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Raymond H. Fogler Library at the “busy campus crossroads” of the University of Maine, circa 1965.

# AT THE “BUSY CAMPUS CROSSROADS”: THE LAST FIFTY YEARS AT RAYMOND H. FOGLER LIBRARY

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*Keeping pace with an “overwhelming explosion of knowledge and information” has been a particular challenge for those at Raymond H. Fogler Library since the university celebrated its centennial in 1965. The technologies for the storage and delivery of information have seen unprecedented rates of innovation, acceptance, and obsolescence. Acquiring appropriate materials has necessitated a close look at changing needs of faculty, increasingly specialized programs, university budget freezes, shifting alignments with other libraries in the University of Maine System, and increasing costs of many subscription journals and databases. Even as electronic access has become prolific, libraries continue to be viewed as important physical spaces and efforts to increase seating capacity have been ongoing. At the core these changes, both physical and digital, remains an effort to serve the needs of academic and statewide communities and reflect the principal mission of a land-grant institution. To the extent that the establishment of land-grant institutions has been equated with increased American egalitarianism and democratization, similarly, libraries have been viewed as having the capability of providing broader access to knowledge and an opportunity for anyone to pursue educational goals and to become a more informed, productive citizen. Desirée Butterfield-Nagy is an archivist in the Special Collections Department at the University of Maine’s Raymond H. Fogler Library. She holds a Masters of Library and Information Science with a concentration in Archives & Preservation from the University of South Carolina, and has been with the Department since 2009.*

**I**N OUR CURRENT era of rapidly changing digital technologies, an “overwhelming explosion of knowledge and information facing universities today” is such a common depiction that many modern readers would hardly pause to contemplate its significance. This expression was used to describe a major challenge faced by the University of



When this photograph ran with an article in the *Maine Sunday Telegram* in 1964, the caption was “‘Tech’ Students: young men and women of the College of Technology are frequent users of this reference room in Fogler Library.” The 17-year-old-plant serves hundreds of students every hour, and is often occupied until “lights out” at midnight.

Maine libraries, however, as early as 1964 when library administrators also noted that “students can learn effectively only in relation to the materials which are available to them.”<sup>1</sup> If there was to be any hope that the libraries in Orono and Portland could continue to serve as the core of instruction and research at their institutions, they emphasized, additional resources would be critical to accommodate the growth of book and journal collections and to provide study space for steadily increasing enrollments.

When library director James MacCampbell spoke to a reporter of the student-run newspaper, *Maine Campus*, the following year, roughly 3,500 students were visiting the library each day, a figure surpassed only by visits to the Memorial Union. “If we served coffee and doughnuts,” MacCampbell kidded, “we’d probably have more business than the Union.”<sup>2</sup> A similar article, “UM’s Fogler Library: Busy Campus Cross-

roads” appearing in the *Maine Sunday Telegram* noted, “It is for no small reason that the Raymond H. Fogler Library stands squarely in the center of the University of Maine’s spacious Orono campus . . . a steady stream of students and professors, numbering in the hundreds every hour, pours in and out of the State University’s most often-used facility and, obviously, its center of learning.”<sup>3</sup> Library shelves already held more than 300,000 volumes. The university administration had just approved a two-phase plan, with President Lloyd Elliot having included in the year’s budget a legislative request for the \$300,000 needed to begin to almost double the library’s holding capacity. As the university crossed the threshold of its hundredth anniversary, these efforts marked the beginning of an era characterized by continued library expansion and innovation. Specifically, this meant supporting the research efforts of faculty and students, providing efficient service, preserving collections while also making them accessible, and examining the roles of libraries within the broader community in order to serve the citizens of the state of Maine.

