

# Faculty Focus: An Active Archivist

By STEVE PELLY

In a room barely large enough for a ping-pong table sits all of the records accumulated during Hunter College's 97-year history. Room 215 in P.S. 76, now a part of the Park Avenue Campus, is the domain of Professor Frederick Stewart, Hunter's Archivist.

Most students are unaware of the exact nature of the activities of an archivist. Well, an archivist is something like a librarian, but he maintains records instead of books. In order to get on-the-job

training for the position, Professor Stewart served as Hunter's Chief Librarian for 19 years. On January 1 of last year Professor Stewart was appointed to his present post by the then President Meng.

After graduating from George Washington University, Professor Stewart edited the publications of the American Council of Learned Societies. When World War II came to Europe, he left his editorial position to become a specialist for the U.S. Office of War Information in London. With the liberation of Paris in 1944, he moved to become the first librarian for the United States Information Service and then the Director of the American Library. He gave up his directorship to serve both campuses of Hunter as Librarian in 1948.



Prof. Frederick Stewart

Professor Stewart has worked at the country's oldest center at Harvard University, in order to better understand what should be done to properly administer the Hunter College Archive Center.

Prof. Stewart feels that the best archive centers in the country are those at Harvard and Yale. These universities have, however, had a great deal of time in which to organize their records, since they are the oldest in the country. Prof. Stewart's vote for the most complete collegiate archive centers in New York City would go to Columbia and C.C.N.Y.

Materials which will eventually be stored in the Archive Center are usually received by Prof. Stewart from departmental chairmen and representatives, and from various administration heads. The final decision as to whether or not to accept a document is determined by evaluating the historical utility of each article, and by ascertaining that an effective method is available for its proper storage.

Any student who is particularly interested in the history of higher education in New York City would find "a wealth of information" in Room 215. Our archives also contain information on general aspects of the New York Community.

In about one year, the archive center will be properly catalogued. All records which are more than five years old, and which, in the opinion of Prof. Stewart, are valuable to Hunter College, will become part of the archive collection. He is presently occupied with obtaining back issues of *Meridian* and other student newspapers, student magazines, and old catalogues. He hopes to be given newer quarters for the center, so that students may have free access to Hunter's records to research term-paper topics, and to satisfy their curiosity about the history of the college.

In 1970 Hunter will celebrate its centennial, and a good archive center will do much to reveal 100 years of college life.