Library Acquires Arthur Rackham and Textbook Collections

This spring, two major additions were made to the Lucile Clarke Children’s Collection. With the support of Friends of the Libraries, a nationally recognized collection of 119 books illustrated by Arthur Rackham found a new home at the Clarke. Complementing this visual treasure was the transfer of nearly 8,000 textbooks printed from approximately 1950 to 1990 from Wayne State University to the Clarke. Taken together the two acquisitions represent a major addition that will enable the library to better document the ways in which children learn to read.

Born in England in 1867, Arthur Rackham was one of twelve children fathered by Alfred Rackham, a hardworking civil servant who held increasingly senior posts in Britain’s Admiralty Court. Although Arthur showed much talent as an artist, his father, who was a practical man, insisted that his son also learn a trade. In the end they compromised. Arthur studied art by night and worked as a clerk in an insurance firm during the day. He was frequently bored by his duties, but he saw them as a means to an end: they were a way to earn his keep while he studied to become a professional artist.

In 1892 Rackham resigned his clerk position and became an illustrator for a weekly magazine. In 1893, one of his drawings appeared in a book for the first time. During the next decade Rackham had steady employment as an illustrator, but he was one of many men making his living in this fashion. He was a journeyman, competent and respected but not prominent and certainly not a name that sold books. Rackham, however, was not content with his lot; he craved fame.

In 1905, with the publication of a lavishly illustrated edition of Rip Van Winkle, Rackham found the popular and critical success he had long desired. Fifty-one color illustrations, tipped into the back of this book, displayed a style for which Rackham would become famous. An intricate pen line was softened by the use of watercolor. Forests of trees filled with frightening ogres and trolls startled the senses yet also appealed to the eye and, when all was said and done, gave the images a surprising playfulness and joy. In the backgrounds of these drawings small creatures lurked, as well as other intricate details that rewarded the patient viewer with gentle surprises.

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In 1906 Rackham secured his place as an illustrator of note with the publication of *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*, one of his two masterworks. Rackham’s name on a volume now became a marketable commodity. His publishers, both in Britain and the United States, rolled out book after book.

With a new volume “illustrated by Arthur Rackham” a regular feature in bookstores on both sides of the Atlantic, there were bound to be ups and downs. Rackham was usually at his best illustrating strong story lines. Weaker stories, which his publishers sometimes convinced him to attempt, often led him to produce illustrations that were not comparable to his best work.

Rackham used his fame to explore illustrating various types of stories. Although he is most often associated with books of children’s stories, Rackham also created illustrations for books on Shakespeare and Wagnerian operas.

It sometimes seems as if Rackham’s work was aimed at keeping the frightening, modern world at bay. Even after the horrors of World War I, his imagery remained unchanged—a reminder of a simpler, happier way of life. The last illustrations he completed, for *The Wind in the Willows*, which was published in 1940, the year after his death, are reminiscent of those found in *Rip Van Winkle* and *Peter Pan*. He had found a distinctive style in the first years of the twentieth century that made him famous, and it was still his thirty-five years later.

The collection of Rackham’s work now housed in the Clarke is a treasure trove both of his major efforts and his minor productions. Rackham’s early years as an illustrator are well represented among the books. Perhaps unsurprisingly, books of children’s tales, both old and new, abound. These are joined by many editions of *Peter Pan*, as well as his breakthrough volume, *Rip Van Winkle*.

Rackham’s versions of Wagner’s operatic trilogy, *The Rhinegold and the Valkyrie*, *The Ring of the Niblung*, and *Siegfried; and the Twilight of the Gods*, are in the collection as well. Also included are his take on Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer-Night’s Dream* (frequently cited as one of his classic works) and *The Tempest*. Other examples of illustrations drawn for adults include an illustrated copy of Izaak Walton’s classic, *The Compleat Angler*. The Rackham collection represents a wonderful addition to the Clarke Library’s collection of children’s books. His works will be celebrated by an exhibit planned for the spring of 2006.

