

Cleveland State University Friends of the Library Newsletter

From the Friends President

As Friends, this group is dedicated to presenting to the community this great urban resource. Our particular interest is in the Special Collections, now in newly remodeled space on the third floor of the Rhodes Tower. Materials in this area are of particular interest to area researchers and are widely used.

Membership in the Friends is one good way to establish a connection here. The cost-effective price is still \$15 and that includes a Community Borrower Card.

Gifts of books to the perpetual book sale are a good way to escalate your interest. We have received collections as large as 600 to 1,000 volumes, but are also glad for the one's and two's.

More to the point, we seek important gifts of substantive material for use here by the community. In addition, cash gifts are needed to maintain these collections and prepare them for public use. We have had gifts in the \$25,000-\$30,000 range and some much higher.

All gifts to the Friends are handled through the University Foundation.

—**H. Baird Tenney, President of the Friends**

Join the Friends

The Friends of University Library welcome new members. You may request a Friends brochure by calling (216) 687-2475 or visiting the Friends web site, <http://html.ulib.csuohio.edu/friends/>.

Contributions can be sent to:

Friends of the Library

c/o Cleveland State University Foundation

Cleveland State University, Mather Mansion 204

2605 Euclid Avenue

Cleveland OH 44115-2403

You may choose various levels of membership, including individual (\$15), family (\$20), or benefactor (\$150).

Makes checks payable to "Cleveland State University Foundation."

Friends of the University Library Newsletter
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Cleveland OH 44114-4435



Guest speaker Professor Michael Tevesz addresses the crowd at the 11th Annual Scholars & Artists Event. Other members of the program included (seated from left to right) Glenda Thornton, Director, University Library, H. Baird Tenney, Friends President, and Harold Allen, Provost and Senior Vice President, Academic & Student Affairs.

Celebrating Creativity

The Scholars and Artist reception XI was held October 15, again sponsored by the Friends. Some 120 submissions were on display. In his remarks, Provost Harold L. Allen said of this display, occupying as it did most of the Special Collections room, "I am proud of all these submissions!" He went on to pay tribute to creativity by saying, "The diverse materials displayed here represent the imagination, the innovation, the creativity, and the scholarly pursuits of the University faculty, students, staff, and emeriti. I have always felt that a feature unique to the academy has been our collective ability to create new knowledge, new information, and new application in a variety of disciplines and fields. In a very real sense, the books, journal articles, the creative products

represented here not only distinguish individuals among peers, but the process of creating these materials—the research, trial and error, the investigative approach, the comparative approach, the analytical approach, and the interdisciplinary approach—all of these activities enrich the learning process for our students—and they enrich the life of the University as a place that recognizes and values intellectual inquiry and personal achievement. On a larger scale, various material displayed here today will enhance the quality of life for all citizens. As an urban University, much of the research and creative activity that is conducted here helps to solve problems of our city, of our state, and of our country."

Next, the reception turned to the photo display of Cleveland Sacred Landmarks, honoring its creator, the late Dr. Thomas L. Lewis of the University faculty. Guest speaker Professor Michael Tevesz of the Department of Biological, Geological and Environmental Sciences described the efforts of Dr. Lewis to record and preserve the remarkable diversity of sacred architecture in the Cleveland area. Large images from the collection cover much of the Special Collections area in a display executed by Ilka Gordon of Kent State University.

Library Director Glenda A. Thornton was Master of Ceremonies and welcomed the crowd that nearly filled the hall.

Preserving Historic Plat Books

The Friends of the Cleveland State University Library are directing their efforts to support the Library's Special Collections. The first project will be raising funds to restore the Library's collection of "plat books." These local urban atlases are highly-detailed sets of maps showing the streets, blocks, parcels, utilities, traction tracks, and building outlines for all or most of Cuyahoga County. They were produced between 1874 and the 1940's by several companies, including the G.M. Hopkins Co. (Philadelphia), and sold to companies and businesses needing accurate, detailed maps for commercial purposes, such as land title companies.

They are a priceless view of the metropolitan area in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century and are used by urban researchers, "house hunters," neighborhood preservationists, environmental engineers, and other students of local history.

Due to their large size, the acidic nature of the paper, and their heavy use, the volumes are falling apart and the pages have become quite brittle. Conservation treatment will consist of removing the pages from the volumes, repairing the major tears and storing them as individual maps in folders and map cabinets. The Friends will contribute to the preservation process but more funds are needed, up to a total of about \$10,000.—**Bill Barrow, Special Collections Librarian**

Book Review

Ruth Praver Jhabvala won England's prestigious fiction award, the Booker Prize, for *Heat and Dust*, set in India, in 1971. Since, she has published 8 novels, several short story collections, and has written many screenplays in collaboration with James Ivory and Ismail Merchant, film producers. Most of her stories are about India, where she lived for twenty-five years, from shortly after India became independent, until 1976. Her newest collection of short stories, *East into Upper East*, published in 1998, takes place both in her newest homeland, New York City, and in Asia. She writes as a longtime "Western" resident of India, and not as an indigenous Indian author, nor even as an Anglo-Indian. Her perspectives are in some ways those of a detached observer, but yet one who is a realist about what she feels and observes. She can't ignore the country's sapping heat, or the effects of centuries-old tradition that dominate all facets of Indian life. Women, particularly, are depicted in an ironic manner. She sees all sides: their bickering, greed, bossy and simultaneously softhearted natures.

