
Library History Round Table Newsletter

New Series Vol. 11 No. 2

Spring 2009

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**LHRT Executive Committee Meeting at ALA in Chicago is open to all interested members. It will be held on Sunday, July 12, 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., in room PDR5 of the Chicago Hilton.**  
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Message from the Chair

Dear LHRT Colleagues and Friends,

Looking forward to this summer's ALA Annual Conference in Chicago, it is a privilege to announce an exciting array of programs. Beginning in the early afternoon (1:30-3:00 pm) on Sunday, July 12, LHRT will offer an invited speaker program titled, *New Perspectives on American Public Library History*. The panel will include three presentations given by well-known scholars in the library history field, followed by a respondent. The program will feature an interrelated approach to the history of public library development in the United States. Here is the preliminary program:

- Christine Pawley (University of Wisconsin, Madison)
"Libraries for Localities: Fostering Neighborhoods in the Early Twentieth Century"
- Wayne Wiegand (Florida State University)
"Main Street Public Library: Books and Reading in the Rural Midwest, 1890-1956," and
- Tom Glynn (Rutgers University Libraries)
"Reading Publics: Public Libraries in New York City in the 19th Century."

- Jim Carmichael (University of North Carolina at Greensboro) will act as a responder to the panel presentations.

That same day at 3:30pm the annual LHRT Research Forum will address the theme *Library Materials and Services for Children and Young Adults: Historical Perspectives*. The forum is co-sponsored with ALSC and YALSA; see the article below for more detail.

Finally, to be held on Monday afternoon (3:30-5:30pm) on July 13, LHRT will sponsor the Edward G. Holley Lecture. Unlike previous years, this year's Holley lecture will offer a full program devoted to a single speaker. David Paul Nord, Professor of Journalism and Adjunct Professor of History at Indiana University, will present a lecture titled, "Ephemeral and Elusive: Journalism History as Reading History."

The original intent of the Holley Lecture, as conceived by Wayne Wiegand back in 1995, was to sponsor a series of lectures relating to library history, history of the book, or print culture studies given by a distinguished scholar from outside the LIS field. David Paul Nord has published widely on journalism, publishing, and book histo-

ry. Most recently, he served as an editor and contributor to the fifth volume in the History of the Book in America series, *The Enduring Book: Print Culture in Postwar America*, forthcoming from the University of North Carolina Press. See the abstract of Nord's talk given in a related article in the *Newsletter*.

In closing, I wanted to give my personal thanks to all the people involved with making LHRT a successful venture during the past year, especially to Denise Davis and Norman Rose who helped immeasurably as our ALA liaisons, and for all of you who care deeply about the round table and its continuation.

See you in Chicago.

Ken Potts
LHRT Chair, 2008/09

LHRT Invited Speakers Program, ALA Conference 2009; Sunday, July 12, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.; Room 176B, McCormick Place West

“New Perspectives on American Public Library History”

The abstracts for the program are as follows:

Christine Pawley, “Libraries for Localities: Fostering Neighborhoods in the Early Twentieth Century.”

Early leaders of the American Library Association were mostly men of considerable stature. Librarian-scholars like Justin Winsor, William Frederick Poole, and Charles Ammi Cutter directed

large libraries housed in grand buildings in the center of major cities. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, such libraries were in the minority. The majority of new American public libraries—many of them in the Midwest—served small, often rural communities, and did so on a shoestring. Some librarians complained that that professional discussion focused too narrowly on the needs of large libraries, and ignored the plight of the much larger number of small and underfunded ones. This talk describes how ALA and other professional organizations shifted priorities in the early years of the twentieth century, addressing issues of importance to local libraries, whether in small towns or neighborhoods of large cities.

Wayne Wiegand, “Main Street Public Libraries: Books and Reading in the Rural Midwest, 1890-1956.”

Based on the histories of five small public libraries in the rural Midwest, and including the analysis of a database encompassing the entire contents of these five libraries between 1900 and 1960, this study attempts to identify and evaluate the political, social, economic, and cultural forces in collection development over six decades. Research findings demonstrate the public libraries in each of these five communities evolved a particular collection contour that was in many ways unique to local circumstances, in other ways common to central authorities.

Tom Glynn, “Reading Publics: Public Libraries in New York City in the Nineteenth Century.”

In 1901, Andrew Carnegie donated five

million dollars to construct a system of branch libraries in New York City, thus making possible the creation of a modern public library, as the term is understood today, in America's largest municipality. Before that time, New York had a multitude of "public libraries," as the city grew and the definition of the term shifted and evolved over the course of the nineteenth century. This talk will explore what the early history of libraries in New York reveals not just about the development of the idea of a public library, but also about changing conceptions of the role of government and the distinction between the public and the private.

