

# THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY RETIREES ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER ISSUE NO. 15 FALL 2002

## SHORTCHANGING LIBRARIES

*from an editorial in The New York Times, February 25, 2002*

On an average day in the city, Spanish-speaking New Yorkers are huddled around computer terminals in East Harlem's Aguilar branch library, learning English with state-of-the-art software, teenagers from poor Brooklyn neighborhoods are discovering the Internet in the Central Library's "technology loft," and parents throughout the city are attending workshops on family reading offered by the innovative Connecting Libraries and Schools Project.

The stereotype of libraries as musty repositories of old books has never been less true than it is in New York today. The city's libraries are community-based educational centers that serve young and old alike. They're a place where someone out of work because of 9/11 can go to find job listings or learn how to write a résumé. Immigrants can attend English-language "conversation circles" led by volunteer tutors. Students can find a quiet, safe place to do homework. In the current economic downturn, the libraries are busier than ever.

The proposed budget cuts would hit neighborhood libraries especially hard. There is not much fat in current library budgets. Many librarians with advanced degrees earn less than \$35,000. The city's library systems have been adept at bringing in private money and outside partners for programs like the cutting-edge "Click on @ the Library" computer instruction initiative, and "Poetry in the Branches," a program of poetry reading and writing that is a national model.

Today's libraries are even skillful marketers, aggressively introducing themselves to a new generation of potential users who have been raised on television and video games.

There is no easy way to close a budget gap of the size Mr. Bloomberg has found waiting for him. Still, it will benefit New Yorkers tremendously if money is found to soften the blow to one of the most vital, well-loved parts of city government.

*For more information on budget cuts see page 8.*

## *News from Retirees*

The following are from letters and membership forms. As far as possible, the words and punctuation have been kept as written, but some items had to be shortened to fit limited space. Most are arranged alphabetically by last name. We apologize if we have not always read your handwriting correctly, and when we have made guesses, we have placed them in brackets. A few membership forms were received too late to be included in this issue but will appear in the next.

*Luis Alcala, East Lansing, Michigan.* Current interests include reading, and I am still collecting model warships. My fleet numbers over 2200 ships; good thing they are very small. I'm currently engaged in composing forenames for a friend's upcoming (due in August) baby boy. Go to Chicago several times a year for theatre, opera and good food. Next to Gotham, Big Windy is the best restaurant town in the USA. I retired in 1991 because of my conviction that work is the curse of the drinking class. Therefore my volunteer activity is regular happy hour attendance at the Harrison Road House. Their martinis are superb and are served by very attractive young ladies. Come spring, their noble kitchen manager will obtain shad roe for moi at a wholesale price. Too many memories of my NYPL years to recount. I have dreams/nightmares about the [Library] all-too-frequently. H.P. Lovecraft would have understood. Happy memories include the loads of gifted (and nice) boys and girls who visited our branches. Sorry to say that I predicted the World Trade Center horror in 1993—why use a bomb in a parked van when a fuel laden jet aircraft can really do the job? Didn't count on the bastards highjacking a plane for each tower. Maybe recruitment of new employees would be more successful if they could be assured of a living wage.

*Mary Ann Altman, Kansas City, Missouri.* Current interests are Tai Chi, reading, movies, family, traveling. In my church, parish librarian, [cannot read word] minister, and a member of the Senior Committee—we plan senior activities, keep in touch through phone calls, and look after the interests such as sufficient handicap access, home visits. My outstanding memories of NYPL: enjoyed my experiences in all my branches, each was unique. I saw much of NYC and became familiar with many different neighborhoods. My last years were spent at Chatham Square Regional—great staff and readers—great for buying oranges, eating lunch and shopping.

*John P. Baker, Delhi, New York.* I have Lou Gehrig's disease, diagnosed in 1998. I am unable to write, and because of shortness of breath, I have great difficulty talking on the telephone for more than a minute or two. I often think of our good times together and the high professional standards we strove to realize in our library careers. My best to one and all.

[John died July 12, 2002. He was the former Chief Librarian for Preservation. From 1969 to 1972 he had served as Executive Assistant to the Director of The Research Libraries. He will be remembered by his colleagues throughout the country for establishing one of the first nationally known preservation departments in a library.]

