

THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



"The Story Lady" enchants and mesmerizes her audience.

ANNUAL REPORT 1988-1989

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For the Year Ending June 30, 1989

With a Summary of the
Report of the Examining Committee
1987-1989



City Document 15—1988—1989

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ANNUAL REPORT 1988-1989

The Boston Public Library published a remarkable little book this year, the original writings of adult learners exploring their pasts, their psyches, and their new power with words. The work is titled *it's never easy*. In one proudly constructed essay, Maggie sums up how she adds to her knowledge: "Learning any skill means I have to listen hard, I have to take my time and I have to follow each step carefully."

Maggie's message describes aptly the path followed by the Library administration and staff in FY89. We had to listen hard to the community and to legislators—to all the people affecting or affected by the Library. We had to move in measured step, taking thoughtful, probing time to deal with a fiscal crisis. And through analysis and planning, we proceeded toward resolution of problems, step by step.

With its marked up's and down's, this year was never easy; but in its totality the year added a milestone to Boston Public Library history as we neared the end of a decade. A local publication paid tribute to our institution with the following citation: "*Boston Magazine* is pleased to honor the Boston Public Library as Best Revamped Local Resource in recognition of Quality and Excellence, Best of Boston, 1988." In the following report we shall pursue those steps of revamping and follow our route toward quality and excellence.

A WORLD-CLASS/WORLD-CONSCIOUS LIBRARY

Sometimes in expressing our pride in the Library's collections and performance, we describe the Boston Public Library as a "world-class institution." We speak in the context of an institution, which reaches beyond provincial bounds, which is sought by patrons throughout the United States and abroad, which ranks with the nation's leading university research facilities. We see the Boston Public Library as a resource of important books, serials, manuscripts, but—more than that—as a generator, a primary source of research and information for books published and books yet to come.

Such a world-class status was demonstrated repeatedly this past year. Among the visitors who sought out the Library to conduct research, to tour, to meet with staff, and to discuss the Boston Public Library as it related to their own institutions were the following: a community librarian from Auckland, New Zealand, here for a study tour; a member of the Council for Cultural Planning and Development from Taiwan; the deputy director of the State Library of Victoria, Australia; the commission president of the San Francisco Public Library to discuss his city's plans to build a new main library and to restore branch facilities; visitors from Venezuela to view equipment for the sensory-disabled in the Access Center; an educator from the Canberra College of Higher Education in Canberra, Australia, to observe materials and services for children; 15 visitors from Japan, including both professional and amateur

binders; guests from the State University Library in Denmark; two librarians from Finland with particular interest in our Rare Books and Manuscripts Department; and two library student interns from Wales.

Probably the most vivid measure of a library's performance as a research center is its use by scholars and the publications emanating from such use. This past year tallied a remarkable number of works published or works in progress represented by both permissions requests and acknowledgments of the Library staff and materials. Evidences of such use included a request for transparencies for a catalog from The Rijksmuseum, The Netherlands; from a Japanese scholar to quote letters of Emily Dickinson; from the University of Buckingham, England, to quote the letters of Harriet Martineau; from an Italian scholar desirous of citing passages from Mrs. Radcliffe's manuscript. Dozens of other scholars and writers from colleges and universities throughout the United States, from the National Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institution, and other museums and foundations called upon the Library's rich resources.

Acknowledgments of the aid provided by Library staff and materials were as numerous as the attributions cited above. Publication credits to the Boston Public Library appeared in a bulletin by Dr. V. C. Marshall on the North End molasses disaster, published by the Institution of Chemical Engineers in Rugby, England; Hendrik Edelman's *The Dutch Language Press in America*, published by DeGraaf in The Netherlands; Stephen Tabor's *Sylvia Plath: An Analytical Bibliography*, published by Mansell in London; and many other works released by popular and university presses here and abroad. All this is testament to the Library as a world-class center of scholarship.

Throughout the branches and central library, countries and cultures were focal points of exhibitions, lectures, programs, and publications. Among the major exhibitions were several particularly strong representations of people in remote parts of the globe. From South America came the substance of an exhibit developed under a grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts, "Scraps of Life: Chilean *Arpilleras*." Featured were 40 *arpilleras*, colorfully embroidered and appliquéd tapestries from Chile that depict life under the Pinochet regime. An anguished, moving portrait of people abroad was the exhibit "Images of Vietnam and Its People," photographs of the desperate lives of Vietnamese refugees in camps in Hong Kong.

Focusing on the mid-East were two exhibitions: "Visions of Jerusalem" by Israeli and Boston artists; and "Photographs of Jordan," views of the ancient city of Petra. A far less sanguine exhibit with international implications was "The Judgment of Adolf Eichmann: Evil, the Media and Society," which brought together mural photographs showing the trial of Adolf Eichmann.

The most extensive international exhibition assembled 1,000 current books from the Soviet Union. Titled "The USSR: Perestroika and Glastnost," the display represented an exchange sponsored by the USIA (U.S. Information Agency) and Goskomizdat, the Soviet State Committee for Publishing and Printing. Six bilingual guides came from the Soviet Union to interpret the exhibition for visitors. Simultaneously with this exhibit that traveled on to Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles, an American collection titled "Many-Booked America" was exhibited in Novosibirsk, Minsk, and Tbilisi in the Soviet Union. The USIA noted that it was hoped that the "book-oriented initiative will play an increasingly important role in promoting mutual understanding and good will."

Children's books were an international ingredient in still another Soviet-centered program. In "Glasnost Comes to Children's Literature," author/illustrator Frank Asch and Vladimir Vagin described their across-the-sea collaboration on *Here Comes the Cat*, published by Scholastic Books.

Another ocean-spanning view of children's books in the Boston Public Library brought Boston and the Emerald Isle in jump-rope proximity. The staff of the Alice M. Jordan Collection created an exhibit, "Turas go Tir na nOg" (Journey to the Land of Youth), which included more than 100 children's publications in the Irish language. The Library and Kenny Bookshops and Art Galleries Ltd. of Galway joined together to handle publicity and a selected bibliography. As a result, Kenny was interviewed on National Irish Language Radio, and the Boston Public Library received phone and mail requests from Ireland for the booklist.

Again and again lecturers this year came from abroad or turned their attention to international themes. Bostonians heard Chilean poet Marjorie Agosin and translator Cola Franzen read from their new book *Zones of Pain, Las Zonas del Dolor*. Professors Beatriz Manz and Lois Wasserspring of Wellesley College presented a slide/talk, "Voices of Latin American Women." Young people with global roots presented a compelling view of their experiences in a program honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. All survivors of conflict, they came from Cambodia, Haiti, Ireland, South Africa, and the U.S. drug wars, speaking as "Children of War" to the youth of Boston.

When Boston served as conference center for the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, the Library sponsored a reception in the Cheverus Room, exhibiting for the event many ecumenical materials donated to the Library by Dr. Robert Nelson.

Our pride in the strength of the Library for world-class research was reinforced this year by a study by the Boston Library Consortium, a cooperative network of major research libraries, which analyzed machine-readable records for 1981-1985 monographs catalogued by member libraries.

