

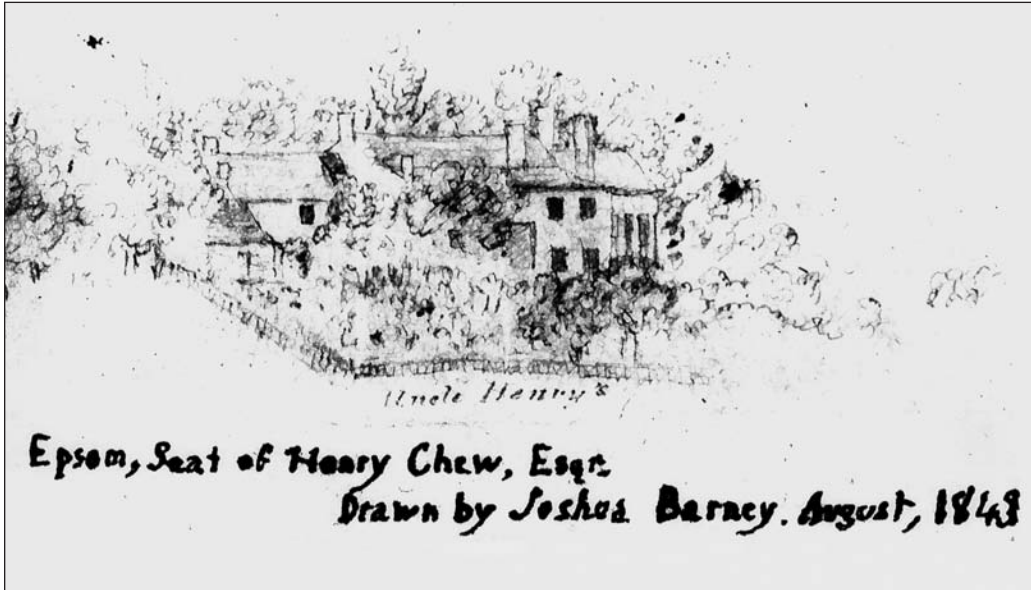
FOCUS

THE FRIENDS OF THE GOUCHER COLLEGE LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

Towson Beginnings

Student exhibit gives insight to Goucher's past

by Jennifer Spieler Curry



Miniature pencil sketch of Epsom Estate by surveyor and cartographer Joshua Barney. Presented to Goucher College by Mr. John Ridgely in March 1941.

A small sketch of Epsom Estate, previously thought lost but recently rediscovered in the Goucher College archives, has inspired the latest exhibit outside the rare book room. *Towson Beginnings: From Epsom Estate to Goucher College* chronicles the history of Epsom, owned at one time by the Ridgely and Chew families, and how the land ultimately became the site for Goucher College.

The exhibit's curator, senior Lindsey Baker (January '06), was attracted to this exploration not only because of her work with Special Collections Librarian Gail McCormick, but also through her work as a student curatorial assistant at the

Hampton National Historic Site (just across the Beltway). In 1754, the Hampton site was known as Northhampton, which was purchased by Colonel Charles Ridgely. Ridgely also owned Epsom, which he gave to his grandson, John Robert Holliday, in 1772. Epsom occupied what is now Goucher's academic quad. Holliday sold Epsom back to the Ridgely side of the family, to Harriet Ridgely, who married Henry Chew of Philadelphia.

One of the many interesting artifacts of the exhibit is the 1849 fire insurance policy purchased by Chew. The policy was discovered for sale on the internet auction site Ebay.com. Funding from the Friends made

the purchase of this valuable document possible.

The policy, however, didn't prevent the property's demise—fire consumed Epsom when fire wagons got stuck in the mud on the pathway leading to the house. The property remained vacant until 1921, when Goucher purchased the land as the site for their new home.

Other items on display include brick fragments excavated from the new South lot (believed to be from the property), historic photographs and pottery shards, and the original deed that laid the boundaries for Goucher College.

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"Towson Beginnings" continues on p. 3

President's Update

By Kenna Forsyth

You are in for a treat at the Friends of the Library annual meeting on April 20 at 7:30. Our speaker is Marion Elizabeth Rodgers '81, author of the critically acclaimed biography *Mencken: The American Iconoclast*. Come prepared to have a good time and get an autographed copy of the book. All FOL members are asked to arrive at 7 p.m. on that evening for our annual business meeting.

