

# THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



*Chinese Performer in the Asian Focus series.*

**ANNUAL REPORT 1989-1990**



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*ANNUAL REPORT*

For the Year Ending June 30, 1990



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A respite from the budget crisis marked the beginning of FY90 with the following announcement: "The Board of Trustees has just approved a revised plan of service for FY90 to reflect the restoration of approximately \$2,000,000 to the Library budget. This will still be a difficult year for the Library (as for all public institutions) involving many reductions in service."

The improvement in the budget came as a result of restoration by the City of \$1,457,000 and an additional \$570,000 in state funding for the Library as Library of Last Resource by a Senate-sponsored amendment to the state budget which increased the *per capita* allocation for the Library's reference and research services to the Commonwealth from 61.3 cents to 71 cents.

Thus, planned layoffs of staff were canceled, but reductions were mandated; among them, elimination of Saturday service during the summer months and continued elimination of Sunday services in central, as well as certain reductions of service in branches (including meal closings). Other reductions included the cutback of the development campaign to a skeletal level; diminution of special programs and exhibits; curtailment of printing—including design work—on flyers, reading lists, and other publications; delay of the opening of the Dudley Literacy Center; deferment of cataloging the backlog of many materials; and reduction in building maintenance.

While attention to the budget loomed large this past year, the Boston Public Library continued to maintain its role as a center of ideas, history, futurism—and discovery. The sense of wonder that the Library houses and shares was best captured in the words of Charles J. Connick whose rare archives on stained glass windows came to the Library in FY89.

I thought of crisp flowers glistening in frosty light, of unnamed jewels in dusky caves, of a quotation about undiscovered loveliness, and of hasty surmises I've since forgotten, but I've never forgotten that burst of uncertain color in a flickering half-light. It was my introduction to the stained glass craft.

As a recipient of such rarities as the Connick archives and as a library committed to the most expeditious and most modern level of service, the Library placed emphasis on two areas this year: preservation and applications of technology.

### Preservation

Several years ago the Library recognized the urgent need to preserve its remarkable rare book and manuscript holdings with the application and receipt of a two-year grant from the U. S. Department of Education. With this

impetus, the Library established a conservation laboratory under the direction of the keeper of rare books and manuscripts. The laboratory was staffed with conservators specializing in the preservation of books and paper. When the grant expired, the Library assumed the budgeted operation of the lab. At that time Keeper Laura Monti said of the conservation center, "This is a great step in the history of the laboratory...because the great collections of the Library, untouched for years and with the accumulation of the dust of ages and the acid in the air, are now being [saved] from progressive deterioration." Dr. Monti was deeply aware that acquisitions by the Rare Books Department must be predicated on the Library's ability to preserve them. Items which are sometimes five hundred years old at the time of acquisition should be still available to scholars for the next half-millennium. Such rarities acquired this year included an *incunabulum* dating to 1498, *Fundamentum eterae felicitas*, a devotional book with woodcuts; *Sermones* by Aurelius Augustinus, printed in Paris in 1500; Johan de Brune's *Emblemata of Zinnewerk*, Amsterdam, 1624; and several impressive Bibles of the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries.

In the years since the establishment of the conservation laboratory, there has been an impressive number of works restored or encapsulated and stored in acid-free containers, all this in a humidity/temperature controlled Rare Books and Manuscripts Department. This past year saw the completion of the Prince Collection of documents, "a great feat considering the condition of deterioration." In book conservation, the John Adams Collection was almost completed "using a process that alternates between small repairs, important repairs, rebinding and binding." From Brazil, Ecuador, and Venezuela came conservators, a librarian, and a historian each seeking data and advice on the conservation needs of their institutions.

With this preface on the Library's strong investment in preserving its magnificent holdings, it is not surprising that one of the major developments of FY90 related to preservation. The Association of Research Libraries Office of Management Studies selected the Boston Public Library to participate in the Preservation Planning Program administered by that office. Designed as a self-study activity, the program will involve a study team and several task forces, the study team to prepare a background paper, the task force to examine specific issues. The final report will be published and distributed by the Association of Research Libraries. The study team will examine activities in the Library in their entirety, from short- and long-term goals to present and future levels of support. Chairing the study team is Mary Beth Dunhouse.

In the Research Library and in some branches there were additional examples of concern with preservation. The Library, jointly with the Society, received a two-year matching grant from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities to microfilm certain items in the archives of the Handel and Haydn Society. Dating to 1815, the archives include early imprints of



Handel's music, holographs of commissioned works, books, concert programs, and scrapbooks. Targeted for the microfilming project were the programs and scrapbooks of the Society. To demonstrate the demands of preservation microfilming, we turn to the report of the activity by Diane Ota, curator of music. First came the gathering in one place of the scrapbook holdings of the Society from their locations in Rare Books, Music Department, and the Society itself. Then came "unfolding foldouts, removing staples, marking manuscript letters and notes, noting ink and pencil notations, noting stained pages, writing descriptions and targets"—a process tedious but essential.

In March the scrapbooks were delivered to the Northeast Document Conservation Center in Andover, Massachusetts, and by the end of FY90 they were returned, inventoried, and replaced in their original sites. Microfilms were inspected and the negatives were also distributed. This work was timed to coincide with the jubilee year of the Society. The Music Department joined with the Society in mounting the exhibit, "175 Years of Music History: The Handel and Haydn Society." Other preservation microfilming projects were handled with Chadwick-Healey, microfilming 19th-century American music periodicals. Some 127 volumes were filmed for this project.

One of the most dramatic examples of preservation (and cooperation with another cultural body) dealt not with books but with a piano! Among the many non-book items received by the Library this past century was a Crehore piano. One of the first such instruments manufactured in the United States around 1800, the piano is one of only six known pianos by Crehore still in existence—and one of the few with its "innards" almost intact. Thanks to a loan agreement with the Museum of Fine Arts, the precious piano has been transferred from its remote site in the office of the Library's keeper of rare books and placed on temporary deposit in the Museum's Musical Instruments Collection. In the tender care of the Museum, under appropriate climatic conditions, the piano will be accessible for supervised viewing and study by students and scholars of musical instruments.

