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The ceremony concluded when Gerry Maginnity and three former State Librarians, Gary Strong, Susan Hildreth, and Stacey Aldrich cut the ribbon across the grand stairway.

OPENING REMARKS
Gerald Maginnity
Acting State Librarian Gerry Maginnity served as host and master of ceremonies for the hour. In his opening remarks, he informed the gathering that when the building was closed in 2009, the Library’s collection of four million volumes was moved to a warehouse in West Sacramento. Returning later to this astounding figure, he said that if the books were set side by side they would stretch from Sacramento to Fairfield, a distance of about...
forty miles. Not all the books were back yet, but enough for the Library to begin functioning again in this building.

Maginnity reminded the audience that the name of the structure is the Stanley Mosk Library and Courts Building. Stanley Mosk, an associate justice on the California Supreme Court for thirty-seven years, served longer than any other member of that body. Maginnity observed, “Here we have two institutions in this building that are very important for a free and democratic society. On the one side, we have the California Third District Court of Appeal. That side serves the yearning for justice. As Pope Paul VI said in 1972, ‘If you want peace, work for justice.’ The other side, the library side, serves the yearning for knowledge and information. ‘Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.’”

Since the Third District Court of Appeal and the California State Library both occupy the building, some may have wondered why this was not a joint celebration. The Court of Appeal staff had moved back several months earlier and marked the homecoming with festivities in October 2013, so this occasion was entirely focused on the return of the Library.

The acting state librarian was obviously pleased with the way the people in the community had volunteered to assist with the celebration; he called special attention to docents who had conducted tours of the building. He thanked Loretta Kanelos for making the beautiful ribbon stretched across the Library’s grand staircase, a ribbon which was later cut to signify the official opening of the building. He singled out Don Gordon in the audience, a local history enthusiast, who brought with him a cane belonging to Talbot H. Wallis, state librarian from 1882–1890. The black cane with a silver-colored handle will remain for a time in the Library on loan in a display case.

ABOUT THE VESTIBULE
Gary F. Kurutz

Maginnity asked Gary Kurutz, special collections librarian emeritus, to talk about the beautiful room in which the ceremony was taking place. “The vestibule,” he said, “was dedicated to the Californians who fought in World War I, that war to end all wars.”

He went on to explain that Charles Peter Weeks, the architect who designed the building, following state procedures, advertised for bids from artists. Frank Van Sloun was selected from the bidding process and was responsible for painting the series of murals in the room illustrating the history of warfare from the very beginning to 1921.

Calling attention to the sixteen black marble columns surrounding the room, Kurutz said, “They lend a very somber feeling to this memorial.” They were quarried from the Isle of Tino in Italy. “One of the happy things about this renovation, he said, “is that these columns are now seismically secure.” This comment drew hearty laughter from the crowd as did his next observation that the urns atop the columns “were originally designed to light these murals, but now they have a new purpose in that they house the remains of former state librarians.” Not true, of course, but they look like they could reasonably be used for that purpose.

It was no doubt quite a surprise to many, when Kurutz told the audience that the beautiful, decorated ceiling was created by
Acting California State Librarian
Gerry Maginnity: A Profile  By M. Patricia Morris

A well-traveled librarian seems like an apt phrase to describe Gerry Maginnity, who has worked in libraries or library systems in three countries and five geographic regions in California. In a recent interview with Gerry Maginnity, I learned about the rich and varied path that led him to the California State Library as well as some of the challenges he has faced since becoming acting state librarian.

The long road to Sacramento began in the Midwest where his parents, both professionals, exerted an important influence on his decision to go into library science. “My mother was a librarian,” Maginnity said. “So she was always fostering the love of books and using the library, but my dad was a chemist, so I also had this interest in science all my life. Initially, I wanted to go into marine biology.” Maginnity wasn’t sure why he developed an interest in marine biology, having grown up in Ohio, which he wryly noted is “surrounded by oceans.” But at the time, the emphasis on natural issues with oceans led him to major in biological science at Ohio State University in Columbus.

While working at Ohio State on his undergraduate degree, he took a part-time job shelving books at a local public library in Upper Arlington, a town not far from the university campus. “At the time,” Maginnity said, “they had a really dynamic library director, who was trying to reinvent the image of a public library to be more dynamic.” That was the point where he became interested in librarianship and knew that was what he wanted to do. Initially, his dream was to become a health science librarian. To achieve that goal, he went on to graduate school in Canada at the University of Western Ontario’s School of Library and Information Science. While earning his master’s degree, he worked for two years in the university’s health science library.

From there, he headed south to Monterrey, Mexico, where he was offered a fellowship to work in an engineering library. At the Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey, he designed and taught an undergraduate course in bibliographic instruction. An added bonus to his stay in Mexico was that while he was there, he became fluent in Spanish. “When I left Mexico, I decided to come to California. . . . I spoke Spanish, so that’s sort of the way I drifted,” he said.

Though northeastern California is not exactly a Spanish-speaking stronghold in California, Maginnity got his first library job in the state as assistant to the Lassen County Librarian. With headquarters in Susanville, the Lassen County Free Library at that time had a total staff of 20 with 10 branches, serving 18,000 people in a 4,000 square mile area.

A little more than a year later, he moved to Imperial County in the southeast corner of California bordering on Mexico. He had developed an interest in cooperative library systems, and there he was hired for his Spanish language skills by the Serra Cooperative Library System as coordinator of the Serra Reference Center in Imperial, California. Maginnity said, “I really enjoyed working with groups of libraries and promoting cooperative services.”

In a move to the Central Valley, he served for many years at Fresno County Free Library as Associate County Librarian for Reference and Information Services. Working in this part of the state, he said, “You kind of get the crossroads of California.” He encountered a different dynamic when he took a position at Solano County Library, where he was responsible for library service to the City of Vallejo. During this period, small towns were growing very rapidly, some becoming bedroom communities for the Bay Area. “You could see what the county was going through trying to deal with that,” Maginnity said.

His longest time in one place came with his next move to the Sacramento area, where he served for fifteen years as coordinator of the Mountain Valley Library System. Thus, in this long journey that began in Ohio, Maginnity has served in all types of libraries in both rural and urban settings and in areas of rapid growth, gathering along the way an

Former State Librarian Stacey Aldrich served while the building was undergoing its restoration and attended countless meetings to protect the Library’s interests during the project.

Anthony Heinsbergen Decorating Company of Los Angeles, a firm that specialized in movie palaces, among other buildings.

RECOGNIZING SUPPORTERS
Kenneth B. Noack, Jr.

Ken Noack, Jr., president of the California State Library Foundation (CSLF), was the next to step forward to the podium. For those unfamiliar with the Foundation, CSLF has raised funds and supported State Library collections, programs, and events since 1982. Nearly all the board members were in the audience for this celebration. Noack asked Board Member Donald J. Hagerty to raise his hand. Noack described him as “the world’s authority on Maynard Dixon,” and he praised Hagerty’s essay in issue No. 106 of the California State Library Foundation Bulletin on the Dixon mural in Gillis Hall and other paintings in the building as well as the Van Sloun mural in the Vestibule.

Noack credited Grand Reopening sponsors for their generosity: Arntz Builders, Inc., the principal contractor for the restoration project; Cosco Fire Protection; Gladding, McBean, LLC; and Vanir Construction Management, Inc. He noted the generosity of the Foundation itself, which had funded the banners as well as refreshments for the week’s festivities.

To the delight of history buffs, Noack
extensive background in library management.

It was a “good fit” he said when he
first joined the staff of the California State
Library in 2005 as assistant bureau chief of
the Library Development Services Bureau,
eventually becoming head of that section.
And he was well prepared for the task when
State Librarian Stacey Aldrich announced
her resignation in 2012, and sent a letter
to the Governor’s Office recommending
Maginnity to replace her. In October of that
year, he received a letter from the Governor’s
appointments office saying he had been
appointed acting state librarian. “When you
think acting or interim, you think two, maybe
three months, not sixteen. So that’s where
we are at.” he said.

