

Friends of the Smith College Libraries



FALL UPDATE-SEPTEMBER 2006

WILLIAM ALLAN NEILSON LIBRARY • SMITH COLLEGE • NORTHAMPTON, MA 01063

***Paper Collaborations for the Janus Press: Books and Broadside* by Claire Van Vliet**

Thursday, October 5 at 4:30 p.m. Neilson Browsing Room



Janus Press proprietor Claire Van Vliet is one of America's preeminent artists of the book, having created some of the 20th-century's most important fine editions. A reception and viewing of a companion retrospective exhibition, "Claire Van Vliet & The Janus Press: 50 Years", will follow the talk in the Book Arts Gallery. The exhibition will remain on view until October 31, 2006.

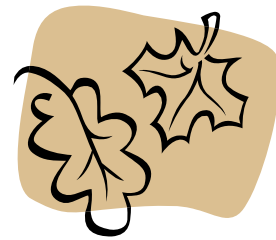
From Henry Purcell's opera *Dido and Aeneas*,
co-published by Janus Press, 1989

Van Vliet operates the Janus Press in the Northeast Kingdom in Vermont. She is known both for her use of traditional techniques, materials, and forms, as well as for innovation in the fields of fine printing, papermaking, bookbinding and printmaking. As a teacher she has had a profound impact on several generations of aspiring book artists, many of whom have gone on to important careers of their own. For her work as a teacher and an artist Van Vliet received a "genius grant" from the MacArthur Foundation in 1989; it was the foundation's first recognition of achievement in the book arts. In 1995 she was elected to the National Academy as a printmaker. She has also received honorary degrees from San Diego State University and The University of the Arts.

A catalogue, *The Janus Press: Fifty Years*, is on sale in the Mortimer Rare Book Room. For more information, contact Barbara Blumenthal at 585-2906, or consult the MRBR website at: www.smith.edu/libraries/libr/rarebook.

Coming Soon: New FSCL Web Site

Check out our new web site in early **October**. With a fresh look and lots more information, we hope you will use it to learn more about Friends' projects, events, and library needs. A new feature will allow members to suggest speakers and share their thoughts. See www.smith.edu/friends



An Author's Voice on the Web

The Alumnae Association has just launched a new feature on its web site: audio-interviews with Smith alumnae authors. Log on to <http://alumnae.smith.edu/authors> and listen to a diverse group of authors discuss their craft, how they began, their inspirations, and their role models.

Dear Friends,

As I write, classes are once again in full swing at Smith, and that feeling of “newness” is in the air: new classes, new faces, the anticipation of the year ahead and the accompanying resolve to do one’s best. It’s also the time of year when we ask you to renew your membership and show your continued interest in this essential Smith institution. Our annual solicitation will be in the mail next month, but if you wish to avoid receiving it, you may renew today using the form on page 4.

We were very pleased to be one of several campus sponsors for **Reading and Reflection: *Mountains Beyond Mountains***, held September 5 as part of new student orientation. Author of the summer reading selection *Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World*, Tracy Kidder spoke about Dr. Farmer’s work combating infectious diseases in Haiti and elsewhere through Partners in Health (PIH). Paul Farmer addressed most of his comments to the incoming Class of 2010, urging them to get involved in social justice causes while they “enjoy great academic privilege at Smith College.” He spoke warmly about his many visits to Smith while his mother Ginny Farmer ’88 was enrolled as an Ada Comstock scholar.

Entering students learned about the Friends when we funded a \$2.00 copy card donation for all students attending library orientation. Learning how to navigate and use library resources is key to a successful academic career, and this gesture from the Friends helps ensure a high turnout of new students.

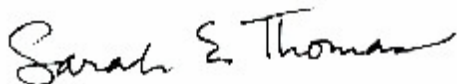
Each year a portion of Friends’ annual giving underwrites new library acquisitions. This allocation is frequently used to purchase reference works or other big ticket items. Among the recent acquisitions you helped make possible was *The Atlas Blaeu-Van der Hem*. A show-piece of Dutch seventeenth-century cartographic and topographic art, the original atlas containing more than 2,400 maps, prints, and drawings, is preserved in the Austrian National Library. A facsimile of the atlas is being published in 6 volumes. The Friends have made possible the purchase of each volume as it appears. The final volume is due out later this year.

Gifts in memory of Eileen Lesko Scott ’69 made possible the purchase of 44 CD ROMs (almost the entire line) of Octavo Editions – a unique and wide-ranging digital library of rare books and manuscripts. Two generous gifts in memory of Lucia Krompart ’81 facilitated the purchase of new mathematics materials while several gifts in memory of Beecher P. Hodgedon added significant jazz recordings to Josten Library.

We recently contributed \$6,000 towards the creation of a new Information Commons on the first floor of Neilson Library (see **Information Commons**, page 3). This is part of the master plan to upgrade public spaces in Neilson. The keystone project of this master plan, you may recall, is the creation of a new **Reading Room** opposite the Browsing Room. I am proud of the support the Friends have shown this project to date - we’ve raised over \$120,000 towards the \$500,000 goal. Thanks to everyone who has made a gift. I encourage you to continue to support this necessary project. For more information call the Friends Office at (413)585-2903 or visit www.smith.edu/libraries/readingroom.

