120 Years Old, 30 Years Young, and a Library for All Time

The John Crerar Library's history of nurturing research and learning in the sciences continues

BY BARBARA KERN AND ANDREA TWISS-BROOKS, CO-DIRECTORS OF THE SCIENCE LIBRARIES

The John Crerar Library holds a place of distinction in the world of libraries. In 2014, we celebrate the 120th anniversary of the founding of the John Crerar Library, and the 30th anniversary of the library’s move to the University of Chicago. Since its beginnings, the Crerar Library has offered unique collections and innovative technology and services that nurture research and learning in Chicago. And we see this as only the beginning of the Crerar Library’s history; its core values are as important today and in the future as they were at the Library’s founding.

The John Crerar Library was founded in 1894 and first opened its doors to the citizens of Chicago on April 1, 1897, with a collection numbering over 30,000 volumes. Located in the Marshall Field Building on State Street, it was to be, according to John Crerar in his 1886 will, a “library for all time” and the City of Chicago. Indeed it has been. In 2014, collections have grown to 1.4 million volumes, services have evolved, and facilities have changed; however, the library has remained open not only to Chicagoans but also to researchers from around the world interested in the sciences.

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John Crerar
Developing outstanding collections has been a priority for the John Crerar Library since its beginnings. John Crerar did not specify the scope of the library but indicated that it must not contain nastiness and immorality, such as dirty French novels and all skeptical trash and works of questionable moral tone. Envisioned by its earliest leaders to complement and not compete with the existing Newberry and Chicago Public Libraries, the John Crerar Library included philosophy, physical and natural sciences, the fine arts and sociology and economics.

In 1906, the Library expanded the collection in response to requests by local medical institutions to bring medical literature together with related science material already located at Crerar. The collection of valuable medical and surgical literature formed by Dr. Nicholas Senn and originally given to the Newberry Library was moved to the John Crerar Library with the approbation of Dr. Senn. In later decades the social sciences and arts collections were transferred to other libraries, in order to focus Crerar’s collections on the sciences, medicine, and technology. Today, the Library continues to respond to changes in user needs, areas of research, and the University’s curriculum. One example is purchasing electronic databases, journals, and books, in response to the preference of researchers in the sciences for electronic material. Another is a change to the collection scope in support of the Institute for Molecular Engineering following its establishment at the University in 2011.

Pioneering innovative uses of technology and user services is a hallmark of the John Crerar Library. In 1912, Crerar was one of the first libraries in the U.S. to offer a photoduplication service, providing copies of material from the collection to researchers outside Chicago instead of lending material. The Research Information Service (RIS) offered intensive expert research assistance. Established in 1946, it was, reportedly, the first fee-based research service of its kind in the country. The Corporate Members Program was established in 1951 to provide companies access to research materials. In 1952, Crerar became one of the first libraries in the U.S. to use a Teletype machine. The National Translation Center, first supported by the Special Libraries Association and the National Science Foundation, and later by the Library of
Digitizing Crerar’s History

PRESERVING THE HISTORY of the John Crerar Library has always been a priority at the University of Chicago Library. With approximately 230 linear feet of historical material in the archives, we seek to digitize special documents and images from the collection that highlight this history.

Over the next year, staff from the John Crerar Library and Special Collections Research Center will work together to select archival material for digitization and addition to a newly created website. Publications, such as Crerar Currents newsletter, photographs in the University of Chicago Photographic Archive, brochures, and other material are examples of items that will be discoverable on this new website. We thank the John Crerar Foundation for their support for this project.
What role did French illustrators play in World War I, and how would you say that affects their illustrations?

HARRIS: The French had a very well developed illustrated tradition by the time the war began, and that was one of their assets in the war. They recognized this on a whole series of levels. A number of the illustrations are funny. That is, they’re satirical—they’re pointed. These artists were aware of the ironies of war and are part of a long French tradition of political caricature. Many illustrations in this show are by artists who were—I wouldn’t say twisting the knife in the back of the government, but skeptical about official wisdom. They glorified ordinary people as best they could while raising questions about the war’s logic. The illustrations convey a more complicated set of messages than the propaganda posters of the time.

EDELSTEIN: The posters, by and large, were made officially by government or quasi-government agencies. They were recruitment posters. They urged people to buy national bonds. The illustrations in this exhibition reflect a much more nuanced and personal take on the war. Many of the illustrators were motivated by patriotism, and many of these artists served in the war.

