

Oviatt Library Fall 2017 eNewsletter



Featured Article: A New Home for Unique Treasures

Contributed by Oviatt Library Student Assistants Debbie Salazar and Alexandra Figueroa

After much collaboration, planning, and noisy late-night construction the Oviatt Library's second floor has been transformed. Special Collections & Archives is a beautiful new space where students and researchers discover the many wonderful rare items that Special Collections & Archives houses. Before its extensive modernization, the Reading Room was tucked far away in the southwest corner of the Library Exhibit Gallery, and collections were stored in rooms all over the Library. In the new space the Reading Room, modern compact shelving, and staff work areas are now all in the same area, making it easier for both staff and patrons to access Special Collections materials. The expansion and remodel includes a warm and welcoming wood paneled Reading Room with beautiful glass windows that provide high visibility and a service desk. The Reading Room offers abundant seating and multiple areas for students, faculty, staff and visiting scholars.



The stacks, inside of the newly renovated Special Collections and Archives.

One of the striking results of the renovation is the new larger compact shelving area, which is highly configurable and provides optimal space and conditions for storing rare materials. "We had several goals for the renovation at the outset, and were able to realize most of them," says Ellen Jarosz, Head of Special Collections & Archives. Jarosz added that the renovation ensured that the entire rare book collection is now housed in a secure climate-controlled environment, and is in closer proximity to the Reading Room. The renovation also ensured everyone who works in Special Collections & Archives can now collaborate in the same space, instead of spread across the Library. Prior to the renovation, staff were dispersed across all five floors of the Oviatt. Another fantastic addition to the space is a new fully-equipped classroom in which students will receive instruction in how to use primary and archival sources in their research.

This gorgeous transformation of the Special Collections & Archive space was made possible by the generous estate gift of \$2.5 million dollars from the Jack and Florence Ferman Trust. The Fermans were philanthropists at heart, and had a keen interest in preserving great works. Both Jack, a

successful businessman, and Florence, an artist and CSUN alumna, were longtime friends of the Oviatt Library, which makes this gift that much more meaningful. For more information about [Planned Giving](#) or one of the many other ways to give to the Library, please click on one of the giving links in this newsletter, or contact [Joyclyn Dunham via email](#), or at (818) 677-2638.

The Oviatt's Special Collections & Archives is home to extensive materials and houses five major collections: the University Archives, Urban Archives Collections, the International Guitar Research Archives (IGRA), Old China Hands Archives, and Special Collections. The collections and items of interest are regularly highlighted in the staff-contributed Special Collections & Archives blog [Peek in the Stacks](#).

For more information and hours of operation, please visit the [Special Collections & Archives page](#). Find out more about Special Collections by reading our [What's Up article](#) to find out how to join us as we celebrate the grand opening of the new Special Collections & Archives space. As well, check out our [We Would Like you to Meet article](#) in this issue of our eNews to learn more about Ellen Jarosz, Head of Special Collections & Archives.

Watch our time-lapse video of [Special Collections & Archives construction!](#)



What's Up: Special Collections & Archives Grand Re-Opening

Contributed by Oviatt Library Student Assistant Debbie Salazar

After two years of renovations and a complete transformation Special Collections & Archives is ready, and it shouts "all eyes on me." The Oviatt Library's Special Collections & Archives houses many unique treasures. It is the home of CSUN's rare book and periodical collections, as well as its archival and manuscript collections (for more, see [About the Collections](#)). In celebration of the expansion and to honor Jack and Florence Ferman's generous \$2.5 million dollar bequest, campus dignitaries and the CSUN community will gather for a grand reopening event on Thursday, January 18, 2018.

Special Collections and Archives houses 50,000 cataloged items, including rare books, art, manuscripts and archives, historical and important periodicals, photographs, audio and video recordings, prints, and maps. Many of these rare and valuable materials are housed in the department's new temperature and humidity-controlled high-density storage facility. Thanks to the generous gift by The Jack and Florence Ferman Trust the Oviatt Library will grow its collection, and will continue to maintain and preserve the resources it holds.



Outside of Special Collections and Archives.

