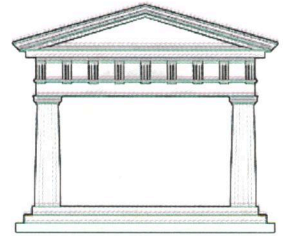


***Shannon Library
Committee Report
To Faculty Council
St. Thomas More College
May 1, 2010 –
April 30, 2011***



Library Committee Membership: The Library Committee consisted of six members: Ken Smith (Acting President), Sarah Powrie, Pat Kelly, Chantelle de Medeiros (STMSU), D. Brockmeyer (Chair), D. Abernethy (recording secretary).



Library Committee Responsibilities: The responsibilities of Library Committee members are delineated in the STM Library Policy. Generally, they are concerned with library policy, financial matters, acquisitions over \$500.00, physical quarters, and equipment.



Acquisitions: The Library acquired **504 new library books** (436 in 2009, and 341 in 2008), as well as periodicals and dvds. New journals include: *Newman Studies Journal* published by the National Institute for Newman Studies. The Library has a substantial book budget at \$20,000.00 which is used for materials in all departments, new programs and emerging study areas. We thank all members of Faculty who contribute to the selection of new library materials, and encourage New Faculty to approach their Department Head (or the Library Director who will then consult with the Department Head) to discuss acquisitions of materials they require for their subject areas.



New Faculty: The Library Director met with new tenure stream faculty to discuss their library needs related to their teaching and research and acquired new materials to address these needs, as well as undertook classroom library instruction to assist their students with library and internet research.



Employed STM Students as Desk Assistants: This year the library employed 11 STM students: Robin Anderson, Alicia Chapman, Chantal de Medeiros, Heather Ellis, Britni Korte, Daniel Pettipas, Derek Sandbeck, Reagan Seidler, Britta Travis, Kirk Trew, and Carson Turnbull.



75th Anniversary: Along with many members of the College, the Library is participating in the planning initiatives for the 75th Anniversary of the College.



Community Engagement: The Library hosted a student, Katrina Robertson, from the Prairie Spirit School Division for a five day work placement. The Library Director wrote a letter to newly appointed Bishop Donald Bolen offering our services to his mission; he responded with a very gracious letter in return. The Library also hosted an Open House during the STM Catholic Studies Conference highlighting the Catholic materials held in the collection.



Acquisition of Statue of Our Lady: A statue of Our Lady was acquired with a \$350.00 donation from Anna Marie Andre of Swift Current, and it is placed by the Rare Book Collection. A blessing was conducted by Fr. Ron Griffin, which is attached. The event was well attended by members of faculty, staff, administration, students and the community.



Christmas Cheer: Because the Cafeteria was closed during some of the exam period in December near Christmas, and there were no hot drinks available in the College, library staff served hot apple cider in the Reading Room. All reports were favourable, and the sugar was much appreciated.



Research and Study Space; Computer Lab Usage: This year, as always, has been a busy and productive one for the library; particularly the Reading Room, which has grown in popularity, and continues to be considered “the place to be on campus” because it is clean, welcoming, quiet and aesthetically pleasing. The STM and the Arts and Science Computer Labs (ASCL) provide computer access to a wide variety of databases, software programs and the Internet for students and faculty.



Circulation: Shannon Library staff processed **10,422 circulation transactions**. On average, **3,400 students** pass through the library security gates each week.



Faculty Donations: The library appreciates donations from Fr. Ron Griffen, Dr. Bohdan Kordan, and Dr. Allan Reese from their personal book collections.



Historical Maps: Through the Shannon library, the STM History department donated a collection of historical maps to the U of S Murray Library. That library has better capacity to catalogue and house maps, and they are also making a concerted effort to increase their physical holdings generally in the library. The maps can be located as a group by typing “gift from St. Thomas More College” (including quotation marks) in the “Word” search function of the catalogue. This should result in 22 items. The U of S extends its gratitude to the College for this donation.



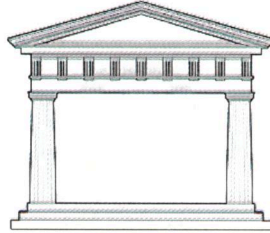
Awards: The Heart of St. Thomas More College Award was awarded to two members of the Library (and the Library Committee). It was presented at the Dean’s Reception on April 7 by students of STMSU who grant the award. In their comments, the students noted that these two recipients maintain a warm, welcoming, educational environment in which to do research, prepare papers, and study. The award was announced in the *On Campus News*:



At St. Thomas More College, Dorothy Abernethy, library assistant, and Donna Brockmeyer, library director, have each been awarded the Heart of St. Thomas More College Award. The award, granted by STM Students’ Union, recognizes active commitment and contribution to students and student life, as well as a lifelong dedication to learning.

