

New York Public Library Retirees Association Newsletter

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HARLEM RENAISSANCE LIBRARIAN: THE BIOGRAPHY OF REGINA ANDREWS

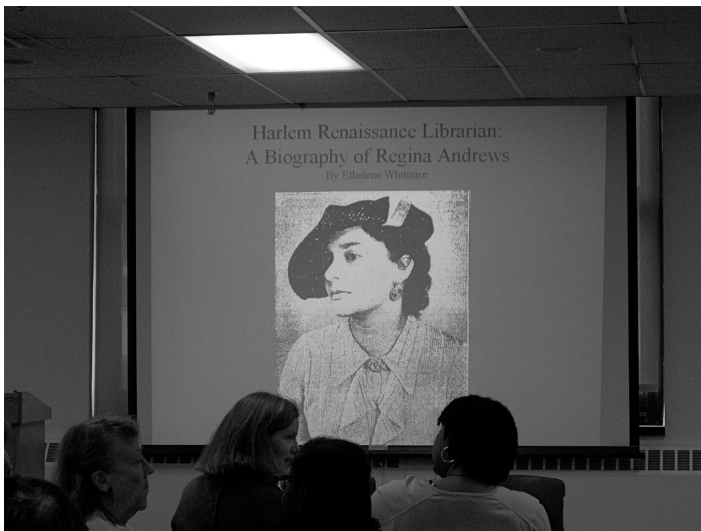
In May, Dr. Ethelene Whitmire, Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's School of Library and Information Studies, gave us an inside look at her project: a scholarly biography and a documentary film on the life of Regina Andrews, the first African American supervising librarian in The New York Public Library (NYPL). Dr. Whitmire's research began when she was writing an article on the role of the Los Angeles Public Library in the



Dr. Ethelene Whitmire

lives of African Americans. She came upon many mentions of African American librarians who worked at the 135th Street Library. Andrews was the most interesting among them. Dr. Whitmire hopes that those of us who knew Andrews during her forty-plus years at NYPL will contribute to this project, which covers Andrews' life from 1901-1993.

Born Regina Anderson in Hyde Park, Chicago, Andrews once described herself as "a stiffly starched and beribboned little girl." Her father, William Grant Anderson, was born in New Orleans and moved from Missouri to Chicago in the 1880's. Of mixed race, including Swedish, he passed the bar exam in the late 1890's. He received the nickname "Habeas Corpus" because of his reliance on this writ in his efforts to free men from prison. Involved in civil rights cases, he worked with Ida B. Wells, the anti-lynching advocate; was the lawyer for the boxer Jack Johnson; and was an early user of fingerprint evidence. His daughter was very proud of him and would often go back to Chicago to be present at one of his trials. Andrews' mother, Margaret Simon, the daughter of a minister, was from Iowa and Illinois. Simon was an artist, and her painted china was displayed at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. A "club woman," she worked as a member of many organizations to help Chicago's less fortunate.



After her parents' divorce when she was twelve, Andrews went to live with her mother's family. Under the influence of her junior high school librarian, Andrews' interest in a library career began early. In 1919, after graduating from Hyde Park High School, she went to college, becoming one of about 2,000 African Americans in college at that time. Her choice was Wilberforce College in Ohio, an historically African American college. Few buildings of her era remain on the campus; one is the library where Andrews had her first job. She did not stay long, and her reasons for leaving are not known. She obtained her first job in the Chicago Public Library around 1920 or 1921 and was probably one of the first non-white librarians. After passing a civil service exam, she was sent to the first available position rather than automatically being placed in an African American neighborhood. This was contrary to her later experience at NYPL.

While visiting New York City on vacation, Andrews decided to stay, and she remained for the rest of her working life. After working for a while in a rental library, she went to The New York Public Library for an interview. When her interviewer asked Andrews what she meant when she listed her race as American, she said she had a multi-cultural background, including Native American, Jewish, and Madagascan.

Her ancestors also included an Arkansas Confederate soldier. Because the interviewer listed her as Black, Andrews was sent to Harlem to work at the 135th Street Library. It was headed at the time by Ernestine Rose and was one of the very few branches where African Americans were allowed to work. It was 1924, the height of the Harlem Renaissance, and Andrews became involved with the North Harlem Community Forum, where invited speakers covered a wide spectrum of issues. Those who spoke included anthropologist Franz Boas and birth control advocate Margaret Sanger. When artists and writers came to Harlem, the first place they visited was the Harlem YMCA or the 135th Street Library, and Andrews met a "Who's Who" of the Harlem Renaissance. At the library, she set up places for writers and artists to do their work. Among those who took advantage of this space were Arna Bontemps, Langston Hughes, and Countee Cullen. Andrews and Ethel Ray Nance, of Opportunity Magazine, also created a salon in their apartment at 580 St. Nicholas Avenue. Writers and artists came to read their works prior to publication and to eat late-night ham and eggs. A famous photo of Harlem writers and activists, taken on the rooftop of 580 St. Nicholas Avenue, shows Andrews in the first row. She was usually the shortest person in any photo.

Andrews married only once, but there are hints that she had a number of affairs. In a box of letters, photos, and oral interviews done in the 1980's and housed at the Schomburg Library, there is a letter written to her by a man trying to woo her back, saying he would get his act together. Her letters to Joseph Friedman, the Communist writer, included such things as a desire to walk with him under the trees and an invitation for him to come over at 10 o'clock to talk about his books.

Regina Anderson married William Andrews in 1925. They were both from the middle class and had friends in common. Their fathers were lawyers and were the first in their families to reach the middle class. Bill

went to Howard University and then Columbia for his law degree. Regina took courses at City College and the Columbia Library School. Though they were members of St. Phillips Episcopal Church, the wedding was held at a friend's home. The couple went to Atlantic City for their honeymoon. Bill worked for the NAACP part time and later, for about twelve years, represented Harlem in the New York State Assembly. He was one of the men who competed unsuccessfully against Adam Clayton Powell for the Harlem congressional seat. If Bill Andrews had won the seat, Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard might have had a different name.