Charlestown Branch Library was particularly mindful of preservation this year. During National Preservation Week, three recently restored paintings were unveiled in the branch lecture hall, among them: John Singer Sargent's "Richard Devens." Costs of restoration were shared by the Friends of the Charlestown Branch and the Charlestown Preservation Society. As part of the focus on preservation, a member of the Museum of Fine Arts delivered a slide lecture on artists of Charlestown and Boston.

The Library's most publicized and necessary restoration will be the place where its treasures—murals, rare prints, books, and manuscripts—are housed, the McKim building itself. Previous annual reports have spelled out the progress in the various stages of restoration which will be carried out by Shepley, Richardson, and Bulfinch under designer Daniel Coolidge. In FY90

the Trustees voted to accept a state construction grant in the amount of \$7 million that will supplement the city's loan order in the amount of \$13.4 million. This year the working drawings for the restoration were completed and in March final approval and certifications for restoration from various official agencies were received. The project is scheduled to go out for bid in 1991. Daniel Coolidge noted that the project will yield a functional, user-friendly building effectively related to the adjoining Johnson building.

The Library staff member charged with representing the Library in the restoration is John J. Doherty, assistant director for physical plant and operations. Doherty's concerns with preservation of the building have long been matched by concerns with other indispensable city buildings and their records. This year his priorities of preservation were recognized by the Boston Society of Architects. On 3 October the Society presented John Doherty with the Historic Preservation Award in recognition of his significant achievements in the conservation and preservation of the man-made environment. The first recipient of the award was Richard Cardinal Cushing.

Behind the award to Doherty was a remarkable move which began in late 1972. At that time the old city hall was being renovated for the Boston School Committee. Stored in the building were virtually thousands of original drawings and city building inspection reports for just about everything constructed in Boston between 1873 and 1962. In the process of cleaning out the building, the plans and reports were scheduled for the dumpster. Recognizing that the drawings were irreplaceable, Doherty recruited Library volunteers armed with trash bags and moved the collection from Court Street to Copley Square. Since 1974 the plans have been available to architects, building inspectors, and private owners. Doherty volunteers his time on frequent Saturday mornings to make the collection accessible. What seemed at one time a throwaway resource has proved indispensable.

No more dynamic examples of the rewards of preservation in the Boston Public Library have been demonstrated than three exhibitions assembled by the Fine Arts Department. The exhibits coincided with the 50th anniversary celebration and annual meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians held in Boston. "Highlights of the Architectural Collections of the BPL" drew upon the drawings and records numbering more than 400,000 items—from an 1805 plan by Charles Bulfinch to alter Faneuil Hall to recent competition panels for the redesign of Copley Square. Included in this exhibit were drawings from the Peabody & Stearns holdings, recently preserved with a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

A second exhibit, "William Gibbons Preston, the Evolution of an Architect," highlighted Boston's best known, most prolific designer. His important Boston landmarks include the Museum of Natural History (later



Bonwit Teller and now Louis), the footbridge in the Public Garden, and the Armory of the First Corps of Cadets (now the Park Plaza Castle).

A third exhibit, "Adventures in Light and Color," displayed items from the Connick Stained Glass Archives mentioned at the beginning of this report. Established in Boston in 1912, the Connick Studio created windows for more than five thousand worldwide institutions, among them: the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, the National Shrine in the nation's capital, and the American Church in Paris. In preserving and exhibiting such archives, the Library performs the role of perpetuating not only the facts of art and architecture, but the sense of wonder behind them.

### Technology

The Library moved rapidly into state-of-the-art technology with the acquisition of a VAX 6410 mainframe computer system supported in part by a corporate grant from Digital Equipment Corporation. Director Arthur Curley said the acquisition "substantially enhances the capacity of our computing system, which has been a major goal of our capital program." He noted that it will make it possible "for us to expand services to the more than two hundred libraries throughout Massachusetts currently connected through our cooperative cataloging program and the state's interlibrary loan network."

The new VAX system, which is expected to be operational early in FY91, will more than double the Library's mainframe computer capacity and will allow for the merging of four existing databases as well as bring on-line the full Library of Congress catalog database of 3.5 million items. With holdings numbering in excess of 23 million items, the Boston Public Library will considerably expedite service to patrons.

In addition to the progress promised by the VAX system, the continuing installation of DRA terminals and the barcoding of collections paved the way for advances in registration, circulation, and full networked access to collections of the Boston Public Library (central and branches) and the other five members of the Metro Boston Library Network.

Reports from the General Library and branches repeatedly testify to the advances brought about by the DRA system. From General Library Circulation and Shelving comes this word: "We are able to offer more services to our public such as renewals, on-line reserves, instant issuing of library cards, daily due dates, and many more." Statistics for this department, certainly augmented by the new system, continue to mount. In FY90 744,626 items were circulated, an increase of more than 10 percent over the previous year. Branch library evaluations of the DRA system included such ventures into hyperbole as "worked wonders," "amazed," "astounded," and "a major breakthrough."

For technology to work there must be expert staff educated in areas daily stretching beyond what was once traditional librarians' knowledge. Specialists dealing with hardware, software, systems management, programming, telecommunications and related instruction, and troubleshooting now occupy key posts in modern library organizations, the Boston Public Library among them. Annual reports often highlight book-centered activities, programs, and exhibits—the things which “grab” the lay reader of such reports. But the units behind the books and the departments which make technology function must not pass unmentioned.

