

INTERVIEWEE: ROGER BERRY
Library Director of Special Collections

INTERVIEWER: Samuel C. McCulloch
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UCI Historian

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SM: This is an interview with Roger Berry, Library Director of Special Collections, on March 6, 1990, in HOB-360. And what I'm trying to do for my history of UCI, Roger, is to find out from different people who are important to this university what they have done and are doing and will do. And the first question: What position did you hold when you first came to UCI? Which year was that, by the way?

RB: I came to UCI in July 1969 and had a combined position of Reference Librarian and also UCI Archivist.

SM: UCI Archivist? Now, right now, that position . . . I know you were (inaudible) as the Reference Librarian because when I've sent some of my students with papers to do, you were very helpful to them and we are certainly grateful. Now, when did you then move over just to Special Collections?

RB: I moved just to Special Collections in 1973 when I became acting head of the department and became permanent head in 1974.

SM: Head of what? What was the department?

RB: Head of the Department of Special Collections.

SM: And did [Sharon] Pugsley then take the position of Archivist or what?

RB: No. For a time, I continued to perform as the acting Archivist because there was no one else on the Library staff to do that. But we hired Roxanne Nilan as a Librarian with a specialization in archives and manuscripts and she was designated the UCI Archivist in 1975. And on her resignation to accept an offer at Stanford, she was succeeded by Sharon Pugsley.

SM: I see.

RB: But each archivist, in turn, has been specially designated the campus Archivist.

SM: In the very beginning, you had two positions. You were our Archivist and you were also in Reference. Is that right?

RB: That's right, yes.

SM: That's very interesting. Of course, I think very much that you're doing an important job. What were your responsibilities at the beginning?

RB: At the beginning, including Reference?

SM: Yes.

RB: In Reference, I was immediately assigned, of course, to the Reference Desk. But there were a couple of hours each day that could be available for other activities and I was almost immediately invited to perform some special supportive projects for . . . especially History faculty who needed library assistance for independent study courses they were offering or presentations to seminars.

SM: (inaudible)

RB: And at that time, we had a very interesting relationship with UCLA. Because for many of the specialized topics that students would select for independent study projects, we depended upon UCLA resources for those research activities. But our head of Public Services at the time was very concerned that students not dismiss the possibilities of the UCI library and its resources before heading for UCLA to use the UCLA collections. It was one of my emphases to introduce students to all of the reference and bibliographical aids that the UCI library had in abundance that would assist them when they did go to UCLA, and, in addition, to point out UCI resources already available that would make it unnecessary to draw upon UCLA materials. And it came as a great surprise to our students that so much was already available at UCI, but at the same time, if they needed to go to UCLA, they could limit their activities there to what actually needed to be obtained at UCLA.

SM: Did they go up on our little bus?

RB: They took the shuttle bus, yes. It was very important because students would almost automatically dismiss UCI as a place where they could do much research and it was a great revelation to them to discover how much was available here. And we didn't want the UCLA librarians to perform the basic reference work for the UCI students. We could do that very

well, in fact, I think in many cases better than some of our counterparts at UCLA.

SM: Yes. And then you went over to the Special Collections alone in 1970 what?

RB: I was acting head by myself in 1973.

SM: And that means that, of course, the second half of the library had been added to, so is that when you were downstairs? Were you put downstairs where the Wellek collection was?

RB: I think that in 1973 the second half of the building was not yet ready for us to occupy. But by 1974, when I became head, we were laying plans to move into the expanded quarters. I recall that when we did make the move, we had a special dedication of the new expanded facility. And in our new quarters down on the first floor where Government Publications is now, we were featured as a place for those who attended the ceremonies to visit. At that time, the collection that was emphasized and celebrated in Special Collections was the new Don Meadows Collection of Western Americana.

SM: Well, tell me, you fairly soon began to collect Arthur Marder's collection of letters and so on, didn't you?

RB: Yes, very soon. Arthur Marder would drop in for ten or fifteen seconds at a time . . . (laughter)

SM: That was Arthur.

RB: And give me an order or ask for assistance on something. And I'd telephone in the response when I found what he wanted.

SM: Yes.

RB: But one day he told me that I should start coming over to his office punctually at noon, usually either on a Friday of the week or every other Friday, and he would have a little material for me to gather and bring over to the library to be, in the aggregate, developed as an Arthur Marder collection of papers. These were . . .

(Telephone rings and interview is interrupted)

SM: So you used to collect every second Friday at noon a collection.

