



# LIBRARIES

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## The messenger. Number 28 Spring 1994

Madison, Wisconsin: Friends of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries, Spring 1994

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# THE MESSENGER

FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON LIBRARIES

Number 28, Spring 1994

## Libraries receive \$1.1 million endowment

A pioneering journalism alumna has left the General Library System \$1.12 million—the largest gift in its history.

Adeline Elizabeth Pepper, class of 1925, bequeathed her entire estate to the libraries when she died in October 1992.

Ken Frazier, director of the General Library System, says, "The gift will help us support important pilot projects aimed at improving our responsiveness to the university and the community. Those projects will not have to compete with our real and continuing needs in collections, access, and public service."

Pepper in 1974

Owner of an East Coast public relations firm, Pepper established herself as one of the few women at the top of her profession. She specialized in health care-related consulting and was an author and photographer.

Born in Madison in 1903, Pepper wrote for various pharmaceutical companies before setting out on her own. She was one of the first authors on ethical issues in the pharmaceutical industry and wrote about such drugs as Ritalin and cortisone.

After her retirement she continued to write numerous articles on travel, history, and decorative arts for magazines and major metropolitan newspapers. Pepper also wrote a guidebook to New Jersey history and a history of the state's master glass craftsmen. Her books are: *Tours of Historic New Jersey*, 1965, which

won the New Jersey Tercentenary medal; the New Jersey volume of *Fodor's Guide to the U.S.A.*, 1966; and *Glass Crafters of New Jersey*, 1971, which received awards from the New Jersey Teachers of English and from the American Association of State and Local History.

During World War II, Pepper was publicity director for the Committee on the Care of Children in Wartime. She was a member of the New York Academy of Sciences and the honorary society Phi Kappa Phi.

According to Deborah Reilly, external relations coordinator, Ms. Pepper wanted to benefit the entire university with her gift. "She believed that libraries are the threads tying together students and researchers, past, present, and future."

Pepper's name will be given a prominent place in the newly refurbished Memorial Library lobby when remodeling is completed later this spring.

## Oxford librarian to speak at annual dinner

Bodley's Librarian at Oxford University will deliver the Friends annual dinner lecture Wednesday evening, April 13, in room 160 of the Elvehjem Museum of Art on campus. David Vaisey, who is also professorial fellow of Exeter College at Oxford, has been Bodley's Librarian since 1986.

Vaisey's lecture at 5:15 p.m. precedes the annual dinner to be held at 7 p.m. The dinner will be in the Department of Special Collections, 976 Memorial Library.

Vaisey was a visiting professor at UCLA in 1985 and is in demand as a lecturer on both sides of the Atlantic. He is the author or co-author of eight books, notably *The Diary of Thomas Turner, 1754-1765*, published in 1984 by Oxford University Press. He is also the author of nearly a dozen articles.



David Vaisey, Bodley's Librarian, Oxford University

Continued on page 15

## Springtime in the libraries

### MESSENGER

FRIENDS OF THE  
UW-MADISON LIBRARIES

Number 28, Spring 1994

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Friends of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries  
976 Memorial Library  
728 State Street  
Madison, WI 53706  
Telephone: (608) 262-3243

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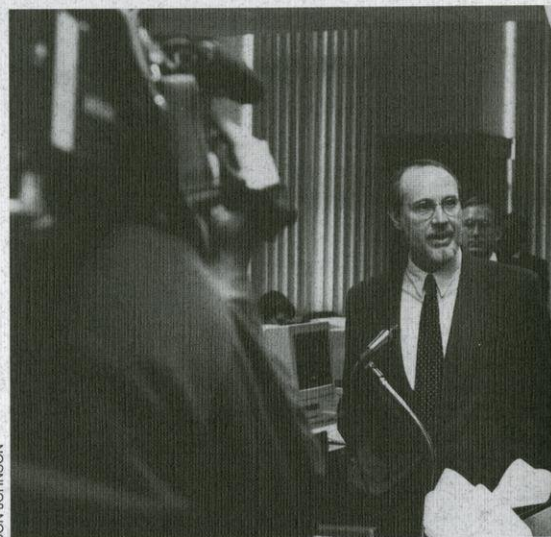
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### From the director

"Spring is like a perhaps hand," e.e. cummings writes, "arranging and changing placing carefully there a strange thing and a known thing here." That is what spring is proving to be in campus libraries, and we are full of anticipation (with a bit of anxiousness) and continuing gratitude to you, our Friends.

