



FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

Wellesley College

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Shirley Jones and the Red Hen Press

This year's fall program will feature a slide talk by the internationally known Welsh book artist Shirley Jones, founder of the Red Hen Press. Following a career as teacher and homemaker, Shirley Jones returned to an earlier interest in etching and printing and began to manufacture books under her imprint, the Red Hen Press, located first in London and now in her Welsh home, Byddwn Uchaf Llanhamlach.

Many of the texts she prints are her own translations of Old English and Old Welsh legends and myths, accompanied by etchings, mezzotints, or aquatints on handmade paper. She editions the illustrations herself, sets the type, and prints the text by letterpress, but has the books bound or boxed by other hand binders. Each of her books is a total concept. The choice of paper and typeface,



Etching from *Etched Out*, written, illustrated, and printed by Shirley Jones. Croydon, Surrey, Red Hen Press, 1990.

the unity of text and images, the harmony of the binding are all as carefully considered as the visual and literary creativity involved. Her editions typically number no more than 40.

Ms. Jones's work is represented in international collections, including the Victoria and Albert, the British Library, the Library of Congress, and Wellesley College. The recipient of numerous honors and awards, she has created 24 titles to date, of which all but four of the editions are sold out.

Please join us on October 23rd in the Library Lecture Room at 4:15 p.m. for refreshments, followed by the slide show talk at 4:45 p.m., "Welsh and Anglo-Saxon Myth, Legend & History in the Artist Books of Shirley Jones."

Call 781-283-2872 for further information.

Richard G. French: Lord of the Rings

Diane Speare Triant '68

As a young man, Wellesley Professor Richard G. French trained in Austria as an opera singer and was a regional finalist in the Metropolitan Opera auditions. But instead of pursuing a singing career, he took Ralph Waldo Emerson's advice and "hitched his wagon to a star"—literally.

As chair of Wellesley's Department of Astronomy, French is now noted for his extensive planetary research, particularly on the rings and moons of Saturn. "In 1989, I was lucky

enough to become a member of the Cassini Mission to Saturn," he says. "I've been at work on the project ever since. We've learned a great deal about Saturn's rings and atmospheres, but the mission's highlights for me are Saturn's exotic moons. Titan is a world with methane lakes and dry river beds, and tiny Enceladus has ice geysers that send fountains of water into orbit around Saturn. These alien worlds are stranger than I could have imagined."

The 100 scientists studying the Cassini spacecraft that has been orbiting the ringed giant since 2004 are primarily affiliated with universities and research laboratories. To French's knowledge, Wellesley is the only liberal arts college involved—a boon for Wellesley students.

"[I'm able] to share brand-new Cassini observations with my students, even before the scientists, themselves, have completed their analyses," says

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In April, poet Rose Styron '50 read from her poetry and discussed her work over the years as a human rights activist. She is shown above (far right) with (from left) Wellesley friends Amalie Kass '49 and Susan Marley Newhouse '55.

From the Co-Chairs

Ruth R. Rogers, Special Collections Librarian, and Dorothea Widmayer '52

It was a great pleasure to greet a number of you during Reunion in June. The tour of the Library and the gallery talk on the exhibition "In Praise of Wellesley Men" were well attended. It was especially meaningful to have some of the donors and members of their families in attendance.

In the past year your support has continued to enrich the library experience for faculty and students alike. We purchased two major online resources, The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals and British Periodicals (see related article on page 7). For Special Collections, the Friends provided a document camera. This useful piece of equipment will allow all students close-up viewing of rare books, without diminishing the unique experience of seeing the originals on the table. Last year, 60 classes visited Special Collections.

Annual Student Research Awards, funded by the Friends, have recently been established by the Reference Librarians. The purpose of the awards is to promote better research techniques, greater understanding of the role the Library can play in student achievement, increased use of library resources, reduction in plagiarism, and better quality papers. One award will be given for a paper or project from a 100- or 200-level course and another for work from a 300-level

course. The first awards will be made in the spring of 2008.

