

Founders Keepers

Faculty edition

Haish Mansion Restored by Cameron Simpson

Upcoming Events

- Exhibits in Founders:

May 2019: Flowers (Mary Burns)

June/July 2019:
Gay Pride
(DeeAnna Phares & Mary Burns)

January 2020:
NIU 125th Anniversary

I am a first-year student at NIU, and in conjunction with the Regional History Center I am restoring a small architectural model of the Haish Mansion this semester. This work has been an incredible learning experience for me.

The Haish Mansion, which used to stand at 227 Pine Street, DeKalb, was demolished in 1961. The model was completed in 1981 as a component of W. Joseph Zack's Master of Fine Arts thesis, which centered on architectural drawings and models as a form of art. The model has been displayed at several venues and events over the course of 30+ years, and it is showing its age. Most recently, it was displayed in October 2018 at the Haish portrait

dedication in Founder's Library. Pictures the Regional History Museum and others have taken of the model show many of its problems, including pieces that have completely detached and bits hanging on by a thread.

The research process for this project began in October. I had the amazing opportunity to visit the Art Institute of Chicago and speak with a conservator there, where I was able to see their conservation lab as well. While I won't be doing anything that's truly world-class-museum-grade comprehensive due to my own time and skill, I hope to do the model

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Haish Mansion model

Founders Memorial Library
(815) 753-1094
<https://library.niu.edu/ulib>

Haish Mansion (continued)

justice and tell the history of the city alongside that of the model.

The physical restoration work began in January. Even though I am not embarking on a full-scale restoration of the Haish house, there is still plenty to be done. First came a thorough cleaning and examination of all the pieces I had. Then, I began to work from the top down, regluing roof trim, reattaching the pieces that have fallen off the model, and removing decades-old glue. My current work is with replacing support structures and creating a new base to replace the larger one that has since been lost. Specifically, my most recent phase of work has involved cutting plexiglass to replace the broken and lost glass that framed the top of the gazebo. I've clamped and glued the plexiglass into the gazebo, and replaced the top as well. Next up, I hope to tackle the detached porches and all the



Restoration in progress

other pieces that need to be reinforced.

Through careful trial-and-error, I have learned a lot about how to use different materials and solve problems I encounter in this process. I am excited to learn even more as time goes on! I've worked for about 60 hours on the model, and since my project with the Regional

History Center is being counted for co-curricular credit with the new Honors Program it requires at least 80 hours of work. I hope to be done with my restoration by the end of this semester. When the model is completed, it will be displayed in the Founders Gallery on the first floor of Founders Memorial Library by the portrait of Jacob Haish.



Cameron Simpson works on Haish Mansion model restoration

Latinx Oral History Project by Drew Vandecreek

The Center for Latino and Latin American Studies established the NIU Latinx Oral History Project in 2014 to document the lives and experiences of Latinxs in the Midwest. The collection currently holds 128 interviews (audio and video recordings and transcriptions) with NIU faculty, students, and staff, undocumented migrants, community activists and leaders, and other Latinxs in the region.

Many of the interviews have focused on family, identity formation, Latinx social and

political organizing, and the difficulties faced by the undocumented in the United States. Interviews continue to be collected by NIU faculty as well as undergraduate and graduate students. Many of the students who work on the NIU Latinx Oral History Project receive funding to support their research, thanks, in part, to participation in the Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning's Summer Research Opportunities Program.

Interviews have been deposited at the Regional History Center at NIU's Founders Memorial Library

and are open to researchers for consultation.

The University Libraries are currently collaborating with the Center for Latino and Latin American Studies to bring audio, video and transcript versions of interviews in the collection together in a freely-available online resource within the NIU Digital Library. A pilot project consisting of several interviews are presently available in video format at:

<https://digital.lib.niu.edu/islandora/object/latino%3Aoralhistory>

Two Significant Donations to SEA by Hao Phan

In December 2018, Dr. George V. Smith and his wife, Chrys S. Smith, donated a box of photo slides and a collection of 13 posters to the NIU Southeast Asia Collection. Dr. Smith received his Ph.D. in Southeast Asian History from NIU in 1974 and his MLS from University of Illinois in 1975. For 30 years, from 1975 to 2005, he worked as a librarian and library administrator at state and public libraries in Illinois, Oregon, and Alaska. He and his wife also worked and traveled extensively in Southeast Asia. He helped train the staff at the National Library of Cambodia in 1994-1995. Dr. Smith and his wife currently live in Oregon.