RB: Well, let me go back to that sentence I started. These were, for the most part, letters from his British correspondence ~~to~~ or correspondence from anywhere in the world that dealt in some way with his research on the final volumes ^{of the} From Dreadnought ^{to} Scapa Flow ~~(inaudible)~~ and his later volumes on British naval history. So many of the letters offered eyewitness information on the accounts that he discussed, that it was very important to preserve those letters. He would use them to document his histories, he would use them as footnote citations in his books, and he didn't want this correspondence to go the way of a great deal of the documentary material that he'd had in Hawaii that had been destroyed.

SM: Yes, I remember that.

RB: And so that readers of his volumes were unable to find the materials that were cited in his footnotes.

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SM: Tell me, I would someday like to read it when you . . . I'll be taking out certain parts of it. But what should faculty members do about their papers and things? When I talked to them, and I've talked to twenty-eight people the first time around, Clark Kerr, Dean McHenry, Aldrich, all the deans and all the chairmen and your librarian, John Smith, and others. Now, you know, I'm University Historian and have been named for two years, to make sixty-five interviews. That's what I'm budgeted for and he wants me to stay at that figure. Now, I have in this here and over in my home a filing cabinet this big, with a fair amount of correspondence. Not like Arthur Marder, but it's all of a personal nature. It's not official. I suppose I do have some official things in there. But suppose you were dealing with it, you could then just give back the ones you didn't think were of any use to you.

RB: That's true. I think this is always a difficult question. If a person whose papers are presented to you is likely to be a candidate for a deep or intensive biographical study, all of that personal material, of course, would be valuable to have. But if the papers are judged to be of importance to the institution for documentation of the institution's history or a department's history or a program's history, it seems to me the personal material might very well be removed and the nucleus of material on the institution's development might be saved. But even there, if some of the material bears upon

colleagues in a way that might seem disparaging, those simply can't . . . no archivist can deliver those to a research patron responsibly.

SM: Yes, right.

RB: They simply have to be restricted, at least for a time.

SM: Yes. You'd be interested, Roger, that at least three of the interviews done, I think one, definitely the one of Ralph Gerard, I had to restrict for fifteen years, because he had retired and he was unhappy and he just made a lot of comments that I wouldn't want anybody else to see.

RB: Yes.

SM: And this time, I've got one restricted for fifteen years, at least--fifteen years, it's written down. I have a form that you will receive, Roger, that we've worked out, we meaning Sharon Pugsley and anybody who is (inaudible). You didn't know that half of this tape belongs to you. You have a half ownership of this tape until you sign it over to the Archives. And I've got this form and everybody signs over their tapes to the Archives. Now, I would think that maybe Dan Aldrich, who's had such an extraordinary career, he might be someday a subject of a biography. And I think I've got a number of letters of Dan's, not all are personal, having to do with things like the Education Abroad program and things of this nature. But he is an extraordinary person.

Well, back to your collections. I mentioned the Arthur Marder and I asked you the question what do faculty people do in sending some of their materials to you. But what are some of the . . . Well, four and five, what are some of the big contributions that have come to your Special Collections? And tell me exactly what you do when you get them. For example, I noticed when I was doing research up there--and will get back to it when I finish this work in June, I'll be back up in your office--and you have an enormous Orange County collection and you've collected the Kufchel papers. Do they go into your collection, Senator Kufchel?

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" RB RB: The Kufchel papers went to the Bancroft Library.

SM: I'll be darned.

RB RB: There was the original expectation that it would come to Irvine but John Smith told me that Kufchel fell in with some lawyers who redirected the collection to the Berkeley campus.

SM: No kidding. I didn't know that. No one knows that. A number of us think we have them.

RB RB: Well, it is true that there were some materials that came from the Kufchel family, which included the Anaheim Gazette from the first years. And the Friends of the Library enabled our library to have those microfilmed so that that became available as a research resource for the first time to Orange County researchers. But beyond that, the papers of the senator didn't come to us.

SM: I'm disappointed. Well, referring back, what are some of the major . . . ~~Arthur~~ Wellek. Is that Wellek collection in your custody?

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RB: Yes, it is. The Wellek collection has come to us in thirteen increments so far, with more promised. Starting in, I think, around 1980 or 1981, I've forgotten the year, Professor Wellek was concerned about disposing of his professional library and papers, and he wanted his library kept together in a single place and yet be accessible to research students. His own campus, Yale, concerned about the inevitable extensive duplication, showed no interest, but in a conversation with an Irvine faculty member at some point . . .

SM: Murray Krieger?