In the 1920's, teachers often had to retire if they married, but this was not true of librarians. Nonetheless, Andrews did have to fight NYPL to get a promotion and to be allowed to work at any branch. Members of other ethnic groups were also restricted as to where they could work. W.E.B. Dubois and the Urban League urged NYPL to follow the practices of the Chicago Public Library, and the issue was mentioned in African American newspapers, including the Pittsburgh Courier. During the same period, Columbia University discouraged African Americans from pursuing a library degree. According to Columbia's records, Andrews took cataloging and reference courses but did not get a degree. While librarians at NYPL did not need the degree to reach the supervising level, branch librarian applicants had to write a thesis. Under these regulations, Andrews achieved the supervising title when she went to the 115th Street Branch and eventually became the first African American to supervise a branch. Her 130-page thesis included interviews with white librarians who were asked if they would hire black librarians. Those interviewed said they wouldn't mind, but the borrowers might. A 1938 African American newspaper mentions Andrews' achievement and commends her on her ability to balance a job and a marriage. In 1939, African American women, including Andrews, were honored at the World's Fair in New York City.



Regina Andrews
From The Schomburg Archives, NYPL

Andrews believed librarians should be more than just librarians. She had a social philosophy: do things in the community and the world beyond. In the late 1920's, she brought a little theater, W.E.B. Dubois' Krigwa Players, to the 135th Street Library. This group evolved into the Harlem Experimental Theater of 1928-1931. Aaron Douglas did the programs and flyers. The theater group eventually moved from the 135th Street Branch to the Harlem YMCA and then to St. Phillips Episcopal Church. Dubois wanted plays to be by African Americans and about African American subjects. The Harlem Experimental Theater did plays from all ethnic backgrounds and included a training program with the participation of professional actors. The theater audiences were large and included both African Americans and whites. Every Thursday night three plays were performed; the ticket price was fifty cents.



Listening to Dr. Whitmire's Presentation

Both Andrews and her husband were interested in acting. Andrews not only appeared in plays but also wrote well-reviewed plays of her own, sometimes under a pseudonym. Her play, *Climbing Jacob's Ladder*, is still performed. Plays in this period often had lynching as a prime subject, and many featured stories of people who passed for white. The latter usually featured women, but one of Andrews' plays was *The Man Who Passed*. Plays by women from the Harlem Renaissance are of considerable interest today.

Andrews worked full time, was married for fifty-eight years, adopted a mixed-race child, and had many activities outside the home. Many of her activities for the Urban League and the National Council of Women of the United States involved traveling. She went to Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Ivory Coast in the 1950's. She invited people from these countries to come to the United States and speak at her library. Germany was the first country she went to as a part of a Marshall Plan project to bring women together. Many African Americans were denied visas for speaking out on racial topics, but not Andrews. The FBI claims they do not have a file on her. She was treated well and featured in photos because the United States government wanted to display successful African American women. In the 1950's and 1960's,

Andrews went to China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, India, Italy, and Lebanon. She was an Urban League representative to a UN conference. Her international contacts made possible the cultural programs she presented at the Washington Heights Library, where she ended her career. She invited ambassadors to speak at special events celebrating such countries as Pakistan, South African, and Israel. In addition, there were piano concerts as well as poetry readings by artists like Langston Hughes, a lifelong friend.

Andrews was at the Washington Heights Library for twenty-seven years, the longest assignment of her career. Continuing her efforts toward equality in the Library, she hired as her assistant an Asian librarian, Edna Law, who had had trouble getting a job in the Library. In the 1960's, retirement was mandatory at 65 or Andrews would have continued to work many more years. She lived to be 91 and was very active in her retirement. She lived with her husband in Mahopac, halfway between Albany and New York City, in a late 19th century home, which they bought in the 1940's. The location was good for her husband, who spent time in Albany in the Assembly. They owned the house until the 1970's. There are pictures of visits from Pura Belpre, the first Puerto Rican librarian at NYPL; she and Andrews worked together at the 115th Street Library.

Andrews wrote a book of African American history but was unsuccessful in getting it published. The timeline from this history was supposed to become part of the controversial exhibit "Harlem On My Mind," but the curator did not accept the contributions of either Andrews or Schomburg librarian Jean Hutson. The timeline that Andrews put together was later published in the book *Black New Yorkers*.

As part of her research, Dr. Whitmire spoke to Regina Andrews' aunt, Kate; her brother Maurice's daughter, Lorelei; and other family members. Dr. Whitmire read the letters of Joseph Friedman in the archives at Stanford University. She contacted the owners of the

Mahopac house to find out if they had found any papers, but they did not reply. She consulted Carl Van Vechten's diaries which tell of Harlem parties with Andrews present. Some of Dr. Whitmire's best sources are materials on the Harlem Renaissance. She visited 580 St. Nicholas Avenue, a doorman building, but could not confirm the location of the apartment where Andrews and others had their salon. Dr. Whitmire is trying to obtain Andrews' records from City College from which she graduated and to contact Andrews' adopted daughter.

Several of our members provided helpful suggestions for further research. One retiree told Dr. Whitmire that Asian librarian, Edna Law, is living and can be interviewed. A retiree recommended reading the annual reports of the branches where Andrews worked. Former NYPL archivist, Robert Sink, offered assistance.

Dr. Whitmire admitted that writing the book is time-consuming but hopes it will be published in two or three years. She has a website on Regina Andrews and a blog where she traces her progress with the research. The blog helps library students and others who are interested in the process of researching a project. Links to her website and blog can be found on the Past Events page of our website nyplra.org.

DEMYSTIFYING COMPUTERS

FEAR OF COMPUTERS Abby Stokes is determined to get us past our fear of computers. Among the 100,000 or so people she has introduced to computing is her mother, a technological "buffoon." She says her mother can't change the car clock when daylight saving time arrives and, instead, waits until her daughter visits. Stokes' book, *Is This Thing On: A Computer Handbook for Late Bloomers, Technophobes, and the Kicking & Screaming*, has a note on the cover: "It's Never Too Late to Love a



Regina Andrews & Edna Law
From The Schomburg Archives, NYPL

Computer!" In the United States, less than 50% of those over sixty have seen a website. If we are over forty, Stokes says we are digital "immigrants;" those under forty she calls "natives." But immigrants can rise above natives, and, when we get past our fears, we can make computers our friends. Yes, the computer will misbehave, but friends do misbehave some of the time.

BUYING A COMPUTER In selecting a computer, you need to consider its brain and its speed. Its brain includes the amount of memory needed to save and store photos, videos, or music. These require a lot of memory. Speed determines how quickly the computer comes on and how quickly it connects to the internet. Take your time in buying a computer. Visit a store just to gather information. If a salesperson is talking at you, instead of to you, get another person to help. Stokes feels that the salespeople at Best Buy are more knowledgeable about computers than those at Staples. Make a list of the three computers you like best. Following the advice on specifications Stokes gives in her book, fill out a Test-Drive Form, found in the back of the book,

for each of your choices. Then seek the advice of someone more knowledgeable about computers. Choosing between a PC and a Mac is like choosing between the Hatfields and the McCoys. Each PC or Mac user loves his or her computer. Stokes calls herself “Switzerland” on the matter since she owns both. Apple makes both the physical computer and the software that runs the MAC. Microsoft bought and developed a software package to run on IBM’s first personal computer or PC, and its software now runs on many, many computer brands. The best advice is to buy the kind of computer a relative or friend also owns so you can seek help and advice from someone with experience.

THE COMPUTER The first thing Stokes advises is to have confidence that you can’t damage the computer. If she were introducing you to one, she would have you grab the monitor and shake it. The second thing she would advise you to do is to make a decision on how you want to connect to the internet. Your computer will usually connect in one of three ways: via a cable (like the cable for cable television), DSL (in which information comes through a telephone line dedicated only to internet access), or dial up (where the information comes over the same line as your phone calls). Dial up access is much slower than the other two and makes your phone unusable while you are on the internet. A fourth way to connect is via Wi-Fi (wireless fidelity) through a wireless modem, which allows you to use your computer anywhere in a room. With Wi-Fi, your computer itself won’t need to be connected with a cable. Outside your home, wireless connection is available for a fee at Starbucks or for free at The New York Public Library. [Editor’s Note: Starbucks is now free.] Most new laptops come with the capability to connect wirelessly, while many older ones do not.

THE INTERNET You don’t have to know what the internet is to access it, any more than you have to know what the carburetor is to drive a car. A computer is like a television with a typewriter and a

mouse. It allows you to have access to the 140 million websites on the internet. There is much more information there than can be found in books and other print materials in a library. Just as you know that some books are good and some full of malarkey, there are good websites and bad ones. You have to use discrimination when you choose which websites to visit. In her book Stokes has a list of 200 websites she recommends.

If you were a client and Stokes were encouraging you to use the internet, she would have you write down questions that occur to you from day to day and then go to the internet to seek answers. Stokes was able to help her mother buy shoes in this way. Because her mother had a brace on one foot, she needed one shoe larger than the other and had been buying two pairs of shoes to get one that fit each foot. Online, Stokes found a site for buying mismatched shoes. She even found a website that matches people with large left feet to people with large right feet.

USING SEARCH ENGINES Google is an example of a search engine and is Abby Stokes’ favorite. When using a search engine, keywords are entered with spaces between them. For example, Stokes wanted to find out if a story was true about a man who cut off his leg when he was trapped by the bough of a tree. She put “severed leg in woods” in quotes in the search engine box and learned that the story was true. Try asking your question in more than one way or putting in different keywords. Entering a minus before a keyword means you specifically do not want that word in your search. If, for example, you are allergic to roses but want to visit a botanical garden, you might put in “botanical gardens -roses.” Your entry of “-roses” means “minus roses.” If you were searching for a name like Bill Flint, you should also try William Flint or try both first names with the middle name or initial if you know it. Google will show you the first ten results of a search, but there will be many more pages of choices. Stokes recommends just looking at the first three pages. If

you already know a web address or an email address, you may type it in directly. In this case, the address is typed without spaces, for example www.abbyandme.com.

VIRUSES, SCAMS, AND PHISHING Viruses consist of computer code, usually created by fifteen-to-thirty year old males who are probably smart, lonely, and good at computers. They want to see how far their virus will spread. Putting anti-virus software on your computer can help protect against viruses known today but not against those yet to be developed. Antivirus software must be continually updated to be effective. Stokes does not have strong feelings about using anti-virus software, because you cannot be completely protected. Once you suspect you have a virus, turn off your computer and seek the help of a professional.

To protect against viruses, be especially wary of attachments. An online attachment is similar to a paper attachment. It is “clipped” to an email message much the way a resume is clipped to a cover letter. Look carefully at an email that has an attachment. If you don’t know the sender, or the subject-line sounds wrong, delete the attachment. If you send an attachment to someone, be sure to type information in the subject-line so the recipient will know it is legitimate. Years ago Stokes was sent an email by her attorney. The subject line said “I love you.” She deleted the email, phoned her attorney, and asked him to check his computer for a virus. He had what became known as the “I love you” virus.

More insidious than viruses are phishing scams. Do not give out personal information over the internet, especially your birth date or social security number. Even if the request appears to come from your bank, do not reply. Call the bank instead. One of Stokes’ friends got an email from Hot Mail asking for his password. He gave the sender his password. The sender was a thief who changed the password and then sent out requests for money to all the addresses



Abby Stokes Demystifies Computers

in the friend’s Hot Mail account. Fortunately, the thief’s English was very poor and the message less than credible.

There have always been scoundrels. Thieves existed before the internet. Just as you don’t give personal information over the phone or carry your Social Security card except when you go to the doctor, you should not give out personal information over the Internet.

PASSWORDS Passwords can be cracked 90% of the time. Don’t use your birth date or anything else as obvious for your bank/ATM password. You should have three passwords: one for the bank, one for email, and one for everything else. To avoid errors when you type a password, recite the name of the key and use



At Abby Stokes' lecture

one finger to press the key. "Password protect" your computer or smart phone. With password protection you must type in the password when you activate the computer or phone. This will help if your computer or phone is lost or stolen since no one will be able to get to your information. To protect or customize your computer or phone in this way, find the page that lists settings or preferences, make a note of what has already been checked, and then make the changes you want.