The Friends are proud, once again, to be involved with the Julia Rogers Research Prizes, honoring outstanding research by Goucher students using library resources. Three prizes will be awarded, and presentations will be made during National Library Week (April 2 through 8). Check the library website (www.goucher.edu/library) for the exact time and place of the event, so you can

join us in honoring these students.

This will be the last time you will hear from us about our status as a separate 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit organization. We are dissolving this status and are in the process of submitting the necessary documents to the IRS and the office of Maryland's Secretary of State. We will be safely under the Goucher College umbrella by the time our annual meeting takes place. In terms of our day-to-day operations, you will notice no drastic change. We will continue to support the programs and mission of the library—that's what we are all about! Thanks for everyone's hard work to bring this new arrangement about, especially Steven Klepper, FOL board member and attorney, and Laurie Burton-Graham, Goucher's general counsel.

Rare Dictionary Hits Milestone

Johnson's first edition turns 250

by Nancy Magnuson

2005 marked the 250th anniversary of the publication of Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language*. Goucher is fortunate to own a first edition of that work, which was the centerpiece of a Special Collections exhibit last fall. According to Professor of English Fred White, who contributed to the exhibit, Johnson was "unknown to the public at large" when "he began planning and creating his majestic dictionary in 1746." After the dictionary's completion, Johnson became "a monumental institution of the literary world, as formidable and solid as the two-volume folio *Dictionary* itself. A few years later, he was given a pension by George III for his unique contribution to the literary culture of the age."

In doing background research for the exhibit, I discovered a fascinating story. Goucher's *Dictionary* was a gift from Dr. Hans Froelicher. When the books were exhibited in the Goucher library in 1927, Froelicher contributed an article to the *Alumnae Quarterly* (December 1927) describing how they came into his possession. The tale he recounts involves a tragic love story in which his former professor in Zurich, Dr. Jacob Baechtold, receives the *Dictionary* from Mrs. Lydia Welti-Escher prior to her death by suicide. If this story intrigues you as it did me, just drop me a note at nmagnuso@goucher.edu or call 410 337-6364, and I'll send you the article.

Go, and Stay Late

New library initiatives offer gamesmanship, extended hours

by Jennifer Spieler Curry

Starting this semester, the library will feature a couple of new offerings for students, faculty, staff, and visitors: the addition of Go, the popular board game, in the library lobby, and extended library hours towards the end of the school year.

The acquisition of the Go game was made possible by Access Services Librarian Susan Ezell, after she submitted a Goucher Innovation Grant proposal to purchase the pieces and board. Go originated in China over four thousand years ago and was modified by the Japanese to become the game we recognize today. Using black and white stones, two players vie

for territory on a wooden board configured like a grid. The player who captures the most territory at the end of the game wins.

Ezell thought the board would make a welcome addition to the library lobby for two reasons: first, it supports the international initiative that the college is encouraging, and second, it's a stimulating social activity for people to enjoy, not unlike the library's chessboard setup. Ezell has also purchased books for people not familiar with the game who wish to learn how to play.

Another welcome initiative this semester is the continua-

tion of extended library hours, which originated as a result of comments from the recent LibQual+ survey. Last spring the library kept its doors open until 2 a.m. for several days, and this past fall extended that time to

almost two weeks. The staff hopes to continue this programming, along with additional collaborative planning with the CTLT, in their continued efforts to make the Julia Rogers Library more accessible to students.



Students Abby Kogen and Kate Barrett take a break to play a game of Go. Photo by Jaime Bogardy

From the College Librarian

by Nancy Magnuson

Greetings from the staff of the Julia Rogers Library! We're enthusiastic about the range of wonderful events taking place this spring. The second rendition of the research fair, research prizes and other national Library Week activities, Marion Rodgers' talk for the Friends, and Rachel Brownstein as our 2006 Burke-Austen Scholar in Residence—these are just the beginning. We're also hosting the annual meeting of the Congress of Academic Library Directors in Maryland, a PALINET grant-writing workshop, and two visitors from the Chawton House Library in England. In addition, we collaborated with the Baltimore County Public Library and the Jewish Community Center on a Jewish literature reading-and-discussion series that began February 1st.

