

NOTES

Volume 13, Number 4, Fall 2006

HEAD LIBRARIAN APPOINTED

A Note from the Chairman of the Board

I am pleased to announce that the Library's Board of Trustees has appointed Mark Bartlett to be the eighteenth Head Librarian of the New York Society Library. Mark has been serving as Interim Head since the end of 2005, a position he assumed after serving as Head of Cataloging. His dedication and hard work have helped maintain a positive atmosphere and guided us through the stresses of our renovations, which are well on the way to completion. I hope the membership will join the Board and staff in congratulating Mark and supporting his contributions to the Library's programs and growth.



Mark Bartlett

Charles G. Berry, Board Chairman

From the Head Librarian

MARK BARTLETT

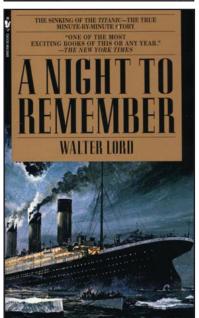
It is with humility and gratitude that I remove the word "interim" from the heading of this article. When I first interviewed for the Head of Cataloging position in December 2003, I quickly sensed there was something incredibly special about this Library—the collections, the members, the staff, the trustees, and its place in the history of New York City. That day, Mark Piel and I had lunch at a neighborhood diner, and the twinkle in his eye confirmed his satisfaction at being the sixteenth Head Librarian of the New York Society Library. As one of his successors, I hope to recognize the traditions and practices of our Library while fostering creativity and introducing change appropriately. I believe that the richness and variety of the Library's collections must be protected and preserved. At the same time, I believe we can find ways to improve and enhance the Library's collections, services, programs, and facilities by harnessing appropriate technologies.

A note on the renovation: I want to thank all the members who accommodated the Library's need to close for the first two weeks of July and who have been coping with the dust, commotion, shifting collections, and closing periods of various rooms since May. If you have comments on the renovation (positive or negative), please let us know. Feedback is vital in helping us make worthy changes to our facilities. More information on the current renovation is on page 2.

I cannot close a column without mentioning books. My love of reading and learning goes back to my childhood in eastern Canada. I am eternally grateful to my parents, Lester and Mardi Bartlett, and my five siblings, for providing me with a home rich with books and the printed word. I still have books inherited from those years, including my grandparents' 1899 edition of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, illustrated by Henry Altemus (upper right) and a 1956 first paperback edition of Library trustee Walter Lord's *A Night to Remember (lower right)*. But even more important than these physical items is the love of reading I keep to this day. My past also led me to my interest in libraries—I started as a library page at college—and helped me decide on librarianship as a career. It is truly one of the best professions there is, and I am extremely pleased to be able to pursue it at the New York Society Library.

Man Danles







News From the Board of Trustees

Two New Trustees

Two new trustees, Laurence Bergreen and Ellen M. Iseman, were named to the Library's Board in June.

Laurence Bergreen is a prize-winning biographer and historian whose books include *Louis Armstrong:* An Extravagant Life, As Thousands Cheer: The Life of Irving Berlin, and most recently Over the Edge of the World: Magellan's Terrifying Circumnavigation of the Globe, a 2003 New York Times Notable Book. He has taught at the New School for Social Research and served as Assistant to the President of the Museum of Television and Radio in New York. A frequent lecturer at major universities and symposiums, he also serves as a Featured Historian for the History Channel.

Ellen M. Iseman is president of Issues Management International, a consulting firm which aids corporations, public agencies, and not-for-profits in the field of communications, including projects relating to speechwriting, employee publications, and annual reports. She formerly worked at the U.S. Department of State in the area of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and as a Vice President for Communications and Corporate Affairs at the American Express Company. She has written for many U.S. and foreign publications on international investment and economic development. A graduate of Yale College, she is completing a master's degree in public administration/international economic policy at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. A lifelong Library member, she often enjoys children's events with her son, Alexander O'Neill.





THE RENOVATION

INTERIOR WORK ALL BUT COMPLETE

The Library reopened its doors on July 17, following the completion of the major portion of the interior work. We thank members for their patience during this period and apologize for any inconvenience. The lobby, Reference Room, and the Members' Room have been completely refurbished. The main and second-floor bathrooms have also undergone extensive renovation. The Members' Room now has refinished and reupholstered furniture, refinished walls and floor, and new curtains and rug. New carpeting has also been installed in the Children's Library and the fifth floor. As of this writing, the granite sill at the main entrance and the broken glass pane in the front doors are scheduled to be replaced before September, getting rid of unsightly cracks. The grandfather clock and works of art have returned to the lobby and main stairwell, and the Reference Room walls and floors have been refinished. As of this writing, the bronze doors and historic Library plaque are scheduled to be cleaned shortly.



