Susanne Roberts, Founder of Nota Bene and Editor from 1986 to 2006, Steps Down

Nota Bene reaches some 10,000 people with every issue. Now a fixture of the Yale University Library scene, twenty years ago it was just a concept. Sue Roberts, who was already juggling her demanding job as Librarian for European History with a family life that then included two small children, somehow found the time and creative energy to launch Nota Bene, too. Associate University Librarian Ake Koel (whose obituary, sadly, appeared in the Spring 2005 issue) came up with the winning title, in a contest among Library staff.

John Gamble, now Yale University Printer, conceived Nota Bene’s classy design. Sue, pulling together material for the first issue, created a pattern of information about both collections and services, and increasingly about the new world of electronic services and databases. She also began to look around the Sterling Memorial Library for details that nobody paid much attention to. “I became so fond of this building,” she says, “by discovering it through finding images to put in the newsletter.”

The first issue was hand-delivered by bibliographers wearing painters’ hats embellished with Nota Bene stickers. In time, the newsletter became a development tool, mailed to donors and supporters of the Library. To designate news of gifts, Sue created an icon of a giving hand, based on medieval imagery of hands holding up a church, with which she was familiar from her own work as a historian. Today, Nota Bene focuses on new services and the research uses of Library collections, including undergraduate research.

Susanne Roberts guided the newsletter through all of these changes with an expert eye and rigorous editorial standards. As she passes Nota Bene on to the capable hands of Amanda Patrick, we thank her for an extraordinary job and a stylish contribution to the Library’s public profile — one that has come to occupy a special place in the affections of its many readers.

– AP and JVV

A Reflection on the 75th Anniversary Season

Carved by the entrance to Sterling Memorial Library are the words, “The library is the heart of the university,” a saying that most definitely has been the theme of the 75th Anniversary celebrations so far. Beginning in October 2005, in commemoration of the completion of the building of Sterling 75 years earlier, the library installed an extensive exhibit entitled “The Heart of Yale: Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of Sterling Memorial Library, 1930–2005.” Curated by Judith Schiff, Chief Research Archivist, the exhibit featured selected architectural renderings, photographs of the sculpture and stained glass windows, and various documents and letters written at the time.

The kick-off event took place later in October when renowned author and historian David McCullough addressed a packed auditorium with his lecture entitled “The Heart of the University.” Describing it as the “noblest of Yale’s buildings,” he went on to talk of his affection for Sterling Memorial Library during his student days and how his time there even inspired him to become a historian. Following the lecture, President Levin hosted a sparkling reception in the magnificently decorated Sterling Nave and L&B Room.

Since then, each month has been a flurry of activity with special tours, talks, and receptions, all part of the Anniversary season’s “Treasures of the Yale Library” series. Tour participants have discovered treasures in the Babylonian, Visual Resources, Slavic, Benjamin…
Franklin, African American Missions, and Kramer Initiative Collections. Others have admired the stained glass or taken “The Journey of the Book” tour, following the steps that each Yale Library book goes through from acquisition to the shelf. Critically acclaimed author Jamaica Kincaid gave a reading from her new book Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya and Gay Walker, author of Bonawit, Stained Glass and Yale flew from Oregon to present an illustrated talk on Sterling’s stained glass to a crowded audience. With the anniversary season set to continue until the end of April, there are still many wonderful events in store.

For seventy-five years, Sterling Memorial Library has been and will continue to be the heart of the university, a magnetic force, attracting outstanding research materials and scholars and motivating their interaction in an inspirational setting. – AJP & JS

ANNIVERSARY EVENTS FOR APRIL

Treasures of Sterling’s Architecture
4/5 at 12 noon and 3pm – Library Staff Only
4/26 at 12 noon and 3pm – Open to the Public
(Please register for these tours at anniversary75th@yale.edu)

Library Open House Day – Saturday 4/8
All are welcome to visit Sterling Memorial Library on this special day for the whole family, arranged in conjunction with Yale’s Community Day throughout the Campus.

• Tours of the Library, including Architecture, Stained Glass and a tour hosted by the University Librarian. (http://www.library.yale.edu/75th/apr_75.htm for details and to reserve a place)

• Our own version of “Antiques Road Show” sponsored by Manuscripts and Archives and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Ever wondered about the history of your old books and documents or ways that you can best preserve them? Librarians will be on hand to help and advise you.

• Manuscripts and Archives Open House — a chance to view close-up some of the treasures of this rich and diverse collection.

• Special features such as a book made from soap!

• Many exhibits including Magic in Mesopotamia, a celebration of the United Nations’ 60th Anniversary, and more.

• Refreshments throughout the day.

Admiring the stained glass windows of Sterling Memorial Library on one of the “Treasures of the Yale Library” tours.

“Sterling Memorial Library and its Champions — Creators, Benefactors and Staff”
4/11 at 2pm, SML Lecture Hall
A lecture by Judith Schiff, Chief Research Archivist in Yale’s Manuscripts and Archives Collection on the 75th Anniversary of the Dedication Ceremony held April 11, 1931.

Anniversary ArtSpot! 4/13 from 6–8pm
Sponsored by Yale University and coordinated by the Arts Council of Greater New Haven, ArtSpot! is the happy hour with an arts twist! Memorabilia Room and Lecture Hall in SML.

“Artistic Interpretations of Sterling by Yale Library Staff”
4/28 at 1pm
Enjoy the artistic reflections of your library colleagues as they discuss what they enjoy about working at the Yale libraries. SML Lecture Hall.
Mellon Foundation Grants Support to Catalog Yale’s Historical Sound Recordings

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has awarded $789,000 to Yale University, Stanford University, and the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts to facilitate the cataloging of historical 78-rpm sound recordings. Commenting on the award, Yale University Librarian Alice Prochaska said, “The Mellon Foundation’s generosity facilitates an exciting collaborative project, and I am simply delighted that Yale University Library is playing a key role in it. It will transform access to these important sound recordings for scholars and other listeners both in the U.S. and in every part of the world.”

During the forty months of the grant period, the three partner institutions will create original catalog records for over 29,000 commercial 78s that were issued by record companies as single discs. These recordings represent a treasure trove of musical and spoken-word performances, but until now, only limited information about their contents has been available to scholars. Once the project concludes, records for the 78s will be fully searchable in the online catalogs of all three institutions, as well as through OCLC’s WorldCat and RLIN’s Eureka databases.

With combined holdings of nearly a million commercial recordings in all formats, plus privately produced archival audio materials, Yale’s Historical Sound Recordings Collection, Stanford’s Archive of Recorded Sound, and The Rodgers & Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts constitute three of the largest collections of audio recordings in the United States. – KC

Lewis Walpole Library Creates Database of Strawberry Hill

In spring 2005, the Lewis Walpole Library began creating a database of the fine art and artifacts accumulated by Horace Walpole (1707–1797) and displayed in his celebrated gothic villa at Strawberry Hill outside London. Dispersed in a major sale in 1842, Walpole’s collection, estimated at several thousand objects, was one of the most significant in eighteenth-century England. The Lewis Walpole Library is the largest research repository of published, manuscript, and fine art material relating to Walpole and Strawberry Hill.

The database will support two major projects:

1) an exhibition of Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill to be jointly organized by the Lewis Walpole Library and the Yale Center for British Art, in conjunction with the Victoria and Albert Museum, in 2009-2010;

2) the renovation of Strawberry Hill, undertaken by the World Monuments Fund with a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The database will also be a research tool for work on individual artists or types of objects, as well as for scholars studying the history of the interior, the history of collecting, and the history of taste.

The database, which will ultimately be online, currently includes almost 400 records, 100 of which have digital images. The project has been supported by a Curatorial Fellowship Grant from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation. – CR
**National Endowment for the Humanities Funds Iraq Digitization Project at Yale Library**

The National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded the Yale University Library a two-year grant in the amount of $97,060 to support “Iraq ReCollection,” a landmark effort to preserve and disseminate academic journals that record, interpret, and explain the history and culture of Iraq.

Iraq has a rich tradition of publishing, and its academic journals are invaluable for humanistic and area studies, particularly in history, literature, and politics. But library holdings of these journals in Iraq and elsewhere are limited and in some cases imperiled. Only in the last two years, through a Yale Library project called oacis, has it been possible to know at all accurately what Middle Eastern journals exist in which collections. We know of almost 600 journal titles published in Iraq, 350 of them being uniquely held.

The project will select a group of the most important scholarly humanistic Iraqi journals held by Yale and by the University of Pennsylvania for digitization. These will then be incorporated into an electronic archive where they can be accessed by scholars worldwide.

