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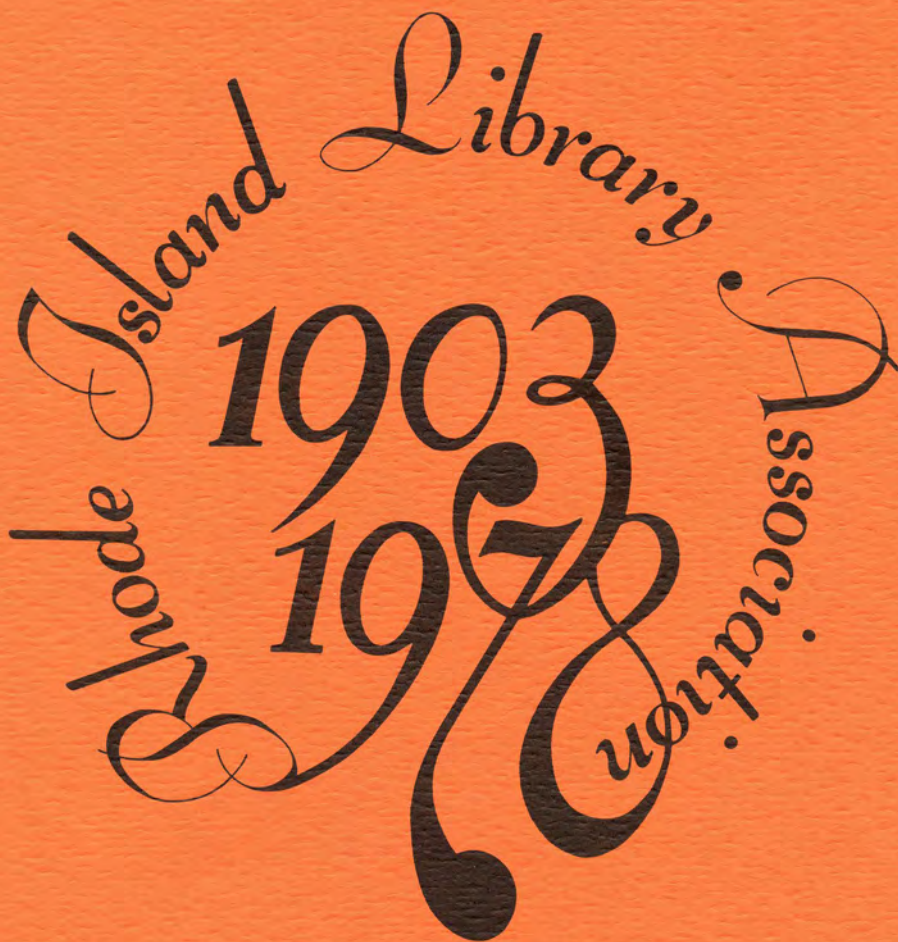
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Rhode Island Library Association BULLETIN



RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
150 EMPIRE STREET
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903

October 1977 Volume 50 No. 3
Indexed in Current Awareness
Library Literature
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EDITORIAL NOTICE:

The Bulletin appears monthly except in August. News and articles should be submitted to the editor by the 10th day of each month for publication by the end of that month.

The Bulletin is a publication for public, school, academic and special libraries of Rhode Island. Published by the Rhode Island Library Association, the Bulletin welcomes news and discussion of interest to RILA members. Articles contained herein, however, do not necessarily reflect the ideas of the RILA membership, or the Bulletin staff or advertisers. All articles about library matters will be considered. All should be signed and should not exceed ten double spaced typed pages unless the editor is consulted.

The Bulletin subscription rates are \$7.00/year for agencies or individuals not holding membership in RILA. Advertising rates per issue are \$20 per $\frac{1}{4}$ page, \$35 per $\frac{1}{2}$ page, and \$50 per full page. Call the advertising manager for further information.

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For each \$10.00 of institutional dues paid, one non-member will be allowed to attend major conferences at member rate, but without voting privileges.

Your dues include receipt of the RILA Bulletin (11 issues/year).
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Association dues support such activities as legislation, continuing education, intellectual freedom, public relations.

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COMMUNITY TO ATTEND A SPECIAL PROGRAM ENTITLED -

A National Information Policy:
Its Implications for Education
and Human Development

LOCATION: GAIGE HALL
RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE
PROVIDENCE, R.I.

DATE: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1977
9:00 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.

PARTICIPANTS: CLAIBORNE PELL,
-U.S. SENATE, R.I.
ALPHONSE TREZZA,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NCLIS
JAMES RILEY,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
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THERE IS NO REGISTRATION FEE FOR THIS PROGRAM.

RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION -- FALL CONFERENCE
 NOVEMBER 14-15, 1977
 SHERATON-ISLANDER INN, NEWPORT, R.I.
 TENTATIVE PROGRAM

The official program and times will appear in the October issue of the RILA Bulletin.

Monday, November 14, 1977

8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Registration

9:00 - 10:00 a.m. University of Rhode Island Graduate Library
 School Update and Introduction to Bernie Schlessinger

9:00 - 10:00 a.m. Resource Sharing

EXHIBITS

11:00 - 12:00 noon Daniel Gore,
 "Mischief in Measurement"

11:00 - 12:00 noon Your Local Publisher
 - Town Government

12:30 - 2:00 p.m. SUMMER BUFFET
 LUNCHEON

2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Public Relations &
 Outreach Subcommittees, "Not Ready
 for Prime Time...?"

2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Lila Sapinsley,
 "Job-Sharing"

EXHIBITS

3:30 - 5:00 p.m. "The Speaker"

3:30 - 5:00 p.m. Tour of Naval War College Library

5:15 - 6:30 p.m. RILAxation! Chips and Chat

6:30 - 8:00 p.m. DINNER ON YOUR OWN

8:15 - 9:00 p.m. Daniel Gore, "Going Out of Bibliographic Control"



Tuesday, November 15, 1977

8:30 - 9:30 a.m. REGISTRATION
9:00 - 10:00 a.m. John Berry, "Politics
of Library Survival"
9:00 - 10:00 a.m. Outreach Subcommittee,
"Barriers to Service"

EXHIBITS

11:00 - 12:30 p.m. ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING
12:30 - 2:00 p.m. SUMMER BUFFET LUNCHEON
2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Celeste West, "Beyond
the Literary-Industrial
Complex"
3:15 - 4:30 p.m. Reactor Panel - John
Berry, Daniel Gore



CONFERENCE REGISTRATION: PRE-REGISTRATION FORM Due by Oct. 31, 1977

Name _____

Title/Position _____

Affiliation _____ (for name tag)

Address _____

Fees: Please check appropriate lines:

