



Spring 2006

# Lux et Lex: Volume 12, Number 1

Sandy Slater  
*University of North Dakota*

Wilbur Stolt  
*University of North Dakota*

Curt Hanson  
*University of North Dakota*

Betty Gard  
*University of North Dakota*

Randy Pederson  
*University of North Dakota*

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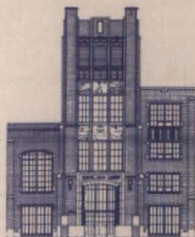


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## Recommended Citation

Slater, Sandy; Stolt, Wilbur; Hanson, Curt; Gard, Betty; and Pederson, Randy, "Lux et Lex: Volume 12, Number 1" (2006). *Lux et Lex*.  
11.  
<https://commons.und.edu/lux-et-lex/11>

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# Lux et Lex

*"By the light of Knowledge we read the laws of life"*

Volume 12 Number 1

Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota

Spring 2006

## NORWEGIAN COLLECTION MILESTONE

A collection of distinction housed in an academic library does not develop by happenstance. A need is identified and validated and a plan of action is implemented. The Chester Fritz Library's Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections houses a collection of distinction, the Bygdebok Collection, a collection of Norwegian local history books considered essential for researching family in Norway.

The growth and rising interest in genealogical research and family history was tremendous after the publication of Alex Haley's *Roots* in 1976. Researchers gathered information from relatives, cemeteries, courthouses, churches, and visited libraries seeking details about the lives of their ancestors. The Chester Fritz Library and its North Dakota Room acknowledged this research interest and opened a small Genealogy Room in January 1980 to centralize the Library's genealogical holdings and public service expertise.

At the same time, then Assistant Archivist, Colleen Oihus, and Associate Professor of Norwegian, Arne Brekke, recognized that to fully assist Norwegian American family historians searching for ancestors and ancestral farms in Norway, access to a unique source, the bygdebok, would be crucial. Creating an ethnic focus for the genealogical collection also seemed prudent. The majority of Norwegian immigrants in the late 1800s and early 1900s settled in the Upper Midwest. Today, approximately one third of North Dakota's population claims Norwegian ancestry and more than half regionally.

A typical bygdebok set consists of several volumes. The first generally describes the history of a community, its geography and geological features, economic base, and social and political culture. Subsequent volumes offer genealogical or family history information about the farms in the area and frequently indicate those individuals who emigrated to America.

In 1980, the Library only held nine bygdebok volumes for two farm areas in Norway, Hol in the Hallingdal Valley, Buskerud, and Hitterdal, Telemark, both fylkes located west of Oslo. Oihus and Brekke sent a letter to 450 municipalities in Norway requesting their assistance to enlarge these holdings. The response from these communities was tremendous. Donations of 400 bygdeboks were received and additional gifts continued to be steady. In 1988, Brekke again assisted Special Collections and a second letter was sent to all municipalities. A significant addition of approximately 150 volumes was added to the Collection.

One can state without any hesitation that the kindness and generosity of the people of Norway has made the Bygdebok Collection possible. Gifts have been donated by numerous individuals, historical

societies, community organizations, and local governmental agencies, in addition to the University of Oslo Library's gift of seventeen volumes.

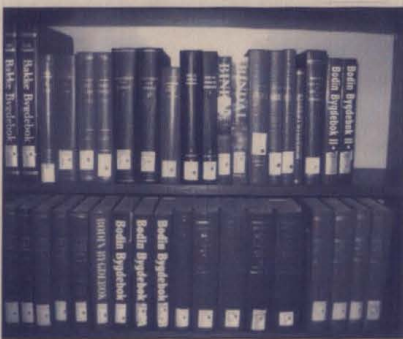
Locally, the Nodak Mutual Foundation recognized the research value of the Bygdebok Collection in 2000 with a generous grant of \$2,000 to UND's Nordic Initiative that resulted in an additional 33 volumes representing 17 Norwegian parishes. From the onset, District Four of North Dakota Sons of Norway, Gyda Varden Lodge, has lent monetary and gift book support, and most certainly, Arne Brekke has lent his expertise, personal connections, gift books, even shipping assistance, to the Collection to fulfill his vision of making the Chester Fritz Library's Bygdebok Collection one of the finest in the country.

