

1980

Morris Library: 25 Years of Progress

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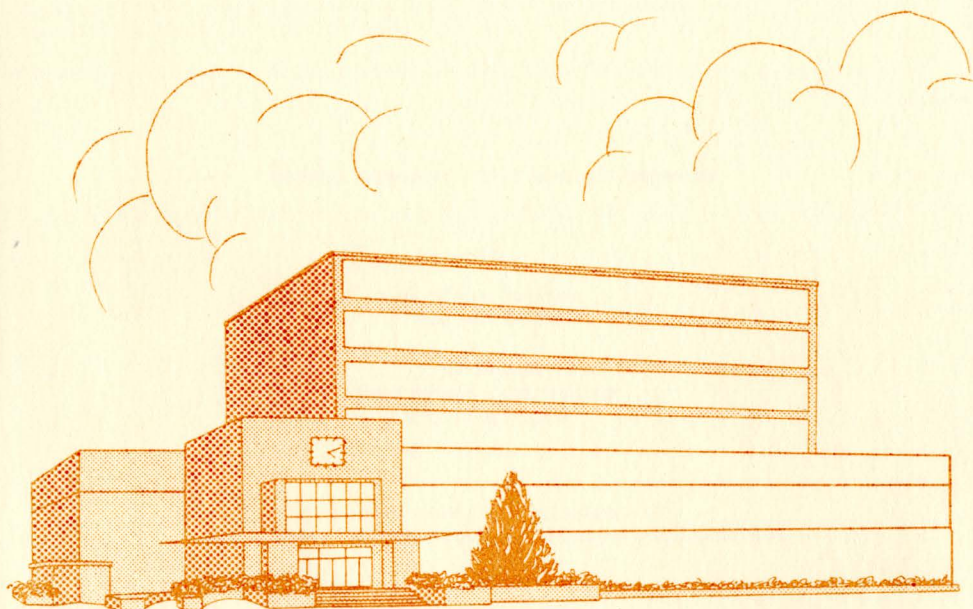
This booklet provides a short history of the Morris Library's first 50 years, from 1956-1981. It also has information about campus library history prior to Morris Library. The text is a script for a slide/cassette presentation that was created under the guidance of the Library Information and Orientation Committee in cooperation with the Learning Resources Service Photographic and Graphic Section.

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Morris Library: *25 Years of Progress*