Among the arranges and changes well under way is a new lobby for Memorial Library. Designed in another era, the lobby to the largest campus library has always contained, at best, unrealized potential. With the help of resources from campus administration, the State of Wisconsin, architects at Strang Associates, and the Friends, we are relocating the entrance to enhance artist James Watrous's wall mosaic and provide patrons with a more welcoming atmosphere. We plan to throw a party after school lets out to show off our new look. All our Friends will be invited.

The Business Library, located in the new Grainger Hall, is complete, and collections and staff moved during the holidays. The new building, including the library, is the result of a major gift to the university. The library will also benefit from a substantial gift to the collections from the Rennebohm Foundation. Students are pleased with the new space. Every seat is in use during evening hours.



DON JOHNSON

GLS Director Ken Frazier speaks before local TV crew at InfoLab dedication.

We also recently opened another library-based computer lab in cooperation with the Division of Information Technology. More than 650 students show up every day to use the facility, and we are learning from them that electronic information and books are complementary, not contradictory, formats for learning.

The very latest harbinger of springtime renewal is that the School of Education's Instructional Materials Center will remodel and refurnish its conference and seminar room as a result of a gift from Friends Board member Ellsworth Snyder.

Campus libraries are working everywhere to strike the proper balance between continuity and change—"carefully," as e.e. cummings notes, "and without breaking anything." We hope you will be able to join us for the annual lecture and dinner, April 13, a celebration of spring and libraries.

Kenneth L. Frazier  
Director  
General Library System



## More than 20,000 patrons visit new Memorial Library InfoLab in first month

UW-Madison Chancellor David Ward cut the ribbon Feb. 23 at the dedication of the new Memorial Library InfoLab, formerly a first-floor study hall. The 106-station lab, the largest on campus, opened its doors Feb. 1. By the end of the month, nearly 20,000 InfoLab users had been counted, almost 12,000 in the last two weeks alone. Use now averages 650 people each day.

The lab offers state-of-the-art technology, both Macintosh and PC-compatible computers, and color printing. Ten workstations are equipped with high-resolution color monitors, CD-ROM drives, and optical disk cartridges.

Students can send and receive email, search electronic library information resources, explore the Internet, and check their student records as well as local campus information. The InfoLab includes facilities for small group hands-on teaching and offers handicap access.

Currently, the lab's hours parallel those of Memorial Library. By next fall, the facility may be open around the clock, seven days a week.

### Wish list

The wish list in this issue focuses on many needs across campus libraries. All of the items relate directly to better serving university faculty and students. Anyone wishing to assist in funding the following purchases should contact Deborah Reilly, 369 Memorial Library, (608) 262-2566.

■ *Gallery benches: \$3,000.* Gallery benches for newly remodeled lobby of Memorial Library.

■ *Disabled access computer equipment: \$2,500.*

■ *Book truck for the Math Library: \$300.*

■ *Microform reader/printer for the Business Library: \$3,500.*

■ *Matching funds for Brittingham grant: \$500.*

The additional fund would allow us to purchase a computerized index to 19th and early 20th century periodicals.

■ *Refitting of instructional media center for library classes and workshops in Memorial Library: \$4,000.*

### *Book Days Weekend held by Borders*

During a *Book Days Weekend*, March 11-13, Borders Book Shop in Madison donated 17 percent of purchases to the Friends of the UW-Madison Libraries. The offer applied whenever buyers showed a Friends membership card or mentioned the Friends.

All facets of books—collecting, design, production, writing—all figured prominently in Wright's personal and professional lives.

## Friends publish new book, *Frank Lloyd Wright & The Book Arts*

The new Friends-supported exhibition catalog, *Frank Lloyd Wright & The Book Arts*, went on sale recently at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. MOMA, the first buyer of the book, placed its order within days after the volume arrived from the printer.

The 120-page catalog is based on an exhibition held in the Department of Special Collections for which Mary Jane Hamilton, the book's author, acted as guest curator. Phil Hamilton, a UW professor of art, designed the book.

The project represents a major book publishing and fund-raising venture for the Friends. The soft-cover book has 42 illustrations and a seven-page index.

