



NOTES

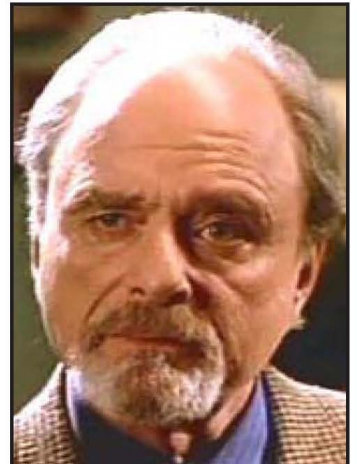
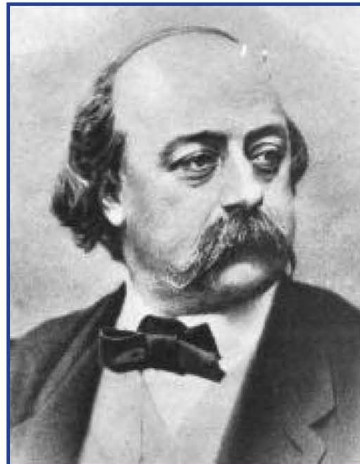
VOLUME 14, NUMBER 5, NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007

THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY PRESENTS

KATHLEEN CHALFANT AND HARRIS YULIN

CHÈRE MAÎTRE: THE CORRESPONDENCE OF GUSTAVE FLAUBERT AND GEORGE SAND

ADAPTED BY PETER EYRE FROM THE TRANSLATIONS OF FRANCIS STEEGMULLER AND BARBARA BRAY
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$20 PER PERSON



After George Sand's spirited defense of Gustave Flaubert's novel *Salammbô* in 1863, the two writers became friends. Both were excited by the attentions of the other, despite their difference in age, and their affection developed into eager and frequent correspondence. So began not a love affair, but a deep friendship and one of the great epistolary masterpieces of modern times.

Chère Maître was first performed at Sharon Stage, Connecticut and later in New York, in London, and at the Melbourne Arts Festival with Peter Eyre and Irene Worth. The Library is honored to bring together two of the New York stage's most admired actors for this unique event.

Kathleen Chalfant is the lauded American actress who appeared in Broadway's *Racing Demon* and both parts of *Angels in America* (she was a 1993 Tony Award nominee for *Millennium Approaches*), Off-Broadway's *Wit* (for which she won the Best Actress Drama Desk Award), *Nine Armenians*, *Spalding Gray: Stories Left to Tell*, *Five by Tenn*, *Talking Heads*, *Twelve Dreams* and more.

Harris Yulin's Broadway credits include *Hedda Gabler*, *The Price*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Visit*, *A Lesson From Aloys* and *Watch on the Rhine*. He directed Signature Theatre's acclaimed *The Trip to Bountiful* Off-Broadway and numerous other productions. His film credits include *Another Woman*, *Cradle Will Rock*, *Training Day*, and *Fur*.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

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

☞ The listed fee may be paid at the door.

☞ The calendar of events can be found on the back page.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

The Library has received one of the largest and most important gifts in its history: \$1 million, from a trust created by George Marshall Hornblower, who died in October 2006. Mr. Hornblower was the father of our trustee Jenny Hornblower Lawrence.

