

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

RILA Bulletin

Rhode Island Library Association

4-1991

Bulletin of the Rhode Island Library Association v. 64, no. 4

RILA

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/rila_bulletin

Recommended Citation

RILA, "Bulletin of the Rhode Island Library Association v. 64, no. 4" (1991). *RILA Bulletin*. Book 205.
https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/rila_bulletin/205https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/rila_bulletin/205

This Book is brought to you by the University of Rhode Island. It has been accepted for inclusion in RILA Bulletin by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu. For permission to reuse copyrighted content, contact the author directly.



Rhode Island Library Association Bulletin

Volume No. V. 64 N. 4

ISSN:0146 - 8685

April 1991

A Conversation with Martha Mitchell

BY JUDITH PASTER

In its continuing interest in special areas of librarianship, the *Bulletin* is pleased to present the following conversation with Martha Mitchell, Archivist of Brown University and Judith Paster, Managing Editor of the *Bulletin*. The conversation occurred during two sessions in the Harris Room of the John Hay Library, with the conversants seated at a long oak table, surrounded by leather volumes in glass-covered shelves, and their voices punctuated by the periodic chiming of a grandfather clock.

JP: Martha, shall we begin at the beginning? the beginning of Archives at Brown University?

MM: I would say that something *like* Archives began in about 1848. In 1844, the Corporation, suggested that Professor Gammell, of the History Department, should write a history tracing the origins of progress at the University, and perhaps he would have, except that he discovered that the materials were not at hand to give him the information he needed to accomplish the task.

A few years later, Reuben Guild, who had been named Librarian in 1848, set about getting a complete set of the annual catalogs and sent out circulars to see what people had in their own hands, which might be of interest to the history of the University. This might be considered the beginning of the Archives.

At the same time, the papers of President James Manning, the first President of Brown from 1765 until his death in 1791, were given to the University. Guild then wrote and published a biography of Manning in 1864. In 1867, he produced a history of the University itself.

Later, Harry Lyman Koopman, who was Librarian in 1898, printed an addenda to his Librarian's

report, which included a twenty-page bibliography of the University, complete with references to pamphlets, documents, and other printed materials about the University that had appeared since its beginning. Twenty pages, but he organized his material into twenty-three categories, very much like, and in the same order as, the Archives...

JP: Pretty much as you do today?

MM: We use the same categories that were used by Professor Koopman. Koopman had them arranged in the appropriate manner. He began with the beginning of the government of the College, followed by the Presidents of the College, followed by the catalogs, publications, organizations of the classes, by year.

In 1902, the University hired an archivist, one Clarence Brigham, who was with the R.I. Historical Society, and later with the American Antiquarian Society. As mostly a consultant, he began work rearranging original papers of the University, which had to do with its founding and history until about 1800. It does appear that the Archives, in general, just sort of grew, for many years.

JP: So it was Brigham who was the first to organize the Archives?

MM: To sort them out, to decide what they were, and how to arrange them.

JP: When he departed, what happened?

MM: I don't know. They kept collecting things. It just grew.

JP: Did someone attend to the acquisition of materials?

MM: We don't know. For one thing, Reuben Guild

himself tended them all of his years, from 1848 to 1893. He kept scrapbooks beginning in 1851, of newspaper clippings about Brown. But I suspect that the Archives were largely unattended until the beginning of the 20th century. It was in the late 1930's that they organized "special collections," within the University Library, and Archives became one of these.

JP: When did you come to Brown?

MM: Not that long afterwards! I came in 1949, fresh out of Tufts.

JP: Are you a native of New England?

MM: I am a Providence person. I was born in Providence. I grew up in Seekonk. I went to Tufts. Would you like to know why I came to work for Special Collections?

JP: Yes!

MM: Because I was looking for a job, and qualified for practically nothing! I appeared here at Brown. I was interested in working at the Library, though I hadn't gone to library school or anything. I was just interested in being employed temporarily. There was a vacancy in Special Collections, as someone who was working there, left, because the lighting was so poor, she didn't want to go blind!

JP: You weren't afraid for your eyesight?

MM: No, because I didn't plan to stay that long!

JP: Not long enough to lose your eyesight at any rate!

MM: No. Special Collections at that time, had a staff of three people, plus one retired lady who cataloged manuscripts part-time. So it was a great opportunity to have to learn about everything. And then, they let me take care of the Archives.

JP: You took it over.

MM: More or less. We all did everything. It became my specialty. Then, six or seven years later, it was decided that I could become the Assistant Archivist. That didn't mean, incidentally, that I could stop working on the other tasks within Special Collections. My specialty was the Archives, but I still had other work to do.

The reason I was the Assistant Archivist was that an Archivist had been appointed in 1937, but this was an honorary position. Do you want to know who it was?

JP: Sure!

MM: It was William Easton Loutitt, who did, in his own way, a lot of things for the Archives, because he was in a position to ask for things.

JP: You're talking about the Loutitt family who founded the cleansers?

MM: One of them, yes. A Brown man himself, he was in a position to purchase, with his own funds, things to add to the Archives. He was not an on-site archivist, working with materials.

JP: You came from Tufts, with an undergraduate degree, interested in libraries, wanting to work for a while, and as most of us thought then, get married, and then goodness knows what we'd do. You ended up, spending six years; your plan had to be revised.

