

## The Remodeled Library Building at Northwestern State College of Louisiana

THE MILLION-DOLLAR enlarged and remodeled Russell Library building of Northwestern State College of Louisiana, at Natchitoches, was formally opened on November 1, 1957. The ceremonies, at which W. Porter Kellam, director of libraries, University of Georgia, delivered the main address, climaxed a ten-year campaign to secure modern and adequate library facilities for the College.

The three-story brick structure, built in 1936, originally was shaped like the letter T, with the three reading rooms in the cross-bar, and the four-tier bookstacks in the somewhat shortened stem. In order to make possible the conversion of the building from the traditional type to an open-shelf, divisional arrangement, a two-story addition was constructed in the form of a squared U around the sides and rear of the bookstacks. Thus the non-convertible stacks, which had previously extended out at the rear of the building and had thereby been separated from the reading areas, now became the core of the building, their central position providing easily accessible book-storage space.

The new portion of the building contains two group-study rooms, a student typing room, two listening cubicles, the reference office, and the librarian's office. Except for these rooms and the stair well and rest rooms, the new portion of the building is partitionless. The large open areas thus provided on each floor are set up as subject division areas—social

sciences and education on the first floor, and humanities and natural sciences on the second floor. All four division areas are filled with ranges of free-standing double-faced shelves, so placed as to provide numerous open spaces among the ranges. Each such open space contains one or two reading tables with chairs; thus books in all the various subject fields are readily available, while at the same time the students are afforded a considerable amount of privacy. Individual carrel desks are available, both in the divisional areas and in the bookstacks, for graduate students and faculty members who are engaged in research. Included in the educational division are a curriculum laboratory, a textbook collection, and a juvenile collection.

The less frequently used materials in each subject field are shelved in that portion of the central bookstacks immediately adjacent to the appropriate divisional areas. There is no reserve book room; reserve books are kept in their regular classified order on the open shelves. The fourth level of the stacks houses the depository collection of United States documents, while the second level (which lies between the two main floors of the building) contains the depository collection of Louisiana state documents as well as other Louisiana materials.

With the exception of a small auditorium at one end, in the original structure, all of that part of the first floor that extends across the front of the building was divided into a series of offices and classrooms. Removal of the numerous partitions was not feasible; so these

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smaller rooms have for the most part been retained, but have been converted to new uses: a shipping room; a microfilm and microcard reading room; a microfilming laboratory, complete with dark-room; a conference room; a library science classroom, with adjoining office; a staff room; and a North Louisiana archives room. The second floor rooms which previously served as the periodical reading room and the browsing room have been combined into a single, large technical processes room; a private office for the circulation staff has been provided at the side of the charging desk; the former reference room now houses the card catalog, the office of the head of reader services, and a recreational reading area adjoining the humanities division. The third floor, comprising four seminar rooms and a large classroom, remains unchanged. In addition to the rooms and areas already enumerated, there are several large storage closets on each floor, quarters for the janitor, and a machinery room.

Two of the most important features of the building are the lighting and the air-conditioning systems. The fluorescent light fixtures, which are recessed into the ceiling, are placed end-to-end in strips running across the entire width of the building, the strips being three feet apart

on centers; the illumination provided is evenly distributed and shadowless, with an intensity of approximately eighty foot-candles at table top level. The entire first and second floors have been air conditioned. A hydraulic elevator has been installed also.

The building is of modified Tudor architecture, with exterior walls of red brick in blended shades. The interior walls are painted in pastel hues of blue and green; the stair-wells and first floor corridors are enlivened with touches of orange. The concrete floors are covered with asphalt tile, which is so designed as to resemble cork. The old portion of the building and the new have been so completely integrated that it is now difficult to distinguish between the two.

The library furniture and the filing cabinets were supplied by Remington Rand, the free-standing steel stacks and the carrel desks by Estey, and the office furniture by Security.

William H. Jesse, director of libraries, University of Tennessee, assisted with the preliminary plans. Edmon Low, librarian, Oklahoma State University, served as official library consultant throughout the planning and construction stages. E. P. Dobson, of Houston, Texas, was the architect.

## Under One Roof

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### *Equipment contractors*

*Stacks:* Estey Metal Products.

*Library furniture:* Loan and reference desks, catalogs, tables.

*LC shelving:* Twombly Associates (Myrtle Desk Company).

*Lounge and occasional chairs:* International Hotel Supply Company

and New England Contract Furnishings, both Boston, Massachusetts.

*Steel furniture:* All-Steel Equipment.

*Curtains:* Edwin Raphael Company; Margeson's, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

*Picture racks:* Nevlen Company, Wakefield, Massachusetts.