



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



A few weeks ago I attended Web-Wise 2002, a conference on libraries and museums in the digital world, at Johns Hopkins University. The Institute of Library and Museum Services and Johns Hopkins sponsored this thought provoking conference. This was my third trip to Web-Wise and again this year I came away inspired, but also very aware of how much I don't know. Sitting in a classic lecture hall with steep rows of seats rising upward, I listened to speakers and panelists discussing topics and using a vocabulary that hadn't even been invented when I sat in lecture halls as a library school student.

We all know that the landscape of libraries, museums and archives (or any profession for that matter) is changing rapidly. Conferences and other continuing education opportunities abound to help us keep up on the latest developments. However, just keeping up with developments in our respective fields is no longer enough. Libraries, museums and archives are part of a larger community. Our services are not delivered in isolation from the latest research in reading and learning theories or developments in child health and development to name just a few. iCONN, the Connecticut Digital Library, can be an important professional development tool and it's available at most of our desktops. As a professional development resource it crosses many disciplines and is available when you need it.

We have been promoting the use of iCONN far and wide (with good results), but how many of us are using it as our personal professional development resource? When I got back to my hotel room the first night of the Web-Wise conference, I logged into iCONN (proving to myself that it truly does work outside of Connecticut) and searched for terms like XML, Open Archives, and Flash 5. What I was able to find made me feel a little smarter, at least until the next day's program. So no matter what your field or level of knowledge, give iCONN a try next time one of your colleagues says "surely you're familiar with"

RE **A** **DISCOVER**
AMERICA
@ your library

CSL's New Web Resource

Julie Schwartz, Unit Head, Government Information Services

The State Library staff has created a new resource designed to save you and your staff research time, while maintaining your ability to have timely information available on issues currently under consideration in state government.

Current Issues is a changing series of research guides to electronically available information on topics of interest to the General Assembly, their staff, state agencies and the general public. Smart growth, teacher recruitment, electricity restructuring, and Connecticut statistics are just a few of the featured topics. Government Information Reference librarians compile the guides by carefully selecting reports from Connecticut state agencies and the Legislative Staff Offices, as well as information from the federal and other states' governments. Special effort is made to include items that compare and contrast multiple states' responses to an issue.

[Current Issues](#) is available on the web.

The Move to Van Block: A State Library Odyssey

Richard Kingston, Director of Administrative Services



Vacuuming fragile materials.

Bright and early on Monday, March 4th, the State Library began its work in earnest. The job at hand was to move more than 31,000 archival items, 33,000 books and periodicals, 3,500 volumes of original Connecticut newspapers, and 3,500 linear feet of state and federal Supreme Court records and briefs, and do it in less than four weeks. As the new Van Block facility has over 10 linear miles of shelving; the task of removing, cleaning, moving and then placing all of these collection materials in just the right place was monumental. With the very able assistance of the William B. Meyer Company all this was accomplished in an efficient and timely fashion and with a few days to spare.

In January we began with an empty 45,000 square foot building; by the end of February, much of this space was filled with rows and rows of empty compact and fixed library and archival shelving. By the beginning of April, most of this empty shelving had been converted into solid walls made of cardboard box and bookbindings. The offices, once void of any items, are now filled with office furniture, computers, phones, and everything else staff need to do their jobs. The Conference Room that once could carry an echo for seemingly endless distances, now has chairs and tables wherever you look. Even the computer lab is taking shape with furniture and computers due for delivery any day now. As collection and archival materials have been given a new home, so will a number of State Library staff. LeAnn Johnson, the Public Records Grants Administrator for this agency, will serve as facility manager for the Van Block facility.



Materials to be moved.



A new home for newspapers.

Many State Library staff took part in the planning and execution of this daunting task. Stephen Slovasky headed up a group of dedicated Information Services staff while Bruce Stark did the same for the Archives Unit of the State Library. Just to mention a few of the many Information Services staff involved: Nancy Peluso, Kevin Johnson, Jose Martinez, Cheryl Schutt, Dick Roberts, Denise Jernigan, and Jane Cullinane. Bruce Stark from the State Archives was very ably assisted by Mark Jones, Lizette Pelletier, George Miller, and Edward Gutierrez.

