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The Stained Glass Windows of the Dewey Graduate Library

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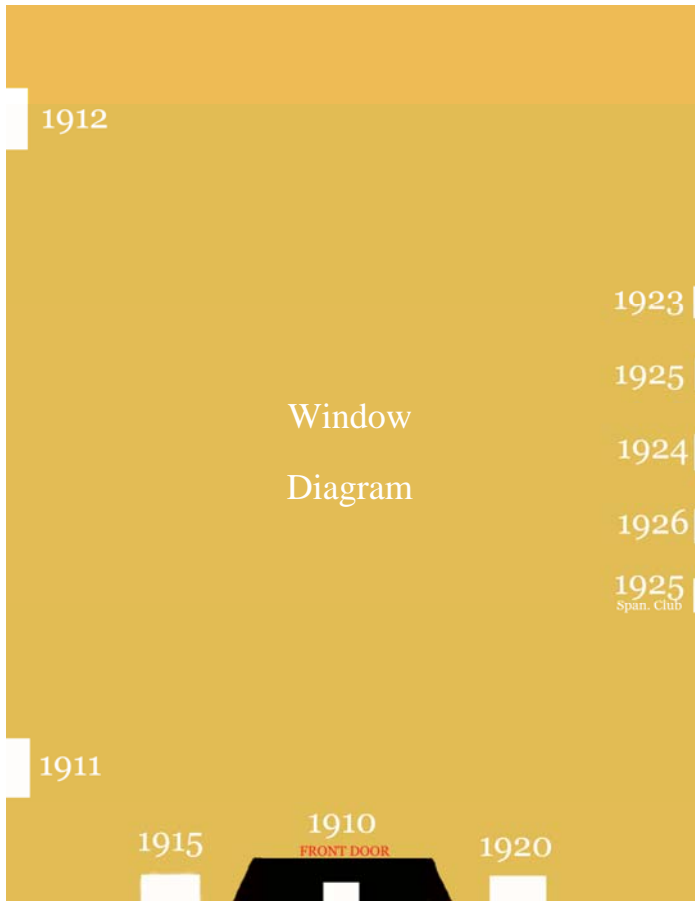
The
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State University of New York



Beginning in 1910 and continuing sporadically until 1929, the senior classes of the State Normal College and the New York State College for Teachers (later the University at Albany) decided on stained glass windows as a senior gift to their alma mater.

All ten of these windows in the Dewey Graduate Library are believed to have been designed by the Chapman Stained Glass Studio, but due to a fire that destroyed all of the Studio's records, there is only documentation of William B. Chapman designing the Francesca Martinez Memorial Window.

Window Details

1923 - Depicting trees, mountains, and daffodils, this is known as the “Peace” window due to the inscription “Post Bellum Nefandum Pax,” which translates to “Peace after an unmentionable war.” This window was donated by the class of 1923 and restored by the class of 1930.

1925 - Donated by the class of 1925, and restored by the classes of 1927-29 and 1930-31, here we see a woman in flowing robes with a torch and the Parthenon in the background. This is the “Knowledge” window due to the imagery of the climb to the Parthenon, the woman shielding the flame of the torch, and the inscription “Per Asper Ad Astra,” which means “Through hardships to the stars.”

1924 - Known as the “Mayflower” window due to the ship and the fact that it was donated by the class of 1924, which began its first year in 1920 on the 300th Anniversary of the landing at Plymouth Rock. The inscription reads “Cras Ingens Itera Bimus Aequor,” which translates to “Tomorrow, we shall set out upon the vast ocean.” This window was restored by the class of 1934.



Above: Class of 1924
Mayflower window.

1926 - Donated by the class of 1926 and restored by the class of 1933, this window depicts a woman in white robes with a quill pen, ink, and writing scroll above her. While there is no inscription other than the donation and restoration note, it is meant to depict learning prior to the “modern” technologies of the time.

