



The CONNector

CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

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This newsletter is published quarterly in January, April, July, November. Your contribution and comments are welcome. The deadline for contributions is the 20th of the month prior to publication. Please send them to Editor, CSL, 231 Capitol Avenue, Hartford CT 06106-1537 or email [Bonnie Delaney](#).

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The State Librarian's Column

Kendall F. Wiggin
Connecticut State Librarian



Opportunity knocks. That is how I can best sum up the results of the recently completed legislative session. As reported in this issue of the CONNector, Governor Rowland and the General Assembly have supported a number of library and preservation initiatives. Now that they have completed their work, our work begins.

The Connecticut Digital Library is an opportunity for all libraries in the state to provide their communities with electronic resources or to expand their electronic offerings. It is an opportunity to maintain the relevancy of libraries. It is an opportunity for the citizens and students of Connecticut to benefit from around-the-clock access to library resources. The Digital Library provides a means to address issues of equity of access to information resources in our schools and libraries. The Digital Library builds on the effort libraries are making to bridge the digital divide.

The Connecticut Educational Technology Commission will provide libraries the opportunity to actively participate in educational technology planning. The Connecticut Education Network is an opportunity to expedite resource sharing between schools, libraries, and academic institutions statewide and enhance programming and learning opportunities at all libraries.

The Library Partnership program that will be piloted in priority schools is an opportunity for libraries to demonstrate to school administrators, teachers, and legislators the important role libraries play in family literacy, reading success, and school improvement.

The establishment of the Historic Records Fund through a modest filing fee on land transactions is an opportunity for towns and cities and the State Library to address local records management, preservation, and access in a way that is sustainable and comprehensive.

The funds and new staff positions to open the State Library on Saturdays and one evening a week, and the Museum of Connecticut History on weekends, is an opportunity for students, citizens, and visitors to our state to see first hand the great treasures found only at the State Library.

Yes, it was a great year. The library community and town and city clerks should be proud of their accomplishments. We should all be appreciative for the support we received from the Governor, Lt. Governor and Legislators. Most of all we should be grateful for the opportunities that lie ahead of us.

State Library Board Notes

At the March 27 regular meeting of the Board, Dick Lowenstein, Chairperson of the Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development (ACLPD) updated the Board on the progress of three ACLPD Task Forces. The Task Force on Public Library Funding, is considering revising the state aid grants to provide incentives for libraries to develop staff, materials, technology and space. The Task Force on Structure and Policy is working on policy recommendations regarding continuing education, Early Reading Success, and developing a position paper on the elements of good school and public cooperation. The Task Force on Library User Services is working on recommendations for interlibrary loan policies and procedures, and will look into ways to increase training and publicity for libraries regarding ADA and Assistive Technology. The Board also approved the State Public Library Construction Grant Timetable and Guidelines for 2000-2001. Mary Louise Jensen reported that the State Public Library Construction Grant Program Guidelines are revised annually and that the Advisory

Council for Library Planning and Development had endorsed the proposed changes at their February 16th meeting.

After much discussion the State Library Board, in a 9 to 1 vote, revoked a State Public Library Construction Grant for the Greenwich Library from November of 1995. The Board was sympathetic to the circumstances surrounding the issue, but felt that making an exception in this case was not warranted and could set a bad precedent.

In a unanimous vote, the Board amended the personal service agreement with New Hartford Memorial Library giving them until May 1, 2001 to meet the square footage requirement of their grant. The Board action also stated that if the Library is not in compliance by May 1, 2001, then the Library will be allowed to keep the \$350,000 State Public Library Construction Grant but it must forfeit the \$100,000 LSCA Title II Public Library Construction Grant, repaying the \$90,000 that they have received on their Title II grant.

On May 22 the State Library Board met at the Cheshire Public Library. Board Member Joy Hostage of Cheshire had made the local arrangements. The Cheshire Public Library Board Chair, Emmett Shutts and Director Ann Wrege were introduced, as well as Board members Jacqueline Sima and Nelle Mohrzynski. Mr. Shutts and Ms. Wrege made welcoming remarks.

Ann Clark, Chair of the State Library Board welcomed Board member Fred Petersen who was recently appointed to the State Library Board by Senator Eads.