MEMBERS: Two days \$6.00 Monday? _____
One day 3.00 Tuesday? _____

NON-MEMBERS: Two days 12.00 Monday? _____
One day 6.00 Tuesday? _____

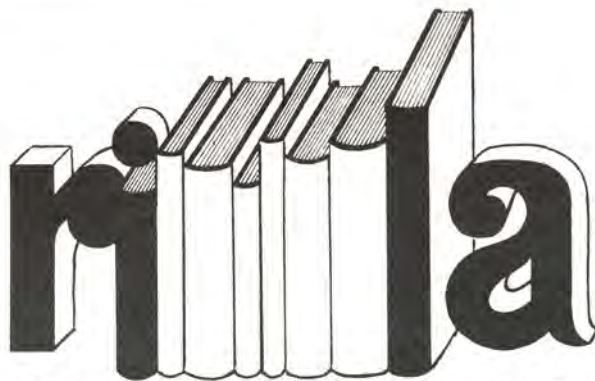
LUNCHEONS: Monday, Buffet lunch 4.55
Tuesday, Buffet lunch 4.55

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Rhode Island Library Association

SEND REGISTRATION FORM & PAYMENT TO: Jan Sieburth, Reference Dept.
URI Library
Kingston, RI 02881

THE HISTORY OF THE



-by Leo N. Flanagan

RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION 1903 - 1978

The objective of the Association shall be to promote library and information services in the State of Rhode Island and encourage interest in libraries, information centers and librarianship.

--RILA Constitution, 1976

To communicate is our chief business, society and friendship our chief delights.

--Virginia Woolf, The Common Reader

INTRODUCTION

Until now no history of the Rhode Island Library Association has existed. On a number of occasions in the past three-quarters of a century, the desirability of a history has been mentioned in the Association. But nothing was done until Allen Kent, editor of the Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science, asked RILA in 1975 to publish its history in the Encyclopedia. In response, RILA President at the time, James Giles, and the RILA Executive Board, requested that I research and write a history of the Association and publish it in the Encyclopedia. While no time for completion was established, it seemed appropriate to finish the history in 1977 because this is RILA's seventy-fifth year and because this year was compatible with the Encyclopedia's publishing schedule. A somewhat shorter version of the history which follows has just been accepted for publication in the Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science in the near future.

This history of the Rhode Island Library Association should be considered a tentative, and not a definitive history. It is based on the archives of the Association housed at the Providence College Library. Unfortunately, these records are sometimes obviously inaccurate, incomplete, or even contradictory. Still other information touching on the Rhode Island Library Association is yet to be explored in the files of the Department of State Library Services, in the personal correspondence and notes of member librarians, and in the memories of individual members through oral interviews. Three individuals have contributed generously from their memories and have critiqued a draft of this history: Elizabeth Myer, both former RILA president and former director

of the Department of State Library Services; Ardis Holliday, current president of RILA; and Jewel Drickamer, current director of DSLS. Their help and guidance has been very much appreciated.

Yet much is unclear, and in truth I feel more like an archaeologist than historian, attempting to interpret the remains, the shards and scrolls, broken and illegible, asking of the fragments, what was life like for them in those times? Most events and people in RILA's history I never knew. Undoubtedly a Rhode Island librarian of thirty or forty years would interpret the record fragments differently. And that may yet be done. Comments, additions, subtractions, modifications, criticisms of this history are welcome, and will be carefully collected for that time when another foolhardy soul, perhaps on RILA's hundredth anniversary, will venture again into the unknown in writing a second history of RILA.

THE ANCIENT WORLD

By 1890 the American Library Association found that many librarians were unable to reach the national library conferences, and that the concerns of those same librarians were reduced to insignificance in librarians' sections of state education associations. Consequently, ALA recommended the formation of state library associations to keep librarians informed of current issues and to deal with local problems. Amongst librarians in thirty-four states responding to the ALA recommendation in the following twenty years were those of the Union's smallest state, Rhode Island.

In response to a call by an enthusiastic Frank G. Bates, State Librarian of Rhode Island, fifty people assembled in the lecture room of the Providence Public Library on March 9, 1903 to discuss the desirability of a state library association. They promptly and unanimously voted to establish one with the constitutional objective of promoting "the Library interest of the state of Rhode Island." On the same day a constitution was drafted, officers were elected with William Foster of the Providence Public Library as first president, dues were fixed at 25 cents per member, and two meetings were henceforth scheduled a year.

In the first decade of the Association's existence, President Foster and succeeding Presidents Harry Lyman Koopman of Brown University, Ethan Wilcox of Westerly Public Library, Richard Bliss of Newport's Redwood Library, Herbert Brigham of the State Library, Frank Bates, and Harold Dougherty of the Pawtucket Public Library conducted semi-annual meetings with papers educationally focused on book coverings, service to schools, interlibrary loan, publicity, local history, government documents, professionalism, service to non-English speaking readers, catalog cards, and methods of reaching out to the community. After formation of RILA's first committee, a nominating committee, attention turned toward establishing a publications committee and issuing an Association newsletter. So in cooperation with the Rhode Island Board of Education (then in charge of public libraries and state library aid), RILA issued its first quarterly Bulletin in May 1908. The Bulletin of the Rhode Island Library Association soon floundered, however, and was discontinued in November 1912. Despite repeated attempts at resuscitation, no newsletter was to appear for the next fifteen years.

Yet other early ventures fared far better. With the apostolic zeal of early churchmen, RILA officers increased membership from ninety-three persons at the end of 1903 to one hundred and seventy-five by 1912, wrote and passed a new constitution, also in 1912, and commenced a second decade for the Association with a member's handbook.

The second decade also brought the first RILA efforts at securing state financial aid and legislation. State aid to public libraries had originated in small amounts in 1875. RILA requested funds for maintenance of the Association, for a state pension plan for librarians, a law allowing libraries to serve beyond their legal community boundaries, and a state supplement to the salaries of high school librarians. All requests, being only polite requests, were rejected.

By 1916 RILA members were responding to the World War. For the next several years Presidents Joseph Peacock and Bertha Lyman encouraged bibliographies on the War, members' awareness of war topics, the collection of 33,000 books for troop camps, and the singing of patriotic war songs and hymns. In the 1918 RILA annual report it is noted that librarians did not need any "encouragement" to exclude pro-German books from their collections.

War put another kind of pressure on librarians beyond that of patriotic fervor when the public began to demand quickly changing information on subjects from ration-oriented recipes to shifting battle fronts. Consequently, attendance at a 1917 library summer school at the Rhode Island Normal School (later Rhode Island College) proved considerable. And in 1918 RILA asked the State Board of Education to provide regular library instruction at the Normal School. This was granted and constituted RILA's first successful request from the State, as well as the beginning of Rhode Island formal education for librarianship.

The War and the period following brought great prosperity to Rhode Island textile and other light industry. Yet while Rhode Island was spending more for library books than most states, its libraries were still beset with serious problems. A RILA request to the State Board of Education in 1919 to upgrade school library service went unheeded. So did RILA legislation to the State in 1921 proposing certification of librarians, increased librarians' salaries, and increased book budgets. The General Assembly of Rhode Island argued that certification of librarians could lead to unionization, and the proposed increase in book budgets would favor large libraries over the small ones. RILA interest in certification was to continue unabated through the 1940's, frequently paralleling that of ALA. Equitable distribution of funds between small and large libraries continued as an issue through enactment of the Library Services Act in 1956 and onto proposed revision of the Library Services and Construction Act in 1977.