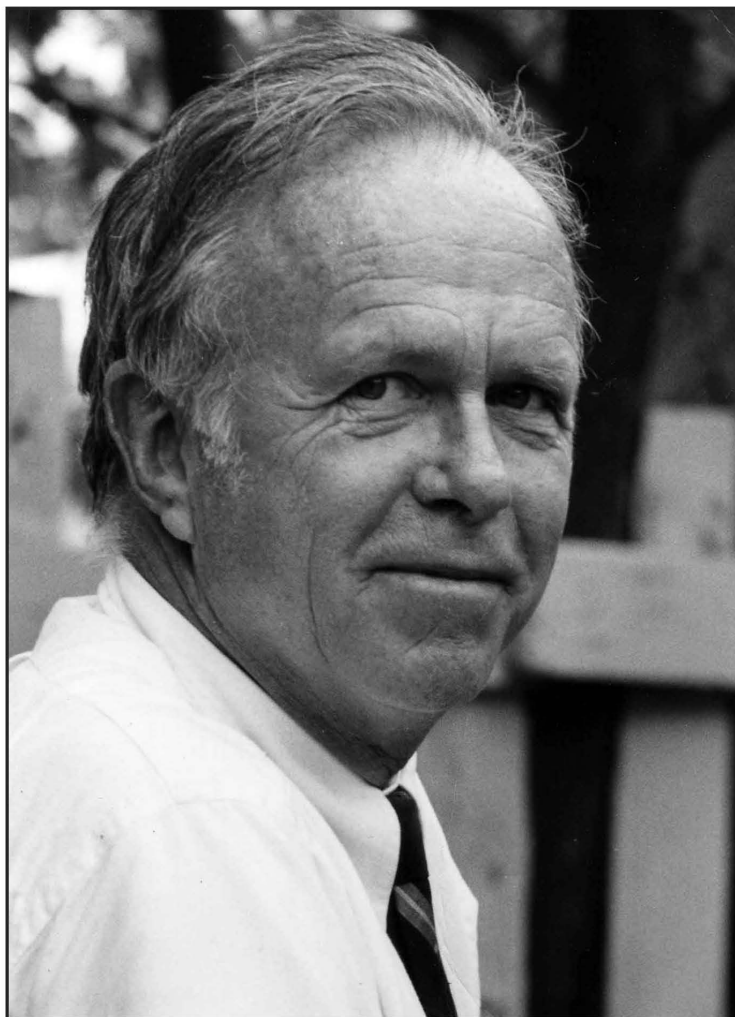
Mr. Hornblower, who was known to family and friends of all generations as “Whistle,” was a distinguished lawyer, exacting writer, and dedicated reader. He grew up in New York (his mother was a shareholder of the Library) and, after Groton, Princeton and Yale Law School, moved to Washington, D.C. while serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He was a founding partner of the Washington law firm of Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering.

Mr. Hornblower was admired by his colleagues as a master draftsman in complex corporate negotiations. A young associate at his firm said, with perhaps a touch of exasperation, “That Hornblower would rewrite the Lord’s Prayer.” His grandchildren are reported to have referred to him as a “grammar czar,” and he instilled in them a healthy repugnance for using a noun (“task”) as a verb (“tasked”) or a preposition (“like”) as a conjunction. He eschewed words he considered pompous, such as “attorney” and “physician” (and probably “eschew”). He adhered to Strunk & White’s dictum of “vigorous writing,” requiring that “every word tell.” He was also a voracious reader, often with several books going at once, particularly enjoying history and biography. A good dictionary was never far away.

Mr. Hornblower’s daughter, Jenny—an editor and writer who with Henry Cooper co-authored the Library’s anniversary book *The New York Society Library: 250 Years*—envisions the bequest as endowing fellowships to writers, essentially formalizing and honoring their place in our community. A committee of the board will consider how best to establish, structure and administer such a program.

It is Jenny’s hope, and mine, that her father’s gift will be matched by others so that the Library can at last realize its long-range goal—expanding the sixth floor into much-needed writing and reading rooms, and adding more space for books. Our designs were prepared several years ago and approved by the city; we are eager to move ahead.

Having had the pleasure of knowing Whistle myself for some 25 years, I learned that he was a student and lover not only of words but also of trees. At the Hornblowers’ summer home in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, I often saw him with a garden hose watering little evergreens he found in the woods and transplanted to their yard. His nurturing instinct lives on with his wonderful benefaction to the Library, for which we are exceptionally blessed and grateful. We look forward to the growth of an endowed writers’ fellowship program and, in due course, expanded facilities, not only for the writers who have been so important to us but for all our readers and members.




Charles G. Berry
Chairman of the Board

FROM THE HEAD LIBRARIAN

MEMBERSHIP AND SERVICE NEWS

The Library's Board of Trustees has approved a small but important change in our circulation policies: the number of books a household membership may have out at one time. The limit, previously ten books, has now been raised to twenty, effective immediately. We believe this will be a help to researchers and to families with multiple children who all need books. All other policies, including holds and length of checkout, remain the same.

Since we established the single membership category on July 1 (\$150/year, \$100/half-year), we have welcomed nineteen new single members. It is rewarding to hear members' comments at the front desk that this is a big step forward. Your feedback continues to be important.

