

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY RETIREES ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 16 FALL 2003

TEN YEARS THE CELEBRATION

by Juanita Doares

On April 3 this association celebrated its tenth anniversary with a special meeting attended by a large number of retirees. The Library's situation at that time, including cuts in money, books, and hours, was described by Mary Kay Conwell, Director of the Branch Libraries, and William Walker, Director of the Research Libraries. We were told that 85 Branches and all four Research Libraries are now at five days of service each week. The City-funded book budget was by 40 percent. [For more details on cuts, see page ten of this newsletter.] Don Hirschorn of the Retired Public Employees Association described that association's actions, and Juanita Doares expressed appreciation for their help in achieving a cost of living adjustment. Robert Foy, Chief Librarian of Mid-Manhattan Library, gave the opening remarks, and Juanita Doares gave special recognition to Robert Goldstein, now retired, for his help when he was head of the Mid-Manhattan Library.

Mary Brady, former treasurer of the Association, who died recently, was remembered by Barbara Berliner, Phyllis King, Harriet Shalat, and Valerie Stegmayer. They spoke of Mary's devotion and high standards as head of Telephone Reference. Members of Mary's family were also present. [See page ten for Phyllis King's remembrance]

Thelma Thomas, distinguished story teller, entertained with her wonderful stories, as she has done so often. Lydia LaFleur, a wonderful friend to the association, read a moving essay.

The social committee provided refreshments, including a birthday cake and champagne. The committee also arranged an exhibit of photographs of the Library's retirees, and the association surprised President Juanita Doares with a beautiful NYPL scarf.

Many people have worked for the association, more than can be mentioned in this short space; large numbers have written letters and made telephone calls supporting legislation. The following list includes those to whom we are especially indebted.

Thanks to those who served

Bert Abelson
Mary Ann Altman
Agnes Babich
Polly Bookhout
Mary Brady*
Edna Canozzer
Theresa Casile*
Henrietta Cohen
Despina Croussouloudis
Juanita Doares
Lucy Eldridge
Moritia Leah Frederick*
Fred Gee*
Bob Goldstein
Nora Gorschoff*
Betty Gubert
Ada Jackson
Mercy Kellogg*
Phyllis King
Ruth Kronmiller*
Alar Kruus
Georgette Lachat
William O. Lee
Helen Levine
Catherine Marquard
Angelina Moscatt
Anne Moy
Larry Murphy
Delores Noyes
Rose Marie O'Leary
Bob Sink
John Slade
Virginia Swift
Belle Weinberg*

*Deceased

News from Retirees

The following items are taken 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.

Luis Alcala, East Lansing, Michigan. Not much new to report save an ongoing bout with arthritis that Pearl Harbored me last November. Celebrex helps keep me walking at something close to my old Johnnie Walker gait. Still enjoying those Harrison Roadhouse martinis, and [the] annual [] shad roe is due this week. My fleet of model warships continues to grow, over 2,300 at this writing. Buying all the opera/lieder CD's that my budget allows before they become extinct. Enjoy reading *Staff News* save for the obits. Re current French bashing: I've increased my consumption of brie and Veuve Clicquot.

Barbara Berliner, Leonia, New Jersey. Since retiring in August 2002, I have been to London twice and Scotland once. I'm planning to visit Scotland again this summer. After that trip I will be doing fund-raising in this country for the Children's Hospice Association Scotland (CHAS). I've been going to plays and movies and catching up on my reading and enjoying retirement!

Polly Bookhout, New York, New York. I've enjoyed learning more about using my digital camera through a course at the YMCA this summer. I took hundreds of pictures on my Elderhostel tour of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, St. Petersburg, and Moscow this fall. I'm taking a course reading Indian authors currently writing in English from an Indian instructor at The New School. Along with others in my YMCA exercise course I've been part of the Riverside Branch book discussion group.

Emily Browne, Fresno, California. Have moved into a retirement home. Am busy cleaning out my house, getting ready to sell. Quite an adjustment but getting there.

Thomas Bourke, St. Petersburg, Florida. I have been working as a reference librarian since 2001 at the Gulfport Public Library, Gulfport, Florida 33707.

Edna Canozer, Riverdale, New York. Working part time at Mid-Manhattan. Frequent trips to art exhibits (Hartford Athenian, Philadelphia Art Institute, etc.). Slowed

down a bit by fractured humerus (left arm). Still in Therapy--Sept-Jan.

Edward M. Dana, Martinsburg, West Virginia. Keeping busy with the Air Force Sergeants Association as Division Convention Coordinator. Just finished a very good convention the end of April in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Now completing final reports and starting planning for next year. Working at home keeping 20 room house on 12 1/2 acres in good shape. Takes 6 hours to mow the lawn.

Dorothy R. Eosefow, South Ozone Park, New York. I still enjoy gardening on a limited basis. Despite [that] I am restricted to a wheel chair. I still travel. Do enjoy talking to longtime friends from the Library. I do remember the opening of the new Library at 5th Avenue at 40th Street with the hassle of packing boxes of books, new and old--the memories are still vivid.

Pilar F. Fornes, Miami, Florida. I have moved to Miami, Florida due to my husband's health. He is actually living in a "home." He has Parkinson's and other problems. I live across the street from my brother, but I may move to another apartment because this one I am living in is too small. If I move I will let you know. Give my regards to all the "girls."

