

# Friendscript



Conceptual Drawing of East Pavilion—Aerial from Southeast View

## Phase One of Building Project Gets Green Light

*Board of Trustees OKs Archives and Special Collections facility*

Gratitude. Excitement. Anticipation.

A range of reactions greeted the news that in January, the University of Illinois Board of Trustees approved the first phase of the University Library’s building project.

The visionary plan will transform the current Undergraduate Library facility into a home for the University Archives, the Illinois History and Lincoln Collections, and the Rare Book & Manuscript Library, offering “a solid footing,” in the words of UI Systems President Tim Killeen, “for our most extraordinary treasures and [positioning] us to build the next generation of services for our students.”

For John Wilkin, dean of the University Library, the BOT vote affirmed “what we do in a way that’s true to our roots”—a model of a library whose vast collections serve as a “gravity center around which our teaching, learning, and research take place.”

Wilkin emphasized his gratitude to those who helped secure funds for the \$50 million project, and for the collaborative efforts of campus figures and design teams coordinating the endeavor. “It feels like we’re all moving in the same direction now,” he said. “The most important thing we need to actually do is construct the new facility and support it.”

Associate University Librarian Tom Teper, project coordinator of the Library Building Project, says design development and construction documents should be completed this

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The Office of Library Advancement garners interest and secures external funds from Illinois alumni and friends, provides visibility for the Library through its programs and events, and promotes the Library within the Illinois campus and the community-at-large.

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## Phase One of Building Project Gets Green Light, *continued from page 1*

summer. Bidding may occur by fall, with construction currently projected to begin in January and end by May 2024.

As to the Undergraduate Library, its last day was May 13. Over the summer, spaces will be updated in the Main Library and other campus libraries to ready themselves to welcome undergraduates by the time fall arrives.

### Study spaces

For more than a year, Sara Holder and David Ward '92 LAS, MS '98 LIS, have worked to prepare for this moment, when undergraduates will transition into the broader reach of campus. Holder directs Research and Information Services, while Ward heads the Undergraduate Library.

"We're on schedule," said Ward, who teamed with Holder to handle the UGL move. "I think we're feeling good with having identified all of the highest-use services, having identified spaces that we think will accommodate providing those services."

Pleased to be through the planning phase, Holder is excited as efforts ramp up to actually put the project pieces in place.

For Ward, the move has been all about connection. Noting that undergraduates originally did their work in the Main Library before UGL's 1969 opening, he looks forward to these students being closer to librarians, services, experts, and resources that will be available to them—and that they often use already—in the main building.

As for the Main Library, its first floor will offer undergraduate study areas, services, and programming. The north side of the Social

## No Water Worries

Are rare and treasured archival items safe in an underground location?

That worry was voiced following the announcement that the Undergraduate Library would evolve into a home for Archives and Special Collections.

According to university records, the building has no documented history of groundwater leaks or flooding. Constructed in 1969, it was built as a concrete boat, as it lies beneath the water table, with a sump pump system carrying off rain and melting snow.

The preliminary report of Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, a global firm of engineers, architects, and material scientists, found UGL's water-tight construction a "superb design for the time," with no signs of blockage or water penetration. However, some flashing and waterproofing near the surface of the building will be redone.

"Their findings were very positive and encouraging," said Tom Teper, project director of the Library Building Project, who also noted that many well-known libraries around the nation—including the Folger Shakespeare Library and the Library of Congress—also safely use underground facilities.

### John Wilkin

The Juanita J. and Robert E. Simpson  
Dean of Libraries and University  
Librarian

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Conceptual Drawing of West Pavilion—View from West



Conceptual Drawing of Plaza—View from Gregory Drive

Sciences, Health, and Education Library (Rooms 100 and 112) will be renamed, rewired, and reconstituted as study space for 300 students. This floor will also host the Writer's Workshop, loanable technology, consultation, and technology support, with other floors accommodating additional services.

In addition to the Main Library, other libraries across campus will offer instructional areas, expanded seating, extended hours, and other programming.

### Rethinking and reorganizing

The move sparked new thinking on collaborating and coordinating services. The Media Commons, for instance, formerly part of UGL, will join the Scholarly Commons in the Main Library, as their missions dovetail.

