

Spring 2005

Library History Round Table *Newsletter*

Message from the Chair || LHRT Research Forum, ALA Conference 2005 - Program Titles/Speakers || LHRT Bylaw Revision || New LHRT Listserv || Library History Website Updated || Book History Online Updated || Library History Seminar XI || Conference: European Modernism and the Information Society || Printing Historical Society Annual Conference || SHARP Annual Conference || Call for Session Chairs, SHARP Annual Conference

Message from the Chair

With the growing interest in history evidenced by the popularity of the History Channel, historical reenactments, docudramas, and genealogical research, it should not be surprising that interest in library history is growing as well. We have seen several indicators of this. Recently reported statistics show that LHRT membership for 2005 is up nearly 17% over last year. A hearty audience was on hand for last year's annual conference program on World War II, and discussion on the new LHRT listserv has been lively from the start.

Another sign of growing interest in library history was participation in the Executive Committee meeting at Mid-winter by members seeking to become more active in LHRT. Coming from academic and public libraries, they re-minded us that practitioners as well as scholars have a stake in library history and in the work of the Round Table. The Executive Committee has addressed ways in which we can reach a broader audience of history enthusiasts within ALA and beyond. An ad hoc committee spearheaded by Executive Committee member Suzanne Stauffer is looking into outreach possibilities.

Both the LHRT Research Forum and the Annual Conference program are geared to this growing audience for library history. The Research Forum, organized by Christine Pawley, LHRT chair-elect and chair of the Research Committee, will explore the theme. "Untapped Treasures: Library Documents as Primary Sources." A panel will highlight how library records can be a trove of information for researchers in various fields beyond library history, for professionals and amateurs alike.

The annual conference program, "Living Legacy: Carnegie Libraries Past and Future," reflects the resurgence of interest in local library history as waves of Carnegie libraries celebrate their centennials. The program will consider how the history of Carnegie's philanthropic gift continues to be explored, preserved, and used to promote library futures.

We are striving to make LHRT more visible within ALA. A gift to the ALA Library History Round Table in honor of Dr. Elizabeth W. Stone is to be used to acquire conference badge ribbons for LHRT members. Betty Stone, an avid ALA conference attendee, was dean of the School of Library and Information Science at The Catholic University of America, president of the American Library Association, 1981-82, and author of *American Library Development, 1600-1899*, published in 1977 by H. W. Wilson Company. The maroon and gold ribbons should be available at the ALA conference registration desk, the LHRT Executive Committee meeting, and LHRT conference programs.

We are excited about LHRT's plans for the annual conference. Join us for the Executive Committee meeting

on Sun-day morning, June 26 at 8:00 am in McCormick Place N136. Spread the word about the LHRT Research Forum and LHRT Annual Conference Program. Wear an LHRT ribbon. We look forward to seeing you in Chicago.

Jean Preer, LHRT Chair

LHRT Research Forum, ALA Conference 2005

“Untapped Treasures: Library Documents as Primary Sources”

This year’s LHRT Research Forum, consisting of three juried research papers, will take place on Sunday, June 26th from 10.30am - 12.00pm. The topic of the session is “Untapped Treasures: Library Documents as Primary Sources.” Although scholars are accustomed to thinking of libraries as containers of useful materials, they have tended to ignore the libraries themselves as sources of historical data. Librarians, too, have not always recognized the value of retaining materials that document their institutions’ own past. Scholars, including historians of reading, the Cold War, intellectual freedom, philanthropy and civil rights, are beginning to make use of this relatively untapped wealth, however, and to encourage librarians to make a priority of preserving the records of their practices and policies.

Each of the three papers selected illustrates the uses of library records that have been relatively untapped for research purposes in the past. They urge librarians to think about the enduring value of their institutional records in a fresh light. Please join us for what will undoubtedly be a stimulating session.

Christine Pawley, Vice Chair/Chair Elect

LHRT Research Forum Program Titles and Speakers

“Untapped Treasures: Library Documents as Primary Sources”

Sunday, June 26, 10:30 a.m.-12:00

SHERATON Michigan A/B

“‘Tis Better to be Brief Than Tedious’?: The Evolution of the Public Library Annual Report, 1876-2003” — Bernadette A. Lear, Penn State University

“Of Auctions and Administrators: Issues Involving Library Records as Primary Sources” — Gregory J. Prickman, University of Wisconsin-Madison

“Borrowing Families: The Challenge of Record Linkage in Antebellum Library Charge Ledgers in an Age of Internet-Based Genealogical Resources” — Ronald J. Zboray, University of Pittsburgh; Mary Saracino Zboray, Independent Scholar

LHRT By-Law Revision

The Library History Round Table By-Laws and Handbook are being revised. A draft is being circulated to members of the Executive Board for comment and should be ready to go to members in late May for approval at the Annual Executive Board meeting on June 26.

New LHRT Listserv!!

As of January 2005 LHRT now has its own listserv for Roundtable members and others interested in the history of libraries and librarianship world-wide. Roundtable members were automatically subscribed at its inception. Messages may be posted to the list at lhrt@ala.org (mailto:lhrt@ala.org). You can be added to, removed from, or report problems with the list at ors@ala.org (mailto:ors@ala.org). The subject line should read “LHRT Listserv.”

Library History Website Updated

Larry T. Nix is renaming and relocating his "Librarians" Web site from: <http://my.execpc.com/~nixlt/index.htm> (<http://my.execpc.com/~nixlt/index.htm>) to: "The Library History Buff" at <http://www.libraryhistorybuff.org/> (<http://www.libraryhistorybuff.org/>). He will maintain both locations while he completes the transition. The new site will continue to emphasize the collecting of library memorabilia and artifacts, but it will also attempt to promote a broader appreciation and enjoyment of library history.