The Board unanimously approved a Resolution for Leon Shatkin, State Data Coordinator acknowledging his more than 30 years of dedicated service to the Connecticut State Library and expressing its appreciation and extending sincere wishes for many fulfilling, pleasurable, and healthy retirement years.



In further action, the Board approved amendments to the State Library Board Bylaws. Ms. Clark thanked Board Member Judge Hennessy for spearheading the revision of the Bylaws. Judge Hennessy noted that the amendments addressed technical problems and clarified language in the Bylaws.

State Documents Librarians' Conference

Al Palko, Library Specialist

On May 11th and 12th, the Connecticut State Library hosted a conference for State Documents Librarians from states east of the Mississippi River. The State Documents Depository Program Coordinators from twenty-three of those states, as well as an equal number of others responsible for, and interested in, the dissemination of state generated information, met for two days in Hartford, for a first-time-ever meeting with their peers. Funded largely by contributions from a private donor and several vendors, and sponsored by COSLINE (Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast), the meeting provided an unprecedented opportunity for these participants to meet as a collective professional group with shared interests, problems and programs. Conference sessions created an open forum wherein State Documents Librarians could meet, network, and participate in an information exchange that brought the group's creative problem solving to bear on issues central to the collection and dissemination of state documents. The conference fostered an interactive learning environment: its interplay of panel leadership and question-and-



From left to right: Mary Martin; Connecticut's State Librarian, Kendall F. Wiggin; Margaret Lane displaying her award; Al Palko; Mary Redmond; and Deborah Hollis

answer sessions allowed the participants to be both instructors and instructed, presenters and audience. All capitalized on this opportunity to find a voice during sessions devoted to acquiring, processing, organizing and disseminating state publications. The diversity of voices did, ironically, give focus to the current challenges, innovations and solutions facing local documents librarians, particularly since access to new formats was of special interest. Additionally, the camaraderie of shared meals and a warm reception in Memorial Hall of the Connecticut State Library's Museum of Connecticut History supplemented business sessions with a chance to meet on a less formal footing and to befriend colleagues from across the Eastern half of the United States (and a few from the Western half, as well).

After a welcome by Connecticut's State Librarian, Kendall Wiggin, the conference explored the nuts and bolts of enacting or changing state legislation designed to create and/or support State Documents Depository Programs. Other sessions featured the difficulties of acquiring publications of state agencies that almost demand some degree of sleuthing before they see the "public" light of day, and demonstrations of already operational systems which, it is hoped, will not only create but perpetuate access to electronic versions of state generated information. Late afternoon saw the conference goers recessing to attend the Connecticut State Library's reception for them, which included tours of the library portion of the building; special attention was paid, of course, to the Connecticut Documents collection in the government documents area.

Michael DiMario, United States Public Printer, was keynote speaker and addressed the group as the dinner session concluded the first day of the conference. The grave concerns he expressed regarding the proposed cuts to the Government Printing Offices' budget elicited a sympathetic response from a group who often see local legislatures follow the lead of Congress, and who often witness the disappearance of government information funding in the name of economy. Concern ran so deep that on its second day the conference made the time to draft a resolution calling for the full restoration of, and encouraging augmentation of, the Government Printing Office budget; a copy of the resolution was forwarded to key members of Congress.

The second day of the conference further explored issues important to the collection of state documents, such as depository library network coordination and essentials of doing checklists and adapting their format to meet the needs of electronic information systems. The last business of the day called upon past and present coordinators of the ALA/GODORT's State and Local Documents Task Force to summarize the task force's activities and highlights of state documents librarianship on the national scene. The conference fittingly concluded with the reading of Governor John G. Rowland's *Official Statement* designating May 12, 2000 as Margaret T. Lane Day in Connecticut in recognition of Margaret Lane's many, many contributions to the development of state documents librarianship in the United States.

Connecticut LBPH Staff on the National Scene

Carol Taylor, Director, LBPH

Staff members of the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) have been participating in national activities that are influencing service to *talking book* patrons throughout the country. Carol Taylor, Library Director and Gordon Reddick, Assistant Director attended the National Conference of Librarians Serving the Blind and Physically Handicapped in Los Angeles, California, April 29 - May 4, 2000. They participated in programs and discussions related to the digital-audio movement, library equipment audits, adaptive technology and outreach activities. The National Library Service sponsors this biennial conference for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS).