In the forefront of technical units in the Library is the Systems Office which describes FY90 as “a watershed year” with the phasing out of obsolete computer equipment. Labor-intensive activities included the moving of software applications for circulation to the VAX computers; the conversion of approximately 170,000 IBM records into the DRA format; and the consideration of a replacement for the cataloging system, a very large, complicated system of more than three million records.

Other departments were similarly caught up in the changes and progress generated by automation. For example, Automated Cataloging, which administers the Cooperative Cataloging Program for 188 Massachusetts libraries, produced 881,541 catalog cards and 65,715 labels for member libraries. This unit also experienced the impact of the new DRA system as the first point of troubleshooting both in hardware and telecommunications failures. The Cataloging Department faced increased attention to media formats—scores, spoken discs and tapes, musical recordings, and mixed book-and-tape sets. “Current records for all formats,” says the department, “tend to be more sophisticated than in previous years because of the increased requirements of automation.” Other units also noted the expanded needs of automation. Book Preparation dealt with a major responsibility for the barcoding operation. Cataloging Support handled the sorting and distribution of cards for the Automated Cataloging Unit as well as database searching for manually produced cards. Interlibrary Loan noted the accelerated activities resulting from DRA, and the charging and circulation of books directly from ILL, including the assignment and later cancellation of temporary barcodes. The Fax Office maintained its remarkable turnaround time this year: more than 8,000 requests received and 80 percent filled within 24 hours.

Application of technology to activities of the Access Center this year was enhanced with receipt of a Library Services and Construction Act grant for implementation of “Computer Technology for Disabled People, Phase 2.” This grant will make it possible for the department to acquire an IBM-compatible computer with Braille peripherals. Armed with this modern tool, blind and visually impaired patrons will be able to access reference materials in CD ROM and eventually to utilize the public access catalog of the holdings

of General Library and Metro Boston Network. Described as "a breakthrough" and "a pioneering role for the Access Center," the computer places the Boston Public Library as only the second library in the United States (preceded by the Phoenix, Arizona, Public Library) to offer CD ROM reference service to blind/visually impaired people.

### Librarians as Teachers

Librarians have always been trained and have performed professionally in giving one-to-one attention and service to individual patrons. In addition, they have become increasingly expert in planning and implementing programs for groups of people. What needs to be emphasized now is the significant role librarians play—especially those in major metropolitan libraries—as teachers. This role has been intensified by the move into automation.

The examples cited here of staff librarians as teachers are selected descriptions of such instructors who have counterparts throughout the specialized departments and branches of the Library. John Pelose, supervisor of the Automated Cataloging Unit/Telecommunications, conducted several staff development sessions for Boston Public Library members as well as librarians of the Metro Boston Library Network. As advances in DRA and other automation projects moved rapidly, Pelose dealt with ACU Cataloging and Telecommunications Services, telephone etiquette, and background on Library of Congress and OCLC services. Marta Pardee-King, network coordinator, led several sessions on the functions and progress of the DRA system. Sally Beecher, curator of humanities reference, offered a ready reference workshop for librarians of the Andover subregion. Mary Frances O'Brien and Dolores Schueler of the Social Science Department gave two sessions on business sources for the Andover subregion and for Dynagraf, Inc.

Examples of instruction by expert staff follow the full range of specialized departments—the more specialized the department, the greater the need for enlightenment of the "uninitiated." The Music Department offered orientation for classes in music bibliography for students from Simmons College. A leader in research resources on genealogy, many of them original files created over the years, the Library is called on frequently to give instruction in the area of ancestors/descendants, their emigration dates, births and deaths, references to families in town histories, and much more. This year lectures were delivered by Henry Scannell of the Microtext and Newspaper Department and Joseph G. V. Maciora of the Social Science Department at the "Best Years Are Here" exposition. Maciora also addressed Harvard University's "Life-Long Learning Class" on genealogy. Staff of the Children's Room, General Library, gave formal lectures on children's literature and services to students of Bunker Hill Community College, Pine Manor Jr. College, Roxbury Community College, Suffolk University, and Emerson College.

Activities of the Science Reference Department graphically demonstrate the role of librarians as teachers. Curator Marilyn McLean and Reference Librarian George Cumming performed the following instructing assignments: a presentation to 300 mechanical design students from Northeastern University and a similar talk to 35 students at Tufts University; also a talk at the MIT Innovation Center. In addition to instructing adults and college students, Cumming also introduced 4th, 5th and 6th graders from the Revere schools to patents and trademarks and offered a science project workshop for 25 children. McLean gave presentations to classes in Science/Technology and Reference at the Simmons Graduate School of Library Science.

Librarians in branches, traditionally instructing young people in library skills, continued their important role. This year the emphasis was on literacy and library services to bilingual patrons. Recent emigrants from the USSR, students at New England Hebrew Academy, visited Brighton Branch. Codman Square offered instructional tours for literacy students from the Haitian Multi-Service Center, Odwin Learning Center, Lee Community School Adult Learning Center, and the Boston Adult Basic Education Center at Woodrow Wilson Middle School. Connolly Branch offered a presentation to multicultural teachers at the Children's Museum on services to bilingual students.

Another effective device for unfolding the functions and collections of a library is the tour. In this format the participant learns according to his inclination, interest, and attention span. The opportunity is there for close up, often hands-on exposure to elements in the Library. Tours vary in patronage and focus, from visitors or professionals to school classes. To give a sample of variations in the tour format: 40 children's and school librarians from Connecticut examined books in the Jordan Collection; students enrolled in a picture book class at Lesley College examined that department's illustrated children's books; Humanities Reference gave tours in literature to Northeastern University graduate students; the Government Documents Department gave a tour to the criminal justice class from Salem State College. These represent only a few examples of the tour format.