Mary F. Gibson, Whiting, New Jersey. Still driving my car, busy at church, enjoying visits with my 3 children and 5 grandchildren all on Long Island, 2 of whom will be entering college this year away from home (new experience for them).

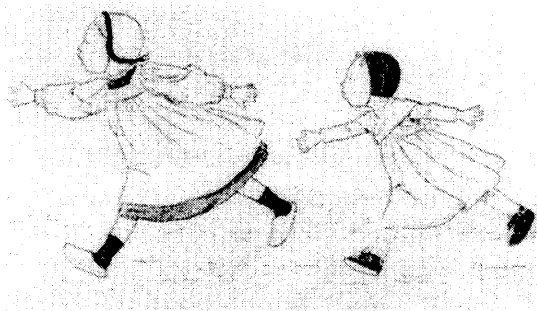
Harriet Gottfried, New York, New York. I'm writing nonfiction and working on a research project. I'm opposed to the military intervention in Iraq.

Ruth R. Higgins, Ellsworth, Maine. I have come back to Maine, my home state. After I retired we moved to Conway, South Carolina and lived there for 17 years. We went through the hurricane Hugo. After my husband died I moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico and lived there for three years. I am happy to be back in Maine, near the coast and near Acadia National Park. I don't mind the cold and love the fresh air. I always felt so lucky to have worked under exceptional branch librarians--Isabel Jackson, Emily Davis, Gerald Gold and Julia Brody from the Bronx Borough Office.

Arnold Hyman, Bronx, New York. I am a lifelong stamp collector. I would be happy to trade stamps with any

other retiree. My wife and I like to travel. We just got back from a train trip across most of the United States. Will be going to Boston and Cape Cod in June and to Columbus, Ohio in August for the APS stamp show. Love to read and attend open rehearsals of The New York Philharmonic. I enjoyed my many years as a book discussion leader at the Kingsbridge Regional Library. Loved doing budget action.

Grace K. Iijima, New York, New York. In April 2002 attended the United Nations Conference on Ageing as a representative of the International Federation on Ageing, whose headquarters are in Montreal, Canada. The official Assembly and NGO conference were held in Madrid, Spain. We discussed such problems of the ageing population around the world as health, poverty, abuse, housing, social relations, and living standards. Greetings to Horace Moseley, custodian of the Allerton Branch when I was there, 1958-1967, and to all staff of that time. I remember the Great Blackout of 1965. I hope that the present economic situation, which has caused so much unemployment and financial disasters that are suffered by low and middle income people will soon improve. The losses to the very rich may inconvenience them, but they are not losing their homes, their livelihood, their basic economic security, their health insurance, etc. I hope the United States will someday have a universal health care system that includes dental care, eyes and ears.



Lee (Jessie Lee) Johnson, New York, New York. Retirement is wonderful: playing the piano, exploring and bicycling in Central Park, playing tennis (I still desire steady partners, intermediate level, for singles or doubles. Any takers?), attending operas, concerts, recitals, seeing former staff, visiting museums, gardens and the Bronx Zoo. The Metropolitan Museum is like a second home. I treasure my 40 years with the NYPL. There's so little time. When working, I was always 2-4 weeks behind in reading my magazine subscriptions. Retirement hasn't changed that. Sooner or later everyone wants to visit New York. I love being a full time

tourist and guide for visiting friends and relatives.

Phyllis King, New York, New York. Summer visit to our first great grandchild, a girl in Denver. Jim had a stent inserted in his aorta after suffering heart pains in October. I had a brief hospital stay on election day for fibrillations. Had tests; my heart is fine. My vote wouldn't have made a difference, anyway, sad to say. We are planning a trip to Turks and Caico (Caribbean) the first two weeks in February.

William Lee, Staten Island, New York. Research on the origin, growth and outlook of Islamic terrorism.

Richard C. Lynch, New York, New York. A question for readers of the newsletter. Recently while reading *Murder on the Blackboard* (written by Stuart Palmer in 1932) I came across an interesting visit to the NYPL's main building in 1932: "For all of 30 minutes Miss Hildegard Withers stood on the steps...awaiting the august pleasure of its gray-clad minions in opening the doors for the day. Once inside, she crossed the wide marble rotunda and stalked grimly up the stairs. On the third floor she turned West, through the almost vacant catalogue room, and on toward the main reading room." The visit goes on for several pages, and it is not a particularly flattering view of the library, although the heroine does get the information she came for (when a certain book was used, by whom, and the time it was taken out and returned) all by a search by a "gray-haired" librarian through the call slips. (At the Theatre Collection we did not record the times, but perhaps in 1932?) Teacher/detective Hildegard Withers was portrayed on the screen by Edna May Oliver in 1932, the same year this mystery was written. Do any readers know of other descriptions of the library in fiction?

Lydia LaFleur, New York, New York. Have been busy this spring rehearsing the play "The Seagull" by Chekhov which our community theater--The Morningside Players--will be performing in June. I love the play and the role of Madame Arkadina, the self centered, aging actress.

Peter McCallion, New York, New York. I cannot believe 5 years have passed since my retirement. I find I am busier now than before. Summers I work as Assistant Head Usher at the Tanglewood Music Center; in winter I travel to Mexico to continue my studies in Spanish and pre-Columbian archaeology. I also drive a van for an Elder hostel out of Santa Fe, NM, and remain active

News from Retirees Continued

in ALA. My health remains excellent. I enjoy meeting NYPL friends for lunch--and attending retirement parties.