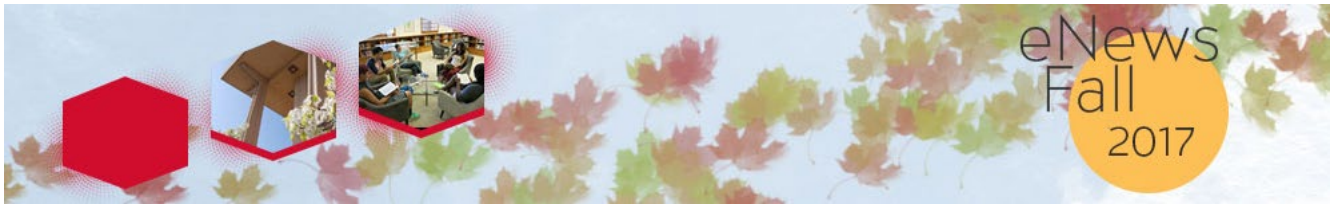
Conserving historical materials is a craft which was very familiar to the Fermans. Jack Ferman was a businessman and Florence Ferman was an artist and a CSUN alumna; both were long-time friends of the Oviatt library. Philanthropists at heart, the Fermans left behind their legacy with a transformative gift that will continue to impact the lives of students and generations to come.

The expansion and renovation opening event will be held at the Oviatt Library, the heart of the University's campus. It will take place on the 2nd floor of the Library, adjacent to the Special Collections and Archives. You can [RSVP online](#), or by calling (818) 677-2638.

For additional information about the Special Collections & Archives Opening, or to learn more about all Library events, please [visit Exhibitions and Events](#) or call (818) 677-2638.



New fully-equipped classroom in where students will receive instruction in how to use primary and archival sources in their research.



Oviatt Spotlight:

Sources of Inquiry: Exploring the Foundations of Primary & Archival Research

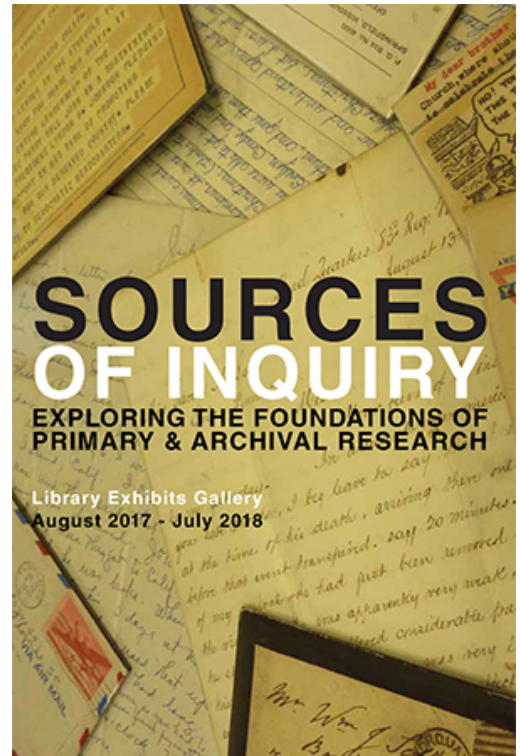
August 31, 2017 to July 1, 2018 Library Exhibit Gallery

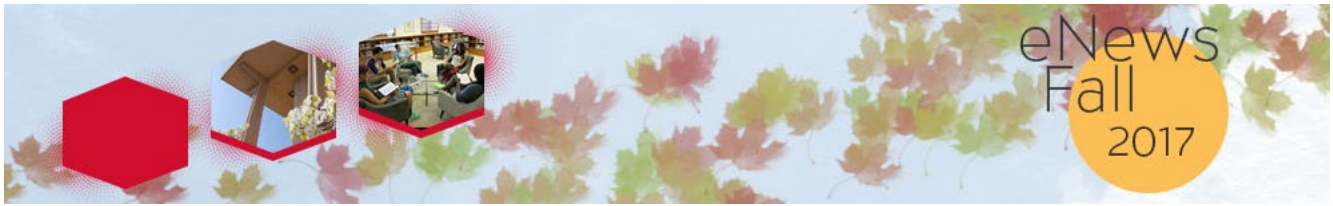
Archivists and librarians at CSUN have been building primary and archival research collections for several decades to help students and other researchers discover and analyze critical information about our collective past. Their great strength and challenge as research materials is that they present information without providing interpretation, analysis, or evaluation. Indeed, those who engage with primary and archival sources often encounter information not seen or considered by others. As a result, they can conduct original analysis, advance new arguments, and draw unique conclusions.

On display in the gallery are items selected from all parts of the holdings in Special Collections and Archives. Rather than leading viewers through an exploration of a particular subject, time period, or theme, the selected items should prompt visitors to consider the strengths and weaknesses of primary and archival sources as research tools.

As you explore the gallery, we encourage you to consider the items selected for display thoughtfully. Ask yourself who produced the item, why they made it, who used it, how they used it, and finally how you as a researcher interested in understanding our collective past, present, or future might draw upon it as source material in a research project today.

An [audio tour](#) is available in the Library Exhibit Gallery.





