



Friends Forum

A newsletter for the Friends of the Geisel Library Society

November 2009

From the Librarian

By Joseph W. Constance, Jr., Librarian


In Memoriam: Professor Austin Conley 1919-2009

Professor Austin Conley was perhaps the original Friend of the Geisel Library, arriving on campus in 1948, when the Library was still located in Alumni Hall. For thirty-six years he taught English and the Classics, chairing the Classics department for over a quarter of a century. In the classroom and the Library, he cultivated his love of Latin and Greek, educating several generations of students using such wonderful books as the Loeb Classics and many others. Even in his retirement, he would discuss the classical languages with friends such as Professor James McGhee, often over long, wonderful lunches made by his wife Ruth at their home very near Saint Anselm. It was in every sense, a life of learning.

I was introduced to Austin and Ruth Conley many years ago shortly after arriving on campus. They visited the Library regularly, frequently bringing gifts of books and periodicals, as well as countless contributions to the Book Fund in honor of friends and relatives. Almost always they would stop by my office and visit for awhile, telling me of their most recent travels at home and abroad. In a truly magnanimous gesture, they also established the Conley endowment that supports the purchase of books in several disciplines. Austin was often found in the Periodicals Room reading about all kinds of things from baseball to Thucydides.

More than anyone else, I think, Austin and Ruth enjoyed the Friends of the Geisel Library meetings, which they attended faithfully since the beginning. They brought a warmth and enthusiasm to every gathering, especially our annual St. Bede's Day dinner each April. Whatever the topic or the speaker, they always found it interesting and never, ever, failed to thank me profusely for the evening. On those occasions that I gave presentations to the Friends, they were especially complimentary.

Last year, along with my wife Mary, we escorted the Conley's to the wedding of a mutual friend's son, whom Austin and Ruth had known since birth. Along the way we had a wonderful visit, hearing great stories of Saint Anselm history we could not have heard anywhere else. Dinner with them was even more fun. A week or so after the wedding, my wife, the Director of a summer camp for the handicapped, received a generous donation from Ruth, a gesture of thanks for the escort. Ruth and Austin had enjoyed learning about the camp on the ride up north, and had wanted to do something. Neither of us was at all surprised.

We will miss you Austin and thank you for so many wonderful years at Saint Anselm and the Library. 

Whither the Encyclopedia?


By Jeff Waller, Head of Reference Services

As the caretaker of Geisel Library's reference collection, I sometimes look around at the shelves filled with encyclopedias and wonder: do students even use these anymore? The simple answer is "yes", because in nearly every research instruction session we teach, we encourage students to start their explorations of their topics in subject encyclopedias.

But if left to their own devices, would students seek out these sources? After all, it's so easy to get basic information by punching a few words into Google. A study published in 2005 found that college students doing research are over five times more likely to start their information seeking in an Internet search engine like Google rather than in the library catalog. Undoubtedly, this margin has only widened.

Producers of multi-volume print encyclopedias are feeling the pinch. Publishers offer increasingly deep discounts on their multi-volume reference sets, perhaps to clear out unwanted inventory. Germany's most renowned encyclopedia, the *Brockhaus*, will no longer be published in book form. While the venerable *Encyclopaedia Britannica* still produces print versions every two years, their print sales are just 10 percent of what they were in 1990, and their team of door-to-door salesmen (remember them?) was disbanded over 10 years ago.

How can encyclopedias survive in an era of ubiquitous free information? Fortunately, publishers have quickly adapted, and so has Geisel Library. In the past three years, we have subscribed to three databases (Credo Reference, Gale Virtual Reference Library, and Oxford Reference Online) that collectively offer several hundred encyclopedias and "companions" in fully searchable, online format. We also get the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in online form. Just like Google and Wikipedia, these online encyclopedias are easy to search and available 24 hours a day from students' dorm rooms. Unlike those free sources, they offer consistently trustworthy information, plus suggestions for further scholarly reading at the end of each article.

