Message From The ASLS President

"The main thing a musician would like to do is to give a picture to the listener of the many wonderful things he knows and senses in the universe."

John Coltrane

Like Coltrane and other musicians, librarians endeavor to provide a similar picture to visitors of our libraries. We strive to open up new worlds of knowledge to patrons through collection maintenance and administration, reference, instruction, and so much more. Even though we toll over budgets, weeding (and saving), and new technologies, we love what we do. We're always eager to enrich the lives of others with our varied treasures.

Members of the Academic and Special Library Section of NYLA include a wide range of librarians who provide such assets. Prison librarians educate inmates with essential skills so they can attain more fulfilled lives when they leave prison. Genealogy librarians provide glimpses to the lives of families past. Hospital librarians supply important library resources to save lives. Academic librarians help open student minds so they may pursue richer lives. ASLS is proud of its eclectic membership and the diverse work our librarians accomplish.

With such a wide range of constituents, it would be wonderful to get a better picture of our members and member institutions. This initiative was started last fall for the NYLA conference. At the ASLS booth a number of New York State academic and special libraries were highlighted. BUT this event only gave us a taste of the many exciting libraries in New York and the essential services and resources they deliver. ASLS would like to learn more about the member libraries in our section. With this knowledge, we will not only have a clearer picture of who you are, but will also be able to better represent your interests and the needs of your constituents.

As section members, you can provide information to us. Please take a few moments and send us details (and pictures, if you'd like) of your library and/or librarians. Your response will be music to our ears!

Carol Anne Germain

Send responses via email, delivery services, fax, or whatever you can think of to anybody on the board roster (see page 3)

CONFERENCE A SUCCESS!

On November 6 - 7, 2001, eighty people gathered in Albany for “Academic Libraries in the Political Word: Strategic Partners for the 21st Century,” the 4th biennial conference for academic library directors and senior administrators. Sponsored by ASLS and the New York 3Rs organizations, the conference provided opportunities to learn about the political process, to weigh in on new Middle States guidelines, and to network with colleagues from all types of libraries throughout New York. Proceedings of the conference are available at www.nyтро.net/NYTRO NYLA/index.htm. Check it out!
Three Days in the Life of a Dewey Fellow

My experience as a Dewey Fellow began when I arrived in downtown Albany on Thursday morning and checked into the Crowne Plaza hotel. I was given a wonderful room on the 14th floor with a view of the gargoyles on top of St. Peter’s Church. After dropping off my bags, I headed up to Empire State Plaza, where I got my badges and tickets and tried to orient myself. Even though I’ve lived in the area for about four years, this was my first trip inside the buildings, and that, along with the number of people milling around made the first few minutes rather overwhelming.

Luckily I soon ran into a few familiar faces from the SUNY Albany library program, and we managed to find our way together to the first session of the day, Andy Rooney. I was amazed to see how many librarians were attending the conference, and it felt good to know that I was part of such a diverse group of people sharing common goals and interests.

My initial disorientation quickly dissipated as I began attending various sessions throughout the conference and got to know many of the other librarians. On Thursday I attended a session on CIPA and UCITA, which featured an excellent speaker from the ACLU, and a session called “Glimpsing the Future” during which many exciting new technologies were showcased. In between, there was a little time to visit the vendor displays and grab a quick lunch.

Friday was a very busy day, as I attended two sessions as well as the ASLS member meeting and the annual membership meeting. One of the highlights for me was the chance to act as a moderator for the “Exhibit This!” session in the morning. Being able to participate in an active way helped me to feel more like a “real” member of NYLA and ASLS.

Saturday morning I was able to attend one last, excellent session on web-based collection development and finally, the grand finale on Saturday evening was the Dewey dinner at La Serre. The food was terrific, and the speaker Mark Dunn was interesting and entertaining. As one of the wonderful gifts I received a copy of Ella Minnow Pea, Mr. Dunn’s book, which was so enjoyable that I read it in one sitting the next day!

