SMU Centennial Homecoming Weekend, September 23-26, was marked by a series of dazzling events commemorating 100 years of achievement. It was a ‘pull out all the stops’ celebration that might have put a smile on the face of the late Nancy Hamon, whose lavish theme parties remain unparalleled on the Dallas social scene. Only her generosity eclipsed her flair as a hostess.

Mrs. Hamon, who died in 2011 at age 92, was a passionate champion of the arts and education. Among her contributions to the University was a principal gift of $5 million in 1988 to establish the Jake and Nancy Hamon Arts Library. Ground was broken on December 12, 1988, and Hamon Arts Library opened on October 10, 1990.

For a quarter of SMU’s first century, Hamon Arts Library has supported the academic mission of Meadows School of the Arts and served as a vital resource for the Dallas arts community. The Meadows School honored that dynamic partnership by hosting its Homecoming open house in the library’s recently renovated lobby on September 25.

Meadows Dean Samuel S. Holland shared his vision for the school as a model for 21st-century arts education that wipes “the term starving artist from the lexicon.” Hamon Arts Library has a vital role to play as a research hub and catalyst for intellectual discovery.

Art Department Chair Noah Simblist noted that even the reconfigured library lobby feeds that vision by creating a new zone for displaying art. The built-in reference desk that once dominated the space was removed and replaced with sectional seating and side tables. Thanks to the generosity of Ann Folz ’50, the more open and comfortable design creates an inviting space for contemplating art that lines the walls. Folz provided funding for new furnishings both in the lobby and in the library, providing patrons prime seating and study spaces. The inaugural exhibit in the remodeled lobby, “Paper Dolls,” photographs of collages created by artists Justin Shull and Colleen Shull ’11, will continue through December 13.

Twenty-five years ago, Mrs. Hamon encouraged students to take full advantage of the library, to “read, learn, create and enjoy.” Students continue to reap the benefits of her advice as Hamon Arts Library begins a new chapter on the vanguard of arts education.

What’s in a name?

Find out on page 3.
THE STYLISH BEGINNING OF A GLAMOROUS LIFE

Even as a young woman testing the waters of fashion design, philanthropist Nancy Blackburn Hamon demonstrated a taste for glamour and an eye for detail. Between 1933 and 1942, she created a series of illustrations featured in the exhibit “Fashion Design Sketches by Nancy B. Hamon” in the Mildred Hawn Gallery at Hamon Arts Library.

A special preview on September 23, a Second Century Celebration event commemorating SMU’s first 100 years, was followed by the public opening on September 24 during Centennial Homecoming Weekends.

Drawn from the Jake and Nancy Hamon Papers, housed in the Jerry Bywaters Special Collections in Hamon Arts Library, the sketches were completed while she was in her late teens and early twenties. The vibrant works on paper were created with tempera, watercolor, pen and pencil. Lever designs range from red-carpet-ready gowns to stylish day dresses to playful hats. Three oversized reproductions of her work, arranged along one wall of the gallery, provide visitors a life-sized look at the timeless dresses.

It is not known if any of the designs were ever fabricated, but based on the sketches, I certainly think she did design some with herself in mind, because quite a few of the figures look like a young Mrs. Hamon,” says Emily Grubbs, archivist with the Bywaters Special Collections, who discovered the little-known illustrations while cataloging the papers, and the exhibit’s curator. “We do not know if she was planning a career in fashion design, but she was obviously interested in fashion and the arts from a very young age and that passion continued her entire life.”

Born in San Antonio, she attended the University of Texas at Austin before enjoying a brief career as a dancer in Hollywood. She moved to Dallas after marrying Jake L. Hamon in 1949. An extraordinary hostess, she was known for the extravagant theme parties she hosted with her husband, almost one per year from the 1950s through 1972, says Grubbs. Mrs. Hamon’s events are documented in scrapbooks, and pages from the parties are shown on a digital screen outside the gallery.

The exhibit will continue through December 13. For more information, visit https://libraries.smu.edu/cul/hamon/.

As these examples illustrate, Nancy Hamon showed a flair for the dramatic and a keen eye for detail in her fashion designs. Illustrations on this page are from the Jake and Nancy Hamon Papers, Jerry Bywaters Special Collections, Hamon Arts Library.

