

## **Biographical Sketch**

Jana Henleben Jones holds a Ph.D. in Fine Arts from Texas Tech University.

Jana has presented at the International Conference of Association of Arts Administrator Educators, the Association of Theatre in Higher Education Conference, and The Southeastern Theatre Conference Convention. She conducted and acting workshop at the Christians in Theatre Arts Conference in Puerto Rico.

Jana is an active member of Actors Equity Association and the Screen Actors/Television, and Radio Artist Guild. Her professional acting credits include: *The Guiding Light* on CBS, New York City Opera, Off- Broadway productions at The Theatre for the New City, 13<sup>th</sup> Street Theatre, and The American Theatre for Actors.

Jana has performed the USO European tour of *GodSpell*, in television and radio commercials, and in films. She has performed with such stars as John Goodman, Kathleen Turner, Nathan Lane, and Leslie Nielson.

While living in Branson, Missouri, she wrote and directed for Silver Dollar City, a turn-of-the-century-theme park, produced, directed and performed for the 76 Music Hall, and developed show concepts for the Grand Palace and the Branson Bell.

Jana has taught acting at Texas Tech University, Ouachita Baptist University, and broadcast, oral-communication, and theatre classes at Henderson State University. She is the drama minister for New Life Church in Arkadelphia, AR.

## **The History of Huie Library**

**David Sesser, MLIS  
Special Collections Curator**

### **Abstract**

Huie Library is unique and integral part of Henderson State University. One of the oldest academic libraries in Arkansas, Huie is the only one named for a female or for a librarian. The library has grown from a handful of journals to several hundred thousand books, journals, videos, tapes, and other items. An ever evolving institution, Huie is continuing to serve the students and faculty of Henderson more than a century after its founding.

### **Introduction**

Huie Library is an academic library located on the campus of Henderson State University, in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. Henderson is Arkansas's public liberal arts university and the majority of the degrees awarded by the institution fall into the traditional arts and sciences. The university also supports other programs including business, education, nursing,

and aviation. Arkadelphia is a small town and many members of the community also utilize the resources that Huie holds. Located directly across the street from Henderson is the campus of Ouachita Baptist University, which shares its catalog with Huie.

### **Importance of the Study**

This study is important not only to library and information science researchers, but also to the history of higher education in Arkansas and in particular, Henderson State University. As this study relates to library science researchers, the change from a private, religious institution to a state supported college and the effect that had on the library and its collection is particularly important. It is also important to current library personnel around the state and region to help determine comparable data for their institutions.

### **Literature Review**

Both regional and national publications discuss the history of academic libraries. The first academic libraries appeared in the American Colonies, most notably at Harvard. Typically just a collection of books, it was not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century that classification systems and other modern elements began to appear in academic libraries.

The first library at Henderson State University was established at this time. The history of Huie Library is discussed in two publications that also address the overall history of Henderson State University and the institutions that it evolved from. *Henderson State College: The Methodist Years*, was written by John Gladden Hall, professor emeritus of history. This work focuses on the founding of the university as Arkadelphia Methodist College and follows the evolution of the institution to 1929, when the college was given to the State of Arkansas. While not a major part of the work, Hall does discuss the founding of the library and the growth that the library experienced as the college went through a major fire and rebuilding effort.

Another work that covers much of the same ground as Hall's work is Bennie Gene Bledsoe's *Henderson State University: Education Since 1890*. Bledsoe completed her career at Henderson as a professor of English. Bledsoe continues her narrative after the institution became a state supported school and traced the history of the university to the year 1980. The library and its evolution are an important part of her narrative. Other publications that discuss the history of Henderson also include some information about the library.

### ***Background and History of Huie Library***

Henderson State University was founded as Arkadelphia Methodist College and first opened its doors in September, 1890. The organization of the college had been completed in a very short time frame and the library was not founded until later in the school year. Reverend John McLauchlan, chair of the Board of Trustees, donated books and financial resources for the establishment of a library. The library was quickly named for him and faculty members were required to subscribe to at least one journal in their field and make copies available in the

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library to all faculty and students. The focus of the original collection was works that supported the liberal arts curriculum of the college. The first librarian was also hired at this time.