MM: Yes, I changed my personal plans. I went to library school in 1959. I went to McGill.

JP: Were you encouraged to do that?

MM: I'll tell you what happened. My supervisor, the head of Special Collections, thought I should go to library school. McGill was his *alma mater*, and he had them send me a catalog. The thing that interested me the most was that if I took these courses, I could graduate dressed up in a hood, lined with burnt orange silk and trimmed with white rabbit fur, so I said, "I'll go!"

I went and got the degree. I got my hood. I won the library school's prize while I was there.

JP: And you got to live in Montreal!

MM: I was offered several jobs in the library field, but I came back here and decided to get married and stay in Providence. I was the Pembroke College librarian for a year, and then I left the library.

JP: When did you come back?

MM: In October of 1967. I came back to Brown to take charge of the Archives.

JP: Had things changed?

MM: Yes. The Rockefeller Library had been built and was the main library of the University, and the John Hay was devoted to Special Collections, manuscripts and Archives.

JP: So you joined the ranks of the scholar-librarians.

MM: I'm not scholarly. Not really.

JP: I just assume that anyone who works in the John Hay Library is a scholarly person.

MM: No, I'm more of a technician.

JP: Do you want to explain that? If there is such a thing as "scholarly librarianship," how does archives librarianship differ from that? It would seem to me that you would have to have a solid background of many subjects, literature, language, history, without forgetting the technical aspects of the work. You sort, organize, paste on labels, yet at the same time, whether academic or archival, you find a real marriage of scholarship and technical skills.

MM: I think of scholars as the ones who use the materials. You put it all in order for them to use, to

Available in Print, Online, and on Tape
Now with Additional Subject Headings!

New! Sears List of Subject Headings Fourteenth Edition

1991 734pp. approx.
ISBN 0-8242-0803-X
\$42 U.S. and Canada, \$47 other countries.

The indispensable subject headings list for small to mid-sized libraries, this Fourteenth Edition of *Sears List of Subject Headings* has been fully revised, updated, and expanded!

Quick Reference

Organized for quick access and maximum utility, the Fourteenth Edition of *Sears* features:

- Over 300 additional subject headings
- Direct order headings replacing inverted order
- Increased scope notes, general instructional references
- Simplified and updated headings and subdivision notes
- Expanded reference structure
- Over 2,000 changes in Dewey numbers
- ALA Filing Rules without modification.

Based on Current, Reliable Sources

In compiling this edition of *Sears*, the editor gave special consideration to librarians' requests for new headings and changed terminology. This Fourteenth

Edition incorporates input from a variety of reliable sources, including The H. W. Wilson Company's staff of indexers and catalogers with expertise in specialized subject areas.

"A required tool for those preparing books for small to medium-sized libraries."

—AMERICAN REFERENCE BOOKS ANNUAL

A Useful Guide

A unique highlight is the chapter entitled *Principles of the Sears List*, a practical, 30-page section offering:

- An overview of subject cataloging principles
- Instructions for creating and maintaining a subject authority file
- A list of commonly used subdivisions.

Now Available Online, and on Tape

- WILSONTAPE™—Available on machine-readable tape in USMARC or Wilson-tagged format. Call for details.
- WILSONLINE®—Offers sophisticated features for easy online searching, at only \$25 per hour.

To Order Call Toll-Free
1-800-367-6770

Telefax 1-212-590-1617.



T H E H . W . W I L S O N C O M P A N Y

9 5 0 U N I V E R S I T Y A V E N U E , B R O N X , N Y 1 0 4 5 2

advance their scholarship. You don't necessarily interpret a great deal. I never became a specialist in anything.

JP: Except in archives, and how to put them together. You became attached to Brown and its Archives, and as I understand it, have made the Archives a visible, accessible collection.

MM: I hope so.

JP: If not a scholar, how do you "define" yourself? Moreover, where do archives fit in a university library system?

MM: I'm essentially the same as a curator of a collection. There was always a question about where archives belong. In some places, it is not a library, but within the university's administration. Some of them are completely separate from libraries. There are "pros" and there are "cons" to that.

JP: So what is the motivation behind making archives a part of libraries?

MM: At Brown, the library is where the material began growing. For the first forty years, the second half of the 19th century, it had been accumulated and largely concentrated in the hands of THE librarian himself. There are some institutions where they create archives, and their archives are considered more for the use of the university itself and its historians.

I think the advantage of their being within the library is that the material is available to the public.

JP: You mean that in a library, one has freedom of access.

MM: This is an issue we go over and over again at archivists' meetings.

JP: You mean, where the archives should be kept?

MM: Where they should rightfully be placed. Whether they should work for the university, or are they a part of the library dedicated to providing information to varieties of people. And there's a certain problem in providing information to anybody who comes in.

We are not a public institution, so therefore, it is not true that every document owned by the University is able to be seen by the public. The University has a right to have a policy for restricting it either chronologically, that is, back to a certain date, or selectively. Here at Brown, we need a policy. I am working on it.

It just isn't in the interest of the University to have everything available to everyone. The Archives is a place where non-current records no longer being used in the offices and are of a historical nature, come to be used as a basis for the future history of the University, and can continue to be consulted by officers of the University who may need them in

connection with what has gone on before.

