



The Richard S. Fisch Imaging Science and Technology Collection

by Gary G. Field

The last RJPGAC Newsletter identified the formation of a collection within the broader RJPGAC collection. That collection, the Richard S. Fisch Imaging Science and Technology Collection, is now on display and ready for use.

This past summer, a concerted effort was made to examine the contents of all boxes we still had in storage (see accompanying "From the desk of ..." article). One key objective was to pull together all the relative imaging science materials and house them within the same room.

Imaging Science, incidentally, is the now-common term which has generally replaced the discipline of photographic science. Most people associate photographic science with just silver halide imaging. The broader term not only includes silver halide imaging, but also encompasses electrophotographic and electrostatic image output technologies, as well as image capture via CMOS and CCD technologies.

Much of this is referred to, somewhat inaccurately, in the popular and trade press as "digital" technology.

Despite the modern-day dominance in the amateur market of non-film cameras (or phones) it would be a mistake to think that silver-halide technology has been abandoned. Indeed, this ultra-detailed imaging process still exists and new research is opening up future high-definition applications.

Both Dick Fisch and Al Materazzi, as well as being TAGA members, were also very active in The Society of Photographic Scientists and Engineers (SPSE), now called the Society for Imaging Science and Technology (IS&T). Al's materials, when needed, were used to supplement the foundation of the collection which was established by the Fisch donation. A third individual, whose collection places a heavy emphasis upon non-silver imaging technologies, was Arthur Diamond. His Recharger magazines, plus his many conference proceedings which covered electronically-based imaging systems, completed a very broad collection in the entire field of imaging science.

The original GATF-Wadewitz donation added a further dimension to the collection. The great strength provided here focussed upon the optical sciences which are relevant to all imaging technologies. In particular, we gained impressive runs of bound volumes of Applied Optics and the Journal of the Optical Society of America. We had originally thought that we may not keep these journals, as the main Cal Poly library already had them on its shelves. We were horrified to learn that these historic journals were no longer being kept on our shelves; indeed, they were no longer on campus! This action is typical for most of today's academic libraries.

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Another important reason to maintain actual journals, rather than photographic (microfiche or microfilm) or digital images, concerns the fidelity of color inserts. Some scientific imaging journals provide such images, and virtually all printing trade journals have high grade advertising inserts printed on special papers. The texture, gloss, image definition, and dynamic color represented in such inserts conveys tactile and visual understanding that goes beyond the content of an electronic display. To fully appreciate and understand the aesthetic qualities of such images, the "real thing" is essential. We have made this point to librarians and they seem to appreciate the fact that essential "information" is not restricted to words and numbers on a page. The Art and Architecture departments have conveyed similar concerns to the main library.

Today's academic journals are all available in electronic on-line formats, sometimes exclusively so; therefore, the library purges do not affect modern materials. Historic journals, on the other hand, are not only interesting artifacts, but they also contain pivotal papers or articles which the prudent researcher would be wise to consult, instead of simply citing a more modern researcher's opinion of the original article's significance. All older material could be scanned and placed on line, but the immense cost of such an undertaking has to be weighed against the cost of shelf space for the actual journals. Remote access is a consideration, but cost-benefit factors must be assessed.

We were very grateful that the Wadewitz collection contained these important older journals, and that we learned the fact that such material was not reliably available in the main campus library. Our thanks are again extended to those whose wisdom and financial support allowed the "rescue" of those Wadewitz materials no longer wanted at their original home.

Abstract bulletins are a critical reference guide, and it is here that we have a most impressive collection. Not only are there those of the SPSE, but we also have those of the Eastman Kodak Research Laboratories and of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain (RPS). The RPS is the world's oldest imaging-related society. Taking the Fisch collection as a whole, we have one of the most important collections related to scientific aspects of imaging in North America. Almost everything in this part of the RJPGAC relates to the image capture and processing aspects of the printing processes, as well as to such other imaging processes as cinematography, all forms of scientific, commercial and amateur photography, television, medical imaging, and military applications.

continued on page 3





From the Desk of Gary Field

by Gary G. Field Emeritus Professor, Cal Poly Graphic Communication

The Summer of Heavy Lifting

Despite the large number of books and bound journals we have displayed on shelves in various locations within the Graphic Communication Department, we still had some 150-plus long boxes (shelf length) from the Wadewitz collection on storage racks. Added to this were many “Banker Box” containers of books that were not needed. These were from Castle Press and either contained duplicates of graphic arts books already in the collection, or books on such subjects as real estate or stock market investing.

The books in the Wadewitz boxes were those remaining after we had quickly chosen the “likely most useful” titles to join the main collection housed on shelves within the department. This was a rather hasty activity because of the unexpectedly short notice we received from the university to vacate a very convenient room eminently suited to reviewing and sorting the box contents. The transport of the boxes to the present storage room (granted to us by the university as compensation for the abrupt reversal of their decision) was quite an adventure. We erected metal racks within our new space, and there the books have remained for almost two years.

