As members of the Friends of the Library, you already have an appreciation for the written word and the knowledge that a library contains. Many of you, however, may be less familiar with the Special Collections Department and its resources.

The Mission of Special Collections

Our department supports the campus curriculum, and we develop and maintain a number of important research subject collections, which include the history of Nevada, the Great Basin Indians, the Nevada Women’s Archive, and our Congressional Papers Collection.

Besides having a wonderful book collection that spans the entire history of the printed word, we have historical photographs of Nevada, the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Great Basin, and we house the University Archives, which collects the history of the campus. Most important to tonight’s event are our manuscript collections.

Donations Help Piece Together History

Manuscripts come from people, organizations, and businesses and they reflect those lives and works. They may come in as individual items or small files. Most of our materials come through donations.

To those people — our “undercover archivists,” we say thank you. For it is often only through your saving materials and donating them that we can piece together the untold history of what has gone before.

Laxalt Memorabilia on Exhibit Through December

The Robert Laxalt Exhibit in Special Collections (on Level 2 of Getchell Library) is taken from his extensive personal collection. It highlights his childhood in Carson City—where his 6th grade class wrote in 1935 that if he continued his writing, he might make a name for himself in the literary world—and the many facets of his career as a journalist, professor at the University of Nevada, Reno, and as founder of the University of Nevada Press. Most of all, it documents his work as a writer, particularly for Sweet Promised Land.

“The creative process is very hard to document. You can’t climb into someone’s head, so you have to use what’s left.”

The creative process is very hard to document. You can’t climb into someone’s head, so you have to use what’s left. By checking various book drafts and reading correspondence with his agent, we hope we have captured how Sweet Promised Land came to be written.

Sometimes the papers don’t answer all the questions. For example, we do not know the first title Robert Laxalt was using for the book, nor why—at the last moment—it was not serialized in The Ladies Home Journal. We do know he changed the ending and the fantastic reaction to the publication of the work. Be sure to look at the examples we’ve pulled of his fan mail.

Exhibit Hours

Please visit the exhibit to learn more about one of Nevada’s favorite sons and the work of Special Collections on the 2nd floor of Getchell Library, Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., and Saturdays, 1- 5 p.m.
The Friends Honor the 50th Anniversary of *Sweet Promised Land*

On June 5th, the Friends of the Library held a reception and readings to honor the 50th anniversary of Robert Laxalt’s much-beloved Nevada book, *Sweet Promised Land*.

Speakers included Janice Pine, president of the Friends; Joanne O’Hare, director of the University Press; Steve Zink, VP Information Technology / Dean of Libraries and master of ceremonies; Jacque Sundstrand of UNR Special Collections; Laxalt’s daughter, Monique Laxalt; and 2006 Hall of Fame recipient, Ann Ronald.

Monique Laxalt (“Nicky”) shared memories of growing up in the Laxalt household with the clicking of a typewriter always in the background. In a passage from her father’s last book, *Travels with My Royal: A Memoir of My Writing Life*, she read an anecdote about how his love of writing began.

A Unique Perspective on the Past

Keynote speaker, Ann Ronald, Foundation English professor at UNR, took us back to 1957, when the book was written. She noted that “a trek to the old country was very unusual back then” when people didn’t travel much. In a passage about their flight to Europe, she shared Laxalt’s multiple perspectives, how he used boxing as a metaphor for the Basque experience, and his unique “narrative voice.” Ronald, who wrote the forward for the 50th anniversary edition of *Sweet Promised Land*, also shared a personal anecdote about “Bob as a craftsman” and how he later changed the ending of the book.

If you missed this terrific celebration, you can view a 55-minute video of the event at: [http://imedia.unr.edu/laxalt/sweet_promised_land.asx](http://imedia.unr.edu/laxalt/sweet_promised_land.asx).

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**Save the Date! November 8th, 2007**

for the 20th Annual *Nevada Writers Hall of Fame*

**ArrowCreek Country Club**

2905 ArrowCreek Pkwy, Reno

To make sure you receive an invitation, email us at fol@unr.edu or call 775-682-5690

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At the reception

Above, UNR English professor and 2006 Hall of Fame recipient, Ann Ronald (left), mingled with the Friends and other attendees, including Monique Laxalt, Robert Laxalt’s daughter, at right.

— Photos by Ted Cook
Views from the Knowledge Center

Above, a construction worker takes in the sweeping city and mountain views from one corner of the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center, currently more than 50% complete. Below, UNR photographers catch odd angles and unexpected shots of the rotunda domes in progress, the curving atrium staircase, light filtering in through construction materials in artistic patterns, and even a lowly construction light fixture.

— Photos by Theresa Danna-Douglas, Ted Cook, and Tyler Keck, TLT
Hap Morehouse, Former Dean of Libraries, Retires

From Clark Hall to Getchell Library to the brink of the Knowledge Center, Harold “Hap” Morehouse has been an integral part of the University Libraries for more than four decades. He retired at the end of June, having spent nearly 46 of his 50-year library career at UNR.

