

TODD LIBRARY UPDATE

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In the Beginning Was the Word: Gutenberg and His Successors

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“**I**n principio erat verbum,” or in English, “In the beginning was the word,” begins the gospel of John in the Vulgate edition of the Bible which came from Johann Gutenberg’s press in the middle of the fifteenth century, the first book printed in Western Europe from moveable type. The printing of that particular book launched a revolution that has lasted more than 500 years. Truly in the beginning was “the word,” whether you look at that word in its Biblical and Christian sense or whether you limit it to humankind’s attempts to communicate formally over the approximately 5000 years of history. But the revolution which Gutenberg and his successors began certainly did change the course of human history. Even in these days of those marvelous computers (on which this speech was written) the printed word, transmitted in a variety of formats, remains the means by which we communicate with each other in teaching, in research, and in our everyday lives.

As Elizabeth Eisenstein notes in her landmark work, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, Gutenberg and his successors changed society in three fundamental ways: (1) they made permanent the renaissance, with its emphasis on the human vs. the divine, (2) paradoxically, they also made available to the masses Biblical information and improved texts which not only divided Western Christendom but also enabled the Protestant Reformation to succeed, and (3) they made possible the emergence of modern science which could now disseminate its findings in multiple copies, all the same, so that what was discovered in one country could now be known in other parts of the world and thereby become the means by which scientific knowledge could be expanded.

This ability to make every copy the same, even in inaccurate and often misleading form, was fundamental for teaching and research as we know it today. From the time of the establishment of the Royal Society in London in 1665 with its *Proceedings* until today, we have expanded newsletters and journals, and works like tide tables, charts, and graphs in ways that make knowledge easily available to the literate person from Murfreesboro to Moscow, from Chapel Hill to Copenhagen, and from Tampa to Tokyo. As the world has become more interdependent, the sharing of knowledge and the cumulative effect of its transmission have not only increased our ability to be more productive but also have created new problems of coping with peace and war, freedom and injustice, and wealth and poverty.

In a remarkable speech in January of last year, Dr. William Beasley, speaking of MTSU’s mission to prepare teachers for the next generation, stated that “from our beginning, our purpose has been to distribute knowledge, to contribute to the good of the state through the belief that the educated person contributes to the well being of all.” That mission of the University, stated so eloquently by its distinguished faculty member, has been made much easier by provision of the printed word, whether it is in the form of book, or journal, or newspaper, or microfiche, or on an IBM XT personal computer. In the beginning surely was the word. That word, communicated by the faculty in teaching, by students in study and debate, by adminis-

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A speech delivered on the occasion of the celebration of the 500,000th volume and the 75th Anniversary of Middle Tennessee State University, April 6, 1987.

Check Us Out...

The Gutenberg Travels

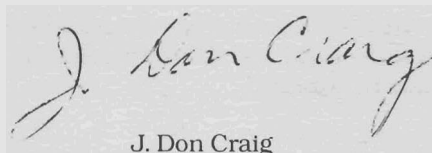
Dear Faculty

In several issues of this newsletter we have described various efforts being made to prepare the Library for a significant computerization project. I am pleased to report to you that all of these preparation activities have been completed and a proposal has been submitted to President Ingram requesting the funding of a major library automation project. The Library staff appreciates your continued interest in this project and your patience as we have proceeded through the necessary preparation activities. We hope that this project will be funded soon so you and your students can begin receiving direct benefits from the investment already made in it.

The next time you are in the Library I hope you will take time to examine the collection of Steuben glass art objects that are on display outside of the Administrative Office on the main floor. These beautiful items were willed to the University by Dr. Mary Dunn, a long-time member of the Biology faculty. We are pleased to be the permanent site for this display and know that many future generations will enjoy seeing these works of art.

I hope that you have noticed the yellow name badges being worn by Library Student Assistants now. We employ about 100 students and are very dependent on the work they perform. We want to make sure you can identify them as staff so that they can be called on for directional-type assistance. I would appreciate hearing about the performance of the student assistants or any other staff members.

Cordially,



J. Don Craig
University Librarian

Thanks to a Public Service Grant from the University, Todd Library has been able to make the Gutenberg Bible replica available to small public libraries in the middle Tennessee area. We also provide a locked display case since most of these libraries have no secure case. In April, announcements about the availability of the Gutenberg for a two-week loan were mailed to small public libraries and community colleges within an approximate fifty mile radius. The response was enthusiastic. Next, an agenda was planned so that libraries would have a firm date for the display.

On July 3, the Gutenberg was taken to the Marshall County Memorial Library in Lewisburg. Two weeks later it was picked up and taken to the Fayetteville-Lincoln County Public Library. Since that time the Gutenberg has spent two-week periods in the Coffee County Lannom Memorial Library in Tullahoma, the Magness Community House and Library in McMinnville, the Justin Potter Public Library in Smithville, the Smith County Public Library in Carthage, and the Lebanon-Wilson County Public Library.

Other libraries awaiting the display later are Gallatin, Springfield, and Franklin, as well as libraries at Motlow and Volunteer State. Several libraries on a waiting list will be scheduled sometime after Christmas if funds are available for travel.