From 1995 to the present, the Chester Fritz Library has provided significant resources for the acquisition of nearly 250 additional volumes. The Family History Room in Special Collections houses this extensive Collection totaling more than a 1000 bygdeboks. The Collection also contains many town history books, published emigration listings, and several yearbooks that contain genealogical information.

To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Bygdebok Collection, the Library and UND's Nordic Initiative sponsored an international conference, "Norwegian Heritage in the United States: Resources and the Research Experiences" October 10-11, 2005 in Grand Forks, ND. The conference brought together speakers and panelists from Norway and the United States to discuss the resources available to scholars and genealogists interested in Norwegian family history and immigration to the United States. Participants from 12 states, one Canadian province and Norway gathered for an enlightening exchange of information and the sharing of common interests. The Conference succeeded in increasing the knowledge of resources and furthered discussion on Norwegian heritage. Future conferences are expected to expand the discussion initiated at this event. In addition to the Library and Nordic Initiative, conference sponsors included the Norwegian-American Foundation, Grand Forks Visitors and Convention Bureau, Brekke Tours and Travel of Grand Forks, Grand Forks Sons of Norway Lodge, and Scandinavian Airlines.

The Chester Fritz Library has also published a guide to its bygdebok holdings and remains committed to acquiring these valuable resources in the future and to enhancing this premiere collection, one of the largest in the United States.

Sandy Slater, Head, Special Collections  
Wilbur Stolt, Director of Libraries



### A GIFT OF ART

It would not come as a surprise to many people that the price of books, periodicals, and electronic resources are considerable and subject to inflation each year. To adjust, Library staff and UND faculty continually make careful practical decisions to select the best and most valuable research tools from the vast number available. Clearly, the ideal situation would offer the ability to purchase substantial collections in every academic discipline available on campus. Through the generosity of private giving, this ideal is a reality for Visual Arts.

The Florence H. and Eugene E. Myers Trust was established in 1993 and comprises a broad philanthropic program extending not only to UND, but also to Northwestern University, Columbia University, and the University of West Virginia, all with which he had an association. The Myers Trust disburses funds in equal amounts to each of these four universities. Myers Trust funds designated for UND benefit both the University's Art Department and the Library. A substantial portion of the annual income from the Myers gift, administered through the UND Foundation, is designated for the purchase of art books, periodicals, and electronic resources, graphics, plastic arts, and art history materials.

Eugene Myers graduated from UND in 1936 and received a B.S. in education, with a double major in art and history. In subsequent years he was a practicing artist, pursued advanced degrees, and published articles. He also published the book, *Creative Lettering*, written with UND Art Professor and artist Paul Barr. Following a distinguished career in the Air Force, his activities included serving as Vice President for Management of the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

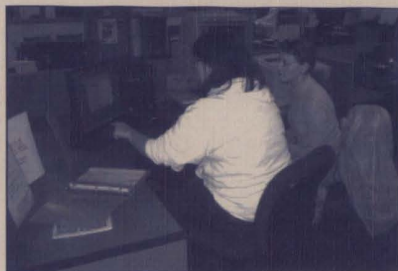
Colonel Myers' gift clearly represents his gratitude to UND for the education he had received in the arts. Funds from the Myers Trust have continued to provide the Library with the resources needed to build a "collection of record" in art. In 2005 alone, a total of 766 art books were purchased through these funds. They covered a wide variety of art subjects, from archeological studies to the latest in artistic developments, from early ceramic and sculptural works to books on computer art, from works on Michelangelo to works on Andy Warhol, and included a unique item that normally would not have been within the Library's budget. *Spiritual Journey: Sacred Art from Musee Guimet* by Jean-Francois Jarrige and Jacques Gies, according to one review, is a "most lavish and extraordinarily produced book filled with stunning photographs of the 240 objects in the collection of the Musee Guimet" providing a "breathtaking journey from Central Asia . . . to Easternmost Asia."