DISCARDING A COMPUTER If you have vital information on your computer, such as financial records, you must take serious measures when you discard it. Just deleting the files won't be enough; they can be retrieved. If you have a smart phone, put it in a plastic bag and hammer it. A computer is toxic so don't throw it away. Take out the green motherboard and break it up. If you use a computer only for email, you won't have to destroy it. Check NYC or local organizations for guidelines on discarding and recycling. [Editor's Note: Visit <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycwasteless/html/recycling/electronicrecycling.shtml> for suggestions.]

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

What do you do if you don't have someone to help you? Stokes suggests Florence Henderson (<http://www.flohclub.com>) where you can pay to get help remotely. You don't have to have someone visit you. Brigid Cahalan, Librarian for Older Adult and Disability Services at NYPL, recommends Per Scholas (<http://www.perscholas.org>) in the Bronx. They sell used/reconditioned computers for a very good price. Their computers include customer service/tech support by phone.

How long can I keep my computer? Computers age rapidly, about two years for every year that passes. A five-year-old computer is technologically ten years old, even though only 5% of a new computer may be different from the old one. If you have had a computer for over three years, the warranty has run out. Repairing it will probably cost more than getting a new netbook.

How do I decide whether to download updates to Yahoo? Just be sure it is from Yahoo. Then go ahead.

Why have I been unable to use my Yahoo email lately? This might be a matter of having to update the Yahoo software. While we may like things the way they are, Yahoo is always seeking improvements. We need to be flexible and adapt to the changes.

Do I need a warranty? If you anticipate moving the computer, get a warranty. That applies particularly to laptops. Do make use of the 30 day return policy. During that time, run the computer through its paces. If anything is wrong, it is probably a lemon; take it back to the store for a refund or replacement. Don't phone manufacturers because they won't refund or replace the computer. They will repair it and charge you for the repair.

How do I "go wireless?" Many laptops today have wireless capability. If you are a Verizon user, Verizon

will mail you a wireless modem. When the modem arrives, open the box, and phone Verizon. They will talk you through the installation process.

What do I do if my laptop screen is too small? If you want a larger screen, you can get a used monitor and plug it into your laptop.

Is the electronic transfer of Social Security checks safe? Stokes said yes and pointed out that walking to the bank with a check has its risks, too, though the exercise is good. And, you can access your bank statement to see if the Social Security check has arrived. A retiree pointed out that a website with an address beginning “https” is safe in a way that one that beginning http is not.

Is it possible to obtain free anti-virus software? Check a magazine site, such as Mac World or PC World, for recommendations.

Are viruses more prevalent on the PC or the Mac? Stokes said viruses are written for the PC because young men, who generally write them, hate MS and love Apple. PCs are seen as workhorses, but Macs are sexy.

Does Adobe Flash Player require Active X? Yes.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

- Check www.realsimple.com for answers to your computer questions. Click on “Work & Life” and then “Technology.”
- Consider buying the easy-to-use Flip video camera (www.theflip.com). Its newest version is wireless.
- Try the solar battery Solio (www.solio.com) for recharging a cell phone.
- Get a Mr. Poncho (<http://www.mrponcho.com/about.html>) as a solution to tangled iPods cords.
- Read the filing system chapter in *Is This Thing On?*

- Ignore Windows messages that say, “We have updates” after you have just updated.
- Check out Stokes’ website, www.abbyandme.com or google the words, Abby Stokes.

PARTING WORDS Take a deep breath. There is no courage without fear.

If you have tips you’d like to share with your fellow computer users, add them to the Computer Tips section of the Discuss page on the Members Only website.

President Becky Koppelman



NOTES FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Greetings to All,

What’s happening at The New York Public Library? Those of you not living in New York City might be interested in keeping up with the vast and expansive



Walking the Highline

changes still taking place within the NYPL system. Combining the research collections and those in the 88 branch libraries has made for a “system unique,” serving over 18 million patrons in the metropolitan area alone. Added to this number are 26 million Internet visits, says Paul LeClerc, President. With more than 50 million items and the world’s largest catalogue, the library is now digitizing its collections and providing free wireless service as well as open access to its physical and electronic resources. The new Library Services Center, where materials are acquired, prepared, preserved, and distributed, is now open and running in Long Island City. The Center contains the world’s largest sorter (238-foot long conveyors) of library materials (NY Times press release 4/22/10). It is grand and good, and is an enormous change from what we dedicated and hard-working staff and retirees used to cherish. It is the new NYPL.

After 16 years as President of NYPL, Paul LeClerc has announced that he will be leaving in the summer of 2011. And at the end of 2009, David Ferriero, who began in September of 2004 and later became Andrew W. Mellon Director of The NYPL, resigned to become the 10th Archivist of the United States in

Washington DC. Extensive searches are being conducted to find replacements for both.

Unfortunately, this spring libraries faced the harshest and most severe budget cuts since the 1970’s. NYPL alone could have lost \$37 million, which would have required branches to close and service to be cut. Fortunately, thanks to Library supporters, 130,000 letters of support were written, donations were received, and library patrons demonstrated their belief that libraries are necessary to all and must be available to all. The good news came this June, and thanks to Mayor Bloomberg and the City Council, enough funding was restored to keep libraries open at least five days a week.

Those of us in the metro area have also been continuing to go on fun outings and enjoy each others’ company. Last fall, we strolled along the High Line Park, which is a green urban-renewal project where 1.5 miles of derelict elevated railway tracks on the lower west side of Manhattan was rebuilt into a fabulous public park and walkway. It features breathtaking views of the Hudson River and of the developing architecture of the Chelsea area. After our walk, we visited the nearby “T Salon” for a High Tea of sandwiches and sweets!

On one of the coldest days in December, the Retirees took a wonderful pre-holiday outing to the Asia Society. It was freezing getting there, but the tour covered two amazing exhibitions: "Hanging Fire: Contemporary Art from Pakistan," which focused on the little-known but thriving art scene in today’s Pakistan, and "Devotion in South India: Chola Bronzes," exquisite religious bronze sculptures cast in India during the 9th through 13th century.