Catherine Marquard, Langhorne, Pennsylvania. General news since I have retired to a lovely Attleboro Village in Langhorne, PA. I work in our small library (not at all like NYPL); attend music concerts in Princeton and Philadelphia; traveled this year to Florida and to London for Christmas; still like theatre in New York; and still follow baseball.

Pauline Ristuccia, Manorville, New York. I am a member of the Greenwood Village Senior Citizen Club. My husband (who is also the treasurer) and I participate in various social functions. I am at times a waitress in the Club House Social Affair, assist in setting up tables with other committees for different functions such as Valentine Parties, Halloween, Spring Party, etc. We enjoy it very much. We live in an Adult Community, and we can be as busy as we want. Also, we volunteer for the Dominican Home Care Services for people who need to be taken to doctors, go for tests, etc. And then if need be we will help them go shopping, which they love

Otillia M. Pearson, New York, New York. New York Public Librarians, especially those who visit Florida, will be interested to learn that on October 6, 2002 Broward County opened a new facility called
African American Research Library and Cultural Center.

They publish a Cultural Quarterly--Fall, 2002 v..XV#4 current issue. Director: Dorothy Klein, Broward County Public Library Foundation. Address: 2650 Sistrunk Blvd, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311. Samuel F. Morrison, retiring as director of the Library System.

The "Beethoven" piano--formerly owned by The New York Public Library Music Division at Lincoln Center and restored by Hugh Gough (deceased)--is now located in the Frederick Historic Piano Collection at 15 Water Street, Ashburnham, Massachusetts 01430. See NY Times article "Where Old Pianos Go To Live" by Anthony Tommasini for details of the collection 11/22/01.

Jean A. Pinckney, Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina. It has been one year since I moved from New York to South Carolina. I have been fortunate to find a part-time position at Trident Technical College in North Charleston. The atmosphere here is more relaxed, and I am making use of my librarian skills, even though on a

smaller scale. I am loving it.

Maria M. Proctor, Hightstown, New Jersey. I am living in a lovely retirement community, Meadow Lakes, which I enjoy very much. We have quite a good library. I help out when needed, cataloging, taking inventory, etc.

Gunther E. Pohl, Great Neck, New York. Just wishing to say hello and to note particularly that I use the Library every possible day for the NYS Biography and Portrait Index, which currently has over one million references.

Bridie Race, Sunnyside, Queens. I continue to keep my membership in the International Association of Administrative Professionals. This year I attended their International Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This was a tremendous undertaking for me since I haven't done anything so adventurous since becoming handicapped. Airport security wasn't a problem (I have a metal prosthesis). Hotel and convention site was terrific. A highlight of the trip was a surprise dinner with Rose Messer, a former NYPL colleague. She looks great.

Emil N. Ramil, Union, New Jersey. I'm in good shape (physical condition) after the radiations (39) ordered by my Dr. Kathleen Murphy, plus prescriptions, etc. for my prostate cancer. God bless Dr. Murphy, my urology science angel. I'm very sorry about the tremendous reduction of my dear Music Cataloger section. I hope everything changes for the best in the future. I continue to work hours and hours in my home, cataloging my videos section (VHS & DVD); Long Plays; CD's; Cassettes; Open Reel; 78 and 45 rpm recordings. Plus: Non Fiction and Fiction Books; Great Arts; Biographies; Science; Spirituals; Hollywood Performers; Composers; etc.

Bella Remz, Rio Rancho, New Mexico. We have been living in New Mexico for 22 years and hopefully for a long time. Life is very quiet, and I like it this way. We used to do some intensive traveling, but now we kind of stay put. Bones are beginning to hurt so I got involved in quilting and am enjoying it. I have always been a knitter, and I still do it along with needlepoint. After the rush of New York we like it quiet. I enjoy the staff news because I can hear some anecdotes of some of the staff that I worked with. Thank you for asking.

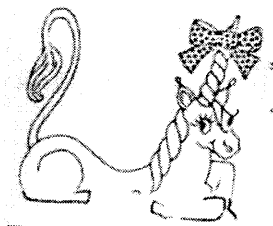
Rose O. Roth, New York, New York. Living at the Williams, a wonderful senior residence run by the Salvation Army. Several other retired librarians live

here from various libraries. I still enjoy the usual reading, TV, cards, concerts.

Inez S. Russo, Bronxville, New York. I really don't do much of anything. I enjoyed working for the NYPL. It was fun. Too bad it lasted only fourteen years.

Virginia B. Smith, E. Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. I have two new items since last year, a new titanium hip (I'm walking beautifully but alas no more golf) and two new lenses in my eyes. I'm now 81, and I don't need any glasses to read anymore! Where were those inventors years ago! I've worn them since I was an infant!

Lewis M. Stark, Bedford, New Hampshire. My chief hobby, begun while I was at UNH (Class of '29), was collecting early New Hampshire printing, from 1756, when it began in Portsmouth, to 1820. I continued to add to the collection after retiring from NYPL in 1973 and moving to Yonkers. In 1979, on the 50th anniversary of my class of '29, I turned the collection, then comprising over 800 books and pamphlets, to the University Library, where it is now one of its Special Collections. Since moving back to New Hampshire I have made very occasional (!) additions.