## Morrow Plots

With the renovation of the Undergraduate Library space, will the Morrow Plots remain protected from shade?

A National Historic Landmark, the plots are the oldest, continuously used, experimental crop field in the Americas and remain a legendary site on campus.

"We have been working with the architects and engineers at RATIO and Shepley Bulfinch to ensure that the design we have is not going to cast a larger shadow onto the plots than currently exists," said Associate University Librarian Tom Teper. "The replacement of [some trees on the plaza] will actually reduce the overall shadow that's cast."

In addition, he said, revisions to the east pavilion will eliminate any shadow-line extension into the Morrow Plots, and new plaza illumination should cut down on light cast on the adjacent Observatory (also a National Historic Landmark).

The Morrow Plots (and corresponding shade concerns) have long been erroneously cited as the reason the Undergraduate Library was built underground in the first place. In fact, university documents show the building had always been planned as a subterranean facility to lend a feeling of open space.

"Scholarly Commons does a lot of work with digital scholarship," Holder said. That complements the activities pursued in the Media Commons, where students produce videos, podcasts, and other digital creations. The two units will be combined, renamed, and located in the Main Library.

Similarly, the Immersive Studio (formerly part of UGL's Media Commons) will sit adjacent to the IDEA Lab at the Grainger Engineering Library Information Center, as both entities concentrate on virtual and augmented reality projects.

### Just breathe

Ward, Holder, and others refer to this time period as the "inhale" phase, as students and resources move into the Main Library.

"It's sort of a visual," Holder said. (Imagine people holding their breath and becoming thinner to fit in their new environment.) "And then, once the Special Collections units move over to the new building . . . we can let our breath out a little bit because we can expand . . . into those vacated areas."

"So how can we still provide necessary and important services while we're doing it?" Ward said. He, Holder, and dozens of librarians have devoted months to creatively finding answers to that question. Now, they're just waiting to exhale.



Take a look at the next page of the University Library's history at [go.library.illinois.edu/NextPageVideo](http://go.library.illinois.edu/NextPageVideo)

# Wilkin Announces Plans To Step Down

*Dean to depart top post in coming year*

John Price Wilkin believes in change. And that includes change in leadership. In February, Wilkin announced his intention to step aside as Juanita J. and Robert E. Simpson Dean of Libraries and University Librarian at the University of Illinois to make way for his successor.

“Organizations need changes in leadership to continue to thrive and respond to evolving challenges,” he wrote in an email to Library staff. “It is an important time to strategically consider the future of our Library.”

When Wilkin came to Illinois in 2013, after nearly three decades in library-related positions at the University of Michigan, he wrote a list for himself. The succinct, matter-of-fact analysis—a clear-eyed, Ben Franklin-style tally—outlined five University Library priorities he wished to address: Google digitization (to broaden access to materials), storage of print collections, diversification of faculty and staff appointments, a shared repository, and discovery (how users find things).

“When I look back on my time,” Wilkin said of his nearly 10 years at the helm, “every one of these things is an area where we made tremendous accomplishments.” In fact, Google digitization has expanded from fewer than 100,000 to 1 million volumes, Illinois leads the Big Ten Academic Alliance in storage efforts, and the Library has greatly diversified its staff makeup and type of academic appointments. “Our digital repository is incredibly strong,” he added, “and we are in conversations with CARLI [Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois] to extend that infrastructure statewide for other institutions.

“Our discovery work has been immensely successful in serving as a linchpin for success in research.”

In those early days, Wilkin also hoped that by the end of his tenure the Library would have reached additional milestones: having a transformed building, strong leadership development, acknowledgment as a leader in shared curation, and a strengthening of the notion of “library as place.” He points to such efforts as the Library Building Project, collaborative teamwork, the Research Data Service,



*“Organizations need changes in leadership to continue to thrive and respond to evolving challenges.”*

— JOHN PRICE WILKIN

data management, and advances in scholarly communication and publishing as evidence of excellence in those fields.

But nothing of real value gets done by a single individual, he emphasized; it takes a team.

“When I think of all the things that I’m proud of,” Wilkin said, “I also, in every case, think immediately of the many people who played pivotal roles in advancing those initiatives.

