Frederick Dwight Kirsch was born in Pawnee County, Nebraska, January 28, 1899. He graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1919 with a Bachelors of Arts degree in Art and French. He studied briefly at the Art Students' League in New York (1919-1922) and the Parsons School of Design in New York (1936). He began an Art Instructor at the University of Nebraska in 1924. He stayed at the University to become Professor of Art, Chairman of the Art Department, and Director of the University Art Galleries until 1950. Dwight then became the Director of the Des Moines Art Center from 1950-1958. In 1953, he received an honorary Doctorate Degree of Fine Arts from Grinnell College. Kirsch was an Artist-in-Residence at Iowa State University and conducted art workshops there from 1959-1965. Kirsch continued making art, exhibiting his artwork, juror for exhibitions, hosting art workshops and lectures, and traveling. He died in Colorado Springs, Colorado on September 25, 1981.

He received many distinguished awards and honors for his artwork. His work is part of the permanent collection of numerous art galleries and museums including the Wichita Art Museum, Sheldon Museum of Art, Joslyn Art Museum, Museum of Nebraska Art, and the Great Plains Art Museum with select pieces currently on display at the Calvin T. Ryan Library.
New Library Coordinator of Instruction

Julia Powell was hired by the Calvin T. Ryan Library in July 2014 as the Coordinator of Instruction and the Government Documents Librarian. Julia holds a Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of North Texas. In addition she has a Master of Science degree in Natural Sciences with an emphasis in Biology and Chemistry from Stephen F. Austin State University.

Julia also serves as the library liaison to the departments of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Math, Geography, and Earth Science. Julia and her husband moved to Kearney from Seguin, TX (about 30 miles east of San Antonio) in July 2012. They have two children, a 7th grader and a 5th grader, attending Kearney Public Schools. Their family decided to move to Kearney because her husband, Lee, accepted a tenure-track position as a physicist and planetarium director here at UNK.

During her first two years in Nebraska, she taught science and health to middle school and high school students at Ravenna High School. Julia previously taught high school and middle school science in both Louisiana and Texas public schools. She has over 13 years of teaching experience, and is certified to teach in both Texas and Nebraska.

As the Coordinator of Instruction, Julia collaborates with other librarians to build on the Library’s efforts to develop sound learning experiences which will enhance critical thinking skills, and build information literacy competencies with our students at UNK. Julia states that “with the ever growing amount of information that is given to us each and every day, students must learn how to disseminate and communicate that data into usable material.” She also says that this is one of the reasons why she wanted to become a librarian, and one of the challenges she faced everyday while a classroom teacher.

New University Archivist

In October 2014, Laurinda Weisse joined the Calvin T. Ryan Library faculty as its first University Archivist. She is chiefly responsible for collecting, preserving and making available materials that document the history of UNK. Laurinda earned a master’s of science in information from the University of Michigan, with specialties in archives, records management, and preservation of information. She previously served as a Reference/Special Projects Librarian at UNK.

During an undergraduate history seminar, Laurinda had the opportunity to conduct archival research. This experience stuck with her, and when she was chosen as a graduate program, she decided to combine her love for helping people find information with her affinity for history. While completing her master’s, Laurinda worked in Interlibrary Loan, as a Reference Assistant, and as an OCLC Research Intern. Her reference experience cemented a desire to assist people in connecting with information.

Beyond preserving physical materials, Laurinda hopes to strengthen preservation of digital materials and make it easier for people to discover the treasures of the UNK Archives. “The first place that most researchers look for material is online, with many assuming that if there is no online presence, the material doesn’t exist at all. I hope to strengthen the UNK Archives online presence so that it better represents the strengths of our physical collection.”

New Project Archivist

This November the faculty and staff of the Calvin T. Ryan Library were pleased to welcome Sally Sinner, to the position of Project Archivist for the Alice Paine Room. In this position, Sally will be processing the Archives and Special Collections held by the University of Nebraska at Kearney in order to provide students and researchers better access to the primary source materials. She holds a Master’s degree in Library and Information Science with a specialization in Archives from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge.