This year we changed our annual Holiday Dinner into a luncheon and had an enormous crowd of 55 people. What fun that was! Many of our newest members joined us at Forlini’s Italian Restaurant, which, though in a new location, is still serving good Italian food.

Our most interesting tour was with Alice C. Hudson, retired Chief of The Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division and now a Retirees Association member. The exhibit is entitled “Mapping New York’s Shoreline, 1609-2009” and celebrates the 400 years since Henry Hudson sailed into New York Harbor and up the Hudson River. This amazing exhibit of the Library’s exemplary collections of the earliest and most glorious examples of Dutch, English, and early American mapping of the Atlantic Coastal region is on display in the Gottesman Exhibition Hall at 42nd Street. Through her knowledge and expertise of the Map Division’s extensive materials, Alice brought this exhibit to life for her enthralled listeners. We traveled on an exciting adventure with Henry Hudson up the river and back into New York Harbor as it was 400 years ago and as it is today.



For something else that sounds delightful to do in NYC, you might want to visit The Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden at 421 East 61 Street near the East River. It was formerly known as the Abigail Adams Smith Museum. Retiree Hara Seltzer conducts tours there most Thursdays. She says it is a small house but charming and rare to see in our crowded city. The hours are 11 – 4, Tuesdays – Sundays, but call first and make sure at 212-838-6878, or visit their website at www.mvhm.org

We now have over 250 members in our association. Many people retired after last year’s incentive, and there is another incentive on the way. If you know any NYPL retirees who have not yet joined, please tell them to give us a call or look at our website. We have all our forms and information online at www.nyplra.org. And if you haven’t paid your own dues, please do so now. You’ll want to continue to receive the Newsletter and other information from us. Be sure to send in all 3 sheets. Among other things, we want to have a history of everyone’s career. We also want to re-start our oral history project this

On the Highline

coming year. If you would like to help in any way, please let us know.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Members-at-Large, and myself, I want to wish you all a wonderful spring and summer. Please remember, keep in touch, and send in your informational Newsheet. Everyone loves to hear from you!

Becky Eakins Koppelman

FROM THE BENEFITS OFFICE

MEDICARE REIMBURSEMENT

NYPL and DC-37 have once again voted to reimburse NYPL retirees for the Medicare contributions. Reimbursement applications for 2009 Medicare expenses have been mailed out to all eligible NYPL retirees. If you have not received your application and are enrolled in an NYPL health plan, contact the



At Larry Murphy's Memorial

Benefits Office at benefits@nypl.org or 212-593-7330.

ANNUAL RETIREE TEA

NYPL's annual retiree event was held in the Celeste Bartos Forum at the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building on June 9th from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. The event was similar to last year's which featured teas and sweet treats. [Editor's Note: Many retirees attended and had a very enjoyable time.]

CALL FOR E-MAIL ADDRESSES

As we are always trying to find the best way to get our messages out to retired staff members, we are looking to collect e-mail addresses for all former staff members who use e-mail. If you have an active e-mail account, please send an e-mail to benefits@nypl.org. Please put "E-mail Address Update" followed by your name in the subject line.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

2010 is a retiree Open Enrollment year. During Open Enrollment, retirees are free to add or drop optional riders, change plans, or add or drop dependents without a qualifying event. Open Enrollment will be held in the fall, with changes being effective for January 1, 2011. If you want to change your plan, but

don't want to wait until the fall, you can use your once-in-a-lifetime change option.

HEALTH INSURANCE RATE CHANGES

The City of New York Health Benefits Program renews and reevaluates their plans each year for July 1st. There are often rate changes and sometimes plan design changes that come along with each renewal. Look out for additional information regarding these changes once information becomes available, closer to July 1st.

HEALTHNET PLAN TERMINATION

United HealthCare recently purchased HealthNet. As a result, HealthNet will no longer be an option for staff and retirees enrolled in the City of New York Health Benefits Program. Retirees and staff affected by this change should have received a letter from the City of New York. If you are a current HealthNet enrollee and have not been notified, please contact the Benefits Office at 212-592-7330.

HEALTH ADVOCATE (For United HealthCare Participants Only)

NYPL is excited to announce a new partnership with Health Advocate. United HealthCare participants are encouraged to take advantage of the services provided by Health Advocate. They can help you understand claims, sort through billing and payment issues, decipher medical information and test results, coordinate home care, and provide assistance with many other issues by dealing directly with United HealthCare. For additional information or assistance, call Health Advocate at 866-695-8622.

Please contact Lisa Kirsch in the Benefits Office with any questions.

Lisa_kirsch@nypl.org 212-592-7331

RETIREEE NEWS

BARBARA ALPER/EDMOND FURSA

Although I left NYPL in 1989, I just retired in 2010! Edmond has been waiting patiently; he says he was born to retire and now I understand what he meant! We're relearning bridge, have taken up bird watching, take wine and cheese "classes"—what's not to like!

CAROL ANSHIEN

In December 2009 I returned from a Jewish mission to Cuba.

I am also studying collage. An art work that I did in a 1985-87 Visual Diaries course taught by artist Nancy Azara at the Feminist Art Institute was included in two recent shows: a fall 2009 show at the Alexander Library of Rutgers University and a March to April 2010 show at Suffolk County Community College's Gallery West. Both shows are about feminist art and the process of visual diaries.

JACOB AZEKE

I'm traveling and volunteering. In September 2008, I was elected Vice-President for Publicity and Public Relations and appointed the Editor and Photographer of the Retirees Association of DC 37. The Association represents 50,000 retirees of which 26,000 pay their monthly dues of \$3 per month or \$36 per year

LOUIS BECKER

Since I retired last August, I am loving the time I now have to do small home improvement jobs—that my limited skills allow—around the house. With spring here, my interest will now turn to gardening and tennis.



**Larry Murphy's memorial.
Agnes Babich is speaking. Larry
Murphy's nephew, his niece and her
husband are in the front row.**

CORAZON R. BUSTAMANTE

I retired on July 31, 2009. I joined a religious pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Greece on November 5-15, 2009. It was a wonderful educational and spiritual experience.

