Between the Lines

the ISU Eli M. Oboler Library Newsletter

Bannock Co. Images Now Online

A database of images depicting people, places, and events from the history of Bannock County is now available on the web. The *Bannock County Images* database contains over one hundred and fifty images culled from the collections of the Eli M. Oboler Library Special Collections Department, the Bannock County Historical Society, and the South Bannock County Historical Center. Descriptions are provided for each of the images.   The database allows users to browse and search for images, zoom in on the images to see details, and create their own lists of favorites.

Begun with a 2003 competitive grant from the Idaho State Library, the current *Bannock County Images* project was funded, in part, by a generous grant from the Idaho Humanities Council. (See story on this grant in the Spring, 2005 edition of *Between the Lines*.) The database is accessible from the Library's website (www.isu.edu/library) or directly at http://www.isu.edu/library/special/bannockci.htm.

The project continues to seek out new images depicting the history of bannock county. Anyone interested in providing information or additional images for the database should contact project coordinator Karen Kearns, Head of

Special Collections at the Oboler Library either by phone at 282-3608 or via e-mail at keark-are@isu.edu.

BIOLOGY DATABASE UPGRADED

Recently the Oboler Library was able to improve its service to researchers in the life sciences by upgrading its subscription to *Biological Abstracts*. The improved product is formally called *BIOSIS Previews.* We have named it "Biological Abstracts – BIOSIS" in our database lists, because *BIOSIS Previews*

The University and the Library have many ways in which they solicit donations, but I would like to encourage your consideration of a new program: Honor with Books. Many of you may be familiar with similar programs. Basically, it is a program that offers an option to those who seek to honor or remember loved ones. When a special occasion arises, such as graduation, or when a loved one dies, donations can be made to the library to buy books in that person's honor or memory. For every contribution of at least $35, a

Fire at Pocatello High School — 1914

Photo from Bannock County Images database. Pocatello High School caught fire around noon on 16 December, 1914. The fire started in a pile of shavings near the boiler room. Most of the contents of the building were saved, and the school was rebuilt using the original stone walls.

Biosis database upgraded — continued from page 1

includes *Biological Abstracts* (citations and abstracts for journal articles), but it adds indexing for meetings, symposia, workshops, books, software, patents, bibliographies, and review articles. In addition to substantially broadening its coverage of the literature, *BIOSIS Previews* greatly expands the time-span of coverage. Whereas *Biological Abstracts* covered the period from 1996 to present; *BIOSIS Previews* begins its coverage in 1969.

There are currently more than 12 million records in *BIOSIS Previews*, and that number will be increasing by more than half a million records each year. Coverage includes at least partial indexing for 5,000 journals, and is international in its scope, representing the research being

done in over 100 countries.

Another significant enhancement accompanying the new subscription is that the Oboler Library is now able to offer *BIOSIS Previews* access to 10 concurrent researchers, a great improvement over the 2-user license that was in force for *Biological Abstracts*. This will make it much easier for research to be done at any time of the day or night.

BIOSIS Previews covers virtually every topic in the life sciences, such as biology, biochemistry, biotechnology, botany, zoology, preclinical and experimental medicine, pharmacology, agriculture, and veterinary science. Though it is not a full text database (search results will include a full citation with descriptors and, usually, an abstract), checking the Library's

access to an article is fairly simple using our "A-Z Journals" list, linked on the Library's webpage at www.isu.edu/library.

BIOSIS Previews allows for very specialized and advanced searching; the user may search by organism name, taxonomic group, chemicals and biochemicals, diseases and syndromes, molecular sequence data, and more. It is thus an excellent tool for advanced research. At the same time, the database works well for students performing simple keyword searches. We hope that this new, enhanced and more accessible database will attract many users. Please contact us at the Library if you have any questions or comments regarding it.