Hamilton examines the internationally-known Wisconsin native from an unconventional perspective. Not limited to books in the famous architect's own library or even to those for which he provided text or illustrations, the volume shows how all facets of books—collecting, book-related architectural design, production, writing—figured prominently in Wright's personal and professional lives.

Hamilton develops the same themes she employed for the Wright exhibition. Fifteen chapters, expanded versions of the exhibition captions, explore a variety of fascinating topics.

Some are relatively broad subjects, such as English Arts and Crafts books that inspired Wright's involvement with a short-lived

private press in the 1890s. Others focus on more specific subjects like the Caxton Club, a Chicago organization of bibliophiles which nurtured Wright's interest in fine books and Japanese prints.

Individual chapters are dedicated to two books that Wright helped produce and design. The two Auvergne Press editions were: *The House Beautiful* by William Channing Gannett, the Unitarian minister; and *The Eve of St. Agnes* by John Keats.

Hamilton cites the full text of Wright's 1898 letters to Gannett, confirming that the 90-copy edition required nearly three years to complete, although the book's title page indicates a single winter. That misconception has been perpetuated by auction and exhibition catalogs.

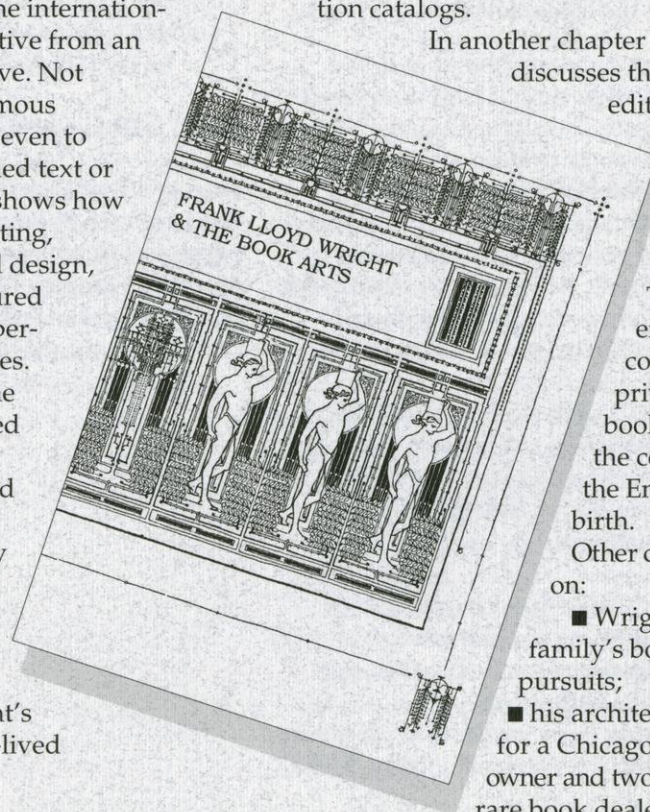
In another chapter the author discusses the 60-copy edition of the

Keats poem for which Wright provided the title page.

This is considered in the context of other private press books celebrating the centennial of the English writer's birth.

Other chapters focus on:

- Wright and his family's book writing pursuits;
- his architectural designs for a Chicago bookstore owner and two for a Pasadena rare book dealer;
- and a discussion on famous architects, including Charles Ashbee, Peter Behrens, and





Henry Van de Velde, who shared with Wright an interest in books, typography, and printing.

Those with only a minimal interest in Frank Lloyd Wright may be intrigued by many links to Madison and the university. For example, what appears to be his first published drawing appeared in the university's 1887 yearbook. His newly established Taliesin Fellowship receives several pages of free publicity in the 1933 edition.

The book also details Wright's relationship with Chauncey Williams, Jr., a fellow UW-Madison student, architectural client, and private press partner. Williams's Chicago firm published books by well-known Madisonians, such as historian Reuben Gold Thwaites and Mary Mathews Adams, the wife of former UW-Madison president Charles Kendall Adams. The same Way and Williams firm served as distributor for the only Kelmscott Press-produced book in America, Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *Hand and Soul*, which provided a direct link between the highly regarded English Arts and Crafts press and Wright's Chicago colleagues.

*Frank Lloyd Wright & The Book Arts* also documents a direct link with another famous English Arts and Crafts figure, Thomas J. Cobden-Sanderson. During October 1907 Cobden-Sanderson presented one illustrated lecture for the Caxton Club in Chicago and two in Madison, the latter co-sponsored by the Madison Art Association and the University of Wisconsin's Library School.