In most of 23 broad subject divisions the Boston Public Library held the highest number of items as well as the highest number of unique titles (those not owned by any other member library).

One last example shows again the Library's participation on the world stage, even as it calls attention to the power of the book and the monstrosity of censorship. Salman Rushdie, author of *The Satanic Verses*, was scheduled to begin a U.S. book tour at the Boston Public Library during the week of February 20. Just a few days in advance of his BPL talk, Ayatollah Khomeini placed a million-dollar bounty on the author's head for his alleged defamation of Islam, and Rushdie's book was pulled from many booksellers' shelves and his tour canceled. Library Director Arthur Curley described the treatment of Rushdie as a "threat to the fundamental freedom of expression upon which libraries are based."

RESEARCH LIBRARY SERVICES

Preparing to deal with the negative implications of the budget crisis, the Research Division simultaneously sought increased revenue from grant sources. Submissions were made to the U.S. Department of Education for preservation microfilming and cataloging of the Brown Collection in the Music Department and for cataloging a valuable collection on the Irish rebellion of 1798. Another grant request was submitted to the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities for preservation microfilming of the Handel and Haydn archives.

Successful funding came from the National Endowment for the Humanities for cataloging Massachusetts newspapers as part of the Massachusetts Newspaper Program. In March the Boston Public Library hosted a three-day workshop in which Library of Congress staff offered training for newspaper cataloging. Another successful grant was received from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners to address the Library's extensive backlog in cataloging.

Problems of space continued in all parts of the Research Library—space for collections, service, and increasingly for electronic reference and bibliographic stations. The introduction of computer technology points up the urgency behind the McKim building renovation and its mandate for adequate electrical power.

Collection development, services, programs, and exhibits were handled for the most part by the individual departments of the Research Library. The impact of automation in accelerating service and expanding access to data was increasingly evident in all departments. A vivid description of this impact came from the curator of Humanities Reference Sally Beecher: "In early 1984 there were no signs of automation in the department. Now we are fortunate to have access by terminals to the Library's holdings, to the

Faxon database, to the Boston Consortium Union List of Serials, to multiple databases provided by DIALOG, WILSONLINE, BRS, and VU/TEXT and to the international bibliographic holdings of OCLC. These sources have become part of our daily routines—so much so that we have to stop and think how (or if) we managed to get certain information before their advent. (This thought process is forced upon us when we experience the dreaded 'downtime')."

In addition to their ongoing activities, staff of the Music Department were contributors to several projects beyond the Library. The department joined Opus Publications of New Haven in supplying items in the Library's retrospective holdings of music periodicals for a series titled *Nineteenth Century American Music Periodicals on Microfilm*. In return for its participation, the Music Department receives free reels of microfilm. The staff also shared its expertise this year in writing: Charlotte Koleczynski reviewed for *Choice*; Michael Rogan edited the publication *Musical Woman* and reviewed for the Music Library Association's *Notes*; and staff joined Curator Diane Ota in the editing and production of the *Newsletter* of the New England Chapter of the Music Library Association. The Music Department represented its holdings in several exhibits: among them, "Boston Musica Viva at Twenty"; "Spring into Song"; "The Esplanade: Fifty Years of Musical Enjoyment"; and "History of Recorded Opera from Wax to Compact Disc." And programming of musical events shared the department's agenda, from a concert by pianist Trudi Van Slyck, featuring contemporary piano works including Walter Piston's "Passacaglia," to pre-concert lectures by David Stockton, artistic director of the Boston Concert Opera.

This year the Fine Arts Department brought to a close the major Peabody and Stearns project with a final analysis and report. The project assessed the physical condition and collected data on the intellectual content of more than 1,300 rolls containing plans from the distinguished Peabody and Stearns architectural firm, which flourished between 1870 and 1917. In addition to completing this project, the Fine Arts Department proceeded with its high-volume reference services in person, by phone and letter, and through Interlibrary Loan. The department responded to the increasing requests from users for photocopies in several ways, both in-house and by arrangements with reprographic firms.

Like the Music Department, Fine Arts shared its resources in a microfilm project, loaning ten periodical titles to Cornell University for its 19th Century American Architectural Periodicals Research project. Other materials were loaned to Wellesley College and the French Library. In an example of international outreach, Fine Arts loaned a copy of O. S. Fowler's *A Home for All or The Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building* for exhibition at the Institute and Museum of the History of Science in Florence.

The services of the Fine Arts Department and Curator Janice Chadbourne were repeatedly acknowledged this year in publications on art. And the staff of the department joined other Research Library units in much appreciated responses to queries in the "Ask the *Globe*" column of the *Boston Globe*. A major tribute came to the department that read as follows: "The Boston Preservation Alliance 1989 Preservation Award is presented to the Fine Arts Department of the Boston Public Library for the conservation of the architectural records of Peabody & Stearns."

This year the Print Department continued its record of exceptional growth in collections and major exhibitions. The department celebrated the gift by Mrs. Merle Sherea in 1987 of prints and drawings by American artist Thomas Handforth (1897-1948) with an exhibition in the Wiggin Gallery, "Thomas Handforth and the Art of Travel." The exhibit featured items reflecting the artist's travels during the 1920s and 1930s from his home in Tacoma, Washington, to France, North Africa, the Orient, and elsewhere. Still another important exhibit featured the etchings by an eminent father/son team, Auguste and Eugene Delatre, as well as etchings they printed for such artists as Meryon, Whistler, and Cassatt. Starting in the 1840s, August Delatre taught artists and printers in Paris the nuances of the artistic printing of etchings. The Library is fortunate in owning the contents of the Delatre studio at the time of its closing after World War II.

Photographs from Library collections formed the centerpiece of several Print Department exhibits this year: "A Celebration of Photography...Saluting the 150th Anniversary of the Invention of Photography"; "Diamonds in the Rough," which pictured baseball players from the 1890s through the 1960s; "The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys"; and, marking the 50th anniversary of the Quabbin Reservoir, "Quabbin" displayed photographs by David Haas, the culmination of a six-year collaboration between the Boston Public Library and Haas. In another collaboration, this time with the distinguished Boston art collector John Merriam, the Print Department mounted the exhibition "Seven from Boston," works by Bostonians Avakian, Boyce, Dergalis, Gabin, di Giovanni, Given, and der Hohannesian.

The Print Department, like Fine Arts, is involved in the labor-intensive service of responding to requests for copy photographs of items in the Library's collections. As Keeper of Prints Sinclair Hitchings notes: "Demand for photographic services continues to grow as the public learns more about the pictorial riches in BPL collections." He recommends "setting goals for a more efficient approach...preferably looking toward an office of photographic services."

