

THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
ANNUAL REPORT 86-87

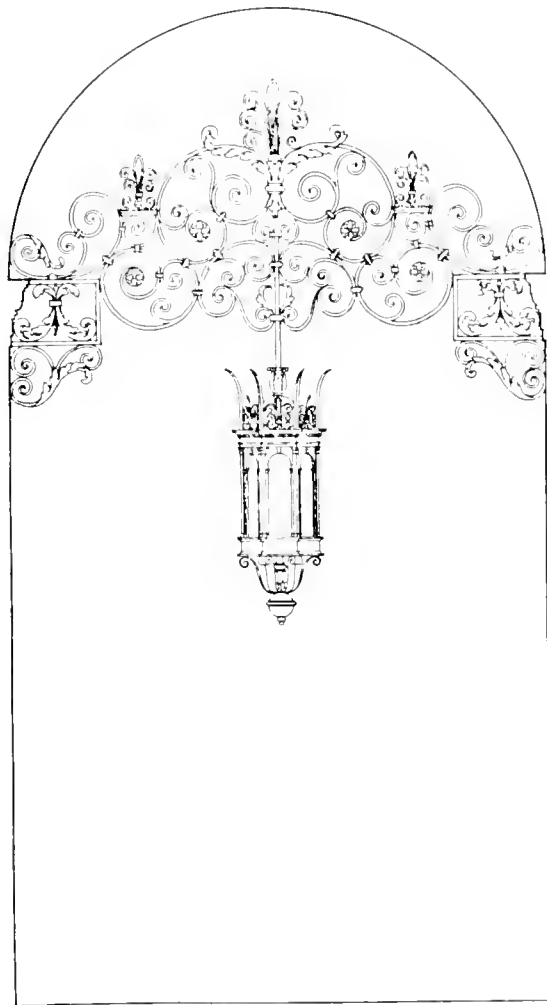


REPORT OF THE EXAMINING COMMITTEE

THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
ANNUAL REPORT

For the Year Ending June 30, 1987

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REPORT OF THE
EXAMINING COMMITTEE

1 April 1986–31 March 1987

Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston

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Director's Introduction

The year just completed marked the beginning of one of the most ambitious efforts in the Library's history: *A Program to Rebuild and Revitalize the Resources and Services of the Boston Public Library*. This long-range plan seeks to reestablish the Library as one of the nation's major cultural and educational institutions by rebuilding the collections, restoring children's services, reinstating hours of service, alleviating the problem of illiteracy, computerizing all borrowing and catalog-access activities of the Library, restoring the Library's landmark building at Copley Square, and rehabilitating branch facilities throughout the city.

The considerable progress already realized in attainment of these goals must be attributed largely to an unprecedented increase of thirty percent in operating support from the City of Boston and the establishment of a \$28,000,000 capital program for improvements to library buildings throughout the city. All users of the Library will share my deep gratitude to Mayor Raymond L. Flynn for this extraordinary support. In addition, the leadership of Senate President William M. Bulger helped gain a major increase in support from the Commonwealth to help the Library improve the research resources which are used by citizens from all parts of the state.

Of the many achievements of the past year to be found throughout this report, one which I consider most meaningful is the restoration of children's services at the Library. Two years ago, more than half the community libraries were functioning without a children's librarian. This situation, dictated by unavoidable budget cuts of the past, was particularly tragic for a library which had been in the vanguard of services to children for over a century. As of the end of this year, children's librarian positions have been reestablished in all twenty-five neighborhood libraries. The appeal that books hold for children is remarkable in our age, when one considers the competition. Television, complex video games, skateboards, computers, sports, and brightly colored plastic toys all vie with the printed word for the attention of the young. And yet, nearly 50,000 children and young adults now have active borrowing privileges at the Boston Public Library.

In conjunction with the plan outlined above, the Trustees commissioned a professional feasibility study to determine the potential effectiveness of a major fundraising campaign. Forty corporate and civic leaders interviewed for the study considered the Library an invaluable cultural resource; they were enthusiastic about the long-range plan and felt that private sector support was both essential and appropriate to the revitalization program. With the heartening results of that study in hand, the Trustees decided on October 28, 1986 to embark on what will be this institution's first major capital campaign. Known as "The Campaign for the Library," this endeavor aims to generate \$50,000,000 over the next five years. Its goal is not only to restore the Library's services and facilities, but also to equip the institution so that it will be able to meet the demands of the approaching century.

Recognizing the importance of the Library, the Boston Globe Foundation came forth with a leadership gift of \$1,000,000. William O. Taylor, publisher

of *The Boston Globe*, announced the five-year pledge, which was given in memory of his grandparents, Mary and William Osgood Taylor. It is designated for the McKim building restoration project and for literacy and reading enhancement programs. The city and state also responded with alacrity, pledging support of \$24,000,000 and \$9,000,000 respectively.

This year we planned extensively for new technologies that will help us to improve service to the public and its changing informational needs. When implemented at a cost of \$3,000,000, the Metropolitan Boston Library Network will allow users of six public libraries — Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Malden, Newton — to have automated access to these institutions' circulating collections. Advanced technologies will also play a critical role in enabling the physically handicapped to make use of library resources when our new Access Center for the Disabled opens in the fall of 1987 on the Concourse Level of the General Library.

The accomplishments that follow in this Annual Report could not have been realized without the dedicated efforts of our Trustees and staff, the Mayor and members of the City Council, the Friends and Associates of the Library, and dedicated citizens who keep alive the faith and optimism of their visionary ancestors who created this very special public institution.

The cornerstone of the Library's famous building at Copley Square was ceremoniously put in place in the year 1888. As we approach the 100th anniversary of that occasion, we hope the public will join us in rebuilding this great institution so that it may resume its eminent position in our changing world.

ARTHUR CURLEY
Director and Librarian

Annual Report



Bates Hall, the main reading room of the Research Library, honors Joshua Bates, who left a life of poverty in Weymouth, Massachusetts, to become a wealthy banker in London.

The Research Library

The past year has been one of the best in memory for the Research Library. The largest book budget in the history of the Library, long-awaited competitive salaries for the staff, an increase in public use of the collections, and several exciting programs have made it clear that the Library is indeed beginning a new era.

Through purchases, we were able to acquire a number of important items, such as a large collection of Russian folklore, a collection of works by Ireland's most illustrious living poet Seamus Heaney, more than 6,400 recordings and 800 compact discs, and significant holdings of Judaica.

The collections also grew through the generosity of donors, 85 percent of whom chose to remain anonymous. It was in this manner that the Library came to acquire an original Ansel Adams photograph this year, which was found tucked between the leaves of an anonymously donated book. Among other notable gifts were most of the contents of the General Electric Library in Pittsfield; the Charles J. Connick Collection of materials from the famous stained glass studio that was in existence from 1913 to 1986; some 40 cartons of books on the American Revolution; three volumes of microfiche on Armenian architecture; 30 Braille Bibles, and even a collector's set of 100,000 comic books in prime condition.

To share the Library's great holdings with a broader audience, staff mounted 33 exhibitions, including a display of the venerable Magna Carta, the document upon which our Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Declaration of Independence are based. During the months before and after April, the Library assisted taxpayers by distributing over 65,000 federal forms and more than 10,000 state forms. In addition, it met the increased demand arising from Boston's building boom to supply patrons with architectural plans and photographs of buildings in the city.

Readers reaffirmed the Library's importance through increased use of the collections this year. As in the past, the Kirstein Business Branch continued to be the most heavily used of all the Research Library departments, followed by the Microtext and Government Documents Departments. The Humanities, Rare Books, and Social Sciences Departments also reported an increased use of their holdings and services, and interlibrary loan requests reflected a rise of 9 percent over last year's figure.

Collaborative efforts were many and varied. Programs, exhibitions, and lectures were jointly conducted with organizations such as the Boston Ballet,

the Association of Latin Americanists, the New England Sculptors Association, the Lewis Carroll Society, the Delta Society, the Consul General of Portugal, the Museum of Science, the Association of Bookplate Collectors and Designers, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the Archaeological Society of America.

Finally, while staff members engaged in extensive planning for the many changes that will take place in the vast rebuilding program of the Library, some were involved in significant activities to preserve the past. The planning phase of the Massachusetts Newspaper Program was completed in May. Referred to as "a major detective effort," this project aims to identify, locate, microfilm, and catalog extant copies of every newspaper published in the Commonwealth. Guided by a distinguished Advisory Committee, the program is part of a national effort to make America's newspapers—both historic and current—available to the public. Massachusetts' contribution to this national program is particularly significant, as the nation's first newspaper started here: *Publick Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestick* dates to 1690.

All of these accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedicated staff of the Research Library. Their efforts have been critical this year and will be needed even more as we assume the challenge of revitalizing this great institution over the next few years.



The facade of the McKim building showing sculptor Bela L. Pratt's heroic figure, Art.

Community Library Services

How can a community library system, once the model for branch libraries throughout the nation, function effectively with a nine-year vacancy in the leadership post, with half of its branches devoid of children's librarians, and a third of the branches functioning without even a branch librarian? This was the silent question posed to the Library's Trustees and its newly appointed director in 1985.

As a result of increased funding from the city and state, the Library has been able to take an active step in beginning to fill these critical vacancies. In June 1986, Lesley Loke was appointed Assistant Director, Community Library Services. By the end of this fiscal year, each branch library had positions for children's librarians, and several of the branch librarian positions had been filled.

With the increased staff, a distinct note of optimism permeated the Community Library Services this year. The 12 months were spent in extensive plan-

ning, in an attempt to redress the problems created by past budgetary cuts and to plan for the future.

Art expositions, summer reading clubs, film series, crafts and hobbies, book discussion groups, and parenting sessions were just a few of the more than 5,600 activities that attracted 182,339 people to their community libraries this year. The number of those with active borrowing privileges increased over last year, with the children's segment of the reader population showing the most dramatic increase, 13 percent.

And when these readers came to use their cards, there was more choice on the shelves: 112,358 new volumes were available in the branches and the General Library by the end of the year. Boston's new residents from Thailand, Vietnam, the U.S.S.R., and Cambodia discovered works in their own languages. Also, 10,000 volumes were ordered for West Roxbury's new addition, which will have its groundbreaking in the spring of 1988.

Another group in need of specialized materials, the physically impaired, received consideration this year. Planning was completed for the Library's Access Center for Disabled People. When it opens in the fall of 1987, the Center will be equipped with a variety of new technologies that will greatly facilitate access for disabled individuals to the Library's vast holdings. Initially planned to serve the physically handicapped, the Center will expand its services in the future to accommodate people with other disabilities.

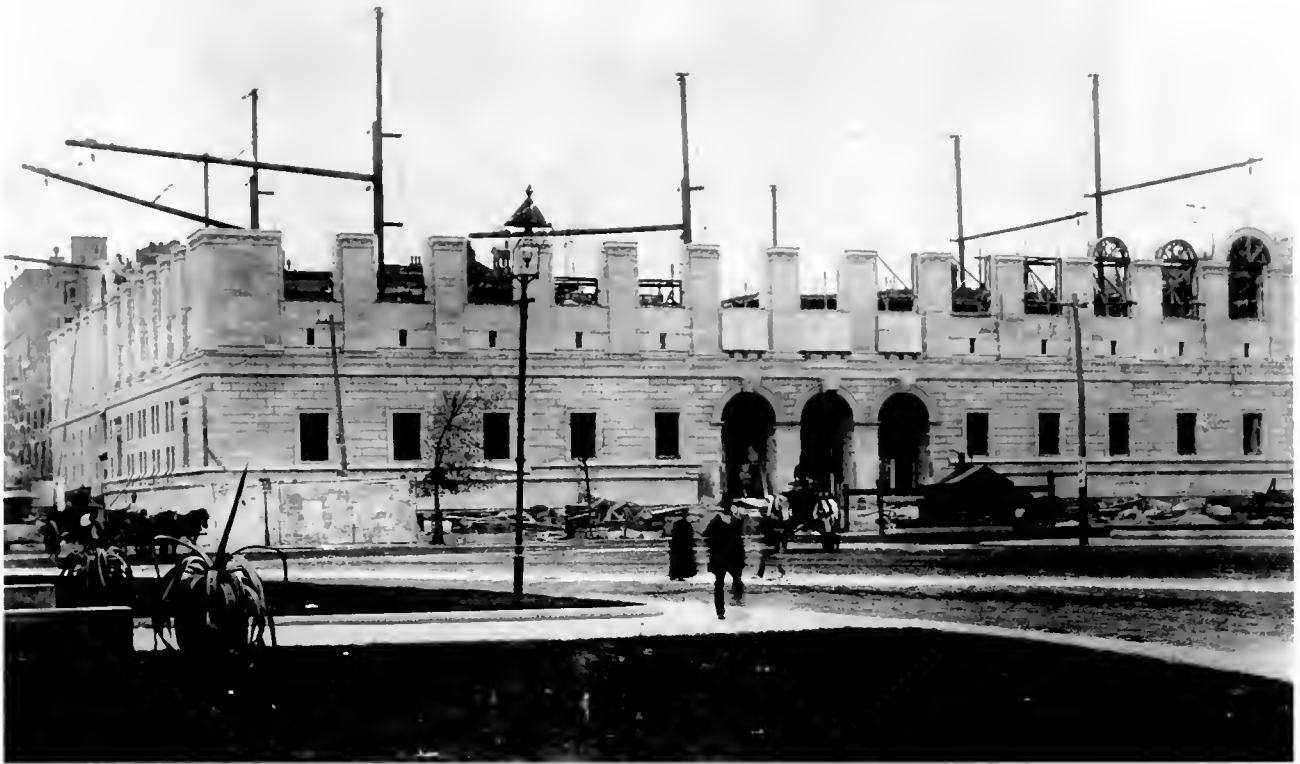
Another area of concern this year was the nationwide problem of illiteracy. In the spring of 1987, a group of librarians from the branches and General Library established the Community Library Services Coordinating Committee for Literacy. It will provide information exchange on program development related to literacy. It augments the Library's current joint efforts with organizations such as Collaborations for Literacy and PLUS-Project Literacy U.S. to combat this serious issue.

The year's achievements were very much bolstered by the increasing support provided by Friends groups, which play an active role in assisting the neighborhood libraries in programming, fundraising, and public relations. During the past 12 months, two new groups were formed — at Roslindale and South Boston. In addition, a new, city-wide group was created in June to coordinate the activities of the individual groups.

As is true with the Library in general, Community Library Services is at a new crossroads. We look forward to the challenge of preparing ourselves for the century to come.



Boston school children learn how to write Chinese at a program in the Children's Resource Center.



This 19th century photograph provides a rare glimpse of how the Research Library appeared to passersby before its completion in 1895.

Rebuilding the Library

The Research Library Building

The challenge handed to architect Charles Follen McKim in the late 19th century was daunting indeed: design a building to house the first large free municipal library in the United States. As no precedent existed for such a structure, McKim incorporated elements from vastly different models: a French library (the *Bibliothèque Saint-Genevieve*), an Italian Renaissance family memorial (the *Tempio Malatestiano* in Rimini), and an American store (the *Marshall Field Wholesale Store* in Chicago).

The result was a magnificent Beaux Arts structure, one that set a standard for municipal architecture throughout the country for decades to come. Even today, over nine decades after its opening, the noted architect Philip Johnson has referred to it as “the finest public building in the United States.”

Although it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973 and became a National Historic Landmark in 1986, nothing has been done

to restore this 92-year-old edifice. Most of its heating, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems are original and are now in a serious state of deterioration. In addition, many of the once beautiful public rooms have acquired a shabby appearance, and new ways of managing information now dictate the need for different allocations of space in parts of the building.

In view of this, the Library has embarked on a vast restoration and renovation project. The design development stage of this project was completed in the spring of 1987; the actual work will begin in the spring of 1989; and the project will be completed by 1995. The project has three main aims:

- to restore the timeworn building and its celebrated artwork
- to increase public access to the building’s historic and beautiful spaces
- to reorganize functions within the building to provide more efficient and effective working spaces

The Library has engaged leaders in the fields of art and architectural preservation to carry out the work:



Architectural historian Douglass Shand-Tucci will advise on the restoration project. He is shown here with (left to right) Library Trustees Berthé Gaines, Doris Kearns Goodwin, René Franks of the Friends of the Dudley Branch Library, and Dina Malgeri, Director of the Malden Public Library and friend of the Boston Public Library.

- Daniel Coolidge of Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott Architects of Boston will serve as project architect.
- The Conservation Department of Harvard University's Fogg Art Museum will restore the murals of John Singer Sargent, Puvis de Chavannes, Edwin Austin Abbey, and John Elliot.
- The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities will oversee all phases of restoration of interior finishes and furniture.
- Architectural historian Douglass Shand-Tucci will serve as special advisor to the Trustees for the restoration project.

