In 1906, celebrated photographer and ethnographer Edward S. Curtis documented Native Americans in his photographic series, “The North American Indian,” a 20-volume set of approximately 1,500 photogravures and 20-volumes of accompanying descriptive text. The cover is a sample of Curtis’ work titled, “A Feast Day at Acoma.” In the early 17th century, Franciscan missionaries introduced public Christian practices to the Pueblos. Since then, these rites have been incorporated into the traditional native ceremonial practices, especially performed on the days of the saints who were assigned to protect villages. (Photo by Edward Curtis)
Highlighted in this issue of Gatherings is the complete 20-volume series of Edward Curtis’ iconic photographic series, “The North American Indian.” Alden Library is among a handful of libraries worldwide that stewards this collection, which is one of the first to chronicle the significance of documentary photography, to record an important history of native culture, and to document a disappearing human experience.

The photographs and drawings from this collection have been used by Ohio University’s students and faculty as primary source materials in a variety of disciplines such as history, photography, and anthropology. Your support of University Libraries helps preserve and make accessible many of our fine documentary photography collections to OHIO’s community of researchers and worldwide.
(From left) Jacob Schlaerth, Turner Matthews and Eli Chambers, seniors in music composition, pause for a portrait with custom-made instruments created for Matthews' senior thesis composition at the 2014 student expo held in the Convocation Center on Thursday, April 10, 2014. Matthews' project was awarded the 2014 Librarian's Choice Award.
Each spring, Ohio University students pack the Convocation Center during the Student Research and Creative Activity Expo with presentations that include live performances, interactive demonstrations, exhibits and posters to showcase original research, scholarship and creative work.

A peek at the accompanying photos demonstrates the levels of excitement by the over 800 students when given the chance to share their knowledge of what they have learned, as well as a chance to share what they intend to learn with the over 2,000 visitors from the OHIO community.

As part of the event, participants of the expo, undergraduate and graduate students, qualify to win up to $200 in awards for top projects, organized by discipline and/or subject, by several panels of judges—one of which includes Ohio University Libraries’ panel of librarians and staff.

Jennifer Bauer, a second-year master’s student in geological sciences and one of the winners of the Libraries’ Graduate Awards in 2015, was awarded for her project, “Ordovician Atlas of Ancient Life: From Fossil Identification to the Classroom.”

Among the students working with Bauer, was Wesley Parker, a PACE student and a junior in geology and Latin American studies who worked on content generation for the website.

“There’s the saying that history repeats itself. Well, geological history repeats itself too,” Parker said. “That’s why I study geology, to understand what happened, so I can understand what’s going to happen.”

He continued by saying, “And the Libraries—plays an invaluable role in fostering that comprehension.”
Wesley Parker, a junior in geology and Latin American studies, delivers a lively presentation to facilitate discussion of "The Ordovician Atlas of Ancient Life: From Fossil Fuel Identification to the Classroom." The poster details the research that went behind the interactive website generated by Parker, as well as a team of students on Thursday, April 10, 2014.

Alaina Morman, a graduate student in environmental studies and the Libraries' Choice Award winner, talks about her project, "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," with Scott Seaman, dean of Ohio University Libraries, during the 2015 student expo at the Ohio University Convocation Center on Thursday, April 9, 2015.

(Megan Purcell, a graduate student in social work and one of the 2015 Graduate Award winners for research on her perception of domestic violence among mental health employees, stands alongside her professor on the project, Mingun Lee, associate professor in the Department of Social and Public Health, and Scott Seaman, dean of Ohio University Libraries, to present her project. Purcell hopes the research will be used to educate future mental health workers at shelters and clinics.
Hayley Herock, a senior in human biology and one of the awardees of the Libraries’ Undergraduate Awards in 2015, placed for her bio-fuel research: “What we’re trying to prove is that there is a reason for researching plants for bio-fuel,” said Herock.

Those students are just a small impressive representation of what students are able to build with ingenuity and guidance by individual faculty reaching across Ohio University colleges, departments and schools.

The expo is sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Creative Activity, the dean of the Graduate College, Office of the President, Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, and University Libraries, whose funds are supported by the Vernon R. and Marion Alden Endowment.

The Alden endowment, created in honor of Vernon R. Alden, the 15th president of Ohio University who made the construction of a new library a priority during his administration, helps provide high quality resources and services that are critical for the effective teaching, learning and, of course, research by the University and beyond.
The images captured by a camera’s lens can chronicle a moment, a place or a time in the past. Not only do photographs represent a piece of history, but they also serve as important primary source materials in education and research.