Like the earlier Wright exhibition, the new catalog underscores the cooperative efforts of numerous libraries and the rarity of items included in their collections. Most of the nearly 100 books featured in the Wright exhibition and the book were drawn from the Department of Special Collections in Memorial Library.

These included the two Auvergne Press books in which Wright was personally involved. The exhibition also featured copies of the Kelmscott Press *Chaucer*, *Ashendene*

*Dante*, and *Doves Press Bible*, all acquired with other valuable items from William G. Reeder.

The UW-Madison Archives provided copies of *Trochos* and *Badger* yearbooks. Mills Library shared a little known music textbook, one of three titles written by the architect's father, William C. Wright. The Kohler Art Library loaned copies of books written by the younger Wright as well as valuable issues of the Dutch *Wendingen* publication featuring articles about his work. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin Library provided a rare book produced by an obscure private press once located in Wausau, Wisconsin. Steenbock Library loaned an especially valuable copy of the two-portfolio German publication, *Ausgeführte Bauten und Entwürfe von Frank Lloyd Wright*, personally inscribed by the architect to the agricultural library in 1923.

Both ventures benefited from the generosity of individuals and community institutions. Professors David C. Davis, Philip Hamilton, Cavalliere Ketchum, and James G. Nelson shared books and artifacts, as did Caryl Askins, Jon Buschke, John Holzhueter, and Lawrence Jacobsen. The book arts exhibition and catalog also were enriched by original Wright letters from the University of Rochester Library and original drawings from the Frank Lloyd Wright Archives.

Neither endeavor would have been possible without the financial support provided by the Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission and the Madison Community Foundation, the Marshall Erdman Foundation, the Friends of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries, the General Library System, Park Printing House, Ltd., and a generous contribution honoring Forest Case and Leonore Belle Middleton.

Copies of *Frank Lloyd Wright & The Book Arts* are available at \$19.95 regular, \$15.95 Friends. Out of a limited press run of 1000, the Friends are offering 50 numbered copies signed by the author for \$30.

Orders may be placed by mail:

Friends of the  
UW-Madison Libraries  
360 Memorial Library  
728 State Street  
Madison, WI 53706

Please include \$3 shipping and handling. Tax for Wisconsin residents is 5.5 percent.

Copies of Genoese cartularies, unique records of medieval notaries, provide a rich source of information about trade between Europe and the rest of the world 700 years ago. A Friends grant-in-aid recipient just completed his own research on the collection in the Department of Special Collections.

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*We can learn how  
Arabian incense,  
Egyptian linen,  
Sudanese gold, and  
Chinese pepper  
arrived in Europe  
... No other  
records of this kind  
have survived.*

## Medieval documents revolutionize study of economic history

Two large 1940s-style metal file cabinets in Vault Two of Memorial Library's Special Collections represent the legacy the University of Wisconsin has left to the study of European economic history. The cabinets contain the papers of the so-called "Wisconsin School" of economic historians whose work has widely discussed in the '30s and '40s and continues to have international influence.

The 40 bundles of old photostats might at first seem disappointing. These copies, however, were the documents the "Wisconsin School" used to revolutionize the study of medieval economic history. The photostats are reproductions of registers kept by notaries who wrote legal documents in the Italian city of Genoa in the 12th and 13th centuries. Along with Venice, Genoa was the medieval port that connected the economic systems of the Muslim and Byzantine worlds with underdeveloped, but rapidly growing, Western Europe.

The Genoese notaries, therefore, recorded the activities of this international, cross-cultural trade. From the registers (called "cartularies"), we can learn how Arabian incense, Egyptian linen, Sudanese gold, and Chinese pepper arrived in Europe and likewise how English wool, Flemish textiles, and German silver were distributed around Northern Africa and Asia. No other records of this kind have survived in Europe.

Dating more than 300 years before the voyage of the Genoese merchant Christopher Columbus, the Genoese cartularies allow us to study in immense detail the commerce of goods and people that connected the different regions of the world.

One of the first people to realize the immense potential of these records for historical study was Professor Eugene H. Byrne of the University of Wisconsin. Byrne first saw the cartularies in Genoa as a graduate student in 1911 and published his famous studies on Mediterranean shipping in the following decades. He showed in these works that the

Genoese cartularies could provide great quantities of new information on the techniques of shipping in the Mediterranean, the balance of trade between Europe and other parts of the world, and the origins of the immense economic growth of Europe that led it to domination of the world economy 400 years later.