The Community Libraries

Like the Research Library building, the facilities of many of the branch libraries have long been in need of repair and renovation. This year, significant progress was made on a number of fronts.

- At the West Roxbury Branch Library, planning continued for a major new addition that will be funded by the City of Boston. To be constructed on land generously donated by the West Roxbury Congregational Church, the addition will afford the following: a threefold increase in space (from 7,000 to 22,984 square feet), a threefold increase in book capacity (space for 97,000 volumes), 30

reading carrels, and a new lecture hall to seat 150. Groundbreaking is scheduled for the spring of 1988.

- At the General Library, plans were finalized for the new Access Center for Disabled People. To be located on the Concourse Level, this facility will provide disabled individuals with increased access to Library and community resources. It will be equipped with a wide array of technological advances, such as a Kurzweil Reading Machine to translate print into speech, a VTEK electronic magnifier to enlarge the size of original text up to 60 times, and a VersaBraille computer word/processor.
- Air conditioning was installed in 12 branch libraries as of the end of the fiscal year. With the exception of the East Boston Branch, which presents special architectural considerations, all community libraries now have air conditioning.
- Renovation work was begun on the Connolly Branch Library in Jamaica Plain. The work includes repairs to the front facade, entrance stairway, a new roof, restoration of its interior leaded-glass windows, and installation of a security system.
- At the Hyde Park Branch, plans were made to install a ramp on the Everett Street side for the physically impaired.

The Campaign for the Library

What took place in Boston in the mid-19th century was to set the stage for the library movement throughout the nation in subsequent years. Founded in 1848, the Boston Public Library was America's first tax-supported free municipal library.

Its strength has always derived from a combination of public and private support. Nearly 140 years ago the institution was launched with a public appropriation of \$1,000 and private gifts amounting to some 10,000 volumes. Today, as a result of this continuing public/private partnership, the Library now makes available to its readers 6,200,000 books plus 17,000,000 items in other formats in its 25 community libraries, its business branch, and its main facilities in Copley Square.

In 1981 the Library was forced to assume a position of retrenchment as a result of budgetary cutbacks dictated by Proposition 2½. Despite the public's increasing demands for library services, the insti-

tution was forced to impose reductions in staff, programs, and hours of access.

Following a comprehensive feasibility study, the Trustees unanimously agreed at their meeting on October 18, 1986 to embark on an ambitious program to revitalize the Library. With a five-year goal of \$50,000,000, *The Campaign for the Library* will equip this institution to reassert its place as one of the nation's foremost educational resources. Specifically, the Campaign seeks to:

- Restore the landmark Research Library building and its artistic treasures and render its space more functional
- Revitalize the community library system by renovating its facilities and enhancing its literacy and reading programs
- Strengthen endowments for scholarly resources, special collections, and related curatorial activity
- Incorporate new technologies systemwide, including automated circulation, book security systems, and on-line access to bibliographic holdings of the community libraries, General Library, and Kirstein Business Branch.



"The Law," a lunette decoration in John Singer Sargent's murals on Judaism and Christianity.



Following his announcement of The Boston Globe Foundation's leadership gift to the Library's Campaign, William O. Taylor (second from left), publisher of *The Boston Globe*, convenes on the steps with (from left) Kevin E. Moloney, President of the Library's Trustees; Mayor Raymond Flynn; and Library Director Arthur Curley.

This is the first time the Library has embarked on a major private sector campaign. The success of this effort hinges on the continuation of the public/private partnership that traditionally has been critical to the Library. Already, governmental funding sources have done their part, pledging \$33,000,000 of the total goal. Most of this sum will be designated for basic renovation of facilities at the Research Library and in the community libraries.

The private sector, too, was quick to demonstrate its initial support. On the same day that the library's Trustees voted to proceed with the Campaign, William O. Taylor, publisher of *The Boston Globe*, announced a gift of \$1,000,000 from The Boston

Globe Foundation. The five-year pledge was given in memory of his grandparents, William Osgood and Mary Taylor, who were lifelong residents of Boston. This generous donation has been designated for both preservation of the McKim building and programs to enhance reading and literacy.

These gifts have provided important impetus to this fundraising effort. Individuals, corporations, and foundations will be asked to contribute the remaining amount of \$16,600,000, which will be used to restore the artistic treasures of the Research Library building, enhance the Library's efforts to promote literacy, strengthen endowments, and provide for new technologies throughout the system.

New Technologies

We are in the midst of an information explosion, a phenomenon that becomes more readily apparent and, for librarians, more unwieldy, with each passing decade. To acquire, catalog, store, and provide access to the plethora of published information now available is a Sisyphean task without the assistance of new technologies. This year, the Boston Public Library came of age in this technological era in a number of ways.

- Metro Boston Library Network (MBLN). During the fall of 1986, five public libraries—Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Malden, Newton—chose to collaborate with the Boston Public Library in developing a comprehensive automated circulation and on-line catalog system. To be known as the Metro Boston Library Network (MBLN), this \$3,000,000 project will ensure increased public access to the resources of these six institutions. Once implemented, the system will allow staff and patrons at all locations to determine the holdings and availability of any item and will enable staff to determine if a patron is eligible for service. In addition, this system will be accessible to other library clusters nationwide through DATALINK telecommunications.
- Interlibrary Loan. In a continuing effort to make its holdings available beyond Boston, the Library gained dial-up access to the data bases of local circulation clusters: the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLCC), North of Boston Libraries (NOBLE), and the Minuteman Library Network (MLN). It also installed an Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) terminal in the Interlibrary Loan Department, thereby enabling the Library to expand its ongoing national interlibrary loan.
- The Science Reference Department was selected as one of ten places nationwide to acquire the automated Classification and Search Support Information System (CASSIS) as a pilot program. This system on CD-ROM was developed some years ago by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Because the Boston Public Library is one of the most frequent users of CASSIS, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is funding this pilot project to create more efficient service.

- New technologies were acquired to increase access for the disabled. They include the Echo voice synthesizer (which vocalizes computer data), a Braille computer and printer, and computer hardware/software which produces large print/Braille. With the installation of this equipment in the General Library's new Access Center for Disabled People, the visually impaired will have greater access to information and will be able to organize research and to print data in Braille format.

Collection Development

To keep pace with the demands of this age of information—in which the world's published information is believed to double every decade—the Library places a high priority on collection development. To augment its impressive holdings, it relies on two major activities: the purchase of items and the acquisition of notable gifts.

This year's success in developing the collections was due to a number of factors. Among these were the largest book budget in the Library's history, a much-needed increase in staff in the Acquisitions Department, a new automated acquisitions system, the relocation of the Acquisitions Department to a quieter space in January, and the acquisition of several important gifts by the Gifts and Exchange Department.

The Research Library welcomed the following additions to its impressive holdings.

Through purchases, it obtained 69,863 new items, including

- Material by and about Seamus Heaney, Ireland's most renowned living poet
- A large collection of books on Russian folklore and Russian theatre
- Judaica collections consisting of smaller press publications by noted Jewish authors
- A Yiddish collection, comprised of famous short stories, folklore, humor, children's literature, and some Holocaust materials. Included are the complete works of some of the most distinguished Yiddish writers, including Sholem Aleichem and Y.L. Peretz
- A Polish collection of reference and literary material



An item from the Charles Connick Studio's rich archives, which were donated this year to the Library.



Mr. and Mrs. John R. Rivers gave the Library a significant collection of drawings and designs by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, among which were intricate bookplates such as this.

Gifts to the Research Library totalled 131,333 items, including these items of particular interest:

- Archives of the Charles Connick Glass Studio, which was in business from 1912-1987
- Most of the contents of the General Electric Company Library in Pittsfield, Massachusetts
- 100,000 comic books from Simon Tenenbaum. These heroic comics, which are in excellent condition, may become a Special Collection.
- An important collection of drawings and designs by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, donated by Mr. and Mrs. John R. Rivers
- A large collection of grotesque borders for rooms, halls, screens. These caricature sequences were drawn by Woodward, etched by Rowlandson,

and hand colored in London in 1799 and 1800. They augment the Library's outstanding Rowlandson collection. Gift of Dr. Mark Altschule.

- 1,276 lantern slides of Europe from 1890-ca. 1910. This gift, donated by Charles Harte of Illinois, will be called the Edward F. Wilder Collection of Lantern Slides.

The Community Libraries and the General Library added 112,358 new books to their shelves this year, including works by Latin American authors in Spanish, and publications in Thai, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Russian. A major effort in building community collections was the acquisition of approximately 10,000 volumes for the expanded West Roxbury collection, which will be housed in the new addition planned for the existing facility.

Conservation

An estimated 77,000,000 books are slowly disintegrating across the nation. They are victims of the high acid content of most commercial papers made since the mid-19th century. To preserve the written legacy of past generations, the Boston Public Library conducts an ambitious program of conservation. In fiscal year 1987, its Conservation Center

- Continued a major effort to restore one of this institution's most esteemed holdings: the private library of America's second president, John Adams. Hundreds of books from this collection received treatment that ranged from cleaning and oiling to rebinding (using the original bindings whenever possible).
- Preserved 2,613 non-book items, including 643 letters of John Ruskin, 139 Civil War photographs, and 1,070 Boston theatre programs.
- Conducted a four-week workshop to instruct Library staff on the proper handling and protective measures for library materials.

In addition, three grants enabled staff to focus on other conservation-related concerns:

- The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) awarded a grant of \$66,000 for a survey of the Library's important collection of over 1300 rolls of drawings by the Boston architectural firm of Peabody and Stearns (1870-1917). With this funding, staff will also conduct preliminary methods to safeguard these drawings and will begin to microfilm them.
- The Library has become the coordinating institution for the Massachusetts Newspaper Program, which is under the aegis of the United States Newspaper Program. With a \$10,000 grant from NEH, the Library is attempting to identify, locate, and microfilm extant copies of every newspaper published in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This institution also received a grant of \$174,500 from the U.S. Office of Education's Title II Program for microfilming the newspapers.
- With funding from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities, the Library engaged a specialist to survey the preservation needs of its celebrated Brown Collection of music and musical literature. The preliminary report rec-

ommended that these irreplaceable holdings be cleaned, prioritized for conservation treatment, and be restricted with regard to public access, particularly in the area of photocopying.

Adult Services

Throughout its history, the Library has made a concerted effort to stay attuned to the needs of its broadest constituency. At present, adults comprise 78 percent of those with active borrowing privileges, and the Library responds to this major part of its readership by offering a wide variety of services and programs. This year 1,012 programs drew a total audience of 43,463 individuals, who came to participate in activities such as the following:

- At the East Boston Community Library, contacts were made with the Asian Task Force to encourage more Vietnamese and Cambodian adults to use the library.
- The Brighton Community Library planned and hosted the second annual Allston Brighton Art Exposition. The day-long event drew a crowd of 300 and featured demonstrations of stained glass, watercolor and printmaking, music, a poetry reading, and an exhibition of works by 16 local artists.
- A Dialog with Ishmael Reed was one of Codman Square Community Library's most successful programs this year. The noted black author addressed an enthralled audience on a hot Saturday morning in June.
- Parent's Programs, held concurrently with preschool story hours, continued to be successful at a number of community libraries. These programs focused on a diverse range of topics, such as Heimlich maneuver training, dental health for children, and Christmas crafts workshops.
- The Best of Boston Author Series at Lower Mills Community Library consisted of two programs. "Evenings With" featured three authors: Melissa Scott, Paul Walkowski, and Ione Malloy, while the crime series entitled "Murder, Ink!" had crime historian and newswoman Pamela Blevins as its guest speaker.
- Culture in and Around Boston at the West End Community Library brought representatives from various cultural and historic institutions to discuss the history of these institutions and

their current services. There are plans to continue this series next year.

- The National Endowment for the Humanities Learning Library Program. One of the Library's most popular continuing series, this program has offered adults college-level, non-credit courses free of charge since the early 1970s. The topics of these five-session courses, which are held in the community libraries, reflect a broad range, as evidenced by this year's series:

America in the 30's

Frederick E. Danker, University of Massachusetts/Boston

American Art

Aileen Callahan, Boston College and Regis College

The American Musical Theater, 1920-1960

Frederick E. Danker, University of Massachusetts/Boston

At Home in America: Domestic Settings 1620-1980

Myrna Kaye, Museum of Fine Arts

American Paintings: From Colonial Beginnings to Contemporary Times

Miriam Braverman, Museum of Fine Arts

Boston's South End: A Social History

Will Holton, Northeastern University

The Life and Times of James Michael Curley

Michael J. Ryan, Boston University

Digging into Boston

Steven Pendery, City Archaeologist, Boston

Glimpses of South Boston: Past and Present

The Honorable Thomas H. O'Connor, Boston College

A Sense of Place: 20th Century American Voices

Shaun O'Connell, University of Massachusetts/Boston

Visionary Plans and Practical Visions in the Shaping of Boston: Two Centuries of Imagining, Planning and Designing the City

Alex Krieger, Harvard Graduate School of Design

Witchcraft in New England

Helen A. Berger, Boston University

Women in Film

Robert G. Goulet, Stonehill College

Women of Mystery and Wonder: Black Women Writers, 1953-1983

Mary Helen Washington, University of Massachusetts/Boston



In addition to these programs, the Library made an important contribution to the adult community by continuing to provide space for the Higher Education Information Center. Now in its third year of operation, the Center serves as a free clearinghouse for information on career and higher education planning.

Young Adult Services

To meet the constantly changing needs of the 14- to 18-year-old patron, the Library held 208 programs which drew audiences totalling 3,226. The topics of these programs were highly varied, ranging from career options to film series to readings of horror stories. Among the year's many activities were the following:

- Three Career Awareness programs at the Brighton Community Library focused on photography, hotel and food administration, and travel and tourism.
- At the General Library, author Lois Lowry taught a Creative Writing Workshop for young people; Patricia Pickett of Jobs for Youth offered a program called "How to Find a Summer Job"; and "A Morning with Margaret Mahy" provided



This year the popular Learning Library Program, founded several years ago under the National Endowment for the Humanities, offered adults 14 free, college-level, non-credit courses such as this one on Boston's South End.

the opportunity for teenagers to talk with the noted New Zealand author of young adult fantasy books.

- Librarians from the Young Adults Room of the General Library produced or collaborated on the following booklists: *Women, To Form A More Perfect Union*, *Black Is . . .*, and *The World of Anne Frank, 1925-1945*.
- 2,078 high school students made 136 visits to the libraries, while young adult librarians paid visits to 685 students in 31 of Boston's schools.
- Over 7,500 books and audio-visual materials were added to the young adult collections during the year.
- A new publishing venture was launched this year with the first mailing of *From the Young Adults Room*. This bimonthly newsletter is designed to promote the Library's collections and programs to young adults and youth workers.

Children's Services

In the latter part of the 19th century, the Boston Public Library was a pioneer in children's library service, a tradition that continues today. This year, children's librarians met with more than 23,000 elementary and middle school children in their classrooms and welcomed 17,825 schoolchildren at the libraries to hear stories, and talks, and to learn about library services and programs.

The year's outreach efforts were greatly expedited by the addition of several new children's librarians, some of whom came to fill positions that had been left vacant for years due to budgetary constraints. As in the past, some of this year's programs were designed for children of specific ages or with special needs, such as toddlers or the physically impaired. Other programs were created with parents, teachers or other caregivers in mind. Some noteworthy aspects of the year include the following:

- Children comprised nearly 16 percent of Boston Public Library cardholders, numbering 36,139 of a total of 229,292 active cardholders.
- Over 24,000 new children's books were added to the collections during the year.
- 135,650 people attended the year's 4,459 public programs. Among the programs were:



Children who participated in this year's Reading Is Fundamental programs were able to select books to keep.

- Reading Is Fundamental (RIF). The first year of this enormously successful reading motivation program drew over 1,000 participants. Four corporate sponsors — H.P. Hood Inc., Digital Equipment Corporation, Fidelity Investments, and B. Dalton Bookseller — made the program a reality at four community libraries, which were, respectively, Charlestown, Dudley, Fields Corner, and South End. The children who participated in these programs were able to select books to keep.
- Summer Stories in the Courtyard brought children to the Library at Copley Square. Community library storytellers conducted the programs, two of which were sign interpreted — courtesy of the Library's Access Center — for the hearing impaired.
- "Treasures from the Sea" was the topic of the Summer Reading Program. Using books, puzzles, games, and activities, this program helped young children to maintain their reading skills through the languid days of summer.
- At the Mattapan-Grove Hall Community Library, the legal and physical dangers of drugs was the topic for a well-received program. In the course of it, a member of the Boston Police Department showed the children what drugs looked like and gave suggestions on how to avoid the peer pressure to experiment.
- A Christmas Bilingual Celebration was held at the Connolly Community Library, featuring a choral group with children from different countries, such as Chile, Honduras, Puerto Rico, San Salvador, and the Dominican Republic.
- In collaboration with the School Volunteers for Boston, children's librarians participated in two outreach programs. The Reading Aloud program brought adults into classrooms to read to children, and the Read Aloud Workshop introduced parents to the benefits of reading to their children.