As acting state librarian, he took the
helm when the State Library faced major
challenges. Naming the most daunting,
Maginnity said that during the recession,
the State Library took “some really, serious,
serious hits to its budget. I think we lost
between thirty and forty positions over the
last four or five years,” he said. Budgets cuts
were in fact, so severe, they threatened the
ten million dollars the Library received in
federal funding for local assistance programs
used to help libraries throughout the state.
The library has to sustain a certain level of
state funding to receive this money from the
governmental. It took a lot of work on the
part of Maginnity and other State Library
staff but the funding was finally secured. “It
was kind of a major victory,” Maginnity said.

All the while Maginnity and staff were
coping with severe budget reductions, they
were also coping with the Stanley Moss
Library and Courts Building renovation.
The collections were in a warehouse in
West Sacramento and all public services
were being operated out of the Braille and
Talking Book Library and the California
History Room located in the annex across
the street. If all had gone perfectly as
originally anticipated, the move back into
the main building should have been easy.
But, of course, the unexpected happened.

To properly install the new fire suppression
system, it was necessary to place sprinkler
systems in some areas lower down from
the ceiling. Maginnity said, “Some might
think it’s not a big issue. If it is just an office
space, then a pipe coming down six more
inches from the ceiling — big deal.” But the
loss of vertical shelving space for the Library
created an enormous problem. “Suddenly,”
Maginnity said, expressing concern in his
voice, “you are talking about thousands and
thousands of volumes.” Consequently, they
had to find space in Library and Courts II
across the street for these materials, insure
that the flooring would bear the weight,
order and install shelving, and allow time for
Fire Marshall inspections. A little over fifty
percent of the collections are back, but the
staff keeps “plugging away,” he said.

Now that the Library and Courts Building
is once again open to the public, he and the
staff are tackling another hurdle — finding
ways to let Californians know about the State
Library. One method they have considered
is outreach to the Library’s principal
clients, namely state government agencies.
Maginnity cited water as an example. “Water
is a big issue right now,” he said. “We have
some historical materials on water; we
have the studies; we have the documents.”
Another outreach possibility is having
brown bag lunches at the Library where staff
discuss an aspect of the collection.

Maginnity enthused, “Then we have that
fabulous reading room — Gillis Hall with
WiFi.” Gillis Hall was reconfigured during the
renovation with the new ways people
use libraries in mind. Another potential for
bringing the library to public attention is
the docent program, which already appears
to be a success with more people coming
forward to volunteer as docents and give
tours. Another area offering visibility to the
Library is the school field trip. Thousands of
school children come to the Capital on these
trips in the spring. They hope to include
the State Library on the “field trip circuit,”
as Maginnity described it. He and the staff
are also working on digitization as a way
of making collections more accessible to
people. “Then they don’t have to necessarily
come in here, but they will see some of the
wonderful things we have and download
them.” Maginnity explained.

There may have been difficulties to
overcome, but the work as acting state
librarian has also had its rewards. For
example, Maginnity said, “We couldn’t have
asked for a better treasure downtown.”
Even though they have gone through some
very hard times, one of the things that has
brought him the most satisfaction is seeing
how hard staff members have worked and
worked cooperatively. He has been
impressed by their desire to serve the public.

Another satisfactory development is the
new home for the Sutro Library Branch in
San Francisco. Maginnity had been involved
in planning for the Sutro to become part
of the new library at San Francisco State
University and had attended the grand
opening last year. After a hundred years,
the Sutro Library finally had a proper facility
for housing its world-renowned collection.
To see that happen and “then to see what’s
happening here — we’re getting back to
being a library, and this building is getting
recognition. These are good things,” he said.

If all goes well, there is another potential
“good thing” on the horizon. Governor Jerry
Brown has allocated some money in the
proposed budget for increasing broadband
for public libraries. Maginnity anticipated
that that would dominate his time in the
near future, and if it is passed, then they
would have to “gear up to get all public
libraries connected.”

Maginnity served as master of ceremonies
for the California State Library’s Grand
Reopening Celebration, during which
California Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera
was one of the guest speakers. With all that
has transpired and all that he has done
since assuming the position of acting state
librarian, if one adopts the colorful language
of Poet Laureate Herrera, one might say
Gerry Maginnity deserves “a big spicy
enchilada” round of applause.
announced that “by golly, we were actually featured in the Mountain Messenger, the oldest newspaper west of the Mississippi with a fabulous display of the announcement of the reopening of this great institution.”

Noack exuded enthusiasm for the State Library referring to it as the “Smithsonian of the West for its truly magnificent collection,” and confessing that the CSLF Bulletin, was second only to his favorite publication — National Geographic Magazine. He urged audience members to invite friends to see the Library and to become members of the Foundation.

THE RECOLLECTIONS OF FORMER STATE LIBRARIANS

Gary E. Strong

Three of the five extant former state librarians were on hand to share memories from the time when they occupied the beautiful office on the second floor of the building. Gary E. Strong, who served from 1980–1994, recalled his initial impressions of the Library and Courts Building. “I remember so well, the first time that I stepped into this vestibule, looked up at the ceiling, stood in the middle and turned slowly . . . I knew then that I stepped into a very special place, a place of importance not just to libraries, but to justice, history, and a sense of what was the very essence of California.”

He said, “As I took over the office, I often felt somewhat alone sitting in the middle of the space that had been occupied by state librarians who preceded me. So instead of being lonely, I began to share that space with county librarians and members of the newly formed California State Library Foundation, among many others.” He recalled fondly the lunches, receptions, and other functions held there. “A highlight,” he said, “was the visit by First Lady Barbara Bush and California’s First Lady Gloria Deukmejian in the kick-off of our literacy campaign.”

Strong recounted some of the struggles and triumphs that occurred during his tenure. He spoke of his fights with the Department of General Services to save the wooden windows and to prevent workmen from destroying paintings throughout the building. He recalled the objections that were raised to an exhibit of Howard Jarvis and Paul Gann materials, when the Library acquired their archives. And he described the physical struggle to get the Albion hand press of Lillian and Saul Marks into the building and up to the California Room.

“I cannot describe,” he said, “the satisfaction of seeing Library and Courts II planned, built and opened, bringing all of the State Library into the capitol complex, or the accomplishment of establishing the California Research Bureau, and the break with the Department of Education establishing the Library’s true independence.”

Eloquently concluding his remarks, Strong said in part, “What we do here today is of vital importance to the life of the State of California in that it confirms our continuity with humanity, our link to the past, our understanding of the present, and our hope for the future. The Library embodies the record of mankind. Free public library service is the basis for our democracy and will keep us a free nation. . . .”

Susan Hildreth

Susan Hildreth recounted her first impressions of the Library. “I just have some personal reflections that I wanted to share with you about the grandeur and the meaning of this building,” she said. Having served in many public libraries in California, she recalled the time when she was Placer County librarian in the late 80s and early 90s, and had been scheduled to attend the County Librarian’s dinner in the state librarian’s office upstairs. “I remember,” she mused, “walking up those stairs and being greeted by Gary Strong, and I thought,” and she said this with great drama, “I have made it to Nirvana!”

Eventually, Hildreth came to work at the State Library under the leadership of Dr. Kevin Starr. In those days, her office was located across the street in Library and Courts II. “My remembrance of this building at that time,” she said, “was if you had to come over to this building it was because you were in trouble.” She added, “I remember saying to myself that this is a good place to be, but I don’t think I would come back here unless I was the boss of the place.”

Low and behold, she was appointed in 2004 as state librarian by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. She considered it “one of the greatest honors an individual could have” promoting all the good work of libraries in California.