The Myers Trust offers the Library continuity in funding, a significant impact. It has been able to purchase new editions and interpretations of established artists as well as work highlighting artists just beginning to enter the mainstream, and has been able to add several subscriptions to important art periodicals, including *The Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, *American Ceramics*, and *Metalsmith*. The Library has recently acquired several important electronic databases; *Art Full*

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### DIGITAL ACCESS FOR DIGITAL NATIVES

Technology is at the core of most activities students do today. We see them with their cell phones, iPods, and laptops. They are chatting, playing games, working, listening to music, and networking. Students use technology for both work and play, and they expect it to be available everywhere. Their expectations are not any different in the Chester Fritz Library. Students are as likely to check their e-mail as they are to check out a book. To



Digital Scanning Center

accommodate their technological needs, the Library has introduced several new services for finding and using information.

The latest innovation is the Digital Scanning Center which opened in September 2005 in two areas of the Library, the Periodicals Department and Special Collections. The Scanning Center contains the

equipment and software to scan books, paper documents, microforms, maps, or photographs. Nearly any original document, whether library materials or personal resources, may be converted into a useable electronic file using the scanners and software in the Center. Items may be scanned and edited with Adobe Acrobat or Photoshop, or directly into Microsoft Word documents. The Scanning Center utilizes ABBYY Fine Reader optical character recognition (OCR) software to convert paper documents, or Acrobat PDF's, into useable electronic data files. The Center offers researchers an opportunity to make their own electronic copies of scholarly resources and images. It also allows the Library to assist the University in achieving one of its goals, that all students understand and use technology effectively.

Library Periodicals staff member, Richard Suggs, says "many students are using the Scanning Center to complete research and writing assignments. Graduate students are scanning illustrations and images for insertion directly into their thesis or dissertation, where a few years ago they would be using scissors and tape." Suggs noted that another use has been to scan statistical information published in federal government documents. Some historical data has never been released in electronic format. Using the ABBYY Fine Reader software, a useable electronic data file can be created from a scanned table.

In the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections, Assistant Archivist, Curt Hanson says, "Researchers are using the Scanning Center for a number of different projects. One researcher scanned a collection of political pamphlets, another scanned pages from the Norwegian Bygdebok Collection in the Family History Room." Special Collections soon hopes to release some of its materials from archives as fully indexed digital collections. Scanning of these materials requires a high resolution and creation of appropriate metadata in order to find a document using keywords. Once these archival materials are placed on the Library's web site, any researcher anywhere will have an opportunity

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### "SPECIAL" SCRAPBOOKS

Scrapbooks are among the most frequent types of records found in archives. The Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections houses approximately 300 scrapbooks in over 120 individual collections in the Orin G. Libby Manuscript Collection. Scrapbooks have been created to record an individual's military service, the seasons of a favorite sports team, the accomplishments of politicians, the activities of university honor societies, and so on. Scrapbooks are unique in what they contain, and what information researchers may glean from them, but as a format they have many characteristics in common. Scrapbooks may hold any number of documents and artifacts, ranging from photographs and newspaper clippings, to dance cards, concert programs, and napkins from restaurants.

Researchers and archival professionals find that scrapbooks present two interesting interrelated issues, one of value and one of preservation. Does the scrapbook retain artifactual value, or evidentiary value, or both? How does one preserve the scrapbook for research use: *en toto* or only a selection of its contents?

The issue of value is apparent in a scrapbook kept by Edward Franta, a UND journalism major from 1923-1927. During his university days, Franta documented his life as well as campus events in a large olive green scrapbook with the UND seal in pink on the cover, 18 inches long and over 5 inches thick. The scrapbook houses a wide array of documents and artifacts, from newspaper clippings and photographs, to Franta's overdue library book notices, his receipts for ROTC uniforms, Sayre Hall party invitations and decorations, Grand Forks restaurant menus, dance cards, football buttons, and train tickets.