*Mary M. Barrett, Lake Worth, Florida.* Into crafts at senior citizen's center. Calligraphy at Junior College. Visiting homebound and nursing homes. Story telling to elementary school children at local public school. Catholic minister of the Eucharist at Sunday Mass. Usher at local city Playhouse.

*Viola Barrett, Lafayette, Colorado.* I work on political action on state and city level.

*Polly Bookhout, New York, NY.* Finally succeeded in registering at Hunter in their senior program, only \$70. You register after the regular students, so get leftovers. Nevertheless, what a bargain. I'm taking Latin American Literature, Russian Literature of the turn-of-the-century period, and Native American ethnology.

*Tom Burke, St. Petersburg, Florida.* We bought a house in May. I began work at NYPL on September 18, 1963 (Kennedy was President back then) and retired on August 24, 2000 just after my 55<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 19. I have gone back to work full-time in a local public library. My wife is enrolled at the University of South Florida.

*Edna Canozzer, Riverdale, New York.* My current interests are cooking, traveling, gardening, working at Mid-Manhattan. I retired in October 1995. I volunteered at the Lacawac Sanctuary (1996-2000), steering committee and Victorian Tea Benefit. Choir St. Anthony's RC Church. Sigma Alpha Tota, New York alumna treasurer 1999-2000. NYPL Retirees Association Activities Committee.

*Helen W. Chin, Port St. Lucie, FL.* Finally learned American mahjong—play twice a week, dominoes twice a week, cards 2 – 3 times a week, Savanna Club a very active community. People are wonderful here!!! Haven't traveled due to fall—go North every August for 3-4 weeks. Getting treated by acupuncture for pain in body from a fall August 21, 1998. Husband had cancer in 3/02; now in remission.

*Henrietta Cohen, New York, New York.* I retired in June 1988 from the NYPL, but I am by no means retired and work whenever I can!! My years in the NYPL were very pleasurable, and I do keep in touch with all my friends. The Association trips are most enjoyable, and the turnout is very good. Political action is most important to continue.

*Ed DiRoma, Garnerville, New York.* I still am working part time as a reference librarian in two small (compared to NYPL) public libraries up here in Rockland. What's more, we continue to go out dancing. Thank God for the Hispanics. They are keeping hold-on dancing alive in the few ballrooms and clubs that remain.

*Imogene Dykes, Bensalem, Pennsylvania.* Reading—*New York Times*. I am in a retirement home. Write a column for our newsletter about the library services. That is about all I can handle

*Lucy Eldridge, Toms River, New Jersey.* Listen to all types of music, country, western, salsa, opera, etc. Now I use the audio and cassette format and read magazines, newspapers too. Really enjoy reading and music. Where do the years go? As a trustee for Garden of Pleasant Plains, I attend meetings and help our community. Keep people informed on changes that affect their homes and lives. I miss the children and co-workers at NYPL. Also the many patrons. Now I have finally adjusted to retirement, but I will always miss the NYPL events. 9/11 threw me for a loop. Did not locate several relatives working in that area until 11 pm. It was a frightening and an awakening experience. Got to see all the new sights in Las Vegas. My friends there took eight graduate students from Ecuador into their home. We had lots of fun with these young adults, professionals from Ecuador.

*Barbara Gibbons, East Islip, NY.* In 2001, I spent eight weeks in Germany, "going back to my roots." Most of the time was in Berlin, visiting friends and family. This year, I traveled with a singing group to

Italy. I sing with the Long Island Philharmonic Chorus and the Long Island Masterworks chorus. On the board (treasurer) for L.I. Masterworks and for my church. I enjoyed my work for NYPL—20 years in the Budget Office (how can anyone enjoy that?!)—but I am happy to have the freedom of retirement. Do miss some of the people, though! I've enjoyed the Retirees Association trips and hope to go on more of them. Thanks to the organizers.

*Raphaëlle Guiyoule, Bronx, New York.* If there are bowlers among the retirees, what about forming a league?

*James Henderson, San Diego, California.* Current interests are opera, theatre, computer-related projects. I am chair and archivist of the historical committee of the Casa de las Campanas. I recorded my memories in a memoir sent to the library and some retirees.