This brings us to the most significant, dynamically staffed and designed tour. Supported in part by the Junior League of Boston since its start in September 1989, the program under the direction of Jody Eldredge trains volunteers to conduct tours of the Central Library. Training for the guides this year included a lecture on David McCord, author of *...as built with second thoughts, reforming what was old!*, a source book used as part of tour guide training. Other special experiences, which unfold useful background data on the Library buildings and history for tour guides, included an all-day workshop conducted by the Royal Pickwickians, a troupe of Philadelphia actors who recreated the life and times of Charles Follen McKim and the major artists in the Research Library; a lecture by Peter Arms Wick, author of *Handbook to*



*the Art and Architecture of the Boston Public Library*; and two lectures on presenting tour information to children.

As the third year of the funded three-year program drew to a close in FY90, it was reported that the goals have been met: five regularly scheduled tours each week, special tours available on request, and thirty tour guides on duty. So effective has the program been that the Junior League will support the program for a fourth year. Tour guides contributed approximately 500 hours of tours in FY90, and general volunteers gave approximately 1,000 hours of research, cataloging, and office support to the Library.

### Research Library

Recent annual reports have detailed the functions of Library departments within the Research Library from collection building to service to users. In addition, this report has called attention to the specialized departments in sections on preservation, technology, and tours. At this point we shall focus on the year's highlights in the specialized departments, which have not already been cited.

Government Documents acquired several noteworthy CD ROMs as well as a personal computer, with several special projects planned. Fine Arts, despite reduced hours, staff, and funds, mounted the major exhibitions already noted; gave extensive reference assistance; and merited this quote from the *Boston Globe* (1/4/90): "...a high quality of civilization still reigns in the Fine Arts section on the third floor."

In the midst of extensive building renovation, Kirstein Business Branch augmented its holdings with the acquisition of 30 new directories; the branch supplied more than 70,000 items, responded to more than 25,000 phone calls, and answered 45,263 reference queries as well as more than 2,000 directional questions. The Sound Archives collection reached a total of a quarter million items. Rare Books and Manuscripts noted that the use of rare items tripled, reference questions doubled, numbers of books and manuscripts cataloged increased as did the flow of visitors. FY90 also marked the completion of the organization and cataloging of the Dwiggins Collection. The department contributed to an exhibition, "The Golden Age of Dutch Manuscript Painting," organized by the Pierpont Morgan Library and The Rijksmuseum het Catharijne Convent of Utrecht. As Dr. Laura Monti, keeper of rare books, commented: "The name of the Boston Public Library appeared with the great libraries of the world in this exhibit."

The Microtext Department continued intensive service of microforms, reporting that "a major new mark in microfiche holdings was reached this year as the department passed its 2-millionth fiche. Microforms began to have a separate identity in about 1966 with the 'breakup' of the old

Patent Room. The millionth microfiche was obtained in 1985, or in 20 years; it has taken only five years to reach the second million."

### Community Library Services

Specific citations and examples related to budget cutbacks, services, programs, publications, and buildings as they relate to Community Library Services are given throughout this report. Three actions highlight the year: the official opening of the renovated Connolly Branch, the opening of the addition to West Roxbury Branch Library, and the launch of the new circulation system on October 16, 1989. At that time the central library, Codman Square, Dudley, Orient Heights, Washington Village, and West Roxbury Branches began performing all circulation functions on the new DRA system. The remaining 20 branches and Mobile Library Services (formerly Extension Services) began partial use of the system pending completion of retrospective barcoding of their collections.

Statistics for FY90 project a positive growth despite mandated cutbacks in hours and book budgets. Thirteen branches and General Library realized increases in total circulation; 21 branches and General Library increased or maintained their circulation per hours open; book deposits were made to 92 sites, totaling 283,956 books; the number of registered borrowers reached 307,126; of this number, 85 percent reside in Boston; reference and directional inquiries increased by 36 percent in branches and 75 percent in General Library departments. While the total number of programs dropped by 16 percent, the average attendance at each program increased by 89 percent over the preceding year.

And behind the statistics was evidence of energetic, committed, imaginative staff who marked FY90 with conscientious, aggressive service on committees, in literacy projects, and in strong collaborations with schools, community agencies, and Friends groups.

### Programs

A major ingredient in each annual report down the years has been the recital of programs (lectures, panel discussions, film showings) for various age and interest levels. For the Boston Public Library such programming has always been accepted by library administration as a responsibility and by the public as an integral part of their library. Rather than recite in detail the programs of FY90, this report will point up trends, historic implications, and interpretations of program activity.

Programming in FY90 revealed a strong awareness and response to ethnic composition of the community. For example, West Roxbury Branch established links with the William G. Abdalah Memorial Library, the St.



George Community Center, and the Lebanese Syrian Ladies Aid Society, which donated several children's picture books in Arabic. An author from Beirut University lectured on the value of bilingual education. One of the most dramatic responses to a special culture within the community was the General Library's Asian Focus series, supported by a grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Programs drew record attendance and were judged to have visibly increased the use of the Chinese book collection. The programs included a film series from China, performances by the American Chinese Art Society, and Cambodian folk dancers. In a practical response to the needs of the growing Asian community, library and card applications were translated into Khmer, Chinese, and Vietnamese. Translations into Russian and Portuguese were addressed to those new Bostonians. The picture of the Angkor Dance Troupe of Lowell performing in front of the Research Library was published in *American Libraries*.

Connolly Branch spread the word repeatedly this year by way of the media, many times calling attention to its services to Spanish-speaking users. The Spanish TV station, *Cuenca Vision*, filmed a Spanish story hour offered by children's librarian Edith Bravo. The *Jamaica Plain Arts News* published an extensive article on Colombian artist Hector Vivas, exhibited at the branch. WNEV-TV sponsored a Spanish story hour led by Mayra Rodríguez, host of *Aquí!* as part of their "Great Expectations" project. Lilian V. Vargas, reporter for the Spanish weekly newspaper *El Mundo*, wrote a lengthy piece on the library, one of several editorial and other articles on the branch in the course of the year. And "Lo Mejor de La Semana" (Best of the Week), a program on *Radio Periodico el Mundo*, featured an interview with Edith Bravo in a segment on library services to the Hispanic community. It goes without saying that such positive coverage by the media can only enhance the library's efforts to reach out.