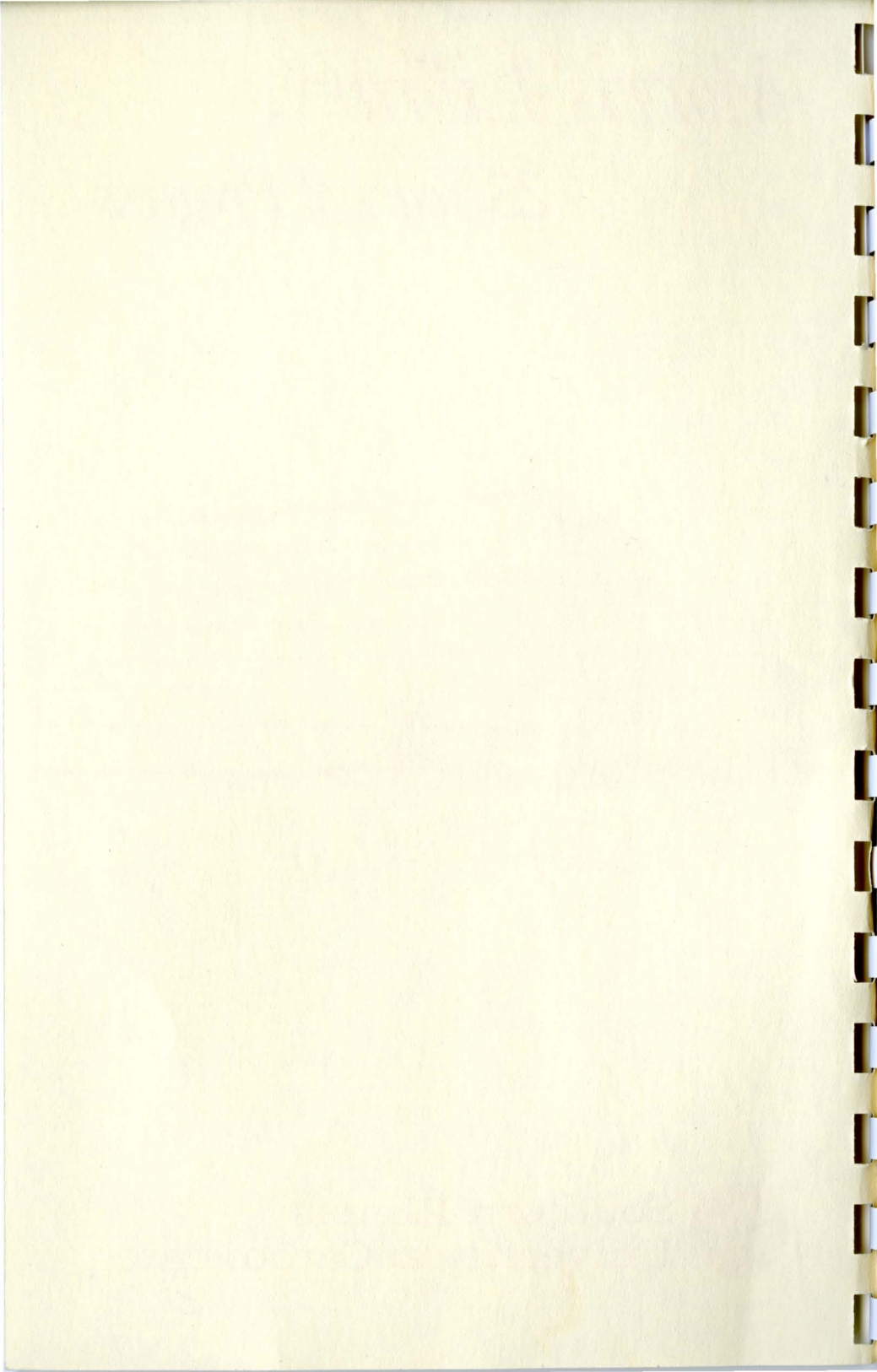


1956 ~ 1981



Southern Illinois
University at Carbondale

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Morris Library: 25 Years of Progress