—*Kristi Austin, Biology Bibliographer*

HITCHCOCK TO RETIRE

Leonard Hitchcock, Associate University Librarian for Collection Development, has announced his retirement effective June 30, 2006. He began at the Eli M. Oboler Library in 1985 as Humanities Librarian and has participated in many changes since then, including the establishment of the Library's gifts program and of its department-based book and journal allocation system, the purchase of a new automated library system, and the transition to a collection with an increasingly electronic component. He served as Acting University Librarian in 1997.

In addition to serving as this newsletter's Co-Editor, Leonard has served as Editor of the Idaho Librarian, was a member of ISU's Faculty Senate, Curriculum Council and Faculty Professional Policies Council, and has written on the subject of intellectual freedom. He presently plays bass for the Idaho State Civic Symphony.

The Library will not lose contact with Leonard completely, though, as he has indicated that he would like to volunteer on a limited basis in the Special Collections Department, where he can indulge his interest in rare books.

— *Sandra Shropshire, Associate University Librarian for Technical Services*

THE HOUSE THAT TURNED INTO BOOKS:

The Barbara Felton Library Endowment

Most of the Library's current endowments began with a cash gift or bequest; the Felton Fund, however, began with a house. Barbara Felton, in the summer of 1988, offered the University a house in Lava Hot Springs, with the understanding that the house would be sold and the proceeds used to establish an endowment dedicated to the purchase of library materials. About a year later a buyer was found, and the resultant funds formed the basis of what is officially known as the Barbara C. Felton Library Acquisitions Endowment Fund at Idaho State University. To date, the Felton Endowment represents the largest single cash gift that the Library has received.

Ms. Felton, who now lives on the outskirts of Chubbuck, has said that she decided to give her Lava Hot Springs house to ISU because she believes deeply in the ideal of a liberal education and felt that the Library was a particularly important, and financially somewhat neglected, element in providing that education. She also felt that there was an overemphasis on sports at the University that needed to be balanced by a gift dedicated to its academic activities.

Born in Detroit, Michigan, Ms. Felton did her undergraduate work at the University of Arizona, in anthropology and geology. She worked in California for a while, as well as in New York City, and spent three years in Ankara, Turkey, first teaching biology in a Turkish school, later, having acquired a speaking knowledge of Turkish, as a staff member of the U.S. Embassy in Ankara. For a time she was married to an employee of the National Park Service and lived in southern Utah. The house she donated to the university in Lava Hot Springs was inhabited by her during the construction of a larger house that she built there. After living in the latter home for two or three years, she returned to Michigan, then settled again in Idaho in 1999.

The funds generated by the Felton Fund are used to purchase books at both the undergraduate and graduate level in all traditional liberal arts subject areas.

—Leonard Hitchcock, Associate University Librarian for Special Collections

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University Librarian — continued from page 1

bookplate will be placed in a purchased book. The bookplate will include the donor's and loved ones' names and whether the gift is in honor of or in memory of that loved one. In some cases, a family might wish to specify such donations in lieu of flowers. The Library may work with a family that wishes to specify subject areas or topics for book purchases. If desired, and if many donations are expected, endowments may be created for ongoing memorials used for general or specific purposes.

Programs such as the one described offer donors a permanent way to honor or remember a loved one, while providing the library with supplementary funds for book purchases. The library is currently creating a special bookplate to use on all such donations, as well as special acknowledgment letters to be sent to both the donor and the honoree or family.

In this simple way, donors can both memorialize milestones in their lives and create lasting legacies for future generations through education.

Please consider this program, won't you?

—Kay A. Flowers

ABOUT FACE: The Fate of the Outsourcing Project

Last fall, this newsletter reported that the Library was preparing to outsource some of its tasks in order to make some staff available for other projects which had been on hold. The change was to have included an arrangement with the Library's primary book vendor to provide shelf ready processing of newly ordered books prior to their shipment to ISU. In conjunction with this effort, the book vendor was to coordinate its efforts with the Library's bibliographic utility, OCLC, to provide customized cataloging records that could be loaded into the Library's online catalog at a time that coincided with the books' arrival at the Library.

Due to an unanticipated series of events, however, the Library reversed this decision earlier this semester.   Technical difficulties and budget concerns prompted this turn of events, and one result is that, for the foreseeable future, newly ordered books will continue to be cataloged and physically processed by Library staff.