But although we can lead students to the proverbial water in our instruction sessions, will they drink it? Again, the answer is "yes". For example, after promoting the Gale Virtual Reference Library to numerous classes in the 2008/09 academic year, the use of that online reference collection increased by over 500% relative to 2007/08, with over 7,500 articles viewed. Although students often resort to searching the Web as a matter of convenience, they're fully aware that it has credibility issues, and seem to appreciate the existence of an equally convenient reference database that has the scholarly stamp of approval. 

¹Griffiths, Jillian R., and Peter Brophy. "Student Searching Behavior and the Web: Use of Academic Resources and Google." *Library Trends* 53.4 (2005): 539-554.

²Cohen, Noam. "Start Writing the Eulogies for Print Encyclopedias." *New York Times* (16 Mar. 2008): 3.

Bookplates Going Digital

by Joseph W. Constance, Jr., Librarian

For many years now, the Geisel Library has sponsored a Gift Book program so that donors can mark all kinds of special occasions with a commemorative bookplate. Many of our books at Geisel bear such plates, a testament to the dedication of our friends throughout the country. Affixed on the inside cover of books, our plates were designed years ago and still possess a timeless elegance.

Over the years, however, the one difficulty we have found with traditional plates came from donors desire to actually *see* the plates. To do so, of course, they would have to travel to the Library, have a librarian look up the information and then retrieve it for them. Unfortunately, very few of our donors are able to do so.

Now, however, technology has allowed us to improve on our Gift Book program by introducing digital bookplates, of differing styles, which can be tied directly to our online system and viewed by donors as soon as they are completed. Right now our staff is in the process of designing signature plates which will be available in January of 2010. Once introduced, friends will be able to view their gift plates as well as the title of the book to which they are attached. Many libraries already have gone digital and the service has been immensely popular.

Those of you who still prefer the traditional paper book plates will still be able to select it for some time. We hope all of you will enjoy this great new service. 📖

RDA: Not Your Grandmother's Card Catalog Anymore

by Claudia Bissett, Head of Cataloging

What could be simpler than an old-fashioned library catalog card? We all learned about them in elementary school. There were 3 types: author, title, and subject. The basic card was the author card with the author's name at the top (last name first, of course). Title cards had the title typed (by hand) at the top, as did the subject card. The rest of the card told you who published it and when, and how many pages it had. That was it. Even though the publisher's name was on the card, there was no way of finding a book that way because no one wanted to type an extra card with the publisher's name on the top, and no one wanted to file all of the extra cards! There were almost never more than three subject cards for the same reason.

Then, in the 1970s, we began to have library catalogs on computers. Suddenly no one cared how many subject headings there were because there were no cards to file. And yes, if you wanted to find a book by its publisher, you could use something new called a keyword search. But when you looked at the catalog record on the computer screen, it still looked very much like a catalog card, if somewhat rearranged. This is because library catalogers have been continuing to use the same standard for

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A Major Donation for Geisel Library: The ACA - Lambert Franco-American Collection

By Elizabeth Holmes, Collection and User Services Librarian

Spring 2009 brought the significant donation of the ACA/Lambert Franco-American Collection to Geisel Library. The ACA (Association Canado-Américaine) was a Franco-American fraternal benefits organization established in Manchester in 1896 with the mission of promoting the union of persons of French Catholic ancestry in North America, and the preservation of the French language and culture.

In carrying out their mission the ACA developed a library of over 8,000 titles, including many unique items chronicling Franco-American culture over the last century. Most of the material is in French, although there are many works in English as well. Changes in the financial status of the Association prompted a consortium of interested individuals to purchase the library. The consortium subsequently donated it to Geisel Library to be maintained as a special collection. We are most grateful for this very significant gift.