### At the Center of Campus

Beginning with its completion in 1947, the current library building allowed for significantly more space as compared to previous homes in Fernald Hall, where it had been located from 1868 to 1888; Coburn Hall, the library’s home from 1888 to 1906; and one of the many libraries funded by the wealthiest American of the time, Carnegie Hall, which housed the library from 1906 to 1947. Then library director, Louis T. Ibbotson, began his career in the Carnegie Hall location and strenuously campaigned for the new building. Although the cornerstone was set in 1941, events of World War II stalled completion for several years. However, Ibbotson’s hopes were eventually realized, and he was able to oversee the shift to the new building in 1947. The library was named for Raymond H. Fogler in 1962 in recognition of the tireless fundraising and volunteer efforts of this University of Maine alumnus and national leader in the retail industry who had served as president of the department store chains W. T. Grant and Montgomery Ward.

Efforts during the 1960s focused on completing renovations as rapidly as possible to accommodate steadily growing collections and to provide additional study space for students, but these many changes were minor compared to the sixty-thousand-square-foot addition completed in 1976, which fundamentally changed the rear section of the building. In 1996, thanks especially to the help and support of University Presi-



The ashtrays were likely removed from the library's Oakes Room well before the renovation to build a café in 2000.

dent Fred Hutchinson, a \$1,000,000 remote storage building was constructed on the southern edge of campus. This facility made room for an additional five hundred seats in the main building, thereby doubling Fogler's seating capacity. The year 2000 saw major renovations to convert the first-floor Oakes Room into a café and the second-floor Thomas E. Lynch Room to the University Club, a dining space reserved for members of the university community and for special functions. Recent renovations have enhanced the building's climate control and created new classroom and tutoring spaces.

## Growing Collections and Difficult Choices

Efforts to acquire appropriate materials for the library have meant meeting the challenges of shifting needs of the university's faculty, increasingly specialized programs, university budget freezes, and increasing costs of many subscription journals and databases. A major refrain of annual reports for the library from the 1960s to the present has been the recognition that, in comparison with other programs, the library has fared well in terms of funding. This has been true even in financially difficult times for the university. However, two major concerns were also stressed nearly every year: a lack of space and insufficient base funding. While several university presidents committed to increasing the library materials budget at a rate of as much as twelve percent per year, library staff members repeatedly noted that, while able to keep up with essential needs, strides could be quickly eroded by diminished buying power and by an inability to keep up with inflation, creating the need to make difficult decisions while attempting to serve all the programs of the university community.

Awareness of the many challenges of meeting diverse educational programs was certainly nothing new. As early as 1898, University President Abram W. Harris emphasized that the principal mission of a land-grant institution, with its focus on applied experiments requiring specialized laboratories and equipment, meant higher costs than a traditional curriculum of courses in Latin, Greek, Philosophy, and Mathematics. Academic programs and the student population have steadily expanded since then, with a particularly notable increase in students and research programs between the end of World War II and the early 1960s.

A merger approved by the Maine State Legislature in 1961 meant that the School of Law and the University of Maine in Portland were administered through the Orono campus. In turn, Fogler's administration oversaw libraries on the campuses of the University of Southern Maine, the law school, and, at times, Bangor Community College. The most enduring relationship of this type has been the association of Fogler Library with the library at the Ira C. Darling Marine Center in Walpole, where the Darling Marine Center Library has served as a branch of Fogler since 1966. All of these relationships further expanded the types of resources needed by the state's university community.

By the mid-1960s, the Orono campus offered graduate and undergraduate courses in more than forty programs in twenty-five departments. Research also took place through the Cooperative Extension

Service, Maine Agricultural Experiment Station, Maine Technological Experiment Station, and the Department of Industrial Cooperation. Keeping abreast of increasing levels of faculty specialization required a reasonable budget, librarians indicated, with more funding than was available in previous years.

### Changing Formats and Automation

While increasing specialization created one challenge for keeping up with needed resources, rapidly changing technologies created another. The last fifty years have been an era in which technologies applied to the storage and delivery of information have seen unprecedented arcs of innovation, acceptance, and obsolescence. While libraries have hoped to be on the forefront of making information available, swiftly evolving formats and their rapid obsolescence created the need for making cautious predictions about technologies in which to invest.