Gordon previously was the librarian representative from the Northeast to the NLS National Audio Equipment Advisory Committee, which makes equipment-related recommendations on planning, design, production, distribution and repair. Carol has been appointed librarian representative from the Northeast to the National Advisory Group on Collection Building



Activities through 2001. The committee is made up of network librarians and readers-at-large from the four regions and representatives from three consumer organizations. Members discuss the various concerns they have brought from the patrons they represent and make recommendations to guide NLS in the development of the collection.

Observing the President: Eyewitness Accounts from the State Archives

Mark Jones, State Archivist

In this year of presidential politics and campaigns, the State Archives offers for your amusement eyewitness descriptions of two presidents, John Quincy Adams and Theodore Roosevelt. The first is found in two letters from John Miller Edwards to William Brooks Bristol written in April 1826. These letters are contained in the State Archives collection, Correspondence of the Bristol Family of New Haven, 1815-46. William Brooks Bristol was the son of prominent New Haven attorney and Superior Court Judge, William Bristol. By 1826, he had graduated from Yale College and was studying law. John Miller Edwards was the third son of Henry W. Edwards, later a governor of the state. In 1826, Henry W. Edwards was representing Connecticut in the United States Senate. John Miller was twenty-one years old and a graduate of Yale College.



Dear Bill

. . .I went with my father and Mr. Ingersoll. Father told me to stick by him and after some ten minutes pushing & squeezing we made our way up to Mrs. Adams. . . we moved off to Mr. John Quincy Adams - well - here stood Mr. President Adams, a short stocky man... I tell you what Bill I felt rather large when I found the President was not a bigger man than myself. I don't mean that he is not a greater man or a stouter man, but I felt rather lofty to look down on the President and say "how do you do Mr. Adams."... My father shook hands with him and them introduced me. John Quincy grabbed hold of my hand and gave me an immortal shake. He almost shook my arm off. I was not use [sic] to such play and hardly knew what to make of it. However it was the Presidents shake and was right of course. "How do you do sir. I am happy to see you." He did not say, "how do you do sir" like common folks. No. No. The President dont shake hands or do such things like other people. He has a way of his own. What you may call a Presidential way.

. . . I received your letter a few days ago and was very much gratified and edified by the perusal of it. I went up to see Mr., I beg his pardon, **His Excellency the Hon. John Quincy Adams**, the other evening. . . But by gum, Billy, he's a **full team** & and it is my opinion that if he pursued the same course through this administration that he has done as yet he will be re-elected almost to a certainty which I for one hope may be the case. You ask me whether he chews tobacco. I never have seen him chew yet at his levees for that would not be polite you know, but judging from the looks of his mouth I should think he took a **sly cud** once in a while.

The next excerpt is the August 22, 1901 entry in a diary entitled, "Occasional Happenings," kept by Ella Fairchild Burr in 1900-1901. She was twenty-five years old when this letter was written. At the time, Ms. Burr was working as a typist for Governor Morgan Bulkeley. Her entry describes a visit to Hartford and speech made by President Theodore Roosevelt. By August 1901, Roosevelt had been President for eleven months, having ascended to that office after the assassination of President William McKinley on September 14, 1900.

Aug. 22:... At noon Elizabeth and I took a trolley around the city to see the decoration for Roosevelt...At 4:00 the President" train pulled in and the salute of 21 guns was given. We had a very good view of him as he came

down the street. Met Lois at six and after a short stop at the office we went directly to the Coliseum. Found Harry Wilcox and he proved a great help in keeping the crowd off me. We had good seats and enjoyed it all with the exception of the hissing when the chairman arose. The President spoke on our relations to Cuba, Porto Rico [sic] and the Phillippines [sic]. He is not handsome and has an odd way of making his voice shrill when saying anything humorous, and rises on one toe often as he speaks. his teeth are almost as funny as his caricatures, but he is a dignified and very pleasing gentleman.

