Inside the quiet walls of Margaret Clapp Library, the Wellesley College Special Collections houses precious artifacts from across time. Hanging unassumingly in an office is a life mask of John Keats identified by a single four-inch plaque—“Life mask of JOHN KEATS 1785-1821/ by/ Benjamin Robert Haydon/ Gift of/ Margaret Sherwood.” Another casting of the same mask is on display in the prestigious National Portrait Gallery in London. How did this mask find its way to a small liberal arts college?

Keats commissioned the life mask early in his career, when he professed devotion to writing poetry to achieve literary immortality. But even at the end of his career and life, Keats felt he had no legacy. At his insistence, his tombstone reads, “Here lies a man whose name was writ in water.” The contrast between Keats’ aspiration for fame and his fear of falling short makes the mask more intriguing. Why might Keats want to memorialize himself if he thought he had not yet achieved success?

In having his life mask cast, Keats paradoxically sacrificed precious time he had set aside to create a legacy through writing. Though creating a life mask was not atypical for the period, it was a laborious and time-intensive process. The plaster cast in the Wellesley College collection is from a casting done in 1816 by Benjamin Robert Haydon, likely just before Keats began experiencing symptoms of tuberculosis. Keats knew that time passing would never be recovered before he would need to return to his role as an apothecary surgeon if unsuccessful as a poet.

Perhaps Keats believed in his poetry more than he let on. The life mask contributed to Keats’ goal of creating a poetic legacy. Before photography, portraiture was the main method of preserving images and the only way Keats could demonstrate that he valued his unique identity. In commissioning an accurate image of himself that would last, he affirmed faith that future generations would recognize his worth as a poet.
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Report from the Co-chair

Karen Bohrer, Director of Library Collections

It’s the end of the spring semester as I write this and the Wellesley campus is glorious in its greenery and blooms and the students are looking forward to a summer change of pace. There are always activities and events at the College for the enrichment of the community but this semester was especially notable by the number and range of those that were supported by the Friends of Wellesley College Library.

Of course, the FOL has supported the work of Library and Technology Services for a long time. Thanks to this generous and dedicated group of people, it would take a book rather than a newsletter column to list everything LTS has been able to do for the benefit of teaching and learning at Wellesley. This semester was especially impressive. The FOL was everywhere!

Focused on students were the Student Library Research Awards and Careers in Libraries day. The research awards drew a record number of applicants this year and the committee of judges had their work cut out for them. [See the story on page 5.] The Careers in Libraries event, co-sponsored by the Career Education office, showed student attendees the many aspects of librarianship with presentations by current staff and alumnae who have gone into the field. As a librarian, I hope this becomes a regular event.

The entire community of students, faculty, staff, alumnae and “Friends” were treated to a lecture on the Renaissance printing house by Anthony T. Grafton. The renowned professor from Princeton also conducted a seminar for students and faculty during his day on campus. Earlier this spring, the FOL co-sponsored a lecture by Robert Darnton concerning the history of censorship as well a a seminar for faculty earlier in the day. Professor Darnton, former University Librarian at Harvard and fervent advocate for libraries everywhere, is one of my heroes, so to have him here at Wellesley was amazing.

The FOL also supports our mission in a less public but no less important manner by enabling us to offer services and resources we couldn’t otherwise. The Material Evidence in Incunabula is a global initiative for libraries with collections of books printed before 1500. The program describes the collective volumes, while making the information fully accessible to members. Wellesley is one of only seventeen libraries in the US participating in this program thanks to the FOL. As the use of video in the classroom grows, we struggle to provide the resources the faculty needs. FOL support allowed us to purchase a streaming collection of documentary films called DocuSeek2 that has already seen hundreds of uses after just a few months.

I think you get the picture! The Friends of Wellesley College Library is an active, engaged and interested organization that touches everything we do. If you’re already a member, thank you. Please consider volunteering to join a committee or get involved in an event. If you haven’t renewed your membership, I hope you’ll think about it.

