



MIT LIBRARIES' NEWS

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Inventions of Note

The Lewis Music Library collects a wide range of music from classical to jazz to world music. Of course, technology-related music is collected as well – our holdings of electronic music are quite substantial. To further the link between music and technology, the Library began to collect popular music written about new inventions. Thus the *Inventions of Note Sheet Music Collection* was established in 1997. To get things started, the Library obtained approximately 70 pieces of popular American sheet music dating mostly from the 1880's to 1920. A look at popular song titles from this time reveals that American society was fascinated by new inventions and technologies. There were hundreds of musical compositions concerning the railroad, automobiles, airplanes, clocks, telephones, telegraphs, electricity, photography, and even sewing machines. As the texts of these songs reveal, response to new inventions was often positive but it also ranged from suspicion to downright contempt.

The Library wanted to make this music widely available to the MIT community and beyond. Because most of these pieces fall within public domain, it was decided to load them on the Web. In the fall of 1997, a UROP student was hired to create a Web site for this collection as a pilot project. Ten pieces were scanned



A piece of sheet music from the collection. Photograph by L. Barry Hetherington.

and loaded onto the site. The positive response to the project led to a grant from MIT's Council for the Arts that has provided for 55 pieces to be scanned in PDF format. Because we wanted people to be able to print the music for performance and study purposes, it was decided to use PDF format which provides excellent copies on most PCs. Document Services scanned the music while a student assistant loaded the images onto the Web site and created an attractive interface. In addition, the Web site will feature a few audio recordings (performed by MIT faculty members, Margaret O'Keefe and Charles Shadle) that accompany the music. More recordings may be added in the future. In order to

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From the Director

Walking my city-trained dog in winter weather is a fascinating exercise. For the dog's safety (and my sanity) he has been trained to stay on the sidewalk; a fine arrangement in fair weather, but not so fine when the snow flies. It transpires that a dog trained to walk on the sidewalk, WILL walk on the sidewalk - no matter how deep the snow, how icy the footing, how annoying the rock salt. The dog has its mission, and it pursues that mission with focus and determination; skidding and clamoring (owner in tow) through all obstacles.

And so it can be with the mission that guides a library's direction. A path that was once well suited may become unsustainable when the environment changes; leaving the library to skid and clamor in dogged pursuit of a mission that is no longer quite right.

Ten years ago, the MIT Libraries were securely positioned at the intersection of education, research, and traditional publishing. We were confident in our mission to acquire and preserve relevant collections, to be a place conducive to discovery and self-education, and to responsibly share our resources with the larger research community. Today, a decade later, we find that the networked environment, information technology, and new forms of publishing have had an undeniable impact on the work and mission of the MIT Libraries.

The MIT Libraries' mission statement was last revised in 1988. It was an exceptionally good mission statement for its time; thoughtfully crafted and remarkably durable. It served the Libraries and the Institute well for a decade. But, like a sidewalk in winter, the environment in which the mission of the Libraries operates has changed. Current news and scholarly discourse appear with increasing frequency on the Web; many scholarly research journals and most index services now offer digital versions to supplement (or supplant) traditional print; more and more MIT courses have Web sites - some now supporting students at a distance from the Cambridge campus.

The importance of these and other emerging environmental changes has become increasingly obvious to the Libraries and to the faculty who work in and with the MIT Libraries. In September 1998 the challenge was made explicit when the Task Force on Student Life and Learning recommended that MIT, "Focus information technology resources around the library system."

The next generation of Libraries at MIT will be information technology intensive and information technology dependent. The Libraries will also be print intensive and print dependent. The challenge is



Ann Wolpert, Director of Libraries. Photograph by Richard Howard.

to develop and sustain, with faculty, a shared understanding of how the MIT Libraries can and should continue to participate in the furtherance of MIT's future.

To that end, the MIT Libraries have revisited the directions set down in their 1988 mission statement. Our goal was to insure that the Libraries' mission statement recognized the reality of emerging forms of teaching, learning, and research without abandoning the persistent values and continued relevance of the best traditional forms of library service.

The recommendation of the Task Force on Student Life and Learning is a vote of confidence in the future of the MIT Libraries. The Libraries must have a mission statement that reflects that confidence and guides us into the information technology future; whatever specific forms that future may take. We hope our new mission statement will be as useful and durable for the next generation of MIT Libraries, as was the previous version in its time.

The MIT Libraries are creative partners in the research and learning process. We select, organize, present, and preserve information resources relevant to education and research at MIT. We sustain these world-class resources and provide quality services on behalf of the present and future research and scholarly community. We build intellectual connections among these resources and educate the MIT community in the effective use of information. We want to be the place people in the MIT community think of first when they need information.