Her writing is preoccupied with the all-pervasive poverty of the country, its backwardness, both materially and even spiritually.

Yet in *East Into Upper East*, she captures the essence of middle class Indian life as it is lived in New York City as well as in Bombay. She focuses on the arranged marriage problem, the concerns of the Indian householder, the ups and downs of Indian social reform, and the charisma of the rare guru.

She wants to know how people live their lives; she clarifies with small, telling detail of self-deception and self-justification. Her plots move crisply, as in "Farid and Farida" wherein sly humor constantly advances the story line when a character suddenly decides on a major move, from New York to India, as in "The Temptress," the tragedy that follows comes as no shock.

It should not be a surprise, then to learn, that as an eleven-year-old Jewish girl, she fled from Germany to England in 1939, just days before the beginning of World War II. She grew up in London and majored in English. There she met a young Indian architect of Parsi extraction, Cyrus Jhabvala. They married and emigrated to India, where they raised three daughters. The reviewer's husband attended elementary school in Germany with the already brilliant young Ruth.

Ruth Praver Jhabvala characterizes herself as a triple exile, a "Central European with an English education who writes about her survival in traditional India."

Review by Lenore Koppel, an Instructor in Literature at the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies, as well as past president of the Cleveland State University Library Friends.

This review is based on Koppel's presentation at Cleveland State University Friends meeting in April, 1999.

Message from the University Library Director:

How You Can Help Build The Cleveland Digital Library

If you have not yet visited the Cleveland Digital Library, please take a minute to direct your Internet browser to <http://web.ulib.csuohio.edu/SpecColl/cdl/> for a virtual trip back in time. Explore "Yesterday's Lakewood," or the history of the Ohio & Erie Canal, or follow the construction of the Cleveland Union Terminal Tower. The CDL site also has the full text of some unique historical works about the Cleveland area. Perhaps as you view this material, you will be reminded of some historical documents or artifacts that you own which would enhance this website. Although you may not be willing to part with your treasure permanently, perhaps you are willing to allow it to be copied digitally and displayed so that it can be viewed by others. I urge you to think about supporting the Cleveland State University Library by discussing this possibility with us.

—Glenda Thornton, Director, University Library



de Chambrun: Friend of a Friend

Longtime Cleveland State University Friends member John Horton urged the local Sons of the American Revolution to recognize his Parisian friend Comte René de Chambrun.

The Cleveland State connection here is the recent gift to the University Library, on microfilm, of the Lafayette Papers—a treasure house of documents from the Marquis de Lafayette's life. He played a vital role in helping us win the American evolution. The Comte is heir to the Lafayette family.

Special Collections

The Special Collections area is the Library's repository for those materials that require specialized handling. Rare books and manuscripts are the traditional items kept in special collections, but also included are items too fragile for regular handling, books containing significant autographs or valuable illustrations and collections of materials that require special handling, such as maps, photographs, broadsides, and historic audio and video tapes.

The Library's Special Collections area is home to a number of important collections, including *The Cleveland Press* Collection, the "morgue" of the former afternoon daily; the Cleveland Union Terminal Collection, the construction records of the Terminal Tower complex; the Wilbur J. and Sara Ruth Watson Bridge Book Collection, the personal collection of a prominent local engineer; the Lafayette Microfilm Collection of the papers of the Marquis de Lafayette, which exist only here and the Library of Congress; and the Sacred Landmarks Archives and Thomas L. Lewis Photographic Collection, a valuable collection of images and information on local churches, synagogues and other religious structures in greater Cleveland.

For a complete list of the collections held in Special Collections, and to learn more about it generally, visit the Special Collections web site at <http://web.ulib.csuohio.edu/SpecColl/>.

Adult Literacy Training: An Extreme Effort

A packed house in Room 503 of the Rhodes Tower heard about the pains and problems of literacy at a Friends meeting last spring. The pain of illiteracy is personal and therefore frequently hidden from view. The obvious problem is that people with reduced literacy frequently have trouble getting a job or keeping up with its requirements. And that can hold back the individual and area economic progress.

Richard A. Peterson, Executive Director of Project: LEARN—the Cleveland area arm of a national literacy organization, believes we as a nation could double our effort. And we still could not reach all those who want to improve their reading and writing skills. He believes the total support for adult literacy training nationwide is around \$750 million. But the target audience is the 20% of the adult population that read at the fifth grade level or below.

Peterson, his staff and a corps of volunteers assist low level readers in intensive one-on-one sessions. It is tough work on both sides but can be exhilarating.

Note: Adult literacy training volunteers are always in short supply. If interested, call (216) 621-9483.

Ben Shouse on The Arts

Ben Shouse is one of the most ardent supporters of the arts in this town. Fortunately he considers our group of Friends worthy of close attention and strong support. You'll find Ben at most of our meetings.

Back in 1995 Ben presented a paper on the arts and philanthropy at a Case Western Reserve symposium. In it Ben sounded his voice as an arts advocate and lifetime union member and officer. The paper traces many threads, finally denying "...that philanthropy is just the carefully-controlled giving away of moneys to avoid social chaos.

Philanthropy must be practical, and wise, but ultimately, there is no true philanthropy without 'love of humanity'."

CHESNUTT CENTENNIAL

The Friends held a special meeting November 12 on the noted African-American author Charles W. Chesnutt. A summary will be in the next Newsletter.