Robert Perreault, native speaker at the college and for many years the librarian for the ACA collection, has been working with Betsy Holmes to select approximately 3,000 titles that will be the core of the ACA/Lambert Franco-American Collection. Bob was unique in his ability to select titles for the collection, being not only extremely knowledgeable of the collection, but also as a noted expert in Franco-American history and culture.

Bob wrote recently* that in the 1927 memoir *Journal d'un bibliophile*, Québécois immigrant Adélarde Lambert (the collection's founder) recalled its pre-ACA history. In 1899, as a door-to-door salesman for the E. M. Chase Tea Company in Manchester, Lambert witnessed one of his French-speaking clients about to toss a book into the flames of her kitchen stove. Sacrificing two dollars for the sake of his cultural heritage, Lambert rescued the book along with another 168 volumes of "Canadiana" for which the woman had no use. Thus began Lambert's avocation as one of Franco-American New England's best-known collectors of unwanted French and French-related books from customers on his route.

The collection as it was given to Geisel Library spans work from Honoré Beaugrand's *Jeanne la fileuse* (Joan the Spinner), the first novel written by a Québécois immigrant in New England (1878), through Biddeford writer Normond Beaupré's book of Maine legends, *Lumineau* (2002). As we continue to sift through the collection many titles cause excitement, including former Manchester mayor Josaphat T. Benoit's two doctoral dissertations, *Rois ou esclaves de la machine?* (Kings or Slaves of the Machine?) from the Université de Montréal and *L'Âme franco-américaine* (The Franco-American Soul) from the Sorbonne; a memoir entitled simply *81490*, the concentration camp inmate number of Albert Chambon, a French Catholic survivor of Buchenwald, who eventually served as Consul General of

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The Studio of Christian Art at Saint Anselm College

By Keith Chevalier, College Archivist

“If there are artisans in the monastery, they are to practice their craft with all humility...”

–Rule of St. Benedict (RB 57.1)

The history of art at Saint Anselm College begins with Fr. Bonaventure Ostendarp, OSB. Fr. Bonaventure (1856–1912) was born Francis Ostendarp in Cincinnati, Ohio. He was admitted to Saint Vincent Archabbey (Pennsylvania), studied theology, was ordained in 1880, and in 1881 began coursework at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. At the completion of his studies, he traveled to Florence and Rome for further study. During his time in Germany, he was exposed to the Beuronese School of Art that was developing at the Benedictine Abbey at Beuron. This short-lived style of Christian art emphasized simplicity and clarity of forms through the use of geometric designs, a basic color palate, and plain backgrounds. Fr. Bonaventure would come to develop his own interpretation of this style, stating that the principles and ideals of the college’s Studio of Christian Art were united with those of the Beuron artists in order to “try to stem the tide of worldly and unchristian paintings entering the house of God.” This philosophy would characterize the output of the Studio for decades to come.

In 1885, Fr. Bonaventure transferred his vows to Saint Mary’s Abbey (Newark, New Jersey). In late 1893 he was summoned to Saint Anselm College to set up an art studio at the recently opened college and to teach painting. He also continued to seek commissions from churches across the country, an activity Fr. Bonaventure began while at Saint Mary’s Abbey.

When Fr. Bonaventure arrived at Saint Anselm College, he established his studio on the fourth floor of the Administration Building (now called Alumni Hall). Abbot Hilary Pfraengle, OSB, asked that Fr. Bonaventure be provided with a studio space at the college with ‘light from the north’ (ideal for painting). Proving to be too small of a space to work, his studio was moved in 1895 to the newly constructed Art Studio building (now called Raphael Hall). This move allowed Fr. Bonaventure to paint and live on the second floor while supervising the Benedictine brothers studying at the college on the first floor.