In a three-part program, Brighton Branch dealt with a world and a culture that remains often cryptic and mysterious. Titled "An Arab Mosaic: North Yemen, Tunisia, and Morocco," the series called on Peace Corps volunteers who have seen service in the Middle East and North Africa. They described their experiences, showing slides of remote, mountainous areas; offering the audience sense-pleasing samples of native costumes, food, and background music. The experience included exhibits of photos and artifacts.

Programs designed for the various age levels continued as a major focus in library events. One such area of programming deserves particular highlighting since such service has been a historic milestone in public library service, namely lecture hall presentations geared to patrons over 60, popularly referred to as "Never Too Late" series. Now more than 40 years old, this attention to senior citizens on a dynamic, continuing basis is the oldest such library-sponsored program for older adults in the country. For a twofold

reason—both as an annual record worthy of archival listing and as a prototype for other libraries involved currently in such programming—here is a recital of FY90 activities in the General Library for Never-Too-Laters. In past reports we have noted the rationale behind these programs: that the audience be perceived as alert, forward-looking, deserving the best, and that the programs offer not pap, not “light stuff,” not superficial, easy-to-digest data.

To quote the report by Kathleen B. Hegarty, staff officer for special programs: “The group continues to sustain its intellectual vigor and vitality and to draw new members to its ranks. Outstanding programs, presented to capacity, responsive audiences, have included an illustrated lecture on ‘John James Audubon: the Man, the Artist, the Ornithologist’ by Dr. Elisha Atkins, director, Habitat Institute for the Environment, Belmont; ‘Monet: the Series Paintings,’ by Henry Augustine Tate, art historian whose efforts received an ovation; ‘Melodic Melodies,’ a concert of opera and operatic selections featuring soprano Alexandra Suchocki and tenor Mark Andersen, accompanied by a talented violinist and pianist, called by the audience the best program ever presented in this library; and ‘Brain Power,’ a talk by Dr. Vernon Mark, neurosurgeon and author, who offered a compassionate, lucid presentation on how to maintain and enhance brain fitness throughout life.” Membership in the General Library Never Too Late group numbers almost 1,500; attendance at these programs in FY90 numbered 7,622 at 38 programs.

Children continued this year to receive their share of special attention in programming. A growing delight for young audiences, demonstrated in FY90, were presentations of puppets. Throughout the library system puppets were “in”—the Gerwick Puppets production of “Aladdin and the Magic Lamp” at seven branches and General Library; NINOTS Puppet Theater at four branches; the Poobley Greegy Puppet Theater at Roslindale Branch; Cranberry Puppets at Jamaica Plain; and You and Me Puppets at Charlestown.

Centered mainly in the Young Adult Department of central, services to teenagers this year gave particular attention to readers advisory help to teachers and youth workers in social service agencies. Programs for young people included the annual creative writing workshop, a science project workshop, and a YA open house. Dudley Branch made efforts to increase YA patronage beyond those seeking books on the summer reading lists by featuring prominent local people with interesting jobs or rapport with youth, for example, Attorney Judith Dilday and Deborah Protherow-Stith.

Programming in Boston enjoys a substantial resource, as do other urban libraries, by having a rich “bank” of speakers—professors, radio and television personalities, and authors/artists. FY90 in the library graphically demonstrated this plus. Media personalities drew fascinated audiences, among them: Jim Boyd of Channel 5/TV; Lonnie Carton of WEEI’s Learning Center; Howie Carr of the *Herald*; Willie Maze, sportscaster at WILD radio. Local

writers who gave their time to programs included Padraic O'Malley, Sam Cornish, James Carroll, Suzanne Gordon, Jeremiah Healy, William Tappley, Stephen Fox, and David Kruh. Not only were these authors available locally, but many of them gave their time without remuneration.

Not content to pursue past routes in programming, the Boston Public Library seeks constantly new routes to reaching new audiences. One such effort was tried in FY90 by General Library. As the report describes it: "We expect that avid readers will use the library, but not necessarily avid cooks, although the library does have a large and varied cookbook collection." So, to introduce new people to the resources of the library and to highlight the BPL's strong cookbook collection, the Special Projects office developed a spring series of programs devoted to the art of the cookbook titled "Cooks in Print." Julia Child kicked off the series with a talk about her latest book, *The Way to Cook*. Successive programs featured restaurateur Jasper White; George Berkowitz of Legal Sea Foods; Odette Bery, owner of Another Season; and Sarah Leah Chase, owner of Que Sera Sarah in a panel discussion; then once again Julia Child with her editor Judith Jones. The fifth program featured the film "Babette's Feast." A lavish, elegant dessert ended the series as author Rose Levy Beranbaum (*The Cake Bible*) talked about her passion for cakes and chocolate. The series brought approximately 2,500 people into the Library, many of whom had never been to the Library before.

Certainly the most concerted effort to bring new readers to the Library was the continuing attention to literacy, begun in 1987 with the formation of the Coordinating Committee for Literacy. Last year Literacy Resource Centers were established in the central library and at 14 branch libraries. This year Library focus was twofold: strengthening ties between adult learners and increasing staff knowledge and understanding of the needs of the adult literacy community. Staff members of the Coordinating Committee and the Literacy Materials Review Committee were briefed through lectures and a workshop on the work of the various organizations.

Three annual memorial lectureships were presented in FY90. In the 42nd Mary U. Nichols lecture and book awards at North End Branch, Honorable Salvatore F. DiMasi spoke on "The Importance of Sharing One's Talents and Knowledge with One's Community Through Active Community Participation." Pulitzer-Prize-winning journalist David Halberstam spoke about his most recent best seller, *Summer of '49*, in the Francis Moloney Lecture. Douglass Scott presented an address honoring W. A. Dwiggins, "Eclecticism to Modernism: American Graphic Design in the 1930s."