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RB: It may have been Murray Krieger but it may have been someone else. I've forgotten exactly which one. But the idea came to the criticism ~~of~~ faculty at Irvine that the Wellek collection might become available to us at a nominal charge. And it was seized upon as a good idea for the Irvine campus because it ~~was~~ *tied in with* a campus specialty. This is something we have focused programs in and it makes sense on this campus far more than at most other campuses. And although the library was unable to fund the proposal at the time, the Academic Affairs provided funding.

And when I knew that they were going to do that, I immediately jotted off a memorandum in about fifteen minutes

indicating to the library that this would need to be treated as a special collection. There was no way of guaranteeing the integrity of the collection, the preservation of Wellek's copies with his marginal notations and so forth that are part of a collection of this kind, to be preserved except as a special collection. Even though the books themselves look like standard trade books, for the most part, and don't look like rare books, ~~but~~ they are a special collection ~~not~~ a rare book collection.

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Wellek himself visited the campus on the occasion of the First Annual Wellek Library Lectures. He was invited as a special guest for that. We exhibited portions of his collection that he had shipped to us. And at the time, I asked him if there were not correspondence, manuscripts and so forth in his custody that he also would be concerned about disposing of sometime. But he hadn't given any thought to that. About two or three years ago, he was struck with a need for prompt disposition of manuscripts that had been at a Yale facility, that Yale had no room *for*.

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SM: More room.

RB: Yale had no room. And Wellek contacted me in this emergency and wondered could we find space for them. And I said, "This is just the kind of material we would like to add to your book collections." And he was so relieved and we received the shipment. Well, in succeeding increments of the shipment of

the Wellek library, he has added twenty or thirty cartons of additional manuscripts. My colleague Eddie Yeghiayan and I have gone through all of those boxes and manuscripts, and we have been so impressed with the importance of them. Because since Wellek is such a central figure in the history of his discipline, the development of studies of comparative literature in American and the history of criticism ^{and} ~~in~~ critical theory. His own papers, in effect, document the history of that discipline in this country--not just in this country but internationally--because he has been in international contact with the leaders of the field in England and in Central Europe and Italy and France. There probably would be no other collection quite like that.

SM: Well, that's very exciting. Would you say that is the most outstanding collection you have? What about all that Orange County material?

RB: I think it's one of many. I think we're very, very rich in not just Orange County historical materials, but western Americana or Californiana that covers the whole area of southern California, even crossing over into Baja California, and to some extent into the desert area and to Arizona.

Of course, the nucleus of that collection was the collection of Don Meadows who was the leading Orange County historical collector of western Americana. His library became available to us in 1972. I inventoried it and prepared a

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summary of all of the different aspects of its contents and presented that inventory to John Smith as a basis for considering how the Irvine library might be able to obtain it, because it was offered for sale and a number of institutions were considered competitors for its acquisition. Smith used my summary of the contents--it went on for many pages--and presented it to Chancellor Aldrich with the request that funds be requested from the University President's Office to purchase this as a special acquisition. And to our surprise, at that time of limited budgets, the President's Office thought we should have it and provided the funding for it.

SM: Great. That's great.

RB: And when we got that news, I was authorized then to be curator of the collection and arrange for its gradual transfer from the Meadows premises to the university library. The stipulation was that Meadows was still writing, would still need to consult a lot of his material for his work, but on a gradual, piecemeal basis, it would be transferred to the university library. And I never dreamed that I would be involved in several years of filling up my car, sometimes a dozen times a year, bringing this or that element of the collection to us, and then trying to organize it here.

SM: Well, that's very exciting, Roger.

RB: But the culmination of all of that--this, I think, brings it up to the present--I consider the Centennial Bibliography of

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Orange County that has just been published, that I was ~~the~~^a principal compiler of, I consider that to be the culmination of the university's commitment to acquiring this kind of material and bringing it fully to the attention of researchers.

SM: Would you consider this your most important contribution? Or what other collections (inaudible)?

RB: I think my role in acquiring, processing, cataloguing and then recording it in this very thorough bibliography, which I think is not matched by any other county in California, to be overall the most important single contribution.

SM: I think, Roger . . . I noticed it going on when I was working up there, more and more things (inaudible) or come in to your office, and it was sort of the finishing touch that you're referring to.

RB: Yes. I think though that there are other collections, too, that are extremely strong and valuable that also represent important contributions. The strength of the dance collection is, I think, one of my major contributions. Working with Eugene Loring and Olga Maynard and dance collectors of the whole Los Angeles area.

SM: Janice Plastino.

