

Digital Collections



KU Libraries digital collections provide free, public access to thousands of objects digitized from across Spencer's holdings, including photographs, documents, and audiovisual materials. Popular collections include the Kansas Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, with historical building information; the Nicodemus Historical Society Collection documenting the legacy of the Kansas town founded by African Americans in 1877; and the Phog Allen Papers, materials from the basketball coach's office when Allen held the position. View these and a growing number of other collections online at digital.lib.ku.edu.

Meet the Spencers



University of Kansas alumnus and native Kansan Kenneth Aldred Spencer (1902-60) was an innovative businessman in the coal and chemical industries. In 1949, he and his wife Helen Elizabeth Foresman Spencer (1902-82) established a foundation for charitable giving to advance the arts, the sciences, and education in the Kansas City region. In January 1966, Helen Spencer, on behalf of the foundation, donated funds to the University of Kansas for the construction of a library in honor of her late husband. At that time, it was the largest single gift ever given to KU or to any institution in Kansas.



Visiting the Library

LOCATION: The easiest way to reach Spencer Research Library is from Jayhawk Boulevard. Visitors can walk through the rotunda of Strong Hall and cross the terrace connected to the library.

An accessible entrance is located on Spencer's ground floor, beneath the terrace to Strong Hall and adjacent to the covered parking area off Poplar Lane.

PARKING: The garage on Mississippi Street (adjacent to the Memorial Union) is the visitor parking option closest to the library. Visit parking.ku.edu to access maps and more information, or contact us with questions about parking.

Spencer Research Library has one reserved parking space for researchers, visitors, and donors. Contact the Spencer reference desk at [785-864-4334](tel:785-864-4334) or ksrlref@ku.edu to reserve the space.

HOURS: Up-to-date building hours can be found at spencer.lib.ku.edu.



Kenneth Spencer Research Library

1450 Poplar Lane,
Lawrence, KS 66045
(785) 864-4334
spencer.lib.ku.edu

Kenneth Spencer Research Library



spencer.lib.ku.edu



A Place of Discovery



We welcome everyone to discover stories from KU, Kansas, and around the world within Spencer's remarkable collections. Here you can encounter rare and unique items ranging from 4,000-year-old cuneiform tablets to more than one million historical photographs of KU.

Visitors to the library, located at the center of the Lawrence campus, will find an expert staff and a welcoming reading room to support research and discovery. With changing exhibitions that highlight library collections, the library's Exhibit Space is open to visitors whenever the building is open. Rooms are regularly used for teaching or smaller academic gatherings or other special events that are sponsored by KU faculty, staff, or students.

The library's spacious North Gallery commands a view of both the library's signature architectural feature — its great glass-enclosed book stacks — and one of the best views on campus of the Memorial Campanile, Memorial Stadium, and the Kansas River Valley beyond.

Elsewhere, the building is home to the Conservation Services lab, audio-visual preservation and digitization workspaces, and a team charged with acquiring, cataloging, and making resources available.