*Ruth Rowell Higgins, Ellsworth, Maine.* I have moved back to my home state after being away since 1940. Since then I have lived in MA, NY, NJ, SC, and ID. Since I am now in a wheelchair, handicapped access is much appreciated. The years Margaret Scoggin was directing YA work live in my memory. They had some fascinating programs in the Nathan Straus Branch. The Ellsworth Public Library is an excellent one. They don't seem to have the economic problems so many libraries have today. I was pleasantly surprised by this, after hearing about the struggles of the Albuquerque Library System.

*Grace K. Iijima, New York, New York.* Still volunteering as an NGO representative at the UN for the International Federation on Aging (HQ in Montreal); serve on the committees on Aging, Older Women, Health, and the Environment. In April attended the UN Forum on Aging held in Madrid, Spain. The week following went on a solo tour of the glories (mostly Muslim) of Spain, in Cordoba and Granada, having visited Toledo and Seville on a previous trip. Last September, with a friend, went on special tour of Russia that highlighted a visit to a government-run boarding school for slightly mentally defective children who have been abused. The school is special because it's located on the former estate of a Russian princely family whose descendants (now American citizens) help with special support, financial, and with annual personal visits to the children, who consider the couple their American grandparents! In March 2001 my friend and I made a second visit to the prehistoric remains on the

## *News from Retirees Continued*

Orkney Islands of Scotland. The area was suffering from mad cow disease, and we saw the smoke of burning carcasses, fortunately from a distance. My travels have taken me to China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, India (including Kashmir), Finland, Afghanistan, Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji.

I remember the retired gentleman at the Allerton Branch whose wife didn't want him at home all day, so spent all his time at the branch, from morning opening to about 3:30 when the teenagers began coming in. I also remember the Port Richmond reader who said that library books gave him the information he needed to establish the leading orchid nursery of Staten Island. I remember the privilege of opening the new Allerton Branch in 1958. Building the basic adult and reference collections there was a high point in my professional life. Assignment to the Book Ordering Office, 1942-1943, gave me a glimpse of the book trade and the publishing world. Buying out-of-print titles in second-hand bookstores introduced me to the world of the used-book trade, and one proprietor even offered me a job!

As I age (I'm now 91), time flies by faster and faster, friends are disappearing into faraway retirement communities or nursing homes, or into the next world. So friends who remain accessible grow dearer and stairs get steeper every day! After World War II I thought we would have "peace in our time," but it seems all the wars, big and little, going on in too many places, are based on "religion" and seem so much worse, more poisonous than the political ones.

*Richard Jackson, Metairie, Louisiana.* As the automobile comes to dominate all phases of people's lives, and movie theaters dwindle to a very few superplexes in the far suburbs (remember those beloved neighborhood movie houses?), my own movie-going, formerly a dearly regarded facet of my life, fades to inconsequentiality. No car. Now I mostly read novels, including crime fiction; Elmore Leonard is one of the better and more humorous American writers. I moved back to New Orleans (born here) in December 1994. By the following June I was a volunteer at the Museum Historie New Orleans Collection, processing musical-related manuscript material in the research section. (My philosophy of volunteering is that one should volunteer in some sort of work one knows something about. Obvious you might say, but many people seem to have the idea that one must do something unpleasant and foreign to one for volunteering to be "meaningful.") I'm very much enjoying this. I have become an expert on jazz. (And the people at Historie New Orleans Collection think I am a genius because I once worked at New York Public.) While at NYPL I spent my whole time (1962-1990) as head of the American Music Collection in the Music Division at Lincoln Center. My boss, the relaxed and efficient Frank C. Campbell was entirely supportive of any big project I was dead set on doing, like the Humanities Endowment grant-supported microfilming of thousands of pop songs, a project that took about eight or ten years, as I remember.

He and I also worked on many exhibitions together. But those days are gone forever now. He's dead and I live in another city

and have other concerns. But some memories live forever, don't they?

*Lee Johnson (Jessie Lee), New York, New York.* Playing piano, bicycling in Central Park, practicing tennis (I need partners. Any singles or doubles available?), attending concerts, operas, recitals, visiting museums, enjoying dinner dates with former staff, visiting outstanding gardens. I enjoyed forty all too short years as a reference librarian. Now I am reveling in my new leisure.

*Kay R. Keeney, Staten Island, NY.* Just came home Monday August 5<sup>th</sup> from 19 day trip to Vienna, Germany and Amsterdam—three days in Vienna and sixteen days aboard a river boat touring Germany and Amsterdam. It was wonderful! The boat was a lot like our barges (because of the low bridges). Magnificent country!! Lots of rain in Holland and no windmills (but one). Food, only one complaint—too much, and I ate it all. I really don't think I gained any weight—HA! I loved my 20+ years with NYPL—each and every one of them! Mostly because of my fellow workers. We retirees on Staten Island have formed a lunch group calling ourselves "The Lunch Bunch." We meet the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month—getting calls from either Virginia Warner or Gene Unhjem—we love and enjoy each other!

*Adelaide O'N Keller, Homosassa, Florida.* My current interests are reading, travelling, organizing book groups and working with my husband, Roy, on trying to get a new library building for Homosassa. I miss my years at NYPL and wish I were back in NYC. I loved the pace and all the

wonderful (all the not so wonderful) and the stores, theatres and museums.

*Phyllis King, New York, New York.* My current interests are the same as before: travel, writing poetry, concerts, plays. I am class agent for my high school class in Cambridge, MA. Traveled to Eugene, Oregon, Longview, Washington, and Victoria, British Columbia to see children. The trip to Thailand was a delight, a major trip. Our first great-grandchild was born. Other important events: Jim's near death from pneumonia, my grandson's bar mitzvah, fall family reunion in Texas and Florida, and the usual busyness since.

*Lydia La Fleur, New York, New York.* Having a good time participating in a writing workshop and in a scene study class taught by Anne Jackson. Last summer went on a tour of Lithuania "to discover my roots." I had hoped that the language I had grown up with in my home would resurface, but no such luck. However, I loved the trip. Am also enjoying working occasionally in neighborhood branch libraries. I loved my career in the Library, especially working on the North Manhattan Project at Countee Cullen in the mid 60's and as Vocational School Specialist giving book talks to classes all over the three boroughs.

*Florence Levy, East Brunswick, New Jersey.* Moved to New Jersey from Illinois.

*Catherine Marquard, Langhorne, Pennsylvania.* I still work in our small but busy library here—nothing like NYPL. I travel to Florida in December each year to spend the holidays with cousins. I am now planning to spend

Christmas in London this year. Take local trips to Philadelphia, Bucks County, and Princeton. Hobbies are bridge and watching baseball. I still follow the New York Mets.

*Rose Messer, Albuquerque, New Mexico.* The only interesting thing in my life currently is—I am now a great grandmother four times over.

*Louis Mintz, Wheatley Heights, New York.* Continue to do volunteering work. In my 12<sup>th</sup> year as president of Mended Hearts, Suffolk County Chapter #67, part of a national non-profit organization dedicated to providing support to heart patients of all types and their families. Treasured my many years associated with Faye Simkin.

*Jean A. Pinckney, Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina.* I just retired from NYPL-SIBL and am enjoying my new home. At present I am exploring new places and trying to plant a garden. I enjoyed 15 years working at NYPL. I started as a Secretary III to Juanita Doares, Head of Collection Development. I entered library school at Queens College and became a librarian. My last position was an LIII at SIBL. I retired early to be here with my husband who is from South Carolina. I may decide to return to work at a library here.

*Emil N. Ramil, Union, New Jersey.* My current interests are music, cassettes, videos, LP's, and new fiction books. I've very good memories of Christmas presents and friendships during my years at the Library.

*Ruth G. Rausen, New York, New York.* Retirement means a full schedule: going to the theater,

piano lessons, and a great deal of travel to distant parts. It's all quite wonderful to meet with former colleagues now and then, have a few good laughs about the old days and exchange a little talk about books.

*Robert Sheehan, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.* Really now live in Mexico (Yucatan) as much as in Pittsburgh, but still find time and strength to travel in South America, too. (Since our poor dollar is suffering a setback in that part of the world I shall find fewer Americans to meet, I suspect). I still remember with horror the fiscal crises of the 1997-80 period, and it looks as if we are due for a repeat. I also wonder how the library workers from our Wildcat involvement have done (They were exconvicts and drug users). I think the two loneliest days of my life were September 11th and also October 8th when I lay in a hotel room in Bolivia hearing of our entrance into Afghanistan...being assured by the South American commentators on TV that it would all be over in one week and knowing within me that that simply was not so...

