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Library Receives Rare Map Donations

McMaster University has been the fortunate beneficiary of two marvelous donations of rare maps recently.

The first collection was donated by Mr. Sydney Banks in September 2001 (*see next article*). This collection is composed of 169 maps, with particular research strengths in Cumbria (Cumberland County, England—66 maps) and in South America, especially Brazil (63 maps). For both of these areas, the collection of maps of the same geographical area over several centuries provides a unique opportunity to see change over time and, especially in the case of South America, to see the development of knowledge about this land as it was first explored. There are also interesting maps of Canada and the world. The oldest map in the collection is a map of the British Isles from an edition of Ptolemy's *Cosmographia*, produced in 1486.

The second collection was donated in November 2001 by Mr. Elmar Hodson. This collection is composed of 149 rare maps (pre-1900), 72 maps dated after 1900 and 7 atlases. Most maps are of Eastern Canada and especially Upper Canada (Ontario), comprising a rich historical collection with particular strength in the 18th and 19th century periods of settlement. These maps add a strong research complement to McMaster's existing collection of earlier maps of Canada. The Hodson Collection is described, with photographs, at: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/library/maps/hindex.htm>

Both of these generous gifts will ensure that these special historical collections remain accessible to researchers in a scholarly setting and are preserved in perpetuity for future generations. The original maps may be viewed by appointment in Archives and Research Collections, Mills Memorial Library. ■

Cathy Moulder

Sydney Banks on Collecting Maps

Sydney Banks' name is most closely associated with the entertainment industry in Canada. His career spanned a variety of visual arts mediums, ranging from live theatre to radio, film and finally, the newest medium of the time, television. He was a co-founder and executive producer of the Global Television Network, and a founder and director of CUC Limited, which became one of the largest cable companies in Canada (now part of Shaw Cable). Currently he is president of S. BANKS Group INC., and is a major shareholder in Essbee Productions and Sydbar Productions Inc.

Over many years, Mr. Banks has been a collector of art, stamps, paper currency and rare maps. In 2001 Mr. Banks donated his collection of rare maps to McMaster, a significant research collection for the academic community. Scanned images of the maps are mounted at: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/library/maps/bindex.htm> so that others can appreciate the beauty and historical significance of his collection.

In a recent conversation Mr. Banks

described how he began to collect the maps he donated to McMaster.

How and why did you begin to collect maps?

My wife told me I needed a hobby, and I thought why not stamps? I made a point of going to a stamp show, went and saw a dealer and chatted with him and obviously he praised stamp collecting as being a very good hobby. He gave me a set of rules to go by and essentially they boil down to: don't try to collect everything—the world is too big a place; and the other thing that he said was: always buy the best, don't buy junk. If you can't afford it—walk away. So I started collecting stamps. One day I went to a stamp show and as part of the

(continued on p.2)

In This Issue:

- Library Receives Rare Maps Donations 1
- Sydney Banks 1
- Remembering Professor Emeritus Lloyd Reeds 2
- Announcing LIBNEWS-LIST 2
- Icelandic Sagas 3
- Cash or Gifts-in-Kind? 3
- Major Art Collection Acquired 3
- Electronic Resources Database 3
- Preservation Tip 4
- Recent Notable Gifts 4
- Grants 4
- Publications 4
- Calendar 4

(Sydney Banks — cont'd from p.1)

show they were also selling paper currency. I was interested for two reasons: I'd been an art collector for quite a long time and I was struck by the design, and I was getting a little tired of stamps. So I sold my stamps and decided to buy this paper currency. That became a problem because you couldn't get insurance and so you had to put them inside safety deposit boxes...it took away a great deal of the pleasure of collecting. I did a fair amount of traveling. I was in London and spoke with a dealer who invited me to a currency auction. Not

only were they selling currency, but also old share certificates, and once again I was attracted to them; they had no particular value, but I was struck by the beauty of the engravings. I wasn't terribly interested in going after share certificates because they were too bulky.

One day I happened to be passing by a shop that sold maps. Again I was attracted by the engraving. I went in and talked to the fellow, and started collecting maps, just like that.

Do you have a favourite map?

They were all favourites. They are all very special. What always amazed me was how accurate these maps were when they didn't have all the technology, but occasionally they goofed and one of them was a map which I gave to McMaster which was a map of the UK. It's a very old map, done in 1486, before Columbus set sail. It's a curious piece because it's based on Ptolemy, who was a very important influence on most cartographers. In those days they drew maps

essentially by information given to them by sailors and merchants and so on. So here we have a map of the UK, but [England, Scotland and Ireland are beside each other, not in a triangle shape]. It's very curious.

Why did a particular map appeal to you?

I was looking for something that was attractive, unique perhaps...in their own way, apart from their geographic significance, they were an art form.

What have you learned from collecting maps?

