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Literae, still adorn the library's facade. The library still tells students "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" every time they walk through its two main entrances. And observers can still see, as did the University community of 1937, the 45 heads representing 15 of the world's greatest leaders in the history of human culture that grace the facade of the building.

The library, however, was not always the integral part of academic life it is today, said University archivist Keith Richard.

"Libraries were not really important to the University student in the beginning." Most of the instruction came from textbooks, and "you did one heck of a lot of memorizing," said Richard, who has worked as archivist for 17 years.

It was six years after the University opened in 1876 that its first official library began in a classroom in Deady Hall, thanks to a \$1000 contribution from Henry Villard, a New York state resident responsible for the Northern Pacific railroad connection. By 1884, the library had a collection of 1,205 volumes.

However, from 1882 to 1907 the University's library was a nomad, moving successively to Villard Hall, back to Deady Hall, Collier Hall (now the Collier House) and then to Friendly Hall, according to Richard.

Finally in 1905, the state

legislature appropriated \$25,000 for the construction of the University's first library building. In 1907 the building, then called the "Old Libe" was completed and the library moved into what we now know as Fenton Hall.

'The book-versus-reader battle has gone the way of the books.'

— Keith Richard

Only one floor was used for the library's 16,000 volumes, however. Faculty offices and classrooms occupied the rest of the building for a while, but by 1914 the library had expanded so much that it used the entire building.

Between 1907 and 1936, the University saw the library grow from 16,000 to 266,000 volumes and student population increase from 304 to 2,973. And by 1922, there were more volumes than the "Old Libe" could accommodate, which marked the beginning of what Richard calls the "library's chronic battle: space for books versus room for users."

From 1927 to 1936, the library was forced to house books in Commerce Hall (part of present day Gilbert Hall), Friendly Hall, and a house on Onyx Street, which inconvenienced anyone who wanted to check out books.

At that point University alumni, friends and the federal government came to the library's rescue, Richard said. In 1935 the federal government contributed a grant of \$131,000 and loaned the University \$317,000 for construction of a new library building. In addition, alumni and friends contributed \$14,047.

Two years and \$460,047 later, the University had a new library that housed its 288,363 volumes and could seat up to 700 of the 3,128 students that attended the University in 1937. Fifty years later the library, which on the average services 5,000 people each day, has the capacity to seat only 800 library users at any given time for a student population of 18,000, according to an article Richard wrote for Old Oregon, the University's alumni magazine.

"The book-versus-reader battle has gone the way of the books," said Richard. The building saw two new additions to compensate for the space crunch in 1950 and 1966. The two additions more than doubled the library's size for a total of 190,000 square feet.

Both additions were designed for ten year's growth, Richard said. It has now been 21 years, and the cost for a new addition to the current building would be \$25 million to get the library into the 21st century, according to Richard.

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