On April 8th, Guilford’s Friends Historical Collection joined with our partners and invited guests for the official launch of Textiles, Teachers, and Troops: Greensboro, 1880-1945. The web site, created by UNC-G’s Digital Projects Team using materials contributed from seven Greensboro cultural institutions, was publicly presented during an event at the Greensboro Historical Museum. Speakers included Dr. Kevin Cherry, Deputy Secretary of Archives and History in the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources; Stephen Catlett, Digital Project Manager for the UNCG University Libraries; and David Gwynn, Digital Projects Coordinator at UNCG.

Textiles, Teachers, and Troops makes available more than 175,000 digital images including photographs, manuscripts, rare books, maps, scrapbooks, printed materials, and oral histories documenting the social and cultural development of Greensboro. The project is a collaboration between UNCG, Bennett College, Greensboro College, Greensboro Historical Museum, Greensboro Public Library, Guilford College, and N.C. A&T State University, documenting the history of Greensboro from 1880 to 1945 through the influence of the textile industry, education, and the military. The project was funded in part through a Library Services and Technology Act Grant administered by the State Library of North Carolina.

Through the grant, Guilford received funds to hire four Guilford students—Isabel Elliott, Nigel Thomas Espey, Morgan Myers, and James Simmons—in Spring and Fall 2013 to prepare items for digitization and draft supporting documentation. As a part of this work, our student interns created exhibits relating to the project, wrote essays to provide additional context, and transcribed handwritten letters that can be a challenge to read. Some of these are now available and additional supporting features are being added with the next site development phase.

The project website may be seen at http://digitalgreensboro.org/. Guilford’s contributions include several significant collections documenting the history of the college and surrounding community. Especially notable is the inclusion of the Mary Mendenhall Hobbs Papers, as well as several smaller collections of her writings, which are an important resource for scholars of Quakerism, women’s history, and North Carolina history, as well as education in the Greensboro area. The Raymond and Helen Binford Papers also provide important correspondence relating to Quaker higher education in the first quarter of the twentieth century while Raymond Binford served as Guilford’s president, and to Helen Binford’s work with the...
MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR
OF LIBRARY SERVICES AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY:
A THOUGHTFUL PLANNING PROCESS BROUGHT TO SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION

As I come to the end of my first full year at Guilford, leading this exceptional library, I look back over the course of the year with a great deal of satisfaction. It has been a joy to work with the Friends of the Hege Library and to include the Friends in our unfolding strategic planning discussions furthered by the exceptional professional wisdom and guidance of Maureen Sullivan, who was profiled in the last issue of the FOL Newsletter. Maureen, who is widely recognized as a thought leader in the world of academic librarianship, was an invaluable presence throughout the planning process. Moreover, knowing that our Friends support our vision for the future of the Hege Library with such enthusiasm and continued commitment is most gratifying. The creative thinking and thoughtful discussions we have had this past year have been vital to our community-building efforts.

I am pleased to share that our strategic planning initiative came to fruition at the end of this academic year in the planning document Hege Library Strategic Directions 2014-2017: The Library as “Academic Commons.” In it we envision the Library as the College’s cultural and intellectual center, exemplifying Guilford’s unique experiential approach to liberal arts education. As the Academic Commons, the Library will promote authentic campus partnerships, and will foster a sense of academic community. We will advance the development of intellectually and culturally responsive collections and create flexible and innovative learning spaces that may continually evolve as needs change. We not only will support, but will model meaningful collaboration for our students within the Library to further the fulfillment of the College’s mission to provide a “transformative and practical liberal arts education.” Now in final review, we will put the finishing touches on this document and develop an action plan from it over the summer months, introducing it for broad Guilford community consideration in the fall.

Staff involvement in the planning process from the beginning was very important. The staff retreat in January produced an excellent foundation for the work that followed. Staff members contributed their ideas and suggestions to vital discussions of mission and vision, the current strengths and positive attributes of the Library, clarification the Library’s core values, determination of a set of strategic directions, and an initial set of aligned priorities. Two groups contributed important content following this retreat. The Librarians’ Council, in its capacity as the steering committee, did the research to identify key trends and developments in academic librarianship, higher education, and instructional technology. They used this research to inform the development of the vision and to propose goals for the plan. A Task Force for the Library Strategic Plan was formed as well, and was a source of critical perspective and thoughtful guidance. Comprised of key leaders and potential partners among the College’s faculty and administrative staff, as well as student liaisons from the newly formed Library Student Advisory Board, the group was broadly representative of campus academic constituencies.

A key aspect of the planning process for consideration of The Library as “Academic Commons” was the organization of site visits to North Carolina State and Duke Universities to tour model library and classroom learning spaces. A diverse contingent of Guilford faculty, librarians, learning specialists, and administrators, including Task Force members, participated in these field trips. This shared experience gave us the opportunity to see more clearly what will be possible as Guilford re-envision the Hege Library as a 21st century academic library, and strengthened the commitment of those who participated.

Critical to the success of our results-oriented process was ensuring as broad as possible outreach to the Guilford community to gain the necessary perspective for the development of the vision, mission, and strategic directions that would firmly align the Hege Library with institutional priorities and demonstrate its central institutional role. During each of Maureen Sullivan’s monthly visits to campus, individual and small group meetings, and targeted group presentations took place. Maureen conducted initial meetings with President Kent Chabotar, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College Adrienne Israel, and Chief Planning and Senior Management Officer Jeffrey Favolise. The insights gained from this ongoing engagement furthered understanding of various perspectives within the Guilford community, guided the approach to the planning process, and enabled us to build a coherent impression of the community’s perception of the Library within the academic community and the support for the concept of The Library as “Academic Commons.” It was an energizing experience.

I prepare to embark upon this next year as Director of Library Services and Instructional Technology in the year that marks the 25th anniversary of the completion of the addition whose principle donors and Guilford alumni, H. Curt ’56 and Patricia S. ’57 Hege, had a vision for the Library that anticipated the direction that academic libraries now are taking. We must be prepared to support the innovation and creativity that is so vital to today’s higher learning environment and that is so fundamental to the Guilford experiential education experience. In envisioning the Library and the Art Gallery as co-existing within the same space, the Hege’s planted the seed of the Academic Commons. The essential “pillars” of the Hege Library, which included the Friends Historical Collection and College Archives, were established. We have a firm foundation on which to build and an exciting vision for the future.

Terry Hammond

WHAT’S COMING TO THE ART GALLERY?

During the fall semester, Guilford College Art Gallery will present the Fifth Juried Alumni Art Exhibition in the main gallery, from September 1 to December 5, and host the Fifth Alumni Art Exchange, an event featuring alumni artists that focuses on professional practices for artists and careers in the arts.

A photography exhibition, Impaired Perceptions will be displayed in the Robert C. Ketner Vitrines from October 1 to December 5. The black & white photographic portraits of people with various physical impairments promote individualization.

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Co-sponsored by the College’s Diversity Action Committee, the exhibition and visit by artist Brian Charles Steel are offered in conjunction with National Disability Awareness Month and an on-campus workshop/conference of AHEAD (Association on Higher Education and Disability) October 2-3. Steel, who was born with congenital fiber type disproportion, created Impaired Perceptions to challenge common misperceptions of people like himself who have physical impairments, and to open the doors for critical dialogue about ableism.

Terry Hammond

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North Carolina PTA. Of interest to Friends of the Library members, both these collections also include information about the key events in the history of Guilford’s library. See http://library.uncg.edu/dp/ttt/guilford.aspx for a fuller list of Guilford’s collection now available online through this project.

Gwen Gosney Erickson, Friends Historical Collection Librarian and College Archivist