Hildreth had one more story to tell. When Governor Schwarzenegger ran for his second term in office, he often used the state librarian’s office for televised interviews. Hildreth said the governor liked to have the building really cold for these interviews. “The advance team, of course” she said, “didn’t want us to tell anyone that he was coming.” But HVAC [the heating and cooling system] wasn’t what it is now. “Everyone who came into work would say, ‘oh, the governor’s coming today.’”

Appointed by President Obama, Hildreth is currently the director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Relating her new role to her experience in California, she said, “The State Library is a treasure here in California. I am representing all of you as well in Washington DC, but the work of the California State Library is work.
that I often refer to on the national level as a tangible example of how we are helping our communities here in California to thrive.”

Stacey Aldrich
Stacey Aldrich was appointed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2009. In 2012, she left to become state librarian of Pennsylvania. She was the third of the former state librarians to describe her first impressions of the Library and Courts Building. In 2007, when she first came to the Library as deputy state librarian, she said, “I stood outside very intentionally to take in whole building . . . and then stepping inside . . . I thought I cannot believe it, I am working in one of the most amazing buildings, how lucky am I today. And then I stood there for a little bit longer, and I thought, this kind of looks like Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom,” an observation that evoked laughter from the audience.

Aldrich resided in the building for only a year and a half before the renovation required Library staff to move out. So some of her most vivid memories of the building were of hard hat tours and reports from Project Director Pella McCormick on skunk infestations, feral cats, and bees. “We had a thousand pounds of honey in the walls,” she recalled. Her next memories were of staff meetings on all the things they would have to do to get back into the building. There were “thousands of sticky notes, she said, “thousands of them, trying to make sure we did not miss a single thing. She had high praise for Acting State Librarian Gerry Maginnity and several other Library staff for the work they had done during the renovation.

In conclusion Aldrich said, “When I think about the State Library, I think about the power of the story. I want to build off of what Gary Strong was saying. I think that the power of the story of who we are and of where we have been helps us create our future. And the building now is part of that beautiful future. People can come in and not only see the materials and look at digitized works or 3-D, but they can also experience the story of this building. It has been an honor and a privilege to be here.”

THE MAGIC OF WORDS
Juan Felipe Herrera
Juan Felipe Herrera was born in Fowler, California, heart of the San Joaquin Valley. A teacher and author of more than twenty books, he has been the recipient of many awards for his writing. In March 2012, Governor Jerry Brown appointed him poet laureate of California. Today, his presentation was as much a performance as a speech, using broad gestures for emphasis, employing a musical cadence in his delivery, and often asking the audience to repeat significant words and phrases.

When he was welcomed with loud applause, he described it as “a big spicy enchilada hand.” He began his remarks by simply, saying “I love libraries.” From there he told how his father had crossed the border from Mexico in the 1880s and a few years later, his mother, grandmother and aunt in 1918. “I grew up on the trail,” he said, “on the road, on the camino as a farm-worker’s child.” He told how he learned to speak Spanish from a primer his mother bought for him in a thrift store. He had the audience repeat the beginning of the alphabet in Spanish —A, B, C, D, E, F.

As a little kid, he frequently went to libraries. “Oh, I lived in those libraries. . . . I felt like I was wearing a tuxedo in those libraries.” He told how he would amble down the aisles looking at the books before checking them out and bringing them back to their little apartment.

Herrera spoke of the connection between libraries and his poetry. He said, “I am very thankful for the existence of libraries and really thankful for the existence of books. My imagination was fed and fortified and inspired and shaped by those moments in those libraries. That’s why I could experience peace. I could experience everybody else in a very kind fashion. Very few people were fighting and slugging it out in there. They were kind of just hanging out. And I loved the little round tables. I could sit down and be really small. And I loved all the magazines. And I would scribble on little pads like this,” he said holding up a small lined yellow pad. “I still scribble. And that’s how I build my poems.”

He then recited words that he and the audience had heard in the speeches presented so far and had the audience repeat the words in unison. “Everybody ready,” he said, “to recite a word music instantaneous poem, and then I will read you the poem from it.” Freedom, Justice, Truth, History of Warfare, four million books, Mountain Messenger, Your State Library, Enchilada, Inspiration — were some of the words that rang out in the call and response until Herrera said, “Big mano for you. When you write a poem, it is just like that.” Selecting many of the words just spoken, he then went on to read the poem he composed for the opening of the California State Library.

SONG AND RIBBON CUTTING
Maginnity termed it “the Grammy Portion” of the meeting when he introduced CSLF Vice President George Basye and CSLF Treasurer Tom Vinson. In rich baritone voices, the two gave a rousing rendition of California’s official State Song, I Love You, California. After that the three former state librarians were all handed scissors, and together they cut the ribbon across the grand stairway. The crowd then dispersed throughout the Library to see the wonderful building and enjoy exhibits drawn from the Library’s collections on every floor. Some crowd members went up to the fifth floor to attend the first of many lectures and events scheduled over the next three days.

THIS IS YOUR LIBRARY
There were two phrases repeated several times to refer to the beautifully restored Library and Courts building: “This is a temple of Knowledge” and “This is your Library.” Be sure to come and see it for yourself.
Recollections of Working in the Library and Courts Building from the 1960s to the early 1980s

By Charlotte Harriss

We Made It Work

For the occasion of National Library Week in 1959 two California assemblymen John Williamson (left) and Bert DeLotto (right) were welcomed by Library staff member Ellenthalor Rocca. Miss Rocca, an invaluable Library employee for decades, passed away on January 1, 2014.

Library staff members look up titles in the Union Catalog on the fourth floor. The catalog, comprised of hundreds of drawers, included a record of books held in most California public libraries. Online catalogs and databases such as WorldCat have superseded this once valuable resource.
The Library and Courts Building, through ad hoc patches, makeshift adaptations and what looked like some very low-bid alterations, managed to accommodate services and needs unthought of when it was planned shortly after World War I. Some of the ways we used it were more creative than elegant, but we made it work. Now that it has had the sensitive and thorough renovation it deserves, it can again be what it was meant to be. These are some random recollections of how we used the building three and four decades ago—and why it really needed renovation.

Phones were going off, book trucks were blocking movement, and people were running around with rush requests. Gillis Hall was trying to function simultaneously as workspace and the library’s main public reading room. The building layout, planned at a time when neither these services nor the vastly increased population served were anticipated, made only minimal provision for work areas, but staff had to be put somewhere. All the public service sections—California, Government Publications, the Law Library and Reference—had to put their staff desks in the middle of their reading rooms. The law library was more creative, putting desks in the hallway next to the reading room, but only got away with it for so long; periodically, the Fire Marshall would make them move back into the reading room. In Gillis

EDITOR’S NOTE

Ms. Harriss until her retirement, was one of the most valuable reference librarians ever to grace the reading rooms of the Library and Courts Building. Her last job in the State Library was as principal librarian in charge of public services in the State Library Services Bureau.
Taken sometime in the early 1970s, this photograph shows a staff member preparing to send a message via teletype. Teletypes were basically very noisy electronic typewriters hooked up to one another like telephones.

My desk was right behind the teletype and copier. One day a patron came up and said, “It’s loud in here!” All I could say was “I know.”

Hall, six messy staff desks clustered right by the door and the section head was barricaded behind a row of file cabinets by the windows. The Reference Section, working out of Gillis, handled requests from other libraries and state workers, as well as the walk-in business and phone calls. “Subject requests” were questions sent to us because a smaller library couldn’t answer them. Some needed research in technical journals; some were of the “need five books for a term paper” variety. We were sometimes left to try to divine whether the “five books on China” meant the country or porcelain. Our practice was to take a handful of the more straightforward requests, grab a book truck, and go down in the stacks and start pulling books to send in response so we could get them out of the way and deal with the more complicated questions.

