Friends Get Together for Homecoming 2013

In conjunction with the College’s Homecoming, the Library celebrated its second annual Friend’s Open House. Highlights included much good fellowship; the unveiling of the Friend’s Charter, beautifully illuminated by Merideth Schifsky; and a bonus unveiling of the original Scholasticat drawing by Todd White which was used to create the Library’s popular Scholasticat tee-shirts.
Something old ...

Who is 417 years young, looking good, and still hanging out at the Library every day? That would be *Xenophonis, Philosophi et Imperatoris Clarissimi, Quae Exstant Opera, In Duos Tomos Divisa* [Of Xenophon, the Most Brilliant Philosopher and Ruler, His Works that Exist, Divided Into Two Books], printed in Frankfurt, Germany in the Year of Our Lord 1596. A beautiful work, it features double columns in both Latin & Greek with a blind-tooled binding. It is the oldest of the rare books in the special collection of Sister Joan Braun.

Sister Joan graduated from the College in 1943 and joined the St. Scholastica Monastery along with her sisters Mary Carol and Grace Marie. She went on to earn a Master's Degree in Art History and a Doctorate in Library Science. Sr. Joan served the College as Director of the Library, Dean of Faculty, and Interim President of the College. She passed away in 2011.

Sometime early during her 70+ years with the College she developed a case of bibliophilia. Her passion for collecting early books has left the College better off for it today. Sr. Joan collected almost 200 rare books & other printed ephemera, in nine different languages, ranging in date from the 16th to the 20th centuries. The collection includes a Catholic prayer book & catechism in the Ojibwe-Indian language from the 1880s; a book on etiquette from 1792 titled *The Young Gentleman's Parental Monitor*; a letter written to Major General Ulysses S. Grant by a prisoner of war in 1862; the *Ulster County Gazette* announcing George Washington's death in 1800; a 1896 book of pressed flowers from the Holy Land; and souvenirs from World's Fairs in Chicago in 1893 and in Tokyo in 1922.

This fall CSS Senior and Library volunteer Laura Vavrosky (and yes, future MLS grad student), working with Archivist Heidi Johnson, organized the collection. Each book was photographed, identified, and given a descriptive bookmark and display card.

Sr. Joan’s books can be viewed in the rare book case in the first floor reading room of the Library.

Something new ...

The Library welcomes its newest staff member, Jenny Lund, hired to replace the retired Barb Werner (*F is for Friends*, Vol. 1, 2013). Jenny has assumed Barb’s duties providing InterLibrary Loan service for the campus and will also be providing evening Reference Service.

Jenny began her library career at CSS in 2000 as a summer intern with the Upward Bound Program. As a Scholastica student, Jenny worked in the library for four years and was one of our first Student Supervisors. Her favorite classes were taught by Dr. Neil Keye. It was the new perspectives on the world she discovered in his classes that made her mind up to become a history major. She graduated in 2006.

Jenny always felt at home in a library, loving the sense of peace she found there. When she combined this with the enjoyment she found in researching her papers, she realized libraries were where she wanted to stay. Jenny worked at the Lake Superior College Library for 3 years before returning to CSS. She is contemplating grad school & a professional degree as a Master of Library Science. Welcome back, Jenny. We are glad you are here!
Hunting something blue...

Many ghosts haunt the library. The saddest are the lost books, their physical incarnation destroyed, and only their names left on the yellowed pages of books that survive.

Librarian Todd White spent a sabbatical hunting for one of those lost books, a creation of his titled Liber Canis Parvi Caerulei [The Book of the Little Blue Dog], a 12th century Irish manuscript which is the only known source that mentions an even earlier lost manuscript, Vita Sancti Finnei Radii (Life of St. Finneus the Radiant), which is believed to be a bowdlerized Christian retelling of the lost Irish epic The Hurting Match of Cluain Cearbhan.

