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Book Repair, Letters, and Pamphlets... Oh My!

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Abstract

A lot has been going on in Special Collections since my last blog post, so I'll get you up to speed. As mentioned in my first post, I and the other interns created our own book. It was an awesome project and I learned to appreciate books as physical masterpieces and not just the words inside. I made my book with a black cover, and the end pages were made from homemade paper. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Musselman Library, Gettysburg College, Diane Werley Smith Internship, Special Collections, College Archive, Book Conservation

Disciplines

Archival Science | Library and Information Science

Comments

The Interns at Gettysburg College's Musselman Library captured their internship experiences since the spring of 2011. Over time the blog has featured Fortenbaugh, Smith, and Holley interns. They shared updates on semester long projects, responded to blogging prompts, and documented their individual intern experience.

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June 26, 2015

By: Avery Fox '16

Hello Readers!

A lot has been going on in Special Collections since my last blog post, so I'll get you up to speed. As mentioned in my first post, I and the other interns created our own book. It was an awesome project and I learned to appreciate books as physical masterpieces and not just the words inside. I made my book with a black cover, and the end pages were made from homemade paper.



My poor bandaged book.



The spine after reattaching it

Most recently, I and fellow intern Alexa have been working with Special Collections Conservator, Mary, repairing damaged books. The book I was given was titled *Peter Parley's Tales About Asia*, which was written for children's education in geography and culture. When I received the book, the covers were detached or becoming detached and pages were falling out. The poor book was in bad shape. The basic rule I gleaned from this whole book repair process was that in order to fix a book, you pretty much have to break the book even more. It seems counterintuitive but Mary assured us that everything would be fine. In order to repair *Peter Parley* I went through a dozen different steps; taking off the spine, peeling up the covers on the boards, re sewing the binding, adding new hinges, filling in any tears or holes that were found in the book, etc. We also had to tone paper for new spine covers and hinges (pretty much playing around with paint to match a color to the original shade of the book), which was my favorite part of the process. I was also able to wash some of the pages to take away some discoloration. Throughout the process, the work table, between both my work and Alexa's, looked like the scene of a book massacre. But once we finally finished yesterday it was all worth it and the books were much happier! Here are some pictures of me and Alexa at work as well as my book in its repaired state, but be warned... the pictures are rated BV for book violence.



Filling in any tears or large holes with Japanese paper



Finished book from the front cover

For my other projects, I have finally read through all of the correspondence in the Lillian Quinn letter collection, and I am in the beginning stages of creating a finding guide. What I find interesting about Lillian Quinn is that I do not actually like her personality; I find her to be an annoying busybody. She does provide an interesting perspective of World War II from the eyes of a woman as well as the experiences of those on the Pacific Coast during the war, but I just can't bring myself to like her. Though I am not a fan of Lillian's character, these letters really do make her come alive, for better or for worse and I am excited for other researchers to read through the letters to see what they think of Lillian and her experiences!

In addition, I am continuing work on the Pamphlet collection, and I have just finished inventorying all of the pamphlets that have not yet been inventoried. At this point I am moving onto cataloguing the pamphlets into our database and eventually finding a new way to house and organize them. It is amazing how much time it takes to go through 950 pamphlets!

As you can see, my internship has started off with a bang and there is never a dull moment. I will bring this long winded post to a close and please tune in again to see what else I will be doing here in Special Collections. Cheers!

<http://blogging.musselmanlibrary.org/2015/06/>

