



## Trustees Approve Billings Project

Many of our friends, colleagues, and patrons who have been eagerly anticipating our move to the Billings Center are wondering when the actual construction work will commence. I'm happy to report that the UVM Trustees gave final approval for the project at their October meeting, and construction is set to begin early in 2017. The "brick and mortar" work should take about twelve months. The timeline of our move from Bailey/Howe Library to Billings stills needs to be worked out, but we expect to be open and fully operational in Billings by the fall semester, 2018.

The design of our new space has evolved considerably over the last few years. Most significantly, the floor that currently houses a cafeteria has become available to us because these facilities will be transferred to the new residence hall now under construction behind Bailey/Howe. This middle floor of the Billings complex (I like to call it the "Mediterranean level") encompasses the ground floor of the historic building and the second floor of the 1986 addition. The final design, then, has our reading room and staff offices in the space currently occupied by the cafeteria.

The advantages of this design—besides the fact that we will no longer have a cafeteria in our midst—are many: we can set up a highly functional reading room; security and climate control will be greatly improved; we will have a classroom within our reading room for small groups; and staff will have offices with windows!

The Round Room (beneath the Apse and on the same level as our new reading room, storage shelves, and offices) will house the Center for Digital Initiatives and provide space for collection processing. Digitizing and processing are best undertaken close to where the collections are stored, so this new arrangement will be a considerable improvement.

Among the advantages of our new home, the use of the Marsh Room is one of the most attractive. Currently, we host up to seventy class visits per year in our reading room. Crowding more than fifteen students around the tables to work with books and manuscripts is a challenge for staff and a distraction to any researchers attempting to focus on their own work. Marsh, the room in which George Perkins Marsh's library was originally housed, can accommodate larger classes and can be set up for public presentations as well. The clerestory windows make this a bright, desirable space, though we will have to install shades of some appropriate design in order to use projection equipment.

North Lounge in the historical library will return to library use as a general study area. Our academic partners in Billings, the Miller Center for Holocaust Studies and the Center for Research on Vermont, will occupy the balcony areas overlooking North Lounge, as originally planned. They will be joined by the Humanities Center, with whom we have worked closely on a number of projects and events. Also as originally planned, the Apse will be designed as an exhibit area.



A project of this scale is not without challenges, but we think the new Special Collections area will be an attractive and functional space, in which we can continue to develop our signature collections and services. We will issue updates as the project proceeds, and look forward to welcoming you to the grand opening of our new (old) building.

*Jeffrey Marshall, Director*

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## The Ellen Dorn Levitt Book Arts Collection

Special Collections received an extraordinary book arts collection from Vermont artist and educator Ellen Dorn Levitt in 2014. Ellen created a unique book arts program at Lyndon Institute, a secondary school in Lyndon Center, Vermont. She provided Lyndon Institute students with a variety of ways to engage with the book arts, and during the summer, offered graduate courses for educators and adult learners.

After Ellen retired, she gathered her book arts projects and related teaching materials and donated them to Special Collections. She felt that the collection would be valuable to students studying bookmaking, printmaking, and book history, and of interest to educators and bookmakers. Her friend and colleague, bookbinder Linda Lembke, volunteered to assemble and organize the collection. Linda contributed a biography that documents Ellen's work in book arts education and prepared a detailed collection inventory.

The collection is organized to reflect the different types of book arts experiences that Ellen offered from 1999-2013. For the Lyndon Institute students, these included bookmaking residencies with Linda Lembke; letterpress residencies with fine printer and publisher Andrew Miller-Brown; cross-curricular projects with other Lyndon faculty; and Ellen's art, design, and bookmaking classes. For the St. Michael's College graduate education students, Ellen and Linda held intensive week-long classes at Lyndon Institute designed to help the students develop bookmaking skills that they could use in their own classrooms.



Lyndon Institute students working with bookbinder Linda Lembke to create boxes for the Tibet Through the Red Box (2009) project.

The collection includes project proposals and syllabi, teaching materials such as instructions, templates and models, and completed books. These items demonstrate Ellen's teaching and working practices. She believed that students should start with the basics, so they began each project by constructing book models and learning related

processes, like making decorative papers. As Linda notes in the biographical statement, Ellen believed that it was important to set limits for assignments and projects but still allow for creative possibilities. Collaboration was also an essential component of each project. For the high school projects, each student contributed pages to a single book on a particular topic or theme.