By the age of 23, photographer and ethnographer Edward S. Curtis, a Wisconsin native, had developed a distinguished reputation for photographing portraits and landscapes. After traveling with anthropologist George Bird Grinnell to photograph the Piegan Reservation in Montana, Curtis became interested in publishing a project of a similar magnitude. In 1906, he set out to document the traditional customs and way of life of Native Americans.
Snake Dancers Entering the Plaza

"At the right stand the Antelopes, in front of the booth containing the snake-jars. The Snakes enter the plaza, encircle it four times with military tread, and then after a series of songs remarkable for their irresistible movement, they proceed to dance with the reptiles." (Photo and text by Edward Curtis)
According to Gilbert King, author of “Edward Curtis’ Epic Project to Photograph Native Americans,” Curtis headed west after financier J.P. Morgan endowed him with monetary installments that totaled $75,000. The publication was to be completed within a period of five years.

Instead, after nearly three decades of fieldwork, Curtis and his staff of researchers, writers and equipment handlers completed a photographic series titled “The North American Indian,” 1,500 images within a 20-volume photographic collection and 20 volumes of accompanying text and images. The first volume of the collection, published in 1907, included a foreword by President Theodore Roosevelt.

In Volume XII, titled “Hopi,” which was released in 1922, Curtis writes:

“My first visit to the villages of the Hopi was in the year 1900, at which time a substantial number of pictures were made…it should be noted that the copyright dates do not always coincide with the year in which the photographs were made.”
East Mesa Girls

“There are now eight Hopi pueblos, [and] all of them are on the tops of mesas...”
(Photo and text by Edward Curtis)
“The scope of the project was massive,” said Miriam Intrator, special collections librarian. “Imagining Curtis and his team traveling the Western United States, using the means of transportation and photographic equipment available at the time—this was a highly impressive undertaking.”

Today, a complete set is housed in Ohio University Libraries’ Mahn Center for Archives and Special Collections, where it is part of the Libraries’ Rare Book Collection.

According to Northwestern University’s Digital Library Collections web page, Curtis proposed 500 complete sets be published and made available through subscription. However, only 220 subscriptions were actually sold and less than 300 sets were printed, which speaks to the exceptional nature of owning a complete set.

It is currently unknown when the Libraries acquired “The North American Indian.” However, it is likely that the Libraries has maintained ownership of the complete set since at least the 1930s. Many of the book spines in the Libraries’ collection bear the distinct markings from OHIO’s Carnegie Library (1905-1930), as well as bookplates from the Chubb Library (1930-1968).

A Mono Home

“The Mono inhabit East Central California from Owens Lake to the head of the southerly effluents of the Walker River. The snow-capped Sierra Nevada rises abruptly on the western border of this inland basin. The wickiup shown in the plate is a typical winter shelter, and the utensils are burden-baskets and sieves, or winnowing-trays. All these baskets were appurtenances of the one wickiup.”

(Photo and text by Edward Curtis)
Sacred Bags of the Horn Society—Blood

"The Horn Society is the custodian of a cult of about which the natives are loath to give details. It stands apart from the system of age-societies, which though partly religious in character were more concerned with warfare and preservation of order in camp..." (Photo and text by Edward Curtis)
Wife of Modoc Henry-Klamate

“The Klamate live in a country of lakes and marshes, broad meadows, and forested mountains. The reservation itself includes an extensive area of splendid pines.”

(Photo and text by Edward Curtis)
Korok Baskets

"The basketry of the Korok is of great interest. The usual materials are hazel rod for the warp, roots of the digger or the yellow pine for the weft, and Xerophyllum grass for white overlay, bark of the maidenhair fern for black, and fibers from the stem of Woodwardia fern, dyed in alder-bark juice in the mouth of the workwoman, for red. Represented in the plate are the receptacle for the storage of seeds and nuts, the burden-basket, the winnowing tray, various sizes of mush-baskets and food containers, and the cradle-basket."

(Photograph and text by Edward Curtis)

Wife of Modoc

"The Klamate live in a country of lakes and marshes, broad meadows, and forested mountains. The reservation itself includes an extensive area of splendid pines."

(Photograph and text by Edward Curtis)

A Hopi Mother

"My first visit to the villages of the Hopi was in the year 1900, at which time a substantial number of pictures were made. I again visited these interesting people in 1902, and further work was done in the years 1904, 1906, 1911, 1912 and 1919... It should be noted that the copyright dates do not always coincide with the year in which the photographs were made."

(Photograph and text by Edward Curtis)

Sacred Bags of the Horn Society—Blood

"The Horn Society is the custodian of a cult of about which the natives are loath to give details. It stands apart from the system of age-societies, which though partly religious in character were more concerned with warfare and preservation of order in camp..."

