

[NO.63 SUMMER
2003](#)

[BENE LEGERE
NEWSLETTER OF
THE
LIBRARY
ASSOCIATES](#)

- [Library Legacies:
Building the
University Library](#)
- [Library Legacies:
Early Gifts to the
Library](#)
- [The UC Archives:
The Blue and Gold
Yearbooks](#)
- [Library Preservation
Funds at Work!](#)
- [The University
Library: An
Illustrated History](#)

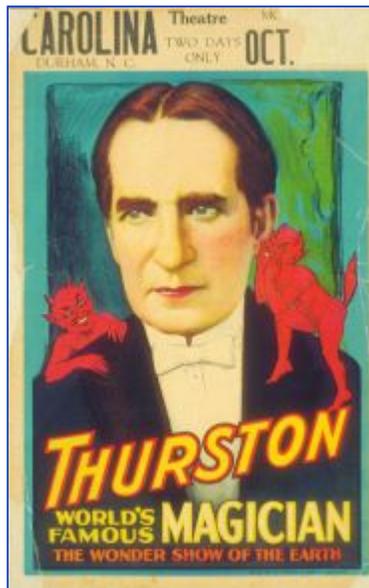
The Library Associates

Join more than 6,000 other friends, book lovers, alumni, and faculty who recognize that the influence of a great research library reaches beyond the university it serves to the many communities of which it is a part.

Library Associates receive complimentary copies of the quarterly newsletter *Bene Legere*, as well as invitations to special occasions at the Library. For more information on the Library Associates program, please write or telephone: The Library Development Office, Room

Library Preservation Funds at Work!

Gifts to the Library Preservation Fund are used to support the repair and restoration of books, manuscripts, maps, and photographs in the Library's collection of over nine million volumes. For years Cal's Library has had a model preservation program, with staff experts skilled in preserving both rare 17th century leather bound books as well as rebinding recent trade volumes falling apart by repeated use. The heavy circulation of Cal's enormous library collections results in appreciable damage to at least 40,000 volumes each year.



"Thurston, World's Famous Magician"

Howard Thurston (1869-1936) reigned as the world's preeminent stage magician—the first to appear on Broadway, and, reputedly, the first to have a face lift. While devils figured prominently in his posters and promotional materials, his elaborate illusions depended less on sorcery than the ten railroad cars of equipment that carried the show from city to city. Like so many posters of the period, preservation work required to restore this poster was major.

For instance, a book in the David P. Gardner Stacks of Doe Library may be read over 75 times each semester, or the pages of a musical score might be turned more than 35 times by a music student learning to perform a piece of music. Books are squashed into photocopiers, taken on trips to the beach, crammed into already-filled backpacks, and get stained by food and coffee during study breaks and meals.

In addition, there are thousands of non-circulating rare books, manuscripts, maps and newspapers that require some form of preservation treatment, many due to the irreversible chemical deterioration of the paper itself.

It is the ongoing support provided by such funds as the Hans Rausing Conservatorship, the Class of 1956 Library Preservation Endowment, and the Library Preservation Fund that helps to insure the Library's remarkable collections are preserved for students, faculty, and scholars of the future.

During the past year, other Preservation gifts were used to purchase some significant items to address special collections needs:

An automated box-making machine from England used to make custom-fitted boxes for fragile and historically important books, documents and artifacts.

Protective book boxes are among the least expensive and most effective means of ensuring the survival of important historical books as they age and become fragile. This box-making machine is run by a computer that cuts and creases flat cardboard sheets to be folded up to become book boxes. Every box is cut to the exact dimensions of each book that needs protection. With a production

131 Doe Library,
University of California,
Berkeley, CA 94720-6000;
telephone (510) 642-9377.
Or, [check our website](#).

speed of several minutes per box, the output from the machine will be ten times larger than ever achieved before in the Preservation Department. The impact on the preservation of the collections will be enormous.



Daguerreotype of dog owned by Sheldon K. Nichols, 1852-53.

Daguerreotypes of animals are rare and difficult to take due to long exposures required. Sheldon K. Nichols, an early San Francisco daguerreotypist, apparently coaxed his pet dog to lie still for the time it took to get this shot. Preservation work on this daguerreotype included removal from the velvet-lined case, cleaning of the cover glass, and reassembly.

A special book freezer to dry wet books and to exterminate bugs.

Despite best efforts by library readers to use books carefully, sometimes accidents happen and a book is returned wet (and occasionally moldy). Sometimes, too, the Library acquires a collection of older materials that has been stored in a basement or in a warehouse, and has become infested. Library staff immediately send the wet and buggy books to the Preservation Department for emergency treatment. To respond effectively, the Department has ordered a freezer specially designed to enhance the rate of sublimation of water from the frozen volume (the equivalent of disappearing ice cubes in home freezers!), and with a fast freezing capability sufficient to exterminate bugs living in the volumes before they can adapt to the cold temperature. With this freezer, the Library will be able to respond

more quickly and effectively to inevitable collection emergencies.

Larger work stations in the conservation laboratory to meet growing collection needs.

The need for library preservation is greater than ever before. The Preservation Department staff have developed new methods and techniques to handle groups of damaged materials at the same time rather than treating one item at a time. To aid in this effort, more large custom treatment tables have been purchased and the flexibility of arrangement of work stations has been improved. Now more materials can be preserved and equipment can be reconfigured to meet the needs of different projects.

One special fund created by alumni from the Class of 1956 to help with those efforts is the Class of 1956 Humanities Preservation Endowment. Pictured here are several examples of before and after images of materials that were preserved with support from this fund.

[\[top\]](#) [\[prev\]](#) [\[next\]](#)

[HELP / FAQ](#) | [CATALOGS](#) | [COMMENTS](#) | [HOME](#)

Originally published Summer 2003. Server manager: [contact](#)