The Binghamton University Libraries’ symposium, *Funding Our Digital Future: Budgeting for Libraries & Scholarly Communication*, was held on March 20 and 21, 2006. The symposium, originally conceived for the Binghamton University community alone, was advertised on several discussion lists. The response was overwhelming and over seventy persons attended from our campus, from other SUNY schools, as well as other colleges and universities in New York, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut.

The main focus of the symposium was to begin a dialogue between the Libraries and the academic community on how we can face the daunting task of providing access to the ever-expanding (and ever more costly) resource base which our students and faculty need for research and curriculum. It was very gratifying to have a significant number of faculty, students and university administrators attend the symposium sessions and participate in the discussion generated by the presentations given by an excellent roster of panelists and speakers.

After introductory remarks by Nancy Stamp, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, the first session was a wide-ranging overview of the situation facing libraries presented by John Meador, Director of Libraries at Binghamton University; Stephen Roberts, Acting Associate Vice President for Libraries at the University of Buffalo; and Suzanne Thorin, University Librarian at Syracuse University. A very thought-provoking panel about the commercial side of information provision followed, made up of representatives from the Haworth Press, Thomson Gale, and Otto Harrassowitz. This session gave the many non-library attendees a glimpse into the challenges facing publishers, information providers and vendors. The first day’s sessions culminated in a very engaging and stimulating discussion among symposium presenters and attendees that ranged across a wide spectrum of issues and concerns from all sections of the university academic community – humanities, social sciences, and sciences. This was followed by an enjoyable reception that was underwritten by the very generous support of the Haworth Press of Binghamton.

The second day’s sessions began with a very powerful and informative presentation by the symposium keynote speaker, Karen Schmidt, Associate University Librarian at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, who talked about campus involvement in the library budget allocation process. The final presentation of the symposium was a panel made up of members of the SUNY Collections and Access Council, which discussed the initiatives being undertaken within the SUNY system to provide greater access to research materials.

Thanks go out to the Provost and her Inter/Multi-disciplinary Symposia Program, to John Meador, and to the Symposium Planning Committee.

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*Inside*

On Friday April 28, 2006, the Department of English, General Literature, and Rhetoric celebrated the fortieth anniversary of its graduate program with an exhibit and reception in the Special Collections area of Bartle Library. Approximately sixty people attended the event.

The list of speakers included President Lois DeFleur; John Meador, Director of Libraries; Susan Strehle, Chair of the Department of English, General Literature, and Rhetoric; Donald Blake, Associate Dean of Harpur College; Grant Webster, Professor Emeritus of English; Martin Bidney, Professor Emeritus of English; and Deborah Poe, graduate student. During his remarks, John Meador announced the establishment of the Bernard F. Huppé Endowment for Special Collections (see sidebar for details). Libby Tucker, Director of Graduate Studies for English, organized the event and was its master of ceremonies. Bern Mulligan coordinated activities for the Libraries.

The exhibit, which includes more than eighty books and edited journals by current and former faculty and students, was put together by members of Special Collections: Cheryl Spiese, Yvonne Deligato, and Sue Connors. Slava Mrozowski and Nicki Chanecka from the Libraries’ Administrative Office helped to arrange the reception.

During his remarks, John Meador announced that Alex Huppé, son of Professor Bernard F. Huppé, had donated $50,000 to the Libraries to establish an endowment for Special Collections in his late father’s honor. Professor Huppé was a medieval literature scholar who was instrumental in starting the graduate program in English forty years ago.

A new reading room will be constructed in Special Collections and named in honor of Professor Huppé. The reading room will be located adjacent to the main entrance to Special Collections. Materials are paged for patrons by Special Collections staff and used only in the reading room, making it a special gathering place for serious scholars from around the world. The room will be furnished with tables and chairs from Thos. Moser Cabinetmakers of Auburn, Maine. Friends, former students, and associates will be asked to “name” each chair and table by contributing to the endowment.
On the evening of Friday, February 24, the Binghamton University Alumni Association collaborated with Binghamton University Libraries to buy out the theatre for New York area alumni and sponsor a post-performance reception. An invitation was issued via e-mail and all seats were claimed within three days!

Ms. Peacock, who in an article in the February 2006 edition of *The Oprah Magazine* defines the shimmering verge as “the cocoon where every poem is born,” recited several poems and talked about the creative process itself. Ms. Roberts brings one of her cartoon characters to life in a dramatic monologue in which she also sings and dances. The reception offered an opportunity for BU alumni to meet, greet and obtain a few autographs from Molly and Victoria. Representing Binghamton University were Elizabeth L. MacNeill, Director of Development and Alumni Relations for the Metro New York Area, John M. Meador, Director of University Libraries, and Susan Currie, Associate Library Director for Public Services. They were joined by the following library personnel: Laurie Miller, Jeanne Eichelberger, Kate Bowman, Beth Kilmarx, and Bern Mulligan. Also attending was Allan Rogg, a New York City resident and BU Libraries benefactor.