Friends Of Connecticut Libraries 1980 - 2000 Twenty Years Of Service To The State, The Community, The Individual

Kay Morey, Friends of Connecticut Libraries and Mary Engels, Connecticut State Library



In 1980, under the guidance of Stanford Warshasky, then Director of the Silas Bronson Library and the encouragement of the Connecticut Library Association and the Connecticut State Library, an ad hoc committee was formed to organize a State Friends of the Library to "promote library enrichment for the state, the community, and the individual". By November of the same year, the Connecticut Friends of the Library (CFL) was formally organized at a state wide conference.

The purpose of the statewide Friends' group is to provide resources, support, and networking opportunities for local Friends' groups throughout the state. Since its inception Connecticut Friends have endeavored to supply information and support to local groups so that they can be successful. A board of representatives of local groups guides the organization.

Officially incorporated in 1981 with 38 group members, a newsletter and a directory were begun. Although changes have occurred over the years, the periodic newsletter and the annual directory continue to this day, providing essential information to libraries, member groups, and interested individuals. In 1981, CFL became involved in the Connecticut Library Association (CLA) annual conference and in 1982 CFL teamed

up with CLA to co-sponsor the annual legislative reception, traditions that continue today.

In 1983, CFL began presenting awards for newsletter excellence and, in 1984, began the Distinguished Friend award. Awards continue to recognize and encourage excellence at the local level. CFL closed out the 1980's by changing their name to Friends of Connecticut Libraries (FOCL).

Since 1995 with the encouragement of FOCL the Governor has proclaimed April Friends of Libraries Month. Each year a celebrity spokesperson endorses the activities of library Friends and expresses their love of libraries and the role they play in our lives.

FOCL celebrated its 20th Anniversary with a Gala Dinner at the 2000 annual CLA conference with author Olivia Goldsmith and author illustrator Leonard Everett Smith as honored guests.

As FOCL begins its 21st year, *FOCL Point* their statewide newsletter, keeps libraries, Friends groups, and individual members current with ongoing activities around the state; as well as matters that could affect library services. The annual Membership Directory now includes information on upcoming group events and book sales. With the help of the Connecticut State Library, FOCL maintains a database of information on successful fundraisers, membership drives, by-law preparation, etc. Workshops on topics of interest to Friends continue and board members continue to visit with local libraries and Friends groups to provide information and support.

Currently over 100 Friends groups and 40 individuals are members of the state organization. Local groups flourish and the relationship among FOCL, CLA and the State Library is a mainstay of library service in Connecticut.

A Contribution from a Connecticut Author

Nancy Shader, Archivist

Stewart O'Nan is the author of several critically acclaimed novels including *Snow Angels*, *The Names of the Dead*, and *A Prayer for the Dying*. After moving to Connecticut he became interested in the Hartford Circus Fire and realized that no definitive history of the fire existed. O'Nan decided to take on the challenge and write about that terrible day. The result is his new book *The Circus Fire* (Doubleday, ISBN 0385496842). Much of Mr. O'Nan's research was done at the State Library. Recently, I had a chance to talk with him.



The cover from Stewart O'Nan's book

What prompted you to write about the Hartford Circus Fire?

At first I was hooked by how strange and terrible of a disaster it was, really bizarre, but once I started talking with people, I realized it was much more important than that. It had (and has) a place in their personal and family history, not just in the larger history of Connecticut. That's when I saw how the public and the private connected in the circus fire. It's not simply a story of parents and children, but also of the relationship of the state or city to its people. So what began, as a fascination with the story from the outside, about the facts became a story written from the inside, about the people.

This is your first non-fiction book. How was researching/writing non-fiction different from writing fiction?

Researching and writing non-fiction seems much harder to me. Every fact has to be checked and double-checked, and often that's impossible. The goal is to tell the truth-in both the letter and spirit. It's a lot of legwork. It is also a challenge to resist the compulsion to embroider or tell stories just because they sound good. Writing fiction is lying artfully to get at the truth, writing non-fiction is artfully NOT lying.

What archival collections from CSL did you use for your book?

