The new 295,000-square-foot Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center opened its doors Aug. 11, 2008 at the dawn of a new century, and ushered in a unique building fit for the “post-Gutenberg” generation.

The Knowledge Center isn’t just a new generation library; it’s not exactly a library anymore, according to Steve Zink, vice president for information technology and dean of libraries.

“Libraries are very old institutions,” Zink says. “They’ve been around a long time. They were built when information was scarce. Libraries were necessary to collect information and keep track of it, or else it would be lost.” But even 15 years ago, with the burgeoning World Wide Web and ease of creating photos, videos and documents, it was obvious that information was no longer a rare commodity. “It was more of a problem pruning out the good information from the bad.”

The Knowledge Center’s functional design was developed not by library consultants, but by the University’s information technology and library staff, Zink says.

They were designing something that had no precedent: a place that not only featured the traditional open stacks of a library, but was geared for the production and sharing of knowledge, collaborative learning, and for a new group of students: the Net Generation.

“Studies are showing that young people are wired differently,” Zink says. “Their brains are developing differently. They can multitask more efficiently. There’s some thought that this may have to do with the fact that they are using objects rather than words. They visualize better. The graphical user interface is easier for them.”

“We,” he notes, referring to anyone not born in the past couple of decades, “were brought up with a word-based interface.” For 600 years, the printed page was the primary means of handing down information through the ages, as well as communicating it broadly. “Text was simple,” he notes. “But graphics were costly and painstakingly difficult to produce.” Today, there has been a dramatic shift toward coupling text with images and video. Students are learning to use digital images readily. Multimedia is becoming the norm.

“We are entering a post-Gutenberg age,” Zink states. Soon, you won’t just have a chemistry textbook telling you about a chemical reaction, you’ll be able to click on a link and see the reaction. “It’s already beginning to happen with electronic textbooks. There’s a realization that the delivery mechanism is almost inseparable from the content. Scholarly materials are moving further and further away from being printed to being interactive.”

President Milton Glick says the Knowledge Center is all about this sea change taking place in the realm of interactivity, communication and learning.

“The critical word with the Knowledge Center is convergence,” Glick notes. “What we are seeing is a convergence of the historic library and the printed page with technology. Together they create a wealth of information that we have never had before. It’s not just how information becomes available anymore—this building changes the way we will use informa-
Alums can borrow Knowledge Center books and videos for free

The Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center offers free library borrowing privileges to all alumni and, for a $25 annual fee, offers privileges to the public. With the library card, alumni and guests can borrow all books, videos and audio tapes that are available to students, faculty and staff. Borrower’s card holders can also log in from off-campus and reserve items via the online catalog. In addition, the Knowledge Center will soon have four guest computers that allow visitors to the building access to close to 300 databases such as LexisNexis Academic, which indexes and provides full text news, business, legal, medical, and reference materials and links to congressional and statistical information; as well as Academic Search Premier (EBSCOhost), which indexes 7,800-plus scholarly journals and provides full text for 4,000 titles. See the Library Services Desk to inquire about a borrower’s card.

All Knowledge Center visitors are welcome in the Special Collections Department and the Basque Studies Library, which are located in the Knowledge Center.

Tour the Knowledge Center

Guided tours of the new Knowledge Center are available to the public daily at 9 a.m., 1 p.m., and 4 p.m. Tours are limited to 15 people. Request a spot at the Information Kiosk in the Knowledge Center or online at: knowledgecenter.unr.edu/instruction/forms/kctours.aspx. Self-guided tour brochures are available at the Information Kiosk with suggested stops. An audio tour will soon be available as well.
In a very real sense, the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center is the physical manifestation of this convergence of technology and the written word.”

Carol Parkhurst, senior director of libraries, adds that “this building is a venue in which a new way of thinking about knowledge will take place.”