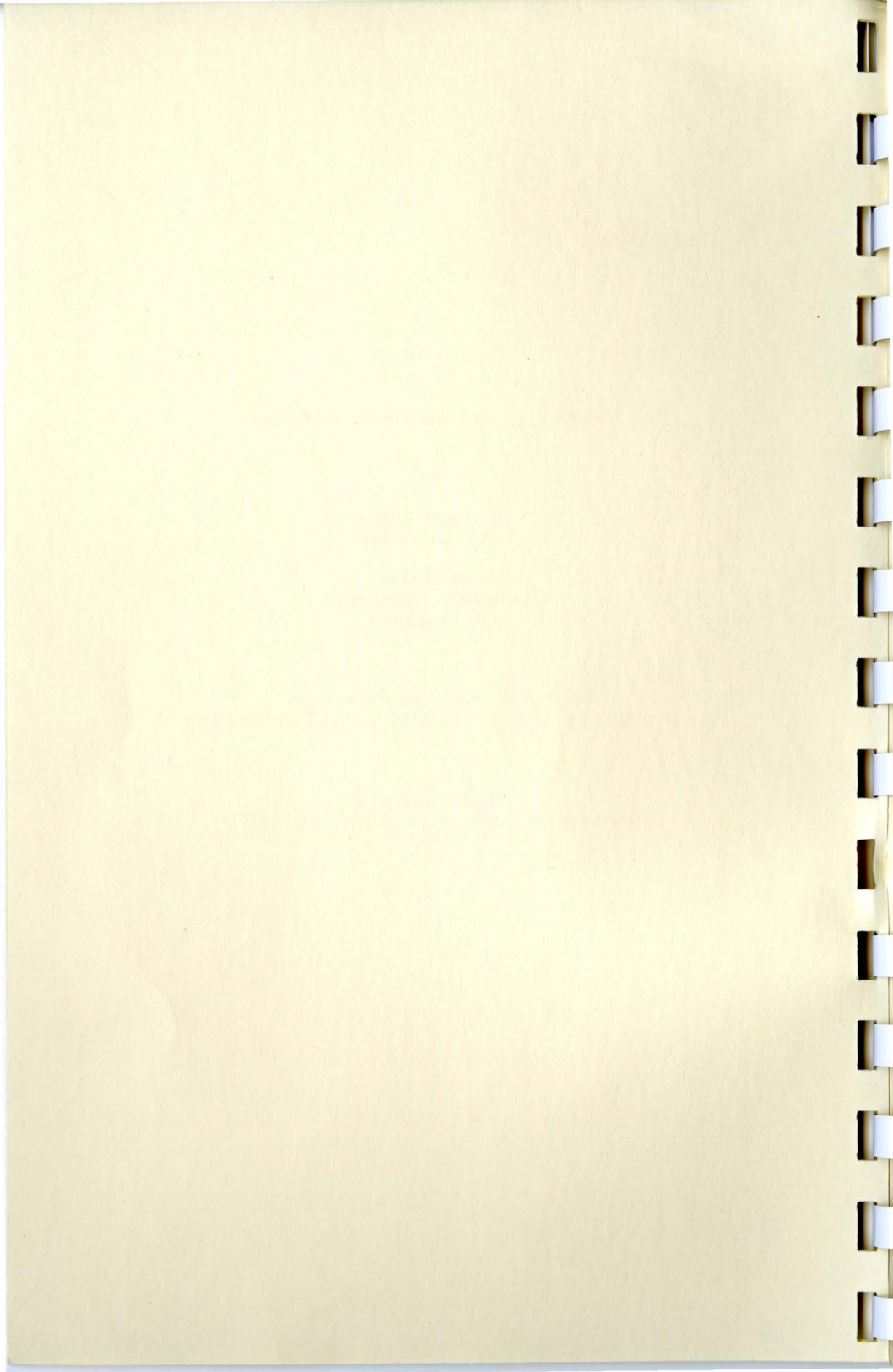
by

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Photograph Coordinator
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Developed under the guidance of
the Library Information and Orientation Committee

