

# ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LIBRARIES

## NEW YORK METROPOLITAN AREA CHAPTER

SPRING 1991

VOL. 6, NO. 2

### Spring Conference - April 29, 1991



The Spring Conference of the AJL/NYMA Chapter will take place at the Mendel Gottesman Library of Yeshiva University, 500 West 185th Street, on Monday, April 29th, 1991, from 1:00 - 4:00 pm.

Dr. Benjamin Gampel, of the Jewish Theological Seminary will speak on the **Transformation of the Sephardic Jewry**. A tour of the exhibit **Sephardic Journey, 1492-1992** will follow the lecture. A reference list of Sephardic Jewry Resources, prepared by Yael Penkower, Reference Librarian at JTS, will be distributed to all participants.

Registration for the conference is \$6.00 for AJL members and \$8.00 for non-members. Lunch is available preceding the conference at the Yeshiva University cafeteria, across the street from the Library. Coffee will be served. Invitations to the conference have been sent out. For further information contact Marion Stein, conference coordinator, at 212-678-8836.

### National AJL Convention in Miami Beach, Florida June 23 - 26, 1991

The 1991 annual Association of Jewish Libraries convention will take place at the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach, Florida, from June 23rd to June 26th. The varied program will include items of interest for school, synagogue, community center, college, university and research libraries. There will be a special focus on Jewish life and Jewish libraries in the southern United States. Reservation forms appeared in the March/April *AJL Newsletter*. Registration is \$205 for those who reserve before May 1st, \$230 after. Be sure to get your reservation in quickly so not to miss this reduced rate.

Many NYMA members will be participating in the sessions given at the Convention. Be sure you support your colleagues and your Association and we hope to see you in Miami Beach this June.

# NYMA Activities: Workshops and Fall Conference Report

## **Fall Conference - October 25, 1990**

The Fall Conference of the AJL/NYMA Chapter was held at the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America on Thursday, October 25th, 1990. The program, *Today's Ephemera Tomorrow's Historical Documents*, was made up of three parts: a film entitled *Let the Record Show: Practical Uses for Historical Documents*, which was followed by a panel discussion of archivists. The participants gave a lively account of the archive/library connection and specifically about their collections. Shulamith Berger (Yeshiva University), Denise Gluck (Joint Distribution Committee) and Steven Siegel (92nd Street Y) each explained what their collections included and who and how they are used. The program concluded with a film about the Joint Distribution Committee using their archival materials.

## **Fall Cataloging Workshop, November 17, 1990**

NYMA's Fall 1990 Cataloging Workshop *Hebrew/English Cataloging in an Online Environment*, was an exploration of the future as it relates to cataloging. Yet, it was also a look back to the world of the founders of modern Judaica librarianship in that the Workshop celebrated the publication of a printed catalog of the YIVO Library's card catalog and authority file.

Hosted by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, the Workshop took place on November 19th and drew fifty-five catalogers, mostly from the New York Metropolitan area, with a national and international flavor added by participants from Ohio and Montreal, Canada. The workshop was chaired by Marcia Goldberg (Gratz College) and Rita Lifton (JTS).

The first segment of the program dealt with ALEPH, a multi-lingual integrated library system developed at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Naomi Steinberger (JTS) and Aviva Astrinsky (Annenberg Research Institute) described their respective institution's experiences in implementing ALEPH.

The second part of the workshop opened with a presentation of Hebraic authority control by Dr. Bella Hass Weinberg (St. John's University). This was followed by a reception in honor of the publication of *The Yiddish Catalog and Authority File of the YIVO Library*. The workshop concluded with remarks by Zachary Baker (YIVO) in which he described YIVO's core collection. He and Dr. Weinberg co-edited the YIVO catalog.

Submitted by Rita Lifton.

## **NYMA Reference Workshop**

The annual NYMA Reference Workshop took place on February 25th, 1991, at Yeshiva University. The topic was: *Reference Sources on the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. The workshop was presented by members of the Yeshiva University Libraries staff. Leah

Adler was the coordinator. Zalman Alpert discussed pertinent reference works. His presentation was based in part on a pathfinder which had previously been prepared by Zvi Erenyi, for students of Yeshiva University. John Moryl and David Crygnola discussed online research possibilities. The afternoon ended with a video presentation entitled **Beyond the Mirage**.

Submitted by Leah Adler.

### **NYMA Day School Workshop**

The Day School Workshop, held on Wednesday, March 13th, 1991 at the Heschel School, was informative, interesting and fun. We had a wonderful turnout of librarians in addition to other school and synagogue related personnel.

The first speaker was Marie Wilson, resource coordinator at the Calhoun School. She spoke about appropriate use of existing space in a small library; managing your library; and communicating with your school community. During her presentation we broke up into small groups where we discussed these topics and then came up with useful ideas.