It has been gratifying for Todd Library to be able to share these beautiful and historical books with the middle Tennessee community. So far an estimated 3900 people in this area have seen the display. It has been very interesting, also, for staff members to see public libraries in the area. (MS) ■

TODD LIBRARY UPDATE is issued from time to time for the Middle Tennessee State University community.

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Holley speaks...

trators in providing public information, and by librarians acquiring, organizing, and delivering thousands and millions of words each year, is one of the precious assets of Western Civilization. In that sense we are all successors to Gutenberg and the symbolic nature of what we do here today is testimony to our faith in our heritage, the importance of its transmission, and the incalculable benefit we derive from using that word in developing the skills so necessary to functioning in a democratic and technologically sophisticated society.

One of the elements of that heritage of course is the Judeo-Christian holy book, The Bible. Gutenberg's product, so handsomely printed in this facsimile, is a marvelous work of art. Since it was based upon the hand-copied book from the monasteries, it is highly decorated and written in a language most of us no longer read or use. But its influence has been tremendous down through the centuries. It is worth noting that the first book acquired by the University was a Bible (King James version) placed in that modest little library on the third floor of the main building. Your historian, Homer Pittard, called the description of that library in the 1912 *Bulletin* as "carefully selected" a "classic overstatement of promotion" since the 2,000 volumes were mostly "out-of-date textbooks" which would serve the same "intellectual purpose in the attics from which they came." No matter. You started with the right book. Perhaps we should forgive the exaggeration. Administrators have a tendency to be intensely proud of their institutions and often get carried away when extolling their virtues.

But back to my point. You have recognized this part of our heritage in this symbolic way and I congratulate you for it. At a symposium on "Religion and the First Amendment" at Chapel Hill last year, the distinguished sociologist Robert Bellah said that it comes as a great surprise to many intelligent people how closely interwoven in our history is the Biblical record, its phrases, its principles. Noting that he had appeared on many radio and TV shows as a result of the unexpected popularity of his book



Seen with the Gutenberg Bible reproduction acquired by Todd Library last spring are Vice President Robert Corlew, President Ingram, Holley, and University Librarian Don Craig.

Habits of the Heart, he often finds himself trying to set the record straight on how Biblical imagery has permeated our national life. The fact that religion has always been involved in our public life is obviously important in understanding current issues.

Now my point is not to defend Bellah's or anyone else's interpretation of that record, but merely to note that ignoring that record is inimical to a liberal arts education, at least in our society. And I would affirm that one cannot transmit the heritage of Western Civilization without acknowledging the role played by religion, both for good and for ill, though I also affirm that in their actions Christians have a lot for which to ask forgiveness. But I am sure that MTSU's faculty does deal with Biblical imagery in history, literature, philosophy, and other disciplines which, in Professor Beasley's terms, constitute the centrality of the liberal arts at Murfreesboro. For Bellah is right that the Bible, in its various translations, and especially in the King James Version, has permeated our social and political life in ways of which many are only vaguely aware.

Libraries as both the repositories and the disseminators of knowledge have played a major role in the liberal arts and in professional education. They have provided the products of Gutenberg's invention both for teaching and research. Books and other materials in the library are not only for lifting the human spirit but also for practical use. They undergird the liberal arts and they also provide information for obtaining the basic skills needed by the modern day teacher, home economist, nurse, aerospace engineer, business person, and scientist.

Middle Tennessee State University and its library have come a long way from that small, inadequate library, and the pretensions that Pittard said did not match reality. From the second year MTSU had a full-time librarian, Bettie A. Murfree, whom Pittard credits with having both "patience and dogged determination" to devise "many unique methods to acquire new and attractive books." By

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Holley speaks...

The liberal arts and the useful arts. They go together, do they not? They encourage our students, in Professor Beasley's words, not only to earn a living but also to build a life. You have done that in your seventy-five years here in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, where young men and women of modest means and background have come to learn and be challenged not only by the best of the past but also the best of the future.

President Ingram, Librarian Craig, distinguished guests, and all of you who have contributed so generously to the development of this library, let me congratulate you on the addition of this half-millionth volume, and let me extend every good wish as you set your sights on your second half million.

1926 when the library moved into a new building of its own, the number of volumes had reached 16,000. Remembrance of her good deeds was duly acknowledged when her name was given to that building after the library moved into its present Andrew Todd Library in 1957.

In commenting on your good fortune in your librarians, I am reminded of a quotation from Justin Winsor, distinguished historian and librarian of Harvard University, who said in 1878 that a "collection of good books, with a soul to it in the shape of a good librarian, becomes a vitalized power among the impulses by which the world goes on to improvement." To Winsor's statement I can only add a hearty "amen."

Through dedicated librarians MTSU's library has continued to grow in resources and usefulness to the faculty and students. Consider this fact: when the Andrew L. Todd Memorial Library was dedicated in 1958, the library contained 65,000 volumes. Today, almost three decades later we are celebrating number 500,000. Clearly this celebration is a time for rejoicing, not just in the numbers themselves but in the possibilities these books provide for improved learning and research. For books are not just symbols; they are also for use.