HENRIETTA CAMMISA

Living in the Pocono Mountains is a challenge in Winter, delightful other times of the year. I'm volunteering at the local hospital and our local library, visiting our beautiful seven grandchildren and, the best of all, our awesome great-granddaughter in Portland, Oregon. Also, I spend the rest of the time improving my golf game??? Winter is spent in West Palm Beach, Florida. I remember especially the renovation of the Tottenville Branch with birds nesting in the rafters.

KAY CASSELL

I had a great time in Milan and Lake Como in August. Lake Como is gorgeous with many charming villages.



At the Tea Salon

Milan is a sophisticated city with world class museums. I recommend a trip to this area.

RONALD CHAN

I would like to join group travel, especially overseas.

HELEN W. CHIN

I'm still battling cancer, since 2005. I have grandchildren now, 3 and 5 1/2, a boy and a girl. I am still active in my community, Savanna Club. I have many friends who support me so I can still live alone. My son, age 55, went back to school for an eleven month course when he became unemployed. My other son moved from Boston to North Carolina.

MARY ANNE CORRIER

A new administration has swept through the Central Park Zoo where I volunteer one day a week. New programs as well as new animals are being added. I've been a docent at the zoo for four years, so now, in addition to my usual docent activities, I've become an animal handler. We'll present a program each afternoon that features a live animal. The docent's role is to keep the animal safe while telling children

about the animal, its habitat and its place in the ecosystem. Piece of cake after running a children's room.

I'm renovating my apartment in New Orleans' Warehouse District. The work, a new kitchen and painting throughout, began in April. I spent that month there to oversee the work, attend the French Quarter Festival and Jazz Fest and enjoy the usually reasonable weather. If all goes well I'll list the apartment for sale by the fall.

WILLIAM A. CWALENSKI

I took a cruise around the Hawaiian Islands and enjoyed taking in a number of tours in May 2009. I spent several days in Washington, DC, in December 2009.

CAROL DAVIES-GROSS

My husband has been under the weather for quite some time. He has greatly improved and is exercising each day. He has spinal and knee issues and now walks with a cane. I am hopeful that I can host another visit to the American Museum of Natural History if there is still interest.

GAIL FEENEY

My husband and I like to travel. We just returned from Krakow, Poland. We love Alaska and have been going to Fairbanks since the 1970's.

JEANNE FELKER

My travels during the 2009 were within the boundaries of the USA, instead of the usual jaunt to Europe. I took a two week tour in Alaska and visited Anchorage, Fairbanks, Denali Park, plus a weeklong cruise including sailing in Glacier Bay, the Inner Passage and visits to Skagway, Juneau and Ketchikan.

LEONARD GOLD

I had two paintings shown in "Spring Forward," a fine arts exhibition held by the West Side Arts Coalition at the Broadway Mall, 96th Street and Broadway center island, April 14-May 2, 2010. "Inner Workings: An exhibition of paintings by Leonard Gold" was held at the Tompkins Square Library June 9-23, 2010.

In February of this year my wife and I traveled to New Zealand.

JAMES T. GREENE

I'm just surviving at eighty-five. I loved my staff and the public.

ALICE C. HUDSON

I just retired in July after thirty-nine years at NYPL, all spent where I wanted to be, in the Map Division. I started out as a map cataloger, then became Assistant Chief and finally, in 1981, Chief of the Map Division. I loved the graphic nature of maps and how those of us in the Division were able to use the maps for outreach to a variety of groups, most especially school children, college students, etc.

JAMES HUFFMAN, JR.

As a former Corrections Services Librarian, I continue to be an advocate for incarcerated people. Volunteering my services assisting incarcerated, and formerly incarcerated people with re-entry services available in New York City.

My introduction in Correctional Services came quite by accident. I received a phone call one day from former Correctional Services Librarian, Steve Likosky. He asked if I would like to come out to Rikers Island. It appears a young man had asked for me, a former high school student who was present



At the Tea Salon

during one of my Young Adult Book Talks several years earlier. He was very impressed with my presentation. I simply could not resist going to visit with this young man during one of Steve's trips to provide library book cart services to inmates. Nothing I learned in library school or experienced in the branches as a young adult librarian prepared me for this visit. Moved by this visit to a correctional facility and meeting with this young man, who told me how impressed he was with my skills as a young adult librarian, planted the desire to become a Correctional Services Librarian. A few years later, when the position became available I applied. Being selected gave me one of the greatest experiences of my career as a librarian.

I enjoy photographing sites in New York City.

ARNOLD HYMAN

I still collect postage stamps. My daughter Amy is an Assistant Professor at Central Connecticut State. My wife and I go to concerts and movies. Last May we went to Amsterdam and Paris.



Lunch at the Asia Society after our tour.

JOAN JANKELL

I'm currently in docent training at the Jewish Museum. By some time next fall or winter I hope to be able to offer a tour of the core collection. A Curious George exhibition opened March 14th. In February I'm off to northern Mexico, Copper Canyon.

MILADA KLATIL

In 2005, I published an article, "Six Hundred Years of Czech Literature in the New York Public Library: from Hus to Havel." This article was in *Slavic & East European Information Resources*, Vol. 6, Number 1, 2005, pages 9-18.

LUCY KUNG

After leaving the library, I spent many years in the jewelry industry specializing in jade.

I am grateful to many wonderful people whom I worked with, forever.

LYDIA LA FLEUR

I'm continuing to read the old fashioned way with the physical book in hand for two book clubs. In one I spent three years reading Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, the shortened version and am now reading *The Hemingses of Monticello* which is a lot more readable. In January, for our community theater, I did a monologue from *Lysistrata* for five performances of scenes and monologues with the theme, "Battle of the Sexes."

WILLIAM C. LEE

I'm working on a paper on the history of the Bible translated from Greek and Hebrew into Chinese.

I still remember vividly the part I took in the group presentation of the reference books at an annual conference of the American Library Association held at Lake Placid, New York. I wish with all my heart that my colleagues in the group are now enjoying a good retirement life and are all in good health.