The Rare Books and Manuscripts Department continued its outreach and influence in scholarly efforts national and international, deserving much

credit for maintaining the Library's world-class status. In addition to many receptions, dialogues, and conferences with donors, antiquarian book specialists, visiting scholars, and government officials, Keeper of Rare Books and Manuscripts Dr. Laura Monti and her staff designed several exhibits that placed department rarities on view, many of them interpreted through lectures. Among them: "Stinehour Press"; "Lafayette: A French and American Hero"; "Columbus and His Voyages," a collection of posters shared by the Italian government. Conservation of books and papers was extensive this year, ranging from volumes in the Adams Collection and theater broadsides to manuscript sheets from the Prince Collection and papers of the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee.

The Sound Archives Department proceeded this year in major acquisition and inventory activities and maintained close association with the Music Reference and Audio-Visual Departments. Budget restrictions hampered full activities in this department, as in others. By year's end, the sound archival holdings—compact discs, cassettes, eight-track tapes—had reached the substantial figure of 256,516.

A key day in the Government Documents Department was the inspection of the department in its role as a depository library for government documents. Such an inspection day by a representative from the office of the Superintendent of Documents takes place one day every five years and is designed to insure that the Library is fulfilling its obligations under the law. The inspector complimented the staff for their capability and dedication to service. He noted certain deficiencies related to record-keeping, conditions of space and lighting, and limitations to public accessibility because of the closed stack policy. Many of these problems will be addressed with the renovation of the McKim building.

In the midst of fiscal austerity, the department continued activities in acquisitions, reference, maintenance of indices, and conducting tours. In recognition of the department's unprecedented efforts in the distribution of tax forms—more than 100,000 federal and state forms this year—the Internal Revenue Service awarded the Government Documents Department a Certificate of Appreciation.

While staff activities in programming were cut back by the Science Reference Department this year, increased activity was devoted to staff presentations on patents to colleges and universities. In addition to the academic community's emphasis on the invention process, referrals and requests for patent data came from the Patent Office, the Massachusetts Department of Corporations, and local attorneys. Curator Marilyn McLean was elected regional representative for the Patent Depository Association this year and conducted their regional conference. She takes responsibility for the Association's twice-yearly newsletter.

At the conclusion of the trial phase of the CASSIS CD-ROM project, the Science Reference Department received a new CD, CD equipment, and a new computer from the Patent Depository Office. Science Reference remains the second heaviest user of CASSIS online across the nation.

The Social Sciences Department added major international efforts to its busy reference regimen. Responses were processed to West Germany, Switzerland, South Africa, Nigeria, and New Zealand, a world-reaching service reflected as well in other Research Library departments. The department's extensive in-person, telephone, and mail services were enhanced considerably with the acquisition of a CD-ROM with access to three major databases. An enthusiastic public and staff shared in the use of the new facilities for searches and for printout of search results.

Services provided this year by the Microtext Department were broad and intensive, consistent with a centralized microform service facility. In addition to individual patrons, other institutions frequently approached the department for guidance on microforms and equipment. Demonstrating the range and demand for services are these numbers for FY89: 108,172 microforms circulated; 86,527 photocopies produced in the department; 1,662 photocopies and 47 fiche duplicates made in response to 313 letters and interlibrary loan requests; 5,264 rolls of microfilm and 162,480 microfiches added this year. Acquisitions considerably expanded resources in the history of women, music, fine arts, fashion, and American and South American history. Staff of the Microtext Department offered special tours for school children and visiting genealogists. Mini-exhibits on the reading machines introduced students to department resources. The Newspaper Room continued its brisk servicing of current newspaper, paging 43,116 newspapers for 20,743 patron requests.

This year Kirstein Business Branch operated frequently as a "high-pressure environment" in terms of numbers of patrons, many of them students needing assistance, and the necessity of serving three floors. While problems with equipment and antiquated aspects of the building persisted, positive gains were made in the acquisition of several new resources, particularly directories. Kirstein Business Branch was monitored this year in terms of service and building needs and stands high on Research Library priorities for alleviation of problems and automation. The branch was frequently targeted for tours led by staff. It should be added here that tours and workshops were brisk in several Research Library departments, which welcomed Boston subregion and Eastern Region libraries to view the Library's collections and services.

In addition to mounting the exhibit of Irish children's books described earlier, the Alice M. Jordan Collection devoted special attention to the Year of the Young Reader. Two major exhibitions were assembled: the first, "A Goodly Heritage," highlighted New England authors and illustrators of children's

books, periodicals, serials—significant personalities in the children's field for the past hundred years. The second exhibition, "Work with Children," brought together archival membership lists, correspondence, oral history tapes, and memorabilia of the New England Round Table of Children's Librarians, which are on deposit in the Jordan Collection. The two exhibits and supportive programs were titled "Our New England Past." A major program featuring author/illustrator Barbara Cooney, a panel discussion, and an exhibition catalog drew much professional and public interest. The exhibits were viewed by a distinguished visitor, Dr. James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress, who commended the Boston Public Library for its recognition of the Year of the Young Reader.

Several units in the Research Department and Administrative Services defied staff and time constraints to perform effectively in behind-the-scenes support of public service centers. Interlibrary Loan experienced considerable growth in all categories of requests, and Catalog Information saw a rise in numbers of phone calls and questions "coming over the desk." An expanded phase of the Telefax project, funded in part by a grant from the Board of Library Commissioners, by the year's end consisted of a network of 35 libraries. Requests numbering 7,897 were received and 7,741 were filled from Boston Public Library and Consortium collections. Each of 2,171 of the requests were filled by FAX within one hour of receipt.

Beyond the function of its name, Book Delivery put together and distributed a departmental manual and conducted in-depth searching of gifts, serials, transfers, and other categories of materials. Curator Scot Cornwall described the establishment of a unified periodical center as predictably beneficial to public service.

The "invisible" units most essential in bringing books from purchase to patron (Business Office, Acquisitions, Cataloging, Processing, Book Preparation, and Data Processing) not only dealt with volume of orders, but with revisions in systems or procedures in cataloging and data processing.

COMMUNITY LIBRARY SERVICES

The branches and the General Library this year continued to demonstrate the many roles of the free public library in an urban setting. The annual report of the Codman Square Branch captures the dimensions of this role: "An inner-city branch such as Codman Square provides essential services that are not reflected in circulation figures. We provide literacy collections for adults, a parents' shelf, a small but helpful medical and law reference section, dictionaries and encyclopedias for families that cannot afford to buy books, an extensive magazine collection, self-help for studying for exams in a wide spectrum of human knowledge, an information referral center for community and cultural events, and a directory for human services." Highlighted, too, in

the report is strong emphasis on dynamic reading and program services to children.

The library's role as meeting ground, as center for dialogue and expression of concern was particularly evident this year. Again, from Codman Square: "In the one square mile area around Codman Square there are between 25 and 30 neighborhood block or street groups very vocal in their concern about crime, vandalism, drugs, deterioration, boarded-up buildings, and dying shopping centers. Our library has become a focal point for these community groups to express these concerns as well as an information and referral center for many of these problems."

