

# THE ACORN *Chronicle*

PUBLISHED BY THE JEAN AND ALEXANDER HEARD LIBRARY • VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY • WINTER 2001



THE LIBRARY TAKES ON A NEW LOOK

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Paul M. Gherman

Space concerns are a constant in the library world, even the technology-driven world of today. The very process of building a library collection—a core activity for librarians—results in the continuing consumption of space. Since new library space never simply materializes, we must anticipate our space needs so that there is always space to shelve the next new book or journal. This summer saw remodeling and renovation of space in three Heard Library divisions: the Alayne Queener Massey Law Library, the Anne Potter Wilson Music Library, and the Education Library.

The Law Library closed for the summer because the Law School expansion impacted library space. Law Library staff worked in temporary quarters, and many books, government documents, and other materials were moved to the Library Annex, the Heard Library's off-campus storage facility. After a Herculean effort, staff managed to reopen the library by the time classes began in the fall, cleaning many books that, despite our best precautions, were covered with construction dust. We hired a professional service to clean some materials. Conditions are still not back to normal, and Library Director Pauline Aranas and her staff face the prospect of a replay next summer, when the Law Library itself actually will be remodeled. This renovation will result in no additional book storage space for the library; because many important law materials are now available in electronic format, we plan to reallocate space to give priority to users and services.

On the other end of campus, the Music Library coped with a construction project in its school, the Blair School of Music. As at Law, this summer's disruption at Music was not caused by a renovation of the library; it was simply a stage in the overall expansion at Blair. In order to accommodate the construction, staff moved materials to the Annex, but the main strategy was to compress the already crowded library. Next summer will bring relief, however. While many library materials will be temporarily removed and the

library closed for the summer, the result will be a renovated Music Library double its current size, a wonderful opportunity for the new Music Library director, whom we hope to have in place by that time.

At the Education Library, remodeling was driven not by space concerns, but by fire safety issues. The Library was found to be out of compliance with current fire codes; as a result, a summer-long project began in May and required closing the building for most of August. During that time, ceilings were replaced, fire alarms and smoke detectors were installed, and an emergency exit stairwell was created in the stack area. The emergency exit, unfortunately, significantly reduced available book storage space and consumed part of a classroom. On the bright side, removal of the old acoustic ceiling tiles revealed the much more attractive original ceiling. Some areas were repaired and repainted, and period lighting fixtures removed from the Wyatt Center during its remodeling a few years ago were installed. These cosmetic changes greatly enhance the entrance.

The new ceiling creates a much more "live" acoustic space without the sound-absorbing tile, and Education Library Director Mary Beth Blalock and her staff are adjusting to that change. I am convinced that a more thorough renovation would restore the charm and utility of this building, and I hope that we may be able to identify funds to make possible such a restoration and modernization of the library at Peabody.

These changes help us in our ongoing goal of providing improved and attractive study space in all the buildings that comprise the Heard Library. I am grateful for the dedication of our staff, who continue to do their work under trying circumstances, and I appreciate the support we receive from library donors and Friends in our efforts.

—PAUL M. GHERMAN



(above) David Rogerson working in the Education Library. (left) David Rogerson, Devin Oglesby, and Leslie Page work this summer on remodeling the Education Library to bring it into compliance with current fire codes.



THE COVER

The Jean and Alexander Heard Library has a new logo designed by Donna Pritchett, art director in the University's Office of Design and Publishing. The new icon, which is related to the previous acorn and "V" for Vanderbilt, is now symbolic of a mouse with a network line to an open book.

THE ACORN CHRONICLE is published semi-annually by the Jean and Alexander Heard Library, Vanderbilt University. Address inquiries to the Library, 419 Twenty-first Avenue South, Nashville, Tennessee 37240 615/322-7110 or by email to acornchronicle@vanderbilt.edu.

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New graphic image includes redesigned logo and Web page

With the beginning of the academic year in August, the Jean and Alexander Heard Library unveiled a new look to students, faculty, staff, and those beyond the confines of campus; specifically, a new logo and a redesign of the library's homepage that uses "information architecture"—the art and technique of designing and building Web pages that intuitively lead the user to complex information.

The development of the new logo was geared toward the new technological orientation in libraries. However, it was important to retain some connection to the past, inherent in the word "ACORN," the name of the library's catalog, which is also emblematic of Vanderbilt in general. Donna Pritchett, art director in the Office of Design and Publishing, was tapped to design the logo.

"The old ACORN logo had the elements of a V and acorn shape (from the Vanderbilt logo known as the 'Helvetica Orn') inside the O," says Pritchett. "Seeing that, I thought that I should continue to work with those elements in the new logo. The shape of the acorn in the Vanderbilt logo reminded me of a computer mouse, and at that point, the V took on the identity of an open book in my mind. The line that connects the mouse to the open book represents the coming together of the old and the new."

The new logo is very flexible. It works well in one color or two and can be reproduced just about anywhere, from being embossed on folders or repeated to form patterns on anything from bookmarks to report covers.

The first official use of the logo was on the library's newly redesigned homepage, launched August 23.

The new Web page was under design for many months, a collaborative effort between librarians and library technology staff, with some consulting on visual design by the University's Creative Services Division. Usability studies were done prior to the redesign to aid in pinpointing the needs of those using the library homepage.