Byrne was so excited by the possibilities of the Genoese cartularies that he returned to Genoa in 1922 with an early Kodak photostat machine to copy the oldest cartularies and bring them back to Madison, where he began encouraging students to work on them. One of his earliest students was Robert Reynolds, who received his Ph.D. from Wisconsin in 1928 with a dissertation titled *The Trans-Alpine Commerce of Genoa: 1179-1200*. Reynolds remained at Wisconsin as a faculty member and became the leader of the "Wisconsin School" after Byrne left for Barnard College in the '30s. For the next 40 years Reynolds and his students produced studies of medieval economic history based on the photostats contained in the two file cabinets in Special Collections. The margins of the photostats are filled with notes written by Byrne, Reynolds, and many others.

The Wisconsin historians' greatest legacy to their field is their transcription of the oldest 12th-century cartularies, which they published in collaboration with researchers in Italy in the '30s and '40s. These editions made the Genoese cartularies available to a much wider audience; they are still considered the definitive editions and are consulted and cited by scholars in North America, Eastern and Western Europe, and the Middle East.

As a historical source, the Wisconsin collection of Genoese cartularies remains just as valuable today as it was in 1922, but in other ways it has become more valuable. The collection itself has become a historical artifact.

*John Bryan Williams  
1993 Friends Grant-in-Aid Recipient*

## New grants-in-aid awarded

The Friends have awarded two new grants-in-aid. The awards will help scholars in American and French literature use UW-Madison library collections.

**Grace Farrell**, the Rebecca Clifton Reade professor of English from Butler University in Indianapolis, plans to use the grant to study materials written by and about Lillie Devereux Blake (1833-1913). Blake was an American fiction writer, journalist, essayist, lecturer, and cultural critic. She wrote fiction, poetry, biographical sketches, historical summaries, social puffs, and exposés.

Farrell will use the Cairns Collection of American Women Writers to do research on Blake and other American women writers during the first decade after the Civil War. She will also study copies of the Philadelphia *War Press* issues published from 1862 to 1863 in the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

**E. Nicole Meyer**, assistant professor of French and humanistic studies at the UW-Green Bay, plans to continue work on Nathalie Sarraute's *Vous les entendez?* She is studying how Sarraute recasts in "oral" form the written texts of other authors. She will use Memorial Library's extensive collection of theoretical and philosophical texts, both in English and in French.

The grants-in-aid offer \$800 to support research each semester in any field appropriate to the collections. The awards are designed primarily to help provide access to UW-Madison library resources in the humanities for people who live beyond commuting distance.

For application forms or further information, please write to the Friends of the UW-Madison Libraries Award Committee, 976 Memorial Library, 728 State St., Madison, WI 53706, or phone John Tortorice at (608) 262-3243.

## Preservation project treats more than 2000 books

More than 2000 books were cleaned and treated in the first phase of a preservation project supported by the campus Brittingham Fund. The materials include American and European imprints published before 1820.

The majority of the books, which had been shelved in the open stacks, are bound in leather or vellum. Some items dated from the 17th century. The materials were transferred from the Memorial Library stacks to the Department of Special Collections.

Early labeling processes involved: painting the lower portion of the spines with black paint, regardless of what earlier data this obliterated; painting on white call numbers; and varnishing over that surface.

Those working on the project removed paint, repaired cracks on the spines, and cleaned off dirt and mold. They cleaned and treated 2247 books by mid-December and repaired 217. About 200 hours of work remain under phase one of the grant.

Records were kept on all books that required protective enclosure, box or pamphlet folders, or actual rebinding and major repair. Conservation boxes for books requiring them have been completed under the Department of Special Collections budget. Books needing significant repairs will be treated under the second phase of the project, which the Brittingham Fund is supporting in 1994.

Anne C. Tedeschi  
Conservation Technician



*Pianist, teacher, artist, composer, scholar—Snyder is the Leonardo da Vinci of Madison's avant-garde.*

## The legend of Ellsworth Snyder

... Over the years he has shown a fierce reluctance to specialize. Pianist, teacher, artist, Unitarian Society choir director, composer, scholar, collector—Snyder is the Leonardo da Vinci of Madison's avant-garde ... Such far-ranging enthusiasms often come at a price, and part of the price Snyder has paid is that he is rather obscure even in the town where he lives ...

