The University Opening Convocation and a Library dedication ceremony was held on Wednesday, September 13, 2006 on the front lawn of the Library. The event was attended by more than 750 guests. Special guest speakers included Leslie Burger, President of the American Library Association and Joan Bernstein, President of the New Jersey Library Association.

The multi-year project, which cost $14.5 million, has transformed the Library into a modern information center. The Guggenheim mansion was restored, the old wing was renovated, and a new wing added. Patrons will find a welcoming environment in the Library for both study and social activities. Improved lighting and an open space plan offer students a library space that inspires study and learning with various options for individual and group study. New furniture, more computers, and a café are creating an attractive and inviting destination. The Library is fully equipped for wireless network connectivity, so students can use laptops anywhere in the Library. The seminar room and three new group study rooms provide study and meeting spaces.

The Library staff welcomes the Monmouth community to visit the library and looks forward to contributing to the intellectual and social atmosphere of the campus.

President Gaffney Recognizes Project Contributors

After his Opening Convocation remarks, President Paul G. Gaffney II recognized several groups and individuals for their contributions to the Library project:

- The members of the dedicated and supportive Library Association.
- Generous donors: Gloria Nilson; Trustee William Mullaney and Sandra Mullaney.
- Library architect Andy Wong of Einhorn, Yaffee and Prescott.

- Robert Cornero, Associate VP for Campus Planning and Construction and his assistant Judy Wortman.
- William Fitzgerald, Engineer.
- Benjamin Harvey, General Contractor.
- And Bill Barham, Project Manager.

“Monmouth is getting better and that goes for our new and promised facilities as well. The whole region should be proud of the masterful work done to recreate this library.”
Chairman Parks: Serving Teaching and Scholarship

Mr. Stephen M. Parks, Class of 1968 and Chairman of the Monmouth University Board of Trustees, Dedication ceremony remarks:

“It is fitting that we have selected the date of our annual Opening Convocation to dedicate this magnificent building. If, as it is said, the Faculty is the heart of the academic enterprise, then the Library is surely its lifeblood.

This project has always been an extremely high priority with the Board. During Dr. Stafford’s administration dialogue began about refurbishing the Library, not only to modernize it but to unify it with Monmouth’s aspirations. Numerous plans and options were considered and rejected for a variety of sound reasons. We grappled with how to marry yet another addition to the historic and architecturally significant original structure and the 1967 wing. What would be the impact of ever farther reaching technology? How much space should be given to books, when some experts said that print would rapidly become obsolete and all resources would soon be digital? How much would the project cost and where would the money come from? With much research, and endless collaboration between Campus Planning and Construction, the Librarians, the President’s Cabinet, the Library Association and the entire academic area, not to mention the generosity of many donors to the Vision for Distinction Campaign, the issues were resolved and the project took shape. Yet when we broke ground on March 18, 2003 the tremendous amount of work ahead made the end result seemed very far in the future. Well, we’ve made it. And, for the foreseeable future this facility will serve not only the teaching and scholarship needs of Monmouth University but also serve our neighbors in the surrounding communities. Our dedicated Library staff, our print collections, archives and state-of-the-art technological support add up to a resource of inestimable value in a building that it was recently said is a “magical mix of the historical and the modern…it’s inspiring”. On behalf of the Board of Trustees who championed this project and to all those who had a hand in bringing it to fruition I say thank you and let us celebrate.”

Dean Sharma: Evolution of Academic Libraries

Dean Ravi Sharma, Monmouth University Library, remarks at dedication ceremony:

“Good afternoon. Welcome to the beautiful campus of Monmouth University and to one of the most beautiful Libraries in the nation.

From the days of Sumerian clay tablets till now, mankind has published at least 32 million books, 750 million articles, three million videos, and 100 billion public web pages. A majority of this material is housed in archives and libraries all over the world. Part of this material is housed in our University Library, also. Libraries have played a very important part in providing for the research needs of all students and faculty, and in preparing leaders for the country. The needs of students and faculty have changed due to the introduction of technology and the changing times. In order to accommodate
their needs, Monmouth University has added a new addition to its beautiful library. Academic libraries have been helping students and faculty from the day the first university was established in 700 BC in Taxila, India. It was known as the Takshila University and had an enrollment of over 10,500 students from all over the world. The University offered courses in more than sixty subjects including Medicine, Economics, and Literature. The university had a nine story library building with an excellent collection including thousands of rare manuscripts to meet the research needs of students and faculty.

