Celebrating 35 Years of Ganser Library
By Barbara Hunsberger

The Friends of Ganser Library has sponsored a new exhibit located in the lobby of Ganser Library. This two-part exhibit illustrates the history of librarianship at Millersville while including interesting tidbits from the rich heritage of the University. The first part of the exhibit, titled MU Library: Reflections of Our Past, begins with the founding of the school in 1855 and continues through 1966. The second part of the exhibit begins in 1967 and celebrates the 35th anniversary of the move from the old library to Ganser Library in September 1967. This part of the exhibit, which begins in 1967 and continues until the present, is titled, Ganser Library – A Celebration of 35 Years.

The exhibit includes photographs and artifacts from the University Archives housed on the fourth floor of the library. A major component of the exhibit is a timeline showing both university and library events since 1855 alongside major national and world events, which place the institution and the library in a broader context. The many photographs and artifacts provide a picture of the institution's progress from a provincial and rural teachers institute to a state normal school and to the current university that is rated as one of top 10 public universities offering masters degrees in the North.

The University Archives is a fascinating repository of information, photographs and artifacts from the almost 150 years of University history. We uncovered a number of wonderful and surprising tidbits of information about the University, the library and the individuals who have graced the halls of this institution. Did you know that Millersville originally had three separate libraries? There was the college library, which had a small collection of reference books and other materials. However the main collections were the libraries funded and controlled by the two competing literary societies, Page and Normal. If you were a member of the Page Literary Society, you could not take out books from the Normal Literary Society unless you had a member do it for you, and vice versa. You were also prohibited from checking out books if you had not paid your membership dues to your respective literary society. There was such a competition for members that the leadership of the societies met the trains in Lancaster to recruit the freshman as they were arriving for their first semester. The two society libraries continued well into the 20th century.

A major force for libraries on Millersville's campus occurred with the arrival of Miss

Classes Use Archives & Special Collections for Research

During fall semester, 95 students from four sections of English 110 and from Anthropology 233 used resources from Ganser Library's Archives and Special Collections for their research.

Dr. Patricia Gibble's Historic Anthropology class investigated the differences between primary and secondary resources on topics relating to Pennsylvania history. Students were introduced to resources that focused on the history of the brewing/distilling, coal, transportation, education, and hotel/tourism in Pennsylvania. Of particular interest was the Solomon Helser Daybook (MS 118) which contains the business records of Solomon Helser, a lumber mill operator, distiller and farmer, who lived with his family on the border between Washington County, MD, and Franklin County, PA from the 1840s until the beginning of the 20th century. Helser's business records record the daily sales of whiskey, the amount of liquor purchased, the amount paid, and by whom. Students also enjoyed seeing the receipts of Abraham Peters (MS 70), a distiller and tavern owner in Millersville from the 1780s to 1818.

Prof. Sally Woodward-Miller asked her
Helen A. Ganser as the head librarian in 1911. She was a 19-year-old graduate with a certificate in librarianship from what is now Drexel University. Her salary was $500 a year plus room and board. Miss Ganser lived in quarters in the women’s dormitory part of Old Main until her retirement in 1952. When Miss Ganser came to Millersville there was no electricity in the library building, so the library had to close around 4:00 pm in winter due to the lack of lighting. Electricity was not supplied to the library until the early 1920s and there were no bathrooms in the building until after Miss Ganser’s retirement.

Interesting tidbits of modern University history are also included in the exhibit. With the opening of Ganser Library in the fall of 1967, it was necessary to move the library collection of almost 100,000 volumes from the old library. Much to the dismay of the administration and librarians, the bids for this move came back as too expensive. Concern was also raised as to the length of time the move would take as projected by the moving companies. Therefore the librarians, under the leadership of Isabel Huston devised the plan for a book walk. The administration agreed to cancel classes and the students, faculty and administration were engaged as volunteers to move this library collection. On September 21, 1967 the entire book collection was moved from the old library to the new in approximately 4 hours. Each volunteer carried a stack of books about 12 inches high, which had a color-coded moving tag, attached. The color of the tag indicated on which floor of Ganser Library housed that part of the collection. Librarians and staff were situated throughout both buildings to provide guidance and assistance to the volunteers.