Morris Library
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
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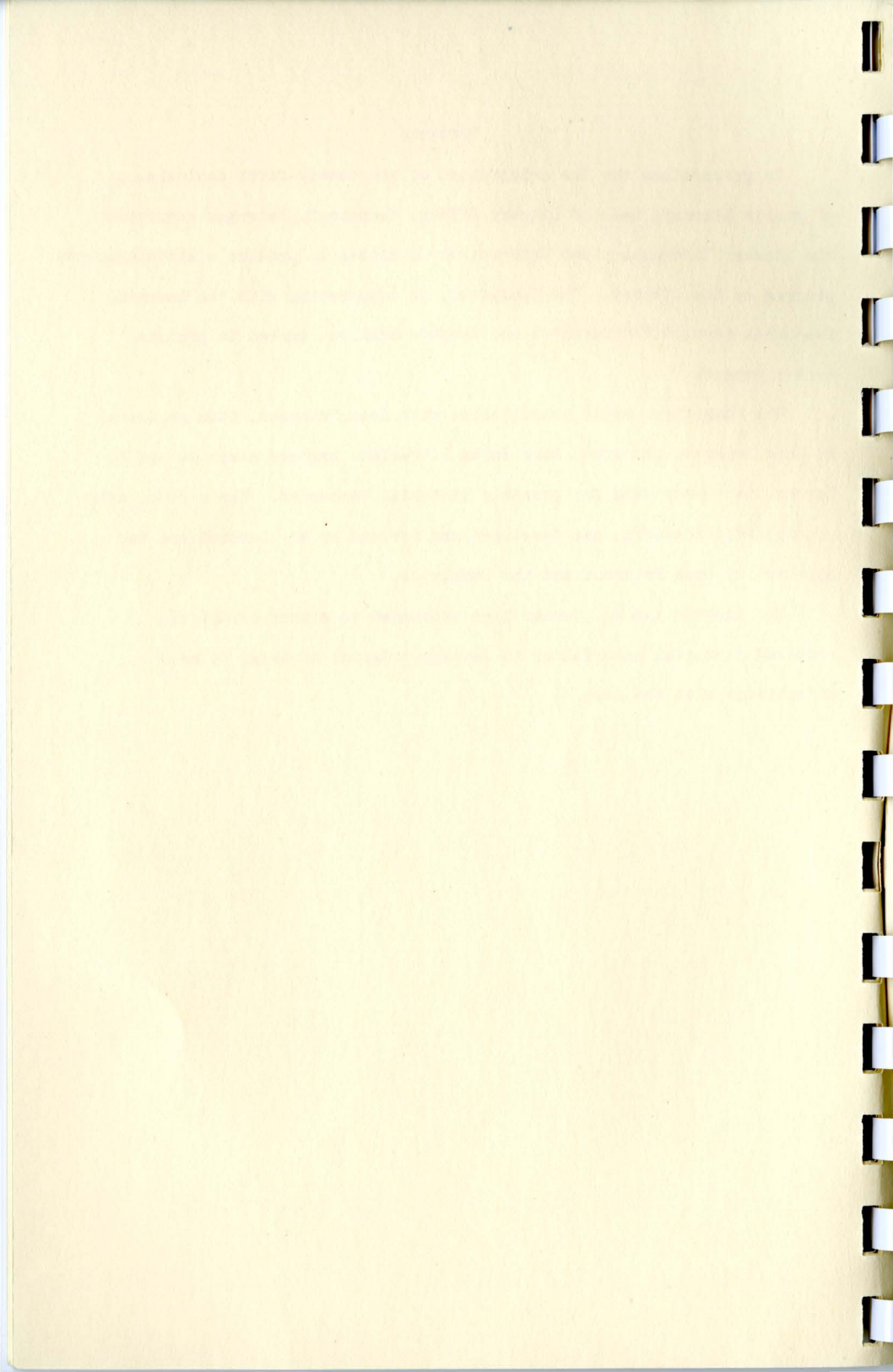


Foreword

In preparation for the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Morris Library, Dean of Library Affairs Kenneth G. Peterson requested the Library Information and Orientation Committee to produce a slide/cassette program on the library. The Committee, in cooperation with the Learning Resources Service Photographic and Graphic Section, agreed to produce such a program.

The Committee, after consultation with Dean Peterson, then requested E. Jane Lockrem, Assistant Rare Books Librarian, prepare a script and Ed Turner start searching for possible pictorial resources. The script, after considerable research, was developed and revised by Ms. Lockrem and was approved by Dean Peterson and the Committee.

Ms. Lockrem and Mr. Turner then proceeded to either secure the required pictorial material or to develop original material to meld effectively with the text.



E. Jane Lockrem
December 1980

Morris Library: 25 Years of Progress

Morris Library, the library which serves the campus of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and the surrounding area, opened its doors on January 9, 1956, after moving from the old Wheeler Library during the university's winter recess. Morris Library is justifiably proud of its position as one of the largest open-stack subject divisional libraries under one roof in the nation. The library was named for Delyte W. Morris who served as President of Southern Illinois University from 1948 to 1970. Since SIU received its charter in 1869 as Southern Illinois Normal University, the library has been housed in six different locations.