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Better Control Available for Your Use of Library Material

Do you have trouble keeping track of the library books you've borrowed? Do due dates pass you by? Control of your library transactions has recently become much easier. From the Libraries' online catalog (telnet version only), you may now see:

- *what items you have checked out and when they are due;
- *the status of any holds you may have placed on items;
- *any fines owed or books charged for replacement;
- *whether the address and phone number in your record is correct;
- *whether any items have been recalled from circulation.

Visit your nearest library circulation desk to get started. To insure privacy, you will need your MIT ID number, and you will be requested to choose a password. Instructional handouts on using the service are also available. Though currently the service may be used only in the telnet version of the Barton catalog, it is expected to be available in the next release of WebBarton.

Carol Zoppel, Editor

Ruth Seidman Named Communications Coordinator for Libraries

Ruth K. Seidman, previously Head of the Engineering and Science Libraries, became Communications Coordinator for the MIT Libraries on February 1, 1999. In this position, Ms. Seidman is responsible for developing and overseeing an improved, user-oriented communications program for the MIT Libraries.

Ann Wolpert said, "Ruth Seidman brings to this new part-time position exceptional professional experience, an abiding interest in communication and communications strategy, and a deep knowledge of MIT and its libraries. Ruth has championed communications and public relations for many years, most recently in her leadership of two communications-oriented strategic initiatives within the MIT Libraries. Under Ruth's guidance, instructional outreach to students achieved new energy and focus in the Engineering and Science Libraries. We are fortunate



Ruth Seidman.
Photograph by
L. Barry
Hetherington.

to find an individual with Ruth's experience, talents and interests to lead our outward-looking communications program."

Ruth Seidman served as Head of the MIT Engineering and Science Libraries for 10 years. Previously she held positions as Director of the Geophysics Research Library at Hanscom Air Force Base, Lexington, MA and Librarian of the New England Region of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, where she participated in establishing its nationwide library network. In 1990-1991, Ms. Seidman was president of the Special Libraries Association. She is the author of the 1993 monograph *Building Global Partnerships for Library Cooperation* and currently is editor of the Haworth Press, Inc. quarterly *Science & Technology Libraries*.

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Inventions of Note, (Cont.)



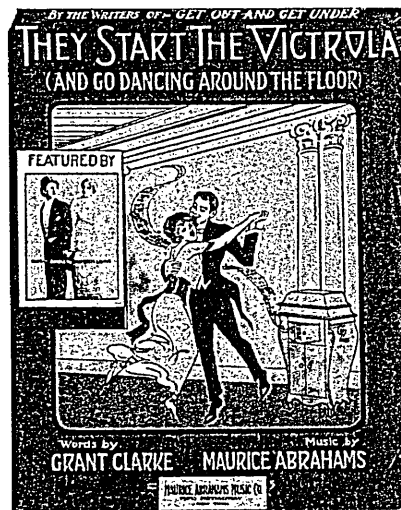
Examples of sheet music from the collection.
Photographs by L. Barry Hetherington.

maximize the accessibility of this music, full cataloging records will be provided. The project will be completed this spring. You can take a look at: <http://libraries.mit.edu/music/sheetmusic> .

The *Inventions of Note Sheet Music Collection* is being used for both research and performance. Students will find a wealth of fascinating topics for class assignments. Two IAP concerts of this music have been presented in the Lewis Music Library by Music and Theater Arts faculty. These spirited performances were a rousing success. After all, how often can we hear such hits as *Keep Away from the Fellow who Owns an Automobile*, *There's a Wireless Station Down in My Heart*, *Take Your Girlie to the Movies if You Can't Make Love at Home*, *Come Josephine in My Flying Machine*, *The Electric Girl* and *The Lover's Telegraph*? And while these pieces may bring a smile to our faces, they also remind us of technology's influence upon our daily lives, both yesterday and today.

Though small in size today, the *Inventions of Note Sheet Music Collection* will be expanded over time. Our goal is for this Web site to become a virtual collection as we link to other public domain images of sheet music held by libraries across the country. There is no telling how many hundreds of pieces might be linked to our collection, and how many different inventions will be represented. Who said that music and technology don't mix?!?

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Electronic Thesis Project Begins to Collect Student Documents

Nearly three years ago, at the end of an exploratory meeting on the topic of electronic theses, one of the participants commented that it was already perfectly clear to him that this was not a case of IF MIT would be moving towards e-theses, but rather WHEN. Our experience since that time has certainly supported that prediction, and it is now a pleasure to report the first doctoral student submissions this spring.

Pressure from both inside and outside the Institute has been building for some years to collect and distribute theses electronically. Not surprisingly, even the Libraries' process of printing a paper copy of a requested thesis has switched to a digital process over the past few years. Although there remain some significant concerns about the ability of an electronic thesis to replace a traditional paper thesis – chief among them authentication and preservation – there is little disagreement about the inevitability and the overall advantages of this trend. And although this current initiative does not address the larger issue of redefining the nature of a thesis in an electronic medium, it is the all-important first step in the process.