The Studio of Christian Art was important to the college as both a place of instructing students in art and as a way to generate income for the new college. Because the college faced a variety of financial crises in its early years (irregular enrollments and the depression of the 1890s), the income from the Studio’s commissions contributed to the well-being of the college. Commissions for artwork came from churches located in a number of states, including New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Minnesota. These commissions were executed in the Studio, shipped from the college to the church, and installed under the supervision of either Fr. Bonaventure or his successor Fr. Raphael Pfisterer, OSB.

Sebastian Pfisterer (1877–1942) was born in Loibersdorf, Bavaria. He came to America in 1891 and was a member of the first class at Saint Anselm College. While a student at the college, he developed an interest in art and was instructed by Fr. Bonaventure. He continued his art training in Europe and then attended the Arts Students League of New York. There he studied under the famous muralist Kenyon Cox (whose murals are in the Library of Congress and a few Midwestern state capitol buildings). After he completed his studies, Sebastian professed vows as Fr. Raphael, was ordained, and eventually became Fr. Bonaventure’s assistant in the Studio.

Fr. Bonaventure and Fr. Raphael collaborated on a number of commissions, including the murals for St. Mary’s Church (McKeesport, Pennsylvania) and Sacred Heart Church (Wilmington, Delaware). The murals for St. Mary’s Church (1908–1910) were the largest commission for the Studio. In 1996, Our Lady of Fatima Church in Collier, Pennsylvania, purchased some of the murals when St. Mary’s Church was closed and torn down. Because Fr. Bonaventure and Fr. Raphael promoted painting murals on stretched canvas and framing them inside church walls instead of directly on the walls, saving these murals from destruction was a relatively easy task.

After Fr. Bonaventure’s death in 1912, Fr. Raphael assumed leadership of the Studio. In addition to running the Studio, he was a professor at the college and pastor of St. Raphael’s Church in Manchester. Though still receiving commissions, Fr. Raphael worked to promote art education and appreciation. On the local level, he organized public viewings at the college where student artwork was showcased alongside his own commissioned paintings and works from prominent local artists. On the national level, Fr. Raphael established the Catholic Federation of the Arts in 1921 whose aim was “to bring together for discussion, consultation and cooperation Catholic artists and lovers of Catholic art, [and] to diffuse and foster knowledge and appreciation for Catholic art.” He also donated cartoons for the early fundraising efforts of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

Fr. Raphael’s largest commission is a series of murals for St. Francis Xavier Church in Buffalo, New York, which he completed between 1919 and 1921. After its closing in 2007, the Buffalo Religious Arts Center purchased the former church to house and display religious artwork from city churches and to give tours of the building. The church complex has been recently added to the National Register of Historic Places, assuring the preservation of Fr. Raphael’s work for future generations.


For almost fifty years, the Studio was a productive department at Saint Anselm College. The last large-scale work of the Studio was the completion of the mural decorations in the College Chapel (now the Alva deMars Megan Chapel Art Center). With Fr. Raphael’s death in 1942, the Studio ceased to exist. The Studio’s legacy continues to be felt by successive generations of Anselmians as they learn and live within the halls and rooms of Alumni Hall adorned with murals and paintings by Fr. Bonaventure and Fr. Raphael.

A recent research project into the Studio’s creative output has uncovered more information about the commissioned artwork. Using a variety of resources - archival records (accounts ledgers, correspondence, etc.), newspaper articles, and the Internet - it is easier today to locate Fr. Bonaventure and Fr. Raphael’s paintings and murals. Many churches that have been contacted thus far have expressed an interest in learning more about

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the artists who humbly signed their paintings as either P. Bonaventura OSB, or P. Raphael OSB.

An exhibit on current display in the Geisel Library outlines the functions of the college's former Studio of Christian Art. The exhibit contains a mixture of primary and secondary sources highlighting the artwork of both Fr. Bonaventure and Fr. Raphael. It will remain in the library foyer until December. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the Studio of Christian Art, feel free to contact the College Archives at (603) 656-6197 or kchevalier@anselm.edu. 

¹Rule of Saint Benedict 1980. Edited by Timothy Fry. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1981. 265.