RB: Yes. Sometimes I've gone up to Los Angeles and brought back half a garage-full of materials to enrich the dance collection, or sat on the floor in Pasadena of a dance teacher

who passed on her lifetime collection of dance books and programs and memorabilia for Irvine, and (inaudible).

SM: (inaudible) does she teach classical ballet in Pasadena?

RB: There is Evelyn Le Mone who did.

SM: Yes, that's the one. I've seen three concerts that she's given. My niece had ballet lessons and was very good. She lives in San Marino and this woman who you just mentioned used to have recitals.

It seems to me, then, your future is that you'll need more space and, of course, staff. Is that right?

RB: No question about that. (laughter)

SM: I will interview Sharon Pugsley because she is collecting all these interviews and she needs more space.

RB: She certainly does.

SM: Yes. So I talked to Cal Boyer when I interviewed him and I said, "We've simply got to have more space for the Special Collections (inaudible)." And he said that when the Science Library was built more space would be given to you and Sharon.

RB: I would like to have an arrangement where the archives could have nearby but separate quarters where they could be brought into immediate contact with their patrons, so we don't have the present arrangement of ^{telephoning/calling them} (inaudible) from the back to come out and, if the patron has a question, and (inaudible). If they could be in quarters where they could have immediate

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access to the reference area that they service, it would be such a convenience.

SM: I'm sure that Sharon wants that and it does constitute a problem at the moment. But as I said to Cal, when I think of the . . . Well, you weren't present at the lecture I gave when Jack made me University Historian, were you?

RB: No, I was tending the store.

SM: Well, anyhow, it was my point that the archivists have just got to have more space, and that this thing . . . My lord, in ten years, Roger, we're going to have 26,000 students, ten years from now. I mean it really is a bit frightening.

RB: My impression from those early years when I was the archivist, there was very little material in the archives because the material wasn't old enough yet in administrative services to transfer to the archives.

SM: Yes.

RB: But now a lot of that comes over and Sharon has to deal with it.

SM: Yes. Well, I've said in my interviews [because I've always been nervous about how much is kept and how much is thrown away]. So, as far as I can figure out, they don't throw out things that are important, but you know it could happen.

RB: Well, I think the historical archivists and the records management ^{people,} ~~(inaudible)~~ have different approaches to the subject. And records management specialists want lean files,

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where an archivist can appreciate having richer material to consult.

SM: Exactly.

RB: Sharon has the historical feeling about it.

SM: Yes, she does.

RB: Which I think speaks very well for her.

SM: That's fortunate. She wrote her M.A. thesis, you know, in history and I read it. And it's very important that the archivists have that--yes, indeed. In your contacts, I suppose, do you have meetings with the other Special Collections people on the other eight campuses?

RB: We have from time to time over one university-wide topic or another, but mostly we know about each other's activities by telephone or that kind of consultation. We know generally what each other's collection is strong in, so that we avoid unnecessary duplication.

SM: I was thinking it would be very necessary that all . . . Well, I wouldn't think the School of Medicine has much, but the eight campuses, it would be very bad to start duplicating. How has Santa Cruz done in its Special Collections?

RB: I probably have less information about Santa Cruz than the others.

SM: San Diego has done quite well, haven't they?

RB: But San Diego has done very well. But San Diego has had very strong administrative support and a world of support from an active Friends group.

SM: They have Scripps, you see. They had their start with the Scripps.

RB: And they've had wealthy donors who donated that wonderful ~~Hewell~~ ^{Hill} collection ~~in the history of science.~~ ^{of Pacific voyages.} That's a wonderful rare book collection, but that's something no university library is financed to acquire. It requires benefactors.

SM: Well, Louise Darling at UCI Medical . . . she collected some pretty interesting . . . and did a good job, didn't she, as the librarian? Because she was in Interlibrary Loan when I was a graduate student at UCLA. She was marvelous. She also did reference (inaudible).

RB: We have rather friendly relations among all of the Special Collections departments. I was very happy just a week or so to be told that Santa Cruz would be shipping us two early maps of Orange County, one dating from the very first year of the county's organization, 1889, and the reason we are getting them is because I had emphasized the importance of those maps, although we lacked them, in a talk I gave to a professional map group on a centennial overview of the mapping of Orange County.

SM: That's good.

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RB: And I had seen this map only at the Sherman Library, but now another campus will be sending us their copy.

SM: How interesting. Well, tell me, Roger, are there any other questions we should discuss or we've missed? I'd like to have as much as I can get.

RB: Of course, our Special Collections Department is famous for its British naval history collection.

SM: How well I know that.

