New: Access to JSTOR for Smith Alumnae

Alumnae can now access JSTOR via the Alumnae Association’s website thanks to funding provided by the Friends of the Smith College Libraries. Whether you wish to do research for a current project or browse topics you loved as a student, this digital archive offers over one thousand full-text journals in the humanities, social sciences and sciences. JSTOR provides access from the first issue of each journal, but, by design, excludes current issues. Several search options are available including browsing by journal title or discipline plus specific searches for authors, title words, abstracts or the full text. The content is expanded continuously with a current emphasis on international publications. To explore the offerings, follow the link once you log in on the Alumnae Association’s website.

Would You Rather be an eFriend?

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter (with live links), membership renewal letters and other correspondence via email, please contact Mary Irwin, mirwin@smith.edu.

SPRING PROGRAM

Wednesday, April 13, 2011

4:00 P.M. Dedication of the Friends of the Libraries Reading Room

4:30 P.M. Panel Discussion: Romance Literature: Love it or Leave it

Neilson Library Browsing Room

5:30 P.M. Reception and Book Signing

Romance Literature: Love it or Leave it

PANELISTS

May Chen ’00 is a Senior Editor at Morrow/Avon (HarperCollins) where she works primarily in women's fiction, including historical romances.

Barbara Keiler ’73 is well-known as Judith Arnold, the best-selling author of more than eighty-five romance novels and a three-time Romantic Times award winner.

Stephanie Dray ’93, abandoned former careers as a lawyer, game designer and teacher to write full time. Lily of the Nile is the first in a trilogy about Cleopatra’s daughter, Cleopatra Selene. As Stephanie Draven, she has published four myth-inspired tales of romance.

Sarah Trabucchi ’00 writes under the pen name Sarah MacLean. Her regency novels, Nine Rules to Break When Romancing a Rake, and Ten Ways to be Adored when Landing a Lord have both been New York Times bestsellers.

Bethanne Patrick ’85, book critic, managing editor and host of The Book Studio, www.thebookstudio.com, will moderate the discussion.
MEMORIAL GIFTS

Many members of the class of 1950 have paid tribute to Frances (Fran) Biern Low ’50 by making memorial gifts to the Libraries. Low worked at the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University for many years. A special purchase will be made once all the gifts have been received.

When photographer Anne Ross ’55 passed away last fall, the members of her book group made donations to the Hillyer Art Library. Mrs. Ross’ interest in photography was sparked at Smith, and now several new photography books bearing a commemorative book plate have been added to Hillyer’s collection.

Thanks to a gift in memory of Samuel Biern, the Hillyer Art Library has acquired a facsimile edition of De Prospectiva Pingendi by Piero della Francesca, an early Italian Renaissance artist with a strong interest in the theoretical study of perspective. This was a final gift from the late Elsa Biern ’45 who was a member of the Friends for over fifty years. Biern designated her annual gifts for acquisitions, and she has been responsible for the purchase of many, many volumes; all presented in memory of her father, Samuel Biern.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY ACQUISITIONS

The Sophia Smith Collection recently accessioned the papers of Evelyn C. White, an African American journalist, health researcher and biographer of Alice Walker. Also added were the records of the Center for the Advancement of Women, a think tank founded and directed by Faye Wattleton, African American feminist leader and past president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

The Werner Josten Library has subscribed to the facsimile edition of all of Fryderyk Chopin’s music manuscripts, with commentaries by leading Chopin scholars in six languages. The purpose of this edition is to preserve and disseminate the Chopin legacy by reproducing and safeguarding the contents of his manuscripts scattered around the world.

FSCL News

By Ann Shanahan ’59, Chair

As I write, the event that is uppermost in my mind is the dedication of Neilsen’s handsome new Friends of the Libraries Reading Room, to be led by Carol Christ at 4:00 P.M. on April 13. It seemed important to name the room in honor of the Friends, many, many of whom provided the crucial financial support that has enabled the transformation of this space into a lovely, quiet haven for students and faculty. During the sixty-six hours a week that Neilsen is open, virtually all of the comfortable chairs, sofas and seats at the tables are occupied. We invite as many of you as can to be here for the celebration.

The dedication will be followed by something quite different for us. Our spring program will take a look at “Romance Literature: Love it or Leave It.” Bethanne Patrick ’85, a member of the Friends Executive Committee and an established online presence in the book world as critic, journalist and author, will moderate a discussion among several Smith alumnae who are romance novelists or editors. After the panel discussion, we will return to the Reading Room for a reception and booksigning.

Everyone who frequents Neilsen Library should make a point of visiting “Wonder Woman 632,” a striking installation by New York artist Linda Stein on the north wall of the Mair Room. The larger-than-life sculpture of Wonder Woman, collaged with archivally modified and acrylicized comics, includes Wonder Woman’s wall shadow. The installation is a gift to the Sophia Smith Collection by Gloria Steinem ’56.

With the growing popularity of e-books, the Smith Libraries are thinking about virtual bookplates. Books purchased with funds donated by alumnae routinely carry bookplates with the funders’ names. Increasingly, e-books are becoming a preferred format. Pasting a bookplate in an e-book, is, of course, not possible, so libraries, including Smith’s, are exploring digital book plates. You’ll be hearing more about this.

For those of you who are Facebook aficionados, I invite you again to visit (and, particularly, to post on) our Friends of Smith College Libraries Facebook page. You should feel free to post anything that’s even remotely book-related—what you’re reading, your favorite blogs, what you remember about using Smith libraries, etc.

