"Our current estimates are that we lost some or all of about 1,400 journal titles, and at least 25,000 volumes. We know those numbers will go up."

LINDA K. LEWIS
Collection Development Coordinator
e-mail, July 7, 2006

In response to one of the questions put to her, a candidate for the University Libraries Dean's position mentioned an event held in the basement of a library she had managed. One person in the audience quickly quipped, "We don’t have a basement." Another countered, "We have a basement; it’s just empty." Several minutes later, Susan Magee chimed in to pin the fact in place, "We have a basement. It’s just in Parish."
Heidi Perez: It was shocking, because then faculty on campus could identify with it as well. You could think, “Well, it’s; those old things in the Zs,” but it wasn’t. And there was so much history in terms of who has selected and processed and shelved those materials. So many hands have been on them.

Linda: We are still working on determining the exact losses from the fire. As you know, it was in the north east part of the Zimmerman basement. What we know at this point is that the major complete loss is between the DS 700 area and the G 160 area. For those not familiar with those call numbers, that is major complete loss is between the DS 700 area and the G 160 area. For those not familiar with those call numbers, that is.

Linda K. Lewis: Collection Development

Thursday, May 25, 2006 9:40 AM
Subject: lost journals update

Hi,

What we now know: We lost Zim Per DS 777 to G161. And we lost a bit in the areas of C to DS and G 161 to LN. We also lost some in the AU, BS, and HS. And there are other scattered losses.

We are sending some damaged titles for cleaning. Some of those may not be salvagable. We won’t know for sure about those for some time.

We are developing an inventory of all lost titles/volumes. We plan to post it when it is complete. People are working on a database that will allow us to identify what we have lost, what formats are available, what replacement costs might be, and other related factors.

Teresa Neely and I chair a group working on assessment and replacement. We will work closely with the selectors in the affected areas.

Please refer offers of donations of print copies to me. We want to coordinate these offers very carefully.

And after all the times we’ve given National Geographic magazines away, now we need it. Yes, they did a cd rom, but it has been pulled from the market because of lawsuits. So...if you know someone with an extensive collection who might be willing to donate it at some point, let me know.

Linda

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Mary Ellen Hanson: Whenever the email came out—maybe it was from Linda Lewis—that talked about the call number ranges affected by the fire. That, to me, was a major news flash. That narrowed it down to topics that the library is really identified with: Native American Studies and Latin American Studies, cote history and that sort of thing. I don’t remember when that came out, but it was shocking to have that specificity.

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Deborah Cole: There’d been a fire in the basement and that’s where we were—the periodicals were and that’s about all we knew. Then we filled that void with knowledge and it was still a void or loss, but we knew what we were talking about.
Heidi Perea  
París Library

recorder—Asian studies newsletter—Asian survey—Atenea—Atlantic Community quarterly—Atlas de relaciones internacionales

Joe’s Song  
(Thoughts on one of our patrons who has not returned since the fire)

I miss the poet and philosopher. Most every day

He approached the desk. Most every day

With bountiful generosity, of words and spirit and will,

With an easy smile and twinkling eyes and shuffling walk,

With enthusiasm contagious and energy unbridled,

With surreal gentleness and an open heart,

With bountiful generosity, of words and spirit and will,

With rich insights, untoldly shared with all,

With a grateful heart, for his goodness and kindness and peace,

A building, especially a beautiful one such as Zimmerman, is important but essentially loses its personality when the people who helped shape it living and learning there are absent.

JOHANN VAN REENEN

Joe “Little Joe” Baca

Veteran and poet

Loved books and libraries

October 27, 1951–December 22, 2006

Joe Baca was a poet, as well as a veteran and a Native American. He was known for his love of books and libraries, and his contributions to the community were greatly appreciated.

Deborah Cole: Heidi did a piece about a patron who never returned after the fire. He was a homeless person, I think.

Evangela Oates: Oh, my god. Is it the short guy that always asked for Heidi? He was so nice, I haven’t seen him. He would talk and would ask, “Is Heidi here?” And I’d say, “No, I think she’s coming on at this time.” You didn’t mind his coming and talking for a while because he was so nice. And we would tease Heidi that he was her boyfriend, because he just loved Heidi.

I miss him. He would talk and would always ask for Heidi? He was so nice. I haven’t seen him. I miss him. He was a beautiful human being.

