

From the Librarian

By Joseph W. Constance, Jr.

My greetings to you as we finally exit a winter that seems to have lasted years and not months. Just a short time ago, in fact, there was a serious movement afoot to rename the College to Base Camp Zulu, Southern Arctic Region. In mid February, of course, virtually the entire campus had disappeared, with only a few landmarks like the bell tower of Alumni Hall and the water tower still visible. Thanks to the efforts of Donald Moreau, Head of Physical Plant, however, we were able to continue operations by connecting our buried buildings via an intricate system of tunnels drilled through tons of snow and ice. Our Security department also adapted well to long winter, hiring some two dozen St. Bernard dogs to replace the human officers who were lost shortly after the first blizzard in October. The students, of course, adjusted more quickly than anyone involved, handing in all of their assignments three months early and leaving for Florida by mid-February.

We have had an excellent academic year to this point, with special accomplishments in the area of library instruction and technology. In the area of instruction, our Reference Department, under the leadership of Judy Romein, has conducted a thorough redesign of the freshmen English instructional program, which enjoyed a magnificent one hundred percent participation rate. Much of our success in this effort was also due to the efforts of Professor Meaghan Cronin of the English department, who has long supported library instruction and made certain her colleagues did as well. Without her boundless energy and enthusiasm for the sources and services of the library, this initiative would have fallen far short of its ambitious goals.

In the area of technology, the Library is now in the process of becoming the first building on campus to become a wireless environment, or one in which a patron may enter the building with a notebook computer and then access our network without "plugging in" to an old style computer port. This project was initiated through close cooperation with the Information Technology Department with special thanks to our former director of IT Richard Powell. The second part of

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Library Instruction Initiative Continued

By Judy Romein, Head of Reference

Second Semester is nearing its end and so is reference desk activity. By this time of the year, our students have read the entire course syllabus and have realized a term paper looms between them and summer vacation. Students arriving at the reference desk with a sense of doom and a hint of panic is an everyday occurrence. Our freshmen are particularly concerned since, for many, it is their first real research paper in college.



As you may remember from the last issue of Friends Forum, part one of our instruction initiative was a Labor Day group orientation to the collection, people and facilities of Geisel Library. Part two came when twenty-seven Freshman English classes were taken on a tour of the Library and taught the basics of academic research.

Part three of our initiative began this semester. It taught students how to define a research topic and provided them with advanced research strategies. Students learned that selecting a topic to research is not a simple, one-step task. It is difficult to clearly define a topic before starting to research, but without defining a topic, students will not be able to efficiently search for information. With a well-defined topic, they can focus their research strategies to find relevant information, avoiding a sea of useless data. Identifying and developing a topic is an on-going process that does not end until the research project is finished. We teach students to find and read background information to get a better understanding of the topic, then to search for more specific information. In order to inspire and guide this initial research, our librarians have developed course guides, our newest tool in our instruction initiative.

A course guide is developed by a librarian in conjunction with a faculty member and is tailored to students needs for a specific course. These guides serve as a starting point in the

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Betsy's Books

Collection Building at Geisel Library

By Elizabeth Holmes, Collections/User Services Librarian

Have I ever mentioned that I love my job? I do, because I have the *most* interesting job in the library, responsibility for “developing” the collections. Just



what does this mean? Collection Development covers a wide array of library materials, procedures, and finding aids, and in the next several columns I'll share some of the activities performed in these areas.

When thinking of a library collection, most folks think **books**.

While not the only focus of our collection, it is certainly one of primary importance. The library currently has over 225,000 books, and is growing daily. When determining if a title should be added to the collection, criteria I consider include:

- Needs of the curriculum
- Special collection areas (Anselm of Canterbury, Northern New England Catholicism)
- Type of source (primary sources are of particular interest);
- Current interests (for example, books on Islam, Iraq, terrorism);
- Format (is this available electronically?)
- Availability at other libraries
- Budget

There are a variety of finding aids I use to assist in determining the appropriateness of a title. I read a wide variety of book reviews: *Choice Online* is a new electronic resource I use to read academically oriented reviews. I also read several professional journals specializing in college library review literature. I scour each edition of *The New York Times Book Review* section, and *The New York Review of Books*. Whether its newspapers, electronic listserves, or radio programs, I'm always on the look-out for new titles that will benefit the collection.

As the curriculum changes at the college, so too must our collection. Each year I prepare bibliographies of books (including classics and out of print titles) that will improve/update current holdings. Recent bibliographies have included poetry, (in collaboration with Judy Romein) Chinese history and Protestant theology. The College Librarian uses these bibliographies to write grant proposals for funding these special collection initiatives.

Note that I am not the only person making collection decisions! Faculty are given library funds to select titles in their areas of expertise. The reference staff select all books for the reference area. Additionally, the reference staff observe immediate patron needs, and provide invaluable assistance identifying gaps in the collection. Suggestions from patrons and alumni are also considered when purchasing books.