Then, archives in a library setting, are not always well understood. For a long time before I came here, almost everything in the Archives was forced into being cataloged as a book, whatever it might be, and these so-called "books" were sometimes groups of clippings or correspondence, or even photographs bundled up in portfolios, pretending to be books. Football programs, on the other hand, were treated as serials. I have had a lot of remedial work to do.

Then, again, the main activities of Archives are acquisitions and processing, and the Archives are sometimes not appreciated because they may not excel in circulation.

And there are the other nuisances. While a library patron cannot demand a book that never was written, an Archives user can assure you that you must have a report he thinks should have been written. Administration offices also have a habit, when unable to find something in their own files, of saying they "must have sent it to the Archives."

I would like to stress the fact that the Archives should contain records of an historical nature, and that they should not, as has sometimes happened, and to us, be merely accumulations of boxes and boxes of invoices that have been paid.

JP: How do you decide what to keep?

MM: Most people are agreeable to transferring their papers, giving you permission to dispense of anything that is truly useless. Hardly anybody disagrees with that.

JP: Is there a statement of intent to the effect of what you'll use or won't use?

MM: We try to acquire the ownership of it and the right to use it, because restrictions on what can be used and how long at times becomes very difficult. The donors of some papers die, and restrictions are still there. It's best to have as few restrictions as possible defined as to how they're limited.

JP: So some kind of agreement or arrangement is made by the donor or the donor's family between you, the Archivist. As we know, some of the Kennedy papers are still under the order of not being opened until 2000 and something.

MM: Right. Harvard, for instance, can't look at anything generated within the offices of Harvard for fifty years. I think about twenty-five years is more reasonable. If there's something in someone's papers that would ordinarily not be used, if it were something that was circulated all over the place at the time, and I can find it in some of these papers, or something that I had questions about, I would call the people who had owned them.

JP: Your integrity is really part of the discipline of

an archivist. What if you came across something that did have an impact, perhaps something the donor family didn't know was in their papers, what then?

MM: I'd tell them. Anything compromising, I'd tell them.

JP: We've been talking about acquiring materials, about restrictions on materials, on policies of collection building. Would you like to give us a definition of archives? I think that "archive" is neither a singular noun, nor ever a verb. Would you agree with that?

MM: No. People use "archive" for something else, but "archives" is a plural noun which means records used in the government of a corporate body or institution. So far, so good. Those are some of the things we acquire, files from the President's offices, files from the Dean's offices, from departmental offices. We acquire publications from different parts of the University.

We also acquire a number of different things, not strictly "archives," but are an incredible source of information about the institution. This is particularly true in the social history of the University. Some of the things we've had are such things as tape recordings of events or motion pictures. These again are all records that are being produced at, and by the University.

But beyond those, there are scrapbooks kept by the University, and scrapbooks kept by students. I mentioned that Reuben Guild, the Librarian who took charge of all the historical materials having to do with the University for a good forty years or so, kept scrapbooks beginning in 1851, of things that he cut out of the newspapers, having to do with Brown, and these are a great source of information about what was happening, because prior to that time, there were no publications, such as we have now, the *Brown Daily Herald*, the *Brown Alumni Monthly*, the *George Street Journal*. These scrapbooks are where one goes to get an account of what was going on then.

JP: They are the predecessors of these journals.

MM: The scrapbooks kept by students give you social history. They're filled up with anything from dance programs to letters from the Dean that they were in trouble, paraphernalia, the ephemera, of student life, the little banners...

JP: Are there fraternity pins?

MM: Yes.

JP: How do you get these things? Do you actively solicit them?

MM: They're often offered to us by those who are cleaning house, and they recognize that nobody in the family really understands this anymore. "Should we sent it to you?"

JP: Do you accept everything that comes, feeling that once you've examined it, it can be discarded?

MM: Most things like this are usually useful, because they don't duplicate anything else, and they show some sort of new insight. Very useful in social history are the diaries kept by students. We have diaries kept from the 1850's up to about 1920. People seem to have lost interest in diaries. Students' letters are very useful, but students tend to call their parents now. Instead of writing home to say "I am buying this book," or "I am furnishing my room," or "I can see Fall River from the top of the dormitory," they use the 'phone.

Today, more communication is done by telephone, meaning that there's less paper record of memoranda. There's still plenty, but still more important communication is being done by telephone.

JP: I like your description of "archives" as memory, or did you say the "longest memory?"

MM: My memory goes back a long way, so far that I can tell you that someone asked about a particular person, and I said, "What I remember about him, is that in the First World War..." whereupon the questioner said, "But you don't remember the First World War." But I do have a feeling of having known what was going on in different times.

JP: Though we've touched a bit on what kind of background helps an archivist, are there other special qualities that are helpful? It seems to me that you've mentioned several right there: a good memory, and a feeling for, and knowledge of, historical periods. You don't have to have lived through the First World War to have a feel for it.

MM: Maybe it has to go the other way. You read about all these things written of the time, which is what you would have read, if you were there then. You read letters from the 19th century, in which current events of the period are mentioned, and you have to go find out what they were talking about. But, truly, I'm not that well-educated!

JP: I refuse to believe that!

MM: I am not. I don't come to any of this and say "I know what was going on then," because you can only find out what was going on then by reading and studying the people who were actually there.

JP: I'm a great believer in learning about periods of time by examining popular culture. This is not an original idea. For example, if you want to know what people were really like, or what their values or interests were, you have to look at, not the master authors of their period, but the popular stuff, the popular novels, which may even have vanished, except for research collections. Researchers of our

own period will have to look at Danielle Steele, not Carlos Fuentes.

MM: Which is what most of the people looked at the time. More people are reading Danielle Steele than anything else. I mean, I don't. I guess I've missed this whole time!

JP: Which means that if, people were looking at our own bookshelves, to see what people were reading, they might get the "wrong" perception of our times.

A month passed, and again Martha and I sat down to talk about archives and archives librarianship. We both had just returned from vacations and felt a little less than totally "together." During this conversation, Martha describes the finding aids that she was developed for Brown's Archives. She also describes her work on the Brown Encyclopedia, a huge undertaking still in progress.

JP: We have talked about some of the finding aids that you have developed: your "Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (MUCMC), and the Union Catalog of Office Files. (MUCOF) These are specific aids, do you have a theory behind them?

MM: The most important thing is to be able to supply access to material. Otherwise, they may just sit there. Without good finding aids, you would go crazy, I think that it's easiest, if you can look for something, to look in the least number of individual finding aids. That's the reason that we made registers of manuscript collections and then, with the use of the computer make an index of the indexes of the registers.

So any person or subject indexed in any collection can be traced from the one composite index. We're doing the same thing with the official papers of the university.

JP: When you index correspondence, do you do it by subject? date? how do you do it?

MM: The registers of manuscripts collections, for instance, are arranged in order of physical arrangement, which may be by correspondent or by date. However, the indexes will also index the recipient of the correspondent, subjects that were important, for whatever reason and that one might want to find again, and also by date, so you can come at the subject from different angles.

We've made other composite indexes, for example, photographs, portraits, postcards, and architectural drawings. So that one day when someone comes in asking for a photograph of a person, and we don't have one, we can direct him to a five-foot painting of that subject. Without the index, we could offer him nothing. So, in that one place, you may have a depiction of a building in a

photograph, or perhaps the architectural plans or a postcard.

JP: It's very impressive! These postcards you're talking about, are they the "wish you were here," type of cards that people send back from Paris or wherever?

MM: No, there are postcards of the University's buildings, and once in a while, there will be a picture of a football team. In fact, we have one of a football player's foot, because he's the man who hit the only field goal of his career, and it was the kick that allowed the Brown team to be invited to the Rose Bowl. This was in 1916, and never again ...

JP: Not in living memory! Are there other finding aids you can describe for us?

MM: We have other indexes, tape recordings of events at the University which are indexed by speaker, performer, and date. We have motion picture films. We make indexes to our theses, though these are regarded as books and are cataloged for the library.

What appears on a cataloging record for the volume may not answer the questions that are most likely to be asked, such as, "What chemistry theses were written in a given year?" Or what dissertations have been supervised by a particular faculty member? So we also make an index of them, by department and by faculty member, and what is supervised by what faculty member.

JP: Why would somebody want to know that?

MM: They want to know what kind of work has been done at a specific time. They want to know about the faculty advisor, because, it reflects later on their own careers

JP: And these are people who might be coming to Brown to specialize in a specific area of research, or want to attach themselves to someone who has already made a name in the area?

MM: Exactly.

JP: I notice you have office files there on the oak table in the main reading room. Did someone go through and quickly read them to see what was there before they went into the Hollinger boxes? Did someone try to organize them by subject, in terms of what responses may have been made to a specific problem in 1978? Or are they merely chronological?

MM: These are in the process of being done. First, we let some staff member have the pleasure of numbering the folders in the order they've come to us, which is often in the order they were maintained in the office. If they are very mixed up, I will organize them.

JP: Impose an order?

MM: I don't like to say "impose." End up with an order such as they should have had, had they not mixed them up! And they frequently mix them up. And they frequently put the folders in by the handful, getting them all out of order, even sometimes leaving them upside down!

JP: You mean they are cleaning out the office and chuck them together for Martha in any old order!

MM: That is true. That having been done, someone will put numbers on the folders and list the folder headings, since it is difficult to know what people have in folders, it's difficult to know if the folder heading actually describes what's in the folder, when someone examines it later.

And at some later date, when I have the time, which is not often, I go through the lists, and check the folder contents against them. Subject headings are very complicated. And you can't let students, or other people make them up.

JP: Even one's own files. I'm thinking of the *Bulletin* files. I have headings, but someone else coming along might not recognize the relationship of the heading to the actual contents. I'm still curious about the subject headings. Do you use headings that help you to find or the scholar to find the materials?

MM: That's why the index! For a limited amount of time, we will plow through the inventory list in order of appearance hoping to come upon something, but the reason for the index is to put in under the term that describes it no matter what they called it.

JP: That's really a finding aid. And the best description of an index I've ever heard!

MM: We have indexed things other than records and papers. For example, we have a list of university buildings and an index by architect, since it is not unusual, as time goes by, to have someone call up and ask "did so and so do such and such a building?" An index by date of construction or acquisition will tell you how much of the campus was built at any date.

JP: How did you develop the subject headings? Do you use some standard guide, such as the LC classification system?

MM: We use LC for general subject headings, but, we have a vast number of local subject headings – Brown University subdivided by almost any way – by department, buildings, social events, programs, and that's the way we try to keep control of the collection.

JP: Do you have an "authority file?"

MM: We don't actually have an authority file. But at any given time, we can print a list of those that have been already used, to see if they have been changed,

which is what I'm going to have to do soon. We never really have time to sit down and have discussions about subject headings. That kind of review happens at some institutions, about what is appropriate, acceptable and true.

JP: I have a question about how the collection is used. What kinds of questions do you receive?

MM: Do you want some inconsequential questions?

JP: Absolutely.

MM: Once I found the name and address of a girl that some boy had met on a train. He knew her first name and her major, and he wanted to meet her again.

JP: And he came to you?! Were you able to locate her?

MM: Yes.

JP: That was "current history."

MM: Do you want to hear some other amusing requests?

JP: Yes!

MM: One scholar's research was devoted to finding out when showers began to be installed in institutions. I found references to showers in two dormitories around the beginning of the century. When they first installed plumbing in the 1880's, a student could buy five tickets to take baths for fifty cents.

Another time, a descendant of a graduate of Brown's early medical school, which existed from 1811 to 1827, wrote to ask about his ancestor. I was able to find a little printed pamphlet relating to his ancestor, which described in detail a malpractice suit, complete with an illustration, showing how the ancestor had managed to set his patient's leg at a most peculiar angle to his body. I never heard from that person again!

And since we have fifty thousand folders of biographical material, mostly of deceased alumnae, and faculty members, families have used them for genealogical purposes.

JP: When does such a file like that get established? I noticed, today, the obituary of a professor of theatre arts, whose last name, I think is Bass. More than that, he had lived in my neighborhood; he lived on Columbia Avenue in Edgewood. Is there already a folder established for him? Or, when an obituary like this appears, do you establish one?

MM: Both ways. We do some clipping of newspaper items, so that a person might have a folder going on throughout his life. Perhaps an alumnae does something exceptional, I would clip it out and put it in his folder.

In general, such material is collected in the

alumnae office, and they have a definite policy that material is transferred to the Archives when that person is deceased or his class is older than fifty years. So, we inherit these from the Alumnae office. The news office collects as well.

JP: They keep more current things, whereas you keep more "historical" or retrospective material. In any event, it sounds like you are clipping material all the time.

MM: Yes, not because we want to be up to date, but so that it will be there fifty years from now. Everything, eventually, is past!

JP: That's an aphorism we might leave for our readers. Do you want to talk about your work on the *Encyclopedia*?

MM: It is an unusual undertaking. Not many people do it.

JP: Where did the idea of the *Encyclopedia* come from?

MM: Princeton had one. And I sort of liked reading it. I was getting to know some things about Princeton, and then I thought, "we have that here too," so I suggested the idea.

JP: To whom?

MM: To the library administration, when I asked for some leave of absence for three months to work on the project. I did that the second semester of 1988, which seems like a long time ago. During the leave, I wrote 190 pages. I've been at it almost three years and have written nearly six hundred pages.

My proposal suggested that there would be something like four hundred pages and 450 subjects. This was based on Princeton's work, but then I began to get carried away, and there seemed to be more things, more things that I learned should be put down, so that it would be there, and I have 580 pages, and seven hundred subjects, which cover historical events, departments, buildings, athletics, organizations, publications.

JP: How did you establish the entries?

MM: My proposal had about four hundred entries that I thought everybody should be interested in. Then, as I went along, I found things that merited a subject heading of its own. Do you want to know my method?

JP: Definitely.

MM: First, I bought some bookcases for my home. Then, I brought home all of the *Brown Alumni Monthlies* back to 1900, of which we had extra copies. Also, the *Brunonian Magazine*, which had news back to 1868 to 1917. I took home some bound volumes of presidents' reports.

And you'll like this part. You remember I had the list of four hundred entries on the computer. So I

printed them out on separate pages for taking notes on each subject. Later, I typed from the notes into the computer, leaving lots of space for additions.

JP: Will there be an index?

MM: Yes, and there will also be a chronology. Also, the index will lead to answers to trivial questions, such as "when did Andrew Jackson visit Brown?"

That information is in the diary of a student, who later became an important professor, for whom there is an article in the *Encyclopedia*, and Andrew Jackson is in the index.

JP: For the record, has any Brown graduate become President?

MM: No, the closest Brown came to having a President as alumnus was Charles Evans Hughes. Remember his story? He fell asleep, thinking he had won the election, while they were still counting votes in California!

But, back to Jackson. There was no reason I couldn't put, in a brief paragraph, the impressions President Jackson's visit made on this student. (pause) I think we've exhausted the subject.

JP: I don't think I could ever exhaust you, Martha!

PEOPLE

JOAN BARTRAM has been appointed Collection Development Librarian at Salve Regina College.

ROBERTA A.E. CAIRNS, Director of the East Providence Public Library, has been elected President of the Marketing of Public Library Services Section of the Public Library Association.

CALENDAR

APRIL 14-20: National Library Week

APRIL 14: Rhode Island Authors Reception, Providence Public Library, 3-6 p.m.