The page spread above is from *Vermont Wildflowers*, a book that students in one of Ellen's design classes made in the tradition of scribes and bookmakers of the Middle Ages. The class started with research, learning about tools and methods of the period, viewing examples of illuminated manuscripts, and even listening to medieval music. Then they selected a theme that would lend itself to rich and colorful designs. Using modern tools and materials, such as Rapidograph pens, acrylic inks and Arches paper, the students created the pages by hand, like the monastic bookmakers of the Middle Ages. They were required to work within a traditional margin and include an illustration of the flower and its name, but were otherwise free to design the pages as they wished.

In a 2007 note to her students, Ellen wrote, "May you remain open, like a book, to all things that come your way in life, and know that I felt it was an honor to be given this opportunity to teach you how to make books." In 2013, when Ellen left Lyndon Institute before the end of the school year due to illness, the students in her book arts class returned that honor with *Recipe for Wellness*, which they dedicated to their teacher and mentor.

When Special Collections first received the Ellen Dorn Levitt collection, we collaborated with Linda Lembke to feature the books and broadsides in an exhibit and used teaching materials from the collection in a day-long workshop for arts educators. Now that the collection is organized and inventoried, we look forward to sharing it with students, educators, and bookmakers. To learn more about Ellen's program and the collection, consult the finding aid at [cdi.uvm.edu/findingaids/](http://cdi.uvm.edu/findingaids/).

## The Great Society Congress Web Exhibit

In 1965, two Vermonters contacted members of Vermont's Congressional delegation about the proposed Highway Beautification Act. In a letter to Senator George Aiken, a Clarendon resident wrote, "Aside from avoiding nuclear disaster, one of this country's most serious problems is reversing the trend that is threatening to turn this country into one vast dump. I urge your support of legislation aimed at controlling and eventually abolishing billboards, and strict control of junkyards." The owner of Santa's Land in Putney told Representative Robert Stafford, "Unless this legislation is modified to permit continued use of roadside signs ... the travel industry and thousands of individual businesses will suffer serious injury."

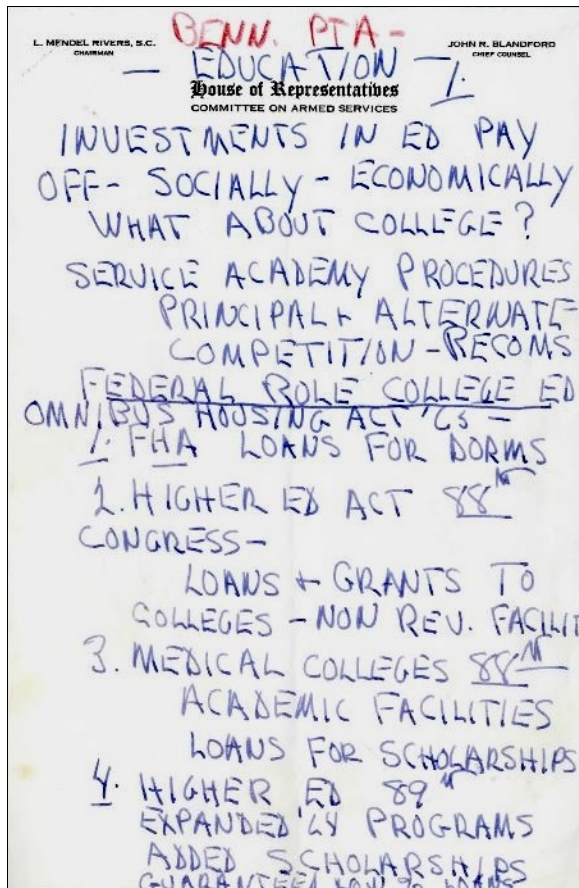
These letters are two of the documents that archivist Erin Doyle selected for inclusion in "The Great Society Congress," a web exhibit created by the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress (ACSC) to explore the extraordinary legislative accomplishments of the 89th Congress during 1965-1966. The exhibit is a collaborative project of ACSC member institutions that house papers of current and former members of the U. S. Senate and the House of Representatives.