In 1921 the State of Rhode Island did agree to small grants to libraries with personnel budgets under \$500 per annum. Failing to win larger book budgets, RILA President William Goddard sought to provide more books for the public by exhorting large libraries to assist smaller ones with cooperative loans of books. And to stimulate professional development, RILA recommended to the trustees of the then existing sixty-three public libraries that they pay conference expenses for their staffs. In this period the library conference was often the single method of education for library staffs, and great effort was

made in the holding of numerous joint conferences between RILA and nearby library associations in other states. These joint conferences of two or more New England states actually and directly prefigured the evolution of the New England Library Association by 1940.

Finally, in 1921, RILA proposed its first code of library standards to the State Board of Education, recommending that librarians work a minimum of ten hours a week, that libraries be open a minimum of six hours a week, that library materials be cataloged, and that every librarian have a minimum of two weeks education in a library institute.

In the twenties under Presidents George Hinckley, Francis Drury, Clarence Sherman, Adele Martin, and Sara Sherman, RILA committees or spokespeople urged library trustees to work more diligently to raise library budgets and to leave administration to the library directors. RILA repeated a request that the state supplement salaries of high school librarians, recommended that librarians be allowed paid time for professional reading, fought again for certification of librarians based on their accomplishments, investigated service to blacks, explored the idea of radio book review talks and story hours, requested more books in the existing travelling libraries in foreign languages and "easy English" for the foreign-born, asked for a state library field advisor or consultant, issued two more Association handbooks, and discovered the censorship issue in the interdiction of certain foreign titles by the United States Customs Service.

The RILA Bulletin appeared again in 1927 after nearly a decade of active attempts to revive it. In 1927 it was finally decided to issue it independently under the Association and not through the Board of Education which had published the old series. The new series begun in 1927 has resulted in a volume per year ever since, although the number of issues per volume has varied widely from one to three issues per volume into the 1960's. In the later nineteen sixties the Bulletin began to appear quarterly, and at present eleven issues per volume per year are published. In addition to a Bulletin committee, RILA had exhibit, relations with the state Board of Education, membership, and hospitality committees by 1930.

In its first quarter of a century, with great zeal on the part of its members, the Rhode Island Library Association had addressed standards for libraries, had secured the rudiments of education for librarians, had recognized the need for service to a variety of clienteles, had established regular dissemination of information to its members in a newsletter and semi-annual conferences, and had comprehended the relationship between money and quality library service. But on the two major issues requiring considerable funding, library development and cooperation for better public access, and salaries and related employment benefits for library staffs, a beginning had yet to be made. The next twenty-five years of economic depression, war, and post-war fear and hysteria were to amount to a Middle Ages for Rhode Island libraries, and for many other libraries in the country. The Association's second quarter of a century was a period in which Rhode Island librarians pulled back into a monastic life of service in their libraries, a period in which they did their jobs, in which they failed to believe that they could do anything to do those jobs better, a period in which they failed to address, or in which they ineffectively addressed, the larger issues.

THE MIDDLE AGES

When Henry Van Hoesen assumed the RILA presidency in 1931, the Great Depression was in full swing, and Rhode Island librarians were hurrying away from national and state concerns and back to their libraries to determine how to deal with smaller budgets. They also needed more time to serve the rapidly growing number of poorer patrons who flocked to libraries for help-wanted advertisements, do-it-yourself information, novels to while away the idle hours, and simple heat. Service was in demand and librarians were giving it. By 1931 membership in RILA had dropped to 94 people. In 1903, RILA's first year, it had 93 members.

Librarians also had to stay home in their libraries to fight for their jobs. For example, in 1933 the Central Falls Library Board replaced a non-resident librarian with a resident non-librarian for political reasons. At the Pawtucket Public Library, the Board demoted its librarian and replaced her with a newspaperman, again for political reasons. RILA protested both actions noting that "dismissal should be for cause only" and "an opportunity should be given to the librarian to remove whatever obstacle or condition seems to constitute the cause." Certification of librarians was again tabled as a costly issue in time of Depression.

The Bulletin dealt mostly with conference programs, personnel notes, and events in local libraries, with safe things as it would continue to do (with the exception of a few 1937-1938 articles) for years. Travelling libraries were discontinued for want of money. And the major issue of the day was reduced to the mutilation of picture books and periodicals by students doing school projects. Conferences themselves dwelt almost wholly on the innocuous, on local history, local poetry, and, of course, booklists.

By 1936 about all that could be said was that RILA always held an annual conference and always held its budget in the black. And it always had. By 1936 the only bright spot was the new State Librarian Grace Sherwood's administration of the RILA endorsed Works Progress Administration program for libraries. In 1940 Elizabeth Myer became supervisor of the Statewide WPA Library Project, cataloging public libraries, and doing field consultant work. The hope that Miss Sherwood would be henceforth a very important figure in public library development, since a 1935 State government reorganization placed the State Library in the Department of State in authority over public libraries and removed the Board of Education from the public library world, did not really come to pass.

RILA presidents of the nineteen thirties and early nineteen forties, William D. Miller, Bess McCreia, Sallie Coy, Norman Kilpatrick, and Muriel Wyman found it impossible for RILA's Committee on Relations with the State to achieve the Association's major project of the period, certification of library staffs in order to credibly secure additional State salary and book funding. A RILA request for \$29,500 in aid was rejected and state support continued at \$17,000 per year (\$14,000 for books, \$3,000 for salaries). Between the State's reluctance to part with library salary funds and the opposition of small libraries to certification (many felt they could not meet the proposed standard of a high school education for librarians), the

certification idea gradually died. By 1942 only a half dozen libraries in the state were willing to accept even voluntary certification. And post-war development of library graduate and technical assistant programs would certify to some degree the competence and salaries that could not be achieved during the Depression.

Poverty brought one improvement when RILA observed the difficulty that underpaid staffs had in furthering their education, and established the RILA annual scholarship in 1940. Overall though, the Association had become very quiet, with the exception of Providence Public Library's Clarence Sherman who led the certification campaigns and continuously asked difficult questions such as, "Should libraries in wartime stock books representing the views of both sides?" Questions were many and perceptive. Answers were few and far between.

The advent of World War Two brought a momentary flurry of activity with RILA issuing a new handbook, with RILA supporting the State Library's Armed Forces Book Pool to send books to troops at home and abroad, and with the establishment of War Information Centers in the libraries of Brown University and the public libraries in Providence, Westerly, Woonsocket and Newport. Nonetheless, wartime RILA presidents John Norton, Francis Allen and Edna Thayer soon found the library world quiet enough to reduce Association conferences to one a year.