Monmouth University was established in 1933 and the library has served the academic community very well in West Long Branch. At present, the library has over 267,000 volumes and access to 26,000 periodicals in paper and on line, which includes 103 online databases. Our students, faculty and community patrons can access the library materials 24 hours a day, 365 days a year from their homes, dorms, offices, and other locations. The library presently has over 70 computers for public use and wireless capabilities for laptops for all users. More books, journals, databases, and computers will be added to the library in the near future.

I would like to thank our President, Provost, all Deans, faculty, administrators, staff, and students for their unconditional support during the library renovation project. I also want to thank all librarians and library staff for their hard work. They are always ready to help our students, faculty and patrons at all times, and always with a smile. We have an excellent team in the library and I am proud of them.

Finally, I want to thank all of you for coming here today for our dedication ceremony. I invite you to take a guided tour of this magnificent library, which has become the showcase of our university, to see that we are certainly ready for the 21st century needs of our students, faculty, and community patrons.

Thank you very much and may God bless you all.

Leslie Burger: Libraries Transform Communities

Leslie Burger, President of the American Library Association, and Director of the Princeton, NJ Public Library was a guest speaker at the dedication ceremony. Her remarks:

“Thanks for inviting me to share this exciting day with you. I’m delighted to be here today to celebrate the dedication of the new library. Having lived through a library expansion program myself, I know exactly how you feel today. It’s not unlike giving birth, the gestation seems to go on forever, the labor hurts and is often difficult but the pay off is great when you finally see the fruits of your labor.

This year I have the honor and privilege of serving as president of the American Library Association, the largest and oldest library association in the world with 66,000 members. On behalf of ALA and its members let me congratulate you on your accomplishment.

Continued on Page 4
Leslie Burger: Libraries Transform Communities (Continued from Page 3)

of my presidency -- libraries transform communities and talk about what you can expect to happen now that you have this wonderful new facility.

The “Libraries transform communities” theme is important at this moment in time when many are questioning the need for libraries in the age of Google and the World Wide Web. But I know, both from experience and observation, that when libraries are transformed either by new service programs, renovations, or new buildings that the communities we serve are in turn transformed. When our customers realize they are getting more from their libraries, they become advocates and passionate supporters for what we do, and learn in new and different ways.

Monmouth University has taken an important first step towards transforming the campus community by investing in this new library.

In our post 9-11 world people perceive their place and time in the world differently. Although we are more technologically connected than ever before one of the lessons we learned from 9-11 is that we need to be socially connected as well. We need a world in which people understand and appreciate their similarities and differences and one in which tolerance and opportunity abounds. The world is much more difficult to navigate these days we’re bombarded with bad news on a daily basis, dealing with the impact of global warming, threatened by wars, terrorism, and unstable economies.

When seeking community, people are looking for institutions where they can understand and secure their place in the world and its future. What better institution to help them do that but the library? And, what better institution to facilitate learning and conversation than the university library?

You have a unique opportunity to use the library as a place to bring the campus community together — commuters and residential students, faculty and students, faculty and administrators, faculty and students across disciplines — the opportunities are endless.

I see a world in which libraries transform their communities — be they cities and towns, schools or universities — by making them better places to live and work, providing hope for the future, offering spaces where people of all colors and all ethnicities come together to learn, explore and celebrate what it means to be part of a learning community and our democracy.

Recently there have been a number of research studies conducted by the American Library Association, OCLC and the Americans for Libraries Council. All were focused on gathering opinions about what Americans think about their libraries. All of the study results revealed that there is an enormous amount of good will out there for libraries and what we do even if people don’t understand everything we have to offer. A recent study by the Americans for Libraries Council suggests five things that community leaders should know about libraries and the public.