I used everything I could find at the State Library, mostly boxes and files from the History and Genealogy Unit. I remember being in RG161 and RG 20, which I believe are listed as Public Safety (check my slips!). Judge Henry Cohn sent me after Edward Rogin's records on the legal settlements between the circus and the survivors. And I used the City Directory from 1944, and the maps of the North End from the turn of the century up to the present. I spent hundreds of dollars photocopying pages of local papers like the Bristol Press and the Torrington Citizen-Register off the microfilm machines. And the folders in the vertical file, the old issues of Time and Reader's Digest upstairs, the trial notes on Edward Rogin's bid to be paid for his work as receiver, even the mug shots of the circus officers who went to jail-it all came from the State Library. And of course by now there's even more.

Do you plan to tackle any other "historical" topic in future projects?

I never know what I'm going to write next. I always start in one direction and then run into something that's way

more interesting. When something takes me over, I just give in and follow it, so I can't rule out more historical work. My next two novels (one done, one three-quarters) are contemporary, but after that, who knows.

Children's Services Competency Survey

Susan Cormier, Director
Willimantic Library Service Center

"Effective library service for children entails a broad range of experience and professional skills. The librarian serving children is first of all fully knowledgeable in the theories, practices, and emerging trends of librarianship but must also have specialized knowledge of the particular needs of child library users." This opening sentence from *Competencies for Librarians Serving Children in Public Libraries* defines the large range of skills and knowledge needed for competent children's services work. Much of this learning occurs in library school. However there is a constant need for children's staff to update skills and practice based on new research, and to learn in subject areas not covered by the library school curriculum. High quality, competency based continuing education is necessary to ensure excellent library service for children.

The Division of Library Development's long range plan calls for identification of core competencies in key areas such as children's services, information services, information technology, and management. These competencies will be used to assess training needs and design appropriate educational opportunities. The Structure and Policy Task Force of the Advisory Council on Library Planning and Development (ACLPD) developed a system for encouraging and recognizing library staff training. Continuing Library Education Certificates will be awarded to staff who participates in high quality, competency based training.

Competencies for Librarians Serving Children in Public Libraries, a nationally recognized document used to define the role of librarians serving children is being sent, in survey form, to all children's librarians in the state. The survey results will provide the basis for training in the most needed competencies.

New Grant for Connecticut Newspaper Project

Laura Moulton, Project Librarian

The Connecticut Newspaper Project (CNP) is pleased to announce that we have received additional grant funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities to continue preservation microfilming. The new grant will run from 2000 to 2002, and will bring the total number of pages filmed by the CNP to just over one million.

One of the priorities of the CNP is to complete filming for titles that we have already borrowed as soon as possible. The CNP will begin shipping titles ready to be filmed as soon as there is a new contract in place. The first group to be filmed for filming under the new grant is the *Manchester Evening Herald*. This is a rather large family which will total over 100 reels of film when it is complete. A few other titles at the top of our filming list include the *Bridgeport Evening Farmer*, the *Tri-weekly Standard* (also of Bridgeport), and *Que Pasa*, a smaller, more recent ethnic paper that was published in Hartford. These are just a few of the titles that the CNP has been preparing for filming during the last few months while waiting patiently to hear that our funding had been renewed.

One of the newspapers filmed under the grant, which is just ending, should be of particular interest to many people, and local historians especially. The *Herald of Freedom* was published by P.T. Barnum in the early 1830's. This newspaper was a real challenge for the CNP to collect and preserve on microfilm. Issues for the *Herald of Freedom* were borrowed from one out of state and three in state institutions including the Barnum Museum in Bridgeport which has the largest known collection of issues for this title known to date. Almost all

known and available issues for the *Herald of Freedom* are now on film. This was a real challenge for the CNP. The *Herald of Freedom* will now be available to a much broader group of researchers.

Also filmed under the grant just ending was the *New Britain Herald*, which includes 192, reels of film, and contains over 100,000 pages of newsprint. The last family of newspapers being completed under this grant is the *Hartford Post* family. The *Hartford Post* is another large family, which will consist of 209 reels of film and contain additional 100,000 pages of newsprint. A [list of newspaper titles that were converted to microfilm](#) under the 1998-2000 grant is being prepared and will be updated as we complete more film.