*Pauline Singletary, Sterling, Virginia.* She is chair of the Black History Committee of the Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, and she was one of five persons who received the 2000 Volunteer Service Award for an Outstanding Program. With a gift of \$50,000, the Black History Committee was established in the year 2000 to collect, preserve, and share with the public information on Loudoun County's African American History. Among its many accomplishments are the increasing of the library's resources; the conducting of programs; the mounting of exhibits;

## *News from Retirees Continued*

the development of an African American Heritage Trail of Leesburg (with the Loudoun Museum); the documentation of the history of Loudoun's black communities with oral histories, photography, archival research, and a map; helping to instigate, fund, and facilitate a major historic resources survey of African American sites in Loudoun County; and the publishing of a book of biographies of outstanding African Americans in Loudoun County's history.

*Patricia Smith, Schaumburg, Illinois.* Learning to operate my computer—my niece's old one. Am now ready to buy a new faster one—they are addictive playthings. My current interests include gardening and fitness. I am presently vice president of my parish church's woman's club, and I also greet at funerals at the church.

*Virginia Bowles Smith, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania.* My husband is golfing again after his knee replacement last October, and I am looking forward to a hip replacement in the next year or so. Such is life in the 80 year group, the Golden Years! Other than that, we are both healthy. Just added a sunroom on the first floor. Can't wait to enjoy it!

*Shirley Spranger, Middletown, New Jersey.* As of August 1, 2002 I will have moved from New York City to Kings Row Senior Residence in Middletown.

*Herbert Thorne, New York, New York.* On May 20, 2002, I shall be observing my 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. On that occasion I shall be becoming an octopus—excuse me, I meant octogenarian. At several (four of them) senior citizen centers (here in Manhattan) I enjoy (super enjoy) singing the great grand melodies of musical theatre (Kern, Rodgers, Berlin, Porter, Gershwin, and others) and golden oldies (many!) from Tin Pan Alley as well as folk music and observation of holidays music. Nothing could be more joyful. Also, (at one of the centers) I am creative in clay (no more flat two-dimensional stuff) of nudes from life and abstract or semi-abstract figurations (my spouse calls these my “finger-pushings”). She paints, paints, paints (and draws) glorious, talented still-lives, nature scenes and nudes too. I strongly recommend to our fellow retirees that they go—not stop at merely considering—to senior centers, a boon to us elders in classes or groups in many different subjects and experiences—artistic, pragmatic, educational, healthful, and very affordable. P.S. I haven't been getting to many NYPLRA gatherings lately—but I hope and expect to improve.

*Leonard Viggiano, Sanford, North Carolina.* I am currently working part-time at the local community college. My wife, Ellen, and I are sharing the position. Volunteering with ESL classes and in a reading program for elementary school pupils. I am also involved with our local church, serving on various committees. Been able to do some canoeing and gardening, both of which I enjoy. The staff at NYPL will always be very special to me. The excellent training I received over the years at NYPL always served me well in my subsequent positions in different types of libraries. It's hard to believe it will be ten years since I retired from NYPL. Moved to North Carolina in the year 2000, so I'm still adjusting to “retirement” here. It's a lonely state. So far so good.

*Molly Wamp, New York, New York.* Hobbies are crossword puzzles daily, *New York Times* and *Daily News*. It's a learning experience. When I look up answers, especially in the *World Almanac*, it makes me look up additional information, particularly on history of nations. I pat every dog I see on the street and in Central Park. They call me the “dog lady” in the Central Park area where I live. I listen to WQXR 96.3 all day long. I love classical music. 96.3 is my favorite number for radio but not temperature. I go to my hometown area—Naples, NY—in July when it's hot here and in December for holiday with family. It's very scenic up there—near Rochester, NY. I go to AA meetings 5 to 6 times a week—since January 1978. “Alcoholism is a disease and nothing to be ashamed of,” stated Dr Nicholas Pace, the M.D. who introduced me to AA. There are 70-100 at a meeting. We discuss our old drinking habits that we now control, working situations, humor and anger. One member wrote me up in *The New Yorker* in February 1992. One finds people with the same interests—dog lovers, music lovers, baseball stars, TV personalities. Anyone who is overdrinking has the disease and AA will stop the alcohol drinking. It is a killer disease. AA tel: Manhattan (212) 647-1680 or call me 724-1742. 100 meetings a day in Manhattan—others in Bronx, Brooklyn, etc. There is more laughter at a meeting of AA than any other place I've ever been. People have a sense of humor and relief from tension. At NYPL I enjoyed getting reserved books for readers from Albany to California.