LIBRARY EXHIBITIONS

In this issue of Library Notes, you will read about the appointment of Harriet Shapiro as our Exhibitions Coordinator. Harriet is a fine example of a longstanding member whose passion for this institution knows no bounds, and I am excited she is back with us. Her work, in coordination with the Lecture and Exhibition Committee, chaired by Jeannette Watson Sanger, will help establish the Library as another notable exhibition venue in this busy city. Our plans for 2008 include improved advertising of exhibitions in the Assunta, Ignazio, Ada and Romano Peluso Exhibition Gallery, a long-range schedule of upcoming exhibitions, consideration of exhibitions of Library members' book collections, and, perhaps most importantly, a more welcoming approach to the gallery, for members and for the public.

As your Head Librarian, I must point out that all these good changes, such as developing the staff and improving member services, cost money. By now you will have received our annual appeal letter and reply card. As of this writing, we have received \$87,000 of our \$300,000 annual appeal goal. I thank all of you who have donated so far, and I urge everyone else to give generously this year.

As the weather turns cold, more and more of us will enjoy curling up with a good book, and we are sure you can find many worthy candidates for winter reading at the Library. I look forward to seeing you at the reference desk, in the stacks, or at one or more of the wonderful events listed on the adjoining pages.

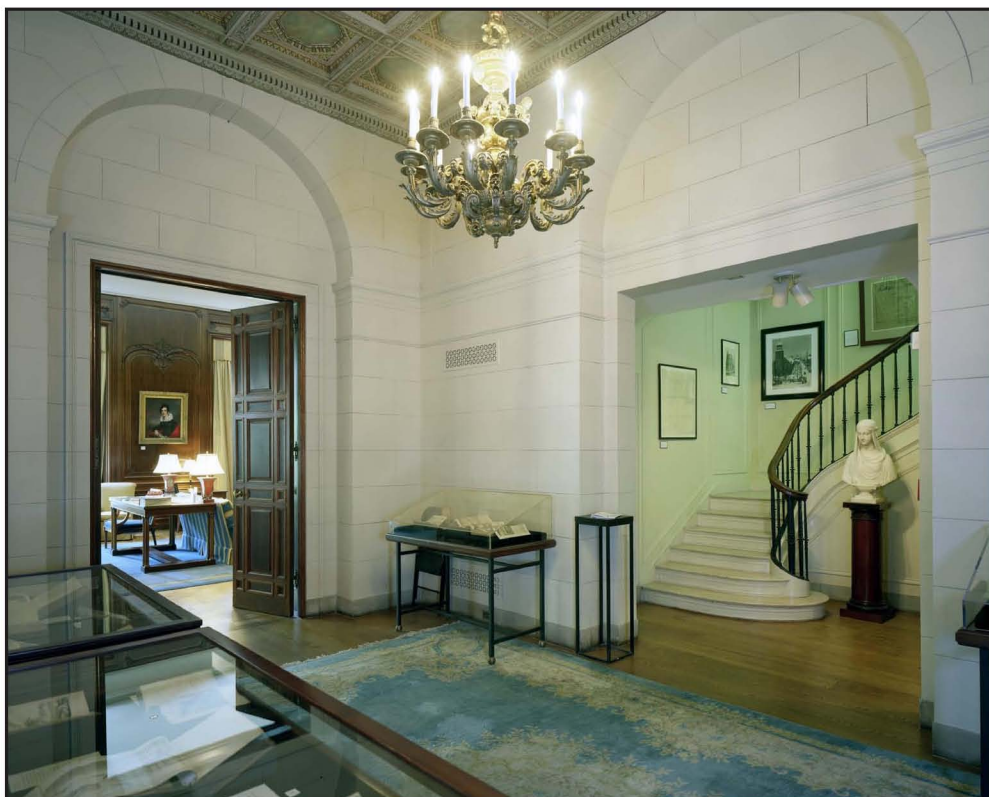


photo by James Dow



Mark Bartlett
Head Librarian

BOOKS TO BIND?

Library Conservator George Muñoz offers his bookbinding services to members owning old or rare volumes in need of repair. For an estimate or to set up an appointment, contact George at 212-288-6900 x249 or bindery@nysoclib.org.