(Photograph and text by Edward Curtis)
Shatila–Pomo

“The Pomo formerly occupied about half the area of Mendocino, Sonoma and Lake counties, besides a small isolated territory in Glenn and Colusa. The survivors are found in greatest number in the vicinity of the town of Ukiah…”

(The photo and text by Edward Curtis)

Gathering–Hanamh–Papago

“Hanamh is the Piman name for the cholla cactus, and its fruit. The natives gather the fruit of this spiny plant in large quantities, and it forms a food of material importance to the several tribes living within its habitat…”

(The photo and text by Edward Curtis)

Winter–Apsaroke

“In the thick forests along the banks of the Rocky mountain streams, the Apsaroke [or Crows] made their winter camps.”

(The photo by Edward Curtis)

A Chief’s Daughter

“Pride of birth played a prominent role in the life of the Pacific Coast Indians. Society was rigidly divided into nobility, common people, and slaves taken in war. No woman of common birth could afford the luxury of the fur robe worn by the subject of this picture.”

(The photo and text by Edward Curtis)

Nootka Woman

Wearing Cedar-Bark Blanket

“Both sexes wore cedar-bark or fur robes pinned together at the right side, and women had in addition bark aprons extending from waist to knees.”

(The photo and text by Edward Curtis)

The Potter–Santa Clara

“The Tewa Indians, a branch of the Tanoan linguistic stock, occupy five villages [of which Santa Clara is one] in the Rio Grande Valley north of Santa Fe [New Mexico]… and a single pueblo adjacent to the Hopi village on the East Mesa in Arizona.”

(The photo and text by Edward Curtis)

Kenown–Nunivak

“A young woman from one of the villages on Nunivak Island. The nose-ring and labret [lip piercing] of beads are typical of this tribe.”

(The photo and text by Edward Curtis)

A Family Group–Noatak

“In midwinter, some of the most courageous families undertake a truly remarkable journey overland from the Noatak River to the sea… in order to arrive in season for the early seal-hunting.”

(The photo by Edward Curtis)
A Hopi Mother

“My first visit to the villages of the Hopi was in the year 1900, at which time a substantial number of pictures were made. I again visited these interesting people in 1902, and further work was done in the years 1904, 1906, 1911, 1912 and 1919...It should be noted that the copyright dates do not always coincide with the year in which the photographs were made.”

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“The basketry of the Korok ...usual materials are hazel rod for the warp, roots of the digger or the yellow pine for the weft, and Xerophyllum grass for white overlay, bark of the maidenhair fern for black, and fibers from the stem of Woodwardia fern, dyed in alder-bark juice in the mouth of the workwoman, for red. Represented in the plate are the receptacle for the storage of seeds and nuts, the burden-basket, the winnowing tray, various sizes of mush-baskets and food containers, and the cradle-basket.”

(Photograph and text by Edward Curtis)
Intrator suggested possible ways the Library could have obtained the complete series.

“One is that the Library subscribed to the series, and received each volume as it was produced,” said Intrator. “Two is that the Library purchased the set as a whole sometime after the publication of all volumes was complete. Third is that the entire set was donated to the Library.”

“The North American Indian” is a primary source for researchers like Natalia de la Torre, a graduate student in production design and technology, who accessed the collection in spring 2015.

“My research for the 19th century art history class is specifically on the modifications and manipulations Curtis did to his photography both in setting up the scenes and portraits and afterwards altering of the negatives themselves,” said de la Torre. “This was generally done to preserve the historical aspects of prints and to remove any modern bias.”

In conducting her research, de la Torre not only viewed Curtis’ photographs, but she also utilized the Libraries’ many books about Edward Curtis and his work.

“As a scientist, he [Curtis] gathered histories, instructions and rituals, both to understand and deliver a more cohesive artistic representation of the tribe,” said de la Torre.

Sara Harrington, head of arts and archives, said viewing the photographs from the series, in addition to secondary sources, will provide well-rounded research.

“... That’s kind of an interesting archival experience to consider Curtis’ volumes [as] a primary source, and then to look at the secondary sources about Curtis, which is something that I would encourage students to do,” said Harrington.

According to Dr. Jody Lamb, associate dean of the College of Fine Arts, the level of detail in Curtis’ photographs is a result of the slow, extensive printmaking process that results in a photographic style called photogravure.
Inscription Rock

“Inscription Rock, or EL Morro (The Castle), as the Spaniards called it, is a striking landmark on the ancient trail between Acoma and Zuni. Beginning with Juan de Onate, who passed here in April 1605 on his return to the Rio Grande from ‘the south sea,’ Spanish explorers and administrators recorded their names and dates on smooth surfaces of the cliff, which reveal also numerous Indian petroglyphs.”

(Photo and text by Edward Curtis)
When creating these large, well-preserved photogravures, Curtis worked with renowned art photographer Alfred Stieglitz, who is known for influencing the mainstream acceptance of photography as an art form.

“When taking images that size you can’t have people moving because it’s not a very speedy process and you need so much light.” said Lamb. “It’s a very technical process that only a few people can do, but you take a photograph, you sort of etch—burn almost—the image onto a copper plate and then print the photograph off of that.”