In that pre-Internet age, the need for more cutting edge communication technology was met by teletypes. For those of you too young to have heard of these, teletypes were basically very noisy electronic typewriters hooked up to one another like telephones. You typed on one and it printed out on the machine you called. Hotels and airlines used them a lot in the fifties and sixties. One was stationed in Gillis Hall right by the door. Next to it was a very large photocopier for all of the Library’s staff to use. My desk was right behind the teletype and copier. One day a patron came up and said, “It’s loud in here!” All I could say was “I know.”

If you needed a book your library didn’t have, you could get it but much patience
was required. Libraries could not borrow directly from one another because there was no way of finding out which library had a needed book; the Internet was not yet a glimmer in anybody’s eye. Librarians are inventive and came up with a solution. When libraries throughout the state cataloged a book, they would send a catalog card to the State Library, and we would file it in the Union Catalog, which had cards for many of the books owned by most of the state’s public libraries. Your library would send a request into the State library and a week or two later would get a reply telling it which five libraries closest to your library had the title. Then your library would send a request to one of those five libraries. The whole process could easily take a month, if you were lucky and there was no backlog. However, there was almost always a backlog. Then you had to wait for the request to get sent, and the book to arrive back in your library. Interlibrary loan was still done largely by mail and it might take a while. Now it seems like something out of the Middle Ages, but it was a great advance over being limited to one library’s resources. The Union Catalog itself took up what seemed like miles of card catalog cabinets. At first, they stretched the length of the fourth floor west hallway. The Fire Marshall objected, of course and rightly so, so the catalogs were moved several times. At one time, the operation was in Room 500, now a gracious meeting room; then it was a depressing example of low budget “modernization.” The decorated domed ceiling was shut off by a gloomy grey acoustic tile suspended ceiling hiding air conditioning ducts, and the floor was covered in muddy brown battleship-grade linoleum. Constant vigilance was required to prevent staff from falling off the edge of the stage.

Later we found a means of communicating with requesting libraries faster than the mail and the earlier manually-keyed teletype, when a supersized version of the teletype, fondly known to us as Godzilla, came in. The big new breakthrough on this was a function that let you type out your messages at your own speed and then send them at maximum speed. The machine cut a paper tape much like a player piano roll; ran it through the gizmo on the side, and sent a message that printed itself out on the receiving library’s teletype. It seems
Processing new books in the catalog department. The State Library made available for interlibrary loan purposes many of the volumes shown in this late 1960s scene, captured by staff photographer Arthur Desmangles.
almost comical now, but it was one of the smaller wonders of the pre-Internet age. And it did work.

The building as a building had its challenges. Sprinting down waxed marble-floored hallways in high heels led to some memorable skids and “Professional” dress was mandatory in those days. There was no air conditioning when I started in 1961. I’m told that until the fifties they simply left the windows open all night to cool the building off. Gillis Hall remained fairly pleasant because there was a cooling system of sorts, a large vat of water on the roof with fans to blow it into the room, an arrangement that would have made Rube Goldberg proud. It actually worked quite well until the memorable occasion when it sprang a leak and water started coming down the walls in Gillis Hall. Fortunately it missed the mural and there was no lasting damage. But this system covered only Gillis itself. The rest of the building was subject to the weather. The south-facing California Section was almost unbearable on really hot days. When the temperature got to 100 degrees inside, it wasn’t safe for the pages to work in the stacks, and we closed at four o’clock.

One of the biggest and most gratifying changes during my time was the increased attention paid to rare books. Early on there wasn’t much. Audubon’s *Birds of America*, four oversize folios of hand-colored engravings and one of the great jewels of rare books, was kept on roller shelves underneath four standing bookcases in Gillis Hall, an inch or two off the floor, secured by dime store padlocks. A few items had even been put in the circulating collection—the Reference Section head found Audubon’s *Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*, another significant rare book, there, available for checkout. For too long, folios were shelved standing up because there wasn’t room for them to be properly stored flat, warping and damaging them. The General Collection’s rare books were separated only by a metal grill from the regular stacks. (The locks did not prevent copies of *Playboy* from disappearing.) Step by step, books that should be in the collection were identified and transferred to secure storage. We actually went through the stacks holding the older pre-1960 General Collection and checked them one by one. Conditions improved exponentially when Gary Kurutz came to be the special collections chief and things started getting done properly. The ultimate solution was the new building with purpose-designed space, but we did manage to keep the rare book collection intact even when there wasn’t optimum storage.

The building didn’t handle technology well, either in terms of structure or space needs for materials undreamed of when it was constructed in the 1920s. Adding one phone line in Gillis Hall was an all-day project because of the cement floor construction. Newspapers on microfilm grew to take up an entire large room and required reading machines. Some problems resulted from original design deficiencies and some problems from unfortunate decisions made later on, presumably for financial reasons. The splendid cork floor in Gillis Hall was replaced by builder-grade vinyl flooring, greatly increasing the noise level and generally looking tacky. The small stack elevator, circa 1928, was just barely big enough for the smallest book truck and one rather skinny library page. The partially frayed rope clearly visible while the elevator was moving did not inspire a lot of confidence, but that elevator actually broke down less often than the “new” elevator dating from 1957.

It was a very different world when I worked at the State Library, and that time was in itself a very different world from the one that saw the building first designed. One way or another it fulfilled many needs for many different users. We made it work; we had one heck of a great building to work with. 😊
Davidson’s incisive description of Adolph Sutro’s collection resonates yet again with the assessment of the Sutro Library’s Orientalia Collection. The collection is comprised of extremely rare, unique, and a hitherto quite unknown collection of Japanese woodblock prints, and its rediscovery, so to speak, will hopefully bring the full richness of what lies in Sutro’s vault to light. This truly remarkable collection was noticed in large part by accident, and as a result of the Sutro Library’s move to its new location in the J. Paul Leonard Library. While boxing up books and manuscripts, it was noticed that some Hokusai and Hiroshige prints were extant, and given Adolph Sutro’s penchant for acquiring the finest materials, thought to be of the highest quality. And indeed, as an 1885 article in the San Francisco Call confirms,

In 1882 Mr. Sutro started for Europe, via Japan and China, with the intention of making a beginning [of his library]. The 60,000 volumes now arranged on the third floor of 107 Battery Street is the result of his work abroad. While in Japan and China, and later, while in India, Mr. Sutro bought Oriental works of great value, wherever he found a manuscript or an old work or a coin that threw light upon the history of religion or philosophy of the East, he bought it and had it shipped to this port [San Francisco].

Although the Orientalia also contains Chinese trade painting books, and various scrolls dating from the early to mid-nineteenth century, the bulk of the collection consists primarily of ukiyo-e prints. In fact the Sutro Library holds hundreds upon hundreds of these prints, bound and unbound, and houses some of the finest

“...It is quite possible that in the annals of American Book collecting and library history, there is no collector who has received less recognition—in relation to the value and importance of his library than the San Francisco entrepreneur Adolph Sutro.” — RUSS DAVIDSON
This breathtaking image is by Utagawa Kunisada and depicts the Tale of Genji Series, of which multiple versions were created. This pristine copy has an accordion fold.
examples of this now obsolete art form.

Japanese ukiyo-e woodblock printing arose under the auspices of the Tokugawa Shogunate (1603–1868) and reached its peak in the latter half of the nineteenth century. After which the introduction of chromolithography helped seal the fate of this once prolific art form. While the tight reign of the Shogunate created a period of isolation for the country, closed to all things foreign with no Japanese permitted to leave on penalty of death, it was also a period of relative peace, stability, and prosperity in Japan. This milieu set the stage for a robust and healthy middle and merchant class to emerge, based mostly in the capital of Edo. Because it was from Edo that the Shogunate ruled the country, this period is often referred to as the Edo period.