Zahava Stessel, Brooklyn, New York. I was so touched by Mr. John P. Baker's reflection on his time at the library, his good wishes and then the announcement of his death. Working in the Jewish Division I knew Mr. Baker very well, and I am sorry of his passing. I am spending my free time in preparing the history of a camp in Markkleeberg, Germany. There I was a slave laborer in an airplane factory during World War II. I want to tell how we remained truthful to our upbringing and tradition, even under the most trying circumstances. As for retirement, one of my pleasures is to visit the library. I walk around the neighborhood of Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street to feel the atmosphere of my working days and lunch hours in the city. Sometimes I visit my department, the Jewish Division. There I read leisurely any book I want, and I can leave when I please. At the beginning I used to see our steady readers. Some even asked questions as they

remembered me from the reference desk where I worked. Now after sixteen years of retirement I see only new researchers, and I am pleased if I meet one or two of my former fellow workers. In any case I am proud to say that I was a librarian in The New York Public Library. [She enclosed an article which we have printed elsewhere in this newsletter.]

Dorothy L. Swerdlove, Tuscon, Arizona. In October, Helen Blankenagel Miller (formerly First Assistant in Room 315, The Research Libraries) and I took a three week Smithsonian tour to China. We did the tourist sights and sites--Tianenman Square, Great Wall, Three Gorges on the Yangtze River, terra cotta warriors at Xian, plus museums, palaces, open-air markets, etc. We were struck by the contrast between the large cities, with their high-rise buildings and wide boulevards (and congested traffic of cars and bikes), and the small villages and farms that we saw from the bus window.

Patricia Smith, Schaumburg, Illinois. I still enjoy gardening. I'm finishing my two year stint as vice president of my parish's Woman's Club. I still am a volunteer greeter at funerals. I'm looking forward to spring. Winter was cold here, but little snow.

Sally Thompson, New York City, New York. Due to my physical disabilities, I cannot travel abroad as I used to do. For the last two years, however, I have gone back to Minneapolis for a week to see old friends, family and to attend a high school reunion. I hope to do so in August 2003, our 55th year reunion. Last year I enjoyed touring Mall of America on a Lark Mobile with friends. Especially enjoyed Camp Snoopy, which has all the amusement park rides. In New York City I enjoy the theater, concerts and especially the ballet and dining with friends beforehand. I keep in touch with old friends from all over U.S. via Christmas cards and occasional phone calls--Arizona, California, Seattle, Atlantic [City], South Carolina and Minneapolis. An old college friend called me from her new home in Toronto--had not heard from her in 45 years! This is important to me since I have no immediate family.

Thelma Thomas, New York City. [She has sent us printed notices of her work with the African Folk Heritage Circle, including The Art of Storytelling Workshop, Juneteenth, and The Third Annual African Folk Heritage Circle Storytelling Festival--Talkin' Brought Me Here.]"

Herbert W. Thorne, New York, New York. One month

News from Retirees Continued

from becoming 81. Still Healthy.

Stephanie Tolbert, New York, New York. My current news is that I've joined the Senior Center in my neighborhood where I play Bingo twice a week. I visit my son, daughter-in-law and two grandsons every other month in Virginia. I really enjoy my once-a-month trips to Atlantic City. Since retiring 12/20/02 after 42 years with NYPL I still have some adjusting to get used to. I was the clerical vice president in local 1930. I was a founding member of the Union. I came to NYPL in 1960 at Donnell and left in 2002 as the Unit Head of Mid-Manhattan periodicals. My years at NYPL were wonderful. I still miss it very much.

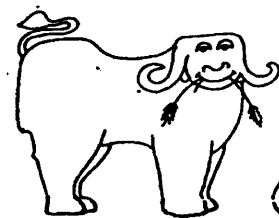
Walter Tsang, Bayside, New York. After retirement, I enjoy taking trips one to three times a year, mostly to Hong Kong, mainland China, Canada, and occasionally to southeast Asia and Europe. I also find myself plenty of time to go to gyms, read, get together with friends to eat and talk and have a good time. Last but not the least, I continue my volunteer work as a pastor, preaching the Gospel, officiating the sacraments, visiting the sick and the troubled, etc. Perhaps I should say a few words about my librarian/minister career. I felt the call to proclaim the Christian message, so after college in Hong Kong I came to the United States for theological training. I admired the life of the Apostle Paul, who devoted a great part of his time for the Gospel Ministry while working as a tent maker for his earthly needs. Therefore, following the M.Div., I earned an M.A. in order to better qualify myself for teaching in Hong Kong. Then the situation there had become unfavorable to return. I adjusted my plans and studied for the M.L.S. degree. Instead of becoming a teacher/minister as originally planned, I have led a life as a librarian/minister. I recall with satisfaction and gratitude that a visit to the Library in the summer of 1967 for a job to help support my education in the city resulted in spending thirty years at this great institution, in a beautiful building, and with many many wonderful people.

Leonard Viggiano, Sanford, North Carolina. I continue as a volunteer for special Olympics. Also mentor in a reading program for elementary school pupils.

Dolores Vogliano, New York, New York. We finally completed renovating and furnishing our house in Manhattan. In June we will take the family (12 of us, including 4 grandchildren) to Italy. In the meantime, I'm enjoying theater, films, dining with friends and

attending art and music lectures at the Metropolitan Museum, as well as traveling to Europe as often as we can.

