Did you know that a Wellesley undergraduate in 1903 could take a course comparing Greek dialects, while also studying “the Anatomy of the Cat?” Or that in 1892, “seamstresses, laundresses, cash-girls and poor school-girls,” were invited to vacation in campus housing for several summer weeks to spend time away from the city and enjoy Wellesley’s beautiful grounds? Or that Wellesley’s Class of 1944 was so enamored of Wendell Willkie (FDR’s opponent in the 1940 election) that he was made an honorary member of the class?

In previous years, such tidbits might have been shrouded in obscurity. But thanks to a blossoming digital repository project at the library, Wellesley’s history – from glorious to curious – is now available to any interested Internet viewer.

“The Wellesley College Digital Scholarship and Archive (DSA) is the College’s new institutional repository tool that is designed to manage and provide access to digital assets owned by Wellesley College,” says College Archivist Ian Graham. “It includes research materials, faculty and student scholarship, and materials concerning the history of the College.” Ian and his colleagues began building the repository during the summer and have already added several hundred unique digital objects, including Legendas up to 1950 and course catalogs for the entire history of the College.

Hosted by Digital Commons software and administered by the Library and Technology Services staff, the repository has twin goals: to provide scholars and researchers access to the College’s wealth of information, while simultaneously providing a place to manage and present faculty and student research and scholarship. These materials are freely available to all at repository.wellesley.edu. (Eventually, access to some materials may be limited for legal reasons.)

Graham is especially enthusiastic about the repository’s ability to also preserve “born-digital” assets. “As an archivist who seeks to manage and make accessible historical materials in all formats (including digital materials), having a virtual ‘place’ to put objects that never existed outside of bytes, and allowing a researcher to visit that ‘place’ at any time to discover and incorporate those materials into her scholarship, is the most exciting part of the project,” he says.

Still in its initial stages, the DSA is at present an eclectic collection of President’s Reports, year books, book-arts ephemera, and copies of Wellesley Prelude, a late 1800s campus news/literary publication.

CONTINUED on page 3
Dear Friends,

So much is happening at the Library! At the September meeting of the steering committee of the Friends of the Library, we heard from Ravi Ravishanker and Eileen Hardy about so many activities. Some will be described in greater detail in the Newsletter but I would like to mention a few highlights. There is now, for example, an electronic institutional repository, accessible over the internet. The address is http://repository.wellesley.edu. Among the contents are the president’s reports, college catalogs, Legenda, Prelude, reports of the Wellesley Center for Women, and examples of ephemera printed in the book arts lab. I spent some time going through my mother’s Class of 1934 Legenda. What fun to find that my first year studio art teacher, Agnes Abbott, was an instructor when my mother was on campus! My mother was an avid golfer as was my aunt. There they were, photographed together in the spring of 1934, a couple of years before my mother met my father through her friend on the golf team! Dip into this wonderful archive of the College. It will grow in time with student and faculty research.

The e-reader project funded by a gift of the Friends of the Library is underway in a political science course. Each student received an electronic reader and downloaded the texts that they will be using this semester. The professor and library staff will assess how the students adapt to electronic texts. Will they make notes on the pages as we used to do? Will the electronic texts be easy to navigate? A faculty reading group also received e-readers. The Friends Steering Committee members are curious to learn how this experiment works.

Changes are occurring in the art and music libraries as well. The art library has been able to merge 25,000 images into the local SharedShelf portion of ARTstor, the large collection of art images from museums and private collections that supports the teaching of art history. Gone are the drawers of slides and the use of projectors. In the music library, the listening room is being transformed into a teaching and work space for digital audio and video.

Finally, Global Flora: Botanical Imagery and Exploration, an exhibition at the Davis Museum, features illustrated works from the Library’s Special Collections. Among the books on display is Robert J. Thorton’s The Temple of Flora, published in 1807 with elegant mezzotint plates.

These activities could not take place without the support of each of our members. Thank you for your ongoing support of so many interesting activities.

Sincerely yours,

Georgia B. Barnhill ’66
More entries – such as back issues of the alumnae magazine – will be added on a regular basis, with inclusion based on the interest and research value of the materials. One project scheduled for the DSA is particularly exciting to scholars and laypeople alike: the digitization of the Browning love letters.

The 570 original letters exchanged between poets Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett (to-be) Browning in the mid 19th century were given to the College’s Special Collections in 1930 by College President Caroline Hazard. Curator Ruth Rogers describes the letters as “probably among the most well-known ever written; of interest to romantics as well as scholars, of any age and nationality.” Special preparations are underway to preserve them in the repository. “The College has contracted with an outside vendor to digitize the Browning courtship correspondence onsite,” Graham explains. “Those digital files will then be made available in two repositories: the DSA at Wellesley, and an existing major repository of Browning letters and manuscripts at Baylor University.” He hopes that the letters will find their way into Wellesley’s repository by the end of the calendar year, further enriching the emerging tool for scholars worldwide.

Look to the Spring newsletter for an update on the Browning project.

