



THE CONNECTOR

The Connecticut State Library Newsletter
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The CONNector has an electronic format designed to make it easier to look at our articles. Please use your backspace button to return the original document after you have hit the more button for any article. We hope you enjoy it and will share any suggestions you have for future issues with me at bdelaney@cslib.org. Visit our web site at <http://www.cslib.org>.

In Libraries They Trust

The Institute of Library and Information Services (IMLS) has released a new study, InterConnections: A National Study of Users and Potential Users of Online Information <http://interconnectionsreport.org/>. This IMLS sponsored national study, conducted by a University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill research team led by José-Marie Griffiths and Donald W. King, recognized leaders in information research, provides evidence that public libraries and museums are thriving in the Internet Age as trusted providers of information to people of all ages.

Three major findings provide evidence that libraries and museums are still relevant (isn't everything on the Internet?) and that we need to greatly expand our online presence.

Libraries and museums are the most trusted sources of online information among adults of all ages, education levels, races, and ethnicities. Libraries and museums rank higher in trustworthiness than all other information sources including government,

commercial, and private Web sites. The study shows that the public trust of museums and libraries migrates to the online environment.

The explosive growth of information available in the “Information Age” actually whets Americans’ appetite for more information. People search for information in many places and since the use of one source leads to others, museums, public libraries, and the Internet complement each other in this information-rich environment.

The Internet is not replacing in-person visits to libraries and museums and may actually increase on-site use of libraries and museums. There is a positive relationship between Internet use and in-person visits to museums and public libraries.

While I think many in the museum and library community know this anecdotally, the study provides a framework for documenting and better understanding patron behavior at a time when information options have grown exponentially. The obvious challenge is for libraries and museums, already strapped for funds, to build, staff, and maintain both a physical and virtual library space. I believe we have a real opportunity to collaboratively build the latter. Already we have some of the pieces in place – iCONN, InfoAnytime, and the Connecticut Education Network. Collectively we can, and should, provide the people of Connecticut with a full service online resource combining our libraries and museums. But first take the time to read this important report and share its findings with your staff, your boards, your elected officials, and most importantly, your community.

Then and Now: The History and Genealogy Reading Room

With the 100th anniversary of the Connecticut State Library building coming in 2010, it seems appropriate to look at how use of some of its facilities and services have changed over intervening years. This article is about what is now the History and Genealogy (H & G) Reading Room on the lower level of 231 Capitol

Avenue in Hartford.

In 1909, State Librarian George S. Godard outlined a project for the deposit of early probate files in the State Library, describing the building then under construction as a "safe depository for files and papers not in current use." In 1911, the transfer of records from the individual probate districts began, and by 1914, a plan for processing, arranging, and indexing the files had been approved by the Connecticut Probate Assembly.

The Probate Department's new quarters included state-of-the-art typewriters, cabinets with drawers to house the files, a mezzanine for additional storage space, and tables at which staff and researchers could work. But a shortage of electrical outlets meant that cords for desk lamps were plugged into ornate chandeliers!



The original probate files, with access facilitated by the card index created by State Library staff (now known as the "Probate Estate Papers Index"), were heavily used by genealogists, historians, and attorneys during much of the twentieth century. In the early to mid twentieth century, the State Library initiated additional indexing projects, including the better-known Barbour Collection of Connecticut Vital Records, the Hale Collection of Connecticut Cemetery records, and the Church Records Index.



After several reorganizations, the State Library's History and Genealogy Unit and State Archives serve as successors

to what were separate Probate, Vital Records, and Church Records departments back in the era of George Godard, and H&G now occupies what was originally the Probate Department. Computers have replaced the typewriters, the mezzanine and chandeliers are gone, but the reading room still needs additional electrical outlets to accommodate twenty first century technology, and H&G continues to receive many questions relating to Connecticut's early probate records – now accessed primarily on microfilm. The thousands who visit H&G every year also discover an extensive collection of materials pertaining to Connecticut genealogy and local history; comprehensive and retrospective collections of Connecticut atlases and maps, city directories, and newspapers; and access to online resources that include Ancestry Library Edition, New England Ancestors, and Early American Newspapers. While most visitors come from Connecticut, last year 145 came from Massachusetts, 75 from New York, 36 from California, and 41 from Florida. In addition to visitors from other states, there were nine from Canada, eight from the United Kingdom, and two from Japan.

H&G also receives hundreds of telephone calls, letters, e-mail messages, and faxes each year. Some "interesting" examples include: "Please send \$25.00 worth of: Joseph Strong." "I am looking for military records for a grandparent who participated in the civil war. Here are the facts about my civil war ancestor: Elijah SHELDON married to Sarah KING. Served under Benedict Arnold in 1775 at Quebec. Born 1719,

died 1885.” “Since we know so much of Hawaii, we decided to see if we could get some information on your state. Please send us tons of information on your state or information that might be appropriate {sic.) or interesting and good for our reading!” “I want to know how the houses looked in the New England colonies in 1910?”