I would like to thank ASLS and everyone at NYLA for making my time at the conference both fun and informative, and I look forward to becoming more active in the future.

Greg Bobish
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You may have heard that Dewey Fellowships will not be awarded this year . . .

Look (and listen) for news of an ASLS Conference Fellowship for NYLA 2002!
Nominations Needed

Spirit of Librarianship Award

Do you know a standout academic or special librarian who is everything -- and more -- that a librarian ought to be? The Spirit of Librarianship Award is for someone who exemplifies the spirit that academic and special libraries bring to our profession.

Last year ASLS honored Jean Sheviak, Executive Director of the Capital District Library Council, and the previous year Nancy Heller, former Library Director of Schenectady County Community College (now retired). The letters of nomination for both indicated that they were energetic and selfless librarians who encouraged others to excellence and who seemed to deal easily with crises that would discourage many of their colleagues.

The Spirit Award is co-sponsored by the New York 3R’s -- The Reference and Resources Councils -- in honor of the contributions made by all of New York's academic and special librarians.

To nominate someone, send a one-page nominating letter and include brief biographical information on the nominee, explaining why you believe this person exemplifies the Spirit of Librarianship in an academic or special library.

Send nominations by July 15 to Dave Harralson, Director, Utica College Library, 1600 Burrstone Rd., Utica, NY 13502.

ASLS/Ridley Book Bindery Student Internship Grant

Thanks to the financial support of the Ridley Book Bindery, the ASLS-Ridley Book Bindery Student Internship Grant offers $1,000 to a New York State academic or special library to support a paid internship for one graduate student in library studies. The purpose of the grant is to provide practical work experience for a graduate library student who is interested in pursuing a career in academic or special libraries.

This year academic and special libraries in the Western New York Regional Library Resources Council are eligible to apply for the internship grant.

ASLS selects the successful internship project based on:

- A clear statement of project needs and goals that are achievable.
- Evidence of value to the graduate student librarian.
- Evidence of value to the host library’s programs and services.

Once the award has been made, the library then chooses an appropriate intern to complete the project.

For application information, contact David Harralson (dharralson@utica.edu) ASLS Past President.

2002 BOARD ROSTER

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NYLA Conference 2001

ASLS at NYLA 2001 a success! 
A retrospective from the 2001 conference planner.

The ASLS sponsored sessions at the 2001 NYLA conference were wonderful. Comments from the evaluation forms were overall very positive. Some samples:

Website Collection Development

"Excellent! Always need advice and help to improve web design and content."

"Thanks for this program! I am in the process of creating a website and this was helpful."

"Superb presentation. As a student this is a great supplement to web building classes I'd taken!"

Hidden Treasures of Albany

"What an Educator (Paul Weiner)! A wonderful reminder that in much of library work and reference with adults (even in genealogy) you are often looking for and responding to the teachable moment"

"Great mix of detailed documentary information and fun hands-on museum material. Both sides of the same coin!"

Glimpsing the Future

"As always, Dave presented really interesting examples of current technology."

"He actually made technology interesting. BRAVO!"

"Please repeat next year. The future keeps changing!" (We're listening! See the article on program planning for 2002 on the next page.)

What session was this?

"That guy with the lightening bolt on his head - he was great - must have been struck with the jagged edge of inspiration."

Does it make you want to come to ASLS sessions in Buffalo this fall?!

NYLA Conference 2002

Looking ahead to the fall NYLA conference:

Planning is well underway for the next NYLA conference to be held in Buffalo October 23 through 26, 2002. Under the direction of Vice-President/President-Elect Cara Molyneaux, who serves as program chair for the conference, ASLS leaders are developing programs that we hope you will find interesting, informative, and fun.

How do we choose what to offer?

Many program ideas come from you, either on the evaluation forms turned in at the previous conference, from surveys of librarians, or because we’re paying attention to what members say. In addition, we like to offer at least one program focusing on the region where the conference is held.

