ONU’S UNDERGRADUATE LIBRARIES
Under President Lehr, students and faculty were served by the libraries of three literary societies and a general reading room. The Adelphian Society Library and the reading room were housed from 1871 through 1913 in the old Normal School Building, which was on the location where Lehr Memorial is today.
Adelphian Society Library interior ca. 1880s/1890s

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Franklin and Philomathean Society Libraries, 1871 – 1913

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Philomathean Society Library interior ca. 1880s/1890s

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University Reading Room interior ca. 1890s

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Ohio Normal University

Library

No. 24

Rent 20 cts. per Term.

Grade

Value $1

Regulations:

1. The holder is requested to use this book with care, and will be held responsible for all damages to it while in his possession.

2. Any one renting this book must deposit its value with the Librarian when taking it, which amount will be refunded, less the rental, when the book is returned.

3. Half rent charged for any time less than half a term. When the time exceeds half a term, full rent is charged.

4. All books must be returned to the Librarian by the holder in person before leaving school.

Early Ohio Normal University library regulations ca. 1900
The Adelphian, Franklin, and Philomathean literary societies decided in 1913 to turn over their collections to the university and all three previously separate libraries were moved to the Administration Building, which is on the site of today’s Hill Building.

That following November, disaster occurred.
The three previously separate literary society libraries were moved to the Administration Building in 1913, but in November of that year a fire reduced the building to a shell. Fortunately no one was injured, and the structure was rebuilt as the current Hill Memorial. Parts of the collection were saved and the following year they were transferred to the new library on the second floor of Lehr Memorial, where the library was located until 1930.
Lehr Memorial Library, 1915-1930

After the fire and destruction of the Administration Building, the surviving portions of the library collection were moved to Lehr Memorial’s second floor. Lehr was the library’s home from 1915 through 1930.
Brown Hall Library, 1930-1953

The Ohio Northern University library collection was transferred from the second floor of Lehr Memorial to Brown Hall in 1930. Brown Hall, which stood in front of Hill Building along South Main Street, housed the library collection until 1953 and was later demolished in 1976. Brown Hall had originally been intended as an auditorium and gym.
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By 1953, a combination of rapid enrollment growth and accreditation pressure dictated that the library move yet again, this time to Presser Hall.
Presser Hall Library becomes Heterick Memorial Library, 1954

In 1954, one year after relocating the collection to Presser Hall, the library received its current name of Heterick Memorial Library in honor of Frances Felker Heterick and her husband Dr. Robert Heterick, who had generously supported the library.
Library book stacks and reading room, ca. 1950s

From 1953 until 1968, the library collection was housed in Presser Hall. In 1954 the library received its current name of Heterick Memorial Library in honor of Frances Felker Heterick and her husband Dr. Robert Heterick, who had generously supported the library.
Library listening stations and reading room, ca. 1950s/1960s

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The library collection was housed in Presser Hall from 1953 until 1968 and given its current name of Heterick Memorial Library in 1954. When the collection first moved to Presser, what is now Snyder Recital Hall became the reading room and the stage was converted to offices and book stacks. The library collection was moved again in 1968 and the space where it had been housed in Presser Hall was able to be converted into present-day Snyder Recital Hall.
Ohio Northern University enrollment, 1929-1965

The 1950s and 1960s were a period of rapid growth at Ohio Northern University. The student body numbered roughly 900 when the library moved into Presser, but by the 1960’s, it was over 2,500 and a new library was needed.
Future site of Heterick Memorial Library, ca. 1950s/1960s

A new library was needed, and the university-owned farm to the west of the older parts of campus provided the solution. Ariel photograph is looking east.
Future site of Heterick Memorial Library, ca. 1950s/1960s

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Construction of Heterick Memorial Library, 1967

Construction of the new library was well underway in 1967 when this photograph was taken of the west side of the future library, with McIntosh Center in the background.
On Valentine’s Day 1968, students, faculty, administration, and staff hand-carried boxes of books from Presser Hall to the new Heterick Memorial Library. In exchange for their help, volunteers were given coffee and donuts throughout the day and classes were cancelled. That evening, volunteers were treated to steak dinners in the cafeteria.
Moving the library book collection, February 14, 1968

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In 1968, the library’s entire book collection as well as the ashes of the Hetericks were relocated to the new library building. The library collection had received its current name of Heterick Memorial Library in 1954 in honor of Frances Felker Heterick and her husband Dr. Robert Heterick, who had generously supported the library over the years.
Dedication of the new library building, October 1968

The dedication for the new Heterick Memorial Library was held in October of 1968 on the lawn in front of the library where the English Chapel now stands. The photograph is looking west, with the Robertson-Evans Pharmacy Building to the right.
Until a third floor was added in 2000, Heterick Memorial Library appeared as it does in the photo above, with two floors dedicated to the library collection.
“Form and Color No. 2,” ca. late 1960s

“Form and Color No. 2” is a massive steel sculpture that has hung in the main stairwell of Heterick since the late 1960s. Artists Bruce Grimes of ONU and Fred Pallini of Ohio University created the sculpture out of old water heaters. Grimes and Pallini designed the piece to impact the library’s unique architecture as though “a part of the building’s internal structure had burst from the brick” (Pallini).
The periodicals section of Heterick Memorial Library was located on the second floor of the building in the 1970s. At that time the library was only two stories tall.
Library card catalog at Heterick, ca. 1960s/1970s

Patrons regularly used the Heterick Memorial Library card catalog for their research needs until the computer catalog replaced the card catalog in the early 1990s.
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The Heterick Memorial Library card catalog was replaced with ONU’s first computer catalog in 1992, an event that was celebrated with a ribbon cutting dedication that fall. There was little resistance to the new computerized catalogs, and patrons quickly learned how to use the computer terminals’ catalog software for their research needs.
Heterick Memorial Library celebrated the upcoming first and second floor renovations and third floor addition with a groundbreaking ceremony during the summer of 1999.
Heterick Memorial Library, ca. 2000s

Heterick Memorial Library as it looked after the third floor was added in 1999/2000. The two existing floors were renovated at that time as well.
An exciting transformation of Heterick Memorial Library’s first floor was made possible in 2016 thanks to a generous donation from ONU alumni Oscar and Judy Mifsud. The entire first floor was renovated to create the Mifsud Collaborative Learning Center, and the renovation also included adding the highly-anticipated Northern Lights Café.