RICHARD C. LYNCH

While reading the Puerto Rican *San Juan Sun* last winter, I noticed a letter to the editor from a Señor Agustin Manzano. He complained about the lack of public libraries in the tropical city and went on to write, "I remember New York City. There was a tiny library near my building in the North Bronx open till ten and they kept the best in encyclopedias and carried all the latest fare. It was a joy to spend an evening reading there and you met with neighbors at the lounge, even pretty girls." Does anyone remember Agustin?

MARGARET MA

This is the second year of my retirement. I started volunteering at the China Institute's art gallery in Manhattan. I love it! I also found time to visit some old friends in other cities. We reminisced, laughed, and ate a lot! Lastly, I hope to travel to China and Hong Kong this fall to visit family and a few childhood friends.

Working for the NYPL Branch Libraries for thirty years enriched my life in so many ways. I enjoyed the everyday going-ons at the branches and helping our patrons. Often through helping them, I learned a lot myself. I also cherish the many friends I made while working there. I feel fortunate and blessed and wish the same to all my fellow retirees.

DAN MC GRATH

I finally bought and installed a computer. At the age of sixty-two, I resigned my Luddite membership and thumbed a ride on the information highway. Tangible results so far: many packages of books, CD's and DVD's from Amazon.com. The more things change, the more they remain the same. Only faster.

PHYLLIS G. MACK

I continue to volunteer in many organizations. I am on the Regional Heritage and Archives Committee of my sorority which will have its 100th anniversary in 2013. I am a part of the Neighborhood Preservation Committee of my community group, on the Cultural Arts Committee of my church, the gardening committee of my co-op. This keeps me busy. I spend time with my four grandchildren who love their upbeat grandma. My daughter and I attend Broadway plays and make regular visits to our branch library. New York is a wonderful place to spend retirement years.



Lunch at the Asia Society after our tour.

I will always remember the tasks involved in re-opening two branches that were closed for extended periods for renovation. It was a very rewarding experience.

RAY MARKEY

Retirement in Hawaii is like a dream come true.

ANNE S. MOY

I volunteer at the Met Council (Metropolitan Council on Housing.) Occasionally I swim at the Asser Levy Pool, a Parks Department Recreation Center.

EDITH OSTROWSKY

I'm still painting and enjoying the mountains, even on the day the temperature went down to minus 18 degrees. The wood stove goes at full blast.

Anyone remember the old book catalog? Well, one updating cycle dropped the letter "T" from the names catalog. Thus, President Truman vanished! One patron accused us of political censorship! He was extremely upset until it was explained that it was a computing problem. This he was able to accept.

CAROLINE OYAMA

I retired again. I left NYPL as a retiree in 2005, after 18 1/2 years, to join the New School. At NYPL I started as the Public Relations Associate and left as the Manager of Public Relations. Recently I retired as Director of Communications of The New School. I spent four fast-paced years there and thoroughly recommend the invigorating aspects of starting a job in a new area at a later age.

I am enjoying catching up with former colleagues on Facebook.

ALAN PALLY

I retired from the Library on January 29, 2010, after forty-two years. On March 1, 2010, I begin working part-time as Coordinator of Public Programs for the South Street Seaport Museum. Also, I have been nominated by the Noël Coward Estate to serve as a Trustee of the Noël Coward Foundation.

SANDRA PAYNE

I am currently enjoying an intense period of artistic creativity! A series of collages, sculptures, and online “movie” projects keep me stimulated.

ANGELA L. PEREZ

I like traveling.

GENNIE PEREZ

I am a dog walker and adoption advocate at the Animal Care & Control of New York City. AC&C rescues about 43,000 dogs, cats, rabbits, etc. each year.

JEAN PINCKNEY

Greetings to my fellow retirees. We had an unusual cold spell here in South Carolina. Some nights it went down to 20 degrees! Fortunately we have had no snow here in the “low country.” I am still volunteering to assist children with their homework at the local church. Last year we went to San Francisco, a lovely city, but a bit on the cool side in June. Also, we traveled up to Georgia to see my eldest sister and family. We were in New York for a short spell, stayed in Mt. Vernon, so did not get to see everyone. I hope to be back in New York next year for NYPL’s 100th anniversary if all goes well. Mt. Pleasant, S.C., is growing at a rapid rate and I am enjoying it still. Come on down, y’all!

MARCIA LANE PURCELL

I continue to work in Library and Academic Marketing at Random House, Inc, a very rewarding position. In addition to all the travel that entails, John and I found many good travel opportunities in 2009. We made the long awaited cruise to Norway with all those waterfalls. I love the Queen Mary 2! Spending a week in Tuscany based in Siena with a Fordham University alumni group was like being in a picture postcard! And now, we are getting ready for travel adventures in 2010. We are going back to Alaska, first visited in 1994. Travel! Enjoy!

RAYMOND & GLORIA (WRIGHT) RACHKO

We are still enjoying life in Florida. Our daughter Samantha graduates from high school in June 2010 and will start attending University of Central Florida in the fall.

CAROL REISNER

Jesse and I are expecting the birth of our second grandchild mid February. We are going off in March on a trip to New Zealand and Australia.

MARY ELLEN ROGAN

I have a new position, Assistant Director of Plainfield Public Library.

SHARON RUBIN

I just retired in July, and so far I am really enjoying not setting an alarm clock. I have volunteered my services to my third grandchild this past month by watching, playing, and reading, reading, and reading to Anna who is fifteen months old.

WINIFRED SALTUS

My hobbies are cooking, baking, and traveling. I volunteer as a group leader and travel coordinator for my local AARP: daily trips, meetings, cruises, casinos, etc.

ROBERT D. SCOTT

I will be having an art and photography show at the Tompkins Square Branch gallery in 2011. I will provide more detailed information in the near future.

HARA SELTZER

I am a Thursday docent at the Mount Vernon Hotel Museum, formerly the Abigail Adams Smith Museum, a 1797 carriage house. Once in a while I sell a painting!

KARLAN SICK

I've been volunteering for a non-profit organization which provides books for incarcerated teens. See literacyforincarceratedteens.org. The students in detention centers need books desperately.



Lunch at the Asia Society

PAULINE SINGLETARY

All of my years at NYPL were wonderful. I met so many people who became close friends.