On Campus News. April 29, 2011, volume 18, issue 18.

Student Registration and Retention Rates: Shannon Library within the College



In recent years, there has been much discussion about enrolment and retention rates at STM as well as the University more broadly. As recently as April 26, 2011, the new Dean of the College of Arts and Science, Dr. Peter Stoicheff, addressed this question at STM. Dr. Stoicheff's comments inspired me to explore and address the role of the library in consideration of these concerns, and how the library might contribute to solutions in these important matters. The Library Committee will consider these matters this coming year, and I would like to invite all faculty to think about this, as well as the topic that follows this one: The Libraries Role in the Academy of the Future.

As STM faculty will know, the academic library of today builds upon the libraries of antiquity and medieval traditions of the monastic orders and great collections such as the libraries of Ephesus and Alexandria around and through which academies of scholars grew. Today, as a dynamic entity, libraries clearly support faculty teaching and research, and student learning through collections, reference assistance, computer access and provision of a quiet, clean, secure and egalitarian place to study. Additionally, this is particularly important because the Catholic elements of our Collection are among the most tangible assets of the College that represent our faith. While that is well and good, we might ponder a related and equally important question:

What impact does the academic library have on student selection of Academy in the first instance, and student persistence and success in the second?



In the document *The Value of Academic Libraries: A Comprehensive Research Review and Report* (2010)¹ it was noted that the library is ranked second in terms of facilities important in the selection (of institution) process; only the availability of the student's major was ranked first. Libraries ranked ahead of technology facilities, the student union centre and even recreational facilities.



A recent study by Mark Emmons and Frances Wilkinson,² *Academic Library Impact on Student Persistence*, explores the relationship between traditional library input and output measures of staff, collections, use, and services with fall-to-fall retention and six-year graduation rates at member libraries of the Association of Research Libraries, which are major academic research libraries. When controlling for race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status, a linear regression finds

that a decrease in the ratio of library professional staff to students predicts a statistically significant positive relationship with both retention and graduation rates.

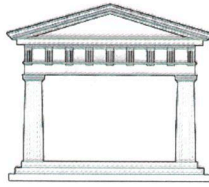
That is, the more librarians per number of students, the greater the retention rates. The study posed that possible reasons for this include: having more professional library staff helps build collections that connect students better to the knowledge that they need to support their critical thinking and their academic achievement; having more professional library staff encourages students to use the collections more as they pursue their research; having more professional library staff to provide services such as instruction and reference engages students intellectually; and, there are factors on campus that are collinear with the ratio of professional library staff to full-time students. These are all possibilities.

Previous related library literature revealed that student use of the academic library had a positive impact on academic performance. The authors cited studies that correlate academic library use and library skills, with lower attrition rates and student persistence, higher grades and GRE scores, and savings in faculty time.

Exploring the literature on persistence, there are two major categories of important factors that we see as collinear with ratio of library staff to students. The first category of factors all relate to the elite status of the university. Elite universities in general have a small student-to- faculty ratio; it makes sense that this same ratio is reflected in the library. Elite universities are more likely to spend more per students, and more on instruction, academic support, and institutional support, in the classroom as well as the library. In fact, institutional commitment, which includes overall number of faculty and staff on campus—and which presumably includes librarians—is a major factor in college persistence. All of these are measures of elite institutions that attract elite students, who are more likely to persist and graduate from college. The second category of collinear factors relate to the support offered to students by the university. A welcoming, inclusive, scholarly environment leads to students to pursue and persist in their studies.

This year, the STM Students' Union awarded The Heart of St. Thomas More College Award to Dorothy Abernethy and myself. The award is *for active commitment and contribution throughout (ones) career to students and student life and for life-long dedication to learning*. While this award was most unexpected and greatly appreciated, it also speaks to the value of the library and its staff in the lives, work and study of the students. It is important for the library to be cognizant of its role in the college both in terms of the student experience, as well a tangential role it might play in enrolment and retention. Beyond that, the Library Committee might also ask what role will the library play in the academy of the future.