Zink, who has taught knowledge management, notes that knowledge is treated differently by different cultures. In the United States and Western Europe, the tradition has been to leverage knowledge for personal advancement. Thus the emphasis here on copyright, patent and intellectual property rights, and other rights that accrue to the “owners” of knowledge. In addition, in the West, the tradition is to “hoard” knowledge. In Asia, however, he says, “it’s been much more of a collective society. Asia has been more open to sharing strategic ideas with others.”

“You often hear that the Chinese, for example, don’t pay attention to intellectual property rights,” he says. “That fits with a belief that ideas are shared. They understand the concept of intellectual property rights, but at the grass roots level, they do not necessarily think that sharing movies, videos, software, etc. is wrong.” This is one of the differences between an individualistic society and a collectivist one, he notes.

The Knowledge Center, while firmly situated in Western thinking, is leaning toward collaborative learning and communication. This isn’t a new concept even in the West, Zink notes. The “think tanks” that originated in World War II and in corporations such as Lockheed Martin, a pioneer in aeronautics, space systems and information technology systems, used collaboration as a deliberate strategy to produce the best ideas in the least amount of time. The idea was to put the brainy people together, leave them alone and let them figure things out. Think tanks stood in sharp contrast to the “lone scholar” approach in which a single person worked alone, often in a solitary study carrel in a library.

With the Net Generation’s expanding use of technology: text messaging, streaming video, photos and Web sites, “it was obvious that students were not as interested in the passive consumption of information,” Zink says. “They were creating their own stuff; and they were doing it at a very early age and they were doing it together.”

Zink recalls seeing students huddled around one or two laptops in a booth at a Denny’s Restaurant or at a Starbucks, working together, making changes, talking, collaborating. “That’s a think tank,” he says. Thus was born the concept behind the booths in @One—a digital multimedia center on the Knowledge Center’s ground floor.

As Parkhurst, notes, the Knowledge Center, with its art collections on display, its wooden tables, chairs and shelves, its luxuriously high ceilings, quiet alcoves and study areas, is “a beautifully classic building.” But when you really dig in, the Knowledge Center is a highly sophisticated, high-tech powerhouse that is “more than a library.”

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**Knowledge Center: What’s inside?**

The Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center boasts more than one million volumes of books and published journals; some 20,000 electronic journals and thousands of electronic books, as well as online access to hundreds of thousands of electronic books on the Web; close to 300 research databases; high-tech automated book retrieval system; spacious reading rooms and quiet study-areas; computing and data works laboratories with large format printing; state-of-the-art wireless network and computer access throughout; smart classrooms and conference rooms; outdoor seating on a covered porch; art gallery and sculpture garden; 170-seat auditorium; the Book Nook—which sells used books, magazines and CDs;—the Nevada Writers Hall of Fame; Special Collections & University Archives; Center for Basque Studies; and the Life and Health Sciences Library. Coming soon: a full-service rotunda coffee shop.

The building is named in recognition of a combined $10 million gift from Chuck Mathewson and International Game Technology (IGT). Private donations account for more than $22 million of the $75 million facility. Remaining funding came from student fees, bonds, and the state of Nevada. It is the University’s most ambitious construction project in history. The design of the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center was the result of a collaboration between the architectural firms of Hershenow + Klippenstein Architects in Reno (Architect of Record) and Dekker/Perich/Sabatini in Albuquerque, New Mexico (Associate Architect). This collaboration allowed the strengths of each firm to create a unique, dynamic facility which will anchor the north campus for years to come.

—Jill Stockton
Knowledge Center stores books on **MARS**

The Knowledge Center’s revolutionary automated retrieval system, Mathewson Automated Retrieval System, or MARS, as it’s known by its contest-winning acronym, automatically deposits and retrieves older books, journals and other materials from on-site storage. MARS accommodates four times the volume of traditional shelving and retrieves requested materials in less than 10 minutes, making more space available for academic pursuits.

In high-density automated shelving systems like MARS, barcoded items are sorted by size and stored in bins. The technology underlying the high-density automated shelving has been used in other industries for many years. Ford and GM store new cars in such systems. The Chicago Tribune uses a similar system for assembling its Sunday papers. The Oviatt Library at California State University at Northridge was actually the first library to use this system, even surviving a 6.8 earthquake in 1995.

MARS consists of 27,216 steel bins, each 2’ x 4’, on a rack structure that occupies a 12,600-square-foot room three stories high. The bins are arranged on both sides of six aisles, each of which has a “mini-load crane” guided by rails at top and bottom.

Initially, books are scanned as they are placed in the bins, and a database keeps track of the location of each volume. Later, when an item is requested, a crane pulls the appropriate bin and delivers it to the designated service point.

— Ken Kempcke

### What are the advantages of MARS?

- **Maximum flexibility.** By incorporating the retrieval system into the building design, the library achieves the maximum capability to house, protect and access library materials.

- **Greater holding capability.** While much of the library collection will be on open shelving, the retrieval system can accommodate an additional 2 million volumes onsite.

- **Earthquake safety.** The retrieval system exceeds standard earthquake building standards.

- **Ease of access.** Items can be retrieved from storage while off campus or from a campus office via the computer catalog and picked up at the patron’s convenience.

- **Efficiency.** It frees space in the library for other activities.

- **Preservation.** The MARS area is temperature and humidity controlled. Materials are safer from theft and vandalism.

- **Cost savings.** The retrieval system eliminates the need and cost for offsite storage facilities.

### What’s with the name?

Brett Amesbury, a civil engineering student, won the grand prize for naming the automated retrieval system in the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center. His name, MARS—for Mathewson Automated Retrieval System—was selected from over 180 entries.
The Knowledge Center is busting with innovations from its automated retrieval system for about half of its book collection to its brand new UNR-WPA wireless network. But the place that typifies most what sets the Knowledge Center apart from any other facility in the nation is @One. Pronounced “At One”—a Digital Age coinage combining the ubiquitous “@” sign used in email addresses and the fact that the facility is located on the ground floor—@One is designed with the Net Generation in mind.

It’s a place where students who have grown up digitally can work and produce in a manner that best suits their learning styles.

“This is such a departure from the other floors of the building,” Tod Colegrove, @One service manager, says. “It strikes me as being a little scary.”

Though “scary” is the word Colegrove chooses to use, his face shows nothing but sheer excitement for what the future of this facility holds. @One features two computer labs: Sierra Pacific Dynamic Media Lab and DataWorks Analysis and Visualization Lab. These labs support 18 duo-core dual processor PCs and 18 8-core Intel Xeon Mac Pro workstations with 9 gigabytes of RAM, all loaded with top-end software. The Dynamic Media Lab boasts 30-inch high-definition monitors and software such as Final Cut Studio Pro, DVD Studio Pro and the Adobe Creative Suite 3 Master Collection, which enables students, faculty and staff—anyone with a current NetID—to do post-production work on audio, video or DVD projects. Dynamic Media Labs’ computers are linked to a 48-terabyte storage system allocated to students, so they can save their work without resorting to portable hard drives. DataWorks’ PCs are loaded with high-end mathematical, statistical, mapping and numbering-crunching software such as ArcView 3.3, ArcInfo 9.2, ArcMap 9.2, ArcGIS 9.2, IDL, ENVI, Maple6, Mathematica 5, Mathcad, MatlabR12, SAS and SPSS.

Colegrove explains that the Knowledge Center allows students to shape the direction of learning and studying. In order to do this the students must “get their hands dirty,” he notes. @One’s resources offer students plenty of
opportunities to do so. In addition to the computers and software, @One loans multimedia equipment such as digital cameras, camcorders, microphones, digital projectors and laptop computers. The facility also boasts a 60-inch large-format photo/poster printer and a 42-inch wide laminator, as well as traditional printing services on legal and standard size paper.