Have a wonderful summer!
Book Studies at Wellesley is an interdisciplinary library-based initiative that seeks to integrate the college’s unique collections and facilities into teaching and research. This initiative draws upon the strengths of Wellesley’s bibliographic legacy, such as the college’s Special Collections and the Book Arts Lab, and integrates them into departments from Classics to Computer Science. In 2019, the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Book Arts Lab is being celebrated with visits from book historians Robert Darnton of Harvard University and Anthony Grafton of Princeton University. Professor Grafton’s visit was sponsored by the Friends of the Library and the visit of both Dr. Grafton and Dr. Darnton were profiled in the last newsletter. In fact, the Friends of the Library also supported the founding in the Book Arts Lab by Hannah French in the late 1940s (see the Summer 2019 issue of Wellesley Magazine for an in-depth story) and have also played a key role in establishing Book Studies at Wellesley.

In 2010, Ruth Rogers, Curator of Special Collections, Ray Starr, Theodora Stone Sutton Professor of Classics & Professor of Classical Studies, Sarah Wall-Randell, Associate Professor of English, and I were invited to represent Wellesley College at a three-day Book Studies Workshop sponsored by the Mellon Foundation at Oberlin College. Though we had not been using the term “Book Studies” at Wellesley, it made perfect sense to us and we adopted the term immediately. In an undergraduate liberal arts context, Book Studies is a flexible and inclusive term that embraces so many aspects of the book in all of its forms—from clay tablet to e-book, from text to image, from material to immaterial.

We were invited to the Book Studies workshop at Oberlin because we had been doing innovative book-oriented teaching based on library collections for many years. In 2002, Ruth and Ray had co-taught an experimental class titled EXP 240 Papyrus to Print to Pixel, for which they received the college’s Apgar Award for teaching excellence. P3, as the course was nicknamed, was a humanities course that had weekly labs. I joined Ruth and Ray as the lab instructor for the course and together we endeavored to cover 5000 years of the history of written communication in the western world in one semester! By 2010, we had developed two courses in conjunction with the Art Department: ARTH 299 The History of the Book from Manuscript to Print, which Ruth teaches in Special Collections, and ARTS Intro Print Methods: Typography/Book Arts, which I teach in the Book Arts Lab.

This arc of course evolution, drawing on the strengths of the collections and facilities at Wellesley, was the focus of a presentation that Ruth, Ray, Sarah and I gave at the Book Studies workshop. In turn, colleagues from other colleges shared with us their plans for launching Book Studies minors and concentrations. We returned to Wellesley with a clearer vision for the ways that Book Studies activity could further enhance the curriculum. The Friends of the Library were ready, willing, and able to support our work.

A grant from Friends’ Innovations in Reading and Scholarship fund supported Book Studies activities from 2012-16. The funding supported two multi-day faculty seminars and numerous visits by scholars, artists, and librarians. During this same time period, Sarah Wall-Randell and Simon Grote, Assistant Professor of History, were

Continued on page 6
One goal of The Friends of the Library has always been to find ways to contribute to the larger campus community. This year, at the suggestion of steering committee member Jacki Musacchio ’89, professor of art history, we instituted a new lecture series; we plan to bring a prominent speaker to campus to discuss issues related to libraries and books and promote some of the unique materials in our outstanding collections. This series will engage not only Friends of the Library members but also the students, faculty, and staff of the College.

There was no more appropriate scholar to inaugurare this lecture series than Anthony T. Grafton, the Henry Putnam University Professor of History at Princeton University. An internationally respected scholar whose many awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship and the Mellon Foundation’s Distinguished Achievement Award, Professor Grafton works at the intersections of cultural history broadly defined. Some of his most influential research has analyzed the history of books and their readers, the history of education, and the history of science from Antiquity to the Renaissance. He has written or edited some nineteen books and more than three hundred articles, essays, and reviews for a wide range of audiences. These include, to cite only two examples, monographs on the fifteenth-century polymath Leon Battista Alberti and on the history and use of the footnote as a scholarly tool.