Virginia Warner, Staten Island, New York. A lot has happened in 2002. I was blessed with a beautiful great grandson (Jayson Edwin) in June. Made a big decision to sell the family home, and three days later it was sold. I had 30 days to empty the house of 43 years accumulation of stuff. Thanks to some help, made it with some days to spare! Now, of course, I am still going through boxes I brought to my new home and wondering why I thought I could not part with what I hold in my hand! I am a volunteer with ACES one day a week. My assignment is Cassidy Coler Senior Center. Every week it is reinforced by someone in need whom I am helping. We retirees are surely fortunate with our benefits, especially our drug plan and hospitalization plan.



Bonnie E. Williams, New York, New York. Still a voting member of Community Board 5 in Manhattan, serving on the Landmarks and the Land Use and Zoning Committees. Hearing a great deal about development and architecture. We just had a presentation on the plans for the former Huntington Hartford Museum on Columbus Circle. It's exciting, but also exacting and hard work. I also volunteer at the New York City Audubon Society one afternoon a week--clerical work mostly--but with people who care about birds as much as I do and know a lot more than I do, so it's the best of all possible worlds--doing and learning! There's also family, friends and opera, opera, opera. As so many others have said, "When did I ever find time to work?" I only wish there were just one final battle to secure permanent funds for libraries--it will always be ongoing--but I am really worried about Ashcroft and the Patriot Act, many features of which Justice and the Administration now wish to make permanent--instead of the sunset year now written into the legislation. We are in for tough times in libraries and in the USA.

Philip Wolcuff, Flushing, New York. I am happy to keep up with news about the retirees. I worked with the NYPL for 42 years, and have fond memories of the staff and public.

BOOKS AND BEYOND

BY ZAHAVA STESSEL

It was one of those winter evenings when the Library was open until nine o'clock on Thursdays. The weather was stormy, and only one or two readers were sitting in the Jewish Division. The guards came around periodically to reassure the solitary librarian attending the information desk.

During the late 1970's Bryant Park was still in the hands of drug dealers, and it was not uncommon to find a user injecting himself behind the card catalog. Dealing with undesirable visitors was in my mind when two young boys entered, both unsteady on their feet. They sat down to rest in the warm reading room. After a while, one of the boys approached the information desk and almost jokingly, in a dream-like voice, said, "I want to look up the name of my family, would you help me?" Checking the card catalog I located a book whose author had the family name. "This is my great grandfather," he declared. "I was named after him." He excitedly called over his friend. The book belonged to a type of response literature containing questions and answers on religious practices. It is usually composed by a learned rabbi whose stature and opinion are respected in the Jewish community. Many of those works were lost in Europe, together with their authors, during the Holocaust. The few which were saved and which the library was privileged to have, were kept in the rare book collection. The boy was disappointed that he could not see the book. "I am not from New York," he pleaded. I advised him to come back in the daytime when the collection was accessible.

The next morning, my reader was among those waiting for the Library to open. He was alone this time. "I could not sleep all night," he said. "My father mentioned that our ancestors were rabbis, belonging to the Hasidic group, but not being observant--a rabbi meant little for me."

I brought him the book, which was in surprisingly good condition. He looked it over carefully, page by page, but because it was written in Hebrew he did not understand it. He wanted to Xerox it, but it could only be photo-

graphed. The boy's appearance touched me. My compassion was probably stronger because of my children of his age. I told him to wait, and during my break we could read the book together. He had many questions, and we finished only the introduction. We spent three more days of my breaks and lunch hours finishing the book, and I enjoyed the questions and his clear reasoning. The issues gave a glimpse into that world of simple life and faith that was destroyed by the Holocaust.

A few weeks later, my friend returned with a camera. Following specified instructions on how to prevent damage, he photographed the book.

I almost forgot the episode when, on a bright spring morning, someone with a bouquet of flowers was looking for me. I glanced at the well-dressed man, who had a familiar expression. It was the boy whom I had seen five years ago. He showed me the book reconstructed from photographs. "Look how nice. I even learned to read a bit of it in Hebrew. You don't know how this book has made a turn-around in my life. My ancestors extended their mysterious ways to reach me; just as written in those Hasidic tales and legends. When you met me in the Library I was heavily into drugs, extorting money from my parents. To buy a camera, I accepted a job. Then I realized it was not so hard to work for a good cause. I continued to be employed, and later, heeding the advice of my father, returned to college. Now, whenever I am down and discouraged, I take out my little book, for inspiration and endurance."

He shook my hand for a passionate goodbye. I looked at my flowers as the young man disappeared into the city, and I knew why I wanted to be a librarian.

Dr. Stessel is a retiree of the Jewish Division. She is the author of Wine and Thorns in Tokay Valley, Jewish Life in Hungary: the History of Abaujszanto, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press and Associated University Presses, 1995. There is a videocassette supplement about her return trips to Abaujszanto. This article has been shortened from the original.

ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

November 13, 2003. Conference Room C, Mid-Manhattan Library, 6th floor, 2 pm. Program: Libraries and the US Patriots Act. Udi Ofer, legal council to the New York Civil Liberty Union and Bob Bellinger, Coordinator Staten Island Borough Office. Reception afterwards for new members and new retirees.

December 10 at 10 am Visit to the Webster Branch, 1465 York Avenue at 78th Street, followed by lunch and then a tour of Gracie Mansion at 2 pm

January 14, 2004, 6 pm Annual Holiday Party. Details to appear in *Staff News*.

DIRECTORS OF THE LIBRARY, 1946-1979

In previous issues of this newsletter we have published articles about people who have been important in developing the Library. These items have been a reminder that the Library does have a splendid past and that the Library has grown from the seeds of the hard work and visions of its employees. Few have been as influential as its directors, and here we print parts of James Henderson's memoir that tell of the three men who were directors when many of the present retirees were employees. The last date is 1979 because that is the year of the closing of the director's office, although it was opened briefly in a subsequent year under different conditions.

