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Fine Arts Library Renovation Project Receives Million-Dollar Gift from Mrs. Lucille Little

On Thursday, 9 May 1993, Mrs. Lucille Little, Lexington philanthropist and one of the community’s greatest supporters of the arts, made a gift to the University of Kentucky Libraries of one million dollars. Mrs. Little’s gift is to be applied to the renovation of Margaret I. King Library - North for future use as a Fine Arts Library. The gift was made before a crowd of friends in the W. Hugh Peal Gallery, and Kentucky architectural historian and oriental scholar Clay Lancaster, a colleague from her early days on the stage of the Guignol Theatre, introduced Mrs. Little with the following tribute:

When she was little she was called Lucille Caudill, and when she grew up and was married she became Lucille Caudill Little. But “little” is an inappropriate word to apply to Lucille, because she does everything in a big way.

She was born in Morehead and might have become the victim of a small-town education had it not been that when she was ten she began spending summers studying at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. She went on to attend Hamilton College at Transylvania University, and the University of Kentucky in Lexington. She matriculated at Stetson College in Florida, where she sang the title role in Bizet’s Carmen, and later performed in Puccini’s Madama Butterfly. She earned a bachelor’s degree at the Ohio State University and sang light opera. Lucille gravitated to New York. She studied at the Juilliard School of Music and did graduate work in speech at Columbia University. Her academic career was supplemented by leading roles in opera, by song recitals, and by performing as a vocalist with orchestras. Desiring something more tangible than this tinseled existence, she returned to Kentucky and taught in the English Department of Morehead State University for three
Mrs. Lucille Caudill Little, Lexington philanthropist and patron of the arts, makes a gift of one million dollars to the University Libraries.
years, during which time she founded the Drama Department. Lucille married W. Paul Little in 1937, and the following year she helped organize the Lexington’s Children’s Theatre and became one of its early directors.

I first met Lucille while working on settings for the Guignol Theatre at the University of Kentucky. She played in Clare Booth Luce’s *The Women*, given in October and November of 1940. It was a near impossible play to produce in such a small theatre as the Guignol, for it had a cast of thirty-seven (all women) and twelve sets (all different). She was one of the first characters to appear, and one of the most unforgettable. She next appeared as Mrs. Edwards in *Kind Lady* in the following February. Mrs. Edwards was not the “Kind Lady.” She was the unkind lady, and Lucille made her rather sinister, as she was meant to be.

She was Louisa Creed in *Ladies in Retirement* during December 1941. The story is about two mature maiden ladies who commit murder and stuff the body in the oven of their ancient house in England. Then Lucille was Mme. Darushka in *Claudia* in November of 1942. Mme. Darushka was in the arts, and Lucille was perfectly at home in the part. The favorite scene in my photo collection of Guignol plays shows two exquisite women. My cousin Margaret Montondo is perched on the arm of a couch looking coldly at Lucille, who is standing in the center of the stage, hands clasped, head raised, emoting. The last play for which I did settings before going to New York was *Arsenic and Old Lace* in January 1943. Although I did not see it, Lucille was Anise in the following play, by Lillian Hellman, *Watch on the Rhine*. She was also associate director. The old Guignol building on Euclid Avenue burned on 10 February 1947. Plays were given in borrowed quarters until the new Guignol was opened in the Fine Arts Building on Rose Street 13 February 1950. The first play was Euripides’ *Medea*. Lucille Caudill Little gave the most notable performance of her career in the title role.

In this same year she was one of the founders of Studio Players and has been its angel ever since. On 2 February of last year I experienced one of the most enchanting evenings (or perhaps I should say “matinées”) of my life. The Studio Players’ presentation of *84 Charing Cross Road* had just concluded its two-weekend run at the Carriage House Theatre
Mr. Clay Lancaster, Kentucky’s revered scholar and artist, introduces Mrs. Lucille Little in the Gallery.

in Bell Court. Lucille sponsored an additional performance on Sunday. She invited all of her friends interested in the theatre and filled the house. She provided free refreshments during intermission and a high tea in Bell House afterward. Lucille’s high teas are so sumptuous that they make Belshazzar’s feast look like a casual picnic. At that meeting the point was brought up that the limited size of the Carriage House could be relieved by removing the lobby and ticket office to an attached pavilion. Plans had been drawn up in appropriate style. Lucille appropriated the money. She has also given generously to the Lexington Arts and Cultural Council, the Lexington Philharmonic, and to other worthy causes both in and out of the arts. But the arts have priority in her affections, because she believes that in them we humans attain our noblest realization.
Lexington Book Arts Weekend

On Friday and Saturday, 12 and 13 November 1993 the King Library Press sponsored a special two-day event entitled "A Lexington Book Arts Weekend." This activity featured a day of library visits, a lecture, and a book arts workshop.

