

# Fun at O'Kelly Library

Mae L. Rodney

The groundbreaking for the C.G. O'Kelly addition and renovation—which will double the size of the university's library—took place over a year before the construction project began. The wait built up anticipation and excitement for the project. The construction company kept the interest level high by having a construction truck plunge nose first over a small hill and into the site. That was certainly an eye opener for the staff as they arrived at work at 7:55 a.m. And, as if to say, "If you like that, watch this": on TWO separate occasions a large crane tumbled forward into the future academic hub of the campus.

Optimism flows through the veins of librarians who must work in a library under siege by a construction project. Although the architect forewarned us of some inconveniences, he observed that they should all be announced and coordinated. For the first six months, all inconveniences were greeted with, "This is only temporary; just think of the beautiful building we will have." Not even the simultaneous appearance of the campus telecommunications director and the project superintendent caused any extra heartbeats:

"Where are the library computer lines?" asked the telecommunications director.

"I do not know..."—and before the complete answer could be given, the Catalog/Automation Librarian appeared saying that ALL the automated services were disconnected, including the online catalog and the OCLC cataloging terminals. With one lucky strike, a backhoe had demolished automation. THE LIBRARY WAS DEAD! The blackened terminals haunted us for two days. After the systems were knocked out another two times, the director's favorite words became, "I don't-care-how-you-fix-it, but fix it NOW!" However, the students proved that they very much like the online catalog, for on all three occasions they preferred waiting for its restoration to using the old card catalog.

During one of the few cold days of the 1988-89 winter, the plumbers left the pipes to the old

library exposed and there was NO water the next morning! Having to cross the street to use the bathroom was bad enough, but NO COFFEE....!!!

## Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head

Working in a building that is being joined to another is one thing; but working in a building that has only one-half of the roof during the rainy season is quite another. (Parts of the roof were blown off three times between May 5 and November 10, 1988). When the sun was shining, there was the unpredictable rhythm of air drills and the workers dumping supplies on the roof. On other days, the rain provided a constant pitter-patter on the plastic that protected the furniture or in the many rain buckets.

## But in the End

One November afternoon a student asked, "Where are the books?" (The book collection had been moved to the new building in August.) The director smiled and said that the library had had a big yard sale and it was a little more successful than anticipated...all of the books had been sold.



Bibliotherapy taken perhaps too far.

Mae L. Rodney is Director of Library Services for O'Kelly Library, Winston Salem State University, Winston-Salem.