The following are excerpts from

Going Back, A Memoir of My Years At The New York Public Library

by James W. Henderson

RALPH BEALS

Ralph Beals came to the Library as Director in 1946 from the University of Chicago and lost no time in instituting a number of basic changes in the Library's structure. At the time he became director, the Library consisted of two large "departments" that operated more or less independently of one another. The Circulation Department (later renamed more appropriately The Branch Libraries) and the Reference Department (now The Research Libraries). Beals had the idea that the two departments needed to be brought closer together and that some of the operations within the departments should be combined into Library-wide offices. In 1947, when I arrived on the scene, for example, the Reference Department had its own hiring procedure; a few months later, however, the process would have started in the newly-created Personnel Office that served both Departments. Other Library-wide offices established during that period were the Public Relations Office and the Office of the Business Manager that included building maintenance and operation, the Printing Office and Bindery, Purchasing, and Photographic Service, but not Accounting.

Beals also instituted a Fund Raising Office designed to develop an aggressive program for obtaining private support for the Reference Department. Although many public libraries had been started or in part supported by private funds, it was unusual for a public library to make fund-raising a principal office in its operations. Beals brought the heads of all of these departments together at a weekly luncheon meeting. The group was known as the General Administrative Officers.

The person selected by Beals to become Chief of the Personnel Office was Edward G. Freehafer, who, as Executive Assistant to the Chief of the Reference Department, had been in charge of personnel matters for that Department. I do not know if the idea came from Freehafer or Beals, but almost immediately a job classification study for privately paid posi-

tions was instituted. Positions in the Circulation Department, funded by the City, had been classified by the City, and salaries were related to that classification scheme. In the Reference Department, however, there seemed to be no clear-cut plan. The Classification and Pay Plan for the Reference Department was completed in 1948.

Beals also saw the need to increase substantially the funds, both private and public, available to the Reference Department. He saw three possible sources. First, inasmuch as the collections at Fifth Avenue & 42nd Street were an asset to the educational, cultural, and economic life of the City, he thought the City had an obligation to pay for more than just the capital costs of repairing the building it owned. Working with the Bureau of the Budget and the Mayor, he was able to get the City to pay for such non-bibliothecal operations as the maintenance and security costs of the Central Building. He then joined with other library administrators in the State of New York in a successful effort to obtain State aid for libraries. While most of the aid went to public libraries throughout the State that were supported by tax dollars (including the Circulation Department of The New York Public Library), the legislation recognized the Reference Department as a unique cultural, educational, and economic asset deserving of State support.

In connection with the Fund Raising Office, designed to seek endowment, foundation grants, and annual gifts from individuals and corporations, Beals organized friends groups such as the Women's Council and the Business Advisory Council whose membership included some of the most influential citizens of the City. These groups were brought into the Library for dinner and luncheon meetings for interaction with key members of the Reference Department staff and to hear speakers of great distinction such as the British historian Arnold Toynbee.

Most of Beals' innovations were introduced, remarkably, in the first few years of his tenure of less

than eight years as Director. His career at The New York Public Library was cut short by illness and death in 1954.

EDWARD G. FREEHAFFER

After graduation from library school, he had applied for a position in the Library's Music Division. He had an abiding interest in music (he composed a hymn that was played at his memorial service), and he was disappointed to have been turned down for the Music Division position and assigned to the Information Division (Room 315). In retirement he enjoyed membership on the Board of the Glimmerglass Opera in Cooperstown, New York, where he lived with his wife, Isabel.

After serving in the Information Division and the Economics Division, he held a series of key posts in the Reference Department, including Chief of the American History Division, and Acting Chief of the Acquisition Division, before being called to Brown University, his alma mater, for the position of Assistant University Librarian. His time at Brown was cut short, however, when he was asked to return to The New York Public Library as Executive Assistant to the Chief of the Reference Department. Afterwards he was the first Personnel Officer of the Library, and then Chief of the Reference Department before his appointment to the Directorship of the Library following the death of Ralph Beals.

Freehafer was the opposite of Beals. Where Beals was somewhat blunt in his personal relations, Freehafer was well-mannered, courteous, sincere. He appeared to lean over backwards, literally, to make sure that he understood another person's point of view.

Freehafer's agenda as Director was to carry forward the program that had been developed by Beals (improvements in the Library's organization and management and increased funding, both public and private) and to carry out plans for the establishment of the Library & Museum of the Performing Arts and the Mid-Manhattan Library, a particularly high priority. Working with the State Education department and other librarians in the State, he was instrumental in developing forward-looking formulas for State aid; and he was able to tap new sources of support from the City and Federal governments.

He must have been gratified that the Mid-Manhattan Library had its beginnings before his retirement in 1970 and that he was able to see it in full flower when it was enlarged and reopened in 1980.

JOHN MACKENZIE CORY

Although John Cory came to the Library as Chief of the Circulation Department in 1951, I did not know him until 1959, when I was appointed Assistant to the Director and, as Secretary of the General Administrative Officers, had the opportunity to observe him at close range. He had made a strong impression on me, however, when, as Executive Secretary of the American Library Association in the late forties and early fifties he presided dynamically over meetings of the Association at its annual conferences.

