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Library Focus

University Libraries

The University of Southern Mississippi

Fall 2006

Nettie Jo and her friends find a new home

-Ellen Ruffin, de Grummond Curator

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From *Nettie Jo's Friends*. Photo taken by Barton Spencer

It is dusk, and a young African-American girl clutches her cloth doll close to her as she walks toward a warmly lit welcoming cabin, which is apparently home. The horizon exudes color, depicting a sunset as it displays golden hues over a rich green landscape. The girl holds her doll as a mother comforting her child. It's clear the little girl and the doll are disappointed by something.

The aforementioned scene is a description of a painting in a book written by Patricia McKissack titled *Nettie Jo's Friends*. The charming picture book tells the story of Nettie Jo's family's preparations for a cousin's wedding where Nettie Jo will be the flower girl. While Mama is busy sewing a dress for Nettie Jo to wear to the wedding, Nettie Jo decides to give Annie Mae, her beloved doll, a new dress, too. However, with all of the wedding preparations, and with Nettie Jo's mama and grandmother making new clothes, a sewing needle is not to be had. The story continues as Nettie Jo and Annie Mae begin their search for that much desired sewing needle.

The story itself is a delight and the illustrations in the book are extremely enjoyable. In her 1989 *Los Angeles Times* review, author Virginia Hamilton states, "Illustrator Scott Cook's illustrations are stunning. He achieves a glowing Rembrandt quality using the techniques of the impressionists. There are muted impasto surfaces of light and dark spaces. Nettie Jo, Annie Mae, family and friends are defined with form rather than with detail.

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The turning edges of clothing are luminous, giving the figures an atmosphere of magic and mystery” (Hamilton).

The good news for the University Libraries is that Scott Cook has donated several of his oil on canvas paintings from *Nettie Jo’s Friends*, as well as others from his picture book adaptation of Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* to the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection. Also among the contributions are mixed media originals for the Gullah tale *A Net to Catch Time*.

A longtime friend of the Children’s Book Festival at the University of Southern Mississippi, Jackson native Scott Cook has decided to house his original works at the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection. Cook now resides in Sandwich, Massachusetts, but he has not let go of his Mississippi roots. His mother, Rita Cook, serves as his business manager in Jackson, where many of her days are spent showing Cook’s landscape and still life paintings.

Cook’s route to picture book illustration happened as a result of teaching middle school students at Friends’ Central School in Philadelphia, PA. He created models of animals to demonstrate to his students how to make their own sculptures. When he put his models out in the sunlight to paint them, it occurred to Cook to make a children’s book. He sent photographs of his paintings to Al-



Cratchet Family from *A Christmas Carol*.
Photo taken by Barton Spencer

fred A. Knopf, and his picture book career was launched!

Scott Cook’s first illustrated children’s book, *The Gingerbread Boy*, published by Alfred A. Knopf, received significant acclaim and was given two starred reviews. It was selected as a “Best Book for the Year” by *School Library Journal* in 1987. The same book was an “Editor’s



From *A Net to Catch Time*. Digitized by Erin Royal.



From *A Net to Catch Time*. Digitized by Erin Royal

Choice Book” by *Booklist*. Cook’s second book, *Nettie Jo’s Friends*, also received much recognition, including a silver medal from The Society of Illustrators. The cover painting of the book was exhibited in *The Original Art, an Exhibition Celebrating the Fine Art of Children’s Book Illustration 1989*, published by the Society of Illustrators.

Paintings from *Nettie Jo’s Friends* were also selected as cover art for the Alfred A. Knopf 1989 spring catalog. The book received starred reviews in *Booklist* and *School Library Journal*, a pointer review in *Kirkus Reviews*, a “Best Book of 1989” by *Parenting Magazine*, a *San Francisco Chronicle* “Best Book of the Year,” and a full color cover was used for the October 1989 issue of *Wilson Library Bulletin*.

Included in the gift to the de Grummond Collection are several oil on canvas paintings from *A Christmas Carol*, published by Random House in 1999. The December 6, 1999, review that appeared in the *Dallas Morning News* cited Cook’s illustrations in the abridged version of the classic as “fully illustrated in evocative oil paintings” (Rautzhan).

