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Andrews Library
celebrates its
50th anniversary.

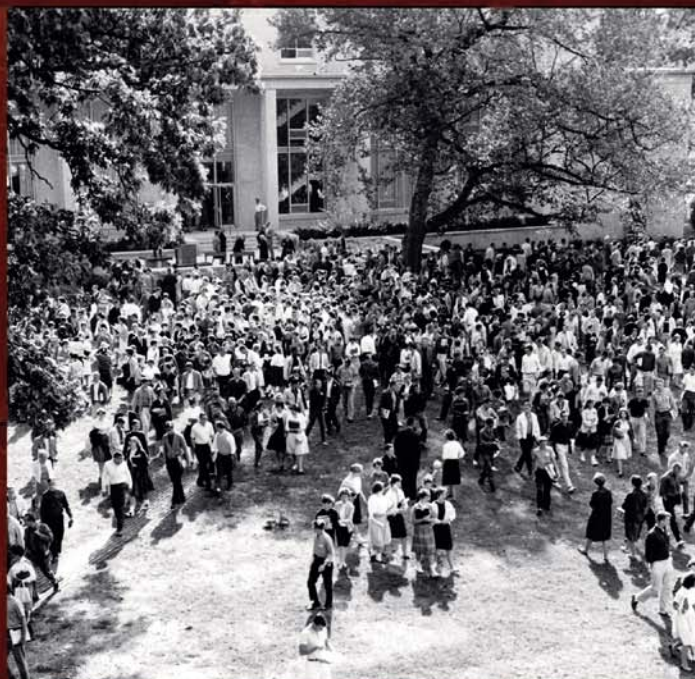
Library

without walls

THE EVOLUTION AND MEANING
OF ANDREWS LIBRARY

“Its character must reflect the character of the College,” wrote the architects. “It must have dignity without monumentality, intangible attributes which are difficult to express in the design of a building made of concrete, stone, metal, and glass...”

opposite page: Late (top left) and early (bottom right) construction of Andrews Library. (center) Students help move books from Frick Library to Andrews during “Operation Booklift.”
To see a 1962 documentary, including footage of the booklift, go to http://youtu.be/kkHf_acyweQ.
Special thanks to the College Libraries’ Special Collections and Digital Resources.



by MARY DIXON



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he College of Wooster had outgrown its library. Its student body had grown fourfold since Frick Library's opening in 1900, and the College's fledgling program of Independent Study meant that seniors needed private workspaces to store their research materials. Space was running out. Said President Howard Lowry in 1958, "Our College does not deserve to be ranked among the top liberal arts colleges in the country until it has brought its library to proper proportions—not only in its holdings, but in its physical arrangements."

Andrews Library, named after its \$1 million benefactor, trustee Mabel Andrews, was completed in May 1962. Publisher Henry Luce and poet Robert Frost spoke to sold-out crowds at a dedication ceremony in the chapel, and architects Shafer, Flynn & Williams handed over the keys to the building, a 72,100 square-foot structure built to accommodate over 400,000 volumes and 700 readers, and carrels designed especially for Independent Study. The capacity of the new library's shelves, however, would not be tested until the beginning of the next academic year. The books remained in Frick Library, awaiting the move to their new home.

"Operation Booklift at The College of Wooster is being planned like a military campaign," wrote the *Daily Record* in September 1962. "Public address system, faculty guides, and student leaders will keep the 1,300 workers moving in neat lines tomorrow when 125,000 books are moved to the new Andrews Library." President Lowry and Mrs. Andrews shelved the first books—the Bible, and a Webster's dictionary. Following brightly colored strips of cloth that indicated where books should go, volunteers spent the next eight hours shelving books. At the job's conclusion, they were rewarded with ice cream and a souvenir bookmark by organizer and librarian Maudie Nesbitt.

