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University Libraries--University of South Carolina

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UNIVERSITY CELEBRATES OPENING OF THE ERNEST F. HOLLINGS SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY

July 23, 2010, will be remembered in the history of the University as the day a new library building was opened on campus (the first in more than 30 years) and as the day when the country’s vice president came to South Carolina to pay tribute to a native son.

Senator Ernest F. Hollings, for whom the new special collections library is named, received glowing accolades from Vice President Joe Biden and other dignitaries at the noontime ceremony held in Thomas Cooper Library and attended by more than 1,200 friends and supporters of the University Libraries.

Greetings from University President Harris Pastides and Dean of Libraries Tom McNally preceded remarks by U.S. Representative James Clyburn and Biden. Also attending were Senator Lindsey Graham, whom Hollings invited to the stage, former S.C. governor Jim Hodges, Columbia mayor Steve Benjamin, and representatives from the S.C. General Assembly and the USC Board of Trustees.

“I congratulate the University of South Carolina on the brand new Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library,” Biden said. “I’m told you have some pretty incredible volumes, and I was able to see some of them. I saw a first edition of Paradise Lost, the original galleys of Ernest Hemingway’s For Whom the Bell Tolls, and the South Carolina Political Collections, which are some of the finest political archives in the country.”

Biden spoke about Hollings as his mentor and said, “I think he is the most significant national figure to ever come out of this or any state. South Carolina owns his heart. No one cares more about this state than this man.”

In reply, Hollings said, “Mister Vice President, the University of South Carolina is the first and oldest publicly funded university in the United States. Any association with the University is an honor, and to receive this distinction—to almost quote our distinguished vice president—is a big blinking deal.”

In an earlier statement, Hollings said, “Libraries are strong symbols of our democratic society. They are places where any of us can go to read, to learn, to research, to expand our knowledge, and to improve ourselves. This beautiful new facility will promote those noble endeavors, as well as protect and preserve our history, and it has been my distinct honor and privilege to have been associated with its establishment.”

Dean of Libraries Tom McNally, noting that the new Hollings Library will better serve students, researchers, donors of materials, and staff, said, “This is an exciting time in the history of the University Libraries. The Hollings Library pulls together three areas of collections in one working environment that is unsurpassed by any repository in the country. The Hollings Library makes it possible for the rare and valuable treasures from the University’s collections to be accessible for students, researchers, and the public through reading, research, class and meeting rooms, a mini-theater, and large exhibition galleries.”
ABOUT THE HOLLINGS LIBRARY

The Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library is an $18 million state-of-the-art facility that comprises about 50,000 square feet on three levels. Most of the funding for the building came through a $14 million federal appropriation secured by Hollings. The Hollings Library is home to three departments of the University Libraries: The Irvin Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, South Carolina Political Collections, and Digital Collections.

Special features of the Hollings Library include a large reading room and work areas for researchers and other visitors, seminar rooms, a mini theater, exhibit galleries, a secure “treasure” vault, space for meetings or other events, a digitization center, and a room for audiovisual research. The use of high-density compact shelving in the stack areas allows a capacity of about 47,000 linear feet, which will accommodate about 250,000 volumes of books, manuscripts, political papers, folios, maps, and framed items.

The Hollings Library presents a classic modern but contemporary addition to the Cooper Library, to which it is connected via a glass-enclosed walkway. The building took 21 months to complete and was constructed at the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Certification level. The LEED Green Building Rating System is a national standard for developing sustainable buildings.

The Irvin Department of Rare Books and Special Collections includes the original library collection of the South Carolina College and more than 100 distinct collections covering history, literature, and the sciences. The department continues to acquire, preserve, and make available rare and unique materials.

Current and Upcoming Exhibits

IRVIN DEPARTMENT EXHIBITION GALLERY

“Two Centuries of Collecting: An Exhibition for the Opening of Hollings Library”—through December 2010

“Beyond Domesticity: U.S. Women Writers, 1780–1915,” curated by USC faculty members Dr. Cynthia Davis and Dr. Katharine Adams—January–March 2011

“The English Bible: An Exhibition for the 400th Anniversary of the King James Version”—April–June 2011

COLUMBIA MUSEUM OF ART

“Emily Dickinson and Contemporary Fine Printing,” curated by Jeffrey Makala to coincide with the museum’s exhibit “I Heard A Voice: The Art of Lesley Dill,” based on literary texts, particularly the poems of Emily Dickinson—through January 2011

South Carolina Political Collections (SCPC) was established in 1991 to collect, preserve, and encourage research in private papers documenting South Carolinians and their government at the national and state levels in the post–World War II era. Through Digital Collections, the University Libraries endeavor to preserve, encourage the use of, and facilitate access to its collections in order to enhance scholarship and research and promote lifelong learning by the citizens of South Carolina and the public at large.
ERNEST F. HOLLINGS SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY

Ernest F. Hollings is recognized as “one of South Carolina’s most visionary leaders, serving more than five decades in public office.”