Special Services

The Library's commitment to the community extends not only to those who require traditional services, but also to those who need special assistance: the physically disabled, the functionally illiterate, and the homebound.

The Disabled

During the past year, plans were finalized for the Access Center for Disabled People. Its purpose is to provide disabled patrons with greater access to Library and community resources. The Center is scheduled to open in the fall of 1987 in an attractive and easily accessible area of the General Library's Concourse Level. Although the Center will direct its services initially to the physically disabled, in the future it will also serve people with other disabilities.

This much-needed facility will become a reality as a result of three federally funded Library Services and Construction Act Title I grants administered through the Massachusetts Board of Library Com-

missioners. Once completed, it will become an integral part of the Library's operations.

The planning for the Access Center was greatly facilitated by the expertise lent by the members of two newly created advisory committees: the Advisory Committee on Library Services to the Hearing Impaired and the Advisory Committee on Computer Technology for the Disabled (see the complete listing at the end of this Annual Report).

In preparation for the Center's opening, a variety of new equipment was installed, among which was the following:

- Kurzweil Reading Machine that reads printed material aloud
- VTEK Electronic Magnifier that magnifies the size of original text up to 60 times
- Echo Synthesizer that gives voice to computer data
- VersaBraille Computer/Word Processor that translates text into Braille and regular print
- Versapoint Braille printer



The Library's new Access Center for Disabled People will offer a broad spectrum of new technologies when it opens in the fall of 1987.

With this new technology, a blind person will be able to read and write electronically, to organize research, to utilize data bases, to obtain both Braille and printed copies, and to work together with a sighted person on a project. This new equipment joins the Library's special formats and services — large print books, talking books, audio cassettes of books, Braille publications, assistive listening systems, and handicapped parking — to ensure the broadest accessibility of library resources to the disabled.

The Adult Nonreader

Illiteracy has become a serious problem of national concern. Recent estimates indicate that 20 percent of the population of Massachusetts and up to 40 percent of Boston's 250,000 adults are functionally illiterate. Simply put, this means that these individuals cannot read the instructions on a medicine bottle, fill out an application form, or decipher a street sign. This problem translates on a broad scale into high unemployment; high burdens on tax-supported social welfare programs; low levels of ability to cope with family, work, and social obligations; low esteem; and, most important, a tremendous waste of human potential.

For more than a quarter of a century, the Boston Public Library has concerned itself with the problem of illiteracy. Today that concern expresses itself in the provision of support for a variety of established programs and activities.

- At the Brighton Community Library, cooperation continued with Boston University's program, Collaborations for Literacy. Brighton provided space for tutoring, and some of its staff participated on the Advisory Board. In addition, staff members also became involved in PLUS — Project Literacy U.S., a cooperative effort of two television networks, ABC and PBS. The aim of the project is to organize groups concerned with literacy so as to increase awareness of the problem both locally and nationally.
- The Parker Hill Community Library also collaborated with the Boston University literacy program, serving as a site for adult learners and tutors to work together.

The Homebound

For the past 17 years, the Homesmobile has brought a world of fantasy, travel, intellectual pursuits, and culture to the doorsteps of readers unable to come to the Library. With a staff of three, this program delivered more than 40,000 items to 6,000 individuals on a regular schedule of visits. In addition to the Homesmobile operation, Extension Services provided deposit collections to 26 sites, such as nursing homes, elderly housing, and rehabilitation centers, while an additional 29 sites were served through deposit collections of the community libraries.

Kirstein Business Branch

The current interest in subjects such as real estate, investments, franchising, small business operations, and marketing is reflected in the statistics of the Library's Kirstein Business Branch for fiscal year 1987. Situated at 20 City Hall Avenue in Boston's financial district, it continues to be the most heavily used of the Research Library departments. During the year, it:

- provided readers with 68,280 items
- answered 47,708 in-person reference questions
- responded to 22,485 telephone inquiries
- filled 708 orders for photoduplication
- offered on open shelves a heavily used collection of over 40,000 volumes of directories, guides, books, trade publications, government documents, and periodicals

The Campaign for the Library will provide for the following improvements at the Kirstein Business Branch:

- Additional business-related data bases will be made available to patrons.
- The catalog to the collection of the Kirstein Business Branch will be available on-line, along with the catalog of all the circulating collections of the Central Library.

Exhibitions and Publications

Over the years, the Library has found its extensive exhibitions and publications programs effective means of expanding and interpreting the collections to a broader audience. In addition to the numerous displays held in the community libraries throughout this year, more than 50 exhibitions were mounted in the Research Library and the General Library at Copley Square.

The Research Library

The Research Library building was the setting for 33 exhibitions in fiscal year 1987. Freedom was an important theme of several of the exhibitions, in particular, those that featured the Magna Carta, the U.S. Constitution, the Statue of Liberty, and Joan of Arc.

- “Magna Carta: The Rare Document Itself.” Bostonians had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to view this famous charter. The only version in private hands, the item was loaned to the Library by Texas patriot H.R. Perot. Funding for the Boston presentation and promotional materials was provided by Aldrich, Eastman & Walch, Inc. January 12–February 17.
- “Are We to Be a Nation?: The Making of the Federal Constitution.” Jointly developed by the American Library Association and The New York Public Library, this exhibition recounted the process, events, and debates surrounding the writing and ratification of the Federal Constitution. March 9–April 18.
- “Liberty: The French-American Statue in Art and History.” Organized by The New York Public Library and the Official French-American Committee for the Celebration of the Centennial of the Statue of Liberty, this show celebrated 200 years of French-American friendship. September 11–October 14.
- “Salute to Liberty,” an exhibition of songs and musical documents. July 1–31.
- “Maid of France: Portrait of Joan of Arc.” This extensive show, which took place on all three floors of the Research Library, displayed many items relating to Saint Joan that have been donated to the Library by John Cardinal Wright and John McKenna. June 1–30.



A workman prepares the Statue of Liberty for a facelift.

The year's other exhibitions focused on a broad range of subjects, including the book arts, preservation, prints, animals, and architecture. Some highlights were:

- “Peabody & Stearns: Preserving the Records.” This exhibition underscored the need to preserve the Library's drawings of this important turn-of-the-century Boston architectural firm. July 7–September 8.
- “Drawings from Boston: Selections From the Boston Public Library Collection.” This exhibition, the first major presentation of the Library's collection of drawings by Boston artists, opened at the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln. It featured 100 works by 50 living artists. April 4–May 31.

- “Bauhaus Books” provided an interesting glimpse of works published by MIT Press and other Bauhaus publications by Boston authors. October 1–31.
- “The Bauhaus Era in Germany and America: Documents from the Archives of American Art-Smithsonian Institution.” November 12–December 31.
- “Stephen Andrus at Impressions” featured items from Impressions Workshop, one of America’s major centers for lithographic and copperplate printing for artists. April 1–31.
- “Animals: Inspiration of Man.” A display of old and precious books and materials from the Rare Books and Manuscripts Department. August 1–31.
- “Contemporary Danish Book Art” presented fine bookbinding from contemporary Denmark, in conjunction with the Boston Ballet’s production of “Tales of Hans Christian Andersen.” May 1–31.
- “Nina Bohlen: A Retrospective of Works on Paper.” June 3–September 6.
- “Fine Bookbindings by Kerstin Tini Miura.” March 1–31.



A springtime exhibition on Anne Frank attracted the largest audience of any exhibition in the Library’s history.

General Library

The Great Hall and the Boston Room provided the settings for most of the 20 exhibitions mounted this year in the General Library. Some highlights of the year include the following:

- “Anne Frank in the World 1929–1945” drew the largest audience of any exhibition in the history of the Library: 150,000 visitors, including at least 200 school and community groups. Organized by the Anne Frank Foundation of Amsterdam and New York, the exhibition was presented at the Library by the Boston-based organization, Facing History and Ourselves. April 10–May 4.
- “Pyramids of Giza,” co-sponsored by the Archaeological Institute of America, the Boston Society of the AIA, and the Boston Public Library, this exhibition was mounted in conjunction with the program “Scientific Solutions to the Puzzles of the Pyramids.” September 15–30.

- “LIFE: The Second Decade, 1945–55” displayed 200 photographs from the archives of LIFE Magazine. October 1–November 17.
- “Drawing Together: Children’s Art from the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.” February 15–28.
- “The American Constitution: A Bicentennial Celebration.” April 1–30.
- “The U.S. Constitution, 1787–1788: From Debate to Ratification.” April 1–30.

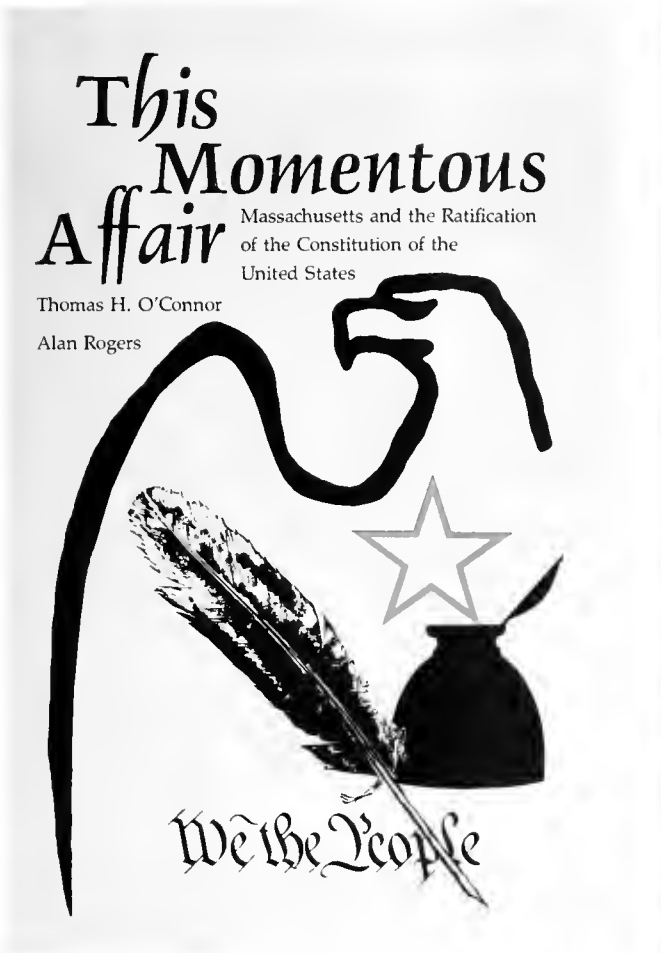
The General Library collaborated with other institutions on several exhibitions during the year. Among these were “Bejart Ballet of the 20th Century,” which was sponsored by the Belgian Embassy, the International Dance Council, the Wang Celebrity Series, and the Boston Public Library. Another collaborative effort was the exhibition, “Drawings of Jerusalem,” which was co-sponsored by the Israel Cultural Center, the Israeli Consulate in Boston, and the Bursten Graphic Workshop in Jerusalem.

Publications

One of the lesser known aspects of the Boston Public Library is its role as a publishing house, a role which dates to the Library's beginnings. To interpret its extensive and often unique holdings, the Library publishes books, essays, posters, and bibliographies on subjects such as the City of Boston, art, architecture, history, literature, and politics. This year's publishing efforts included four works significant to Boston and Bostonians. In *The Bull and the Garden, A History of Allston-Brighton*, author William P. Marchione traces the area's transition through time from the Indian presence to the modern rise of political awareness. As past School Committee member and present teacher and historian, Marchione brings considerable authority to his work.

The Library joined the city this year in a major publishing effort, *This Momentous Affair* by Thomas H. O'Connor and Alan Rogers, professors of history at Boston College. Timed for release during the bicentennial of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, the book focuses on Massachusetts and the ratification of the Constitution. O'Connor was named by President Reagan to membership on the Commission of the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution. His lively history of Boston, *Bibles, Brahmins and Bosses*, published this year in an updated revision, continues — like the earlier editions — as a "best seller" among the Library's publications.

As this year closes, editing/publishing efforts in the Library are directed to what promises to be an important book, *Poets on the Horizon*, collected verse by members of the Dudley Branch Library Poetry Club.



Special Events

In addition to the more than 5,600 public programs staged by the Library this year, many special events were designed to expand this institution's outreach or to honor special commitments. Some highlights follow.

- At its Annual Reception and Recognition Ceremony in the Research Library's courtyard on September 12, the Board of Trustees honored Rosalie Lang, Assistant to the Director for Personnel, and Martin Waters, Curator of Geography and Maps, for their 50 years of service to the Library. They join the ranks of B. Joseph O'Neil, Supervisor of Research Library Services, who has now completed 54 years of service.
 - The courtyard was the site of another ceremony on September 26, this time to celebrate the great generosity of the Druker Family of Boston, who
- donated both the land and the building of the Orient Heights Branch Library.
 - Collectors' Day: Appraising Your Art, Antiques, Collectibles was held for the second year in the Children's Resource Center in the General Library. The event gave the public an opportunity to bring in personal possessions for oral appraisals. Members of the Appraisers Registry kindly donated their services that day to benefit the Library's Fine Arts activities.
 - The first annual Women in Science Lecture was held on November 12. Dr. Mildred S. Dresselhaus, Abby Rockefeller Mauze Professor of Electrical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was the guest speaker.
 - The twenty-second annual Wiggin Symposium was held on May 19. This year the event focused on Stephen Andrus, owner of Impressions Workshop, the famous printing center for artists.



The Druker family, shown here with Library Director Arthur Curley, generously provided both the land and the building for the Orient Heights Branch Library. (Left to right) George Fengold, Ron Druker, and Anne U. Ludwig with Mr. Curley.

A program in words and slides provided the evening's guests with a glimpse of Impressions and the life of its proprietor, a Boston art-entrepreneur who made a major contribution to the city's cultural life.

- The W.A. Dwiggin Lecture was held on January 15 for the 14th year. This year's guest speaker was Oscar Handlin, Carl Michael Loeb University Professor Emeritus at Harvard University. His lecture was entitled "Freedom of the Press: Social Foundation 1650-1850."
- A ceremony honoring the antiquarian Robert Severy was held in October. The occasion was designed to honor this individual for his continuing generosity to the Fine Arts Department. He has donated hundreds of his original photographs of historic Boston architecture and has underwritten the restoration of a number of the Library's important portrait paintings.
- John McKenna is another benefactor who was honored this year at the Research Library. In gratitude for his ongoing donations of valuable bronzes, artwork, and rare books pertaining to Joan of Arc, the Library held a reception for him on August 6.
- Liberty: The French-American Statue in Art and History was a series of programs in September to celebrate two centuries of French-American friendship. Co-sponsored by a number of distinguished French organizations, the series included a major exhibition, lectures, and a film program.
- The Harvard Book Store Cafe Author Series is a popular ongoing program that brings readers together with contemporary writers. Among this year's participants were Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, Ann Beattie, Manuel Puig, and Doris Kearns Goodwin.

Friends Groups

It was nearly 40 years ago that the Library's first Friends group was formed. Suitably enough, this volunteer effort began in support of the East Boston Community Library, the first branch library in the country. Since the beginning of this community resource in 1948, 12 other Friends groups have been formed to help the community libraries on numerous fronts, ranging from fundraising to programming to community relations.

During the year, two new Friends groups came into being at the following branches: Roslindale, and South Boston.

Some of the Friends' many activities in 1986-87 include the following:

- At Charlestown Community Library, the Friends presented special interest programs to attract new membership. These included programs on women entrepreneurs, rural Ireland, and wildflowers. They also collaborated with the Charlestown Association of Parents on a reading readiness program for parents of preschool children.
- At Hyde Park, the Friends developed a full year of special events, which included a September book sale, a holiday reception, a winter musical, and a yard sale.
- The Jamaica Plains Friends sponsored "Picture Peace," a special collection of books for children on peace and creative conflict resolution.

The City-Wide Friends of the Boston Public Library became established and had its first meeting in late June 1987. Officers of the Friends of the Hyde Park Branch, John Thomson and Robert Smith, were major initiators of the concept and the resulting organization.

