

Spring 1997



Library History Round Table
Newsletter

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Note From the Editors

In this issue, we are pleased to feature Pamela Spence Richards, Chair of the IFLA Round Table on Library History, as our guest columnist. We are also pleased to present three new feature editors who will be monitoring library schools, American and International organizations concerned with topics related to library history, and the Worldwide Web.

LHRT Meetings and Programs - ALA Annual Conference, San Francisco
Saturday, June 28, 1997

LHRT Research Forum, *Reading for Moral Progress*. 2-4 PM, Marriott San Francisco, Yerba Buena Ball Room - Salon 12, 13, and 14.

Bread Upon the Waters: The Printed Word in Sunday Schools in 19th Century England and the United States.
by Donald G. Davis, Jr. University of Texas, Austin.

The Library is a Valuable Hygienic Appliance. by David M. Hovde, Purdue University.

Wide Awakening.- Political and Theological Impulses for Reading and Libraries at Oberlin College, 1883-1908. by J. Mark Tucker, Purdue University.

Sunday, June 29, 1997

LHRT Executive Committee Meeting. 8-9 AM, Marriott San Francisco, Pacific Suite D.

LHRT/LRRT Joint Program, *Library History as Research*. 9:30-11 AM, Marriott San Francisco, Yerba Buena Ball Room - Salon 1, 2, and 3.

Justin Winsor Prize Essay Award. 11:30-12:30 AM, Marriott San Francisco, Golden Gate A2.

Houston's Colored Carnegie Library, 1907-1922. by Cheryl Knott Malone, University of Illinois.

LHRT Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 8:15 AM in Room 16 of the Renaissance Washington Hotel by LHRT Chair Nancy Becker-Johnson. Attendees introduced themselves. They included: Chair, Nancy Becker-Johnson, Vice-chair/ Chair-elect, Louise Robbins, ALA Liaison Mary Jo Lynch, Board member Christine Jenkins, NCC Liaison Steven Sowards, Chair IFLA-RTLH Pam Richards, P. Toby Graham, Bill Olbrich, Jeff Bullington, Donald G. Davis, Jr., Robert Freeman, and Secretary David Hovde.

Steve Sowards reported on activities of the NCC. His full report is on page 5 of this issue. David Hovde complimented Steve on his report and regular contributions to the *LHRT Newsletter* and expressed the hope that all future LHRT liaisons submit reports of similar caliber.

Louise Robbins commented on the importance and scholarly nature of H-net. Steve Sowards reviewed his conversation with Jim Niessen the co-editor of the Habsburg discussion list. In the conversation, Niessen stated that H-Net would be receptive to the creation of a Library History list; however, the development of such a list was our responsibility. Such a proposal, made and approved in past LHRT meetings, lacks implementation (See the minutes of the June 24, 1995 and June 25, 1994 LHRT Executive Committee meetings).

Pamela Richards reported that *Libraries & Culture* will publish the papers from the 1996 Russian Library Conference. The upcoming conference, "International Conference on Libraries, Reading and Publishing in the Cold War" will take place in Paris in June 1998 (See Call for Papers on page 7). It is co-sponsored by the Round Table on Library History and the Section on Reading of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA). Richards asked the LHRT for help in sponsoring the upcoming conference. It was decided to table a vote on this request until the summer conference. Richards noted the embarrassing lack of support, of the conference in Russia, from American organizations (LHRT helped sponsor that conference by contributing \$500.00. The LHRT Executive Committee approved the \$500.00 subvention at the 1994 Midwinter meeting in Philadelphia). Richards reported that RTLH-IFLA (<http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/ifla/VII/rt8/rtlh.htm>) is developing a web site.

Nancy Becker Johnson reported that several liaison positions are vacant and need filling. A list of these open positions is on pages 134-135 in the ALA Handbook of Organization 1996-1997 (the February supplement of *American Libraries*).

A written report from Barry Neavill notified the Committee of problems concerning the publishing of the Library History Seminar IX papers. Dwight Burlingame notified Neavill in January that Indiana University Press decided not to publish the collection of nine papers from the Library History Seminar IX planned for the Philanthropy Studies series. Apparently, the Press has been cutting back on a number of titles that are not expected to generate significant income. For the LHRT, this means that the \$2000.00 approved as a subvention for the book can now be diverted to other purposes.

Since all the papers from the Seminar have been published in *Libraries & Culture* and in hardcover by the University of Texas Graduate School of Library and Information Science, the cancellation of the Indiana Press book affects only the dissemination of some first-rate work in library history to a larger scholarly audience.