Perhaps no one exemplified that uniting of books for learning and books for use than our most famous intellectual

president, Thomas Jefferson. You may recall that Jefferson's great library became the basis for the Library of Congress after the British burned the Capitol in 1814. As Professor Arthur Bestor has noted:

Jefferson's libraries were for use. He loved books, he chose editions with discrimination, he respected rarities, he paid attention to the proper binding of ephemera, he was careful of the physical condition of his volumes. But his ultimate purpose was not to display his library but to live with it and make its volumes work for him and for others...In the last analysis books were tools, designed to assist men in the most serious and difficult of their labors. That these tools—especially the most useful and valuable of them—should be available to all was a first necessity of a republic.

In our colleges and universities we have given expression to the Jeffersonian ideal by providing books both for the liberal arts and the useful arts. MTSU's courses embody values which no one should take lightly. They must be supported by the great cultural works of the past, as exemplified by the Gutenberg Bible, and an appreciation for its importance in our intellectual heritage. I am happy that you have chosen a book

emerging from our religious and humanistic heritage, representing those subjects which encourage students to think, and argue, and decide upon the great issues of life which remain perennial in the human being's quest for understanding the world and the individual's place in it. The Gutenberg Bible will remind us not only of the rich contribution the Bible has made to our heritage, but also that the interpretation of basic values in all periods of our history has engaged the brightest minds our civilization has produced.

But the useful arts and their practice must also be provided in your library. Those books, and journals, and audio and video cassettes, that embody "useful knowledge," those works which provide for the development of skills and analysis of problems for serving a technological society with competence. These, too, are needed by your students who go forth equipped to earn a living.

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Retiring Faculty



Ida Read

In August, 1987, Ida Read retired from Todd Library. She had been a catalog librarian at Middle Tennessee State University since 1965. Mrs. Read received her undergraduate degree from the Tennessee College for Women in 1945 and her Master's degree in Education with a minor in Library Science from Middle Tennessee State University. Before joining the staff at MTSU, Mrs. Read worked as a high school teacher, a photographer, and a bookmobile librarian.

A woman of many talents and skills, she is an accomplished violinist with the community orchestra. This love and knowledge of music brought a much-needed expertise to her work of cataloging music scores. During her career at MTSU, Mrs. Read processed and cataloged all of the music scores for the Music Department. The sole cataloger for microforms, she processed almost 800,000 physical units of microtext material and over 350,000 volumes in her twenty-two years at the University. Mrs. Read was also responsible for book repair, and she stimulated staff interest in book preservation.

During her years at MTSU, Mrs. Read frequently snapped photographs of the staff and the library building. Her skill in photography was evidenced by the appearance of three of her photos on the covers of *Choice*, *Software*, and *Reference Services Review*.

Mrs. Read belonged to the American Library Association, the Tennessee Library Association, Southeastern Library Association, Mid-State Library Association, the Music Library Association, and she was past state president of the Tennessee Federation of Music Clubs for 1981-83.

Mrs. Read approached both her work and her hobbies with enthusiasm and professionalism. Her unique and varied talents will be missed at Todd Library. (VV) ■



Rebecca Smith

Rebecca Smith, periodicals reference librarian, will be retiring at the end of December, 1987. As the periodicals reference librarian, Ms. Smith has helped many in their use of the materials located on the second floor of the Library—periodicals and periodical indexes, Tennessee materials, government documents, and microtext. She developed the ERIC orientation module and taught most of the classes on ERIC, and she was instrumental in the development of online reference services.

Prior to coming to MTSU in 1969, Ms. Smith worked at David Lipscomb College Library during the academic year and at various libraries around the country during the summers. Her summer work took her to Wisconsin State University at Whitewater, San Diego Public Library, Ohio Valley College Library, and Seattle Public Library.

Ms. Smith has been active in numerous professional organizations. She belongs to the American Library Association, Association of College and Research Libraries, Southeastern Library Association, Tennessee Library Association, and the Mid-State Library Association. In 1984, she was president of the Mid-State organization. Locally, she has been actively involved in the Rutherford County Historical Society and the Friends of Cheekwood.

Her interest in local history led her to research and write a "History of Dilton" which was published in the *Rutherford County Historical Society Publications* in 1977. The Society recognized the quality of this research by awarding her the "Cannonsburgh Award" for that year.

Hobbies of Ms. Smith include travel, beadwork, cooking, reading, and eating at gourmet restaurants. She has also occasionally written and illustrated children's books for special "little ones" in her family. In 1972, she participated in a "People to People" tour of the Soviet Union, and she has toured Israel and Ireland. Her travels are not always so far flung though; one of her favorite trips is to hike to the top of Mt. LeConte in the Smokies. The librarians (and probably many others) have benefited from her wonderful cooking specialties and from advice on which restaurants to try on that special night out.

Ms. Smith's library skills will be greatly missed by the Library staff and by students and faculty who use the Library. She will also be missed by the librarians for her good humor and that special quality she added to the lives of those who worked with her. Many good wishes go with Ms. Smith as she "retires" to her new home in the Dilton community. (LSG) ■



Todd Library

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Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37132

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discriminate against the handicapped.*