Franta's scrapbook has a strong nostalgic feel, as it is impossible not to leaf through the pages and avoid wistful thoughts for days long past. As an artifact, it represents a rather typical 1920s college scrapbook, and a four year glimpse into UND student life. The research avenues it presents are more limited as the majority of the newspaper clippings and photographs are undated and unidentified. Research is still feasible since its focus is narrow, the time span but four years, the location is UND or local, and comparisons may be made against other photographs, or by searching the *Dakota Student* online index, or issues of the *Grand Forks Herald*.

In particular, this scrapbook also holds informational value as it contains UND related photographs of students and their activities not found in any other collection. One can date two photos of students raking on campus found just above a small card, "I helped in the campus clean-up - 1924," or find students studying in dorm rooms in Sayre Hall, or canoeing on the English Coulee, or sitting on UND parade floats passing in front of the downtown Frederic Hotel, which was destroyed by fire in 1944.

Over fifty years later, another UND undergrad began compiling scrapbooks about only one subject, UND men's hockey. Danny Cooper, a 1979 mechanical engineering graduate,

was a prodigious clipper of newspaper articles from the *Grand Forks Herald* and *Dakota Student*, as well as various national sports publications. His thirteen scrapbooks, not prized as artifacts, date from 1977 to 1987 and consist of ordinary three-ring binders that hold clippings mounted on black construction paper housed inside plastic page protectors. Although the source of most are identified, not all clippings are dated, but do fall within a particular hockey season. Cooper's scrapbooks offer any researcher a comprehensive reference tool and their evidentiary value is heightened in that they also hold several hard to find WCHA publications, *WCHA Facts and Stats* and *WCHA News*. *College Hockey Week* and *WCHA Week* are also in the collection, but not part of any formal scrapbook. None of these publications are listed in World Cat, a database of library holdings throughout the United States.

Special Collections houses numerous manuscript collections related to 20<sup>th</sup> century North Dakota women's clubs. The one significant document remaining for many that have disbanded is the organization's scrapbook. This is true for the Bathgate Study Club's eleven scrapbooks, 1938-1959, or the Langdon Women's Club thirty-nine scrapbooks, 1930-1984. Locally, the Grand Forks Scotties Curling Club's only surviving document is a 138 page scrapbook, dating from 1955-1972. It primarily contains newspaper clippings about the club's competitions, social events, and officers, and several identified photographs and annual reports. Although one could search microfilmed editions of the *Grand Forks Herald*, it is not indexed nor keyword searchable for this time period. Thus the club's scrapbook provides a great deal of information in one convenient location.

North Dakota suffragette, Anna Kirk, kept a scrapbook fairly typical of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, primarily newspaper clippings and several photographs, programs, and ribbons. Her clippings are especially relevant as many contain the text of suffragette speeches, including some delivered by Kirk herself, and snippets of meeting minutes for local suffragette organizations published in local newspapers. Interestingly enough, it

also contains a clipping with suggestions for creating scrapbooks for "soldiers in the trenches" during WWI. "The contents of these books should be cheerful, optimistic and patriotic." These obviously were thought of as temporary creations since "scrap books should be light in weight and inexpensive in construction... and so cheap that they may be thrown away."

One could assume that the scrapbooks housed in Special Collections were assembled by their creators to be saved. Their permanent nature may especially be seen in the large wooden covered scrapbooks found in the records of two UND honorary societies, Sigma Alpha Iota and Phi Upsilon Omicron. The question, then, for archivists is how to adequately preserve the scrapbooks under their care.

Some archives advocate either microfilming portions of scrapbooks with easily discernible informational value, i.e., news clippings, or discarding those aspects deemed to be of less

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Edward Franta Scrapbook

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*Text and Art Retrospective* provide historical and ongoing subject indexing to major, wide-ranging art periodicals. A subscription to *Grove Art Online* provides updating and enhancement to the Library's physical copy of the outstanding 34 volume reference work, *Dictionary of Art*, also acquired through Myers funds. The Library also has taken advantage of the savings offered by becoming a charter member of the *ARTstor* database, a digital library of art images acquired from curated collections of art, architecture and archeology housed in a number of important museums. *ARTstor* serves as a valuable resource for both faculty and student research.