Some present at the meeting suggested the possibility of sending the book to other publishers. Louise Robbins made a motion that \$1000.00 be given to Don Davis to help fund promotion and marketing efforts, particularly the distribution of review copies of the University of Texas GSLIS hardcover edition. The motion carried. Don Davis noted that the \$1000.00 for promotion of the collection of papers from the Library History Seminar IX may not be needed. However, the money could be used to generate a mailing list to promote the sale of this and previous editions. Mary Jo Lynch reported that money is coming in for the Justin Winsor Endowment. If anyone would like to make a donation to the endowment, Lynch asked the sender to include a note on the check indicating its purpose. Johnson noted a problem with the limited number of submissions for the Winsor Award.

Louise Robbins reported on the Ruth Brown endowed lectureship fund. The death of the potential donor has put the project on hold temporarily until the heirs to the estate are contacted.

David Hovde reported on the LHRT Newsletter. Hovde noted that the Newsletter is now available on the web via the LHRT web page (<http://www.spertus.edu/library-history/>). Hovde stated that the editors have always had difficulty getting the LHRT liaisons to submit reports. The editors are considering redesigning the Newsletter and adding feature editors to extend coverage of the ever-expanding field of library history. Hovde also noted the fine work that Joy Kingsolver is doing as the LHRT web page editor.

Nancy Becker Johnson noted that the Phyllis Dain Dissertation Award Committee needed members. There seems to be confusion as to what year the next award should be given. Johnson also cited problems with publicity. The Davis Award for the best article on American and Canadian library history and the Gleason Award for the best book on library history were also discussed. Johnson raised the question of how the LHRT would fund these awards. Mary Jo Lynch stated that the LHRT could use its existing funds. Lynch noted that LRRT for many years offered a research award of \$500.00 from its budget. At some point LRRT requested permission to rename the award in honor of Jesse Shera and sought funds for an endowment. The Shera award, now \$1000.00, comes from two sources: the LRRT budget and the endowment. Johnson asked Lynch to determine what procedures were necessary to establish the awards. Mary Jo Lynch has since reported after a conversation with Susan DiMattia, Chair of the ALA Awards Committee, that LHRT needs to get approval from the Awards Committee before announcing an award.

Johnson asked about whether the electronic version of the LHRT Handbook was available. Johnson cited problems with lack of information on committee membership and what was the length of the members' terms and when do they revolve. The discussion that followed concerned whether some committee assignments should be two or three year terms or in some cases permanent positions. Johnson reported on the Carnegie Library Postage stamp proposal. The U. S. Postal Service is reluctant to put buildings on stamps. Johnson commented on the upcoming Library History Seminar X at the Library of Congress. Questions were raised on who offered the site and who was on the committee. The site for the conference was offered by John Y. Cole, Director of the Center of the Book at the Library of Congress.

Johnson discussed the concerns of the ALA Round Table Coordinating Committee. The primary concern of the Committee is limiting the overlap of activities and subject interests throughout ALA. The ensuing discussion determined that no other ALA Round Table engages in activities similar to LHRT. In the event LHRT wanted to interest other divisions within ALA in library history, Don Davis proposed a model based on the activities of the IRRT. The IRRT encouraged the creation of committees, concerned with international relations, in other ALA Divisions. These committees report to the International Relations Council and not to the IRRT.

Johnson announced that the LHRT and the LRRT will present a joint program in San Francisco. Johnson also reported that the Nominating Committee would have their work completed on time. Don Davis reported on the LHRT Fiftieth Anniversary celebrations that will take place in 1998 (Currently, the committee members are Don Davis, Mark Tucker, and David Hovde). If anyone wishes to volunteer for service on the committee, please contact Don Davis at: dgdavis@uts.cc.utexas.edu (<mailto:dgdavis@uts.cc.utexas.edu>)

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 am.

Respectfully submitted,

David M. Hovde
Secretary/Treasurer

The Importance of Internationalism for American Library Historians

By Pamela Spence Richards Chairman

IFLA Round Table on Library History

First, let me define what I view as an internationalist approach to American library history. It is one based on the belief that the forces impacting on the history of an American cultural institution may well have their origins in geopolitics and international relations. For every era in American cultural history, there is an international dimension--wars cold and hot; immigrations political, religious, and economic; international prejudices positive and negative; to name only a few such possible factors.

