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Bibliotech



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Virginia Tech Information Center

Z. Kelly Queijo

Deep in a corner of the fourth floor of Newman Library is a small office that has a large impact on economic development throughout the state of Virginia. The Virginia Tech Information Center (VTIC), staffed by librarians John Cosgriff and Carolyn Warmann, is a key part of a technology transfer project sponsored by the Center for Innovative Technology. The project is designed to help businesses in Virginia through the Higher Education Economic and Technology Development (ETD) Pilot Program. Nine Virginia community colleges serve as centers for ETD directors, who assist state businesses-particularly small businesses-in remaining competitive in the world market. VTIC, now three years old, is the information center for the ETD directors.

Much of VTIC's research is done online, and a typical request begins with a telephone call from one of the ETD directors.

Once the director specifies a research topic, Cosgriff and

Contact

Send questions or
comments to [Scholarly
Communication](#).

Warmann begin their search of online databases via computer and modem hookup. Their research often takes them into the library's book and journal resources as well. Answers are mailed or faxed to the ETD director, with most questions answered within twenty-four hours. At present, no electronic mail between the community colleges and Newman Library exists, though Cosgriff states that it would be helpful.

Cosgriff emphasizes that no two days or searches are ever alike. Search topics range from specific product research (for example, new developments in fiber optics) to business strategy (such as the economic study of the impact of festivals on tourism). He compares his operation to that of a corporate library dedicated to product research for a single business-with one important difference. VTIC functions as a combination of many specialized libraries, one for each business needing its services.

Recently, the Center for Innovative Technology announced a plan to double the number of community college participants in the program. At the same time, VTIC expanded its customer base to include businesses and universities not sponsored by CIT. Services to these groups are fee-based. Now that VTIC's services have become more widely available, Cosgriff and Warmann look forward to helping more and more organizations.

Paul Gherman, director of libraries, stresses the importance of the VTIC project: "VTIC is the Virginia Tech Library's way of contributing to the economic development of the state. No business, small or large, can possibly afford to build a science and technology collection comparable to ours. Through VTIC our collection and expertise are made available to those who need it."



New Technologies in the Reference Room

Linda Wilson

The electronic reference area, or ERA as it is becoming known, is rapidly turning into one of the most heavily used areas in Newman Library. So popular are the databases in the ERA that students and faculty register days in advance for the opportunity to do their research electronically.

Students and scholars have traditionally used reference books to help them in their research-books such as encyclopedias, periodical indexes, and statistical handbooks. Many of these reference materials are now being published in electronic formats. One of the fastest-growing formats is CD-ROM, or Compact Disc-Read Only Memory. CD-ROM discs are similar to the CD audio discs that are replacing vinyl discs as the preferred medium for recorded sound. The only difference is that the content is textual rather than musical.

An example of a CD-ROM database owned by the library is the MLA (Modern Language Association) Bibliography, an index to literary criticism published in more than 2,000 journals, as well as in books, dissertations, and collections. This database corresponds to the print index MLA International Bibliography of Books and Articles on the Modern Languages and Literatures. Coverage begins in 1981 and the entire index is contained on one compact disc; the index is updated quarterly.

The library also subscribes to about a dozen other CD-ROM databases in a variety of subject areas, including: Agricola, corresponding to the Frint index Bibliography of Agriculture; Auto-graphics, providing access to government documents published since 1976; CIRR (Corporate and Industry Research Reports), indexing company and industry reports written by

securities and investment banking firms; ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center), corresponding to two print indexes, Resources in Education and Current Index to Journals in Education; GPO Monthly Catalog, corresponding to the print index Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications; InfoTrac, indexing five national newspapers and 800 general interest journals since 1985; NTIS (National Technical Information Service), corresponding to the print index Government Reports Announcements & Index, which indexes government technical documents; PsycLIT, corresponding to the print index Psychological Abstracts; and Sweet's Catalog, a database of manufacturers, building products, and trade associations.

The electronic reference area also provides access to two online databases. The Dow Jones News/Retrieval Service includes over forty databases covering such topics as business and economic news, as well as detailed financial reports on companies, industries, and the economy. WESTLAW provides access to hundreds of legal and business databases covering statutes, codes, regulations, rules, court decisions, and legal periodicals.

Library patrons are encouraged to search these CD-ROM and online databases in the electronic reference area on the second floor of Newman Library. Access, printing, downloading, and friendly assistance are available at no charge.