You will find additional interesting anecdotes illustrated in this exhibit celebrating the history and librarianship of Millersville University. The exhibit will be on display in the main lobby of Ganser Library throughout the 2002-2003 academic year and is available for viewing whenever the library is open. Library hours are posted on the library’s web site at [www.library.millersville.edu](http://www.library.millersville.edu), or by calling 717-872-3665.

English 110 students to select a personal experience and connect their own family history to events and experiences in a broader historical context. Students were to write about experiences in contemporary American life and to find parallels with events during and after the Civil War. Students pursued topics such as the history of the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, history of contraception, theater during the Civil War, the underground railroad, music in the Civil War, and Jewish women in the 19th century using the resources of Archives & Special Collections as well as digital archives available through the Library of Congress and other research libraries across the country. Connecting personal interest with events and people of historical significance offered the opportunity for students to explore writing in new ways. Especially important to these classes were groups of people who have been overlooked in standard approaches to history.

Dr. Carla Rineer’s two honors sections of English 110 examined differences between secondary and primary local history source materials. Students were fascinated by the diaries of Maggie Cameron (MS 157), daughter of Simon Cameron, who chronicled both her travels to Great Britain and Europe in 1857, and her trip to Russia in 1862 when her father was appointed ambassador. Students were surprised to find signatures of early faculty and administrators such as Lyte and Wickersham in the autograph books of Millersville Normal School students (RG 6-D). These books contain other items of interest such as poems, drawings and locks of hair. The Wickersham collection was of interest to education students who reviewed how teachers in training were taught subjects such as geography, language, history, and medical science during the mid 19th century. Dr. Rineer’s classes were lively and engaged in animated discussions about the materials. One section needed to schedule an additional session to cover the digital archives, because students were so interested in the Archives & Special Collections materials.
Spring 2003
Bus Trip
The Friends of Ganser library will sponsor a special one-day bus trip to New Castle, Delaware, on Saturday, March 15, 2003. We will be leaving from Millersville University campus (Pike House lot) at 7:30 am and will return by 5:30 pm. This tour of colonial New Castle begins with a welcome reception and tour of the Read House, a Federal-style mansion built in 1801 by the son of a signer of the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution. A short guided walking tour of Old New Castle will feature the New Castle Court Museum, built in 1732 to serve as the first Capitol of Delaware, and home of the colonial and First State Assembly. Discover New Castle’s colonial history and its role in the Underground Railroad. Take the afternoon to eat lunch on your own and explore shops and historic buildings. The Dutch House, initially built in the late 17th century, displays the furnishings of early Dutch colonists. The Amstel House, built by Dr. John Finney, demonstrates the refinements of early colonial life.

The cost for the trip is $50.00/person and includes the welcome reception and admission/tour of the Read House, the guided walking tour of Old New Castle, Courthouse Museum, escort, driver gratuity and round trip motor coach transportation. To reserve your seat, make checks payable to Millersville University/Friends of Ganser Library and mail to Catherine (Kitty) Glass, 356 Herr Ave., Millersville, PA 17551. Contact Kitty at 872-7743 for more information.

Letter from the President
This year we celebrate the 35th anniversary of the building of Ganser Library. Please take the time to stop by the library lobby and see the exhibit mounted by Barbara Hunsberger and Marie Zubatsky. It is a chance to see the history of the library as a whole, as well as of the building. We will celebrate the anniversary of the library in April with a number of activities during the week of April 6. The Friends remain very active in supporting the work of the Special Collections area and the Board members deserve special thanks for their work during the book sales and their willingness to serve. As you can see from the newsletter it will be a busy spring for the Friends, with a bus trip, the annual dinner and book sale, as well as the library celebration, your participation and support are greatly appreciated.

Janet L. Dotterer

Annual Book Sale
The Twenty-fifth Annual Book Sale will be held during the week of March 31st 2003 on the first floor lobby of Ganser Library. Donations are welcome and pickup of books can be arranged. We welcome books in all areas and are particularly interested in local history and children’s books. Please contact Leo Shelley at 872-3610 for more information.