Thank you for your past support. I hope to see some of you at Claire Van Vliet’s talk on October 5th.

Sincerely,



Sarah E. Thomas ’70,
Chair, FSCL

LIBRARY NEWS

Information Commons

Located in the Mair Room, and extending into the reference areas, an Information Commons is currently under construction in Neilson. This will create new learning environments that merge traditional library functions with computer facilities and services. The entire space is being reconfigured and wired to respond to student needs for individual as well as collaborative study spaces with seamless access to reference and information technology help.

In almost all disciplines, technology is playing an increasingly important role in teaching, learning and discovery. Faculty members have new expectations for student learning and students themselves work in different ways. The Information Commons establishes a continuum of services and resources to



Mair Room renovation

enable students to be efficient and productive as they learn, and acquire knowledge and insight. Phase 1 of the project will be completed this fall; phase 2 will be undertaken next summer.

Important Cache Added to Digby Collection

When former Trustee Constance Morrow Morgan died in 1995, her family presented the libraries with a major gift: her collection of rare books and manuscripts by and about the remarkable 17th-century British writer, diplomat, and naval commander, Sir Kenelm Digby. This summer a surprise package arrived in the Mortimer Rare Book Room containing the astonishing *coda* to that gift – a small cache of “Digbyana” that had lain hidden and quite forgotten in a closet in her son Rhidian’s Oregon home. Astonishing, and very welcome, not only because it was so unanticipated but more importantly because of the formidable historical and literary significance of many of the items: among others, a letter in Digby’s hand about his conversion to Catholicism; a three-page manuscript entitled “To My Mistressse,” a rare example of Digby’s poetry; a document concerning Digby’s pension signed by Charles II; a scarce printed broadside relating to Digby’s exile in France. Many thanks to the Morgan family—Saran Morgan Hutchins, Elisabeth Morgan Pendleton ’62, Rhidian M. M. Morgan and Margaret Eiluned Morgan ’72—for their continued support.

Sophia Smith Collection Receives Women’s Music Archive

Kim Kimber is a woman with a mission. Now in her mid-seventies, Kimber recorded every women's music concert she ever attended and gathered recordings from others, both commercial and non-commercial. She and her team of musicians and fans clipped and filed articles about the singers and bands thus creating the Women’s Music Archive. In August Kimber donated her 75 linear foot archive to the Sophia Smith Collection along with a \$15,000 gift that she and her friends raised to provide ongoing support for the documentation of the women's music movement. Kimber also plans to create an endowment the proceeds of which will be used to process the WMA and other music collections. By publicizing her plans, she hopes to encourage other musicians to add their papers to the SSC.



New Five College Online Catalog

Students and faculty have a new online catalog at their finger tips that can scan the holdings of all Five Colleges in one fell swoop. The new software from Ex Libris enables users to scan the 6.5 million items in the consortium’s holdings while customizing and saving searches in ways not previously available. “This new management software is easier to use and vastly increases the libraries’ abilities to accommodate our users’ research needs,” says Director of Libraries Chris Loring.

2006 Annual Meeting



Guest speaker Loretta Ross chatted with students following the annual meeting last April. In “From Margin to Center: New Voices of Feminism,” Ross spoke about her work interviewing women of color activists for the SSC’s “Voices of Feminism” oral history project. Funded by the Ford Foundation, this project aims to document the experiences of women usually overlooked in traditional accounts of women’s history. Ross has spent over thirty years fighting for human rights and against racism and sexism. Her voluminous personal papers are preserved in the Sophia Smith Collection.

FSCL Executive Committee members:

Sarah E. Thomas '70, Chair, Priscilla Barlow '80, Mary S. Hinkel '73, Kate Kelly '73, Katherine Kyes Leab '62, Ann Martin '77, Cheryl Stadel-Bevans '90, Susan von Salis '79, Arlene Colbert Wszalek '83. **Ex-Officio members:** President Carol Christ, honorary chair; Director of Libraries, Christopher B. Loring; Alumnae Association Executive Director, Carrie Brown Ed.M '82; Libraries Special Collections Coordinator, Sherrill Redmon; Executive Secretary, Mary Irwin.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY

Your membership matters. Annual dues from many supporters strengthen the Friends and provide an important source of revenue for the Smith College Libraries. You help the libraries acquire books and other materials, enhance patron services and meet short and long term needs that benefit students and faculty. Re-enroll today and continue to receive newsletters and invitations to events.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

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|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| \$10 Student/Individual | \$35 Active Member | \$60 Family/Dual |
| \$125 Contributor | \$300 Sustaining Member | \$600 Benefactor |
| \$1000 Patron | \$1,500 Champion | |

Name _____ Class _____ (if alumna)

Address _____

I wish to make my gift in honor/in memory of _____

My/our company will match the gift.

Please make your check payable to the Friends of the Smith College Libraries and mail to the address below, or **enroll on-line at www.smith.edu/friends**. Thank you for your support.

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Telephone: (413) 585-2903.*