Activity within the storage area was restricted due to my increasingly severe hip arthritis. Some boxes were over head-height and must have weighed 100 lb. or more. At the end of last February I had very successful hip replacement surgery and, after my healing was well advanced, I tackled the stored book-sorting task.

Sorting involved deciding whether books: 1. were going to our main shelves as “prime items”, 2. were going to our Shakespeare Press Museum’s

Collection (focusing upon letterpress printing, type and engravings from about 1850 to 1950), 3. were going to be kept in storage, or 4. were going to be sent to “good homes” elsewhere. This task was completed, and I seem no worse for wear.

Re-Boxing the Stored Books

For every long shelf-length box we used two “Banker Box” containers to rebox the contents. Separate boxes were used for journals and books. All items were placed in boxes on edge, with their spines uppermost, in order to reveal their identity when the lid was lifted. Banker boxes have integral handles on either end and, because they were roughly half the length of the original boxes, they were much more convenient to lift. We filled some

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250 new boxes and applied temporary hand-written descriptions of the contents to end panels. A plan for a more comprehensive and accessible box-content identification system has been developed and a report will be made in a future newsletter. A pilot evaluation project is currently underway.

In those instances where the original boxes contained pamphlets, booklets or other materials without an identifying spine, a surplus 5-drawer filing cabinet was installed to house them.

These “vertical file” materials will be sorted more completely at a later date.

The original Wadewitz boxes also contained the personal papers of Frank Preucil and Al Materazzi. These were reboxed, labeled, and placed on a storage rack that was separate from those used to contain the journals and books.

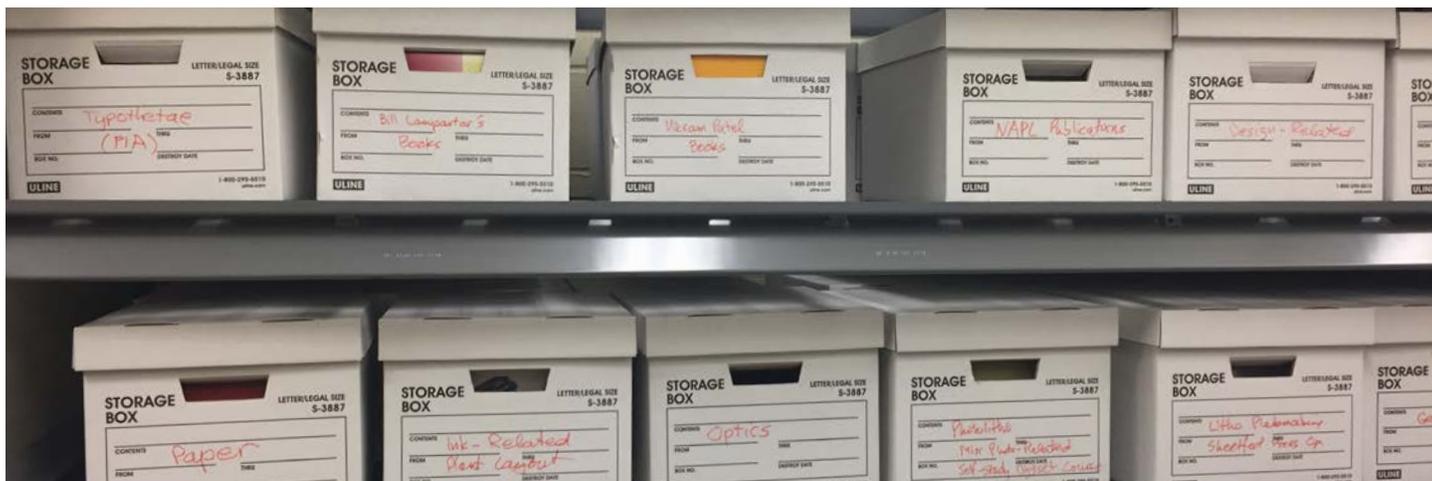
The stored journals and books were those judged “unlikely for regular reference purposes, but should be retained”. Every journal, bound and unbound, from the Wadewitz library was retained.

“We don’t need these”

The LTF/GATF library was one devoted primarily to scientific research. There were many books on such subjects as colloid chemistry, surface chemistry, metallurgy, dyes and pigments, statistical methods, environmental sciences, chemical engineering, psychophysics, optics, photochemistry and human visual processes. Some had “University of Cincinnati” stamps within, indicating that they dated back to the days (1925-1944) when LTF’s research laboratories were located at the University of Cincinnati.

Many of these scientific and engineering books were outdated, and few of them seemed to have great relevance to the future needs of the department. Books dealing with such perennial topics as light, color, psychophysics, rheology and the like were retained, some on the prime shelf space areas. Lending cards were in most volumes, so I used the name of who signed them out as a guide to the significance they had to the research of GATF. If George Jorgensen or Bill Schaeffer signed a books out, it was a “keeper”. This was not a perfect

continued on page 3



system as it seems that books from the LTF days in Cincinnati and Chicago could not be signed out. They were for use in the library only. The library card check out system appears to have been implemented following the move to Pittsburgh in 1965. With the check-out card evidence, and a bit of judicious evaluation, a selection of the older scientific texts was made for shelving within the "Offset Lithography Archive" section of our main display area: the Raymond J. Prince Resource Room.