Committees and Councils

as of June 30, 1987

Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston

The Boston Public Library's Governing Board is comprised of the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston who, by virtue of St. 1878, c. 114, constitute a nonprofit educational corporation.

Appointing Authority: The Honorable Raymond L. Flynn, Mayor of Boston

Trustees

Kevin F. Moloney, President
William M. Bulger, Vice President
Berthé M. Gaines
Doris Kearns Goodwin
Marianne Rea Luthin

Director and Librarian

Arthur Curley

Examining Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston, 1986/87

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William Johnson, Vice-Chairperson
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Friends of the Boston Public Library

City-Wide Friends Committee for the Boston Public Library

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Robert J. Luttmann, President

Friends of the Charlestown Branch Library

Anne E. Cavanaugh, President

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Barbara Ernst-DiGennaro, Chairperson

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Friends of the Egleston Square Branch Library

Sister Mary Cahill, Chairperson

Friends of the Hyde Park Branch Library

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Friends of the Jamaica Plain Branch Library

Gail Schubert, President

Friends of the Lower Mills Branch Library

Donald Oakes, President

Friends of the South Boston Branch Library

Robert Toland

Friends of the South End Branch Library

Gail Ide, President

Friends of the West Roxbury Branch Library

Pamela Seigle, President

Massachusetts Newspaper Program Advisory Committee

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Bernard Bailyn
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Peter Nicholas Cuenca
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William Ketter
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Thomas O'Connor
Roland R. Piggford
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Claire Quintal

Associates of the Boston Public Library Officers and Board Members

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Frances Howe, Co-Chairperson
Peter Wick, Secretary
Charlotte Vershbow, Treasurer
Gail Banks
Arthur Curley, *ex officio*
Joan Eldredge
Kenneth Gloss
Emanuel Josephs
Natalie Klebenov
Kevin F. Moloney, *ex officio*
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John Woolsey, Jr.

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Computer Technology for
Disabled People**

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Eileen Curran
Katherine Dibble
Gloria Evans
Albert Gayzagian
Kathleen Hegarty
Mildred Hilliard
June Holt
Patricia Kirk
Roberta Kracov

Dr. Richard Jackson
Brian Reilly
Claudia Semper
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Library Services to Hearing-
Impaired People**

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Patrice DiNatale
Paul Hostovsky
Cathy Mylotte
Kimball Nash
Brian Reilly
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Brenda Schertz
Alice Sykora
Barbara Wagreich
Rocky Marie Weaver
Hollis Wyks

Nancy Becker, Consultant to
Library Services to the Hearing-
Impaired Project

Notable Gifts Received

from July 1, 1986 to June 30, 1987

The Research Library

American Revolution materials. 40 cartons of Revolutionary War materials, with emphasis on Concord, Lexington, and Bunker Hill. Gift of Paul Thurston.

Appraisers' Registry. Donation of services to benefit the Library on Collector's Day in May 1987.

Comic books. 300 cartons of heroic comics. Gift of Simon Tenenbaum.

Stanley Research Library. Books, periodicals, and shelving from a reference and research library that was closed. Gift of the General Electric Company, Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

Music Department

Mozart's *Violin Concerti*. Limited facsimile edition of the manuscripts. Gift of Boston area music librarians.

Warren Story. Scrapbook of this noted music critic. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Laning Humphrey.

Rare Books & Manuscript Department

Boston Almanacks. Gift of Mr. Roher.

Edward F. Wilder Collection of Lantern Slides. 1,276 lantern slides of Europe, 1890–ca. 1910. Gift of Charles Harte.

Diary of the Avery Family. Gift of Mrs. Davy Jo S. Ridge on behalf of the Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina.

Twelve wall maps from 1845 to 1918, including an 1852 map of Lynn, Massachusetts; an 1852 map of Concord, Massachusetts; an 1855 map of Medford, Massachusetts; an 1858 map of Hillsborough County, New Hampshire; and an 1867 map of Boston. Gift of Dr. Joseph Rubini.

Visiting cards. This collection includes some with signatures and notes of Presidents Truman, Nixon, Ford, and Reagan. Gift of E. C. Schang.

Richard Worsley. *History of the Isle of Wight*, 1781. Gift of Lee Z. Johnson.

Print Department

Alfred Bendiner. Eleven selected drawings. Gift of the Alfred Bendiner Foundation.

Mortimer Borne. Prints. Gift of various donors encouraged by Mrs. Mortimer Borne.

Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue. Drawings and designs. Gifts of Mr. and Mrs. John R. Rivers.

Impressions Workshop. Files, printed ephemera, and photographs of artists and printers, including photographs taken by Stephen Trefonides. Gift of Stephen Andrus.

Rowlandson. Collection of *grotesque borders* for rooms, screens, etc., drawn by Woodward, etched by Rowlandson, and hand-colored in London in 1799 and 1800. Gift of Dr. Mark Altschule.

Andrew Stevovich. Seven etchings and four color woodcuts. Gifts of Andrew Stevovich and Sybil Stone.

Fine Arts Department

Armenian Architecture: A Documented Photo-Archival Collection on Microfiche. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur H. Dadian and the Armenian Educational Council, Inc.

Charles J. Connick Stained Glass Studio. Archives, including gouaches, full-size cartoons, black and white photographs, blueprints and sketch layouts, color slides, copper stencils, financial and office records, 25 glass panels, and 5 light boxes. Gift of the Charles J. Connick Stained Glass Studio.

Photographs of Boston buildings. Four file drawers. Gift of the City of Boston Inspectional Services.

Robert Severy. 2,369 photographs of Boston. Gift of Robert Severy.

Community Library Services

The following donors contributed programs, equipment or services amounting to \$1,000 or more during fiscal year 1987 to Community Library Services:

Boston Human Rights Commission
Family Service of Greater Boston
Friends of the Hyde Park Community Library
Friends of the Jamaica Plain Community Library
Friends of the Lower Mills Community Library
Harvard Bookstore Cafe
Harvard University
Loon and Heron Theatre
Macmillan Publishing Company
Random House Publishing
Warner Audio Publishing

Contributors

Gifts of \$1,000 and over from July 1, 1986 to June 30, 1987

Individual and Foundation Gifts

Charles Sumner Bird Foundation
The Boston Globe Foundation
Constance Carleton Trust
Theresa and John Cederholm
Susan W. and Stephen D. Paine
Jerome Preston, Sr.
Sholley Foundation, Inc.
Stephen and Sybil Stone
The Frederick E. Weber Charities
Carl A. Weyerhaeuser 1972 Trust
Estate of Beatrice L. Williams
Nancy Zinsmeyer

Corporate Gifts

Aldrich, Eastman & Waltch, Inc.
B. Dalton Bookseller
Digital Equipment Corporation
Fidelity Investments
Harvard Community Health Plan
H.P. Hood, Inc.

State and Federal Grants

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners
National Endowment for the Humanities
United States Department of Education
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

Ways of Giving to the Boston Public Library

Founded by an act of the Massachusetts legislature in 1848, the Boston Public Library was this nation's first large free municipal library. With the establishment of the East Boston Branch in 1870, the Library became the first library to institute a formal system of branches. Throughout the years it has been guided by the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston, who comprise a nonprofit organization, incorporated under the Acts of 1878 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and classified as such under 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

At this time the Trustees direct their attention to The Campaign for the Library, particularly significant as the Library moves toward its second century in Copley Square. The Boston Public Library invites you to join in this Campaign. Your contribution will enable the Library to maintain its vital role as an institution for civic education, enlightenment, and enjoyment, and will help to lay new cornerstones for the Boston Public Library's future.

The Boston Public Library offers a range of exciting opportunities for gifts.

You may wish to give

- appreciated securities
- life insurance
- personal property
- cash
- real estate
- by bequest
- by pledges payable over a three-year period
- gifts that pay income for life

Commemorative Gifts

A gift to The Campaign for the Library may commemorate your name, the name of a living relative or friend, or the name of a deceased person.

Each commemorative or memorial gift will be individually recognized, and donors will be identified with the purposes for which their gifts were made through an appropriate testimonial. In this way the name of the person or persons recognized will live on with the Boston Public Library.

Whichever way you choose to make your gift, be assured that your support will have a lasting impact on the future of the Library.

Your inquiry concerning the complete program of giving is invited. If you have any questions about the plans or objectives of The Campaign for the Library, please direct your inquiries to:

Development Office
Boston Public Library
Copley Square
Boston, Massachusetts
02116

Telephone: (617) 536-5400, extension 212

Library Resources

The Boston Public Library Annual Report FY87

General Book Collections	
Volumes	5,806,895
Special Collections	
Rare Books and Manuscripts	1,223,643
Prints	1,103,400
Patents	8,500,019
Maps	322,565
Government Documents	2,493,593
Musical Scores	97,762
Periodicals	
Current Subscriptions	16,049
Non-Print Material	
Audio-Recordings	294,553
Films & Video Cassettes	11,062
Pictorial Works	513,216
Microforms	<u>3,425,144</u>
	23,807,901

Library Use

Visitors	2,278,196
Programs	5,679
Program Attendance	182,339
Items Borrowed	1,721,558
Volumes Consulted	930,977
Reference Inquiries	1,076,153
Photocopies	1,340,000

Library Expenditures

The Boston Public Library Annual Report FY87

Library Expenditures	FY84	FY85	FY86	FY87
A. Salaries and Wages:				
City of Boston	\$ 8,100,318.00	\$ 7,605,112.00	\$ 8,279,133.03	\$10,801,626.01
Commonwealth of Massachusetts				
Eastern Regional Library				
System	694,126.00	685,111.53	823,011.61	935,092.10
Library of Last Recourse	0.00	932,734.00	1,253,028.00	1,813,618.55
Total Salaries	\$ 8,794,444.00	\$ 9,222,957.53	\$10,355,172.64	\$13,550,336.66
B. Books and Other Library Materials				
City of Boston	\$ 1,442,032.00	\$ 1,164,654.00	\$ 1,107,012.32	\$ 1,905,857.98
Commonwealth of Massachusetts				
Eastern Regional Library				
System	822,134.00	1,755,824.72	1,707,743.19	1,769,740.74
Library of Last Recourse	2,073,616.00	1,137,724.00	1,318,035.00	1,968,260.51
Other State Aid	0.00	281,497.00	281,497.00	339,746.14
Trust Fund Income	292,076.00	302,807.77	182,409.00	192,448.90
Federal Grants	11,054.00	139,081.00	0.00	477,947.50
Total Books and Other Library Materials:	\$ 4,640,912.00	\$ 4,781,588.49	\$ 4,596,696.51	\$ 6,654,001.77
C. All Other Expenses:				
City of Boston	\$ 2,557,228.00	\$ 2,547,556.00	\$ 2,634,584.58	\$ 2,994,819.53
Commonwealth of Massachusetts				
Eastern Regional Library				
System	371,178.00	757,611.51	688,100.20	628,464.28
Trust Fund Income	23,609.00	54,586.28	36,695.00	90,689.42
Federal Grants	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,649,592.44
Total Other:	\$ 2,952,015.00	\$ 3,359,753.79	\$ 3,359,379.78	\$ 6,363,565.67
Grand Total (A, B, and C):	\$16,387,371.00	\$17,364,299.81	\$18,311,248.93	\$26,567,904.10

Report of the Examining Committee

1 April 1986–31 March 1987

Members of the Examining Committee

Berthé M. Gaines, Chairperson

William Johnson, Vice Chairperson

Rodney Armstrong	Joseph J. King
William Buckingham	Diana Lam
Joseph F. Carey	Tunney Lee
Ralph Crandall	Paul J. Lynch
V. Paul Deare	Robert Mulligan
Joseph H. Deary II	Bettina A. Norton
Kathryn Downing	Barbara Oakes
Paul Faircloth	Donald Oakes
Jovita Fontanez	Aurora Salvucci
Michael Fung	Kathleen Kelly Satut
Milton Glass	Robert Smith
Renee Glass	Jane M. Stahl
William Hennessey	Robert D. Stueart
Frances Howe	Deborah Thomas
	Brunetta R. Wolfman

Introduction

Chapter 9 of Boston City Ordinance 11 deals with the Library Department and the Trustees of the Public Library. It requires that the Trustees annually appoint an Examining Committee of not fewer than five persons, not members of the Board, who, with one of the Board as chair, shall examine the Library and make to the Board a report of its conditions. That report is to be included in the annual report of the Board of Trustees.

This was the first Examining Committee to be convened since the 1983–1984 Committee, which reported for the period ending March 31, 1984. The Committee numbered 30 members, making it about twice the size of its predecessor. There were no additions and no resignations during the life of the Committee. Virtually the entire membership participated in some way in the examining process.

An informal survey of the membership of the Committee yields the following profile. Eight members had served on the previous Committee. Seven had served on the screening committee that assisted the Trustees in the search for a director in 1984. The Committee was grateful for the continuity and experience which these members brought to its efforts. Six members were library professionals. Six were educators. About half the Committee represented friends groups or community-based interest in the Library. Three were in government. Three were business people. All of the members were library users and supporters.

The Examining Committee was named by the Trustees in March of 1986. It held its first meeting on March 18, 1986 and its last on March 10, 1987. The whole Committee met monthly during the year. Its various working groups and subcommittees met during the intervals and reported their progress at the general meetings. Meetings took place in the Trustees Room, in two branches, and in the Research Library.

The first task of the Examining Committee was to define its job and to determine an approach. Four members were assigned to review the findings of the preceding Committee and report on the status of their implementation. By and large, the results

of that review are incorporated in the main body of this report under the appropriate subjects.

The Committee decided to organize itself into seven working subcommittees, each of which would examine a particular aspect of the Boston Public Library system. Four of these corresponded to the subcommittees employed by the preceding Committee. These dealt with branches, the central library, funding, and public relations. Three new groups were created to study friends groups, staffing, and technology. The report of each of these subcommittees will follow as approved by its membership and the general membership.

The Examining Committee was given a completely free hand by the Trustees in the conduct of its business. This is testimony to the openness of leadership increasingly characteristic of the Board and the Library in general. In addition, we received full support in every sense from the Director and his management staff. Without this support, our work would have been infinitely more difficult and correspondingly less pleasant. The Director addressed the Committee early in its work and discussed his priorities and concerns. In addition, he met with individuals and working groups as the examination progressed. The Committee found this most helpful and encourages future Examining Committees to insist upon access to and close communication with the Director. Staff throughout the system were most cooperative. Their patience and willingness to share their experiences were invaluable.

Observations and Recommendations

It has been said by some in recent years that the spirit has gone out of the public library movement in the United States. According to this argument, the public library has grown weary and irrelevant. It is no longer on the new frontier of community education. In its place is conjured up the image of a futuristic high tech information system which will deliver material to people in their schools, work places, and homes more rapidly, more comprehensively, than a traditional library equipped with mere books and documents ever could. In addition, the Boston Public Library experienced in recent years a period of relative desolation which generated its own sense of pessimism. While not all of its problems have been solved, by any means, it is the view of the 1986–87 Examining Committee that the Boston Public Library has emerged from a difficult time in

its history and stands now on the threshold of a renaissance. We cannot say that this puts to rest darker predictions as to the future of public libraries in general, but we feel that it points to a promising future for this library.

It has become conventional wisdom to proclaim that the present moment is absolutely critical and that one must grasp every opportunity it offers if one is to be successful today and build wisely for tomorrow. In our judgment, this really is a critical time in the life of the Boston Public Library system. It is a time of revitalization, of expansive and innovative spirit. It's a time of increasing resources. Choices are being made now which will set the Library's course into the twenty-first century. Actions taken now and in the immediate future will cast long shadows in the life of the institution and should be judged accordingly.

The law says very little about the duties of the Examining Committee except that it examine and report. It does call for the appointment of a committee every year, though. This has not been consistently done, in part because it may seem somewhat unnecessary and unproductive to assemble a fairly large group each spring, essentially to repeat the examining process just completed by the outgoing committee. Such committees are at risk of becoming little more than nuisances and their reports endlessly repetitious and unread. It would be undesirable to respond to this possibility by relegating Examining Committees to a meaningless role, having them submit cursory reports as a matter of form. The Examining Committee should serve a purpose in the administration of the system. It should not be called just to satisfy a legal requirement. Its work should be perceived to be useful and its findings should be addressed, one way or the other.

One approach to the accomplishment of this goal within practical limitations might be to convene annually a smaller and relatively specialized Examining Committee to study a limited number of specific subjects or issues. Automation, collection development, literacy, the relationships of libraries to schools, and the future of branches are examples of subjects that might be studied. The mini-Examining Committee would have considerable flexibility. It could be mandated or could choose one, two, or even three areas of investigation in a given year. Every third year the larger full committee of 20 to 30 would be convened to conduct a comprehensive examination of the Library, as is now the practice, if not the theory.