In 1963, when I became Chief of the Reference Department and he became Deputy Director of the Library, I was in a position to work with him for the first time. It would be interesting to know what his I.Q. may have been. He was certainly one of the most brilliant persons that I have known. He would speak, articulately, often eloquently, at considerable length on a great variety of subjects. His comments never seemed to be prepared; his words were spoken without hesitation, his sentences well structured--so much so that his words could have been taken down or recorded and published verbatim.

I often encouraged him to put some of his thoughts into written form, but he always dismissed the idea as unimportant. At some point he had considered a career in the legal profession, and he would no doubt have made a brilliant lawyer. Although his mind moved with lightening speed, his administrative style was relaxed and unhurried.

In 1971 he became Director of the Library, but not without the interposition of a full time President and Chief Executive Officer between himself and the Board of Trustees. If he harbored any resentment for not having been chosen to head the Library's administration when Edward Freehafer retired, he did not show it.

Nothing seemed to delight Cory more than to meet with a group for discussion of an issue. He had a way of making the tackling of a problem exciting. He was reputedly popular as an Adjunct Professor in the Columbia University School of Library Service.

Cory was able to move forward aggressively with some of the Library's most challenging projects--The Lincoln Center Library, the Mid-Manhattan Library, and the establishment of the Systems Analysis and Data Processing Office. None of these projects would have succeeded as successfully as they did without John Cory's imagination and determination.

MARY BRADY IN MEMORIAM

by Phyllis King

In 1969, three days after I had applied for a job at New York Public Library, I met Mary Brady, and two days after that I was at work at Telephone Reference at Donnell, where it had been established for about six months. Mary and I were of an age though I didn't find this out for a while, as a matter of fact I was six months older.

My first impression was of someone more strict than the person I later came to love--and she was. Something about her desire to be a nun seemed to have made her a believer in the strength of rules to keep order--and for many years she never used a first name or allowed us to. The rules were a good thing for this fledgling department full of a bunch of oddball middle agers. Naturally, as we all discovered the nature of our work and our clientele, things altered, with Mary the last to let go.

There is a quote I found, a description of her that I loved from the *Daily News*, June 1965, "a tall graying lady with an impish tongue and amazing patience, joyful in the knowledge she has and equally joyful in knowing where to find what she doesn't know."

She told the same reporter that she had always wanted to be a librarian, and she encouraged all of us to use whatever individual skills and knowledge we had to increase the general knowledge of the group: file drawers of lists of animals, real and fictional; a now huge moving picture list; and an odd, hard-to-find information file to which she added things even after she retired; a reference sheet in each world almanac for quick often-cited answers. She also made the communal answering of questions the norm if we couldn't quickly find an answer.

In other words she understood Telephone Reference and what it needed and adapted it to suit that need. This was especially true with the physical moves we made from Donnell to Mid-Manhattan's top floor over the Arnold Constable store, to the big tiled former presses room at the main library, and finally to the present quarters on the second floor of Mid-Manhattan. She also adjusted to the early Dialog computers though one felt the printed word had a good deal more veracity to her.

I realize this more in retrospect, and though like all groups we complained, we all knew that she cared deeply for what she was trying to do.

And equally expressing her regard for rules, when she reached sixty-five she gave it up. Though I stayed on for ten more years, she stepped out with grace and modesty, visiting often but never interfering, though if we asked,

she would help.

She had created a very excellent division which though modified by technology and different people, still contains the framework which she set up.

[Mary Brady was for many years the treasurer of this Association, an enthusiastic and much loved worker. The Editor]



DRAMATIC CUTS TO THE LIBRARY BUDGET

Fiscal Year 2003

The \$16.1 million cuts in City funds have already resulted in the following:

- The end of six-day service--67 out of 85 Branches and all 4 Research Libraries are now at five days of service each week.

- The loss of 200 staff members through attrition and early retirement.

- A 40 percent cut to the City-funded book budget--meaning 260,000 fewer books, an average of 3,000 books per branch.

- Fewer children reached through the connecting Libraries and Schools Program.

- Fewer adults reached by literacy programs.

- Reduced technology, maintenance, and security.

Fiscal Year 2004

The proposed State cut will be 15 percent, or \$3 million. An additional City cut will be 12 percent, or \$12.4 million on top of the \$16.1 million cut already absorbed in fiscal year 2003. If these cuts are enacted, the Library will have a combined loss of \$31.5 million.

An Emergency Campaign for the Library has been started to raise \$2 million for The Research Libraries and \$4 million for The Branch Libraries. The Library hopes to raise \$18 million in private funds over the next three years. For current information see www.nypl.org

THE EDITOR'S NOTES

This is my last newsletter. The first appeared ten years ago on June 1, 1993, and it will be continued by other people.

I regret that I have not had space to include far more articles about the thousands of people who made the Library a great institution. Among the most forgotten are the last three of the Library's directors. I here add a few words to those of Mr. Henderson in his article.

In their day, the administrative structure of the Library was sparse, considering the immense size of the institution. There were few assistants, few underlings, and tiny office staffs. Money was scarce and financial disasters haunted everyone. Administrators worked hard, kept long hours, and in return received salaries so low as to be scandalous. In addition they had to endure incredible barbs. And always there were problems with an ignorant city administration, a lethargic Board of Trustees and an indifferent public. (One mayor wanted the Library to be staffed entirely with unpaid volunteers.) Mr. Freehafer used to say that every day in his office was filled with nothing but crises, which were sometimes interrupted by a major crisis.