APRIL 18: International Special Librarians Day

APRIL 26: URI Graduate School of Library & Information Studies Annual Gathering

APRIL 26: New England Technical Services Librarians Spring Meeting, College of the Holy Cross, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Topic: "MARC: Prospects, Promises, and Potential of Machine-Readable Cataloging"

JUNE 6-7: RILA Annual Conference, Salve Regina College

JUNE 29-JULY 4: ALA Annual Conference, Atlanta

JULY 9-13: White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services, Washington, DC

BULLETIN BOARD

The Department of State Library Services recently reduced its staff by three members as a result of state employee layoffs mandated by Governor Sundlun. Those whose services have been lost are: GAIL MASTRATI, Chief of Public Relations and Information Services; AL PEREIRA, Community Libraries Consultant; and, SHARON BRAMAN, Library Aide. All will be sorely missed. Meanwhile, DSLS will be closed on the state services shutdown days imposed by the Governor. These include: April 15th, April 29th, May 13th, May 28th, and June 17th.

Students currently enrolled in a library science program are eligible to apply for the Baker and Taylor Grassroots Grant. The winner of the grant will be awarded \$250.00 to finance his or her attendance at the Annual Conference of the Rhode Island Library Association, which will be held at Salve Regina College in Newport on June 6 and 7. Students who will graduate before the conference are eligible to apply provided they are still enrolled in school at the time they submit their applications.

For additional information and application forms, contact Prof. Stewart Schneider, GSLIS, Rodman Hall, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI 02881-0815 (Phone: 792-2878).

As part of its National Library Week festivities, the Providence Public Library will hold its third annual Rhode Island Authors Reception on Sunday, April 14th, from 4-6 p.m. at the Central Library. The guest author this year will be SALLY BEDELL SMITH, author of *In All His Glory: The Life of William S. Paley*. Smith, a former reporter for *The New York Times* and *TV Guide*, is a weekend resident of Little Compton, Rhode Island. *Time* magazine's book review of Smith's publication states, "*In All His Glory* is an impressive, meticulously researched work of broadcast history as well as a piquant glimpse inside CBS's corporate culture." Smith's book will be on sale, and she will be autographing copies.

The reception, the only state-wide gathering and recognition of all Rhode Island authors, will include special recognition for all commercially published authors with a new book copyrighted 1990. Waldenbooks will have these books on sale at the reception, available for autographing by the authors.

Local author SCOTT CORBETT will be the Master of Ceremonies. This is a wonderful opportunity to come

and meet this distinguished group of authors. The reception is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.

The Department of State Library Services announced that the National Endowment for the Humanities has funded "What a Difference a Bay Makes," a collaborative effort of the Department and the Rhode Island Historical Society. NEH will support the project with \$229,000 in outright funds and \$20,000 in federal matching funds when an additional \$20,000 is raised in Rhode Island, bringing the total to \$269,000.

"What a Difference a Bay Makes" is a two-year series of public library programs that will consider the roles Narragansett Bay has played in the history of the region - as its front yard, highway, workplace, playground, and inspiration - and the role it will play in the future. Lectures, reading and discussion series, exhibits, panel discussions, interpretive musical and dramatic presentations, workshops, and tours will be presented by 50 humanities scholars and other experts. Libraries in the Bay region will host the programs starting in September 1991. Additionally, two major exhibitions will be held at the Rhode Island Historical Society and the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design. Annotated reading lists and essays by the scholars also will be made available throughout the state as part of the project.

Frontrunning "What a Difference a Bay Makes" are PEGGY SHEA, Project Supervisor, and DEBBIE BRENNAN, Project Director. Both can be contacted at the Department of State Library Services.

Educators, librarians, parents and storytellers from across the country will gather at Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut, for a five-day symposium on "Storytelling In Education." The 5th Annual National Congress on Storytelling, on June 12-16, 1991, presents a wide range of noteworthy speakers in over forty sessions including keynotes, workshops, panel discussions, activities and group meetings.

Sessions include: "The Rationale for Storytelling in Education" by DR. WERNER GLAS, President of Waldorf Institute; "Keepers of the Earth" by Native American author and storyteller JOSEPH BRUCHAC and naturalist MICHAEL CADUTO; "Were You There? History Live!" by storyteller JUDITH BLACK; "Storytelling and Writing - the Intimate Connection" by author JANE YOLEN, as well as sessions on storytelling and whole language, the power of myth, intergenerational

storytelling, stories and conflict resolution, building literacy through storytelling, working with inner city youth and much more.

Special presentations during the five-day symposium include performances by master storyteller JAY O'CALLAHAN, the National Theater of the Deaf, and a storytelling concert at Old Mystic Seaport.

Registrations are available for the entire Congress or on a per day basis. Early-Bird rates apply prior to April 30. For more information and registration details, write to: NAPSS, P.O. Box 309, Jonesborough, TN 367659, or call (615) 753-2171.

•

Now available from Sunrise Corporation is *Rhode Island Media Listings 1991-92*. This comprehensive guide is priced at \$12.50 (prepaid only) and should be ordered from: Sunrise Corporation, 26 Rochambeau Avenue, Providence, RI 02906.

