IN THE NORTHWEST SCHOOL IN VIEW

In 2015-2016, Heritage Resources partnered with La Conner Public Library and the Museum of Northwest Art (MONA) in La Conner, in a project to digitize and showcase artwork and manuscripts relating to the “Northwest School” of Skagit County and the Puget Sound. With grant-funding and support from the Washington State Library Rural Heritage Program (via the Institute of Museum and Library Services), this project resulted in an exciting new digital collection, featuring materials from artists Charles Stokes and Louis Mideke (from collections at MONA), plus select correspondence from the papers of Guy Anderson (digital copies archived at the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies). All three artists were leading figures in the Northwest School.

While work with Guy Anderson’s papers continues, his digitized correspondence now includes around sixty letters, notes, and cards dating from 1960 to 1991, including from Morris Graves (with whom he shared a studio for many years), Charles Krafft, Mark Tobey, and other artists and friends connected with the Northwest School. Heritage Resources expresses its gratitude to Deryl Walls for his loan of Guy Anderson materials for purposes of digitization.

We invite researchers to explore and enjoy these online resources, now available via the Rural Heritage Project website.
The arts and humanities are essential components of our shared cultural heritage, and we are fortunate to live in a region with a strong dedication to these disciplines. Skagit and Whatcom Counties have long been a draw for artists, who find inspiration in the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest and its unique landscape. Western Washington University has also played an important role in advancing the arts in our community by offering performances through the College of Fine and Performing Arts, exhibitions at the Western Gallery, and amazing large-scale works in our renowned Outdoor Sculpture Collection. Local artists teach at Western, and WWU faculty and staff share their creativity through exhibits, lectures, and public programming that enrich our life. Our arts education programs also prepare students to become classroom teachers and specialists who will ultimately cultivate future generations of art patrons.

As the director of a cultural heritage organization, I am dedicated to the development of unique and archival resources in support of teaching, learning, and research. The units of Heritage Resources—the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Special Collections, and University Archives—work together to document the culture and history of Western, the local community, and Pacific Northwest region. Documentary evidence of Western and the region’s longstanding contribution to the arts exists throughout our collections, and several examples are featured in the pages of this issue of *Heritage Highlights*. We invite you to visit all of our units to explore our wonderful collections, and to learn about our rich cultural and artistic heritage.

With my sincerest regards,

Elizabeth Joffrion
Director of Heritage Resources

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**Events and Exhibits**

- **“Out and Out from the Family to the Community”: The Housmans and the Politics of Queer Sibling Devotion**—Tuesday, May 9 at 4:00 in Special Collections (Wilson Library 6th floor). Western Washington University Associate Professor of English and Heritage Resources Distinguished Speaker Kristen Mahoney will speak about British author, artist, and activist Laurence Housman and the manner in which his collaborative relationship with his sister Clemence, with whom he lived his entire life, became the foundation for broader forms of feminist and anticolonial political thinking. This event is free and open to the public. Contact Paul.Piper@wwu.edu or (360) 650-3097 for more information.

- **Western Tableaux: Redux**—March 27-June 9 in Special Collections (Wilson Library 6th floor). A retrospective exhibit featuring historical photographs and other memorabilia illustrating Western’s twelve vibrant decades of institutional life. Originally developed for the WWU Centennial in 1999-2000, the exhibit has been updated to reflect Western’s history to the present date. Contact Tamara.Belts@wwu.edu or (360) 650-3193 for more information.
Western Washington University has a long history of promoting the public display of art, with a world-renowned Campus Sculpture Collection that includes the work of thirty-five artists situated throughout Western’s ten-acre campus. Evidence of this deep and long-standing commitment to the arts can be found throughout the collections of Heritage Resources. According to a 1993 oral history interview with former Director of Campus Planning (and later State Senator) Barney Goltz:

“The board of trustees... asked that future building projects... have art in public places as a part of every project. This was a time before the law was written to require it. ... Western’s outdoor art collection started with Haggard Hall and the conditions for the outdoor art collection were really set then: that was that we should only have contemporary artists, living artists, that the artist had to come to the campus either to execute the work of art or to install it, or to participate with the faculty and students as the art was being installed so that we got an educational benefit with the artist at the same time.”

In 1974, the Art in Public Places (AIPP) program was established in Washington State to “acquire artwork for K-12 public schools, colleges, universities, and state agencies, funded by ½ of 1 percent of the state’s portion of construction costs.” When the percent-for-art law was discussed at the state level and ultimately passed in 1974, then-Senator Goltz advocated for its adoption, using Western’s approach as a model. Today, the State Art Collection includes “more than 4,500 artworks that are sited where people study, work, and live” (source: http://www.arts.wa.gov/public-art).

Barney Goltz’s full interview is available in the Western Washington University Centennial Oral History Collection at the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies. Other records documenting the history of art and artistic works on campus include site drawings for planned sculptures; photographs of art pieces; and records relating to acquisition, installation, and dedication ceremonies are available in both University Archives and Special Collections.
The number of photography books in Special Collections recently tripled with a generous gift from Gary Pumplin. Gary was an EMT in Cincinnati who retired out West, where he lived briefly in Ennis, Montana, and subsequently West Yellowstone. Before his death in 2013, he entrusted his magnificent collection of photography books to Diane Kamionka, who graciously donated Gary’s collection to Western Libraries in 2016. The original gift numbered over 600 books, of which 60 were deemed valuable enough to place into Special Collections for additional protection. These 60 books are worth well over $20,000. The books have already been used by students in Brenda Miller’s Autobiography and Photography English class.

Examples from the collection include numerous artist’s books by Ed Ruscha, and collections of works by notable photographers Edward Weston, Michael Smith, Harry Callahan, Paul Strand, Richard Avedon, Robert Mapplethorpe and more. Several books are also signed or inscribed by the authors.

We invite anyone interested to visit us and view this marvelous collection.

**Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank our volunteers and student employees for all they do in support of Heritage Resources. We would also like to thank the many individuals, families, and organizations who have made generous monetary gifts and contributions of collection materials. To donate to Heritage Resources, please email Eliza-beth.Joffrion@wwu.edu or phone 360-650-3283. Donations can also be made online or by mail to the Western Foundation, MS-9034, Western Washington University, 516 High St, Bellingham, WA 98225-9034. Please designate your contribution to Western Libraries and identify “Heritage Resources” as the program you wish to support.