NAMING A NEW MARQUEE SPACE

In June 2015, SMU began a $17 million renovation project to modernize Fondren Library Center. Along with extensive plans to meet the research and study needs of students and other patrons now and in the future, there are also plenty of naming opportunities remaining to help support the project.

“There are many ways donors can participate in updating the 75-year-old Fondren Library Center,” says Paulette Mulry, 83, Director of Development, Central University Libraries. “For example, the University commissioned custom-designed, handcrafted Moser tables and reading chairs to re-establish Fondren Centennial Reading Room. A plaque mounted on each named table or chair will recognize the donor or honoree a current or former student. There are also legacy opportunities donors can take part in, but there is only one marquee space left—naming the new Starbucks Café.”

The Collaborative Commons and Starbucks Café will be a prime destination for students, faculty and staff. It will be accessed directly from the main quad and the Laura Bush Promenade and provide areas for individual and group study, interactive technology, and conversation and collaboration. Baristas will serve Starbucks’ famous coffees, lattes and frappuccinos, as well as pastries, bistro boxes, sandwiches and other tasty delights.

“Someone once said coffee and libraries are the recipe for successful students. I don’t know if that’s true, but we’re certainly going to provide the best of both worlds in one convenient location,” Mulry says.

To learn more about naming the new Collaborative Commons, which will house the Starbucks Café, and other naming opportunities provided by the renovation project, please contact Paulette Mulry at 214-768-7141 or email pmulry@smu.edu.

NEW DOCUMENT DELIVERY SERVICE

Central University Libraries’ Interlibrary Loan (ILL) has added a new component to its comprehensive system—a document delivery service for faculty, staff and graduate students.

“The ILL system is a great resource that connects CUL to thousands of other libraries throughout the United States,” says Sakarah Sheridan, I.L. librarian. “We just improved the process, making it easier for our users. You can now use our system to request a document, and a user-friendly delivery service component will be added. If the item is available, you will receive it by email. If the item is not available, we’ll search our system for other sources. The process is seamless.”

A key customer-focused change comes in the delivery of CUL-owned books, says Mulry. Prior to launching the new service, when ILL received requests for CUL books, users were notified when items were available, but they had to retrieve the books themselves from the stacks. “Now, if we own the book, we will put it and place it on hold for pick up at the central service desk,” she says.

In addition, users can request CUL-owned book chapters or articles, which are scanned and sent to them via email, she says.

For more details and answers to frequently asked questions about the ILL and document delivery service, visit https://library.smu.edu/ill/services/ill/.
Jennifer Boswell Pickens ’00 did not set out to write books about the country’s first family. But when the opportunity presented itself, she was more than happy to take on the labor of love.

It all started in 2004 when Pickens was invited to one of the annual White House Christmas parties. The decorations and theme were festive and she wanted to share the experience with her family and friends. So, when she asked about purchasing a book about past White House Christmases and was told one didn’t exist, she decided to take on the task herself.

From there, Pickens began a four-year journey to produce her first book. The finished product resulted in Christmas at the White House, a unique coffee-table book showcasing more than 300 beautifully restored photographs of 50 years of Christmases under nine different administrations, starting with John F. Kennedy and ending with George W. Bush. She is the first person to research, compile and produce a book on this subject.

Her second book, Pets at the White House, is filled with photographs and stories of the presidents, first ladies and their families with their four-legged friends. Pickens portrays the role of first pets in more than 200 carefully selected photographs, as well as a multitude of anecdotes, and includes the Obamas.

“Both endeavors were rewarding on so many levels. Not only was I fortunate enough to work with so many talented people with rich history, I also had the distinctive honor of First Lady Laura Bush ’83 penning the foreword to my first book, as well as every living first lady contributing an introduction to their section of the Christmas book,” Pickens says. “First Lady Barbara Bush wrote the foreword to the second book on the first pets and many other presidents and first ladies added anecdotes as well.”

“I am also very proud that a portion of all proceeds benefits the SMU Libraries Board an “honor.” Libraries have always been special to her. “As a student, I utilized the library effectively and depended upon the libraries for help with research. As an author, I couldn’t have completed either one of my books without librarians and historians all over the country who helped me uncover photographs and documents,” she says. “They’re invaluable to students, researchers, authors, academics and the general public.”

Pickens has relied on the assistance of librarians as she wraps up her first book. The finished product resulted in Christmas at the White House and will feature even more exquisite photographs of inaugurations, arrival ceremonies, holidays and other occasions,” she says.