We welcomed Professor Grafton to campus on April 10th. During the day he met with members of the Wellesley community and led an informal workshop for a small group of faculty, students, and staff on “Correctors and Content Providers: The Evidence of the Books.” Using a number of volumes from Special Collections, Professor Grafton demonstrated how print correctors, working in the various printing houses of early modern Europe, actively shaped texts for publication; he focused in particular on Wellesley’s copy of Hartmann Schedel’s Liber Chronicarum (Nuremberg, 1493), popularly known as the Nuremberg Chronicle, and its amazing woodcuts by Michael Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff. Curator Ruth Rogers also used this opportunity to share her recent discovery of a fingerprint on the dedicatory page of Richard Hooke’s Micrographia (London, 1665), a perfect example of the sort of physical evidence Professor Grafton found so compelling. Workshop participants continued their conversation with a box lunch, and following that Professor Grafton went to our Book Arts Lab to watch Katherine Ruffin, the Director of the Book Studies program, prepare the presses for upcoming visits from Ruth Rogers’s and Jacki Musacchio’s classes.

Later that afternoon Professor Grafton gave a lecture to the larger community entitled “Inky Fingers: Scholars and Artisans in the Renaissance Printing House.” This lecture, part of his larger interest in early modern print culture, described the collaborative process of printing and the relationships among workers in printing houses. The lecture filled Collins Cinema with a large audience from the Wellesley campus and the broader community; we advertised it before the start of the spring semester to faculty in related fields and were especially pleased to see so many students in attendance.

Events like these will bring the activities of the Friends of the Library to a larger audience, and will add immeasurably to the curriculum, highlighting the importance of books and Wellesley’s collections. We were delighted with the success of this, our inaugural lecture, and will begin planning for next year soon.
In this age of electronic information, research has become a more complicated process. Sources may be in paper or microfilm, on the Web, or in other electronic formats. Evaluating these sources takes increasing time and effort. This award was created to reward those students who take the time to develop a thoughtful, methodical, and scholarly approach to the research needed for their papers and projects, as well as to encourage students to develop good research techniques. Current Wellesley College students registered for a Wellesley College course are eligible to submit. All submissions must be accompanied by a letter of support from the faculty member who taught the course for which the paper/project is submitted. Applicants must agree to give the Library permission to exhibit winning papers/projects in the Library. All application materials remain the property of the Library. Winning papers/projects will become part of the College Archives, and may be posted in the Wellesley College Institutional Repository (https://repository.wellesley.edu/library_awards/).

Angela Coco ’19 has won the 300-level Award for her 352 paper, “The Powerful Mind is the Healthy Mind: Ralph Waldo Emerson’s Representative Men (1850) and the History of Mental Health.” Supporting faculty: Simon Grote.

Sanjana Kothary ’21 has won the 100/200-level Award for her EDUC 215 paper, “I Am, Because We Are: Intersubjectivity and the Ethics of Care in Student-Teacher Relationships.” Supporting faculty: Deepa Vasudevan.

Victoria Cottrell ’22 has won the First Year Award for her WRIT 187 paper “Sanitationists, Sewers, and Shoe-Leather: Political and Social Subtexts in British Cholera Epidemiology.” Supporting faculty: Simon Grote.

Emily Martin ’21 has won the Independent Study Award for her ANTH 350 paper “Veganism, Race, and Soul Food: Evaluating Reproductions of Race in Vegan Spaces.” Supporting faculty: Justin Armstrong.

Clare Doyle ’20 received an honorable mention for her ECON 350 paper “Tax Havens and Multinational Corporate Income Tax Avoidance.” Supporting faculty: Akila Weerapana.
On Wednesday April 3, more than 40 students, alumnae and staff attended a lunchtime “Careers in Libraries” event, sponsored by the Friends of the Wellesley College Library and Career Education. The program opened with a panel of three librarians who spoke about their undergraduate education and the path that led them to their current careers.