For those for whom the merits of this approach are not immediately obvious, I would like to advance some arguments for its adoption. First, we are a nation of immigrants, and although much of the inspiration for America's public libraries, and even for some of its research libraries, was home-grown, millions of the people who came to use these libraries brought with them values and practices that were anything but native. In the more progressive libraries, collections were acquired of the literatures of many of these immigrant peoples, and immigrant librarians were hired to serve them. (Some immigrants became directors of important libraries--Vartan Gregorian of the New York Public Library being only one of the most recent examples.) Would we not all agree that a full understanding of the history of any library can only be achieved through an understanding of the different cultures it serves over time?

Second, during the last two centuries of dynamic library growth, we have been a country whose influential citizenry, including its leading librarians, has traveled widely, absorbing innovations encountered in foreign cultural institutions: from Joseph Cogswell's German pilgrimage at the beginning of the nineteenth century to Harry M. Lydenberg's 1923-24 visit to the new Soviet Union to Bob Wedgeworth's 1996 visits to mainland China, American librarians have been visiting foreign countries and coming back with ideas.

Third, the same two centuries witnessed a dramatic facilitation of international communication and trade that

have made it almost impossible for library collections to avoid being affected by foreign developments (have you checked lately to see where those art books you recently acquired were actually produced)?

And, finally, a fourth argument is that the United States government, proud of the democratic tradition of American librarianship, has since World War II made of American libraries powerful (and largely positive) overseas propaganda tools. Not only did great American public librarians like Mary Parsons (former head of Morristown, New Jersey Library and founder of both the American Library School in Paris and the first New Zealand library school in Wellington) serve abroad in USIS libraries, but USIS's mother agencies (first the State Department and now USIA) have brought to internships in American libraries since 1946 over one thousand librarians from Germany and Japan, and, more recently, the republics of the former Soviet Union. It is a rare large municipal or university library in the United States that has not at some time had government-sponsored foreign visitors. The historian must ask the question: why was the internship undertaken by the institution? What were the expectations? Even if the expectations were disappointed, they must remain an important indication of the institution's self-image.

Intellectually, the internationalist approach automatically enriches our field, forcing it out of the realm of petite histoire into the arena of scientific (read: explanatory) history. And, by using a larger framework in which to set our story, we library historians make our narrative more dramatic, for we let it reflect the whole range of human tragedy and triumph that has been played out on the world stage.

Preview of the Past: The American Library Association Archives

by Elizabeth R. Cardman

Assistant University Archivist, University of Illinois

LHRT members will be interested to know that in 1995-96 the ALA Archives expanded by nearly 70 cubic feet. Among the more important recent accessions were the additions to the Executive Director, RASD and ASCLA subject files; ALISE and GODORT files; and the Sanford Berman Papers. There are also 6 new records series: Public Information Office Photographs, the National Library Power Program Files, RASD Occasional Papers and the Douglas M. Knight Papers, Lester Asheim travel diaries, and the Cargill/ALA Partners for Family Literacy Project Files.

Interest in the ALA Archives grew substantially over the past year. There were reference inquiries by mail, phone and e-mail from ALA Headquarters and across the country: Oregon to Florida, Wisconsin to Texas. International requests came from Australia, Sweden and Colombia. Among the topics researched were: reading practices and library access for African-Americans, the ALA War Service Committee of World War I, the Oklahoma Library Association, Newbery, Caldecott and Wilder award winners, theft detection systems, ALA activities during World War II, a history of bibliographic instruction, minority subject headings, and the Gay Liberation Task Force. In addition, an Illinois Library Association centennial year exhibit circulating throughout the state featured documents from the ALA Archives.

ALA members are encouraged to contribute to the continued growth of this unique research collection. The Archives is interested in receiving publications, photographs, postcards, scrapbooks, personal papers and the archives of other groups, associations, and organizations that deal with important aspects of the history of librarianship. For further information, please contact the University of Illinois Archivist:

William J. Maher
University of Illinois Archives

19 Main Library
1408 W. Gregory Drive
Urbana, IL 61801
Phone: (217) 333-0798
Fax: (217) 333-2868
Internet: illiarch@uiuc.edu (<mailto:illiarch@uiuc.edu>)

For more information on the ALA Archives, you can examine a selection of ALA Archives holdings on the Internet through a connection on the ALA (<http://www.library.uiuc.edu//ahx/ala/ala.htm>) home page or directly at the World Wide Web URL.

Electronic information about the ALA Archives will improve this year. The address may change, but fortunately, the archival documents remain in Urbana, Illinois.

Liaison Report: National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History (NCC)

As an organization tracking federal actions affecting libraries and archives, NCC monitored some of the following matters in recent months.

