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East Wing Reopens

The first floor of the D. H. Hill Library's East Wing reopened on March 12. Please visit the newly renovated space, explore the Learning Commons, view the exhibition about the life and work of ecologist B. W. Wells (next article), and spend a quiet moment studying in the elegant new Special Collections Reading Room. The entire East Wing project is expected to be completed by early April when library staff will return from their temporary office space at Brickhaven to occupy their renovated work areas on the East Wing ground floor. ♦

Inaugural Exhibit—*B. W. Wells: Pioneer Ecologist*

The work of pioneer ecologist and NC State professor B. W. Wells is the focus of the first exhibition to be featured in the D. H. Hill Library's new exhibition gallery. The story is told by the wealth of excellent photographs that Wells took to document his research. He converted four-by-five-inch negatives to glass lantern slides and hand-tinted many of them with watercolors. Throughout his career, he used these images to enlighten individuals on the importance of appreciating nature. The NCSU Libraries and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences have partnered to preserve, identify, digitize, and display these images.

Much of Wells's work focused on the ecologically unique Big Savannah located in Pender County. Although this landscape was lost to the plow in the late 1950s, the recent discovery of a similar site, dedicated as the B. W. Wells Savannah in 2002, created a renewed interest in the ecology of this region and the abundance of plants and flowers that are found there. Photographer Freda Wilkins of Wilmington, North Carolina, has documented them for this exhibition.

The exhibition also displays Wells's publications, including his popular work *The Natural Gardens of North Carolina*, which has provided an invaluable resource for North Carolinians interested in the native flora of the state for over seventy-five years. Other highlights include his camera, botanical specimens, and original documents produced by Wells.

All of the photographs in the B. W. Wells Collection are available in the online exhibit on the NCSU Libraries' Web site at <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/exhibits/wells/>. The images are also featured in the catalog that accompanies the exhibition, available for purchase from the NC State Bookstores. ♦

Learning Commons Opens in D. H. Hill Library

On March 12 students were welcomed for the first time to a new, state-of-the-art Learning Commons, added as part of the East Wing renovation to the D. H. Hill Library. The Commons is a space designed for productivity and group work, inspiration and socializing, research and relaxation. At 14,000 square feet, it supports all of these activities through a smart combination of cutting-edge technology, learning-space design principles, and improved access to information resources. Students have played an integral role in shaping the Commons and will continue to inform and envision the future of this vibrant learning space in the coming months and years.

The Learning Commons sets the new standard on campus as a media-rich workspace where researchers can take projects from idea to finished product, with support at each step along the way. The Commons added more than 100 new workstations to the D. H. Hill landscape. These new computers are loaded with all the familiar Unity software that students expect, including Microsoft Office applications. In addition to these workstations, six other computers are clustered together with enhanced tools for multimedia projects, such as scanners and image-editing applications. No matter where students are working, knowledgeable staff and student workers are nearby able to assist with all of these standard and specialized computing options.

All of D. H. Hill's popular device-lending services are now centralized at one single service area, just inside the entrance of the new Learning Commons. Now students can stop at one place to borrow laptops, tablet PCs, digital cameras, digital camcorders, iPods, and MP3 players.

Two group study rooms and a presentation practice room provide space for collaboration and

are equipped with display technology. These rooms may be reserved on the Learning Commons Web site.

The Learning Commons is an ideal venue for showcasing the many activities and achievements at NC State, thanks to the nine digital signs located throughout the space. The screens range from forty-two to sixty-two inches and display a rotation of content. To submit images for display in the Commons, go to <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/learningcommons/submit/>.

For more details about the Learning Commons, see <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/learningcommons/>. ♦

Firefox and IE 7 Catalog Plugins

The NCSU Libraries now offers a quicker way to search the catalog. Firefox and Internet Explorer 7 users can install a plugin that takes advantage of the integrated search feature of those browsers (the search box located in the upper right-hand corner of the screen). Go to <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/catalog/plugins.html> for installation instructions. Once installed, users should see the NCSU Libraries catalog and icon as a search engine option. They can then enter search terms to conduct a keyword search, which will take them directly to the catalog and display search results. From there, users can refine searches as necessary. ♦

My Alerts

The My Alerts service at the NCSU Libraries allows users to receive e-mail messages containing current tables of contents for many of the most-popular journal titles subscribed to by the Libraries. Users with suggestions on additional titles to include should send them via e-mail to LibraryAlerts@ncsu.edu.

For each title users subscribes to, they will receive an e-mail message when a new issue is published. The body of the e-mail will consist of the table of contents from the journal's Web site. Links to the full text of articles will be provided when available. Alerts are sent to each user's e-mail address on file in the NCSU Libraries' system.

Questions or suggestions about this service should be sent to LibraryAlerts@ncsu.edu. ♦

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