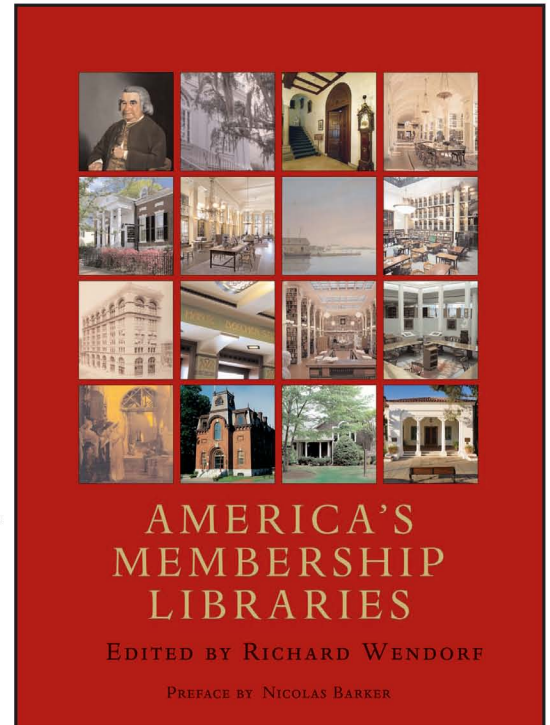
PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENT

OAK KNOLL PRESS TO PUBLISH THE FIRST BOOK ON AMERICA'S MEMBERSHIP LIBRARIES

The Library is proud to join with Oak Knoll Press in announcing the publication of *America's Membership Libraries*, a volume of sixteen essays on historic membership libraries across the country. The volume is edited by Richard Wendorf, Stanford Calderwood Director and Librarian of the Boston Athenaeum, and features a foreword by Nicolas Barker. It is beautifully illustrated with color photographs.

Long before the establishment of public libraries in America, during the colonial period and the early decades of the new republic, thousands of "social" or membership libraries served as the primary venues for the circulation of books. This collection of sixteen essays represents the first attempt to provide, through individual histories of the largest surviving membership libraries, a composite portrait of this important movement in American library history. Although they sport different names—society library, library society, mercantile library, mechanics' institute, athenaeum—all of the institutions have played a significant role in the intellectual and cultural lives of their communities, which range from Boston, New York, and Charleston to Cincinnati, San Francisco, and La Jolla. Some continue to serve as the central library in their city, whereas others resemble large, independent research institutions. Each chapter in the book is intended to stand alone, and yet collectively these essays should suggest the evolution of a particular kind of American library during the past three centuries.

The New York Society Library is among those profiled in the book, in a chapter written by Head Librarian Mark Bartlett and Events Coordinator Sara Elliott Holliday. The Library will make copies of the book available to members and at the event listed below at a substantial discount from the cover price. Please ask at the front desk if you would like to purchase a copy from us. More information on the book and on Oak Knoll Press is available at www.oakknoll.com.



LIBRARY LECTURES

- ☞ To reserve spaces, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.
- ☞ Listed fees may be paid at the door.

NICOLAS BARKER

"THE BOOK, PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE"

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$10 PER PERSON

In conjunction with the publication of *America's Membership Libraries*, the Library is pleased to host book scholar Nicolas Barker. In this event he will reflect on the way the history of books has shaped their present form and how that form has held up despite the electronic revolution, and explain why it will survive through further technological changes. He will also offer personal views on the modern trade in new and old books.

One of the most respected authorities in the book-history field, **Nicolas Barker** is the founder and editor of *The Book Collector*, the premier periodical on the antiquarian book trade. He has served as Deputy Keeper of the British Library and the Libraries Adviser for the (Great Britain) National Trust and the House of Commons; he also spent a decade as Chairman of the London Library. He has offered his expertise to organizations ranging from the Library Committee of the Royal Horticultural Society to the Pierpont Morgan Library. His own publications include *The ABC for Book-Collectors*, *The Pleasures of Bibliophily*, and *Form and Meaning in the History of the Book*.



