Dr. Warren Long, retired Shreveport neurosurgeon, lofted a grim-looking trepanning instrument and asked, “Anyone need their bad humors released?” Long spent over an hour with the Honors Program students on Thursday, September 6, describing his medical education and some of the techniques in neurosurgery that have changed over the years. He emphasized a well-rounded education over a tightly-focused curriculum.

“I didn’t know anything about art and now I’m an art collector,” he said. He also described his interest in country and western music that arose from a visit to the Vanderbilt University Medical Center E.R. where he was a resident late one night.

“I was asleep and very tired because we were doing these long rotations. We got a call that Dolly Parton was in the ER with a broken nose. I wasn’t on call that night but another resident convinced me to get out of bed and come down with him. Sure enough, it was Dolly Parton. And her nose was lying flat against her cheek – it was broken, all right. We got it set and thought that would be the end of it. Well, she invited us to visit her at the Grand Ole Opry which was just around the corner later in the week where she sang and talked about some of the songs she was working on. By the time we left, I was a country music fan!”

Long is a walking advertisement for a multi-disciplinary approach to life. He has worked with the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce and is a past president of the Art Guild. His interests range from the English speaking Union to the Creative Craft Alliance to service with the Spring Street Museum. He is an active member of the Benjamin Franklin Philosophical Society where he has given fourteen papers on a variety of topics over the past 25 years.
Education in the early empires

Not many people know too much about education in the early days. There weren’t any computers or other technological devices we use today to help teach the student. So how did they do it? The students in the Honors Program got a chance to learn from Dr. John Vassar about education in the “olden days.”

Dr. Vassar covered the educational time period starting from the Ancient Egyptians up to the Roman style of learning. With many different influences between the different empires, there seemed to be an endless way of teaching a student the same thing but through different and more creative means than the previous.

Students in the Honors Program learned that in Ancient Egypt, for example, Amenemope wrote instructions on how to be a good person for his son. The work, although thousands of years old, is still relevant to today’s time and can be universally applied depending on what point of view you look at it from.

The Greeks had a similar style to the Egyptians yet completely different. Because they had written works to help increase knowledge but the most popular way to learn was the Socratic Method. Since they had no schools or universities like today, students had tutors who would ask them questions and get the students to defend their answers, thus challenging their minds to think fast. This method was known as the Socratic Method, a method still very popular in universities today, especially in law schools. Since there were no schools or universities, Athens, due to its large population of philosophers, became a center for learning where students would come from far and wide to study with their mentors.

The Romans followed the Greek system of education and wealthy Romans sent their sons to Athens to learn under mentors who taught them how to be politicians and lawyers. To this day, many politicians are also lawyers.

September–October Calendar

- September 21 - Homoerotica in Knowles’ lecture at 11:00 a.m. in SC 335.
- September 28 - Islamophobia: Race, Religion, Politics lecture at 11:00 a.m. in SC 335.
- October 3 - Movie Night at 8:00 p.m. in BH 360.

“It is important for students to recognize that we stand in a rich tradition that extends back to the earliest horizons of recorded history. By navigating the original context of education together, we have an even better understanding of our own educational location. More importantly, we gain a better understanding of ourselves.” - Dr. John Vassar
A Trip to the Noel

By: Autumn Garner

What if you could hold 300 years of history in the palm of your hand? Or flip through the delicate pages of one of the first copies of your childhood favorite Winnie the Pooh? You may be thinking that only happens in large historical cities like New York, London or Rome. What you might not know is that there is a one of a kind collection of thousands of books bought by Mr. Noel and many more different artifacts found over the years on the third floor of the Noel Memorial Library on our campus.

I had the pleasure of visiting the collection a week ago when the director of the library, and his secretary, gave us a tour of Mr. Noel’s collection. On the tour we learned about the beginning of the Noel collection and how the director was able to add more and keep it alive all of these years. When he was finished giving us the background story we walked across to the glorious collection. When you walk through the doors of the Noel collection you are automatically transported to a place of wonder and knowledge.

We walked through the shelves of Shakespeare and Chaucer; grazed the spines of antique encyclopedias; and stood before one of the greatest collections of books in America’s history.

When we finished looking at the books on the shelves, the director took us to “The Vault”. In this vault were hundreds of years of history in one place: a French map of the lakes and rivers of Louisiana from the 1600s; the 58th copy of the first edition of A. A. Milne’s Winnie the Pooh, signed by both the author and the illustrator and (the most impressive in my opinion) a card game. Now this just isn’t any old card game, this game is an astronomy game from over 200 years ago. There are only two copies in the world: one here, and one at Princeton. Someone suggested that we play Princeton in a game of cards but the director said it would be unfair because we have the only copy of the rules in the world. At that moment, I knew that the Noel Memorial Library at LSU in Shreveport was one of a kind.

If you would like to take a tour of the Noel Collection do not hesitate, the director and his secretary would be more than happy to show you some of history’s hidden gems.