Harry Abarca returns "Faith" to the Large Study Room

Work on the new east elevator shaft area is nearing completion, and work on the new cab began at the end of August. This installation and replacement of the elevator doors on each floor will last until late fall. Although most of the disruptive work will take place after hours, we ask members to continue to be aware of possible work areas on the front floors.

As always, we thank you for your flexibility as we improve our space. Updates on the renovation are available at www.nysoclib.org/renovation_update.html or by calling 212-288-6900.

BOOKS TO BIND?

Conservator George Muñoz

Library conservator George Muñoz offers his bookbinding services to members owning old or rare volumes in need of repair. A graduate of London's Camberwell College masters program in conservation, George served an apprenticeship in the art in Barnes, England and has also spent three summers doing conservation work in a medieval seminary library in Montefiascone, Italy. At the Library he is responsible for conservation and repair treatments of regular stack books and our rare book and map collection. For an estimate or to set up an appointment, contact George at 212–288–6900 x249 or bindery@nysoclib.org.



RARE BOOK NEWS

International Attention to the Winthrop Collection

The Library's extraordinary collection of rare books continues to attract international scholars. In the summer of 2005 we worked with Dr. J.H. Alexander of Oxford University, who was conducting research for the academic edition of Sir Walter Scott's works. This spring and summer Milica Pavlovic, a graduate student in the Department of History at the University of Zurich, spent several weeks researching the alchemical portion of our John Winthrop Jr. collection.

Ms. Pavlovic's doctoral thesis will be entitled *Alchemy in the New World: John Winthrop Jr.* and His Library. At the request of Rare Book Librarian Arevig Caprielian, she will send the Library a copy when it is completed. Ms. Pavlovic also provided us with a bibliography she compiled listing holdings of Winthrop books in other institutions, and with handsome images of books in our collection bearing annotations by Winthrop or John Dee.

Ms. Pavlovic developed a special fondness for our Library, reciprocated by those who worked closely with her, particularly Ms. Caprielian. Her scholarly enthusiasm and her courage in weathering the inconveniences of the renovation were a testimony to the ongoing importance of rare book research, in which we are always proud to play a part.



Arevig and Milica

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

FOR RESEARCHERS, BAD NEWS AND GOOD NEWS

Due to policy changes at ProQuest, provider of our *New York Times* electronic archives, this service will no longer be available offsite through the Library's website as of September 30. We will continue to offer access to this valuable resource within the building via Library terminals and laptops. We regret the loss of this popular form of access, but it is due to decisions beyond our control.

The good news is the addition of two important new resources, JSTOR and Cambridge University's *Historical Statistics* of the United States, Millennial Edition. JSTOR is a vast archive of major scholarly journals, and the online Historical Statistics includes and augments the acclaimed new five-volume reference set.

For more information on the Library's electronic resources, visit www.nysoclib.org/remote.html or ask at the reference desk.

BOOK SALES AT LIBRARY EVENTS

HEAR THE LECTURE, READ THE BOOK (EVEN GET AN AUTOGRAPH)

Responding to requests from many members, the Library will now sell books at most events both in the building and at the offsite Author Series lectures. For the majority of events, the speaker's most recent book and/or the book being discussed will be sold, at a discount from the list or bookstore price. Library events will now be followed by a period in which attendees can talk to the lecturer and get books signed. We look forward to offering this new service to our membership.

AND YET THE BOOKS

BY CZESLAW MILOSZ

And yet the books will be there on the shelves, separate beings

That appeared once, still wet
As shining chestnuts under a tree in autumn,
And, touched, coddled, began to live
In spite of fires on the horizon, castles blown up,
Tribes on the march, planets in motion.
"We are," they said, even as their pages
Were being torn out, or a buzzing flame

Licked away their letters. So much more durable
Than we are, whose frail warmth
Cools down with memory, disperses, perishes.
I imagine the earth when I am no more:
Nothing happens, no loss, it's still a strange pageant,
Women's dresses, dewy lilacs, a song in the valley.
Yet the books will be there on the shelves, well born,
Derived from people, but also from radiance, heights.



LIBRARY LECTURE

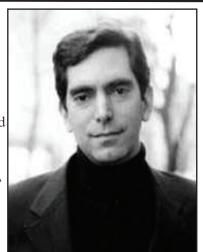
To reserve spaces, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.

& Listed fees may be paid at the door.

