



staff news

Issue 77

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Inquiring Minds Want to Know...Who am I?

The following is one of Cynthia Needham's IST 511 assignments: Biography of a "Mover and Shaker" Involving Libraries from Jana Bradley's class, Introduction to Library Science. The idea behind the assignment was to create a biographical sketch of a particular someone based on research, and then write it up in the first person. The assignment was intentionally designed in this way to arouse our curiosity and to make it fun for the class to guess who the person might be!

Many know well what can be accomplished with cash, creativity, and courage. Such is the case in the construction of Syracuse University's main library, built in 1972 and renovated in the early 1990s, featuring more than two million volumes and fortified with some of the most advanced information retrieval technology. Syracuse University Library is named after its major donor, which is where my story with you comes in.

Allow me to introduce myself...

I don't want to give you the wrong impression by admitting right from the get go that I have a building named after me. Actually, I am very modest and I told the University officials to play down my gifts and connection with the University. I resisted the whole notion of their putting my name on the library building. However, on the occasion of my death, which, by the way, was on February 10, 1974 at the ripe old age of 79, I did like what Chancellor Melvin Eggers said about me, "He was a quiet, dedicated and loyal alumnus of Syracuse University. The Library, on our campus, which bears his name, is a living memorial to his belief in the value of a university education and a desire to share his good fortune with generations of Syracuse students." Those library officials went ahead and made a big deal over me and hosted a naming dedication for the library in my honor, and while they were at it, went ahead and named a large multi-purpose meeting room on the first floor of the library after my graduating class of 1916! I was even awarded the Syracuse Centennial Medal in 1969, an award given to recognize service to higher education and society.

Well, it is kind of nice and rather appropriate to have my name on the Syracuse University Library building. After all, I was a salesman for the American Book Company of New York and was made vice president in charge of Eastern Division sales. During this time in my life, I was able to make an extremely generous donation to Syracuse University. As a matter of fact, apparently a lot of people have been told through newspaper articles and the like, that my contribution was the largest gift Syracuse University had received from an alumnus. According to Chancellor William

P. Tolley, my gift of a cool three million was second in size to a \$15-million donation made in 1962 by Samuel I. Newhouse, the newspaper publisher.

I was born on a farm near Andover, New Jersey on November 21, 1894. I came to Syracuse University in 1912 with \$11 in my pocket and worked my way through school. I supported myself washing dishes and waiting on tables. I graduated from Syracuse University with a BS degree from the College of Liberal Arts. After I graduated, I taught high school science and mathematics and coached at Ithaca, NY, Newark, NJ, and Wilmington, DE. I did enlist in the Army during World War I and attended aviation ground school at Ithaca.

I never had any children, but I did marry Marie Little Bird. I believe on the second floor of the Syracuse University Library, there are some lovely portraits of the two of us. And, if my memory doesn't fail me, a seminar room in the library is named in my wife's honor. There is also the Marie L. Bird Rare Book Endowment Fund to which folks may contribute if they wish. My wife died in March of 1988 at the age of 90. I'd like to think that my wife was granted a long healthy life because of her love for books and reading!

I was extremely active in Syracuse University campus life and especially with my fraternity, Pi Kappa Alpha. I was also head cheerleader at SU, and a member of the Senior Council, a forerunner of the present Student Association. And, I was extremely involved with my local church.

It is my hope that if you are reading this bit of information about my life, that it serves to prompt many to check out this Syracuse University campus library which is named for me. It was once said by a Syracuse University Director of Libraries, that this new library, "will have the greatest impact on the University's program of any building in its history." I know I spent a lot of time in the library while I was in college and, as a result, I was an outstanding student. I do believe my financial gift was put to good use for the many ambitious students, young and not so young, who attend Syracuse University and who visit the library regularly!

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In Brief

... news about our staff



Joined by family and friends from as far away as California and Arizona, **Jenny Davis** (Serials Department) and Bill Barnhill were married on February 2 (02/02/02!). The short ceremony was performed by a personal friend, followed by a reception at the Brae Loch Inn in Cazenovia. They honeymooned at Disney World in Florida.