To ensure the effectiveness of Examining Committees, there should be regular follow-up to their

reports. We urge that future committees continue the practice of monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of their predecessors. Further, we suggest that the Trustees adopt the habit of reporting in a timely way actions that they have taken or decline to take on specific recommendations. In addition, the present Examining Committee requests the opportunity to meet informally with the Trustees for the purpose of discussing its findings and entertaining questions. To repeat for emphasis, the Examining Committee process should be a useful tool. No Trustee who has worked to assemble a committee and no citizen who has served on one should be satisfied with anything less.

The need for long-range planning was a recurring theme in the investigations of the Committee. Management articulated it often. It emerged in the findings of several of the subcommittees focusing on specific program areas. We recommend it to the Trustees as a matter of overriding concern, particularly in this watershed period for the Library.

The Committee placed suggestion boxes in each branch and in the General and Research Libraries during the month of September. Approximately 500 responses were collected. Many were interesting and helpful, but the Committee did not have the capability to analyze and study them as carefully as it would have liked. It is recommended that the responses be regularly collected from the permanent Boston Public Library suggestion boxes and action taken as appropriate, also that the data be retained for two years, during which it be made available to Trustees, management, staff, and Examining Committee members upon request. The Library should acknowledge serious suggestions from users.

The visits of Examining Committee members can be confusing and distracting to Library staff. Many apparently do not know what the Committee is and does or whom it represents — the Trustees, City Hall, Beacon Hill? It would be helpful if the Trustees could in the future issue an announcement at the beginning of an Examining Committee cycle explaining the role of this body, informing staff that Committee members will be visiting facilities and contacting staff, and requesting everyone concerned to cooperate fully.

Conclusions

The 1986–1987 Examining Committee draws the following conclusions from the findings of its subcommittees.



Front Row: William Johnson, Vice Chair; Berthé M. Gaines, Trustee and Chair of Examining Committee; Barbara Oakes; Kathleen Kelly Satut; Jane M. Stahl; Arthur Curley, Director and Librarian; Renée Glass; Brunetta R. Wolfman; Jovita Fontanez; Kevin F. Moloney, Trustee. *Second Row:* Marianne Rea Luthin, Trustee; Deborah Thomas; Robert Smith; Frances Howe; William Hennessey; V. Paul Deare; Joseph H. Deary, II; Milton Glass; William Buckingham. *Third Row:* Donald Oakes; Paul J. Lynch; Robert Mulligan; Robert D. Stueart; Paul Faircloth; Rodney Armstrong; Joseph F. Carey. *Not present:* Ralph Crandall; Kathryn Downing; Michael Fung; Joseph J. King; Diana Lam; Tunney Lee; Bettina A. Norton; Aurora Salvucci.

Central Library

1. Challenging years lie ahead for the Research Library. The restoration of the McKim building will dramatize the role of BPL as "palace of the people" and will serve as a catalyst for the functional revitalization of services to provide a sound basis for twenty-first century operation.
2. For the General Library, the opportunity is at hand to enhance its image as central library of the system, offering a broad range of services to a diverse clientele while assuming an active leadership and support role toward the branch libraries.

Branches

1. Staff morale in the branches appears to be good. Many previously vacant positions have been filled.

The Committee noted an optimistic sense among staff that plans which have recently been formulated will result in a better library system in the future.

2. On the other hand, many longstanding physical shortcomings of the branch facilities which were identified in earlier reports have yet to be addressed.
3. Circulation is a particularly important indicator of branch activity. This is reflected in the fact that the branches continue to circulate twice as many titles as the central library.
4. With renovation of their facilities, the staffs of the branches are quite capable of meeting the growing informational needs of their neighborhood communities.

Friends

1. There are 12 active friends groups in the BPL system. Aside from the obvious commonality of purpose, there are no organizational links among the various groups, nor is there a typical pattern of development.
2. Of the 12 active friends groups, six have been in existence more than five years and five have fulfilled the essential legal and financial requirements of formal organization. The incorporation of three more friends groups is pending. The five groups of more recent origin reflect varying states of stability and strength, ranging from the small but active to the small and shaky.
3. All friends groups carry out in various degrees the functions inherent in such associations: fund-raising, program enrichment, and community public relations. Some projects have been frustrated by union regulations, administrative procedure, and the absence of clear policy guidelines.
4. Evidence of former groups organized during the budget crises of the recent past indicated the realistic possibility of re-activating friends groups in several branches around a larger purpose.
5. State, federal, postal, and banking regulations governing the incorporation and business of non-profit associations can present an intimidating burden to potential organizers of new groups.
6. A city-wide umbrella friends organization is at this time being developed by representatives of several friends groups throughout the city.
7. Lesley Loke, Assistant Director for Community Library Services since August 1986, is making a serious effort to address the issue of friends groups in the BPL.

Fund-Raising

1. The BPL is in much better financial condition than it was three years ago when the last Examining Committee reported.
2. The Library is about to embark upon a major fund-raising campaign in the private sector. The Committee applauds and wholeheartedly supports this bold initiative. Further, it endorses the Trustees' selection of a professional fund-raising consultant as a wise and necessary step if the campaign is to succeed.
3. Restoration and revitalization of the main buildings and branches of the system are too big a job to be undertaken with normal budgetary appropriations.

Public Relations

1. Public relations has an important role to play in the future of the BPL — greater than the role it has traditionally played in the life of the institution.
2. BPL has taken major strides forward in the development of its public relations capability since the last Examining Committee report.
3. The decision to seek major financial support from the private sector and to undertake a development campaign has been a boon to public relations at the Library, although the permanent linkage of public relations to development should not be a foregone conclusion.
4. The Committee found it useful to look at BPL's public relations experience in terms of other cultural institutions, including the New York Public Library.

Staffing

1. There has been a marked improvement in staff morale since the report of the last Examining Committee.
2. The personnel office appears to be seriously understaffed at both the professional and administrative support levels.
3. The Library needs a more comprehensive approach to recruitment, training, and education.
4. Despite the salary increases recommended by the Hewitt Report, there remains a number of major problems adversely affecting the retainment of staff—specifically in terms of job description, job classification, and career development.
5. While the present Board of Trustees is dedicated and hardworking and has played a critical role in turning the tide of the BPL's ebbing fortunes, there is some indication that the Board's membership is too small to meet its expanding responsibilities.

Technology and Networking

1. Probably the greatest change occurring in libraries today is in the area of technology and networking. BPL has been hampered in its ability to keep abreast of this change because of inadequate funding.
2. BPL has shown that it is struggling to come to terms with change and with its role in a library world dominated by new technology. We assume with confidence that the Library will catch up.
3. A major part of BPL's problem lies in replacing an already existing system of partially automated, partially antiquated components.

Recommendations

The 1986–1987 Examining Committee makes the following specific recommendations based on the work and findings of its seven subcommittees:

Central Library

1. That management take action to ensure that all affected staff are kept fully and currently informed throughout the McKim restoration of the impact of the project on services.
2. That the upgrading of automated systems in the central library—particularly those relating to circulation and security—be given a high priority.
3. That cataloging backlogs and the prioritizing of cataloging and acquisition work receive immediate attention.
4. That a more formal approach to staff training and development be adopted.
5. That the use of a viable remote storage facility be secured before the McKim restoration begins. This facility could house unused and uncataloged collections and provide temporary storage for materials displaced during the restoration.
6. That the new outreach program to handicapped citizens, which we view as an important initiative, be actively encouraged, monitored, and supported.

Branches

1. That systems be developed to ensure that repairs to branch facilities are performed correctly and efficiently.
2. That the central administration find ways to support the branches more effectively.

Friends

1. That the Trustees, the administration, and the City-Wide Friends together draw up a statement of guidelines to clarify the rights, responsibilities, and boundaries of friends groups.
2. That the Trustees seek the formulation of a policy governing the ways and means volunteers may serve the Boston Public Library system.
3. That the Trustees, recognizing the role of friends groups in the realms of public relations and fund-raising, include friends group representation on the Capital Fund-raising Committee.

Fund-Raising

1. That earlier recommendations be reaffirmed that 3.5 per cent or more of the city's total departmental

expenditures be allocated for the Library.

2. That private funds should not be construed to replace public funding. They are intended to supplement public support of BPL.
3. That the Trustees decide whether the current fund-raising is to be a one-time project, or additional private funding is to be sought on a continuous basis to expand services, programs, holdings, and facilities. If the activity is to be ongoing, careful attention must be paid to the general recommendations contained in the December 1986 feasibility study of the fund-raising consultant to the Trustees.
4. That Associates of the BPL, friends groups, and volunteers in general have an important role to play in the fund-raising process. The Committee recommends that they be encouraged to participate individually or as an entity, as appropriate.
5. That a core group be formed of business, cultural, and educational leaders of the city to work actively on behalf of the fund-raising campaign.
6. That a system of accountability be established to counter the historical perception of misuse of funds by city agencies. This system should be open to public examination and should detail the intent of donors and the ultimate use of donated funds.
7. That a graphic display of the progress of the development campaign be mounted in the main lobby.

Public Relations

1. That the Trustees develop by the end of the current campaign a long-range plan for the public relations function of the BPL which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of alternate approaches, including the relationship of public relations to development.
2. That the Trustees secure the services of a public relations firm to support the Library's internal effort.
3. That the Trustees consider the creation of a friends media advisory group.
4. That plans be made for the establishment of a major sales operation in the restored McKim building.

Staffing

1. That three more professional staff positions be added to the personnel office. These should be filled by individuals with extensive personnel training.
2. That information relating to job openings and their descriptions should be posted publicly and

- promptly in the personnel office and in all branches.
3. That the Trustees develop and implement a comprehensive program for staff training and development which should include realistic levels of funding for coursework.
 4. That an effective affirmative action plan be developed and implemented to recruit minority group members to the professional staff.
 5. That the Trustees reconsider the Library's present posture of opposition to job sharing, flextime, and part-time work. This opposition is widely seen as an impediment to recruiting.
 6. That the Trustees raise the pay scale for aides and shelvers. The low wages paid aides and shelvers make it difficult to fill these jobs. Shelving of materials has become a major problem.
 7. That the Trustees study the possibility of an expansion in the size of its membership to permit it to include a larger number of community leaders and reflect a broader range of interests.

8. That work continue toward a comprehensive review of all positions in the system. The Committee applauds the Trustees' decision to retain a consultant to conduct such a review.
9. That an intern program be established to increase the number of students in library science and related disciplines who work at the Library as part of their professional training.

Technology

1. That a mechanism be devised to involve all interested parties in current technological developments affecting BPL.
2. That an office of automation be established within the Library and that it be responsible for interaction with cluster groups and other institutions as well as developments within BPL itself.
3. That the next Examining Committee take a particularly close look at the progress made by the Library in this area since this report.

Reports of the Subcommittees

Central Library

General Library:

Joseph F. Carey
Brunetta R. Wolfman

Research Library:

Aurora Salvucci
Ralph Crandall
Joseph F. Carey

McKim Building:

William Buckingham
Joseph H. Deary II
Joseph F. Carey

General Library

The General Library delivers a broad range of services to a multitude of constituents, ranging from the recent immigrant seeking to develop new literary skills to the university professor seeking a rare volume in conjunction with his research. Seven hundred thousand volumes on the shelves and an average daily circulation of 2,200 volumes indicate a large and diverse body of users placing demands upon the holdings every day, a constant challenge for a busy library.

In its examination of the General Library, the Committee was struck by the prevailing optimism among staff members. What follows should be read with this observation in mind. Using the 1983–1984 Examining Committee report as a base, conditions overall have improved in such problem areas as missing titles, reserves, and insufficient shelf space, although the reserves problem persists to some degree. While staff felt theft was still a problem, not all agreed that the introduction of an automated circulation system and the simultaneous establishment of a viable security system were the panacea in this area. However, the Examining Committee urges that the two systems become operable with all due speed in the hope that the problems noted above will be greatly reduced in the near future.

Outreach programs in adult, young adult, and children's services should be encouraged and expanded, particularly in the areas of literacy and English as a second language. The ongoing "Never

Too Late" and the Rabb Lecture series are outstanding examples of the BPL ventures into the outreach area. Their continued success over a period of time should encourage those who set policy to be constantly pursuing viable methods of expansion in this field.

The Library deserves high praise for reaching out to handicapped citizens. The establishment of the Access Center for the disabled which will provide library services for the deaf and hearing impaired, blind and visually impaired patrons, and the physically disabled is a most praiseworthy endeavor. The program, now in its formative stages, should be encouraged, monitored, and supported fiscally with federal, state, and local monies.

Another program deserving the highest praise concerns exhibits in the foyer of the Johnson building. Responsible staff should be complimented on the uncommonly high quality of these exhibits.

Finally, the Committee notes that the Library is going through a period of vast technological change and recommends that all staff members be made aware of the impact of technology upon library operations through the various channels of communication. In addition, the Library should embark upon a more formal program of staff development and training in general, as well as in the specific area of new technology.

Research Library

In contrast to the General Library whose physical plant (Johnson building) will be relatively untouched by the McKim building restoration, the Research Library will be profoundly affected by the physical changes inherent in the McKim undertaking. Many of the Committee's observations undoubtedly have been noted by library staff and incorporated in the restoration plan in such a way as to ameliorate many of the persistent and vexing difficulties which staff have faced over the years. Moreover, even though some of the observations are quite consistent with observations made in the most recent Examining Committee report, it was deemed prudent to let the present report stand in the hope that the repetition of the observations might act as a further catalyst for the promotion of physical, programmatic, and administrative changes needed.

Inadequate operational space remains a problem. There is a lack of shelf space in the stacks, a lack of work space in many departments, and insufficient space for projects and exhibits. In some instances

where new equipment would enhance departmental functioning, space problems act as a constraint and the equipment is not purchased. Part of the problem is the clash between aesthetics and function. It is hoped that the McKim restoration will result in a more harmonious solution to this problem. One wants the grandeur of the McKim building preserved, even enhanced. One also wants space for a functioning twenty-first-century library.

Perhaps the major obstacle to the correction of Research Library operational deficiencies cited in this or prior reports lies in a chronic inability to hire, train, and retain competent staff. Some departments cited a need for personnel to aid in book delivery and stack work. Other departments felt the salary structure was such that they could not retain skilled personnel after hiring and training them.

Perhaps the major asset is the feeling of good will that pervades the atmosphere. It is true that quarters remain cramped, amenities lacking, and some departmental problems continue to defy solution. Yet the staff in general looks forward to the McKim restoration, increased city and state financial support, and greater budgetary stability.

With this in mind, the following is a list of concerns expressed by staff to the Committee: cataloging (on which more will be said), equipment and materials, and autonomy. The term autonomy probably best sums up many of the concerns held by staff operating certain departments on a day-to-day basis. The formulation of requests for needed equipment and material often seems a pointless exercise. Many requests go completely unheeded. Staff are not regularly informed as to the disposition of their requests; as it were, they simply disappear into the bureaucracy. This fact leads staff to raise the issue of autonomy in this and other matters. This is and has been a problem in any large public entity. The Committee feels obligated to reiterate staff concern in this report.

The following specific suggestions by Research Department staff are worthy of note: a color photocopying machine for the Fine Arts Department, installation of a photographic service within the Boston Public Library, adoption of a procedure by the Microtext Department which would wash and preserve film rather than ordering new replacement film, and an updated basic handbook of Boston Public Library services. Each department should also have an up-to-date handbook.

Cataloging, as the term is used here, refers to the necessary processing of the massive amounts of materials which have been acquired in the past and continue to be acquired on a daily basis. It is discerned

by the Committee to be both a major and a complex problem — and is recognized as such by top management. The Committee recommends the following: first, that responsible administrators look at the current processes of acquisition and cataloging extant in all departments before adding staff to solve the problem. Second, that priorities be established — the technical services department cannot process all the materials ordered by the public service departments. Third, that more adequate physical space be made available immediately, no matter what processing policy is applied to correct the situation.

It is interesting to note that several responsible administrators have addressed the physical space problem and that each did so from a different perspective. The Committee has chosen to make its recommendation regarding space needs of the Central Library in the final paragraph of its statement on the McKim building.

McKim Building

The desire to restore the McKim building's splendid interiors to their original beauty is not new. It was indeed a major motivation for the construction of the Johnson building: moving the General Library as well as extensive stock space and specialized work areas to the newer building made it possible for many rooms in the McKim building to return to public uses appropriate to their original design. This possibility is now being realized.