We continue to work with the results of our LibQual+ survey, making small fixes in the building where we can, and developing new services such as office calls for college staff who would like to make better use of library resources. Two of our newest offerings are Central Search, a product that facilitates searching across multiple databases, and RefWorks, which helps our users manage their bibliographic citations. Several LibQual+ respondents also expressed an interest in the college archives. New hours of service and a more welcoming reception area for special collections have resulted in greatly increased activity.

Teri Dorsey Rising '93 is Goucher's newest Mears Fellow. Teri will begin her graduate studies this spring in

the Master of Science in Library and Information Science program at Drexel University. Teri was a student employee in the Julia Rogers Library while she attended Goucher. Since graduating, she has worked in library and technology services at Towson University and the Baltimore County Public Library System.

Our work with the Hillier Group, architects for the Athenaeum, continues. The current stage of design development requires the library staff to think imaginatively about the spaces that will be required to provide library services for college students of the future.

One of our interesting Athenaeum exercises has been to develop a closer working relationship with our colleagues in the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology. The two staffs have been holding regular meetings to contribute to the design of the Information Commons, that technology-rich space that will hold the expertise of reference librarians and academic technologists, in order to support a full range of user needs. We are also working together to design support for faculty who are teaching research-intensive courses as one component of the college's newly revised curriculum. Another rewarding collaboration has been working with Goucher's Department of Education faculty as we plan the curriculum resource center. The center will house the materials used by pre-service teachers, as well as provide space that will invite class groups and other learning opportunities.

"Towson Beginnings" continued from p. 1

The exhibit can be viewed through May of 2006. Baker has also included contact information for Hampton as part of her showcase, so that others who have an interest in history and historic preservation may pursue additional internship and volunteer opportunities.

Baker's experiences both at Hampton and with this exhibit have been stepping stones to future work. She

was recently hired for two jobs in Washington, D.C.—as an assistant archivist at the Association of American Medical Colleges, and as a reference archives assistant at the Holocaust Museum.

For further information on this exhibit, please contact Special Collections Librarian Gail McCormick at gail.mccormick@goucher.edu.

New Membership

Yes, I wish to join the Friends of the Goucher College Library. My contribution is enclosed.

Please make your check payable to Friends of the Goucher College Library. Mail this form and your check to Friends of the Goucher College Library, Julia Rogers Library, Goucher College, 1021 Dulaney Valley Road, Baltimore, MD 21204.

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Mencken Author to Speak at Alma Mater

Alumna Marion Rodgers to address the Friends
 by Jennifer Spieler Curry

As part of Goucher's Alumnae/i Weekend this year, the Friends has invited Marion Rodgers '81, author of *Mencken: The American Iconoclast*, to speak on April 20 at 7:30 p.m. in the Haebler Memorial Chapel. The event, open to the public, is co-sponsored by the Alumnae & Alumni of Goucher College, the Schroedl Lecture, and the Friends.

Rodgers' interest in author H. L. Mencken began right in Goucher's own archives. Shortly before graduation, Rodgers came upon a box of love letters between Mencken and alumna Sara

Haardt. Her interest in Mencken helped form the basis of her first book, *Mencken and Sara*. For *Mencken: The American Iconoclast*, Rodgers drew her research from more than sixty archives, including several private collections in the U.S. and Germany, FBI files, personal interviews with Mencken's friends, and of course, Mencken's own love letters.

Rodgers' latest work on Mencken has done much to highlight this champion of the free press. Fellow Mencken author Charles Fecher has described *Mencken: The American*

Iconoclast as "the most complete and the most living picture of H. L. Mencken that has ever been attempted, written with vividness and even poignancy."

We hope you will be able join us in welcoming this dynamic speaker back to campus. For more information, please contact Pamela Flowers, assistant to the college librarian, at pflowers@goucher.edu.

Marion Rodgers '81 will speak to the Goucher community this April as part of reunion weekend.



Photo courtesy of Marion Rodgers

Friends of the Goucher College Library
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