentary by today's standards. Until the construction of the Abbey Theatre in 1946, staging and set design was limited to the confines of the small stage in Alumni Hall. In 1913, the stage was equipped with electric lighting, a development discussed in the *St. Anselm's College Monthly* which notes that the lighting permits "scenic and illumination effects not to be had in the past, and approaching the possibilities of a city theatre."⁴

Throughout the years, theatrical performances were held in the basement of Alumni Hall, the gymnasium (the north wing of Alumni Hall where administrative offices are now located), the Abbey Theatre, the Chapel Art Center, and in Manchester (the Practical Arts Auditorium and the Palace Theatre). From 1947 until the collapse of its roof in December 1969, performances and other college activities were held in the Abbey Theatre. With the loss of their performance space, the Abbey Players used the Chapel Art Center, the Palace Theatre, and the Practical Arts Auditorium until the arrival of the Koonz Theatre in 1981 where the Abbey Players staged a performance of the musical *Pippin*.

While the students throughout the years have called themselves by different names (St. Benedict's Dramatic Association, the Dramatic Society, the Saint Gregory Club, the Dramatic Club, Sigma Alpha Delta, and Anselmian Abbey Players), theatre at Saint Anselm College continues to attract students interested in theatrical production. Though the people and program notes change, the benefit to the student performers remains similar to the early years of the college—to improve its members; to provide entertainment for the community; to develop an appreciation for the drama through observation and participation; and to allow into its membership all students.

An exhibit documenting the history of the theatrical performance at Saint Anselm College will be on display from January 2009 until April in the Geisel Library exhibit cases. The archival materials on display will include photographs, programs, and scrapbooks. The Anselmian Abbey Players will celebrate their 60th year with an alumni review show on Saturday, February 21, 2009, at the Koonz Theatre of the Dana Humanities Center. For more information on the celebration, contact the Abbey Players at AbbeyPlayers@anselm.edu.*

¹*Annual Catalogue of St. Anselm's College, 1895–1896*, 27.

²*Annual Catalogue of St. Anselm's College, 1905–1906*, 49.

³"Program of the Exercises," *St. Anselm's College Monthly*, May 1909, vol. 1, no. 8, p. 1.

⁴"The Comedy 'Vacation' a Distinct 'Hit,'" *St. Anselm's College Monthly*, February 1913, vol. 5, no. 5, p. 12.