“Please send me the ‘William Smith Family’ and ‘Charles Henry Smith Family’ and ‘Nicholas Smith Family’ and ‘Samuel Smith Family’ and ‘John Hunter Smith Family’ and ‘Philamon and Elizabeth Williams Family’ and ‘Elder John King’....” Please send me the 3rd great grandparents of Capt. William Smith’s wife. Please write! Please Hurry!” Fortunately, most inquiries are better organized and thought out than the examples above!

Although, as in the days of George Godard, the H&G staff does not undertake extensive genealogical or historical research, last year the staff answered 6,422 ready reference questions and provided thousands of helpful suggestions to get patrons started with and organize their research, devise and outline search strategies, and identify resources for further research.

For more information on the History and Genealogy Unit, its resources, and its services, visit www.cslib.org/handg. For a subject approach, see the State Library’s Research Resources page, www.cslib.org/faq.htm.

Richard C. Roberts, Unit Head, History and Genealogy

Worth a Trip

Connecticut State Library has purchased several databases for your free use on-site. Stop by some Saturday when you can park for FREE* because the lot behind the library is open to the public! Yes, we offer FREE databases and FREE parking*!

Here's a sampling of what we have for you once you arrive:

1) An historical newspaper database covering 400 cities and towns from the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. which dates as far back as the 1700's! It's called Access NewspaperArchive and contains tens of millions of searchable newspaper pages. Not only could you see the newspaper headlines for the day you born, but you could see your birthday headlines in such obscure places as Lethbridge, Alberta; Lima, Ohio; Titusville, PA; Brownsville, TX; or Modesto, CA. Who knows? You might stumble across Uncle Fred who mysteriously disappeared in the early '20's.

This source also has the Stars and Stripes Newspapers published in the 1940's from all over the world. Wherever the Armed Forces were -- Oran, Paris, Bavaria, Tokyo, or Tunis, the Stars and Stripes was published!

2) Or you may wish to try [American Periodical Series Online, 1740-1900](#). View images from some of the very first American magazines to be published. In 1741 Andrew Bradford's American Magazine and Benjamin Franklin's General Magazine were both launched. [The full title of Franklin's magazine is The General Magazine, and Historical Chronicle, for all the British Plantations in America, 1741.] There are over 1,100 periodicals spanning nearly 200 years -- from colonial times through the 19th century. America's first scientific journal, Medical Repository, is included as well as popular magazines such as Vanity Fair and Ladies' Home Journal. The covers and illustrations from these magazines are unique. You may not wish to read B. Franklin's History of Female Dress, but may be interested in a contemporary newspaper account of the Siege of Louisbourg in 1744-45.

3) Perhaps you've wanted to donate to a charity but have worried that most of the money would not get to the intended recipients. We now offer GuideStar Premium, a database which has comprehensive information on more than 1.7 million nonprofit organizations. It has searchable data from IRS Forms 990 and the IRS Business Master File, comprehensive

facts on employee compensation, and grant activity. User-friendly tools help you narrow your results by city, state, IRS subsection code, NTEE code, MSA, or income. Their list includes American Cancer Society, American Heifer Project, and Doctors Without Borders. In addition to charity verification, GuideStar Premium can also be used for compensation benchmarking, research, qualification, market analysis, outreach, development, and oversight. Please see a librarian for the log-in.

Other subscription databases are listed at our website. Go to <http://www.cslib.org/subscrindex.htm>

Come early! Saturday hours are 9 a.m. - 2p.m.

For directions go to <http://www.cslib.org/directions.htm>

*Remember: The parking lot is only open to the public on Saturdays!

Hilary T. Frye, Legal Reference Specialist

"Talking Books" Going Digital



Since the 1970's, cassettes have been the medium used to provide "talking" books and magazines to persons who are print handicapped. A network of libraries and patrons of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) across the United States are now looking forward to a new era as digital technology becomes a reality. Rigorous test studies over the years have shown that Flash memory

will provide the best quality and longevity of use. These results are directing the momentum toward the new medium and digital player.

Over the past two years, libraries and other special programs have participated in surveys and test studies to provide input into the development of the final equipment and flash cartridge design. The prototypes of the new digital talking book machine (DTBM) went through a series of eight usability test cycles to insure the final product's accessibility and acceptability to talking book patrons of the NLS program. The Connecticut State Library's Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) was privileged to participate in three test studies during this digital transition.

In March 2006, nineteen library patrons, representing a variety of age categories, visual disabilities, and technical skills, were brought to the library over a week-long period to perform and evaluate assigned situations and operational tasks. The library was also asked to provide 25 participants as the sole test group in the fifth usability test study of the functional DTBM prototype in September 2006.

