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Special Collections Newsletter

C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department

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C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department



UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO LIBRARY

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Year in Review

2016 has been an important year for the Special Collections Department. On October 7 a reception was held to honor Jo and Haskell Monroe, Jr. for their generous \$250,000 gift to Special Collections. During the reception, the reading room was officially named the Jo and Haskell Monroe, Jr. Special Collections Research Center.

During the past fiscal year, the Department had 2,027 researchers, over 700 other visitors, and answered over 2,200 reference requests. Our online resources were also heavily used: over 40,000 images were viewed and almost 7,500 oral histories were consulted. And during the 2016 fall semester, we provided instruction to 14 classes.

This year several history PhD students, including Joanne Kropp, Lina Murillo, and Heather Sinclair, successfully defended their dissertations. These students regularly used our collections and consulted with archives staff about their projects.

In November Special Collections honored local journalist and community activist Joe Olvera with its Día de Los Muertos altar.

The Department also created a calendar for 2017. This calendar features images from our collections and helps celebrate the upcoming 50th anniversary of the "Archives Department" which was established in 1967. A special anniversary exhibit is planned for next year.

Happy Holidays!

Thomas F. Burdett, In Memoriam

Our colleague and friend, Thomas Frederick Burdett, passed away on October 4, 2016. Mr. Burdett, a native-born El Pasoan, graduated from El Paso High School and then proudly served his country in the United States Army.

After retiring from the Army, he returned to El Paso and earned his Bachelor of Arts

degree in history (with honors) at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Mr. Burdett began his second career as curator of the S.L.A. Marshall Military History collection in Special Collections in 1978. He retired at the age of 85 after 32 years at the UTEP Library. Mr. Burdett was known for his expertise in



Jo Monroe at the reading room ceremony, October 7, 2016.



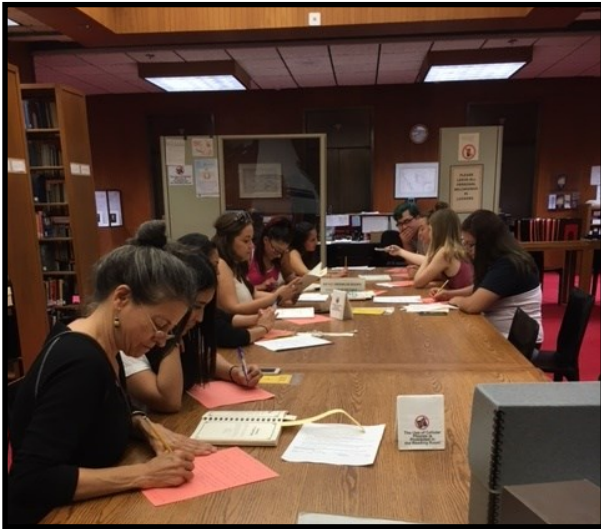
Claudia Rivers and Mr. Burdett, 2009.

military history, love of books, professionalism, defense of animal rights, and great kindness.

He is very much missed.

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Archival Literacy



Students research historic cookbooks in Special Collections.

This semester Claudia Rivers (head of Special Collections) conducted 14 Special Collections orientation sessions. Some of these classes visited Special Collections as part of the Library's Information Literacy Course Enhancement grant program. Class disciplines included: sociology, anthropology, health sciences, political science, security studies, and history.

During these instruction sessions, Claudia emphasized the importance of archival lit-

eracy for students. In addition to introducing students to Special Collections and our procedures, students critically examined historical documents using a document analysis worksheet published by the National Archives. Students then returned to Special Collections during the semester to do research as part of their coursework.

One anthropology class used historic local cookbooks to research food culture and made recipes from them!

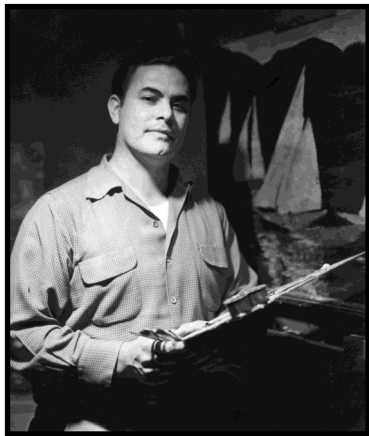


Photo from the new Manuel Acosta collection, MS 638.

New to the Archives & Exhibits

New collections include:

- Calvin L. Traylor papers
- E. Guyler Magruder photograph collection
- Amelia Mendez Castillo papers
- Manuel Acosta collection
- *Hudspeth County Herald* collection

Library Exhibits for July-December 2016:

- Scientific Evidence of Life on Earth During Two Millennia
- San Jacinto Plaza
- Election 2016
- Memorial Exhibit for Mr. Burdett
- Welcome to UTEP, Art Spiegelman!