Planning for the proposed restoration is well underway. The Library has retained the architectural firm of Shepley Bulfinch Richardson & Abbott, along with a team of consultants in such specialties as structural, mechanical, and electrical engineering; building and art restoration; lighting, acoustics, fire protection, elevators, and food service. Their objectives are still those set forth in the Stull Associates Report in 1981:

1. Conserve the building itself and the integral works of art.
2. Reorganize the uses of various rooms to reopen prominent rooms to the public, improve the delivery system, and accommodate changes in departments.
3. Replace decayed heating, electrical, and plumbing systems to prevent damage to the building and the art and to provide climate control.

Working with the Library's building committee, the architects have settled on the reallocation of functions in the McKim building. Only a few highlights of their proposal can be reported here. From the entrance hall a new public stair will lead to the basement, where maps, government documents, and new lavatories will be located. It is hoped that these rooms will be somewhat drier than they presently are. Flanking the entrance hall will be exhibition and lecture rooms. Along Boylston Street at this level will be a tearoom and a newspaper room. At the Bates Hall level the catalogue, delivery, and periodical rooms will extend along Boylston Street. At both of these levels ample new halls with stairs and wheelchair lifts will serve as clearer, more convenient links to the Johnson building.

The timetable for the projects calls for the completion of preliminary plans and estimates in the spring of 1987. At this point the Library will need to make some choices, reconciling the extent of the work to be done with the available funds. The next step is the preparation of detailed documents for a public bidding process. The earliest probable date for the beginning of construction is late in the summer of 1988.

Work on the building itself will begin with those unglamorous essentials of plumbing, wiring, and climate control and proceed to architectural restoration and renovation. Finally, after the dirt and disruption are past, will come the cleaning and restoration of the mural and ceiling paintings. It is our hope that this great task will be successfully completed, and that the manifold glories of this palace for the people will be preserved and revealed for many years to come.

During this period of restoration the Research Library will remain open. Obviously, there will be disruptions, temporary staff and function relocations and the ever-present annoyances related to the construction process such as sound, dust, and displacement. Planning involving the entire staff is a must. The need to know is of prime importance and must be handled forthrightly and skillfully. One or more staff with a good sense of logistics will be a necessity in this venture.

Finally, for the foreseeable future the Boston Public Library must have a viable remote storage entity. This will do much to relieve the burden of inadequate shelving in the Johnson and McKim buildings. Certainly, the McKim restoration will act as a catalyst in this acquisition, but logic dictates that the acquisition should occur now, prior to the start of displacement and construction.

Branches

Kathryn Downing
William F. Hennessey, Chair
Joseph J. King
Barbara Oakes
Donald Oakes

The subcommittee on branches prepared and distributed a questionnaire to gather information about branch operations, and from the responses we were able to identify some strengths and problems. During the course of our visits, we found the staff a highly motivated, dedicated group. Morale in most branches is good, especially since the new salary structure recommended in the Hewitt Compensation Study has been implemented. Staff members were singularly cooperative in assisting us during our tours of their facilities, and offered constructive suggestions or reinforced our belief in needs which earlier reports had identified. Indeed, as the visits extended, we met several newly-appointed or promoted staff members, particularly new branch children's librarians.

Several branches have community activities which are ongoing daily, especially those which involve senior citizens' groups and whole classes or grades of pupils from nearby schools. Other branches concentrate on evening meetings and lectures, after-school story hours, and the like, to bring the Library into the life of their neighborhoods. Illiteracy as a problem is being addressed in some branches through various programs. One of the more successful is called "Reading Is Fundamental" (RIF). It strives to arouse an excitement for reading by offering free books to different age groups to take home and enjoy. Teachers in the schools near the three participating branches of Charlestown, Dudley, and Fields Corner bring their pupils to the branch where the children pick their own books. This project, partially funded by Fidelity Investments, shows great potential as the city comes to terms with its obligation to tackle Boston's adult illiteracy problem.

In at least two neighborhood branches there is reason for rejoicing over improvements in the physical status of buildings. First, during the past year BPL formally received from the Druker family the building which now houses the Orient Heights Branch Library. This branch, though small and understaffed, has an outstanding record of book use and programming, as well as initiative and creativity in obtaining needed equipment. Secondly, the Friends of the West Roxbury Branch Library, after working extensively and cooperatively with central and branch

library personnel, the Public Facilities Department (the city agency in control of all municipal buildings), and its designated architect, saw their collective energies come to fruition in February 1987 when the Trustees voted to accept plans for a new branch wing, an addition larger than the original building. It will incorporate many of their ideas as well as newer library concepts already proved useful in areas beyond Boston. West Roxbury will now be promoted to the status of district library.

If this year's report on branches could stop here on such an optimistic note and with such positive observations, we would indeed be pleased. Unfortunately, that is not the case. A review of many of the recommendations and even of the most recent requests spelled out in the 1983-1984 Examining Committee report and of the 1986 progress report on recommendations indicates that a great deal remains unaccomplished.

The most widespread deficiency is in the area of repairs or, more correctly, disrepairs, both structural and cosmetic. Damage from multiple roof leaks remains appallingly unimproved. Heating and air conditioning conduits have been misplaced or are not functioning properly. Window shades are ripped, damaged, missing, or lacking cords. Empty mullion framings gape in windows where lights of glass were shattered long ago. Cement pillars, porticoes, and masonry on stairs have crumbled. Flooring and parquetry are chipped or lacking pieces. Drapes, carpeting, and rugs to enhance acoustics or cover worn flooring are uninstalled. Rooms for community activities lack furniture and other equipment. Graffiti glower outside on building bricks or stone. The custodians we met work conscientiously on maintenance, but responsive, speedy support from central appears not to exist. Perhaps changing custodial hours to coincide with library hours, plus insuring adequate maintenance staffing with shared staggered-duty covering crews authorized to make minor building repairs, would help.

Other areas of serious concern exist in the branches in addition to their structural integrity and appearance. Ethnic materials in the appropriate branches have not kept pace with the needs of the library's clientele. This is true in the neighborhoods of both newer and older arrivals: Cambodians, Chinese, Italians, Laotians, Spanish, Vietnamese. Foreign-language books and other materials should be chosen by experts for their readability and appeal, not merely because they happen to be in the called-for language.

Construction of ramps for handicapped accessibility is in progress but not complete. Better security,

staff protection, burglar alarm systems, and smoke detectors still need to be provided. There ought to be a uniform policy for the use and access to public rest rooms as well as to community bulletin boards. We sensed that in a few branches, volunteer assistance or friends groups would not be greatly missed if they were withdrawn.

Almost all of the preceding litany has been recited in previous reports. Concerns, such as staffing and job descriptions, speedy dissemination of current books, magnetic tape systems to decrease theft, public relations, and fund-raising, mentioned in earlier Examining Committee literature, do impact on the branches, but also affect the central library and are being addressed by other subcommittees.

Despite these lamentations, we did get the firm feeling from our visits and interviews that the branches are alive and well and are managed by staff who are encouraged by and enthusiastic about the new spirit of leadership and competence demonstrated in many of the recent appointments and promotions. It was noted that the Board of Trustees has in fact begun holding meetings in the branch libraries. The Director has come to the branches for first-hand accounts and to give information directly to staff. Over and over again we detected an atmosphere of hope and new vitality, of optimism about immediate and long-range renovation plans, of confidence that positive change is within reach.

For many years the branch libraries have circulated roughly twice as many books as the McKim-Johnson central library. This is an important statistic. The subcommittee feels that the book circulation and general use of the branches would increase dramatically if repairs were done to make them once more attractive. We recognize the importance of all the functions of the central library and acknowledge its essential role as the library of last recourse, as well as its leadership of the Boston Library Consortium and the Eastern Massachusetts Regional Library System. We, too, are proud of the priceless and scholarly collections in the Rare Book, Music, and Fine Arts Departments; but in this populistic era, as the twentieth century winds down, we feel strongly that the branches should receive full support also from central administration for their community and local undertakings. We note that most of the items branches lack have already been budgeted. What must be done are follow-through reports on repairs and related branch requests until they are completed, verified, and paid for.

Branch libraries had their national beginning in Boston in 1871. As a vigilant parent, the main library

supervised their development — not as tolerated stepchildren but as beloved and encouraged siblings. The words of the first Trustees in their 1852 report are just as poignant for us today:

And yet there can be no doubt that such reading ought to be furnished to all, as a matter of public policy and duty; on the same principle that we furnish free education, and in fact as a part, and a most important part, of the education of all. For it has been rightly judged that . . . the means of general information should be so diffused that the largest possible number of persons should be induced to read and understand questions . . . which are constantly presenting themselves . . . That this *can* be done — that is, that such *libraries* can be collected, and that they will be used to a much wider extent than libraries have ever been used before . . . there can be no doubt; and if it can be done *anywhere*, it can be done *here* in Boston; for no population . . . was ever before so well fitted to become a reading, self-cultivating population, as the population of our city is at this moment.

Friends

Diana Lam
Robert Smith
Jane Stahl, Chair

The 1986-1987 Examining Committee's subcommittee on friends groups was formulated as a one-time survey of the background and present status of friends groups throughout the city, in order to bring that subject to the thoughtful attention of the Trustees, the administration of the Boston Public Library, and the interested public. The ensuing details, statistics, and impressions have yielded several issues of concern for the groups and for the Library in general and will provide a point of comparison for a subsequent subcommittee, perhaps in three to five years' time.

In preliminary meetings we created a two-part survey document designed to elicit not only the relevant facts but also the overall climate concerning friends groups in each library. The first part, to be completed by the librarian in charge, dealt with his/her knowledge of past and present friends groups and the nature of his/her experience there or elsewhere with such groups. The second and longer part, to be forwarded where applicable to whoever was the nominal or titular head of each group, bore upon

the organization, programs, and character of each group.

We divided the entire system of 25 branches, Kirstein, and the central library into units of nine. After a couple of false starts in the form of personal visits by one committee member, it became apparent that addressing and mailing the questionnaire to the "Librarian in Charge" was the desirable *modus operandi*, as it assured that the surveys would be directed to the appropriate persons first, to be filled out at their convenience, after an opportunity for some reflection.

Several weeks were allowed over the course of the summer for the completion and return of the questionnaires. By our first review meeting in September, the bulk of the data had been mailed in; and in the following month, nearly all the remaining surveys were returned. However, in the cases of the Brighton, Faneuil, and East Boston/Orient Heights libraries, there were no replies despite follow-up phone calls. Several branch librarians seemed to believe that the interviews carried out with them by an earlier Examining Committee were sufficiently exhaustive, if not exhausting. Most cooperated, nonetheless. Perhaps a system-wide communication from the Trustees to the professional staff, announcing the imminence of the Examining Committee and spelling out its responsibilities, might have given a more official cast to our questionnaire.

Friends groups in the Boston Public Library have developed in a way that differs from the national pattern. Generally speaking, a friends group is organized first around the central library, perhaps but not inevitably encouraging and stimulating the formation of satellite friends groups in branches. That has not been the case in Boston, where several friends groups antedate the founding of the central Associates of the BPL in 1972. This probably reflects the vigorously defended autonomy and ethnic identities of our well-defined neighborhoods, as well as the central library's historically passive interest in such movements.

A consequence of this atypical pattern is that there has been no organizational link among the groups and little exchange or sharing of information of mutual interest with the exception of the Save Our Libraries crisis response movement in 1981. Another drawback has been the absence of standardized administrative policy concerning the rights, obligations, and opportunities of friends groups. Without the resources of peer group back-up and administrative acknowledgement, each effort toward the organization of a group within a branch has suc-

ceeded, failed, stagnated, or flourished according to the persistence of the would-be members and the good will of the librarian. Efforts are currently underway to form a city-wide friends committee to support the BPL and serve as a resource to branch friends groups. Given strong representation from branch friends groups and individuals from around the city, this could be the round table for impressive gains in the numbers of friends and their effectiveness throughout Boston.

Of the 27 libraries reviewed (25 branches plus Kirstein and central), 13 have active friends groups ranging in size from 680 for the Associates to 15 at Egleston; and in age, from 1952 for Jamaica Plain to the brand new Roslindale Friends. Others are Charlestown, West Roxbury, Dudley, Hyde Park, Lower Mills, Connolly, South Boston/Washington Village, Brighton, East Boston. Most of these have achieved an impressive degree of formal organization including state incorporation, by-laws, federal non-profit status, state sales tax exemption, non-profit bulk mailing permit, local bank account, and a regular, effective schedule of meetings, programs, and fund-raising events. Their mission statements vary in language, but all reflect the desire to serve the needs of the library and to strengthen the links between the library and the community. Frequently this has meant trying to help solve some of the branch library's problems such as personnel shortages, curtailed hours, and maintenance and repair delays. Other groups have made substantial capital, in-kind and equipment contributions. The greatest successes seem to be in the area of providing additional programs in each branch. These include puppet shows, local history lectures, school visits, art exhibits, summer reading, folk singers—an amazing panoply of cultural events aimed toward bringing the community into the library and extending the library's reach into the community.

The problems of the groups vary according to the particular library. The smaller ones cope with a shortage of volunteer manpower and manhours as they struggle to maintain momentum. Larger groups are more likely to get entangled in procedural issues as they strive to keep an equilibrium between the needs of the community and the imperatives of the institution. The time and energy requirements of the volunteer leadership and the bureaucratic paperwork essential to each of these organizations are often onerous. Their fulfillment is wordless testimony to the omnipresence and constancy of Bostonians' sense of concern and custodianship for their city's cultural and educational institutions.

The branches where there are inactive or no friends groups disclose the other side of the story. Many of these had friends groups in the '50s and '60s when the neighborhood's population was different and probably more stable, as in Mattapan and West End. Again in the early '80s under the threat of Proposition 2½ and repeated budget cuts, friends groups sprang up to confront the crises. As conditions have improved, the motivation for these groups has diminished, as in the South End and at Adams Street. However, the strength mustered at that time of cut-backs most surely played a role in affecting public and political opinions, one of the most important goals of friends groups. In branches where there is the potential nucleus of a friends group, there is a different sort of problem: the perceived perplexities and responsibilities of formal legal organization intimidate those, often older people, who might otherwise be willing participants in an existing group. Also, it is not always clear, on either side, what the librarian's role is, *vis-a-vis* a friends group. Several librarians, seeming to presume that formation of a friends group would be their responsibility, have said that they don't have the time or the help to spare in that direction. In other instances, librarians have expended imaginative but apparently futile efforts in attempts to create interest in such a group. Both extremes express the misperception that the existence of a friends group is just one more library program depending initially if not permanently on the librarian. A librarian may be and often is the catalyst in putting together and encouraging the people who might have an interest in being friends, as at Dudley, Egleston, and South Boston/Washington Village. On the other hand, a quick look at the successful friends groups in the city indicates that a healthy group requires the dedication, loyalty, and endurance of a highly-motivated volunteer group—ideally, to be sure, with the enthusiasm and support of the librarian. The words of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners are perhaps misleadingly simple: "The friends supplement the functions of the director, the staff and the board thus providing the final element in a good public library team." It seems to us a good public library team balances the supplementary contributions of friends with the responsibilities of the professional staff and of the trustees in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation.

The topic of friends groups most recently turned up in the Examining Committee report for 1981, wherein it was recommended "That the Trustees appoint a committee to explore and define organi-

zation, goals and programs for the Friends” and “That the Trustees appoint a full-time professional as staff for the Friends.” Though neither of these recommendations appears to have been acted upon, many other significant and exciting changes have taken place in the BPL in the intervening five years, with salutary effects on the morale and welfare of friends groups. The appointment in August 1986 of Lesley Loke, a person with considerable experience with friends groups in other cities, as Assistant Director for Community Library Services is one such change. The prospect of a gathering together of representatives of friends groups to share problems and solutions is another. Thus, this subcommittee report comes to a happy ending.

Fund Raising

Paul Faircloth
Milton Glass
Renee Glass
Paul Lynch
Bettina Norton, Chair

The fund-raising subcommittee looked first at recommendations of the past Examining Committee and any resulting actions taken by the Trustees, the Library’s administration, or the state or local governments. It next addressed the activities of the Library at the present time. Its recommendations are based on these two reviews.

We find the Library to be in much better financial condition than it was three years ago. The recommendation of the 1984 Examining Committee was that the Library’s share of the city’s resources be equal to or more than 3.5% of whatever are the total city departmental expenditures for a given year. Although this goal has not yet been realized, the percent has risen from a low of 2.4% in FY 1982 to 2.8% in FY 1984 and 2.9% in FY 1985. The figure for FY 1986 is expected to approximate that of FY 1985, although the official confirmation was not available at the time of this writing. Further, it is expected that the percentage increase for FY 1987 will be substantial. The subcommittee, therefore, strongly reiterates the earlier recommendation of a goal for the Boston Public Library system of 3.5% of the city’s total departmental *expenditures* for any given year.