I also want to acknowledge the efforts of two of my staff who did a wonderful job in making this building ready for occupancy. Mario Colagiovanni of Automation Services and Jenifer Miller of the Purchasing Unit were invaluable in making this project the success it has become. In addition to State Library staff, the building's owners, the Connecticut Department of Public Works, and the many vendors that worked with us to ready this facility are also to be commended for their cooperation and flexibility. Finally, I want to thank the State Librarian, Kendall Wiggin; the Public Records Administrator, Eunice DiBella; the Director of Information Services, Lynne Newell; the Administrator, Museum of Connecticut History, Dean Nelson assisted by Dave Corrigan and Howard Miller for all of their efforts in making our Homeric dream a reality.

The New Digital Library Advisory Board

William Sullivan, Administrator, Connecticut Digital Library

The new Connecticut Digital Library Advisory Board (CDLAB) was formed and met for the first time on February 6. The members of the Board and their membership categories are:

- Academic Librarians: David Bretthauer, Homer Babbidge Library, UCONN/Storrs and Samuel Brown, Albertus Magnus College.
- Public Librarians: Alan Benkert, Groton Public Library and Cheryl Beturne, Enfield Public Library
- School Librarians: LuAnn Cogliser, Watertown High School and Jenifer O'Connor, Sarah Noble Intermediate School, New Milford
- Librarian, Other: Edward Murray, Libraries Online, Inc. (LION)
- Business Community or Library User: Alfred Hopkins, Jr., ACES
- Teacher (School or College): Jim Smith, Naugatuck Valley Community College
- Parent of K-12 Student: Alana Meloni, C. H. Booth Library, Newtown
- Student (School or College): Unfilled
- State Department of Education: Betty Goyette
- Commission for Educational Technology: Unfilled
- Permanent Members: Kendall Wiggin, CSL and Jonas Zdanys, Department of Higher Education

The Board elected Alfred Hopkins, Jr, and Jenifer O'Connor to be Chair and Vice Chair, respectively. Anita Barney (Executive Director, Western Connecticut Library Council) is serving as liaison between the CDLAB and CLSUs. The Board also established two subcommittees, one focused on Database Selection (coordinated by Sharon Brettschneider) and one focused on Public Awareness (coordinated by Bill Sullivan). The directory of CDLAB members, Bylaws, and subcommittee members is located [online](#). The next meeting of the Board will take place on Wednesday, May 1, 2002, at 1:00 p.m. at the Middletown Library Service Center.

A 124-page iCONN Training Manual was completed and delivered to the Regional Educational Service Centers for their use in training library media specialists from public K-12 schools. It was developed by Patricia Lord Clark (formerly, library director of Miss Porter's School) under contract with CSL and pursuant to an agreement between the State Library and the Connecticut Alliance of Regional Educational Service Centers. The entire

manual can be [downloaded from iCONN](#). For a snapshot view of the manual, the table of contents can be downloaded separately. Also available from the same location is a brochure developed by Betty Goyette (State Department of Education) entitled, *10 Big Ideas for using iCONN to increase the challenge level for students*.

The RESC Spring training schedule and registration information has been [posted online](#) ("Statewide Training Program - Public Schools"), and was also published in the CLSU and CEMA monthly newsletters and CEMA-L listserv. Each class is open on a statewide basis. There is a nominal registration fee and CEUs are granted. A summary of the iCONN Training Workshops being offered from March through May is given below:

Location: ACES (Hamden)

March 12 and 14, 2002 (4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.)

May 23, 2002 (9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.)

Location: CREC (Hartford)

March 6, 2002 (9:00 a.m. - Noon)

March 6, 2002 (12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.)

Location: EASTCONN (Hampton)

April 1, 2002 (9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.)

Location: CES (Trumbull)

May 29, 2002 (9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.)

Location: LEARN (Old Lyme)

March 9, 2002 (9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.)

May 9, 2002 (9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.)