Number 1: Libraries are highly valued. Libraries received the best grades of any of the community institutions covered in a national survey. Nearly half the public gave libraries an A — higher than the public schools, the police and the local news media. More than 6 out of 10 strongly agree that libraries are essential for maintaining a productive community. In the campus community that means that students see the library as a destination, a partner to facilitate their learning, a place for social interaction.

Number 2: Libraries are an Important 21st Century Resource

The public considers having computers and internet access in libraries essential and many also want libraries to provide other technological and multimedia resources. Almost two-thirds of all American say that having enough computers and online services is a high priority for libraries.

Continued on Page 5

“You have a unique opportunity to use the library as a place to bring the campus community together...”
Leslie Burger: Libraries Transform Communities (Continued from Page 4)

On campus students need continuous access to technology to secure information needed for their studies. We are an information-based economy and the ability to provide state of the art technology to assist in student learning is essential in the library.

Number 3: Voters love libraries
Those who vote in nearly every local election, and who volunteer and contribute to charities are big fans of libraries. Nearly 75% have library cards. Six in ten of these civically engaged folks would favor a tax increase to cover library needs compared to about half of less engaged citizens. At some point your students move on from student status to voters who will determine the future of libraries in communities, schools and campuses throughout the country. Make sure that their experiences here make them lifetime library supporters.

Number 4: Libraries use their funding wisely
More than three quarters of library users believe that libraries spend their dollars well. Even among non users 60% believe that libraries use their funds wisely.

Number 5: People are welcoming an expanded role for libraries
They see this by having libraries providing a safe and engaging place for teens, building literacy skills for a strong workforce, becoming centers for community information, being partners in the educational process and offering greater access to technology.

I would add to this list role our libraries can play in building community and fostering civic discourse, providing a source of entertainment and a place for social interaction. All things that you have done so well here at Monmouth University.

Did anyone see a recent op-ed piece in the New York Times by Luis Alberto Urrea? It’s entitled Kankakee Gets it Groove Back. In the article he talks about how Kankakee had been designated just a few years ago as one of the worst cities in America. David Letterman played on the insult by shipping two prefabricated gazebos to the city to elevate the livability factor. The author who recently visited the city speaks about his surprise at arriving at the library to do a reading, expecting only 25 retired women only to find a crowd of 325 people waiting inside. He then goes on to describe how the city pulled itself back from the brink starting with an investment in its library. “The people of Kankakee know that to rebuild a suffering city you have to reconstruct its culture and community”, said Urrea.

After a local corporation abandoned its headquarters the city’s mayor converted it into a library. Less than a year later the library moved from its 105 year old building in a sophisticated new building on three floors. According to Urrea this new library has become the cultural hub of the city, crucial to its downtown revitalization. “It all started with the library,” the mayor said, “I can’t tell you how proud that makes our community.”

And although Monmouth University is a far cry from Kankakee many of the points in this article hold true for this campus community as well – the library has become and will continue to be the hub of the community, a gathering place for students and faculty, with comfortable spaces, friendly staff, great technology, terrific resources and something guaranteed to satisfy everyone. Be proud of what you have achieved, protect your investment for years to come but more importantly be willing to share your story with others in the academic community to inspire them to transform their libraries. That is exactly what I am trying to do during my year as ALA president. I can’t do it alone, I need your help.

I’ll close with a quote from Luis Urrea. “Our cities are scrambling to find fresh paradigms for a new America. Maybe, just maybe, the Midwesterners, librarians and Mexicans of Kankakee, Illinois have found theirs.” I think you have found yours here at Monmouth University. Congratulations.”

“… the library has become and will continue to be the hub of the community…”
Joan Bernstein: Vitality of the Library

Joan Bernstein is the current president of the New Jersey Library Association and Director of the Mount Laurel Public Library. Her remarks at the Library dedication:

“I’m honored to be here today and I thank you for including me in this wonderful celebration.

Upon being informed that his obituary had been printed in the New York Journal, Samuel Clemens, with his characteristically laconic style, advised the world that “reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated.”

So it is today with libraries. For years now, pundits, futurists, and politicians have opined that libraries would cease to exist as civilization’s prime repository and resource for information and knowledge. The death of the library, the argument goes, was inevitable because the Internet would become faster, more comprehensive, more convenient, and better able to fulfill the information resource mission than a “brick and mortar” library could possibly hope to.