RB: The collection of books, which Arthur Marder was responsible for. And I would say we've had, I think, an unusual degree of support, too, from other faculty quarters. Judd Hubert has been probably the principal adviser in the development of the rare book collection in Special Collections. As a matter of fact, in his visits to the book shops of Europe and England, which sometimes occur twice a year, he has reserved more rare books for the university library than probably the library, left to its own devices, would have ordered.

SM: I think John Smith started that way back. In 1964, I went down to . . . We hadn't opened. I was appointed in December 1963 and worked very hard with John on our Humanities--I was Dean of Humanities. But I went down to Australia and he said, "Well, now, if you can find some books there, Texas has cleaned out Australia." Texas has a very fine Australiana collection. And so, when I went down there, I reserved certain books and sent them back . . . air letters, their

letters, right away, and we got started on our Australiana by the notion of my going into bookstores.

RB: Well, Judd has not only developed the rare book collections, especially in French literature, but he has also helped shape the development of an outstanding collection of illustrated books, especially in the nineteenth century, that feature the work of the great artists as book illustrators.

SM: Now, is that under your collection or is that in (inaudible).

RB: That is in Special Collections, because of the importance of those graphic features. But this would support a lot of research in the interrelations of literature and the arts.

SM: Yes.

RB: And, of course, his wife is a leading authority in that field, with her recent book on Surrealism ^{and the Book.} in (inaudible).

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SM: Oh, yes, Renée is tremendous. Well, anything else you can think of, Roger?

RB: I might say that we have been enriched tremendously, sometimes simply by bequests, as in the Menninger bequest of a tremendous collection of orchid literature. That's one of the major acquisitions in the department.

SM: Orchids?

RB: Literature on orchids.

SM: Did Joe Arditti have anything to do with that?

[Edna Menninger]

RB: She [^]was aware of his work and I think that may be one reason why she thought the Irvine campus might be a possible place to bequeath her collection.

SM: That's wonderful.

RB: But I think Arditti might have preferred to have obtained it as a private collection. (laughter) But he's glad we have it, anyway.

SM: I know he is, yes. He gave a lecture to the Forum three weeks ago, the best one he ever gave. He had given it at some scientific group and he had it very well organized and he picked his slides very carefully. It had to do with the orchids of Southeastern Asia. He goes to Singapore--in fact, that's about his second home, I'd say--and (inaudible).

RB: Well, the Menninger collection had many of the high points of orchid literature from the nineteenth century, great large volumes with chromolithographed plates that are extremely costly now in dealer catalogues.

SM: Yes. Well, I've always felt how important that is. And am I correct that Andy Horn who was at UCLA when I was, he's about three years ahead of me, wasn't he in charge of Special Collections at UCLA for a while? He started out as, I thought, at UCLA. He went from there to North Carolina, I thought, as their head librarian.

RB: If he was not in charge of Special Collections, he was very closely associated with ~~it~~. I know Wilbur Smith was in

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charge of it when I arrived in the late sixties. But preceding him, I know Andy Horn had very strong interests in that area. He was himself a private printer, so he had a feeling for the book arts.

SM: I was a good friend of Andy's. In his later years, he was, I think, sort of quiet and subdued. And if he would come down, I would only learn afterwards that he'd come down for a meeting with certain librarians here.

RB: Well, I think he was the organizer of the University Archivists Council.

SM: Oh, was he? (audio difficulty) So what was he head of?

RB: He was the head of the University Archivists Council when I was Archivist. And he seemed to have developed . . . (audio difficulty)

SM: There we go.

RB: He served as a liaison between the archivists on all of the different campuses, a liaison with the university-wide records management program, and spoke for the archivists and their interests.

SM: Now, Dowrene Hahn has always been our . . . What do you call her? What's her position?

RB: Her position has changed over the years, but she was in charge of Central Records, which I think now is Administrative Services.

SM: Yes.

RB: And I think she still remains in some overall administrative relationship to that. But when I first came, Eloise Kloke had a very strong interest in archives and she seemed to supply direction and control to Dowrene's Central Records office. I thought that Eloise Kloke's special interest in archives gave this campus probably more interest in archives at an early point than at any of the other campuses.

SM: Well, I didn't know that. I've interviewed Eloise. That was sometime ago, though.

RB: I detected this when I attended the university archives meetings. Many of the other campuses had none of the enthusiasm that Eloise had brought into the Irvine approach to archives.

SM: Good. Now, that's an important thing I didn't know and I'll have to follow that up. I'll have to run a second interview of Eloise. Well, thank you very much, Roger. This has been really very good and I am much appreciative.

RB: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW