

University Libraries History at a Glance

- 1892 The University of New Mexico is founded. It occupies a single building, Hodgin Hall, in which one room houses the 100 volume library.
- 1895 The library makes its first official acquisition—a copy of the Century Dictionary.
- 1924 Plans are made for the first library building. It is to be designed by architect Elson H. Norris
- 1926 The library building is completed. The collection of 12,000 volumes is moved in two hours from Hodgin Hall to the new building under the supervision of Librarian Wilma Loy Shelton, and with the assistance of virtually all of the students, faculty, and staff.
- 1936 The first library building is drastically full. Bids are opened for a new library designed by Campus Architect John Gaw Meem. One of the main goals of the new library was to incorporate the use of the native pueblo style into the design.
- 1938 The new 61,780 sf building is completed at a cost of \$338,828. The focal point of the building is the nine-story book stack tower designed to hold 70% of the library's collection. Meem was meticulous in his specifications for the surface finish and wood and metal detailing. He specified the wall battering to resemble the effects of erosion on adobe walls. This required over 41 individual drawings. Native American artists representing two pueblos and the Navajo nation did carvings throughout the library. The lobby ceiling was fashioned after the Rancho de Taos church ceiling. Local Hispanic artists also designed and created tin fixtures throughout the library. A book parade headed by President James Zimmerman and the University marching band, carries books from the old library to the new building.
- 1961 The library is named "Zimmerman Library" in honor of the late president James F. Zimmerman.
- 1965 A 106,320 sf addition and remodel designed by architect George Pearl at a cost of \$2,593,430 is completed. The addition is designed to accommodate 650,000 books.
- 1974 A 65,300 sf addition, designed by the firm Dean and Hunt at a cost of \$2,593,430 is completed. It is designed to serve a university of 25,000 students.
- 1980 The library acquires its one-millionth volume.
- 1986-2001 Construction is completed on the new Parish Memorial Library, the Centennial Science and Engineering Library, and the remodeling and expansion of Zimmerman Library to house the Center for Southwest Research.
- 2004 Computer use and technology expands – with laptops available for loan all four libraries go wireless. UNM's main campus library system has been renamed "University Libraries".
- 2004 During the winter holiday Centennial Science and engineering Library is flooded when a chilled water line breaks. The flood cleanup takes most of 2005 but the library reopens in a few months.
- 2006 Construction begins on a new Architecture and Planning building "George Pearl Hall" which will house the Fine Arts and Design Library on the top floor.
- Zimmerman Library experiences a fire in the basement journals area during Spring Semester finals week. Approximately 300,000 volumes are damaged or destroyed completely. Cleanup and rebuilding is still underway.