Explore the Wellesley College Digital and Scholarship Archive: http://repository.wellesley.edu
The past year has been bountiful with gifts to Special Collections. Whether donated by academic departments, individuals with ties to the College, or our ever-loyal alumnae, the collections have been strengthened by a wealth of new materials.

From the Religion Department, Professor Edward Hobbs and his colleagues presented us with the massive limited edition Arion Press Bible. The complexities of textual editing and letterpress printing involved in the production of this holy book have already earned it critical praise as a landmark in American Bible printing.

Susan McDermott, a descendant of Catharine Mitchill, Class of 1931, gave an unusually deep collection of 19th century family letters. The correspondence between soldier and family, husband, wife, and children grants students and researchers a unique perspective of American life during and after the Civil War era. The letters are being processed and will be eventually transcribed as well as scanned.

On the occasion of her 56th reunion, Charlotte Germundson, Class of 1954 donated a collection of 15–18th century maps of Switzerland. Last semester, students were able to compare woodcut 16th century maps to the more detailed 17th century engraved versions that Mrs. Germundson’s donation now provides. The collection is an excellent teaching tool for demonstrating the advances in mapmaking and printing technology during this time period.

Judith Miskell of Freeport, Maine, gave six books belonging to her father, Guy Warren Walker Jr., whose collection of 384 volumes documenting the history of book illustration has been a heavily used part of the College’s collections since 1981. A rare Doves Press ephemera volume, La Fontaine’s Fables illustrated by Grandville, and an early 20th century deluxe edition of Milton’s Paradise Lost printed on vellum are among the gifts.

Charles Rheault, of Dover, Massachusetts, a retired printer and manager at the Riverside Press in Boston, has given 250 fine press books printed by Bruce Rogers to Special Collections. The texts represented are diverse, and include world literature, poetry, New England history, and essays. Considered one of the great American typographers and book designers, Bruce Rogers’ volumes will complement the richness of our existing collection of limited editions and fine printing. Wellesley students hungry to learn more about type design, exemplary presswork, and what constitutes a well-made book should look no further than this extensive collection now at home on their campus.

Francita Ulmer, Class of 1953, gave two rare books from her family library, in memory of her mother-in-law, Beulah Anne Hubbard Koelsch, Class of 1913. Walter Besant’s East London, is remarkable for its delicate fore-edge painting of London, and Byron’s Werner is a scarce first edition in full morocco with a printed dedication to Goethe himself.

Perhaps our most unusual gift this year is not a book or a manuscript but the tools for producing one. Susan Baerg Epstein, Class of 1960, wanted to make a donation in honor of Micheline E. Jedrey upon her retirement as College Librarian. With Ms. Epstein’s gift, we were able to commission a modern reproduction of a medieval scribe’s toolkit, which has already been used in classes to explain scribal methods and production techniques in the era before printing.
“What Are We Reading” is a regular feature of this newsletter. To share what you're reading, please contact newsletter editor Amanda Zoellner '03 at azoellner@alum.wellesley.edu. We look forward to receiving your submission!

I read the Kindle book That Used to Be Us: How America Fell Behind in the World It Invented and How We Can Come Back by Thomas Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2011). The authors bring a historic perspective to what made this country so successful for so many years and how we seem to have lost our ways in the recent years. The inevitable discussion of China and India and the adjustments they have made in recent years to become successful is fascinating. The authors discuss how China lost its edge for a few centuries by being complacent and warn how the same could happen to us here if we don’t do something quickly. They then go on to provide a few specific ideas on how to fix the problems.

Ravi Ravishanker

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Ravi Ravishanker

The hare in the title of The Hare with Amber Eyes by Edmund de Waal (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2010) refers to one of a collection of 264 wood and ivory carvings called netsukes, miniature sculptures made in Japan as fasteners for pouches that hung from the obis or sashes to hold valuables. But this book is about so much more than the netsukes themselves—it is the story of the man who originally collected them, Charles Ephrussi, and his family, one of the richest European families of the nineteenth century. It is a marvelous combination of memoir, art history, the arrival of the Nazis in Vienna, and biography. It is fascinating, extremely well-researched, and well-written. My favorite book of the past year, it reads at times like fiction, but it is a true story.

Maud Chaplin ’56


Georgia B. Barnhill ’66

My high school did a ‘one book-one school’ project where faculty and students read the same book over the summer. Zeitoun by David Eggers (SanFrancisco: McSweeney’s, 2009) was an important contemporary America story to be told about the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Deborah Holman ’89
Holiday Gifts & Cards

Support the Friends of the Library with your order of postcards or notecards. Contact Kristy Grinder, kgrinder@wellesley.edu.

✧ Send your holiday greetings with an initial from the Book of Hours. Only $5/box of 8.

✧ A special gift for Wellesley friends: a set of postcards featuring photographs from the Clapp Library Archives. Each of the five sets is $10 and contains two each of eight images.

✧ Notecards feature botanical illustrations from The Botanic Garden by Benjamin Maund. $13/box of 8.

We’ll see you at the Library!