Morehouse came to the University in September of 1961, when the campus library was still in the Clark Administration Building and Getchell Library was under construction. Only a few months later, in February 1962, they moved into Getchell Library, where he eventually became head of Public Services, supervising Reference, Circulation, and the branch libraries. In 1969, after a national search, Morehouse was offered and accepted the job as Dean of Libraries.

For the next 24 years, Morehouse oversaw the transformation of the University Libraries from a totally manual card catalog and circulation system to the more technically advanced, automated ones we have today.

“That didn’t happen without effort,” he says. “I give Carol Parkhurst (now director of library systems) a lot of credit for that.” Morehouse also originally hired Steve Zink to head the Government Publications Department. Zink is now Vice President for Information Technology and Dean of Libraries.

“I’m going to take full credit for making good choices,” Morehouse laughed.

Goodbye to Hal Rothman, 2004 Hall of Fame Recipient


A UNLV history professor, Rothman also hosted a radio show, wrote a column in the Las Vegas Sun and authored several books about Las Vegas. He was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, in December 2005.

UNLV hired Rothman as a history professor in 1992, when the Strip was leading the valley headlong into a boom that was to last into the next decade.

It provided Rothman with his topic of choice:


Rothman’s sharp mind and quick wit made him the media’s choice for intelligent perspective on the city. Though he became known worldwide as the preeminent historian of modern Las Vegas, his areas of expertise also included environmental history and the American West.

"History is a profession that attracts storytellers," said his colleague, UNLV history professor Andy Fry, "and he was a particularly good one."

Rothman is survived by his wife, Lauralee, and their two children, Talia and Brent.
Clay Jenkinson to be Honored as Laxalt Distinguished Writer

Friend and colleague of Robert Laxalt will inspire new generation of writers

The Reynolds School of Journalism at the University of Nevada, Reno has named Clay Jenkinson, humanities scholar, author and social commentator as the 2007 Robert Laxalt Distinguished Writer. Jenkinson has a long history with the Friends of the Library and served on its board for many years.

The school will honor Jenkinson at the Robert Laxalt Distinguished Writer Program at 7 p.m. on Oct. 24. The program will be held in the ASUN auditorium or the new Joe Crowley Student Union, if it is ready. The program is free and open to the public.

Jenkinson will describe Laxalt’s influence in the pursuit of quality writing.

“Clay is widely known as a leading Jefferson scholar,” said Rosemary McCarthy, interim dean of the School of Journalism. “In this case, we are highlighting Clay’s writing career and reputation as an author. As a friend and colleague of Robert Laxalt, he embodies the spirit of literary excellence that distinguished Robert Laxalt’s career and legacy.”

— by Zanny Marsh, University Communications

Clay Jenkinson, a longtime board member of the Friends, will be honored Oct. 24. He now lives in North Dakota.

Book Nook Volunteers Needed

Do you love books and people? Then you might enjoy volunteering a few hours of your time to the Book Nook, the Friends’ “gently-used” bookstore in Getchell Library.

The Book Nook has quality used materials at reasonable prices. It is open Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To find out about upcoming opportunities to volunteer, call Clair Wojcik, Book Nook coordinator, at 775-682-5597.

Correction:

In the last issue, we incorrectly identified the artist of an oil painting donated to the Silent Auction for the 2006 Nevada Writers Hall of Fame. The artist should have been Amy Mazza, not Anne Hall. We regret the error.

Thank you Amy for the beautiful painting and the money it raised for the Friends!

Nevada Shepherders Website Debuts

A fascinating new website, Shepherders of Northern Nevada was launched in March 2007 by the Special Collections Department, University Libraries, with a grant from Nevada Humanities.

It features more than 500 photographs, online books, oral histories and interviews in video and audio, drawings and rubbings of artistic arborglyphs, Basque accordion music, games and quizzes!

Check it out at http://www.library.unr.edu/sheep/.
Summer 2007

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Susan Palwick Publishes New Book

Excerpts from a Nevada News story
by Sarah Licausi

Last fall, UNR English professor Susan Palwick was
honored as a Silver Pen recipient at the Nevada Writers
Hall of Fame. This spring, she published The Fate of
Mice, a collection of short stories, which has achieved
additional critical acclaim, including a starred review by
Publishers Weekly.

The Fate of Mice features eleven short stories written by
Palwick over the last 20 years. Three stories were
published for the first time; the other eight have been
featured in previous publications. For example, “Elephant,” the earliest story
included in the book, was written in 1985 and published in 1986 in Asimov’s
science fiction magazine.

Palwick said she hopes the book will open readers’ eyes to different genres. “I
hope it will help demonstrate that science fiction and fantasy are vibrant
literary genres,” Palwick said.

Palwick has been publishing books and short stories for more than 20 years.
She has published 25 short stories and two full-length novels. She has won
many awards and kudos for her work. The Necessary Beggar, published in 2005,
won an Alex award from the American Library Association and helped Palwick
win a Silver Pen award at last year’s Nevada Writers Hall of Fame. Library
Journal named it one of the best five science-fiction/fantasy books of 2005.