

Kamp Kit Exhibit On Display | Libraries

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Kamp Kit Exhibit at the Merrill-Cazier Library

On Display: Now until Mid-October

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Caption: Kamp Kit is on display in the main atrium at the Merrill-Cazier Library.

Kamp Kit, an exhibit exploring the history of outdoor recreation and gear, is on display at the Merrill-Cazier Library through mid October.

The exhibit starts during the Civil War and the rise of “weekend warriors” through The Outdoor War of 1939-1960s to modern day production

“A lot of folks in our community enjoy the outdoors, but probably haven’t thought much about how the gear they use has developed over the years,” exhibit co-curator Clint Pumphrey said. “I think the public will discover some surprising things, like the fact that Abercrombie & Fitch started as an outdoor gear company, or that the military developed layering as a principle for outdoor clothing.”

Pumphrey worked with Outdoor Product Design & Development (OPDD) Program Coordinator Chase Anderson to create Kamp Kit.

“I’m passionate about showcasing the long history of the outdoor industry and feel the materials in our unique collection deserve to be seen and appreciated. Our Outdoor Product Design & Development students would especially find the material interesting as well as members of the local community, many of which are avid outdoor enthusiasts,” Anderson said.

Kamp Kit was inspired by Pumphrey and Anderson’s work on the Outdoor Recreation Archive, an internationally-recognized collection of documents, photographs, catalogs, and magazines related to those topics in Special Collections & Archives. The Instagram account for Outdoor Recreation Archive has over 18,000 followers.

“I’m a collaborator with Pumphrey on the Outdoor Recreation Archive. I help find potential collections to be donated as well as promote the archives to the public,” Anderson said. “I worked with him to identify materials from the ORA to showcase as well as wrote descriptions of the history of various product categories featured in the Exhibit including packs, tents, and clothing.”

After gathering the materials to display, the curators got to work to develop Kamp Kit.

“I collaborated with Chase Anderson in OPDD to develop the concept for the exhibit and then we divided the work: I wrote the general history of the outdoor industry, which wraps around the outside, and Chase wrote the history of specific types of gear, found on the inside. I have also worked with the library’s fantastic graphic designer, Shay Larsen, and exhibit preparator, Devin Greener, to make our vision become a reality,” Pumphrey said.

Kamp Kit features historical materials as well as panels of text. A lot of the materials are available for the public to view in [USU Libraries’ Special Collections & Archives](#).

“We really worked hard to make the exhibit a fun experience. We were going for a “gear store” vibe with the design, and we’ve incorporated mannequins, clothes racks, peg board, and other props to dress up the space. We’re also looping a film produced by Gerry Mountaineering in 1971 about how to camp that’s really fun,” Pumphrey said.

The exhibit is free and open to the public.

“Anyone who is interested in history, design, or the outdoors should attend this exhibit to better understand how critical the outdoor industry is to our collective history,” Anderson said. “I hope they develop a deeper appreciation for the history of outdoor brands and learn more about the people behind the companies and product innovations.”

If you are unable to view the physical exhibit, there are many online resources related to Kamp Kit.

“I’d encourage anyone who wants to learn more about the Outdoor Recreation Archive to check out the collection on our website as well as listen to oral histories from [gear pioneers on YouTube](#) or our [podcast](#),” Pumphrey said.