The emerging middle class caused a dilemma for the ruling Shogunate, in that this class could neither own land, nor obtain political office, yet their wealth provided them with a great deal of unofficial power. In an attempt to distract the nouveau riche from seeking political power, the Shogunate designated and allowed for the establishment of Yoshiwara—red light and entertainment districts. Many of the subjects of the ukiyo-e prints were inspired by the Yoshiwara and many of the women depicted in the ukiyo-e prints were Yoshiwara mistresses (and entertainers) of Edo’s rising class of merchant men. With this in mind, ukiyo-e prints are distinguished not only for their beauty, but also as novelist James Michener ascertained (himself a connoisseur of Japanese woodblock prints) for the depiction of “the rowdy, exciting theaters patronized by the merchants” and thus serve to provide a “rich record of Edo that . . . is today prized by social historians.” In many ways, the ukiyo-e’s rise as an art form in Japan can also be seen as a reaction to the elite domain of the Japanese artistic traditions of the Kano school.
and the Tosa school. Focusing on heroic deeds and aristocratic activities, these schools considered the images of everyday life to be vulgar, unworthy of artistic merit, whereas the ukiyo-e artists wholeheartedly embraced the prosaic.  

The focus of artists on the everyday lives of Japanese citizens is reflected in the name ukiyo-e. Translated into English as “images of the floating world,” the name is a “composite term of uki (floating), yo (world), and e (pictures).” In its original usage ukiyo was a Buddhist term used to illustrate the ephemeral nature of human life. During the Edo period when ukiyo-e prints were flourishing, it evolved to refer to the sensual and pleasure filled world of the Yoshiwara. While the world outside the Yoshiwara imposed strict boundaries for the merchant class, they nevertheless came up with imaginative ways to buck the system.

By law they were required to wear somber clothing dominated by blacks and grays, but the interior linings of their kimono were apt to be of silver and gold. They were forced to live in houses that were outwardly plain, but the inner quarters were often rich in art. The brothels in which they hid their Yoshiwara mistresses were luxurious and the costumes resplendent...

Once inside the enclosed and gated confines of the Yoshiwara, merchant men were able to enjoy much that limited them in the outside world of Edo. They could buy goods, attend Kabuki theaters, enjoy services of all kinds including prostitution both male and female, and sip tea at local tea houses. Ukiyo-e provided this marginalized class with an alternative means “of attaining cultural status outside the sanctioned realms of shogunate, temple, and court.” By depicting and capturing the lived experience of citizens’ everyday lives (a novelty in Japanese art), the common man was elevated, in a sense, to immortality. In addition to this, the prints, with their vivid colors and magnificent scenes, were subversive testaments to the spartan strictures the Shogunate imposed upon the merchant class.

Ukiyo-e prints as art, are unique in that they are not the work of a sole creator. Referred to as the “ukiyo-e quartet” the production of a print was the collaboration of artist, artisan, and publisher: the publisher who provided the financial backing, the artist who came up with the design, the engraver who expertly carved the woodblocks, and the printer who skillfully colored the final print. This partnership gave ukiyo-e its unique and vibrant expression. These prints were also created for theaters and adorned theater entrances in the form of posters depicting a variety of kabuki actors. The prints were widely popular, were inexpensive, and thus avail-
able to all levels of society, and as methods improved, produced en masse for public consumption. The colorful images do go beyond the Yoshiwara and range from kabuki actors, sumo wrestlers, famous courtesans, erotica, folk tales, historical events, to breath-taking landscapes.

Another significant facet of ukiyo-e prints is how much they offer of Japan's social history in the pre-modern period. As the world took notice of ukiyo-e within the context of Japan's opening up to the West in 1853 and the subsequent exportation of Japanese goods and culture, the skill and beauty of the ukiyo-e artists was noted. Captain Osborn, commander of the frigate that took the British ambassador to Edo Bay—a trip which ended in the signing of the treaty of 1858 with Japan—was one of a number of Westerners who were impressed by ukiyo-e. Describing the Japanese artists' skill, he admiringly said that “these native illustrations bring before us in vivid relief the scenery, towns, and villages, highways and byways of that strange land—the costumes, tastes, and I might also say, the feelings of the people—so skillful are Japanese artists in the Hogarth-like talent of transferring to their sketches the characteristics of passing scenes.” Ukiyo-e prints found their way into Europe, initially, “as wrapping for fine porcelains, [but later became] . . . sought-after works of art that would inadvertently influence the course of modern art.”

Indeed, modern art owes much to the influence of ukiyo-e prints. In particular, they made an indelible mark on the French Impressionists and Post-Impressionists of the late nineteenth century. Van Gogh, Edgar Degas and Henri Toulouse-Lautrec were all inspired by the ukiyo-e use of “flat space” and the importance of the black outline, which the French Impressionists found, as opposed to the traditional Medieval illumination use of the black outline, “inspiring.” In fact, the line is essential to ukiyo-e art and Michener evokes this, saying that “the basis of ukiyo-e is line, and a print which starts with an evocative line will probably turn out to be a lovely thing, no matter what happens to the colors.” Ukiyo-e prints, for the creators of modern posters, “offer superb examples of the correct use of bold outline in conjunction with large masses of colour, and of the most effective manner of grouping figures in a design.” When, for example, one views Toulouse-Lautrec’s posters within this context; their layout, their aesthetic, their focus on a theatrical figure, all are influenced by the work of ukiyo-e designers.

It makes perfect sense that within the context of the Western embrace of Japanese aesthetics (or Japanisme as the French coined it), as well as within the context of his collecting, that Adolph Sutro would have acquired Far Eastern art such as this. In fact, starting in the
1860s, as Japanese art migrated westward into large urban cities like Paris, it became highly sought after. Beginning in the 1870s books about Japanese art began to be published, thus canonized as legitimate art, so that “by 1890 Japanese art had become an integral part of the modern art movements.”

Furthermore, three major exhibitions were a source "of inspiration for French artists: the Paris Universal Expositions of 1867 and 1878, and a major retrospective exhibition of Japanese art in 1883 at the Paris Gallery of Georges Petit.”

**CONCLUSION**

Like many of the artifacts and treasures housed within the Sutro Library, the amazing and rich collection of ukiyo-e prints is stunning both in its breadth and depth. Within the context of this genre of art, it is truly one of the great collections yet to be studied, cataloged, and enjoyed.

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5. Michener, 12.
7. Stewart, 4.
8. Stewart, 5.
10. Stewart, 7.
11. Patricia Flynn, “Visions of People.”
Mead B. Kibbey Donates the Only
Complete Set of
Alfred A. Hart’s Stereographs
Documenting the Construction of the
Central Pacific Railroad, 1864–1869

By Gary F. Kurutz
he saw, Mead asked him, “Where did you get these slides?” Apparently, the railroad had used them for promotional purposes, and Biaggini himself had used them for talks. The railroad president, realizing that the glass slides were outdated, then generously gave them to Mead for his presentation. Mead also learned that the slides were reproductions from negatives of stereographs made by Alfred A. Hart, the official photographer of the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad (the predecessor of the Southern Pacific).

That Christmas Eve adventure in the basement of the Southern Pacific Building began a fifty-year odyssey of studying Hart, collecting his views, giving numerous talks about him (at least thirty-seven times), and writing a highly acclaimed book published by the State Library Foundation in 1995, *The Railroad Photographs of Alfred A. Hart, Artist*. Furthermore, Mead came to realize that Hart had not received proper recognition for his heroic work in pictorially documenting the greatest construction project in nineteenth century California and Western history. Correcting this oversight became a cause.