@One is perfectly designed for sharing information, which is critical to learning. "Knowledge is not in a book," Colegrove says. "A book is basically a highly processed block of wood."

Knowledge, in the opinions of library revolutionaries such as Steve Zink, vice president of information technologies and dean of libraries, is the reconstruction of the thoughts that were in the mind of the author when they wrote a particular book. Sharing information and thoughts is the most important way to attain this knowledge.

With approximately 130 work stations and plenty of open space for group work, @One should prove to be one of the first locations students think of when it comes to group projects. The open and informal work environment beckons to late night study sessions around the melting cheese of a pizza or steaming coffee from the Joe Crowley Student Union, which is right next door.

"We want students to feel as at home in the Knowledge Center and the Joe Crowley Student Union as if they were in their own living room," says Zink.

Colegrove notes that a student-directed learning environment won’t necessarily remain spotless: “It is more important that students take us where we are going than for a piece of carpet to stay pristine until the end of time.”

A cloverleaf-shaped table provides collaborative space where students can sit around a computer screen and share a rotating keyboard. Booths, like those found in restaurants, offer cozy spots to confer, work and study. @One also boasts collaborative work screens where students can hook their laptops to a large high-definition television to share work in the comfort of easy chairs or around a large study table.

Mark Gandolfo, manager of media design and production, says, “Philosophically, @One is an attempt to bring the typical library structure into the post-Gutenberg world.” The objective, he says, is to “synthesize knowledge into a new product” by putting high-end technology into the hands of students and providing them with the help they need to use it. Johann Gutenberg, 1400-1468, of Germany, was the inventor of the printing press.

"@One allows students to experience what it is like to work with professional quality products before they begin their professional careers,” Gandolfo says.

Duncan Aldrich, the @One administrator, notes: “We are bringing together things that we were trying to do in Getchell, but that Getchell wasn’t built to do.”

Another striking feature in @One is the large video screen composed of nine smaller screens. These screens will display work composed by students and faculty. “I’m hoping this will be a canvas for the students with which they can engage,” Gandolfo says.

The information technology and library team that developed the concepts behind the functionality of @One tried their best to include every capability they thought students would use. They are anxious to see the direction that students take it. “It will be interesting to see what happens between now and when finals roll around,” Aldrich says. “I’m expecting evolution.”

—Josh Culpepper, Class of ’09 (English and French), is a Nevada Silver & Blue intern.
Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center
Grand Opening Ceremony

The University hosted a grand opening ceremony Aug. 7 for the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center, which opened to the public Aug. 11. Anthony Ciorciari, executive vice president for global operations at International Game Technology, gave a speech in which he said that the Knowledge Center was “really quite phenomenal.” The building is named in recognition of a combined $10 million gift from Charles Mathewson and International Game Technology (IGT). “Our investment was made wisely, very wisely,” he said, adding, “President Glick, you have hit a home run!”

(1) Anthony Ciorciari, executive vice president for global operations at International Game Technology, gives a speech.

(2) Adam, William and Sarah, grandchildren of Frank and Joan Randall, listen to Daniel Fergus, head of the Dynamic Media Laboratory, as he shows them some of the multimedia equipment available in @One.

(3) Mary Liz and Ron Zideck ’59 (accounting) view the Popular Reading Area, near the group study room, provided by their gift to the Knowledge Center.

(4) Peter and Turkey Stremmel ’72 (art) chat with Phil and Jennifer Satre.

(5) UNLV student body leaders were sufficiently awed by the Knowledge Center that they vowed to apply to graduate school here. From left: Dianna Feice, UNLV ASCE student chapter president; Vik Sehder, UNLV CSUN vice president; Marco Valera, UNLV CSUN chief counsel; Adam Cronis, UNLV CSUN student body president; Jason Meyer, UNLV CSUN Nevada student affairs director; and Shane Collins, UNLV Rebel Yell news editor.

