

Sterling Memorial Library nave restoration heads towards completion



A major milestone in the restoration of the gothic-style entrance nave to Sterling Memorial Library occurred in January when the project passed the halfway point. Much of the restoration work has taken place out of sight, since the project began in June of 2013, behind a specially constructed pedestrian tunnel.

All of the stonewalls and decorative ceilings have been cleaned and repaired. The large stained glass windows have also been restored, with portions of the most at-risk windows going off-campus for repairs to a specialist stained glass studio.

All of these activities have resulted in a much more vibrant nave, in which the colorful ceilings, intricate stone carvings, and monumental windows will delight and awe viewers. Less noticeable work has occurred behind the scenes, as new heating and cooling systems have been installed and new furnishings for readers and staff have been selected.

Two major parts of the project will continue during the spring: the restoration of the prominent Alma Mater mural above the circulation desk, and the cleaning and repair of the decorative woodwork that fills the nave at floor-level. A newly constructed service desk for the north aisle of the nave and a reconfigured security and welcome desk at the High Street entrance are being built to complement the original woodwork nearby. Although work in the side aisles will continue throughout the summer, the pedestrian tunnel is anticipated to come down in June, which will reveal the restored nave for the first time. All parts of the nave will reopen to users in August, just in time for the beginning of the new semester, and opening celebrations are being planned for the fall. The SML nave is being restored thanks to a generous gift from Richard Gilder '54 and his wife, Lois Chiles.

To see photographs from behind the scenes: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/sml-naverestoration/sets/> [1]

External link: http://www.library.yale.edu/librarynews/2014/03/sterling_memorial_library_nave_2... [2]

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