The work will be done over the calendar years 2006–2007 and will be closely watched to see what the best next steps will be. “As a project that should lead to further projects and a developing commitment to building Middle-Eastern digital libraries, Iraq ReCollection will be a sign of the future whose importance will not be lost on the scholarly world,” said Yale Associate Librarian Ann S. Okerson, principal investigator on the project. –ASO

**Preparations Underway for CCL/SML Upcoming Renovations**

Preparations are now underway for the complete renovation of the Cross Campus Library and basement of Sterling Memorial Library, due to begin soon after Commencement. Starting the second week of May, library staff will shift over one million books in the sml stack tower to empty shelves on floors 1, 1m, & 1mb to make way for the temporary relocation of the ccl book and video collections during construction.

The free-standing card catalog cabinets will be removed from the Nave, following the transfer of boxed subject cards to the Library Shelving Facility and the relocation of name and title cards into boxes to a reader-accessible basement room which will be specially fitted with compact shelving. To make space for the new staircase and room for the name-title catalog cards, some special collections from the Arts of the Book and Manuscripts and Archives Collections will be transferred to the Library Shelving Facility.

Architects are working with staff to finalize plans for the temporary relocation of service and work areas.

**Yale Library Creates Diversity Council**

In August 2005, a team of staff from across the library system gathered together to form the library’s very first Diversity Council, with the mandate to promote and support a more diverse workforce within the Yale University Libraries. Composed of seventeen library staff members, and chaired jointly by Rich Richie and Teresa Miguel, it works in alignment with Yale’s university-wide diversity initiatives. Since its day-long retreat in November 2005, the Council has been working hard to facilitate the continuing efforts by the Yale University Library to create a workforce that reflects the richly diverse Yale University community and society at large, and to make the library an even more appealing and open workplace. The many goals include establishing efforts to recruit the best librarians from ethnically diverse backgrounds and enhancing the library’s multi-ethnic collections. The Council is currently refining a Strategic Plan, which will be posted to a forthcoming library web page focusing on diversity issues. –TM
Last fall, Yale University Library sent Patricia Thurston, Assistant Head of the Cataloging Department, to Nigeria to help train African librarians in automated cataloging techniques. The project, sponsored by the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs in coordination with the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa, aims to improve research services at seven African institutions by the end of 2007. Patricia participated by giving presentations in basic MARC and cataloging workflows at two university libraries in Nigeria, the University of Jos and Obafemi Awolowo University.

During her visit, she learned about the wealth of information and material located in Nigerian university libraries, much of which remains inaccessible to all but a handful of local scholars. This project will ultimately allow a greater number of scholars, both local and international, to learn about Nigeria’s social and economic history, as well as its rich culture.

The Partnership for Higher Education in Africa, which began its work in 2000, is supported by six major U.S. foundations that have pledged more than 200 million dollars to support higher education in Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. The mission of the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs, founded in 1991, is to strengthen ties among libraries and librarians worldwide for the promotion of international education.

To learn more about the Partnership, see http://www.foundation-partnership.org. For information about the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs, see http://www.library.uiuc.edu/mortenson. – PT
This year marks the 75th anniversary not only of Sterling Memorial Library, but also of the Yale Library Associates. Founded in 1930 by an eminent group of bibliophiles, the Library Associates provide support and exposure for Yale’s libraries. Their 39-member Board of Trustees includes Chairman Jerrold Mitchell ’61, the focus of the first in this Trustee’s Corner series.

Jerry joined the Associates in 1961 after graduating from Yale, became a Trustee in 1987, and was elected Chairman in 2004. A voracious and eclectic reader, he eagerly crossed the line into book collecting, beginning with books he had read — mostly modern first editions and books on Russia. He currently collects imprints of the Elzevier press (17th century Dutch printers who published everything from theology and the classics to satire and doctoral dissertations). Beinecke Library exhibited part of this collection in the summer of 1995. He also owns an “accumulation” of 492 books on wine.

Some of Jerry’s fondest memories of Yale took place in the libraries: the pleasures of wandering around the Sterling stacks; the courtesy, generosity, and friendliness of the staff; the beauty of the Beinecke; and — a memory shared by many Yale students — the comfortable club chairs in the L&B room. Jerry began his career in the investment management business in 1968 and, uniting his love of book collecting with his fulfilling career, he commented, “While my advice to incipient book collectors would be ‘specialize, specialize,’ my advice to novice investors would be ‘diversify, diversify.’” — RM & JM

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Training Librarians and Faculty in Syria

Syria contains the world’s oldest continually inhabited city, Damascus, and one of the world’s oldest libraries. For an American librarian, then, visiting Syria is a sobering and exhilarating experience. In November, Yale librarians traveled to Syria for the third time in five years to train Middle Eastern professionals in the techniques of contemporary librarianship. Their trip was sponsored by the Soros-funded eIFL Project (Electronic Information for Libraries), which has given similar workshops in Laos and Cambodia.