LHRT Research Forum, ALA Conference 2009; Sunday, July 12, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.; Room 192B, McCormick Place West

"Library Materials and Services to Children and Young Adults: Historical Perspectives"

Nearly a decade ago, Christine Jenkins surveyed the literature pertaining to the history of youth services librarianship. She found that scholars had given precious little attention to this important topic, and that information was "scattered" across a variety of publications in library science, history, education, and the humanities. Many questions remained about how we have developed specialized collections, spaces, personnel, and services for children and young adults.

At ALA's Annual Conference in Chicago, LHRT, ALSC, and YALSA will make a significant step in fulfilling the wor-

thy agenda that Dr. Jenkins outlined. We are delighted to announce a co-sponsored research forum, "Library Materials and Services to Children and Youth: Historical Perspectives," to be held on Sunday, July 12th, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

This is the first time our forum will focus on children and young adults. Over the course of Fall 2008/Spring 2009, LHRT's Research Committee consulted with LHRT, ALSC, and YALSA members and widely distributed a CFP. The response was very enthusiastic. We received proposals from more than twenty scholars/practitioners and invited four to present their research.

The panelists will be:

- Jennifer Burek-Pierce, University of Iowa, "When the Reign of Children Began: Games, Toys, and Activities for Young People in Libraries, 1876-1920"
- Kate McDowell, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, "Children's Voices in Librarians' Words: Children as Readers in Libraries from 1890 to 1930"
- Ellen Pozzi, Rutgers University, "An Early Model of Youth Services Cooperation Between Public Libraries and Schools"
- Cindy Welch, University of Tennessee at Knoxville, "Are You a YA Librarian? ... *The Young Adult Alternative Newsletter*, 1973-1979"

We are also pleased that Dr. Christine Jenkins will join them as a commentator.

This interesting panel is sure to enliven scholarship pertaining to the history of young people and libraries. It will cer-

tainly be an excellent learning opportunity for us all. We hope that a healthy cross-section of researchers, practicing librarians, and students will be part of the audience and pose their thoughts during the Q&A which will follow the presentations. Please join us!

Bernadette Lear
LHRT Vice-Chair/Research Committee
Chair

Edward G. Holley Lecture, ALA Conference 2009; Monday, July 13, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.; Room 176B, McCormick Place West

“Ephemeral and Elusive: Journalism History as reading History”

Abstract: Historical evidence of readers reading journalism is ephemeral and elusive. Newspapers and magazines have been common forms of popular reading material over the past three centuries, but for that very reason, perhaps, people tended not to think much about their news reading. They did not ponder it as they might have pondered a scripture verse or a poem. And they seldom wrote much about it in diaries and letters. The historical record is thin. Though libraries are packed with newspapers, evidence for exploring reader response to those newspapers is rare. But it is not missing altogether.

This lecture is about my quest to track down some of those elusive readers. Over the past couple of decades, I have done half a dozen studies in the history of reading and readers of American journalism. In the Holley Lecture I will talk about several of those studies,

paying particular attention to the nature of the *evidence* that I have found. The studies range in time from the 1730s to the 1910s, and the evidence ranges from diaries to subscription lists to statistical data to manuscript letters to the editor.

David Nord
Indiana University

First Call for Nominations: 2010 Donald G. Davis Article Award

The Donald G. Davis Award for the "best article written in English in the field of United States and Canadian library history including the history of libraries, librarianship, and book culture" is given by the Library History Round Table every two years. This is the first call for nominations for the 2010 award. The award criteria and other information are available on the ALA website:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/ors/orsawards/davisdonaldg/davisdonald.cfm>. If you would like to suggest an article for consideration, please send your nomination to the committee chair.

Cheryl Gunselman
Chair, Davis Award Committee
gunselma@wsu.edu

LHRT Book Auction 2010

We are currently in the process of collecting books, serials and ephemera for LHRT's third auction to raise funds the Round Table's speaker honoraria. The auction is scheduled for the Library

History Seminar XII, September 10-12, 2010 at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. When sending a donation, include your name and mailing address as well as your email. Please provide a list with titles, brief descriptions and your estimate of "fair market value" if you wish to be sent a receipt for tax purposes. University libraries normally price hardbacks at \$5.00 each, paperbacks at \$2.00 each. For historical items, value on the used and rare book market can be considered.