Even with our effort and the efforts of other Connecticut projects, there are still an estimated 2.75 million pages that need preservation on film. Local libraries and historical societies will have to get involved to help save Connecticut's newspapers before they are lost forever. For more information on the importance of microfilming check out [CNP](#). If you have questions on how to get a local microfilming project started, contact Laura J. Moulton, CNP Project Librarian, at 860-757-6527.

Legislative Update

General Assembly Passes a Host of New Initiatives

The recently completed 2000 session of the General Assembly resulted in some very good news for libraries and local records managers. Governor Rowland has now signed into law a number of Public Acts which will lead to improvements in the way we deliver library service and preserve local records here in Connecticut.

PA 00-146 An Act Concerning Real Estate Filings And The Preservation Of Historic Documents

Effective July 1, 2000 town and city clerks will begin collecting a \$3.00 fee for all documents recorded on land records. The municipality will retain \$1.00 for local records management and preservation activities. The remainder of the money will go to the State Library with 70% being used to fund a grant program to help municipalities to enhance and improve the preservation and management of historic documents. The balance of the money is to be retained by the State Library for the preservation and management of historic documents at the State Library, and for the expenses of administering the program.

PA 00-187 An Act Concerning Education Aid

This act contains several new programs affecting libraries.

It establishes:

The **Connecticut Digital Library** and assigns administration to the State Library in conjunction with the Department of Higher Education. As a component of the Connecticut Education Network, the Digital Library will ensure on-line access by all students and citizens to essential library and information resources by providing access to on-line electronic full-text databases.

The **Commission for Educational Technology** with broad responsibility for educational technology in the state. The State Librarian and a representative of the Connecticut Library Association will both serve on the Commission.

The **Library Partnership Program** with priority schools in priority school districts. At least 10% of the grant a school board receives for each such school is to be used for partnership projects with the local library.

In addition:

The Act calls for connecting all institutions of higher education, libraries, public elementary and secondary schools, regional educational service centers and other parties through a state-wide high speed, flexible network that will allow for video, voice and data transmission. This is referred to in the Act as the **Connecticut Education Network**

Special Act No. 00-13 An Act Making Deficiency Appropriations For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2000

This budget bill provides \$2million dollars for the digital library and funding to restore State Library and Museum hours. Unfortunately there were also budget reductions from the original budgets for operating expenses, the Connecticut Digital Library and the Cooperative Library Service Units.

Legislative Bill Tracking Pilot Project

Hilary T. Frye, Bill Room Supervisor

Requests for legislative bill tracking have been a perennial event at the Bill Room at CSL. In the past, it was impossible to meet this need because of the demanding nature of the primary work. Customers were politely told that if they called in on a regular basis, verbal updates would be provided over the telephone.

Recent computer applications, both at CSL and at the Connecticut General Assembly, may make it possible to add a new level of service. The Bill Room is conducting a pilot project to explore the possibility of offering a bill tracking service to government agencies.

The focus of the pilot project is to increase awareness of and participation in the legislative process by making it more accessible and more understandable. The pilot project removes barriers by providing a venue for daily updates on proposed legislation which will affect operations at the agency. Participants receive updates from the experts in the Bill Room who then serve as resources for answering questions about particular bills and the legislative process.

The project is aimed at agencies which experience such obstacles as those created by physical distance from the General Assembly in Hartford, or by lack of computer access to the World Wide Web or from staffing constraints which make daily bill tracking an impossible task.

Among the twenty-two participants in the Pilot Project are the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control (Windsor Locks), the Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials (Goshen), the Milford Transit District (Milford), The South Central Regional Council of Governments (North Haven), and the Southwest Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA) in Norwalk.

The first stage of the project began February 9, 2000 when the General Assembly convened for the 2000 Session. Participants identified subject areas for their Bill Tracking Profiles. As bills were introduced, staff at the Bill Room translated these subjects into bill numbers. These bills were then added to each agency's Bill Tracking Profile and marked for inclusion in a daily bill tracking report which was generated by the Connecticut General Assembly. The report was in the form of an Excel spreadsheet which was enhanced and edited by the staff at the Bill Room and either faxed or emailed to the participants. Copies of bills, substitute bills, amendments, and files were also included when appropriate. When the legislature adjourned many bills were left unpassed on the Calendar.