Counterbalancing the select nature of the works containing Rackham’s illustrations is the large collection of nearly 8,000 textbooks. Bound so that they would survive the sometimes rough use of young hands and often more concerned with vocabulary development or price per unit than artistic representation, textbooks nevertheless are a critical component in teaching children how to read. For almost four decades Wayne State University in Detroit collected grade-school textbooks as a sample library. The books served students entering the teaching profession. Eventually the collecting effort was abandoned. With the passage of time, the librarians at Wayne wished to place materials that patrons used more on the shelves occupied by these aging textbooks.
Michigan Newspaper Minigrants Announced

With the financial support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Michigan Newspaper Project made available to libraries and historical societies in Michigan a minigrant program to support the filming of community newspapers. Twenty-four agencies requested that more than 500,000 pages of newspapers be filmed. With guaranteed funds to film only about 100,000 newspaper pages, with the possibility of funding an additional 100,000 pages, the MNP board had to make a number of difficult choices.

The following newspapers were selected for filming through the MNP minigrant program:

- Bay City Press and Times, 1863-1864
- Benzie Banner 1969-1976
- Grand Rapids Courier, 1906-1907
- Grand Rapids Times, 1936-1937
- Grandville News, 1909-1911
- Inkster Journal, 1939-1946
- Lansing Journal, 1904-1905
- The Leader and Kalkaskaian, 1967-2004
- Richmond Review, 1875-2000
- Tribal Observer (Saginaw Chippewa Tribe, Mt. Pleasant), 1991-2005
- Ramey Observer, 1866-1936
- St. Clair Shores Herald, 1953-1961
- Wayne County Review, 1931-1943

If funds allow, the following additional titles will be filmed:

- The Augustinian (Kalamazoo), 1897-1930
- Charlevoix County Herald, 1943-1952
- Four Corners Press (Southfield), 1948-1958
- Montmorency County Tribune, 1974-1994
- The Progress Advocate (Pigeon), 1983-1992
- Township Times (Saginaw), 1965 to approximately 1985

Filming will take place until June 2006; thus, titles listed here may not be available for use for some time.

Continued from Page 2

Through a chance conversation at the Michigan Library Association meeting, knowledge of the collection's availability became known to the Clarke staff. For the price of a rental truck, gas, and several very sore backs, the books were moved from Detroit to Mount Pleasant.

The volumes represent a rich resource for historians interested in studying changing education trends in post-World-War-II America. The books also represent a rich cultural history because of the ways in which they chose to interest children in reading. The stories sometimes hearken back to an earlier generation's agricultural roots, which will likely be quite alien to children who lived in post-World-War-II American suburbs. These children's only knowledge of cows probably came from televised cowboy shows and not in fields or milking barns.

Housed in the Clarke, both the beautiful books of Arthur Rackham,
Exhibit Features Michigan’s Oil and Gas Industry

Ask a typical Michigander where oil and natural gas come from and the answer you hear will probably be “Texas” or perhaps “the Middle East.” One of Michigan’s best kept secrets is that our state is among the nation’s major producers of oil and natural gas. In the fiscal year that ended September 30, 2004, Michigan wells pumped oil and natural gas valued at $1.143 billion—real money, even by Texas standards.

This exhibit will educate its visitors about the history of this little-known Michigan industry. It will also briefly investigate the geological reasons why Michigan was blessed with such rich oil and natural-gas reserves.

To be useful, however, oil and natural gas need to be found, pumped from the ground, and delivered to refineries. Thus, the majority of the exhibit will be devoted to the history of the industry that performs these tasks, beginning in 1925 with the drilling of Michigan’s first commercially viable oil well in Saginaw. The exhibit will also examine the relationship between the industry and Mount Pleasant, long considered the “capital” of Michigan’s oil and natural-gas industry.

In addition the exhibit will explore the relationship between the oil industry and the environment by focusing on the legislative compromise brokered between industry representatives and environmentalists that resulted in the creation of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund in 1976. The fund was established to receive the royalties paid to the state for oil and natural gas found under state land. This money is used to support environmental and outdoor recreational projects. Since its creation, the fund has supported more than 1,400 projects. Each of Michigan’s 83 counties has benefited from the fund, and over the years more than $635 million has been spent protecting natural resources, whether by purchasing areas at state land, providing public access to Michigan waterways, or improving outdoor recreational opportunities in both urban and rural settings.

In addition to the exhibit in the Clarke Library, a link on the Clarke website will direct users to a large number of oil-and-gas-industry photographs. Drawn from the almost 5,000 images donated to the Clarke Library from the Michigan Oil and Gas News photographic morgue and the Norm Lyons Papers (Lyons was a longtime editor of the Michigan Oil and Gas News), together these images create a pictorial history of the industry and the people who worked in it. The web component of the exhibit can be accessed by visiting the Clarke website, found at www.clarke.cmich.edu.