According to the latest statistics, more than a million searches were conducted in iCONN from July 2001 to March 2002. There are two sections within the iCONN home page to publish testimonials and cost savings reports submitted by libraries. View the [testimonials site](#), and the [Cost Savings/Budget Impact site](#). These sites are very helpful in revealing how libraries and schools are using iCONN, and iCONN's local impact.

Articles published (or submitted for publication) about iCONN have been listed under "Articles" in About iCONN and in Support Materials. Among four articles listed are articles by library media specialists Muriel Gaynor and Janet Leonberger from West Hartford Public Schools and by library media specialist Jane Tonn from Middletown High School.

Not Bad For a Small State

Joanne Turschman, Library Specialist



For the 6th straight year in a row, Connecticut has ranked number one in the U.S. in library visits per capita. This and other interesting statistics from the newly released [*Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 1999*](#), illustrate how Connecticut ranks nationally in such categories as:

Audio (16th)
Books and Serials (11th)
Circulation (14th)
Collections Expenditures (6th)
ILL (11th)
Librarians (4th)
Librarians with an MLS (2nd!)
Operating Expenditures (5th)
Other Income (5th)
Salaries (4th)
Staffing (6th)
State Income (30th)
Subscriptions (10th)
Total Income (6th)
Videos (5th)

These per capita figures have been compiled annually since 1989 when the National Center for Education Statistics recognized a need for data relating to the condition and progress of public libraries in the United States.

Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Receives Award



LBPH Staff

On Thursday, March 28, 2002 the Connecticut State Library's Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) was honored at the Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) Awards Celebration with the 2002 Raymond E. Baldwin Award. Established in 1983 in memory and honor of former Governor, Legislator and Chief Justice of Connecticut, Raymond E. Baldwin, "this award recognizes an individual, agency, civic organization or volunteer group who has made outstanding contributions to the betterment and enrichment of the lives of persons who are blind in Connecticut."



Marcia Baran receiving award

The library was nominated on behalf of the members of ACAC, Agency Consumer Advisory Committee for BESB, because "the dedication of Carol and her staff make the Library for the Blind and Carol Taylor worthy recipients..." The nomination recognizes the library's outreach activities, volunteer program development, and its "meaningful partnership with its readers." It further states that "Outreach activities have created a dynamic library, in touch with the population it serves, reaching out for eligible patrons, and spreading a positive message of an essential service..." The staff has created an atmosphere where volunteers can play an active part in assuring excellence in library service.

Marcia Baran, a longtime volunteer of the library was the honored recipient of the BESB 2002 Emily Welles Foster award. Established in 1988 in memory and honor of Emily Welles Foster who was instrumental in the establishment of the Oak Hill School for the Blind in 1893 this award is for a legally blind resident of Connecticut in recognition of outstanding accomplishments in any sphere of activity. Marcia was chosen for her advocacy role in promoting special services for the disabled and her tireless volunteer spirit.

The entire library staff was in attendance for the celebration held in the Old Judiciary Room of the State Capitol. A luncheon followed. This truly was a well deserved recognition of the library staff and their dedication to the mission "That All May Read." Staff and other library guests ended their day by touring the Legislative Office Building and the Connecticut State Library facilities.

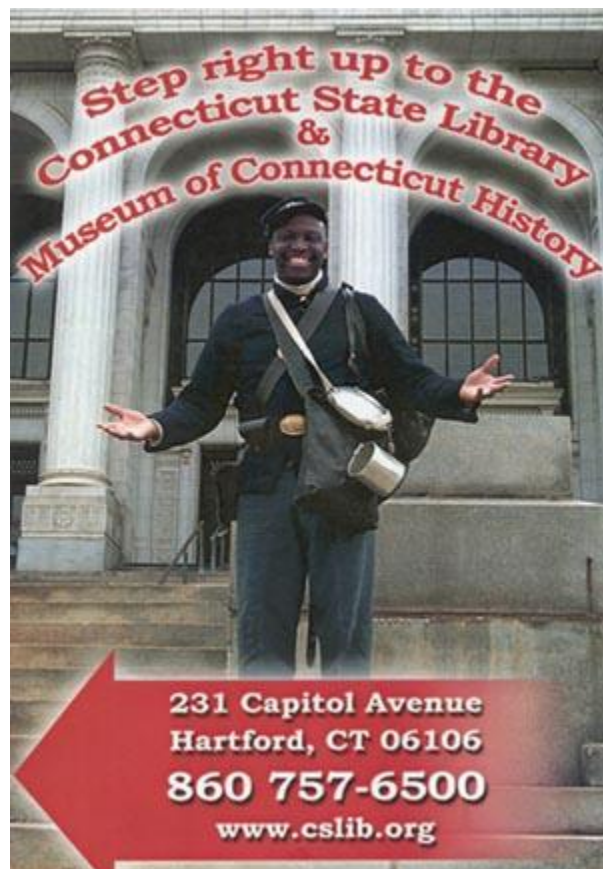
"The Life and Times of William Webb: An African-American Civil War Soldier from Connecticut."

Richard C. Roberts, Unit Head, History and Genealogy

As a tribute to the more than 1,700 African Americans from Connecticut who served during the Civil War, Kevin Johnson of the State Library's History and Genealogy Unit spent much of February, Black History Month, performing at libraries, schools, historical societies, church groups, and other non-profit organizations across the state. His performances included: February 3, First Congregational Church, Windsor; Feb. 5, Park Street Branch Library; February 7, Noah Webster School, Hartford; Feb. 8 and 20, Sub Base, Groton; February 13, Vernon Middle School; February 21, Blue Hills Branch Library; February 23, Liberty Christian Church; February 28, Farmington Public Library.

Private Webb was an actual soldier who was a native of Hartford. He was recruited in 1863 and served in the Twenty-Ninth (Colored) Regiment, Connecticut Volunteer Infantry in several battles in Virginia. Johnson's presentation of Webb is told from an emotional and exciting first-person perspective that vividly illustrates the struggle of the African-Americans in the Colored Infantry during the Civil War. He tells of his early life in Hartford, his recruitment and training, and the traumatic final battles of the Civil War. The presentation is based on extensive research in the collections of the Connecticut State Library and the Museum of Connecticut History.

For information on booking a performance for your organization, please contact Kevin Johnson, (860) 757-6589 or Carolyn Picciano, (860) 757-6580



Kevin Johnson as Private William Webb is featured on one of two posters in the bus shelter outside the State Library.

Remembering A Policewoman Pioneer: Evelyn J. Briggs

Mark Jones, State Archivist



Trooper Evelyn J. Briggs

The March 2, 2002 *Hartford Courant* obituary read that Evelyn Jennie Briggs, wife of deceased husband Ernest Briggs, had died at 90 in a medical center in Meriden. She was, it continued, one of the first two State Policewomen appointed in November 1942. Recently I had sampled State Police personnel files retaining those of early female and minority troopers. I checked a box list, and indeed, I had saved her file. Since April is Women's History Month, this newsletter's editor encouraged me to write about her.

Evelyn Briggs was born in 1912 in Middletown to Simion VanHyning and Laura Duffy. She graduated from Middletown High School in 1930, worked in the payroll department of the Portland Soap Company, and got married in 1932 to Ernest C. Briggs. After a year in Florida, the couple returned to Connecticut. They lived on Christian Hill in rural Higganaum Village. In 1936 she entered the field of social work. Her area included the towns of Portland, Killingworth, Haddam, Chester, Deep River, Saybrook, and Higganaum.

In her work, Briggs often met State Troopers. One told her about a Civil Service examination for two new policewomen positions, and Briggs made a decision to change careers. Local officials wrote letters of recommendation. One emphasized, "She is very capable and efficient, handles welfare cases wonderfully well, is business like and allows no one to put anything over on her." Another, a local Justice of the Peace, wrote that she "cuts to the heart of the problem" and wasn't "fooled by the blarney offered her."

