

FOCUS

THE FRIENDS OF THE GOUCHER COLLEGE LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

Friends of Goucher Library Celebrate 50th Anniversary with Ghosts from Goucher's Past

by Chris Iseli, Focus editor

There have long been rumors about the "presence" that haunts the stacks of the Julia Rogers Library. Library staff and visitors alike tell of strange drafts, cold spots in the middle of an otherwise warm walkway, eerie feelings that raise the hair on the backs of their necks as though someone else is there with them when they know they're completely alone. Some say it's the ghost of Otto Kraushaar. Some prefer not to talk about it at all.

That presence, along with several others from Goucher's 114-year history, will be brought to vivid life for participants in the Friends of the Goucher College Library's 50th Anniversary Celebration as Michael Curry, associate professor of theatre at Goucher, and several Goucher students present "A Living History: Goucher Voices from the Past," a series of original theatrical vignettes researched, written, and performed by the students in which personages such as Otto Kraushaar, Julia Rogers, John and Mary Goucher, Dorothy Stimson,

and others will meet each other, trade stories, and talk about the myriad changes the college has undergone since its founding.

Although Curry and the students are still in the research and planning stages of the production,

like the World Wide Web and other advances and changes that have been made through time."

Curry has himself performed as a character from Baltimore's past in living history productions for the Maryland Historical

"We want to be able not only to bring these characters to life, but to bring different people from different time periods into the same space to interact."

—Michael Curry, associate professor of theatre

Curry says the performance will likely take the form of a multimedia "séance" that brings the ghosts together and will employ both live action and video projections to create the séance's supernatural aura. "We want to be able not only to bring these characters to life, but to bring different people from different time periods into the same space to interact," says Curry. "Obviously a lot has changed over the years, and we're going to explore things like how the older characters react to things

Society, and has brought his living-history expertise to campus through an applied-theatre class he teaches in the subject. The Friends of the Goucher Library approached Curry to direct the performance for the 50th anniversary celebration after seeing a living-history production performed by Curry's students last fall.

To create these performances, the performers immerse themselves in their characters through an intensive research process that draws on a variety of sources of historical information. Curry and his students are working from the two histories written about Goucher College, resources available through the Maryland Historical Society, and assorted materials from Goucher's archives. "We'll be looking at photographs and yearbooks and, as much as possible, these people's own writings," says Curry. "We try to use every available resource to capture their voice, their language, their appearance, and their

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We've Changed: the new FGCL Newsletter

After years of doing things pretty much the same way, we've decided to take this 50th-anniversary year to shake things up a little bit here at the Friends of the Goucher College Library Newsletter and give the publication a new name and a new look. The new name comes from Friends president Merle Phillips, and the new look was designed by Angela Woods

in Goucher's Office of Communications. We would love to hear what you think of the new Friends' newsletter, so please drop us a line with your comments, questions, or suggestions at *Focus* c/o Goucher College Library, 1021 Dulaney Valley Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21204, or by e-mail at jrogers@goucher.edu.

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Friends of Goucher Archives Sift Through College's Vast Photographic History

*by Sydney Roby,
special collections
and preservation librarian*



The Friends of the Goucher Archives (FOGA), a group of current and retired faculty and alumnae led by Rhoda Dorsey, has assembled to put the college archive's extensive photograph collection in order.

The collection is of historic interest for many reasons. It is a photographic record of the life of women in Baltimore at the turn of the 20th century and documents changing social mores and traditions since then. Students of the history of photography will find many media, including early glass slides that appear to have been taken by the Gouchers during their travels to India and elsewhere, blue cyanotypes, salted paper prints, albumen and gelatin prints, early panoramic views of the downtown campus, and a number of shots taken by well-known photographers such as Aubrey Bodine and the Bachrach studio.

Processing the collection has taken time. There are approximately 6,000 prints in the main collection, about half of which were put in rudimentary order with a system of retrieval by Steve Hahn, archivist from 1983-89. A former student, Juanita Ignacio, spent a few hours a week for several years putting of the rest of the collection in order, and worked with Christa Gagliano '94 for her internship in historic preservation to determine the best way to preserve the photographs.

*Photos courtesy of the
Goucher College Archives.*



We read articles and books on the subject, visited other institutions to learn what worked and what didn't, and developed a housing and numbering system that should preserve and provide ready access to the collection for at least another hundred years. Working with computing staff Bob Ambrosino and Wendy Pichardo, we created a computerized database so that researchers can find photographs by subject, date, name of the photographer, or name of the individual, activity, or event. Sally Barnes '46 has already entered descriptions of 2,600 photographs into the database. And with the help of developing technology, we are now also able to scan the images into electronic format and place the images in the database along with the descriptions. Ultimately anyone in the world with access to the Internet will be able to search the database and view the photographs we have scanned.