E. E. Billings Civil War Collection

Clara B. Cox

North and South are meeting again- but not on the field of battle. When a collection of books and manuscripts reflecting the Northern view of the

Civil War joins Virginia Tech's collection with its Southern emphasis, the University Libraries will have one of the best Civil War collections anywhere.

Elden E. "Josh" Billings has pledged to the Virginia Tech Libraries approximately 6,000 Civil War books, manuscripts, and letters collected during the past forty years. Billings has been called the "greatest living authority on Civil War books" by noted Civil War historian James I. "Bud" Robertson, Jr.

Billings has already given over 1,000 books and more than 100 Civil War manuscript letters to Virginia Tech and continues to donate materials on a regular basis. Recently, he delivered some 500 volumes to the library when he came to talk to Tech's librarians about his adventures as a Civil War book collector. Among the books in his most recent donation are *War Letters of a Disbanded Volunteer*, published in 1864; *Life and Death in Rebel Prisons*, published in 1866; and the *Book of Anecdotes and Jokel's Knapsack*, a collection of Civil War jokes that was published in 1866.

"The Billings collection is one of the best private collections on the Civil War in existence, especially in the field of Union regimental histories and narratives of campaigns and battles," said Glenn McMullen, head of the library's Special Collections Department.

"Giving a collection like this to a repository in the South is quite unusual," McMullen continued. "Many Southern Civil War research collections concentrate, as might be expected, on the Confederacy. The Billings collection is heavily weighted toward Union materials, especially Union regimentals published in the half century after the war. Having this collection will give this library a distinctiveness in its Civil War holdings that few Southern repositories can claim."

Billings, who retired in 1973 as an international economist with

the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress, first began collecting books not on the Civil War generally, but on Abraham Lincoln. "Gradually," he said, "I got more interested in the war itself than in Lincoln," although he added that "Lincoln has been my ideal for many years."

He secured the books in his collection in several ways. For example, once he took payment in books for helping a man set up a bookstore, and another time he was given about 250 books when a fellow collector died. But most of his collection came through hours of patient searching through rare book catalogs and in antiquarian bookstores in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C.

A member of eight Civil War roundtables, Billings makes numerous presentations to the roundtables each year, gleaning facts for his talks from books and manuscripts in his collection. He also reviews books for the "Campaigning with Lee" seminar organized each summer by Robertson, the C.P. Miles Professor of History at Tech.

Billings and Robertson have known each other since the Civil War centennial commemoration in the 1960s, and this association was the leading factor in Billings's decision to give Virginia Tech his collection. Robertson noted that his friend "is still buying books and manuscripts to donate to Tech." Calling Billings "a benefactor of the first magnitude to this university," Robertson said that "generations of Tech students and friends will benefit from his gift."

Moonstruck

Glenn L. McMullen

"What a fantastic experience it must have been—the first man alone looking down on another celestial body, like a god of space!" Charles A.

Lindbergh wrote these words in a letter to Apollo 11 astronaut Michael Collins twenty years ago, soon after the historic lunar landing mission of July 1969.

"There is a quality of aloneness that those who have not experienced it cannot know," he continued. Like Lindbergh, who had flown solo across the Atlantic Ocean in 1927, Collins had experienced that solitude. As Apollo 11 command module pilot, he orbited seventy miles above the moon while his fellow astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin descended to the lunar surface. Later Armstrong and Aldrin would rendezvous with Collins so that the three could return to earth.

In May 1989, Collins gave the letter and thousands of other personal papers and memorabilia documenting his career as a test pilot, astronaut, and author to the Archives of American Aerospace Exploration in the Special Collections Department. Included in the collection are Collins's training notebooks and manuals for his Gemini 10 and Apollo 11 flights; notes and drafts for books he has written; correspondence; photographs and audio tapes; and medals and awards, including his Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Collins was in the third group of astronauts chosen by NASA in 1963. During the Gemini 10 mission in 1966, he was one of the first astronauts to engage in EVA-extravehicular activity, or walking in space. After Apollo 11, Collins became director of the National Air and Space Museum, serving in that position from 1972 to 1978. He is the author of three books: *Carrying the Fire: An Astronaut's Journeys* (1974), *Flying to the Moon and Other Strange Places* (1976), and *Liftoff! The Story of America's Adventure in Space* (1988). Collins is currently at work on a book arguing the case for the exploration of Mars.



