

Cartographic Collections

Expansion of the Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education at the University of Southern Maine

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The Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education (OML) is one of the newest rare map collections established in the United States. Housed on the Portland campus of the University of Southern Maine (USM) since 1994, the collection consists of rare maps, atlases, globes, geographies, and explorer's accounts ranging from 1475 to 1900. The scope and variety of OML's collections is readily seen from the library's website, www.usm.maine.edu/maps, which provides digital versions of past exhibitions.

During their first twelve years, the OML staff has developed a broad range of services for several distinct constituencies. Their success has brought the OML to the verge of a dramatic, physical expansion that is planned for 2008.

Academic Support

OML is first and foremost a part of a comprehensive metropolitan public university, and its staff seeks to address the instructional needs of its faculty and students through direct curriculum support. Professor Matthew Edney, who joined USM as OML's Faculty Scholar in 1995, has successfully promoted the use of OML's maps as primary source materials in his own courses and in special classes for courses in several departments including history, geography, philosophy and political science. Graphic arts students from the Maine College of Art visit annually to study examples of early printmaking technologies.

Conference Organization

OML has broadened its academic reach by organizing and hosting scholarly conferences. Beginning with its own inaugural conference in October 1994, *Reading the World: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Maps*, OML has hosted conferences for the Society for the

History of Discoveries in 1996 and the North East Map Organization in 2000. OML co-hosted the International Conference on the History of Cartography with the Harvard Map Collection in 2003, which is the best attended map history conference to that date, and was awarded first place by the Association for Collegiate Conference and Events Directors International.

General Public Support

Situated in Portland, Maine's largest city, OML also provides a variety of services to area residents. OML's guest lectures and exhibitions are free and open to the public. For the cost of shipping, traveling facsimile map exhibitions are offered on extended loan to libraries, schools and historical societies throughout Maine. OML's exhibition catalogs and other publications are sold at modest cost recovery rates to the widest possible readership. The library staff routinely conducts guided group tours and prepares special events tailored to reflect the interests of organizations such as antiquarian booksellers, professional calligraphers, and alumni associations.

K-12 Support

OML has also received recognition for its innovative educational outreach to elementary and high school students. The lesson plans OML created to accompany the *Neptune's Realm* exhibition on nautical charts were selected as one of the best educational resources by StudySphere, a web site that evaluates and recommends educational resources for students, teachers, and parents. Through its teaching kits, in-service workshops, and school group tours, OML attempts to share its resources in a variety of formats for the K-12 community throughout Maine and northern New England.

Expansion

A dozen years after opening its doors, OML has outgrown its space on the first floor of the Glickman Family Library. This is in large part due to the generosity of several map collectors, whose gifts have joined those donated in the late 1980s by the Smith and Osher families. These donors include Peter Enggass (historic maps of Iberia), Doug Yorke Jr. (U.S. road maps from the early twentieth-century), and Tony Naden (cartographic ephemera and road atlases).

USM has incorporated OML's expansion into its plans for a *University Commons*. This ambitious building project links the University's Glickman Family Library, situated at the periphery of campus, to the campus center through a complex of new buildings and landscaped walkways. Three commercial properties — a defunct car dealership, a PVC pipe company, and an electrical supply company — separated the library from the rest of the campus. Once these properties were purchased, the University was able to implement the plan conceived by Boston-based architectural and urban design firm of Koetter Kim & Associates (KKA). The Glickman Family Library is itself the former National Biscuit Company factory; it was one of the earliest industrial structures USM renovated for academic use, opening in 1993. These acquisitions enable USM

to expand by transforming a blighted industrial zone into an inviting new gateway to the campus.

With the demolition of the former automobile dealership, the first phase of the new University Commons — the Wishcamper Center, which will house the Muskie School of Public Policy and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute — began construction in Spring 2007. The OML expansion started in Summer 2007 with the demolition of the electrical supply company. Completion of the entire complex is projected for Fall 2008. The University Commons project was made possible by a successful private fund-raising campaign, including a Kresge Challenge Grant, and dedicated sources of public funding. The building site can be tracked with USM's web cam, at www.usm.maine.edu/abromson/webcams.html.