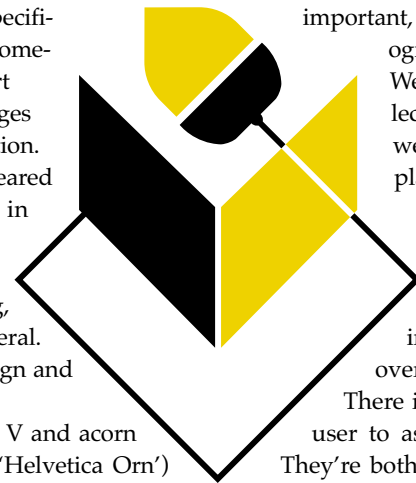
"We looked at each user category in an effort to picture our audi-

ence," says Suellen Stringer-Hye, systems librarian at the Heard Library. "There were a number of important considerations. We wanted people to find information easily, because accessibility is very important, so we used the expertise of our librarians and bibliographers in thinking about information architecture. We wanted information to load quickly, too. The collections represented in the IRIS and ATHENA catalogs were becoming more important, and we wanted to place them more advantageously and explain them more clearly to users.

"In fact, explanations are built into the page," continues Stringer-Hye. "There are quick links on the left side with more descriptive information on the right. If the user puts the mouse over text, more explanatory information comes up. There is also a 'How do I' box at the top that allows the user to ask reference questions in a quick and easy way. They're both user aids, designed to make accessing the information easier."

"Any successful organization today has a consistent graphic image or presence to offer to the world," says University Librarian Paul Gherman. "This is especially true on the Internet. The library is increasingly accessed remotely via the Web, so we want a strong image to present to our students and faculty when they visit us in cyberspace. We're pleased that our new logo, featured prominently on our web page, links the past and the future of the Heard Library."

—BONNIE ARANT ERTELT



The new logo even looks good on trucks. Here, clockwise from right, library budget officer Norman Nash joins James McCullough, Dewey James, and Michael Chandler of the Heard Library Messenger Service in appreciating the new design.



## GALLERY TALK

*Grantland Rice, A'01 and Fred Russell, A'27, L'27, two sons of the Vanderbilt tradition, have strong ties to each other, not only because of their alma mater, but also because of their careers, each having left his mark on the history of sports writing in the United States. Special Collections holds the manuscript and book collections of both writers and has loaned memorabilia from both collections to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio; the College Football Hall of Fame in South Bend, Indiana; and the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame in Nashville. Last November, William A. Harper, the author of *How You Played the Game: The Life of Grantland Rice*, published by the University of Missouri Press, presented the following Gallery Talk on*

### *Grantland Rice and Fred Russell, Two Gentlemen of Sport*

WILLIAM A. HARPER, PURDUE UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, KINESIOLOGY, AND LEISURE STUDIES

November 14, 1999

On Tuesday November 1, 1955, a little more than a year after Grantland Rice's passing, Fred Russell of the *Nashville Banner*, then nearly fifty years old, was awarded the first Sportsmanship Brotherhood award for sports writing in the Grantland Rice tradition. Mr. Russell was so honored on what would have been Rice's 75th birthday. The luncheon was held at Toots Shor's restaurant on 51st Street in New York City.

Mr. Russell's award-winning column appeared in the *Banner* on June 10, 1955. His subject that day was a call to update the true meaning of sportsmanship. The gist of Mr. Russell's observations was to issue a challenge to the growing preoccupation with "winning-at-all-costs" in American sport. Russell argued that without doubt, competition is at the core of sport. In team sports, for example, healthy competition instills a certain resolve to not let one's teammates down, and to be unselfish in pursuing a common goal.

But all too often, noted Mr. Russell, winning is so important to the players, coaches, and fans alike, that the virtues associated with the well-played game go unnoticed. The "winners" gloat and taunt; the "losers" rant and rave and whine. The true meaning of sport—that is, sportsmanship and fair play—is endangered. For Russell, whether we win or lose, sport is capable of some priceless teachings: respect for the rights of others, self-discipline, devotion to a goal or an ideal, and unselfishness. It was this appeal to the better side of Americans in 1955 that warranted Mr. Russell's recognition as the recipient of the first Sportsmanship Brotherhood award for sports writing in the Grantland Rice tradition.

Much has happened in sport between mid-century and now. My own students, when asked if things are better in sport now than 50 years ago, enthusiastically and oh-so-naively answer "yes, of course they are." But what should haunt us all about Fred Russell's 1955 column is that the description of his times sounds so much like ours. And his call for reimplementing sportsmanship in its fullest sense seems to be just as necessary today as it was then, maybe even more so now than then.

I want to make a simple but important point that is nicely illustrated in Fred Russell's award-winning column. There is a lesson for us all here and one that can serve to explain in part why these two

gentlemen of sport—Rice and Russell—achieved so much, why we revere and honor them, and why it is necessary for us all to carry forward what they stood so tall for. The lesson is this: there is a difference between the tangible and the intangible in sport, and we ought not to think that we have made progress in sports when we use the standards of tangible progress to assess progress on the intangibles.

#### Progress and Technology

At just about the time Fred Russell was entering the profession of sports writing (1929) and Grantland Rice was the dean of it, some thoughtful writers were questioning the assumption that there was a necessary connection between technological progress and the progress of civilization as a whole, especially in the moral, artistic, or intellectual senses.

For example, Lewis Mumford thought that the chief problem of life in general was that "many people think not only that mechanical progress is a positive aid to human improvement—which is true—but that mechanical progress is the equivalent of human improvement—which turns out to be sheer nonsense." Aldous Huxley said that just "because we use a hundred and ten times as much coal as our ancestors, we believe ourselves a hundred and ten times better intellectually, morally, spiritually."

In other words, it is mostly an illusion to believe that technological progress necessarily means human improvement. It is my opinion that since the 1920s and 1930s, in elevating our technical wizardry to the extent that we have done, we are so busy, distracted, and have so little time that we have lost sight of what the technical developments and products were meant for originally. We then idolize the tangibles of technical production and indiscriminate consumption—sheer abundance itself—instead of finding ways to improve and sustain the quality of our intangible human character.

