



STATE LIBRARY NEWS

For the People, the Government and the Libraries of New York State

Summer 2006

LEGISLATORS: STROLL THROUGH HISTORY

- Who was governor of New York in 1895?
- Why was the state capital called "The New Albany" in 1908?
- Who were the five socialist legislators expelled from the Assembly for "disloyalty" in 1920?

New York Red Books have answers to these and many other questions about New York government. Published since 1892, this storehouse of information presents facts, figures, and photos about New York's public officials, political subdivisions, and political events, as well as texts of the state constitution and other documents. Volumes dated 1892 to 1923 are now on the State Library's Web site. Go to <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov>. Click on Catalog/Digital Collections, click Search Digital Collections, and input *New York Red Book* in the search box.

For answers to questions above, see page 3.

New York State Library News is produced by the Friends of the New York State Library and the New York State Library to inform New Yorkers about the collections and services of the State Library.

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Intern: Maura Conway

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RESEARCH LIBRARY DIRECTOR SHARES VISION OF THE FUTURE

by Loretta Ebert



Loretta Ebert became Director of the New York State Library's Research Library on January 17, 2006. She was previously Director of the Research Libraries at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York.

Milestones are a good time to take stock of progress and to look to the future. As I complete my first six months as Director of the Research Library, I'm excited by opportunities to re-establish the New York State Library as a leading research library and as a "Library for all New Yorkers." Extended borrowing privileges to New York State residents 18 years of age and over, initiated in 2004, has been a major step in that direction. We are also working to increase services and extend hours.

We continue to make more resources available on the Internet. We're adding over 100,000 pages of historical materials to our digital collection. Watch for details in forthcoming issues of the *New York State Library News*. Use of

NOVEL continues to grow with the addition of simplified, "one-stop" searching and access via New York State driver license or Department of Motor Vehicles ID for non-drivers. Here in the Cultural Education Center, we are improving our public spaces with wireless connections for patrons' computers and better signage. We are also sharing initiatives such as new exhibits and grant applications with our colleagues in the State Museum and the State Archives.

Looking outside our institution, the Research Library is working with other research and academic communities in New York State to align and leverage investments for critical support of academic/research, financial, medical, and social initiatives at the state level. We are also renewing our involvement in national organizations like the Association of Research Libraries and the Coalition for Networked Information, and in national initiatives, such as the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program.

I look forward to working with colleagues here at the State Library and around the state as we advance. And I would like to add a special note of thanks to the Friends of the State Library for your interest and support. We welcome your feedback on our efforts and new opportunities for continued partnership.

THANK YOU

We want to express our deep appreciation to those who gave \$50 or more to the Friends of the New York State Library. Your contributions are of major significance in sustaining the vital activities of the State Library and the Friends.

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TELL US

Send comments and questions about the New York State Library and its newsletter to Mary Redmond <mredmond@mail.nysed.gov>.

WHAT'S NEW



*This photo from the new slide show depicts **Shawn Purcell**, State Library Public Services staff arranging an exhibit.*

■ A slide show featuring the State Library is now operating on the mezzanine of the Cultural Education Center lobby.

■ OCLC (the Online Computer Library Center) is putting the *New York State Library News* into a digital archive of its permanent collection of State Library journals and newsletters. This enables more people than ever to learn about the State Library and to access its outstanding collections and services.

■ Starting with the summer issue, the Talking Book and Braille Library's newsletter, *Upstate Update* is available on one audio file so that listeners can hear Peter Douglas, Mike Romeling, and other TBBL staff read the whole publication in about 10 minutes. Previously newsletter articles were recorded as single files. *Upstate Update* is also available online:

<<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/tbbl/audio/smr2006>>.

STATE LIBRARY PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL SPANISH LANGUAGE OUTREACH PROGRAM

From October 2006 to May 2007, about 800 library professionals and trustees will attend 48 one-day workshops across New York State. Topics include the best way to reach out to Spanish-speaking people; how to plan for outreach; ways to interview community leaders; use of WebJunction.org, and other techniques and activities.

To conduct this program, the State Library is partnering with the Gates Foundation and WebJunction, an online community where library staff can

share ideas, solve problems, and take online courses. This outreach program is also supported in part by OCLC, grants from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, partners in state library agencies, other library service organizations, and the library community. For more information about this Spanish language outreach program for professional development, contact Cassie Artale, (518) 474-1479 or e-mail: <cartale@nysed.gov>

Visit the State Library's Web Site

<<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov>>



Search Excelsior, the online catalog of our holdings and access national and regional databases. Use the State Library Web site to:

■ **Broaden your language skills.**

Keep up with ways to express yourself at <NetLingo.com>.

■ **Explore New York's agricultural heritage.** Go to the Harvest of History Web site.

■ **Dig into Albany's past.**

Discover capital region archeological sites and see what excavations reveal.

■ **Follow paths to freedom.**

Visit locations of Underground Railroads in New York.