Figure 1A. This composite of a 1776 coast chart by DesBarres graphically reveals the shape and growth of the urban core of the Portland peninsula over the past two hundred years. Rosemary Mosher, USM graduate and co-founder of Orbiss, LLC, created these composite maps of Portland and the USM campus by combining historical maps with aerial photographs and CITIPIX Ortho-rectified Digital Images (ODI). The illustrations depicting Portland's growth and development originally appeared in *The Changing Peninsula: Two Centuries of Portland Maps and City Views*, an exhibition guest curated by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Director of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. The exhibition can be viewed at the library's website: <http://www.usm.maine.edu/maps>.

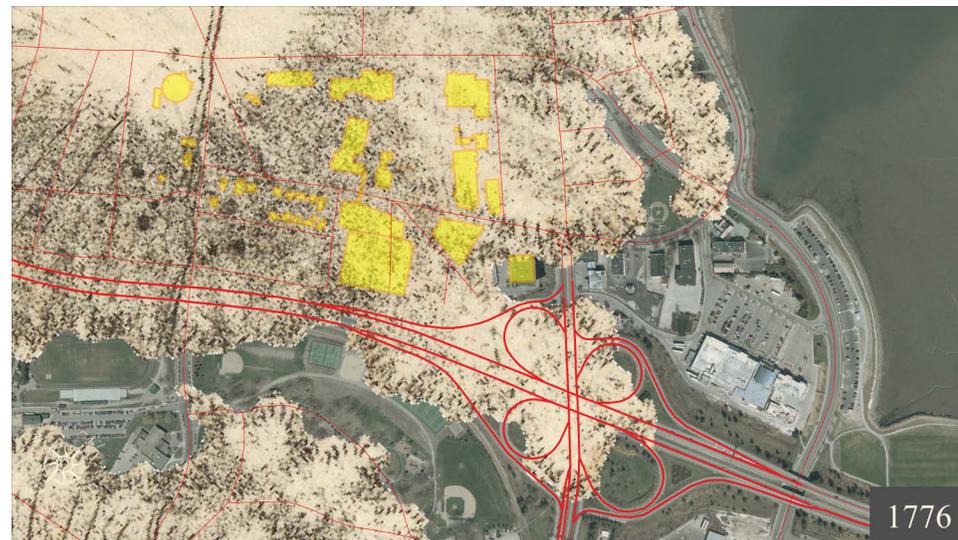
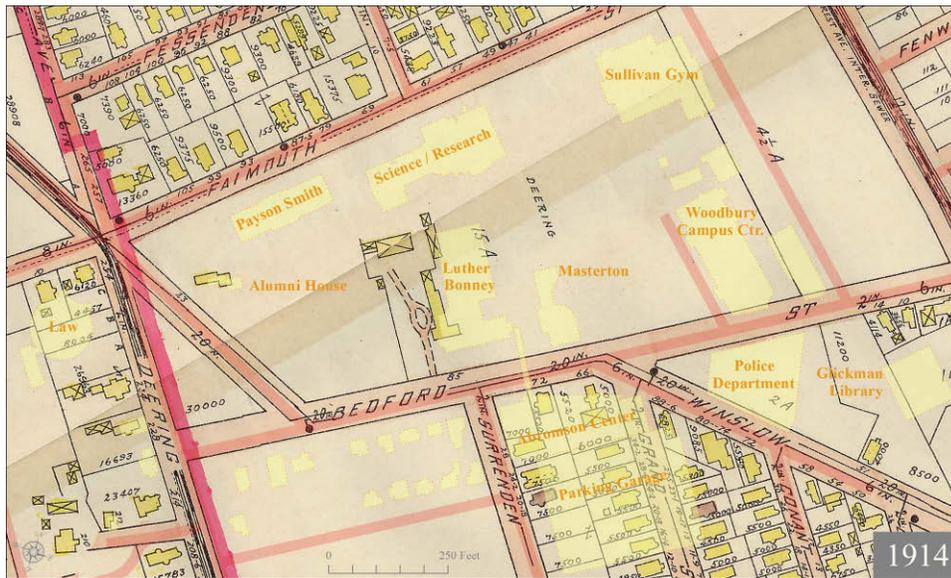


Figure 1B. To support its commercial and industrial growth, the city of Portland expanded its borders by infilling along its shoreline. As can be seen in this detail of Back Cove, the University Commons will be built on a former tidal estuary. Marine clay in the soil test borings has confirmed the sites' wetland origin. The cube shape of the Glickman Family Library roof demarcates the campus boundary at the crossroads of Forest Avenue and Interstate 295.