(6) Paul Bible, ’62 (economics) Chair University of Nevada, Reno Foundation; Spike Wilson, former state senator from Washoe County, and his wife, Janice Pine ’62 (biology); enjoy the grand opening.

(7) Joe ’78 (economics) and Liza Bradley ’96 (accounting) take time to pose with President Milt Glick.

(8) Marilyn Melton, who attended Nevada during the ’50s and went on to receive an honorary doctorate of letters in 1986, chats with Librarian Betty Glass.

(9) President Milt Glick and his wife, Peggy, take seats to listen to speakers and a presentation on the history of the libraries at the University of Nevada, Reno.
(10) Ann Carlson, ’58 (business), ’78M.Ed. (education), trustee of the University of Nevada, Reno Foundation, visits the Clarence & Martha Jones Special Collections & University Archives department in the Knowledge Center. The new rooms were made possible by a generous donation from Ann’s parents, the Joneses.

(11) Bob Whittemore ’47 (economics) enjoyed a tour of the Knowledge Center, as well as the presentations.

(12) Doug and Fran Sloane, Nadine Pillsbury, and Clark and Karen Pillsbury stand in the William F. & Nadine M. Pillsbury Reading Room in the Knowledge Center. Bill Pillsbury ’50 (engineering), who died in January at age 82, was a tireless volunteer leader for the University. Nadine continues to invest time in projects they both initiated in engineering and at the University.

**Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center Major Donors**

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Photos by David Calvert and Theresa Larriva-Douglas.
Sculpture Garden brings vibrant art to campus

When you think about the technologically advanced, state-of-the-art Knowledge Center, do you also think of art? If not, maybe you should. Not only are there art exhibits on the walls, but four contemporary sculptures were installed at the University of Nevada, Reno’s 295,000-square-foot Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center June 9 in a project that has been in the works since September 2006.

Featured in the garden are: Melvin Schuler’s Offset Forms 08, Randall Shiroma’s Remembrance #3, Michael Todd’s Punjab VIII and Boaz Vaadia’s Ginnetoy 2nd.

A generous donation from the Carol Franc Buck Foundation and some assistance from Turkey Stremmel ’72 (art), director of the Stremmel Gallery in Reno, helped complete the new sculpture garden in the heart of the University’s campus.

“The Foundation and our trustees are very proud to be part of the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center sculpture garden,” Carol Franc Buck says. “I am quite impressed with the changes the University has made to campus over the past 10 years. To be a part of that is exciting and satisfying. The new Knowledge Center is beautiful and it is a great leap forward for the library.”

Thought provoking sculptures will help students connect, explore and create new ideas.

“I know people will embrace this art,” Stremmel says. “It will force people to think, question and contemplate.

“The same thing will likely take place when someone picks up a new book or accesses an electronic journal from the Knowledge Center. There is nothing else like this on campus. It will truly add to the vibrancy of the University,” Stremmel says.

When asked why she got involved in the project, Stremmel says, “Reno is my home and Nevada is my University. I was thrilled to work with Carol while giving back to my community and embracing my passion for the arts. When I work on projects like this, I feel renewed and excited.”

It took Buck and Stremmel nearly two years to select the featured works.

“Carol came to me with her idea to develop a sculpture garden at the Knowledge Center,” Stremmel says. “I assisted her in identifying the right artists to feature in the garden. We started by considering nine artists and worked hard to select the perfect four.”

“Working on the Sculpture Garden with Turkey was so much fun,” Buck says. “She has impeccable taste and is so knowledgeable. All of the pieces in the garden are of the highest quality.”

“I loved the space at the Knowledge Center because it is contemporary,” Stremmel says. “The focus is on the art,” Stremmel adds.

—By Jill Stockton
Special Collections: a treasure trove of valuables

Whether you are in search of books with hand-written liner notes by Mark Twain, enormous leather-bound volumes written in Latin or the first folio of *The Merchant of Venice*, the Clarence & Martha Jones Special Collections & University Archives, which is now located prominently at the top of the stairs on the third floor of the Knowledge Center, is the place to go.