On Friday, participants met at the library of Transylvania University where Special Collections Curator Ms. Carolyn Denton shared the outstanding holdings of Kentucky's first academic library. Reviewed also was the fabulous gift of Miss Clara Peck, which included, among other important works, the double-elephant folio edition of Audubon's *Birds of America* and Audubon's important pictorial publication on American quadrupeds. After seeing these and other bibliographical highlights, guests were shown the Boxwood Bindery, a gift to Transylvania from Lexington's Mrs. Lucy Crump. Ms. Gabrielle Fox-Butler, a Cincinnati book artist and Transylvania's visiting binder, showed the group the bindery's unusual hand equipment, including some antique items, used to ornament fine leather book covers and spines. After lunch at the University of Kentucky Faculty Club, the visitors proceeded to the University of Kentucky Special Collections where Mrs. Terry Warth, in the Peal Gallery, displayed and discussed some of the University Libraries's rarest and most unusual resources. Following this presentation, Dr. Paul Holbrook and his apprentices at the King Library Press mounted a demonstration of hand printing, and visitors each pulled keepsakes on the Press's antique iron and wooden presses.

On Friday evening, Ms. Sheila Waters, one of America's foremost lettering artists, delivered an illustrated lecture on her career as a calligrapher. Educated in London at the Royal College of Art, Ms. Waters came to the United States after her husband, who led the preservation effort for libraries following the great Florence flood, accepted the position of Conservation Officer for the Library of Congress. Ms. Waters has been involved in calligraphy for over forty years, both as an artist and a teacher. She initiated the Smithsonian Institution's calligraphy instruction program in 1972. She has exhibited widely, including a nine-month showing at Washington's Renwick Gallery of Art. Her son, Julian Waters, is also a leading calligrapher, designing in such media as laser-defined glass and computer fonts; his lettering is frequently seen, among other places, in the maps of
National Geographic. One of Ms. Water's major achievements has been the hand lettering of Dylan Thomas's well-known work, Under Milk Wood, as a commission from Edward Hornby, son of the legendary printer C. H. St. John Hornby of the Ashendene Press. On Saturday morning Ms. Waters conducted a day-long calligraphy workshop in which she outlined the historical development of Western lettering styles, discussed questions of technique, and shared resource literature and information on sources of supply for calligraphers.

Library Associates Annual Meeting

For the Associates Annual Meeting on 28 March 1994 more than three hundred fifty Library Associates and guests gathered at the Singletary Center for the Arts. The event began with a reception in the U.K. Art Museum, where Associates joined Prichard Lecturer David McCullough for refreshments and the opportunity to view some of the Museum's premier works. Mr. McCullough spoke quite knowledgeably about a number of the paintings on display, to the delight of the Associates. The Concert Hall stage was the setting for the dinner that followed the reception.

Library Associates President, Dr. Dixon Barr, convened the business meeting and program in the Recital Hall of the Singletary Center. During the business meeting, Dr. Barr and Dr. Carolyn N. Curry were re-elected as President and Vice-President, respectively, of the Library Associates. Others elected to a two-year term on the Associates Executive Committee included: Dr. James Albisetti, Mrs. Rose Mary Brooks, Mr. John Crockett, Mr. William Francis, Dr. Charles Eastin, Dr. Bracelin Flood, Mrs. Joy Hembree, Mr. Robert Hillenmeyer, Ms. Lori Keeton, Mrs. Alfred Lacazette, Mrs. Lucille Little, Ms. Kristin Mathis, Mr. Hill Maury, Mr. Jim Thomas and Mrs. Vivian Weil.

Dr. Charles T. Wethington, Jr., President of the University of Kentucky, provided the Associates with an update on the Library Campaign and progress towards the construction of the Commonwealth Library. Director of Libraries Paul A. Willis announced the 1994 laureate of the Libraries Medallion for Intellectual Excellence: Kentucky author and poet James Still. Mr. Gene Williams, Vice President for Information Systems, presented the Medallion in recognition of Mr. Still's eloquent interpretations of Appalachian life for more than fifty years through poems, short
stories and novels. He was joined during the presentation by two former laureates in attendance, Dr. Thomas D. Clark and Mr. Len Press.

Following the presentation of the Libraries Medallion, Library Associate and former Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky, Wilson W. Wyatt, introduced the thirteenth Edward F. Prichard, Jr. Lecturer, Mr. David McCullough. Mr. McCullough’s presentation was titled “From a Historian’s Perspective,” and his remarks were well received by the rapt audience. Following the lecture Mr. McCullough signed books and keepsakes from the event for nearly one hour. Dr. Barr adjourned the meeting.

— Paula Leach Pope