In early October 1942 Briggs met with the respected Commissioner of the State Police, Edward J. Hickey for an interview. All potential appointees went through this ritual. A copy of the transcript of the interview is in the file. Hickey asked whether Briggs had appeared in court as a witness, and she answered that she had "gone to hearings, juvenile court hearings and with some of my cases." Hickey reminded her that a trooper's hours could fluctuate between "an hour one day and nineteen hours the day after," and Briggs countered, "social work in small towns means being called out at night if necessary." Had she been at the "death bed" of any person outside of her family? Yes, Briggs answered, "I have taken my clients to the bedside of relatives, sometimes in the middle of the night." After the interview, the commissioner dictated for the transcript that she had left a "very good impression." She was "a little soft spoken" but was "rather emphatic" and "apparently" had "the courage of her convictions."

Briggs and Kathryn B. Haggerty were appointed the first State Policewomen on November 1, 1942. She reported for duty in Hartford in the Special Services Department on the second. Immediately both were sent for training at the New York City Police Academy. Over the years she attended workshops on legal medicine, civilian defense, first aid, photography, and small arms. She represented the force at Conferences of Social Agencies held in Bridgeport. She was a crack shot and won awards as a member of the State Policewomen's marksmanship team. While on duty, she carried a blackjack and kept her pistol in a leather briefcase.

Briggs knew she was a pioneer. No, male troopers did not oppose her. The department had decided that, when dealing with women accused of crimes, female troopers were indispensable. By driving an unmarked vehicle and dressing in civilian clothes, Briggs assured women of privacy when arrested or driven to State Police headquarters for questioning. To her fell the duty of informing an accused woman's family of an arrest, another duty believed to be more tactfully carried out by a woman.

Her cases included domestic disturbances, murder, rape, robbery, and sexual offenses. During one Christmas holiday, she was called out on a murder investigation. She believed that policewomen often saw different aspects of a case or interpreted evidence in a different manner than men. Working together, she concluded, male and female troopers were a formidable crime solving team.

Her colleagues recognized her leadership qualities. The number of State Policewomen increased and they formed the Connecticut Policewomen's Association. In 1946 members elected Evelyn Briggs as president.

Museum's Uniforms Travel to Civil War Arkansas

Dean Nelson, Administrator, Museum of Connecticut History



*Major General Samuel
Ryan Curtis - CT State
Archives, Brady Collection*



*The Curtis Uniform Coats -
MCH acc. #s 1927.6.1, .2*

The uniform coats of Union Major General Samuel Ryan Curtis, in the Museum of Connecticut History's collection since 1927, arrived by overnight air freight to northwest Arkansas just in time to help launch Pea Ridge National Military Park's fund campaign to purchase them from the Museum in ceremonies marking the 140th anniversary of General Curtis's resounding defeat of Confederate forces there in March of 1862.

Museum staff researched General Curtis's coats as part of a several year collection-wide assessment of our holdings, with an eye towards strategic deaccession of items that did not have Connecticut stories to tell. The Museum of Connecticut History collects and exhibits items which illustrate aspects of the state's rich and textured governmental, industrial and military heritage. To our greatest disappointment, as the coats are quite striking and in excellent shape, General Curtis had no Connecticut connections to work into exhibitry.

Born in New York in 1817, Curtis was appointed from Ohio to the U.S. Military Academy, and graduated with the Class of 1831. He resigned his commission in the Regular Army after only a year. In a career mixing law, civil engineering and railroad entrepreneurship, he rose to the rank of colonel in the Ohio militia and raised state volunteers for the Mexican War (1846-48). Moving to Iowa in 1855, he was elected to the United States Congress, but relinquished his seat to take the colonelcy of the Second Iowa Volunteer Infantry upon the outbreak of the Civil War. In May of 1861, he was promoted to brigadier general and in charge of the large Federal camp of instruction at St. Louis, Missouri. He was picked to lead the Union Army of the Southwest in the winter campaign of 1861-62 to secure and occupy large parts of Missouri, Kansas, and Arkansas. Towards that end, his force of some 10,000 soldiers, largely from Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Ohio (half of them German immigrants) defeated Confederate Major General Earl Van Dorn's larger army of 16,000 men from Missouri, Texas and Arkansas (including some 800 Cherokees) in the Battle of Pea Ridge on March 7-8, 1862.

This victory gained him his major general's stars and for the duration of the war he headed the Department of the Missouri, Kansas and the Northwest. He died in 1866.