The exceptional growth in the Library's art book collection would not have been possible without the generous gift of a committed UND alum. Eugene Myers' focused gift is an extraordinary example of what is possible. His gift has allowed the Library to move one particular collection to a caliber normally held only by much larger university libraries. The added advantage is that since most of the books can be borrowed through Interlibrary Loan, the benefactors of his generosity are not only UND faculty and students, but the world at large.

Betty Gard, Head, Reference & Research Services

Digital continued from Page 2

to locate and examine these archival materials using a web browser. However, some materials may never be digitized and for those items a researcher has access to a Scanning Center to make "on the fly" reference copies for their personal research projects.

Besides the Digital Scanning Center, which was made possible with funding from the UND Student Technology Fee Committee, the Chester Fritz Library has completed other technology projects through various partnerships. In cooperation with Information Technology Systems & Services (ITSS), the Library provides students using laptops a wireless network to access the Internet. The Uniprint printing system provides easy, no-fee printing for students using the Library. This project leveraged a partnership with Student Government, the Student Technology Fee Committee, and ITSS in September 2002.

Although the aforementioned services are used by students while in the Library, some innovations are designed to bring library services to the student. An EZproxy server was implemented during the 2004 Fall Semester. The EZproxy server allows students and faculty to gain easy access to electronic subscription databases and journals from any off-campus location. This project was completed with the assistance of ITSS. All three services, the wireless network, UniPrint, and EZproxy have been well received by students and faculty. The Chester Fritz Library will continue to partner with other departments to offer new services that will provide students with a quality educational experience.

Randy Pederson, Head, Library Systems & Services

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evidentiary value, usually ephemera. Both approaches present a significant downside, destruction of the scrapbook as a whole, and thus its artifactual value, and all possibilities of internal relational dating as seen in the Franta scrapbook. The Department of Special Collections does its utmost to preserve this record as a whole using acid free folders and boxes or wrapping with scrimweave, and storing in an environmentally controlled archive vault. Basic conservation procedures are undertaken, including interleaving acid-free paper to prohibit acid migration, but the concept of the scrapbook as a whole is never forgotten.

Special Collections provides researchers access to its scrapbooks through the finding aid/inventories it creates for each manuscript collection. Accurate descriptions of the title, subject, date range, and contents of each scrapbook allow easy access while decreasing unnecessary handling.

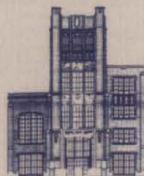
Today we are witnessing a new era in scrapbooking, currently a very popular past-time. The overwhelming force behind this trend is the documentation of family history. What is crucial is the presence of historical context, which will prove extremely valuable to both future descendants of the family, as well as future social and cultural historians examining the nature of life in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Dated photographs and news clippings, full identification of people, and explanation of events are critical.

The modern scrapbooker has no shortage of acid-free embellishments available to help tell the story of the first day of school, the summer vacation to Glacier, or a high school graduation. What makes the "modern" scrapbook different is that it is purposely designed to last for generations. Long term preservation is stressed in every aspect of the scrapbooking industry, from the use of digitally scanned copies rather than originals, to acid-free paper, cardstock, and adhesive, to special plastic page protectors that allow paging through the scrapbook without wear and tear. The Department of Special Collections looks forward to preserving this next generation of scrapbooks.

Curt Hanson, Assistant Archivist, Special Collections  
Sandy Slater, Head, Special Collections

*Lux et Lex*

Chester Fritz Library  
University of North Dakota  
Grand Forks, ND 58202  
(701) 777-2189  
Fax: (701) 777-3319



Director of Libraries: Wilbur Stolt

Editor: Sandy Slater, Head, Special Collections  
Technical Support: Curt Hanson, Assistant Archivist, Special Collections

Contributors: Sandy Slater, Wilbur Stolt, Betty Gard, Randy Pederson, Curt Hanson

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