The collection is very heavily and widely used. College administrators use it in the creation of exhibits and publications and in documenting and sharing the history and traditions of the college. Researchers use it when writing articles about the luminaries who have taught at and graduated from Goucher. It is an invaluable resource for architectural historians and preservationists who are interested in both the downtown

and Towson campuses, for genealogists and other individuals seeking information about their relatives, and for historians in general.

Because of this heavy use, it quickly became apparent that the pace at which the collection was being processed was insufficient to meet the demand, and so the Friends of the Goucher Archives have come to the rescue. The group includes Rhoda Dorsey, former professor of history, dean, and president of the college and a member of the community from 1954-94; Chrystelle Bond, professor of dance since 1963; Josephine Fiske, professor of physical education from 1929-1970 and still active in the department; George Foote, professor of history from 1955-86; Brooke Peirce, professor of English from 1954-85 and lecturer since 1993; Marilyn Warshawsky '68, trustee since 1986 and current chair of the board; Hazel Hill '47 and Margaret Kraus '47, both of whom have been very active alumnae in the community; and Evelyn Schroedl '62, who was the registrar from 1948-81. Beginning in February 1998 and meeting nearly every Friday, they have used their considerable institutional memory to identify individuals and events in the photographs, and we are now in the final stages of fine-tuning the cataloguing system, putting the remainder of the collection into a long-term archivally sound environment, and finally providing both high- and low-tech access to the prints. Researchers can come to the library, leaf through photocopies that have been made to minimize handling of the original photographic prints, make a selection and request, for a modest fee, a copy negative and positive print, or as is increasingly expected, have the photograph scanned into electronic format and sent to them by e-mail.

Working with the group has been a lot of fun, and the cacophony emanating from their workspace reflects their enthusiasm as they tell stories and relive their memories of Goucher's past.

Winn Collection Broadens Library's Jane Austen Resources

by Laurie Kaplan, professor of English

A bequest from the estate of Barbara Winn Adams of Bethesda has broadened the Library's already impressive collection of Jane Austen-related resources. Although Ms. Adams had no connection to Goucher, she was a longtime collector of materials by and about Austen and wanted her collection to remain together after her death. Investigations by her daughter Susannah Adams led her to discover Goucher's Burke Jane Austen Collection and, after some discussion, the gift was made. The Winn Collection complements the Burke Collection nicely, adding a number of new translations into other languages as well as several first editions and performance versions.

Ms. Adams also collected books from the Silver-Fork School, and the library was able to acquire those titles as well. This collection, which reinforces Goucher's strong holdings in 19th century literature, includes important primary source materials for scholars working on 19th-century literature.

The work of the Silver-Fork School has been the source of some controversy among literary critics. The Thrall/Hibbard/Holman *Handbook to Literature*, published in 1936 and revised in 1960, notes that "Silver Fork" was "a name applied in derision to a group of nineteenth-century English novelists who placed a great emphasis upon gentility and matters of etiquette." And the list of members of this school, which included Frances Trollope, Lady Caroline Lamb, Theodore Hook, Lady Blessington, and Benjamin Disraeli, tilts slightly toward women writers, often called "lesser women novelists" because the conventional wisdom of the middle of this century held that women's novels were somehow less worthy or less literary than

men's novels. Another critic from the 1960s found the Silver-Fork School of novels "materialistic and snobbish." Focused on presenting "pictures of fashionable ladies in well-upholstered high life," these were novels of escape - and they were immensely popular.

Feminist criticism has taken a second look at the Silver-Fork School, and subsequent study of women's literary work has resulted in re-evaluation of the novels. As a result, the novels and writers of the Silver-Fork School have found a new niche in the history of the novel. Novels once considered obscure have now found a place in the canon of women's achievement; "lost" women writers have achieved a place in literary history as "mothers of the novel." It is important to note that Jane Austen often found she had to "defend" her craft. Even though the public loved those so-called "women's" novels, many people nonetheless deemed novel-writing a "low pursuit" and a less than respectable literary endeavor.

The addition of Winn's Silver-Fork collection to Goucher's holdings helps to reassert the importance of writing and literary works to women's lives in the 19th century. The books themselves met the intellectual and social needs of women readers, and this small collection offers researchers insight into the ideas, activities, and reading habits that structured women's daily lives.