And all books are not purchased! The library is blessed with an active community of donors, who give hundreds of titles (sometimes basements full!) These titles are evaluated and either added to the collection or included in our booksale.

One area of collection development most people never think of is the de-accessing, or removing of library materials. Books take up valuable real estate, so it is important to monitor titles to keep those that are relevant and current on our shelves, and remove those that are out-of-date or redundant. At times I find this the greatest challenge of the position.

Books are being added to the collection daily. Titles arriving yesterday include: *The Collected Poems of William Carlos Williams*; *A Modern Buddhist Bible*; *Are Cops Racist?*; *Samuel Pepys: The Unqualified Self*; and *A History of Christian Missions*. With great company like this, who wouldn't love this job?! ☺

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this initiative will involve seeking funding to acquire some fifteen to twenty notebook computers for the library that can be used for library instruction and also for in building check out when not being used for classes. It promises to be a wonderful experiment, and one in which we will keep you

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research process, and are not meant to be comprehensive, but only suggest strategies and resources to help students begin their research. Course guides are perhaps one of the most effective instruction tools available to librarians. Go to the library's homepage and click on [Guide and Tutorials](#). There you will find the course guides. Let me know what you think of them as a research tool.

By the time first-year students are ready to go home for the summer break, they will have been exposed to the art of library research. This foundation will be helpful for them in future college work and allows the library staff to add to the students' skill levels from that point. ☺

A New England Treasure

By Joseph W. Constance, Jr.

On April 10, 2003 at our annual St. Bede's Day Dinner, we were honored to have as our speaker Mr. Judson Hale, Editor in Chief of the *Old Farmer's Almanac* and *Yankee Magazine*. The Friends, of course, have had many wonderful guest speakers throughout the years from many different and fascinating professions. Yet none of these have been so favored by our members as Mr. Hale, who so completely captivates any audience presented to him regardless of venue. From here, of course, I could simply describe to you what a wonderful evening we all had, using the usual complement of adjectives in a weak attempt to recount for you but a small bit of Mr. Hale's gift for storytelling. After leaving our President's Dinning Room that evening, however, I realized that Mr. Hale deserved much better, as did all of our readers.



For a number of years in my young life, I was forced to live away from New England, in places where maple trees didn't exist and winter consisted of a brief flurry and perhaps a slight damp chill. To keep in touch with my birthplace, my parents gave my wife and I a subscription to *Yankee* and an annual copy of the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, ties that we've maintained for over twenty years. When in exile, of course, I realized it wasn't the foliage, maple syrup or the Siberian winters I missed so much since I have never found raking leaves, pancakes, or shoveling a billion tons of snow to be significant cultural vehicles. What I clearly missed most were the New Englanders I grew up with, who seemed so priceless and so much more entertaining than the locals discovered in my extensive travels. These were people like Miner Thompson, a laconic tobacco chewing farmer from Greenfield, Massachusetts for whom I worked for several summers collecting hundreds of bales of hay and cutting corn, by hand, for the then unheard of sum of \$2.50 an hour. Or Ralph Haskins, another farmer who moved faster than a whirlwind and thought so highly of me he let me drive his tractor the moment I became of legal age. Or Daniel Krause, a wholesale florist and former artilleryman who would amuse himself by firing a homemade mortar in no particular direction after a day of hard work. Or my boyhood friend Robert Dirks, who could fix anything and is possessed of the unique gift of being able to ignore the schedules that family, educators and employers have tried for decades to impose upon him.

Judson Hale is one of those characters but on a far grander scale, the kind of person who can unify our New England experience into a poignant story touched with a wry humor that is absolutely inimitable. Mr. Hale was born in the nineteen thirties in Boston, Massachusetts to Brahmin parents enamored with the discipline anthroposophy. (For those of you, like me, who haven't heard of anthroposophy and have to sound it out to even pronounce, it is a school of thought that believes education should be experienced and not simply garnered from texts.) Shortly after Judson's birth, his parents decided to further the cause of anthroposophy by founding a colony in rural Maine that included a school, laboratory, cultural center and living quarters. It is here that Mr. Hale grew up and the place in his life that gives him his fondest memories. After attending Dartmouth College he joined the United States Army and then, through the good offices of his uncle, secured a job at the *Old Farmer's Almanac*. Later, he was an instrumental force in the founding of *Yankee Magazine* in Dublin, New Hampshire, the town that has long been his home. In his time at the *Almanac* and *Yankee* Mr. Hale has become a consummate editor and, without doubt, New England's greatest storyteller. No one since Will Rogers has possessed a better sense of humor and one marvels at his ability to still laugh at his own jokes after so many years. His best stories are from his work on the *Almanac*, such as the one he related to us that evening about the farmer who had an accident while working with dynamite in a field one day. "The explosion blew him clear across the field to a tree where his head became severely lodged in the split trunk of an oak". "The odd thing", as Mr. Hale explained, "was that he didn't die, but he couldn't be removed from the tree either. His body eventually atrophied and fell off, but neighbors managed to keep his head alive and even built a small house around it with little windows so they could feed and communicate with him, though he couldn't talk either. Instead he communicated by blinking his eyes in a coded fashion, observable through the small windows in his tiny house. He did die some years later, though this was not immediately noticeable since one of the back windows in his house had broken and he was moving his eyelashes in a fashion similar to his accepted code!" Now I ask you dear Friends, could you tell that story in such a way as to sound halfway believable, make everyone laugh hysterically, and still laugh at it yourself after telling it countless times? Mr. Hale did, and with the greatest of ease.

