Welcome to the Special Collections semiannual newsletter! During the Spring semester Special Collections staff kept busy processing collections, providing instruction for classes, curating exhibits, and answering in-person and remote reference questions.

In January Mark Smith, Director of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, and Gloria Meraz, Assistant State Librarian, visited the UTEP Library and toured Special Collections. Ms. Meraz is a former Special Collections intern who helped process the Popular Dry Goods Company records, MS317, in 1997.

The Casasola photo collection feature in the El Paso Times (“Do You Know this Person?”) now appears on Sundays (instead of Tuesdays) and is back in the print version of the newspaper. Please check the UTEP Library Facebook page to view recently identified images: https://www.facebook.com/uteplibrary.

The Special Collections Department also expanded its social media presence in February with an Instagram account: https://www.instagram.com/spcuteplib/.

Planning is underway for the second annual Border Archives Bazaar. This year’s event will be on Saturday, October 13, 11am—4pm, at the El Paso Natural Gas Conference Center (across the street from the UTEP Library). The Border Archives Bazaar is a free event where community members can interact with fascinating historical collections from border regional archives, museums, and libraries. We would love to have a great turnout, so please save the date!

Special Collections would also like to congratulate our graduating student workers: Estebanné Taranigo, Andres Lucero, and Kofoworola Fadeyi. We wish them much success in their future endeavors.

We hope that everyone has a safe and wonderful summer!

Updates and News

Carl Hertzog Award for Excellence in Book Design

The 2018 winner of the biennial Carl Hertzog Award was Naturans Naturata (2017) by Sara Langworthy of Iowa City, Iowa. The judges chose Naturans Naturata from a field of sixty entries.

The Hertzog Award, named after El Paso book designer and printer Carl Hertzog, celebrates the art of fine printing. The award was presented by the Friends of the Library, and the winner and other selected entries were added to the Carl Hertzog collection in Special Collections.

In addition to the award ceremony on February 18, Hertzog Day activities included a lecture by Bryce Milligan of Wings Press in San Antonio and a reception. Claudia Rivers also curated an exhibit of this year’s Hertzog Award entries.
Archivists at the Alamo—SSA 2018

Claudia Rivers and Abbie Weiser attended the annual meeting of the Society of Southwest Archivists in San Antonio, Texas. The meeting was from May 23—May 26.

The theme of the meeting was “Archival Encuentros”. Abbie participated in a panel discussion about archival outreach events, and Claudia, immediate past president of SSA, attended the SSA board meeting and presented the Distinguished Service Award to Amanda York Focke of Rice University. Claudia also took part in a photo archives pre-conference workshop.

Meeting session topics included records management for archivists, ArchivesSpace workflows, archival outreach events, forming archival partnerships, digital preservation, and Texas Archival Resources Online (TARO).

Conference participants attended an opening reception at the Alamo, and an all-attendee reception at the Witte Museum. Archivists also toured various archival institutions in San Antonio including the McNay Art Museum and the Sisters of the Incarnate Word archives.

Mapping History Workshops and Exhibits

As part of a collaboration with the Benson Latin American Collection at UT-Austin, the UTEP Library hosted an opening reception for two exhibits, Mapping Mexican History and Mapping Borderlands History, on April 26. Mapping Mexican History features reproductions of colonial-era maps of Mexico, known as relaciones geográficas, from the Benson Collection. The exhibit, Mapping Borderlands History, includes maps from UTEP’s Special Collections. Over 75 people attended the opening reception, which featured music by the UTEP Sprezzatura Early Music Ensemble. The exhibits are located on the third floor of the UTEP Library.

The following day two digital scholars from UT, Albert Palacios and Joshua Ortiz Baco, conducted three free map workshops at the Library. Participants learned about ArcGIS, MapWarpper, and StoryMapJS.

Special thanks to Albert and Joshua for the map exhibit and workshops!

Other Conferences and Presentations

In January Claudia Rivers attended a meeting of the Texas Historical Commission. And in February Claudia, Eva Ross, and Abbie Weiser attended the UTEP Borderlands History Conference.

In March Juan Sandoval attended the Congreso de Literatura Mexicana Contemporánea at UTEP. Later that month, Claudia and Abbie presented at a Pan American Round Table meeting.

Also in March, Abbie and Eva Ross presented at the UTEP Women’s History Month Conference about women’s archives. And Claudia presented to a group of art collectors from Stanford University about art-related collections in the UTEP Library.

In April Claudia presented to a local discussion group and showed them current library exhibits.
Preservation Month Activities — May 2018

The UTEP Library Preservation Committee met on May 1 (May Day for cultural heritage organizations) to discuss preservation challenges in the UTEP Library. The committee updated the Library’s Disaster Plan and reviewed additions made to it last year. During the meeting, the committee also went over preservation training opportunities as well as Preservation Month events in El Paso. This year’s Preservation Month — El Paso theme was “The River and the Trail”.

On May 30 Abbie Weiser and Claudia Rivers attended a Western States and Territories Preservation Assistance (WESTPAS) disaster planning workshop, Are You Ready?, at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Museum in Las Cruces.

New to Special Collections & Exhibits

New collections
- Joe D. Old journals
- El Paso County Medical Society Auxiliary records
- William Kolliker collection
- Who is Modesto Avelino Gomez? manuscript
- papel sellado collection

Exhibits: January—June 2018
- Happy 30th Anniversary Dr. Natalicio!
- Douglass School in El Paso
- Postcards: More than “Wish You Were Here”
- Earl F. Evans: An El Paso Aviator
- 2018 Carl Hertzog Award Book Award Exhibit
- Mapping Mexican History & Mapping Borderlands History

Volunteers and Interns

Cindy Milazzo completed inventorying the Duffy Stanley collection.

Eva Ross, a longtime volunteer, completed inventories of the Kathy Staadt papers and the Ellwyn Stoddard papers and continued her work with the vertical files.

Nancy Wilson finished surveying the Haskell Monroe postcard collection. She is now working on an inventory of the John Haddox papers.

Bill Key continued working on the Joseph Friedkin papers and helped identify maps to include in our map exhibit on the third floor.

Intern Margot Chavez-North worked on the Festival Theatre collection and rehoused negatives in the Samuel Fant photo collection.

Volunteer Joan Isichei is typing an inventory of the Ramona DeLaney papers.

In Memorium


Art by Mago Gándara, Mago Gándara papers, MS584.
The C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department is located on the sixth floor of the UTEP Library.

Overview

The collections contained in the C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department directly support research and learning at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). The Department currently has over 750 archival collections, over 1,600 oral histories, various rare book collections, and thematic book collections, such as the Southwest, Chicano, Judaica, Art, Military, and McCord Poetry collections. During the 2016/2017 fiscal year we welcomed over 3,600 researchers and visitors.

Mission Statement

The Special Collections Department supports the University’s mission of education, research, scholarship, and community service. The mission of the C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department is to acquire, preserve, and make available for use the archival, rare book, media, and digital collections of the University Library. Areas of collection emphasis include primary sources for the history of the University, El Paso, and the border region; fine printing and book design; and military history.

Vision

The Library sits on a hill within sight of the Mexican border. Our unique position informs our attitudes and the services we offer. We aim for excellence in serving our users and in making our collections accessible.

Sunset view from the Special Collections terrace, February 2018. Photo courtesy of David Flores.