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Dacus Library

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**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- **News About the Dacus Library and Archives**
- **The \$400K Legacy Gift of Dorothy M. Medlin**

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Christmas ...

I can't think of a better holiday than Christmas. Unlike most Southerners (and I am originally from south Alabama so I know I qualify), I love snow and cold weather. And yes, I shovel my own driveway and get out in it, much to my wife's dismay. I really love winter weather and would be happy to see it begin in October and end in March or April. The few warm days before Thanksgiving, when everyone remarked gleefully about the weather, I was mumbling, snorting, and in general grumpy. As Shelley put it, "I love the snow and all the forms/Of the radiant frost."

More than snow, however, I love Christmas and all its glittering (and kitschy) accoutrements. We extend our holidays even past Epiphany, and I dread the day we take down the tree. The house returns to its now-seeming mortuary appearance, and every corner that once radiated life, now snores ennui. Only snow replenishes my delight.

I especially love the giving part of Christmas. I understand the angst commercialism creates for some, but I blame that more on us than on the spirit of giving that Christmas evokes. I enjoy giving more than receiving, finding it, yes, indeed more blessed.

I hope you do, too, this season. Dacus as most of you know is undergoing two transformations: the Pettus Archives will have moved by the time you receive this; and the Dacus main floor will be transformed by August of this year. I hope many of you will see these events as opportunities to give during this season.

The much needed facelift for Ida Jane could not come at a better time. Ida is 43 years old and is showing every line. Our students spoke, we listened, and the changes in Dacus will incorporate much of what they told us they wanted: 24-hour access, group and individualized study rooms, smarter technology and a vending/cafe area. Of course, we all want a new Dacus but that prospect is at least a decade away, when Ida will be over 50. For at least twenty years now, we have tried for a new building but economic constraints have prohibited it. This coming facelift will take us through the fi-

nancial shadows and position us well for the future. The good news is that naming opportunities in this area will move to the new building once constructed. But neither Ida Jane nor our students can wait another decade without some improvements.

I hope during this Christmas season, you'll join me in the celebration of giving and do what you can for these projects. The English essayist G. K. Chesterton penned what has become for me a mission statement for our library. When asked why he wrote so much, Chesterton replied, "To aid the divine gift of language and letters to outlive us all." That strikes me as what libraries are all about. Each gift you give us moves us ever closer to that goal.

Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year! (And, by all means, let it snow!)--Mark Y. Herring

Friends of Dacus Library Endowment ...

The Friends of Dacus are within \$5000 of their goal to establish the first \$25000 organizational endowment fund to support library services at Winthrop. This fund will become a permanent income-earning source of support under the auspices of the organization. If you wish to assist this worthy endeavor, you can do so by joining the Friends or by sending a check made out to "Winthrop University Foundation" clearly designating "Library Endowment" on the "For" line. Mail check to the library and the attention of Ronnie Faulkner and he will forward as appropriate.

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The Dacus Library of Winthrop University was constructed in 1969 and named for the school's first librarian Ida Jane Dacus, who served from 1900 to 1945 and was also the first person in South Carolina to receive professional training in library studies. Today the facility houses over 500,000 volumes and provides extensive online resources to support the educational and research needs of the Winthrop academic community.



Dacus Library Benefactor Dorothy M. Medlin



On November 28 a special ceremony was held at the MacFeat House on the campus of Winthrop University recognizing the

legacy gift of Dorothy M. Medlin to the Ida Jane Dacus Library. Medlin, an alumna of Winthrop, a French professor at the institution and Distinguished Professor in 1985, died on July 30.

Brien Lewis, vice president for development, and Bob Breakfield, Medlin's attorney and friend, unveiled a check representing the \$400,000 gift to Dacus before a group of over thirty friends and admirers of the late teacher and French studies scholar.

Born in 1931 in Monroe, North Carolina, to N. Lee Medlin and Kate Funder-

burk Medlin, Dottie Medlin graduated from Winthrop College in 1953 and earned her Ph.D. from Tulane University in 1966. She joined the Winthrop staff in 1963.

Medlin became a French scholar because of her early experiences of being taught French in the Monroe public schools by a graduate of Winthrop College.

Among Medlin's publications were *The Verbal Art of Jean-François Regnard* (1966); a number of articles about Andre Morellet; a three-volume edition of *Lettres d'André Morellet*, co-edited with Jean-Claude David and Paul LeClerc (1991-1996); "André Morellet (1727-1819)" in the *Republic of Letters and French Revolution* (1995); *André Morellet: Texts and Contexts* (2003), both co-edited with Jeffery Merrick; *British-French Exchanges in the Eighteenth Century* (2007) and a critical edition of Morellet's *Mémoires sur le*

dix-huitième siècle et sur la Révolution, both co-edited with Kathleen Hardesty Doig.

Medlin was well-known for her love of the library and was a founding member of the Friends of Dacus Library group in 1996. She served as both an officer and board member. Medlin likewise spent countless hours engaged in research at the library. "We were always delighted to have her in here," recalled Library Dean Mark Herring. "She always had a smile on her face."

Antje Mays, who worked with Dot on Friends of the Dacus Library projects, recalled her as a "tireless supporter, a wonderful mentor, ... and a generous person, who was always ready to lend a helping hand when she saw a need."

"A library is not a luxury but one of the necessities of life."

—Henry Ward Beecher (1813-87)