The eIFL Project’s major goal is to help librarians in developing nations improve user access to electronic information. Academic and scientific publishers have begun to make their journals and databases available at reduced prices — sometimes at no charge — to libraries in these nations (for examples, see http://www.library.yale.edu/~license/develop.shtml). However, long histories of warfare and underdevelopment, along with bandwidth limitations and legal regulations, still hamstring what researchers can do. Syrian and Iraqi librarians described how they struggle to do business amidst such political, economic, and technical challenges, but their energy and optimism were heartening.

Yale’s library is well positioned to support the growth of information resources in Middle Eastern libraries. Three years ago, a grant from the U.S. Department of Education supported a project to unify catalogues of scholarly journals on Middle Eastern subjects, including rare ones held only in Middle Eastern libraries (see http://www.library.yale.edu/oaci). A second grant supports A Middle Eastern Electronic Library, or AMEEL (http://www.library.yale.edu/ameel). This winter, Yale will participate in two workshops at the new Library of Alexandria (http://www.bibalex.org) — itself a groundbreaking venture — to plan further developments, including large-scale Arabic-language digitization projects. — aso

Securing Library Collections

All Library staff, from student and casual employees to senior administrators, share responsibility for securing the collections from theft, vandalism, and negligent handling. The Library Collection Security Group, formed in October 2005, is chaired by Roberta Pilette and composed of staff from many different parts of the Library. Its charges are to assess current security measures and practices and to make recommendations for updating them. Ultimately, the group will issue sets of guidelines for staff and patrons and a report on the state of each library building with regard to physical security issues.

TRUSTEE’S CORNER

Jerrold Mitchell, Chairman of the Yale Library Associates

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The Reverend Jared Eliot, Class of 1706, included a gift in his will for the benefit of the Yale Library, which was received upon his death in 1763. His was the first bequest for the Library. His great-great-great grandson, George E. Eliot, Yale College Class of 1886, continued the tradition, stating in his will: “To the President and Fellows of Yale University the sum of one thousand dollars ($1,000.00) for the use of the University Library. I herein follow the example of my great-great-great grandfather, Rev. Jared Eliot, who made the first bequest to the Yale Library.”

As the Yale Library enters its fourth century, it is undertaking a major capital campaign to create a firm financial base for the work it needs to do: renovating facilities, preserving and providing high-quality access to collections, and building innovative services for the changing needs of students and faculty.

Today, we would like to ask you to consider following the example of the Eliot Family by supporting the work of the Yale Library. If you wish to give now to support the Library’s work of preserving, cataloging, and digitizing its collections, please consider joining the Yale Library Associates (http://www.library.yale.edu/development/yla.htm) and their Celebration Fund (http://www.library.yale.edu/yl75). If you wish to make a bequest or other planned gift, we invite you to join Yale Legacy Partners, a society of alumni, family, and friends who have made bequests or other planned gifts to Yale.

If you would like to learn more about gifts with mutual benefits for you and Yale Library, please contact Eileen B. Donahue or Mary Beth Congdon at Yale’s Office of Planned Giving: (203) 432-7025 or 800-445-6086; development.plannedgiving@yale.edu. – DT

Yale College Graduate of Three Hundred Years Ago Makes First Yale Library Bequest

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Calendar of Exhibits

STERLING MEMORIAL LIBRARY

A Timeline of the Human Record
May through July

Carillon
May through July

Class of ’36 Reunion Exhibit
May through June 5

Anne Morrow Lindbergh
June 16 through September 8

Oil through the Centuries
August through October

Croatia through the Centuries
August through October

BEINECKE RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY

Tending toward 50: A History of Chelsea Review
through early June

Rachel Carson
through June

MEDICAL LIBRARY

For all Medical Library exhibits: http://www.med.yale.edu/library/about/exhibits.html#hallway

Please see our website at: http://resources.library.yale.edu/online/news.asp for a complete listing of exhibits.

DIVINITY LIBRARY

Early African-American Missionaries
through April 30

The ‘Cycle of Life’: A History of Experimental Ecology, 1750–2000
through April 30

Samuel Beckett: A Mystery Wrapped in an Enigma
through May

From Nebraska to Istanbul: The Work of a 20th-Century Missionary, Melvin Wittler
May 1 through August 30

From the Arts of the Book Bookplate Collection

Nota Bene News from the Yale Library