Send your donations to:
Louise Robbins (LHRT Auction)
Library and Information Studies
Helen C. White Hall
600 North Park Street
Madison, WI 53706

David M. Hovde
Chair, LHRT Auction Committee

LHRT on Facebook

LHRT is taking a new step into the digital world. We have set up a group on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com>), the popular social networking site. Our group's official name is "Library History Round Table (ALA-LHRT)" and anyone can join. On the site, you will find a calendar of events, a link to LHRT's web page, and a community of "friends" who are interested in the history of libraries. Members of the group can post comments, discussion topics, photos, news, and more.

If you don't like Facebook, don't worry - our Facebook group will not take the place of traditional means of communication, such as LHRT's webpage, listserv, or newsletter. It is simply an al-

ternative means of sharing information about LHRT and the history of libraries. If you have additional ideas for enhancing the round table's online presence, please share them with Bernadette A. Lear (BAL19@psu.edu) and other members of the Executive Committee.

Hope to see you on Facebook soon!

Bernadette Lear
Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect, 2008/09

Statistics of National Scope on Libraries in the United States: A Bibliography

Statistical information on libraries is an infrequently used resource by the library history community. Two of the reasons for this is that they can be difficult to find and difficult to determine the kinds of information available for a specific time period and for an individual library. Over the past few years I have been compiling a bibliography of national level surveys for all kinds of libraries. The first part, 1829-1899 is now available on the Web at: <http://www.libsci.sc.edu/bob/LibraryStatistics/LibraryStatisticsGuide.html>; the second part, 1900-1999, is almost complete and will be available at this same address.

There is an amazing variety of information in the reports about individual libraries of all types as well as analysis of the characteristics and conditions of libraries at the time of the surveys and, occasionally, analysis of trends over time. While the most common variable in each survey is about collection size and growth there is also substantial information about income and expendi-

tures, physical facilities, circulation, services, salary data, services for special groups, and much more. The surveys are a rich resource for many different historical topics about libraries of all types.

Robert V. Williams
Library and Information Science
University of South Carolina

Library Historian Wins Dissertation Award

Karen Cook, a University of Louisiana at Monroe government documents librarian, was selected to receive The University of Alabama Outstanding Dissertation Award for 2008-2009 for her dissertation entitled "Freedom Libraries in the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer Project: A History."

The Freedom Libraries were established by civil rights activists in Mississippi to provide African Americans access to books. The establishment of the libraries reflected the strong commitment of civil rights activists to empower people through literacy and education; the national and international responses to the libraries reveal important dynamics of the way in which support for the civil rights movement spread across race, class, and cultural lines.

Ms. Cook is currently working on turning the dissertation into a book. LHRT members look forward to its publication.

Tom Glynn
Co-editor, *LHRT Newsletter*

News in Brief

Louise Robbins has high hopes (or deep concerns) that *Librarian Spies: Philip and Mary Jane Keeney and Cold War Espionage*, the book she co-authored with the late Rosalee McReynolds, will come out from Praeger prior to her August retirement date. She celebrated her 18 years at UW-Madison and 12 years as director with a party on April 17.

For the academic year 2009-2010 Wayne Wiegand will be "Scholar-in-Residence" at the Winter Park Institute in Winter Park, Florida. The Institute is part of Rollins College. He will be teaching a Book Censorship course in their Master of Liberal Arts program, giving several public lectures, and teaching a seminar to the Rollins College Library staff on the foundations of American libraries.

A new edition of Fred Lerner's book *The Story of Libraries: From the Invention of Writing to the Computer Age* will be published this summer by Continuum. It contains a new chapter on the history of information science, and updates and expansions to the existing chapters.

Tom Glynn
Co-editor, *LHRT Newsletter*

Preliminary Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting, ALA Mid-Winter Meeting, Denver, January 25, 2009

The following will be approved or amended by the committee at the Annual Conference in Chicago.

Present: Denise Davis, Nancy DuPree, Norman Eriksen, David Gracy, Gerry Greenberg, Christine Jenkins, Bernadette Lear, Irene Owens, Lorna Peterson, JB Pierce, Ken Potts, Nora Quinlan, Norman Rose, Sharon Saulmon, Lee Shiflett, Steven Sowards, Suzanne Stauffer, Mark Tucker, Cindy Welch, Andrew Wertheimer, Holly Willett

Meeting called to order at 8:20; introductions at 8:23

Ken Potts announced changes to the Agenda: II Treasurer's report given by S. Stauffer, not L. Peterson; IV. Arro Smith unable to attend due to car trouble, so report was deferred to Annual; Norman Erickson, BARC representative, would make a report in that time slot; Auction Committee report moved to Library History Seminar XII discussion.