Further appreciation of Cook’s work was evident when his *Mother Goose* (published by Knopf in 1994) was given the honor of having its art featured, along with his sculptures and puppets, in the windows and interiors of Tiffany & Company in New York City. Woody Shimko, director of window display at Tiffany, chose the oil painting used on the title page of Cook’s *Mother Goose*, as well as marionettes carved like a frog and Mother Goose, and sculptures of a fox, panther, and rabbit, characters from *Nettie Jo’s Friends*.

Mr Fox from *Nettie Jo’s Friends*. Photo taken by Barton Spencer



The temperamental artist does not apply to Scott Cook the person. That image simply doesn't fit this down-to-earth approachable talent. Having grown up in Jackson, Mississippi, and having seen "Miss Eudora" at the Jitney Jungle buying groceries, Cook realizes that real people are behind the letters, words and pictures in books. He still considers himself a "struggling artist," despite his successes.

Cook's passion for his work is evidenced by his continued learning and studying. He is always examining new ways and approaches to his work. The de Grummond Collection is pleased to receive his gift and will look forward to future exhibits of Scott Cook's work.



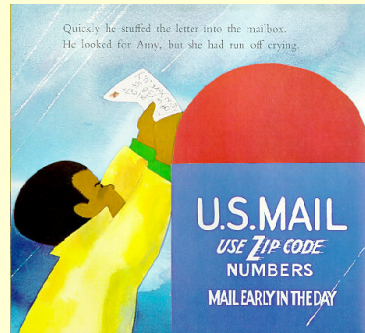
From *A Net to Catch Time*. Digitized by Erin Royal.

Works Cited

Hamilton, Virginia. "The Children's Bookshelf." *Los Angeles Times* 28 May 1989.

Rautzhan, Kendall. "Dickens' 'Christmas Carol' Still Sings." *The Dallas Morning News* 6 December 1999.

de Grummond Collection 40th Anniversary T-Shirts



Join us in celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection. This 100% preshrunk cotton "Hanes Beefy Tee" features the de Grummond logo in black on the front left pocket area and a full-color illustration from Ezra Jack Keats' *A Letter To Amy*; Viking, 1968 (see above) on the back. All profits from the sale of these shirts go to the de Grummond Collection. Thank you for your order!

Adult Sizes:

Small _____ \$15.00

Medium-_____ \$15.00

Large_____ \$15.00

X Large_____ \$15.00

XX Large_____ \$15.00

Shipping & Handling \$2.50

TOTAL _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Phone/E-mail: _____

All orders must be prepaid. Make checks payable to the de Grummond Collection

Send checks and order form to:

The de Grummond Collection, McCain Library, 118 College Dr., #5148, The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001. Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery

New Services for Faculty and Staff!!

EAGLE EXPRESS Delivery, EAGLE EXPRESS Hold

-Kay Behm, Head, Access Services

Cook Library on the Hattiesburg campus is offering two new services for faculty and staff members. Faculty and staff can request that items from the circulating collections be delivered to designated locations throughout the campus, via EAGLE EXPRESS Delivery. Fourteen locations spread across campus have been identified as delivery points for faculty and staff unable to come to the library.

The EAGLE EXPRESS Hold service allows faculty and staff to have items held at service desks in Cook Library. Materials from the circulating collections may be requested to be held at the different service desks, such as the Curriculum Materials Center, the Music Resource Center, the Reading Room, or the main Circulation Desk.

Requests for these two new services are placed through Document Delivery at <http://www.lib.usm.edu/>. A turnaround time of 48 hours is required for delivery.

Introducing

VIDEO ON DEMAND

-Tracy Englert, Media Librarian

An excellent resource just got better! Library patrons can now view many of the Annenberg Media programs online!

Simply click the Video on Demand icon and view the video. Annenberg Media has an impressive variety of programs including Statistics, Chemistry, Psychology, Algebra, Spanish, Geology, Geography, Economics, English, Music and Teaching and many more.

There is no charge for this service, but registration is required for first-time users.