After the sorting, we had ten "long boxes" of unwanted Wadewitz science-related books. Some were offered to our faculty and staff, and the university's chemistry and physics departments were also invited to evaluate what we have and, if items of interest were found, to relocate them to their respective departments.

Apart from the science-related books, we have a palette load of excess (duplicate) graphic arts-related books. A "Free books" box in a student-frequented area saw some snapped up, but their planned new home will be the library of the International Printing Museum, located in the Los Angeles area.

The Director of this museum, Mark Barbour, is a graduate of our program at Cal Poly. If Mark finds that some of these books are in excess of his needs, he will sell them at the "Printer's Fair" he runs each year, or otherwise dispose of them. The Museum has a very impressive outreach program which involves visiting area schools with a mobile display. The program includes an actor playing Ben Franklin, and addresses the role of the printer in the production and distribution of America's founding documents and declarations.

More Book Donations Arrive

This past summer more books arrived, including those from Bill Lamparter, courtesy of Ann, his widow. More will be said about the summer's donations in the next Newsletter, but a new strategy was implemented for the Lamparter donation that deserves a mention now. In that case, we asked Ann to send us a list of books slated for disposal. We reviewed the list, identified the items of interest, and informed Ann of our choices. She promptly shipped the chosen items. There are two advantages to this strategy: 1. the donor does not pay for shipping unwanted books, and 2. we do not have to worry about how to be rid of unwanted books.

In future, this is the strategy we want to use. It is tedious to list every book, but a quick phone-capture image might be sufficient. Books should be photographed while on shelves. If spine titles are not visible on some books, the cover images could be photographed in batches. Initial contact with the Department Chair, Ken Macro, will smooth the process. ■



Fisch, from page 1

The Fisch collection has its own room. It is known in the department as the R.R. Donnelley Room, because that company, one of America's oldest and largest printers, generously refurbished the room on two occasions. Recently, it has been used for industry seminars and small-group undergraduate classes. Initially, the renovations were geared towards a dedicated-purpose quality analysis and color proofing laboratory. The 3M Company's proofing products were well represented, so it seems appropriate that Dick's collection, amassed while he was a 3M scientist, should now reside in this room. ■



A Few Thoughts

by Raymond J. Prince *Printing Consultant | Serving the industry for 59 years*



Amid ongoing restructuring, interest in the industry and its products is strong. We see many changes that are giving our customers a more dynamic product. Recently we have seen many market changes and mergers in the industry. Some of these changes, especially in commercial printing, are due to age of owners. The firms that are very successful today are serving their customers with a wider variety of communication products than ever before.

Knowledge of the industry in terms of standards, print quality, and productivity improvements seems

to be very high. As we have seen over the years, productivity improvement drives print quality. Today, the emphasis is still on faster and better. For a number of years many printers did not invest in newer technology or product lines – this was a mistake. I have seen too many established firms trying to run 25-year old web offset presses and 20-year old sheetfed presses; the productivity and quality is just not there for today.

Our industry is blessed in many ways. There is and has been a great sharing of technology and management information by virtually all of the suppliers and manufacturers in the industry. The Collection at Cal Poly of reference materials is extensive and a great starting point in examining new technologies. It is far easier to start with extensive resource material than starting with a blank sheet of paper. Fortunately at Cal Poly the funds are available to purchase every new book, magazine or report on this industry. This is more than a resource of historical and classic material, it is up to date for students, faculty and industry to use. ■

Letter from Dr. Kathryn Rummell

When I assumed the role of interim dean last summer, I asked Ken for a tour of the GRC facilities, hoping to learn a bit more about the department. I was already familiar with the Shakespeare Press Museum, and was delighted to learn about the impressive Raymond J. Prince Graphic Arts Collection. To house such a collection at Cal Poly is an honor and a privilege, and one I know that the Graphic Communications faculty, students, and alumni appreciate very much. I look forward to watching the collection continue to grow, and am excited by the opportunity to work with the department to better showcase it. ■

Dr. Kathryn Rummell
Interim Dean, College of Liberal Arts



Inquiries about potential donations

Please contact the Graphic Communication department before shipping any material. Department staff will then work with you to determine the most appropriate disposition of the material.

We will need an inventory of books to be donated in order to determine if duplicates exist.

Contact for potential collection donations:

805.756.1108

Ken Macro, GrC Department Chair • kmacro@calpoly.edu

Dave Cohune, CLA Advancement • dcohune@calpoly.edu

Transfer of ownership

To transfer ownership of the archival materials to Special Collections and Archives, donors must sign a deed of gift. The deed of gift includes a brief description of the material donated and can be customized to address the individual donor's needs. The donation becomes official once it is reviewed, approved, and counter-signed by the Director of Special Collections and Archives.

RJPGAC donations

To contribute to the RJPGAC fund, please send checks payable to **Raymond J. Prince Graphic Arts Collection** to Dr. Ken Macro, Graphic Communication Department, One Grand Avenue, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407-0381.

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