With the War's end, the return of many librarians from service, RILA interest in a world peace organization, the problems of demobilization, a new technology created by war, and new library media of phono-recordings, film, microfilm, and paperbound books, RILA members found their views had broadened. Federal funding legislation for libraries which the Association had opposed in the nineteen thirties (out of fear of socialistic government control) was now whole-heartedly endorsed in 1947, as was ALA's Library Development Fund to establish ALA representation with the Federal government in Washington. A new handbook was quickly published to list a record 225 members. RILA committees had grown to seven, on State relations, conference programs, membership, the Bulletin, exhibits, hospitality and scholarship. And in 1947 that membership passed President Stuart Sherman's resolution asking the United Nations to control atomic energy so that it would never again be used in war. In the same year Providence Public Library established a complete file (from 1927 on) of the RILA Bulletin, and has maintained it to this day.

The Federal Library Demonstration Bill was proposed in Congress in 1947 and RILA began to hope that it would bring some answers to Rhode Island's long-standing problems with weak library cooperation, with an absence of regional services, with lack of a statewide bookmobile service, and with want of demonstration libraries as models. Despite Stuart Sherman's lament in the May 1948 Bulletin about "mediocre" state service at thirty-eight cents per capita support and his criticism of "serious" library personnel deficiencies in Rhode Island, RILA hopes rose even higher with the publication of ALA's National Plan for Public Library Service. RILA itself undertook a state-wide survey of libraries in 1948 in the event of passage of the Library Demonstration Bill, a prototype of the 1956 Library Services Act. But these expectations were not fulfilled. The Library Demonstration Bill was defeated in 1950 despite strong efforts by Stuart Sherman and Grace Sherwood, and a RILA campaign to increase state aid from \$14,000 to \$42,000 in

book funds brought only a \$6,000 increase. State aid to libraries would not exceed \$20,000 a year until 1964.

Association members rejected a joint conference with the Massachusetts and Connecticut Library Associations and the New England Library Association similar to ones held in the past for reasons of time and cost per member, and a joint conference was not again attempted. Curiously, RILA appears to have never repeated its best state programs at later NELA conferences. Nor does NELA appear to have made a concerted effort to repeat the best programs of state library conferences at its annual conference.

Except for RILA opposition to the Red Menace scares that made it difficult to keep certain titles on school library shelves, the RILA presidencies of H. Glenn Brown, Ellen Stone, Jeanne MacCready, and K.K. Moore from 1949 to 1953 reflect considerable quiet in the Association. In 1949 the RILA Executive Board refused to go on record as favoring or not favoring library unions. Delay after delay plagued the Federal Library Services Bill which had succeeded the Library Demonstration Bill. While a new Association handbook was issued in 1952, the Bulletin remained singularly devoid of issues and news, even to the point of failing to announce upcoming RILA conferences. The 1953 conference, devoted to television, its educational possibilities and its effects on reading, stood alone in excitement. What else could be expected in 1953? Joe McCarthy was screaming, the Korean War appeared eternal, and "I Love Lucy" topped the television rating charts as RILA completed its second quarter of a century. Rhode Island libraries had somehow survived, just as they survived the hurricane of 1938 and another to come in 1954.

THE MODERN ERA

The beginning of reform, a modern spirit, a belief that something could be done and out of sheer desperation that they had to do it, siezed RILA members in 1955 when the Association recommended that all boards of public library trustees approach their towns for substantial budget increases. Furthermore, RILA proposed additional education for librarians and library trustees in budget matters after the first tough RILA survey defined the financial disaster in the State's libraries. That survey of fifty-nine public libraries showed that only five exceeded the ALA minimum recommendation of \$1.50 per capita support. The survey also stated that service depends on money and money was sorely lacking with twenty-five libraries having less than thirty cents per capita support. Twenty years later the average library in Rhode Island was to have a dozen times as much money. If it were not for librarians in many cases working for next to nothing, and in some cases donating their salaries to the book fund, the survey concluded, many libraries would cease to function. That was the situation only a little more than twenty years ago in the state.

A 1955 fifteen-week library technical assistant course approved by RILA and conducted by the Extension Division of the University of Rhode Island at the Providence Public Library signaled the end of even the best informal in-house training. Virtually alone in the state, the Providence Library had offered such training for years, abandoning it finally only when the URI Extension Division took over

library technical instruction completely in 1958. Also at this time exhibits were becoming a common part of RILA conferences. And RILA was attempting to set more specific goals for itself, affirming that a state library association should promote practical workshops, the state library budget, state aid and legislation, and library publicity.

Unfortunately, when the Library Services Act passed in 1956 after years of waiting, the Rhode Island General Assembly did not choose to appropriate state funds necessary to secure the federal dollars. Under RILA president David Jonah, however, the Association did draw up a plan for use of the federal and state money when it might be available. The plan did establish R.I.'s eligibility for LSA money and was supported by Secretary of State (later Governor) John A. Notte. When the money was appropriated by both Congress and Rhode Island the following year, state Public Library Services came to Rhode Island. Established July 1, 1957, Rhode Island Public Library Services in Rural Areas, as it was then known, was placed directly under the Secretary of State who also oversaw the State Library. The state librarian herself had never developed a great interest in public library service. Public Library Services replaced an impoverished Extension Service that the State Library had previously operated, and Public Library Services brought a budget of \$61,500, over three times more than Extension Services had had. Under the new director, Elizabeth Myer (who had run the WPA Library Project), Rural Library Services in 1958 developed quickly and brilliantly. Within several months statewide bookmobile service had commenced to unserved areas, \$500 yearly grants were being awarded to rural libraries, a collection of current titles for loan was made available to them, and Miss Myer herself began serving as a field consultant. Meantime the Armed Forces Book Pool came under fire because RILA wanted the \$5,000 used for it each year to be reallocated to public libraries within the state. Also in 1957, RILA became a chapter of the American Library Association. Previously it had been an affiliate of ALA for several decades.

A division between school and public libraries, extending back to 1935 when public libraries were removed from jurisdiction of the Board of Education and placed under the State Library, continued to produce problems. And despite considerable recruiting efforts and a special dues structure for school librarians, RILA still failed to attract them. Even so, in 1958-1959 under Dorothy Budlong's RILA presidency, a membership campaign raised the number of members from 277 to 434 within a year.

From 1957 through the early nineteen sixties the excitement generated by the Rural Library Services program became contagious, and on numerous occasions RILA went on record recognizing the significant accomplishments of this program serving forty-two public libraries with a host of services from centralized processing to book discounts. RILA also became interested in the role of the library in high school equivalency programs, in service to the aging, in the Great Books Discussion Groups, in prison libraries, in assisting Rural Library Services in the weeding of dated library collections, in radio and television publicity for libraries and for National Library Week, in collection development concepts, in recruiting for librarianship, in young adult services, and in friends of the library organizations.

Issues were quickly becoming those that would easily be recognized as crucial by a young librarian of the nineteen seventies.