Well, I'm always thrilled when I

can go to other cultures and learn things I've never known before. Since I'm in the creative end of things all the time, culture is very important

and I appreciate it very much. A great deal of the romance attached to them has a lot to do with politics, sometimes accidental discoveries, [as well as historical information contained in the maps]. These were all incidental to the purpose for which they were made...which was essentially for people to travel.

Why did you decide to donate your collection to McMaster?

Eventually I decided now is a good time [to donate the collection]; I've had a good time with them, I've enjoyed it...learned a great deal. I started looking around and most of the reaction was negative. There was far more interest from the United States than there was from Canada, but I didn't want it going there, I wanted it to go to a Canadian school of learning. Then I phoned McMaster and I

got an immediate positive reaction and, as they say, the rest is history. I thought if somebody can get half the joy I've retained...but much, much more important is this: maybe a scholar will find information [in the collection] that will do something significant for them. ■

Anne Plessl

Remembering Professor Emeritus Lloyd Reeds

Dr. Lloyd Reeds, for whom McMaster's Map Collection is named, died in April at the age of 85. He was appointed to teach Geography and Anthropology at McMaster in 1948, and was effectively the founder of the Department of Geography and its Chair for the first 12 years. He was a wide-ranging researcher, a farm boy whose areas of expertise included agricultural geography and particularly the loss of farmland in the Niagara Peninsula. Most notably, he was a superb teacher.

Alumni who visit the Map Collection always remember him fondly and particularly the enthusiasm with which he taught Canadian geography. The Map Collection was named in his honour at his retirement in 1983. ■

Cathy Moulder

Announcing LIBNEWS-LIST

This new opt-in list will alert subscribers to news about collections, services and events at McMaster University Library. Subscribers will occasionally receive brief messages from the list to inform them of ways we can assist with research, study or teaching activities. Messages will also provide the most up-to-date information to access the Library's resources.

For general information, or to subscribe to the mailing list, go to: <http://mailman.mcmaster.ca/mailman/listinfo/libnews-list>

We are pleased to offer this service and hope you will find it useful. ■

Icelandic Sagas Tell Exciting Tales

The Complete Sagas of Icelanders, a fine 5-volume edition of the first English translation of 40 Icelandic sagas and 49 associated tales was presented to University Librarian Graham R. Hill by Mrs. Holly Garrett on behalf of the Icelandic

Ambassador to Canada. Charlotte Stewart, Assistant University Librarian, Collections Management and Development, Dr. Virginia Aksan, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of History, and Dr. Anne



A. Savage, H. Garrett, G.R. Hill, V. Aksan

Savage, Associate Professor in the Department of English joined Graham in accepting the set.

The set is one of 500 donated to schools, colleges and universities across North America to commemorate the Iceland-Canada Millennium Celebrations of the year 2000, a celebration of the 1000th anniversary of Viking Icelanders' first voyages to North America. McMaster is fortunate to have been selected as one of the Canadian institutions to receive this important literary work, which will be of interest to scholars in history and comparative literature. ■

Will That Be Cash or Gifts-in-Kind?

Donors sometimes ask if the Library is still in need of cash donations. The quick answer is YES!

While we are grateful for donations of gifts-in-kind such as books, archives and manuscripts, we are also very appreciative of those donors who give us gifts of cash. You may direct your donation to a specific area of the collection or to the *Library of the Future* fund, an endowment that will provide funds annually for the purchase of books in all disciplines for students, faculty and other scholars who use the library's collections.

If you are beginning to plan your charitable tax donations for 2002, we hope you will consider making a donation to McMaster University Library. Your contribution will make a difference! For more information, please call the Library's Development Office at (905)525-9140, ext. 24865.

We look forward to hearing from you. ■

Anne Plessl

Major Art Collection Acquired

In November 2001 the Library acquired an extensive collection of European and Asian art books. The collection was created by two brothers in Montreal who operated a mail-order art book business in the '60s and '70s. After the death in 1984 of the brother who was the prime book-dealer, the business was no longer actively carried on, and eventually the surviving brother decided to find a suitable home for the remaining stock.

The books are new or in nearly-new condition, many in their original slipcases and as issued from the publishers. The collection of some 800 titles is particularly valuable for its 350 catalogues raisonnées and several limited editions including original lithographs.

This collection is a significant addition to the Library's holdings and would be difficult to recreate in such a comprehensive way. The publications will be a major resource for

students and faculty of the School of the Arts. ■

Charlotte A. Stewart

Electronic Resources Database (ERD)

The Library spends hundreds of thousands of dollars every year on valuable electronic products. Given that expenditure, it simply makes good sense for us to try to help our users make the best selection possible of these resources. Although they're catalogued in our online catalogue, MORRIS, many e-resources first appear to our users through web pages and our staff have long maintained cumbersome lists on the web. These lists were of limited flexibility and time-consuming for staff to maintain.