²Fr. Bonaventure Ostendarp, OSB, and Fr. Raphael Pfisterer, OSB. "Preface." Christian Art. St. Anselm's College: Studio of Christian Art, [1910].


³Catholic Federation of Arts Charter Membership Form. 1921. Saint Anselm College Archives collection.



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France in Boston; and a book of special importance to the Anselmian community, *Just Off the Aisle: Ramblings of a Catholic Critic* by Nashua-born St. Anselm alumnus Richard A. Duprey.

Of great importance to the donors was to make this material accessible to the community as well as researchers the world over. Even though only a portion of the collection has been cataloged, the library has already received requests from libraries at Iowa State University and Southwestern University in Texas. While 'googling', a researcher from Sussex, England located ACA materials at Geisel Library. The resource she was seeking is held by only three libraries world-wide, and she was thrilled that we would ship the needed volumes to her library. She hopes to include information gathered from this resource in three novels she is planning... perhaps future additions to the ACA/Lambert Franco-American collection!

The collection will be cataloged through the rest of this academic year, and we hope to move it to a new special collection room (the current listening room on the lower level) next summer. Stay tuned for updates and special programming to celebrate this wonderful new donation. 


*Robert Perreault wrote *Revisiting Old Friends in Their New Home: Perusing the Geisel Library's ACA/Lambert Franco-American Collection* (September, 2009) for use by the Saint Anselm College Public Relations office. Look for a future issue of *Portraits*, where Bob's history with the collection will be more fully told.

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cataloging. The standard is called the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, and we are using the second edition, commonly referred to as AACR2. As its name implies, it was created and adopted for use by English-speaking countries.

Over the years an increasing number of librarians began complaining about the inflexibility of using AACR2, which was primarily developed for printed library materials and didn't take into account that the same "book" could be on a compact disc or available electronically through the Internet. There was no easy way to show relationships between publications, such as earlier or later editions, title changes, adaptations, etc. In the meantime, publishers and other industries dealing with information developed other incompatible standards that included the same or similar information. We needed a new standard that everyone could use, whether the audience was a library patron, a bookstore, or someone surfing the 'Net. The new standard would also be international, not solely English.

The new standard is called RDA, or Resource Description and Access. It will be published before the end of this year, and it will only be available electronically. It has been developed by an international alphabet soup of organizations with input from librarians, publishers, archivists, and other information professionals. RDA uses the principles of the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Resources (FRBR), which allow for the grouping of different "manifestations" of the same work so that the patron can clearly see what a library has instead of needing to scroll through a listing of different editions of the same title. For an example, take a look at the web page for a prototype catalog called Fiction Finder: <http://fictionfinder.oclc.org/>. A search for *Moby Dick* shows that there are 823 different editions in 40 different languages. The basic information about the book follows: summary, genre, characters, settings, subjects, and audience. Only when you scroll down the page do you see the information that is unique to each edition. This will save catalogers considerable time, because we won't need to recreate the basic information about the book each time we catalog a new edition. And for users, the listings and improved displays will also clearly group together related works and provide links between them.

At this time, our own online-catalog provider, a world leader in library software, is hard at work developing enhancements around these new RDA features. Thus, you can look forward to the next generation of library catalog improvements during the fast approaching 2010! 

Evaluating Websites

While the world of the web has its place in the world of academia, one must use caution before accepting freely posted (unpublished) information as reliable or appropriate to scholarship. Determining reliability requires practice and critical thinking. The library website has a short informational page that includes some quick questions that you should ask yourself before accepting or rejecting a website for its scholarly value. Sometimes answering these questions is a straightforward process. Other times, you may need to do some 'digging'. Check out the webpage at <http://www.anselm.edu/library/evalweb.html>. Please feel free to call the Reference Desk at 603-641-7306 or send an email to askreference@anselm.edu if you would like assistance in evaluating a website. 