Prairie View A&M University
The Texas A&M University System

Groundbreaking Ceremony

New University Library

All Faiths Chapel
July 18, 1986 at 10:30 a.m.
Prairie View, Texas
On April 19, 1879, the Fifteenth Texas State Legislature provided funds to the Normal School at Prairie View, Texas to initiate a library collection. An 1885-86 report indicates that $19.00 was allocated for books.

In 1888, the Normal School administration presented a proposal to the state for a $500.00 appropriation to be used in support of the library. Through frugal budgeting and planning, the library was able to amass 2,400 volumes. Special libraries were housed in different educational departments and the Academic Hall (Administration Building).

In 1912, Mr. G. W. Buchanan assumed the responsibilities of the library and book store. Mrs. Gertrude Williams, Commercial English Teacher, served as librarian from 1919-1930. The collection was moved to the east half of the first floor of the newly erected Science Building in 1924.

Under the leadership of Mr. O. J. Baker, librarian, the year 1931 saw the collection of approximately 10,000 volumes and 3,000 unbound periodicals moved to the third floor of the newly constructed Education Building.

In 1943, the Forty-Eighth Legislature appropriated $160,000.00 for the construction of a library building and added a supplement of $20,000 for equipment and books. The Alumni Association was instrumental in naming the library in honor of Principal Willette Rutherford Banks. The Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963 provided funds for the construction of an addition, which served to increase the volume capacity from 100,000 to 301,000 volumes.

In 1966, after 50 years of service, Mr. Baker retired and was succeeded by Mr. William B. Scott, who served until his untimely death in 1968. Mr. Frank Francis, Jr. began his tenure in 1969, serving as Head Librarian until 1983. The collection had grown to over 200,000 volumes. Mrs. Joyce K. Thornton served as Acting Director during the 1983/84 academic year. Dr. Donald Sweet, hired in 1984 as University Librarian, has aided in the orchestration of a new library building to be completed by early 1988, at an estimated cost of 16 million dollars.

On September 2, 1985, Robert Wedgeworth, Jr., became the sixth Dean of the School of Library Services at Columbia University, the oldest and best known library school in the United States. He came to this position after serving as Executive Director of the American Library Association.

It is particularly appropriate that Mr. Wedgeworth participate in this 16 million dollar project. As Chief Executive Officer of the ALA, Mr. Wedgeworth revitalized and computerized its publication program, introduced the use of video-telecommunication for professional education programs and oversaw the development of new offices for the ALA's Chicago headquarters. He restored the Association's fiscal health and generally strengthened ALA's role as the leading organization in North America devoted to libraries, librarianship and information services. He was prominently involved in founding the Coalition for Literacy.

Mr. Wedgeworth describes himself as "professionally, a child of the technological revolution with a humanistic grounding."
New Library Groundbreaking Ceremony
Convocation

Prelude

The Invocation

The Occasion

The Welcome

General Greetings

The Introduction of the Guest Speaker

The Guest Speaker

Special Recognition

The Benediction

Recessional to Site*

Groundbreaking

Presiding: Mr. Robert K. Goodwin
Mrs. Marion Williams

Artistic Rendering

Groundbreaking

Reception: Alumni Hall

*-Audience is requested to remain seated until the speakers and Miss Lenice Brown, 1986/87
Miss Prairie View exit.
Executive Officers

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University Relations

W. R. Banks Library Staff

Donald G. Sweet, Ph.D  
University Librarian

Mrs. Cecilia J. Wang  
Administrative Secretary

Mrs. Joyce K. Thornton  
Assistant Director for Public Services

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Assistant Director for Technical Services

Mrs. Linda Aaron  
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Library Assistant

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Circulation Librarian

Mr. Johnny Boykin  
LRC Audio/Visual Technician

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Miss Phyllis Earles  
Assistant Reference Librarian

Miss Audrey Edwards  
Library Assistant

Mr. Frank Francis, Jr.  
Collection Manager

Mrs. Benita Garfield  
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Miss Cassandra Harris  
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Miss Angela Jordan  
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Miss Gayle Lindsay  
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Miss Ollie Mayberry  
Library Assistant

Mrs. Dorcas Okoro  
Periodicals Librarian

Mrs. Clara Stewart  
Clerk/Typist

Mrs. Sherylln Swanson  
Library Assistant

Mrs. Arnetta Taylor  
Library Assistant

Mrs. Jimmizine Taylor  
Reference Librarian

Mrs. Dhana Thiagarajan  
Library Assistant

Mrs. Ruth Wachter-Nelson  
Archivist

Mrs. Marion Williams  
LRC Coordinator