Thanks & Recognition: Dennis Bakewell

Contributed by Virginia Elwood-Akers

Jane McMahon still remembers when she first met Dennis Bakewell. Jane volunteered after the 1971 Sylmar earthquake, which is when she was first introduced to Special Collections librarian Dennis Bakewell. Dennis immediately put her to work in an iron cage on the fourth floor of the Library. In the aftermath of the recent Sylmar earthquake, McMahon found to her dismay that precious collection materials had been buried three to four feet deep. Perhaps Bakewell, the librarian in charge of the Special Collections, recognized in McMahon a future librarian, because he gave her the task of re-shelving and organizing the fallen books. McMahon quickly fell in love with the books, with the work, and, in a way, with Dennis Bakewell.



Dennis Bakewell browsing the Special Collections & Archives item M2149 .L4 1700Z - an anthiphony of Gregorian chants



1Dennis Bakewell

After graduating from library school at UC Berkeley Dennis Bakewell came to the fledgling San Fernando Valley State College campus as a cataloger in 1959. Within a few years he was made the Library's Social Sciences Specialist and there he might have remained, had not Norman Tanis become the Director of the Library in 1969. Tanis recognized in Bakewell a fellow lover of books, particularly rare or fine press books, and manuscript collections. In 1971 Tanis moved these materials from his office into the cage, and gave Bakewell the title of Special Collections Librarian. Between the two of them, they would build the tiny collection into a nationally and internationally recognized collection, that in 2017 boasts over 50,000 cataloged items.

Bakewell did not immediately turn to the library field when he was graduated from Pomona College in 1948. Raised an only child in Grant's Pass, Oregon, he had attended the University of Oregon until World War II intervened. After the war, he moved to California with his widowed mother and finished his undergraduate education at Pomona. Moving with his mother to Berkeley, Bakewell briefly worked in San Francisco in a clerical position. By the late 1950's he was back in school and working to become a librarian. The Library at San Fernando Valley State College was his first and only professional position.

When the Oviatt Library opened in 1973, Special Collections moved into the Garden Level. By then the college had become California State University, Northridge and Dean Norman Tanis and Bakewell set out to create a Special Collections department worthy of a major university. Tanis established the Bibliographic Society of CSUN, a friends group whose main purpose was to generate funds to purchase special materials. Together, he and Bakewell sought books and manuscript collections for Special Collections. They began to attract the attention of booksellers and collectors throughout Los Angeles, who came to the library to gather in the Special Collections room and discuss their favorite topics.

Renowned Los Angeles bookseller/publishers Jake Zeitlin and Ward Ritchie came to these gatherings, along with book collector Carl Haverlin, who ultimately gifted his magnificent collection on Abraham Lincoln to the Oviatt Library. Fine press bookbinder Tommy Thompson was a frequent visitor, as well as book-loving faculty members like Vern Bullough and Barnabas Hughes. Nearby San Fernando Valley residents like Herb Yellin, a bookseller and small press owner, and Carl Dentzel, who was then the head of the Southwest Museum of the American Indian were part of the group.

Bakewell's literary expertise was matched by his ability to schmooze. He was a man of few words, but when he spoke, you could be sure that what he said was interesting. One of Bakewell's tasks was to act as host to these eminent men – and they were, in fact, all men, except that over in the corner Jane McMahon sat quietly working. McMahon still remembers these gatherings as incredibly interesting and educational. She now says, "These men were magnificent storytellers of books, manuscripts, authors known in Los Angeles environs."

Bakewell wore several other hats. He was deeply involved in Letterpress Printing Chapel, and acted as copy editor for several of the books published by the Library's own Santa Susana Press. He compiled a massive bibliography called *The Black Experience in the United States* based on the Library's holdings on the subject, and acted as co-compiler of *Lynton Kistler, Printer-Lithographer*, which listed the books printed by the famed printer from 1927 through 1974. In addition, Bakewell organized and curated many Library exhibits based on materials in the collection, such as the 1976 exhibit of the library's Carl Sandberg Collection and the popular exhibit of Biology Professor William Emboden's extensive collection on Sarah Bernhardt, in 1977.

For many years, Bakewell seemed the very epitome of the stereotypical grumpy bachelor librarian, but in 1982 he surprised his colleagues by marrying a vivacious woman who seemed his exact opposite, Hildegard Salinas. Bakewell still tried to play his curmudgeonly role, and always seemed a little surprised to find the bubbly Hildy at his side, where she remained until her death in 1994. By that time Bakewell had retired from CSUN, but was still seen regularly in the Oviatt Library checking out books to read. He lived quietly alone until his death in late 2016.

Dennis Bakewell was a quiet man, who lived a mostly quiet life, but he left a great legacy in the Special Collections and Archives at CSUN.