Unless each generation is reminded of this danger over and over again we forget what Ralph Waldo Emerson told us nearly 150 years ago: that "character is higher than intellect." If we return to the world of sport, it seems that we perpetually fall prey to the same misemphasis of the intellectual over character formation. As in the larger world, we cultivate the tangibles—the technically produced



Grantland Rice

sport, they are far less sure of themselves.

Today, as compared to 70 years ago, we have more sports, quicker times, better equipment, faster information. More technique—the tangible—does not mean that we are any more successful than previous generations when confronted with the terribly important need to nurture such ideas and ideals as social responsibility, moral values, basic virtuous conduct, and simple character education—the intangibles.

It is a fair question to ask ourselves, over the last couple of generations in particular, has our collective technological sporting genius done more to decivilize than to civilize? To some extent, I think it has. When we moderns reduce the meaning of sports and athletics to little more than the obsessive pursuit of records and of winning; when we assume self-righteously that sports' greatest good is the verification and vindication of the theory of technological progress; and when we exaggerate the component of human engineering to an art form and measurement to four and twenty decimal places, then we have accomplished what the poet William Carlos Williams once said we eventually would: "They've got it down to a science, where there's nothing to it anymore."

Because in sport we are so single-minded in our hot pursuit of velocities, human engineering, and medals, we have created something so large and popular and so beyond anyone's control, that doing the right things have been replaced with doing practically anything. We are in an age that will be remembered mostly for some pretty hellish behavior.

#### Civility vs. Cynicism

It's disgusting, for sure, to experience what appears to be business-as-usual in professional sports and some big-time collegiate sports. We are almost immune to the daily journalistic accounts of cheating, drug use, exploitation, gender and racial discrimination, greed, arrogance, violence, stupidity, flat-out civil and even criminal illegalities, and institutionalized disrespectful attitudes and behavior. Yes, this is truly demoralizing.

and consumed sporting goods, services, promotions, organizations, networks, and businesses—over the intangibles—the satisfying of basic individual human needs, hopes, and dreams. This is the mistake that my students make when they argue so passionately that sport today is better than yesterday. What they mean, I think, is that we are technically more sophisticated today than yesterday. I usually grant them this, but when I switch the criteria for progress to human character in

*When we learn things,  
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our lives and our nation.*

But now and even worse, look what's happening to the high school athletic experience. Let me give you but one illustrative example from my own small city of Lafayette, Indiana. The last three years of high school boys soccer Sectional Tournament play has produced the following:

1997: An apparent bad referee call ignited a team temper tantrum that resulted in four players being ejected, additional police being summoned to the field beyond those already assigned to the tournament, the ejected players having to be physically escorted to the bus, and angry arguments between the team members and the officials after the game.

1998: A senior team captain spit in a referee's face because he felt the game was not being called correctly. Later, the players and fans that lost the tournament cursed, screamed, and argued with officials, tournament organizers, and opposing coaches.

1999: In the first game of the sectionals a fight broke out on the field, two coaches were cautioned for their inability to control their teams, and four players were ejected. One ejected player raised both arms

above his head in the universal symbol of vulgarity, all the while yelling at the official as he stormed off the field. Then he shoved his assistant coach over a bench and to the ground. In the second game, two players were ejected for fighting and unsportsmanlike conduct. In the third game, a coach was ejected for arguing a call and throwing objects onto the field of play. Then, a parent, angered by the referee's action, climbed the moat-like fence separating the players from the spectators, ran onto the field and assaulted the game official.

Now that's just at the high school level. Don't get me started on my first hand accounts of hellish behavior in age group

sports competition for our younger sports competitors. In my experience, coach, parent, and player behaviors can sometimes even be worse in youth sports than what I have witnessed at the interscholastic high school level.

The solution to unethical transgressions in all venues and at all levels of sport—no matter how discouraged we may get at their frequency—isn't to be found by allowing ourselves to become cynical, no matter how easy and popular it is to do so. If we as a nation stumble or fall back, it will be because too many otherwise good men and women turned sour and because they soured on their own possibilities. Those folks who moan and whine the most about the disappearance of high ideals are providing us with a confession of their own critical shortcomings. Cynicism, in the end, is a declaration of intellectual and spiritual bankruptcy. You may remember the physicist, Richard Feynman, who told of his visit to



Fred Russell

a Buddhist monk. “I am going to tell you something that you will never forget,” said the Buddhist. “To every man is given the key to the gates of heaven. The same key opens the gates of hell.”

Now the cynic—and this especially applies to many of our social critics and not a few journalists—is forever putting the key into the wrong gate. But our two gentlemen of sport, Grantland Rice and Fred Russell, knew better. They both were opening the gate to heaven by way of their lifelong contribution to sport and sports writing. Two uncommon gentlemen: civil and civilized and civilizing, and both

*Sport is about telling our story over and over again, each time with different characters, different plots, and different endings but always with the same enduring vision of attempted greatness.*

hell-bent on helping our country make real progress toward positively shaping the intangible nature of our national character. Consider their common oath or habits of mind:

- A stubborn loyalty to the idea that sports writing is a legitimate personal calling and professional career.
- Professional stick-to-it-tiveness. That is, they were both happy hacking all life long.
- The leathery belief that, at bottom, and however bad the day-to-day practice of it could be, there is still an essential sensibility and dignity in the idea of friendly strife between consenting human beings.
- Their legendary loathing for cheating of any kind, since playing to win and playing honestly and fairly are not at all incompatible.
- The view that sport should not be taken as God-awful seriously as most people want to and usually do take it.
- The almost heretical belief that the final score of whatever Big Event, in both the short and the long runs, is considerably less important than the mettle-testing going on in the contest itself—a winning contest is far more important than a winning score.
- And the flinty refusal to badmouth anyone; if you can’t bring yourself to say something good about someone, don’t say anything about them at all.