The single event which more than any other led to modern library service in Rhode Island was triggered when Dr. Elmer Smith, chairman of the Brown University Department of Education, observed the deplorable condition of local school libraries. Dr. Smith thereupon convened a conference in 1959 sponsored by RILA, the R.I. School Library Association, and Brown University to study school library service. Conferees soon found their attention directed at service in all types of libraries. And they concluded that low standards and severe underfunding were major problems, that R.I. school libraries were the worst in the nation, that a stronger professional association and more state leadership were necessary, that many public libraries were receiving thoroughly insignificant appropriations, that too many libraries were operating with completely untrained staffs, that except for Brown University, state college and university libraries provided no support to other libraries, and that in general there was a serious lack of coordination amongst all libraries in the state. Or as James Healey of the URI Graduate Library School put it in his 1974 biography John E. Fogarty, as late as 1964 R.I.'s library picture was bleak. Only Brown University among academic libraries possessed a library appropriate to its needs.



The libraries of the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, Bryant College and Providence College were very small and badly funded. Amongst public libraries only the Providence Public Library, according to Healey, "deserved the name by even the most liberal interpretation of the phrase." In seventeen of Rhode Island's thirty-nine communities at least two or more public libraries operated with complete independence of one another.

Consequently, with a Council of Library Resources grant, Brown sponsored a thorough statewide study of all libraries. That landmark study, Library Cooperation, by John Humphry with the assistance of Lucille Wickersham, was published by Brown in 1963. Humphry and Wickersham found that thirty-two of the then existing seventy-four public libraries in Rhode Island had less than a \$1,000 yearly budget. Today in a consolidated network of forty-five public libraries, only nine have under a \$10,000 yearly budget. Exclusive of Federal money, total state aid in 1963 amounted to only \$20,000--today state and Federal aid is approaching the one and a half million dollar mark. In 1963 Humphry noted that many librarians were trained only as housewives, and many library collections dated from 1880 to 1930. Under the RILA presidencies of F. Charles Taylor, Dorothy Barre, and Elizabeth Myer, the Humphry findings recommending a statewide regional library system were thoroughly analyzed.

From 1960 to 1963 RILA also made suggestions to the New England Library Association for its reorganization, presented Representative John Fogarty of Rhode Island with a citation for his work in securing Library Services Act appropriations, recruited professional librarians intensively, established an Association trustees committee, witnessed the establishment of a long desired full graduate library school at

the University of Rhode Island, supported passage of the New England Interstate Compact as Rhode Island law for New England wide interlibrary loan and cooperation, issued a new handbook, and passed a new constitution. The RILA Bulletin developed an entirely new orientation, paying less heed to factual information about library personnel and events, and paying more attention to educating members in the major issues of the day. It was turning out to be much more controversial, and much more readable.

If 1963 was an exciting year, 1964 was much more so. Back in 1961 RILA had asked state Senator John Moran to support a bill for a State Legislative Commission on Libraries. The bill passed and the Commission, headed by K.K. Moore, was appointed in 1962 to revise archaic library laws and regulations (e.g., the Book Pool program) in light of the expected Humphry findings. This Commission, composed of state legislators, RILA and other public members including Elizabeth Myer and Dorothy Budlong, Senator Moran, and the State Librarian, after evaluation of the Humphry study and after numerous hearings, filed its report (Report of the Legislative Commission on Libraries to the General Assembly) recommending new library legislation in January 1964.

While the Commission was at work drafting new legislation, Dr. Smith of Brown, still deeply involved, sought professional and public support for whatever the recommended legislation might be. To accomplish this, Smith contacted Mrs. Edwin Sherman Jr., a very active Providence Public Library trustee, and as secretary of a Brown University Clearinghouse, she began development of support at once. She scheduled a major meeting in late 1963 of school superintendents, teachers, school board chairmen, school librarians, parent-teacher groups, some public librarians, and representatives from the State Department of Education. This audience was given a complete review of the Humphry report. Then after a masterful barrage of explanatory public relations information on radio, television and a series of newspaper articles by Lawrence Howard and Joseph Giblyn, Mrs. Sherman held a "dinner party" in January 1964 to coincide with the Library Commission's submission of the new library legislation to the State Legislature. Of the more than 700 people who attended the dinner at the Brown Repertory, the crowd included three-quarters of the state's legislators, the entire Congressional delegation, plus leading educators, librarians and social figures. R.I. Congressman John Fogarty

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announced that the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) had just passed in the House of Representatives and that the recommended state library legislation should be passed to tie into it.

In a mass meeting of an enthusiastic RILA at the Providence Public Library in February 1964 the Commission's conclusions were heard and approved. And Senators Moran and Rufus Prossner and Representatives Joseph Thibeault and Donald Bonner introduced state legislation embodying them. Commission recommendations included: 1) the creation of a new state department of library services with a board of library commissioners empowered to operate the state library, all extension services, and the state archives; 2) expanded state aid to city and town libraries; 3) creation of principal and regional libraries and research centers; and 4) state funding for library construction. The Legislative Commission and RILA completed their work just ahead of the Federal government, and shortly after the February RILA conference President Johnson signed the Library Services and Construction Act and state legislation was introduced in the Rhode Island General Assembly in accord with LSCA. In April of 1964 the General Assembly smoothly passed state legislation on the basis of the Legislative Commission and Humphry reports and in accord with the new LSCA. Rhode Island was the first state in the Union to accomplish that. Many, many hundreds of people and their instruments had been brought together as for the production of a major symphony, the major event in Rhode Island Library history, the creation and performance of a well-funded effective comprehensive state library cooperative network.

Credit for orchestration and conducting goes overwhelmingly to then RILA president Elizabeth Gallup Myer. If Rhode Island Congressman John E. Fogarty can be called "Mr. Library" for his support of LSA and LSCA legislation, if Mrs. Sherman is the library trustee, then Elizabeth Myer must be considered the Great Librarian in the state's history. For it was she who, according to Healey's John E. Fogarty, introduced Fogarty to library issues, it was she who directed his attention to libraries and kept it there for many years. It was she who prodded and cajoled scores of Rhode Island libraries not only into seeing the possibility of library cooperation, but into enthusiastically supporting it. And it was she who was appointed new director of the network and who spent the next ten years developing it into one of the most effective library systems in the nation.

On July 1, 1964, having concluded two years as RILA's most energetic and foresighted president, Elizabeth Myer became head of the Rhode Island Department of State Library Services. While the new department did not include the State Library or the State archives as recommended, it did include the other recommendations. The new Department introduced successfully a state law for library construction funding by the state that became a model nationally.