When Special Collections was housed in the Getchell building, not many knew of this treasure trove, as it was tucked away in the recesses of the upper level down a long corridor. Signs pointed to the door and a gold bust of William Shakespeare diligently watched the door’s square window, keeping guard over the stockade of rare goods held within the small space.

Visitors to the new home of Special Collections are welcomed by replicas of Lorenzo Ghiberti’s 15th century “Gates of Paradise”—large and magnificent bronze panels depicting scenes from the *Old Testament*, leading into an exhibit hall outside the reading room.

Donnie Curtis, head of Special Collections and the Knowledge Center’s director of research collections and services, keeps watch over the many rarities held within the walls of this section. Most of the materials in Special Collections pertain to the history and cultures of Nevada and the Great Basin. University Archives preserves the history of the University in documents, photographs, books and memorabilia. Special Collections also houses a renowned collection of 20th century artists’ books and hundreds of rare books.

“We have some really old, beautiful things in here,” Curtis says. “To hold those old things in your hands is meaningful.”

However, there is nothing antiquated about the new Special Collections section. As the Knowledge Center has blended old with new, digital with print, Special Collections is also flexing its newfound digital prowess. The end of the laborious move from the Getchell building signals a renewal of efforts to make as many of the treasures in Special Collections as possible available in digital format to researchers, history enthusiasts, and students, who will have access to local and historical content as well as the copyright-free graphic materials housed in Special Collections for their multimedia projects in the Knowledge Center’s high-tech labs. Access to audio and video materials is facilitated by private media viewing areas set apart from the Special Collections reading room.

Special Collections uses humidity and temperature controls in its storage areas. A new preservation lab will allow on-site repair and salvage of damaged books and papers.

Currently, Special Collections is hosting an exhibit on the Great Basin Indians, featuring Special Collections books, photographs, videos and tools of anthropologists, along with baskets from the Department of Anthropology Research Museum.

—Josh Culpepper, Class of ’09 (English and French), is a Nevada Silver & Blue intern.
A brief history of the library buildings at Nevada

Compiled by Donnelyn Curtis, director of library research services, from sources in the University Archives.

In 1886, the year that the University of Nevada moved from Elko to Reno, the state Legislature appropriated the sum of $500 for the purchase of books. The Board of Regents’ report states: “This will enable the Regents to establish a nucleus for a good reference library of standard works in English literature and the arts and sciences. The leading magazines and periodical devoted to scientific progress and discovery will be kept on file for the use of the instructors and students. All donations to the library will be welcomed and will be duly acknowledged in future University Registers.”

When Morrill Hall was completed in 1886, a room was dedicated as the library, and Hannah K. Clapp was appointed as the first librarian. For the first few years, she was also listed as professor of history and the English language in the school of agriculture. By 1888, she was a full-time librarian in charge of a small collection that depended on donations from “The Friends of the University.” In 1889, the library expenditures for the fiscal year were a mere $58.65, but some years were better. By 1894 there were 4,013 bound volumes in the library and 265 students at the University. In her report for 1896, Clapp laments, “We wonder why some of the wealth taken from Nevada does not find its way back in donations to our Library, where they are so much needed, and could be such a source of culture to the sons and daughters of the State.” Hanna Clapp retired in 1901 at the age of 77. At that time the library held 7,300 volumes.

The library became too large for the room in Morrill Hall, and the entire basement floor was remodeled to accommodate it. That space was also soon outgrown. As early as 1900, the president asked for a new building, and the request was repeated regularly, while books had to be stored in other buildings. By 1911 there were 23,920 volumes. President Stubbs hoped to find a wealthy donor to fund a new building and increase the collection: “It is perhaps not too much to expect that some generous friend may be found who will lift the burden from the Legislature and give the sum of $250,000 for a library and administration building.” A grandiose plan had been developed, but in the end, the University built a new library building with $10,000 appropriated by the Legislature.