Thanks to those of you who responded to the survey included in the spring newsletter. Several of you suggested that we sponsor programs outside New England, either speakers or tours of noteworthy libraries. Others suggested that we consider programs at times when groups of alumnae are returning to the college for other events, not only at reunion time. The Honor with Books program raised questions about how books were selected and honorees notified. These are excellent suggestions and questions, which we will seriously consider and address. Many of the replies also expressed appreciation for the caring and helpfulness of library staff during their college days. Those who had enjoyed working in the Book Arts lab were particularly grateful to Miss Hannah French. If you have not yet returned your survey, we would still enjoy hearing from you.

Finally, this coming year we plan to produce full-size reproductions of some of the botanical plates from Dr. Robert Thornton's *Temple of Flora*. There will be an announcement in the near future about how to purchase these beautiful prints, which will grace your home while supporting the Library. 📖

RICHARD G. FRENCH continued from page 1

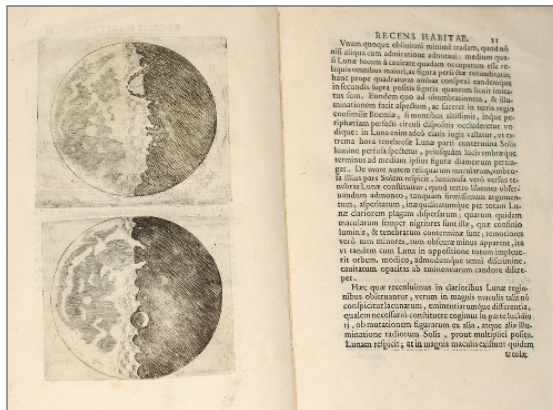
French. “My students were delighted to discover that their analysis of some observations of the geysers on Enceladus matched the published results perfectly. During the summer, I’ve also had a chance to involve students with my research using the Hubble Space Telescope.”

Another asset French has incorporated into his teaching is Wellesley’s Special Collections, having learned about “these remarkable holdings” while participating in a seminar on the art of the book. “Ruth Rogers showed me the first edition of Newton’s *Principia Mathematica* and of Galileo’s 1610 discoveries with his telescope, and I immediately decided that I needed to share this with our students,” he says. Ever since, he’s dazzled introductory astronomy students with a dozen or so important historical works, including a volume conjecturing on the solar system’s inhabitants written by Christianus Huygens in the 1600s.

A Renaissance man of sorts, himself, French is currently making his way chronologically through the works of Melville, and learning classical guitar.




French at the NASA Infrared Telescope Facility on the 14,000-foot summit of Mauna Kea, Hawaii.



Engraving of the phases of the moon from Galileo’s *Sidereus Nuncius*. Venice, 1610.

He traces his enthusiasm for astronomy back to NASA’s heyday. “I grew up during the dawn of the space age, and I spent much of my teen-age life with a transistor radio glued to my ear, following the latest astronaut missions,” he explains with a boyish grin. “When I got to college, I studied physics and math, but I was not hooked on astronomy until I took a seminar at Cornell from Carl Sagan about the chances of there being other intelligent life in the universe. Carl was enthusiastic, charming, and brilliant, and often said that he was surprised that one could be paid for having so much fun.”

After earning his PhD at Cornell and beginning research work at MIT, French had occasion to visit Wellesley’s Astronomy Department. The department chair, Scott Birney, convinced him of the employment advantages of a liberal arts college, wooing him with a temporary job teaching astrophysics. The “temporary” soon became “permanent,” and in 2004, French received the McDowell-Whiting Professorship of Astrophysics as well as the Pinanski Teaching Prize. “It was the best decision of my life to make Wellesley my intellectual home,” he says. “There is a tradition of excellence here that inspires me to try to do my best work. After 25 years, it still feels fresh and new.” 