From the College Librarian

by Nancy Magnuson, college librarian

There have been a number of staff changes in the library since the last issue of this newsletter. Lillie Brinkley retired in December 1998 after serving the college for thirty-five years. That vacancy was filled, as part of an internal reorganization, by Jean Marie Prociuous as weekend supervisor/circulation assistant (Jean Marie has since been promoted to the position of circulation supervisor with the departure of Susan Crudden). Also as part of that reorganization, we defined a second readers' services librarian position to enable us to better meet increased demand for instructional services. That position was filled for eight months by library staff member Tanya Shkolnikov, a new M.L.S. recipient who has since left to join her husband at SUNY-Stony Brook, and beginning in November will be held by Deborah McKinney. Thomasin LaMay has changed departments and is now managing the periodicals collection as well as much of the library's web development. We also have a new position; thanks to start-up funds from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, Margaret Guccione joined us as information technology librarian in April 1999. New to the library as a volunteer is John Gregory, husband of Polly Gregory '54, who has taken on tasks in several parts of the

library. An also-new group of archives volunteers is described elsewhere in this issue.

Much of our time this year is being used in planning and preparing for the anticipated renovation of the Julia Rogers Library. We are working with a new Trustee task force and a campus-based users' group to review the work of building consultants who have given us a set of recommendations regarding the renovation. We're all looking forward to a very exciting few years!

Among many new technology-related changes in the library is our new Web page at www.goucher.edu/library. The page is designed to provide convenient access to our growing family of Web-based resources, as well as information about the library, the staff, and our policies. Many of those resources, such as Britannica Online, Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, and the contents of many individual journals are available not only in the library, but from any computer on the Goucher network. Soon the page will feature a link to our first digital publishing project, "Robin Flies Again," which focuses on a fascinating collection of letters written by the class of 1903 and purchased for the archives by the Friends.

Lastly, I am very pleased to announce that the library and the history department are the recipients of a new endowed fund. The Toby Wertheim '68 Fund for Library Resources in History was established to honor the long-time Friend of the Library and current Goucher Trustee by Dan Rather, her CBS News colleague. Recent purchases from that fund have included *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (1999) by Edwin Burroughs and *Cities in Civilization* (1998) by Peter Hall.

Do you want to receive *Focus* by e-mail?

The Friends of the Goucher College Library invite you to join our new e-mailing list, delivering the electronic version of *Focus*, announcements of library and Friends events, and updates on library news and projects directly to your e-mail inbox. This service is free, and all you have to do to add your name to the list is drop a line to e-friends at jrogers@goucher.edu.

At the heart of every great college lies a great library.

Expansive and rich in resources, the Julia Rogers Library is the intellectual heart and technological center of the Goucher College academic community. If you have spent time there, you know that it is not only a gateway to the history of human thought and written expression, but a gathering place — a place where people and their ideas come together to explore, challenge, encourage, and enrich each other. The library depends on these exchanges to keep its vibrant spirit alive.

The library also depends on the support of people like you to maintain the resources that make it as magnificent a place as it is. Although it is supported primarily by the college, the annual contributions of dues-paying members of the Friends of the Goucher College Library provide supplemental funds to enhance its collections, facilities, and services.

We know how much everyone who has used the Julia Rogers Library appreciates all it has to offer. And we hope that you will show that appreciation by joining the Friends in support of one of the most vital assets of Goucher College.

For more information or to join, contact Merle Phillips at 410-433-7195.



Help Celebrate Our 50th Anniversary

In celebration of our 50th anniversary and in support of the acquisition of new materials for the 1999-2000 academic year, the Friends of the Goucher College Library is offering each of our supporters an opportunity to place a book in the Julia Rogers Library. Every contribution touches the Goucher College community by expanding the resources the library has to offer, and each volume will include this attractive bookplate celebrating the Friends' 50 years of support of the library's mission and goals.

Make your mark today by sending your \$50 contribution to FGCL Anniversary Bookplate c/o Goucher College Library, 1021 Dulaney Valley Rd., Baltimore, MD 21204.

Ghosts from Goucher's Past *continued from page 1*

mannerisms as accurately as possible.”

The process is as much of an education for the students as the performance may be for audience members. Says Ingrid Abrams, a Goucher senior majoring in theatre who is in the process of researching the characters of John and Mary Goucher for the performance, “It’s another way of using theatre to educate. I’ve been at Goucher for three years and don’t really know much about the history of the college, and I think this will be an interesting way of getting to know the people who made it what it is. I’m interested to see what they were like.”

Friends of the Goucher Library can see for themselves what Goucher’s ghosts are up to these days at the Friends of the Goucher College Library’s 50th Anniversary celebration on Saturday, November 13, in the Mildred Dunnock Theatre on campus. “A Living History: Goucher Voices from the Past” will be performed at 2:00 p.m. and will be followed by a festive reception in the lobby of the Meyerhoff Arts Center. Tickets are \$15 each and may be purchased by calling Margaret Spencer at 410-825-4080.

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