HARRIS: Many were wounded. There was a total mobilization in France, so almost all of their artists who were fit and of age—and who were not foreign nationals, like Picasso—went to war. Many went to the front. They were wounded—in some cases, killed. The enemy was demonized by many of the artists. The Germans, and the Austro-Hungarians, and the Turks were caricatured mercilessly—particularly the leadership. So that wasn’t nuanced.
But what was more nuanced was the way French illustrators presented the experiences of the war and focused on the poilu—the ordinary French soldier—who was a key figure in every history of the war.

*Is there a particular example of a satiric or subtle illustration that stands out for you?*

**HARRIS:** One is by Lucien Laforge, a socialist, an anarchist, who worked for left-wing journals. He did a broadside called *Conte de fées* that tells a story of the war as a fairytale. The German ogre is beheaded by three little girls playing in a garden. Figuring out what he meant by this is difficult. Was it an implied critique of what the French referred to as the *bourrage de crâne*, the war fever that overtook people’s minds? Is it satirical? Is Laforge poking fun at the reductionist character of the war? Or is he, in fact, endorsing the war? It’s hard to say.

*Are there aspects of the exhibition that you expect to particularly surprise your audience?*

**EDELSTEIN:** I think people will find it unexpected and riveting to see the extent to which the subject of World War I appears in fashion illustration. The reason for this is threefold. One, fashion was a very important French industry. Two, fashion was an area where the French felt they could nationally distinguish themselves from their enemies. They felt that French fashion was at a great remove from German so-called fashion. Three, the illustrators employed by fashion were, by and large, out of work for the duration of the war, so they turned their attention to finding jobs elsewhere. Many issues of *La baïonnette* feature satirical cartoons that hinge on the notion of French fashion. We also have individual prints on patriotic themes connected to the war that were done by fashion illustrators.

*Some of the items on display in *En Guerre* and included in the associated catalogue have long been a part of the Library’s collections, but a great many are part of your personal collections or were collected by you and subsequently donated to the Library. How did you become interested in collecting World War I illustrations, and how did the Library help in developing the exhibition?*

**HARRIS:** We didn’t really start with the war. I had been collecting French illustrated books since the 1970s. At a certain point, we realized that the centenary of World War I was approaching and we had more than enough for an exhibition. And the Library has a number of things that have been very important, most significantly *La baïonnette*, a quite amazing illustrated magazine done during the War. We hope that when people come to the show they will observe that these things survive only because there’s a library that takes care of them.

**EDELSTEIN:** The Library and the staff of Special Collections have been endlessly supportive. We’re delighted with our work with the Library.

Visit the associated web exhibit at lib.uchicago.edu/e/webexhibits/enguerre
AJOR GRANTS from the U.S. Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the British Library are enabling the University of Chicago Library to expand and enrich digital resources for South Asian studies. UChicago faculty and students benefit from these projects, as do researchers around the world, through our freely available online presentation of books and images. In two instances the projects are partnerships to digitize materials located elsewhere, to make these unique resources available to UChicago researchers and others.

Historic Postcards of Colonial India

The University of Chicago Library has digitized nearly 12,000 historical postcards of colonial India from one of the largest collections in existence. A grant from the U.S. Department of Education in 2009 and 2010 helped to support our project to present the private collection of Mr. Graham Shaw in London. These postcards cover undivided India as well as Nepal and Sri Lanka. Most date from the 1880s to the 1930s. They depict topographical features as well as the people and their culture—from occupations and faiths to modes of transport and humor. The collection’s significance derives from its extensive visual documentation, the varied perspectives it provides for sites over time, the postage stamps, and the correspondence on the back of many cards. A search engine being launched this fall at postcards.uchicago.edu will allow users to search by location and keyword or to browse through the cards by category.

Monolingual and Etymological Dictionaries

With the support of a two-year, $300,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities that began in July, the University of Chicago Library will be converting and disseminating 12 monolingual and etymological dictionaries from our own collections as electronic resources, extending the coverage of our Digital Dictionaries of South Asia (DDSA, at dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries) and significantly supporting humanities research and advanced language learning. Additionally, the 54 dictionaries currently available from DDSA will be enhanced through improved facilities for searching and displaying data on desktop and mobile devices.

The DDSA is already heavily accessed by scholars and lay users, who currently execute 4 million searches per year. This project enhances the value of the website by extending monolingual lexical coverage in eight critical languages: Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Panjabi, Prakrit, Sindhi, Sinhala, and Telugu.