Although I worked as a summer substitute when Mr. Beals was the director, he was only a name to me. Mr. Freehafer I remember as a remarkable person who was continually worried about the Library and its staff. He left the door open into the hall as a reminder that he was only one part of an institution, and he insisted on having no privileges, such as air conditioning, unless the benefit could also be given to the entire staff. Having been a librarian himself, he was intensely interested in the Library's collections and its services to the public, and these needs were placed above others. Many of the heartbreaking problems, especially cuts in hours of service, still exist in spite of work by those who followed him.

Mr. Freehafer was the last librarian to head the Library. With his retirement the Board of Trustees established the new position of President, Chief Executive Officer, and the next director, John Cory, worked under him and his staff.

John Mackenzie Cory was, as Mr. Henderson says, an extremely brilliant man. He was a self denigrating person, and much of his work is not known to many people. Here are a very few examples:

Among his unknown activities are his attempts to get

the Library to buy a building on 43rd Street to be used as a club for the Library's employees, but the Library was not interested. He fought the closing of the subsidized cafeteria, citing studies in diverse sources, including *The Harvard Business Review*, that proved the importance of such eating places in the operation of an institution, but no one listened. He hoped that a way could be found to give protection to helpless people caught in Library politics and injured by poor supervisors, a problem still difficult to solve. He wanted to establish a bibliographic center to hold all the bibliographies scattered throughout the Library. This is a move still not made. Before the days of the Internet he proposed an antenna on top of the Central Library that would transmit printed articles, and he helped establish a state-wide primitive fax system for getting articles from scholarly journals to those who needed them. Another project was the transmission of multiple impulses over one cable, thus permitting the cable to simultaneously carry both information and TV. It became a reality long after his death. He was always ahead of his time.

I especially remember him as a great believer in ideals. One morning, for example, he received a call from an important Trustee who ordered him to withdraw an anti-Vietnam War film to be shown that day at Donnell, something Mr. Cory had not known about. He immediately refused to withdraw it and told the Trustee that libraries must present all sides of issues regardless of personal beliefs.

He started the Library's computer work, the first major library to do so. When he came to the Library, the building of Donnell had been delayed for several decades, mired in unsolvable difficulties, and with great effort he forced it to proceed, as he did also for the Mid-Manhattan Library. The Library at Lincoln Center was a struggle against time, for if there had been a delay, the City's fiscal crises, which he foresaw, would have doomed it.

I especially remember him for his calmness in times of crises, his efforts to be fair to everyone, and his ability to admit and correct any mistakes he may have made. Above all, he was an extremely kind person, and he personally helped innumerable people throughout the Library. Among them were many who later became some of the Library's most creative people. His contributions to the Library are largely unknown and forgotten.

LM

RETIREEES STEP OUT

by Polly Bookhout

Multicultural events have highlighted our excursions since our last newsletter. Last fall we visited the Urasenke Tea Ceremony Society at the Urasenke Chanoyu Center. Combining both tranquility and humor, our guide led us through a tea ceremony while we knelt to drink tea, an especially challenging experience for many of us. Our holiday dinner was "a sumptuous Middle Eastern feast" at the attractively decorated Salam Cafe and Restaurant.

A large and enthusiastic group attended our Tenth Anniversary Celebration, "celebrating ten years of advocacy, memories and fun." The details of this appear in Juanita Doares' article on page one of this newsletter.



Rounding up the year, we visited two research libraries with unique missions. We were impressed with the expanded Performing Arts Library with its multimedia displays and its improved electronic research possibilities. At the American Bible Society our knowledgeable and charming host librarian showed us rare and ancient Bibles in many languages and formats.

On our final trip a valiant few celebrated the Central Park's 150th year with a tour. By good fortune we benefited from a rainy season, the park was bright green, and we weren't rained upon. After seeing and hearing about the origins of the park, we visited the Metropolitan Museum to see the fascinating exhibit of the competing plans for building the park and to eat in the new cafeteria.

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.

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND LIBRARIES THE DANGERS

The USA Patriot Act empowers government agents to subpoena any person's records, including those at libraries, simply by saying that the records are needed for an investigation. The act also makes it a crime to inform the reader about the subpoena, or tell anyone else, including your newspaper or Congressman. Unless someone is willing to risk disobeying the law, no one will ever know whether or not privacy has been invaded.

So far the act has not been challenged in court. As of now, it is a frightening development that goes against generations of striving for privacy protection, the work of library associations and the laws of the State of New York. The act is too much like something out of a dictator's government. Is security worth this price?

Senator Russ Feingold (D-Wis) introduced legislation (S1507) July 31 designed to limit the government's ability to secretly view library records. Feingold was the only senator to vote against the Patriot Act. Similar bills have been introduced by others. According to a search on the Internet, all of these were referred to the Committee on the Judiciary and none of them have been reported out as of the date of this writing, October 27, 2003.

For a discussion of the present dangers to our civil liberties, we recommend the article "Un-American Activities" by Anthony Lewis in *The New York Review of Books* October 23, 2003. That issue also contains an article on U.S. foreign policy written by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

A new copiously illustrated small book has been published by Scala, *The New York Public Library, A Beaux-Arts Landmark*, written by architectural historian Ingrid Steffenson. It moves from the inception of the Library through to the construction of the glass-enclosed South Court in 2002. \$7.95 at The Library Shops or at www.thelibraryshop.org.