Phonograph records, audio cassettes, video tapes, educational film strips, and a wide variety of micro-sized formats—along with the equipment needed for accessing them—were all a part of an evolution of ac-



## **A FAREWELL TO THE CARD CATALOG**

***Please join us in a brief retirement party for the library's main card catalog.***

***Place : Fogler Library catalog area, first floor***

***Date: Wednesday October 2***

***Time: 3:10 pm***

For more than 100 years the card catalog has served as the primary means of access to library resources at the University of Maine. Countless hours of staff time have been invested in typing and filing over 1.9 million cards. Generations of students and faculty have thumbed through these cards in search of the books and other library information they represent.

We have now reached the end of the era of the card catalog. URSUS, the library's online catalog, was opened to the public more than 3 years ago. Since that time the card catalog has not been updated and it is now seriously out of date. Since the URSUS data base has grown to include virtually all the information listed in the catalog and much more, the time has come to recognize that the transition to the online catalog is complete.

The program will include remarks by Chancellor Robert Woodbury, President John Hitt and Dean Elaine Albright, followed by the symbolic emptying of a few catalog drawers into recycling bins. Light refreshments will be served in the lobby area of the library's east entrance. Your participation in this event showing your support for our progress with URSUS will be much appreciated.

FREE! Limited time only! If you would like some catalog cards for old times' sake, you may take them any time during the week of September 30 - Oct 4. Bring your own containers.

A 1991 flyer served as the invitation to the official "retirement party" of the library's card catalog, a chance to bid farewell to the more than 1.9 million paper cards that had served the library for more than 100 years.

quiring resources to support campus curriculum and materials that captured the interest of students and faculty. "Librarians are gadgeteers at heart and are not inclined to resist the introduction of new technology," noted Ralph E. Ellsworth in a 1972 report, entitled *Library Service on the Orono Campus*. "If criticized," he further noted, "it would be that we have rushed into application before evaluating their costs as well as contributions."<sup>4</sup>

The contribution of one technology, however, has hardly been disputed, perhaps representing the most significant change in library offerings in the last fifty years: the searchable, electronic database. On the Orono campus, the first access to a national database was unveiled in 1977, as noted in an article, "Fogler Computer Makes Researching Easier," which appeared in the *Maine Campus*.<sup>5</sup> Fifteen to twenty minutes with the new process produced a list of sources on a particular subject that could then be pursued by the researcher. A small teletype in the library was connected via telenet to computer banks of the System Development Corporation in California. Rather than consulting the long-trusted paper indices to find citations for articles, a researcher's subject terms were matched against citations the company had compiled for the sciences, business, education, psychology, statistics, and government research and development.

The advantages of electronic data storage, in terms of the relative ease with which data could be updated, sorted, and stored as compared to print resources, caught on quickly at the local level. By 1983, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Dr. Harlan Philippi, asked the eight University of Maine library directors (representing leadership in Orono, Southern Maine, the School of Law, Farmington, Presque Isle, Machias, Fort Kent, and Augusta) to discuss the development of a unified on-line library catalog for the University System.<sup>6</sup> In their article, "Maine Libraries: A History of Sharing and Collaboration," James Jackson Sanborn and David Nutty described a culture of collaboration that brought together state library leadership as early as 1915, as directors at the University of Maine in Orono; Maine State Library; Bangor and Portland Public Libraries; Colby, Bates, and Bowdoin Colleges; and the Bangor Theological Seminary all worked together on a plan to create a Union List of Serials. These early collaborative efforts, some of the earliest in the country, assisted in the transition associated with the advent of computers and automation systems, and library directors turned their attention toward ways to maximize automated processing, storage, and communications.<sup>7</sup> The system-wide plan of the 1980s precipitated dis-

cussion of converting information on paper cards to machine readable form along with the possibility of barcoding all items, creating shared databases, and coordinating efforts in the selection of hardware and software.

The successful implementation of an online public access catalog known as URSUS was one of the significant accomplishments reported in 1989, making way for another long-anticipated event on the Orono campus. An invitation, in the form of a flyer, was circulated to announce a farewell to the card catalog on October 2, 1991. This official “retirement party” was a chance for faculty, staff, and students to bid farewell to the more than 1.9 million paper cards that previously served as the primary means of access to library resources for more than one hundred years.