In May of 1998, a group of staff from the Libraries and Information Systems, with the support of two faculty members from the Laboratory for Computer Science, proposed an e-thesis pilot project to the Committee on Graduate School Policy. The proposal called for a small, controlled, optional program, running parallel to the paper-based procedure. The focus of the program would be on the electronic capture of traditional theses that are representable on paper, rather than on new kinds of theses whose original, and only, form is electronic. Response from the committee was generally positive, although several members voiced concern in a number of specific areas including the potential to spoil commercial publication prospects for students in certain disciplines. The Committee agreed, however, to move ahead with caution rather than to continue to avoid addressing the issue.

Three departments were chosen as the initial participants – Brain and Cognitive Sciences, Chemical Engineering, and Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. Doctoral students for February 1999 degrees were given the option to submit their theses in electronic format. By doing so, the student could eliminate one of the two paper copies usually required by the Libraries. Thus the "official" copy of the student's thesis remains the paper document submitted to the MIT Archives, but an electronic version is also made available for online viewing.

In technical terms, the process goes like this: After the thesis is approved and signed, the student renders it for submission by rendering it in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). If his or her own word processor cannot do this, the student can use the translation service on our Web site to convert a printable copy of the thesis to PDF. Next, the student visits the secure e-thesis Web site and fills out information about the thesis in a Web form. The Web form then uploads the PDF document of the thesis to our digital library server, where some basic tests are conducted before returning a receipt to the student a few seconds later. Within a few days, the thesis will be available in the digital library as page images and a bibliographic record.

Design of the submission process had two overriding challenges: first that it be simple and fast enough to be attractive to students, and second that it produce an identical digital rendering of the paper document. In the course of overcoming those major hurdles, many specific issues – including student authentication, format conversion, and thesis "holds" – were exposed and worked through by the Library and Information Systems developers. By continuing to refine the e-thesis submission process, we hope to make it uniformly easy and attractive to all students who would like to participate.

It is our goal to scale up this project in the next year or two to include many more, if not all, departments. Although electronic submission is currently only optional, an early lesson we have learned is that most students in the final stages of producing a doctoral thesis are very reluctant to do anything that is not required, even if it is simple! Without imposing a significant additional burden on graduating students, we would like to capture their theses – at the one time it is relatively easy to do so – in a format that will benefit them, the Institute, and the world of research most effectively.

The Web site for electronic thesis development is:
<http://web.mit.edu/etheses/>

The Web site for the digital thesis library is:
<http://theses.mit.edu>

For an example of an electronically-submitted thesis, see:

<http://theses/Dienst/UI/2.0/Describe/0018.mit.etheses%2f1999-2>

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Web Manager Appointed

The Libraries' Web site (<http://libraries.mit.edu>) has become an integral and highly visible component of the service we provide to our user community. Each month, thousands of people at MIT and from all over the world consult the Libraries' site. It is developed and maintained by dozens of members of the Libraries' staff. Subject specialists provide links to resources specific to their areas. Collection managers and reference coordinators select Web-based databases relevant to the teaching and research needs of the MIT community. Other staff members contribute information about the Libraries' services, policies, collections, and other activities. As the amount and complexity of the information on our site has increased, so too has the need for someone to provide direction, coordination, and leadership for the site and all its contributors. In recognition of the growing importance of the Web to our work and to the public we serve, the Libraries have created a full-time Web Manager position. The Libraries' Web Manager serves as the editor-in-chief of our site, coordinates the efforts of Web developers throughout the library system, and keeps abreast of developments at the Institute and in the technology world.

In January we welcomed Nicole Hennig as the first Web Manager for the Libraries. Prior to joining us, Ms. Hennig was the Systems Librarian for the Bose Corporation, where she managed the library's Web site and the top-level intranet pages for the company as a whole. Prior to that she was the Reference and Systems Librarian at Emmanuel College from 1993-1996, where she created the first Web pages for the college's library and for the Fenway Library Consortium. She also served as Librarian for the Electronic Frontier Foundation from 1992-1993.



Nicole Hennig.
Photograph by
L. Barry
Hetherington.

Her academic background includes a B.A. in music education from St. Olaf College, a Master of Science in Library Science from Simmons College, and a Master of Music in Organ Performance from the Boston Conservatory.

Ms. Hennig's special area of interest is usability testing and user-centered design – gathering information about how people actually work with electronic resources, and then using that information to design more usable systems. She employed these techniques at Bose to study the usability of its intranet site, resulting in a massive redesign of the site. Ms. Hennig has spoken widely on usability techniques and on library applications of the Internet. She plans to conduct usability tests of the Libraries' site. The results of these studies will influence the future direction of our site's development.