This passion for these historical railroad photographs and the quest to honor Hart’s legacy, ultimately led Mead to donate his Alfred A. Hart Collection to the State Library. In December 2013, he brought them to the Library carefully preserved in archival sleeves and boxes. This gift of 364 original Hart stereographs represents the only complete collection of the great photographer’s Central Pacific Railroad series. Because of the compelling subject matter, many institutions naturally have strong holdings of Hart stereographs, but none can compare in size or condition. It took Mead decades to form this astounding collection. Wherever he went, he always kept an eye out for stereograph cards with Hart’s distinctive logotype on the rear or verso of his double image stereograph cards. One can only imagine the countless phone calls, letters, emails, and trips to antique stores, book fairs, and auctions that it took to amass all 364 cards, and one can only imagine that thrilling moment when he acquired that last elusive stereograph, “Monarch from the East”. His gift certainly stands as the finest single collection of original stereographs ever given to the Library through its Foundation. The Mead B. Kibbey Alfred A. Hart Collection, once cataloged and digitized, will be added to the Library’s extensive holdings of stereographs made available.
in the California History Section. Foundation members may recall that Mead also donated to the Library a fabulous quarter-plate daguerreotype of a young Theodore Judah, the engineer who laid out the route of the Central Pacific Railroad over the formidable High Sierra.4

Mead has had a long fascination with the medium of the stereograph and three-dimensional photography. He often carries a camera capable of making 3-D views and stuffs examples of new images in his coat pockets that he will happily pull out to the delight of those who are fortunate to be in conversation with him. Of course, his home is graced with boxes of modern Kibbey-created stereo views. His keen interest in Hart’s work and the story of the formidable task of building the railroad over the High Sierra led him not only to collect his views but also to retrace as much as possible the actual locations where Hart had planted his camera tripod. This was no easy task, as the Sierra is studded with sharp boulders; fallen branches and trees; steep granite escarpments; long, dark railroad tunnels and snow sheds; towering cliffs with precipitous drops to canyon floors; wildlife, and numerous other obstacles. Plus the path of the railroad reaches high altitudes that challenge the lung capacity of even a robust physical specimen like Mead. On occasion, too, when setting up his camera and tripod, a freight or passenger train would noisily rumble around a bend shaking the ground while Mead clutched his camera and held on. There is no telling how many miles Mead drove from his Sacramento home up Interstate 80 and over dirt roads in the Sierra to get to the railroad tracks and retrace Hart’s footsteps. In preparation for these trips and writing the book, he studied Hart’s views to pinpoint locations, poured over detailed topographical maps, and spent many hours grinding through microfilm looking for any mention of Hart in newspapers, railroad reports, and other documents.

Fortunately, much of Mead’s personal experiences tracing Hart’s footsteps are recorded in his monumental book. The late historian of California photography, Peter E. Palmquist wrote the volume’s foreword and the following is excerpted

“J Street, Sacramento City. View from the Levee.” Hart took this dramatic view just two blocks from his studio.
from Palmquist’s eloquent introduction:

[Mead] has made a special point to visit most of the sites photographed by Hart, and has placed his own tripod in the precise same spot as Hart’s, some one hundred thirty years later. In order to understand Hart’s stereography, Mead experimented with actual stereoscopic negatives with a camera dating from Hart’s era and came to understand the “how-to” of different focal length lenses in field photography and the difficulty of adjusting an 1860s-style tripod to the rough mountain terrain and jumbles of broken granite. Mead has meticulously traced each step of stereograph production, ranging from optical spacing of the prints to labeling the finished card even manufacturing his own salted paper. Mead has been particularly conscientious in his attempt to date each photograph and to provide insight into why they were taken.

Mead, himself, in his book beautifully explained his historical mission to give Hart his just recognition as one of California’s premier pioneer photographers. He wrote:

Locating the exact sites from which

“Locomotive on Trestle.” Hart No. 135. The locomotive was named “Conness” in honor of California Senator John Conness. The senator introduced the bill that preserved Yosemite in 1864.

Mr. Kibbey poses with stereo camera and tripod, much like the one Hart used in the mid-1860s. This photograph was then used for the gold-stamped engraving that graces the cover of his book.
Mr. Kibbey selected this unusual photograph as the frontispiece image for his book on Hart. This is a rare example of Hart producing a single lens image of the Central Pacific Railroad, probably using his stereo camera modified for panoramic work. It was probably taken in mid-1865. Whitney and Paradise of New York and not Hart actually published the image.

“Looking out West Portal of Tunnel 10.” Hart No. 255. When inserted into a stereo viewer, the onlooker would obtain an astounding 3-D sensation.
Hart took many of his views in California was just difficult enough to make it fun, and it became a sort of hobby with me. In the process I came to deeply respect Hart, and to feel that although a century apart, he and I had photographed a work of giants.

As the official photographer of the Central Pacific, Hart was the only one to record scenes during the actual construction of the railroad over the mountains. He was permitted to stop trains and work crews for the time needed to set up his camera and to find the best location for his photographs. He was also allowed to have his small photo-darkroom-wagon hauled to the end-of-track on a railroad flat car where he pushed ahead to capture scenes of the early stages of excavation for the road bed. Because he was on site well before the completion of the famous snowsheds in 1869, and before the tracks were in such heavy use, Hart was able to take advantage of photographic opportunities not available to other photographers of that era. In addition, his photographs taken along this route during the actual process of building trestles, constructing enormous embankments, and digging tunnels can never be duplicated.

Some of his finest photographs were taken from the tops of boxcars or locomotives and because of this, I carried a six-foot folding ladder on my truck, and by setting it up between the rails and standing on the top rung, I could get my camera at almost the same elevation Hart used. Unfortunately when I was on top of that trembling ladder (the ties were spaced so that only two of the ladder’s four legs were resting on a tie), the sound of an approaching train greatly reduced my interest in perfectly duplicating Hart’s composition. By using modern topographic maps, many isolated locations were quite apparent, but often proved to be more than a mile from even a four-wheel-drive road. In those instances several hours were needed to hike in and back out with my camera, a light tripod, the rolled map, 8-by-10 inch enlarged copies of the appropriate Hart prints, and a compass to measure the direction of the shadows in his photographs (to help establish the time of day when he had taken the original views).

In presenting his magnificent collection to the Library, Mead also provided an impressive and invaluable list of all 364 views with a detailed explanation of each stereo card. This represented incredible scholarship. As Mead explained, “This short catalog [32 pages of single-spaced type!] was prepared by carefully examining every stereo view listed with a 20-power lens, and in a few cases, a 60-power binocular microscope, so that small and often important details could be noted.” For each image, he provided a narrative description denoting location, the construction work that was going on, and types of equipment being used by the crew. Where visible, he also pointed out Hart’s tripod and photographer’s wagon. His magisterial book features appendices reproducing and listing all these images, but since its publication date in 1995, Mead
has updated the catalog with new information. Being such a thorough collector, Mead also went after variant views. Sometimes two or more stereo cards were labeled with the same number, and through research, he identified the correct one in his extensive list. In addition, after the railroad company terminated Hart and hired C. E. Watkins as its photographer, many of Hart’s negatives were then published under Watkins’ name. Several of his views also bear the imprint of Frank Durgan of Sacramento. Such a practice was not that unusual in an era when respect for copyright was casual at best. Mead again presented irrefutable evidence to properly attribute the images to Hart. Consequently, Mead’s gift also contains eighty-two variations of Hart’s work, some of which bear the logo of Watkins or Durgan. His amazing inventory includes a grading system with numbers indicating the condition of each card. For example, a card with the number one is considered in the “worst” condition and the number four signifies it is in mint condition as issued. The number of “fours” in his gift, not surprisingly, far outnumber the rest.

Mead’s book, since its publication by the Foundation nearly twenty years ago, naturally continues to receive much praise, and it is cited in numerous scholarly works on the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. In addition, the beautifully-designed oblong volume is highly collectable and may now be classified as a rare book, judging by prices found on the Internet. A recent online survey lists prices ranging from $150 to an astounding $2,700! The Foundation originally sold it for $55 each, and it did not take long to sell out. Parts of his book are also reproduced online through the Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum (a virtual museum). Most recently, Mead supplied a superb biography of Hart for inclusion in Waiting for the Cars: Alfred A. Hart’s Stereoscopic Views of the Central Pacific Railroad by Howard Goldbaum and Wendell W. Huffman and published by the Nevada State Railroad Museum in 2012. Utilizing new technology, the volume is illustrated with 3-D anaglyphs, and by using the glasses supplied in the book, a viewer can see the images in 3-D.