Calendar

September 2007 Exhibition

“Celebrating Wellesley College Presidents”
Margaret Clapp Library
Crozier Reference Rm., 2nd floor

September - November 2007

“Transfiguring Texts”
Margaret Clapp Library
Special Collections, 4th floor

October 23, 2007 Shirley Jones

“Welsh and Anglo-Saxon Myth,
Legend & History in the
Artist Books of Shirley Jones”
Reception: 4:15 p.m.
Program: 4:45 p.m.
Margaret Clapp Library
Library Lecture Room

November 7, 2007 Authors on Stage

Katha Pollit, Judith Dupre
and an author TBD
Ticket: \$25
Coffee hour 9:45 a.m.
Program 10:30 a.m.
Wellesley College Club
For information call: (781) 237-5519

Half-Price Note Card Sale

The annual half-price note card & postcard sale will be held in the Wang Campus Center on a date to be determined in November. For more details, visit the Friends of the Library web site: www.wellesley.edu/Friends/Library/index.html



Behind the Scenes

Another in a series of Q&As with people who work in the Wellesley College Libraries



When Science Librarian Irene Laursen began working at Wellesley in July 1975, the various collections

devoted to the sciences were housed in five different locations spread across campus. It wasn't until February 2, 1976—the date the new Science Center library opened—that everything was brought together under one roof. Laursen, who holds an M.S. in physical chemistry from Rutgers University and an M.S. in library science from Simmons College, found a quiet corner to talk about past and current developments as the Library underwent some “fine tuning” of its main floor in preparation for the fall semester.

What's happening here?

Science library renovations are going to begin to reflect the impact of digital technologies on the distribution and use of scientific literature. Some of the print materials from the main floor are being moved to storage to make room for 13 additional PCs, two scanners, and a plotter (for printing research posters) for student and faculty use. We support curricular needs of more than 700 science majors, so the space will be well used.

Are there further plans for the future?

They're still being finalized, but two developments that I hope will come are more spaces to facilitate group study and an accommodation for late night study (24/7 space). There is so much collaboration that takes place in the sciences.

I see it happening now, of course, but it's very informal. Students pull chairs up together, but I'm sure they'd like to be able to talk without disturbing others around them. The science faculty has been encouraging students to work together for years, and I see many students teaching other students, which is a terrific way to develop leadership skills.

You've been at Wellesley for over 30 years. What keeps you here?

In many cases, one needs to find something different by going to another job, but I have found that this position gets reinvented about every decade, and that keeps it fresh.

Is that due to advances in technology?

Partially. Some of it has been through library organization and changing priorities. In the first 5 to 8 years, we were really just getting organized physically by merging resources and eliminating duplications. Then, in the mid-1980s, we saw the beginnings of automation. We were performing remote searches of databases using very slow terminals with paper print-outs and no electronic files. In the early 1990s, the end-user became the focal point as we shifted from performing searches for students to showing them how to search for themselves. As information began to migrate to the World Wide Web, and self-publishing on the Web became more frequent, the need arose to cultivate information fluency skills... the ability to identify, evaluate, and properly acknowledge information in a variety of formats.

What do you like about your work?

The personal challenge I enjoy most is finding a needle in a haystack. If there's an elusive piece of information out there, I like to pin it down as best I can.

Can you give a few examples of research projects you've assisted with recently?

One of our Biological Sciences faculty is collaborating with Russian scientists to study the changes in Lake Baikal, and she needed to identify who has cited their recent publications. Web of Science and a knowledge of variable spellings of Russian names helped a great deal in responding to her need. This summer, a student working in Germany on X-ray crystallography was looking for a crucial paper written by a faculty member in the 1950s or 1960s, so I traced it forward to see if there were relevant, related papers that would lead us back to it.

What do you enjoy about working with the students?