Both of our Southern gentlemen of sport paid just as much attention to the intangibles, to the more abstracted ethical and value issues of right conduct, friendship, loyalty, courage, and generosity, as they did to the tangibles. This they did against the philosophical direction of this entire century, where it is increasingly difficult to keep our eyes on such abstract matters. P. J. O’Rourke, of *Rolling Stone*, recently pointed out that the concrete is winning out over the abstract:

It’s just that it’s hard for us to pay attention to abstract matters when we have so many concrete matters—cellular phones, ski boats, salad shooters, pasta-making machines,

four-door sport utility vehicles, palmcorders, rollerblades, and CD players for cars—to occupy us. No wonder all the great intellectual concepts such as monotheism and using the zero in arithmetic come from pastoral societies where herdsmen sit around all night with nothing to do except think things up.

The right and good reaction to sins, character flaws, and ethical lapses is not to scoff at the misconduct, but to prod the collectivity toward better conduct. That’s what sets Grantland Rice and Fred

Russell apart, for their prodding was at least prodigious even if it wasn’t always contagious. What really matters athletically, these two gentlemen of sport thought, are the *edifying* possibilities available in sport and athletic competition: the tests, the challenges, the work ethic, the loyalty, the friendships, the overcoming, the luck, the fair play possibilities, the poetic moments of justice, the dramatic, and romantic turns sport experiences can take.

Or even the humor. Remember Fred Russell’s wholly imagined character named Stagnant, who was said to have made his home in a hammock under a bridge spanning the Cumberland River right here in Nashville? Whenever Mr. Russell needed a special prophecy for the outcome of a Big Game that everybody was counting on him for, he playfully consulted Stagnant. Stagnant’s method for rendering a prediction (which was about as good as the way most sports prognostications are figured out) was to read what the dandelions spell out when dropped into a steaming cauldron of equal parts hyena milk and donkey sweat.

As you well know, our two gentlemen from Nashville were not cynics. Persons with real ideals have no time for cynicism, or for the despair such cynicism results in. In successive generations spanning nearly this entire century, they put forth an elevating view of sports and the covering of them that served to make us think twice about sport’s intangible value. Sport, they prodded us, is more than

amusement, more than recreation, more than entertainment, more than show business, and certainly more than self-gratifying diversion.

Sport is about intentional over-training to develop an uphill heart; finding clarity of goals, of meaning, and of action; enabling positive human responses in a comic and tragic world; achieving vitality; experiencing mystery and suspense and drama, love and losing and luck. It’s about learning things, and it’s about giving the things we learn in this life the stamp of our humanity. Above all, it’s about creating continuity in the face of constant challenges and gen-



Fred Russell, Grantland Rice, and Vanderbilt football coach Red Sanders

eration after generation: that is, in the end, sport is about telling our story over and over again, each time with different characters, different plots, and different endings but always with the same enduring vision of attempted greatness.

### “Heroes Writing About the Heroic”

As we come to the end of this millennium, we have tamed, even somewhat dominated matter, and made it conform to our wishes. We have diligently pursued the goal of making things more comfortable and convenient. And to our credit, we have succeeded in many ways. But this success has its dangers too. Besides the difficult problem of discovering too late unforeseen consequences of our emerging technologies, there is the impact that such a pursuit has on the character of the people themselves, on all of us.

The pursuit of comfort and convenience is *not* an index for superiority. Such a single-minded goal weakens our inner constitutions and has a questionable impact on our individual and collective character. Florida Scott-Maxwell, the writer and playwright, said that we are all to some extent tested in this life: “Suddenly I wonder—is all hardness justified because we are so slow in realizing that life was meant to be heroic? That is life’s aim and justification, and we poor fools have for centuries been trying to make it convenient, manageable, pliant to our will.”

Such heroism means what the dictionaries tell us it means: having a “nobility of purpose.” In our modern times it is increasingly difficult to find positive, noble, and worthy goals. Hence, inertia sets in where there is a lapse in initiative and a failure to make a concerted effort toward accomplishing anything. When everything is done for the people, the people do nothing for themselves. As a result, and according to the historian Barbara Tuchman, there is a fracture in national, even global character.

One huge antidote for the loss of a moral sense to life as a whole is the multiplication of opportunities for experiences that do not debase humanity, but dignify it. When we learn things, master a difficult skill, and play the game well—such as we can do in sport—we dignify ourselves and our lives and our nation. The biologist and philosopher Leon Kass argued that to make progress toward human improvement, we absolutely must encounter necessity and difficulty. That’s what living means. And what we truly respect are people who somehow raise themselves up to a level beyond the mundane by their own efforts. What we should be celebrating continuously is the effort the best of us make to achieve something noble, something fine, and something that reaches beyond in the heroic sense.

Our two gentlemen of sport are two examples of such heroes. For the duration of their lifetimes they covered sport, always on the lookout for what was noble in it. By way of honing their craft over the years, they too produced a body of work that is truly noble. Heroes writing about the heroic. Grantland Rice and Fred Russell both verify what D. H. Lawrence meant when he



The Nashville Banner 25th anniversary banquet for Fred Russell held September 8, 1953 at Memorial Gym. Among those in attendance were, from left to right, James Geddes Stahlman, Banner publisher; Russell; Bill Corum, New York sportswriter; “The Champ,” Jack Dempsey; Red Smith, New York Times sportswriter; Dean Madison Sarratt; Tom Meany, Knoxville News-Sentinel sports editor; and George Trautman, head of Minor Baseball Leagues.

taught us the following: “Pay homage to a hero, and you yourself become heroic.”