The last numbered view in the Hart series: “364. Railroad at Ogden. Wasatch Range in Distance.” The card documents Leland Stanford’s group at Ogden, Utah.
With this donation, Mead’s work on Hart has by no means ended. Hart took many other photographs besides railroad construction views, and Mead has collected many of these images. Hart spent his post-railroad years as an artist and as an inventor of a folding magic lantern projector. Unfortunately, the future was not kind, and he lived his remaining years in poverty dying on March 5, 1908, at the Alameda County Infirmary, a few days short of his ninety-second birthday. The undertaker sold the great photographer’s body to a local medical college for dissection. Because of this rather ignominious end, it has been an ongoing goal of Mead to celebrate his life. His book certainly is an appropriate memorial, but Mead is also planning to create a granite monument dedicated to him in the Sacramento Old City Cemetery. Fittingly, it will carry a photograph by Alfred A. Hart, the man who pictorially documented the linking of California to the nation by a steel ribbon. A replica of that monument will be placed in the Mead B. Kibbey Gallery adjacent the Library’s California History Room.

1. Magic lantern slides became a popular form of entertainment during the nineteenth century. In the case of the Hart views, a positive image on glass was created from a wet plate negative. Once the plate dried, technicians finished the image with a mat and a glass cover that was taped to seal the image. In turn, the slide could be projected using a magic lantern. Made of wood or metal, a magic lantern consisted of an artificial light source and a combination of lenses to enlarge the positive transparency up to 10 x 20 feet.

2. Stereo photography enjoyed immense popularity during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is now enjoying a resurgence. Stereographs consisted of two slightly different positive images mounted on a card. In turn, a person placed the card in a stereoscope and was able to see a single image in 3-D. Oftentimes, the publisher of the stereographic included a caption below the image. In the case of Hart, the cards were usually printed with the name of the series “Central Pacific Railroad” on the left and right of the images. On the back of the card appeared Hart’s printed logotype, name, and often his address. Mead’s book includes a full and lucid technical description of the making of a stereograph from taking the picture to producing the finished product.

3. “Monarch from the East” is a dramatic view of the Union Pacific locomotive No. 119 at Promontory, Utah, on May 10, 1869, the day the tracks of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads met. It is card number 359. Hart’s stereograph shows a group of triumphant men standing on the top of the locomotive and a slightly inebriated U.S. Army band standing in front of the locomotive.

A Drawing and the Making of a Mural

By Donald J. Hagerty

Maynard Dixon’s original pen and ink drawing on paper, measuring 14 3/4 by 9 3/4 inches, signed MD and dated June 1928 at the lower right. On the reverse is Dixon’s printed 728 Montgomery Street studio label.
In late 1927, the artist Maynard Dixon learned that he had been awarded the commission for a mural at the new Library and Courts Building across from the state capitol in Sacramento. Shortly thereafter, he traveled to Sacramento to begin the process of assessing the mural’s location. The mural would be located in the spacious James L. Gillis reading room on the third floor of the neoclassical-designed structure which occupied the entire width of the building’s north front. Enormous windows mostly occupied three walls, but on the fourth side a great stretch of blank wall stood above bookshelves. The central portion was broken by a large doorway faced with black marble. This was flanked by shelving which runs the full length of the wall and rises to about one-third of the room’s total height. On this great expanse, Dixon would create the heroic fourteen-by-seventy feet A Pageant of Traditions, considered one of California’s great historical murals. The title had been suggested by Charles Peter Weeks, the building’s principal architect.1

Dixon made a thorough and precise study of the wall, concerned that the mural belonged there and that it would be in harmonious relationship with the surroundings. Most likely, he made a quick pencil sketch of his thoughts about the mural, which would serve as an “idea guide” for the dual pageantry that is the story of California. Nearly two years earlier, he did the same thing with the Room of the Don murals for San Francisco’s Mark Hopkins Hotel, which he sketched out on the back of a napkin at a restaurant. Through experience, Dixon knew that mural decoration required strong discipline and large scale thinking. But ideas that seemed workable on a small scale sometimes proved futile when enlarged. Thus he carefully planned every step in a mural project.

By now considered one of California’s preeminent mural painters, Dixon painted his first one in 1907 for the Southern Pacific Railroad’s Tucson station. In 1915, he created murals for Anita Baldwin’s home in Arcadia, California.2 This was followed by murals for the dining rooms of the steamships S.S. Sierra and the S.S. Silver State, the foyer for the Spring Valley Water Company in San Francisco, Barker Brothers Building in Los Angeles, the Room of the Dons (in conjunction with Frank Van Sloun) for the Mark Hopkins Hotel in San Francisco, the proscenium for Oakland Technical High School, and the foyer for the West Coast Theater in Oakland. Dixon credited his work between 1916 and 1921 for the outdoor advertising firm of Foster and Kleiser in San Francisco for honing his skills as a muralist particularly in modern design and color. George Kleiser wanted to elevate outdoor advertising beyond fence painting, and he acquired some of the leading California artists for his staff. Among Dixon’s colleagues were Harold Von Schmidt, Roi Partridge, Charles Stafford Duncan, Maurice Del Mue, and Rinaldo Cuneo. Partridge, who introduced Dixon to a young photographer named Dorothea Lange and served as the best man at their wedding in 1920, recalled that Dixon was “one of the last of a group of notable men of a past generation who worked in the arts and letters in San Francisco, giving it artistic and literary distinction such as it has not had since.”3

Because of the large doorway to the reading room which was located in the center of the wall, Dixon needed to design the mural to fit over and around the doorway entrance, in effect developing the mural into two parts. To tie the two large spaces on either side, he envisioned a curved line starting at the apex of the doorway which swept right and left to the lower corners of the mural. Then to relieve the angular space above the entrance, Dixon would place a group of relieving curves with three circular figures representing Philosophy, Science, and Art, anchored by a large one at the center, and smaller ones on each side. In a nod to symbolism, Dixon placed the female figure of Beauty to the left representing arts and culture; on the opposite side would stand Power, indicative of modern technology and industry.

On the mural’s right side, Dixon envisioned the American impact on California’s past with iconic images of early Colonial settlers, a mounted Revolutionary soldier, frontiersman, several Afro-American individuals, a miner from the Gold Rush period, ending with a 1920s era laborer and his family. On the left panel, Dixon brought forth the Hispanic contribution to California, including Aztec warriors, a mounted conquistador, robed priests representing the Jesuit and Franciscan traditions, kneeling Native Americans, and a Hispanic workman and his spouse. Toward the end of the procession are a dashing Californio and his striking female companion.

With her billowing white dress, crimson shawl, jet black hair, and haughty daring look, the figure looks as if she might have stepped out of the pages from Gertrude Atherton’s classic collection of stories, The Splendid Idle Forties, a work set in Hispanic California just before its pastoral lifestyle was swept aside by the arrival of the Gold Rush.4 It was a time of sprawling ranchos, bullfights, fandangos, fancy dress balls, horse races, and families like

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**EDITOR’S NOTE**
Foundation Board Member Donald J. Hagerty is the authority on Maynard Dixon having written a score of books and articles on the California-born artist. He has also written auction catalog entries, forewords to books, and curated exhibits on Western art.
Reproduced here is the final painting of the Californio woman that appears on the left side of Dixon’s great mural in Gillis Hall.
Through the passage of time and circumstances, virtually all of Dixon's preparatory sketches for the mural have been destroyed, lost or have otherwise disappeared. Only three are known to exist. The third one recently surfaced when noted Los Angeles book dealer Michael Dawson contacted Gary Kurutz, principal librarian emeritus of the California State Library to offer the library a sketch of the female figure. Through the generosity of the California State Library Foundation, the drawing was purchased and is now on display in the Library's Gillis Hall reading room.