It just got a little easier to travel back in time. Thanks to a $25,000 Texas Textreasures grant from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC), Central University Libraries Digital Collections is currently digitizing and annotating 1,370 photographs, documents and ephemera from The George W. Cook Dallas Image Collection. The collection, held by the DeGolyer Library, contains a rich overview of Texas history with an emphasis on Dallas.

The strength of the Cook Collection lies in its images: more than 2,200 photographs and 9,000 postcards depicting everyday life, ranging from workers wrapping saltines at Brown Cracker and Candy Co. to tornado damage in Garland, as well as more controversial and contentious subjects, including postcards of a Confederate monument and lynching.

Many of the postcards are real photographic postcards, not prints of photographs, which adds to their value, says Anne Peterson, DeGolyer library’s curator of photographs. “Historians, authors, researchers, educators, anyone interested in learning more about Dallas and Texas history will find this collection a treasure trove of materials in various formats,” Peterson says.

Petersen and Cindy Booke, CUL digital collections developer, co-authored the grant proposal. “There is a scarcity of Texas photography from the mid-19th century to the early 20th century and it is always of interest for research,” Peterson says.

It was an easy decision for me to support my alma mater, it was an easy decision. My former history professor James McMinn and his wife, Judy, invited me to Tables of Content, an event hosted by the Friends of SMU Libraries. I got invited immediately,” she says. “I am honored to be part of an organization that supports the heart and soul of the university. The Friends do such a wonderful job providing grants to SMU libraries and scholarships to future librarians.”

As an author, I couldn’t have completed either one of my books without librarians and historians all over the country who helped me uncover photographs and documents,” she says. “They’re invaluable to students, researchers, authors, academics and the general public.”
MAKING A CAREER DIFFERENCE FOR SMU GRADUATE STUDENTS

Central University Libraries’ Norwick Center for Digital Services (nCDS) has created a Digital Humanities Practicum that is helping SMU graduate students with their career development in today’s technology-rich environment. Since fall 2013, nCDS’s Practicum has allowed SMU graduate students to learn about the growing use of technology and software tools for teaching, research and scholarship in the humanities. Students learn digitization, metadata creation and digital collections development using nCDS’s Digital Collections.

“The Digital Humanities Practicum was a natural evolution of our longstanding Master’s of Library Science (MLS) Practicum, where we teach library students about the field of digital collections,” says Cindy Brooks, nCDS’s digital collections developer. “Over the past six years, we have trained 27 MLS students and graduates how to digitize special collections, create metadata and upload items into nCDS Digital Collections. Both programs are informal and in many ways resemble an apprenticeship.”

The SMU graduate students often add historical context to their Digital Humanities projects. In 2013, Carrie Johnston ’14, then an English Ph.D. candidate, created the Fred Harvey Co. Materials from the DeGolyer Library digital collection, which brought to light new information on the development of U.S. southwest.

Last year, Christopher Dody ’13, a post-doctoral religious studies student, received specialized training and advice on his multi-archival digital exhibit on the 1910 lynching of Allen Brooks in Dallas, “The Lynching of Allen Brooks and the Disappearance of the Elks Arch.”

Charles Weeks ’15, who completed the practicum in the spring while an English Ph.D. candidate, states, “I highly recommend the practicum to other students, particularly graduate students in the humanities; the materials we use are changing with digital technology, and more jobs are asking for candidates with training in the digital humanities.”

Johnston’s practicum project only attracted interest from unexpected venues, but it also led to a transformative change in her career path. “During job interviews, search committees commented on my digital work and cited my Digital Humanities Practicum as the primary reason for their interest in my candidacy,” she says. As a result of her project, in 2013 she accepted a two-year post-doctoral fellowship in digital scholarship at Bucknell University, a position made available through the Council on Library and Information Resources and partially funded by the Mellon Foundation.

“Through my strong background in textual criticism and scholarly research, I have the necessary framework to form partnerships in pursuit of digital and archival projects with university librarians, faculty, and students,” she says. “My commitment to cultivating new ways to access and theorize literature and material culture using innovative technology has set me up to succeed in a highly competitive and ever-evolving job market.”