ELIZABETH HICKEY

THE WAYWARD MUSE

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$10 PER PERSON

The Wayward Muse, Elizabeth Hickey's second novel, focuses on the complex relationships between Pre-Raphaelite painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Morris, founder of the Arts & Crafts movement, and Jane Burden, a stableman's daughter. Loving Rossetti,



but marrying Morris, Burden was immortalized as the famous face and the ideal of beauty of late-nineteenth-century English art. (Rossetti's *Proserpine*, at left, was one of his many works using her as a model.) *Publishers Weekly* says of *The Wayward Muse*, "Marvelous period detail adds appeal to an alluring story," while *Booklist* calls the novel "haunting and lyrical."

In this event, Ms. Hickey will use slides to discuss Burden's role in art history, the Pre-Raphaelite and Arts & Crafts schools, and the personalities behind them.

Elizabeth Hickey holds a BA in Art History from Williams College as well as an MFA in Creative Writing from Columbia University. Her acclaimed first novel, *The Painted Kiss*, dealt with the relationship between Gustav Klimt and the model for his masterpiece *The Kiss*.

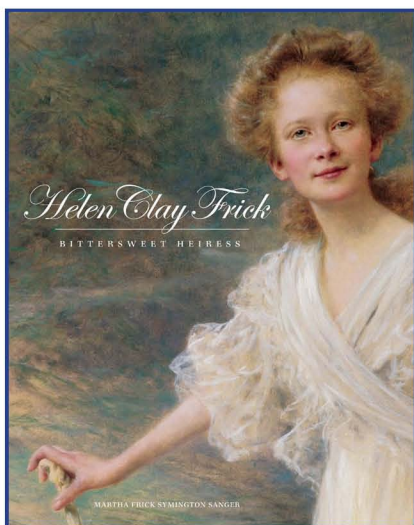


MARTHA FRICK SYMINGTON SANGER

HELEN CLAY FRICK: BITTERSWEET HEIRESS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$10 PER PERSON

In 1919, at the age of thirty-one, Helen Clay Frick inherited \$38 million, becoming the richest single woman in America. These riches, however, came at a price. Frick's tumultuous early life was shaped by her father's infamy as a union strikebreaker and the



ensuing attempt on his life, her mother's debilitating depression, and the death of her older sister and newborn brother about a year apart. Despite these events, Helen built a luminous legacy through her lifelong commitment to social welfare, the environment, and a supreme devotion to the visual arts. Her philanthropic contributions included a vacation home for young female textile workers, two wildlife preserves, a public wilderness park, a university fine-arts department, two art-history libraries, and the purchase of many significant works of art for her private collection, the Frick Collection in New York, the University of Pittsburgh teaching collection, and the Frick Art Museum.

Ms. Sanger has used extensive period research and singular access to family archives and personal writings to fashion a multifaceted portrait of a cultural force in twentieth-century America.

Martha Frick Symington Sanger, a great-granddaughter of the controversial steel tycoon and preeminent art collector Henry Clay Frick, has spent two decades researching Frick, his family, and his art collection. Her previous major work is *Henry Clay Frick: An Intimate Portrait*, a definitive work on the influential man. She has given presentations on the Frick family in many locations in the U.S. and Great Britain, and served as consultant to the PBS documentary *Andrew Carnegie: The Richest Man in the World*.



THE 2007-2008 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.*

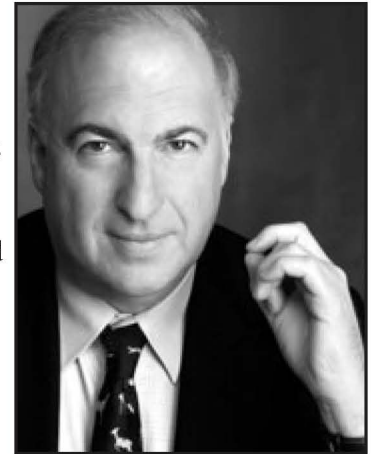
LAURENCE BERGREEN

MARCO POLO: FROM VENICE TO XANADU

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 7:00 P.M., TEMPLE ISRAEL, 112 EAST 75TH STREET



Marco Polo, the scion of a wealthy Venetian merchant family, was only seventeen when he set out in 1271 with his father and uncle on their journey to Asia. In the years that followed, he would gain the confidence of Kublai Khan and become a trusted diplomat and intelligence agent in the Khan's government. He then journeyed back to Venice, laden with riches, the latest inventions, and twenty-four years' worth of extraordinary tales, and recorded his travels in a book that would explode the notion of non-Europeans as untutored savages and stand as the definitive description of China until the nineteenth century. Laurence Bergreen's book is the first fully authoritative biography of one of the most fascinating figures in world history.