The drawing is pen and ink on paper, measuring 14 3/4 by 9 3/4 inches, signed MD and dated June 1928 at the lower right. On the reverse is Dixon's printed 728 Montgomery Street studio label. Dixon developed a great affinity for California's Hispanic culture, beginning as a young boy when he encountered vaqueros working on his uncle's ranch in the San Joaquin Valley. Already an established San Francisco illustrator at the age of twenty, Dixon and fellow artist Xavier Martinez visited Monterey in 1895, attracted by the remnants of old California. When Martinez returned to San Francisco, Dixon remained, venturing down the coast to the Big Sur area for several weeks to visit remote ranches still practicing the way of the vaquero. When he returned to San Francisco, not only was he now an expert rider, but he was also fluent in the Spanish language and had become with an unqualified admirer of the Californio lifestyle. Frequent visits to Monterey and to the Southwest after 1900 further solidified his observant skills for their customs and costumes.

The history of the drawing is fascinating. Sometime in the early 1930s, Dixon gave the drawing to Richard and Mary Tomalino who operated the Villa Turin restaurant at 800 Montgomery Street, in the same block which housed Dixon and Dorthea Lange’s studios. The former owner of the drawing and a descendant of the Tomalino’s recalled that his grandparents were good friends with Dixon and Lange and that the artists were frequent patrons of their establishment. Like most artists during the Depression years, Dixon would trade his artwork for meals at this restaurant and others in the neighborhood.

Dixon began work on the mural at his 728 Montgomery Street studio in San Francisco, working until early summer of 1928 on preparatory sketches. Using this pen and ink sketch, he created a larger image of the Hispanic woman and her male companion positioned on architects detail paper against measured squares with a ratio of six inches to the foot. He considered the ancient Egyptians master muralists and closely studied their use of grids to transfer images onto tombs and monument walls. This grid system ensured that proportion and scale were maintained when transferring any of the images onto the mural wall. Most important, it allowed him to avoid the inaccuracies and subjectivity of a freehand approach. In July 1928, Dixon moved to Sacramento to begin painting the mural. First, canvas was glued to the wall and then primed. Then using his grid technique, Dixon would outline the life-size figures in charcoal on the wall. When that was completed, he began to apply color using oil paint thinned, with turpentine. This ensured that there would be little evidence of brush marks. Varnish was not applied which resulted in a flat matte finish eliminating a shiny surface. In early November, Dixon completed the mural.

Comparison of the initial drawing of the Hispanic woman to the elegant figure on the mural shows Dixon transferred his thoughts with great fidelity. Through Dixon's brilliant vision she is forever imbedded on the wall. Along with her dashing escort, they represent the picturesque 1840s in California's history, a time of ranchos, presidios, missions, and the Dons before an agrarian-based life would be overwhelmed by the Gold Rush and the Industrial Age.

ENDNOTES


2. Dixon considered these murals of Plains Indian life one of the great transformative events in his career. Through the generosity of a Southern California family, the Baldwin murals were donated to the California State Library in 1999. They are installed on the second floor of the Library and Courts Building.


ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR BTBL FORMED

Early in 2014, the Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) launched the BTBL User Advisory Council (BUAC). The purpose of the council is to advise and offer recommendations regarding the services, goals, policies, and practices of BTBL.

Nine members have been chosen for the council, which will hold its first meeting on May 21, 2014. Membership in the inaugural group represents the range of BTBL patrons: blind, low vision, organic reading disabled (i.e., dyslexic) and physically disabled Northern Californians with print disabilities, including representatives of veterans and blindness consumer groups. The council is currently seeking to add a youth representative or the parent of a young patron. Geographical representation of council members includes the Bay Area and the five county greater Sacramento region with plans to add new members from the northern coast and/or interior. The council will meet quarterly by teleconference and at least once a year in person. Members will be asked to serve as outreach ambassadors for BTBL services throughout Northern California by helping to staff events and by talking to groups, institutions, and individuals who would benefit from BTBL’s specialized services.

The BTBL User Advisory Council is authorized to have no less than seven nor more than fifteen members, who serve three-year terms. BTBL is presently seeking future advisory council members whose terms begin in 2015. Applicants can find bylaws and an application on the web site: http://btbl.ca.gov.

DIRECTOR REPRESENTS BTBL AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

BTBL Director Mike Marlin is traveling frequently this year. A five-month term on the Executive Board of the American Library Association (ALA) takes him to Chicago in April for the discussion of national library issues, such as privacy protection, intellectual freedom cases, the ALA budget. The meeting will also address a recent Diversity Initiative from African American and Hispanic ALA members regarding attendance at the 2016 conference in Orlando, Florida, motivated by recent Stand Your Ground law decisions. In early May, Mike and other BTBL staff travel to the biennial National Library Service (NLS) National Conference of Libraries Serving the Blind and Physically Handicapped in Oklahoma City to learn about new practices and regulations governing these libraries.

Mike is also representing ALA on the Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities section of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA). The implementation of the “Marrakesh Treaty” — an important international treaty regarding copyrighted works and access to those works by blind people and others who can’t read standard print — is on the agenda for the 2014 IFLA Congress in Lyon, France. Mike and other representatives of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped will be making presentations at this congress.
FOUNDATION ACQUIRES RARE CALAVERAS COUNTY LITHOGRAPH

In Memory of Elizabeth Gibson

This beautiful 1853 lithograph of a big tree in Calaveras County was donated to the California State Library Foundation by the friends and colleagues of Elizabeth “Liz” Gibson (June 5, 1942—October 14, 2013) in recognition of her invaluable service to California libraries. Born in Sacramento, her family moved to Calaveras County when she was six years old and she grew up on a cattle ranch. Liz graduated from Calaveras High School in 1960 and received a B.A. from the University of California at Davis in 1964. She served two tours of duty as a volunteer with the American Red Cross in Vietnam. On her return from the war, she received her Master’s Degree in Library Science from the University of California, Berkeley. She had a distinguished career spanning over thirty years with the California State Library.

The lithograph is a striking large folio view drawn from nature by J. M. Lapham and entitled Mammoth, Arbor Vitae. Britton and Rey, the distinguished lithographic firm from San Francisco, printed the view of the Giant Sequoia. It is beautifully hand colored.
WINDGATE PRESS PUBLISHES NEW BOOK ON CALIFORNIA PHOTOGRAPHY

California and the Camera, from Glass to Film: 1850–1930 by historian Wayne Bonnett, this stunning collection of photographs is available for purchase through the California State Library Foundation’s website. Featuring images from the State Library’s California History Section, Bonnett traces the state’s development through the evolution of the art and science of photography, from silvery daguerreotypes to albumen mammoth plate prints, to modern film. His tribute to the intrepid photographers who documented California’s emerging industrial and agricultural empire would make a perfect gift for photography enthusiasts and California history collectors. All proceeds benefit the California History Section.

The handsome volume sells for $50.00 plus sales tax and shipping.

The front cover illustration documents President Theodore Roosevelt at Glacier Point, Yosemite National Park, 1903.

Frontispiece photograph. Mobile camera, McCurry Foto Company, Sacramento, California, 1924.
Miners at work with a “long tom” sluice box, Auburn Ravine, Placer County, 1852. The quarter-plate daguerreotype is attributed to Joseph Blaney Starkweather.

(Above) With comely attendants, the California Petroleum Company’s service station at the corner of Wilshire Blvd. and New Hampshire Ave. in Los Angeles celebrated its opening. This J. Howard Mott photograph makes the viewer long for the return of full service.

(Left) Fox Wilshire Theater, Beverly Hills, 1930. Photograph by J. Howard Mott. A long exposure time in this shot caused the moving cars on Wilshire Blvd. to blur into oblivion.
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