By 1914, the main library had moved into its new “comfortable and commodious quarters,” in what is now the Jones Visitor Center. Branch libraries were maintained in department buildings for mining, chemistry, and veterinary science. A mezzanine floor was added to the library building in 1920, and was expanded in 1924.

But the growing library quickly ran out of space again, when fortunately, William A. Clark, Jr. of Butte, Montana and Los Angeles presented the University with a gift to build a memorial library in memory of his wife, Alice McManus Clark, a former native of Virginia City. Clark chose his own architect for the project, Robert D. Farquhar, who had designed Festival Hall for the Panama Pacific Exposition in San Francisco in 1915. Clark also donated “a gift of completed furnishings.” The total cost was about $250,000. The library was built to accommodate 1,500 students and 110,000 volumes, opening for service in the fall of 1927 with 42,000 bound volumes.

The Alice McManus Clark Library was spacious and served the University well as a library for many years, with some upgrades and renovation, until the mid-1950s when there was again not enough space. In 1952, a group known as the Friends of the University of Nevada Library was organized “for the purpose of assisting in bringing to the University important library materials which are beyond the means of the usual budget.” In the early 1960s, the Nevada Legislature
appropriated $2,679,000 of state funds for a new library building. The architectural firm Robert E. Anderson and Associates designed the building in the “Chinese Modern” style. The modular floor plan was designed to be flexible, and that has paid off over the 46 years the building has been in use, as the nature of library services have changed radically during that time. The floor area was 91,000 square feet, there was shelf space for 400,000 volumes, and seating for 1,400. It was designed to have a second phase addition.

The groundbreaking was held in Jan. 1960, and the building opened for use Feb. 5, 1962. Books were moved from Clark Library to Getchell Library in a “book brigade,” with students, staff and faculty of the University carrying armloads of books. A Getchell grand opening ceremony was held on June 2, 1962. During the first semester of use, student attendance in the library more than doubled.

Inevitably, the University Library outgrew its allocated space in Getchell. The planned addition was completed in 1977, adding 76,635 square feet, to make it the largest building on campus. Funding came from the state ($3,075,000), from the University ($550,000), and from a federal grant ($117,000). The capacity for books increased to 690,000 volumes. The grand opening of the new addition was held May 12, 1977.

Branch libraries at Nevada have been developed and consolidated through the years. The “Agricultural Experiment Station Library” was moved to the original Agricultural Experiment Station Building, and later moved back to the basement of Morrill Hall, where it remained until 1958, when an agriculture library was included in the Fleischman Agriculture Building. That library grew to become the Life and Health Sciences Library, housing nursing, biology and medical materials, as well as agriculture materials. When the School of Medicine was built to the north of the campus, materials from the Life and Health Sciences Library became the basis of the Savitt Medical Library. Materials and staff from the Life and Health Sciences Library have now been incorporated into the Knowledge Center.

The Desert Research Institute library and the Savitt Medical library were part of the University Libraries at one time, but management of those branches was transferred to their parent units. Strong branch libraries for engineering and mining were brought together in 1997 in the remodeled Mackay School of Mines Building as the DeLaMare Library. The separate Physical Sciences Library in the Leifson Building was merged in 2007 into the DeLaMare Library, which has now become the only branch library that is part of the University Libraries system.

Since the expansion of Getchell Library, the collection has increased in size to serve an expanded University. Shelf space was increased to the detriment of seating space, and the building became very crowded. Some of the collections had to be stored off-site, and branch library collections were growing, as well. The staff has also expanded to meet the information needs of today’s University. Information technology and library functions were beginning to overlap and blur as IT developed, and the concept of the Knowledge Center and compact storage evolved to provide long-term, high-tech space for library materials and 21st century information services.