Laurence Bergreen is the prize-winning author of *Over the Edge of the World: Magellan's Terrifying Circumnavigation of the Globe*, as well as *James Agee: A Life*; *Louis Armstrong: An Extravagant Life*; *Capone: The Man and the Era*; and *As Thousands Cheer: The Life of Irving Berlin*, each considered the definitive work on its subject. A graduate of Harvard University, he lives in

New York City, where he serves on the Library's Board of Trustees. As part of the research for this book, he traveled Marco Polo's route across Mongolia and China.

CHILDREN'S LIBRARY EVENT

☞ *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.*

BRETT HELQUIST

BROKEN PENCILS, DRIED-UP PAINT, AND BOXES AND BOXES OF TISSUES: AN UNFORTUNATE EVENING WITH BRETT HELQUIST

FOR GRADES THREE AND UP

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 5:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$5 PER PERSON

Brett Helquist is best known as the man who brings Violet, Klaus, and Sunny Baudelaire and their archenemy Count Olaf to life in Lemony Snicket's *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, for which he uses "broken pencils, dried-up paint, and boxes and boxes of tissues" to depict the tragic lives of the Baudelaire orphans. Sometimes he finds this work so distressing that he "sends himself flowers, but it never helps." His other works include the acclaimed illustrations for *Chasing Vermeer* and *The Wright 3* by Blue Balliett, *Capt. Hook* by James V. Hart, James Howe's *House of Bunnacula* series, and the story and pictures for *Roger, the Jolly Pirate*.

In this event, Helquist will talk about how he became a children's author and illustrator, starting with a childhood love of comic books, and describe the process of creating the illustrations for *A Series of Unfortunate Events* and other books. Participants will also learn the techniques for drawing his favorite characters.



The ill-fated illustrator

NEW EXHIBITION

THE LIBRARY MOVES UPTOWN:

A CELEBRATION OF SEVENTY YEARS AT 79TH STREET, 1937-2007

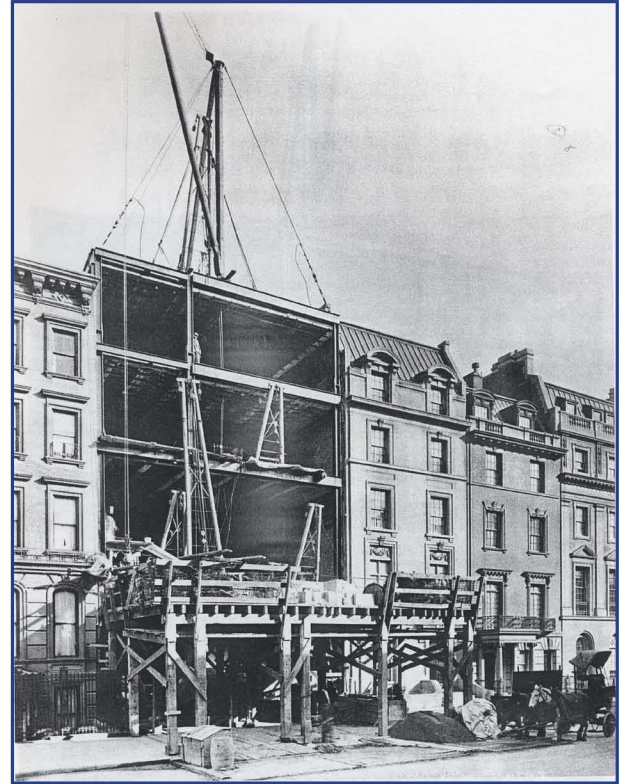
EXHIBITION OPENING AND RECEPTION

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 3:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM

In 1936, the Library, then located downtown on University Place, purchased 53 East 79th Street from Mrs. John Shillito Rogers. Most of the next year was devoted to a massive process of sorting, packing, cleaning, and renovation to get the building ready to move into and the books and holdings ready to move. Business began in the new building in July, but our new home was officially opened in December 1937.

