Library addition plans call for annex completion by June

By CHARLES SZALKOWSKI

Designed to nearly double the space of Fondren Library and add storage for an additional 400,000 volumes, the new Graduate Research Library has nearly finished the planning stage, according to R. H. Perrine, consultant to the Library Planning Committee.

Plans presently call for construction to begin in January and to be completed by June, 1968. The cost, nearly $3 million, will be shared by the Fondren Foundation, Rice University, and a grant from the federal government. The grant from the government is for the graduate research facilities, the basis for the addition.

Existing structure of the library will be changed only slightly on the inside, but the entire west wall of the building will be moved out about 76 feet onto the present parking area. The new addition will be almost 270 feet in length, extending beyond the present south end of the building and restoring the symmetry of the quadrangle.

Projections

The outside construction will be similar in detail to the present building, to preserve the appearance of the library. The west wall, however, will be a series of projections. Each projection will extend all four floors but will be only a few feet deep. All windows on the west side of the building will be on the sides of the projections to eliminate direct lighting from the west.

Fondren now contains 124 carrels, but with the completion of the addition, there will be 341 carrels available for assignment. The carrels will be distributed on all new floors, with some changes in the present carrel setup.

Over one-third of the first floor of the addition will be devoted to a graduate research area. Storage of the rare books, manuscripts, and archives will be here, including a new vault for storage of valuable items. The rest of the first floor will be given over to an expanded staff work area and maintenance facilities. The present staff area will be converted to a bibliography room.

The mezzanine, second, and third floors will be nearly identical in construction. The greatest part of the space will be taken with stacks. Around the walls will be located a number of open carrels, six closed group-study rooms, two smoking rooms, five closed carrels, and six open study areas in the projections on the west wall.

The part of the liberal arts reading room on the front of the present library will be remodeled into a reserved reading room, designed for about 40 seats and 6,000 volumes. Part of the science stacks will be removed to make a gallery leading to the entrance into the new addition on the first floor. Plans now included display cases for rare books and other items of interest in the gallery.

The removal of the map room from the present second floor will allow for expansion of the administrative offices. The new map room will encompass a much larger area and include the microfilms, microtexts and six booths for microfilm reading. Other changes on the present second floor include enlarging the area for tapes and scores and enlarging the reading area for current periodicals.

Jeff Davis Papers

The current fourth floor will be remodeled for use by the faculty. All stacks and carrels presently there will be removed to make room for a faculty studies area.

Seminar rooms and a stenographic pool will occupy much of the remaining space, with one suite of offices designed especially for the Jefferson Davis Association, which is currently collecting the Jefferson Davis papers for compilation and publication.

Housed in the basement, besides more stacks and carrels, will be the library computer. Through an ingenious system of conduit lines, provision will be made for future use of the computer by students in the enclosed carrels on the mezzanine, second and third floors and by the library staff in the new workroom.

Two new elevators will be installed, one for staff use and the other for public use.

Filling the 400,000 more spaces with new books will take some time. There will not be any rapid increase of the rate of procurement of new books until the expanded work room facilities will be available.

According to Perrine, the purchase of new books is at the maximum for the present facilities.