It's a lazy summer afternoon, and several of Snyder's piano students—all adults except for one teenager—are gathered around a comfortable west-side living room, discussing 19th-century performance practices. Leading the discussion is the world's most loquaciously quiet legend, a 62-year-old imp who shows few signs of having slowed down since undergoing a quadruple by-pass back in 1988. Snyder says the medicine he takes these days is supposed to change him from a Type-A person to a Type-B person. Maybe he needs to double the dose ...

Snyder's own past began in Ohio, but he didn't start piano until he was 12—an unusually late age for someone who would eventually make the piano his career. After a year studying popular music, he settled down with Ralph Zirkle, a classical piano teacher from the old school.

"He used to yell and scream and threaten," Snyder says. "I can remember arriving at his studio one day and seeing him run out the door after some kid, waving his fist and shouting, 'Don't you ever come back!' And there I was clutching my little book of Clementi sonatinas. But you have to understand, teachers were authority figures back then. I was not allowed to do any school activities—any anything—without getting Mr. Zirkle's permission first. And his answer was always the same: 'Do you want to be a pianist?'"

After graduating from high school, Snyder spent an extra year with Zirkle and then was accepted at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, where he studied with Robert Goldsand, a former prodigy who was still actively concertizing at the time.

"Mr. Goldsand was a great revelation," Snyder says. "Though we talked about technique and things like that, the emphasis shifted to musical matters. I felt like the whole world had opened up to me ..."

Shortly after receiving his master's degree in 1955, Snyder was drafted into the Army. He did his bit to defeat the Koreans by working as a chaplain's assistant in Tokyo. Upon returning to the States, he had to start looking for a job, his performing career having been thwarted by his stint overseas. He first landed at East Tennessee State, where he taught piano and theory, conducted the glee club, and knocked heads with the department chair, "a band man."

"He was given to saying things that he hoped would drive me up the wall, like he would die to defend the eight-tone scale," Snyder says. "I hope I at least wounded him when I performed the *Little Concerto for Piano and Band* by Henry Cowell."



BRENT NICASTRO

After Tennessee, Snyder tried Louisiana in 1960. He spent four very happy years at Newcomb College, the women's division of Tulane University, but the possibility of getting tenure became mired in departmental politics, he says. After Newcomb, Snyder literally snapped his fingers—actually, a tendon—and arrived in Madison in 1964.

"At first, the doctors thought it was just a fracture, but it turned out the tendon had severed and kind of wadded up," Snyder says. "It took several hours of surgery to put it back where it belonged. Anyway, a colleague of mine from Newcomb, who had moved on to the UW, called me up one day and said, 'Well, since you're never going to play piano again, why don't you come to Wisconsin and get a Ph.D.?'"

Thus began Snyder's most hectically productive years. While taking classes and writing the first-ever doctoral dissertation on John Cage, he gave piano lessons and taught courses in music theory and music appreciation. These were the anything-goes '60s, of course, and Snyder enjoys telling how the experimental section of his music appreciation class went from 50 students one semester to 250 the next.

"It was just a wonderful time to be alive," he says. "We'd do all this kooky avant-garde stuff in the Memorial Union, and there

would be students in the aisles."

Miraculously, Snyder also started playing piano again—a Mozart concerto with the Summer Symphony, an all-contemporary recital in Old Music Hall. Eventually, against all odds, he found himself on the stage of Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall.

"I chose a wonderful program," he says about his 1977 New York debut. "I opened with a Cage piece called *Dream*, because it had always been my dream to play in New York. Then I played Schoenberg's Opus 23, four late-Liszt pieces, the Czerny toccata, and Schubert's B-flat sonata. Unfortunately, my only review was by a man from the *New York Times* who didn't like contemporary music. Of course, my Schubert doesn't exactly sound like anyone else's, either ..."

By the time of his New York recital, Snyder had been teaching at Milton College near Janesville (Wis.) for several years. During this time, his friendship with Cage, whom he had met at Newcomb, became stronger.