Driller Wade Kunkler and Toolpusher Ray Stack in Oscoda County

Pipeline prior to being placed in the Straits of Mackinac
Jeff Hancks to Leave

We bid farewell to our colleague Jeff Hancks, the Clarke’s public service librarian for the past two years. Responsible for reference and collection development in the Clarke, Jeff has recently accepted an offer from Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois, where he will assume the title of Endowed Professor of Regional and Icarian Studies. The position also requires Jeff to serve as coordinator of the university’s archives and special collections.

The Icarians were followers of the nineteenth-century Frenchman Etienne Cabet, who wrote an influential utopian book, Travels in Icaria. In the 1850s an Icarian settlement of about five hundred people was established in Nauvoo, Illinois (the same community that earlier housed Joseph Smith and the Mormons). Cabet’s death in 1856 caused the movement to splinter. Most of the Nauvoo Icarian community relocated to Iowa in 1860.

We wish Jeff well in his new endeavor.

Trendwell Energy
in Memory of Jack Mall

Jack R. Westbrook
in Memory of Walter Scott
Westbrook
and H. Hood Westbrook

Wolverine Gas and Oil
Corp.
in Memory of Sidney J. Jansma

Rosemary Reid
in Memory of
Anthony Thomas Wallangar
& Roy A. Lovell

This exhibit will open in mid-August and run through January 31, 2006. It was made possible, in part, by generous gifts from the Michigan Oil and Gas Producers Education Foundation.

Additional contributors include:

Muskegon Development
in Memory of Charles E. Myler
and Hugh Crider

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in Memory of Larry J. Kinney

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in Memory of Arthur M. Cook

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John Hartman
in Memory of I. W. “Bucky” Hartman

Mika, Meyers, Beckett & Jones
in Honor of Ernest A. Mika
and Veryl N. Meyers

Tiger Development
in Memory of Lyle Hall

Howard Asha
and Floyd Calvert,
Michigan’s Oil and Gas Industry’s first and second presidents, respectively.
Bringing Michigan's Bird's-eye Views to the Web

With the assistance of a grant from the Library of Michigan, the Clarke Library will scan and place on the world wide web many of the nineteenth-century bird's-eye views drawn of Michigan cities. Over the course of the next year, views from the following cities will be scanned:

- Adrian, 1889
- Albion, 1866
- Alma, 1885
- Alpena, 1880
- Ann Arbor, 1866
- Ann Arbor - University of Michigan, 1881
- Ann Arbor, 1890
- Au Sable and Oscoda, 1880
- Battle Creek - Mills and Manufacturing Establishments, undated
- Bay City, 1879
- Belding, 1880
- Big Rapids, 1880
- Birmingham, 1881
- Cadillac, 1882
- Charlevoix, 1889
- Charlevoix and surroundings, undated
- Charlotte, 1870
- Clare, 1884
- Coldwater, 1883
- Coleman, 1884
- Constantine, 1874
- Corunna, 1881
- Decatur, 1875
- Delhi Mills, 1874
- Delphi Mills (Scio Township, MI), undated
- Detroit, 1855
- Detroit and its Waterfront, 1887
- Douglas, 1907
- East Saginaw and Saginaw, 1885
- Escanaba, undated
- Fenton, 1880
- Flint, 1867
- Flint, 1880
- Grand Ledge, 1881
- Grand Rapids, 1860
- Grand Rapids, 1874
- Greenville, 1880
- Hancock, 1873
- Hanover Village, 1874
- Harbor Beach (Sand Beach), undated, [1880s]
- Harbor Springs, undated, [1890s]
- Hartford, 1880
- Holly, 1873
- Howell, 1877
- Ionia, 1879
- Ionia, 1881
- Iron Mountain, undated, [1890s]
- Keweenaw Peninsula - Houghton, Hancock, Calumet, Lake Linden, 1913
- L'Anse, 1881
- Lansing, 1890
- Les Cheneaux Islands, 1914 (Arnold Transit Co.)
- Lowell, 1870
- Ludington, 1880
- Marquette, 1871
- Marquette, 1881
- Marquette, 1886
- Menominee, 1860
- Menominee, 1886
- Mount Pleasant, 1884
- Muir, 1881
- Mullet Lake House, undated
- Negaunee, 1881
- Ontonagon, 1855
- Ovid, 1881
- Owosso, 1873
- Paw Paw, 1875
- Pentwater, 1880
- Petoskey and surroundings, 1880
- Petoskey and surroundings, 1890
- Portland, 1881
- Quincy, 1883
- Rapid Railway System Detroit and Port Huron, Rockford, 1880
- Saint Joseph, 1870
- Saugatuck, 1907
- Shelby, 1909
- South Haven, 1880
- Stanton, 1880
- Traverse City and its Pioneers, undated
- Union City, 1880
- Vicksburg, 1880