Programming in the series format known as the Learning Library of the National Endowment for the Humanities was considerably reduced and emphasis was placed on single program formats. Two branches did offer NEH series. South Boston Branch called upon Anthony Sammarco to deliver a

three-part slide/lecture sequence on the history of South Boston. Hyde Park Branch presented Padraig O'Malley speaking on "Understanding Ireland."

### Exhibitions

Reaching library patrons' attention through visual displays, often of art, sometimes of artifacts or crafts or books themselves, remained a priority in FY90. Exhibit cases and galleries in the McKim and Johnson buildings as in branch libraries were booked months ahead.

Several distinguished artists were shown in the Wiggin Gallery, among them Heinrich Kley, called one of the greatest cartoonists of modern times; Boston artist/teacher Arthur Polonsky, whose drawings demonstrated particular techniques to his students; and Duncan Macpherson, who recently donated many of his political cartoons to the Library. Boston's Black artist Allan Rohan Crite was exhibited in the great hall of the General Library.

Rare Books displayed its rarities, among them: "Italian Treasures," leading writers from the 15th to the 17th centuries; "The Christmas Story: Told through Illuminated Manuscripts"; and "W. B. Yeats," honoring the Irish writer on the 50th anniversary of his death. The Jordan Collection drew upon its international holdings for two major shows: "Africa Publishes: A selection of Books for Children from Twenty-Four African Nations" and "A World of Alphabet Books." Brighton, Hyde Park, Connolly, and South Boston Branches all chose to exhibit the works of community artists. Roslindale exhibited "A Little Bit of Ireland" featuring Waterford glass, Irish linen, and such.

Photographs frequently were the centerpiece of exhibits: "Kiki: Migrant Family Life in a South African Compound," photos by Roger Meintjies of living conditions under *apartheid*; a photodocumentary by Joanne Ciccarello, "Arts in the Healing Process," both in the General Library; "Women of Courage—East," photographs of 22 women from the northeast, displayed at Dudley Branch. A major exhibit in the great hall was jointly sponsored and designed by the Library of Congress and the American Library Association in celebration of the bicentennial of Congress, "To Make All Laws: The Congress of the U. S."

### Buildings

The major building event of the year was the grand opening of the West Roxbury Branch addition on Sunday, 24 September. Assistant Director for Community Library Services Lesley Loke called the event "a benchmark in branch library development." Funded as part of Mayor Flynn's Rebuilding Boston Capital Improvement Project and designed by Anthony Tappe Associates, the addition complements the *Beaux Arts* style of the original building. The horizontal lines of the stone cornice continue from one building to the next; the windows of the new structure are massed similarly. Inside,



directly across from the lobby is a reading garden with a central fountain. The addition almost triples the space of the existing library, with seating for more than 180 in service areas and 150 in the lecture hall. Steel shelving will accommodate 90,000 volumes.

The addition to the West Roxbury Branch contributed several firsts in the history of branch buildings: first elevator, first exhibition gallery, first lecture hall accessible when the remainder of the building is closed, first craft center (with sink and work space), first functional garden space. Delighted with the results of the new unit, West Roxbury residents—fervent advocates for the best in library service—remain mindful that the new addition came about in part because of the generosity of The West Roxbury Congregational Church. The church originally occupied the site of the new addition, the land given to the Library after the church was destroyed by fire.

Maintenance of buildings and grounds in other branch libraries as well as installation of items ranging from doors, locks, air conditioning units, flooring, and roofs were handled this year under the department appropriate to the project, either the Library's Buildings Department or Public Facilities. Several projected and essential capital projects remained incomplete or postponed.

The impact of the continuing attention to library structures in the picture of total service to the public is graphically summarized by reporting branch libraries. From Barbara Wicker, branch librarian of Hyde Park Branch: "in spite of the filth, inconvenience, and chaos that comes with major renovations such as these [exterior painting, new bathroom, security of items], the results are well worth it." From Dorothy Martin, branch librarian, Roslindale: "Last summer and fall were total chaos at the branch due to construction dust and noise [handicap ramp, bathrooms, doors, lighting, security rooms, air conditioning, asbestos removal] but the end results were worth it." Mary Linn, branch librarian of East Boston Branch, summed up the importance of the building in branch library service: "All of these improvements [new roof, boiler, fence] send a message to the community that their public library should be a place of beauty and importance."

## Grants and Gifts

Many of the innovations, special acquisitions, studies, and important events are made possible for the Library by grants or gifts. FY90 was marked by funding which propelled the Library beyond the operational necessities.

### Grants

Digital Equipment Corporation toward purchase of VAX 6410 system	\$353,000.
Boston Globe Foundation	200,000.
Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities (for Handel & Haydn microfilm project (FY90)	2,339.
LSCA, Title I, microfilming local newspaper indexes	20,000.
LSCA Title I, "to expedite access to Library's unprocessed resources"	311,509.
LSCA Title I Grant, "Asian Focus"	23,570.
LSCA Title VI Grant (for compiling and publishing works of adult new readers)	25,000.
National Endowment for the Humanities (bibliographic phase to catalog all Massachusetts newspapers)	401,685.
Fidelity Foundation, RIF program at Fields Corner	2,000.
WMJX Radio and JIF Peanut Butter (for special children's programs at district libraries)	1,461.
Association of Research Libraries (self-study preservation project)	10,000.

Several grants went directly to branches for art exhibitions, landscaping grounds, and preservation.

### Gifts

Donation of \$13,330 by Daniel Rea of Readville for purchase of a facsimile edition of the Book of Kells.

3,000 books bequeathed by Edward Beatty of Hyde Park.

U. S. Geologic maps donated by the State Library.

136 books (German, Polish, Russian, Indian), gift of the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago.