Let’s return to that November day in 1955 when Fred Russell received the much-deserved Sportsmanship Brotherhood award for writing in the Grantland Rice tradition. This was truly a big event for both “Freddie” and “Granny”. In a telegram Mr. Russell received that day, the writer, Gene Fowler, congratulated Freddie with the following tribute:

Very happy indeed that you are receiving the Grantland Rice award. The best newspaper writing appears in the sports pages of America and the finest friendships are formed among the sports reporters. The field of sport is one of the few places left in this age of spite and prejudice and vengeance where men can respect and like one another without flattery or fear or because of self-interest. In sports, unlike politics, a man does not last long if he hits below the belt or kicks a fellow who is down or helpless.

Granny’s legacy was also remembered that day in 1955. Sportswriter Leonard Lewin covered the award ceremony. In part, here’s what he had to say about Grantland Rice:

I didn’t know Granny too well. Casually, you might say. I doubt if he even knew my name. Actually, I can recall about a half-dozen times, at the most, that I wound up in the same group with him. But I always came away with the feeling that I was a lot better for it. It was like spending an enjoyable evening with an old friend . . . No, it wasn’t exactly like that. There’s more to it . . . Maybe I can’t express it in the proper words. But the feeling I’ve been trying to express is the same one you get after leaving a house of God . . . You feel relieved at being spiritually cleansed.

Lewin ended his remarks by echoing John Kieran’s observation on Rice that “No man who ever knew him is not better for knowing him.” And today, I say to you Mr. Fred Russell, that the same can be said of you.



Bill Harper and Fred Russell

*Commissioner of the Southeastern Conference and former Director of Athletics at Vanderbilt*

How great it is for Sara Jo and me to be in Nashville on this memorable afternoon and, in particular, to be with so many friends in the Heard Library. But most of all it is wonderful to be present to hear the remarks of Professor Harper as he describes so well the intermingling of the two gentlemen who have perhaps had the most impact of any upon the interest, the mystique, the love, the comedy and, most of all, the emotions that are the world of sport. For these two men were able to catch in the beautiful words of the English language so many wonderful moments that have been forever enshrined in our memories. They wrote about almost every possible sporting event—from the betting window at Churchill Downs to the smell of azaleas at Augusta, and even to the taste of a hot dog at Sulphur Dell Park on a warm summer afternoon.

More than 50 years ago this fall, a young man enrolled as a freshman in a small college in East Tennessee and took a freshman English composition course. My instructor was a lady of about 60 (who, I thought at the time, was extremely senior) who had a special interest in those of us who thought we were athletes. She knew so well that the last thing I was interested in was the use of the English language. But she did understand my love of the game. So, after one rather boring class session, she called me to her desk and handed me a very small book with a blue paper cover entitled, *I'll Go Quietly*. As I began to read those poetic lines written so many years ago in his beloved Nashville *Banner*, I was first introduced to Fred Russell—the tales, the jokes, the artful descriptions of hundreds of sporting events, and most of all, an appreciation for the people whom he knew so intimately and who had played the game. Thus it is that I am deeply indebted to share in this special moment in time as we honor the world of Fred Russell and the blessings he has bestowed on us as he painted the world of sport for us in his writings.

And what a world that is! I would offer that it's really three worlds. First, there's Freddie's world, for that was always the very endearing title bestowed on him by his wonderful partner of so many years, the gracious Kay. Freddie's world is that of devotion to his family, his beloved daughters, his grandchildren, and all of those who knew him best. The second world I'd call just Fred's world. That's the world of laughter and twinkling eyes as he unfolded a favorite joke to one of his friends—like Cotton Clark, or perhaps the much-beleaguered and second-guessed athletic director at Vanderbilt during our weekly luncheons at the University Club. It is also the world of practical jokes that none of us can ever forget: the famous Stetson hat story, the lady in the old Brown Derby Hotel in Louisville, the drunken official and Chancellor Heard at a cocktail party at Fred's house before the Tennessee-Vanderbilt game and many more too numerous to mention or, perhaps, not in good discretion to tell. What a legacy it is—to make people laugh. That truly is the legacy of Fred Russell's world.

But it is the third world that we celebrate today on this very special occasion—the world of Fred's typewriter and the matchless ability to catch for all time the unmatched emotion of touchdown runs, birdie putts, photo finishes, and home runs in the bottom of the ninth. Herein is the fame and fortune that Fred Russell brought to this community from all over this world. Red Smith, Grantland Rice,

and Henry McLemore were only a few of the giants of his profession who looked to him. He was the inspiration of almost every young sportswriter across this land in the forties, fifties, and sixties. He brought a very special dignity and class to the game that unfortunately is often lost today. There was a relationship between Fred and the heroes of sport that afforded him access and friendship that we do not see in the game today. Fred believes in the game and the people who play it, and always came to lift up our hearts after the game rather than to second-guess every move.

It was this relationship which made almost every well-known player in the major leagues drift over to the fence for a conversation with Fred during his favorite time of the year—spring training—or every name that meant anything in football come across the lobby of the Waldorf at the Hall of Fame dinner to say a special greeting and to share a favorite story of yesterday with Fred.

How vividly I can remember sitting out at the Sounds baseball stadium one evening with Fred and Kay waiting for an exhibition game to begin between the Detroit Tigers and the Nashville Sounds when out on the field all of a sudden, Sparky Anderson, the manager of the Detroit Tigers, spotted Fred in the stands. He came running over, climbed over the railing and proceeded to visit and tell stories with Fred (although I think Fred told more) until the umpire finally yelled, "Play Ball!" And as he left I'll never forget what Sparky said. He looked at us and said, "Fred, I'd give anything if I didn't have to go over there and sit in the dugout and I could just sit here with you." I honestly believe that even Man O' War nodded his famous red head at Fred when he visited him at Faraway Farm just outside Lexington.