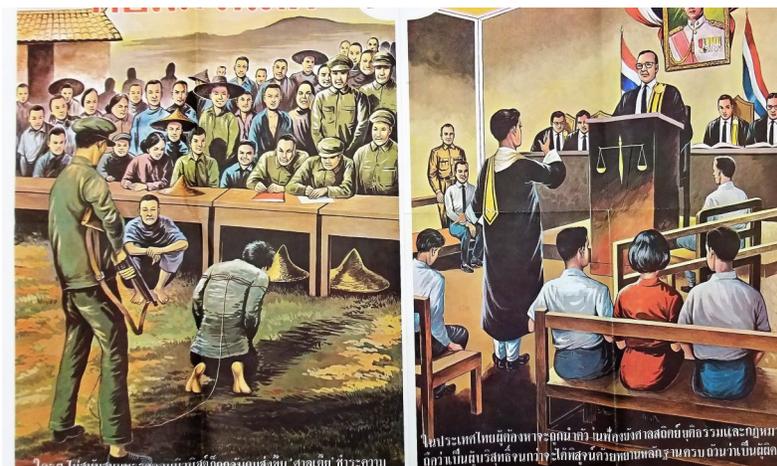
The slides are photographs taken by Dr. Smith and his wife during their time working as Peace Corp volunteers in Thailand from 1967 to 1969, and on their visits to Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam in the 1960s, 1990s, and 2000s. The

photographs feature temples, markets, festivals, villages, and daily life in these countries. The posters are anti-communist propaganda material used in Thailand in the 1960s. Each poster is equally divided into two columns. The left column portrays the dreadful life under a communist regime in contrast to the right column portraying

the free life in a democratic society.

While the slides can be useful for the study of architecture, culture, and social changes in Southeast Asia, the posters are fascinating materials for the

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Thai anti-communist poster that contrasts life under a communist regime with life in a democratic society. It contrasts the so-called "people's court" in China and the court in Thailand

Two Significant Donations (continued)

study of Thailand's history in the context of the Cold War. Although not fighting directly in the Vietnam War, Thailand provided important logistical supports to the operations of the American military in Vietnam. About 80% of all air strikes of the U.S. Air Force over North Vietnam originated from the air bases in Thailand. Two of the largest air bases were located in Northeastern Thailand, where the Thai communist insurgency was most active. These anti-communist posters, printed with funding from the United States Information Agency, are part of the Thai government's efforts to battle communist influences in the region at the time. While primary sources related to the Vietnam War are plentiful, there are very few materials on the communists in Thailand. These posters help reduce that gap. We plan to digitize the posters and make them available soon on the Southeast Asia Digital Library site:

<https://sea.lib.niu.edu/>.

In March, the Southeast Asia Collection also received a large donation of books from a Vietnamese American author living in Illinois, Mr. Nguyen Tan Hung. Mr. Hung (born in 1945) was a former navy officer of South Vietnam who came to America as a refugee in 1975, at the end of the Vietnam War.

In America, Mr. Hung returned to college studying engineering. He holds a BS in Engineering Technology from University of Nebraska and a master's degree in Electrical Engineering from North Carolina A&T University. For many years, while working full-time as an engineer and raising his family, Mr. Hung also wrote. With more than 20 books published, he is one of the most prolific overseas Vietnamese authors. Mr. Hung's memoirs and fiction reflect experiences of a person living through the war in Vietnam and as an immigrant in America.



Mr. Nguyen Tan Hung and boxes of Vietnamese books he donated to the SEA Collection

Mr. Hung's donation includes 845 books, most of which are on Vietnamese literature, including many works written by Vietnamese authors living in America. For Vietnamese studies, although the focus in library collection development are materials from Vietnam, it is also important to collect Vietnamese materials published in America, for two main reasons. First, as a consequence of the Vietnam War, many writers and intellectuals moved from Vietnam to America where they continued to write. The works of these authors are essential for the study of literature and history of Vietnam, especially from the perspective of South Vietnam. Second, due to censorship still existing in Vietnam today, many works deemed politically sensitive by the Vietnamese government can only be published overseas. These works are often very interesting and more candid than works published in Vietnam in their depiction of politics and life in Vietnam.

The majority of the books donated by Mr. Nguyen Tan Hung were not previously available at NIU and will be added to our Southeast Asia Collection.