CYNTHIA L. SMITH

I'm enjoying my retirement in Manhattan. I attend many operas at the Met, go to the theatre, and even have time to read. I've been revisiting some classics (Dickens, Trollope) and keeping up with my favorite mystery writers. I love all the series by Alexander McCall Smith. Also, I try to stay healthy by exercising several times a week.

DOROTHY L. SWERDLOVE

I'm still volunteering at the zoo and the local library branch, where my main duties are 1) sharpening golf pencils, 2) cutting scrap paper, and 3) shelving paperback fiction. Most theatre research is done at the University of Arizona, so there is little need of my professional skills here. It's just good to be doing something useful.

VIRGINIA SWIFT

I remember some of our great storytellers: Mary Strang, Maria Cimino, Pura Belpre. Shortly before I retired, a Sanitation worker told me I told his class stories when he was in the 4th grade, and it reminded me again how important storytelling is to children.

VIRGINIA TAFFURELLI

I'm currently working part-time (2 days a week) at Brooklyn College Library where my library career began over thirty years ago.

CYNTHIA THOMAS

I just became a grandma for the second time on October 20, 2009. He is a handsome boy, weighing six pounds, 5 ounces.

LIZ TIEDEMANN

My activities include walking daily in Clove Lakes Park, Staten Island, swimming at the "Y" three times a week and just enjoying my retirement. My husband and I went to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, for a few weeks and Washington, DC, several times this year visiting our daughter and her family. Washington, DC, is always interesting with plenty to see.

I love the Library of Congress, the U.S. Capitol, all the memorials and just being in Washington, is exciting. There is always someplace to visit and explore in the Washington area. I wish one and all happy retirement years. It's the best.

STEPHANIE TOLBERT

I've been assigned to the Advisory Board of the Central Harlem Senior Citizens Board of Directors.

SARA VELEZ

I'm planning to work as a private consultant and also part time with a retirees' organization. I am devoted to the performing arts and fine arts and hope to pursue these interests both in New York and on extended trips in Europe. Recently I obtained a dual citizenship with Ireland, which should facilitate longer trips to Europe.

Some of my greatest memories of working at NYPL involve the staff members, their true humanity, their great expertise, and their tremendous passions for their subject areas and collections. I will never forget them and intend to maintain friendships with many of them.

KAYE COKE WALKER

In February 2009, I spent ten days cruising Antarctica. I was an indescribable experience in the most beautiful place on earth. This was an extraordinary adventure with blue skies, bright sunshine, white snow and clean air. How many people have seen beautiful sunsets at 10 p.m., or a full moon in a pink sky, or walked among hundreds of penguins! I have breathtaking photos and never-to-be-forgotten memories of the best vacation I have ever taken.

MA'LIS WENDT

Since retiring in 2007, I've found a number of volunteer activities to keep me busy. I've been using my library skills in a new way at the Lefferts Old Dutch Farmhouse Museum in Prospect Park and learning lots about Brooklyn and New York history, as well as the curatorial process. Also, I'm working with Karlan Sick in a small non-profit organization, Literacy for Incarcerated Teens, Inc. Our role is to raise money to provide library books, author visits, and other enhancements for teens in secure detention facilities in New York City and State. Check out our Facebook page.

VIRGINIA WILHELM

I'm currently volunteering at the Metropolitan Opera. I attend some of the dress rehearsals. Also, I've attended some wonderful programs sponsored by the New York Chapter of the Jane Austen Society. I continue to lead book discussions for the Betsy-Tacy Society, Greater New York Chapter.

BONNIE WILLIAMS

I traveled to Cleveland in the spring to visit Penny Jeffrey (former NYPL), saw her new granddaughter, Elyse, a premie, 1 lb. 3 oz. at birth. Now flourishing. I greeted my nephew and his wife and kids in their new home in Georgia. They finally left Alaska for "green Christmases." I went to San Francisco to visit cousins and attend the opera.

I've joined the Penn South Social Service Board of Directors for a three year stint. I thought I was finished with Board work, but they were looking for new (younger!) people, so I succumbed. It is very interesting and informative. Penn South has an aging population that increasingly needs services. I regularly attend the Metropolitan Opera, two subscriptions this year! My family continues to occupy my concern and time.

After I retired, I started using the Muhlenberg Branch. One day I was elbowed out of the way by a reader I had known when I worked there. I remonstrated with her as she was leaving; I was quite forthright, but civil in my comments. She was surprised, then annoyed, then recognized me and said, "You were nicer when you worked here." I replied, "I'm a reader now."

JOSEPHINE CHAN YUNG

My activities after retirement are playing chamber music and giving recitals in the metropolitan New York area.



Lunch at the Asia Society

NEW MEMBERS

Ismael Alicea
David Badeior
Louis Becker
Agnes Beck-Statile
Bonnie Birman
Valorie Bowers
Gail Feeney
Doris Y. Green
Anne Hofmann
James Huffman, Jr.
Christopher Johnson
Lucy Kung
Alma Lindsey
Alice Merker
Thomas Nolan
Angela L. Perez
John Peters
Sharon Rubin

Harriet Shalat
Robert Sink
Cynthia Thomas
Arline Wilson
Fu Mei Yang
Josephine Chan Yung

PASSINGS

George Copeland
Marilee Foglesong
Ruth Ganeles
Barbara Gibbons
Raphaelle Guiyoule
Mihai Handrea
Nathaniel Keitt
Charles Landis
Gabby LeVenti
Lois McFadden
Monica Moseley
Lawrence Murphy
Virginia Rust
Richard Salvato
John Stoetzer

EDITOR'S NOTE

You will see several changes in this newsletter. There are two feature articles and, with our larger membership, more Retiree News items. The Retiree News items not included in this issue will appear in the fall newsletter.

Just a few photos chosen from the many photos taken at our meetings and tours appear in this newsletter. You can see many more photos, and photos in full color, on the Members Only website.

I have gone from taking notes for the newsletter using paper and pencil, to taking notes on a Palm with a bluetooth keyboard, to recording the lectures on my laptop.



Newsletter Editor Polly Bookhout

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