The first speaker, Paulina Borrego ’84, is employed at UMass Amherst as Science & Engineering Librarian and Patent & Trademark Resource Center Librarian. Her comedic, self-deprecatory tone and advice to “figure out what interests you and go after it” had students laughing and clapping. Next up was Library and Technology Service’s own staff member, Sara Ludovissy, the Assistant Wellesley College Archivist, who admitted that her post-college years working in customer service were great preparation for library work. Sara encouraged students not to stress about knowing what they will do the moment they graduate, but to get exposure to possible careers by doing internships in libraries – a path that led her to attend Simmons College for her SLIS degree in Archives.

The final speaker was Bethany Templeton Klem ’05, who was refreshingly candid about not having any idea what her degree in Religion would do for her career prospects. She stressed the need for a practical financial plan, and suggested establishing residency to qualify for in-state tuition in a graduate library program. She, too, was open about never imagining that she wanted to work with children, and suggested that one doesn’t need a fully developed career plan upon graduation from college. She stressed her good fortune in being able to return to LTS for a term position in the Science Library before landing her current job as Head of Children’s Services at the Bedford (MA) Free Public Library.

After a brief question and answer period, the students eagerly mingled at designated tables with LTS staff librarians, who gave advice and information about careers and their own job responsibilities at Wellesley in specialties as diverse as collections conservation, metadata specialist, research and instruction, special collections, and digital scholarship initiatives.

Considering the number of students who attended and stayed and asked questions long after the event was technically over, the Careers in Libraries event was a huge success!
While the Keats life mask exposes much about the poet, it also reveals information about the creator of the piece, Benjamin Robert Haydon. Haydon was a painter and worked in the visual arts, while Keats was struggling to be a writer. Both were friends at the peaks of their artistic careers, admiring and influencing one another. For example, Keats’ poem “On Seeing the Elgin Marbles” followed a visit directed by Haydon. Thinking about Haydon’s guiding hand in Keats’ powerful and prominent piece adds a new dimension to the work. Having a friend who would be able to produce the mask made commissioning a casting easier for Keats, though doing so was still a significant time investment.

But the relationship between Keats and Haydon brings its own paradoxes. While obscure during his lifetime, Keats achieved fame after death, while Haydon is almost forgotten today despite his artistic success in his lifetime. Ten years his senior, Haydon began a friendship with Keats in 1816 that continued for three years until they began to drift apart, likely due to Keats’ tuberculosis. Many years after Keats’ own death in 1821, financial reversals led Haydon to commit suicide, as Keats’ work was posthumously gaining steam. The opposing trajectories of their lives complicate the mask’s history and make it all the more intriguing.

It is astonishing that such an important piece of history is so readily accessible to students at Wellesley. The impression of Keats’ face watches over students as they pore over all of the treasures Special Collections holds. The mask provides unparalleled insight into Keats himself—his facial features, his resting expression, and his projection to the world. The mask itself holds significance in Keats’ own history and highlights his struggle to leave a legacy.

Equally interesting is the history of the mask’s artist, both because of his friendship with Keats and own trajectory as an artist. The donor of the object, a Wellesley professor of English Literature for forty-one years, adds even another layer to this mask. Was she too thinking about her legacy along with that of a poet she loved teaching? Behind its impassive features, the life mask of John Keats conceals mystery and drama. Yet, even as someone fascinated by Keats, I had walked past this object many times and only noticed it as a minor curiosity. Dig deeper, ask questions, and uncover history—more often than not, walls tend to be far from quiet, especially in a place as rich in tradition as Wellesley.
Is it time to renew your membership?

You may use the form below and make your check payable to Wellesley College. Mail to: Friends of Wellesley College Library, Wellesley College Office for Resources, 106 Central Street, Wellesley, MA 02481

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