1. NCC took part in successful efforts to insure the extension of "fair use" rights to computerized databases under the new World Copyright Treaties.
2. NCC consistently pursues national information policies stressing open access, including wider declassification efforts. With Senator Moynihan's recent criticism of a "government culture of secrecy," watch for possible developments.
3. As it does each year, NCC will speak on behalf of adequate funding for the National Archives, NHPRC, the National Endowment for the Humanities and comparable bodies as Congress works on the FY98 federal budget.
4. When libraries and archives work with limited funds, there are hard choices. In recent months, NCC reported on a new strategic plan for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). Because this plan makes preservation of and access to electronic records a priority, thereby decreasing funds for publication of traditional documentary collections (such as the papers of Thomas Jefferson), it has been challenged by the AHA and others. At this time, the plan is under review.
5. Michael DiMario, the head of the GPO, recently questioned the permanence of CDROM as a storage medium (speaking of depository copies of the Congressional Record and the Serial Set). NCC will track developments on this new issue.
6. A reminder: anyone with a Web browser can read the useful "Policy Briefs" and backfiles of NCC's *Washington Update* (<http://h-net2.msu.edu/~ncc/>) newsletter.

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Web Sites of Interest

Please note that in the Fall 1996 Newsletter we gave the wrong address for the LHRT Website. There is a hyphen between library and history in the URL: <http://www.ala.org/ala/lhrt/lhrtnewsletters/lhrtnewsletters.htm> (<http://www.ala.org/ala/lhrt/lhrtnewsletters/lhrtnewsletters.htm>)

For those interested in the text-only of the LHRT Newsletters (<http://omni.cc.purdue.edu/~pulref>). This site is maintained by David Hovde at Purdue.

Members may be interested to find pages on the History of the British Library and the General Catalogue of Printed Books at the BL's Portico site (<http://www.bl.uk/about/history.html>)

Other Useful Sites on the Web (courtesy of Charles Seavey)

Canadian library history called Libraries Today (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/%7EElBruce/>) contains numerous links to other library history web pages.

Another interesting site with mostly narrative information is: Vatican Library and Its History page (<http://harpo.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Experimental/vatican.exhibit/exhibit/History.html>)

The editors would be pleased to learn of more websites that deal with library history!

Also, a good general website for historical research is maintained by Richard Jensen at the University of Chicago entitled Scholars Guide to WWW (<http://members.aol.com/Dann01/webguide.html/#hist:us>)

To improve communication with the LHRT membership, Louise Robbins has set up a list which you can join by sending a note to Louise at robbins@mac.wisc.edu (<mailto:robbins@mac.wisc.edu>). The list address is LHRT-L@mac.wisc.edu (<mailto:LHRT-L@mac.wisc.edu>) (caps not needed). You can also reach Louise at: Phone: (608) 263-2963 or (608) 263-2105. Fax: (608) 263-4849. Please join this list and keep in touch!

Expanding the Scope of the LHRT Newsletter

The editors recently decided to expand the role of the Newsletter as a forum and facilitator for networking in the field of library history. To make this a reality, the Newsletter has expanded its volunteer staff and added several new features.

LIBRARY SCHOOL FORUM

This column is intended to be an informal round-robin survey of the state of library history in library schools. We would appreciate receipt of brief signed news items from faculty and graduate students. This will let the rest of the world know how our field is being introduced to future librarians (is there a class, is it required, how many students, is library history a part of other courses?). This also offers an ideal place to introduce faculty and graduate students and mention their research interests. Please send these items to:

Andrew Wertheimer [abwerthe@spertus.edu (<mailto:abwerthe@spertus.edu>)] Asher Library, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, 618 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago IL 60605.

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

Professor Richards's call to internationalize library history research (in this issue) is an excellent lead-in to another new feature, the International Report (IR). IR will present field reports on the state of library history in select countries or regions. These brief articles will evaluate national organizations promoting library history

and the study of print culture, journals, institutes, conferences and experts on the library history of that area. Suggestions for international colleagues who might be interested in writing would be most appreciated. Please send them to Andrew Wertheimer at the above address.

IN ASSOCIATION

ALA-LHRT is the only American organization focusing on library history, however, our field is truly an interdisciplinary one with many relevant centers for promoting research in the field of print culture. This column, along with reports from our own LHRT liaisons, will update members on the activities of SHARP, AHA, MLA, and the various centers for the book, as well as other bibliocentric organizations. Please send relevant notices to the editor of this column, Robert S. Freeman [rsfree@omni.cc.purdue.edu] (<mailto:rsfree@omni.cc.purdue.edu>), HSSE Library, Stewart Center, Purdue University, West Lafayette IN 47907

Library History on the Web Joy Kingsolver

The web, as it expands and evolves, is becoming an increasingly rich source of information and professional contacts in the field of library history. This will be the first installment of a regular column featuring some of these resources.

