

RESOURCE

Attic Treasures

The rare, the interesting and the unusual can be found in the Library's Special Collections & Archives

A 16 mm film collection from a Christian film-making pioneer. A 9,000-volume collection of hymnology books of all shapes, sizes and denominations.

and other memorabilia of the university. The Special Collections section, much of which is on display in the library's Lehman and Kiewatt Reading Room, includes a variety of materials donated and purchased by the university.

The most unique of those items, according to Robert Sivigny, coordinator of the archives, is the Clark Hymnology Collection. Keith C. Clark, a U.S. Army musician who played "Taps" at the funeral of President John F. Kennedy, amassed more than

9,000 volumes of hymnology dating from the early 17th century. Written in several languages and representing a plethora of countries and denominations, the collection also includes miniature hymnals and prayer books from the 1800s, as well as biographical works about John and Charles Wesley, Isaac Watts and Fanny Crosby. In 1982, when Regent purchased the collection, it was the largest private

collection of hymnology books in the United States.

"It's certainly our most valuable subcollection," Sivigny says. "Clark was just a collecting machine. He kept collecting after he sold the collection to us." Clark's widow recently visited Regent and donated nearly 100 additional items—the remainder of her husband's collection—to the university.

Included in the Clark assemblage is the 1608 *Book of Common Prayer*, complete with Old and New Testament concordances and the psalms with musical notes. "This is interesting to look at because it has so much character and is so old," says Donald Gantz, assistant supervisor for Special Collections & Archives. "The fact that it's pretty much all intact is amazing."

Special Collections & Archives also houses the C.O. Baptista Film Collection and Archives, which contain some of the earliest Christian films produced in the United States. Under the direction of Carlos Baptista, a former piano salesman who got into cinematography when he made a movie for his Sunday school class, the C.O. Baptista Film Mission used live and animated

moving pictures to spread the gospel from the 1940s to the early 1960s. Regent has 125 reels of original film with titles such as *All for Jesus* and *The Rapture*,

hand-painted title cards, records of Baptista's correspondence and the 16 mm "Miracle Projector." Baptista manufactured the projector and included the following inscription:

"God was our helper in conceiving and producing this useful machine. It was designed and manufactured primarily for His glory, that through it Christ be made known to men. It is our fervent hope that this instrument will not be used with films that debase but with films that educate, enlighten and uplift."

"Baptista guaranteed the projector would work until the Lord returned," Gantz says, noting that at last check the projector was still functioning. Seventeen titles from the Baptista film collection have been transferred to video. Six to eight of those films are available in the Library's general collection, while the rest are housed in Special Collections & Archives.

By today's cinematography standards, Baptista's films would be considered rudimentary. Most were black and white, although a few were colorized. One of his most successful



Patrick Wright

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An Israeli flag carried by troops withdrawing from southern Lebanon. A volume of the writings of Martin Luther published in 1570. A Bible presented to Dr. Robertson by Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Famer Little Richard. These are just some of the interesting items found in the Regent University Library's Special Collections & Archives.

In Special Collections & Archives, located on the library's second floor, reside objects relevant to Regent's history and culture, and other resources. The archives serve as a repository for official papers, publications, audiovisual materials,

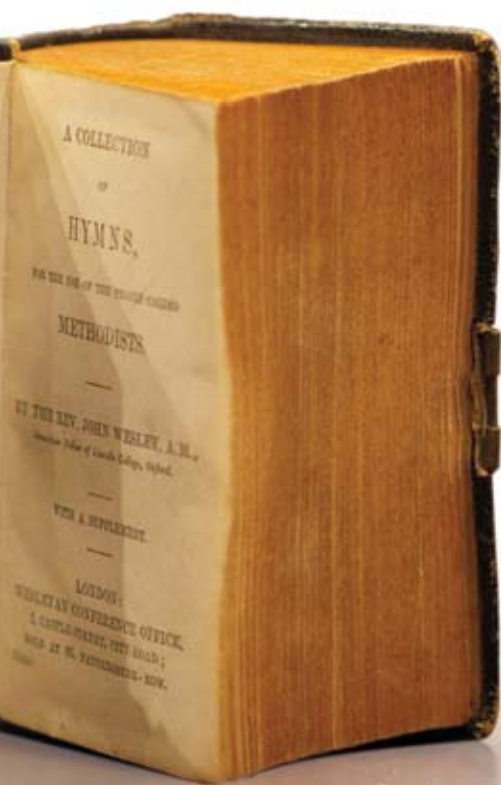
The oldest book in the collections is a volume of writings by Martin Luther, published in 1570.



films was an animated version of *Pilgrim's Progress*.