Bill is a senior programmer at BAE Systems in Rome NY; Jenny continues the eternal struggle with publishers (i.e., still working in Serials). Her email address is now *JBARHIL*.

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March Peer to Peer Dialog

The next Peer to Peer Library Dialog is scheduled for March 6, from 12:30 until 1:30 pm in the 1916 Room of ES Bird Library. The topic is "Information Literacy." What is the essential conception of this term and how should library services encourage what some have called the premiere competency of our time?

In preparation for this discussion, please check the suggested readings at the Reserves Desk or use SUMMIT Course Reserves. Search under LBR 100: Peer to Peer Discussion Group. No time to read up before the discussion? Please join us anyway for friendly conversation and flavorful refreshments.

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Stallybrass Speaks on History of the Book

On Friday afternoon, March 1, the Syracuse University History of the Book seminar series committee presented Peter Stallybrass, Professor of English, Comparative Literature, and the History of the Book at the University of Pennsylvania. He was to speak on "The Materiality of Writing," but instead (late-breaking news) spoke on "tables" (or tablets) in Renaissance England. Professor Stallybrass has directed the seminar on material texts since 1994 and co-founded the University of Pennsylvania Press series on "Material Texts" with Roger Chartier and other scholars from around the globe.

The announced seminar was to examine a range of miniatures, paintings, woodcuts, and engravings that depict the scene of writing. Professor Stallybrass would have explored why scenes of the evangelists' "inspiration" from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries paid so much attention to the material preconditions of writing: lecterns, desks, inkpots, quills, rulers, knives, sandshakers etc. Why, for instance, is the devil so often shown trying to prevent St. John from writing, not by any spiritual torment, but by stealing his inkpot? Why does St. Matthew's man/angel so often dictate to the evangelist and even in Caravaggio's 1602 painting, teach the evangelist how to write? And why does Caravaggio's St. Matthew write in Hebrew with which Caravaggio himself was almost certainly unfamiliar? Among other topics concerning the materiality of writing, Professor Stallybrass was to discuss why desk technology has regressed since the fifteenth century.

The next History of the Book seminar will be held at 4:00 p.m. on April 26 in the 1916 Room of ES Bird Library. It will feature Roger Wieck, Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts at the Pierpont Morgan Library. He will discuss

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February 12, 2002 Library Cabinet Meeting Summary

Peter Graham called attention to an ACRL ad hoc task force report on Human Resource Issues in Academic Libraries, which includes a demographic overview of the profession, and provides structural recommendations. Peter will meet with Denise Stephens, Cindy Cost, and Peter McDonald concerning priorities for the three new positions the Library has been allocated for the next year. Cindy Cost updated present position searches, and she will be working with Charles Tremper, Janet Pease, and Nancy Pitre on approaches to compensation and market pay. Cabinet updated the must-do list.

Barbara Opar, Fine Arts Department

WOW!

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the observant may notice an exodus of library staff (from E.S. Bird, Sci-Tech, ESF Moon, and the Library School), around noonish. If you were to follow these strong women out of these buildings and across the Quad, you would find yourself at Flanagan Gym, where SUL Reference Department staff member, Cynthia Needham, leads a Recreation Services fitness class called “WOW!” (Working Out with Weights). Not for the faint of heart (although, as Cindy says, “We don’t put Jane Fonda to shame!”), the class is nonetheless a welcoming environment for women of all fitness levels, who are encouraged to set their own “personal goals” as well as striving towards the “group goal.”

Although some class members do not hail from the library world, the class culture has a certain library flair; Cindy has established a “resource table,” where class members share information they’ve collected about wellness, weights, and healthy habits.

For more information about “WOW!” speak to a participating staff member (as shown in these photos), call Recreation Services, or go straight to the “WOW!” guru, Cindy herself.

Sarah Morgan, Library Administration and WOW! Participant



Above, instructor Cynthia Needham leads Tasha Cooper through a partner squat, a strength (and trust!) exercise.



Upper right, Moon Library and SUL are enthusiastically represented in this pre-stretch warm-up. From left to right, Kelly Hovendick, Ann MacDonald, Betsy Elkins, and Tasha Cooper.