The first was a fourth floor room of Old Normal, until that first building on Southern's campus was destroyed by fire in 1883. Thanks to the joint efforts of the university's first president Dr. Robert Allyn and his students many of the library's materials were saved, it was reported, by rough and ready methods which included tossing them from the burning building! The entire campus, including the library, was moved into a temporary structure which housed the university for four years, until 1887. At that time, the site of the library shifted to a second floor room of the main building commonly known as Old Main where it was located until 1896 when the state government appropriated 40,000 dollars to construct the building once called Old Science and now known as Altgeld Hall. This building contained not only the library of the rapidly expanding Normal University but also

a science department and gymnasium. One room measuring fifty feet by sixty feet on the first floor of Old Science held the library until it grew to a collection of over 17,000 volumes in 1903. Thanks to a progressive state legislature, Board of Trustees president Judge Samuel P. Wheeler had unheard-of success in requesting funds for a separate library building, the first for any normal college in the state. With 25,000 dollars, a building for the library was constructed and it was dedicated in June 1904. In 1906 it was formally named Wheeler Library. The library remained in this building through 1955, a total of fifty-one years.

As the SIU campus grew, so did the library's holdings and despite remodeling efforts in Wheeler begun as early as 1938, it became apparent that the limitations of space made it too small to serve the growing collections and student body. SIU first offered graduate level courses in 1944, and graduate students were permitted stack privileges in the library. Wheeler Library had to expand into two adjacent barracks and a quonset hut. The urgent need for a new library building was recognized as a major priority. The Illinois General Assembly granted two million, five hundred thousand dollars in 1953 for the construction of a new library building. By July 1953, the construction of the new facility had begun. The new library was dedicated and the cornerstone was laid by President Morris, Governor William Stratton, and other visiting dignitaries. This building consisted of a basement, first, and second floors. Plans for the construction of five additional floors were reserved for a later date.

Midway through the building process, Ralph E. McCoy became director of the SIU library. In fall of 1955 Dr. McCoy wrote of the planned move

from Wheeler to the new Morris Library:

The plan is to use a well-trained team of students, together with trucks and drivers furnished by the physical plant. The physical plant will also construct the necessary ramps and hoisting equipment to get the books from the second floor and basement. The entire book collection will be fumigated and cleaned prior to moving.

Morris Library was designed to contain four divisional libraries: Humanities, Social Studies, Education/Psychology, and Science. The library also offered a Browsing Room which was established to meet a need expressed by both faculty members and students.

During the 1960s, under the guidance of Dean McCoy and the continued support of President Morris, the library flourished. On October 17, 1960, President Morris, with the encouragement of philanthropist Charles Feinberg of Detroit, proclaimed Friends of the Library Day. President Morris's proclamation read in part:

Whereas: The library is at the heart of any institution of higher education. . . There are many areas of library needs that cannot be appropriately filled through state appropriations; every state university that has achieved distinction has benefited by the gifts of private and corporate donors; many friends of Southern Illinois University have already presented gifts of money and books to Morris Library.

That day in 1960 marks the founding of the group now known as the Friends of Morris Library. One significant donation to the library was

this work on ophthalmology published in Dresden, Germany in 1583.

It is the earliest work on eye surgery and it is the first to use overlays to show medical detail.

When the first stage of Morris Library's construction was completed, it could accommodate 350,000 volumes and 12,000 library users. But while the collections grew, the library itself expanded. The modular construction design permitted the addition of five floors in the mid 1960s. Both SIU and the library experienced very rapid development during this time. By 1968 the library's holdings had grown to one million volumes. The one-millionth book was presented to the library on November 17, 1968 by friends of President Delyte Morris on the twentieth anniversary of Morris's succession to the presidency. The book, a first edition of Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass, is now housed in Special Collections.

