



Library History

Officially opened in June 2000, the John D. Ong Library is a 21,000 sq. ft building designed by the Pittsburgh-based architectural firm of McLachlan, Cornelius & Filoni. The current library honors John D. Ong, who served as WRA Board President from 1977 to 1995.

Previous Library Locations

1826–1827: Rev. William Hanford's study on Aurora Street

1827–1836: Middle College (demolished in 1912)

1836–1882: The Chapel (ground floor)

1882–1903: Athenaeum (top floor, west)

1916–1921: Seymour Hall

1921–1963: The Chapel (ground floor)

1963–2000: Wilson Hall

Technology

While the library building conveys 19th century charm and grandeur, it subtly offers 21st century technology. Personal computers are available throughout the library. The entire building is equipped with Wi-Fi and the computer lab on the lower level is equipped with more than 20 computer learning stations for class or individual use.

Library Learning

Locating and evaluating information is not always easy. Through carefully designed information literacy lessons, librarians help students learn key information skills. These skills emphasize general information problem solving and research processes. Librarians work closely with faculty to coordinate research skills instruction with curriculum needs. The instructional classroom on the lower level is a state-of-the-art learning facility.

Study Rooms

Nine group study rooms are available on the main and upper levels of the library. These rooms can be used for both individual and group study.

Archives

Western Reserve Academy's revered history is documented in the Academy Archives Collection housed on the lower level of the library. Included in the collection are yearbooks, faculty and alumni records, school publications, photographs, correspondence, audiotapes, videotapes and 16mm films. The Archives Collection is open to students, alumni, faculty and historians.

UNIQUE LIBRARY FEATURES

Bible Lectern

Location: Anne Chapman Reading Area (Upper Level)

This was designed to support a copy of the Bible or other religious manuscripts used in a monastic community where portions of the Scripture were either read aloud or sung. Around the octagonal center portion of the stand can be found the symbols of the Four Evangelists: Man (Matthew), Lion (Mark), Ox (Luke), and Eagle (John). It may be a late 1400's lectern, probably purchased by benefactor James W. Ellsworth before 1914.



Gargoyles

Location: Outside on the southeast side of the building

Many cultures throughout history have placed gargoyles upon the roof of important buildings. Jamie Stevenson, a WRA Trustee and the library building project manager, thought of the gargoyles as his signature. Mr. Stevenson also referred to the common belief that they are protectors, keeping away evil from the building and its occupants.



Globe

Location: Main Level

The globe sculpture is an original piece of art designed exclusively for WRA by Tom Antonishak, a world-renowned artist and sculptor who has art galleries in Poland, OH, and Avon, CO. The sculpture, donated by the Ong family, represents the tie between books and the adventures they stir within the imagination of young and old.



Names

Location: Upper Level

The upper level walls of the library are lined with the names of influential authors, historians and philosophers. All the names were chosen by and are the favorites of John D. Ong, who served as WRA Board President from 1977 to 1995.



La Licorne (The Unicorn)

Location: Anne Chapman Reading Area (Upper Level)

Harold M. Hahn, a world-renowned ship model builder, designed and built this replica of *La Licorne*, a 32-gun French frigate. In 1992, Robert and Martha Sugar gave the La Licorne to the school in honor of their two daughters, Mary Sugar '93 and Robin Sugar '96 (who are also the granddaughters of Mr. Hahn). To learn more about the history of the actual *La Licorne*, ask a librarian to see a copy of the article that Hahn wrote for *The Nautical Research Journal*.