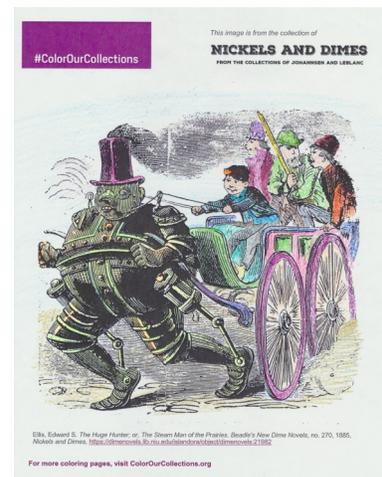
#ColorOurCollection by Matthew Short

On the week of February 4, NIU Libraries joined more than a hundred libraries, museums, and archives around the world in sharing a free coloring book based on materials from their collections. This is the fourth annual #ColorOurCollections, but the first year that NIU has participated. The Libraries' coloring book featured our



digital dime novel collection, Nickels and Dimes, and included winged whale monsters, women pirates, steam-powered robots, and more. A table with crayons and colored pencils was set up in the lobby of Founders throughout the week, where we collected patrons' contributions. A selection of these have since been posted on the NIU Digital Library's Facebook page. NIU's coloring book was also highlighted in a story by WNIJ and in an article by the Smithsonian. Although the event is now over, the coloring book can be still be downloaded here: <http://ow.ly/J0du3OnYp4p>

Nickels and Dimes contains more than 7,000 dime novels and story papers digitized from the Johannsen and Edward T. LeBlanc Collections in Rare Books and Special Collections. Dime novels were a format of inexpensive popular fiction



produced in the United States between 1860 and 1930, and were especially popular among children, immigrants, and the working classes. For more information about the project, or to get involved, please contact the Digital Collections & Metadata Librarian, Matthew Short (mshort@niu.edu).

Collections News by Jana Brubaker

In order to stretch what we anticipate will be a flat materials budget, we will be shifting access to some serials titles to Get It Now, which allows for quick access at the article level. Selection will be driven by usage statistics, as it has been in the past. If a serial costs more than \$50 per use, it will be made available through Get It Now rather than through a subscription. We will be posting a list of these journals on the Libraries' webpage at the beginning of FY20. Similarly, by reviewing interlibrary borrowing statistics we plan to add serial

titles where we are seeing a high demand.

The Libraries will continue a deaccessioning project this summer in which we are focusing on monographic titles with multiple copies that have not circulated in the last five or more years. With space in the Libraries at a premium this will give us room for new monograph acquisitions. Last fiscal year we purchased approximately 6,800 monographic titles

Finally, in case you've wondered which databases are most

popular with our users, based on usage, we have the answer. The rankings, below, reflect the number of searches in 2018:

Academic Search Complete—142,821

Web of Science—108,374

CINAHL Complete—82,003

JSTOR—72,362

ERIC—67,321

Message from Dean Barnhart

As you can see from this issue of the Founders Keepers, the University Libraries include a remarkable variety of formats from model mansions to oral histories to dime novels. All of these resources really come to light, though, when our students, faculty and other patrons are given the opportunity to engage and learn from them. The restoration of the Haish Mansion model is not only preserving a piece of our region's rich history, but also is providing firsthand experience in museum conservation and research. The collaborative Latinx oral history project combines experiential learning

for our students with the development of an archive which will bring immigrants' stories not only to a larger group of researchers, but also to future generations. By inviting our patrons to "#ColorOurCollection" the libraries have introduced a whole new generation of researchers to the unique, and often fanciful, world of the Johannsen and LeBlanc Dime Novel Collections.

These are just a few examples of the many ways that researchers, and students in particular, are engaging with the libraries' primary materials every day. We

hope this edition of Founders Keepers will inspire you too to engage your students with our Distinctive Collections or the many other resources in the University Libraries. For more information about the possibilities, please contact your subject specialist librarian (see <https://library.niu.edu/ulib/content/aboutus/subjectspecialistsdirectory.asp>) or feel free to e-mail me directly at fbarnhart@niu.edu

Enjoy the summer!

Fred Barnhart,
Dean of University Libraries

New Carrel Policy by TJ Lusher

Reserving a carrel in Founders Libraries has been a long tradition. The policy governing the carrels also has a long history. The current carrel policy was updated in 2008. While the tradition will continue, the policy is being completely re-written to reflect a more up-to-date vibe. The Libraries management team is currently reviewing the new policy that will include guidance on requesting a carrel assignment, and carrel holder's responsibility for the library's materials. The Security office has placed a memorandum

asking current carrel holders to clear out personal items and library materials and to turn the key into the office by May 19th. The summer period will allow for deep cleaning of the carrels, the development of a new online carrel request form, and a directory of individuals in the carrels. It is the hope of the Facilities office and the Security office to have the carrels available in August prior to the start of the fall semester. If you have questions or concerns, please talk to TJ Lusher (tlusher@niu.edu).

