

The  
New York  
Society  
Library

# Annual Report 2013



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## LIBRARY STAFF

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Harry Abarca  
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Mark Bartlett  
Matthew Bright  
Susan Chan  
Andrew Corbin  
Kathleen Fox  
Katherine L. Fricas  
Endang Hertanto  
Sara Holliday  
Randi Levy  
Steven McGuirl  
Susan Vincent Molinaro  
Laura O'Keefe  
Peri Pignetti  
Syed Rasool  
Patrick Rayner  
Ingrid Richter  
Diane Srebnick  
Brandi Tambasco  
Carolyn Waters

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Jennifer Hanley-Leonard  
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Caitlin McCarthy  
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## Volunteers

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Edmée Reit

## REPORT FROM THE CHAIR (2013) Barbara Hadley Stanton

The year 2013 brought many good things to the Library, including some generous gifts. The first was the Lyn Chase Poetry Collection, a unique personal assemblage, mostly of 20th Century poetry, with many books signed by their authors. The gift included funds to create new bookcases in the Third Floor Whitridge Room and to provide a special poetry reading area there. The funds also helped support renovations to the Whitridge Room to better meet the Library's changing needs.

Lyn Chase served as a trustee since 1996 and is now trustee emerita. She was instrumental in establishing, with Jeannette Watson Sanger, the Lecture and Exhibition Committee, which organizes events and exhibits such as the excellent 2013 exhibition *Extraordinary Gifts: Rare Books Presented to The New York Society Library, 1754-2012*. Lyn's savvy counsel has enriched the Library in many ways over the years. We will celebrate the official dedication of her Collection at a small gathering in June.

The next gifts came in a remarkably quick and generous response to an unexpected change in circumstances. When I spoke to you at last year's meeting, we expected to complete renovations for the poetry collection in the summer of 2013—as indeed we have. The Building and Renovation Committee, chaired by Byron Bell, also had plans for the rest of the Third Floor. They had “been working on a 40% expansion of the Children's Library, to be gained by using the newly enclosed room above the Peluso skylight and renovating existing space.” At that time, this major project was scheduled for summer 2014.

The unexpected change in circumstances was the contractors telling us that the 2013 work in the Whitridge Room would require closing the Children's Library as well. If we stuck to our plan of having a year to raise funds for its reconstruction in 2014, the Children's Library would be closed for two summers in a row. More, the contractors assured us that their charges would rise substantially in 2014 as the New York City building boom got underway.

You know the result! We now have a lovely, welcoming, expanded Children's Library, made possible by swift, generous responses of a special few trustees and friends.

Naturally, planning continues. We need space for staff, small meetings, and—not least—readers. The Fourth and Sixth Floors must be more fully used. We also need to ensure that our century-old building stays in good shape. The Building and Renovation Committee is still at work, as is the Development Committee, helped by the invaluable input of Joan Zimmet, Director of Development, and Diane Srebnick, her able assistant.

Finally, I want to express my admiration and gratitude to Sara Holliday, who acts in myriad ways to keep the Board functioning, and to two men whose input shaped every Board decision made in 2013: Mark Bartlett, our Head Librarian, whose caring thoughtfulness is felt everywhere in the Library, and George L.K. Frelinghuysen, our Treasurer and Development Committee chair, whose counsel has been essential throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted on April 16, 2014,  
Barbara Hadley Stanton, *Chair*

## REPORT FROM THE HEAD LIBRARIAN (2013) Mark Bartlett

It has been a healthy and productive year in the Library, marked by a number of changes in the staff and the continued growth and popularity of the Library's collections, events, exhibitions and member services.

Kathleen Fox is our new full-time page in the Circulation department. Randi Levy rejoined the Library as a Children's Librarian in the fall, after five years as a school librarian. Susan Vincent Molinaro was appointed interlibrary loan and children's librarian after the departure of Brandi Tambasco. In January 2014, Meredith Rossi became Head of Circulation, after her career as a librarian at New York University's Law School. Finally, Peri Pignetti is Catalog Librarian and Syed Rasool is the Library's Head of Systems.