GEORGE D. TERRY

The late Dr. George D. Terry was a student at the University of South Carolina before advancing to a series of positions of academic leadership on campus, including vice president and dean of the University Libraries. Many of Terry’s colleagues and friends were initial contributors to a fund in support of a special collections library, which was a dream of his for many years.

THE SMITH READING ROOM

Dorothy Brown Smith, ’51, for whom the main reading room is named, has been a longtime library supporter and participant in library programs. Smith’s family joined her for a ceremony on July 13 unveiling a plaque recognizing her gift toward the new special collections building.

The Smith Reading Room provides appropriate space for students and other researchers to use the rare books and archival materials housed in the Hollings Library. The reading room houses reference materials to support both the rare book and political collections, and its staff is available to assist visitors.
Members of the Irvin family gathered on July 15 to unveil a plaque formally naming the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections for the late Dr. C. Warren Irvin Jr. and Mrs. Josephine B. Irvin, '43.

Dr. Irvin had already donated his Charles Darwin collection before Dr. and Mrs. Irvin committed the first major funding to rehouse the rare books collections. After retiring as a cardiologist, Dr. Irvin regularly participated in University courses and community programs. He envisioned a new special collections library building with space for teaching and outreach events as well as collections and research.

The Irvin Department’s west seminar room recognizes Mr. William L. Richter of New York, who, with the William L. Richter Family Foundation, committed leading support in 2006 that enabled the University to purchase the Robert J. Wickenheiser Collection of John Milton.

The Brittain Gallery, the first major space that visitors encounter when they enter the new building, provides an elegant gathering and orientation space for classes and tour groups, as well as a registration area for attendees at conferences or other special programs.

The Richter Room provides quality teaching space for classes using rare-book materials and makes visitors aware of the Wickenheiser collection through the continuing display of Milton portraits, including the Koblenzer gifts, books, and other items.
**THE ROY-SCOTT ROOM**

The Irvin Department’s conference room was named at the request of the donors, Susan and Frank Shaw of Atlanta, for two USC faculty members, Dr. G. Ross Roy and Dr. Patrick Scott, who share their love for Burns and Scottish literature. The room, displaying selected items from the G. Ross Roy Collection of Robert Burns and Scottish Poetry, was formally dedicated on Nov. 12, following the third W. Ormiston Roy Memorial Lecture, endowed by Dr. Ross Roy.

**THE POPE-BROWN ROOM**

Among the Hollings Library’s major treasures is a series of 18th-century natural history watercolors donated by the late Ethelind Pope Brown, ’26 (Mrs. William Carroll Brown). The Pope-Brown Foundation’s gift to the new library honors Brown’s lifelong interest in natural history, which also continues through a named acquisitions endowment.

Artwork in the Pope-Brown Room, which serves as an administrative office, includes appropriate engravings by American naturalists John James Audubon and Mark Catesby.

**NAMING OPPORTUNITIES**

The Hollings Library still has several attractive and important spaces that are unnamed, ranging in size from the main program room and exhibition galleries to teaching rooms and offices. Naming and sponsorships of the remaining spaces will help ensure the building’s continued service to the University, its students and faculty, as well as scholars from around the world.

To inquire about these opportunities, contact the University Libraries development officer at 803-777-1278.
In its first months, the Hollings Library has already begun to contribute to the University’s academic and outreach programs. From the beginning, the vision for the building was to make the treasures it would preserve better known and more fully utilized. The main or public level is largely devoted to this purpose. Along with the Smith Reading Room and exhibition galleries, the public floor provides three seminar-style teaching rooms and a large program room for public events.

In the Irvin Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, initial use of the William L. Richter Seminar Room has been for classes relating to the collections for both honors undergraduates and graduate students. Classes in art, history, English, theatre, journalism, library and information science, and other areas have used the large teaching room to see materials relevant to their studies.

