

The Sixty-Eighth Annual Report
Crossett Library
July 1, 2000 - June 30, 2001

The Crossett Library continued in its quest to provide outstanding service to the students, faculty, and staff of Bennington College. The staff of the library seeks to achieve this goal as part of its overall mission:

Bennington College's Crossett Library strives to be innovative, dynamic and flexible in providing excellent library service central to the academic and personal growth of our community of users. We encourage curiosity and inquiry, teaching and learning, increased user self-sufficiency and broad interpretation of the role of the library within a wider educational context.

The library as an organization is composed of three elements: the staff, the collection, and the building. While the last two elements are important, the staff is the most crucial element in the organization as it determines how the collection and building are best developed, utilized, and presented as a resource to the community.

The changes in staffing at the Crossett Library had the biggest potential impact on library services during the 2000-2001 year. The library experienced a 100% turnover in personnel among all positions. Out of the nine staff members employed in the library at the beginning of the fiscal year, five resigned or left the college and four assumed different positions within the library. Two new staff members were hired to fill vacant positions and two other positions were in the process of being filled at the end of the fiscal year. There was no change in the staff of the Music Library in Jennings Hall.

Robert Waldman, Director of the Library and Dean of the College from 1995 to 1997, resigned his position effective 2/28/2001. Timothy Dowgiert, Circulation/Systems/Public Services Librarian, was appointed Acting Director, effective 3/1/2001.

New staff members of the library are:

Larraby Fellows, a 2001 graduate of Bennington College and former student assistant in the library, was appointed as Library Assistant.

Anne Just, the Director of the New Lebanon Library in New Lebanon, NY, was appointed the Circulation/Systems/Public Services Librarian.

Kathleen Williams, an Editorial Assistant at Storey Communications, Inc. in North Adams, MA, was interviewed at the end of June and accepted the position of Library Assistant, to begin at the end of July.

Oceana Wilson, a Reference Librarian at the Rhode Island School of Design, was interviewed in early June and accepted the position of Reference Librarian, to begin at the end of August.

The process of publicizing, interviewing, hiring, and training for each open position, in addition to the regular duties of an already depleted staff, was a challenge. The Crossett Library tried to minimize the impact on patron services during this time of transition by enlisting the cooperation and support of its student assistants. The regular staff impressed upon the student assistants the vital role they played in the operation of the library and constantly reminded the students of the importance of properly communicating with staff and being present to fulfill their responsibilities. By effectively managing the activities of this important segment of the library staff, the regular staff were able to continue to provide all services without interruption, including the popular annual book sale and thesis unveiling. The students are to be commended for pulling together and contributing as part of the library team and as part of the Bennington College community.

Crossett Library Staff for Fiscal Year 2000-2001:

Timothy Dowgiert	Circulation/Systems/Public Services Librarian; Acting Director (from 3/1/01)
Larraby Fellows	Library Assistant, Evening Supervisor (began 6/11/01)
Leah Giblo	Library Assistant, Technical Services; Library Assistant, Technical Services and Acquisitions (from 11/1/00)
Vanessa Haverkoch	Library Assistant, Circulation; Head of Technical Services (from 10/9/00)
Anne Just	Circulation/Systems/Public Services Librarian (began 6/25/01)
Michael Martin	Library Assistant, Interlibrary Loan (resigned 4/23/01)
Lisa Monroe	Library Assistant, Evening Supervisor; Library Assistant, Circulation (from 1/29/01)
Marie Parker	Library Assistant, Acquisitions (retired 10/31/00)
Susan Reiss	Music Librarian
Heather Van Inwegan	Reference and Outreach Librarian (resigned 5/24/01)
Robert Waldman	Director of the Library (resigned 2/28/01)
Peggy Winn	Library Assistant, Circulation (left college employment 1/18/01)

Student Assistant Staff:

Aliza Akhtar	Taro Johnson	Yory Teperman
Mala Arkin	Emilia Keene-Kendrick	Sara Teten
Sara Baumgartel	Anna Kicheva	Claire Thomas
Aadya Bedi	Niranjan Kunwar	Adeia Thompson
Susie Benton	Tugce Kurtis	Dannikke Walkker
Melis Bilgin	Brendan Mahoney	Lillie Walsh
Juliet Case	Subash Manandmar	Gabrielle Weiler
Chris D'Agostino	Milica Markovic	Hilary Winters
Heather Dewey-Hagborg	Chloe McCloskey	Ed Zarsky
Larraby Fellows	Ilike Merey	Melody Zilber
Jodi Harris	Jason Myers	Kenyon Zimmer
Sanam Hasan	Richard Stinson	
Darina Ivanova	Mary Tasillo	

During the 2000-2001 year, a great deal of effort was channeled into ongoing projects that continue to have an impact on library services for the patrons of the Crossett and Music Libraries.

The Crossett Library completed the retrospective conversion of its main circulating collection and began converting smaller non-circulating collections, such as the Faculty collection. The Music Library began its conversion process. Many of the Music Library book records were entered into the library's catalog and work began on the process of converting the records of the other 17,000 scores, records, CDs, DATs, cassettes, and archival tapes. The importance of these accomplishments means that patrons can now locate an estimated 95% of all Crossett Library materials via a web-based catalog and for the first time will be able to search for items in the Music Library through the same catalog.

Another accomplishment was the development of a searchable database for the Crossett Library's collection of over 27,000 art slides. Students and faculty can now search for slides by title or artist or media or country, as there was no prior existing public access point for these items. This database is reached through the main catalog page on the library's web site.

The Crossett Library continued its ongoing reclassification project. The library has books classified in both the Dewey Decimal and Library of Congress Classification Systems. The library staff began a push to change items that had been cataloged in Dewey (about ¼ of the holdings) into Library of Congress over the last couple of years. With the completion of the retrospective conversion project for the main collection, it has meant that more effort could be placed on the reclassification project. The presence of two classification systems means that a patron may have to look in two different areas of the library for a book by Hemingway. While every effort is made by the staff to educate users to the fact that items are shelved in different places, some patrons may not locate a title and leave the library without seeking assistance, convinced that the library doesn't own an item. Classifying all items in the same system will shelve all related materials in the same locations and thus increase access.

Staff members have attended training sessions to learn some of the processes to properly catalog certain materials. Training was obtained through Nylink, a library network of which the Crossett Library is a member. The staff continues to take advantage of professional development opportunities through our consortium memberships in order to keep abreast of changing technologies.

The Crossett Library began collecting DVDs in addition to videocassettes. As time progresses, more movie titles will be purchased in the DVD format and fewer in the VHS format.

The Crossett Library entered into an agreement to acquire an online database called JSTOR to complement the group of databases accessible from the library's web site. Students or faculty from anywhere on campus can search 117 core scholarly journals for full-text articles on a 24/7 basis. This journal archive became available through the efforts of the Association of Vermont Independent Colleges (AVIC). AVIC successfully obtained a grant from the Mellon Foundation to fund each library's one-time Archive Capital Fee of \$10,000 and the first year Annual Access Fee of \$2,000 for this product. The feedback from students and faculty since this database became available has been tremendously positive. The Librarians' Coalition of AVIC will continue to explore other opportunities for the cooperative sharing of products, services and ideas.

All these efforts have been undertaken in order to provide greater access to materials, including electronic resources, for students, faculty, and staff. Some of these projects are ongoing and will continue to be a focus of the staffs' energies for some time to come. Other areas within the library's responsibilities will need attention in the upcoming year. These include the College Archives, the Special Collections inventory, continued facilities maintenance, focused collection development and weeding, working to improve outreach to students and faculty, evaluation of new technologies and services, and continued staff development.

A list of library donors and library statistics are attached.

Timothy Dowgiert
Acting Director