On the state level, the 1984 report strongly advocated aiming for the per capita state allocation goal of 75 cents under the category, “Library of Last Recourse.” The allocation keeps rising impressively,

from \$2,073,704 in FY 1984 to \$3,517,681 in FY 1987. The big jump came in 1983, thanks to the efforts of the Massachusetts Legislature and such independent groups as the Library Lobby, which supported the Library administration’s Walsh bill.

The following table gives funding sources for the Library for the past year and current fiscal year:

	FY 1986	FY 1987
City	\$12,512,535*	\$16,344,984 (15,805,238—city alloc. 539,746—state p.c.)
State		
ER**	3,218,853	3,333,313
C4***	2,371,070	3,517,681
LSCA****	18,564	2,158,998
Trust Funds	219,104	242,000
Federal	-0-	174,543
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	\$18,540,126	\$25,771,519

* includes per capita aid to each library in the state, from the state, which is distributed through the cities and towns

** Eastern Region

*** Library of Last Recourse

**** Library Services and Construction Act

The subcommittee lauds both the city and state governments for their greatly increased support of the Library during the past two years. We feel it is imperative that the city and state support continue to increase if the present revitalization is to be sustained and private sector fund-raising is to have the desired impact. The Library continues to be aggressive in applying for federal funds. None was awarded to the Library for FY 1986, but it has since received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for \$174,543 to pursue a microform project to copy Massachusetts newspapers.

In 1984, the Trustees were delegated as contractors for a \$12,000,000 bond issue administered through the Public Facilities Department of the City of Boston. In 1985 the authorization was raised to \$13,400,000. The bond issue was sought in order to undertake major repairs to and renovations of the central library’s McKim building, found to be in deplorable condition. The present Trustees and Director have built admirably on that impetus, and the Library is about to begin a major fund-raising campaign in the private sector.

Historically the administration of the Library has

shied away from private sector fund-raising for fear that success there would result in curtailment of public funds. While this fear may have had some basis, this is not the case at the present time. Both the state and city governments, as shown in the above chart, are very supportive of the public library system. Realistically, however, this might not always be the case, and an adverse change in the economy might force a decrease in budgetary allocations to the Library. Also future state and local administrations may not be as receptive to the Library's needs as the current ones.

Because budgetary allocations have been insufficient in the past years, especially in the years from 1977 through 1983, normal maintenance of both the Library's main building and branches and its collections have suffered. However, restoring and revitalizing these resources of the Library are too big a job to be undertaken with the ordinary appropriations of the Library, even with the addition of the bond issue from the city. Therefore, the committee joins the many persons who already have expressed belief in the wisdom of a major fund-raising campaign to address the shortfalls.

We looked at the Library's existing plans for fund raising. The hiring of a very competent fund-raising consultant, Robert J. Corcoran Company, which has a proven track record in the nonprofit world and is also known for its integrity, is a very good—even necessary—step. The subcommittee, along with the administration and Trustees, realizes that fund-raising by a public institution is more difficult than by a private nonprofit organization.

The subcommittee looked at current volunteer groups within the Library, with a view to helping with the campaign. The Associates of the BPL was organized in 1972 "to share and stimulate the work of the Library at many levels of education and research." This initial reference in the Annual Report of the Library for that year goes on to say that, with support from the Associates, "the Library will be able to purchase special materials that would be beyond our normal budget allocations, ensure the repair and restoration of important works already in the collections, and by stimulating exhibitions, publications and lectures, make the Library's collections and services more visible and useful." This original description was carefully drafted to leave out any implication of major fund-raising for regular operations of the Library on the part of this group.

A survey of current members of the Associates suggests that they still do not see fund-raising as their role. They will continue to raise money in a

low-key way for the system as a whole, run book sales, occasionally make purchases for a branch library, and sponsor special lectures and other programs. Of course, individual members of the Associates are free to help with the current fund-raising campaign. Because of their long-standing experience with the Library and prominence in the community, we feel that participation in this campaign by members of the Associates would benefit the Library.

The friends of the Library consist of the central Associates group and separate ones for each of several branches. Friends groups focus on helping their own branch libraries first. That is the purpose behind their organization. Efforts on behalf of the branch libraries are already time-consuming, and Boston is a city in which people tend to direct their energies towards their own neighborhoods. Nonetheless, we feel that the friends role in the campaign is important for several reasons.

First, the friends groups comprise hundreds of active library users and supporters city-wide. They are already organized separately and to some degree collectively and could help to generate tremendous public awareness of and support for the campaign. Second, although friends groups have acknowledged primary concern with their respective branches, some have already expressed willingness to aid the larger campaign.

Some ideas that have already come out of friends groups are: volunteering to help staff the central library gift shop, promoting "literary package tours," selling book bags, and serving as volunteer guides.

Including the many friends of the Library in the various campaign activities in meaningful ways adds cohesion to the campaign effort and produces benefits for all. We strongly encourage the wishes of the administration to involve the friends and heartily agree with the Director's statement, "We recognize their [friends] own objectives, but a role in the campaign would be welcome."

The Library intends to solicit the business sector. Towards this end, the fund-raising subcommittee offers the following comments. They are limited to the subject of stockholder-owned business participation in funding the Library. The Trustees must decide whether the current fund-raising effort with regard to the McKim building restoration is to be a single capital investment funding project, or whether private funding is desired beyond McKim in order to fund expansion of facilities, broaden programs, accumulate additional materials, and revitalize the branch system.

If it is to be a one-time effort, then the Corcoran

survey results, to the extent that the subcommittee has been given a synopsis thereof, appear to provide an accurate blueprint to success for the one-time \$16 million goal. Specifically, the notions of a public relations "blitz" effort, a powerful broad-based campaign leadership, and a well-defined business target, all under the umbrella of the generous Boston Globe Foundation gift, should bring the desired result.

If, however, continued private support from business is desired, the more sweeping recommendations of the Corcoran survey have to be addressed. The perception that the Library is simply a city and state agency must be dispelled through such actions as expanding the Board of Trustees to include business leaders, reinvigorating friends and Associates groups, and other actions and programs directed to the business community, such as accountability reports on income and expenses at frequent intervals. These are necessary if we are to convince business funders that the Library is a major cultural institution in our city and state, worthy of support and encouragement as a vital link in the chain of cultural organizations needed to attract and hold good employees and to enrich the lives of their families. Business recognizes that it prospers most in a favorable community environment. Similarly, corporations would welcome the grass-roots participation in the funding process of individual giving by the broader community, which is a source that, up to now, has never been tapped.

To implement these changes, it is natural and tempting to look at other libraries in the United States to see how they attract private funding. Every great library has its own special genesis, whether it be a wealthy benefactor, a special relationship with a funder, its location, or a myriad of other reasons. We should not limit the investigation to only other libraries. Rather, we have the unique opportunity to benefit in developing our funding plans from two world-class institutions that are in Boston, namely, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. The remarkable job that these organizations have done in enlisting broad business and community support allows us the luxury of not re-inventing the wheel. These institutions in their volunteer leadership and fund-raising plans incorporate many of the attributes mentioned by respondents to the Corcoran feasibility study. Both the BSO and the MFA enjoy the perception of being worthy and entitled to privately supported, broadly based funding. While both institutions charge admission, this part of their funding can be considered

as similar to the support for the Library that comes from the city and state. The remaining funding must come from substantial contributions from the private sector.

It is, perhaps, a poor commentary that in marketing either merchandise or ideas, the perception of reality is sometimes more powerful than the reality itself. It is, however, an accurate assessment of the human condition, one we are not likely to see change. In accepting the findings of all reputable sources on perceptions of the Library, the Trustees and the administration can endeavor to correct the misconceptions and address the valid issues.

The fund-raising subcommittee feels quite strongly that two additional points should be made to further the fund-raising efforts at this time. The first is that a core group be formed of business, cultural, and educational leaders of the city, to work actively on behalf of the campaign. The second is that a clear system of accountability be established to counter the historical perception of misuse of funds by city agencies.

The Boston Public Library has a good track record for appropriately expending funds for just such purposes as are being contemplated at this time: renovation of the system's buildings and restoration of its valuable collections. The Johnson wing of the Library was completed in 1972 *under* budget and *ahead* of schedule. At the time, conservation facilities were installed with the help of federal grants to work on library materials. There are many other examples. *The point must be emphasized that historically BPL's problem has not been misuse of funds, but availability of funds.*

The subcommittee is confident that the system of accountability which is being established at this time will be well advertised in all solicitation materials, and that all contributions will be acknowledged in writing as soon as possible, which should go a long way to reassure prospective donors. We are also confident that the Library administration in consultation with the fund-raising counsel is considering public reports at frequent intervals during the campaign. We recommend a graphic display of the progress of the campaign in the main lobby. This will serve both as a useful and as a motivational force.

In conclusion, there are many aspects of the Library that admittedly lend themselves readily to effective fund raising. These include special collections such as in the Fine Arts, Music, or Print Departments; imaginative programs run by the Library both in the central library and in the branches; and continued

modernization of library services throughout the system. Bringing these substantial assets to the attention of potential donors would demonstrate the Library's value to the city and the region, and the manifest wisdom in supporting it.

Public Relations

Jovita Fontanez
William Johnson, Chair
Tunney Lee
Deborah Thomas

Public relations has an important role to play in the promising future of the Boston Public Library. Just what is meant by the term "public relations"? Public relations, one often hears, is both everything that's done and everybody's business. Employees invariably point out that it starts with staff morale. Practitioners view PR as the application of their considerable expertise in the marketplace. Whether we define it broadly or narrowly, conceptually or technically, programmatically or functionally, we must sooner or later confront the fact that PR is at some point inseparable from the image and reputation of the institution as a whole. Effective public relations appears to hold a very high place in the priorities of the current BPL administration. The Director has said that his essential goals are to create a better understanding within the community as to what the Library is all about, to encourage its use, and to build a broader basis of support for the Library in the community. Clearly, effective public relations is critical to the achievement of all of these goals.

The committee finds that the Library is now perceived by the community to be one of its most important institutions and a major public resource, based on both its long-term reputation and traditional role. It is also seen as an older institution in need of revitalization. It is seen to be predominantly of and for the city of Boston, with relatively little appreciation of its value to the rest of Massachusetts, the region, and the nation. BPL is commonly perceived to be somewhat political, based on its past record as a Boston municipal agency. The Board of Trustees is often thought to be too small and narrow in its membership, BPL management not visible enough, and staff dedicated but overworked and harried. The committee finds that, aside from scholars and students, most of the public is largely unaware of the services and materials available from the Library. Clearly, the Library will need a strong public relations program if it is to play a vital and creative role in the

life of the community. A modern public library in the booming metropolitan center that Boston has become must be equipped with a PR capability which can make it better understood, better used, and better supported. This is necessary if BPL is to be competitive in an intense cultural and educational market dominated by private institutions. No longer can the Library be limited to the traditional role as just another part of the basic grey infrastructure of city services. As its new development campaign seeks major financial support from the private sector, the case for BPL needs to be presented as perhaps the most significant campaign effort in Boston in many years.

Public relations at the BPL has made major strides. One measure of this is the appearance of the monthly *Calendar*, listing events in the branches as well as the central library. This was recommended by the last Examining Committee. That Committee also recommended that demonstrated public relations ability be an important consideration in selecting the new Director. That recommendation was translated into the search and selection process. The Director clearly feels that communicating the Boston Public Library system — its holdings, programs, and services — to the community and the world is one of his most important responsibilities. During 1987 this commitment was seen in the increase in staff with public relations responsibilities. Prior to this time the Assistant Director for Communications and Community Affairs was the sole professional person with responsibility for publications programs and all public relations. Now there has been added an active, visible Development Office with a staff of five: a development officer with an assistant, a media specialist, a grants writer, and a writer/editor. This professional development staff of four plus one support person takes the position that there is just too much to do to allow the lack of a secretary to be a problem. Obviously PR here is closely tied to the needs of development, for the present.

The decisions to seek major support from the private sector and to undertake a development campaign are a boon to public relations at the BPL. Successful fund-raising will depend on an effective public relations arm. The campaign will itself create publicity in the form of events like that recently marking the Globe Foundation's major gift. It will make others possible by funding programs and enhancement of the physical facility through the rehabilitation of the McKim building.

With the development campaign, public relations can be identified as something which is not simply

good in itself that the system ought to have to help it communicate itself to its constituencies. Public relations is now an essential component of a money-making activity. In this capacity, it will undoubtedly be easier to justify in some quarters and—it is hoped—less vulnerable to cuts. In the phrase of the Director, the development campaign is a beachhead for public relations at BPL.

There is also a potential disadvantage to the present location of the public relations function in the Development Office. It is possible for public relations to become to an exaggerated degree a permanent adjunct to the development effort. The current development campaign, as proposed to the Trustees, will extend through the end of 1991. Beyond that, the Development Office as a unit and fund-raising as an activity will almost certainly continue indefinitely. During the particularly intense period of the initial campaign, it is to be expected that the bulk of the public relations work of the Library will be directed to meet the needs of the campaign itself. In the judgment of one top manager, development may of necessity be the tail that wags the dog for a few years.

What of the long-term view of the public relations function at BPL? The development officer has expressed the view that development and public relations may be permanently linked. This is the case at the New York Public Library. A quick look at some local cultural institutions shows that at the Museum of Science public relations is the responsibility of the development office. At the New England Aquarium, both are subsumed under "marketing." At the Museum of Fine Arts, the public relations office of three is independent of the development office, which focuses on corporate involvement with the museum, and independent of the advertising activity for major exhibits and programs, which is handled by an outside advertising agency. The Committee recommends that there should be a long-range plan for BPL public relations which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of alternative approaches. It suggests that responsibility for this evaluation be included among the duties of the new Assistant Director of Planning.

The committee found an examination of the New York Public Library as a model to be useful. While NYPL is larger and more "private" than BPL, the two systems have much in common. The current Director's approach strongly reflects his New York experience. New York is frequently cited as the preeminent example of the modern progressive municipal library system.

In 1982 NYPL's Development Office was redefined as the Office for Public Affairs and Development. It carries out all activities in development, public relations, and public education. The head of the office is a vice president of the Library, the equivalent of our Associate Director. His immediate subordinates are a coordinator for individual giving, one for corporate and foundation giving, a public relations manager, and an associate public relations manager for the branches.

The public relations division has expanded its work in the areas of publicity, publications, and public information for both the central library and the branches. These efforts were seen as necessary to increase the public's awareness during a critical period of revitalization of the Library's important educational and cultural role in the life of the community.

A public education program was established at NYPL in the winter of 1983 to interpret the central research library's collections and concerns through discussions, lectures, readings, and films. Fifty different activities were scheduled for 1984. This program is thought to have strengthened the role of the central library in the community where, unlike the branches, it has assumed a very low level of visibility in recent years.

The New York model indicates current and likely trends in management thinking, here and elsewhere. How can it be applied in the Boston context? To be specific, what does it suggest regarding the size and configuration of an ultimate BPL development/public relations operation? An important consideration in raising these questions is the fact that BPL is now in or emerging from the critical transition phase which extends back to the years of decline and forward into the full renaissance of which we believe the system is capable. Indications are that management has not yet settled on a scheme for the future of public relations. Both the Director and the development officer have indicated that they have not come to a position on this.

Though difficult to assess, direct comparisons with New York can be useful. Their public affairs and development office has a staff of 43. Their development office must raise much more money—a record \$13,000,000 in 1983. Based on overall staff size, NYPL at 2,523 is about five times larger than BPL. Based on expenditures for 1983, the ratio is about the same (69.7 million to 14 million). Using this formula, BPL might end up with a development office staff, including public relations, of about 15 people. Closer examination of the NYPL model and those of other major cultural institutions should

be part of the development of the Library's long-range plan.

Where will the Library's publications program be located? Will it fall within the responsibilities of development, PR, or will it be independent within the Director's office? Will there be a sales operation in the restored McKim building? If so, how will it be related to the public relations activity of the Library? What outside public relations support should the Library utilize? These are some additional questions which need to be addressed, although the committee feels it would be inappropriate at this time to attempt to prescribe answers to all of them. We do, however, urge the Trustees and the management of BPL to consider them. As we said before, management should engage in a long-range planning process and formulate a plan. Such a plan, whether in PR or any other functional or program area would give the public a clearer sense of where the system intends to go. It would, of course, be subject to adjustment and revision as necessary.