In addition to bringing together concerned residents, libraries are committed to acquiring current materials on current events, people, and problems (with possible solutions). Speakers and films also spread before audiences and participants the dimensions and impact of living in the city in this decade. To cite a sampling of guidance and problem-solving programs of FY89: "Child-rearing in the 80s," presented by Family Service of Greater Boston (Brighton); "Cancer Prevention Through Diet and Nutritional Food Choices," by the Cancer Information Service (Dudley); "Services for Your Elderly Relations," Southwest Senior Services (Jamaica Plain); "Streetwise and Street Smart: How to Take Care of Yourself on the Streets," Jamaica Plain Karate School (Connolly); "AIDS and AIDS Care," Mission Hill Coalition Against AIDS (Parker Hill). These programs represent only a sampling of the Library's attention to current concerns and show as well the range of cooperating agencies that share their expertise.

On several occasions branches and the central library achieved high visibility by involvement in community fairs. Jamaica Plain/Connolly Branches manned a booth at Jamaica Plain's World's Fair. Children's Librarian Edith Bravo presented a bilingual story hour at the Codman Square Fair. West End Branch co-sponsored the second Community Resource Fair with the West End/Beacon Hill Geriatric Interagency Council that brought together ten social service agencies offering information on health, housing, and recreation. South Boston Branch sponsored a library information booth at Family Fest '88 held at the John F. Kennedy Library. And once again the General Library joined forces with the *Boston Globe* in presenting leading authors at the annual Globe Book Fair.

In addition to representing contemporary times, branches and General Library performed another library role as resource and program centers on history, with emphasis on Boston history. Distinguished historian Barbara Tuchman set the stage with a presentation in Rabb Lecture Hall on her book *The First Salute*, a view of the American Revolution. The president of the West Roxbury Historical Society gave a slide view of West Roxbury's past; the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities sponsored a

program at Jamaica Plain Branch on historic houses in New England; the Castle Island Association offered "Castle Island, Then and Now" at South Boston Branch. Charlestown Branch patrons learned of "17th and 18th Century Holiday Customs at the Paul Revere House"; and Lower Mills Branch called upon officers of the Dorchester Historical Society for its National Endowment for the Humanities series on Lower Mills.

Branch Librarian Barbara Wicker of Hyde Park Branch responded to a request from Southwest Boston Community Services to help produce a video on the agency. For this project she wrote a script on the history of Hyde Park, focusing on physical and population changes over the years and the uniqueness of the community. The finished product served as a program centerpiece this past summer and promises continuing use as a resource. In still another creative effort, Adults Services Librarian Paula Posnick of West End Branch founded the West End Historical Committee and undertook an oral history taping project. Recorded by a camcorder purchased through agency donations, elderly citizens offered their reminiscences in the branch or in their homes. In other West End projects, the editor of the *West End Newsletter* gave a visual tour of the area in the '50s, using slides from photos in Herbert Gans's book *The Urban Villagers*. Books were also the base for the West End Branch series, "Our Literary Heritage, 19th Century Writers In and Around Boston."

At South Boston Branch some 400 people attended a celebration of the publication of *South Boston: My Home Town*, the first history of South Boston to be issued since the turn of the century. The Honorable Thomas H. O'Connor, historian at Boston College and member of the Bicentennial Commission on the U.S. Constitution, was honored as the author. And throughout the city, in all branch libraries and central, even the youngest patrons gave animated attention to the history of their city by joining the summer reading club with this year's theme "Boston Is My Hometown."

Community Library Services gave unabated attention in both acquisitions and programming to the city's rich ethnic variegation. Like the activities already described in the FY88 annual report, programming this year ranged from a lecture at the North End Branch on Italian genealogy to a talk by poet Valerie Foxx on "The Black Experience in Drama and Poetry" at Dudley Branch, and celebration of the Chinese New Year at Connolly. Caroline Young, General Library, wrote articles in Chinese for the *Sampan*, Boston's bilingual newspaper, to introduce Chinese readers to collections and services of the Library. She also wrote introductory handouts which tell how to find books and periodicals in the Library.

The Library continued, also, a dynamic range of exhibits and activities for all groups in their various roles as children, teenagers, students, parents, senior citizens, and people with special needs. Librarians visited

1,494 school classes reaching almost 30,000 children; and, in return, 23,337 children visited branch libraries and central for programs and tours. Total attendance of children at film and other activities in libraries numbered 146,357. Thus the Boston Public Library productively observed what was designated nationally as The Year of the Young Reader.

Reading Is Fundamental activities were sponsored by H. P. Hood Company, Digital Equipment, and Fidelity Investments at Charlestown, Dudley, and Fields Corner Branches. Stellar event of the year for young patrons was the appearance of "The Story Lady" at branches throughout the city. Reports on the story hours delivered by Jackie Torrence described her impact on her young listeners in unmatched hyperbole. It was variously reported that she "entranced," "mesmerized," and "engrossed" her audiences. As Roslindale Branch's report put it, "Jackie Torrence held 250 children and adults spellbound as she wove her magic."

Teenagers were targeted this year in book acquisitions geared to their interests and in film programs and lectures on such topics as individualized library instruction and guidance on science projects. The Young Adult Department of the General Library sponsored its annual Creative Writing Workshop with author Deborah Savage speaking on writing techniques and publishing. The Young Adult Teen Tutor Project, funded in February 1988 by a grant from "Teens as Community Resources," became fully functional this year in the Young Adult Department. In this project, students tutored their peers in algebra and Latin. A solid collection of books, tapes, and videos was purchased to assist tutors in their contact with "tutees."

An innovative, collaborative effort directed at teens involved the Young Adult Department with the Judge Connelly Youth Center, a facility for incarcerated young men ages 13 to 18. In consultation with reading teachers at the center, Young Adult staff selected books for deposit there, served as advisors on daily operation procedures, shelving, and furniture for the establishment of a library at the facility. For their assistance, librarians Catherine Clancy and Laura Peale were honored at a testimonial luncheon. The report on this cooperation notes that "through this interagency contact we are making a difference in the lives of young adults whom we would otherwise never reach." In other Young Adult activities, the Library staff joined area libraries in creating a Young Adult Librarian Network to share ideas on books and programming.

Activities for adults that frequently reach teenagers as well were, as always, numerous and varied on themes related to their roles as parents and citizens—concerns of health, finance, self improvement, leisure entertainment, and hobbies. The total attendance at branch/central-sponsored lectures, films, discussions, receptions, and other events numbered 58,380.

For almost 40 years the Boston Public Library has built a special program of service to senior adults. That record of involving such patrons as contributing/learning/influential members of the community remains still the approach of the Library. They are not on-the-shelf people lapsing into limp old age, but people of vitality and power. Variousy referred to in branch activities as "elders," "senior adults," "young in heart," the group over 60 are most commonly called "Never Too Late" patrons. In the 39th anniversary program of the General Library Never Too Late group, the oldest library-sponsored gathering in the nation, Helen Heineman, Professor of English at Framingham State College, lectured on "Francis Trollope: A Career at Mid-Life." True to the objectives of the program, this event was intellectually challenging. A total of almost 7,000 people attended the series in central in FY89.