The answer? Our new *Electronic Resources Database (ERD)* available through our webpage at: <http://library.mcmaster.ca>. The database includes all of our licensed electronic products, plus a number of "free but valuable" products, and offers basic, advanced and browse searching capabilities. Keyword searching is available and you can limit your search to "e-resources type"—for instance, indexes and abstracts. The search results list will indicate whether access to the item is restricted to the McMaster community or open to anyone by icons—"M" for McMaster or a globe for open access.

We think our users will find the *ERD* a big improvement. Our staff will reap many benefits as well. Much of the information for licensed products will be downloaded with the click of a button from MORRIS. Then public services staff can quickly add less formal subject headings and other information that will assist users to access the product easily. Staff who want to compile lists of products for tutorials or web pages on specific subjects can do so by simply

(continued on p.4)

(ERD — cont'd from p.3)

adding a code to one of the database fields. It's a pleasure for us to be able to deliver a product that benefits both our users and our staff so much. ■

Sheila Pepper

Preservation Tip: Evaluating Your Treasures

Before investing time and money to improve the condition of your documents, art, photographs, memorabilia, and books, you should first assess the importance of various items to you and your family. They may be objects of monetary value, or, like photographs of grandparents or a family Bible, Torah, or Koran, they may have intrinsic, sentimental, or historical value. Identifying what you have will help you determine the best means of preservation.

Preservation measures that will protect your valuables often only require time and judgement. Inspect your valuable items a few times each year. This will enable you to keep track of their condition and be alerted to any problems. Periodic inspection enables you to detect problems before items are ruined. If an object is damaged, refrain from treating it yourself. For example, the use of pressure-sensitive tape, while a short-term fix, is especially harmful to objects and is not recommended. Rather than undertaking repairs yourself, contact a professional conservator. ■

Audrie Schell

Recent Notable Gifts

The Library has received the following gifts from:

- ◆ Dr. M.E. Fayed, a collection of books on engineering.
- ◆ Dr. Karl Freeman, documents about the Labor-Progressive Party.
- ◆ Dr. J.D. Holbrook, a collection of books on art.
- ◆ Jackie Lautens, the archives of Gary Lautens.
- ◆ Asher Joram, *The Life and Works*

of Garnet Hazard, and documents and illustrations relating to Patrick Lane.

- ◆ Dr. James King, the 4th accrual of his archives and Farley Mowat's correspondence with Peter Davison of The Atlantic Monthly Press.
- ◆ Erika Lehner, two German eighteenth-century manuscripts.
- ◆ Dr. Harvey Levenstein, books on American and Latin American history.
- ◆ Brian McFarlane, his archives and documents related to his father (Leslie McFarlane, the writer of the *Hardy Boys* series) and grandfather (John Henry McFarlane).
- ◆ Dr. Stuart MacLeod, *Zoology of the Voyage of the H.M.S. Beagle, Under the Command of Captain Fitzroy During the Years 1832–1836* by Charles Darwin. London: Royal Geographical Society, 1994. (facsimile reprint of 1840 ed.)
- ◆ Farley Mowat, the 12th accrual of his archives.
- ◆ Dr. Charles Roland, a collection of books on various topics.
- ◆ Sarah Sutcliffe, the 7th accrual of Marian Engel's archives.
- ◆ Dr. Harry Waisglass, the 5th accrual of his archives.
- ◆ Dr. Michael Walsh, two manuscripts of Bertrand Russell ("How to Read History" and "The Extant Fragments of Heraclitus") along with correspondence with John M. Keynes, Gilbert Seldes, and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.
- ◆ Dr. John Weaver, a collection of books on colonization and settlement frontiers.

We are grateful to all donors for their generosity to the Library. ■

Grants

Labour Studies grant: \$1,200 to arrange and describe the records of the Amalgamated Transit Workers. Local 707 (Hamilton, ON) fonds and the third accrual of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers. Local 504/550 (Hamilton, ON) fonds.

Canadian Council of Archives, two

grants: \$7,224.84 to arrange and describe the second accrual of the Hamilton and District Labour Council fonds; \$14,787 for the electronic conversion of 150 finding aids and their placement on the web site of Archives and Research Collections. ■

Publications

Christmas, William J. *The Lab'ring Muses: Work, Writing, and the Social Order in English Plebian Poetry, 1730–1830*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2001.

Edmonds, David and John Eidinow. *Wittgenstein's Poker: The Story of a Ten-Minute Argument Between Two Great Philosophers*. London: Faber and Faber, 2001.

Marshall, Amy. *Mirabilia Urbis Romae: Five Centuries of Guidebooks and Views*. Toronto: University of Toronto Library, 2002.

Sassen, Brigitte, ed. and trans. *Kant's Early Critics: The Empiricist Critique of the Theoretical Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Schmid, Anne-Françoise, ed. *Bertrand Russell correspondance sur la philosophie, la logique et la politique avec Louis Couturat (1897–1913)*. Paris: Éditions Kimé, 2001. ■

Calendar

Exhibit in Archives and Research Collections, Mills Library, May 1–July 31, 2002: *Herbals, Gardening and Botanical Illustration, 1550–1850*. ■

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