Minutes from the June 2008 meeting were corrected from Norma Peterson to Lorna Peterson in attendance. Minutes from the last meeting approved unanimously.

Secretary/Treasurer Report

Suzanne Stauffer reported that individual members increased, institutional members decreased. LHRT needs to increase membership as membership dues remain our primary source of revenue.

The Justin Winsor Endowment is still not self-sustaining. Money for the Ed Holley Lectureship must also be transferred from operating funds as the Fund is not yet large enough to generate dividends. Both lost revenue this past year.

The newsletter is the single largest expense. Expenses could be reduced drastically if the print newsletter were replaced with an electronic version.

The dues increase which was proposed at the last meeting needs to be placed on the ballot for a membership vote. Bernadette brought up the Library History Seminar and not putting the expense in. Denise explained that, as a one-time expense, it is not included in the budget.

BARC Representative Report

Norman Eriksen, BARC representative, reported that LHRT is following a pattern that is happening with every Division and Round Table; they are losing members and revenue. The ALA endowment started with \$30 million in June; by October it had lost 6 million that quarter ending at \$24 million. His recommendation is that LHRT should not debate having an electronic newsletter, just do it and end mailing the paper copy as have many other Round Tables. LHRT should look at ALA Direct as a model. Discussion continued on the expense of establishing and maintaining an electronic newsletter and the merits of having a paper option. Steve Sowards recommended that a standing task force be appointed to get more input from members on this matter. Denise Davis stated that postage has tripled. If a week of preparation time is

added, the newsletter could go from non profit to 3rd class bulk. The impact of this would be cost saving but increased pressure on those who get the newsletter out. Ken Potts stated that electronic versus paper newsletter will be on the agenda for Annual.

Norman reported that incoming ALA President Camile Alire's focus is dealing with family literacy/young adult literacy. There are funds earmarked for small projects to further this focus and LHRT should tie its year work into President-elect Alire's initiative. LHRT's co-sponsorship with YALSA for the Research Forum "Library Materials and Services for Children and Young Adults: Historical Perspective" was mentioned.

Leslie Berger's Emerging Leaders Project was designed to get new members involved in ALA; each Round Table was asked to sponsor a new member at conference; this initiative is continuing and is becoming a standard.

The ALA Funding Workshop, which presents the basics of accounting, etc., is available on the ALA website.

Norman asked to be added to the ALA ex-com list; he will forward documents to everyone on the LHRT ex-com for approval and any necessary changes. He is writing an ALA Procedure Manual for Round Table Treasurers that will include "best practices." He announced that the Budget & Planning was being held from 1:00-2:30 that afternoon. On Tuesday, the Task Force for Electronic Participation had made 16 recommendations that are on the Council website. The question was raised about the financial implications of holding Mid-

winter in an electronic format. Denise explained that ALA make \$1 million from Midwinter, so the question is how to offset the drop in revenue. ALA Connect is increasing and improving communication between groups in ALA.

"New Perspectives of American Public Library History" presented by Ken Potts at Annual, July 12 was announced by Mark Tucker.

Research Committee Report

Bernadette Lear read the Research Charge and the priorities of the Research Committee. Panel has been selected for the Research Forum that is being co-sponsored with the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) and will be held Sunday, July 12, 3:30-5:30. Bernadette Lear stated that the volume and high quality of submitted proposals made choosing difficult. This forum will raise the profile of LHRT and fits into the incoming president's theme. She then thanked Ken Potts and David Gracy for reviewing the Call for Papers.

Bernadette Lear commented on membership; that membership is trending down 3%-10%. She would like to see a standing Membership and Outreach Committee created.

Report on Walking Tour: three individuals showed up for the LHRT walking tour of the Denver Public Library; two of the three were Bernadette and Ken Potts. Discussion began concerning other ways for LHRT to have social interaction; casual social dinners were suggested.

Nomination Committee

Mark Tucker reported that he had names for the slate but all were unopposed. He would continue to do some last minute "bush beating," but that everyone he had talked to at that point was over-committed and was worried about funding for travel. The slate is:

VP/Chair Elect Melanie Kimball,
Simmons College

At Large: Maury York v Nancy DuPree
Secretary/Treasurer Mark McCallon

Bernadette Lear encouraged people to talk to her about what it is to run and serve in LHRT.

Libraries and the Cultural Record

David Gracy reported that the publication *Libraries & Cultural Record* is doing fine. Two volumes are being produced on women pioneers in librarianship. It will divide at WWII. He announced a call for articles from the committee, and said that book reviewers are needed.

