From the University Librarian

by Bil Stahl

As I complete my seventh month as University Librarian some items have clearly emerged as priorities. One of the library's major priorities must be improving the library facilities.

Libraries have always been special places for students and faculty. The "library as place" is actually growing in importance in the digital age. After the initial infatuation with the notion that everything can be found on the Web fades, the library is often rediscovered as the "one-stop shopping" place with knowledgeable and helpful staff ready to assist the information seeker. Libraries also continue to be important communal gathering places where students come to work together on group projects or simply to study together.

The good news is that the Hunter Library has adequate square footage to accommodate collections, services and users for about another decade. However, the bad news is that the space is dated and not very inviting. One of the most common words mentioned in the students' comments about the library is "orange," referring to the rust-colored fabric on the exposed heating ducts. The color quickly recalls the 1970's, and indeed the library is designed for the collections, services and students and faculty as they were then.

Appearance is important. A presenter at a recent conference on academic libraries reported that his research showed a direct link between the appearance of the facility and library usage by students. As an example of this, library usage often jumps by 50 – 100% with the opening of a new library facility. This is not simply a matter of aesthetics or comfort. A WCU Interior Design faculty member recently noted that the Hunter Library appears dated and some students extrapolate that to mean that the materials available in the library are also dated.

Hunter Scholar Makes Presentation

by George Frizzell, Special Collections Archivist II

Dr. Scott Philyaw of the History Department and the Hunter Scholar for 2000 gave a presentation to the library staff on his research findings on February 1. Dr. Philyaw's project, "From Old Smokey to Sedro-Woolley: Western North Carolina Migration to the Pacific Northwest," expands upon the motivations for migration into and out of western North Carolina. Those familiar with the Mountain Heritage Center's "Migration of the Scots-Irish" exhibit will find a corollary in Dr. Philyaw's research, and will be rewarded with a better understanding of the scale and context of this movement.

Western North Carolinians settled throughout the Pacific Northwest, but particularly west of the Cascade mountain range in the well-watered and timbered country reminiscent of their former homes. Communities from the Washington-Canadian border down into northern California witnessed an influx of immigrants, with especially high concentrations of Carolinians in Skagit County, Washington, and its environs. While initially focusing attention on Skagit County, Dr. Philyaw discovered in the course of research patterns of migration into the Northwest and the emigrants' motivations.

While western North Carolinians were only one of many groups moving into the Northwest in the past 150 years, many of them recognized and celebrated a sense of identity. Even though descendants of the earliest emigrants from the late 19th and early 20th centuries came to think of themselves as "pioneers" and "first families" of the Northwest, later settlers from the 1920s-1930s and the post-World War II decades often retained close ties with western North Carolina and were known as "Tarheels."

From the University Librarian

As reported in the last issue of the *Hunter's Clarion*, the Library established two task forces to address library facilities issues - the Facilities Improvement Task Force and the Exhibit Task Force. Neither task force was charged to develop detailed implementation plans, but rather to think about how to make the facilities more user-focused, attractive and relevant. The members of both task forces have provided excellent final reports that we are in the process of converting into action plans. I will not list all of the recommendations here, but will simply highlight some of the themes and ideas developed by them.

Improving the Hunter Library facility will have to be a multiyear project. Some of the changes will require significant funding and/or extensive collection moves and renovations. One of the first tasks will be to define a style and color palette that we will work toward over the years. The style will be one that is "timeless." The color palette will need to work with the current colors used in the library, but also be able to stand on its own.

Major projects will be to improve the lighting in the library, change the layout of the library and, of course, remove the orange fabric from the heating ducts. Improving the lighting is critical as the lighting levels in many areas are simply too low. Changes in the library's layout will include moving the services currently on the mezzanine levels to the ground or main floors, placing a service desk on the ground floor, creating more group study rooms, spreading out the bookstacks to allow seating areas to be scattered throughout the collections, and creating attractive seating areas outside the library's entrance. We also hope to put a café in the library on the main floor. Fortunately, many of these projects do not have to be done all at once, but can be done incrementally.

A warmer reading area at the main floor entrance (photo by Robin Hitch)

by Stephen Findlay,
Reference Librarian

Hunter Library celebrated National Library Week, the week of April 1-7, based on the theme "@theLibrary." A National Library Week banner was displayed and the Circulation Desk was given NLW bookmarks to distribute. There were also fliers posted on bulletin boards all across campus advertising Hunter Library.