New VTLS Feature

Users of the VTLS online catalog are now able to determine not only which materials are owned by University Libraries, but also which materials have been ordered. All new books, journals, and nonprint items-whether owned or ordered- are now entered into the VTLS database. By simply using the standard author, title, and subject search keys, patrons are alerted to ordered items by the words "ON ORDER" preceding the call number. The date of order also appears on VTLS. Library patrons wishing to borrow ordered books as soon as the books arrive have two options: if patrons are in the library, they may stop at the circulation desk to fill out hold forms, or if patrons are not in the library but have access to the university's mainframe, they may complete the form online and send it electronically to the library. Either method ensures that the new books are routed to requesters on a first come, first-served basis.

The online ON ORDER designation provides up-to-the minute information, taking the guesswork out of which books actually have been ordered. This new enhancement, along with the ability to place holds online, are indications of the library's continuing efforts to respond to patrons' needs.

Lucy Lee Lancaster

Clara B. Cox

Lucy Lee Lancaster, who worked at the Virginia Tech libraries for more than fifty years, died on December 14, 1989. She was eighty-four. Lancaster was among the first women to enroll at Virginia Tech when it became coeducational in 1921. She began working in the library as a student assistant in 1923. Following her graduation in 1925, she received a master's degree in library science at Columbia University. Lancaster then returned to Virginia Tech where she held various positions, ranging from

science librarian to acting director, until her retirement in 1975 at the age of seventy.

In an article she wrote for the Virginia Librarian in 1975, Lancaster said that "the Virginia Tech Library has been a large factor in my life since I was eight years old. It was then that I made my first trip to it." She spent her early years at the library in an old chapel converted for library use where, she later said, "the cockroaches loved to eat the book bindings." During her years at Virginia Tech, she saw the library's holdings increase from 40,000 to nearly 1,000,000 volumes.

For her years of outstanding service, Lancaster was recognized by the American Association of University Women and the Virginia Tech Alumni Association. In 1979, the Board of Visitors presented her with the William H. Ruffner medal for exceptional service to the university.

The University Libraries have established the Lucy Lee Lancaster Memorial Fund, which will be used to purchase books on the history of science. Contributors should make checks payable to the Virginia Tech Foundation, Inc. Donations may be sent to the Acquisitions Department, University Libraries, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061-0434.

Lambda Horizon Memorial Collection

Gregory Allen Edwards, a 1986 Virginia Tech communication studies graduate, recently donated a collection of nearly one hundred books to the University Libraries to draw attention to the deadly disease AIDS. In ceremonies in the library on October 27, Edwards, who was diagnosed as HIV positive two years ago, announced that he hoped the library would "use the books to commemorate the lost lives out there." The Edwards donation, which includes plays and classic novels, will form the nucleus of the Lambda

Horizon Memorial Collection. Lambda Horizon plans to add a book to the collection each semester, a representative said. Special bookplates will be placed in the books.

In accepting the collection from Edwards, Paul Gherman, director of libraries, noted that "the books will stand as a memorial to you and your vision and to the AIDS crisis in this country." Anyone wishing to add to the Lambda Horizon Memorial Collection or donate money to a fund for the collection should contact the library's Acquisitions Department.



Cataloging Exchange

Gail McMillan

The Cataloging Department of the University Libraries is accustomed to international exchanges. For over a decade the department has contributed to and borrowed from an international database of cataloging information. Several times each year it hosts demonstrations of the Virginia Tech Library System (VTLS) for visitors from all over the world.

In 1989 the Cataloging Department's involvement with international cooperation went one step further. Marilyn Norstedt, head of cataloging at Virginia Tech, and JoAnn Cowie, cataloging and systems librarian at the Massey University library in New Zealand, exchanged libraries for three months.

Both Norstedt and Cowie found their exchange libraries to be strikingly different from their home libraries. For example, the combined Systems Operations and Cataloging Departments at Tech have a staff of over seventy-five, while Cowie is used to running the Massey University library system (also a VTLS user) almost singlehandedly.

Norstedt shared with the Massey University library her many

years of experience in serials, cataloging, and systems. Cowie came to Virginia to observe VTLS in a multiuser environment, and she proved to be a welcome addition to the library, sharing her perspective as a professional librarian with both systems and cataloging expertise.



Accomplishments

Lowell Ashley, head of the humanities cataloging team, participated in a program in March 1989 entitled "Authority Control in the Online Environment," sponsored by the Music OCLC Users Group, in Cleveland.

Annette Burr, art and architecture librarian, taught a course in the humanities department spring semester 1990 entitled "Introduction to Humanities and the Arts."