This exhibition takes viewers back to the early days in the Library's new home with a selection of classic books originally published in 1937, along with memorabilia about the move such as letters and newspaper clippings, and photographs and documents on the important political and cultural events of the year in New York City and beyond. Historic photographs will show the building when it was a townhouse and flash back to its construction in 1917, ninety years ago.

Library members and their guests are cordially invited to the exhibition opening and reception on December 15, which will offer period refreshments and a first look at this turning point in the Library's and the city's past. R.S.V.P. to the Events Office, 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.



STAFF NEWS

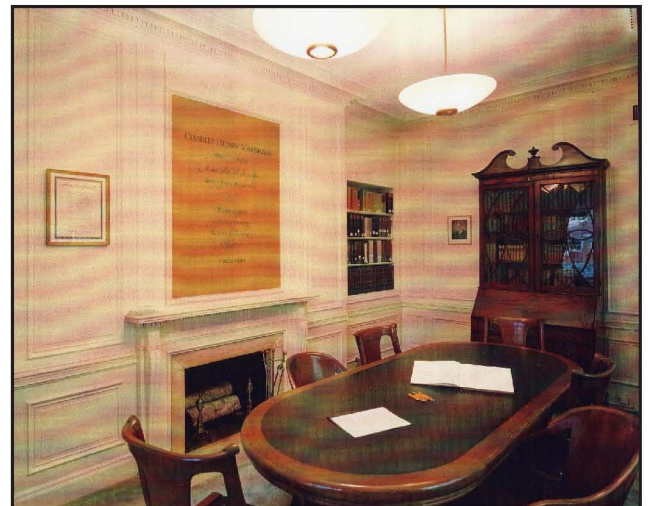
HARRIET SHAPIRO IS THE NEW EXHIBITIONS COORDINATOR

The support and naming of the Assunta, Ignazio, Ada and Romano Peluso Exhibition Gallery, reported in the June *Library Notes*, has made it possible to add the permanent position of Exhibitions Coordinator to the Library staff. Harriet Shapiro, a longtime Library member and consultant, will now take on the work of planning, organizing, researching, and writing materials for our exhibitions. Harriet was a major contributor to the research and composition of the catalogs for our exhibitions from the Special Collections in 2002 and 2003; she also works as a freelance writer and editor. We are pleased to add her to the staff and look forward to her help in exhibiting the treasures of our collection.

REMEMBERING BROOKE ASTOR

The Library notes the death in August of Brooke Astor, a longtime member and supporter. Mrs. Astor's first husband, Charles Henry Marshall, was a Library trustee from 1951 until his death in 1953. At that time, his widow inherited his share and interest in the Library. In the early 1980s, she donated funds to create our beautiful rare book reading room (shown at right), which she named for Mr. Marshall. At that time, Librarian Mark Piel wrote to her with thanks for providing "a comfortable and handsomely appointed room in which to read our rare books."

We cherish the memory of a member who had such a meaningful impact on our building and our institution, as she did with so many others.





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.*
- ☞ *More information on event is inside. For events announced in the September/October Library Notes, see www.nysoclib.org/notes/index.html.*

Thursday, November 8, 5:00 p.m.

An Unfortunate Evening with Brett Helquist

Friday, November 9, 11:00 a.m.

Reading Group: Going Global II

Friday, November 9, 6:30 p.m.

“The Book, Past, Present, and Future”

Nicolas Barker

Monday, November 12, 6:30 p.m.

Chère Maître

Kathleen Chalfant and Harris Yulin

Wednesday, November 14, 6:30 p.m.

The Wayward Muse

Elizabeth Hickey

Wednesday, November 28, 11:00 a.m.

Reading Group: *The Odyssey* III

Tuesday, December 4, 7:00 p.m.

Marco Polo: From Venice to Xanadu

Laurence Bergreen

Friday, December 7, 11:00 a.m.

Reading Group: Going Global III

Thursday, December 13, 6:30 p.m.

Helen Clay Frick: Bittersweet Heiress

Martha Frick Symington Sanger

Saturday, December 15, 3:00 p.m.

Exhibition Opening Reception

“The Library Moves Uptown”

The Library thrives and prospers through the generosity of our members and contributors. To join, renew, or make a contribution in support of our activities, send mail to the address below, visit our website, www.nysoclib.org, or call the Development Office at 212-288-6900 x214.

THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY

53 EAST 79TH STREET

NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10021