The year in member services is best described with one word: communication. The staff communications group is chaired by Carolyn Waters and includes Matthew Bright, Sara Holliday, Randi Levy, Steve McGuirl, Doreen Pastore, Meredith Rossi, and Joan Zimmitt, and meets every other Wednesday. They see that regular blog posts appear on the Library's website; the calendar of events and event recordings gets posted on time; and print and electronic newsletters are well designed and timely. The improvements to our three regular print publications, the Events newsletter, the Annual Report, and *Books & People*, were praised by Library members and colleagues in other membership libraries across the country.

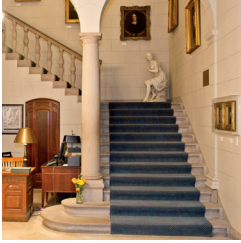
Head of Exhibitions Harriet Shapiro and Special Collections Librarian Erin Schreiner co-curated an excellent exhibition, *Extraordinary Gifts:*

*Rare Books Presented to The New York Society Library, 1754-2012*, in the Peluso Family Exhibition Gallery from January 24 to December 31, 2013.

The May 2013 ceremony for the New York City Book Awards was a standing-room-only event. This year's two winners, both image-intensive books, were *New York Nights* by James T. Murray and Karla L. Murray and *One Times Square: A Century of Change at the Crossroads of the World* by Joe McKendry. Alex Gilvarry won the Hornblower Award for a First Book for his intriguing novel *From the Memoirs of a Non-Enemy Combatant*.

The October re-opening of the renovated and improved Children's Library was celebrated with a Members' Room event for children, families, and members with Laurent de Brunhoff and Phyllis Rose, creators of the beloved *Babar* series. The Children's Library is an enlarged, brighter and more comfortable space for our youngest readers and writers; the new picture book area has been a favorite spot for the kids, parents, and nannies.

Eighty-seven new families were registered in the Children's Library in 2013. More than 150 children participated in kids' programs, including storytelling for toddlers, preschool and elementary age children, and special events with writers for older children. Maryann Macdonald, author of *Odette's Secret*, led a Holocaust Remembrance Day event in April, Elizabeth Winthrop spoke on becoming a writer, and Polly Shulman, whose books *The Grimm Legacy* and *The Wells Bequest* take place in a library based on ours, held a writing activity with older children.



The Library's collection is growing. We added 4,013 purchased books and 467 gifts to the collection. In 2013 eight book funds underwrote 19% of book purchases, providing welcome relief to the Library's operating budget. The book funds support such subject areas as British literature, arts and history; contemporary and mystery fiction; French works in translation; poetry; and art and artists. Two new book funds were established, the Kallisto Fund for Ancient Cultures and Civilizations and the Peluso Family Exhibitions Book Fund.

The Library now licenses twenty electronic resources and databases for its members. We recently added two new services, *Oxford Music Online* and *Book Review Index Online Plus*, to our roster.

The Systems department, under the leadership of Syed Rasool, has been tackling long-term changes to our systems infrastructure—including increased Internet bandwidth, a new email server, a better firewall, and an improved server arrangement in Closed Stacks.

The members of the Cataloging, Special Collections, and Conservation departments on the fourth floor are hard at work each day. Last year, we began cataloging all materials according to *Resource Description and Access (RDA)*. These rules supersede the older *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules* as the standard in the library profession. Erin Schreiner completed the cataloging of the Sharp Collection, 150 theological works that belonged to the Anglican minister and missionary John Sharp. We have alerted scholars to the Sharp books on listservs devoted to publishing history, rare book librarianship, and American religion.

Interlibrary loans by members and member writers increased by 22%. One hundred forty-two different members were provided 442 items. The Library's books-by-mail service was busier than ever. Susan Chan mailed 270 packages to 43 member households, 45% more packages than the previous year.

We circulated 87,041 titles in 2013, only a 3% decrease from the previous year. Fiction titles continue to be very popular, with Ian McEwan's *Sweet Tooth*, Elizabeth Strout's *The Burgess Boys*, and Meg Wolitzer's *The Interestings* the top books of the year. Members continue to be avid nonfiction readers. 2013 ranked Justice Sonia Sotomayor's *My Beloved World* and Andrew Solomon's *Far From the Tree: Parents, Children and the Search for Identity* as the two most popular titles.