BARNET SCHECTER

THE DEVIL'S OWN WORK: THE CIVIL WAR DRAFT RIOTS
AND THE FIGHT TO RECONSTRUCT AMERICA
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$10 PER PERSON

Nine days after the battle of Gettysburg, the largest riots in American history almost destroyed New York City and violently polarized its diversity of classes and races. Usually styled a reaction to draft laws that exempted the rich, the riots were actually a microcosmic version of the battles taking place in the rest of the country, over the same issues, slavery and federal authority. *The Devil's Own Work* elegantly uses contemporary narratives to lay out the causes, the personalities, and the dramatic unfolding of the infamous Draft Riots. *Publishers Weekly* says the book "colorfully recreates a historical watershed and offers a rich exploration of the Civil War's unfinished business."



Barnet Schecter is an independent historian whose other work includes *The Battle For New York: The City at the Heart of the American Revolution* and writings for the *Times Literary Supplement*, the *Village Voice*, and the *Washington Post*. He also conducts historical walking tours and boat excursions in New York City and has appeared in two History Channel documentaries on American history.

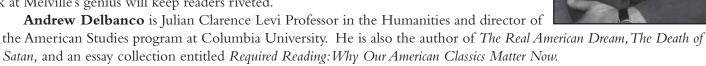
THE 2006-2007 AUTHOR SERIES

- The Author Series is co-sponsored by the Library and Channel 13/WNET. Attendance is free for members of those organizations and their guests.
- To reserve spaces, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.

Andrew Delbanco

MELVILLE: HIS WORLD AND WORK WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 7:00 P.M. TEMPLE ISRAEL, 112 EAST 75TH STREET

With *Moby-Dick*, Herman Melville set the standard for great American novels, and in that and his other writings he chronicled the moral development of a country in transition from the preindustrial age to a modern one. Because his work was little understood and less appreciated in his own time, he left little for a biographer aside from hints in his published writing. Yet by setting the sparse facts against the panorama of Melville's era, Andrew Delbanco has crafted a majestic biography capturing the author as an adventurous young seaman, a struggling writer, and a disillusioned civil servant. The *New York Times* calls the book "the best contemporary introduction" to Melville, and *Library Journal* says that "Delbanco's stunningly readable and fresh look at Melville's genius will keep readers riveted."



Trivia Note: Herman Melville was a shareholder in the Society Library, then located on Broadway at Leonard Street. In the late 1840s he borrowed several items, including William Scoresby's 1820 book An Account of the Arctic Regions with a History and Description of the Northern Whale-Fishery, and kept them out for more than a year. Moby-Dick, of course, appeared in 1851. Melville's Library share will be displayed at this event.

& Watch your mailbox in the next few weeks for an announcement of an additional fall Author Series lecture.



SPECIAL EVENTS

To reserve spaces, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.

& Listed fees may be paid at the door.

THE WORLD OF H.C. BUNNER: FROM PUCK THROUGH WHARTON INCLUDING A STAGED READING OF BUNNER SISTERS,

A NEW PLAY WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY LINDA SELMAN BASED ON THE EDITH WHARTON NOVELLA

Wednesday, October 25, 7:30 p.m., Members' Room, \$20 per person

Although little-known now, in the late nineteenth century Henry Cuyler Bunner (upper right) led a movement that changed the face of politics, arts, and literature in America. The editor-in-chief of Puck Magazine, America's first successful political comic weekly, Bunner was also the author of the 1883 essay "New York As a Field for Fiction" which laid out the structure for a new genre, the New York story.

In this unique evening, Linda Selman will recount her discoveries about Bunner's influence on the early stories of Edith Wharton (*lower right*) as well as his effect on the culture of the era. She will then join six other actors in a staged reading of a new drama based on Wharton's novella *Bunner Sisters*. The play expresses Wharton's unusual use of the surreal to show the struggles and vulnerabilities of two working-class sisters in Gilded Age Stuyvesant Square.

Linda Selman has been involved in the writing, development, and direction of numerous projects including a retrospective of Andrea Pfister's *Shoe Dreams* at the Fashion Institute of Technology, the Off-Broadway and Emmy Award-winning television productions of *Bubbe Meises*, *Bubbe Stories*, *Tallulah Hallelujah!*, chosen one of the Ten Best Plays of the Year by *USA Today*, and *From My Lady's Diary: Marie Antoinette*, a chamber-music drama presented at the Vineyard Theater. She is currently writing a short biography of H.C. Bunner for the upcoming second edition of Kenneth Jackson's *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, as well as a full-length book on his life.