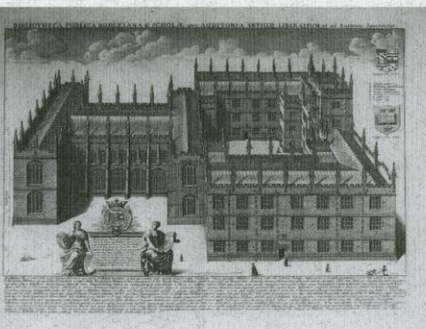
"I suppose I wrote my thesis on Cage because I didn't understand him," Snyder says. "Incomprehensibility is something that really interests me because of the way it can twist your mind. I sensed an importance in Cage, and I figured that if I wrote about him, I would come to understand him." Twenty-five years later, Snyder's still trying to understand.

"By the time John died, I felt I was finally able to discuss his work with him without talking nonsense," Snyder says. "He was a much smarter man than I am. Whenever I left him, I felt I'd just been with the most lucid mind I'd ever encountered. In my own not-so-lucid mind, John stands for curiosity, awareness, and chance. He believed people could reach an inner state in

The Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles included a painting by Ellsworth Snyder in an exhibition called *Rolywholyover: The Circus*. In addition, Snyder lent the museum several works from his own collection of Fluxus art. Fluxus, an international avant-garde movement, opposes artistic traditions. It focuses on generating "living art" in which spectators participate in a process that often combines visual, musical, and literary aspects of culture and art. Some artists associated with the Fluxus art movement were Joseph Beuys, George Brecht, John Cage, Dick Higgins, George Maciunas, Yoko Ono, Emmett Williams, and others.

*Continued on page 11*

*Ellsworth Snyder, a long-time member of the Friends Board of Directors, was featured recently in Isthmus, a Madison weekly newspaper with a circulation of 58,000. The following excerpts tell the story of a "quiet legend."*



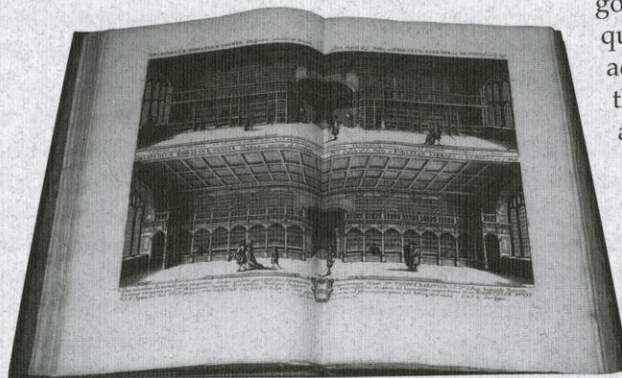
Photos show exterior and interior views of the Bodleian Library, founded in 1602, taken from *Oxonia illustrata*, Oxford, 1675, by David Loggan (Department of Special Collections, #1288802). Bodley's Librarian will speak at the Friends annual meeting, April 13 (see page 1).

## Inside the Bodleian

The Bodleian Library, set in a series of magnificent buildings dating from the 15th century, was founded by Sir Thomas Bodley in 1602 to serve the University of Oxford and "the whole republic of learning." Until the foundation of the British Museum in the mid-18th century, it was the premier scholarly library of the English-speaking world. With its 4.5 million volumes, the Bodleian is one of the world's great libraries.

The Bodleian, a national depository library, is entitled to receive a copy of every British publication. It is not, however, a lending library. No book may be lent, not even to kings. Nor are its readers given access to the stacks.

In the early 19th century, every reader had to take a solemn oath on a Testament that he (there were no women readers) would not mutilate or embezzle books, but would



faithfully observe university regulations. At about the same time, the librarian and the sub-librarian were obliged to take vows of perpetual celibacy (a custom, I presume, no longer observed).

Late one October afternoon some years ago, seeking admission to the Bodleian as a reader, the writer of these lines entered the old door of the School of Natural Philosophy, where he found himself in a spacious room emitting a faint atmosphere of old leather bindings and hushed librarianly activity. A recommendation, it transpired, would be necessary.

Did I know anyone in Oxford? "Dr. Robert Shackleton," I replied. (He had taught a seminar in Wisconsin a few years earlier.) This reference to the director of the Bodleian Library did not go unnoticed.

"Ah!," said the sub-librarian approvingly, "Bodley's Librarian." A tattered black gown was produced. The oath required of new readers was about to be administered. Somewhat nervously, I then read aloud and signed the archaic statutory declaration: "I hereby undertake not to remove from the Library, or to mark, deface, or injure in any way, any volume, document, or other object belonging to it or in its custody; nor to bring into the Library or kindle therein any fire or flame, and not to smoke in the Library; and I promise to obey all rules of the Library."