UVM Special Collections holds the papers of Senators George D. Aiken and Winston Prouty and then

Congressman Robert Stafford, moderate Republicans who supported many of the Great Society programs. Erin was already very familiar with the Prouty and Stafford collections, having recently completed detailed collection inventories. To find documents relevant to the topics selected by the exhibit project team, Erin searched the finding aids for the Aiken, Stafford and Prouty papers using bill and public law numbers, act titles, and the committees responsible for each bill. She consulted the *Congressional Quarterly* to trace committee assignments and track the progress of legislation.

For the exhibit, Erin looked for personal accounts from Vermont constituents that demonstrated strong feeling on both sides of the issues. She selected items with a strong visual appeal in a variety of formats, including typed and handwritten letters, newsletters, speech notes, telegrams, photographs, promotional brochures, and maps.

The Great Society Congress exhibit will feature new content regularly. Vermont material is currently featured in the sections on the Higher Education, National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety, Highway Beautification, and Fair Packaging and Labeling Acts. To view the exhibit, visit the project web site at <http://acsc.lib.udel.edu/great-congress>.



Above: The American Industrial Arts Association recognized Senator Winston Prouty for sponsoring a program of Federal Assistance to Industrial Arts Education.

Left: The first page of notes for a speech Congressman Robert Stafford delivered to the Parent-Teacher Association in Bennington, Vermont about gains in education made during the 89th Congress.

## Librarians Present and Publish

Prudence Doherty, the Special Collections Public Services Librarian, and Dan DeSanto, a librarian in Bailey/Howe's Information and Instruction department, contributed a chapter to *Collaborating for Impact: Special Collections and Liaison Librarian Partnerships*, a new book from the Association of College and Research Libraries. Their case study describes a project they initiated and implemented with upper-level education majors that gave the students an opportunity to create lesson plans for elementary-aged students using items in three of our digital collections. Prudence and Dan also gave a presentation about the project at a meeting of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Information Literacy Section in Chicago in August.

Manuscripts Curator and University Archivist Chris Burns also traveled this summer, heading to Atlanta for the Society of American Archivists annual conference. His presentation there, "Teachers in the Archives: a Different Kind of Archives Fellowship," described the Practitioner Fellowship Program, which gives faculty, independent researchers, students, classroom teachers, principals, administrators, and other community members active in school affairs an

opportunity to benefit from the Prospect School and Center for Education and Research Archives during a five-day fellowship at Special Collections. Chris's article, "Negotiating Community Values: The Franklin County Agricultural Society Premium Lists, 1844-1889," has been accepted for publication in an upcoming issue of *Vermont History*. In the article, Chris examines county fair premium lists to show how the meaning and impact of agricultural fairs, originally intended as a means toward achieving agricultural and economic reform, were shaped as much or more by those who attended the fairs as they were by the organizers.

This fall, Burlington Geographic sponsored a six-part series that explored and celebrated Burlington's place-based identity. Special Collections Director Jeffrey Marshall joined two other presenters for the first session, "Burlington Underfoot." In "A Ravine Runs Through It," Marshall focused on how Burlington residents adapted to a major topographic challenge by using the central ravine as a transportation corridor, a trunk line for the developing city sewer system, and ultimately by filling it in and building around and over it. Visit [Burlington Geographic's web page](#) to view Jeff's presentation.

## Vermont Digital Newspaper Project Update

The UVM Libraries received three grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support the Vermont Digital Newspaper Project (VTDNP). From 2010-2016, UVM worked with partners at the Vermont Department of Libraries, the Vermont Historical Society, the Iisley Public Library in Middlebury, and advisors from around the state to digitize historical newspapers from 1836-1922 and make them freely available through the Library of Congress website, *Chronicling America*. By the time the third grant ended this August, the VTDNP had digitized about 375,000 pages of 70 titles published in all counties except Grand Isle.

VTDNP requested and received an extension to use funds not expended by the end of the grant period. Rather than tackle new titles, the project management group decided to take advantage of *Chronicling America's* expanded date range (now 1670-1963) and add the early years of two titles already digitized, the *Vermont Watchman*, the *Rutland Herald*, and the *Burlington Free Press*. If possible, one new title will be added: *the Journal of the Times*, a Bennington paper edited by abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison. The team is also considering some additional outreach activities.

Find Vermont newspapers at [chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/newspapers/Vermont](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/newspapers/Vermont).



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