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CONNECTIONS



DIGITAL IMAGES:

The Library's Newest Collection

by John Schlinke

Twenty years ago at RWU a collection of art and architecture slides was started as part of the University's Architecture Library. The collection has grown over time and now numbers approximately 100,000 slides. At about the same time the RWU slide collection was begun, the first academic collections of digital art and architecture images were also beginning. Owing to the large financial resources then necessary to create a digital image collection from scratch, early collections were limited to major research institutions. The intervening years, however, have seen the creation of numerous solutions for digital collections along with steep reductions in associated costs. As a result, the RWU Library is now launching its own digital image collection.

The heart of RWU's collection is open-access software called MDID which stands for Madison Digital Image Database. The software was developed at James Madison University and first made available in 2001. Working in conjunction with SQL, the MDID software is able to store and retrieve the images and cataloging data that are part of the collection. Three sizes of images (thumbnail, postcard, and full-size) are available for each item in the collection. At present, over 1,800 images have been cataloged into the collection and this number will grow over time.

Using the presentation software that is part of MDID, faculty members can project the images in their classes, or they can download the images into another presentation tool such as PowerPoint. Using MDID, they can also make groups of postcard size images available to students via the web for review before examinations. The review images can include the cataloging data, such as creator name, work name, dates, location, etc.

To supplement RWU's homegrown digital image collection, the University also plans to subscribe to the ARTstor digital image collection. ARTstor is a non-profit organization initially funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The charter image collection created by the organization was first made available in July 2004. The collection, also known as ARTstor, currently contains approximately 300,000 images. This charter collection is scheduled to grow to 500,000 images by June 2006.

ARTstor will allow users to search the collection, select images, and create a presentation with those images, either within ARTstor itself or



using a separate software program called the Offline Image Viewer (OIV). Like MDID, ARTstor images are available in three sizes (thumbnail, postcard, and full-size). ARTstor also contains some QuickTime VR files that allow a user to see an object from multiple vantage points. Both the ARTstor viewer and the OIV have the ability to zoom or pan on an image. The images contained in ARTstor are typically licensed from the repositories that hold the original works. ARTstor has negotiated agreements with numerous museums, libraries, and archives to make images available in the collection.

Alongside ARTstor, RWU will continue to subscribe to Grove's Dictionary of Art which includes access to a collection of 90,000 images of art and architecture and a searchable portal site that links to digital images available through museum websites around the world. Training for faculty members interested in using these collections will begin this summer.

Three people have played key roles in beginning RWU's digital image collections. Betsy Peck Learned, former Architecture Librarian and now Associate Dean of University Library Services, was responsible for constantly assessing the state of digital image technology and deciding when to initiate the homegrown collection at RWU. Tim Kindle, Data Systems Administrator, set up the computer server and software that hosts the collection, and has responsibility for maintaining that technology. And Marci Hahn, Assistant Curator of Visual Resources, created the MDID cataloging fields, and worked through the often frustrating task of getting MDID to import images and cataloging data correctly. When you see them, please tell them thank you for their vision and persistence in bringing digital image collections to RWU.



LIBRARY NEASC UPDATE

By Betsy Peck Learned

As the University prepares to undergo regional accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), many faculty and administrators on campus have been appointed to lead the work associated with specific standards. Betsy Peck Learned, Associate Dean of Libraries and June Speakman, Wilf Professor of Political Science, have been appointed co-chairs for Standard Seven: Library and Other Information Resources and their work is well underway. With the recently approved revision of the NEASC Standards for Accreditation, Standard Seven has been largely rewritten to address information technology resources and services in conjunction with library resources and services. This is a departure from previous accreditation requirements and will require some careful collaboration between the Library and Information Technology.

The Library and Information Resources Committee has been divided into two work groups—library and information technology—to collect data and address questions related to the specific sub-standards. The

library group, chaired by Betsy, includes Will Ayton, Susan McMullen, and Brett McKenzie. The I.T. group, chaired by June, includes Bonnie Hatch, Joe Pangborn, and Madge Thombs. The groups are busily collecting evidence in support of the standard such as strategic plans, budgets, annual reports, faculty and staff CVs, instruction and training data, etc. Simultaneously the groups are working to prepare an outline of the most important issues related to the standard for the June planning meeting with the President.

Focus groups will be held in the fall with students, faculty, and staff to address issues that were identified through the library's LibQual survey of user satisfaction completed last Spring. Methods of assessment of faculty and students' information technology needs will be determined within the next academic year. Anyone wishing to participate in library focus groups should contact Betsy (elearned@rwu.edu) or June (jspeakman@rwu.edu).



