



Florida Institute of Technology
High Tech with a Human Touch

the silver panther

professors emeriti newsletter

Volume X Issue 1

Special Spring Edition - 2014

Welcome to this Special Edition of the “Silver Panther”

The newsletter by and for the professors emeriti of Florida Institute of Technology.

This issue is dedicated to news and information about current substantive progress in fulfilling the goals of the History Committee and of a serious commitment by the Institution in the establishment of a University Archive in Evans Library

Professors Emeriti History Committee

In 2005, Harry Weber announced the formation of a committee to review the storage and preservation status of historical documents and information about FIT. A major goal of the committee was to preserve historical documents and information before they were lost or destroyed. A major outcome of early efforts of the committee was the presentation of recommendations on organizational responsibilities, collection, and storage for a continuing institutional effort. Those early efforts have paid off with substantial support of the administration and staff of the university. Emeriti have been active in funding and digitizing FIT's archival publications. Included are the Keuper scrapbooks, old *Florida Tech Today* and *The Pelican*

publications, old copies of *The Crimson*, and other vintage materials. These will be among the documents available and on display in the Archives.

Establishment of an Archives Exhibition Room in Evans Library

An Archives Exhibition Room complete with display cases, TV, furniture, photographs, and various archival materials is under construction on the first floor of the library. Projected costs for the current phase of renovation, including construction costs, are close to \$40,000 and planned to be finished toward the end of March 2014.

Renovation of the Exhibition Room began on February 11, 2014. Windows and ceiling tiles were removed and walls were knocked

down to create some depth in this small space. The exhibit will have 44 linear feet of shelves to present the archives material.

In addition to construction, furniture, supplies, and display cases have been ordered and have begun arriving. The library has engaged the services of a part-time museum curator to assist us with the display and invitation design.

The Board of Trustees will participate in the Grand Opening of the room during the upcoming meeting on April 25 at 2pm.

With the April 25 debut in mind, librarians have been meeting with many key individuals who are knowledgeable about the history of the institution, such as professors emeriti and current staff members. They have also been gathering key pieces of Florida Tech history, including materials and the exciting stories they tell (view pictures of construction below).

First Floor Evans Library



University History Timeline

An important feature of the University Archives Exhibition Room is an interactive virtual University History Timeline to highlight significant Florida Institute of Technology events from its beginning in 1958 through the present. As archival discoveries are uncovered, original documents, images, audio, and video happenings will be added to the timeline to reveal noteworthy details of the university's exciting history. Dr. Gordon Patterson has been instrumental to this project, being quite generous with his time and relating a great deal of historical facts, location of artifacts, and assistance in the interpretation of documents and events. Many of the faculty on the History committee have also helped with fact gathering and document sharing.

University Archivist Search

In January of 2014, Dr. Dwayne McCay, EVP/COO, approved the establishment of a new full-time position for a University Archivist. The job was advertised in early February and the library received 34 applications. The search committee has selected three well-qualified individuals for a phone interview and decided to invite two to visit campus for daylong interviews.

The search may be concluded in March and the selected individual may begin in May 2014. This has been a positive development in light of the fact that the university has never before employed an Archivist on staff, and as a result, material related to the institution's history is scattered across campus and some items may have departed with those who have left the institution. The Library hopes to establish a sound archival system, develop record management procedures, and collect material related to the history of the institution.

Early Photographs and Document Acquisitions

The following photos are typical of some of the early photographs being collected and archived. (Supplied by Dr. Patterson)



Aerial View of Campus Construction of the President's Office

Thanks to Dr. Sohair Wastawy, Dean of Libraries at Florida Institute of Technology, for providing this information on current activities on the project.



The establishment of University Archive facilities in Evans Library and the hiring of a full-time University Archivist are major steps in fulfilling Dr. Weber's dream of preserving the unique history of Florida Institute of Technology. Emeriti will continue to be instrumental in the acquisition of documents, photographs, and memorabilia for the Archives. In addition, they will play an important role in developing and implementing strategies to provide ongoing support for the archives.

Comments and suggestions are welcome.
Editor: Tom Stephens, Professor Emeritus,
321-501-1206, tstephens@cfl.rr.com