FAU Libraries Receive Gift in Memory of Barry Serota, Executive Director of Chicago-based Institute for Jewish Sound Recording

BOCA RATON, FL (October 4, 2011) – Florida Atlantic University recently received a gift in memory of the late Barry Serota, an attorney, record producer and executive director of the Chicago-based Institute for Jewish Sound Recording. Serota was widely known for his deep knowledge of Jewish music and produced more than 100 recordings of Jewish sacred and secular music. His productions at the Institute for Jewish Sound Recording included choral, instrumental, folk and art music.

Serota’s mother, Blanche, donated 1,500 LPs, more than 700 78-rpm discs, 100 digital audio tapes and 1,443 audio reel-to-reel tapes to the Judaica Sound Archives (JSA) at FAU Libraries in honor of her son. The collection includes rare record masters and pre-production one-of-a-kind recordings.

“Barry Serota devoted his life to collecting great Jewish music and producing high-quality recordings,” said Maxine Schackman, Ph.D., director of the Recorded Sound Archives at FAU Libraries. “Although we knew this was a wonderful donation to the JSA, we really couldn’t be sure what treasures we would find. Many of these recordings are legendary in the world of the cantorial arts.”

Blanche Serota became acquainted with the FAU Libraries when Ben Roth-Aroni, JSA’s sound technician, called to offer his condolences following Barry’s death. During his youth, Roth-Aroni worked for Serota as a tape editor and greatly admired his expertise in the field of Jewish music. Roth-Aroni encouraged Blanche to visit FAU Libraries, and during her February 2011 visit, she arranged to donate her son’s treasured collection to the JSA.

“She wanted to honor his memory,” said Schackman. “It comforted her to know that what he loved so much would find a warm welcome and a permanent home at the JSA.”

For more information on the JSA at FAU Libraries or to volunteer, contact Maxine Schackman at 561-297-0080 or mschackm@fau.edu, or visit www.library.fau.edu/rsa.

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Photo#1: Blanche Serota embraces a copy of the specially-created record label that honors her son, Barry Serota. The record is displayed on JSA’s “Sound Angel” recognition wall on the fifth floor of the Wimberly Library.

About Florida Atlantic University:
Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. In commemoration of its origin, FAU is celebrating its 50th anniversary throughout 2011. Today, the University serves more than 29,000 undergraduate and graduate students on seven campuses and sites. FAU’s world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.