Programs we are working on for the 2002 conference:

Information Literacy. This is a term popping up in all educational institutions. Carol Anne Germain is putting together a panel of people who’ve had successful information literacy programs from elementary schools through colleges.

Selling ourselves. Why is marketing so important? How do you do it?

Mentoring. Helping new librarians learn to be successful is crucial to our profession, so look for a program on mentoring academic librarians.

Buffalo. Our local focus program will feature the treasures hiding in Buffalo area museums.

Assessment. Another term we’re hearing more and more. What makes it work?

Glimpsing The Future. Back by popular request is Dave Cossey’s annual multimedia presentation that focusses on technology developments and their impact on libraries, reading and learning. (See the article on 2001 conference programs on the previous page.)

Look for details in NYLA’s preliminary conference bulletin or contact Cara Molyneaux (see contact information in the “Board Roster” section of this newsletter).
NEW YORK LIBRARIES NEED YOUR HELP

Are you involved in Advocacy Efforts? You should be!

Legislation currently being considered in New York includes provision for programs directly benefiting academic and special libraries. You can help to educate our legislators about the importance of academic and special libraries in the education process and the economic development of New York.

Need more information?

Check out www.nyla.org/office/lobby.htm for details on NYLA’s lobby day and other advocacy activities.

Go to http://www.ncl.nysed.gov/index.html and click on “Fact Sheets” for information about NOVEL and the new ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH INITIATIVE.

Contact your NY Senator or Assembly representative to voice your support for this legislation.

Contact your local 3Rs Council about their advocacy programs.

If you want confirmation of the importance of these efforts, go to www.nytro.net/NYTRO_NYLA/index.htm and note the remarks of Assemblyman Sullivan in the section “The External Political Environment.”

**We need your support in this important effort!**
Introducing New Board Member Gail Staines

Editor’s note: Each issue of the ASLS Newsletter will feature an article introducing a member of the ASLS board. This issue focuses on Gail Staines, who was elected to the ASLS Board of Directors last fall.

Gail is Executive Director of the Western New York Library Resources Council (WNYLRC), the second largest of the nine 3R’s councils in New York State. For the past 11 years, she has been Visiting Lecturer in the Department of Library and Information Studies, School of Informatics, at the University at Buffalo. Gail holds a Ph.D. in higher education administration, along with an MLS, from the University. Her research interests are management and information literacy in higher education. A frequent lecturer, consultant, and author, her most recent book is Social Sciences Research: Writing Strategies for Students (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2000).

Prior to joining WNYLRC, Gail was Associate Professor/Coordinator of Library Instruction at Niagara County Community College (NY). She has also held positions at Clinton Community College (NY) and SUNY/Plattsburgh. At the national level, Gail was selected to be an Information Literacy Advisor by ACRL, and she was appointed to the ALA Special Presidential Committee on Information Literacy Community Partnerships. Her article "Moving Beyond Institutional Boundaries: Perceptions Toward BI for Transfer Students," [Research Strategies 14 (Spring 1996): 93-107], was recognized as one of the top 20 information literacy articles in 1996. Gail is also a member of Beta Phi Mu, the international library honor society, and she served as Vice-President/President-Elect of the SUNY Librarians Association in 1998.

"One of the reasons I became involved in ASLS is that I believe in its mission, especially in the areas of providing means for further education and professional development of academic and special librarians; and to promote the development and improvement of academic and special libraries in New York State," says Gail Staines. "Members of ASLS continue to be an influential community, and I want to be an integral part of that community."

Out of the office you will find Gail engaged in one of her passions – riding. "I've been riding horses since I was seven years old. There is no greater joy than galloping over fences cross-country – it is such a rush! It also continues to amaze me how much you can learn from a sport that requires both strength and finesse at the same time, and how much of what you learn in that non-technical environment you can bring to working successfully in a high tech world," says Gail Staines.