“This is the work of a team, and . . . one of the things that I’m proudest of is the way that we pulled together to make these things happen,” he said.

While at Illinois, Wilkin also served as interim vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost designate in 2017-18. In 2019, he received the Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Award, granted to an academic librarian for significant contributions to library automation or management, and for notable improvements in library services or research.

As to the change in leadership, a search committee is being formulated, and Wilkin will stay on until a new dean is in place (perhaps by January 2023). After a semester’s break time, Wilkin plans to return to the Library faculty and assist with special projects of the chancellor, including as part of HELIOS (the Higher Education Leadership Initiative for Open Scholarship), a cohort of U.S. colleges and universities.

Regarding the work that he and his team realized over his years of service, Wilkin maintains the long view. “It’s not just about Illinois by itself or not just about libraries by themselves,” he said, “but about [the] knitting together of our strength in the context of what . . . libraries should do and should be.”

## Best in Show

### Gift provides exhibition space for library treasures

**Lionelle Elsesser** '66 LAS, MS '67 LIS, watched as her grandchildren's eyes grew wide. Ensnared in the Rare Book & Manuscript Library on the University of Illinois campus, the teen-agers were examining Sir Isaac Newton's *Philosophiæ naturalis principia mathematica*, as well as items in the Frank Lloyd Wright collection. As the teens processed the stunning moment, their visceral reaction underscored for their grandmother the importance of actually seeing and (sometimes) touching the brilliance that has shaped humanity throughout the ages.

That type of insight has galvanized Lionelle and husband **Jim Elsesser** '66 BUS, MS '67 BUS, longtime supporters of the Rare Book & Manuscript Library (RBML) and other university efforts. The St. Louis couple's most recent gift marks \$500,000 for a significant acquisition, plus \$1 million for an exhibition space to display the University Library's treasures in the planned Archives and Special Collections Building.

The Elsessers' shared interest in rare and beautiful books began, perhaps, as undergraduates, when both of them looked forward to the ever-changing presentations of Audubon's *Birds of America* on the Main Library's second floor. As an English major, Lionelle spent time in the stacks and was entranced by the idea that libraries existed for many specialties. Her sense of the "tactile essence" of a library—its muffled sound, "bookish" aroma, and the refracted light bouncing off tomes and tables—recalls for her an overall feeling of being in "a unique and comfortable space."

After completing their undergraduate work, the couple extended their studies with the help of graduate assistantships. In addition to the monetary boost, they appreciated the significant work their assistantships entailed—Lionelle at the Illinois Project for Educational Leadership Development, and Jim at the Survey Research Lab. Believing that these experiences proved essential in garnering future opportunities, the Elsessers have supported scholarships for many years.



**Library Friends Jim and Lionelle Elsesser**



**The Library was able to acquire one of the most beautiful and original books published in 18th century Britain with a gift from Library Friends Jim and Lionelle. Latin for "fields of fire," *Campi Phlegraei* is one of the most celebrated books on Mount Vesuvius by Sir William Hamilton, a leading scientific pioneer of the age. This book contains hand painted illustrations of the eruptions of Mount Vesuvius volcano throughout the 1760s and 1770s, including Plate XXXVIII above.**

"We're grateful to Illinois," Jim said. "No. 1, we met each other there. And we had graduate assistantships, which made all the difference in our careers for both of us."

For Jim, the "Learning and Labor" motto, depicted in the Alma Mater statue, instilled a deep-rooted guidepost to building an illustrious career. Upon leaving Illinois, he served four years as an officer in the U.S. Navy, including a year in Vietnam, where he was selected as the aide/flag lieutenant to Adm. Elmo Zumwalt, the Commander of Naval Forces in Vietnam. A long business career followed, where Jim became chief financial officer of Ralston Purina and chief executive officer of Interstate Bakeries. In 2021, he received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the UI Gies College of Business.

After graduation, Lionelle used her background in English and library and information science to plunge into literacy and library efforts at Norfolk State University, a historically black college. Later,

she served as chief of the library service at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in Minnesota, and also wrote the text for the Medical Library Association course in patient education.

That interest in how people access information—from grandchildren to students to veterans—threads throughout Lionelle's life. "My concept of what a library is has shifted greatly because of [my] work," she said, "how [a library] builds its collection, what it makes available, and how it makes it available. And you know, that's a very satisfying part for me, of looking at the University Library, what it builds, and how it makes it available."