"To some extent, they were experimental," Gantz says. "I doubt if they would be distributed or used anywhere now."

Technique aside, Baptista's uniqueness lies in using films to evangelize. Sivigny notes that Baptista realized that the American military had transported 16 mm projectors overseas and figured he could use the equipment left in Europe for evangelism. "He was very aggressive



The Clark Hymnology Collection consists of over 9,000 volumes dating back to the early 17th century.

internationally in using films to spread the gospel."

The Baptista collection is part of a large Christian film collection of at least 1,200 titles. There are between 50 and 100 films by James Friedrich, an Episcopal priest who launched Cathedral Films and employed Hollywood actors in his movies. According to Gantz, Friedrich



The lithographic proof of the Israel Freedom Document by Arthur Szyk.

produced *The Great Commandment* in 1939 in a studio adjacent to the one where *Gone With The Wind* was being filmed. Regent also has a 16 mm copy of *Steamboat Willie*, the first animated cartoon with a soundtrack.

Along with films and books, Special Collections & Archives is home to an Israeli flag donated by Lee Scott '84. While completing an internship with Middle East Television in Lebanon, Scott was carrying equipment for CBN journalists filming the withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon when he found the flag in an area where Israeli tanks and artillery had recently passed.

"It's unique in the sense of how it was acquired," Gantz notes. "He pulled it out of a field at a time when Israeli troops were pulling out of Lebanon."

Regent also has a late 1940s lithographic proof of the Israel Freedom Document by Arthur Szyk, one of the few manuscript illuminators of modern times. Regent's copy, which includes symbols of the Holocaust and the 12 tribes of Israel, was used to check the registry of other copies as they came off the printing press and was donated to the university by the printer's daughter. "I doubt if many people have a lithographic proof from the printer," Gantz says.

The oldest book in the collections is a volume of writings by Martin Luther, published in 1570, 24 years after Luther's death. Other early volumes include the 1755 *Dictionary*

of the English Language by Samuel Johnson. A precursor to the Oxford English Dictionary, it was the first English dictionary to employ literature to illustrate word usage. Dr. and Mrs. David B. Johnson of Batavia, N.Y., donated the book to Regent.

Regent also has a collection of Bibles, including a Black Heritage Edition, which Little Richard presented to Dr. Robertson in 1978; its inscription notes their friendship in Christ. Other Bibles include the 30 millionth copy of the Living Bible, presented to Robertson in 1984 by its paraphraser Kenneth Taylor in recognition of Robertson's help in promoting *The Book*, CBN's edition of *The Living Bible*.

With an impressive array of resources already in place, the library would like to acquire other unique items beneficial to student's research needs. Regent welcomes gifts of appropriate materials in a variety of formats and subject areas, including early films, film history and research, hymnals and psalmody, Pentecostal and charismatic history and research, and Christian cartooning. The Library reviews all donations to determine if they should be placed in the general collection or in Special Collections & Archives.

—Beth Cooper

The Special Collections & Archives is open to visiting researchers weekdays from 10:00 a.m. to noon and from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Those interested in visiting the collections are requested to call 757.226.4154 or e-mail refer@regent.edu.

BLOGWATCH

ALUMNUS NAMED WORLD MAGAZINE'S BEST BLOGGER

Law graduate Gregory Jones won *World* magazine's "Best Blogger Contest" in November 2005. He and two others were invited to become regular contributors on the news magazine's blogsite, www.worldmagblog.com/blog. "I participated in the contest just for fun and as a challenge to myself," says Jones. "I didn't have my own blog at that time and had no expectation of winning."

Jones has now launched his own site, <http://chainoffliberty.wordpress.com>, which, he says, allows him more freedom. "The ones I do for them must be very short."

Jones is following the only creed bloggers tend to follow: "I simply write what I think," he says.

Here is an excerpt:

Taking a Hack at Christians

Ohio Democratic candidate for the U.S. Senate Paul Hackett is refusing to apologize for comparing some Christians to terrorists and labeling others "un-American." Taking a page from the Howard Dean political handbook, Hackett asserted in a newspaper interview that "the Republican Party has been hijacked by the religious fanatics" who "aren't a whole lot different than Osama bin Laden and ... other religious nuts around the world," and suggested that opponents of gay marriage are "un-American." One political scientist opined that while these comments likely will help Hackett in his quest to win the Democratic nomination, they probably will hurt him in the general election. If this is true, one truly has to wonder about the kind of thinking that is currently dominating the Democratic Party.