Mr. Hale also has wonderful tales of the people he has met throughout the years, like the world's tallest woman who hailed from Finland and was some seven foot nine inches tall. In a wonderful moment, one of our guests later asked him if he talked much with the woman after their public appearance and he replied regretfully that he hadn't. "She actually called me after our appearance since we were at the same hotel", he replied. "She asked me if I wanted to join her for a drink but I made up some excuse, worrying, I guess, that it might be a boy girl thing that a married man should not engage in". "But you know", he then added somewhat wistfully, to this day I wish I had and I've always wondered what happened to her." It was, I sensed one of the few good stories Mr. Hale has ever missed and I, too, felt a loss for not being able to hear it many years later.

If in your travels you get a chance to listen to Judson Hale, please make every effort to do so. He is perhaps, the greatest New

Defining Technical Services

By Felicity Walsh, Head Cataloger and References Librarian

What is Technical Services?


Technical Services is the behind-the-scenes part of the Library, the area where library staff receive books, classify and organize them, and make sure that the collection is properly maintained and preserved. Technical Services also works to ensure that the Library catalog and other computer systems are functioning properly. Without the dedication and effort of these people, the rest of the Library could not function.



What do we do in Technical Services?

The main responsibility of Technical Services is to provide access to every title (books, videos, CDs, web resources, or periodicals) through the library's online catalog. This catalog is an informational database that provides a description of the work and can be retrieved by using a myriad of search strategies (i.e., barcode, title, call number).

The majority of cataloging is done on the computer and attention to detail is paramount to maintaining the integrity of the catalog. Most procedures are double-checked. Cataloging duties include creating and editing item records, physically processing all materials, maintaining the catalog through special projects and withdrawing materials as needed.


Geisel Library receives items either by ordering them from vendors or items may be received as gifts. Many of the materials received into the library's collections have records already in one of the nations online databases. Geisel uses OCLC (which stands for Online Computer Library Center, Inc. based out of Dublin, OH) for its records. If no record is available for an item, we will create an original record. Some of our original records are submitted to the national database. 

Cataloging Personnel News: Farewell to Felicity Walsh

By John Dillon, Head of Technical Services and Systems Administrator

All good things must come to an end, and accordingly the Library (and myself in particular) wish a fond farewell to a staff member who is leaving. Yes, this April the Library wishes our Felicity Walsh a fair "Adieu" in her last month as Geisel's Head Cataloger. Felicity and family are relocating to the Atlanta, Georgia area for new opportunities and we wish her all the best. Felicity has been with us since late 2001, shortly after receiving her Master's degree in Library and Information Science.

Among others in Technical Services, Flip has been an unsung hero for the many projects she has been able to accomplish, great and small. Many of her cataloging duties centered around helping to make our online Library Catalog richer and more useful to students and faculty. Whether it was helping to catalog maps, better organize videos, enhance titles with Internet links, or prevent database conflicts, Felicity showed a knack for making the complex simple and the planets stay in orbit. In these days of constantly evolving standards and interfaces, this has indeed been an accomplishment.

Congratulations Felicity on a job well done! Best wishes on promising new adventures. 

Bookfund Donation Form Now Available Online

Information about the Geisel Library Book Fund, as well as a printable donation form, is now available on the Saint Anselm College website (www.anselm.edu) and linking to the Geisel Library homepage via *Quick Links*. Once on the library homepage you will find bookfund details under *Other Services* on the left side of the page, or click on *Book Fund* under the "What's New" column on the right side.

The online donor form can be printed on your home or workplace printer. Once the form is complete, simply mail it to the address on the bottom of the form along with your donation. Checks should be made payable to "Geisel Library Book Fund".

Should you have any questions, please contact Denise Labore, Geisel Library Secretary at (603) 641-7301 or e-mail dlabore@anselm.edu.

Contributing to the book fund is an excellent way to commemorate a special occasion or remember a loved one. Your generous donations greatly benefit the library and are always sincerely appreciated. 