Figures 2A and 2B. This series traces the development of the USM Portland campus from a farmstead shown in this 1843 manuscript, as the site was transformed into Portland Junior College some one hundred years later. The Deering farm, the only original structure remaining on this site, now houses USM's Alumni Association. Other University owned properties are shown in yellow and present day streets indicated in red. Winslow Street, an important early land route to the Portland peninsula, was converted to a dead spur after the construction of the Interstate 295 on-ramp. Composite provided by Rosemary Mosher.

Like other urban universities in the northeast, USM is balancing the demand for more classroom, lab, and office space with built in constraints inherent to its location in an old, established city neighborhood. Its' choices are limited.

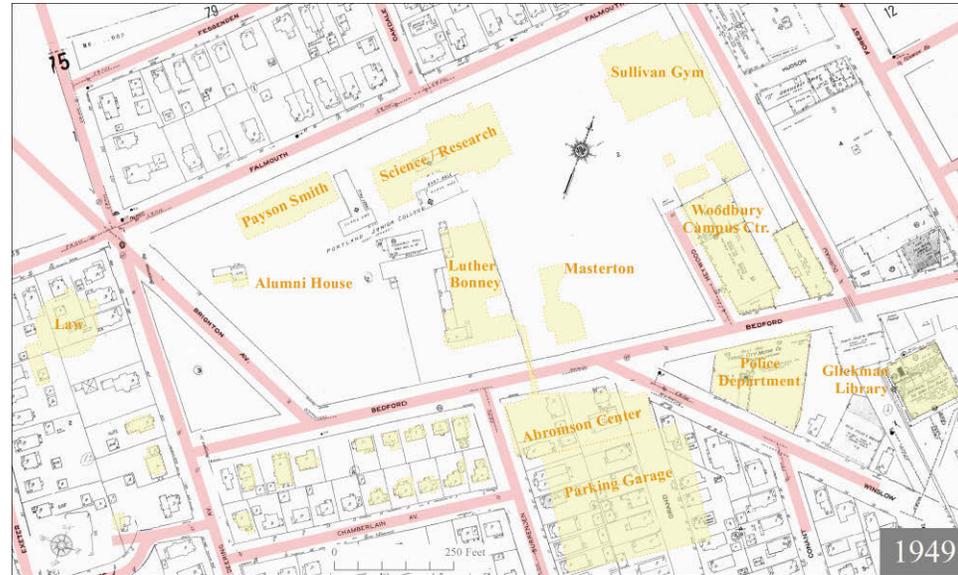


Figure 2C and 2D. As shown in this detail, the campus is bordered on one side by tree lined streets and stately nineteenth century homes, long since subdivided into studio apartments for USM students. Two major transit routes intersect directly outside the Library: Interstate 295, a major commuter highway, and Forest Avenue, a heavily traveled six lane thoroughfare. Oakhurst Dairy, the University's closest neighbor in the commercial zone along Forest Avenue, completes the campus boundary with its processing plant, which occupies a full city block. Provided by Rosemary Mosher.