The committee recommends that the Trustees secure the services of a public relations firm on a *pro bono* basis, if possible, to support the Library's internal effort. There is evidence that this option has been and is now under consideration within management and the professional staff. The development office has spoken with some agencies. We feel that this innovation should be explored aggressively. Toward the end of the present development campaign in 1991, the Library should be prepared to enter into a working relationship with a firm. It should be a fairly long-term arrangement of at least two years duration. Further, it should be integrated with or closely coordinated with the publicly funded public relations activity of the Library, rather than isolated from it. Preparatory work for this initiative should begin as soon as possible.

Access to and effective use of the media are essential to good public relations. Traditionally, BPL had neither the resources nor the mandate to achieve either fully. The committee suggests the creation of a media advisory or friends group by the Trustees to help it explore this area. We have raised this possibility briefly with several management and professional staff. The response has been mixed but fairly positive. If such a group of local media people were determined to have value to the Library as advisors or as supporters, the proposal could be adopted experimentally. If on the other hand it were concluded that this would not be productive, that there are better ways to interface with media people, and that it is likely to become yet another unwieldy

body that needs to be managed, such an innovation should be avoided. Preliminary assessment is called for.

The committee recommends that there be a major sales operation in the restored McKim building. It should be designed to appeal to the general public as a "museum shop" as well as a book shop, with innovative merchandising and a diverse inventory. We feel that there is real potential in an operation of this kind to provide service and generate income. Several major educational/cultural institutions in Boston have prominent sales operations. The Kennedy Library's museum store, to cite one, is expected to gross about \$400,000 during the current year from a total museum visitation of under 300,000.

Traditionally at BPL sales desk profits have been held in trust to support the preparation of new publications. We think a highly successful operation would generate enough income to contribute to both publications and public relations programs. We suggest that 50% of the income from sales be set aside to support the public relations program of the Library in the form of public information publications or related services to the public. If the Trustees choose, the remaining 50% could, as in the past, support scholarly or substantive publication projects.

Staffing

Rodney Armstrong
Robert Mulligan
Kathleen Kelly Satut, Chair

The purpose of the Staffing subcommittee was to assess personnel functions of the Library and to address the specific issues of the recruitment of new employees and the retention of present employees.

We met with management and union representatives, members of the rank and file from various departments, and with the staff of the Personnel Office. There is an intense interest in every sector of the Library in improving working conditions for all employees.

There has been an obvious and marked improvement in morale since the report of the last Examining Committee. The long overdue salary increases implemented as a result of the Hewitt Report, commissioned by the Trustees to assess the status of personnel practices at the Library and the restoration of fiscal stability, have been critically important to rebuilding professional self-esteem and optimism. The Director has set a positive tone and is working hard to restore and expand personnel functions. The

union grievance level, once the highest in the city, has decreased significantly.

The Personnel Office now consists of a Director, Assistant Director, and three support staff and is overseen by the Associate Director of the BPL. The Personnel Office is understaffed at the professional level and operates virtually without clerical help. The administration is committed to increasing the size of the Personnel Office by adding professionals in the fields of labor relations, staff development, and recruitment. These individuals should have extensive training in the personnel field. There had been no formal recruitment during the years of financial crisis. When recruitment resumed, the three branch district supervisors and the Assistant Director of Personnel were sent on recruiting trips to different library schools and professional conventions last year. This resulted in some filled positions which helped resolve long-term problems of understaffing but also aggravated an already overextended branch system while supervisors were away recruiting. The hiring of at least one professional person to do full time recruiting should help reduce the number of vacant positions, ensure the employment of qualified people, and shorten the time it takes to hire them.

The lack of communication between the Personnel Office and jobseekers is a recognized problem. Information regarding the availability of jobs is inconsistent. A listing of all job openings and their descriptions should be publically posted in the Personnel Office and all branches.

There is a shortage of librarians in all areas, particularly in children's services. This is reflective of a national trend which is further exacerbated by Boston's residency requirement and high housing costs. Additionally, most graduating librarians are seeking careers in the more lucrative field of information service.

The Library has historically replenished many of its professional positions from within through the pre-professional program. Some of the librarians began as clerical workers while they received on-the-job-training. It has become increasingly difficult to attract employees to join this program. Library school courses in New England are currently offered only at Simmons College which is prohibitively expensive for most employees. City tuition reimbursement at \$500 per year does not cover the cost of a single course and frequently is not available. The Trustees should begin to explore, perhaps in conjunction with the Board of Library Commissioners, the establishment of subsidies for state residents wishing to attend library school, since there is no existing state program.

There is a congruent critical shortage of minority professionals in the field of library science and availability of funds for full scholarships and stipends for minority residents of the state. More should be done to ensure that the availability of these funds is publicized.

Another factor hindering the Library's recruitment of local staff is a posture against job sharing, flextime, and part-time work. Many competent staff are forced to leave the Library when they are unable to work full time. While recruiting is being done on a national level, there are many Boston residents who could be filling vacancies if they were offered some job flexibility. Given current projections for declining number of librarians entering general library work, creative approaches toward recruitment are essential.

Attracting people to fill library aide and shelver positions has also been difficult. Salaries are not competitive, especially in the case of shelvers who earn only \$3.75 per hour.

Retainment of Employees

Prior to the implementation of the salary increases recommended by the Hewitt Report, departure of library employees, specifically those leaving for other libraries or other jobs, exceeded the number being hired. This situation has improved since the salary adjustments were voted by the Board of Trustees on July 22, 1986. The increase, approximately 22% for all employees, has eliminated the primary cause for the departure of employees. However, diligent attention must continually be focused on the salary issue, to maintain the competitive salary levels presently in place.

There remain major problems adversely affecting retainment, and to a certain extent, the morale of the library staff, specifically, the related issues of job description, job classification, and career development. There is no definitive pattern of advancement. The nonexistence of career ladders and the belief that some promotions are, in part, due to favoritism or factors unrelated to competence and job performance, is of great concern to the staff. Although the latter may not be true, such misperceptions can be fostered by lack of definite criteria for promotion.

The present personnel manual, which defines jobs and establishes levels, dates from April 1960. Its most recent amendment was in 1964, although all changes in job descriptions after 1970 are contained in collective bargaining agreements. Many of the job descriptions are personalized and seldom reflect the duties of the person holding that job.

The lack of a career ladder, in particular the lack of promotional opportunities, has caused some professional employees to switch into other areas of the library solely in order to attain higher paying positions. Newer employees are often frustrated by the few promotional opportunities, caused in part by the pattern of many competent professionals remaining in positions at BPL for decades, thereby blocking the promotional advancement of those below.

After a six-month probationary period, new employees are evaluated. This is the only formal assessment that an employee receives. Guidance and counsel regarding performance and career development are remarkably lacking. More frequent evaluations during an employee's career must be part of an overall restructuring of career development.

Employees receive minimal formal job training. Educational programs should be established, and staff working-groups and professional mentors should be fostered, to provide formal training, personal guidance, and opportunities to discuss problems and goals.

The administration of the library is aware of the problems in job classification and career development. As an initial step, plans are being formulated to retain a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review and reclassification of all jobs.

The expansion of the Personnel Office, coupled with a modernized job classification system, will significantly benefit career development, and should help eliminate the remaining obstacles to the retention of employees.

Despite the prior salary problems and the present shortcomings in job classification and career development, the morale, dedication, and professionalism of the Boston Public Library employees highly impressed all members of this subcommittee.

Board of Trustees

The present Trustees are devoted, energetic, hard-working and capable. Clear evidence of this is the position of the Boston Public Library today compared to where it was a few years ago. However, there is a perception among some, because of the highly publicized past history of the institution, that BPL Trustees are political appointments. Further, there seems to be some feeling that the number of Trustees, five, is too small for present day conditions and is, in fact, a holdover from our 19th century past. Most, if not all, Trustees of large public libraries

in the United States could be considered political appointees. Some cities have Boards consisting of three to five Trustees, though there is a trend to increase the size of large city public library boards. The highly successful and active Board of Trustees of the New York Public Library, singularly skillful in increasing endowment and other funds for their library, this year consists of 40 members with an additional two vacancies to be filled.

Despite highly publicized pockets of poverty and unemployment and the large number of homeless, the Commonwealth is experiencing a prosperity unprecedented for many years. How long this prosperity may be sustained is a matter of guess. This year approximately 30% of the operating income of the Boston Public Library comes from the state. Obviously, such funding is subject to change in the future. Such a situation appears to call for a larger Board of Trustees; a small board of trustees in these times simply cannot know all the personalities involved, the approaches which might be made, and the roads to success in broadening the basis of financial support for the Library.

A major fund-raising effort on behalf of the Boston Public Library is now underway. Common fund-raising wisdom is that the boards of charities and educational institutions, including libraries, must on a day-to-day basis successfully guide and support the fund-raising efforts of staff and professional counsel. It is essential that the BPL Board be able to reach on a personal level many major sources of funding within the city. It is not common that large amounts of money are raised for public libraries from neighborhood groups. Clear responsibility for this major fund-drive lies with the Trustees. Thus, there is a strong case to be made for an increase in the number of public library trustees.

Public library fund-raising is among the most difficult of fund-raising efforts. Many citizens firmly believe that Andrew Carnegie still lives and that, in any case, they have already paid the price of admission through their taxes. It has not proven effective elsewhere to resort only to the appointment of friends groups or other such potential fund-raising bodies. Our public library board should now have strong representation from the commercial and industrial sections of the city as well as from other communities to reflect the diversity of Boston. It is a matter of prudence to increase the size of the Board, because the fund-raising effort must succeed or the Library will be left in a critical position for a number of years to come. A failed fund-drive is often worse than no fund-drive at all.

Another reason for increasing the number of

Trustees is that the Director of the Library is appointed to direct the Library, not to raise money. A wide variety of unresolved Library problems still exist which will take great concentration, skill, and effort on behalf of the Director and others to solve.

A final reason for additional appointments to the Board is that one of the major problems facing the Library at this time is proper staffing on all levels and the retainment of staff in a time when professional library training is increasingly difficult and expensive to obtain. Under these circumstances, the Trustees might wish to consider the possibility of adding to their number a member with special experience and ability in personnel or the education and training of librarians.

Technology and Networking

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Michael Fung
Frances Howe, Chair
Robert Stueart

The subcommittee on technology and networking has as its charge to review technological and networking efforts that are currently in place and those that might be planned for the future, as well as to identify areas of immediate concern. To that end, we met and interviewed the Associate Director of the BPL who is primarily responsible for the development of automation; the Regional Administrator of the Eastern Regional Library System who is responsible for networking developments with public libraries in the Eastern Region; the Coordinator of the Boston Library Consortium who is responsible for working with research libraries who are members; the Director and certain staff of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners who are responsible for distributing state and federal monies after receiving proposals for projects from the individual libraries and determining the priorities for the funding; representatives of other Eastern Massachusetts sub-regional libraries which provide services at the sub-regional level as does the BPL, but who also receive some services from the Eastern Regional Library System; and other administrators and staff members within the Boston Public Library system. All discussions were cordial and highly informative. What follows is an attempt to examine a complex topic in abbreviated and comprehensible terms.

Probably the greatest change occurring in libraries today is in areas of technology and networking.

BPL is not excluded from that development, although some point out that it has acted late in assuming a primary leadership role.

Networking

The BPL augments its own services and shares its resources through two major cooperative agreements: 1) with other research libraries in the Boston Library Consortium and 2) through networking with other public libraries in the Eastern Massachusetts Regional Library System. As the library of last recourse, as a sub-regional library, and as the host institution for the headquarters of the Eastern Regional System, the BPL receives state and federal funds. It also serves as headquarters for the Boston Library Consortium. Some concern has been expressed about the BPL not having developed as a bibliographic utility which would be both cost effective and efficient. Further, in the document delivery area, the produce-rate and rapidity of delivery of materials has been less than expected. In addition, the fact that the research collections are not available to public libraries through regular loan procedures has produced frustrations. Clusters of public libraries have developed cooperatives in acquiring automated circulation systems for shared access and now support those with document delivery services. The interlibrary loan function has been assumed, in large part, by those clusters. As a result, not all members of the regional system partake of the services which the BPL by contract is charged with providing, and there has developed a dichotomy of service in the region. At the same time, rich resources — as an example, the extensive film library — have been developed by the BPL and are available to regional libraries. These services are invaluable to those participating in the Eastern Regional Library System.

Integrated System Plan

Concerns have been tempered somewhat over the last year or so as the BPL has begun to struggle with that role and those challenges. The Boston Public Library has now committed itself to the concept of a shared online system through its own cluster arrangement with five other public libraries — Cambridge, Brookline, Newton, Chelsea, and Malden. Plans are for an eventual totally integrated online system: circulation, cataloging, serials control, and acquisitions. The agreed upon first phase will be an online circulation system, probably followed

by an online catalog. When that is in place, the resources of this extended area will be identifiable by Boston residents and will be available upon request through some as yet undetermined delivery system.

In addition, there is some thought being given as to how this system would be helpful to the BPL in its role as a member of the Boston Library Consortium consisting of MIT, Tufts, Brandeis, Boston University, Boston College, University of Massachusetts at Boston, and several other academic libraries. Plans are to share access with those libraries through a computerized catalog, but that will require some adjustments and negotiations since at least four computerized turnkey systems (GEAC, DRA, ULISYS, and CLSI) are currently represented in that group. Sharing of access by accommodating those variant systems will come only after the initial circulation component is in place with the other public libraries in the Boston cluster, and will be a much more complicated issue although the bid specifications for the new system state that it should be possible to access other systems through terminals to be provided.

Technology's State-of-the-Art at the BPL

Looking at the current picture, the BPL continues to offer automated time-sharing services to other libraries in the Eastern Region. It produces catalog cards for a number of other libraries through its automated services. In addition, other activities (accounts payable, serials union lists, specialized data bases) are already in some form of automation. Further, library users have direct capability to conduct electronic data base searches in the General Library; professionally assisted data base searches in the Central Library; or in-depth, customized data base searches in the Research Library.

Part of the BPL's problem of getting from where it is to where it might want to go, technology-wise, is in replacing already existing partially automated, partially antiquated components: a circulation system for the General Library developed several years ago and originally leased through IBM; cataloging services run on a DEC machine using leased software from Infonics; an interim COM (Catalog on Microfiche) catalog, the technology of which is now dated; an acquisitions system which is being converted to a leased MicroVAX, with software from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst; and a serials control system through the vendor service of the Faxon LYNX System (through which, incidentally, a union list of serials for the Boston Library Consortium has been developed). Currently, auto-

mation seems to affect primarily the Central Library since the branches simply receive the end product and are not yet involved in the use of systems.

Funding

Until now there have not been resources available to replace the existing piecemeal system with a fully automated one. However, the new Boston cluster will receive \$2.1 million in LSCA funds to purchase the major equipment components necessary to begin implementation of such a system. In addition, the BPL has committed a larger portion of its own budget to achieving this goal. It is to be commended for bringing in a consultant to work with the Boston cluster in determining specifications which must be included in the bidding and implementation processes.

Microcomputers

Microcomputers are used in several branches and most departments for a variety of reasons. Although there is no standardization of hardware, software, or use applications, attempts are now being made to standardize hardware and avoid duplication of effort. The use of microcomputers for routine processing is likely to accelerate as prices decline and as new software packages are developed.

Challenges

Two immediate challenges face the system. The first is the preparation of bibliographic records which are now in a variety of formats — accessed through the Book Catalog (1975) of the General Library holdings; the COM Catalog representing both the Research Library and General Library holdings; and on-line supplement. The traditional use of MARC tapes through the contract with Infonics, with less complete records than those which exist in OCLC standardized format, causes concern for the BPL system. Additionally, regional libraries which have joined other clusters with OCLC data bases are making less use of a service which originally was contracted for under terms of the Eastern Regional system charge. Further, conversion of records for the newly planned system will probably be more cumbersome than for other libraries which already have more complete data files online. This will hold true particularly for the Research Library holdings, only about 20 percent of which have post-1974 cataloging records. Any current decisions on

how to approach the conversion of those files will affect characteristics of the future catalog.

The second challenge is that the relative satisfaction of a larger group dictates that a consultative approach is necessary. This is complicated and time-consuming, because any selection of technology which is intended to be shared under terms of agreement with other libraries must meet the needs of all involved. The governance and communications channels must be defined and developed so that the change process will culminate in a successful system mutually acceptable to all parties involved. Involvement of the Eastern Regional Library Advisory

Committee with prescribed feedback to all 200+ libraries in the eastern part of the state is desirable.

Recommendations

It is recommended that a mechanism be devised to involve all interested parties in current technological developments affecting the BPL. What previously had been a rugged independence is developing into a shared relationship which should be fostered. Reporting the results of technological change and networking in the BPL system should receive priority.

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