And Much More

Instructions for reaching these sites are available at:

<<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/friends/nysl.n.htm>>

For more information, call (518) 474-7920 or e-mail: <excelsior@mail.nysed.gov>.

BE A FRIEND

Join the Friends of the New York State Library. In addition to the deep satisfactions of preserving your heritage and sustaining a world-renowned public research library, you can obtain special discounts at local bookstores. Select:

■ **Sustaining Membership.**

\$25. Receive discounts at three book shops: 20% at Borders Books & Music in Colonie, 20% single use discount on one in-stock title at the Book House in Stuyvesant Plaza or Market Block Books in Troy, and 25% off one purchase at the Open Door Bookstore in Schenectady.

■ **Contributing Membership.**

\$50 or more. Receive all of the above plus recognition in *New York State Library News*.

Every Friend also receives:

■ **Free admission** to the Friends Annual Meeting featuring a talk by an author of a recently published book.

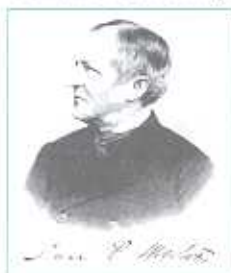
■ **Invitations** to other stimulating programs at the State Library.

■ **A subscription** to the *New York State Library News*, an illustrated quarterly newsletter.

■ **Remote access** to Health Reference Center-Academic, a database for health and medicine.

ANSWERS

continued from page 1



1. **Levi Morton** was Governor of New York in 1895.

2. Handsome streets, imposing buildings, smooth boulevards, and beautiful public parks replaced colonial Dutch "houses with their gable ends to the streets."

3. August Claessens, Charles Solomon, Louis Waldman, Samuel A. De Witt, and Samuel Orr.

MID-DAY PROGRAMS

Two State Library-sponsored programs, held in the Cultural Education Center 12:15 to 1:15 are open to the public:

■ **Colonial Albany Rum Distillery.** Justin DiVirgilio, Hartgen Archeological Associates: Excavation Project's Findings. September 20, Librarians Room, 7th floor.

■ **Pandemic Influenza.** Loretta A. Santilli, NYS Department of Health: Preparedness for an Epidemic. September 27, Museum Theater, 1st floor.

Please register online at <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/library/trng_reg.htm> or call (518) 474-2274.

To join Friends of the New York State Library, complete the form below and mail it with your check.

New York State Library News

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FROM THE COLLECTIONS: GIBSON GIRL GRACES STATE LIBRARY COLLECTIONS



Charles Dana Gibson sketched Elizabeth Cooper Pruyn Harrison, c. 1900.

Elizabeth Cooper Pruyn Harrison (1868-1961) posed for Charles Dana Gibson, the famous Manhattan artist whose Gibson Girls became the ideal of American women in the late 1890s and early 1900s. Gibson Girls were "spunky and sentimental, down to earth and aristocratic at the same time," according to an online article at www.gibson-girls.com.

The Elizabeth Cooper Pruyn Harrison Collection, recently donated to the State Library, includes Gibson's sketch of Mrs. Harrison and reveals the character and personality of a complex woman and the world in which she lived.

"She was born into an Albany family of old names and old money --- the Pruyns. But because her father's business had failed in 1862, she learned early about 'bankrupt aristocracy,' said Paul Mercer, Senior Librarian in Manuscripts and Special Collections at the State Library. "Nevertheless, she was introduced into society in New York, Albany, Philadelphia and Boston," Mercer continued. "In 1898 she married Mitchell Harrison, a widower from Philadelphia." The marriage ended within a year, however, after Harrison became involved with his mother's live-in nurse. Society generally frowned upon divorced women then. But Mrs. Harrison rose above public opinion to live a stimulating, purposeful life. She traveled the globe to countries such as the nations of Europe, Japan, China, Indonesia, India, and Afghanistan.

"Her photographs and letters help document what the world was like in the years just before World War I altered almost everything, as well as the years building toward World War II," said Mercer. Her extensive correspondence includes notables such as Mahatma Gandhi, members of

the British royal family, and many artists, scholars, writers, and explorers. In June 1920, Marie Therese, the former Austro-Hungarian Duchess wrote, "I...have been informed by the American Relief Administration that an American lady has had the great kindness to order a food parcel to be forwarded to me..." and in another letter, "My husband nearly wept for joy, he who suffers in his old years so much from hunger." The American lady was Mrs. Harrison, donor to many good causes.

Like the characters in Edith Wharton's novels, Mrs. Harrison and many of the women highlighted in the collection embody the sorrows and satisfactions, the struggles and conflicts of late nineteenth and early twentieth century women who attempted to shape an existence outside the conventions of the class, wealth, and tradition to which they were born and bred.

The Elizabeth Cooper Pruyn Harrison Collection was donated to the State Library by the family of Mrs. Harrison's grand niece, the late Joan Blackmer. For more information about the collection, call (518) 474-6282.

New York State Library News
New York State Library
N.Y.S. Education Department
Albany, NY 12230

State Library Hours

Monday through Friday
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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refserv@mail.nysed.gov.