To our great surprise, in the fall of 2007, Connecticut LBPH was again asked to participate in field testing for the new DTBM and flash cartridge. According to NLS Project Leader Jean Moss, the purpose of the study was "to identify defects in the player hardware and software through rigorous patron testing prior to full manufacture". This time 50 participants were needed, and again LBPH patrons would be the sole test group for blind and visually impaired library users. Selecting patrons meeting the specific criteria for testing was the most difficult thing. The testing began in December 2007 and was completed in January 2008 with the equipment and digital books traveling through the mail to the selected patrons during that time. LBPH staff checked returned cartridges and mailing containers for condition and proper placement of cartridges and address labels.

All participants were visited and contacted by phone

for input about the machine. The quality and ease of use of book cartridges and mailing containers were also questioned. Patrons in the study reluctantly returned the materials and eagerly anticipate the day when the new format will be available to them on a more permanent basis. All participants of the three studies and the LBPH staff concluded that it was going to be “worth the wait” and felt very fortunate to have had a direct influence on the design of the new DTBM.

For more information about this new digital technology development, visit www.loc.gov/nls and checkout What’s new at NLS. There you will find the strategic plan and a description and pictures of the new DTBM and cartridge. Under Publications you can read the Flash newsletters highlighting the transition.

Carol Taylor, Director, Connecticut Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

Connecting to Collections Grant

The Connecticut State Library has been awarded a \$40,000 Connecting to Collections: Statewide Planning Grant by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The purpose of this grant is to create a conservation plan for collections held in libraries, museums, and archives throughout Connecticut. The Statewide Planning Grants are an important component of the IMLS initiative, Connecting to Collections: A Call to Action, which is a multi-year, multi-faceted national plan to raise public awareness and inspire action on collections care.

Under the new program, 19 states will receive \$720,497, matched with \$527,930 of non-federal funds, to implement recommendations of the Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America’s Collections, which found that the nation’s collections are at great risk. The IMLS-supported report recommended that collecting institutions provide safe conditions for their collections, create an emergency plan for collections, designate a person for collections care, and raise public awareness and support for

collections care.

“These 19 projects represent movement toward collaborative thinking among collection-holding institutions that have a strong commitment to collections stewardship,” said Anne-Imelda Radice, IMLS Director. “IMLS funding will assist these relationships in blossoming into powerful alliances that will serve collections and the people who use them for years to come.”

In the first year of this two-year initiative, IMLS received 26 applications from 23 states and territories requesting more than \$1 million. Over the next two years, IMLS hopes to make one grant to each eligible state or territory. The Connecticut State Library, in partnership with the Commission on Culture and Tourism, the Connecticut Humanities Council, the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History and Archaeology Center, the Connecticut League of History Organizations, and representatives from various libraries, historical societies, museums, and archives will develop a statewide planning process for developing emergency plans, harnessing digital resources, training staff, cataloguing collections, and building public and private support. This process will produce a better understanding of the conservation needs of the 900 collecting institutions in the state and will establish an ongoing collaborative (“Conservation ConneCTion”) to act on the findings and recommendations of the planning team.



The Connecticut State Library by the Numbers

By law, a State Library is the official agency charged with the development of public library services. It also administers the Library Services and Technology Act. Beyond these two roles, state libraries vary greatly.

Connecticut State Library Divisions

Since 1994, the Connecticut State Library has sent



data relating to direct library services, library development services, electronic information, staffing, and its collections to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

It is 1 of 5 State libraries in the nation that offer three or more allied services including:

The Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

The Museum for Connecticut History

State Archives

Public Records

The Collections at 231
Capitol Avenue, Hartford

This beautiful beaux arts
building is open to the
public 46 hours per week.

There are 39 public
terminals with access to 63 subscription databases
that include specialized information in law and
legislation, history and genealogy, and the federal
government. Its collections have 1,209,699 books and
serials, 509 audios and 1,189 videos. It has 5,581
current serial subscriptions. The State Library is also a
regional federal depository, housing 1,739,788
government documents. It circulated 1,511 items, and
interlibrary loaned 1,247 items. The reference
departments answered 38,527 questions and greeted
57,920 visitors.

63 subscription databases

Connecticut State Library Services in 2007

The 118 staff members include archivists, curators,
specialists in law, genealogy, and government
documents; as well as a division of professional
librarians devoted to statewide library services. They
circulated 1,511 items and interlibrary loaned 1,247
items. The reference departments answered 38,527
questions and assisted 57,920 visitors.

The Division of Library Development (DLD)

DLD hosted 178 continuing education programs for 2,543 members of the library community. It awarded 348 direct and competitive grants. It operates 2 service centers that loan parts of their collections to public libraries across the state. In addition, DLD administers iCONN, the state's digital library, which had over 8,000,000 views last year.