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Library Development Update

I am excited to report that the MIT Libraries have been named a priority in the next comprehensive MIT Capital Campaign which will be launched November 6, 1999. This decision reflects the MIT Administration's belief that outstanding library resources are essential to maintaining the academic and research excellence of the Institute. The details are still being finalized, but we do know that our campaign goal will include such core needs as increasing the endowment for collections, raising funds for technology, and generating support for

building renovations. Our most immediate challenge is to identify alumni and friends to make lead campaign gifts that will serve to inspire others to support the Libraries.

In order to meet our campaign goals, we will have to step up our development efforts and work to increase our constituency. Already, we have visited some loyal donors to understand better what inspires support for the Libraries. We have heard some interesting stories. One alumnus told us he knew

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New Institute Archivist Appointed

The Libraries are pleased to announce the appointment of Megan Sniffin-Marinoff as the new Institute Archivist at MIT. Ms. Sniffin-Marinoff brings a very distinguished record of professional contribution and expertise to MIT. Since 1994 she has been Assistant Professor and Director of the Archives Program in the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science. Prior to that she served as the College Archivist for Simmons College.

Ms. Sniffin-Marinoff has a B.S. in Journalism from Boston University, an M.A. in History and Certificate in Archival Management, Historical Editing, and the Administration of Historical Societies from New York University, and she has recently completed the coursework required for a Ph.D. in History at Boston University. As part of her studies she has taken several classes on the history of American technology in the 20th century. In addition to her academic background, Ms. Sniffin-Marinoff has served as an archival consultant for numerous institutions and organizations in the Boston area, including the Harvard University Graduate School of Education. Farther afield, she undertook a "Project for Strengthening Health Delivery Systems" in the Ivory Coast, West Africa. As a nationally respected archivist, Ms. Sniffin-Marinoff has served as a grant reviewer for the National Historical Publications & Records Commission, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. She is a member of the Commonwealth's Historical Records Advisory Board. She is active in the Society of American Archivists and New England Archivists and is a frequent speaker on archival issues



Megan Sniffin-Marinoff. Photograph by Samuel Cooper.

and archival education. Ms. Sniffin-Marinoff has authored a number of articles that have been published in books and professional newsletters.

Ms. Sniffin-Marinoff has a clear vision of the role the Institute Archives can play in preserving MIT's administrative records and in documenting the Institute's research and teaching. Under her able guidance, the Institute Archives will continue its impressive record of acquiring and providing access to a rich array of resources that tell the story of MIT. Ms. Sniffin-Marinoff began her appointment on a part-time basis the week of March 21 and will become full-time on July 1, once she completes her teaching responsibilities at Simmons College. We are very pleased to have her join us in the MIT Libraries and look forward to introducing her to members of the MIT community!

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Library Development Update, (Cont.)

how frustrating it was for researchers to have subscriptions to specialized journals cut because of budget constraints, so he sends a donation every year to purchase periodicals relating to his field. Another alumnus, who supports the Humanities Library, told us that he remembers the place fondly as a comfortable haven from his doctoral work in another field.

To the extent that we have found any common thread among library donors so far, it is – perhaps unsurprisingly – an affection for libraries as a place for resources, reflection, and repose. We believe

there are many potential donors who share these same basic feelings. Now to find them! (Certainly, if you know any library lovers, please point them in our direction.)

I look forward to keeping you updated on our progress. If you would like further information about fundraising activities for the MIT Libraries please feel free to contact me.

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New Databases Available through the Libraries

As part of the Libraries' ongoing effort to provide the most timely, relevant, and easily accessible information sources to its users, the following electronic databases have been added to our collections recently. They are available through the Libraries' Web site (<http://libraries.mit.edu/lists/db-web.html>). For help in using any of these databases, please contact a reference librarian at the appropriate subject library.

Biography and Genealogy Database
BIOSIS (*Added backfiles for 1985-1990, making 1985 to present available.*)
Congressional Universe
Contemporary Authors
Contemporary Literary Criticism
Disclosure Global Access (*includes U.S. and international annual company reports*)
Dictionary of Literary Biography
Dow Jones Interactive

Ethnic Newswatch
Gale Ready Reference Shelf (*includes Encyclopedia of Associations*)
Historical Abstracts
History of Science and Technology
IEL (*IEEE/IEE Electronic Library*) Online
ILI Metals Info Web Search
ILI Standards Info Web Search
Investext Research Bank Web (*Business School Edition*)
Peterson's Graduate Study Databases
SAE (*Society of Automotive Engineers*) Publications and Standards Database
Science Magazine Next Wave
SciFinder Scholar (*from Chemical Abstracts Service*)
Statistical Universe
Zacks (*from Zacks Investment Research*)

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