Early Kannada Books

“Preservation and Access for Rare Early Kannada Books” is the most recent digitization project. The British Library’s Endangered Archives Programme has granted £44,950 (approximately $75,700) to save more than 1,650 of the most important early printed publications in the Kannada language, which are held by several public and private collections in south India. This grant also covers a two-year period that began in July.

Kannada is an important Dravidian language spoken in south India since the early modern period. The broad spectrum of writings in these publications are invaluable for historians of social, cultural, literary, and intellectual change in this region in the 19th and 20th centuries. Digital page images will be presented via our Digital South Asia Library (dsal.uchicago.edu) and the British Library.

The University of Chicago Library’s South Asia collection is widely regarded as the strongest North American university collection about the Indian subcontinent. These digital initiatives expand the resources we are able to offer through international collaborations that open access to rare and unique scholarly resources.
THE NEW UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARY CATALOG, launched in August, is now in regular use by faculty and students. The Catalog’s clean visual design and advanced set of features allow users to more readily discover and access the Library’s resources.

Based on VuFind, an open-source catalog originally developed at Villanova University, the new Catalog has been tailored by UChicago Library staff members to meet the needs of local users, as identified in an extensive series of interviews with UChicago faculty and students. The new Catalog retains all of the functionality users identified as valuable in the previous Catalog and Lens, such as browsing by call number, title, and subject headings; ranking of search results by relevance; and emailing and texting of records. It also adds new features that users requested, such as easier access to ebooks and ejournals and display of current availability on the search results page.

Early feedback from students suggests that the new features enhance discovery and ease of access. “The search results have been more relevant for the papers I was writing during spring quarter,” said Sylva Osbourne, AB’14, comparing the beta version of the new Catalog to Lens.

“With the new catalog system in general, it seems to be a significant upgrade over the previous systems, and I have been using it with great success since it was released, even including Chinese and other complex character encodings in my search terms,” wrote Jeffrey Tharsen, a graduate student in East Asian Languages and Civilizations. “I’m particularly pleased that we now have the call numbers and availability of items immediately displayed in the search results list, both in the Brief and Detailed View.”

The new Catalog is powered by a new library management system, Kuali OLE, also released in August. Kuali OLE was created by a partnership of some of the nation’s leading university libraries, including University of Chicago, Indiana University (lead), SOAS-University of London, Lehigh University, Duke University, North Carolina State University, University of Florida, University of Maryland, University of Michigan, University of Pennsylvania and Villanova University.
The Library and The University of Chicago Campaign

T HIS FALL, THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO IS ENTERING THE PUBLIC PHASE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO CAMPAIGN: INQUIRY AND IMPACT, which has a goal of raising $4.5 billion. The priorities of the campaign, the most ambitious in the University’s history, include support for faculty and researchers who are shaping fields of inquiry, distinctive educational opportunities for students at all levels, and innovative programs to enhance the University’s local and global reach and impact.

The Library serves as a vital center of inquiry and impact at the University of Chicago, fueling groundbreaking research and a transformative educational experience, while acting as a mecca for scholars from around the world. We are proud to support inquiry and impact across all the disciplines of the University, and we embrace the opportunity to participate in the University’s campaign. Toward that end, we seek to raise $26.5 million in essential funds in four categories that will enable us to build on our strengths and continue our work as a world-class and world-renowned research library.

Distinctive Collections: Special Collections and Global Resources

Among the Library’s most distinctive holdings are its Special Collections of rare books, manuscripts, and archives, as well as world-renowned area studies collections focused on East Asia, Southern Asia, the Middle East, and Slavic and Eastern Europe. Funds are needed to preserve and expand these invaluable collections for future researchers and students. A $2 million Special Collections Opportunity Endowment will enable the purchase of unique items and rare collections that are available for a limited time in a highly competitive marketplace. A $2.5 million Global Resources Collections Opportunity Endowment will allow the Library to seize special opportunities in areas of the world where different acquisition patterns require flexibility. And a $5 million Digital Program Endowment will support the digitization of collections to enable new types of research on campus and around the world.

Expanding Areas

The Library strives to anticipate the new needs of faculty and students. As the University establishes and expands its programs in areas such as molecular engineering and the sciences, Jewish studies, and Latin America, the Library seeks to establish expendable and endowed funds to build collections and provide services that support emerging directions in the University’s research agenda. A $2 million Science Collections Fund will bolster the John Crerar Library’s resources, including online literature, databases for discovery, and tools to aid in the discovery, management, visualization, and analysis of information arising from research activities, such as ChemDraw, which allows researchers to draw chemical substances. A $1.5 million Jewish Studies Endowment will expand and enhance the Library’s current Jewish Studies collection to serve the growing needs on campus in this area.

