

Library's growth charted over 50 years

285,000 to 1.5 million volumes

By **DEBBIE HOWLETT**
Of the Emerald

Editor's note: The University Library celebrates its centennial this year. This is the second of a three-part series.

In the mid-1930s, while the issue of building a library was debated, existing facilities were wholly inadequate and overcrowded.

This method alleviated the overcrowding to some extent, but a new library was obviously needed.

Construction on the new library began in 1937 and was finished the next August. Designed in a modified roman-escue style which was popular at the time, the building was constructed to accommodate later additions.

Considered modern and innovative, the library even carried an unabridged edition of "Mein Kampf" at a time when Hitler rose to power.

A temporary solution was rendered: Students would go to a reference desk requesting a book, the librarian then would send a card up a pneumatic tube to work-study students in the stacks, who would send the book down a chute to the librarian.

The library contained a browsing room with easy chairs, a fireplace and, as an Emerald article from the period stated, "all the comforts students seek."

The building cost a half-million dollars, holding more than 285,000 volumes. The old li-

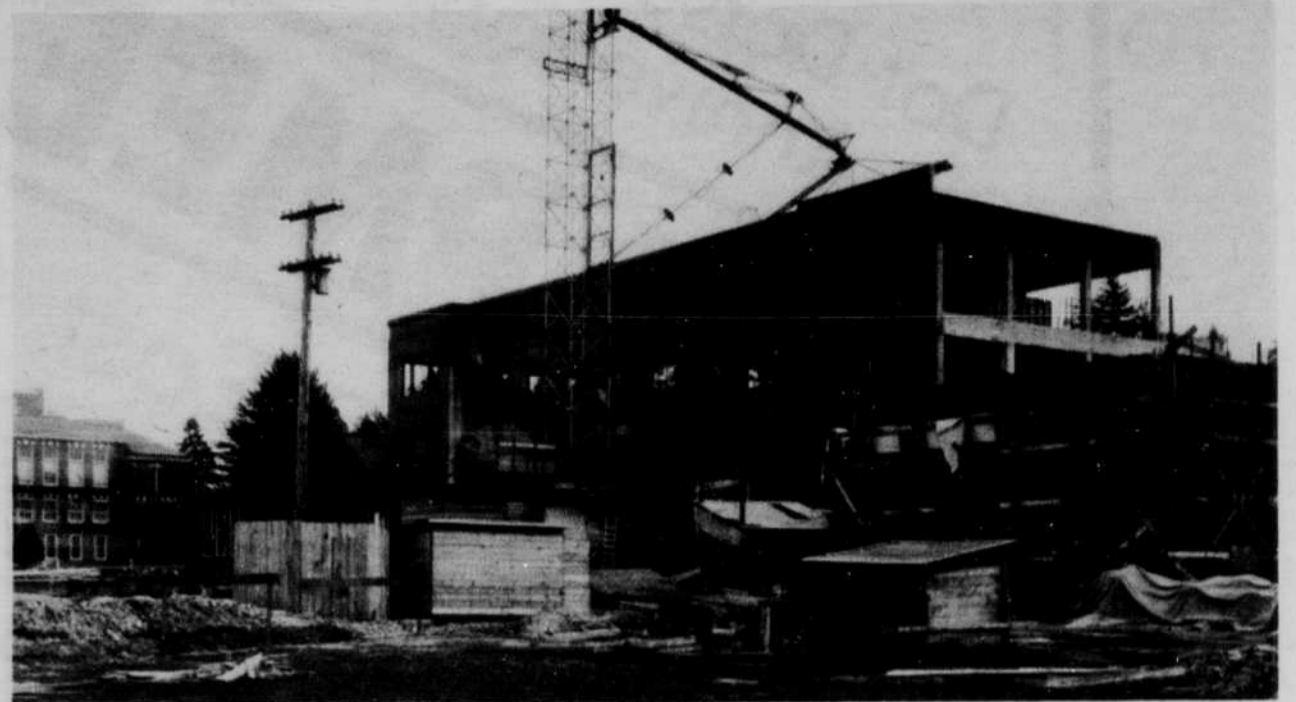


Photo courtesy of University Archives

Construction on today's University library began in 1937 and was completed in August of the next year

brary building — Fenton Hall — was converted into a law library.

During the transition, the Red Cross helped library staff purchase Braille books for blind students.

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New purchases included two "micro-projectors" for viewing 16mm film. Librarian Matthew Douglass called the projectors "like television... a relatively new process." These were the kinds of modern equipment that major newspapers like the New York Times used.

Douglass died in 1947, after serving as librarian from 1908 to 1942. In his will, he bequeathed music collections worth more than \$10,000 to the University.

At Douglass' retirement the library had grown to more than 300,000 volumes. Much of the credit for the library's growth and reputation in the early part of the century is reserved for Douglass.

The library installed "pay typewriters" in 1948. A dime would buy a student a half-hour of typing — not the best buy for hunt-and-peck typists.

After completion of the library's first addition in 1950 the number of volumes on the shelves rose to over a half-million.

Also at this time, librarians removed the partitions between students and books, allowing access to almost all books except rare materials.

In 1956, a journalism graduate student donated a collection of presidential auto-

graphs ranging from Presidents Washington to Truman. Perry Morrison, a library department professor, believes the collection has been kept up to date.

Six years later, the Library purchased a photocopier, one of the few on campus. Installed to deter students from clipping pages from books, the machine produced "short-term" copies — after a few months they began to deteriorate.

The Library also completed its second addition in 1962, making room for nearly 800,000 volumes.

Today the library holds 1.5 million volumes, with more than 800,000 titles worth up to \$19.5 million. In the final part of this series, current head librarian George Shipman discusses the problems the library faces and his plans for the future.

RCYB ejected from class

Members of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade allegedly disrupted a University chemistry class Tuesday morning, says Officer Al Williams of the Eugene Police Department.

Ralph Barnhard, senior chemistry instructor, reported he was lecturing in his Chemistry 101 class when four RCYB protestors waving red flags entered the room and disrupted the session.

"We asked if they were students," Barnhard explained. Receiving no answer and failing to reach campus security by phone, Barnhard attempted to persuade the RCYB members to leave. At this point a female student left the class to notify campus security, he said.

According to later reports, Barnhard was able to persuade one demonstrator to leave, while students and a "girl in a pink sweater" pushed two others out the door.

"They received a very hostile greeting from the class," Barnhard said.

RCYB member Mark Freeman told a reporter he and his fellow revolutionaries entered the class to "alert the people to the trial."

Freeman was referring to the trial of accused "yellow ribbon" arsonist John Joseph Kaiser, which began Tuesday.

No charges have been filed and the incident is under investigation by the Eugene Police Department.

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