The recently established Access Center was a particularly effective arm in the Library's efforts for people with special needs. The first anniversary of the center was observed in December: "the most significant, encouraging, and heartwarming event [of the center] of FY89. More than 70 people attended, representing a range of disabled people—blind/visually impaired, deaf/hearing impaired, mobility impaired. Attendees were genuinely interested in the Kurzweil Reading Machine, the Apple-enhanced computers, the Versa-Braille, the close-captioned cassettes, and the book/periodical collection." As part of its consideration of users with special needs, FM receivers were made available to 45 hearing-impaired persons at 20 programs.

Shut-ins and residents and clientele of nursing homes, hospitals, and youth and senior centers received attention from branches and Extension Services in the form of deposits of materials which totaled 268,396 items. Still another group receiving special materials and services were the adult learners in ABE (Adult Basic Education) classes, ranging from citizens with English as a second language (ESL) to people with learning disabilities. Buttressed by several grants (listed in the Gifts and Grants section), the Library acquired background materials on adult literacy, and literacy resource collections were created in 14 branches and in the central library. Spearheaded by a Boston Public Library Coordinating Committee on Literacy, the Library has advanced rapidly in reaching many of Boston's thousands of refugees and immigrants as well as adults stalled at the 5th grade reading level. The energies of the Coordinating Committee moved this year from evaluation and acquisition of materials to outreach efforts and to devising strategies to find and serve the targeted clientele. A key component in these efforts is collaboration with university and community specialists. For example, Codman Square Branch works closely with WEAVE, an adult literacy group, and the Haitian Multi-Service Center.

The Audio-Visual Department chalked up another remarkable year in circulation of films to Boston Public Library units and community organizations and to Eastern Regional libraries. The department showed its almost legendary imagination in translating its film resources into program series unified by actor, genre, director, and such—e.g. “Salute to Charlie Chaplin” on his 100th birthday; “Ode to James Joyce”; “Performance by Poitier,” and famous silent films. The department also complemented Library exhibits and programs with related film screenings. Audio-Visual statistics for FY89 recorded 18,827 audio-cassettes and recordings circulated; 8,725 films used by Eastern Regional libraries and 4,416 used by Boston Public Libraries and community organizations.

Community Library Services embarked this year on the circulation of audio-cassettes with marked success. Branch reports repeatedly cited user approval of the newly introduced format. Adams Street commented on the “steady circulation” of children’s cassettes. Charlestown Branch reported that the cassettes circulated “briskly” among children and adults, noting that the favorites were music, narrations of popular titles, and follow-along easy readers. Parker Hill Branch summarized the impact of audio-cassettes: “The circulation has been phenomenal. Almost all of the children’s and most of the adult literacy tapes we own are circulating at any given time.”

The Library added video-cassettes to the collection including cassettes of interest to professional librarians—book production, grantsmanship, storytelling, labor relations, foreign language, computer applications, and Video Classics donated by the MacArthur Foundation. Plans continue for future acquisition of video-cassettes for circulation to individuals.

With the purchase of a large portable screen and a video projector, it became possible for overflow crowds, beyond the seating and safety limits of Rabb Lecture Hall, to see the hall programs off-site.

AUTOMATION

Installation of terminals for the automated circulation system was completed this year. As East Boston Branch described the new technology: “The staff has taken to the DRA system and isn’t afraid of the new technology. Registration of borrowers began in January.” The system will make three million books and non-print materials more accessible by linking electronically all branch libraries with the circulating collections in the General Library and the Metro-Boston Library Network. The network system has been made possible by 2.2 million dollars in grants from the federal and state governments in addition to ongoing support from network cities and towns. At the program celebrating the restoration of Connolly Branch, the first library card for the new system was issued, a card made of gray plastic with a motif of Library lanterns.

Other uses of equipment that expedited service goals were reported by Brighton Branch, noting a brisk use of electronic mail and FAX. West Roxbury, Codman Square, and Brighton Branches reported the value of Infotrac in periodical searching. As Brighton noted, "Infotrac, in combination with FAX, increased the timeliness of retrieving periodical articles."

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

The tradition of bringing university-level lectures to interested adults was pursued this year with vitality and variety in lecture series funded by the Library's endowment from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Reactions to the mind-stretching experiences were typified by the enthusiasm in participants at the Grove Hall sequence where Representative Byron Rushing presented "Roxbury, A Political Geography": "a fascinating and highly informative look at the history of our community. Attendees, whether lifelong residents of Roxbury or new arrivals, left each program looking forward to the next."

Other series, ranging from literature to history and art were:

"Portraits of the Artist," Thomas O'Grady (Hyde Park).

"Irish Dissent," Prof. Francis Phelan, Stonehill College (Charlestown).

"Reviewing the Black Past: A History of Blacks Making Movies about Themselves," Dr. Clyde Taylor, Tufts University (Codman Square).

"Celebration of Boston Area Painters," Museum of Fine Arts Boston (Fields Corner).

"Writing Lives: The Art and Craft of Biography," Justin Kaplan, Cynthia Wolff, Susan Quinn, Mary Helen Washington (Brighton)

"Good Olde Dorchester," Dorchester Historical Society (Lower Mills).

"Imagining Boston: A Look at Four Novels," Prof. Shaun O'Connell, University of Massachusetts (Parker Hill).

“Aladdin’s Lamp Revealed: A Journey Through the Arab World,” Edmond J. Moussally, Northeastern University (Roslindale).

“Inventing Ireland and Other Memories of the Future,” Padraig O’Malley, University of Massachusetts/Boston (South Boston).

“The Architect’s Dream: Boston Buildings from Bulfinch to Blackall,” Prof. Gerald S. Bernstein, Brandeis University (South End and Jamaica Plain).

“Literary Dublin: A Look at Modern Irish Literature,” Herbert A. Kenny (Adams Street).

Among the annual lectureships presented this year were the following:

Mary U. Nichols Book Awards Program: Robert O’Brien, Executive Director of the North End Union, spoke on “The North End Union in the Decade of the Nineties,” focusing on the changes the depression of the central artery may bring to the area in the next ten years.

10th annual Gibbons Memorial Lecture: Father James DiPerri lectured on the history of the Catholic Church in South Boston.

W. A. Dwiggins Lecture, co-sponsored with the Society of Printers: A dialogue between Mathew Carter and Carl Zahn, “Design of Type; Design with Type.”

PUBLICATIONS

This report began with reference to a small book with *large* implications, *it’s never easy*, published this year by the Library in collaboration with the Family Learning Center at Boston University. The 13 authors of short pieces in the book deal in quiet power with their pasts, their coming to America, and their aspirations. As Worth Douglas, District Supervisor for the Brighton district and project coordinator for the Library, says in her introduction: “To produce a single short story is not easy.” And again: “It requires a willingness to think seriously, face parts of our lives which may be hurtful, and organize our ideas

and thoughts in such a way that those who read the words will understand our meaning.”

An equally exciting publication also originated this year in the Brighton district. Children are the authors of a handsome little newsletter *The Oak Leaf*. Published bimonthly, it contains the writing of young people from the Oak Square/Brighton neighborhoods and schools. The newsletter consists of short stories, poetry, puzzles, book reviews, and a list of new books and programs at the Faneuil Branch.