Finally, Andrews Library was open for business and almost immediately became a campus hub. In 1966, the library was designated a depository for U.S. government publications. The following year it became a charter member of the Ohio College Library Center, which soon developed sharing privileges with other institutions throughout the world. In 1971, Andrews added

a centralized audiovisual space; in 1978, it became a member of the Northeastern Ohio Major Academic Libraries, broadening partnerships with neighboring schools.

Less than a generation after the library's opening, students literally had a world of resources at their disposal. Andrews Library reflected the changing face of research, helping to establish Wooster as a leader in opportunities for undergraduate research.

Yet these transformations paled in comparison to what the next 20 years would bring. Damon Hickey, director of libraries from 1991-2008, remembers feeling claustrophobic when he first walked into the library. "The card catalog was so large, it really constricted that central space." And the catalog also constricted research: "We could borrow resources from other libraries, but without a keyword search, there was no way to find anything unless you already knew what you were looking for."

The card catalog went extinct in 1995, when the Flo K. Gault Library for Independent Study was built, and microfilm and computers took its place. Says Margie Powell, an Andrews reference librarian from 1980-2001, "We had embraced the technological revolution; we had moved from typewriters, to desktop computers, to computer networks that facilitated local, national, and worldwide partnerships. Andrews had truly become a library without walls."

The way students interacted with the library had fundamentally changed. They no longer needed to fumble through a card catalog, and, as resources increasingly became accessible electronically, they no longer needed a book to do research. Yet as more and more books began to go unused, the number of students visiting the library saw no similar decline. Fifty years after its opening, the library remained a campus hub. In 2009, library administrators conducted a photo survey of study spots around the library.

"We took photos every 30 minutes to see how different spaces were being used," says Mark Christel, director of libraries since 2008. The result? "We saw demand for more collaborative spaces. Timken Library is a good reading room for students looking to work quietly, and Gault is a great library for doing I.S. But there wasn't really a space for shared work."

ALUMNI WEEKEND 2012
On Alumni Weekend, June 7-10, library staff members will collect oral histories of those who were present at the library's 1962 dedication. Help celebrate the library's birthday by sharing your memories of the event with us.

ABOUT THE WRITER:

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CoRE reflects evolution and constancy

The library's new addition, created to facilitate collaborative and interactive research, opened January 2012.

Photo: Matt Dilyard

Cue CoRE (Collaborative Research Environment), a flexible, interactive space in the heart of Andrews Library that has been created to fill this need. Unveiled in January 2012, CoRE inhabits the space that once housed the card catalog, and later, microfilm readers, a fitting reflection of the library's evolution. Mobile white boards, LCD screens, a digital media lab, and glass-enclosed seminar rooms allow for collaborative efforts and the creation of projects that improve on the bound thesis that sits on a bookshelf. The \$1.2 million project was funded by the College and with grants from the McGregor Foundation.

"CoRE was conceived as a place to bring I.S. to the world, and bring the world to I.S.," says Heather Fitz Gibbon, dean for faculty development.

In this way, CoRE represents not a shift, but rather a more complete expression of the meaning of I.S. and of the library, says Hickey. "When the Gault addition was built, there was a need for a building on campus dedicated to Independent Study. CoRE takes that one step

further. Carrels point to the individual aspect of I.S., CoRE to the collaborative side."

What is the next chapter in the Andrews Library story? This summer, construction will begin on an integrated educational planning and advising center. Located on one of the library's lower levels, the Center will integrate, coordinate, and expand the College's existing resources in academic advising, career services, the Center for Entrepreneurship, the Learning Center, and the Lilly Project for the Exploration of Vocation, currently spread across campus.

Fifty years ago, library planners, book movers, and I.S. writers couldn't have dreamed of the tools and technologies that the library now offers. What has stayed constant, however, is the library's mission—consistent with that of the College from the beginning—a dedication to Independent Study and all that it entails. It's not something that can be conveyed by metal and glass or even flat-screen TVs. Rather, it is something you have to experience to really understand.