JOHN MARIN

JOSE DE SAN MIGUEL

And talking for a while because he was so nice. And we would tease Heidi that he was her boyfriend, because he just loved Heidi.

“Thank you for the piece on one of our patrons who has not returned since the fire.”

October 17 ALC begins relocating the Dewey call numbers in the 900’s from B2 to Tower 3, backshifts from Deweys 373.44 m93 through 327.73 B421s on B2 and relocates

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I found that the first time I was in the basement I had to orient myself by where the bathrooms were. They were the only identifiable spaces left.

DEBORAH COLE
CSWR
Here, at the bottom of the main stairwell, the walls have been stripped down to concrete. The terrazzo tiles in the foyer at the bottom of the stair’s remain. Florescent light hangs in clumps outside where the carrels that lined the far wall have been removed. The wall is covered with a pattern of tall rectangles separated by gray vertical lines; rather beautifully. There are nine and a half feet that wall. A few fluorescent fixtures hang from the ceiling. As I walk toward to that area, I pass a spot on the wall where something has been scuffed off. In the ceiling there is a sucking/blowing sound. There is a crack there but absolutely no indication of a vent, just bits of electrical conduit hanging down.

Near the women’s bathroom and the exit leading to the south stairwell, there’s a large circular vent area. Pieces of metal and strapping sway and rattle with the wind. The exterior of the floor has been scraped away leaving a pattern that looks as if someone had drawn a grid in the cement floor. Nine florescent light fixtures dangle from the ceiling.

Walking toward the east end of the building on my left it’s very dark where the Interlibrary Loan, Print Resources and Library Information Technology offices were. To say right, looking south I can see where the carrels that lined the far wall have been removed. The wall is covered with a pattern of tall rectangles separated by gray vertical lines; rather beautifully. There are nine and a half feet that wall. A few fluorescent fixtures hang from the ceiling. As I walk toward to that area, I pass a spot on the wall where something has been scuffed off. In the ceiling there is a sucking/blowing sound. There is a crack there but absolutely no indication of a vent, just bits of electrical conduit hanging down.

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Walking west towards the Print Resources/Gifts Acquisition area is really disorienting. I have to use an exit or a bathroom as a reference point. Bathrooms are pretty much the indicators of where one is down here unless you happen to have a great memory of the relationship of certain offices to specific pillars. Now I’m entering the area where I guess the Gifts Department was—hard to tell. I can see the small bathroom they had and then there’s the men’s room and the north stairwell that leads up into what used to be the Catalog Services Department.

Where Serials and the Bindery were, carrels have been removed from the north wall. In the floor, you can see where the studs were attached to the cement. There’s not much light here; there are a few little spot-lit areas where they’ve strung up some fluorescent lights, but in the northwest corner there’s no light. It’s very dark where Bindery was. You almost feel like there should be a play going on with someone sitting in a chair or dancing under these singular light fixtures. There does remain, around the elevator, some sort of brick wall with plaster and sheetrock—another isolated peninsula, I guess you would call it. The elevator door is much like it was. There is a small fire extinguisher still around the elevator, some sort of brick wall with plaster and sheetrock—another isolated peninsula, I guess you would call it. The elevator door is much like it was. There is a small fire extinguisher still.

I’m back, now, to where the tile walkway used to go northward to maybe LIT or ILL or around the northwest corner there’s no light. It’s very dark. I have to use an exit or a bathroom as a reference point. Bathrooms are pretty much the indicators of where one is down here unless you happen to have a great memory of the relationship of certain offices to specific pillars. Now I’m entering the area where I guess the Gifts Department was—hard to tell. I can see the small bathroom they had and then there’s the men’s room and the north stairwell that leads up into what used to be the Catalog Services Department.

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...relocates from B2 to east side Gov Docs call numbers Y4 S.1:94-122 (ms) Y4 S.2:109-19 and from B1 to east side Gov Docs call numbers D114 20:8 thru D301.26/17-2:46150 068104
...it won’t be here again. Much like the article I read today about rebuilding New Orleans, this space is going to be reconstructed and reinvented inside its rawest structure.

Well, this is one person’s take, one person’s report on the basement.
UNM Today, May 8, 2006

A PRIL, 2007:

33% of University Libraries employees will remain displaced until January, 2008:

“Physical Plant administrators say a seventy-five hundred square foot area of the upper basement level on the eastern side of the building was completely destroyed.”