New Library Services

The electronic age has created an increasingly complex landscape for everyone from College students to advanced researchers. New teaching techniques and assignments create the need for new study environments. Graduate students, faculty, and visiting researchers have highly specialized research needs that often require in-depth consultation with librarians. A $2 million Instruction and Research Support Program Endowment will enable the Library to teach users how to optimize their use of both emerging and established scholarly resources. A $1 million Study Spaces Fund will support the creation of flexible spaces that are suitable for collaboration and outfitted with the latest technologies.

Strategic Opportunities

In order to embrace the promise and the challenges of the future, the Library must be able to respond to opportunities as they arise. New research needs will continue to emerge, and user demand for rapid and innovative access to physical and virtual materials will continue to grow. A $2 million Strategic Opportunities Fund will allow the Library to sustain its strengths and maintain its forward momentum. This fund will provide long-term support to test new ideas through pilot projects, to use technologies of the future; to hire experts for emerging initiatives; and to purchase products and services developed by commercial vendors. A $3 million Strategic Opportunities Collections Endowment will provide the Library flexibility to obtain highly desirable, unique collections across the disciplines when they come onto the market. The fund will also support the University of Chicago Library’s fruitful partnerships with peer institutions in order to increase collection coverage, discoverability, and access.

For specific information on these and other campaign giving opportunities and to learn more about the Library’s role in The University of Chicago Campaign: Inquiry and Impact, please contact Yasmin Omer, Director of Development for the Library at 773-834-3744 or at yasminomer@uchicago.edu.
Enabling Worldwide Discovery of Rare Books
A Gift from Roger and Julie Baskes

Enhancing Online Catalog Records for rare books is a high priority for the University of Chicago Library in the University’s capital campaign. Detailed cataloging is an essential tool for researchers to discover handwritten annotations, special bindings or illustrations, and other features of individual copies of rare books. The Library has long recognized the scholarly value of this work, but without additional funding the project could take as long as 20 years to complete.

Prominent Chicago cultural philanthropists Roger and Julie Baskes stepped forward this spring as the right donors for this endeavor. In his seven years on the Library’s Visiting Committee, Mr. Baskes said, he was impressed by “the Library’s extraordinary commitment to keeping its collections physically and instantly accessible, at the very center of the campus” through the construction of the Mansueto Library. An avid and knowledgeable book collector, Mr. Baskes has also nurtured a long affiliation with Chicago’s Newberry Library, serving as a trustee and previously as chairman of the board. Over the last 30 years, he has cultivated a one-of-a-kind personal collection of rare and historical books with maps.

In doing so, Mr. Baskes explained, “I became aware of the extraordinary collections of rare books at the world’s great research libraries, especially as the catalogs of these libraries began to be accessible online, and discovered that the University of Chicago Library is one of the world’s most important repositories of rare books. Julie and I also understand that however rare, beautiful, or extensive such materials may be, their value to scholars is entirely dependent upon their accessibility.”

With that in mind, Mr. and Mrs. Baskes made a $250,000 commitment to support the cataloging project. “Twenty-first century readers and students of rare books and manuscripts, whether part of the University of Chicago community or from other parts of the world, will come to the Library after they have learned from its online catalog that there exist materials important to their research,” Mr. Baskes said. “We believe that little would add to the value of the Library’s remarkable Special Collections more than the enhancement and editing of its catalog, and we are honored to support it.”

Along with their monetary support, Mr. and Mrs. Baskes are also donating rare and historical books with maps that they have collected. So far the Library has received approximately 100 titles ranging from the 18th century to the late 20th. In addition to American, English, and French books with maps, the gifts include books in Japanese, Armenian, and Ottoman Turkish. When they are cataloged, the associated online records will bear a custom electronic bookplate (pictured) and will be readily retrievable by searching the catalog for the donor name. “We have long understood the importance of improving access to our rare book collections by providing more detailed and accurate catalog records,” said Alice Schreyer, Interim Library Director and Associate University Librarian for Area Studies and Special Collections. “Roger and Julie’s gift will make the unique features of our collections known to a wide range of scholars who would otherwise not discover them.”

In recognition of their gift, a group study space in the Special Collections Research Center will be named the “Julie and Roger Baskes Group Study.” Students, faculty, and visiting scholars use this room to work collaboratively with rare and historical materials.

The electronic bookplate for gifts from the Roger Baskes Collection.

