1964 – 2014
Celebrating 50 years in the lives of Brown students and faculty

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library – Brown University
Main lobby view of the newly constructed John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library, designed by the architectural firm of Warner, Burns, Toan, Lunde. Groundbreaking for the building took place in the summer of 1962. Van Wickle Hall, an administration building at the corner of College and Prospect Streets, was torn down to make way for the new library.

Completed in the fall of 1964, the Rockefeller Library was occupied by staff in October. Here, a librarian moves books into the newly constructed stacks.

In the early planning stages, the new library was referred to as the "John Hay Library extension," acknowledging the main library building on campus at that time directly across College Street. The new "extension" was designed to hold 1.5M volumes, more than twice the capacity of the Hay.

The Rock has been a primary study location for generations of Brown students. Here, students study at some of the more than 400 carrels in the stacks of the Rockefeller Library, part of the more than 1,000 seats available for researchers in the library.

From its propitious location at the corner of College and Prospect Streets, the Rock for 50 years has witnessed the processions of new students in through the Van Wickle gates at opening convocation, and out through the gates at graduation.

Over the years, the Rock has been host to countless exhibits, receptions, and creative expressions of all kinds. Here, two students dance during the opening reception of the 2011 "Capturing Fleeting Moments" exhibition, in honor of the donation of the Bryson Dance Collection.

In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Rockefeller Library, Brown University is pleased to invite the public to explore the library with our 50th Celebration Guide. The guide is available online and in print at the library, and features highlights of the library's history, current offerings, and future plans.

Photo: Ben Tyler

Photo: H. Raymond Ball

Photo: Daniel O'Mahony

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Photo: University Archives

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I Believe:

I believe in the supreme worth of the individual and in his right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I believe that every right implies a responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation; every possession, a duty.

I believe that government is the servant of the people and not their master.

I believe that truth and justice are fundamental to an enduring social order.

I believe in the sacredness of a promise, that a man’s word should be as good as his bond; that character — not wealth or power or position — is of supreme worth.

I believe that the law was made for man and not man for the law; that the world owes no man a living but that it owes every man an opportunity to make a living.

I believe that love is the greatest thing in the world; that it alone can overcome hate; that right can and will triumph over might.

I believe that IRR or willful productiveness is the common duty of mankind and that only in the purifying fire of sacrifice is the dross of selfishness consumed and the greatness of the human soul set free.

I believe that every profession is a vocation; that the world’s need is for men who will do some work with head or hand; that the world owes no man a living but that it owes every man an opportunity to make a living.

I believe that thrift is essential to well ordered living and that economy is a prime requisite of a sound financial structure, whether in government, business or personal affairs.

I believe in the dignity of labor, whether with head or hand; that the world owes no man a living but that it owes every man an opportunity to make a living.

I believe in the widest usefulness are to be found in living in harmony with His will.

I believe that the rendering of useful service is the common duty of mankind and that only in the purifying fire of sacrifice is the dross of selfishness consumed and the greatness of the human soul set free.

I believe that the law was made for man and not man for the law; that the world owes no man a living but that it owes every man an opportunity to make a living.

I believe in an all-wise and all-powerful God of love, who is able to work all things through the faith of His children.

I believe in the united Christian churches as the one hope of the world for peace and brotherhood; that the salvation of the human race is dependent upon the coming together of the churches in a world-wide fellowship of harmony and service.

Roughly half a million users visit the Rockefeller Library each year. Open 112 hours a week, the Rock is a popular refuge for students and an important destination for faculty and other researchers. The library’s 1.5 million holdings are accessible in varying forms in the library and the university’s other libraries.

The Rock has adapted its spaces and services over the years to respond to the changing needs of Brown students and faculty. In 1999, a café was installed in the lobby of the library. Other recent improvements include a renovation of the Central Reading Room on the first floor (to be completed in fall of 2014). Students studying in the Laura and David Finn Reading Room, part of the 2009 renovation of the first floor of the Rock.

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