After many years of planning, the University Libraries’ dream of a new home for its unique and invaluable special collections soon will be realized with the construction of the Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library. The $18-million state-of-the-art building will be erected behind the Thomas Cooper Library (Blossom Street). It will comprise about 50,000 square feet of new library space on three levels.

The Hollings Library will house Thomas Cooper Library’s growing rare books and special collections and will provide the first permanent home for the University’s South Carolina political collections.

There will be space for teaching, exhibits, and public programs, as well as for offices, processing areas, and extensive stack space to house the collections. Special features will include a large reading room with comfortable work areas for researchers and other visitors, seminar rooms, a mini theater, exhibit galleries, a “treasure vault,” an auditorium for meetings or other events, a digitization center, and a room for audio-visual research. Utilizing compact shelving, the stack areas will have a capacity of about 47,000 linear feet (equivalent to almost nine miles) and will accommodate about 250,000 books, manuscripts, political papers, folios, maps, and framed items.

Architects for the new library are the Columbia-based firm of Watson Tate Savory. The building, which will be constructed at the LEED Silver Certification level with optimum climate control and security, will compliment the classic modern style of the Thomas Cooper Library, to which it will be connected by a corridor on the Main Level. Construction will begin in summer 2008 and the building should be completed by late 2009.

Most of the funding for the Hollings Library came from a $16-million Federal appropriation secured by Senator Hollings in 2005. In addition, an anonymous donation of $2 million was given in fall 2004.

A campaign is now underway to raise an additional $2 million for programming, preservation, and other unanticipated needs.

For more information about the University Libraries or to make a donation, please call the Administrative Office at 803-777-3142 or visit the University Libraries Web site at www.sc.edu/libraries.
RARE BOOKS AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA, THEN SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE, STARTED BUILDING ITS LIBRARY COLLECTIONS IN 1803.

By 1850 the College had the largest library south of Washington, DC. Many of the books acquired then still survive in the modern Department of Rare Books and Special Collections: incunabula, Theodor de Bry's Greater Voyages, Stuarts Antiquities, the complete Pilgrims, the Description de l'Egypte, Kingsborough's Mexican Antiquities, Karl Bodmer's Travels in North America, and even South Carolina College Library Book 1. A special emphasis was on works in natural history, including John James Audubon's Birds of America (1827–1838). During the mid-twentieth century, with the growth of graduate programs and the first library endowment, the library acquired additional high points such as the Nuremberg Chronicle (1493), the King James Bible, and the Blaeu Atlas and began to build research collections in earlier British and American literature, as well as the separate South Caroliniana collections.

The past 25 years have seen transformative growth, with new collections of international significance. Holdings in Special Collections have grown sixfold, with more than 120,000 volumes and several modern literary archives. Areas of significant growth include philosophy, history, exploration, military history and military aviation, natural history, the history of science, English literature, Scottish literature, American literature, children's literature, and the history of the book. For images and information on these collections, see www.sc.edu/library/specoll/rarebook.html.

Over the same period, the department has also transformed expanded use of these collections, adding new initiatives in the areas of teaching, exhibits, digitization, and scholarly and public programs. In addition to supporting more specialized research, the department gives students and others firsthand experience of some of the world's greatest books. Through an extensive series of Web exhibits and Web projects, now attracting over 25 million hits a year, the department makes the University and its treasures known worldwide.

SOUTH CAROLINA POLITICAL COLLECTIONS

SOUTH CAROLINA POLITICAL COLLECTIONS (SCPC) WAS CREATED IN 1991 TO DEVELOP THE UNIVERSITY'S MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS DOCUMENTING CONTEMPORARY GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS.

In 2000, the U.S. Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress cited SCPC as a model repository for the documentation of government, politics, and modern society. In 2008, SCPC was nominated to receive the Society of American Archivists' Distinguished Service Award. Writing in support of this nomination, Ray Smock, director of the Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies, stated, “Others have called the SCPC a model archive of its kind, and I heartily concur. It is simply one of the best run political archives in any state in the Union.”

SCPC holds more than 80 collections with a total of approximately 5,000 linear feet of papers, audio-visual materials, and electronic records. Included are the papers of many of South Carolina's most illustrious leaders of the modern era. These large, complex legislative collections require special expertise on the part of the archivists charged with their arrangement and description. Processing these materials often entails months or even years of exacting work. An active oral history program is designed to supplement the documentary record.

SCPC strives to encourage research into its collections. In addition to presenting exhibits at the University and around the state, SCPC maintains on its Web site detailed collection descriptions, transcripts of its oral histories, and electronic exhibits, all designed to excite interest in the study of South Carolinians and their contributions to government and society in the state, national, and international arenas.

THE HONORABLE ERNEST F. HOLLINGS


A visionary workhorse, Hollings has focused throughout his long and active career on putting government on a sound financial basis and on economic development to create opportunities for all.


He also led in the creation of the WIC program [Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children] and in the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.


Hollings frequently states that “performance is better than promise.” This is more than a campaign motto—it is his calling card and the reason he has been so successful in politics and government.