I like to get to know them and their needs over their time here and help as much as I can; so many of them stay in touch after they leave. More than anything I like to watch what happens once you give students a little guidance on how to get started with their research. Once they're launched, they take off almost exponentially. Then they come back a little while later with a much more sophisticated question. That's the challenge I like. 📖

Laura Beckerman '08: Digging Deep

Julia Hanna Brown '88

It's not every college student who would spend her free summer Saturdays holed up with decades-old diaries and letters. When Laura Beckerman '08 describes sifting through the personal papers and correspondence of Supreme Court Justices held at the Library of Congress, however, you don't get the sense that she finds it a burden. "I had no idea I would get to do this," she says, reached by phone this summer in Washington, D.C. "When I opened the first box and saw some of these beautiful, original manuscripts, I was a bit shocked."

Laura hopes this research will pay off in her senior thesis, "*Stare Decisis*, West Virginia Board of Education v. Barnette, and the Legitimacy of the Supreme Court in the Public Eye." The work will examine two Supreme Court cases from the 1940s. The first, from 1940 (*Minersville v. Gobitis*) was a controversial decision in which the Justices ruled 8 to 1 that the state could force students to salute the American flag or face expulsion. In the second, from 1943 (*West Virginia Board of Education v. Barnette*), the justices reversed their opinion on the same question by a margin of 6 to 3. Both cases involved Jehovah's Witnesses, whose religion forbids them from saluting or pledging to political institutions or symbols.

"In the late 1930s and early 1940s, Jehovah's Witnesses brought a number of cases to the Supreme Court, although the government brought suit in the two cases I'm considering," Laura notes. "They were a group that made it their business to use legal channels to fight for certain civil rights."



Laura Beckerman '08

"This was a relatively quick, drastic switch for the Court," she continues. "I'll be looking at how that turnaround affected the legitimacy of the Court in the eyes of the public." To that end, Laura plans to devote much of her research at Wellesley to combing through newspapers, editorials, and law review articles that were written at the time.


She credits Research Librarian Laura Reiner for helping her map out available resources for the work that lies ahead. "Last spring, I e-mailed her with a bit of information about the project, and when I walked in she had three pages of notes to show me," Laura says. "We spent two hours going through Web sites as well as all the electronic resources and databases that Wellesley subscribes to...she's been amazingly helpful. One of my biggest initial hurdles was that I had no concept of how to go to the Library of Congress and begin my research. She set me on the right path." Laura is also quick to mention Professor Nat Sheidley: "It was really through conversations with him that I came up with this topic in the first place."

"From a librarian's point of view, Laura was a dream to work with: curious, intelligent, persistent,

and well-organized," Reiner says. "It was tremendous fun to dig into both primary and secondary resources—whether in print, microfilm, subscription databases, or on the Web—and to map out a research strategy with Laura. I learned a great deal from the process and look forward to working with her this fall."

When she wasn't at the Library of Congress, Laura interned during the week for DC Superior Court Judge Fern Saddler '76 through the Wellesley in Washington program, where she helped with the Judge's family court caseload. After graduation, she hopes to attend law school in her native California, possibly at Berkeley or Stanford. Until then, Laura expects this last year at Wellesley to be one of her busiest and most rewarding.

"I'm just coming into the beginning of the middle of my research," she says carefully. "It's a bit daunting to get started and figure out my exact angle. What I'm hoping to write is a kind of social history of the Supreme Court and the country in general at this particular point in history." Laura notes that there are a number of interesting factors to consider, including the influence of World War II and national feelings that swirled around patriotism and the fight against fascism.

"There are a lot of thoughts percolating right now," she says. "I'm looking forward to working more with Nat and Laura this fall and hopefully getting this thing on the road. I feel ready to do something more independent, to really concentrate on it, and hopefully, have it be something good." 

Hand Press Back in Business

A Morgan & Wilcox Washington-style hand press (c. 1900) is in good operating condition again, thanks to a grant from the Friends of the Library. According to a proposal by Book Arts Program Director Katherine McCannless Ruffin (right), the rare press was in generally good shape. However, the working mechanisms needed to be stripped down and reassembled. Perhaps most importantly, the press was not perfectly level—a condition that could only be corrected by professional riggers, who removed the platen and bed from the frame of the press (the combined weight of these pieces was approximately 1,000 pounds!).