Many of the gifts to the library were placed in Special Collections. Here rare books, manuscripts, and university archives are organized, exhibited, and preserved for students, faculty, the Southern Illinois community, and visiting scholars. Collections include James Joyce, the Irish literary renaissance, literature, theatre, fine printing, philosophy of the twentieth century, and Southern Illinois history, such as this Maud Rittenhouse diary.

Library Services increased during this time also. In 1960 photocopying machines were brought into the library to make materials more easily available and to discourage book mutilation. A computer-assisted book circulation control system installed in 1964 made Morris Library one of the first academic libraries to use computers for this purpose. The undergraduate library, opened in 1970 with a separate card catalog, provides books selected for the undergraduate curriculum. Other advances in Library Services include on-line computer-based bibliographic

searching, credit courses on library use taught by library faculty, and a comprehensive program for the preservation and care of the library's collections. In the conservation laboratory books from the general collections are repaired to insure continued use by library patrons. The physical and chemical condition of library materials are examined as a first step in conservation treatment. Pressing the books after repair is the last step in this process.

In 1967 Learning Resources Service was established to provide a broad range of instructional improvement services to faculty and students. An instructional design and development faculty works with faculty to improve learning and instruction. An equipment section with projectors, video equipment, and recorders that can be delivered to the classroom for instructional use, photographic laboratory, graphic section, and film library provide support for the instructional program. PLATO terminals for computer-assisted instruction are available for students in the Self Instruction Center where students can use slide/tape programs, video, and other media. A Student Media Design Lab enables students to produce their own materials for class presentations.

On January 8, 1967, recognition was paid for Morris Library's superior development when it was elected to the Association of Research Libraries. This association includes the most prestigious scholarly libraries in the United States. The library's excellence was further recognized when it was selected to be one of four Research and Reference libraries in Illinois responsible for sharing resources through inter-library loans and bibliographical research services. In 1974 Morris Library gained access by computer terminals to a national data base of over six million bibliographic records when it became the first library

in Illinois to join OCLC. From these records catalog cards are produced.

Morris Library as it is today was designed for a student body of 15,000 and for a book collection of one million volumes. The enrollment at SIU-C is now over 23,000 and the library's collections number over one and one-half million volumes. New shelves have been added yearly which limit seating of students to far below the recommended 25 to 33 per cent. Space problems have been severe in Morris Library for over a decade and there is no indication that they will improve.

Speaking to the Board of Directors of the Friends of Morris Library in September 1980, SIU-C President Albert Somit noted that while Morris Library is one of the most handsome libraries in the country, it is stretched to the limits due to severe overcrowding. While the first twenty-five years of growth and service were impressive for Morris Library, they are now behind us. But with your help, Morris Library will continue to grow and to serve the University and the Southern Illinois community. Morris Library is now reaffirming its commitment to this important mission.

As Morris Library embarks on its second quarter century under the guidance of Dean of Library Affairs Kenneth G. Peterson, it would be well to remember the words written on the back of the Morris Library commemorative plate:

Morris Library, opened in 1956, is literally a living tribute to the vision, hope, and labor of scholars, administrators, builders, and others who have been friends of Southern Illinois University since its founding in 1869. It is a testimonial to those who braved fire to save the first 8,000 books from a

burning building in 1883, to those who in 1903 built Southern's first library building, Wheeler Hall. Morris is the heart of Southern Illinois University.

How appropriate it is that the mission and goals of Southern Illinois University are inscribed in the entrance hall of Morris Library facing the portraits of six of the university's presidents as a reminder of the library's central role:

Southern Illinois University
Established in 1869

To exalt beauty
In God,
in nature, and
in art;
Teaching how to love the best
but to keep the human touch;

To advance learning
In all lines of truth
wherever they may lead,
Showing how to think,
rather than what to think,
assisting the powers
of the mind
In their self-development;

To forward ideas and ideals
In our democracy,
Inspiring respect for others
as for ourselves,
Ever promoting freedom
with responsibility;

To become a center of order and light
That knowledge may lead to understanding
And understanding to wisdom.

Morris Library is your library.

List of Works Consulted

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