I thank the Board of Trustees for their stewardship and Barbara Hadley Stanton, Chair, and George Frelinghuysen, Treasurer, for their steady guidance. Carolyn Waters continues to excel as Assistant Head Librarian, and also curates our popular Writers Services programs.

It continues to be an honor to serve as Head Librarian of this wonderful New York institution. Happy 260th year to all.

Respectfully submitted on April 16, 2014  
Mark Bartlett, *Head Librarian*

## REPORT FROM THE TREASURER (2013) George L.K. Frelinghuysen

For the year ending December 31, 2013, the New York Society Library recorded an operating surplus of \$135,637 prior to non-cash charges. While revenues closely matched budgeted levels, savings in several expense categories led to actual expenses being below budget by \$126,000, which accounts for almost the entire recorded surplus.

Membership subscriptions declined slightly year over year due, in part, to a lower level of renewals, with membership at year-end standing at 3,017 against 3,054 the year before. Nonetheless, overall revenues from membership subscriptions exceeded our budget forecast by 5.6%, aided by an increase in membership dues instituted in 2013. Encouragingly, new memberships in all categories were up 4.2% to 397 from 381 in 2012.

The Library raised \$523,256 through its annual appeal, which represents a slight decrease compared to 2012. A total of 832 donors gave unrestricted gifts in 2013, for a 5% increase over 2012's figure of 795. The top three categories represented 72% of all unrestricted funds raised, compared to 69% in the previous year. Equally important, the Library received \$327,775 in restricted funds, compared to \$235,858 in 2012. This is a 39% increase. The restricted total for 2013 includes \$215,000 in combined gifts for the Children's Library renovation.

Total operating expenses increased slightly over 2012. Staff expenses were lower due to positions that were budgeted for but vacant for all or part of the year. Spending for library materials was 28.4% below budget due to the continued benefit that we are seeing from the book funds created by members, which lower the Library's outlays for book purchases. In

addition, we budgeted for but did not expend any funds on e-books, due to the Library's opinion that existing platforms in this area were unsatisfactory. Building services showed a substantial increase in 2013, largely due to the Library's decision not to hire a building superintendent but rather to employ full-time the building maintenance and cleaning services of Harry Abarca's company. The Library will continue to pay close attention to expense control in 2014.

Endowment income provides the largest source of support for the Library's operations. It covers about 54% of our operating expenses. In 2013, the Library's endowment continued to grow. The value of our endowment increased approximately 8.7% over the course of the year, with the strongest portfolio performance turned in by our domestic equity manager. Our endowment, which reached a low point of \$25 million at the end of 2008, has steadily recovered in value and at the end of 2013 was \$32.2 million. Going forward, our endowment draw, which is 4.75% of the average fair value of the fund assets calculated on the prior twelve quarters, is expected to increase, as it will no longer be penalized by the years of lower endowment value.

Respectfully submitted on April 16, 2014,  
George L.K. Frelinghuysen, *Treasurer*

## STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES, UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

### December 31, 2013, with Comparative Totals For 2012

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>
Membership subscriptions	\$707,843	\$632,827	Staff expenses	\$1,411,338	\$1,499,101
Donations and bequests	523,256	533,179	Library materials	140,161	131,792
Lectures and events	36,746	39,571	Library services	153,788	129,823
Book sales	8,252	13,386	Development	229,446	198,166
Lost books and fines	10,502	10,631	Building <i>(excluding depreciation)</i>	387,935	292,704
Postage reimbursements	2,102	1,789	Professional fees	41,452	40,812
Photocopy fees	875	1,046	Miscellaneous	189,369	211,121
Miscellaneous income	9,234	7,583			
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,298,810</b>	<b>\$1,240,012</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,553,489</b>	<b>\$2,503,519</b>
				<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>
Increase (decrease) in net assets before allocation of four and three quarter percent (4 ¾%) from endowment				(1,254,679)	(1,263,507)
Allocation of four and three quarter percent (4 ¾%) from endowment				1,390,316	1,297,946
<b>Increase In Net Assets</b>				<b>\$135,637</b>	<b>\$34,439</b>

Notes: This statement includes unrestricted revenue and expenses only.  
All other funds are accounted for separately. Full audited financial statements are available at the Library.  
The approximate market value of investments on December 31, 2013, was \$32,207,000.



The New York Society Library

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