

Syracuse University (SU) has received a generous gift from William J. and Joan Brodsky, which has made possible the new Brodsky Endowment for the Advancement of Library Conservation. Beginning in spring 2005, the endowment will be used to promote and advance the knowledge of library conservation theory, practice, and application. Programs designed for on-campus and regional participants will include lectures and workshops by prominent library conservators. The educational programming sponsored by the endowment will be organized by Peter Verheyen, an internationally known and award-winning conservator, craft binder, and book artist who directs the conservation lab at the Special Collections Research Center at SU Library. Endowment-sponsored events will complement the internship, independent study, and class presentations currently offered by the SU conservation lab, which have already led some students to pursue library conservation as a career.

The University of Minnesota (UM) Libraries has received a grant of \$162,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to assess support for scholarly inquiry in the context of a large research university. The grant will allow the UM Libraries and the university's College of Liberal Arts (CLA) to develop a conceptual framework to analyze the needs of various academic disciplines as they acquire, create, manage, and use knowledge resources. The 12-month project will include a team of librarians, graduate and post-doctoral researchers, and administrators from UM. The team will carry out its exploration within targeted academic communities in CLA. The team's goal is to better understand discipline-specific needs for information content, services, tools and expertise, and to present a model for bring-

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ing coherence to these distributed resources through physical and virtual means.

Columbia University has been awarded funding for two separate projects by the New York State Program for the Conservation and Preservation of Library Research Materials. Through the program Columbia will receive \$150,052 for a two-year cooperative project to microfilm approximately 2,014 brittle East Asian serial volumes. Materials will be drawn from collections at Columbia University, the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo, and other libraries in New York State. Columbia will also receive \$65,017 for a one-year cooperative project to photocopy brittle reference materials. Columbia will manage the project and will contribute approximately 55 volumes amounting to over 36,000 pages. Cornell University and SUNY at Albany will contribute an additional 115 volumes. Included in the materials to be photocopied are encyclopedias and other reference tools that have deteriorated physically, and must be preserved in paper form because they are not available online.

Acquisitions

Records of the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway Company (Frisco) have been acquired by Southwest Missouri State University's Duane G. Meyer Library. The records were donated to SMSU by Louis Griesemer, president of Springfield Underground Incorporated, who acquired the materials from the former Frisco Museum in Springfield, Missouri. The collection consists primarily of more than 1,000 bound volumes of Frisco Interstate Commerce Commission reports and Record of Property Change (RPC) books from 1918 to 1974 and shop files from the 1940s to the 1970s. The RPC volumes cover a wide geographical area

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to his service at MSU, Besant was director of the Linda Hall Library, assistant director for public service at the Ohio State University library, and assistant director for technical service at the University of Houston library. Besant has been active in state and national organizations, having served as the president of the Kentucky chapter of SLA twice, and chaired the State Assisted Academic Library Council of Kentucky from 1989-1990 and 1997-2000.

Charles T. Cullen, president and librarian of the Newberry Library in Chicago, has retired. Cullen has been president of the Newberry

Library since 1986, forging an era of financial stability, academic accomplishment, and public access. During his tenure, the Newberry Library has seen its endowment increased from \$27 million to \$63 million, which has ensured support for active acquisition, emerging scholarship, the strengthening of staff positions and resources, and technological advancement. Under Cullen's stewardship, the Newberry was an early adopter of new technology, becoming one of the first independent research libraries to have a Web site and to network via a state-of-the-art intranet. The Newberry Library is an independent humanities library that is free and open to the public. *~*

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including Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee, Texas, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri. The shop files include diagrams and schematics (including painting diagrams)

for a broad range of railroad equipment from railroad cars to tools and fittings. Other materials donated include Frisco maps, stationary, labor agreements, and publications. *~*

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et-fuel pioneer and occultist Jack Parsons, whose research at Caltech led to the development of military ballistic missiles. Pendle successfully weaves together the threads of Parsons's relatively unknown career—his interest in space travel and science fiction, his immersion in thelemic magick based on the writings of the notorious Aleister Crowley, and his untimely death in a chemical explosion at his home in 1952. Much better written than John Carter's *Sex and Rockets* (Feral House, 2000), Pendle's biography also provides a glimpse of the southern California culture in the 1930s and 1940s that allowed such a free thinker to flourish. \$25.00. Harcourt. ISBN 0-15-100997-X.

bird that tried to carry off a 10-year-old boy in Lawndale, witnessed by two adults. Hall has assembled an intriguing list of cases and traditions that are difficult to explain. \$15.95. Paraview. ISBN 1-93104-497-X.

Thunderbirds: America's Living Legends of Giant Birds, by Mark A. Hall (204 pages, December 2004), examines Indian legends and modern sightings of big birds with wingspans of up to 20 feet. The most interesting instance of the latter was a flap (one might say) of reports in southern Illinois in the summer of 1977, one of which involved a large

Vanishing Point, by Richard J. Tofel (216 pages, August 2004), reexamines the unexplained disappearance of New York Supreme Court Judge Joseph Crater in August 1930, an event that made him the most famous missing person until Jimmy Hoffa. As part of his inquiry, Tofel looks at political corruption in New York City and the decline of the Tammany Hall political machine that Crater was involved with. Over time, speculation on the case has ranged from his outright murder by thugs enforcing a showgirl's blackmail scheme to Crater taking it on the lam to escape a corruption investigation. Tofel suspects Crater died suddenly at the brothel of notorious madam Polly Adler, who used her underworld connections to make the corpse disappear. \$24.95. Ivan R. Dee. ISBN 1-56663-605-1. *~*