<http://www.learner.org/>



Popular Reading Materials Now Available in Cook Library

-Sherry Laughlin, Associate University Librarian

“Where are the books that you can just, you know, READ?” This is a question that Cook Library’s Information Services Librarians have heard from students quite often over the years. Information gathered during the Library Summit focus group, held in October 2005, also reinforced the notion that Southern Miss students wanted access to books that were fun to read. Armed with that information, and convinced that students who read ANYTHING regularly enjoy greater academic success, Southern Miss librarians set out to find a way to offer a collection of popular reading books that students would enjoy.

A contract was arranged with a book rental service that provides a core collection of 1000 titles, featuring popular mysteries, adventure books, popular fiction, and non-fiction books in history, current events, politics, and other subjects. Other donated books appropriate for adding to the library’s permanent collections, as well as a few purchases of award winning books and books by Mississippi authors, round out the popular reading collection. The rental contract, along with purchases of award winning and Mississippi authored books, are funded by overdue fines paid by library patrons.

The books are shelved on the first floor of Cook Library in the Information Services Department. Circulation period is 30 days, regardless of patron category. Upholstered furniture is located near the low shelving, just outside Starbucks, creating a comfortable place to take a break from classes and required reading.

Library users can expect to see new titles, including best sellers, added regularly, as the rental collection is designed to be rotated, with a few books returned each month and new titles received.

Contact the Information Services desk at (601) 266-4249 or email Ask-a-Librarian for more information about the collection.



Library Research Forum

-Jennifer Brannock, Special Collections Librarian

The Library Research Work Group hosted the 1st Library Research Forum on September 8 in room 123 of Cook Library. This event was held in conjunction with the University sponsored Letters Day. Letters Day is an annual event held to recognize the research and creative activities of faculty members at the University of Southern Mississippi. The Library Research Forum was an opportunity for library faculty to showcase their research activities to the University. Five librarians gave presentations on their research. The topics ranged from the image of women in librarianship to using podcasts for information delivery to library patrons. In addition to highlighting the research of librarians, Sara Paschal, a former student in the library and information science program at USM was invited to present her research paper on the authors of articles written about Accelerated Reader. The event was a success and the Library Research Work Group hopes to make the Forum an annual event.

Adrienne McPhaul	“Mousey or Man-Hungry: A Look at the Popular Images of Women in Librarianship”
Steven Turner	“Library Website Content Management System”
Sara S. Paschal	“Authorship of Academic Articles Pertaining to the Topic of Accelerated Reader: A bibliometric study.”
Tracy Englert	“Cooking up a Cookbook Collection in Special Collections”
Barton Spencer	“Library Podcasting – An Innovative Method of Information Delivery”
Ellen Ruffin	“A Gentle Parting: Grief and Loss in the Work of Cynthia Rylant”

The Southern Quarterly

A Journal of Arts in the South

—Carol Green, *Serials Librarian*

The Southern Quarterly has been published by The University of Southern Mississippi since 1962 and was the first scholarly journal devoted entirely to the interdisciplinary study of the arts and culture of the southern United States.

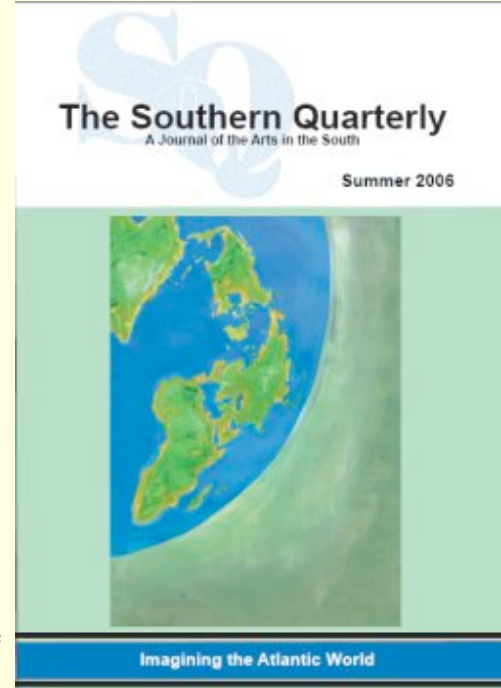
Over the past couple of years, *The Southern Quarterly* has undergone a number of changes. In Fall 2005, University Libraries assumed responsibility for publishing the journal and a new editorial staff was formed. Douglas B.