KATHRYN WOOD

April, 2007:

Second of three Pack Back training sessions held in Zimmerman basement.

“The library burned down?” “No, just filled with smoke.” It was fun telling them what that is. It happened around the University. “What? Oh, they hadn’t fixed that yet?” It’s so much a part of your perception and other people are wondering, “What fire? Did the building burn down?” “No, just filled with smoke.” It was fun telling them that 17 truckloads of books were taken out. People don’t have any concept of what that is. It happened around the University. “What? Oh... oh, yeah.”

Lee Byrne: For as much of an impact as it had on people working in this library, I would get surprised by people outside the University. “Well, how are things going?” “They’re okay, but we’re still in temporary quarters.” Then they’d say, “What?” And I’d say, “There was a fire in the library.” If it’s not headline news, it’s forgotten. “Oh, they haven’t fixed that yet?” It’s so much a part of your perception and other people are wondering, “What fire? Did the building burn down?”“No, just filled with smoke.” It was fun telling them that 17 truckloads of books were taken out. People don’t have any concept of what that is. It happened around the University. "What? Oh... oh, yeah."

Elevator breaks down.

Fire/Watch Book Group
Claire-Lise Benaud and Deborah Cole, Center for Southwest Research
Mary Ellen Hanson, Research Materials Bibliographic Access
Heidi Perez, Parish Library

Deborah: There was the “void” of not really knowing what we were talking about: there’d been a fire in the basement and that’s where the periodicals were and that’s about all we knew. Eventually we filled that void with knowledge and it was still a void or loss, but we knew what we were talking about. And then there was this “Zimmerman as a building” awareness we discovered in the interviews. In a way, the building had been a kind of void for us before the fire. It was here; we worked in it, but …

Claire-Lise: We didn’t think of it; we didn’t think of the building.

D: We needed it. It’s where our services collections were housed. Then there was the void of not being able to get into it, of not having access to it, of …

Mary Ellen: What it means to you.

CL: A reversal. Because librarianship was what mattered; we didn’t really care about the building. After the fire, librarianship disappeared in some ways, like projects and whatever was going on, and then the building came up. Because when I read the interviews and contributions, what struck me was that people were so busy doing this and doing that because, in a way, psychologically it was easier. You wouldn’t get depressed. You know: try to set up reference, try to set up Interlibrary Loan. I think this kind of frenzy was in a way: let’s get busy, let’s get busy and not think about the burned periodicals.

Heidi: It was a way to cope.

D: And then you get someone like Kathleen who was given nothing to get busy about.

CL: And then you get depressed.

D: But sooner or later people had contact with the building, either because they had to come back in to do some work or they wanted to come back in and peak.

ME: Or they were given 15 minutes to get in, get their stuff and go.

D: And then we started having our reactions to the place, the space, the building, which is not something we would normally react to. Sure, we generally like the spaces in which we work but until they’re actually taken away from us or we’re forced to go somewhere else, we don’t really define them or engage with them. So that push-pull of “no access” or “no place” makes you entirely aware of place and what you’re missing.

ME: Very early on, I sat at one of the information tables and it was frustrating because you are there in library mode with the table and canopy and it looked official and people had just heard the news and they came rushing up asking, “What happened?” And you had to say, “We don’t know.” Just like Evangela said.

CL: So it was a “non-information table.”

ME: But there were people who ran up and said, “Can I return my books?” And we had an answer for that. Or: “Can I get in to see the books?” “We have an answer for that; you won’t like it.” But people would want to know what happened, what was going to happen next. They were just the kinds of things we could not answer, because we did not know.

H: And even at the SUB, you could console people because they knew the fire had happened and they knew there wasn’t going to be a lot of information about it, but they really wanted to express their grief and they wanted to apologize to you and they wanted to just share in the experience and that’s the way they did it. They came and chatted at the reference desks about something that we all knew nothing about.

ME: That’s true, even the brief few days I was at one of those outdoor information tables some people would just come up and say, “Well, that’s terrible; that’s awful; I love the library.”

D: And again it’s that thing about “the library.” Sure people were freaking out about exams but again even … they reacted to the building, the place, the things in it. They weren’t missing the online databases.

H: They disappeared, I anticipate initiating move of CSWR LC collection from tower by coming week, if elevator cooperates.

D: 12:45pm Dan Barkley sends out Pack Back schedule for the week of November 5-9

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