

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES:

Exhibitions 1991

BY RUTH J. SIMMONS

Mrs. Simmons is curator of the William Elliot Griffis Collection

Drawing from the holdings in Special Collections and the University Archives, a number of exhibitions were on view during 1991 in Gallery '50, the Alexander Library Lobby and the New Jersey Room.

Black History Month displayed 18th and 19th century New Jersey materials which highlighted the struggle to abolish the institution of slavery, the experience of so-called "free" African-Americans, and the development of the black church and self-help organizations. Rare correspondence, manuscript and printed items were exhibited including: the constitution and minutes of the African Association of New Brunswick (1817-1824); a history of Gouldtown, thought to be the oldest black settlement in the United States; and the writings of John Woolman, Dr. James Still, and Benjamin Banneker.

Leadership on the Banks: Rutgers' Presidents 1766-1991 was mounted to coincide with the inauguration of Francis L. Lawrence as the eighteenth president of Rutgers University. Focusing on each president's educational philosophy and tenure, the exhibit traced the evolution of Rutgers from a small private colonial college to a large public research university. Photographs, manuscripts, books and other printed materials from the University Archives were used to illustrate the context of this transformation, and to provide some personal information about each president. Col. Henry Rutgers' pocket watch and the first issue of the student newspaper, the *Targum*, were included. A special commemorative issue of the *Journal of the Rutgers University Libraries* served as the Exhibition catalog.

The Friends of the Rutgers University Libraries sponsored a program and reception which opened this exhibition. President Lawrence made a few remarks, and Dr. Richard P. McCormick, University Professor of History and University Historian Emeritus, delivered a lecture entitled, "Rutgers' Presidents: Profiles and Evaluations."

Reflections of the Past celebrated Women's History Month and featured selected New Jersey women from 1600 to the present drawn from the book *Past and Promise: Lives of New Jersey Women*, compiled by the Women's

Project of New Jersey Inc. The display presented photographs, drawings and biographical sketches from the book, as well as other items from Special Collections and Archives and the Mabel Smith Douglass Library including Elizabeth Cady Stanton's ballot box. The exhibit emphasized the contribution women have made to the arts and sciences and to Rutgers. Among those included were Mabel Smith Douglass, Florence Eagleton, Millicent Fenwick, Jarena Lee, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, and Elizabeth Rodman Voorhees.

The *Reunion Weekend* exhibit honored the Class of '41 and the Class of '65 through a display of photographs, *Targums*, yearbooks, mugs, shirts, hats and other memorabilia.

A selection of *Special Collections Ephemera 1850–1920* revealed the charm, diversity and potential use of printed ephemeral collections. The items chosen illustrated holidays, summertime, and men's and women's leisure activities, and included: turn of the century menus, Fourth of July broadsides, theater programs from the mid-nineteenth century, postcards from New Jersey shore towns, cards from tobacco products, trading cards and sheet music.

The annual *Welcome Students* exhibit opened the academic year and displayed memorabilia such as the ubiquitous T-shirt, mugs, beanies and Frisbees from years past, and printed items including songs, broadsides, and handbooks from Rutgers College and Douglass College, and *The Rutgers Picture Book*.

As Japan emerged from an isolated, feudal society to a modern industrial state in the second half of the 19th century, Japanese were sent abroad to study in the west, and Westerners were hired to teach and work in Japan. Rutgers and its alumni were among the first to participate in this cross-cultural exchange. Using materials from the William Elliot Griffis Collection and the University Archives, *Reciprocity: Japan and Rutgers 1866–1930* traced the activities of Japanese students who came to Rutgers, and the experiences of Griffis (Rutgers Class of 1869) and other Westerners who went to Japan. Featured in the exhibition were the journals of Commodore Matthew Perry's 1852–54 naval expedition to Japan; the diaries, manuscripts, ephemera and photographs of William Elliot Griffis and his sister Margaret Clark Griffis and other "yatoi" (foreign employees); English compositions written for Griffis when he taught in Tokyo; and records, photographs and correspondence of the Japanese students at Rutgers.

The Seventh annual Louis Faugères Bishop III Lecture and a Friends of the Rutgers University Libraries reception opened the exhibition. A paper

titled *Twelve Centuries of Printing in Japan* was given by Dr. Robert Sewell, Associate University Librarian for Collection Development and Management at Rutgers.

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EXHIBITIONS 1991

February	<i>Black History Month.</i> Gallery '50, Alexander Library Lobby, The New Jersey Room. Prepared and installed by Ed Skipworth.
March–May	<i>Leadership on the Banks: Rutgers' Presidents 1766–1991.</i> Gallery '50. Curator: Tom Frusciano. Installed by Janice Levin. <i>Reflections of the Past.</i> Alexander Library Lobby. Prepared and installed by Jan Leavitt and Janice Levin.
May	<i>Reunion Weekend: Class of '41 & Class of '65.</i> Alexander Library Lobby, New Jersey Room. Prepared and installed by Janice Levin.
June–September	<i>Special Collections Ephemera.</i> Gallery '50, Alexander Library Lobby, The New Jersey Room. Prepared and installed by Ed Skipworth.
September	<i>Welcome Students.</i> Alexander Library Lobby.
October–December	<i>Reciprocity: Japan and Rutgers 1866–1930.</i> Gallery '50, Alexander Library Lobby, The New Jersey Room. Curator: Ruth J. Simmons. Installed by R.J. Simmons and Janice Levin.

Conservation work for exhibitions is done by Janet Riemer, preservationist for Special Collections and Archives.