A system was immediately created with Providence Public Library as the principal public library, Barrington and Westerly Public Libraries as regional libraries, and Brown University Library as the special research center. These libraries were charged to provide inter-library loan service to the public, library grants were issued to all cities and towns, workshops were regularly scheduled, a large collection was created for loan to public libraries, a professional reading collection was established, consultant service was offered to every library, and vehicular delivery of library materials began. Then in the next few years legislation establishing a statewide network was prepared by Jewel Drickamer (assistant Director, DSLS) and Eustace Pliakus (a library commissioner). And the system grew to include the public libraries at Warwick and Pawtucket as regional libraries. Rhode Island College and the University of Rhode Island libraries were soon funded as additional research centers. All were connected by teletype and vehicular delivery, a marvel of concentrated efficiency in a state 48 miles long and 37 miles wide. Today Pawtucket, for example, with the assistance of other libraries in the system, fills 85% of its interlibrary loan requests.

Also on the basis of the Humphry report, state standards for school libraries were established in 1964, and with the appointment of a school library coordinator the state was prepared for the flood of Elementary and Secondary Education Act monies that appeared in 1965. Unfortunately, although the Department of State Library Services was charged with coordination of all library effort in the state, school libraries remained, and remain, separate entities under the authority of the Department of Education. And while some of them have been served for over a decade by the public library regional system, and while RILA has made particular efforts in 1967 and 1976 to draw school and media associations into some state unity, neither school libraries and media centers nor the Department of Education has reciprocated with support in money or materials to public libraries.



Other events of 1964 included the opening of new university libraries at Brown and the University of Rhode Island, the opening of a new central library in Warwick which would soon provide regional service to the western part of the state, and full time operation of the new Graduate Library School at the University of Rhode Island under a second Dean E. J. Humeston, succeeding Jonathan Ashton.

In the November 1960 RILA Bulletin, Maribelle Cormack had complained of the monumental indifference of city and town fathers to libraries that had characterized the nineteen thirties, forties, and fifties. And she found that the problem

lay with librarians themselves: "Too many of us are ladies for one thing. Ladies in the sense that we are not aggressive fighters. We should perhaps try being fishwives." By the mid-sixties many Rhode Island librarians had become as noisy as fishwives, and many were selling libraries to politicians as fast as a fishwife moves fish.

The last half of the sixties decade under RILA presidents F. William Summers, William Alexander, Selby Gratton, Janice Mages, Richard W. Robbins, and Richard Combs was a period of consolidating and refining LSCA concepts by the Department of State Library Services and the Rhode Island Library Association. In the same years RILA members were also discussing automation, library education, salaries, personnel policies, possible school and public library cooperation, central processing, film and tape recordings, media centers, and outreach programs. The issue of certification was raised again but had been made largely moot by the triumph of graduate and technical library education in Rhode Island and by the setting of standards for libraries by RILA. RILA committees by now included the following: conference, government relations, intellectual freedom, education, trustees, membership, publications, public relations, recruiting, and scholarship. In 1965 RILA created its first comprehensive public library standards which were then approved and enforced by the Department of State Library Services and the Board of Library Commissioners for individual library reception of grants. These standards required that each library have a telephone, that head librarians attend board of trustees meetings, that the federal minimum wage be paid to all library personnel, that libraries maintain public catalogs, that libraries establish minimum hours of service and collection size according to community population size, and that all communities of more than 10,000 people have a professional librarian. In 1967 RILA completed standards for regional libraries, which also were enforced by the Department of State Library Services. After RILA discussion, the Department of State Library Services and a number of public libraries established the independent Rhode Island Library Film Cooperative to purchase and circulate films to public libraries. It presently holds 1,000 films. The Bulletin was growing more and more sophisticated with a new format, regular quarterly issues, focus on rather radical topics, substantial articles on planning and development, a calendar of events, and by 1971 a list of area career opportunities. And on both radio and television RILA commenced spot announcements regarding libraries.

In 1969 under president Jean Nash, the pressures created by the Vietnamese War and the Nixon administration began to divide RILA as they divided the country. A RILA resolution from member Leo Pinson protesting the conduct of the Nixon administration in Vietnam was tabled by a vote of the membership. With a delightful sense of irony Pinson then proposed a resolution asking for RILA approval of the Nixon administration's conduct in the war. A second could not be found for the latter resolution. RILA also tabled a motion to deplore the efforts of the highest government officials to suppress dissent. The following year under president Charles Crosby, the issue of the rights of librarians in employment was set aside by the RILA Executive Board as "too deep" for the Association. Confusion was sufficient by that time for Crosby to ask if RILA should continue as a "chicken salad" operation (the levels of meaning here could be explored at length), for members to wonder if the Bulletin at \$500 per issue were

worth the rising cost, and for splinter media groups to begin formation. So under the pressure of "advocacy" librarianship, RILA set out to re-examine its goals.

Much was done, however, in the state in the meantime. In 1971 the University of Rhode Island Graduate Library School was accredited by the ALA. And a full library technical assistant program was offered by the Extension Division of the University of Rhode Island. Topics of interest in the early seventies were social responsibility, cable television, special collections, service to the handicapped, National Library Week, a campaign for more state aid, posters, film loops, toys and other realia, continuing education, women's liberation, library renovation, staff development, and a headquarters for RILA. Without sufficient funds for a separate headquarters, the Association accepted Charles Crosby's gracious offer of the Providence Public Library as its headquarters address.

Intellectual freedom was, and has been ever since, a major focus of interest. In 1971 attempts to remove the Sensuous Woman from the Cranston Public Library, a raid by local police on the Warwick Public Library, and a tough new state obscenity law awoke and revitalized the RILA Intellectual Freedom Committee. In the following year it secured the State Attorney General's opinion exempting libraries from the new obscenity legislation. Also in the early seventies RILA revised the standards for regional libraries, issued its first trustees handbook, and with the Department of State Library Services successfully opposed the ouster of a local librarian on non-residency grounds as local interference with the state guaranteed authority of library trustees.

Through the RILA administrations of William Alexander, Richard Olsen, Paul Crane, and Paul Bazin from 1971 to 1975, RILA and the DSLS fought the LSCA, ESEA and HEA cuts threatened by the Federal government in the Nixon years. Federal terror did not finally predominate. Membership rose to the 800 mark in RILA.

With RILA input, the Department of State Library Services completed its first five-year plan for library services, and RILA passed a new constitution with three super committees governing the many existing committees. The roles and relationship of DSLS and RILA became more defined, with RILA promoting debate on controversial issues and embodying controversial solutions in proposed programs and program funding legislation. RILA had become, and is, the forum for exploration, for formulation, and for the search for funding. With a project and necessary funding approved by RILA and the state or

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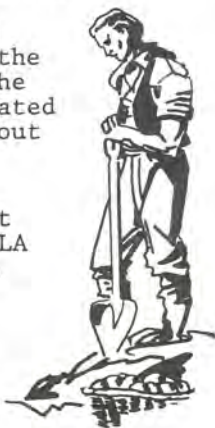


Federal governments, DSLS then administers the project as part of the Governor's overall program. There are healthy exceptions to this rule of course, such as the DSLS grants allotted each year to innovative projects generated in individual libraries.

