The History of IUP Libraries

John Sutton Hall Library, 1875-1941

A.W. Wilson Hall Library, 1941-1961


Patrick J. Stapleton Library 1981-Present
In the late 1860s, leading citizens of Indiana, Pennsylvania, put out a call for the creation of a Normal School, an institution devoted to the preparation of teachers for the common schools. These men were concerned with the quality of instruction offered to the area’s children in the local schools. High schools were rare during that period and many teachers were not even high school graduates. It was believed the quality of instruction in the common schools could be markedly improved if quality and affordable teacher training and other higher academic training were made available locally. Out of this concern, Indiana State Normal School was born.

A decade later on May 17, 1875, the State Normal School of the Ninth District, at Indiana, Pennsylvania, officially opened. At first, there was only one building on campus, John Sutton Hall. John Sutton Hall was originally called the main building, but in 1903, the Indiana State Normal School Board of Trustees renamed it after John Sutton, the first president of the Board of Trustees. It became the home of students, some as young as 14 years of age, and contained classrooms, a dining room, and “library rooms.” A library in some form or another appeared early on and over the years the library collections moved from place to place in Sutton Hall – in all, to four different locations.

The first mention of the library in official publications seems to have been in the 1877 Catalog, it boasted that “During the last year a fine Reference Library has been established in the Institution, mainly by donations from the members of the Board of Trustees. To this students have constant recourse and free of charge…. A Reading Room containing leading daily and weekly newspapers, magazines, journals of education, and church and Sunday School weeklies, etc., is also connected with the school with privileges free to all.” By the 1884-1885 academic year, the collection had grown to 1,000 volumes with titles in history, biography and various departments of literature.

Though the Library existed, Normal School counselors encouraged students to maintain their own libraries as well. “While the student will find many books of reference here, still it is advisable for him to bring such as he may have that he may make personal and daily use of them. The habit of such use is of inalienable importance, and school life should ever minister to the formation of such habits as will lead to a successful life. Bring your books with you; place them where you can conveniently use them; and by their use form a habit, the value of which you can never overestimate.”
By 1888, Normal School educators had become aware that access to a library was not all students needed. In the catalog for that year, they expressed concern over the lack of what we now call information literacy skills among their students when they recorded, "Experience shows that student [sic] is almost helpless in the presence of an abundance of the very material he desires.”

Interest in encouraging students to read was also evidenced in the efforts of the local YWCA in the summer of 1895. The Normal Herald of that year reported the beginning of the “Y Library.” Just as YMCAs had for a century been offering wholesome amusements from libraries to gymnasiums for young people in urban areas, this YWCA was offering a collection of 200 books to encourage young women to read on the Sabbath. Though small by modern standards, young women from rural origins may have been thrilled by the collection. With the addition of this collection, Library holdings continued to grow steadily. In 1902, there were 4,650 volumes, and by 1910, the collection had grown to 6,803.

In 1915, the Library added a new browsing collection based on a Red Star System. It consisted of three shelves of books marked with Red Stars. The star was used to designate books that were admired for their humor, attractive stories, and beauty in thought and expression.

**Indiana State Teachers College, 1927-1959**

By the time of the First World War, high schools had become much more common, making it possible for the Normal School to require high school degrees for admittance. This paved the way for the Normal School to develop full four-year undergraduate programs in addition to its certificate programs. In 1927, the curriculum was sufficiently developed to allow it to change its name to Indiana State Teacher’s College.

But even as the change to state teacher’s college put greater demands on the Library, funding became a problem with the onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s. Economic cut-backs included a 10% pay cut for library staff. In spite of this, in 1936, the Library began to publish its first publication, the Library Bulletin, which kept students and faculty aware of the Library and its resources.

Dr. Samuel Fausold, President of the College, helped build Library collections by requesting textbook donations from various publishers. Seven publishing houses responded, among them, Noble and Noble, Charles Scribner’s Sons, Foresman and Co., and the American Book Company,
leading to the creation of a textbook collection in 1939. This collection would go on to provide the core of the eventual Curriculum Materials Room, which would include textbooks, courses of study, testing materials and other teaching aids. With the new textbook collection and other growing collections, the Library was swiftly outgrowing the space allocated to it in Sutton Hall.

A.W. Wilson Hall Library
1941–1961

1941, the year that the State Teacher’s College received accreditation, was also the year that the Library moved out of Sutton Hall. Wilson Hall, named after the third president of the Board of Trustees, was the home of the Model School since 1893. At this time, it was remodeled to house the Library, and renamed Wilson Hall Library. The redesigned building offered a seating capacity of 255 and room for 50,000 volumes and four reading rooms on the second floor. Newer books were placed on open shelves to encourage students and faculty to browse the collection. On the first floor was the circulation desk, a combined reference and reserve room, a periodical room, and separate quarters for the Pennsylvania Collection. More information about Wilson Hall.

In the same year the Wilson Hall Library opened, the United States entered the Second World War and the college and student life dramatically changed. Professors increased efforts to make the students aware of world events and the impact of international events on students’ lives. The Library noted that there were changes in the types of information that students were searching for, either for personal interest or in relation to assignments from the faculty. The Library began to collect war related materials and maintain a clippings file, and made use of posters and bulletin boards to draw attention to the materials available, notably magazine articles and books.

The Library continued to expand its collection and offer more services. In order to make more fiction available to students, a rental library was established in 1944. Under this program students would pay 2 cents per day when borrowing a book until the book was paid for. They also benefited from gifts from graduating classes, alumni classes, and private individuals that were used to buy new materials. Soon the collection grew to 45,000 volumes and the Library subscribed to 250 periodical titles.
Faculty valued the Library and expressed interest in increasing students’ use of it. During a faculty meeting in December of 1941, a desire was expressed that the library should be integrated with other educational processes of the college. That desire is echoed today with 21st century Information Literacy efforts. As time passed, the use of the library did increase. Between 1949 and 1955 there was a 25% increase in the use of the library by the students. Despite this increase, teams from the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education reported in 1949, 1950 and 1951 that the library was under-utilized and inadequately supported. When it could, the Library improved access and services. In 1950, the book stacks were opened to the general public, not just students and faculty; and plans were undertaken to add more storage space in the basement as were typing facilities and rooms where patrons could listen to phonograph records.

In 1948, Dr. Willis E. Pratt began his 20-year tenure as president of Indiana State Teachers College (ISTC). A man of great vision and considerable drive, Dr. Pratt’s time as president saw increasing enrollments coinciding with the end of the war and increasing access to higher education fueled by the GI Bill. Under his direction, the college grew dramatically, culminating in its re-designation as Indiana State College (ISC) in 1959. ISC achieved university status in 1965-1966 and became Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP).

Transformation to a full college and interest in developing Master’s degree programs put greater demands on the Library. Plans were made to expand the collection beyond the 50,000 volume limit of Wilson Library to 60,000 volumes by 1960. The “60 by 60” program was instituted to fill the library shelves with emphasis on acquiring out-of-print books, foreign language material, microfilm periodicals, and expanding the humanities and philosophy collections. Due to the hard work of those involved, the goal of 60,000 volumes was reached a year ahead of schedule, in 1959, requiring the construction of a larger facility for the collection.
Stabley Library was named for Dr. Rhodes R. Stabley, chairman of the English-Speech Department from 1941-1960. It was the first campus building built specifically for the purpose of being the library. The actual cost of the new library was $570,000, $30,000 less than the estimated cost when construction began in 1960. Use of this new library, which could accommodate 130,000 volumes, began in April of 1961.

In the 1960s, computers were beginning to be used to support business applications. In 1961, they were first used to assist in processing Library materials. In that year, a punch card tabulating system was instituted. Each book had a card, which contained the call number, author, title and publisher for that book. This card system contributed to the efficiency of purchasing and processing books and maintaining inventory and circulation records.

In 1963, the Library was designated as a selective depository for Federal Government Documents after applying to the state representative. With this status, the Library began to receive selected U.S. Government Publications free of charge for the Library’s collection. The designation as a Depository library greatly increased the opportunities for reference and research for students, faculty and staff in the library as well as for the general public within Indiana and neighboring counties.

When the Middle States (an association that accredits degree-granting colleges and universities in the Middle States region) evaluation was done in 1964, the results brought good news, not only for the library, but for the University as well. Dr. Crawford, representing the evaluation team, informed the University that “Indiana is number one among the state colleges as far as the library goes” and indicated that the goal of increasing titles to 1,000,000 was not unrealistic. The first goal would be to build the collection in order to support graduate programs. The next goal would then be to work towards a Doctoral program. Both areas of higher education would focus on the arts and sciences.

By 1967, Stabley Library’s collection had grown dramatically and was ranked number twelve among all academic libraries in Pennsylvania. That year, its holding included 126,000 volumes of books, 20,000 volumes of periodicals, 10,000 reels of microfilm, 2000 volumes of microcards,
12,000 phonograph records, 26,000 film strips and 10,000 government documents. They also reported more than 250,000 library visits yearly by this point.

Soon after Indiana’s metamorphosis to a state college, administrators and faculty began working to develop the state college into a university. The official name change from Indiana State College to Indiana University of Pennsylvania occurred in 1967. With a new mission to support increased Masters and PhD programs, increased library holdings would be needed and an additional library would be required to house them.

With collections quickly growing to support and higher degrees offerings, and more students enrolling each year, Stabley was quickly becoming inadequate. The building could no longer contain the burgeoning collections or larger student body. For a time, overflow was stored in Sutton Hall and a Reading Room maintained in what is now Gorrell Auditorium. In the 1970s, it was determined that a new facility, or additional space, was needed to satisfy the requirements of the growing university. Plans began with the original intention of constructing a new building on the site where Sutton Hall was located. After the decision was made to preserve Sutton, it was decided to attach the new library to the existing one. The new library, which would be the largest academic library between the University of Pittsburgh and Penn State, would be named after Patrick J. Stapleton, Jr., Pennsylvania State Senator from the 41st District for more than 30 years and member of the IUP Council of Trustees.

**Patrick J. Stapleton Library**
1981-present

The new building was to be a blend of old and new. Part of Sutton Hall had to be demolished to make way for the new construction, so stained glass windows from Sutton Hall were included in the design, as was a beam made from a tree that had been cut for space in the Oak Grove. Construction was begun in December 1978, and not a moment too soon. Nearly a year before the dedication the library had celebrated the acquisition of its 500,000th volume on September 3, 1980, *The Poetical Works of Thomas Campbell*. The new library was opened for students in the fall of 1981 with the official dedication on October 10.

Over the years, the Library’s location was moved many times, to several places within Sutton Hall, to Wilson Hall, to Stabley Library, and finally to Stapleton Library. In 1981, when Stapleton opened its doors, the Library had seen many changes. The collection had expanded
greatly, from the few volumes in the “fine reference library” to hundreds of thousands of volumes. Over the years it had added media items, such as phonograph records, microfilms, and motion pictures, and made some use of computers to aid in acquisitions and circulation; but the Library remained primarily book based. Patrons still depended upon an index card catalog to locate books and still used periodical indexes in book format. The next thirty years would change both the manner in which the collections were used and the physical library itself, in a way never envisioned by early librarians.

In the late 1970s, OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) began to offer computer based services to American libraries, easing the cumbersome process of verifying bibliographic information about books and allowing the printing, rather than the typing, of individual cards for card catalogs. By the end of that decade, it added an Interlibrary Loan subsystem to its services, allowing libraries to use this system to borrow books and journal articles for their users from other libraries, speeding up the process! IUP Libraries took advantage of both of these services, decreasing staff processing time and getting books and articles to library users more quickly.

These changes happened behind the scenes, but by the mid-1980s changes would occur that would impact library users more directly. At that time, library computer services vendors were offering products which enabled libraries to move from reliance on card based catalogs to locate books in their collections, to the use of more flexible, computer based online catalogs. In 1987, IUP libraries successfully moved to an electronic catalog, IUPTOMUS. While this online catalog was an improvement over card based systems, making accessing book records by keyword possible, it still only provided users with the book citation information and could only be accessed by those in the building via limited and cumbersome dial-in access.

Access to periodical literature until this point was a cumbersome process whereby a researcher would search through paper issues of periodical indexes such as Reader’s Guide to Periodical Literature, look under subject headings, find citations, and write them down. They would then need to determine if the Library owned the journals by looking in another file or listing. If the Library did own the journal article, they then set off to retrieve it in another location.

In the mid-1980s the Stapleton Library acquired its first electronic index of periodical articles, InfoTrac, which relied upon a laser disk and allowed users to access periodical articles by
keyword as well as title and subject. While this made it easier to find citations, the researcher still had to find the periodical article itself, and again, was only available inside the building.

Some online indexes of periodicals were available through vendors such as DIALOG. This process required connecting with computers in California, paying telephone charges, charges for database use, and printing results. It was so expensive the Library had to charge a fee to users, and only professional librarians, with training in doing the searches, could perform them. Again, DIALOG still provided only the citations to articles, and the user was sent off to find the article itself elsewhere in the building.

Library users often preferred to do their own searches. In the mid-1990s CD-ROM bibliographic databases, such as ERIC, were purchased and run on small computer networks in the building allowing users to do their own bibliographic searching. Librarians were still there to assist and to educate the users in the art of searching.

With the development of the Internet in the early 1990s, libraries were quick to embrace what this new technology offered - the ability to make huge amount of bibliographic and full-text information available to users in and outside the library. IUP Libraries offered its users computers with Internet access in the early 1990s and adopted VOYAGER, an innovative online catalog that utilized the Internet to allow users to access library holdings records from off-campus, with the potential to access full-text Internet accessible sources as well. It developed web based forms so that reference questions and requests for other library services could be submitted via the Internet. It also worked with other libraries in the region and in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, to build cooperative purchase agreements to provide greater access to full-text bibliographic databases of books and journal articles to its users whether they are on or off-campus, 24/7.

Today, although most library resources can be accessed from off-campus, Stapleton Library remains a busy place. Here students and faculty can access books and periodicals in paper or electronically over the Internet. Librarians are available to assist users in their quest for information to do classroom assignments and other research, but also in Information Literacy classes, where they teach skills necessary to find authoritative, reliable sources and use them ethically. Computers abound here, either in our computer lab (the busiest on campus) or at other locations throughout the building. We offer places for quiet study and group work, computers to
write papers, or those with specialized software to assist in media production. When students are not hard at work on their studies, we offer other enriching activities from a wide variety of films to watch or popular books to read from our Schaefer Collection or a pleasant place to rest in our JAVA City coffee bar lounge. Though we show little physical resemblance to the original rooms in Sutton Hall, the mission of the Library, to support the curriculum and private research of our faculty and students, and help students in the “formation of such habits as will lead to a successful life” remains our primary objective. Today, the IUP Libraries is a 24/5 operation.

Bibliographic Essay
The information contained in this paper comes from interviews conducted by Eric Bonner, Courtney Dennis, Amy Loch, Wendy Lynn, Todd Miller, and Amanda Yasczak in the Spring of 2004. Additional resources came from Record Group 60 in the IUP Special Collections & University Archives. For more information on the history of the IUP Libraries and the University, see http://libraryguides.lib.iup.edu/c.php?g=60459.

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Visit the IUP Special Collections & University Archives in Stapleton Library, Room 302