We Would Like You to Meet: Ellen Jarosz

Could you start by talking about your job as Head of Special Collections and Archives? What is your primary role?

I manage the Library's rare and archival collections, as well as a number of services we provide, including reference and research assistance for students, faculty, and community members who want to use Special Collections materials. I also take the lead in curation of exhibits that promote research in the collections. In my instructional work I develop resources that promote active student learning and information competence relating to primary sources and archives. I interact with many stakeholders on campus, most frequently in the library, but also with teaching faculty across campus.

How did you get interested in Special Collections? How does being a Special Collections librarian differ from other librarian positions?

I was introduced to archives as an undergraduate when a member of the History faculty at my alma mater, the University of Wisconsin, hired me as a research assistant. I had already had several student jobs in libraries on campus, but doing archival research on his behalf really opened my eyes to the rich world of primary resources. Being a Special Collections librarian is a little unique in that I have the opportunity to work with researchers across a wide variety of disciplines and topical interests on a regular basis, and in that I work more with donors than many other librarians do.

What do you think are the most important functions of Special Collections in a university setting? Special collections departments can challenge and intimidate new users, in part because of the security measures we have in place, and because of the rarity and fragility of the materials we have in our care. At the same time, they often inspire, excite, and energize. Our users often encounter information not considered by others, and then have the opportunity to conduct original analysis, advance new arguments, and draw unique conclusions in their projects. It's difficult to overstate the value of that experience, regardless of discipline or area of study.



Ellen Jarosz, Head of Special Collections & Archives

What is your favorite part of your job?

My favorite thing about this job is that I get to work with young people conducting research projects in many disciplines and on a variety of different topics. I also enjoy working with my colleagues in the Oviatt, and being challenged by new projects on a regular basis.

How can alumni and community members best support Oviatt Library Special Collections & Archives?

I think the best way for alumni and community members to support Special Collections & Archives is by getting to know the collections, those who use them, and those who work in the department. As one example, we have an endowment that supports a student fellowship in the department that we'd love to grow, and there are other opportunities for support, as well, for those who are interested. Just ask us!



Ellen & Benicio



Message from the Dean: A Most Special Place

One of my favorite parts of the Oviatt Library is Special Collections & Archives (SC/A). I'm not an archivist myself, but one of my first mentors taught me that Special Collections & Archives is the jewel in the crown of every library. The SC/A rare books are amazing to look at and study, and the archival collections are truly unique. Every time I visit this space I'm reminded of the importance of curating and caring for these materials, as well as the positive academic impact on students and researchers who are afforded access to these collections.

This edition of the Oviatt Library eNews is all about Special Collections & Archives at CSUN. In the lead article, "[A New Home for Unique Treasures](#)," you will learn about the recent completion of the expansion and modernization of this part of the Oviatt [Library](#). In "[What's Up](#)" we invite you to attend our Grand Opening event in January 2018, and "Oviatt Spotlight" describes the wonderful exhibit, pulled from our own archives, that will stand in the Library Exhibit Gallery for the next nine months. You will also get to meet two individuals who have been a positive influence on Special Collections & Archives over the years: Ellen Jarosz, our current head of SC/A, and the late Dennis Bakewell, one of the first Oviatt librarians to work in this section of the Library.

I've been at CSUN for over six years, and in that time I've worked hard to create a high profile for the unique materials that are preserved in Special Collections & Archives. From expanding the number of staff who work here, to focusing our efforts and resources on a newly completed \$2.1 million expansion and renovation of Special Collections & Archives, to raising funds from alumni and community donors so that we can acquire new archival collections and process old ones, Special Collections & Archives has been one of my highest priorities while at CSUN.



Dean Mark Stover

I've found a great passion among archivists, historians and curators over the years when talking to them about the fabulous resources that are available to researchers, students and scholars through our archival collections. In fact, this passion sometimes reaches the heights of religious zealotry, and why not? Our archives shed light on the rich diversity of Los Angeles, past and present, and help our students become not just scholars but also better citizens through a deep study of historical events and people. As many of us have learned, primary source documents are one of the best ways to connect with our region's past and to learn from our failures and triumphs. Why shouldn't a group of committed archivists and historians take on the mantle of the evangelist when promoting the hidden

treasures of the Los Angeles region (and beyond) through letters, diaries, photographs, video and audio recordings, and historical legal documents? It is no wonder that those who guard the gems of Special Collections & Archives are “true believers.” And you might become one too once you get to know the joys of reading an original 150-year-old document, holding in your own hands a 19th century diary, and reflecting deeply on what the past can mean for us today.