MICHAEL LASSER, LECTURER

SARA HOLLIDAY, SINGER; JEFFREY CAMPOS, PIANO "MAY YOUR DAYS BE MERRY AND BRIGHT":

THE UNLIKELY STORY OF AMERICA'S CHRISTMAS ANTHEM

MUSICAL LECTURE AND RECEPTION

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 3:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$10 PER PERSON

Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" is a beloved song for Americans, whether they celebrate Christmas or not. Library member Berlin, an immigrant Jew who nonetheless loved Christmas, composed it in 1937, telling his secretary "I just wrote the best song I've ever written—hell, I just wrote the best song that anybody's ever written!"

What follows is the stuff of legend, a story Michael Lasser will tell at the Library's first holiday lecture/reception. Sara Holliday will illustrate his words with a handful of wonderful tunes by Berlin and others, including "White Christmas" and "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm." A reception featuring seasonal refreshments will follow.

Michael Lasser is the co-author (with Philip Furia) of the new book *America's Songs:* The Stories Behind the Songs of Broadway, Hollywood, and Tin Pan Alley. He is well known as the host of the nationally syndicated public radio program Fascinatin' Rhythm, winner of the 1994 George Foster Peabody Award. The Peabody citation praised the show for letting "our treasury of popular tunes speak (and sing) for itself with sparkling commentary tracing the contributions of the composers and performers to American society."







READING GROUPS

- To reserve spaces, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.
- Reading Groups and Workshops are free of charge.

THE ILIAD WITH DONALD McDonough

Wednesdays, October 4, November 1, December 6, 11:00 a.m., Whitridge Room

Donald McDonough, Professor Emeritus of English at Central Connecticut State University, returns to guide readers through Robert Fagles' wonderful translation of Homer's *Iliad*, winner of the 1991 Academy of American Poets Landon Translation Award.

Book for discussion: The *Iliad* by Homer, translated by Robert Fagles. This translation is available in several editions; one inexpensive one is published by Penguin, ISBN 0-140-44592-7.

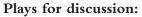
- October 4: *Iliad* books 1 through 8
- November 1: *Iliad* books 9 through 16
- December 6: Iliad books 17 through 24



THURSDAYS, OCTOBER 5, NOVEMBER 2, DECEMBER 7, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM

Rob Ackerman is a widely produced playwright whose works include *Origin of the Species*, made into an award-winning independent film, and *Tabletop*, which received a 2001 Drama Desk Award.

This group will use a new format in which participants read the play aloud under Mr. Ackerman's guidance. Parts will be assigned arbitrarily for each session. The idea is to bring to story to life in real time; no theatrical experience is required and there is no need to perform.



- October 5: All My Sons by Arthur Miller
- November 2: *The Dining Room* by A.R. Gurney
- December 7: String of Pearls by Michele Lowe

Copies of the plays will be made available for purchase from the Events Office.

Technology Workshops

- To reserve spaces, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.
- These free workshops take place in the Whitridge Room and last about 90 minutes.
- More information on all classes being offered is available at www.nysoclib.org/tech/.

Wednesday, October 18

10:00 A.M. Windows XP Tips & Tricks New Class Taught by Ingrid Richter For PC users Learn more about the Windows XP environment, including a peek at the upcoming Windows Vista.

2:00 P.M. Google Advanced Features • New Class • Taught by Ingrid Richter • For Internet users Explore Google's additional features, including Book Search, Desktop, Maps, Mobile, and Scholar.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26

10:00 A.M. Online Periodicals • Taught by Thomas Meaney • For Internet users

Mr. Meaney introduces popular online newspapers, including a variety of interesting foreign publications.

2:00 P.M. Navigating New York Online New Class Taught by Thomas Meaney For Internet users Members-about-town will learn about searching for restaurants and menus, maps, movie tickets, and more.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3

10:00 A.M. Blogs, Podcasts, and RSS Feeds ■ New Class ■ Taught by Ingrid Richter ■ For advanced Internet users Ms. Richter defines and talks about creating and accessing these popular media.

2:00 P.M. Online Digitized Research Tools New Class Taught by Keren Fleshler For Internet users Learn how to search the Internet for free scanned images of books (including rare and first editions), manuscripts, maps, letters, art images, audio resources, and other valuable research tools.





CHILDREN'S LIBRARY EVENTS

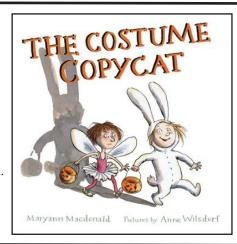
- To reserve spaces, contact the Children's Library at 212-288-6900 x234 or children@nysoclib.org.
- & Listed fees may be paid at the door.
- A Children's Calendar listing events for younger children is sent monthly by mail and e-mail. To receive it, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.

