

Minutes of the Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the Council of
the Friends of the Oberlin College Library, November 5, 2011

President Maxine Houck convened the Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the Council of the Friends of the Oberlin College Library at 1:37 p.m. in the Goodrich Room at Mudd Center.

The following Friends Council members were present: Vice President Ann Sherif (by phone), Secretary Nathan (Mike) Haverstock, Ardie Bausenbach, William Bradford, Dan Goulding (Nominating Committee), John Elder, Ray English (ex officio), Celeste Feather, Jessica Grim (ex officio), Herb Henke, Nick Jones, Amelea Kim (student representative), Gary Kornblith, Robert Longworth, Peter McCracken, Thelma Morris, Scott Smith (Chair of the Acquisitions Committee), Wayne Steinmetz (special guest), and Ed Vermue (ex officio).

Highlights of the meeting.

At the meeting, the Council:

- approved acquisitions for the Library worth \$40,000 in response to recommendations from Oberlin College faculty,
- awarded a Friends scholarship, worth \$2,500, to Oberlin graduate Jane Sandberg '10 to help her defray the cost of attending library school en route to a library career,
- awarded two student research awards, each in the amount of \$500, for excellence in the use of the Library's collections,
- approved the award of a life membership to Wayne Steinmetz '67, Professor Emeritus of Chemistry at Pomona College, for his generous donations to the Science Library over a period of many years,
- approved a posthumous award of honorary membership for Margaret Forsythe '46, former Dean of Women at Ohio Wesleyan University, for generous annual contributions to the Library and for a major gift from her estate,
- elected officers for the 2011-2012 academic year, two incumbent Council members to second terms, and two new members to their first terms,
- discussed an exciting proposal that will lead to the renovation of the Goodrich Room

to better and more comfortably accommodate patrons of the Library's Special Collections and Archives, and approved spending the Friends portion of Forsythe's estate gift for the renovation project.

Minutes.

The minutes of the previous meeting on September 25, 2010 were approved after two minor corrections were made, which are incorporated in the section on "Digitization of the Collections" below.

Financial report.

Ray English delivered the financial report. Regular membership contributions to the Friends totaled almost \$50,000 in 2010-11. Thanks to two estate gifts, he said, the Friends had a fund balance of approximately \$212,000 as of June 30, 2011.

Acquisitions Committee.

The Acquisitions Committee had again supplied Council members before the meeting with a listing of the committee's recommendations on acquisitions. This year's list of recommended purchases had a value of \$40,000. In commenting on it, Scott Smith noted that the committee tried to fund the total cost of each of the recommended items and thus avoid dipping into the Library's regular acquisitions budget for supplementary financing.

In answer to questions as to decisions on whether or not to fund certain items, he and Jessica Grim explained that decisions on a couple of items mentioned could be "revisited" next year.

The list of recommended acquisitions, which the committee had chosen from a larger list of possible purchases totaling \$62,671, was approved by acclamation by the Council.

Program Committee.

The Program Committee supplied Council members before the meeting with a chronological listing of the past year's and upcoming Friends events. In commenting on it, Bob Longworth, who has replaced Ann Sherif as the committee chair, called attention to an upcoming reception in December to honor Oberlin authors. He also noted that this past year there was the usually rich mix of book talks by faculty and special guests.

Looking ahead, English noted that Molly Raphael '67 has already accepted an

invitation to address our next annual banquet on November 3, 2012. That will be shortly after Raphael, who has long lent her support to Friends activities, completes her term as president of the American Library Association.

Membership Committee.

In delivering the committee's report, Peter McCracken noted that recent solicitations of residents of Kendal at Oberlin and College Park Manor have helped increase Friends membership. In support of efforts to recruit new members, Thelma Morris said she has commenced leading tours of the Library by groups of four or five people from Kendal, where she lives.

During the past year, progress was made, McCracken said, in working out “a calendar” for soliciting membership renewals. His suggestion was to send first notices on renewals in August, followed by reminders in December, February, and May.

Total membership in all categories remained strong. The total number of Friends members for 2010-11 was 745.

Nominating Committee.

Dan Goulding presented the committee's recommendations. These were that two incumbent Council members be appointed to second terms ending in 2014, Celeste Feather '84 and Peter McCracken '91, and two people, Anne McFarland '62 and Jack Glazier to first terms of similar length.

McFarland is a retired law librarian who lives in Cleveland Heights. She and her husband Charles have been generous donors to the library. Their gifts included major financial support for the Academic Commons project.

Glazier is a Professor of Anthropology at Oberlin College. His research interests include East Africa (especially the Mbeere people of the Mt. Kenya periphery). He and members of his family have been regular donors to the endowed fund they established in 1991, whose proceeds are used to purchase materials in the area of African American studies.

The committee also nominated officers for the 2011-2012 academic year as follows: Maxine Houck, president; Ann Sherif, vice president; and Eric Carpenter, secretary.

The Council approved the nominations for Council members and officers unanimously.

At this juncture in the meeting Gary Kornblith introduced a motion that passed on a voice vote, designating Haverstock “Secretary Emeritus.” This special, unprecedented recognition of a Council officer, he noted, was merited in view of Haverstock's service going back to 1985, when he became involved, under Director of Libraries William Moffett, in the planning and organization of the Friends group.

Life and Honorary Memberships.

The Nominating Committee recommended the award of a life membership for Wayne Steinmetz '67, Professor of Chemistry Emeritus at Pomona College. Steinmetz has been a generous donor to the Science Library for many years – his donations earmarked for purchases of books and other library materials in his field. He and Scott Smith '79 jointly endowed a library fund to buy chemistry materials in honor of Norm Craig, Emeritus Professor of Chemistry.