I could go on for a long time. For, you see, Fred's world is my world and the people he knew and who knew him are forever my idols. This is the world I love so much in so many ways—a world that has been nourished and cultivated and harvested because each of us has been touched by this gentleman of sport—Fred Russell. Thank you, Fred, for your friendship but most of all for a lifetime of memories that none of us will ever forget.



Roy Kramer and Fred Russell

*Government Information Services helps keep Vanderbilt—and Nashville—informed*

BY BONNIE ARANT ERTELT

Question: Which of the following is published by the Federal government? a) information on which political action committees are giving money to candidates; b) tax forms; c) a brochure on the Grand Canyon; d) the magazine *Civilization*; e) all of the above.

If you answered "all of the above," you'd be correct. But the first four selections above barely illustrate the incredible diversity of material made available on a daily basis by the Government Printing Office, known as the GPO, and its primary disseminators, the more than 1,300 Federal depository libraries. This system, mandated by Congress and nearly 140 years old, makes available to the public everything from congressional hearings to statistics on virtually any subject to that yearly inevitability, the Form 1040.

The Federal depository at the Jean and Alexander Heard Library, known as Government Information Services, became a depository in 1884. (A smaller depository focusing on legal materials was added at the Law Library in 1976.) Government Information Services receives about 60% of what the GPO distributes and serves as a subregional depository for congressional hearings, meaning they are working to have a copy of every hearing ever published by the GPO.

"We focus on three main areas," says Larry Romans, the government information librarian and political science bibliographer, "Congress, the Office of the President, and the Department of State. But we have a fascinating array of old and current material here. People don't realize that the United States government is the world's largest collector and producer of statistics. That's one of the things we use to pull people back here. They may see one citation, but once they're here, we can show them all kinds of things."

Some piece of information from every agency and department in the Federal government finds its way to the Vanderbilt depository, from reports on Tennessee soils by the Agriculture Department to botany studies from the Smithsonian Institution. Based on a selection profile determined by Romans and his assistant, Gretchen Dodge, and grounded on users' needs, Government Information Services receives about 30,000 documents during the year. Most of the documents stay at Central, though some are distributed to other libraries in the Heard system. The documents are numbered, not in standard Library of Congress call numbers, but according to a system determined by the Superintendent of Government Documents in Washington, DC. Additionally, the department is the only full United Nations depository in six surrounding states.

With so much material and a classification system unlike the rest of the library, Government Information Services constitutes its own

library within a library. And it's an area of library and information science that requires a special interest by those willing to learn its labyrinthine ways.

Luckily for Vanderbilt, the backbone of the Heard Library's government information department is Romans and Dodge. Romans started as a student assistant in government documents in 1964 at Stetson University in Florida, where he received his undergraduate degree, and has worked in government information since then. Dodge began her work with government documents in 1985 at the Central Library.

"I've been a student assistant, a library assistant in government documents, and now a government documents librarian for 17 years here at Vanderbilt, 14 of those as department head," says Romans. "When I started, none of the documents were included in online or card catalogs, and you had to use the GPO's Monthly Catalog and some really difficult finding tools to get at them. In the mid-70s, the GPO began using standard subject headings and putting the Monthly Catalog in electronic form, so that tapes could be created to load into online catalogs. That made finding things much easier."

"Those were the dark ages," says Dodge, of the time before the Monthly Catalog was electronic. "But we just started recording documents online about four years ago, rather than checking them in on shelf list cards. So, cataloging has been electronic for some time here—there's no way we

can individually catalog 30,000 documents a year—but check-in has just recently been updated."

The Heard Library's government information Web site (<http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/central/govt/gvtmain.html>) was recently named one of the 26 principal starting points in the country for finding government information by Gregg R. Notess in the third edition of *Government Information on the Internet*. In June alone, the page had 11,000 hits—second only to the Library's home page.

Despite all this use of government information both on campus and nationwide, Congress proposed a 61% reduction to the GPO budget for the year. "It required a tremendous effort to put most of that money back," says Romans, "but the GPO still ended up with a significant reduction. As a result, they now don't have much choice but to offer information only in electronic resources. It costs too much money to produce both electronic and paper versions."

Using electronic resources to access government information certainly has advantages. "The most obvious is that you don't have to be in the library to find things. Another is that they update information much more quickly online. It might take us six months to receive a



Larry Romans and Gretchen Dodge

paper update," says Romans, "but it takes a day to post an electronic update."

On the other hand, the availability of government information only through electronic resources does not always assure that it will be available to everyone, which makes it difficult to uphold the motto of the GPO—"Keeping America Informed."

"Not everyone has the same access to computers," explains Romans. "There are definitely information haves and have nots. So the haves will have access to more and more information, and the have nots will have access to less and less information. Also, virtually anyone can look in the index of a book and find information, but because the GPO basically contracts out to the lowest bidder, you end up with electronic products that use hundreds of different kinds of software. We have trouble staying on top if it, so the idea that the general public can do that is unrealistic. And there are the logistics—if you have a class using 20 books, everyone can be at work, but if the information

is only available online and we have only four terminals, then people are five deep waiting to use the terminals. So, there are definite pluses and minuses."

