

# A&M library offers much more than books

By Karl Spence  
Reporter

The Sterling C. Evans Library, the main library at Texas A&M University, houses 1.5 million volumes on six floors, providing the University and community with a large facility for study and research. To take full advantage of the library, users should become familiar with its layout and services.

Library cards are issued free to the students, faculty and staff of Texas A&M, to former students, to high school students in the Texas A&M honors program, and to faculty from Prairie View A&M, Texas A&M at Galveston and Tarleton State University. Cards are issued at the circulation desk for a small fee to anyone else.

Across from the circulation desk is the card catalog, which is being supplemented this year by a computer system, the ALIS II on-line public catalog. Circulation division head Colleen Cook says the system will have terminals on every floor, some for staff use and some for the public's, more than 40 in all. She says users will be able to find items by author, by title, by author and title, by call number and, when the item is part of a published series, by series.

Eventually, ALIS II will replace the files of index cards, but, as Cook points out, "eventually" is undefinable. Five to 10 years or more could pass before patrons are accustomed to its use and have come to rely on it exclusively. There is no date for removing the cards, she says, so those who are fond of them need take no alarm.

In the meantime, Aggies who learn the new system no longer will have to make repeated treks back to the cards to look up sources when they are already among the stacks on the upper floors. Just use the nearest terminal.

Next to the card files is the reference desk, whose staff will help users with the computer and with any questions they may have about the library. The reference department also includes various encyclopedias, indexes, bibliographies, directories

and almanacs, along with study tables for their use.

Down the first-floor hall is the library copy center, and at the end of the hall is the current periodicals department. It contains magazines, journals and more than 100 newspapers from around the world.

Security is tight at current periodicals. A library or student identification card is required to read the more popular magazines there. Users' briefcases and purses must be opened for inspection on leaving, because C.P.D. materials do not leave the room.

To the right of the C.P.D. is the Reserve Department, where quiz files and faculty-assigned readings are held. Most reserve materials also do not leave the room. As at current periodicals, tables and photocopiers are provided for in-room use.

On the second floor are the administrative offices, conference rooms, map department, special collections, interlibrary services, microtext department, technical report department, documents division and, at the rear, a vending-machine snack bar and lounge.

"We have a lot of things up here that people don't even know about," says Pat Lahrof the map department. She says students often come into the map room and declare they are just now discovering it after us-

ing the library for years. The department holds a large collection of maps, globes, atlases, charts and aerial photographs. Most of the maps, including street and highway maps, topographic maps, soil surveys and geologic charts, may be checked out for two weeks.

Across from the map department, the special collections division holds privately-donated collections on subjects ranging from science fiction to world bird life to the Ku Klux Klan. All materials are in closed stacks and may be inspected in the special collections reading room.

The interlibrary services division borrows materials not found at Texas A&M from other libraries. It serves mostly faculty, staff and graduate students.

The microtext department keeps microfilm and microfiche copies of newspaper back issues, college catalogs, agricultural experiment station publications, and various other technical, corporate, governmental and educational documents. Photocopies of those materials can be made.

The technical report department and the documents division contain governmental, corporate and technical papers, including publication indexes, statistical abstracts, U.S. statutes and regulations, and the reports of agencies such as the FBI, the En-

vironmental Protection Agency, and NASA.

Above the second floor are the stacks, arranged under the Library of Congress classification system.

The sixth floor holds sections A to D: general reference works, philosophy, psychology, religion, and European and world history.

The fifth floor holds sections E to K: western hemisphere history, geography, anthropology, social and political science, and law.

The fourth floor holds sections L to Qh: education, music, fine arts, architecture, languages and literature.

The third floor holds sections Qk to Z: science, medicine, agriculture, technology, engineering, and military and naval science.

To the rear of the building, above the hall leading to the snack bar and lounge, are four levels of stacks holding books that were never reclassified when the library converted from the Dewey Decimal to the Library of Congress system.

Behind the Dewey stacks, above the snack bar and lounge, is a small reading room containing the Templeton collection of conservative books and pamphlets dealing with economics, politics and law.

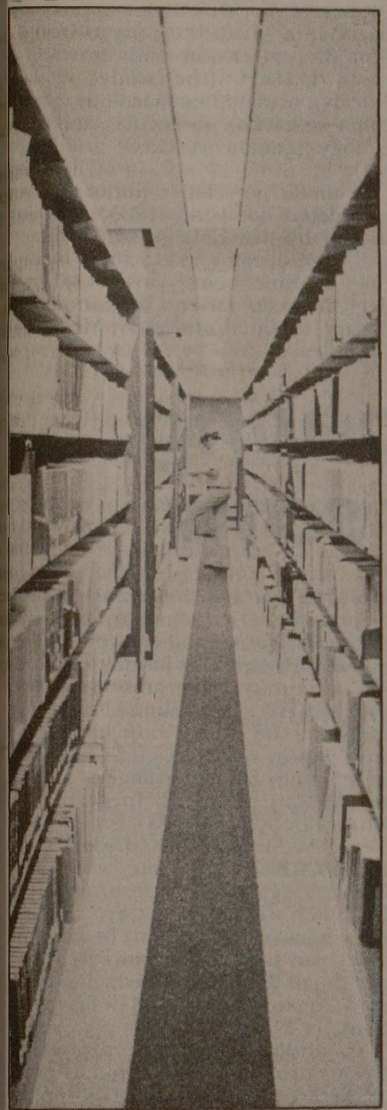
Stan Hodge, head of the resource development division, is in charge of building on these collections. His