Only then was I granted that most priceless possession, that open sesame to the world of arcane scholarship, my green Reader's Ticket (No. B77N6247).

Lorin A. Uffenbeck  
Friends President

Ellsworth Snyder *(Continued from page 9)*

which everyday living would be pleasurablely substantial, and that it was possible to show them how to do this using sound . . . ”

It was through Cage that Snyder started making art.

“When I first saw John’s artwork, I was very moved by it,” he says. “And it occurred to me that I didn’t really understand the creative process, since I had always been the middleman between the composer and the audience. So I bought some art materials and just started doing things. That was in 1979.”

In his artwork, Snyder draws on the art he likes best: abstract expressionism and minimalism. Like the abstract expressionists, he loves gesture. Like the minimalists, he insists on keeping things simple; his shapes seem to have been teased into existence but not quite into meaning.

“I do like the concept that less is more,” he says. “I think if one could just draw a line that had real presence, one would have achieved a great deal—just a simple line . . . ”

It’s a Thursday evening and Snyder is putting the Unitarian Society choir through its paces in the auditorium of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Unitarian Meeting House. Snyder has been riding this choir for 21 years, and they seem to have loved every minute of it . . .

Snyder has taken advantage of the Unitarians’ commitment to diversity—their tolerance for other belief systems—by continually pushing new kinds of music on them. “I suppose I cannot do a polka,” he says, “but I can do just about any music with any text in any language, as long as it has some sort of religious, spiritual, or philosophical overtones.”

Like many others, Genevieve Gersbach first joined the choir and then joined the church. “I started going because of my respect for Ellsworth, both as a musician and as a human being,” she says. “I feel he really

understands the voice, but I also feel he’s a very endearing man, genuinely concerned about you.”

Parish minister Michael Schuler says that, although Snyder is not a Unitarian, he has nevertheless performed a ministry at the church. “In terms of his thinking and his own spirituality, he’s as much a Unitarian as anyone here,” Schuler says. “I find it quite amazing what he is able to coax out of these singers, many of whom have had no formal training, but Ellsworth is also the first to notice when it’s someone’s birthday or someone is sick or has suffered a loss. He’s imbued with the spirit of this place . . . ”

*Kent Williams*

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### **Frank Bright Fund created**

More than \$10,500 has been given in memory of the late Frank Bright, who was associate director of the General Library System and who had also served as acting director. He was involved with the library system from its inception. Contributions are still being welcomed. Library staff hope to use the fund in the Memorial Library lobby remodeling.

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## Bodleian *(Continued from page 1)*

His historical research and writing focus on two specialties:

- the nature and potentialities of local historical records of all periods; and
- the nature and contents of retail shops in 17th- and 18th-century provincial England.

Vaisey is a fellow of the Royal Historical Society, of the Society of Antiquities, and of the Royal Society of Arts.

The working title for the lecture is *Four Centuries of Collecting: The Bodleian Library at Oxford*. A first-hand account of experiences at the Bodleian Library has been written by Friends President Lorin Uffenbeck, professor of French and Italian (*see page 10*).

## Friends book sales

Book sales occur monthly on the third Friday, 3-5:15 p.m., and Saturday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. in the southeast basement of Memorial Library.

Items have included works on popular entertainment, current events, and nearly every academic subject. Call John Tortorice, 262-3243, to donate books. Coming dates are:

March 18-19;

April 15-16;

May 20-21.

## Coming Exhibitions

Exhibitions listed are in the Department of Special Collections, 976 Memorial Library, which is open 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

### ■ Through March 31.

*Department of Special Collections: Ornithology Books*. Exhibition features illustrated books on birds, primarily drawn from the Thordarson Collection of the department.

### ■ April through August.

*From the Collections of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries: Italian Books*. A special exhibition in conjunction with a conference of the American Association for Italian Studies.

## Planned giving: a tax-effective way to assist libraries

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Libraries and UW Foundation experts are always available to talk with you and your attorney or tax advisor confidentially about will provisions. We can help provide wording which will ensure that your bequest is carried out in accordance with your wishes.

If you are interested in learning more about planned giving to campus libraries, please call Deborah Reilly at (608) 262-2566 or Russell Howes at (608) 263-4545. We will be pleased to discuss with you these and other strategies for financial planning.

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