By 1904, the library had grown to include more than 1,000 volumes and was housed in the main campus building, which also contained all academic facilities, women's dormitory, offices, and a gymnasium, among other rooms. The library continued to grow with the college, now known as Henderson College, until February 3, 1914. That night, a fire swept through the building and destroyed the structure without any loss of life. In addition to more than a dozen pianos, all of the athletic trophies, and the personal effects of most of the female students, the entire library of more than three thousand volumes was saved from the flames. The students of the college met that night under a grove of pine trees near the site of the fire and decided to continue their studies regardless of the situation and classes continued to meet the next day. Over the next year, the library was housed in a temporary wooden structure as five new buildings were constructed. The library moved into the new main building, called College Hall. Once again, the building included other facilities, including classrooms, offices, and dormitory space for female students. During this period the McLauchlan name was dropped and the library was simply called the "college library."

The library slowly expanded from one room to three, all the while keeping separate reading areas for men and women. In 1920, the first card catalogue was created and the next year Mrs. Minnie Belle Huie was hired as the first professionally trained librarian. She led the library for more than twelve years and oversaw a large expansion in library holdings and also began using the Dewey Decimal system to catalog books.

The library continued to grow in order to meet guidelines established by both the Methodist educational committee and the North Central Association. By 1925, the library was able to meet the Methodist guidelines, but although the collection grew quickly through the donations of alumni and townspeople, North Central accreditation was not achieved.

In 1929, the Arkansas Methodist Conference decided to combine the college, which had been renamed Henderson-Brown College in honor of two of the largest donors and members of the Board of Trustees, with Hendrix College. Hendrix was also a Methodist College located in Conway, Arkansas. Upon learning of the merger, the townspeople of Arkadelphia and local Methodists approached the state legislature and offered the campus as a public college. The last class to graduate from Henderson-Brown College gave a copy of the Oxford English Dictionary to the library and the alumni association also made a donation of \$1,000 to the library. In the fall of 1929, Henderson State Teachers College opened its doors on the former campus of Henderson-Brown College.

Even with the Great Depression, financial support for the library continued to grow. In 1930, the library gained another room in College Hall and the first librarian with a degree in library science was hired that same year. In 1935, the library was moved to the old dining hall. Spending \$3,000 on the project, the new building was dedicated on September 28, 1934, and was named Huie Hall in honor of Mrs. Minnie Belle Huie, who served the college from 1921 until 1933. This move also marked the first time that male and female students were allowed to share the same reading room.

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By 1941, Huie Library was the third largest academic library in the state and the best state college library. Only Hendrix College and the University of Arkansas boasted larger libraries. A new library building was planned in 1941, but all construction was halted with the start of the war. With World War II draining most of the male students and much of the funding for higher education, Huie Library grew very slowly between 1941 and 1945. In the four years of the war, the collection did expand from 20,000 volumes to more than 24,000 and new lights were installed to allow readers to more easily utilize the texts.

Huie Library moved again in 1949. Arkansas Hall was constructed on the southwest corner of the campus and Huie moved into the south wing of the building. Constructed specifically to house the library and college auditorium, Arkansas Hall was the first building to expressly hold the library. With two stories, this was the largest space the library had occupied since its creation. Not only was the building air conditioned, it also offered facilities for students to listen to sound recordings and use microfilm readers. This move also marked the establishment of an agreement between Huie Library, the Arkadelphia Public School Library, the Clark County Library and the Ouachita Baptist College Library. This agreement allowed students and citizens to use any of the libraries while each still focused on serving their particular population.

While the library facilities improved, so did the quality of the collection. By 1960, the total collection had increased to more than 48,000 items and the annual budget increased from less than \$4,000 to more than \$15,000. The library staff was also expanded. By 1960, four librarians with MLS degrees were on the staff and were supported by student workers. These librarians also taught the four required courses for a minor in library science which allowed students to serve as school librarians after their graduation.