The division cooperates with 15 other libraries in the U.S. to create a unique website devoted to locally relevant content and services for state libraries while sharing information globally. For more information about your State Library visit www.ct.webjunction.org or www.cslib.org

Joanne Turschman, Connecticut State Library Data Coordinator

Use of Public Library Data Wins National Recognition

An award for “Exemplary use of Public Library Data“ was presented to Kendall Wiggin, State Librarian during the Mid-Winter American Library Association (ALA) conference. The recipients of the award were Kendall Wiggin and Joanne Turschman, Connecticut State Library Data Co-ordinator. The Helen M. Eckard Award is decided annually by representatives from the National Center for Education Statistics, ALA, the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, and other State Data Coordinators. The award was based on the State Library’s presentation of the data collected from 195 Public Libraries in the state, through the Annual Survey. The statistics describe the buildings, collections, services, personnel, incomes, and expenditures of each library in Connecticut. The data was determined to be effective in promoting libraries, using clear concepts, and being released in a timely manner. The Division of Library Development manages these and other useful statistics on its WebJunctionCT site <http://ct.webjunction.org/do/Navigation?category=6005>

Connecticut State Library Awards State Aid to Public Libraries

Through funds appropriated by the State Legislature, the Connecticut State Library paid \$347,109 in direct state aid to 160 principal public libraries for the fiscal year 2007/2008. Directors were mailed their award letters with the amount calculated in February, and the State Comptroller began issuing the checks a short time later. The average award was \$2,000. The amounts are calculated through a statutory formula based on a flat amount, added to that library need, and library expenditures. To be eligible to receive the grant, a principal public library must submit and certify their Annual Survey and Application for State Aid on time, using the web-based Bibliostat™ Collect, and their local funding must be equal to or greater than that of the three previous years. They also must adhere to the Attorney general's opinion of 1992 which states they will not charge fees for services and materials which are part of their collection. The complete list of libraries and their award is on the Division of Library Development's web site

<http://ct.webjunction.org/do/DisplayContent?id=19338>

Joanne Turschman, Connecticut State Library
Data Coordinator

Documenting Public Art for Connecticut Citizens



During the past legislative session, an appropriation to the State Library was added to the state budget for an inventory of Works Progress Administration (WPA) art created under the Federal Art Project (FAP), 1935-1941. Representative David McCluskey (20th District) was instrumental in getting this added. He had read an article in *The Hog River Journal* by Amy Trout, who was then a curator at the New Haven Museum and Historical Society, regarding the FAP in New Haven. In a footnote, Trout stated that “the State Library has probably the most complete listing of artists in its Federal Art Project collection, part of Record Group 33. However, a definitive catalogue of Connecticut FAP artists and their network has yet to be compiled.” McCluskey agreed and secured the appropriation for the State Library.

The inventory project is underway in the Office of the Public Records Administrator and State Archives, and the State Archivist Mark Jones is compiling biographical files for all of the 146 artists documented in the FAP records, specifically the artist production cards. These cards give the name of the artist and

residence at the time of the FAP, titles of art produced, medium, size, date started, and date received by the State WPA, whether a photograph was taken of it, whether it was exhibited and the “allocation” of each piece of art, that is, the state or local institution or branch of government in which the art was hung. Some of the cards indicate that the State FAP rejected the work and sent it back to the artist. And of these, some artists destroyed the rejected art.

In compiling the biographical files, Jones is drawing from biographical directories of artists, AskArt, an online subscription database, the New York Times and the Hartford Courant databases, and books and articles about artist colonies in Connecticut. He stresses that these are beginning files and hopes that researchers will use them to reconstruct an artist’s life. Jones could not find any information about a minority of the artists, and perhaps some enthusiastic art historian will unearth this information.

In addition to the biographical files, the project will enter data on the production cards into an ACCESS database so that researchers can sort the information by various fields. Eventually the State Library will post the database online. It may be possible within the parameters of the appropriation to also enter data regarding the allocation of FAP art throughout Connecticut. Such a database may be useful in tracking down several pieces of art.

In addition to the records at the State Library, the New Haven Museum and Historical Society has paper records of projects in the southwestern part of the states and 1,000 negatives of black and white photographs of artists’ production. Part of the appropriation will be used to identify the images of art using the artist production cards and entering data into an ACCESS database that will be interactive with the artist production database.

Finally the project will make a preliminary search for art documented by the cards by selecting a sample institution or town and using the “allocation” cards. In addition, Jones is being contacted by relatives of WPA

artists, and this shall add to our information on the respective artists.

For further information about this project or to provide information, contact State Archivist Mark Jones at (860) 757-6511 or mjones@cslib.org.

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