Chambers, assistant professor of history, was appointed editor and Ann Branton, head of bibliographic services in the Libraries, was appointed managing editor. Other members of the staff include Douglas W. Bristol and Kyle Zelner (book review editors), Phillip Gentile (film and video review editor), Carol Green (subscription manager), and Miao Jin (webmaster).

Regardless of recent changes, the mission of *The Southern Quarterly* remains the same: we are committed to the interdisciplinary study of southern culture through reasoned consideration of the arts.

On an appropriately stormy night in June 2006, *The Southern Quarterly* presented “An Evening of Prose and Poetry to Explore Hurricane Katrina Experiences” to celebrate the publication of “Voices of the Storm”, a special issue of the journal featuring essays, memoirs, poems, and photographs from contributors across the South. The event was co-sponsored by The University of Southern Mississippi Museum of Art in conjunction with the “Drawing on Katrina: Mississippi Children Respond to the Storm” exhibit. Several authors were on hand to read their works and share experiences from Katrina.

For more information on *The Southern Quarterly*, the “Voices of the Storm” special issue, or any other issues of the journal visit <http://www.usm.edu/soq/>.





McCormack Named Interim University Librarian

Edward McCormack has been named Interim University Librarian, pending a national search to replace Kay Wall who took the position of Dean of Libraries at Clemson University.

McCormack, who has been director of the University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast Library since 1993, holds the Master of Library Science degree from Indiana University

Faculty Publications

In an attempt to highlight the publications of Southern Miss faculty, Cook Library is collecting books authored by current and past members of the university faculty. The collection will be housed on designated shelving in the Information Services department on the first floor.

If you would like to donate faculty-authored books to this collection, please call Nancy Kaul, Collection Development Librarian at (601) 266-5078.



New Library Website

-Steven Turner, Library Web Services Manager

New for fall semester 2006, The University of Southern Mississippi Libraries has released an all-new and completely re-designed library web site, the result of over one-and-a-half years of user research. The web site features a variety of new services, a “from-the-ground-up” re-design of the web site structure, improved access to highly-used areas, a cleaner “look-and-feel,” improved navigation, content serving via RSS feeds and XML and host of new and upcoming electronic services.



New Design

The construction of the new website focuses on user-centric design ideals. The library web team concentrated on user needs first and foremost, soliciting construction, content and design ideas from Southern Miss students and faculty. Extensive use of surveys and focus groups revealed that user desired a cleaner interface and easier navigation, and a reduction of the clutter that plagued the most recent design. Users also indicated that quicker access to highly-used services was high on their list; consequently, the web team designed the site with these services (such as databases and electronic journal / book access) as “quick links,” front page links, constant navigation objects or as sections less than one level deep in the web site ontology. Fonts are also larger and white space has been increased along with design consistency and a new and more attractive graphical look.

New Services

The web site features a variety of new services. Users can now search the library catalog directly from the front page of the web site, or search the Library’s database of electronic journal subscriptions via the Ex Libris SFX journal finder tool to locate, and gain access to electronic versions of their favorite research journals. The library also plans to launch MetaLib, a search engine that will

allow users to search all or part of our databases for full-text articles from a single search box. The library has also added several new research databases, including:

EBSCO Databases

Alt HealthWatch

Bibliography of Native North Americans

Book Collection: Nonfiction

Computer Source

EBSCOhost ECONOMIA Y NEGOCIOS

Environmental Issues & Policy Index

Garden, Landscape & Horticulture Index

General Science Collection

History Reference Center

Hospitality & Tourism Complete

Humanities International Complete

Information Science & Technology Abstracts (ISTA)