Gifts from the Library of E. M. (Pete) Bakwin

Library Visiting Committee Life Member E. M. (Pete) Bakwin (MBA’61) learned to love beautiful books from his parents, both physicians and art collectors. They had an unusual way of encouraging him to read: his mother gave him a beautiful book each time he completed the previous one.

This year Mr. Bakwin presented a group of literary and historical works to the Library reflecting his interests in first editions and books important in history and literature. Among them are first editions of all six volumes of Edward Gibbon’s The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (London: W. Strahan, and T. Cadell, 1776–1788); Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield’s Letters...to his Son, Philip Stanhope, Esq. (1806); and Memoirs of Samuel Pepys, Esq. (1825), the first publication of Pepys’s diaries from 1659–1669.

The gift also includes first editions by favorite authors Charles Dickens and Mark Twain. A limited edition of John Ruskin’s The King of the Golden River (1932), with illustrations by Arthur Rackham, one of nine copies with an original watercolor drawing by Rackham; and many volumes in beautiful decorated bindings, make this a visually stunning gift as well as one that adds important editions to the Library’s collections.
We wish to thank and recognize our donors who have made gifts or grants of $250 or more between July 1, 2013, and June 30, 2014, to the University of Chicago Library. Through their generosity, these individuals and organizations have supported the Annual Fund, the Library Society, Library endowments, and special projects.

$250,000 and more
Julie and Roger Baskes
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**The Library Society**

**CHANGE IS IN THE AIR.** Following Judi Nadler’s remarkable decade as Director and University Librarian, we are (as I write this) awaiting the appointment and arrival of the new director. Meanwhile, we have the steady and wise guidance of Alice Schreyer as Interim Director.

The world of libraries is changing too, as much new material, including most periodicals, arrives in digital format. But there is uncertainty in equal measures at libraries and publishers as to what this will mean for the future. What will this mean for our Library? My own guess is that there will be little fundamental change for at least the next decade or so. Yes, we will adapt to the new world, but our physical collections will remain critical to the library, and our status as a first rank library will be ensured by that collection. Indeed, as electronic media become a common good, that which is unique to Chicago will be of comparatively greater value.

The compilation of a concordance was once a valued scholarly enterprise; now the internet is the concordance to everything. In his 1942 short story “Funes the Memorious,” Luis Jorge Borges imagined a man, Funes, who as the result of an accident recalls everything (even the act of recalling), but understands nothing. Without scholarly analysis, Big Data is the Funes of our age. Scholarship is more important than ever.

“Digital” used to mean, “by hand,” and for most of the research world that will still be true. No one who has encountered Google Books with all folding plates missing, or tried to read small print on screen, can doubt the continued need for hard copy, and a large part of what we hold will not be digitized in this century. Libraries will still be libraries, and ours will remain pre-eminent.

My term as Chair of the Library Society ends with the arrival of 2015, and I thank all of you for your support for the Library Society. I look forward to seeing you at meetings for the indefinite future.

With best regards,

Stephen M. Stigler
Library Society Chairman and Ernest DeWitt Burton Distinguished Service Professor, Department of Statistics and the College, and Member, Committee on Conceptual and Historical Studies of Science

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**2014-15 Library Society Speaker Series**

Save the date for these Library Society lectures:

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2014**
**Neil Harris**, Preston and Sterling Morton Professor of History and Art History Emeritus, The University of Chicago, and Dr. **Teri Edelstein**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2015**
**Rosanna Warren**, Hanna Holborn Gray Distinguished Professor, Committee on Social Thought, The University of Chicago

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2015**
**Andrew Abbott**, Gustavus F. and Ann M. Swift Distinguished Service Professor, The University of Chicago

All lectures will be held in Regenstein Library Room 122 in the evening and are open to the public with registration. To register and for updates including topics and times, visit lib.uchicago.edu/e/alumnifriends/libsoc.

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**Desiderata**

Bibliographers are seeking funding for a variety of titles that would be valuable resources for University of Chicago faculty and students. Below is a small sampling of these items.

Bernard Bolzano. *Theory of Science*. Translated by Paul Rusnock and Roil George. 4 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. This first complete edition of Bolzano’s 1837 masterwork of theoretical philosophy is important to those studying the history of logic and philosophy. **$625.**


Georgios K. Giannakis, ed. *Encyclopedia of Ancient Greek Language and Linguistics*. Leiden: Brill, 2013. This continually updated electronic encyclopedia is a valued reference work for students and scholars of Greek, Biblical literature, and linguistics and is requested repeatedly by Classics faculty. **$1,650.**

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