The event was proclaimed a great success by all in attendance and the Libraries were praised for sponsoring an alumna writer.
The Bartle Information Commons opened its doors to the public for the first time on Sunday, March 19, 2006. This was the culmination of more than two years of planning, involving many units on campus.

So far, business has been brisk, as students returning from Spring Break made the transition from the South Pod to the IC. From early each morning until late in the evening, the IC is filled with students taking advantage of the vast array of application software and tools available from the IC desk tops. There is also scanning, color printing, laptop loans, and space to collaborate and practice presentations. The service desk is staffed by librarians and information technology consultants ready to answer questions that run the gamut from the simple ("How do I log on?") to the very complex ("What are the effects of agribusiness on the Guatemalan rain forest?")). While there, students can now also take advantage of the other resources offered at the library: reference works, circulating books, print journals and lots of quiet study space. And the IC, like Bartle Library itself, is open continuously from noon Sunday through 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday noon until 8 p.m., so there is plenty of time to use the new facility.

A smaller Information Commons in the Science Library is scheduled to be completed this fall.

In the morning, Abigail Bordeaux, Erin Rushton, and Marcy Strong were members of a panel for a session titled “Wikis in Action,” which was part of the conference’s “Communities and Collaboration” track. The three speakers described how the Libraries have been using wikis internally since early 2005 and discussed the Libraries’ implementation of a locally hosted wiki (below). They were joined in the session by librarians from Stony Brook and Ohio University.

During the afternoon, Kate Bouman, Alesia McManus, and Dave Vose presented a session titled “Meet the Grokkers: Implementing a Visual Search Tool” as part of the conference’s “Information Discovery and Research” track. Grokker is a visual search tool that facilitates information discovery by displaying search results in topically organized visual maps (at right). Students use the maps with easily discernable visual cues to explore results more efficiently and with greater understanding. The speakers discussed the general background of the product, performed a live demo of Grokker, and discussed the technical issues behind implementing this exciting new service.

The Libraries are pleased to announce the Laptop Lending Program, which is now available to University faculty, staff, and students. Fifteen laptops, ten in the Glenn G. Bartle Library and five in the Science Library, circulate on a first come, first served basis. The laptops have a three-hour loan period and may be renewed once in person unless another borrower is waiting for the service. Laptops are checked out at Bartle Library’s Circulation Desk and at the Science Library’s Information Services Desk. For more information visit the Libraries’ website at: http://library.lib.binghamton.edu/webdocs/laptops/index.html.

New Laptop Lending Program

By Kathryn Kowalczik
Symposium Spawns
Information Ages Exhibit

By Cheryl Spiese

The Libraries are currently featuring an exhibit entitled Information Ages: Modes of Knowledge Transmission. Designed to provide an overview of the various tools used to disseminate information throughout history, exhibit materials taken from the Libraries’ collections illustrate the use of cave paintings and petroglyphs, the emergence of clay tablets, the revolutionary impact of the printing press, and current developments in electronic and digital texts, just to mention a few.

The idea for this exhibit was prompted by the Libraries’ symposium, Funding Our Digital Future, with its emphasis on the significant changes that are affecting how we acquire and/or access the vast amount of materials in non-print formats. Examining where we are going can often be informed by knowing where we have been. Given the availability of space and materials, the exhibit gives the briefest of overviews to a subject about which vast amounts have been written. It is, therefore, extremely selective, with examples taken from the Mediterranean and Western traditions.

The exhibit will remain on view through the summer.

Peace Action Movement Collection Highlighted

By Beth Kilmarx

The Broome County Peace Action organization held its 25th annual meeting on Tuesday, May 9, 2006. Professor Jean Quataert (Department of History) and Beth Kilmarx (Libraries’ Special Collections) gave a presentation on the Peace Action Movement (PAM) Collection. This collection is a newly acquired local history collection that is housed in the Libraries’ Special Collections and Archives Department and consists of the Greta Lake Papers and the Broome County Nuclear Weapons Reduction Committee (BCNWRC)/Broome County Peace Action (BCPA) Papers. The Greta Lake Papers span the years 1983 to 2000 and contain correspondence, petitions, posters, educational materials and numerous Peace Action-related research folders that were compiled and used by Greta Lake. The BCNWRC/BCPA Papers contain the organization’s meeting minutes, photographs, and newspaper clippings for the past two decades, in addition to hundreds of books, newsletters, pamphlets and flyers that were sold by the BCNWRC at their events.