A major event of the week was an open house and reception on Wednesday afternoon. Bil Stahl, the University Librarian, and other staff members greeted visitors. In addition to each unit offering tours, cake and punch was served. Guests had the opportunity of viewing our current exhibits, which will remain on display through April. These exhibits highlight important events in the history of Hunter Library and also spotlight other libraries around the world.

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The Facilities Improvement Task Force has already done some improvement projects. These include rearranging seating areas, installing new, brighter floor lamps, and placing living plants on the library's main floor. It is important to note that these improvements quickly received very favorable notice from our students and faculty. There are many other "small" things that we will continue to identify and do to make the library a more comfortable and inviting place.

Other changes will include creating display walls and walls for murals or other art, installing good signage and directories, and replacing worn-out furniture. One of the furniture changes we need to make is to shift from having so many individual study carrels to having more flat tables where groups of students can work. Having a vibrant exhibit program with appropriate spaces and equipment will also be an important enhancement to the library facilities, as well as to its services.

We will be developing the overall plan for the library facility improvements over the next several months. As part of the planning, we will be seeking regular input from all of our constituent groups. I look forward to your involvement in the development of ideas and hope that we will have your support as we proceed.   ◆

Net Challenges: Concepts, Perceptions and Misconceptions

by Betsy Whitley,
Reference Librarian

Librarians and teaching faculty from Ivy Leagues to high schools are all in the same boat regarding the Internet: *Students are high-end users of the Internet and believe that makes them high-level researchers.* Students use the Internet, but have little knowledge about what it is and how its materials differ from traditional information sources.

I see students frustrated because they have the perception that 1) they are knowledgeable about the Web, and 2) their professors (adults) are unsophisticated Web users. This makes giving advice about the Web precarious. When I warn students that they must be wary of materials found on the Web, yawns abound. But when I elaborate by saying that they must check author credentials because it's not okay for college students to cite the digitized papers of sixth graders, many wake up.

Western Carolina University graduates must be able to intelligently use the World Wide Web because most will be employed in information-intensive fields—health, business, technology, sciences, etc. It's estimated that over 70% of medical information on the Web is incorrect, and the rate of information obsolescence is astounding. I tell students that *now* is the time to practice finding and selecting information intelligently, *not* when they are on the job. Helping students develop critical thinking skills to recognize reputable information is the business of librarians and the faculty.

Librarians and professors are faced with the following challenges associated with this incredible information resource.

Challenges:

- Students who don't know there is a difference between a journal article and a Web site.

    This is an elementary beginning, but believe it or not, many students don't know or choose not to believe that Web pages are not equivalent to journal articles. Both are articles in their eyes; read on . . .

- Students who don't know there is a difference between the *validity* of a Web source and that of a periodical article or book.

    A reference is a reference is a reference, right? Students don't understand why professors emphasize the use of books and journals for research when "it's all on the Web." Students may be aware that authoring Web sites requires only the use of a computer and some software knowledge, but they don't think through the implications that *anyone* can author a Web site. Few realize that a published author must have talent to attract the notice of a publisher who then goes through

the time and expense of editing, printing and marketing books and journals.

- Professors who assume students will evaluate Web sources.
- Students who have *never had to* evaluate information resources.

    Students are unaware that throughout their school careers they have used library resources that were evaluated and selected by librarians, faculty, editors and publishers. The idea that all information is not equal, true and good has never occurred to them.

- Students who don't know that they *should* evaluate information.

    Students need to be encouraged to be critical readers. Take a look at the *Journal of Historical Review* article at the following URL address:
    http://ihr.org/jhr/v18/v18n3p-4_Weber.html
    It looks like a reputable site, even to the wary, and after all, the article is in a publication with the word "journal" in it. The impressionable might believe that the Auschwitz gas chambers were indeed delousing chambers.

    Professors immediately see the blatant bias of the site. With our educational background and greater life experience we see the red flags; our know-how enables us to pursue clues that show that this journal and its sponsoring institute are not embraced by scholars or most of society. Students do not have the background and experience to see that this information is suspect. Most poor or questionable sites are not so extreme as this one, and these subtleties are lost on students.

- Students who *don't know how* to evaluate information resources (books, articles or Web).
- Students who *think they know how* to evaluate Web resources.