By the mid-1960s, the library was continuing to grow to keep pace with a rising enrollment. At this point, it had outgrown its space in Arkansas Hall and the Board of Trustees agreed to construct a new library facility nearby. Opened in 1967, the building was called Huie Library, sharing the name of the library collection. The building was constructed directly across the South Lawn of the college from Arkansas Hall and completed a new academic square where most classes and academic offices were located. The new building was three stories tall and had more than 33,000 square feet, which dwarfed the 6,000 square feet that the library enjoyed in Arkansas Hall.

Enrollment continued to rise and the library tried to keep up with the number of new students enrolling each year. When Henderson became a state supported school, it was called a teachers college. For the first two decades of state control, this was not really the case as most students still received degrees in traditional arts and sciences fields, while also obtaining teaching certificates. These offerings were expanded in 1951 when Henderson began offering graduate courses through the University of Arkansas and Henderson began offering graduate degrees in 1955. Huie Library supported these programs as they were created and students enrolled in them.

By 1970, five trained librarians served the university community, and they were supported by fifteen classified staff and fifteen student workers. Library science course

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offerings were also expanded and the library science minor was changed to 18 semester hours, all of which were taught by Huie librarians. The collection grew in response to comments made by North Central examining team members and more non-print material was collected in response. Faculty members became more involved with the selection of materials in their respective subject areas. A sixth librarian position was also added in 1975. An effort was also made to get more students into the library to use its resources and in 1979, the atrium of the second floor was first used for an art exhibit. Computer systems were introduced, including Online Computer Library Center, Inc. (OCLC) in 1980.

In spite of all of these gains, Huie needed several thousand new monographs to meet minimum American Library Association standards. In response, the budget was increased and by 1980, the budget was almost double what it was in 1970. A security system was also installed in an effort to keep materials from being stolen.

More computer based databases began to be added by the library in the 1980s. By 1989, four databases were being used by Huie, including ERIC, Sociofile, Medline, and Psychlit. Additionally, two OCLC terminals were in use. The biggest change that occurred during this time was a joint library automation project between Huie and Ouachita Baptist University. Separated by only a ravine and a highway, the two universities slowly moved away from being only rivals and adopted a few small measures to promote unity between the institutions, such as a combined academic calendar and homecoming. In 1984, the process began when the universities agreed to participate in a joint automation project. The original plan called for the two universities, Arkadelphia High School, and the Clark County Library to all share the system. In the end, only HSU and OBU participated. By 1985, the vendor had been selected and the funding was worked out. Finally, in June, 1989, the system came online and was followed in November by the unveiling of the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC). With upgrades in equipment and software and changes in vendors, the system is still in use today.

In 1993, an addition was constructed on the south side of the building, almost doubling the publically accessible square footage of Huie. Two stories tall, the addition contained a classroom, office space, and more room for the growing stacks. More computers and printers were added annually and by 2000, the library was the largest computer lab on campus. The transition to electronic and online databases continued and a class called Library Research Methods was added to the curriculum. In 2005, Huie closed the upper two stories of the building to patrons and embarked on a reclassification project. Henderson was the only member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges that did not use the Library of Congress Classification System. The main collection of monographs was converted during the summer and during the summer of 2006, the serials collection was converted. The reference collection and other smaller collections were converted during the academic year. Ouachita Baptist did not convert at the same time and continues to use the Dewey Decimal System.

Special Collections were first given to the library beginning in the 2000s. In 2003, Stephen Bissette donated his personal papers, chronicling his career in the comic book industry and other collections such as the Blackmon Aviation, Richard Bissette Coast Guard, and Loifficer European Popular Culture were also donated to Huie. By the end of the decade, a total

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of 13 collections were held by the library. More than 60 student computers and four community terminals were available, along with other electronic resources including a book scanner, electronic microfilm reader, and several services for blind and deaf patrons. Huie continues to add monographs and other items to the collection on a daily basis. By growing the collection, Huie is able to offer the most current items to Henderson students and the community.

Huie Library is a vibrant member of the Henderson State University community, as well as the larger surrounding Arkadelphia community. As both the university and the city around it grow, Huie will continue to evolve in order to provide information resources to its students and other patrons. It faces challenges, including an aging building and other physical limitations, but it will continue to offer the best resources available.

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### Bibliographical Sketch

David Sesser is the Special Collections Curator at Huie Library. He is currently completing a graduate degree in library and information science.