The Great Migration
Molly S. Campbell ’60

Over the past six months, faculty, students, and staff at Wellesley have been “migrating.” Not heading south, but moving all their electronic data from one academic management system to another. Sounds complicated, and it is. When the announcement was made that the College would leave “First Class,” the existing system, the community outcry resulted in the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Library and Technology Policy, in November 2010. This Academic Council Committee with faculty, staff, and student representatives was welcomed by Ravi Ravishanker, the newly appointed Chief Information Officer. In his characteristic “let’s do it now” style, Ravi urged the committee to make its recommendation in time to announce the decision to students accepting the College on May 1, 2011.

After reviewing different vendors, the decision was made to go with Google Apps. And so began “the great migration” under the direction of David O’Steen. It is quite a complicated process to move all student, faculty and staff emails and documents (think about 20 years of emails) from one system to another. Of course, glitches do occur, with the accompanying complaints. Bill Joseph, the Chair of the Advisory Committee, says the tech staff deserves an award for “grace under pressure.” However, the benefits of the Google system are many. They manage and store the data off-site, except student records, and they do it for free. In addition to email, the system provides “course conferences,” sites which enable each course instructor to post assignments, electronic readings and even videos as well as hosting on-going student/faculty dialogs. The only drawback to the online system is the long faces which result when the instructor suggests that the students actually go to the library and read from books on the shelf.

Other policy issues that the Committee has discussed include the establishment of closed groups and adjudication procedures for violations. The Committee has recently sent out a request for proposals for the Friends of the Library Innovation Fund, a $100,000 gift to the Library to celebrate the 100th birthday of the Clapp Library. We look forward to some exciting projects.

Gallery Walk

On November 9, the Friends of the Library joined Kristina Jones, Director of the Wellesley College Botanic Gardens; Ruth Rogers, Curator of Margaret Clapp Library Special Collections; and Elaine Mehalakes, Kemper Curator of Academic Programs at the Davis, for a refreshing interdisciplinary guided tour of the current exhibit at the Davis Museum, Global Flora: Botanical Imagery and Exploration. If you missed the walk, there’s still time to see the exhibit, on view through February 26, 2012.
Is it time to renew your membership?

You may use the form below and make your check payable to Wellesley College.

Mail to: Kristy Grinder, Friends of Wellesley College Library, Wellesley College, Office for Resources, Green Hall 259, 106 Central Street, Wellesley, MA 02481.

Please choose a membership category:

___ Patron* $2,500  ___ Donor $250  ___ Endowment Fund
___ Benefactor $1,000  ___ Sponsor $100
___ Supporter $500  ___ Contributor $50  ___ Young Alum $15 (graduates from past 5 years)

*Entitles Durant Society Membership

Name: ___________________________________________ Class, if applicable: ________________
Street Address: ____________________________________________________________________
City: ______________________________ State: _____ Zip Code: ____________
Phone Number: (_____)______________ Email Address: _______________________________

Or, make your gift online at www.wellesley.edu/give, and choose “Friends of the Library” as your gift designation.

Thank you for your continuing support!

Friends of the Library Steering Committee Welcomes New Member

At the September meeting, the Friends of the Library Steering Committee was pleased to welcome Deborah Holman '89. At Wellesley, she was a history major and studio art minor.

She taught overseas at American schools in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Bangkok, Thailand. Currently, she lives in Brookline, Massachusetts, and works at Newton North High School where she has taught history since 1996.

Deb wrote in her nomination statement, “I am now vice principal in charge of diverse things such as operations, teacher collaboration, communication, calendar, and state exams. One of my favorite aspects of my job is that I get to support and supervise the school’s library staff.

We recently moved into our new high school building where our library teachers re-designed the library learning commons.”

“They created a prize-winning website, updated the book collection, created an innovation studio with online resources available for student groups and group collaboration, and created a QR code system for identifying resources and good literature.”

“As a high school and district, we are trying to figure out the new nexus between print and online, traditional library resources and new technology. I welcome the opportunity to get back in touch with these discussions at the college level and to participate with the FOL Steering Committee.”

Honor with Books

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✦ Honor a Graduate
✦ Celebrate a Birthday or Anniversary
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✦ Remember a Classmate

For each $100 gift to Honor with Books, the Library will place a bookplate bearing the name of the honoree, as well as your name, in a newly purchased book.

To request information from Friends of the Library: Call 781-283-2872 or visit the Friends website: www.wellesley.edu/Library/Friends
Good News for Students

In Spring 2011, Library staff came to the Friends of the Library with a proposal. They reported a striking number of students expressing interest in library-related careers and wanted to find a forum to share information about the field. The Friends of the Library Steering Committee asked the Library staff to explore hosting a library careers event for Wellesley students and students at affiliated institutions.

We are pleased to announce that the event has been scheduled for Friday, March 30, 2012, and will be co-sponsored by the Center for Work and Service. The mid-day event will include lunch and a panel discussion with Library and Technology Services staff.

Stay tuned for more information, and save the date on your calendar. As the event gets closer, we’ll be able to provide more details on the day’s schedule and ask for volunteer assistance from the Friends membership.

Careers in Library & Information Science

Friday, March 30, 2012
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Library Lecture Room
Margaret Clapp Library

Co-sponsored by
The Friends of the Library and
The Center for Work & Service