

Online Library Report. Fall 2017

Respectfully submitted by Bob Pries

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The online library began in the Fall of 2013 with the inclusion of articles from the Biodiversity Heritage Library. In the last 4 years the library has grown to over 2,220 articles, catalogs, books and journals. The stated goal of the Iris Encyclopedia was always to bring all Iris information together in one place and the literature containing that information obviously needed to be a part of the Iris Encyclopedia. Recently it has been suggested that an Encyclopedia should be in a library and not a Library in an Encyclopedia. On the internet I am not sure those types of distinctions apply anymore.

Funding & Goals

The Online Hager/Du Bose Memorial Iris Library is funded by the Hager/Du Bose Trust managed by the AIS Foundation. The entire cost per year for IT support and server costs for its website are now at \$2,000 per year. Because the Online Library is managed by AIS and supported by The Foundation I have created an advisory committee combining individuals from each. Presently the committee has just begun work and is working on a mission statement to set its goals and scope. I invite all AIS members to send comments to me as to their thoughts.

Continued redesign of library

The Encyclopedia and The Library are always changing, and in the process of being created, as they are also being used. Therefore there are always areas under construction. And areas that may seem finished are really in a state of flux, and will change as more is added. For example when there were only a couple hundred catalogs in the Library a gallery of their covers showed a interesting progression from 1780 to present. But as numbers were added, the galleries had to be broken up into decades, which again showed sort of a visual essay of what was available in that decade. As more were added, they had to be broken up to yearly galleries. The older galleries are still useful as an overview but cannot include everything that would be in a year's gallery. There are presently 1,425 catalogs as I write. But to completely cover the field I suspect we will have over 5,000 if they have not yet been lost. Please help find new and old catalogs to be scanned. As member's estates are dismantled, we may have one-time-chances, to capture many before being lost forever.

Scope of acquisitions

One advisory committee member suggested to me that the library should contain all AIS literature including Region Newsletters and Affiliate Newsletters. I have made a place in the library for both. Currently there are 46 regional newsletters that I have found online but it would a great help if past editors of these still have files on their computers to send me those files. Also if you have old copies we can scan them. Surprisingly I did find one regional newsletter on Google books, I doubt they had permission to copy it but I could not download it from there either.

As you can see the Online Library is still very much in its formative stages. Now is a great time to get involved and/or to voice your ideas. I could use helpers.

Ultimate searchability

One simple task is correcting transcripts of optical character recognition. If the transcripts are accurate every item in the library could be searched in one search!!! No other library has reached that level of searchability.