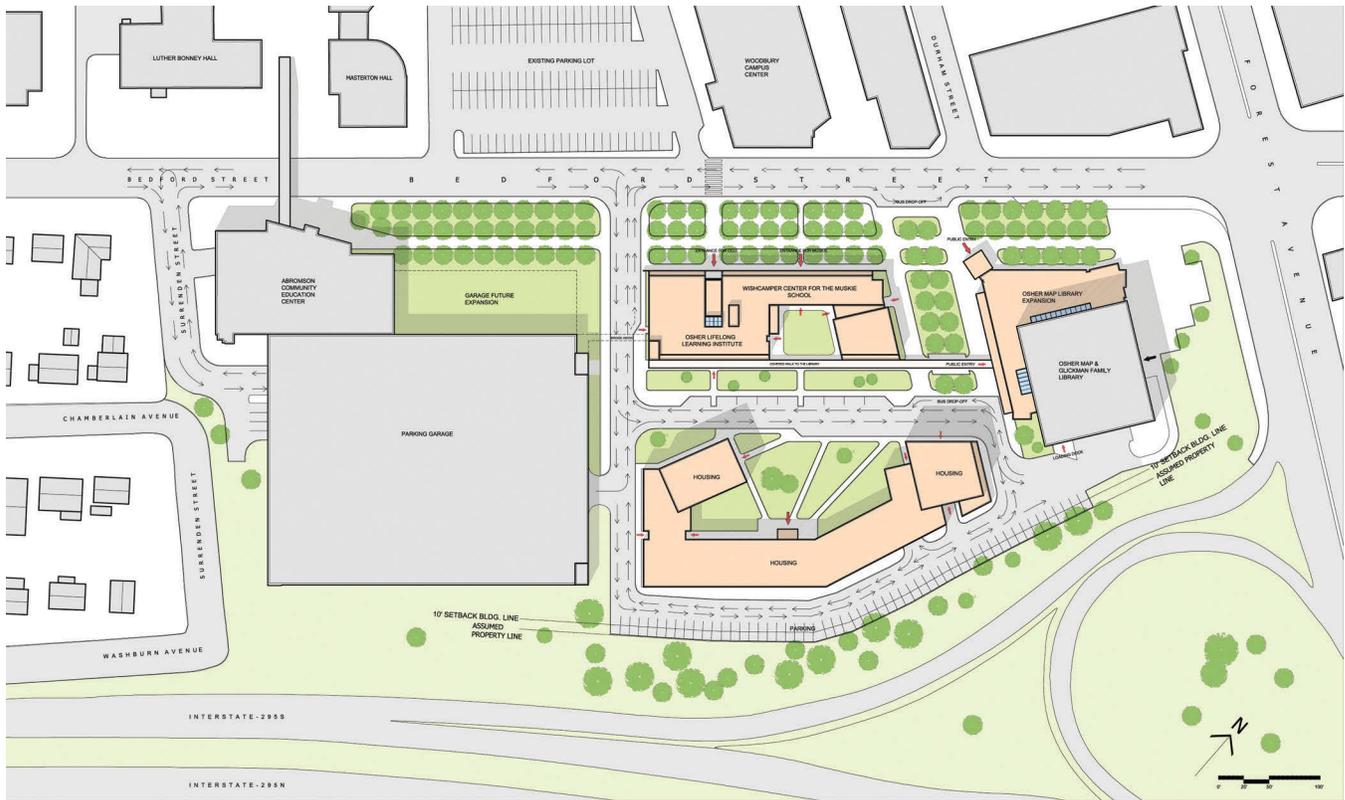


Figure 3A. As shown, the University Commons project consists of three programmatic components contained in two separate buildings, the Wishcamper Center and the Osher Map Library: (1) the consolidation under one roof of all the operations of the Muskie School of Public Service currently housed in various rented offices throughout the city; (2) a multi-purpose facility for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, a consortium of senior colleges, which will also serve as its national headquarters; (3) the expansion of the Osher Map Library's footprint on the corner of Bedford Street and Forest Avenue to support its growing collections. The master plan for University Commons was designed by Koetter Kim & Associates, an award-winning architectural and urban planning firm which specializes in campus planning. The Boston based firm is currently in the news for designing a new expansion to the port city of Aktau in Kazakhstan, located next to the Caspian Sea. Their website can be found at www.koetterkim.com.



Figure 3B. Koetter Kim & Associates model of University Commons.



Figure 3C. Artist's rendering of the Osher Map Library expansion.



UNIVERSITY COMMONS
Portland Campus
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE

OSHER MAP LIBRARY FLOOR PLAN

KOETTER KIM & ASSOCIATES INC.

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0' 5' 10' 20'

Figure 4A. The Osher Map Library expansion, adjoining the Glickman Family Library along Bedford Street, will roughly quadruple the size of the map library from 4,525 to 19,000 sq. feet. A two-story vault will house its growing collections. The seating capacity in the reference area is doubled. Permanent globe displays at each end of the reference room will showcase OML's rare globe collection. Rapid changes in access technologies are addressed in a digital reference room and a digital reproduction center. For improved group tour access, the renovated gallery will have a separate entrance. The Cohen Education Center will provide instructional space for K-12 outreach. This multi-purpose space can also be converted into a lecture room with seating capacity for seventy-six.