In 1973-1974 RILA proposed new legislation for service to pre-school children, to the homebound, and to the economically disadvantaged--without success at the state level. And in the same year RILA issued new public library service Guidelines, not standards this time, since statistical surveys were showing every library was in fact unique. The product of several years of debate and the failure of an earlier draft, the Guidelines primarily affirmed that the public library is the primary information source of the whole citizenry, that every library should be accessible to all, that every library should cooperate with all others in all media, and that every library should promote its purpose aggressively.

With the RILA presidency of James Giles in 1975 came a passing of the fear of Federal monetary cutbacks, and an even greater concentration of RILA energy on the state situation. RILA's old ad hoc Committee on Goals had proven somewhat ineffective, so RILA organized, and after twenty months' work, passed a Long Range Plan for the Association with the objectives of engaging a library publicist for the state, of developing a program for continuing education in cooperation with DSLS and URI, of promoting a statewide library card, and of securing a state school library coordinator. Three other goals, to establish a forum for discussion of library unionization, to establish an OCLC NELINET bibliographic data network, and to establish at the Graduate Library School a bureau for consultation and research on local problems, were reserved until some achievement is made with the first four goals. An Ad Hoc Long Range Planning Committee finally rejected the idea of a publicist as too costly for the Association at present. However, the Planning Committee did have the Education Committee develop an excellent plan for continuing education of library staffs. The Planning Committee did add pressure for the appointment of a school coordinator who was appointed. And another ad hoc committee today continues the debate over the statewide borrower's card. So successful was the Planning Committee in its achievement in the realm of the possible that the Long Range Plan would probably be updated if the same sort of future library planning were not about to be done in the upcoming Governor's Conference on Libraries.

Dissatisfied with small increases in the Department of State Library Services budget over several years, RILA submitted four library bills with excellent information packages to the state legislature in 1975-1976. One bill passed, thereby increasing state aid for public libraries from twenty-five to thirty cents per capita. This was the first significant legislative success for public libraries since 1964. In 1975 the RILA scholarship was suspended because of the rising cost and the over supply of librarians. Some money that had been



expended for it was reassigned to improvement of the Bulletin in a new format of eleven issues a year. The Bulletin now proved to be quite critical, even to the point of regularly criticizing RILA itself. A helpful intellectual freedom manual was issued by the Intellectual Freedom Committee to guide librarians in censorship disputes. Before growing competition of commercial book processing, the central processing center at the Department of State Library Services collapsed, to the dismay of many RILA members. A RILA search committee for a new director at the Department of State Library Services, after the resignation of Elizabeth Myer, failed in its purpose completely when the Governor after encouraging it ignored its recommendations. RILA interest in data banks, the New England Library Board, the New England Library Information Network (NELINET), and the New England Document Conservation Center grew considerably.

In 1976-1977 RILA, under president Daniel Bergen, supported five library bills in the General Assembly. And through the vigorous efforts of the RILA Government Relations Committee and the new RILA lobbyist Robert Perrson, four of the five proposals were successful in whole or in part. This astonishing success meant that regional library budgets rose almost thirty percent, the Rhode Island Library Film Cooperative received \$5,000 more in state aid, and \$7,500 was allocated to each of two new research center libraries at Bryant and Providence Colleges. While the Providence Public Library bill did not pass, the campaign for it helped the Department of State Library Services secure an annual \$50,000 more for it as principal public library for the state.



In 1976 the Graduate Library School at the University of Rhode Island lost its ALA accreditation, and RILA is now working closely with the School for its re-accreditation by 1978. It is hoped that the school will focus on updating the education of practicing librarians rather than turning out a surplus of new librarians.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee most recently conducted a workshop on the rights and responsibilities of librarians. The Education Committee presented another workshop on commercial processing, in response to the financial collapse of a central processing center at DSLS. And the ad hoc Statewide Card Committee held still a third workshop on an unrestricted state borrower's card. In the spring of 1977 the Intellectual Freedom Committee beat back two strong pieces of obscenity legislation. The Membership Committee issued a new handbook or directory of members. Conference Committee Planning has grown better than ever and John Berry, Daniel Gore and Celeste West are expected at the fall conference. A preconference on a national information network will also be held. The Outreach and Public Relations Committees are planning more television publicity for libraries in the fall. Attempts to revitalize the Trustee Committee have not been so successful but continue. Four more ad hoc committees have been added to the above roster, for revision of the Association constitution and by-laws (to become a Standing Committee in November 1977, with member-

ship approval), for children's services, for reevaluation of the legislative procedure, and for coordination between RILA and other state information agencies. All of these committees will report directly to the Executive Board (should the membership approve a constitutional change in November) rather than to "umbrella" committees as they have done for several years. The Board is composed of the president, the vice-president, the treasurer, the recording secretary, the corresponding secretary, the ALA counselor, the New England Library Association counselor, the chairpersons of the "umbrella" Professional, Administrative, and Public Relations Committees, and the Bulletin editor (ex officio). This Board for the first time in 1976 established complete goals and objectives for each committee and for the Association in general in its revised 1976 constitution. The Association goal as stated in the Constitution is: "The objective of the Association shall be to promote library and information services in the state of Rhode Island and encourage interest in libraries, information centers and librarianship."

Today RILA operates in an atmosphere of studied cooperation with DSLS and its director, Jewel Drickamer. Approximately five million dollars is spent by public libraries in Rhode Island per year, with approximately another one and a half million dollars expended in state aid to or administration of them. They in turn circulate well over two million books and other library items a year. RILA's annual 1977 budget was \$13,050 as compared to its 1917 budget of \$180. There has indeed been great achievement in building a great library system.

But considerable problems yet face RILA's new president Ardis S. Holliday. Additional funding legislation is necessary simply to meet inflation. A Governor's Conference in preparation for a White House Conference on Libraries must be planned with the Department of State Library Services. Though the Association is more active than ever, membership is predominately composed of graduate librarians and public librarians. And it has declined by twenty-five percent because of recent dues increases and the growth of splinter library and media groups such as the R.I. Social Responsibilities Round Table, the regional Association of College and Research Libraries, the R.I. Educational Media Association (a merger of the Rhode Island School Library Association and the Rhode Island Audio-Visual Education Association), and the R.I. Special Libraries Association. The now four decade old separation of school and public libraries under the authority of two separate state departments has never worked for a unified library association. Library cooperation, a major problem at the beginning of RILA's third quarter century, is only partly solved as the Association approaches its fourth quarter century.

The symbol of Rhode Island is the independent man, whose figure stands atop the State Capitol. And independence has been a Rhode Island tradition since Roger Williams founded the colony to escape all authority, and since the colony was the first to rebel against



Great Britain, and since the time when other colonies almost invaded to force Rhode Island to join the other first twelve states in forming the United States. But RILA and other associations of information specialists are finally going to have to realize that independence amongst small groups all devoted to information provision is no solution in meeting current problems so recently and so well defined by the American Library Association as rapid social change, technological revolution, economic austerity, free and universal information access regardless of the profit to be had from commercial information production, and professional protection of employment security and salaries.