The Nominating Committee also recommended the Council's first posthumous award of an Honorary Membership for Margaret Forsythe '46, who for many years was the Dean of Women at Ohio Wesleyan University. In addition to her generous annual donations to the Library, Forsythe left a major gift in her estate to the Oberlin College Library and the Friends.

The life membership for Steinmetz and the posthumous honorary membership for Forsythe were both approved by acclamation.

Student Friends.

Amelea Kim '12 described another “very active” year for Student Friends of the Library (SFOL). The events included “tours of the former Carnegie Library, tours of the letterpress studio, movie screenings of book adaptations, talks on librarianship as a career, as well as *Fahrenheit 451* book discussions.” (The latter is a 1963 dystopian novel by Ray Bradbury about a future American society where reading is outlawed and firemen burn books.)

Thanks to a campus-wide mailing early in the academic year, Kim said there are now 131 SFOL. She sends them a regular, monthly newsletter by e-mail. As part of this, she has tested and is now making improvements to a monthly “puzzle hunt” that exposes students to new Library resources as they track down clues that figure in the game. Finally, she noted student interest is high in a book collection contest scheduled for the spring.

Library school scholarship.

Maxine Houck reported that Jane Sandberg '10, who is attending the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, was chosen to receive the Friends scholarship of \$2,500 for 2011. Upon completion of her master's degree, she plans to work in a rural public library and help to bring technology to an underserved community.

While at Oberlin, Jane worked in technical and public service student assistant positions in the Art, Conservatory, and Main libraries. She also worked as a summer intern at the Library of Congress in 2009 and taught a course on librarianship at Oberlin's Experimental College.

Following discussion of whether the Friends should consider increasing the amount of the scholarship, Kornblith introduced a motion approved by acclamation to refer the matter to a group comprising Council officers for further study.

Student Research Awards.

Ann Sherif, chair of the Research Awards Committee, announced that the committee was recommending two \$500 research awards be made to Oberlin students for excellence in the use of the Library's collections from among nine that were nominated:

-- Benjamin Jakubowski, class of 2011, for his paper "Controversies in '-omics' diagnosis development" written for Chemistry 361. In nominating Benjamin, Rebecca Whelan, Associate Professor of Chemistry, wrote: "Among many thoughtful, thorough, and comprehensive research papers produced by members of this seminar, Ben's truly stands out. The final draft cites 23 sources, mostly articles from peer-reviewed literature but also monographs on topics ranging from systems biology to data mining and statistics. He assimilates a large amount of information into a coherent, sophisticated, and compelling story."

-- Thomas Vozar, class of 2013, for his paper "Scorti Libellus: Publication as Prostitution in Sulpician Elegy" written for Latin 307. Kirk Ormand, Associate Professor of Classics, wrote in nominating Thomas: "this is an outstanding paper, written on a short sequence of poetry attributed to a young woman poet of the Roman Empire. The assignment required that the students use one or two secondary sources ... Thomas went well beyond that. He tracked down and made unusually sophisticated use of twenty-six secondary sources, including several in French (which he read in the original)."

The "young woman poet" was identified as Sulpicia, the daughter of Servius, by

the Friends Secretary who read in translation one of her short poems for the amusement of those assembled.

Collection digitization progress report.

According to information supplied by Alan Boyd, Associate Director of Libraries, efforts to digitize “Oberlin-related materials that have the potential to support student learning and research” are moving along. This past year this involved digitizing and indexing the complete run of *The Oberlin Evangelist* (1839-1862), which deals with Christian education, slavery and abolition, moral reform, and religious revival among other topics.

Boyd’s report also provided an update on a project to digitize selected years of the *Oberlin Review*, established in 1874 and one of the oldest student-produced newspapers in the U.S. It now appears likely that the project can be funded from the Five Colleges of Ohio Next Generation Library Grant from the Mellon Foundation.

Goodrich Room renovation.

English introduced a discussion of a proposal to renovate the Goodrich Room to serve the needs of the Library better at a time when there is more and more teaching based on materials in the archives and special collections. He said the preliminary and “rough” estimate for carrying out the project, as illustrated in a diagram provided by the URS Corporation of Cleveland, was \$350,000.

He suggested that a large portion of this might be defrayed from the very generous gift to the Friends from the estate of the late Margaret Forsythe. He also responded to a comment at the meeting that the present chairs in the room were “awful” by noting that a portion of the cost of renovation would be for furnishings.

Sherif pointed out the importance of the project because digitization was encouraging people “to come and see objects for themselves.” Kornblith asked whether the renovation might lead to extended hours for the archives and special collections. Vermue and English both indicated that extended hours were under consideration.

In answer to questions, Vermue said special collections will still have sufficient space for storage even after the loss of a few square feet. He attributed this to improved and more compact shelving and judicious weeding of materials.

As to funding the project, Longworth suggested that it might be wise to have all of the money at hand before getting started, with the balance of the cost possibly coming from Oberlin College's regular capital improvement fund. English did not see this as an

obstacle, and expressed confidence whatever additional money was needed to complete the project could be found.

Thereafter, Kornblith introduced a motion that was approved by acclamation to the effect that by decision of the Friends Council the entire amount of the Forsythe estate gift, or \$178,000, be earmarked for the Goodrich Room's renovation.

Adjournment.

Following this decision, and after a hearty round of applause for the two retiring Council members, Ardie Bausenbach and Gary Kornblith, President Houck adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Nathan Haverstock, Secretary Emeritus
November 15, 2011