Twenty-First Century Romance: What’s in it for Authors? For Readers?

By Bethanne Patrick ’85

This spring, the Friends of the Smith College Libraries will host a panel of romance-fiction experts. Romance fiction gets short shrift in public from a lot of readers - but behind closed doors, it’s often the reading matter of choice for some very smart women. It also makes a lot of money for some very smart women authors and editors, so I turned to two very smart women in the publishing media, Sarah Wendell and Jane Litte, of the blog “Smart Bitches, Trashy Books,” to talk about the latest developments in what was once the “Harlequin ghetto.”

I asked Sarah and Jane to give me their thoughts on what’s new in romance. Sarah replied almost instantly: “Without a doubt, authors have more opportunity, from digital presses that publish romance fiction that bends and reshapes established rules to new venues to publish short romantic fiction and older out-of-print works. Readers can connect with authors directly. It’s an awesome time to be a romance reader because there’s even more variation, diversity, and variety in the happily-ever-after.”

Continued on back.
Adapting Library Spaces to Meet Changing Needs

By Christopher B. Loring, Director of Libraries

As Ann Shanahan notes, we will officially dedicate the Friends of the Smith College Libraries Reading Room on April 13. We opened the room with a small celebration on November 29, 2010, one hundred and one years to the day after Neilson Library first opened. In my remarks that day, I reflected on how much the Libraries have changed over the years and how much they will need to continue to change in the future. As we look ahead, we know that our traditional role as a warehouse for journals and books will decrease as we increasingly rely on digital formats. We also know that there will be an increasing need for spaces that marry access to all forms of knowledge with learning environments that allow our students to learn effectively. Smith students need spaces to study alone or with friends, to collaborate together on projects, to practice presentation skills and to hone all the essential capacities that mark a liberal arts education. The Smith College Libraries are poised to provide our students with exactly those types of spaces, converting excess book stacks when we can and where it makes sense to do so to create these diverse environments. As we do that, I am confident that you, our Friends, will be there to help us re-imagine what it means to be a library in the twenty-first century.

News from Around the Libraries

Hundreds of primary sources from the Sophia Smith Collection (SSC) are now available through the online database Women and Social Movements, International - 1840 to Present. These materials from individual activists such as Dorothy Kenyon and organizations such as the International Council of Women, reflect the transnational character of women’s activism—around peace, poverty, child labor, literacy, disease prevention, and global inequality—throughout the 20th century. The database will total 150,000 pages of documents when complete in 2012.

With support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Peck Stacpoole Foundation, SSC archivists have begun a two-year processing project to prepare several top-priority manuscript collections to be open to research. The collections include the records of Ms. Magazine and the National Women’s Health Network and the papers of Native American leaders Rebecca Adamson, Charon Asetoyer and Katsi Cook.

Sophia Smith Collection historians and archivists Kelly Anderson, Joyce Follett, Maida Goodwin and Sherrill Redmon will present papers at the Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, a triennial event to be held at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, June 9-12. The 2011 conference theme is “Exploring Race, Sexuality, and Labor across Time and Space.” The SSC will also host a reception to showcase new collections.

“Cather and the Nineteenth Century” is the title of the International Willa Cather Seminar to be held at Smith College, June 20-25, 2011. Senior Emily Cook AC is researching Cather under the direction of Professor Richard Millington for a special studies project. Her research will result in an exhibition of Cather publications and manuscripts from the Mortimer Rare Book Room. For more information about the seminar, see www.willacather.org/conferences.

Sponsored by the Friends of the Libraries Staff Development Fund, Barbara Polowy, head of the Hillier Art Library, attended the Association of College and Research Libraries Intentional Teacher Immersion program held in Nashville last November. This intensive annual program helps experienced academic librarians develop their teaching skills. Barbara is one of a growing list of Smith librarians to attend the program.

IN MEMORIAM:
A Tribute to Elliot Offner by Martin Antonetti

Friends of the Libraries will certainly have read one of the many encomia of Elliot Offner that circulated in the Smith network after he died last October. His successful career as an artist and teacher and his many contributions to the College were sung and celebrated. And of course the loss created by his departure will continue to be felt all over campus, but especially in the library and in particular in the Mortimer Rare Book Room, where he filled the position of unofficial genius loci for many decades. Anyone who had a course with him (and almost everyone else as well) sensed his passionate bibliophilia, expressed in his own collecting of rare and beautiful volumes, his establishment of the Rosemary Press to print works of his own design and composition, his teaching of the various arts of the book, his many gifts to the Libraries and, not least, his role in bringing Ruth Mortimer ’53 back to Smith College in 1973, this time as Curator of Rare Books. As the illness progressed in his later years Elliot visited the rare book room less frequently but when he did, he stayed for hours, poring over old favorites and delighting in new acquisitions. He knew books, and loved them: he was our ideal reader.

2010-2011 FSCL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
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The FRIENDS NEWS UPDATE is published twice yearly, in the fall and in the spring. Comments and suggestions may be addressed to Mary Irwin, Executive Secretary, Friends of the Smith College Libraries, Neilson Library, Smith College, Northampton, MA 01063, Telephone: (413) 585-2903 or email: mirwin@smith.edu. Visit us online at www.smith.edu/libraries/info/friends or on Facebook www.facebook.com/FSCLib

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Please make your check payable to the Friends of the Smith College Libraries and mail to the FSCL Office, Neilson Library, Smith College, Northampton, MA 01063 or, if you prefer, enroll on-line at www.smith.edu/friends.