The Libraries' Role in the Academy of the Future³



Five reasons people will continue to come to the library

- **Learning:** increased focus on print collections as scholarly publishing and book publishing continue to rise; availability of technology and wireless access
- Browsing in the stacks / serendipity
- Democratic environment
- Choice
- Comfort / security



Scholarly Publishing, the Book, and Technology

- The book is still the primary medium for knowledge transmission in many disciplines, and is the cornerstone in developing intellectual capacity.
- The use of online resources, especially in the humanities and social sciences is associated with getting “things done quickly and easily, not high quality work.” Digital resources do not require attention span and concentration to learning and deep thought.
- Undergraduates overwhelmingly prefer books over online resources for important contextual information, and associate print journals with higher quality research.
- Libraries establish quality control in scholarly information resources.



Research and Study Space

- Grand reading rooms are being included in many new academic library spaces and are being restored in existing libraries to accommodate more readers. (Standards for Canadian college libraries indicate there should be 1 seat per 10 students. We currently have 150 seats.)
- Libraries offer opportunity for sustained engagement with academic work.
- Users themselves establish and sanctify space by a culture of silence.
- One example: University of Chicago's 42 million dollar library expansion added 3.5 million books.



Institutional Credibility

- The lack of an adequate library can diminish the core meaning and credibility on an institution of higher learning. The Library is a symbol of the institutions values and the centre of its intellectual life. The space should be transcendent (encouraging imaginative understanding and association) and transportive (uplifting and unique).

Concluding Comment



You may notice that this Report is not only a report of matters undertaken by the Library Committee this past year, but also outlines some of the important College matters recently discussed by the new Dean of Arts and Science, Dr. Stoicheff. It may serve the Library Committee and Faculty Council well to consider this for further discussion in the next term of the Library Committee.

Thank you for your attention,

Donna Brockmeyer,
Chair, Library Committee

NOTES:

1. Oakleaf, Meagan (2010). *The Value of Academic Libraries: A Comprehensive Research Review and Report*, Syracuse University for the Association of College and Research Libraries.
2. Emmons, Mark and Frances C. Wilkinson. (2011). *Academic Library Impact on Student Persistence*, College & Research Libraries, Volume 72, Number 3. NOTE: I have presented only a brief overview of this article; if interested in a fuller discussion, please refer to the article directly. As this article is cited, I claim no credit for its authorship, and ascribe all copyright to its authors. Any mistakes or misrepresentations are inadvertent and are my own.
3. These ideas come from the work of Stewart, Christopher, (2010). *The Academic Library Building in the Digital Age: A Study of Construction, Planning and Design of New Library Space*. Chicago, ILL: Association of College and Research Libraries.



Blessing of the Statue of Our Lady

Shannon Library, STM, February 17, 2011, 10:30 a.m.

BLESSING - Fr. Ron Griffin, c.s.b.

From: *The Roman Ritual: The Blessings (1946, #73)*

Fr. Ron: Our help is in the name of the Lord

Response: Who made heaven and earth

Fr. Ron: The Lord be with you

Response: And with thy spirit

Fr. Ron: O almighty, everlasting God Thou dost approve of the sculptured or painted image of thy saints, in order that when we behold them, we may be led to contemplate and imitate their lives and holiness. Wherefore, we beseech thee to bless and sanctify this image wrought to the memory and honour of thy Sole-begotten Son, our lord Jesus Christ the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, blessed thine Virgin. And grant that whosoever through the inspiration of this image earnestly strives to honour and worship the Blessed Virgin, may by Her merits obtain grace in this life and eternal glory in the next. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE MEMORARE – Dorothy Abernethy

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy, hear and answer me. Amen.

INVOCATION – Donna Brockmeyer

Our most Divine Mother, we pray that you guide with your Wisdom those students who study, and staff who serve, in this library. We pray that you intercede on our behalf to protect and enhance this library and these collections in that they may enrich the lives, and nourish the souls, of all who seek here. We pray that this space may be transcendent in inspiring the imagination, and transportive in uplifting the spirit. For this we pray. Amen.

PRAYER – Hail Mary – All

Fr. Ron: Holy Mother, Pray for us.

Lord Jesus, we love you and ask your strength and grace as we try to follow you each day. Bless this image of Mary our mother and help us to imitate her in loving and serving you. Lord Jesus, we praise you for ever and ever. **Amen (From: *A Book of Blessings, CCCB, 1981.*)**

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@ STM Library**



**You are Invited
to an
Open House
at the
Shannon Library**
*See samples of our
Catholic series:*

- Fathers of the Church
- Moreana
- Anchor Bible
- Corpus Christianorum
- History of the Popes
- Catholic Fiction

Where: 2nd floor, STM

When: Saturday,
March 12, 2011
10 a.m.— 5 p.m.

**Open over
the lunch break.**