Events

The large program room was the site for several events connected with the opening, including special pre-dedication tours for library staff and members of the libraries’ friends groups, in addition to the August commencement dinner for the Board of Trustees. Since then, the program room has hosted the 25th anniversary meeting of the S.C. Special Libraries Association, a donor-recognition dinner for the S.C. College of Pharmacy, and several public lectures for the College of Mass Communications and Information Studies’ I-Comm week. It was the site also for the Fall Literary Festival featuring nonfiction writer Susan Orlean, novelist Colson Whitehead, and poet Robert Crawford; the W. Ormiston Roy Memorial Lecture, presented by Burns biographer Robert Crawford; the dedication of the Flynn T. Harrell Collection on the Separation of Church and State; and the annual meeting of the Ex Libris Society addressed by Dr. Edwin C. Bridges, director of the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

The potential of the Hollings facilities to support academic programs was demonstrated in early October when the Center for Teaching Excellence organized a full-scale conference, with parallel breakout sessions in the three seminar rooms and plenary events in the large program room.

Public programs and nonlibrary events in the Hollings Library are coordinated through Elizabeth Sudduth, and Jeffrey Makala handles class visits to the Irvin Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. Contact them at 803-777-8154 or tclrare@mailbox.sc.edu.
RECENT GIFTS AND ACQUISITIONS

This year has continued to bring the library many gifts and other significant acquisitions. These will be more fully reported in the spring issue. What follows gives only a hint of the range of materials that are being added.

A MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPT BIBLE

With major support from the B.H. Breslauer Foundation of New York, the library was able to purchase a complete medieval preaching Bible, written on vellum ca. 1240. It is the first such Bible in the state. Dr. Scott Gwara of the Department of English Language and Literature, who was instrumental in arranging the purchase of the Bible, plans to make it the centerpiece of a two-day symposium on medieval manuscripts to be held in the Irvin department in early April 2011.

CHARLES BABBAGE’S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

To celebrate the opening of the Hollings Library, the Thomas Cooper Society purchased a first edition of Passages in the Life of a Philosopher (1864), by Charles Babbage, a pioneer in the development of computing. The department already holds many of the early writings of Babbage, but this new acquisition filled an important gap.

AN AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT POEM BY ALFRED TENNYSON

Dr. G. Ross Roy has donated a previously unknown manuscript in Alfred Tennyson’s hand of his poem “Break, Break, Break.” Though this is one of Tennyson’s best-known short poems, only one other manuscript is known to have survived. Roy presented the manuscript to mark Dr. Patrick Scott’s retirement as a professor in the Department of English Language and Literature.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY INSECTS

An unexpected gift this past spring from Dr. Mark Langdon brought three valuable and beautifully illustrated editions of entomology books by August von Rosenhof (1705–1759). Langdon’s grandfather had acquired the books for his research many years ago when he was a professor of biology at the University of Tennessee.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LITERATURE

The library’s 18th-century holdings have been strengthened by the acquisition of the Donald T. Siebert Collection. Dr. Siebert, distinguished professor emeritus of English, wrote books on Dr. Samuel Johnson and David Hume. His collection has filled gaps in holdings of both authors. In addition, the collection brought some important individual items, including the first biography of the poet John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1680), and the first edition of William Robertson’s History of Scotland (1759).

A PLATTER PAINTED BY ZELDA FITZGERALD

Along with further research papers and correspondence for the Matthew J. and Arlyn Bruccoli Collection of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Mrs. Bruccoli donated a wooden platter hand-painted by Zelda Fitzgerald, the author’s wife. This new gift joins other Zelda Fitzgerald paintings that Mrs. Bruccoli had previously donated.

CURIOSITAS

The Irvin department has a new blog titled Curiositas (www.sc.edu/library/blogs/rbsc), which will highlight select new acquisitions as well as “rediscovered” gems in the collections.
IRVIN DEPARTMENT WINS ADVOCACY AWARD

At the South Carolina Center for the Book Awards ceremony in September, the Irvin Department of Rare Books and Special Collections received the 2010 annual Award for Literary Arts Advocacy.

The department was cited particularly for its public programs offered through the Thomas Cooper Society (TCS), the annual USC Literary Festival, varied exhibit programs, and outreach to other campuses and cities.

The South Carolina Center for the Book is the South Carolina affiliate of the Library of Congress Center for the Book and is a cooperative project of the South Carolina State Library, the University of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science, and the Humanities Council of South Carolina.