Other useful library history sites may be found on the LHRT links page at: <http://www.ala.org/ala/lhrt/lhrtlinks/links.htm> ([/lhrt/popularresources/lhrtlinks/links](http://www.ala.org/ala/lhrt/lhrtlinks/links.htm)). For an interesting collection of primary documents from nineteenth century America, including several catalogs, see: http://www.digitalbookindex.com/_search/search010histuslibraries19a.asp (http://www.digitalbookindex.com/_search/search010histuslibraries19a.asp).

Book History Online Updated

Book History Online (www.kb.nl/bho/ (<http://www.kb.nl/bho/>)) is pleased to announce the update of its database. BHO, an International Bibliography of the History of the Printed Book and Libraries, now contains over 31,000 citations to books and articles on book and library history. The database is based upon ABHB, The Annual Bibliography of the History of the Printed Book and Libraries and is maintained by the National Library of the Netherlands.

Library History Seminar XI

Library History Seminar XI, sponsored by the Library History Round Table of the American Library Association, will be held at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on October 27-30, 2005.

The theme chosen for the Seminar, Libraries in Times of War, Revolution and Social Change, is a particularly timely one in terms of recent history. For example, the pillage and burning of Iraq's National Library in Spring of 2003 sent cultural shock waves around the world. The apparent contradictions of libraries, conventionally taken to represent stability and continuity, and wars and revolutions, involving rapid and disruptive change, suggest a number of urgent historical issues. Major themes are:

- Books and libraries as agents of cultural memory to be protected, appropriated or obliterated.
- Library collections and services as instruments of political power in providing, restricting or withholding access to information.
- Libraries as places of refuge, solace and practical help in times of war, revolution and social disruption.
- Libraries and their contents as cultural heritage and as booty.

The nature of the revolutionary cultural and political regimes in which libraries are situated and the attitudes of the regimes to literacy and learning.

- The responsibilities of the international community in creating and enforcing policies and procedures of protection, reconstitution and restitution of cultural artifacts, including books and libraries.

For more information see: <http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/conferences/LHS.XI/home.html> (<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/conferences/LHS.XI/home.html>)

W. Boyd Rayward

Conference: European Modernism and the Information Society

The conference, "European Modernism and the Information Society: Informing the Present, Understanding the past," will be held on the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on May 6-8, 2005.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century and during the first half of the twentieth century, a loosely knit group of European intellectuals were deeply committed to exploring ways in which knowledge might be better organized and disseminated in order to promote the progress of science, social welfare, and new international institutions. The "information" interests of the key figures involved reflected what we might label a modernist European Knowledge Project in that those involved were committed to a modernist belief in rationality, planning, standardization, the value of the scientific method and the inevitability of scientific and social progress as they conceptualized and attempted to solve "information" problems. The objectives of the conference are:

- to explore some of the ideas, institution-building activities and disciplinary practices underlying the "modernist European Knowledge Project";
- to assess their implications for concepts of a radically trans-formed globalized "post modern" information society that is often regarded as having arisen from relatively recent developments in communications and other in-formation technologies.

Our hope is that the conference will be of interest to scholars concerned with aspects of social history, the history of architecture, urban planning, philosophy, museology, library and information science and other disciplines relevant to the themes of the conference. The conference is sponsored by the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, New York, and at the University of Illinois by the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, The Center for the European Union, the University Library and by a Hewlett International Conference Grants from the Office of International Affairs.

The website lists the papers to be presented, with abstracts. For more information see:

<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/conferences/EuroMod.05/home.html> (<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/conferences/EuroMod.05/home.html>)

W. Boyd Rayward

Printing Historical Society Annual Conference

The 2006 conference of the Printing Historical Society will be held April 7-8, 2006 at The University of Reading, jointly with the Ephemera Society. Its theme will be 'The Jobbing Printer'. Expressions of interest to present a paper, or to attend, should be addressed to the organizer, Martin Andrews, m.j.andrews@reading.ac.uk (<mailto:m.j.andrews@reading.ac.uk>).

Margaret Jacobs, PHS Chair

Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP) Annual Conference

Picturesque Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada is the site for the 13th annual conference of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP) from July 14-17. Keynote speakers include the noted French-Canadian scholar, author, and recent National Librarian of Canada, Dr. Roch Carrier, and leading African-Canadian poet, dramatist, and university professor, Dr. George Elliott Clark. A full program, and ideas for local travel, can be found on the conference website at: <http://www.dal.ca/~sharp05/> (<http://www.dal.ca/~sharp05/>)

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SHARP Public Affairs Director

Call for Session Chairs, SHARP Annual Conference

Wanted! Chairs for sessions for the upcoming SHARP conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia in July. This opportunity is open to individuals who are not presenting papers as well as those who are. People who may need to show that they are part of the programme for purpose of obtaining travel funds from their institutions may be particularly interested in chairing a session.

The conference preliminary programme is available at the conference website, www.dal.ca/sharp2005 (<http://www.dal.ca/sharp2005>), and the Organizing Committee is now at the stage of assigning chairs to the paper sessions.

Check the programme, and if you would like to chair a session send a message to the conference e-mail - sharp2005@dal.ca (<mailto:sharp2005@dal.ca>). In your message note:

- 1) your name and e-mail address
- 2) your institutional affiliation (if applicable)
- 3) the session(s) that you would like to chair in priority order
- 4) your rationale for wishing to chair the session(s)

Once chairs have been assigned to sessions, we will inform all participants.

Bertrum H. MacDonald

Mary Lu MacDonald

SHARP 2005 Conference Co-Chairs