The first stage of the pilot project will continue during the upcoming Special Session, which has already been called and is tentatively scheduled for June, 2000. Bills which died on the calendar during the Regular Session could receive another chance for passage during a Special Session. It is a frequent occurrence for the General Assembly to reintroduce and pass some of these bills during a Special Session.

The primary work at the Bill Room is to create a permanent archive of actions on each bill as culled from the daily journals; to provide access to the verbatim transcripts of debate and hearings by reading each page of transcript and creating a bill number index; to provide telephone and walk-in reference service about the current session of the Connecticut General Assembly, and to organize and preserve the documents created during each legislative session. The Bill Room at the Connecticut State Library is a sub-unit of the Law & Legislative Reference Unit.

To contact the [Bill Room](#), call Jean Kincaid-Ross or Richard Scholz at (860) 757-6550.

Connecticut Public Libraries - New, Expanded, or Renovated

Woodbridge Public Library

Mary Louise Jensen, Building Consultant



Main entrance of the Woodbridge Library

On April 8, 2000, the expanded and renovated Woodbridge Town Library was dedicated. Woodbridge is a suburban residential town minutes from New Haven, with a population of approximately 9,215.

Originally, the town proposed to build a new building, but the community felt strongly that the old library building should be expanded and renovated. With this addition the library space grew from 8,100 square feet to 21,450 square feet. The total cost of the project was \$4,715,642, partially funded with a \$350,000 State Public Library Construction Grant.

The shape of the back of the building was influenced by the presence of a very old tree. In order to preserve the tree, the addition was designed to curve around it. The main entrance is in the middle of the new addition, as shown in the picture above. The first floor to the left of the entrance houses the adult and young adult materials. Special features of this area are the curved stack area, arched doorways to the stacks, and custom-made computer tables. To the right of the entrance and down a corridor is a spacious meeting room.

An open stairwell to the second floor leads to a café and audiovisual materials. The children's room, which contains window seats built into dormers and separate story and craft areas, is on the second floor above the adult and young adult areas. The technical services area is located above the meeting room. More than a dozen dormers provide light to the second floor. Natural woods and neutral tones accented with shades of blue create a peaceful atmosphere throughout the library.



Adult bookstacks with computer tables

To reach the original building one passes through a space where the Friends have a used bookstore. The original building has been restored to a quiet reading area with periodicals. A display case containing the six foot table stone (tombstone) of the Rev. Benjamin Woodbridge, the founder of Woodbridge, has been placed in this room.

If you are interested in more information about this library, contact Janet Vaill Day, Director of the Woodbridge Town Library, at 203-389-3433. There will be a Librartects workshop at the Woodbridge Town Library on September 21, 2000 from 9:30 a.m. to noon. (For further information about the Librartects workshop contact Mary Louise Jensen at 1-800-253-7412.

The Connecticut Digital Library

Kendall Wiggin, Connecticut State Librarian

The State Library's Division of Library Development Services is hard at work developing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the first phase of the Connecticut Digital Library. Students and residents of Connecticut should have access to the Connecticut Digital Library by early Fall 2000. At least that is the prediction of State Librarian Kendall Wiggin. The \$2 million contained in the recently approved state budget for the Digital Library is, according to Mr. Wiggin, "the most significant new investment in library service in Connecticut in many years." The majority of the funds will be used to provide access to a wide selection of commercial databases and other electronic resources to support the educational, cultural, personal and economic interests of Connecticut citizens.

Administered by the State Library, in conjunction with the Department of Higher Education, the Connecticut Digital Library will provide immediate and free access to full text information at each citizen's desktop whether at home, at the office, at their library or at school. It will provide up-to-date and reliable information through full-text journal and newspaper databases, a consumer-oriented medical database, online encyclopedia, business databases and the online catalog of Connecticut's libraries. Subscriptions to a variety of commercial full-text and image databases will be made available to all of Connecticut's public, academic and school libraries. These databases will also be available to citizens from home or business. Statewide purchasing of these databases realizes tremendous savings for schools and libraries.

The Digital Library of Connecticut is a component of a much larger educational technology initiative that developed out of a report issued by Lt. Governor Jodi Rell in the Fall of 1999.

Telephone Changes