David Gracy also announced a symposium on trends in library history research, to be held Friday, April 24 in conjunction with the 2009 annual meeting of the advisory board of *Libraries & the Cultural Record*. Ed Goedekin will be speaking. This symposium is open to the public.

Ken Potts asked the publication committee about an electronic newsletter. After some discussion, it was decided that this issue would be placed on the agenda for Annual. Denise Davis suggested distributing it as a PDF rather than modeling it on ALA Direct, which is extremely expensive to design. Mem-

bers should be allowed to opt out of receiving the newsletter via e-mail.

Library History Seminar XII

Christine Pawley reported on the number of sponsors. LHRT is a major sponsor of this event. Co-sponsor is the Center for the History of Print Culture. The conference will be in Madison, Wisconsin. Call for papers will be in early May.

Christine Pawley and Louise Robbins conveyed request for funding from LHRT for scholarships for LIS students. 2005 Library History Seminar was granted \$1000 from LHRT. Christine Pawley requests \$1000 for scholarship and general support.

Motion: \$1000 for total support to be used for general support. Ken Potts. Second: Gerry Greenberg. Discussion: Steve said that LHRT has the money. The seminar and therefore expense, occurs only every five years. There are \$18,000 in LHRT reserves. ALA requires that Round Table be able to operate for two years without any reserve, that amount would be \$12,000. Christine said that the money should be given for unspecified, general use, not specifically for scholarships because it will be easier to administer in the University of Wisconsin, Madison bureaucracy. Bernadette asked what the role of LHRT is besides being a financial donor. She suggested that LHRT have a role in determining the papers and scholarship. Andrew said that if asked, we would offer assistance but suggested that we not rush into a formal role. Ken said that, according to the LHRT by-Laws, LHRT selects the place where the Library History Seminar is held. Mark added that since LHRT created the community, offering assis-

tance is appropriate if it is needed. Ken: Call the question. Motion passed un-
animously

LHRT Auction

Louise Robbins will handle local arrangements. The auction has been conducted three times. Proceeds will be channeled into the LHRT endowment. The auctions have earned approximately \$2000 each time they have been held. The challenge is to maintain or surpass the \$2000 mark. Requested that individuals donate books for the auction; please send books to the Madison library school c/o of Louise Robbins. Stated that Louise is a great auctioneer and would like to have her do this again.

LHRT Webpage

Denise Davis began by apologizing for the ALA transition. There was the challenge of the server load and other issues such as the complexity of using editorial tools. This challenge was compounded by new version of software. Meta-tagging is difficult and is being worked on link by link by Norman Rose. Patience of the ALA membership is greatly appreciated. Bernadette Lear agreed that the software is difficult to use and that it is not fair to ask a member volunteer to struggle with it. Larry Nix, LHRT webpage volunteer, resigned because of this. Discussion occurred on having the LHRT page hosted by another institution. It was pointed out that ALA still has to maintain a page of LHRT bylaws, awards, etc. so the webpage should stay with ALA. Once the software is upgraded, we will be able to pull information from ALA member records and other ALA databases (awards, etc.), so the site must be maintained on the ALA server.

SRRT webpage was brought up as an example and Denise Davis stated that SRRT was told to move it to the ALA site. However, while ALA maintains the core page, there is no reason other documents (bibliographies, minutes, newsletters, etc.) could not be maintained elsewhere with links from the core page. Denise suggested that Larry Nix be asked to write up guidelines for the LHRT page and said that our page is one of the most content-dense of the Round Table pages. Holy Willett reminded the group that web pages are expensive to maintain and that we would be honor bound to support Larry. Ken Potts placed the LHRT web page as an agenda item for Annual 2009.

LHRT Annual Conference Program

Ken distributed a draft of the LHRT program for Chicago, 2009. It will be held on Sunday, July 12 from 1:30-3:00. Christine Pawley, Wayne Wiegand, and Tom Glynn will be presenting. Jim Carmichael of UNC, Greensboro, will act as responder.

Ed Holley Lecture

Ken stated that an endowment is established but it is not earning money. We need to build it up and give it time to earn money. Purpose of the fund is to bring in a historian from outside the library history field for cross-fertilization. David Paul Nord, professor of history at Indiana University, Bloomington, who specializes in book history and the history of publishing and journalism has agreed to come to ALA Chicago for an honorarium of \$1000. **Motion:** Jennifer Burek-Pierce moved that David Paul Nord is ALA speaker.

Second: Cindy Welch. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m.

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Spring 2009**

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