

Moving 'em by the Book

Thousands of volumes are being stored as library at Fresno State expands.

By Jim Steinberg / [The Fresno Bee](#)
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Workers from William B. Meyer move books from Henry Madden Library at Fresno State onto a truck Thursday. The books are being stored in a warehouse during a \$91 million expansion that one official says will create "the architectural jewel in Fresno State's crown."
Kurt Hegre / The Fresno Bee

The first of more than 900,000 books and bound periodicals began their move from Fresno State's Henry Madden Library to an undisclosed warehouse Thursday in preparation for the library's \$91 million update and expansion.

From now through the new library's completion in fall 2008, students, faculty members and other library users will place requests on campus, then wait for library staffers to deliver material from south Fresno.

Michael Gorman, dean of library services, and the library's staff have scheduled a news briefing for this morning to discuss the move.

Gorman said previously that the new library will become "the architectural jewel in Fresno State's crown." Gorman said in a campus publication that the old library building was outmoded. It was designed to serve 13,000 full-time students.

Fresno State now serves 21,000 students, including those taking less than full course loads.

Workers who specialize in moving and storing books traveled from Wilmington, Del., to transfer truckloads of material, some dating back hundreds of years.

Some of the 40 workers loading and unloading books Thursday said their most crucial task was to keep volumes in order and not to "mess the books up."

Book mover Ronald Jones of Delaware said he felt the importance of his work. He looked at rolling trays of books sitting outside the Madden Library in late-morning sun.

"They're in a lot of heat," Jones said. "We're going to move them into shade."

The rented storage space is near railroad tracks, Freeway 99 and the looming trash mountain in a landfill visible from the freeway.

Library staffers and student assistants placed books in numbered, Library of Congress order in the air-conditioned warehouse.

Among the first to move was "Ancient History of the Egyptians, Carthaginians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Macedonians and Grecians," by Charles Rollin. A handwritten note said he was born Jan. 30, 1661, and died in Paris in 1741.

Books, including George Rawlinson's translation of "The History of Herodotus," a Greek historian, traveled from California State University, Fresno, to the warehouse in rented trucks.

Library staff members said they would move every book in the Madden Library's north wing by the end of summer.

The university will demolish that wing in the spring and construct the new building in its place.

Eventually, the new construction will connect to the library's south wing, built in 1980, where most Madden services will continue through the transition, although some under temporary limitations.

The expanded, renovated library will comprise 315,600 square feet, including reading rooms, study areas, collections, library administration and study carrels, group study rooms, specialized libraries and special collections.

The library will feature the latest information technology and 3,600 "reader stations."

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