The technical difficulties surfaced as staff worked to complete the specifications required by both the book vendor and the bibliographic utility. One such problem was the Library's need to create temporary cataloging records as part of the book-ordering process, and then to "overlay" those records with permanent cata-

log records received from the bibliographic utility at the time that the books arrived from the book vendor. Staff members Mary Lou Beran (Coordinator of Bibliographic Databases), Philip Homan (Reference/Catalog Librarian), Sue Carter (IT Information Systems Technician), and Sandra Shropshire (Associate University Librarian for Technical Services), worked directly with the book vendor, the utility vendor and the Library's online catalog vendor to settle details that would provide for the inclusion and acceptance of common matching points in order for the records to overlay properly. That task proved to be more challenging than anyone had anticipated. And another problem arose coordinating the timing of the receipt of books from one party with the receipt and loading of matching records from the other party.

Staff learned that other academic libraries that have successfully participated in this type of outsourcing handle their book orders differently than does the Eli M. Oboler Library, in that they either participate in "approval plans" or provide no temporary order records in their online catalogs. (Approval plans are those in which the library establishes a profile of ordering preferences with a book vendor, and then simply accepts books that are shipped to them

by the vendor). Staff found no examples of other academic libraries that had utilized the same combination of book vendor, bibliographic utility, online catalog and ordering policies that are in existence at the Oboler Library.

As these problems mounted, another concern surfaced: whether the additional expense that the Library would face for this outsourcing would be feasible given its increasingly tight budget situation. In the end, the technical and budgetary problems led the Library to decide not to move forward with this project.

The project that was to have occupied staff once their time was freed up by outsourcing was the retrospective cataloging of U.S. government documents that were published prior to 1976, a collection estimated to include 192,000 volumes. This material, which includes materials related to the War of the Rebellion, the Framingham Heart Study, and United States Geological Surveys of western regions from the early twentieth century, is exceptionally rich, yet is presently unacknowledged in the Library catalog. Moreover, there are no automated cataloging options for these documents, and experienced staff would have been the ideal resource to have directed toward this project.

Oboler Library Stretches the Dollar at ISU Day at the Capitol 2006

The Oboler Library made its annual appearance at ISU Day at the Capitol on Thursday, January 26. Thanks to the collective efforts of numerous librarians, and the on-site efforts of Sandra Shropshire (AUL for Technical Services), Philip Homan (Reference/Cataloging Librarian), and Marcia Francis (Director of the Idaho Health Sciences Library), the Library produced and staffed two displays, one for the Library as a whole, the other for the Health Sciences Library. The theme for both displays was how the Oboler Library is stretching the education dollar by adding value to higher education in Idaho. For the general Library display, Sandi dressed as a banker and Phil as a dollar bill (see photo, right.) Not surprisingly, the costumes, designed with the assistance of Robin Wilson (ISU Records Manager), Sue Roth (Administrative Assistant), and Mary Lou Beran (Coordinator of Bibliographic Databases), were a success and attracted a lot of attention.

With statistics supplied by Annie Smith (Reference Assistant), Oboler's general display described how the Library has stretched the dollar in 2005, building collections and delivering services such as reference, interlibrary loan, and bibliographic instruction to ISU students and faculty.

The Health Science Library's display had the theme, "Serving Idaho," and emphasized the state-wide mission of the IHSL, highlighting projects that have been completed over the past several years. It brought to the attention of visitors six projects undertaken by the IHSL within the past eight years that have aided health services in all areas of the state, and done so entirely without cost to the State of Idaho due to grant funding (a total of $226,000). Among the projects that elicited the most interest from visitors was the Medical Journal Archiving Project, which gathers together medical journals subscribed to by Idaho hospitals and physicians and archives them at the Oboler Library for use by medical practitioners throughout the state.