Sally donned her first pair of white cotton gloves as a student curator at the Northlight Gallery for Photography at Arizona State University. After earning her Bachelor’s Degree, she moved to the San Juan Mountains, volunteering and then working for the Telluride Historical Museum. From there, her varied career took her around the country before returning her to her home state of Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina. Library school had always been on her radar. With a recession in progress, it was a good time to pursue the degree at LSU. While in grad school, Sally became a Raging Cajun working in the Special Collections of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Upon graduation, she accepted the position as the Archivist for the Grand Lodge of the State of Louisiana Free and Accepted Masons.

What brings this southerner all the way to the plains of Nebraska? “The opportunity to create a collection from the ground up. I enjoy bringing order to chaos. The thrill of discovery is what drew me into the dirty and dusty world of Special Collections. You just never know what you will find, be it an item or a story, when you open that box.”

Florenc M. Wagner Scholarship

Aaron Ohri, a Criminal Justice major from O’Neill, Nebraska, is the 2014 recipient of the Florence M. Wagner Scholarship. Aaron follows his brothers, Ryan and Kevin in working for the Library’s Circulation Department. In addition, three Ohri first cousins – Daney, Katie, and Andrew – have worked for that department during their years at UNK. All are from the O’Neill and Spencer areas. The Scholarship, given yearly to a student worker who is a graduate of a Nebraska high school, is made possible through an endowment established by Florence Wagner’s daughter, Carolyn Snyder.

Support the Calvin T. Ryan Library

There are a number of ways that you can help Calvin T. Ryan Library including:

Gifts that strengthen collections - Do the books you love need a new home? Why may be just what is needed to enhance the library collection. We are especially interested in books and other materials with a UNK, Nebraska, or Great Plains connection. See this site for details: http://library.unk.edu/about/giving.php

Buy a book for the library - Buy a book for the Calvin T. Ryan Library” is a way to commemorate, congratulate, or memorialize a relative, friend, professor or colleague.

With a gift to buy a book, a bookplate with a personalized message will be placed in each new book purchased by the library. The bookplate will include the name of the donor and if the donor chooses to honor or recognize. A copy of the personalized message and a letter of acknowledgement will be sent to the donor and, when possible, the honoree or the honoree's family. The information will also appear in the library's online catalog of materials.

To support the “Buy a Book for the Calvin T. Ryan Library” program, visit nufoundation.org/unkbuyabook. To learn more or to request a brochure, contact Anne McConkey, UK Foundation’s Kearney office at P.O. Box 2678, 214 W. 9th St., Kearney, NE 68848; or call 308-896-5270; or give online at https://nufoundation.org/unk/library.

In Brief

The Library, in collaboration with the History, Sociology, English, and Communications Departments, hosted speaker and retired BBC documentary producer Tim Slessor, Tuesday, November 4th.

Nebraskans do not have to look far to see where the Brits may have had an early presence: Oxford, Cambridge, Crawfordsville, Norfolk, Bridgeport, Exeter, Litchfield, Lancaster, Wakefield, Walton and at least a dozen more. The name is true in Wyoming and Montana. But perhaps more interesting are the stories of individual immigrants – especially the well-to-do second sons of England’s landed gentry. What, for example, brought the Queen to spend a week on a horse-ranch in the shadow of Wyoming’s Big Horn Mountains? Who in the 1920’s, after his father – the Earl of Portsmouth – and then his elder brother died, uniquely had a seat in the Wyoming Legislature and the House of Lords? Of course, there is much more to it than that as Slessor shared in his presentation to a group in Copeland Hall and in his book More than Cowboys.

Mr. Slessor’s presentation was made possible by the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center at Chadron State College through a private donation to the Chadron State Foundation.

In Brief is a publication of the Calvin T. Ryan Library, University of Nebraska Kearney. It is designed to keep friends of the library informed about library changes and events. Its production is overseen by the Library Publications Committee. Current members are: Michael Sutherland Kate Freeman