



New Bjork Library Exhibition “Surveying South Jersey” Showcases Local 19th Century Maps at Stockton College

For Immediate Release

Thursday, December 06, 2012

**Contact: Tim Kelly
 Office of Public Relations
 Galloway Township, NJ 08240
 Tim.Kelly@stockton.edu
 (609) 652-4950**

Galloway Township, NJ – The Richard E. Bjork Library at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey is currently hosting “Surveying South Jersey”, an exhibit of maps and artifacts representing the region in the mid- 19th century. The exhibit, free and open to the public, is ongoing through January 20, 2013.

Centerpiece of the display is a beautifully restored Smith & Wistar map of Salem and Gloucester Counties. The map measures 4.8 feet in width and 3.4 feet in depth and is water colored by hand. Visitors will find it near the library’s reference desk.

“This map is unique in several ways,” said William Bearden, the library’s Associate Director for Technical Services. “It shows the counties and municipalities at the time, and it is interesting to compare the geography to what is there today. This map also marks and notes individual properties, including the names of the various property owners.”

Bearden said he believes only one other copy of the map, published in 1849, exists. It is located at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C.

The map, part of a collection of regional items donated by the late Bill Leap in 2007, was in poor condition and hidden away in the facility’s Special Collections area. Mary Ann Trail, interim director of Learning Resources, felt that the map needed to be accessible to the community.

With help from Stockton librarians, the School of Arts and Humanities, the Masters of Arts in American Studies Program, the South Jersey Culture & History Center and six other individuals, the 150-year-old map was restored to its original condition using a lithographic process.

An accompanying exhibition, by two recent Stockton graduates Nick Leonetti and James Pomar, describes New Jersey map-making at mid-nineteenth century, and gives brief background on the two counties. The curators hope to show through the restoration and illuminating various cultural and historical aspects of Salem and Gloucester counties, that this map is something more than just an artifact on the wall.

The collection also includes a grouping of large Atlases containing maps of the Southern New Jersey coast, Philadelphia and what is now Camden County, and Monmouth County, among other areas.

For more information about the exhibition and southern New Jersey history, please visit <http://wp.stockton.edu/surveyingsj/>

