November 2012 Newsletter

Bringing collections to life

VCU's librarians engage with passionate communities to share their expertise and bring our collections to life. Autumn events illustrate these warm scholarly and community connections.

- In mid-October, VCU Libraries sponsored the 10th anniversary conference of James River Writers, which featured author and VCU alumnus Tom Robbins (B.S.’59/H&S), Library of Virginia 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. Special Collections and Archives organized an exhibition for that conference that showcased Robbins’ papers housed at James Branch Cabell Library. Robbins’ visit to Richmond received lengthy front page coverage in the Richmond Times-Dispatch. And, Robbins visited Cabell Library for an event.

- Nov. 16 marks the 20th year for an annual conference organized by Charles E. Brownell, Ph.D., the head of VCU’s Architectural History Program. Traditions IV: 20th Symposium on Architecture and Decorative Arts takes place at the Virginia Historical Society. (Above: a detail from a book cover by the Richmond publisher Engelhardt.) In the words of Brownell, the conference was created “to air valuable work by current and recent VCU graduate students, as well as important research by other members of the VCU family circle.” Ray Bonis, archives coordinator at Cabell, will be presenting on “Griffin and Randall, American Masters.” University Librarian John E. Ulmschneider will be chairing a session on “Twenty Years of Research at VCU.” Richmond’s 19th- and 20th-century architectural history is a focus of VCU Libraries Special Collections and Archives. More about the collection.

- Save the date for noon Dec. 4 for “The Medical College of Virginia During War and Reconstruction.” This Brown Bag Lunch Series event with Jodi Koste of Tompkins-
McCaw Library for the Health Sciences takes place at the Larrick Student Center, Court End Ballroom A. It is part of the ongoing VCU Year of Freedom, which marks the end of slavery and is part of the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War. Tompkins-McCaw holds significant medical artifacts from the Civil War era.

Help redesign this newsletter

Please give us 10 minutes to help us improve this newsletter. Tell us what you want to read about.

Book sale remains

Thanks to all who donated materials for and attended the October book sale, which was very successful. The book sale room, ground floor of Cabell Library, is now open for friends who would like to help clear the shelves as we prepare for next year. Books are free for the taking. They won’t last long.

Inside the Libraries

- 80 Years on 12th Street. Tompkins-McCaw (reading room, above) celebrates.
- More than 20 VCU Libraries employees were honored with 2012 service awards.
- The next generation: Library catalog moves to the cloud
- VCU Libraries marks Open Access Week
- VCU now has its own fleet of buses that connect the Monroe Park and MCV campuses. You’ll spot them around town and at the hub in front of Cabell.
- A new Rodney. VCU unveiled a new look for the Ram mascot this fall. The retired Rodney, born in 1963, is now part of the university’s history, much of which can be found in digital and paper collections at Cabell Library.

Just the facts
VCU Libraries has 2 million volumes, 2 million visitors a year and 2 million downloads of journal articles.

**Events and Photographs**

- **The 11th annual VCU Cabell First Novelist** event Thursday, Nov. 8, is the last major public event for the fall semester. It’s not too late to attend the reading and talk at 7 p.m. at the Grace Street Theatre. [Details](#).

- Tompkins-McCaw Library for the Health Sciences is hosting the traveling National Library of Medicine exhibit "Life and Limb: The Toll of the Civil War" through Dec. 1 in the Special Collections and Archives Reading Room. This exhibit explores the experiences of disabled Civil War veterans and their role as symbols of the fractured nation.

- **Artifacts tied to the great English poet Robert Browning** are on display in Cabell’s Special Collections and Archives department through Dec. 7. [More](#).

- **Community Health Education Center anniversary**: The only library of its kind in the commonwealth, the consumer health library in the Gateway Building of VCU Medical Center, marked its 10th anniversary with an Oct. 18, talk by patient safety advocate John J. Nance, who shared some of his ideas in a Sunday, Oct. 14 [commentary piece in the Richmond Times-Dispatch](#). Some 250 people attended. [Photo gallery](#).

**Thanks and more**

**Update your information**: Do you have a new email address or address? Please update your information by contacting **Antonia FD Vassar** (B.A. ’05/A), assistant director of development, at (804) 827-1165.

**Stay in touch**: Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter, too.

**Thank you for your support**: Thanks to our Friends of the Library donors for their support of the VCU Libraries. Please consider making your annual gift today.