As was no doubt the case with Mr. Clemens, I am pleased to report that the death of the library has been greatly exaggerated. The Internet, as well as the incredible explosion of electronic media and information resources over the last two decades has not lead to the death of the library. Quite the contrary; the library has become more important than ever as the bewildering array of sources of information and communication continues to expand with what sometimes seems to be the speed of electricity, itself.

In my role as President of the New Jersey Library Association, I talk regularly with hundreds of colleagues who work in public, academic, business and school libraries. I hear about their successes and their difficulties, their joys and their concerns. I can tell you without equivocation that not one single librarian yet has told me he or she is faced with a decline in library utilization at his or her institution!

Moreover, we need look no further than today’s happy event to confirm the vitality of the library. I am pleased to add my congratulations to Monmouth University’s community on your newly renovated and enlarged library. It is a beautiful and superbly designed facility that will serve the information and leisure needs of students, faculty, and all other members of the University community today and far into the future.”

“...the library has become more important than ever as the bewildering array of sources of information and communication continues to expand...”
The remarks of Mary Weir, President of the Monmouth University Library Association:

“100 years ago Long Branch was the most fashionable sought-after destination on this continent; truly deserving its title, Monte Carlo of America. Long Branch was more popular than its two chief competitors, Newport Rhode Island and Saratoga, New York.

Who summered in Long Branch besides the seven presidents of the United States? The list reads as a “Who’s Who in America” a century ago.


Long Branch was the rendezvous of the theater-world. Lillian Russell and Fanny Davenport had homes on Bath Avenue. Lily Langtree summered at Chelsea and 2nd Avenue and kept her private railroad car at the Long Branch Railroad Station. ANYBODY who was ANYBODY summered at “The Branch.”

In 1848, Meyer Guggenheim, the founder of the Guggenheim Dynasty migrated to America. Murry, one of his seven sons, married Leonie Berheim in 1887. The silver demitasse service on display in the original billiard room was a wedding present to them. Four of the seven Guggenheim brothers had “Summer Cottages” at “The Branch.” Only Murry and Leonie’s home is still in existence and is now our library. In 1902, Murry and Leonie bought eight acres at the corner of Norwood and Cedar Avenues. They hired Carrere and Hastings, New York’s most prestigious architects, to design their thirty-five room “Summer Cottage” in the Beaux Arts tradition. Carrere and Hastings designed the New York Public Library and the Frick Mansion, now an Art Museum on Fifth Avenue. The cottage was modeled after the Petite Trianon at Versailles in the French Renaissance style. I have matted the original photographs of the house taken in 1905. They have been placed for your viewing in each room. I hope you will have time to take a tour of the library after the dedication.

Murry died in 1939, Leonie continued to spend every summer at “The Branch” until her death in 1959. In 1960, the Guggenheim Foundation gave the cottage to Monmouth College.

The Monmouth University Library Association is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Since 1956 it has been our mission to ensure a state-of-the-art learning and research center for the students of Monmouth University as well as the residents of Monmouth County. We have donated over $2,000,000 to that goal. One million dollars was designated for the building fund. Would the Monmouth Library Association ladies please stand. We are all proud to have played a part in the restorations of this building.

For 32 years the Library Association has held a Holiday Ball on the first Saturday in December to raise funds for the library. We hope you will join us this year on Saturday night, December 2 for the most beautiful event of the holiday season.”
Monmouth University Library

400 Cedar Avenue
West Long Branch, NJ 07764

Reference: 732-571-3438
Circulation: 732-571-3693

New Expanded Hours:
Monday-Thursday: 8 am—midnight
Friday: 8am-6pm
Saturday: 9am-5pm
Sunday: noon-midnight

http://library.monmouth.edu

See the Monmouth University Library featured on the cover of Choice magazine, Vol.44 Iss.4, December 2006

Visit the ALL NEW Monmouth University Library and get MORE out of your college experience!

Newsletter Editor:
Eleonora Dubicki
edubicki@monmouth.edu

Monmouth University
where leaders look forward™