It is extremely important to both of these veterans that the information remain available to anyone who wants or needs access to it, from Vanderbilt nursing students working on a class project on community needs assessment to a member of the Nashville community checking regulations in place as a result of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

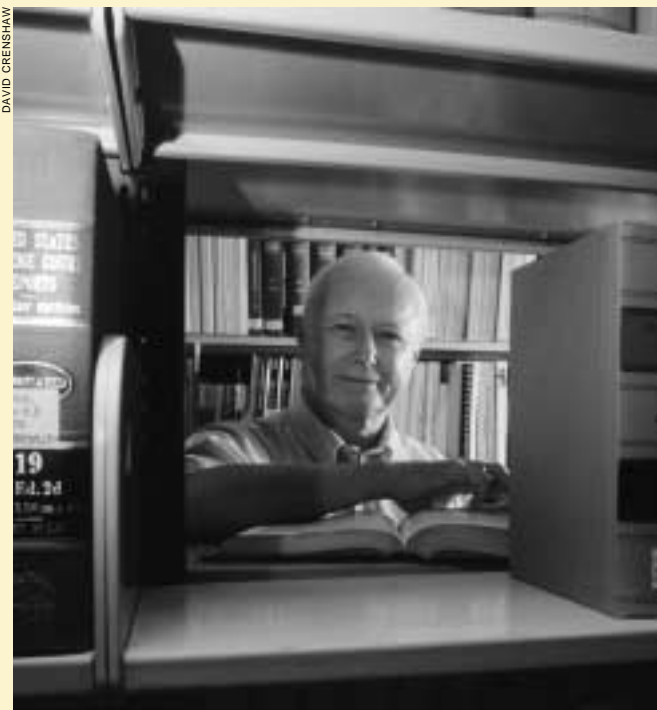
"The thing that most impresses me about this information," says Dodge, "is that these are the original sources. They're THE original transcripts to the hearings, THE testimonies, THE speeches given by the President, THE laws. Even the statistics. It may be that the Department of Labor or the Treasury are the only places that collect a particular piece of information. And we have it right here in Government Information."

**"My students use government documents a great deal in their classes on domestic Federal policy. I send them to Government Information Services to read the Congressional Record, congressional committee reports, and public laws so they can understand the process of policy formation using original source materials."**

—Hugh Davis Graham, Holland N. McTyeire Professor of History and professor of political science

ical items received each year must be labeled, shelved, bound, and maintained for users by library staff and student workers. As more of the GPO's products become available only in electronic formats, Government Information Services at the Jean and Alexander Heard Library must continue to maintain, update, and fund more ways to provide access to these important materials.

Your gift to the Library helps make resources like these available to students and faculty at Vanderbilt. For more information, please contact Elaine Goleski, library development officer, at 615-343-4701.



DAVID CRENSHAW

Hugh Davis Graham knows Federal documents. The author of *The Civil Rights Era: Origins and Development of National Policy, 1960-1972*, which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in history in 1991, he finds that original source material made available through Federal depository libraries is key to his research. As the coauthor of *Violence in America*, published in 1969 when he was staff historian to President Johnson's national commission on violence, he has written some of the government materials found at the Heard Library.

But even government information sent to a Federal depository library like Vanderbilt's is not free. The thousands of phys-

### Retirees Learn to Surf the Web

This past July, many retirees learned to surf at the Jean and Alexander Heard Library—surf the Internet, that is. During "A World of Information—A Library on your Desktop" led by University Librarian Paul Gherman and other library staff in the new electronic classroom, Internet sources on topics as diverse as health care, investing, travel, genealogy, and e-commerce were presented to a class of interested and grateful digital age neophytes.

"Kathryn Smith, the President of the Friends, mentioned to Silvine Hudson who coordinates the Retirement Learning program that she thought the library would be a great organization to teach a course on Web content to retirees," says Gherman. "I jumped at the chance when Silvine called. Retirees are sometimes reluctant to use new technology, since they did not grow up in the Internet age like most of our students. But once they get even a small taste of the riches of importance to their lives that are available on the Internet, they are the most enthusiastic and appreciative students we teach."

Harry Ransom, BA'43, and professor of political science, emeritus, signed up for the course in order to catch up with his wife's expertise on the Web. "We have a home computer, and my wife, Nancy, is rather good at using it. I'm not, so I thought I would sign up for the course. It brought to my attention the enormous amount of information that is out there on the Internet, but I was delighted to learn how much is available from the library's subscrip-

tions to other digital sources. I now know where I can get information on travel, politics, hotel reservations, rental cars, a whole range of things."

Ransom held a work/study position in the library in 1939 when it was still located on the third floor of Kirkland Hall. "When I see the highly computerized library now, I really understand the change over history. I found the class very valuable."

Alumnus Robert McNeilly Jr., BA'54, MAT'55, agrees. "It was the best course on the Internet that I've ever taken, because it covered so many different areas, and the explanations and printed material given to us were so clear."

Retirement Learning at Vanderbilt began in 1995 with 110 members. Currently, about 300 people participate in classes as well as informal monthly luncheons highlighting guest speakers and sponsored trips to such places as Churchill Downs and the Renaissance Center in Dickson, Tennessee. For more information contact Silvine Hudson at 343-0553.



NORMAN NASH

The library's new electronic classroom has seen much use since it opened last spring, including being the venue for this summer's retirement learning class.

### Wolfe Honored at Friends Annual Dinner

Marice Wolfe was honored at the 27th annual dinner of the Friends of the Library on November 2. This year's event, titled "Gone Off Up North," featured author and humorist Roy Blount Jr., BA'63, as speaker.

Wolfe, who retired in October from her position as University archivist and head of Special Collections, began work at the library in 1973. She received her MLS from Peabody in 1977 and became University archivist in 1979. Active in local, regional, and national library and archival organizations, she has been involved with the Friends of the Library organization at the Heard Library since its founding in 1974.

Wolfe's sense of style and good taste will be put to use after retirement as she pursues an interest in the culinary arts and catering.