    I recently worked with students on an exercise where they compared two sites about Fetal Alcohol Syndrome . . . One was a site by a professional medical organization and another was created by a support group. The medical site was short, simply laid out in black and white, using a technical writing style, all of which students found boring and unappealing. Because there were "lots of links and graphics," they preferred the other site that was

Net Challenges

long, colorful, emotional, and had some picturesque (though definitely questionable) quotations and statistics.

• Students who don't know where to find the information needed to evaluate (and cite) Web resources.

Web authors are often not identified; their credentials are rarely mentioned. Students don't even know they should identify the author, let alone analyze their qualifications. Frequently organizations are identified, though their legitimacy may be questionable (if you are a critical reader). The date, accuracy, and purpose of sites are frequently overlooked.

Solution: Help students learn to evaluate information

• Invite librarians into your classroom to discuss information and its sources.
• Talk about quality information—what is it, where does it come from, how do you recognize it?
• Work with students during the research process to find quality information.
• Require students to defend their choice of information sources early in the process of producing a paper.

There are excellent Web sites with reliable information, but they are far outnumbered by inferior sites. Finding high-quality information is a skill honed by librarians who are happy to share their expertise.

Some call information literacy the literacy of the 21st century. Finding, evaluating and synthesizing information are critical thinking skills necessary for employment, life-long-learning, professional development, and empowered citizenship and consumerism.

You are welcome to use the handout that was developed by my colleague, Dana Edge, that is available at the Reference desk, to work with students on developing critical thinking skills. This handout is also available online at http://www.wcu.edu/library/research/wwwsearch/searchtools/evaluate.htm ◆

If you haven't tried netLibrary yet, you might want to consider doing so. The Project Management Distance Learning faculty were delighted to discover that a $90.00 textbook their students will be able

*by Elizabeth Vihnaneh,
Curriculum Materials Librarian*

to use is available in this collection. NetLibrary offers 10,000 full text reference, scholarly and professional electronic books, which can be accessed through the library's home page. See the November/December 2000 issue of the Clarion (http://www.wcu.edu/library/whatsnew/clarion/index.htm) for instructions and more information on the contents. ◆

Q. How Many Libraries Does It Take To Support Research At WCU?

Answer: 304

by Dana Edge, Reference/Interlibrary Loan

304**???** That's right. It takes Hunter Library plus the 303 other libraries from throughout the U.S. and Canada that sent materials to our interlibrary loan office last year. How many institutions did we support? **702** libraries in 47 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, Canada, Denmark, Hong Kong, Hungary, Japan, Norway, and the United Kingdom.

Librarians across the country note the same trend: even with greater availability of full-text articles in online databases and some excellent World Wide Web sources, interlibrary loan activity is increasing. Since 1995, the number of article requests handled by Hunter's interlibrary loan office has increased 19% and the number of book requests has increased 7%. Even in this new millennium, not everything is on the 'net.

As periodical prices increase, so will library interdependence. No library, regardless of academic reputation or collection size, can stand alone. We do a lot of business with the libraries at UNC-Charlotte, Duke, Wake Forest, and Davidson, yet they all request considerably more material from us than we do from them.

So what do researchers from other institutions request from us? Primarily journal articles and books from the general collection. There is a significant demand for our student theses (and now dissertations), some of our specialized historical microfilm collections, regional newspapers, and genealogical materials. The three most requested books from our collection are *The Turner Diaries* (popular every time there is an Eric Rudolph sighting), *The Man-Eaters of Tsavo*, and *Profits in the Stock Market*, a 1981 imprint with a separate volume of charts.

Brenda Moore, our intrepid interlibrary loan staffer, is an expert at searching the world for obscure materials. Recently she obtained a 16 mm motion picture from another state for a faculty member. "I was a little surprised that they sent it," she said. "I hope he can find the equipment to watch it."