“I was brought here to the University of Maine to computerize the library,” said then director of libraries, Elaine Albright, in an interview with the *Bangor Daily News* in 1992. When the first three personal computers that had been placed in front of the circulation desk in 1983 did not attract the level of response she had hoped for, Albright did “what any woman with a vision would have done. She added seven more computers to the cluster. The sheer mass of machinery attracted students, and, before long, the computer center became the hot spot in the library.”<sup>8</sup>

While new digital catalogs and databases helped researchers locate citations and discover the existence of resources, few predictions forecasted the Internet’s eventual ability to facilitate immediate, full-text access. Ellsworth’s 1972 report asserted, “There is no possibility within the foreseeable future, unless some new breakthrough appears either in terms of technology or costs, that the computer will be used to provide access to the textual literature of scholarship as contrasted to data or bibliographic controls.”<sup>9</sup> Just over forty years later, though, the ability to download full-text articles is more the norm than the exception, and a large percentage of the nearly four-hundred databases offered through Fogler Library provide at least some full-text access. The library also contributes a significant number of electronic resources through digitization projects, including the university’s *Prism* yearbooks, launched in 2007, and a joint project with the Maine State Library to provide electronic access to the state’s annual reports for towns ranging in date from 1848 to 1950. Many of these electronic resources are shared through the University of Maine’s institutional repository, DigitalCommons@U Maine, which has continued to grow since its initiation in 2011, provid-



Images of Raymond H. Fogler Library's computer cluster in 1984. Since the 1977 unveiling of the first access to a national, electronic database, the move toward digital technologies and automation has steadily increased at Fogler Library.

ing a forum for items scanned by library staff along with the research and publications from all departments on campus.

The movement toward digital technologies and automation has been so dramatic that some have questioned whether libraries should become less focused on, or even give up, their physical settings. In their 2013 article, "Are Libraries Necessary? Are Libraries Obsolete?" Linda Silka, then director of the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center, and Joyce Rumery, dean of libraries at UMaine, recognized that the ways in which libraries are needed and being utilized may be constantly evolving, presenting the need to explore challenges and strategies to address the rapidly changing context in which information is made available and used. Even as electronic access has become prolific, libraries are also viewed as tremendously important physical spaces within communities, and "are frequently seen as the true heart of the community, whether a small town, a city, or a college or university campus."<sup>10</sup>

In working to balance access to both tangible and digital resources, as of 2015, Fogler Library's collections included approximately 1,040,000 volumes, 3,889 periodical subscriptions, 1.6 million micro-



The library's steps have often served as a gathering place in the "true heart of the community" for speeches and events, including this "End the War" demonstration in 1969.

forms, and 2.2 million government publications from the United States and Canadian federal governments, the State of Maine, and Canadian provinces, along with its rapidly growing number of electronic resources.

### **Serving Academic and Statewide Communities through Collaboration**

The core of these changes in offerings, both physical and digital, has always been an effort to serve the needs of academic and statewide communities, to provide leadership in the development and delivery of library services in Maine, and to cooperate with other libraries to meet the information needs of the citizens of the state. The library science profession has long embraced the fundamentally political nature of access to information, recognizing that access can contribute to an informed public within a democratic society and can help citizens develop skills to be critical of all messages, whether those of the media, governments, corporations, or the classroom. In 1973, a professor of library science at the University of Maine, James Van Luik, spoke of the potential

for a “socially animating role” of libraries. He noted that increasing automation within society had encouraged thoughts about ways that systems could be improved, not just in the delivery of library information, but also of social services, the promotion of cultural expansion, and the allowance of more leisure time within society. In the Library Service Department (a program that existed in Orono from 1967 to 1978), faculty stressed American librarianship’s relationship to constitutional inquiry, censorship, the evaluation of information retrieval systems and their limitations, and the relationship between libraries and the media.<sup>11</sup>