Lower right, this is not the ultimate strength training exercise - holding up the wall. Julie Bell (second from right) joins fellow staff in “around the world”, a lower body workout.



...continued from page 1

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- Daily Orange, December 12, 1974, *SU Library Donor Ernest Bird Dies*.
- Syracuse Post Standard, February 13, 1974, *Services In Reno For Ernest Bird*.
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Cynthia Needham, Reference Department

Media Services Schedule for March

March 22 noon - 2:00 pm 1916 Room
Whatever Happened to Carbon Paper? A Look Toward the Future for Librarians, Library Assistants and the Printed Word

What does the future hold for libraries and the printed word? In an electronic age, what will happen to reading and literacy? Are libraries becoming anachronistic? How must libraries and library workers redefine themselves in this age of technology? As we try to “fit in” with technology, where do library workers, LTAs, and librarians fit in? Join us as we delve into this topic that concerns all of us ... the future of libraries, and our roles in it. Co-sponsored by Syracuse University Library and the Central New York Library Resources Council. The presenters are Bill Erbes and a panel of Library staff.

March 26 noon - 2:30 pm 1916 Room
A New Harvest: Revealing Hidden Resources with the Open Archives Metadata Harvesting Protocol

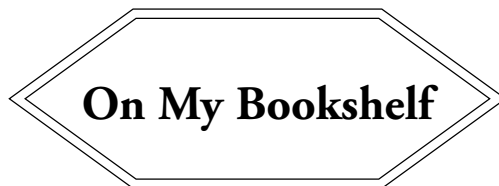
The Open Archives Initiative, guided by a team at Cornell and sponsored by the Coalition for Networked Information and the Digital Library Federation, is overseeing creation of the Open Archives Metadata Harvesting Protocol. This mechanism allows metadata to be collected from many servers, then aggregated and made available in new services. Universities and other organizations can thus disclose the

existence of their informational assets - e-prints, technical reports, learning materials, image collections, and so on - in a consistent way. With this approach, we can shine a light on the “dark” or “hidden” web, which is not visible to today’s search engines. How will the mechanism work to reveal the existence of valuable institutional materials? What impact will the initiative have on user scholarship, learning, and personal fulfillment by connecting users with previously hidden resources? How will reference professionals and other information seekers harness the power of metadata harvesting? Co-sponsored by Syracuse University Library and the Central New York Library Resources Council. Part of the “Steering by Standards” videoconference series presented by the OCLC Institute.

Host: Lorcan Dempsey, Vice President and Director, OCLC Research

Key Speaker: Herbert Van de Sompel, Director, e-Strategy & Programmes, The British Library

Expert Practitioners: Joann Kaczmarek, Project Coordinator, Illinois Open Archives Initiative Metadata Protocol Harvesting Project and Visiting Assistant Professor, Library Administration, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; and Stephen Pinfield, Academic Services Librarian, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom



Donna Sullivan (Reference Department) reports that the following books have been on her bookshelf recently.

Football’s Most Wanted: The Top 10 Book of The Great Game’s Outrageous Characters, Fortunate Fumbles, and Other Oddities by Floyd Conner

The book has multiple top-ten lists of football players covering topics like practical jokers, unorthodox coaches, ultimate upsets, etc. Covering both college and pro ball, SU players and games were mentioned several times. Fun reading.

Battle at Alcatraz: A Desperate Attempt to Escape The Rock by Ernest B. Lageson

This is a very compelling account of the 1946 inmate escape attempt at Alcatraz. The author’s father was one of the officers shot and left for dead in the attempt. (He survived.) You’d think I’d get enough prison talk at home since my

husband is an officer at Auburn Correctional Facility, but I love reading these things!

September 11, 2001: A Record of Tragedy, Heroism, and Hope by the Editors of *New York Magazine*

This is a pictorial account of the events in New York City surrounding September 11th from the time the planes hit the World Trade Center through the following week. Almost six months later, the pictures still bring tears. So many people are still grieving their losses.

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Please send material for the next *Staff News* by Thurs., March 14, 2002

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