Phil Homan and Sandra Shropshire

Sandi and Phil talked to more legislators this year than in previous years—including a visit with Rep. Elmer Martinez about the benefits for the state of Idaho of LiLI Unlimited, the State Library's statewide cataloging and resource-sharing program. They and Marcia also chatted with ISU colleagues and gave a bookmark designed by Gene Warren (Financial Technician), to everyone who passed by. Such encounters again proved that the opportunity to get to know others at ISU is as good a reason to attend ISU Day at the Capitol as lobbying the legislators.
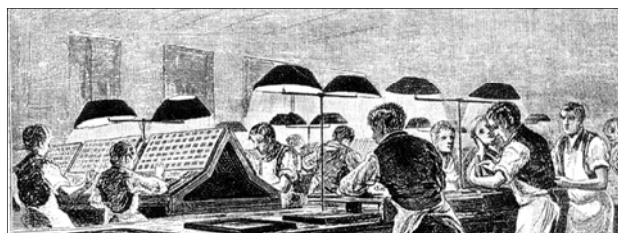

—Philip A. Homan, Reference/Cataloging Librarian

On Collecting Usage Statistics from Database Vendors

Usage statistics for databases are becoming increasingly important in the library community. The statistics that vendors provide about the use of online article indexes and databases can be used to ascertain how much these databases are being used and in what ways they're being utilized. Some libraries use these numbers to decide if these resources are worth the cost of the subscription. These numbers are also a required element in the Library's accreditation report. However, collecting meaningful usage statistics from vendors can be very difficult and there is often no way to check on the accuracy of the numbers. Vendor usage statistics need to be carefully scrutinized before they are used for making decisions.

One of the major problems with collecting statistics from vendors is the lack of a standard way of doing so, particularly the lack of a standard vocabulary. A "page view" to the database publisher EBSCO is not the same as a "page view" to the database publisher SilverPlatter. The lack of a standard vocabulary makes it very difficult to accurately compare these products. There have been attempts to impose standards on vendors, such as the COUNTER Project, which began in 2002. (COUNTER is an acronym for "counting online usage of networked electronic resources.") To date, they have only proposed standards for vocabulary, for data collection, and usage report formats. Conformity to these standards, at this juncture, is entirely voluntary. (For more information about the COUNTER Project, visit http://www.projectcounter.org/.)

Another problem is the fact that each vendor collects usage data in slightly different ways, and these methods are rarely made public. One vendor might count every click on the search button as a search; another might discount double clicks or clicks on the search button that occur within a certain number of seconds of each other. The second vendor, in this example, is trying to filter out accidental clicks and clicks made by impatient users trying to make the search run faster. But the library employee who collects statistics on the number of searches from both vendors has no way of knowing if there are filters in place or not and hence whether the number of searches actually represents deliberate searches.

A third problem is the difficult task of deriving meaning from these raw numbers. Currently, this Library is collecting statistics on the number of searches performed and the number of pages viewed. The raw number of searches includes searches that, for the user, might not have given them any useful information. The number of pages viewed might be more useful, but again we run into the problem of non-standard vocabulary. Does a page view mean that the user downloaded and saved the document for later use? Or does it mean that the student checked the expanded records to find out more about the result and didn't download anything at all?

Online patron activity will be an increasingly important measure of collection value in the future as libraries move to more electronic resources.

—Annie Smith, Reference Department

TOP TEN MOST USED DATABASES AT OBOLER LIBRARY*

1. Academic Search Premier

2. PsycINFO

3. ERIC (EBSCO)

4. MLA International Bibliography

5. LexisNexis Academic

6. Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection

7. Business Source Premier

8. MasterFILE Premier

9. Education Full Text

10. WorldCAT

*This list excludes all of the Health Sciences databases. The Counts upon which this ranking are based are of clicks on the search button.