DAVID CRENSHAW

Marice Wolfe greets Chancellor Emeritus Alexander Heard at a reception held at the University Club on October 24 honoring her on the occasion of her retirement. She was also honored at the Friends annual dinner on November 2. In Wolfe's honor, the Friends presented Special Collections with a limited-edition, oversize 1972 imprint of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, accompanied by an unbound set of plates, each signed by artist Elisabeth Frink. The volumes are currently on display in Special Collections.



Brent Mai, director, Walker Management Library

*Walker Library: Untethering Information*

Owen Graduate School of Management students are using a local area wireless network this fall, a move that propels the school even further in the forefront of technology. As a result, resources available at the Owen School's Walker Library followed suit.

Incoming students are now required to purchase preconfigured laptop computers with a wireless receiver card. Such state-of-the-art equipment, used by few business schools in the country, helps prepare students for the workplace and enhances Owen's position as a leader in telecommunications and electronic commerce, say school officials.

The new technology enables students to access the Web anywhere, thereby eliminating

space and equipment constraints and untethering students and faculty from stationary computer hardware. Brent Mai, director of the Walker Management Library at the Owen School, had to ensure that Owen students and faculty would be able to access the information they would need from the library in this kind of setting

"I had to make sure we could deliver the electronic information we have here at Walker to faculty and students wherever they happen to be," he says. "Students, for example, could be on an internship halfway around the world, at an interview in Toronto, or studying in an apartment across the street and still have access to the information. We tried to make it as streamlined as possible. Software-related issues of access and licensing agreements were negotiated in order to make access less cumbersome for our users. Some of the technology to make this happen just came about this summer, and it didn't all come crashing together until the beginning of the fall semester.

"Every other library on campus will be joining that wireless world soon," says Mai, "but at the moment, Walker is on the cutting edge of technology use, and we'll have to continue to do more."



Ridley Wills II (center) with Tina and Jack Gaultney at "Wish You Were Here," a gallery talk given by Mr. Wills on September 24 on his collection of historic Tennessee postcards. (See the Donor Report in this issue for illustrations of some of the cards. Excerpts from the talk will be featured in the spring issue of the ACORN CHRONICLE.



University Librarian Paul Gherman and David Blum, BA'77, of Wilmette, Illinois, celebrate the first purchases from the Wild Bunch Acquisitions Fund. The Wild Bunch, members of the classes of 1977-80, established the fund at the time of their 20th reunion in honor of Chancellor Emeritus Alexander Heard and his wife, Jean Heard, for the purchase of materials for undergraduates.

JULY 1999–JUNE 2000

The Jean and Alexander Heard Library is grateful for the generosity of its Friends and other benefactors who provided gifts to the library or any of its divisions during the 1999-2000 fiscal year (July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000). Contributions included unrestricted gifts, donations for particular purposes, memorial and commemorative gifts, and bequests.

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## FRIENDS PROFILE

### Marc Stengel: Wandering Forth in the Sacred Grove

Often, in conducting research for articles and novels, writer Marc Stengel, treasurer of the Friends of the Library, finds, to put it simply, that one thing leads to another.

"The Diffusionists Have Landed," his cover story in the January 2000 *Atlantic Monthly*, came about as a result of research he is currently conducting for a historical novel. "To extend a filmmaking metaphor, the diffusionist material came from the cutting room floor," says Stengel. "In my search for verisimilitude for my novel, I found myself immersed in this material, and it was just too good to waste." Stengel's interest in diffusionist scholarship—the claim that explorers from around the world discovered and traveled throughout America before Columbus—is indirectly related to his interest in Welsh and Arthurian studies. Quite by accident, he stumbled upon the outlandish claim that a sword found in Kentucky and inscribed in Welsh, may have belonged to one of two Arthurs who lived centuries apart and who supposedly emigrated

to North America. This is a far cry, of course, from Stengel's studies at Vanderbilt with Emerson Brown, professor of English, emeritus, who first planted the seeds for his interest in the legend of Arthur. Nevertheless, it provided him with an exotic anecdote for introducing readers to the larger controversy of pre-Columbian contact with the Americas.

Stengel enjoys following the thread of ideas. In the early '90s he produced a show for ESPN in which he specialized in the history of famous firearms. "It allowed me to bring together several disciplines, telling the story of a problem being solved," says Stengel, "and it was appropriate to other fields beyond firearms. In fact, it had nothing to do

with the ultimate use of the firearm and everything to do with the creative mind at work. For instance, John Browning, whose invention of the Automatic Colt Pistol, the military's Colt .45, refined the concept of repeating fire, which has everything to do with the car you're driving—reciprocating motion—or even something as mundane as the lockset in a door."

Stengel's continued interest in historical arms extends to attending "swordfighting school" where he is researching the martial arts of the west, a very refined and specific tradition practiced during the dark ages in Europe, although they are largely unknown or misrepresented today. What's his stake in all this? "To resurrect what is lost," he answers. "When things in the world at large are lost, I get very melancholy. By nature, I'm a packrat, and I guess I project that same view onto other fields."

A quotation at the top of Stengel's business card reads in French '*Droit devant soi on ne peut pas aller bien loin,*' literally 'one can never go very far travelling straight ahead.' "I thank Antoine de St. Exupery for letting me steal his sentiment," says Stengel, "which I understand as an invitation to 'wander forth.'" And to that end, the Jean and Alexander Heard Library and the Friends play an important role.

"I make excuses to spend time in this library, a great deal more than when I was an undergraduate," Stengel laughs. "The library is essentially a meeting ground. To use an old pre-Roman term from Gaul, it's the *nematon*, the sacred grove, where all important things happen. And with the Friends, you don't even have to make your way into the stacks. They associate events around this grove so that you know by coming here that you'll encounter a topic that satisfies your appetite for knowledge."

*Editor's note: This is the first in an occasional series of profiles of Friends of the Library.*



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