The Research Library issued a bibliography and supplement of an important recent purchase by the Library, a collection of books on the Soviet Union published in the Soviet Union. The list was printed with the assistance of the Eastern Regional Office and distributed to Massachusetts libraries and other interested institutions.

Several booklists and manuals were published this year by departments—booklists on children’s literature by the Jordan Collection, a departmental manual put together by Book Delivery, also annual booklists for Black History Month and for the Massachusetts Federation of Women’s Clubs. Staff of Reader and Information Services compiled several subject bibliographies. A color-coded directory of department and service locations of the central libraries was produced for display and handout.

STAFF AND FRIENDS

Repeatedly this report has called attention to the commitment and energy of staff in their service to the public, their readiness to learn new technologies, their involvement in outreach, their contributions behind the scenes as well as in visible activities. And repeatedly the Trustees and administration have acknowledged staff efforts to maintain levels of service during a crisis period. In a special tribute to two retiring staff members who have worked in the Boston Public Library for almost 100 years, the Trustees paid tribute to B. Joseph O’Neil, Supervisor of the Research Library, and M. Jane Manthorne, Assistant Director for Communications and Community Affairs and Clerk of the Corporation. In a resolution on 22 December 1988, the Trustees cited Mr. O’Neil’s loyal service, professionalism, resourcefulness and ingenuity in reference service, dedication to the preservation of Massachusetts newspapers, and direction of programs related to newspapers. The Trustees named him Curator of Newspapers *Emeritus*.

In a resolution on Jane Manthorne, the Trustees cited her dedication, her distinction in many areas of librarianship, her presidency of the Young Adult Services Division of A.L.A., and other professional accomplishments. Mindful of her great interest in services to young adults, the Trustees established a scholarship in her name for grants to staff for either formal study or continuing education in the field of Young Adult Services.

Branch Friends groups continued their active support in program sponsorship and fundraising. A new Friends organization was launched this year at East Boston Branch. In another first, the Associates of the Boston Public Library established the Epstein Award for Outstanding Career Achievement in Screenwriting. The first award was presented to Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and the award event included the screening of two of her films. The Associates also sponsored several other Library events including presentations of plays and play-reading, co-sponsored with New Voices; and a pre-election panel of leading columnists and commentators, "Five Days to Go—and Then What?"

BUILDINGS

Many capital improvements for branch library buildings remained in the planning stage or on hold this year. Attention to urgent needs such as roof repair, handicap access, and asbestos removal was accomplished at several branches. New gas-fired boilers were installed at East Boston and Jamaica Plain Branches.

Priority was accorded throughout the Library to security with resultant improved exterior lighting, construction of secure rooms for storage of equipment, and installation of alarm systems linked directly to the Boston Municipal Police. The effectiveness of the alarm system was rather dramatically demonstrated at Parker Hill Branch when—as the branch report notes — "a would-be thief was apprehended while climbing down the library wall."

The improvements in branches met with staff and public appreciation. At their annual meeting, Friends of the Hyde Park Branch held a dedication ceremony for the newly installed handicap ramp. Orient Heights Branch acknowledged the generous donation of the branch building and land by members of the Druker family, with the unveiling of a bronze plaque. A Boston Works Smarter grant was awarded to Julie Brandl's suggestion for completion of plexiglass guards on all the inside ramps of Brighton Branch.

The most celebratory event occurred on October 1 at Connolly Branch in recognition of the handsome renovation completed there. Mayor Flynn, numerous political/civic leaders, and a large turnout of residents were in attendance. The new circulation system was officially launched with the presentation of the first library cards to Mayor Flynn, Library Director Arthur Curley, and a neighborhood child.

McKIM BUILDING RESTORATION

The McKim project proceeded on several fronts this year: submission and approval (or approval pending) with several regulatory agencies in terms of handicap access, exit requirements for health and public safety, and historical

appropriateness. Architects Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson, and Abbott, Inc. substantially completed working drawings for phase one of the restoration, predicting that the project will go out to bid in 1989. Word was received that a construction grant in the amount of \$7,000,000 will be awarded by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

In commemoration of the centennial of the laying of the cornerstone on 28 November 1898, the Library mounted an exhibition, "A Tribute to the People's Palace," featuring books, photos, and archival materials.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE LIBRARY

Preparations moved forward this year for the launching of the major fundraising effort of the Library with the appointment of distinguished citizen/leaders, denoted as a Partnership for the Library's Future. The Partnership comprises Walter J. Connolly, Jr., chairman and CEO, Bank of New England, who serves as chair; Honorable William M. Bulger, president, Massachusetts State Senate; Doris Kearns Goodwin, author; Rosalind E. Gorin, president, H. N. Gorin Associates, Inc.; Edward C. Johnson III, chairman and CEO, Fidelity Management; Bertram M. Lee, president, BML Associates; E. James Morton, chairman and CEO, John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company; Ira Stepanian, president and CEO, Bank of Boston; William O. Taylor, chairman, publisher, and CEO, Globe Newspaper Company. Meetings of the group have been held to explore strategies and the possibility of altering the governance of the Library to expand the base for reachout to likely donors.

Behind-the-scenes activities within the Development Office of the Library continued. A major achievement of the year was the production by Communications for Learning of "This Is Ours; The Campaign for The Library," an 18-minute, multi-projector slide show as well as video-cassettes for use in the fundraising.

GRANTS AND GIFTS

Major contributions in funding and in kind added to the Library's growth in collections and programs this year. Gifts ranged from thousands of dollars to single copies of books. As the Gifts Librarian Margaret Bowles expressed it, "Gifts [of books] can play an important role in maintaining stack integrity; and with the fiscal uncertainty that exists, 'free' material can be a great assist."

The total number of gifts received this year (books—hardcover and paperback—serials and magazines, recordings, and other formats) reached 29,072 items. A "surprise" bequest of \$345,000 came from lawyer Herman Leventhal, who in his retirement had become almost a daily user of the Boston Public Library. A former client remembers him as an astute lawyer and a fine and honest man. The Library will remember him for his great generosity.