The Library History Group is a special interest group of the Library Association, somewhat analogous to the LHRT. It was formed in 1962 and is "the only group in the UK specifically devoted to the history of libraries and librarianship," according to its website. With the introduction of its listserv and the launching of its website, the Library History Group has become more visible in the online community. "We aim to use the Internet to raise awareness of our activities and to stimulate debate on library history," explains Graham Jefcoate, Secretary for the Committee of the LHG, adding that the site has succeeded in reaching an international audience beyond the formal membership.

The site includes a report which outlines the activities of the LHG for 1995-96 and descriptions of publishing projects such as an upcoming directory of historic libraries in the UK and the multi-volume History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland. A large part of the site is devoted to two conferences. Available on the site are abstracts of papers presented at a conference called The Universal Library: From Alexandria to the Internet, held in London in September, 1996. These papers focus on the tradition of a universal library throughout European library history. The conference ended with a call for cooperation to transform the internet into a global electronic library. An upcoming conference on Libraries and Modernity, scheduled for June, 1997, is also introduced.

Future plans for the web site include more conference abstracts and information on publications, according to Jefcoate. Possibilities for expansion of the site to include other resources have not been decided. It is important to remember, Jefcoate says, "the high level of membership we have not yet connected to the Net, e.g. retired people and those in public libraries. We need to ensure a mix of paper/electronic communications media so as not to exclude members."

The group's listserv can be accessed through their home page or the LHRT website. Topics of discussion focus on library history in the UK, but other library history topics are also welcome. The listserv is open to all. The LHG (<http://www.fdggroup.co.uk/lhg.htm>) website can be reached via a link on the LHRT site.

New Publications!

Louise S. Robbins. *Censorship and the American Library: The American Library Association's Response to Threats to Intellectual Freedom, 1939-1969*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1996.

Lee Shiftlett. *Louis Shores: Defining Educational Librarianship*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996.

Congratulations Louise and Lee!

Calls for Papers

International Conference on Libraries, Reading and Publishing in the Cold War will be held in *Paris in June 1998*.

Co-Sponsored by the Round Table on Library History (RTLH) and the Section on Reading (SR) of IFLA. The purpose of this international conference is to draw attention to the Cold War's effects on print culture and to analyze their social, cultural and intellectual impact.

Proposals of one typewritten page in English are solicited relating to the conference theme. Among the possible topics are those concerning the effect of the geo-political environment from 1945 on: the mass print media; mass media and scholarly publishing; scholarly communication; library collection development; library construction; library education; censorship; reading; literacy; educational curricula; and international library and literacy programs.

Proposals and a one-page curriculum vitae should be sent by *June 1, 1997* to: Mme. Martine Poulain, Secretary of the IFLA Round Table on Library History and Editor of the *Bulletin des Bibliothèques de France*, 27 rue Bezout, 75014 Paris, France.

FAX 33-1-40-64-1089

email: poulain@ext.jussieu.fr (<mailto:poulain@ext.jussieu.fr>)

Final invitations will be issued in September 1997. Every effort will be made by the organizing committee to have as broad an international representation at the conference as possible.

News and Announcements

Humanities Collections

New Journal Call for Articles. Humanities Collections is a new quarterly journal devoted to writing and research on primary and secondary collections. The journal seeks contributions from librarians, archivists, curators, historians, writers, and humanities scholars who work in national and international collections.

Contributors are invited to forward title and abstract of a proposed article to:

Robin Kinder
Neilson Library
Smith College
Northampton, MA 01063
rkinder@sophia.smith.edu (<mailto:rkinder@sophia.smith.edu>)

413-585-2913 or FAX 413-585-2904

Another publishing opportunity exists with the British journal *Library History*. If you have an idea for an article you think might be appropriate for this journal, please contact:

Dr. Keith Manley
Library
Institute for Historical Research
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HU
UK

The Library History Award

An annual award for the best essay on Library History published in the British Isles and is organized by the Library History Group of the Library Association. The award aims to improve the quality and increase the quantity of writing on library history in the British Isles.

Nominations including five copies of the essay which should have been published during 1996 should be sent by June 30, 1997 to:

Dr. John C. Crawford
Library Research Officer
Glasgow Caledonian University Library
Cowcaddens Road
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0141-331-3847
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