Mrs. E. D. Bird, General Curtis's granddaughter and Greenwich, CT, resident, gave his coats and one belonging to his son Major Henry Z. Curtis, to Fitch's Home for Soldiers in nearby Noroton Heights, Darien. The Home for Soldiers in turn presented them to the Connecticut State Library in 1927.

The Museum featured the Curtis coats in a 1996 exhibit titled "Connecticut Cleans its Attic: Right Sizing the Collection in the 90s" which showcased hundreds of fascinating, exotic and often valuable items united under the shared circumstance of being out-of-scope of the Museum's mission and collection policies and therefore candidates for deaccession. The exhibit labels described the historical attributes of the "out-of-scopes" and outlined Museum plans to remove them from the collections through donation, sale or trade with another museum or sale at public auction. Pea Ridge National Military Park was the obvious future for the Curtis coats, and the label stated our intent to offer them "first refusal" to acquire them. As it turned out, Pea Ridge called us first! A touring, label-reading friend of the Park, from down that way, had visited Hartford, had viewed "Connecticut Cleans its Attic", had learned about the Curtis coats and had told the Park about the discovery. Pea Ridge staff phoned us to verify the story and were elated about the prospects of exhibiting them in their visitor center and raising funds to buy them.

The Curtis coats also underwent scrutiny by the Museum Advisory Committee, composed of Connecticut museum and history professionals appointed by the governor. Certified by this committee as unrelated to the Museum's mission, the coats were next reviewed by the Connecticut State Library Board to determine whether or not they supported the Museum's purpose. The Board's approval for deaccession also governed the coat's disposition to a "destination museum or historic site", in this case Pea Ridge National Military Park, and established a market value of \$32,500 in consultation with an appraiser. The Connecticut Attorney General's Office prepared the agreement for the loan which everyone expects to culminate with the sale or trade of the Curtis coats to the National Park Service. The proceeds will augment the Museum Collection Fund, dedicated to the purchase of Connecticut historical materials for the Museum's permanent collections.

The Museum is similarly working to find an appropriate home for the Major Henry Z. Curtis uniform coat. Major Curtis, Assistant Adjutant General for Iowa Volunteers, was among the Federal soldiers killed by Confederate Lt. Colonel William C. Quantrill's troops in a raid near Baxter Springs, Kansas, on October 6, 1863.

Connecticut Public Libraries - New, Expanded, or Renovated

Stafford Public Library

Mary Louise Jensen, Building Consultant



Main Library

On October 28, 2001, the new Stafford Library was dedicated. Incorporated as a town in 1719, Stafford's principal industries are manufacture of woolens and printed circuits, print goods, paper felting and filters. Stafford is a rural community and has over 12,000 residents and covers 60 square miles, making it the third largest town in land area in Connecticut.

The new 17,500 square foot one-story library designed by the Schoenhardt Architects is located in a wooded setting between the high school and middle school. Upon entering the library, one can see all of the public services. This layout is easy to supervise with a small staff.

In the middle of the library is a large circulation desk and staff work area beneath a clerestory that emphasize a the desk and provides natural lighting. Next to the circulation desk are low reference stacks that connect to a seating area with natural lighting from large windows and indirect lighting from the vaulted ceiling. On the left side of the entrance is the children's area with cube display shelving, seating, computers, a children's program and craft room, and a bathroom with children's-sized fixtures. On the right side of the entrance is the adult area with bookstacks, seating, and computers.

Some other keys features of the library are

- A local history and genealogy room near the entrance
- A young adult area
- Two quiet study rooms
- Two program rooms that business and community groups will be able to use even when the library is closed
- An area for a future coffee bar
- Parking for 70 cars



Main Library



Main Library

The funding for this project came from town bonding and a \$500,000 State Public Library Construction Grant. The total project cost was \$3.4 million.

Come see this library at the Libratects meeting, a series of workshops sponsored by the Connecticut State Library, on September 5, 2002 at 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. People involved in the design and construction of the library will be available to answer questions. For questions about the Libratects meetings contact Mary Louise Jensen, 1-800-253-7412

For more information about the new library, check out [Stafford Library's webpage](#).