A partial list of grants and gifts follows:

Junior League of Boston (for Art and Architectural Tour Program)	\$30,000
Boston Foundation of Architects (for same program)	1,000
Associates of the Boston Public Library for tour director's salary	7,500
Fidelity Foundation (for Connick brochure)	11,315
Department of Education/LSCA I	
(for Datalink Sharing for Boston area)	221,000
(for outreach to Hispanic parents & children)	27,035
(for Supervisory Skills Workshops)	25,100
LSCA VI (for literacy collection)	25,000
Title II-C for Massachusetts Newspaper Program microfilming	210,000
LSCA II for McKim restoration	221,922
New England Foundation for the Arts	
(for Design of Motley exhibition)	2,500
(for Chilean exhibition)	5,425
Board of Library Commissioners	
(programming for Motley exhibition)	2,500
(processing Research Library backlog)	311,509
Association of Research Libraries	
Systemwide Preservation Survey—stipend	1,000
Systemwide Preservation Survey—in kind	10,000
Sholley Foundation (for literacy collection)	1,500
Boston Globe Foundation	1,000,000
Weber Charities	10,000
Surdna Foundation (for Visiting Scholar, Print Department)	75,000
H. P. Hood (Reading Is Fundamental)	2,000
Digital (Reading Is Fundamental)	2,000
Fidelity Investment (Reading Is Fundamental)	3,000
B. Dalton (Reading Is Fundamental)	3,000
MacArthur Foundation (for PBS Video Classics Series, in kind)	18,000
Boston Foundation—Greenspace for East Boston	3,000

GIFTS (a partial list)

- Anderson, Wayne: 1,400 art books and catalogs.
Bendiner Collection: a succession of gifts establishing at BPL one of the finest existing collections of the drawings and prints of Alfred Bendiner of Philadelphia.
Boston Authors Club: \$250.
Boston University, Muğar Library: 173 spiral-bound paperbacks, 522 hardcover cookbooks, 22 bound magazines on cooking.
Brothers, Dr. Joyce: 107 paperbacks, 96 hardcovers, all review copies.
Bernard Chaet Collection: 100 drawings.
Cohasset Public Library: 700 monographs.
Fogg Art Museum: 1,000 auction catalogs.
Gutche, Genem, composer: his works.
Grady, John: 139 paperback books, 71 magazines, 71 other items.
Estate of H. Earle Johnson for Music Department: \$10,000.
Estate of Herman Leventhal: \$345,000.
Middleboro Public Library: 270 monographs.
O'Connor, I. J.: \$500.
Reher, Sven: composer: his works.
Roden, Stephanie: 210 sound recordings, 119 books, and 36 album sets.
Ryburn, Donna and Scott: \$7,500.
Slater, Mr. and Mrs.: 3,000 items—popular song sheets, jazz collections, piano teaching methods, and classical piano works.

The Rare Books and Manuscripts Department received many gifts consisting of letters, authors' autographed works, also an ultra-violet light for reading very faint documents.

CRISIS

The positive momentum of FY88 threatened to come to a halt in the latter half of this year. The services which had begun implementation with the master plan adopted by the Trustees in January 1986, "A Program to Rebuild and Revitalize the Resources and Services of the Boston Public Library" were severely threatened. And the crisis put in hazard, as well, the staff which had been recently recruited, the hours which had been restored, the materials earmarked for purchase—all the elements in the master plan for growth and progress, for the rejuvenation of the Boston Public Library.

On 9 February 1989, the Trustees adopted the FY90 budget proposal for submission to the Budget Office, a process scheduled to be followed by

action by the Mayor and the City Council. Subsequent to adoption by the Trustees, Kevin Moloney, president of the Board, commended Library management for the "depth and quality of analysis" of the proposal.

The budget request of \$22,466,366 represented a maintenance level, including provision of staffing for the addition to the West Roxbury Branch and the Literacy Center at Dudley Branch. The city's Office of Budget and Program Evaluation recommended a budget of \$18,500,300, \$969,980 less than the Library's current budget and a shortfall of \$3,966,066 from the FY90 request. The proposed budget will require a 20 percent cut in Personnel in addition to a million dollar cut in non-personnel costs. In a Trustees' meeting of 1 May 1989, Moloney concluded that the Library was facing "extremely grave financial circumstances." If the funding situation were to remain unchanged, he noted that "major surgery" in hours and services would be necessary throughout the Library. Moloney described the crisis as a direct result of the state's decision to decrease local aid to cities and towns augmented by a Budget Office use of a wrong payroll figure in projecting the personnel budget.

As the end of FY89 approached, a wave of action swelled in several sectors. Faced with the imminent realities of a bleak fiscal situation, the Library management drew up a Program of Service Reductions, a devastating counterpoint to the program for revitalization. Director Arthur Curley called the reductions "a fundamental blow to the achievements over the past four years in circulation, program attendance, and library use." The cutbacks proposed were widespread including elimination of summer Saturday hours, continued elimination of Sunday service in central, decreased acquisition of books and serials, deferred opening of the Dudley Literacy Center, and numerous other reductions recorded in the Minutes of the Trustees' Administrative Meeting of 5 June 1989. As FY89 neared an end, the crisis—described by Arthur Curley as a "threatened disaster"—mandated the issuance of layoff notices to more than one hundred staff members.

Throughout the spring and early summer the Library had studied in depth virtually all possible options that finally resulted in the "extremely painful and unfortunate developments" here described. In response, neighborhoods went into action. Meetings were held with state legislators to seek restoration of local aid and with city officials to seek review of the impact of the budget. Friends groups in branches and the Citywide Friends were mobilized, rallying to a cause reminiscent of 1981's Proposition 2 1/2 and its threat of cutbacks. More than 7,000 citizens signed petitions that were forwarded to the mayor; the Trustees and administration joined Friends in branch libraries to review the crisis; local newspapers interviewed branch librarians and published articles on the "gravity of the situation." Some staff members, facing loss of their jobs, accepted positions in other libraries.

The *Boston Globe* contributed a free full-page ad to the Friends in support of their cry to restore funds. Even the children of Boston were involved. Channel 7's program, "Ready To Go," interviewed youngsters at the South Boston Branch on their opinions of the proposed budget cuts.

So it was that deep concern reached into each neighborhood and stirred citizens to action. The branch librarian of South End said, "Now after about five or six hard years of work to really get the branch moving, we will now be going backwards." And the Hyde Park librarian summarized: "It's hard to believe that a fiscal year that began with such promise could end on such a sad note."

After all this, FY89 ended with a degree of hope for library service; the possibility emerged of a partial restoration of the requested budget. On 28 June, layoff notices for 7 July were postponed to 14 July while the Library awaited the resolution of the budget crisis.

Arthur Curley
Director and Librarian

LIBRARY RESOURCES

General Book Collections

Volumes	6,141,482
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Special Collections

Rare Books and Manuscripts	1,232,851
Prints	1,206,148
Patents	9,566,498
Maps	329,845
Government Documents	2,595,640
Musical Scores	100,772

Periodicals

Current Subscriptions	16,704
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Non-Print Materials

Audio-Recordings	305,604
Films & Video-Cassettes	14,485
Pictorial Works	522,819

Microforms

	<u>3,961,122</u>
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TOTAL	25,993,970
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LIBRARY USE

Visitors	2,576,548
Programs	7,469
Program Attendance	208,386
Items Borrowed	1,959,237
Volumes Consulted	1,044,064
Reference Inquiries	1,205,732
Photocopies	1,481,365