The latter issue, employment security and salaries, including grievance procedures and bargaining, is the other issue that RILA faced without success twenty-five years ago. And unlike the problem of library cooperation, it is the one in which not even partial solutions have been found. It can only be hoped that the Rhode Island Library Association membership will effectively address this problem in the coming year, and if necessary, the coming quarter of a century, with its revival of the RILA Committee for Arbitration, Mediation and Inquiry, or similar personnel committee. As this history is being completed, the RILA Executive Board has just recommended for approval by the membership at its Fall Conference, a Personnel Committee to establish the rights and responsibilities of Rhode Island library staffs.

Elizabeth Myer, as RILA president, in the April 1963 Bulletin, summed up the pervasive confidence of the modern period in RILA history when she said: "We do not wish to stand still. We do not want to go back into the past. We admittedly do not know all answers to all the questions of what is best for the future. We do have the means, however, of working out a solution in the right kind of service for our beloved State."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

As noted in the introduction, prior to this paper no history of RILA has existed. This history has been written (except for two titles noted therein) entirely from the RILA Archives at the Library of Providence College, Providence, Rhode Island. These archives contain RILA's annual reports, Executive Board meeting minutes, fall and spring and other conference summaries, and most issues of the RILA Bulletin. These archives are at present an untapped mine for further books and articles on a general history of Rhode Island libraries, for histories of individual libraries, for biographies of several great librarians, for a history of great library scandals, and for histories of library developments in intellectual freedom, legislation, public relations, library education, the state library, the Department of State Library Services, and library procedures. A full run of continuously published Bulletins from 1927 to the present is available at the Providence Public Library. Prior issues from 1908 to 1912, published by the R.I. Board of Education may be buried in the archives of the R.I. Department of Education. However, they are known to exist at the University of Pittsburgh Library. The two significant volumes on Rhode Island libraries cited in this paper are John Humphry's Library Cooperation, Brown University Press,

Providence, Rhode Island, 1963; and James Healey's John E. Fogarty: Political Leadership for Library Development, Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, New Jersey, 1974. Yearly updates of library news from the state, from RILA, and from the Department of State Library Services in Rhode Island are written by Emil Cillella Jr. and appear in each edition of the ALA Yearbook. Recent copies of the RILA Bulletin are available from the editor on request, care of the Providence Public Library, 150 Empire Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903.

THE NEW ENGLAND LIBRARY BOARD

- A summary from a 1976 NELB Pamphlet

1. Objectives: Access to needed information for all people is the nationwide goal of the library community. But to be of greatest value, information resources must be coordinated. Here in New England, NELB is a representative group dedicated to regional coordination within the national framework. Its goal is to improve library service to all people in the region through the sharing of information resources.

NELB's major objectives:

- * To identify regional needs which can be met through cooperative planning and action.
- * To locate and describe library and information resources in New England for the purpose of promoting their accessibility.
- * To form a communications link among information resource centers, networks, consortia, relevant organizations, and other cooperative efforts in New England with the aim of coordinating services.
- * To encourage the development of continuing education programs for library personnel in New England.
- * To communicate news of regional information activities and needs to librarians, legislators, and the public.

2. New England Serials Service: NESS is the first phase of a New England Library Resource Center intended to bring together diverse materials and make them available for cooperative use by all libraries in their services to people throughout the area. Features of the Serials Service are:

- * To provide access to a variety of magazines and journals to meet the needs of most libraries in New England for information contained in articles which cannot be supplied through individual collections.
- * To supply articles in hard copy or microfiche as rapidly as possible in response to requests via mail, wide area telephone service (WATS), teletype (TWX), or other means.

3. New England Library Resource Network: The design of a hierarchical resource-sharing system for the region is expected to come out of a planned survey. Data on library needs and on state and regional

cooperative activities will serve as an introductory step in the full-scale investigation of New England library resources.

Aim: to apply to New England the recommendations of a 1974 study for the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, Resource and Bibliographic Support for a Nationwide Library Program.

Some areas to be identified in setting up a model network for materials and services on a regional basis are:

- | | | |
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| * Location | * Delivery | * Funding |
| * Access | * Coordination | * Evaluation |

4. The New England Document Conservation Center: Every town, city, and state record repository, every public or private library, archive, and historical society in New England faces the problem of serious deterioration of records. To lessen this hazard, NELB administers the New England Document Conservation Center in North Andover, Mass. This Center houses a workshop with the necessary facilities and staff to restore and preserve the sound physical condition of books, prints, maps, broadsides, manuscripts, and other documentary materials of historic, archival, or cultural interest. Staff will also conduct surveys of collections and suggest remedial measures.

The various services of the NEDCC are available to public libraries, state and local archival agencies, and private non-profit historical, educational, and cultural institutions on an "at cost" basis.

5. Other NELB Projects:

- * A directory of library consortia and other cooperative groups.
- * Development of regional continuing education programs for both professionals and supportive staff in cooperation with library schools and undergraduate colleges.
- * Coordination of a regional legislative network.

6. Idea Interchange: One of NELB's concerns is to provide a forum for the exchange of views and to encourage more effective communication among libraries in their continuing efforts to bring better services to the people of New England. Toward these ends, NELB maintains both formal and informal relationships with individuals and groups interested in cooperative endeavors.

Assisting NELB in keeping in touch with librarians and citizens is a distinguished 41-member Panel of Counsellors, representing all types of libraries, regional organizations, and the lay public. The Counsellors act as a two-way link between NELB and the people NELB is intended to serve.

With the New England Library Association and the New England Library Information Network, NELB has brought together representatives of interstate library groups in the area to discuss needs for cooperative regional action and to chart the directions it should take.

Beyond New England, NELB seeks to represent its constituents' interests in contributions to national professional organizations and in the support of library legislation beneficial to the region.

News of NELB activities and programs is published in its newsletter, NELB LINK, distributed to libraries in the six-state area and available to others by subscription. NELB operates under the New England Interstate Library Compact. It is composed of the directors of the six state library agencies in the region and executive director Mary McKenzie.

Additional information may be requested from: New England Library Board, Library Service Center, 786 S. Main St., Middletown, CT 06457, (203) 347-7473.

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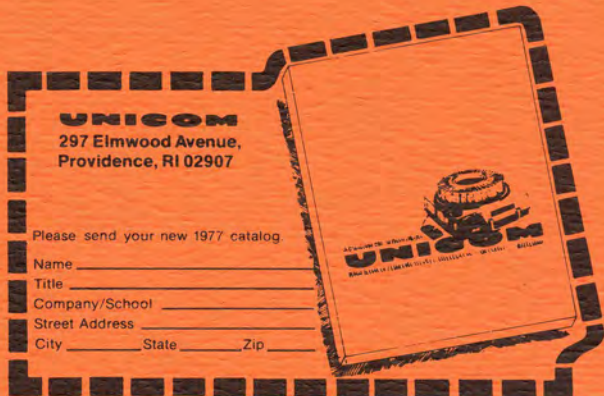
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