Seeking Historic Materials and Memorabilia
In preparation for the 150th anniversary celebration of Millersville’s founding, we are actively collecting historic materials and memorabilia from Millersville’s history. If you have something you would like to donate to Archives & Special Collections, please contact Marilyn Parrish at (717) 872-3624 or marilyn.parrish@millersville.edu.
Recent Additions

With the support of the Friends of Ganser Library, the Special Collections Department has acquired a number of unique manuscripts, rare books and publications on local and cultural history. The highlights of these acquisitions are listed below.

Manuscript Collection

- Account books of John Bachman Lumber Accounts and Mill Laborers Time Book
  John Bachman was the owner (with Isaac Pusey) of a lumber mill in Columbia, PA. These account books cover the years 1870-1880 and add to the Bachman papers already in the collection (MS 170), which document the Bachman & Pusey lumber business before and during the Civil War.

- Robert Scott Account Book
  Robert Scott was a farmer at Oak Hill, Little Britain Township, Lancaster County, Pa.
  The account book includes record of income and expenditures in the operation of a farm during the years 1865-1870. Ledger records include payments to laborers in cash and in kind, as well as funds expended for the purchase of lime, and income received in payment for farm produce.

Rare Book Collection

- Elflora of the Susquehanna: a poem, by Caleb Harlan.
  Printed for the author by J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1879. An eighteen page poem highlights the scenes and characters of the author’s childhood home near the Susquehanna.

- Fearful adventures in Pennsylvania’s wilds; or The startling narrative of Adelaide Lane. Barclay & Co., 1857.

Pennsylvania Regimental Histories

- Attack and defense of Little Round Top, Gettysburg, July 2, 1863, by Oliver Willcox, Norton
  Neale Publishing Co., 1913.

- First City Zouaves and City Grays: history of Harrisburg’s leading military organization, 1861-1913: series of sketches covering fifty-two years of service in peace and war, compiled by Lieut. Charles P. Meck.
  Telegraph Print, 1914.

- History of Company K of the 140th Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers (1862-65), by B.F. Powelson, under the direction of Aleck Sweeney and with the co-operation of others of the company, Carnahan Print. Co., 1906.

- History of the Eighty-third regiment Pennsylvania volunteers, by A. M. Judson. B. F. H. Lynn, [1865]

- History of the Fifty-seventh Regiment Pennsylvania Infantry. 57th Regiment, Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteer Infantry, First Brigade, First Division, Third Corps, and Second Brigade, Third Division, Second Corps, Army of the Potomac, 1861-1865, compiled by James M. Martin ... [et al.]. McCoy & Calvin, printer, [19—?]


- Kilpatrick and our Cavalry: comprising a sketch of the life of General Kilpatrick: with an account of the cavalry raids, engagements, and operations under his command, from the beginning of the rebellion to the surrender of Johnston by James Moore. W.J. Widdleton, 1865.

Local and Cultural History Collection


Just over the line: Chester County and the underground railroad, by William C. Kashatus. Chester County Historical Society; Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002.


History of a cavalry company: a complete record of Company “A,” 4th Penn’a Cavalry, as identified with that regiment, and with the Second Brigade, Second Division, Cavalry Corps, in all the campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, during the late Civil War, by William Hyndman. Longstreet House, 1997.

History of the One Hundred and Fifty-third Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers Infantry: which was recruited in Northampton County, Pa., 1862-1863, written by W.R. Kiefer; assisted by Newton H. Mack. Butternut and Blue, 1996.


Right flank at Gettysburg: an account of the operations of General Gregg’s cavalry command, showing their important bearing upon the results of the battle, by William Brooke-Rawle. Olde Soldier Books, [198-].


Planned Giving Opportunities
Consider including Millersville University in your estate planning. For more information on planned giving opportunities, including Ganser Library, Friends of the Library, or student scholarships, contact the Millersville University Development Office at (717) 872-3820.

Becoming a Friend
People become Friends of Ganser Library when they make a donation to Millersville University and request mailings from the Friends. Encourage your friends to become Friends of the Library through their support of Millersville University. For more information, contact the Millersville University Development Office at (717) 872-3820.