Robert Severy continued to fund the restoration of Library paintings, this year a Winslow Homer.

Burlesque actor Stephen Mills bequeathed his personal collection of clothing, hats, canes, musical scores.

776 recordings from various donors went to the Sound Archives.



15 scrapbooks and correspondence of the Handel & Haydn Society donated by Mrs. John Hamilton of Millbrook, New York.

610 jazz arrangements, some in manuscript format, gift of Sophia Chomes of Newton.

Other musical gifts included 155 music song sheets, gift of Rita Dinneen; Carroll collections of compositions for military and concert bands, secular motets, songs, and choruses, gift of Rev. Robert Mackie, Hanover; several back issues of music journals from Mary Wolfman of Brookline.

Robert Severy donated 3,000 photographs of Charlestown, Kenmore Square, and Bay State Road.

Roger Howlett of Childs Gallery donated 15 boxes of art sales catalogs, periodicals, and ephemera on American artists.

7,259 books on American humor bequeathed by the Rosenberg estate.

This represents only a partial list of the generous donations on many subjects and formats. The value of gifts and grants for FY90 reached a total of \$1,400,000.

### Publications

In its publications program, the Library has repeatedly turned to writings from community poets and authors. Several years ago the creative efforts of children and teens were highlighted in *What Is a City? Young People Reply*. As a result, the original sentiments of our urban contributors were later quoted in several anthologies. Two years ago the Library published the verse of 27 poets in the Dudley Branch Poetry Club, *Poets on the Horizon*. And last year beginning writers appeared in print in *it's never easy*.

Once again the Library is encouraging the writing talents of neighborhood authors. Work has been proceeding on a project titled "Tales from Boston Neighborhoods" under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education (LSCA Title VI). Students in adult literacy classes in the Codman Square, Dudley, and Jamaica Plain communities are putting into words their thoughts on their lives, their neighbors and neighborhoods, their concerns and aspirations. It is hoped that the project will result in a publication.

In other publishing efforts this past year: a guide to the Alice M. Jordan Collection was released and given widespread distribution; two major exhibits of that collection were represented in a checklist, "World of Alphabet Books," and a bibliography, "Africa Publishes." Several booklists were compiled by staff of the General Library: "Cooks in Print" and "Extraordinary Lives" by Joanne Bogart; "High Noon: Books about Lawmen and Outlaws of the Old West" by Roland Butterfield; "We Could Have Danced All Night: A Celebration of Lesbian and Gay Fiction" and "Deadly Intentions: True Tales of Murder," compiled by Susan Jacob; "Black Is...." selected and edited by a staff

committee chaired by Lois Henry; and "Modern Chinese Fiction," compiled by Caroline Young.

Government Documents laser-printed two editions of its in-house Index to State and Local Documents this year and produced them also on microfiche for distribution to libraries throughout Massachusetts. Thanks to the department's acquisition of a personal computer, plans are in process for updating other publications.

Library staff members reviewed for professional journals: Catherine Clancy and Denise Thornhill of the Young Adult Department reviewed young adult books for *VOYA Journal*; Charlotte Koiczynski of the Music Department reviewed for *Choice*; and Michael Rogan, also of the Music Department, reviewed for the Music Library Association's *Notes*.

Library staff members contributed to other publications in addition to their assignments for the Library. Marilyn McLean, curator of science reference, edited the newsletter of the Patent Depository Association, Region 1. Kim Tenney of the Fine Arts Department was represented in volume 4 of the *Walter Gropius Archives* (Garland), which printed her bibliography, "Gropius at TAC: Selected Projects." Ken Carlson of Fine Arts wrote two articles that appeared in print: one on Veronica Louvet, French-American Boston designer, in *Elle Decor* (March 1990), and another on the design of a London night club/*discotheque* in *Harper's and Queen* (June 1990). Diane Ota, curator of music, continued as editor-in-chief of the newsletter of the New England Chapter of the Music Library Association. Caroline Young of General Library contributed articles to *Sampan* and *World Journal*.

Demonstrating an expertise apart from her Library assignments, Alice Kane of the Microtext Department published the *Coffeeshouse Manager*, issued by the Coffeehouse Association of New England, and the *Coffeeshouse Information Booklet*.

In FY90 it was strongly evident that Library staff contributed to the print world as well as cataloged and interpreted the Library's vast collections.

### Staff

Possibly the most prolific writer among the staff this year was recently appointed Public Relations Officer Arthur Dunphy. Charged with educating the public to the full range of Library services and programs, Dunphy opened wide avenues of communication with the media. In FY90 he established central and branch editions of the monthly calendar, issued a new BPL telephone directory, established "This Week at the BPL" for distribution to the media, and created "user-specific" mailing lists for news releases. Media coverage of the Library increased dramatically in the press, television, and professional journals. Dunphy also promoted the American Library Association program, "Night of a Thousand Stars," in central and district libraries.

Four staff members with distinguished records in the Library departed their posts this year. Margo Crist, assistant director for planning and administrative coordination, accepted a position at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor as assistant director for public services. Crist saw earlier service as branch librarian at the Boston Public Library and regional administrator for the Central Massachusetts Regional Library System. On the occasion of her resignation, the Trustees paid tribute to her outstanding accomplishments including coordination of the search process for a new Library director. Mr. Curley noted that the "contributions she has made to the quality of library service in Boston and throughout the state will long remain."

Francina E. Gelzer retired this year as district supervisor and branch librarian, Dudley Branch Library. She began her career as a children's librarian at the North End Branch. In the ensuing years she held posts in several library communities—South End, Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan, with service also as director of the Holbrook Public Library. In a stirring salute at the Harriet Tubman House, an outpouring of city and library leaders cited her record of service, "her consistent concern for young people, her priority of community outreach, her encouragement of patrons and residents to value branch libraries as self-empowering resources." A scholarship in Francina Gelzer's name has been established at Roxbury Community College.

