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UNH Museum Features Most Curious and Odd Objects

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News Editors: For more information about the exhibit, contact Dale Valena, museum curator, at 862-1081. Visit the Milne Special Collections, Archives and Museum online www.izaak.unh.edu.

September 19, 2002

DURHAM, N.H. -- After nearly 30 years of serving as a repository for rare books, documents and research materials, the University of New Hampshire is prepared to share some its more unusual holdings with visitors.

An incurably irreverent display of items from Special Collections, the University Archives and the University Museum, "Oddly Enough" opens Friday, Sept. 20, and runs through Feb. 15, 2003. An opening reception will be held at 2 p.m. Friday, Sept. 20.

"Oddly Enough" is a mixed-media exhibition of photographs, posters, manuscripts and objects designed to amuse, puzzle and pique the curiosity of visitors. Anticipating the reaction "what on earth is it?" or "why on earth is it?", the exhibit includes a playful and interactive element, inviting visitors to create their own captions and take a stab at identifying a number of mysterious items.

Some items in the exhibit are homegrown, representing the history and development of both the state and UNH. Others represent the outer reaches of the arts, photography, or publishing. "Some items, and there's really no other way to say this, are just plain strange. There are a few odds and ends found in collections that even we can't quite figure out," Museum Curator Dale Valena said.

The exhibit is a change of pace for this most traditional
corner of the library. "Dimond Library holds research collections sought by scholars all over the world and we remain, first and foremost, in the business of facilitating research. But, once you've seen this exhibit, you probably won't view Special Collections quite the same way again," said Bill Ross, Head of Special Collections.

Special Collections contains nearly 100,000 published items related to New Hampshire, traditional music and dance, angling and angling literature, New England authors, the Shakers, and contemporary book illustration and photography. Manuscript collections within Special Collections focus on state history and culture, forestry and conservation movements, and contemporary New England writers and poets. Special Collections also contains a wide range of nonprint materials including historic photographs, acoustic recordings and the pottery of Edwin and Mary Scheier.

The University Archives contains more than 300 series of records related to the history and development of UNH, from presidential records to sports films.

The University Museum develops, maintains and exhibits historical objects and property related to the history of UNH and its alumni. UNH memorabilia and artifacts range from freshman beanies and scrapbooks to costumes and fraternity dance favors.

**Museum hours:**
During the fall and spring semesters: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, 1-5 p.m. Between semesters and during the summer: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. The museum also may be open by appointment. The museum is located within the Milne Special Collections and Archives area on Level 1 of the Dimond Library.