1925 Spanish Club - The Francesca Pagan Martinez memorial window was donated by the Spanish Club in 1925 after the professor’s sudden death. The window shows the torch of learning, and the roof line represents a Spanish gothic style of architecture. The window was restored by the class of 1934.

1920 - Donated by the class of 1920 and restored by the class of 1932, this window depicts Flander’s Field, with its bright red poppies. While this window clearly honors the soldiers who lost their lives in WWI and the deceased buried at Flander’s, some believe that this was a gift in memory of a professor who died while serving as a nurse during WWI.

1910 - The first window designed and installed is meant to represent Minerva. The inscription, “Finis Coronat Opus,” reads “The end to a crowning achievement.” The symbols of the outstretched scroll and torch serve as reminders that knowledge is attainable as long as a fire for learning burns within. The window was donated by the class of 1910 and restored by the class of 1928.

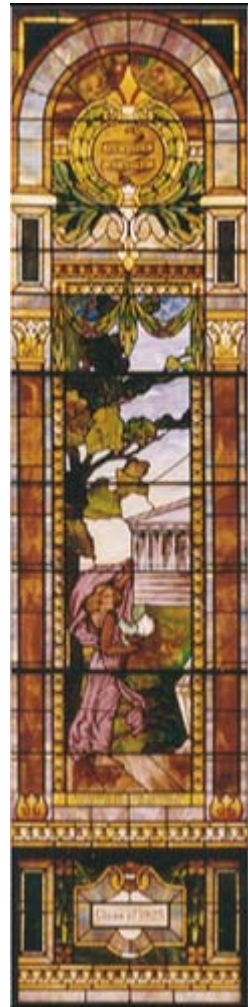


Above: The Francesca Pagan Martinez Memorial Window



Left: Class of 1911 window

Lower Right: Class of 1925 window



There are a variety of recurring images in the Dewey windows representing ideas of knowledge and learning, one of which is the climb to the Parthenon. The Grecian temple dedicated to Athena, the goddess of wisdom, is a symbol of culture, knowledge, and prosperity.

The connection to the Parthenon and Athena is significant to the University at Albany's history as Minerva is the Roman embodiment of Athena. Due to their equivalency, the Parthenon is sometimes also referred to as the Temple of Minerva.

1915 - Donated by the class of 1915 in memory of William James Milne, the President of the State College for Teachers from 1889-1914, this window's inscription reads "Non Nobis Solum," meaning "Not for ourselves alone." Again, this is another tribute to those who gave their lives during WWI. This window was restored with funds from the class of 1932.

1911 - Class records indicate that this window is referred to as "Dawn." It was donated by the class of 1911 and restored by the class of 1952. The inscription reads "NOVA INITIA E FINE," meaning "Every finish marks a fresh start." Again, we see the Parthenon depicted, along with a globe, likely symbolizing the journey post-graduation.

1912 - Located near the rear of Dewey, this window shows a scenic lake with mountains in the background. The inscription reads, "Non Scholae Sed Vitae Discimus," meaning "We do not learn for school but for life." This window was donated by the class of 1912 and restored by the class of 1933.



Above: Class of 1915
William James Milne
Memorial Window

RESTORATION

In 1979, library staff and administration grew increasingly concerned about the state of the windows. Due to age and the elements, the lead was wearing away, many inscriptions had faded to the point that they were difficult to read, and panes of glass began to loosen and crack. Staff decided it would be necessary to clean and restore the windows and thus began to seek funding for the project. Fortunately, various graduating classes (1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1934, 1952) made generous donations, which were dedicated to the restoration of the stained glass windows. The restoration began in 1981, and was finalized in 1986. The restoration included the installation of Plexiglas panels on the outside of the windows to improve the quality of light streaming through the panes.



Left: A Roman figure from the class of 1926 window.

DONATIONS

If you would like to support the conservation of the Hawley stained glass windows, donations can be made out to the *Hawley Windows & Murals Endowment* (40-46166).

References

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