THE MARY TEFFT WHITE CULTURAL CENTER

By Betsy Peck Learned

As the academic year comes to a close, we'd like to note the great success of the first year of programming in the library's Mary Tefft White Cultural Center. This active space, located on the east side of the Main Library's first floor, was made possible by a generous donation from Mary Tefft "Happy" White, class of 1976 and an RWU honorary degree recipient in 2002. Dedicated on September 16, 2004, the Center featured a wide variety of academic lectures and

discussion groups including eight Socrates Café sessions, the Foreign Policy Association's Great Decisions discussion series sponsored by the Friends of the Library, the Academic Showcase featuring senior honors research, and the UN Pathways video conferences.

In the words of Mrs. White, "The Center serves as the University's primary gathering place for students, faculty, and the community to



interact with visiting scholars and chosen local, national, and international leaders for the meaningful exchange of thoughts and ideas.”

Among the many diverse programs this year the most widely attended were those in the Mary Tefft White Program

Series which featured Oskar Eustis, former Artistic Director of Trinity Repertory Theater and the new Director of the American Repertory Theater in New York; David Macaulay, award-winning author and illustrator of books such as *Cathedral*, *Mill*, and *The Way Things Work*; and Robert Ballard, URI Oceanographer and discoverer of the remains of the Titanic.

The final program this academic year featured a reception sponsored by the Friends of the Library for the statewide program “Reading Across Rhode Island” preceding a public appearance by Khaled Hosseini, author of the highly acclaimed *The Kite Runner*. Please join us again in the fall for the second year of exciting and enlightening events in the library’s Mary Tefft White Cultural Center.



Mrs. Mary Tefft White greets Robert Ballard

Roger Williams University

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

2004 - 2005 ACTIVITIES

By Elizabeth Arnold

The membership of the Friends of the Library is made up of congenial bibliophiles and library supporters; the Steering Committee has been guided by this fact to arrange programs and field trips to appeal to their interests. A pattern has been established of presenting two programs at the University in the Fall and the Spring, and arranging field trips of interest in the Winter and Summer.

This Spring we have introduced and sponsored a Great Decisions Discussion Group using materials prepared by the Foreign Policy Association. The FPA, based in New York City, is an independent nonprofit association dedicated to encouraging study and discussion on solutions to the world’s greatest challenges affecting the United States.

For this year’s programs, we have had as speakers; authors, publishers, faculty members, book collectors, and sellers. In the Spring of 2004, Ambassador Chas. W. Freeman, Jr. spoke to a full house on “What’s to Come in the Arab Gulf”. After the September dedication of the Mary Tefft White Cultural Center, we opened there in October with Stephan Brigidi presenting “On Being a Citizen of the Planet”. For this season’s finale, we welcome Sarina Wyant, President of the Rhode Island Center for the Book, and Peter V. Deekle, Dean of University Library Services, speaking on “Reading Across Rhode Island.”

Field trips have taken us to libraries within a radius of an hour and a half travel time from Bristol. We have visited ten of the fourteen Special Collections in Rhode Island and reached into Massachusetts to visit the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, the Kennedy and Public Libraries in Boston and the Kendall Library at the New Bedford Whaling Museum. The staffs of these libraries have done an outstanding job of arranging really special material for us to see “up close and personal”. The Summer field trip took us to the historic RISD Library where Carol Terry, the Director, presented the extensive array of materials there for the students as well as some precious historic documents. As a special treat, we were shown the plans for their new Library. The Winter trip this year was to the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology for an in depth presentation of their history, programs, publications, and exhibits and a look at some very special artifacts in the vaults.

Plans are underway for next season. In the works for the July field trip are arrangements for a trip to the Mashantucket – Pequot Museum and Research Center. Starting in September, we look forward to co-sponsoring with the RWU Department of Arts and Letters certain public receptions for authors and their books during a 4 to 5pm “Meet the Author” for the RWU students in the M. T. White Center.

The Friends will continue to encourage donations to the Library “Endowed Book Fund”. The programs are open to the public, but only members of the Friends of the Library are invited to go on the field trips. We cordially encourage all book and library enthusiasts to take advantage of this opportunity to join us as we look forward to the next season with excitement. Membership information will be on hand at each of our events.



INVESTIGATING DIGITAL REPOSITORIES

By Peter Deekle

Although the University is a treasure house of scientific, technological, cultural, artistic, and historical material, these resources are generally inaccessible to searchers and the public. Furthermore, there is increasing awareness that universities and research institutions are losing valuable digital and print materials. Like a growing number of academic libraries across the nation, the University Library is investigating its emerging role as the host of an institutional repository. The creation of institutional repositories is addressing the changes in scholarly communication that remove barriers to access. In collaboration with librarians from other academic libraries we are studying models and preparing for a future of digital repositories. This future will enhance librarians' roles as experts in collecting, describing, preserving, and providing stewardship for

documents and digital information. Digital repositories provide services to faculty, researchers, and administrators who want to archive research, historic, and creative materials. We look forward to sharing information with our readers about this project in the coming months.

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