John Cosgriff, director of the Virginia Tech Information Center, **Donald Kenney**, head of the Reference Department, and **Gail Mc Millan**, head of the online maintenance team, published an article, "Support for Publishing at Academic Libraries: How Much Exists?" in the March 1990 issue of the Journal of Academic Librarianship.

Michael Cramer, bibliographer and reference librarian, and Mary Markland, reference librarian at North Dakota State University, wrote "Newspaper Indexing with ProCite," published in the October 1989 issue of College & Research Libraries News. Cramer has also been appointed site coordinator for a project involving the University Libraries and three other major research libraries who are studying the use of CD-ROM technology with selected materials from the National Agriculture Library.

Bela Foltin, assistant director for public services and collection development, and **Paul Metz**, principal bibliographer, co-

authored an article, "A Social History of Madness-or, Who's Buying This Round? Anticipating and Avoiding Gaps in Collection Development," published in the January 1990 issue of College and Research Libraries.

Paul Gherman, director of University Libraries, has been appointed to the Association of Research Libraries Task Force on Telecommunications.

Mary Hinkle, bibliographer and reference librarian, and Linda Wilson, coordinator of reference and instructional services, presented a poster session, "In-depth Service at a Comprehensive Reference Desk: A Plan to Facilitate Subject Research," at the American Library Association Annual Conference in Dallas in June 1989.

Vicki Kok, veterinary medicine librarian, and Harry Kriz, head of the Automation Services Department, co-authored a paper on using askSam software, "If You Have Thought of It, This Can Do It, ' which Kok presented at the annual meeting of the Medical Library Association in Boston in May 1989.

Harry Kriz, head of the Automation Services Department, and Kelly Queijo, programmer in the department, published an article entitled "An Environmental Approach to Library Staff Training" in issue no. 28 of Library Hi Tech.

Cindy Linn, science cataloger, is currently chair of the Junior Members Round Table Leadership Development Committee of the American Library Association.

Gail McMillan, head of the online maintenance team, was elected secretary of the Serials Automation Interest Group, a unit within the American Library Association's Library Information Technology Association.

Paul Metz, principal bibliographer, wrote a chapter entitled "Subject Searching in Libraries" to be included in the fourth edition of *Reference and Information Services: A Reader*, edited by William A. Katz and currently in press. Metz also recently completed a chapter entitled "Bibliometrics: Library Use and Citation Studies" for a book now in press, *Academic Libraries for the Year 2000: A Research Perspective*, edited by Mary Jo Lynch.

Marilyn Norstedt, head of the Cataloging Department, participated on a panel which discussed a national database of coded publication patterns for periodicals, sponsored by the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services at the American Library Association January 1990 meeting in Chicago.

Bruce Obenhaus, microforms, maps, and geography librarian, has been elected president of the Virginia chapter of the Special Libraries Association for the 1990/91 term. Obenhaus also published an article, "Maps: Guiding Users," in the October/November/December 1989 issue of the *Virginia Librarian*.

Linda Richardson, bibliographer and reference librarian, is currently the editor of the American Library Association's *Library Instruction Round Table Newsletter*.

Jan Spahr, government documents and law librarian, reviewed the Index to the Tower Commission Report in the November 1989 issue of the *Association of College and Research Libraries Law and Political Science Section News*.

Linda Wilson, coordinator of reference and instructional services, was one of eight librarians nationwide chosen to participate in the American Library Association's *Bibliographic Instruction Section Think Tank*, which met in June 1989 in

Dallas to address the topic, "Educational Roles of Academic Libraries: State-of-the Art and an Agenda for the Future."



From the Director

Unlike the researcher of just a decade ago who largely had to rely on a local collection of books, today's researcher has access to the world fund of information. The services that make this information available, however, can be quite costly. Escalating journal prices, electronic databases, and the significant hardware costs associated with the electronic age have all had an impact on the costs of operating research libraries today.

The strategy the library must use in these challenging times is to move faster toward our emphasis on access to information instead of on ownership of books and journals. While maintaining a core collection of heavily used materials, we must also concentrate on providing electronic pointers to information, wherever it may be located. Once the information is retrieved, we need to get it to our patrons quickly via fax machines or the growing electronic networks.

Legislation to support one such network—the new National Research and Education Network (NREN) is now under consideration at the federal level. The NREN will be a high-speed communications backbone to link the computing and information resources of the nation's educational institutions. If funded, this network could someday tie our nation's research libraries together into the richest information resource ever conceived. We are working at Virginia Tech to make our library an integral part of this future.

Paul M. Gherman