Terry Manning Exhibit Opening



On October 18 Special Collections hosted an opening reception for photographer Terry Manning's exhibit, *Scientific Evidence of Life on Earth During Two Millennia*. This exhibit, located on the third floor of the UTEP Library, includes Manning's historic photographs of Martin

Luther King, Jr. as well as more recent works. This exhibit will be up till the end of the year.

Art Spiegelman Visits Special Collections

On October 19 Pulitzer Prize-winning artist and author Art Spiegelman visited UTEP. In the morning, Special Collections hosted a Q & A session with Mr. Spiegelman in the John H. McNeely Room. This program was organized and sponsored by the Inter-American Jewish Studies Program. Approximately 40 people, including Liberal Arts students, several faculty members, and Special Collections staff, attended this special event.

During the session, Mr. Spiegelman discussed his career, creative process, experiences with *Maus* and other projects, and appearance on *The Simpsons*.

In the evening, Mr. Spiegelman gave a lecture to a large audience in the Union Cinema. He discussed the history of comic books, interviewing his father for *Maus*, and his friendship and work with the late artist Si Lewen.



Art Spiegelman spoke with Special Collections staff during his visit to the UTEP Library.

Volunteers and Interns

Volunteer Nancy Wilson continued her work inventorying and rehousing her grandmother's historic postcard collection.

Eva Ross, a longtime volunteer, continued adding to the Special Collections vertical files. She also gave several tours to Special Collections visitors throughout the year.

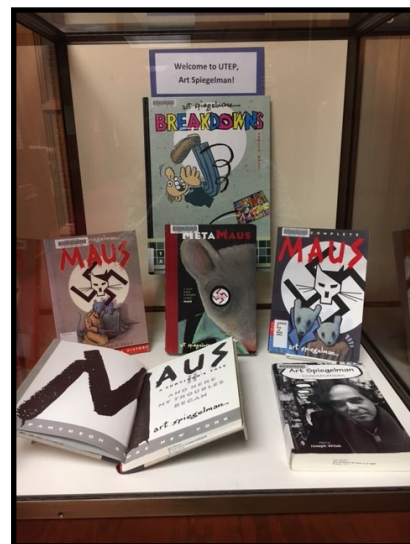
Marsha Labodda, another longtime volunteer, completed her inventory of the last of the ASARCO records.

Cindy Milazzo continued inventorying the Carl Hertzog Ephemera collection.

Student intern Ryan Alford worked on inventorying a new accretion to the Suzie Azar papers.

Student intern Steve Baird continued his work of adding transcripts and streaming audio to our online Oral History collection.

Special Collections is grateful for its volunteers and student interns!



New Mexico Association of Museums Meeting

Abbie Weiser, Assistant Head of Special Collections, attended the New Mexico Association of Museums annual meeting at the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) campus in Santa Fe, November 16-18. Meeting sessions covered varied topics from community-based exhibits

to disaster management strategies.

Former Special Collections intern Michael Reyes spoke on a panel at a session called "Student Voices", which featured UTEP Museum Studies professor Daniel Carey-Whalen, Michael, and UTEP students

Sarah Ramirez and Briana Olsen. Michael spoke about how his internship helped him gain practical experience in the museum/archives field.

This meeting also featured tours of Santa Fe and a visit to the IAIA's Digital Dome theater.



Virtual art tour of the IAIA in the Digital Dome, November 2016.

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The **C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department** is located on the sixth floor of the UTEP Library.

The Department's mission is to acquire, preserve, and make accessible the special book and non-book resources in the UTEP Library, especially those relating to the history of the University of Texas at El Paso and the El Paso region.

Priorities for acquisitions include visual and textual materials documenting the University of Texas at El Paso and its predecessor institutions; people, organizations, and history of El Paso and Ciudad Juárez; the natural and built environment of El Paso and Ciudad Juárez; and the history and environment of the U.S.-Mexico border region. Subject areas of particular interest are immigration, basic industries such as railroads and mining, photography, and under-represented minority communities along the border. Records of local businesses or organizations, papers of faculty members, papers of local residents and political figures are sought. The Department also collects literary manuscripts from local and regional authors and materials documenting the publishing process.

Other priorities for collecting include materials documenting far West Texas, southern New Mexico, and Northern Chihuahua. As a Regional Historical Resources Depository, the department also accepts and preserves records of historical importance from county and local government agencies from several West Texas counties.

SpC Staff

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Photo courtesy of Yvette Delgado

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