ISU's Records Manager Appointed to National Committee

Robin Wilson, ISU Records Manager, will join the Nominations Committee for the National Association of Government Archivi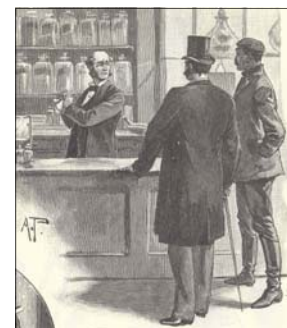sts and Records Administrators (NAGARA) this spring. NAGARA is in the process of reorganizing and restructuring its governance. Due to this and other factors, a record number of positions on the 8-member board are vacant, requiring extra effort to complete the Board in time for the Joint Meeting of NAGARA, the Society of American Archivists and the Council of State Archivists scheduled for July 31 through August 6, 2006, in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Wilson is also part of the Membership Committee for NAGARA, and has been a NAGARA member since 2000.

New Manuscript Acquisition:

The Dr. J. H. Bean Collection

The Special Collections Department recently purchased a small manuscript collection relating to one of Pocatello's early physicians. Dr. J. H. Bean was born in Boston in 1857. He came west in 1882 and settled in Idaho Falls. By 1889, Bean and his wife had relocated to Pocatello where they operated a drug store on North Cleveland Avenue. Bean practiced as the city and county physician, as well as the physician for Oregon Short Line Railroad employees. In 1910, health concerns led Bean to consult specialists in Los Angeles where he died of heart failure at age 53.

The Bean Collection contains a selection of correspondence and receipts. Many of the items deal with Bean's attempts to collect payments from his patients. At one point, Bean hired a collection agency to handle the transactions. Patients frequently paid in amounts as small as a quarter. One patient paid him off by handing over a stove. The patient ledger includes a number of high profile names from Pocatello's past, including Joseph Bistline, owner of Bistline Lumber and Hardware Company, and C. E. Arney, Secretary to Senator DuBois. It also details the work Bean performed as Bannock County physician. There are, for example, notes on an outbreak of smallpox in 1904 that mention a number of cases among students at the Academy of Idaho.

The Bean Collection (MC 109) is available for research in the Special Collections Department from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday – Friday. For additional information or to make an appointment, please contact the department at (208) 282-3608.

—Karen Kearns, Head, Special Collections

About Face —Continued from page 4

Initially, the decision to abandon the outsourcing plan seemed to make it impossible for the Library to pursue the documents retrospective cataloging project. Fortunately, coincident with that decision was the unexpectedly early completion of yet another massive project that, for over three years, had occupied Technical Services staff: the correction of thousands of faulty records that the Library had been unable to load into its cataloging utilities' database.

Consequently, despite what was an apparent setback, the Library has found itself in the position of being able to direct certain experienced staff toward the government documents project. Under the direction of Government Documents Librarian, Beth Downing, three staff members, Arlene Tillotson and Robert Hancock (Library Assistant IIs), and Kathy Benjamin (Library Assistant I), have already begun work on the project.   *—Sandra Shropshire, AUL Technical Services*

Student Lounge, 1st Floor
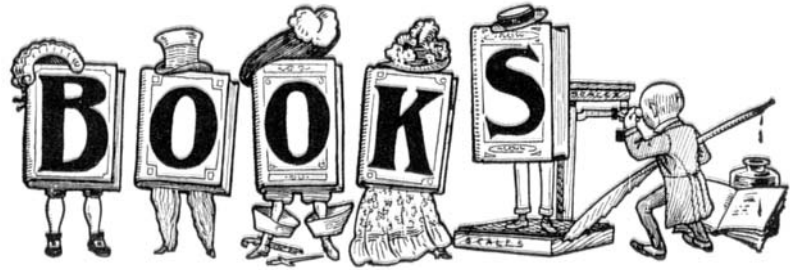
Eli M. Oboler Library

Hardcover/Softcover

Fiction/Non-fiction

Old/Not-so-old

ALL SUBJECTS

Special Interest Collections:

- **Science Fiction & Fantasy**

- **Religion**

EVERYBODY NEEDS MORE BOOKS!

ISU LIBRARY

BOOKS

SALE!

Friday, April 7 — 11:00 AM—6:00 PM
Select from the entire stock of books for sale!

Saturday, April 8 — 10:00 AM—3:00 PM
Reduced prices on everything that's left!

Between the Lines