# Library Is Looking For

To fund one of these items or to ask for additional titles in an area of interest, call (217) 333-5682 or email [friends@library.illinois.edu](mailto:friends@library.illinois.edu).

**\$375 for Cram's Map of the Loop and Vicinity**, a rare look at the Chicago Loop before the construction of Wacker Drive in 1926. Bounded by the Chicago River on the north, Clinton Avenue on the west, Roosevelt Road on the south, and Grant Park on the east, this small piece identifies railroad stations in red and names most businesses, hotels, and important buildings.

Additional information on the back includes an index of locations, as well as data on railroads, steamships, depots, and rapid transit and streetcar lines. No record for this item exists in the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC); the **Map Library** believes this article would serve as an ideal companion for a pictorial map of Chicago of the same era already in its collection.

**\$750 for Camps des Prisonniers Français d'après les documents du Ministère des Prisonniers de la France Libérée**, detailing German camps for French prisoners of war during World War II. Created and published by Jean Baneton in Paris in 1944, the map marks sites in Germany, Poland, and Austria, with red lines delineating European borders in 1923 and black, dashed lines indicating their evolution by 1944. Along the left side, an index identifies camps by name and location, and whether for officers or enlisted men. This map, for which no record exists in OCLC, would complement the **Map Library's** previously purchased Red Cross map showing German camps for American prisoners.

**\$1,100 for 改正測量皇國明細全圖 [Complete and Detailed Revised Survey Map of the Empire]**, a Meiji-era map of Japan highlighting administrative and local government, a step that helped move the country toward national change and economic growth. Printed and published by Inoue Katsugorō in 1888, the item displays Japan horizontally, with inset maps of lesser islands and images of significant sites decorating the border. Sought by the **Map Library**, the drawing depicts Japan at a critical juncture as it moved from the feudal *han* system to a modern, bureaucratic state.

**\$1,750 for Map of The Old Reliable Hannibal and St. Joseph Short Line—Always On Time** for the **Map Library**. This map is a spectacular timetable promoting the virtues of the H&SJ train. Produced in 1882 in Chicago, the piece is delightfully detailed and brilliantly colored, showing scenes of the train (with a brightly shining “new electric light”) crossing

a railroad bridge whilst a dog runs alongside, as well as an inside view of its passenger car, complete with comfortable lounging chairs. The item also includes a timetable and regional map—just the ticket for the **Map Library's** holdings.

**\$1,950 for Le Rêve du Fou: The Madman's Dream**. This map is a 1914 pictorial map in which Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany is drawn as a Frankenstein-like figure looming over Europe. Blood drips from his hands directly over France, with his boot stepping on French possessions in North Africa; meanwhile, a red-soaked Germany leaks over Russia, Austria-Hungary, Serbia, and Turkey. No other samples of this French-produced map exist; the **Map Library** would like to get its own hands on this item.

**\$2,000 for A Map of Europe In which are delineated its Grand Modern Divisions, as well as Partitions into Inferior States Governments and C.**, a rare illustration issued in 1804 just one month before Napoleon Bonaparte declared himself emperor of France. The large, colored wall map runs 61 x 62 inches and offers a full view of Europe (from Iceland to Cyprus, Spain to the Ural Mountains) in the very short-lived period just before the start of the Napoleonic Wars. Fewer than five copies of this map, published by William Faden, exist in institutional collections; the **Map Library** would like to join those ranks.

**\$2,850 for North America**, one of five, large pictorial maps rendering in rich color and detail the history, agriculture, industry, minerals, and peoples of a continental region. The **Map Library** already owns *Australia*, published in 1927, and eventually would like to complete the collection with *Africa*, *South America*, and *Pan Africa*. The OCLC lists only three copies of this 1930 production, drawn by Margaret Whiting Spilhaus and measuring 39.75 x 30.25 inches.