priorities for acquisitions are, first, to support the University curriculum; second, to assist faculty research; and third, to provide leisure reading. He welcomes student suggestions for new books, promising to consider every request and approve the majority.

Hodge has two requests of library users: please carry on conversations in the lounges and group study rooms rather than in the reading rooms and on the main floors, and please refrain from stealing or defacing library materials. The greatest number of user complaints Hodge receives concern noise in study areas, and he says the library spends thousands of dollars replacing or repairing lost or damaged items.

The library devotes \$3 million of its \$5-million budget to buying materials, Hodge says. As anyone who has purchased a college textbook knows, they are very expensive.

Hodge estimates that the library, which was expanded in 1968 and 1979, will be filled to its 2-million-volume capacity by 1990. The tentative plan for that event, he says, is to begin moving some materials out of the building. Little-used items may be moved to a remote storage area, to be retrieved individually on request.



## Special department offers microcomputers

By MICHAEL RAULERSON  
Reporter

Students can do anything from writing a term paper to viewing video tapes for class studies in the Learning Resources Department of the Sterling C. Evans Library.

The LRD offers the newest microcomputer models, as well as the latest developments in audio-visual technology at no cost to faculty, staff and students of Texas A&M University. The department also offers services to the blind or partially sighted.

The LRD opened its doors for microcomputer users in September 1982 with 25 Apple computers, said Hal Hall, head of the special formats division of the LRD. Hall said it became obvious that 25 computers were not enough and that the students wanted something other than Apple computers to work with.

Since that time the computer facilities have expanded to include 34 Apple II+ and Apple IIe computers; 41 Radio Shack TRS-80 Model

III and TRS-80 Model 4 computers; 20 Texas Instruments Professional Computers; five IBM PCs (personal computers); two Balcones Z-80 Microcomputers, and 20 Plato computers, Hall said. Most all the computers have dot matrix printers, but the department also has a limited number of letter quality printers.

Hall said during the summer a near-letter quality printer, an Epson LQ-1500, was donated to the department by Cargill Computer Products, a retail outlet in Houston. He said Texas Instruments also has donated two near-letter quality printers during the last year. As a result of these donations, the department now has seven near-letter quality printers, he said.

Hall said computing facilities probably will be expanded during the fall semester.

"We anticipate the addition of over 40 computer stations in the late fall," Hall said.

Hall said the department has purchased more than 200 software programs for class studies on request of

*The LRD offers a selection of audio-visual services that include audio and video tapes, filmstrips and other related materials, Hall said. The department also recently acquired an optical laser video disk player, he said.*

faculty members. He said the programs are available for students, but are checked out on a "room use only" basis.

Computer use has increased dramatically in the LRD in the last year, Hall said. He said 60,881 hours were logged between Sept. 1, 1982, and Aug. 31, 1983, and he estimated that 112,000 hours would be logged by Aug. 31, this year. He said April is the busiest month with about 17,000 hours logged.

"If you're doing a paper in the LRD and it's due in April, you better plan ahead," Hall said.

Hall said a reservation policy helps to control the use of the computers, although computers can be used any time if space is available. He said a computer can be reserved over the phone up to one week in advance for two hours, but only one reservation per day is allowed.

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Services available to the blind or partially sighted include a Kurzweil Reading Machine which synthesizes speech for the words the machine reads through an optical scanner. The machine can read books, 8 1/2 by 11 inch pieces of paper and most other texts, but has trouble reading newspapers because it can't determine where the column ends, Hall

said. The department also has a Braille, a machine that creates texts in Braille, and an Apollo Laser Magnification System. The system utilizes a television camera and television monitor to magnify texts for easier reading.

Theft in an area with numerous computers and audio-visual machines could be a problem, but Hall said the department has suffered only a couple thefts. He said new security measures should minimize future thefts.

The LRD began with a limited collection and no audio-visual or microcomputer facilities about four years ago in a small L-shaped room on the second floor of the library, Hall said. The department later moved into its present quarters on the sixth floor of the library, but Hall again is worried about space.

"This room is almost too small," he said. "If the computers come in in the fall and computer use continues to increase, then we will need more room."



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