Insurance Periodicals Index

International Bibliography of Theatre & Dance with Full Text

Internet and Personal Computing Abstracts

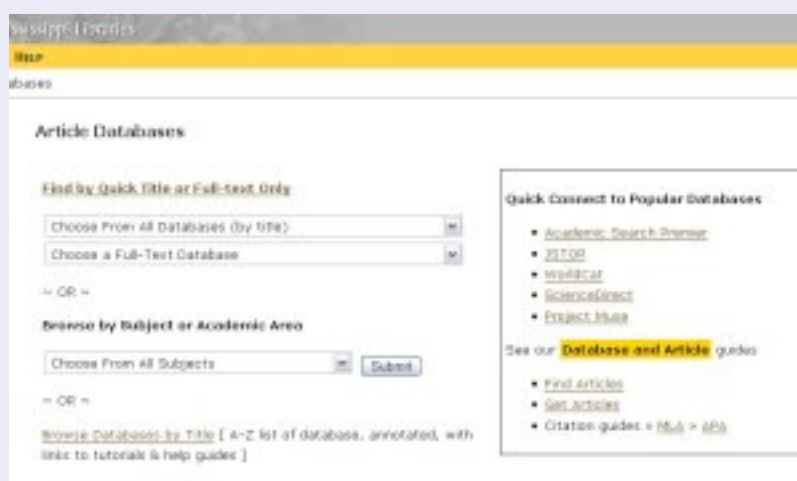
Legal Collection

Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection

Religion and Philosophy Collection

TOPICsearch

Vocational and Career Collection



OTHER Databases

Keesing's Online

American History and Culture Online: Sabin Americana, 1500-1926

ASFA 1: Biological Sciences and Living Resources

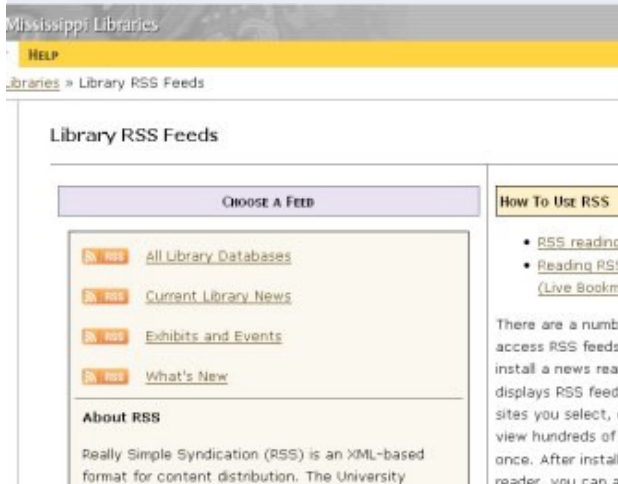
Ecology Abstracts

Oceanic Abstracts

New Navigation

Web site navigation is also vastly improved, drawing structure and inspiration directly from our aforementioned research as well as from detailed statistical analysis of user traffic and behavior patterns. The library 'interface' now focuses on links that our users requested, or required (based on the traffic analysis) as well as a structure that is more logical and deliberate and internally consistent.

RSS Feeds & Cell Phone Access



The new website also makes much of its content (such as access to our databases) available as an RSS / XML feed for use with modern browsers or with news readers and syndication aggregators.

RSS (Rich Site Summary) is a format for delivering regularly changing web content. Many news-related sites, weblogs and other online publishers syndicate their content as an RSS Feed to whoever wants it.

RSS solves a problem for people who regularly use the web. It allows you to **easily stay informed** by retrieving summaries of the latest content from the sites you are interested in. You **save time** by not needing to visit each site individually. You **ensure your privacy**, by not needing to join each site's email newsletter. The number of [sites offering RSS feeds](#) is growing rapidly and includes big names like [Yahoo News](#) and [Amazon.com](#).

(2006 RSS Explained <http://www.whatisrss.com/>)

The University Libraries web site now offers RSS feeds of our databases list, our current library news and more. Our RSS /XML feeds can be used from within the USM faculty / staff portal and the new iteration of WebCT.

Additionally, the library is actively moving towards making much of the web site's research content (again, such as our research databases) available via java-enabled portable devices such as cell phones, palm pilots, treos and blackberries.