HISTORY OF LIBRARIES AT MILLERSVILLE, 1857 TO 2007

Exhibit prepared by Janet Dotterer, Archives & Special Collections, in celebration of the 40th anniversary of Ganser Library and 150 years of libraries at Millersville
Over the years the library has moved because of its continual growth and it has served as a center of support of academic learning. As we celebrate this growth of the academic library it is well to look back at its foundation.
The original libraries actually were founded by the schools two literary societies: Page and Normal. In 1857 both societies recognized the need for the students to have access to library materials and after much discussion the members of each society agreed to donate books for the foundation of the libraries. The trustees of the school gave early support to their effort and their libraries were established.
Originally the library was located in the central building of Old Main
We are fortunate enough to own some of the books that were in the Page and Normal Literary Societies libraries. Some examples are: *Poems of the Orient* by Bayard Taylor, added to the Normal Literary Society Library August 28, 1857; *Principles of Geology* and *A Manual of Elementary Geology* both by Charles Lyle and both donated to the Page Literary Society Library by R.T. Cornwell on June 1st 1857.
Poems of the Orient

Bookplate and flyleaf from book
Principles of Geology

Presented to the Page Literary Society by R.T. Cornwell. June 1st 1857
Manual of Elementary Geology

Presented to the Page Literary Society by R.T. Cornwell. June 1st 1857
Growth of the Normal School in the late 1800s led to the erection of new buildings since Old Main was being stretched beyond capacity. One of the buildings erected was a new Library and with the erection of the new building, the hiring of the first professional librarian on campus, Miss McCrory. The library building was opened for usage in 1895.
In 1890 the Library building now known as Biemesderfer Executive Center was begun
1940s
By Spring 1961 the chapel in Old Main was being used as a Library annex and it had become quite apparent that a new building was needed.
Library under Construction
Ganser Library was completed in 1967 to accommodate the growing needs of the campus.
For the last 40 years in the Helen A. Ganser Library
In September 1967 a “Bookwalk” was arranged to move approximately 90,000 books from the “Old” Library building to the Helen A. Ganser Library. Classes were cancelled for September 21 and students, faculty, administration and alumni helped move books.
LAST WEEK’S bookwalk emphasized the MSC spirit as shown by pictures above and at the right. The bookwalk included not only books but necessary equipment needed for the new library. Members of the MSC football team also showed up to assist with the move.

(Staff Photos)
Book Walk Remembered

Book Walk

Returning books to the library seems to be on everyone's "to-do list." But September 1962 holds the ultimate record for the number of books returned. That was the day that everyone—students, faculty, staff, and townspeople—literally lent a hand in carrying books from the Old Library, now known as Remodeler Center, to the new facility named after Helen A. Gunner, who served as Millersville's librarian from 1911 to 1952.

September 19, 1962, was the day of Millersville's Book Walk. Classes were cancelled for the day while hundreds of volunteers carried books, pre-coded for their destination, to the new facility. Once the books were moved, the procedure was repeated to move the furniture in the same fashion. Remarkably, the library opened for business at 6 p.m.

In all, approximately 15,000 books were moved that day. The periodicals had been moved by the freshmen and members of the football team during orientation week. Roy F. Edman, "I vividly remember participating in the sidewalk procession on that sunny September day, a stack of heavy books in his arm. Surrounded by his new classmates, they spent hours out and getting to know each other while maintaining books from the old library to the new. He looks back now and is proud to have been a part of this, now historic, accomplishment.

Although the library actually opened in September 1962, it was officially dedicated in May 1968, and is celebrating the 35th anniversary with a special display in the lobby of the library. In addition, a Library Science Reunion will be held during Alumni Weekend (see page 35).

Over the past 35 years, Gunner has changed with the times. In spring 1991, computer terminals replaced the card catalog. And, today, Gunner Library holds over half a million books, thousands of periodicals, and other educational and reference media.
Refreshments were served on the porch of Old Main North, it would not be completely demolished until 1973, and the MSC band played to start to move.
The official dedication of the Helen A. Ganser Library took place on Saturday, May 4, 1968. Ms. Ganser cut the ceremonial ribbon with numerous dignitaries on hand.
Ganser Library Dedicated During Ceremonies Saturday

Ganser Library was dedicated at 3:15 on Saturday afternoon in ribbon-cutting ceremonies performed by Helen A. Ganser, for whom the library was named.

Dedication ceremonies were prepared nearly nine months, pending the completion of the upper floor interior of the structure.

Shortly after 3 p.m., a double-file procession of some 80 of Millersville’s alumni, faculty members, library staff members, representatives of other colleges and various dignitaries lined up to present speeches.

Dr. Robert A. Christie, president, welcomed the procession and attendees at Kyle Auditorium.

During the ceremonies Dr. Christie introduced several personnel who had been instrumental in making the day possible.

Among those cited were State Senator Richard A. Snyder, state Representative Sherman Schloss and the library’s architect Bernard Rumey.

The proceedings continued with a speech praising Miss Ganser’s contributions to the field of education.

In response, Miss Ganser said, “My appreciation of the great honor of this day for me, of the fine words being said, and of the kindness with which everything is being presented, is indeed profound.”

Miss Ganser, fundamentally modest in her talk by stating that the purpose of a college education is the same today as it was when she went to the college. “The function of a college education is to provide the student with a larger and deeper conception of life.”

Dr. D. L. Bienvenue, Dr. Christie’s predecessor in the presidency of Millersville, followed Miss Ganser in the ceremony.

RIBBON CUTTER—Miss Helen Ganser cuts ribbon officially dedicating new campus library which is named for her. Watching the ceremony are President Robert A. Christie and Superintendent of Public Instruction David Kortman. (Staff Photos)

Other addresses were made by Robert E. Lenker, a representative of the General State Authority; Dr. David Kortman, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Mr. Dan Mahler, vice president of the McGraw-Hill Book Co.

Brenda Behler, president of Student Senate, and Miss Katherine Ann Toth, president of Alpha Beta Alpha, also participated in the ceremony.
Since 1968 the library continues to grow. This growth includes new services being offered including electronic databases, instruction to classes on the many ways to utilize the library and general outreach to the campus and town communities. As we celebrate 40 years at Ganser we also celebrate 150 years of library services to Millersville.
Ganser stacks
The library continues to grow, providing new resources and services, an active instruction program, and outreach to the campus and broader communities.