According to Ruffin, the press can now be used to better realize the possibilities of teaching historically accurate printing in books arts classes, and in instruction sessions



with faculty and students. Advanced printing students will also benefit from being able to work on the press independently.

Consultant Daniel Urban (left) of Rutland, Vermont, performed the initial assessment of the press's condition and was on-site at Clapp for the restoration. "Daniel's guidance through the entire process was key," says Ruffin. "His enthusiasm, attention, and thoroughness made the project into a wonderful and satisfying adventure." She adds that restoration of the press was a collaborative effort, requiring the help of a press-rigging specialist from New Hampshire, manufacturers of special press accessories in the United States and England, and Carlos Dorrien and Andrew Mowbray in the sculpture area of Wellesley's Studio Art Department. Ruffin notes that the press has been named in honor of Marilyn Hatch, who taught in the Book Arts lab for 25 years. 📖

From the Archives: The Music March

Ever helpful, the Wellesley students shown here are carrying vinyl LPs from Billings to the newly-opened Music Library in Jewett on December 13, 1958. It's not known how or why these particular students were chosen for the task, but they seem to be enjoying themselves despite the cold weather (one young woman appears to be wearing a fur coat).



According to Music Librarian Pamela Bristah, today's collection represents nearly 78,000 items, including 8,800 CDs and tens of thousands of online recordings in three collections: Naxos Music Library, Classical Music Library, and Naxos Music Library Jazz. "We also provide streaming audio for course listening assignments—online audio for course reserves, as it were," says Bristah. And yes, students can still listen to LPs—there are 7,573 of them in the collection.

Friends Fund Two New Databases

Steven D. Smith, Preservation Librarian

I was taken to the very stronghold of female 'cultshure,' the Wellesley College... My visit to this noble institution...will always be a pleasant recollection. The girls seemed so happy: in spite of their assiduous cultivation of fields where the learned dig for 'roots,' their joyousness was their chief characteristic. It was infectious.

Hamilton Aidé, 'Social Aspects of American Life,' *Nineteenth Century: A Monthly Review*, June, 1891, p. 893.

In May, thanks to the generosity of the Friends of the Library, the Library was able to purchase the British Periodicals database—and it has already found a dedicated user on campus. The Library's 135-year-old issues of the *Fortnightly Review* have become brittle, too fragile to use. Happily, however, English Professor Lisa Rodensky can now access them online: "In the words


of my 7-year-old twin boys, Awesome!" This fall, students in Rodensky's seminar on the Victorian novel will benefit as well.

British Periodicals consists of the full text of more than 160 journals, representing the equivalent of 5,238 printed volumes containing approximately 3.1 million pages, with articles covering literature, philosophy, history, science, fine arts, and the social sciences.

Its companion, The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, originally a project led by a Wellesley professor, Walter Houghton, and depending in part on the Library's extensive collection of Victorian-era periodicals, was originally published in 5 volumes between 1965 and 1988. It is an index to the authorship of articles from 45 important monthly and quarterly literary magazines from 1824 to 1900. This is a landmark research tool, one

with which Wellesley has been proud to be associated since its inception.

There is full cross-searching capability between British Periodicals and The Wellesley Index, as well as with the nearly 200 humanities and social science periodicals that are included in another database that the library already owns, the Periodicals Archive Online.

While currently much smaller in scope, British Periodicals serves as counterpart to the more American-focused JSTOR (consistently one of the library's most heavily used databases, with nearly 200,000 searches in May alone), and we anticipate both it and The Wellesley Index to become staple resources for a broad cross section of students and faculty. We are very grateful to the Friends of the Library for making the acquisition of both of these titles possible. 

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