Lamb identifies one important attribute associated with using this “very carefully thought out” process. “All photographs fade in someway or turn color in some way, even the black and whites—photogravures don’t,” said Lamb.

Through her research de la Torre came to view the completion of the series as a union between two distinct disciplines—science and art.

“Though Curtis approached the gathering of information on these tribes scientifically, his photographs were handled with sentiment and romance, shown in the lush materials used to create the bound photographic books,” said de la Torre. “The images conceived were printed in sepia ink …before being bound into books of hand-tooled Moroccan leather.”

Lamb says one of the most remarkable aspects of the collection is found within the text that accompanies the photographic volumes. The photographs and printed volumes combine visual and written elements to provide a record of historical

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**A Hopi Mother**

Possibly, Curtis’ signature found on the back of the image, “A HOPI MOTHER.”
information, languages, foods, music, agriculture, arts and crafts, dwellings, clothing, biographical interviews, oral traditions, recreational activities and ceremonies of Native American tribes.

Curtis, who often traveled with people who spoke the languages of the Native Americans, was able to develop a trusted relationship with the people he photographed. As a result, he was able to capture images and information about day-to-day traditions and ceremonies that had not previously been documented.

“The depth of his knowledge on each tribe was critical to his success in garnering support and acceptance from the community members themselves. He would take months, and sometimes years, corresponding, living and working amongst the tribal members to gain their trust,” said de la Torre.

Despite the fact that much can be learned from the photographs and accompanying text, “The North American Indian” series has faced its share of modern-day criticisms related to the modification process of the photographs.

“They’re complicated. If you’ve done some research, you’ve already found out that you can’t trust all of them for being literal representations of that time period,” said Lamb.

“…What he’s trying to capture is already gone...”

When creating photogravures, objects can be covered on the glass plate negatives and removed from
Witchita Grass–House

"The relatively permanent character of the typical dwelling of the Wichita indicates the sedentary life of this tribe. They were farmers in the main, but hunted the buffalo and other game in the season."

(Edward Curtis)
An unidentified golfer prepares to make a putt near a row of globes on the fifth floor of Alden. Each hole was differentiated by special themes, decorations and obstacles inspired by the event sponsors, the Ohio University Libraries and the 2016 Student Research and Creative Activity Expo.
Prizes, food, fun, and of course, mini-golf were all provided during Ohio University’s Dads Weekend at the 2015 Alden Open held November 7. The 18-hole mini-golf event took place on the third, fourth, and fifth floors of Alden Library with over 350 dads, students, faculty, staff and community members playing the three-floor golf course.

As a member of the team of event planners, we knew that in order to hold a successful event, sponsors and donations were essential.

As sponsors started flowing in, like our lead sponsor, The Legend Group, promotional materials began flowing out: news stories, digital and print posters, radio announcements, flyers and posts on all forms of social media were created such as inaugurating a ‘Spotlight Sponsor’ on Facebook to highlight businesses supporting the Libraries. It was very exciting for me to see how much attention we were getting—even four to five weeks before the event!
Our plan of action: At 4:00 p.m. on Friday, November 6, the course was unloaded and then distributed to specific floors by staff and volunteers. Setting up the course on three floors allowed dads to see an academic library while also giving their sons and daughters the opportunity to learn more about what Alden has available to them—especially if they weren’t already regular library users.

Two such players were Jeff McCuen and his daughter Lindsay McCuen, a freshman in accounting, finance and business pre-law, who spent the afternoon playing mini-golf in Alden. When asked what brought him out to the Dads Weekend event, Jeff McCuen replied, “Just the golf course. It’s a lot more than I...
anticipated. I thought it’d be a little simpler, but it’s nice that it’s so spread out, and you get to see the whole Library.”

Everyone who attended the event received small giveaways: t-shirts, luggage tags, and pen/highlighters along with access to a table full of delicious food that changed as the morning hours moved into the afternoon. Intriguing signage was also placed throughout the three floors bringing attention to the Libraries’ resources as well as information about study spaces, special collections, and subject librarians.

The 2015 Alden Open, the most heavily attended golf event that we have ever had, raised nearly $2,000 to help support the Ohio University Student Research and Creative Activity Expo. Without the generous sponsors and their donations, the 2015 mini-golf event wouldn’t have been possible. The team at Alden Library greatly appreciates all the support and hopes to see you on the fairway in 2016! 🏌️

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Tracy Presser, a senior in child and family studies, has worked as a PACE student with the Libraries since July 2015.
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Acoma Belfry

“With the possible exception of Sia, Acoma possesses the oldest church among the Pueblos. Its bell is dated 1710, but the massive structure may have been erected as early as 1699.”

(Photo and text by Edward Curtis)