JOANNE KILLEEN and GEORGE GERMON, chefs and co-owners of Al Forno and Lucky's (and named in 1988 by *Food & Wine* as two of the ten best chefs in America) will be honored by the Providence Public Library at a benefit reception to kick off its 10-city tour for their new cookbook, *Cucina Simpatica, Robust Trattoria Cooking from Al Forno*.

The benefit, assisted by Johnson & Wales University, will take place at the Central Library, 225 Washington Street, Providence, on Monday, May 6, 1991, from 5-7 p.m. The festivities will begin with a lecture on their culinary skills and will end with a sampling of some of the wonderful recipes in *Cucina Simpatica* prepared by Al Forno Restaurant and served at the reception with the special assistance of the Culinary Arts Division of Johnson & Wales University. Personalized cookbooks and aprons will be available for purchase throughout the evening.

There will be a \$15 donation to attend the lecture, a \$35 donation to receive preferred seating at the lecture and reception, and a \$100 donation to receive preferred seating at the lecture and reception and a complimentary copy of *Cucina Simpatica*. Reservations for seats must be received by April 23rd. For more information, call 455-8003/455-8055. Reservations must be mailed in, accompanied with a check made payable to the Providence Public Library. No tickets will be mailed; a complete list will be maintained at the door, and you will be notified if the reception has filled to capacity.

Al Forno, which opened in 1980, is best known for its pizza, grilled over a hardwood fire. Lucky's opened in 1987, winning *Esquire* magazine's recognition as one

of the nation's best new restaurants. The establishments are equally popular, attracting diners from all over New England. Their menu is Italian trattoria food made with experimental zeal and artistic flair, using only fresh American ingredients.

GSLIS Gathers Again!

The fourteenth annual gathering of the Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences at URI will be held on April 26th.

For a change of pace, this year's Annual Gathering will be an evening affair at the University Club. A cash bar beginning at 5:30 p.m. will provide an opportunity to meet and mingle. Dinner at 7 p.m. (veal cordon bleu or baked stuffed fish) will be followed by the presentation of the Distinguished Graduate Award and a talk by a distinguished speaker, JOHN BERRY, the editor of *Library Journal*.

The University Club is located on Upper College Road, about half a mile from where it begins at Rte. 138 (opposite the white church). Parking is available in the lot just before you reach the club (turn right on Chapel Way) or in the nearby Fine Arts Center parking area (turn right on Bill's Road, just after passing the club). Since the capacity of the club is limited, early reservations are suggested.

Cost of the evening is \$20.00, payable to GSLIS. Reservations must be made by April 15th, to GSLIS, Rodman Hall, URI, Kingston, RI 02881-0815.

A P O L O G I E S

The *Bulletin* apologizes to its readers for misspelling the name of MARGARET "PEG" DEIGNAN, who among other worthy accomplishments in the library field, is also COLA's Sweetheart of the Year.

We also apologize for a typographical error that implied that photographer and manager of the Media Resource Center at DSLS, JOE MCGOVERN, joined that staff at the age of thirteen. The line should have read "thirteen years ago."

Notes from the Executive Board

RILA's Executive Board met on March 5. As this was a quarterly meeting at which Committee Chairs gave reports, the *Bulletin* is presenting a summary of its proceedings.

(1) Conference Committee Chair, Carol Drought, reported that the Spring Conference will be held on June 6 and 7 at Salve Regina College in Newport. Highlights of the Conference, to date, are Joey Roger's (Executive Director, PLA, see *IJ*, March 1) speaking at breakfast, Friday morning; and Bruce Calver in a murder mystery evening, Thursday, at the dinner at Ochre Court. Other workshop programs, poster sessions, and receptions are planned. RILA's Business Meeting is scheduled for Thursday morning, from 11 a.m. - 12 noon.

(2) Government Relations Chair, Jim Giles, reported that a bill before the General Assembly puts more strength into the law concerning the theft of library materials from public libraries.

The following issues were recommended for consideration at the Governor's Conference (March 16-17):

- Equal access to library services
- Governance of city and town libraries by library boards of trustees

- Adequate salaries and benefits for librarians
- Adequate funding for libraries
- Role of public libraries within community agencies
- School and public library relations
- Participation in the National Research and Education Network.

A brochure was presented for use by libraries and directed toward legislators, which outlines library services and their necessity to the public. This brochure, as well as a video-tape, will be presented at the legislative reception in April.

Other committee reports included that of Rachel Carpenter, Intellectual Freedom Chair; Donna Roberts, Membership Chair; and Ann Crawford, Personnel Chair. (The *Bulletin's* May issue will include a report on salaries prepared by this Committee.)

Additional information on this, or any meeting of the Executive Board, is available from any Board member. Do remember that the Board represents the views of the membership, and relies on each of you to supply it with necessary information and concerns. (Names and phone or fax numbers of Board members are available in the *Bulletin*, V. 64, no. 1-2.)