MARYANN MACDONALD

THE COSTUME COPYCAT, A HALLOWEEN READING AGES 5 AND OLDER

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 4:30 P.M., WHITRIDGE ROOM, \$5 PER PERSON

Just once, Angela wants to outshine her big sister on Halloween. But Bernadette always has the best costume. What can Angela do? *The Costume Copycat* is Ms. Macdonald's twenty-first children's book. It is about envy, a subject on which the author is an expert, having grown up in a family of eleven children. She likes to talk to children about creating stories from the people, places, and problems they know and understand. In this event, she will read her book and talk about writing and publishing it. Please wear a costume to get into the Halloween spirit.



JOHANNA HURWITZ

From Librarian to Author

FOR SECOND GRADE AND OLDER

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 5:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$5 PER PERSON

"At a very young age I began making up stories and writing them down," says Johanna Hurwitz. "When I was growing up, I only came face-to-face with one or two authors. Nowadays, authors are invited to visit schools and libraries." Ms. Hurwitz herself went from a thirty-year career as a children's librarian to write more than sixty popular children's books including the *Pee Wee* and *Elisa* series, *Aldo Applesauce*, and *The Hot and Cold Summer.* She has won many literary awards chosen by children and travels extensively, inspiring young people to read and to write. In this visit, Ms. Hurwitz will read from some of her books and talk about how she creates them. "At first, surrounded by so many children's books, I wondered what I had to say that hadn't been said before and said better than I could ever hope to do," she says. "Still, I continued writing. As a writer, one uses everything in one's life."



Hurwitz visiting a school

FAMILY BOOK DISCUSSION

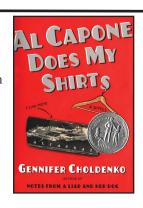
FOR FOURTH THROUGH SIXTH GRADES

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 5:15 P.M., WHITRIDGE ROOM, FREE OF CHARGE

Parents and their children are invited to join Children's Librarian Carrie Silberman for a discussion of this Newbery-honor historical novel. Books will be provided for participants.

Al Capone Does My Shirts by Gennifer Choldenko (Penguin, 2005; ISBN 0142403709)

When Moose Flanagan's dad becomes a guard at Alcatraz in 1935, Moose has to try to fit in at school and take care of his disabled sister while surrounded by murderers, mob bosses, and other convicts, including the notorious Al Capone. On Alcatraz, hilarious trouble is never far away.





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Registration is required for all events. To reserve spaces, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org. Locations and fees are listed inside.
- Please write or phone the Library with any comments or suggestions. Visit our website at www.nysoclib.org.

Tuesday, September 26, 6:30 P.M.

The Devil's Own Work
Barnet Schecter

Wednesday, October 4, 11:00 A.M.

Iliad Reading Group I Donald McDonough

Thursday, October 5, 6:30 P.M.

Play Reading Group I Rob Ackerman

Thursday, October 12, 4:30 P.M.

The Costume Copycat Maryann Macdonald

Wednesday, October 18, 10:00 A.M.

Windows XP Workshop Ingrid Richter

Wednesday, October 18, 2:00 P.M.

Google Advanced Features Workshop Ingrid Richter

Wednesday, October 25, 7:30 P.M.

The World of H.C. Bunner Lecture and Play Reading Linda Selman Thursday, October 26, 10:00 A.M.

Online Periodicals Workshop Thomas Meaney

Thursday, October 26, 2:00 P.M.

Navigating New York Online Workshop Thomas Meaney

Thursday, October 26, 5:15 P.M.

Family Book Discussion Carrie Silberman

Wednesday, November 1, 11:00 A.M.

Iliad Reading Group II Donald McDonough

Thursday, November 2, 6:30 P.M.

Play Reading Group II Rob Ackerman

Friday, November 3, 10:00 A.M.

Blogs, Podcasts, and RSS Feeds Workshop Ingrid Richter

Friday, November 3, 2:00 P.M.

Online Digitized Research Workshop Keren Fleshler Thursday, November 9, 5:00 P.M.

From Librarian to Author Johanna Hurwitz

Wednesday, November 29, 7:00 P.M.

Melville: His World and Work

Andrew Delbanco (Temple Israel)

Wednesday, December 6, 11:00 A.M.

Iliad Reading Group III Donald McDonough

Thursday, December 7, 6:30 P.M.

Play Reading Group III Rob Ackerman

Sunday, December 17, 3:00 P.M.

"White Christmas" Lecture and Reception

Michael Lasser and Sara Holliday

THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY 53 East 79th Street New York, New York 10021