What will the next generation of interlibrary loan bring to you? This summer watch for article delivery to your desktop! ◆

Scholar Presentation

Whether they relocated as individuals or as families, Dr. Philyaw noted that many of these people sought "to recreate a life they were familiar with in timber and agriculture." In building lives in a new land, the people retained many aspects of their culture, such as food preferences, recreation, music, sense of place and remembrances of "home." For years "Tarheel Day" celebrations were held in parts of Washington. Today, bluegrass festivals and church picnics are as popular there as they are in western North Carolina.
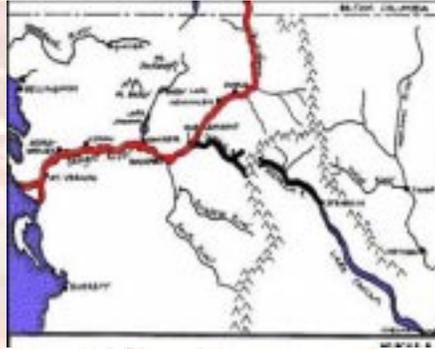
Corridors of settlement: Skagit River

The scale of out-migration from western North Carolina throughout the 20th century was substantial and the Pacific Northwest, while not the sole destination, was a perennial favorite. For instance, Jackson County's population declined in the 1940s and 1950s, despite natural increase. Some locales, such as the Washington town of Sedro-Woolley, became known in Jackson County lore as a place that felt like "home" due to the large number of familiar family names. In the 1950s, a regular feature of the Sylva Herald was a "Darrington" news column, named for a small town east of Seattle, which kept Jackson County readers informed of family and friends in that Washington community.

Currently Dr. Philyaw is working on cooperative exhibits between museums in Skagit County and WCU's Mountain Heritage Center. He also has plans for an online exhibit and is examining ways to help regional educators share the information with students. If you have friends or family who were part of this migration and who may wish to share their experiences, please contact Dr. Scott Philyaw at the History Department, WCU (telephone: 828/227-7243; e-mail — PHILYAW@wcu.edu).   ◆

More New Databases

by Lorna Dorr, Reference Librarian

Hunter Library has added five titles to its lists of databases. ***Biography and Genealogy Master Index*** is a comprehensive index to more than 12.7 million biographical sketches in more than 3,400 reference books, covering both contemporary and historical figures throughout the world. ***eHRAF Ethnography*** is a cross-cultural database that contains full-text information on world cultures. This database supplements the Library microfiche collection of world cultures. The ***Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia*** is based on the text of the Academic American Encyclopedia and contains thousands of new articles, extensive hyperlinking, bibliographies, and links to other Web resources. Grolier's ***New Book of Knowledge*** is an encyclopedia for children which has long been a leading source of accurate, accessible, and fun-to-read information. It contains thousands of articles and many special features, including Wonder Questions, projects and experiments, and literary selections. And finally, ***DISCovering Most-Studied Authors*** provides comprehensive bio-bibliographical and critical information on 380 of the most-studied authors in North American curricula.

If you need assistance in searching any of these databases, please call the Reference Desk at 7465.   ◆

by Linda Gillman, FHL Board Secretary

Friends of Hunter Library Takes on a New Look

The Board of Advisors of the Friends of Hunter Library met in December and has scheduled a follow-up meeting in April. Thanks to the leadership of Bil Stahl, our new University Librarian, and his capable staff, changes in the appearance of Hunter Library are happening as the library takes on an updated and people-friendly look. The Friends of Hunter Library is responding to these changes with changes of their own! Under consideration is an updated logo, new membership brochure, and a much more ambitious series of special events. All in all, Friends is out to "kick up the dust" with higher visibility events and some fresh faces on the Board and in the membership.

It's so easy to be a Friend! Just stop by the Circulation Desk to fill out an application then return it (along with your membership fee) or mail it back in with a check for $15.00 per person. Joining Friends is about much more than having a borrowing card or receiving a newsletter - it's about community and new challenges! We cordially invite you to be our Friend. Please join us today!   ◆

HUNTER LIBRARY HOURS
Spring/Summer Semester 2001

Monday, April 16 - Thursday, May 3	EXTENDED HOURS
Friday, May 4	8AM-Midnight
Final Exams	
Saturday, May 5	9AM-9PM
Sunday, May 6	Open Noon
Open 'Round the Clock' (24 hours) til	
Friday, Mary 11	Close 6:30PM
Commencement	
Saturday, May 12 & Sunday, May 13	Closed
Monday, May 14 - Sunday, June 3	8AM-8PM; Monday-Thursday, Friday; 8:00AM-6:00PM Closed Weekends

Extended Hours

Monday-Thursday
8AM-2AM

Friday
8AM-9PM

Saturday
10AM-9PM

Sunday
Noon-2AM

Hunter's Clarion

http://www.wcu.edu/library/whatsnew/clarion/index.htm

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   I B R A R Y

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