ASLS Treasurer’s Report

2001 Year End Summary
ASLS began the year with $6,084.55. Income to date from dues is $4,243.14. This is consistent with the trend in recent years. Other income is the grant income of $1,000.00 which is for the Ridley Internship and miscellaneous income of $196.30. Expenditures to date have been held down this year by reducing travel and meeting expenditures and by savings from the cost of publications. To date the expenditures include $33.20 for Awards; $595.02 for conference expenditures; $100.00 for miscellaneous expenditures, $691.92 for publications, and $580.74 for travel and meetings. This leaves ASLS with a remaining balance of $9,523.11.

Thomas E. Lawrence, Treasurer
New and Improved ASLS Website

As the new chair of the Web Committee, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Sheri Webber and I'm the Electronic Resources/Social Sciences Librarian from SUNY, Purchase. Having just moved to New York from Texas last summer, I'm a brand new member of both NYLA and ASLS. It's great to have this opportunity to become immediately active in the Section and to be working with the website.

Soon, you will all notice that the ASLS website has a new look and feel. Greg Bobish from the University of Albany and I have been working diligently since last November to complete the first phase. I expect there will be several changes over the coming year, refining its organization and detail.

At the November 11th meeting the Board discussed which elements of ASLS were most important for inclusion in the site. As a primary communications tool for the Section, most agreed that there should be information about ASLS history, bylaws, board of directors, committees, meeting minutes, membership, awards, conferences, newsletter, and the new ASLS listserv. For various reasons, not all of these elements were included in the first phase. You will notice from the site's main navigation bar however, that most were.

The first area of the site is "ASLS Home." This currently features the ASLS statement of purpose and a rotating photo album from the 2001 conference in Albany. These photos were taken and developed by Dave Titus -- so make sure that you're smiling wide next time Dave comes your way! From the home page, you have a link to an "About" page which currently contains only the ASLS bylaws. Eventually, I hope to integrate a welcome message from the president and a description of the Section's history.

The second area of the site provides an outline of the "Board of Directors." Here you will find a list of Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs, as well as their term dates and contact information. Below the directory, you will find committee descriptions. “Minutes” from the Board meetings and General Membership meetings are available from the third link in the navigation bar. I have reformatted these from text files provided by Tom Lawrence into an HTML files. There may be errors in the line breaks and spacing. Please feel free to contact me with corrections.

In future phases of the website, the next link will lead to pages about "Conferences" -- past, present and future. We will be announcing and describing programs that are sponsored by ASLS at NYLA's annual event. Currently, the fourth link is to the "Awards" section. Here you will find information about the ASLS Spirit of Librarianship Award, the ASLS/Ridley Grant, and the Dewey Fellowship Award. It features photos and descriptions of the 2001 recipients. Congratulations Jean and Greg!

The next area of the site belongs to the ASLS Newsletter. The newsletter is published several times per year in print format. Jean Shevki has kindly offered to convert the newsletter into a PDF file, so that it may be included on the ASLS site. We will begin the electronic run with Number 30, from the Fall of 2001. And in keeping with the communications theme, the final link from the navigation bar will lead to a page about the new ASLS listserv. It will contain directions for how to subscribe, unsubscribe, and post messages. Greg Bobish will be working with the University of Albany to set up this service for ASLS members and interested colleagues.

We hope you will find the new site informative and easy to navigate. There is still much work to be completed before we reach our goal of providing the full array of information about our Section, its services, and its membership. Greg and I will surely welcome any of you who would like to join the Website Committee.

If you don't feel you have the time to devote to a committee, but would like to lend your expertise, we have several opportunities for experienced members to write copy. In particular, we would like to have an essay about the Section's history. We need abstracts of presentations sponsored by ASLS at past NYLA conferences. We would also like to add a few paragraphs, a testimony of sorts, about the benefits of membership to a membership page.

And of course, if you only have a few minutes to offer your 2 cents, we'll take that too! If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the website, please feel welcome to contact me.

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