Library Expenditures

	FY87	FY88	FY89
A. Salaries and Wages			
City of Boston	\$10,801,626.	\$ 12,761,847.	\$ 14,087,657.
EMRLS*	935,092.	1,077,009.	1,353,318.
Library of Last Recourse	1,813,619.	1,680,000.	1,685,958.
Other State Aid	0.	300,000.	242,542.
Federal Grants	0.	119,897.	38,898.
TOTAL (A)	\$13,550,337.	\$15,938,753.	\$17,408,373.
B. Books and Other Library Materials			
City of Boston	\$ 1,905,858.	\$ 2,285,688.	\$ 2,372,978.
EMRLS*	1,769,741.	1,425,033.	1,196,476.
Library of Last Recourse	1,968,261.	1,837,681.	1,867,962.
Other State Aid	339,746.	216,236.	330,456.
Trust Fund Income	192,449.	231,707.	193,911.
Federal Grants	477,947.	554,888.	115,326.
Private Grants	0.	0.	23,225.
TOTAL (B)	\$6,654,002.	\$6,551,233.	\$ 6,100,334.
C. All Other Expenses			
City of Boston	\$ 2,994,820.	\$ 2,934,251.	\$ 2,871,479.
EMRLS*	628,464.	657,994.	670,380.
Trust Fund Income	90,689.	34,304.	21,790.
Federal Grants	2,649,592.	202,702.	39,811.
Private Grants	0.	0.	41,991.
TOTAL (C)	6,363,565.	3,829,251.	3,645,451.
GRAND TOTAL (A,B,C,)	\$26,567,904.	\$26,319,237.	\$27,154,158.

*Eastern Massachusetts Regional Library System

**EXAMINING COMMITTEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON
1987-1989**

Berthé M. Gaines, Chair
Joan Byrne, Vice Chair
V. Paul Deare
Paul Faircloth
William Johnson
Lorraine Khan-Broy
Paul J. Lynch
Robert Mulligan
Barbara Oakes
Marc Seigle
Pamela Seigle
Robert Smith
Robert D. Stueart
Deborah Thomas
Mary Van Meter

EXAMINING COMMITTEE REPORT: A Summary

The Examining Committee that convened for 1987-1989 was aware that the previous committee had done a superb, exhaustive report. The new committee decided to review the prior report and then focus on a few major concerns. The following summation of the findings of three subcommittees demonstrates that each area has been addressed in a cogent, meaningful manner.

McKim Building Restoration and Fundraising Subcommittee

The subcommittee reviewed the three phases of the restoration of the McKim building and the work to be accomplished within each phase. The architectural firm, Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott, has produced the design and working drawings for the project.

Phase I, which will be publicly funded at a cost of approximately 16 million dollars, will focus on the infrastructure—the plumbing, electrical, heating, and air-conditioning systems. This phase will also include some restoration work on the magnificent murals, refurbishing the grandeur of the interior of the main entrance, and construction of a tea room and bookstore. Basement space, presently used exclusively for storage, will be recaptured for public use as exhibition rooms and lavatories. The inclusion of more than infrastructure work is considered important for fundraising purposes.

Phase II will be directed towards the second floor of the McKim building; restoration of the floors and walls of Bates Hall and relocation of the book delivery desk to the Eliot Room. As part of the second floor restoration, a photocopying center will be added, the periodicals will be consolidated, and the science department will be relocated to the Johnson building.

Phase III, centered on the third floor, will include the conversion of the north wing into an area for the display of special collections and the creation of a large reading and reference area for the Print Department. The art work on all levels will be restored.

Fundraising Subcommittee

Since 1986 a professional fundraiser, Corcoran Associates, has been working with the Board of Trustees and the management of the Library to develop and implement a fundraising campaign. As an initial step in that campaign, a group of distinguished corporate and civic leaders came together and formed the "Partnership for the Library's Future." [For names of members, see page 19 of the Annual Report for FY1988-89 to which this report is appended.]

After four meetings, including management and staff briefings on Library operations and the campaign's goals and time frame, the Partnership feels positive about Library management and the campaign. From all reports,

the Partnership believes that the campaign has been well conceived and its financial goals are conservative. The Partnership has recommended that the ultimate goal, from public funds and private fundraising, be increased from fifty to eighty million dollars. It is further recommended, in light of the magnitude of the project, that the Board of Trustees be expanded from five to nine members and that a twenty-five-member Board of Overseers be created.

As a result of the Partnership's findings, Mayor Raymond L. Flynn submitted a home rule petition to the City Council seeking to reorganize the governance of the Library. The petition for expansion of the Board to nine members was passed in amended form by the City Council on January 24, 1989. This amended petition contains language that requires that the Mayor's appointments to the Board of Trustees be confirmed by the City Council. The Mayor has yet to sign the petition.

On January 25, 1989, an amendment to the ordinance relative to the powers and duties of the Board of Trustees empowered the Trustees to create a 25-member Board of Overseers. This amendment was passed by the City Council and became effective on April 26, 1989.

The subcommittee views the fundraising campaign as stalled at this time. There is a risk, if the campaign does not commence soon, that the ultimate success is in jeopardy. The impression would be created that it had made "a sputtering start." The subcommittee recommends that the campaign consider immediate commencement, regardless of whether the Board of Trustees has been expanded to nine members.

Subcommittee on Buildings

After reviewing Examining Committee reports for 1983-84 and 1986-87, this subcommittee decided to give primary attention to maintenance and repairs of branch library buildings.

Recognizing that to conduct a thorough analysis of the maintenance/repair process would require time and resources not available to the subcommittee, the group limited themselves to lines of accountability in the process and branch librarians' perceptions of how the process works.

Data for the report were gathered in part through interviews with management in the Library responsible for buildings maintenance and repairs (assistant director for physical plant and operations) and the city department responsible for capital repairs (assistant commissioner, Public Facilities Department). Data were obtained from branch librarians through circulation of 14 questionnaires with 13 respondents. Questions asked in the survey of librarians dealt with the job description of the custodian assigned to their unit, the quality of training and supervision, their evaluation of the work done, the time allocated their unit for such work, and the librarians' power to deal with

concerns about their buildings, also to whom they address their problems and the resultant response and action. Lastly, librarians were asked to suggest and rank in importance changes or improvements in the entire maintenance process.

Branch librarians offered often vehement responses. They pointed out their total absence of a supervisory role in maintaining their units and a circuitous, slow route to address the needs of their buildings. They noted that the line of command flows from the assistant director for physical plant and operations to two supervisors of custodians, then to the custodians themselves. There exists no formal accountability to the branch librarian or formal, citywide standards for custodians' performance and evaluation. The branch librarians called for a voice in the process, for a part in scheduling, supervision, and evaluation of custodians.

The subcommittee is aware that their survey data were a sampling and that certain key people, custodians and their supervisors, have not been queried. Despite these limitations, the subcommittee draws its conclusions with "troubling observations" and "reasonable questions" about the state of branch library maintenance, both the process and the product.

The subcommittee questions whether the maintenance process, as presently structured, can work well for anyone. They note the need for clear, consistent work standards for custodians, the involvement of branch librarians in the evaluation, and work incentives. They suggest further that "a more complete assessment be undertaken of the procedures established for maintaining our treasured buildings." They recommend that the Trustees engage professional, disinterested management consultants for such an assessment.

The Examining Committee presented its report in the "hope that the constructive critique will be looked at closely. Throughout the process the goal of the Committee has been to examine and make recommendations for a library system that is Boston's pride and its citizens' joy."

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



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