White has worked with letterpress printing for years, and along with Dr. William Hodapp, teaches the Honors course The Book in the 15th Century. “What I wanted to do on my sabbatical,” White said, “was to take one book and create versions of it that would mirror the history of printing.”

He started out by drawing the intricate frontispiece, or carpet page, of his “lost” manuscript, Liber Canis Parvi Caerulei. In the 14th century the manuscript becomes a block book, in which image & text were carved and printed from a wooden block. These images were line drawings and meant to be hand-colored (a look much like medieval stained glass). Books printed with moveable type appear in Germany in the mid-15th century, & by the 1470s printing enters England. Liber Canis Parvi Caerulei now becomes The Boke of the Lyttlle Blwe Dogge. “As books become less expensive, the demand for cheap books increases. There is a crudeness to much of the early printing & illustration that is just charming. The Book of the Little Blue Dog becomes a low-end knockoff, circa 1500.”

The trail of the Blue Dog grows cold after 1500, but White discovered other “lost” examples of early printing, including a tarot card featuring the Librarian conducting the Sortes Sanctorum, or sacred lottery, in which an individual divines the future by opening either the Bible or the Aeneid at random and blindly selects a verse. Those familiar with the legend of Scholasticat (told in Vita Sancti Finnei Radii) will recognize this from the story of the monastic feline dislodging books from the library shelves in order to instruct penitent monks in the ways of salvation.

White is grateful to the College for his sabbatical time hunting the Little Blue Dog. He has hopes for the future of his lost book. “Someday I would like to discover the text ...”

And the CAT is in the house

“In the 8th century Irish monastery at Blarney, there lived a miraculous feline known as Scholasticat. Now, it is told, this tomcat lived in the library and kept the books safe from mice and some of the older, grumpier monks who kept complaining about how they wanted the library to be like it was in the old days. Many tales are told also of the pious nature of this cat, of how its yammering and howling to the moon would wake the monks for matins, and of how each day at mass it would watch from the window of the chapel and shake the bell tied around its neck when the Host was elevated” ... so begins the legend of Scholasticat, as told in the lost manuscript Vita Sancti Finnei Radii.

Our book catalog is named after this famous feline – bibliotheca feles (the cat of the library) - who, according to legend, among his many miracles, drove out all the rats from the granary of the Monastery of Blarney. Now you can own this great shirt with its visual homage to the Lindisfarne Gospels and those crazy Irish dudes who saved Western Civilization. Tee-shirts are $10 + postage, with all proceeds going to the Friends of the CSS Library.

To order, visit our Friends page - http://libguides.css.edu/LibraryFriends
“Whatever book I want to have I can get on loan from any library, while if I wanted to borrow money to buy these books I should find no one who would lend it to me.”

- Ibn Hyyan, 13th century historian

It’s quite obvious that our beautiful fall has taken a decided, and quite emphatic, turn toward winter, leaving only memories of a landscape not blanketed by snow. Fortunately our memories include the many of you who stop by to visit the Library during the year. Thanks so much to all the friends who attended our Homecoming gathering back in September; it was nice to see so many familiar faces and spend time talking about library things past, present, and future. Since then I’ve been asked how Library friends can play a more active role in the Friends group. One of the ways is simply to continue your support. Now is a good time to renew your pledge by returning the form below. Another way to get involved is to join the Library in helping to promote library-based research. Starting this spring the Library will offer a research award to the student who best demonstrates an understanding of library research principles and use of library resources. The process and award details are still being discussed but will be publicized before spring semester begins in January. Where you, as a Library Friend, come in is the selection process. We are looking for a few volunteers to participate in the selection process. If you have any interest in this, please contact me at kmcgrew@css.edu.

___ St. Brigid—$360 annual gift  ___ St. Catherine—$120 annual gift  ___ Venerable Bede—$60 annual gift  ___ Friend—$30 annual gift

St. Jerome, Patron Saint of the Library – $1000 cumulative gift

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