**\$3,500 for Andersonville**, a hand-colored view of the infamous Andersonville Prison, drawn by a Union soldier held captive there during the Civil War. Having tired of the less than frank postwar accounts of the Confederate prison's conditions, Thomas O'Dea created this bird's-eye view from memory, circa 1885, complete with stockade, rifle towers, and tents. One key identifies 41 sites within the prison complex, while another details 18 scenes of everyday life, including death, torture, rations, and dreams of home and family. A portrait of O'Dea stands at lower right. The **Map Library** would like to secure this item, which is impressively large (57 x 37.5 inches) and in remarkably good condition.

**\$3,800 for *Map Showing the Isle of Pleasure*,** a whimsical piece published by Henry Jefferson Lawrence late in the Prohibition Era and overflowing with anti-Prohibition and liquor puns. View the “state of inebriation,” bordered by the “Gulp Stream,” illuminated by “moon shine,” and garnished by sites such as “Hang Over Hollow” and “High-Ball Grounds.” The **Map Library** would love to top off its collection of other allegorical maps with this rare item; only four copies exist in OCLC.

**\$4,500 for *Карта Группировки Союзных Оккупационных Войск в Германии по УКА ГСОВ в Германии [Map of the Grouping of the Allied Occupation Forces in Germany according to the UKA GSOV in Germany]*,** a secret, original Red Army document from 1945 Soviet-occupied Germany. Pen and crayon markings atop a 1939 map of Germany detail the location of Allied armed forces and evince the trust crisis that existed after the end of World War II—Germany was defeated, but would war continue between the Allied and Soviet armies? The **Map Library** seeks this unusual item (of which no other copies exist) which presages what would result in a decades-long Cold War.

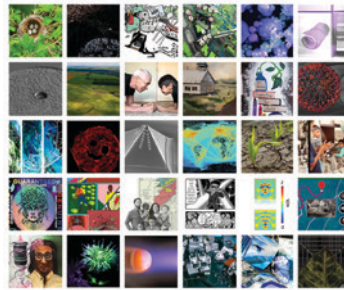
## Thank You

The following donors have adopted these items previously featured in *Friendscript*:

- ◆ **Bob and Kay Merrick** for their gift for a facsimile of Dante’s *Divine Comedy* (Literatures and Languages Library)

We would like to bring our readers’ attention to an error in the Winter 2021–22 issue of *Friendscript*. We used the incorrect pronoun in thanking one of our Library Friends. We regret this error. The correct appreciation is as follows:

- ◆ **Mardell J. O’Brien** for her gift in support of the Image of Research competitions (Scholarly Commons)



View all 30 semifinalists, see the winners, and read more about the impact of Mardell’s gift at [go.illinois.edu/2022ImageofResearch](http://go.illinois.edu/2022ImageofResearch).



We encourage you to visit the Library’s online calendar at [go.library.illinois.edu/calendar](http://go.library.illinois.edu/calendar) for the most up-to-date information about events.

# Library Friends

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Annual gifts strengthen the Library and ensure its standing as one of the world’s preeminent public university collections. We invite you to join this tradition of private support, which makes a critical difference in the quality of the Library’s collections, programs, and services.

Please mail this form with your gift to:

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**Questions?** Please call (217) 333-5682 or e-mail [friends@library.illinois.edu](mailto:friends@library.illinois.edu).



**Yes!** I want to help ensure the Library’s excellence with my gift to the:

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### **Best in Show**, *continued from page 5*

Lionelle believes the University Library staff have deftly handled the creation and implementation of the building project, which will transform the former Undergraduate Library space into a home for RBML, University Archives, and the Illinois History and Lincoln Collections. Although strongly invested in supporting scholarships, the Elsessers became more interested in brick-and-mortar issues when both the Library and the Gies College of Business needed to expand to better serve their missions.

“There is a fine, difficult balance to be struck between preserving and sharing the treasures,” Lionelle said. “If you believe, as I do, that libraries define, maintain, and display our history and culture, then you must make as much of the collection as possible visible and accessible.”

And with a new exhibition space, that will happen, stretching beyond a special grandparent moment to affect many more generations to come.



**The Library holds a treasured 17th century manuscript by one of the most influential scientists of all time—Sir Isaac Newton. *Opus Galli Anonymi (Work of an Anonymous Frenchman)* is Newton’s unpublished Latin translation of French instructions for making the philosopher’s stone, including his own notes. Its purchase at auction was made possible with a donation from the Elsessers.**