The underlying principles of the library field might, in fact, be viewed as mirroring those of the land-grant mission. Insofar as the establishment of land-grant institutions has been equated historically with increasing American egalitarianism and democratization, these institutions have provided a departure from educational programs geared primarily for elite classes. They have instead recognized economic and political shifts of the mid-nineteenth century toward an increasingly industrialized society and a growing need for a more socially relevant education accessible to a much broader community of citizens. Similarly, libraries have endeavored to provide broader access to knowledge and an opportunity for anyone to pursue educational goals and to become a more informed, capable, well-read citizen. These closely aligned goals may explain why the strength and growth of the library has served as a crucial measure of the progress of the University of Maine as a whole.<sup>12</sup>

While many libraries strive to meet social ideals expressed by Van Luik and others, libraries have also been known as a place to turn when in need of immediate and practical answers or instruction. Various members of the campus community, in advocating for the library, have pointed to its broad usefulness, its significance to the life of the entire university, and its unique ability to combine the idealistic with the utilitarian. To address these diverse goals, Maine has been known for developing innovative ways to share and make use of available resources. As noted by Sanborn and Nutty, “The large geographic spread of Maine, with much of the state sparsely populated, promotes both independence and a simultaneous need to work together. Financial resources for libraries tend to be thin, which results in an inclination to want and need to cooperate.” In addition to the joint efforts related to technology already mentioned, they observed that, “School and public libraries often work together, recognizing that their constituencies often overlap. Academic libraries recognize that their success is, in part, dependent on the

work accomplished with children and students by school and public libraries long before those individuals set foot on campus.”<sup>13</sup>

Fogler Library’s collaborative efforts extend beyond state and national boundaries. The library has worked to collect a comprehensive selection of United States federal government documents since 1907 and has served as Regional Library in the United States Federal Depository Library Program (FLDP) since 1963, committing Fogler to indefinitely maintain copies of documents distributed through the federal program to be accessible to citizens within the states of Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire and making it one of the few FDLP regional libraries in the country to serve multiple states. The library is also a selective depository for Canadian federal government publications, and as such, is one of very few bi-national depositories. In 1999, with the passage of Part UU of Maine Public Law 401, Fogler Library was officially designated as the State Research Library for Science, Technology, and Business. While library patrons may be familiar with database subscriptions that can only be accessed by those with campus credentials, licensing agreements funded through this legislation allow for access to vital science, technology, and business related resources for all Maine residents.

As libraries around the state continue to face difficult decisions on how best to make use of limited budgets and space, several Maine libraries worked together to submit a successful grant application to develop a Maine Shared Collections Strategy. This project, funded in 2010 by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) with matching funds provided by participating library partners, established a coordinated effort to compare titles held at participating institutions and to assess whether equivalent titles are available in electronic form in order to set a statewide protocol for managing, storing, and preserving items in legacy print collections. This allows libraries to better judge the feasibility of weeding materials from collections or otherwise avoid duplicating efforts in acquiring materials that are already available through Maine’s robust interlibrary loan system.<sup>14</sup> Administered through the University of Maine, partners include Portland and Bangor public libraries; the Maine State Library; the University of Southern Maine; Colby, Bates, and Bowdoin Colleges; and the state’s library collaborative, InfoNet.

### Looking Toward the Future

As noted by Silka and Rumery, “Although often considered ‘static,’ libraries have always transformed themselves as the times have changed.”

This perception of stasis may emerge, at least in part, from libraries historically having been viewed as a tremendously reliable source for information, even if the specific methods for delivery of content have evolved dramatically over time. “Users can rely upon libraries,” Silka and Rumery further noted, “partly because of their traditions, but also because they are institutions that respond to the changing technologies and needs.”<sup>15</sup> While limited budgets and space; increased specialization of faculty and programs; and ever-shifting formats, technologies, and practices are all likely to present as many challenges in the future as they have in the past, Raymond H. Fogler Library will continue to evolve in its efforts to meet the information needs of the state and to serve at the heart of the UMaine campus.

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