WELCOME NEW FRIENDS

New members of Friends of the SMU Libraries who have joined as of November 2, 2015

Jeremy duQu sensory Adams and Bonnie Wheeler
Mary Boyd
Daisy Carr
Mary Cates
Carolyn B. Dickinson
John and Katie Deminski
Julie Forrester
Alexa Gordon
Julie Tallich-Harper
Mona Hendrix-Coonan
Norah Jackson
Karl Langston
Andrew Lewis
Pat Malting
Rafi Rodriguez
Stacey Smart
Stephanie Stegman
Bonnie Stoner
Patricia Taylor
Kristen Tekavec
Colleen Thompson
Nancy Wedelsher
Kevin Wei
Susan and Ed Wilson

UPCOMING FRIENDS EVENTS

Tuesday, December 1 Annual holiday luncheon at the Oak’s Country Club
Wednesday, December 2 Laura Wilson presents That Day: Pictures in the American West. The program and book signing at McCard Auditorium, Dallas Hall, will be co-sponsored with the Clements Center for Southwest Studies.

JANE AUSTEN, THE PASTURE BOOK AND MAGICAL STORYTELLING

‘Ask Russell’ is a familiar refrain at DeGolyer Library to questions on a vast array of topics, from early advertising ephemera to regional cookbooks. Russell L. Martin ’78 ’86, Central University Libraries’ man for all seasons, serves as assistant dean of collections and director of the DeGolyer. These days it is not unusual to see the respected scholar in a hardhat, steering a full book cart from one end of Fondren Library Center to the other as new spaces take shape during the renovation.

Whether he is reading, studying or transporting them, Martin’s professional and personal lives are intrinsically bound to books. Taking a cue from the popular “By the Book” features in The New York Times Sunday Book Review, Browsing Forward queried Martin about favorite writers and titles and unveiled a few surprises.

Who is your favorite novelist of all time?

Almost impossible to answer, but if forced, I’d say Jane Austen.

Who are your favorite writers working today?

All the ones we publish, of course! The DeGolyer has books by C.W. Smith, Marshall Terry, Jane Roberts Wood, Joe Coomer, Darwin Payne and Willard Spiegelman now in print or in the Book Club of Texas, which we also sponsor; has just published Franklin Gillom: Texas Boulevard, with contributions by John Critchton, David Farmer, Larry McMurtry and others, all reminiscing about a great figure in the antiquarian book trade. I heartily recommend all of our stock.

What’s the best short fiction you’ve read recently?

Helen Barabás’s “The Crossing,” in the Southwest Review. Actually, it is not a fictional story but a personal narrative. But it certainly is as well-crafted as a story. And I have to mention the Southwest Review, nCDS’s literary quarterly. Nothing SMU has done in its 100 years of existence is as important as Southwest Review. It is not a fictional story but a personal narrative. But it certainly is as well-crafted as a story. And I have to mention the Southwest Review, nCDS’s literary quarterly. Nothing SMU has done in its 100 years of existence is as important as Southwest Review.

What kinds of stories are you drawn to?

There has to be magic. By that I mean the language has to draw me in. I know after a few paragraphs whether a story has those elements. Isaac Singer’s “Gimpel the Fool,” translated by Saul Bellow, is a perfect example. You simply can’t put it down, or I can’t. The voice carries you along. The older I get, I find it harder to lose myself in a book in the way I could as a boy. Too many cares and distractions, I suppose. But when a voice comes along that compels me, even now, I simply follow it, grateful for the experience.

What books might we be surprised to find on your shelves?

What books might we be surprised to find on your shelves?

The Pasture Book and The Livestock Book by W.H. Thompson - two of my all-time favorites. If you could require the president to read one book, what would it be?

The Oxford Book of Light Verse, with the introduction by W.H. Auden. It would well serve the president of the United States or the president of SMU!
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COMING TO TERMS WITH WATCHMAN

Thomas DiPiero, Dean of Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences and an acclaimed expert on the works of author Harper Lee, led an animated, interactive discussion of To Kill a Mockingbird and the recently published Go Set a Watchman on October 7. Friends of the SMU Libraries, in partnership with the SMU Staff Association Book Club, sponsored the program, with an introduction delivered by Gillian M. McCombs, Dean and Director, Central University Libraries, shown with DiPiero. “You can’t really read Watchman outside of Mockingbird,” DiPiero said, challenging readers to examine the different perspectives – one story told through the prism of childhood; the other through an adult lens – and appreciate the complexities of Lee’s characters in both novels.