*Bonnie Williams, New York, New York.* Current interests are birding, movies, concerts, theatre,

health, family, reading, gardening (armchair!), furnishing my new home—coop at Penn South. I volunteer at Holy Apostles' Soup Kitchen. Still active with Community Board 5, Manhattan. I am taking the Citizen Tree Pruning Course. My NYPL memories include the pain of the City debacle in the 70's, which has faded to a great extent, but the sadness of that time is still with me. However, I will always remember the resolute will of the staff to go on and give the best service they could. I hope the Retirees Association will work for salary increases for all the Library staff.

*Philip Wolcoff, Flushing, New York.* I enjoy reading the newsletter, and it brings back fond memories of my forty-two years at NYPL and the wonderful people I worked with, and the pleasure of helping a wide variety of readers, on the floor, at book discussion groups, etc. I also enjoyed my participation on NYPL's *Speaking Volumes* program on radio (WNYC) and the television program NYPL had on channel 31 (the municipal TV channel at that time).

*Agnes Babich, Jackson Heights, New York.* For the past several years, I have been a volunteer interviewer with the Mayor's Voluntary Action Center, which refers volunteers to nonprofit agencies in all five boroughs. It has provided me with an opportunity to meet people from diverse backgrounds who are willing to give their time and expertise to help others. Just recently, I have been volunteering with the AARP Job Hub, an agency that tries to find jobs for people over 45 years of age. It is a challenge, and sometimes frustrating, to accomplish this due to the economic downturn. However, the Job Hub has been successful in placing people, working in conjunction with other agencies assisting mature job seekers. Fond memories of NYPL include my early years in Preparation Services and the exposure to that division's diverse staff. I felt as if I were working at the United Nations! My final years as the Library's Benefits Manager were particularly exciting since I was involved in implementing the Tax-Deferred Annuity Program. That benefit, as well as the Pre-Retirement Program, helped to make the transition for retiring staff a smooth and pleasant process. I am now also enjoying rediscovering all New York City has to offer with my 8 and 11-year-old grandsons. We take our Metro cards and zip around the city on weekends throughout the year.

## FROM THE EDITOR

This issue is filled with the writings of the Association's members. Perhaps they will momentarily take us away from the many disturbing events of current life.

In the article below, we add news from the Library to the disturbing national and world events. As most of you know, the City is now in an extremely difficult financial situation, and as you can guess, libraries are among the first to suffer. As of this writing, the bad news continues to come in, and until it is all received, the extent of the trouble is not known. The suffering will probably be extensive, for in addition to the country's bad economy, the national administration is focused primarily on military might and the huge budget it requires. We would advise our politicians to go to a library and read about what has happened throughout history to the powerful militaristic governments that have neglected the internal affairs of their nations.

## THE CUTS

We quote from part of the October 28, 2002 memorandum from Sam Butler and Paul LeClerc to the Trustees and Staff:

We have just been notified from the Mayor's Office of Budget and Management of a further reduction to City agencies of 2% in their operating budgets. For the Library, this comes on top of an initial reduction of 5% and a subsequent one of 7 1/2% in the present fiscal year. The new reduction translates into an additional cut of \$1.917 million for the branch libraries and one of \$369,000 for the research libraries. (The numbers include reductions that will be reallocated to central units.) Our *total* reductions in City operating support for this fiscal year now stands at \$16.8 million.

A hiring freeze had already been instituted, and a drastic materials cut had begun. In September The Research Libraries reduced their services to five days, opening only Tuesdays through Saturdays. In October, the 85 Branch Libraries gradually shifted their hours. The hiring freeze has left the Library without adequate staff, and everyone is wondering when the dismissal of its members will begin. Already about 200 jobs have been lost to attrition. An emergency campaign for money is to be started. The membership of the Retirees Association has been active in such campaigns and intends to be helpful in this one.

## NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

A dramatic new building has been built in the South Court of the Humanities and Social Sciences Library, known to retirees as the Central Library. It is a six-story glass structure with cantilevered floors held three feet back from the court's walls, visible through the glass. The building cannot be seen from the street or from the Library's most important interior spaces, including the Main Reading Room. A former large courtyard window is now a public entryway that opens onto Astor Hall (the Fifth Avenue Lobby). The public areas include an Orientation Center auditorium seating 24 and two classrooms for instruction on research techniques and computer use. On one level is a 178-seat auditorium for programs, lectures, and conferences. Other floors are occupied by Technical Services, and the top floor is a glass-enclosed staff lounge that includes pantry facilities and a "quiet room." The ground level has a new loading dock.

The Branch Libraries have always required a library card for those who borrow books. Now The Research Libraries is requiring a user card for readers who request materials from closed-stack collections. To acquire the card, a reader will need to fill out an application, similar to that of The Branch Libraries but including a picture of the reader, a process supposed to take only ten minutes. To request materials, readers submit call slips, and their cards are scanned at the pickup desk when they retrieve their materials. If they are not returned or returned damaged, the Library will have a record of the user. Eventually the cards will have many other uses, such as making possible the submission of electronic call slips, placing holds on material, making reservations for computers, media stations, and training classes.

Most of the news from the Branches has appeared in Staff News, but we regretfully add that the gutting and rebuilding of Mid-Manhattan has been put on indefinite hold because of the financial situation.

The Newsletter is published at irregular intervals by The New York Public Library Retirees Association, an independent association. Information for the newsletter should be sent to Lawrence Murphy, Editor, The NYPL Retirees Association Newsletter, 137 East 36 Street, Apt. 16-B, New York, NY 10016-3528. (lmurphy@nyc.rr.com). Officers of the Association—President: Juanita Doares; Vice-President: Alar Kruus; Secretary: Angeline Moscatt; Treasurer: Agnes Babich; Social Activities Coordinator: Polly Bookhout. To join the NYPL Retirees Association, send annual dues of \$10 to Agnes Babich 3546 79th St., Apt. 3, Jackson Heights, NY 11372. Dues include a subscription to the newsletter. Information and inquiries should be mailed or telephoned to Juanita Doares, NYPL Retirees Association, 401 W. 118th Street, Apt. 3, New York, NY 10027-7216 (telephone: 212 666-5737). Committees of the Association: Health Care: Ann Moy; Legislative: Ada Jackson; Membership: Dolores Noyes; Social: Polly Bookhout (Chair), Despina Croussouloudis, Edna Canozzer, Agnes Babich, Bert Abelson; Oral History Advisory Committee: Angeline Moscatt (Chair), Alar Kruus, Phyllis King, Dolores Noyes, Despina Croussouloudis, Virginia Swift, Carol Davies-Gross, and members of the Executive Committee.

## NYPL RETIREES OUTING "HAVE A CUP OF TEA"

Mr. Yamado of the Urasenke Tea Ceremony Society will be our guide for a lecture/demonstration at the Urasenke Chanoyu Center, 153 East 69th Street, between Lexington and Third Avenues, on Wednesday December 11, at 11 a.m. Make your reservations early for space is limited. Send your check for \$15 by November 25, payable to The New York Public Library Retirees Association, mailed to Agnes Babich, treasurer, 35-46 79th Street, Apt. 3, Jackson Heights, New York 11372. Following the tea there will be an optional visit to the nearby Asia Society. For further information telephone Juanita Doares (212) 666-5737, or Polly Bookhout (212) 956-3634.

To reach the Center by bus, use the M101, M102, M103, or M98 bus uptown on Third Avenue or downtown on Lexington Avenue, or take the M66 bus west on East 68th Street or east on West 65th Street. There is a subway stop at Lexington and 68th Street on the IRT 6 line and an IND F stop at Lexington and 53rd Street.

## THE ASSOCIATION STEPS OUT

Since our last newsletter, we visited the South Street Seaport, the newly renovated Chatham Square Regional Library, and the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens. Because of limited space, the reports will be published later.

We sympathize with those who regret that they cannot attend. Most of our members do not live in New York City. We nevertheless look upon the trips not only as entertainment but as a means to sustain the interest of those who do the work of the Association, such as secretarial chores and many other things. Thus everyone benefits. These outings and other local activities are financially self-sustaining and do not use the Association's funds.