Panoramic views are among the most unique and important visual records for nineteenth-century Michigan communities. For those communities fortunate enough to have had a view created, the document opens up a wealth of local information regarding architecture, spatial relations, and documentation regarding individual structures. For scholars and others, views create a unique tool through which communities can be compared and contrasted. Panoramic views create a cornucopia of research opportunities for local citizens, community historians, and professional scholars in several disciplines.

Seventy-two of the views will come from the Clarke Library's collection, supplemented by nine views from the University of Michigan's Bentley Historical Library.
A Final Word

As reported elsewhere in this newsletter, the library has made a wonderful acquisition of Arthur Rackham books and other materials. A child’s life, however, is not all pretty pictures, and so the library also acquired approximately 8,000 textbooks published between 1950 and 1990.

For every child who gazed in wonder at Rackham’s illustrations, there is another tyke whose introduction to reading was an elementary-school teacher who put a textbook in his or her hand. This method of introducing reading may not be the most enticing way to convince young people of the need to learn their letters, but it certainly can be effective.

The Clarke has always collected books on both sides of the literacy coin: volumes children read for fun and texts children read because their teachers and parents tell them to do so. Both are important—although adults tend to remember the former a good deal more fondly than the latter.

When they were not beating the bushes for new acquisitions, Clarke staff members have also been working to promote history, primarily by partnering with the Historical Society of Michigan to bring the Michigan History Day state finals to the CMU campus on April 30. Students in grades 4-12 who had won district competitions held at ten sites around Michigan were invited to participate in the state finals. We were delighted when a record 178 students appeared to compete in the day’s many events.

Having served as a judge, I found it exciting to view the many student efforts and to interview several participants. The students brought a tremendous enthusiasm to their projects. After overcoming the fact that they had to answer questions from the “old-timers” who served as judges, the students demonstrated a remarkable knowledge about the subjects they had selected for their themes.

In a real sense all the students who participated won because they deepened their appreciation of history though the creation of their entries. If the students were all winners, so was the Library. Encouraging the next generation to appreciate and study history is a double good. It is good for the Library, ensuring another generation of users. It is even better for the nation, encouraging the continued appreciation of our cultural heritage.

Finally, I am delighted to report some happy news. For years Mark Clare, CMU facilities management refrigeration specialist, has kept the temperature and humidity in the Clarke’s stacks within acceptable levels. Given our relatively narrow range of tolerance, Mark is a frequent visitor to the Clarke, tweaking the system to make the necessary adjustments. This spring Mark was presented with a CMU staff excellence award, or, as he describes it, the “Mark of excellence.” I cannot think of a more deserving candidate. Congratulations Mark!

Frank Boles

I needed to corroborate a… detail in Frank Sidgwick’s [1914] three volume edition of A Descriptive Catalogue of the Pepys Library. … I decided to make a… stop at the Boston Athenaeum.

There, I… turned up the three… volumes… As I was signing the books out… I confirmed… that they were… leaving the library for the first time. “Eighty-one years,” I said aloud, shaking my head with amused gratitude. “You wonder who they bought these books for anyway.” James P. Feeney, the silver haired circulation librarian… paused momentarily and fastened his unblinking eyes on mine. “We got them for you, Mr. Basbanes,” … It was as if the collective hands of… every temporary custodian of the world’s gathered wisdom had reached out through the swirling eddy of the ages and placed in my hands the precious gift of a book. It was an act of faith fulfilled, and we… owe no less a compact to the readers of the third millennium.

Nicholas Basbanes from the prologue of his book, Patience and Fortitude. Mr. Basbanes spoke June 18 at the Friends of the Libraries luncheon on the CMU campus.
Friends of the Library

The CMU Friends of the Library is a membership organization that supports, through contributions and volunteer activities, the programs of the University Library, the Clarke Historical Library, and Off-Campus Library Services.

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