Marilyn Stokstad Reading Room

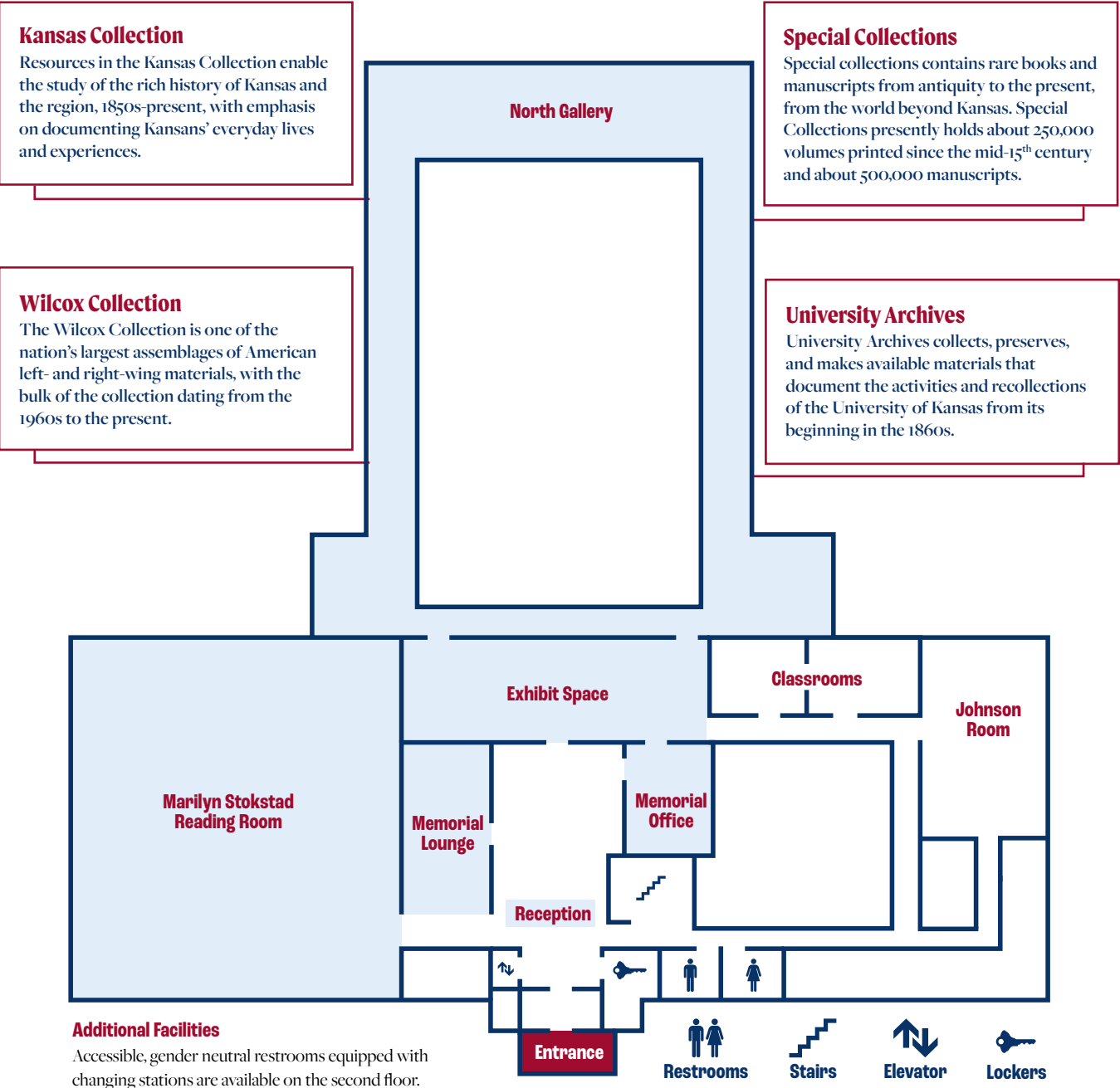
While the library's exhibits display a sample of the impressive distinctive collections, visitors can examine or research almost any item from our holdings in the reading room. No appointment is necessary. Check in at the reception desk for assistance.



Memorial Lounge & Office

These spaces provide information about Kenneth and Helen Spencer and the establishment of Spencer Research Library and are comfortable places to relax, reflect, or gather for classes. The rooms feature original furnishings and decor selected by Helen, including the study which serves as a memorial to her late husband.

Spencer Research Library, Main Floor (Level 3)



North Gallery

This signature space includes glass-enclosed book stacks with selections from our collections, a permanent exhibit with interactive multimedia tools, and windows that offer sweeping views of the KU campus. Explore the gallery's multiple displays featuring the university's founding, mascot, student life and athletics, ornithology collections, Kansas authors, renaissance and early modern books and more.



Exhibit Space

The gallery features changing exhibits that highlight library collections with past installments focused on Shakespeare's First Folio, medieval manuscripts, Quantrill's Raid on Lawrence and women's athletics at KU. Exhibits inspire community curiosity while illustrating curator expertise and providing opportunity for collaboration with KU faculty. Past exhibitions can be viewed online.