<h1>Reward Yourself!</h1>	<h2>You're a success story!</h2>	<p>You provide quality in your library. Your library provides reference services and information services, literacy programs, bibliographic instruction, collection development, public relations, and much more. Even with all these offerings, you're always planning new and better services.</p>	<p>ALA understands your goals and can help you reach them.</p>	<p>You'll receive 11 current issues of <i>American Libraries</i>, with 100+ monthly job listing, discounts on ALA publications and graphics, reduced registration rates at ALA conferences, voting rights, committee privileges, and eligibility for group insurance and credit card programs.</p>	<p>Select membership category:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$38 first-time regular member</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$75 renewing member</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$19 student member</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$26 retired/inactive/salary under \$10,000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$34 trustees and Friends</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$45 foreign librarian</p> <p>Check enclosed for \$ _____</p> <p>Charge my dues of \$ _____ to my:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> American Express</p> <p>card number _____</p> <p>expiration date _____</p> <p>signature _____</p> <p>Your membership runs for 12 full months from the month you join. Information on ALA's divisions, round tables, and membership benefits will be sent with your ALA membership card.</p>	<p>Name _____</p> <p>Home Address _____</p> <p>City/State/Zip _____</p> <p>Institution _____</p> <p>Street Address _____</p> <p>City/State/Zip _____</p> <p>Work Telephone _____</p> <p>Home Telephone _____</p> <p>Send mail to: _____ home _____ work</p> <p>Send your completed application to: ALA Membership Services American Library Association 50 East Huron Street Chicago, Illinois 60611 Telephone: 800-545-2433, ext. 4299 & 4298 Fax: 312-440-9374</p>

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

On my first visit to MARTHA MITCHELL, Archivist of Brown University, I asked the inevitable question, "Surely, you receive a lot of humorous remarks about your name." Even the Publications Committee, when I proposed my interviewing Martha, said such things as "Gee, I thought she was dead!"

There was a pause, in which Martha scrutinized me with her big blue eyes behind her intimidating glasses. "Yes, I used to hear comments all the time. But you know, today few, if any of our undergraduates, remember that Martha Mitchell."

I suddenly felt very old, and, as was often the case during my conversation with Martha, utterly speechless.

Later, during one of those conversations, Martha defined "archives" as "the longest memory," and it occurred to me then, that in our "fast-food, throw-away" society, we should stop occasionally and pay homage to the memories of our past, and to those who organize, maintain, and make them accessible to us.

Of course, there are many kinds of archives, national, state, institutional, even personal. To manage one's own archives strikes me as a daunting task, requiring organization of photographs, letters, legal documents, pieces of jewelry, even, perhaps a wedding dress. Managing the archives of a university, with hundreds of years of such memorabilia, seems a herculean task at best.

To talk with Martha is to be aware, at one moment in time, of everything that has ever happened at the University. She speaks familiarly of such luminaries as Francis Wayland, whose correspondence she cataloged at the beginning of her career, and whose children she refers to as "the kids." One of these "kids" became Dean of the Yale Law School, another President of the College at Brown!

She speaks with equal ease of Charles Evans Hughes, who, as a student, made money "on the side" by writing other students' papers, and who justified his activities to his father as a form of intellectual enrichment! Martha now sits at her desk in the mahogany chair Hughes used at the Supreme Court. She sits, I might add, with feet stretched out before her, and hands folded half-pensively, half-mischievously, under her chin.

Indeed, my conversations with Martha turned out to be both pensive and mischievous. I went to our first visit, a bit nervous and unsure that I could respond intelligently to someone of her wit and intelligence. I left our visits, with a light step and recurring laughter.

Martha is a rare combination of erudition, scholarship, and sheer fun. When I consider some of my stuffier experiences in the halls of academe, I can only say that Martha is indeed, a healthy antidote to the so-called scholarly environment, and without a doubt, one of the jewels in Brown's crown.

The RILA BULLETIN is published nine times per year by the Rhode Island Library Association. Managing Editor: Judith Paster, 52 Seaview Avenue, Cranston, RI 02905 (467-8898); Feature Editor: Norman Desmarais, Providence College, Phillips Memorial Library, Providence, RI 02918 (865-2241); News Editor: Frank Iacono, DSLS, 300 Richmond Street, Providence, RI 02903-4222 (277-2726); Jobline: Pam Stoddard, Government Documents Department, URI Library, Kingston, RI 02881 (792-2606); Advertising Manager: Elizabeth Johnson, Cranston Public Library, 140 Sockanosset Cross Road, Cranston, RI 02920 (943-9080); Subscriptions Manager: John Bucci, William Hall Library, 1825 Broad Street, Cranston, RI 02905 (781-2450). A current list of RILA Executive Board members and Committee Chairs is available in Volume 64, No. 1-2. Subscriptions: free to members; \$15/year in U.S.; \$20/year foreign. Deadlines: 1st of the month for features and 15th of the month for everything else. Advertising: \$130 full page; \$65 half page; \$40 quarter page; \$15 business card size. Change of address: members contact the Membership Committee Chair, Donna Roberts, 1503 Middle Road, East Greenwich, RI 02818 (885-3174). Subscription correspondence: contact Subscriptions Manager. For further information, contact the appropriate Editor. Technical Production: Verbatim, Inc., 769B Hope Street, Providence, RI 02906 (273-6930). Printing by Lewis Graphics, 636 Park Avenue, Cranston, RI 02910 (941-7540). LC 57-26438.

Rhode Island Library Association
300 Richmond Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-4222

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Providence, R. I.
PERMIT NO. 210

RITA H WARNOCK
271 DOYLE AVE
PROVIDENCE RI 02906