Theresa Cederholm left behind a proud record of achievement when she retired after more than 20 years of service making major contributions as coordinator of fine arts and subsequently as development officer. In her leadership of the Eastern Massachusetts Regional Library System, Mary Heneghan, retiring after almost 20 years, developed an efficient, responsive coordination of more than 200 libraries in eastern Massachusetts.

### Friends

Friends groups in branch libraries continued to expand this year in their various roles from fundraising to program support. The Jamaica Plain Friends donated an artificial Christmas tree, a new steel filing cabinet for local history materials, and a rack for displaying juvenile paperbacks. In addition, the group paid for an author appearance and proposed and received an Arts Lottery grant. The Hyde Park Friends also requested and received an Arts Lottery grant to fund four musical performances and gave the branch a VCR monitor and cabinet. Friends of the West End Branch donated a computer chair and received a \$2,000 grant from Boston Foundation's Fund for Parks and Open Spaces. Among their contributions, Brighton Friends supported a performance of magic, mime, and storytelling. Fields Corner Friends funded a series of family programs and received an Arts Lottery grant.

A recital of contributions and volunteerism from Friends groups could go on and on. They have made a considerable, visible difference in branch

services and grounds. In East Boston Branch where the Friends donated two fans and a pitcher and creamer, the librarian reported: "Friends planted daffodils and tulips in front of the Library....The flowers bloomed in the spring and were quite beautiful."

City-Wide Friends of the Boston Public Library also underwent considerable growth in FY90. To both groups, President of the Board of Trustees Kevin F. Moloney paid this tribute early in the year following receipt of word that the threatened Library budget had been revised and increased: "This change in the Library's circumstances would not have taken place without the many hours of hard work by officers and members of Friends of the Library organizations and citizens throughout the city." Under President Lorrey J. Bianchi, the City-Wide Friends have established an office in the McKim building. They spread the word of their activities and plans through publication of the newsletter *Friends Forum*. Using the motto, "Supporting the Entire System," the group encourages the goals of neighborhood Friends and publishes their news. The main focus this year, like last year, remains "The Budget Is Coming!"

The Associates of the Boston Public Library continued their mission of promoting the visibility of the Library and supporting a variety of programs. Centerpiece of the year's activity was their second annual dinner, the elegant "Literary Lights" fundraiser. Joining the featured speaker, Irish poet/author Seamus Heaney, were several other prominent writers, among them: John Kenneth Galbraith, George Higgins, Annie Dillard, and Stephen Jay Gould. In addition to the dinner, the Associates sponsor the annual Epstein Screenwriting Award and readings of new plays for the stage.

### Concluding Thoughts

In FY90 we witnessed the dual importance of preservation and technology. These priorities never for a moment obscured the importance of people in the Library equation—friends, volunteers, officers in city and state government supporting the Library, citizen users or potential users, library staff, library trustees.

In her annual report, the curator of Humanities Reference described her reaction to a publisher's catalog which came addressed to the "Curator of Human Reference": "Perhaps this is apt now for so many times today you must press a screen, type a message, fax a request, or push a button on your telephone to get information. People seem happy to contact the library and still be able to talk to a person and ask a question—the human exchange which is the essence of reference work."

And the human exchange remains the essence of all library service.

Arthur Curley  
Director and Librarian

## Library Resources

General Book Collections	
Volumes	5,992,634
Special Collections	
Rare Books and Manuscripts	1,180,274
Prints	725,880
Patents	9,332,356
Maps	308,916
Government Documents	1,870,210
Musical Scores	89,600
Periodicals	
Current Subscriptions	16,903
Non-Print Materials	
Audio-Recordings	323,915
Films and Video Cassettes	16,259
Pictorial Works	1,612,591
Microforms	<u>4,208,074</u>
TOTAL	25,677,612

## Library Use

Visitors	2,148,063
Programs	5,129
Program Attendance	176,923
Items Borrowed	2,086,071
Volumes Consulted	998,223
Reference Inquiries	1,235,612
Photocopies	1,570,000

# Library Expenditures

	FY88	FY89	FY90
<b>A. Salaries and Wages</b>			
City of Boston	\$ 12,761,847.	\$ 14,087,657.	\$14,040,104.
EMRLS*	1,077,009.	1,353,318.	1,197,085.
Library of Last Recourse	1,680,000.	1,685,958.	1,582,391.
Other State Aid	300,000.	191,527.	197,535.
Federal Grants	<u>119,897.</u>	<u>89,913.</u>	<u>309,153.</u>
TOTAL (A)	\$15,938,753.	\$17,408,373.	\$17,326,268.
<b>B. Books and Other Library Materials</b>			
City of Boston	\$ 2,285,688.	\$ 2,372,978.	2,721,258.
EMRLS*	1,425,033.	1,196,476.	1,219,040.
Library of Last Recourse	1,837,681.	1,867,962.	1,949,982.
Other State Aid	216,236.	330,456.	330,500.
Trust Fund Income	231,707.	193,911.	187,258.
Federal/State/Private Grants	<u>554,888.</u>	<u>138,551.</u>	<u>139,074.</u>
TOTAL (B)	\$6,551,233.	\$6,100,334.	\$6,547,112.
<b>C. All Other Expenses</b>			
City of Boston	\$ 2,934,251.	\$ 2,871,479.	2,999,423.
EMRLS*	657,994.	670,380.	804,071.
Library of Last Recourse	0.	0.	583,920.
Trust Fund Income	34,304.	21,790.	140,983.
Federal/State/Private Grants	202,702.	81,802.	263,339.
TOTAL (C)	\$3,829,251.	\$3,645,451.	\$4,791,738.
<b>GRAND TOTAL (A,B,C.)</b>	\$26,319,237.	\$27,154,158.	\$28,665,118.

\*Eastern Massachusetts Regional Library System





BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



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