Our second presenter was our host librarian Beth Anshen Braunstein who discussed the research and implementation of an online catalog program for a small library. Beth's presentation was most informative, well-organized and useful since she included anecdotes on trials, tribulations and experiences in the process of computerization.

This workshop was particularly productive and stimulating. We would appreciate any ideas or topics from the membership that would be of interest for future workshops. You can contact Beth Braunstein (Heschel School) or Eileen Shmidman (Ramaz), the co-chairs of this event.

Submitted by Eileen Shmidman.

## **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

When Edith Lubetski gathered a group of us together some eight years ago with the idea of forming a local chapter of AJL-NYMA I could not have envisioned how quickly her seed of an idea would flower into the reality of the vibrant NYMA chapter. As I am just completing a three year term as president I am proud to say that it has been filled with stimulating programs for both special and general interest participants. I applaud the talents of my colleagues who have run the excellent cataloging, reference, day school librarian and synagogue librarian workshops, all of which have drawn librarians from within and without the New York metropolitan region., The twice yearly conferences have taken advantage of the special resources in our areas such as the fantastic exhibition held at the New York Public library in 1988 and the "Going Home" at YIVO in 1989. Our speakers focused on aspects of special interest to the librarians. The forthcoming conference at Yeshiva University **Sephardic Journey, 1492-1992**, promises to be the same special combination of lecture and guided tour.

The Executive Board was wonderful, dedicated people. My thanks to everyone for making these past three years most gratifying. NYMA enjoys special advantages because it is located in the heart of such phenomenal Judaica centers and by extension is home to so many librarians of Judaica. It is a privilege to be involved. I hope, as time goes on, more people volunteer their services. This year Leah Adler and Beth Braunstein joined the Board and contributed greatly.

No doubt we are in for note-worthy activities under the leadership of our incoming president, Music Librarian at JTS, Marion Stein. I look forward to continued successes for NYMA.

Esther Nussbaum, Outgoing President

## Conferences and Workshops of Interest in our Community

### **Elementary School Librarians Staff Development Day**

The annual Elementary School Librarians Staff Development Day was held on Thursday, April 11, 1991. Eileen Shmidman of Ramaz Lower School attended and reports:

The program topic was strategies for integrating library and information skills in the curriculum. However, the presenter could not come and instead we had three wonderful presentations by three children's authors.

The first was Jeanne Betancourt who writes about "hot" contemporary issues for ages 10 and up. She spoke about the writers process: research background materials to set the scene of a book.

Robert Kimmel-Smith was the second author. He touched on familiar poignant memory in all of us by describing where he grew up (Brooklyn) where he went to school, reading in bed as a sickly child, college life (Brooklyn College), etc. He wrote from the time he was little, but began professionally after a career in advertising. Robert Kimmel-Smith writes about boys, realistic, funny and sad stories for pre-adolescent ages.

Patricia Hermes was the third author. Her message was that the author should tell you in the most honest way what he or she really believes in. Her books deal with different kinds of separation (sometimes even death). Patricia Hermes stressed the importance of reading to all-age children and having children write about what they know. She suggested encouraging this by having children keep private journals.

### **Cataloging Congress at St. John's University**

On Monday, February 18th, St. John's University sponsored a librarians' congress which had as its theme "Cataloging Heresy: Challenging the Standard Bibliographic Product". Dr. Bella Hass Weinberg, Congress chair, stated the central issues of the Congress as: is the idea of standard cataloging valid? Can centrally supplied

data fulfill our needs? The first three speakers - Dr. Weinberg, Norman Anderson (Gordon-Cornwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA) and Sanford Berman (Hennepin County Library, Minnetonka, MN) answered a resounding no to this question. They argued that customization for cataloging records is often necessary in order to serve the needs of individual libraries and their users.

An interesting contrast to this point of view was apparent in comments and questions from the floor, perhaps reflecting the fact that the questioners have to deal with the realities of the economic climate and therefore, see customization of already created cataloging records as a luxury.

Glen Paton and Ed Glazier spoke on behalf of OCLC and RLIN, respectively. The concept of a single master record in a bibliographic utility was discussed. OCLC's approach was contrasted with that of RLIN, which is to present clusters of customized records for a given item.

"Standard Cataloging Data: the View from the Library of Congress" was the topic addressed by John D. Byrum. In an informative presentation, Mr. Byrum described the measures taken by the Library of Congress in order to fulfill its mandate as a national library. He pointed out that standardization has allowed LC to serve the needs of libraries throughout the United States in numerous ways, such as creating bibliographic records and distributing them via CIP, by cards or online in the bibliographic utilities.

Submitted by Rita Lifton.

### **From the Editor**

The AJL-NYMA Board wishes to thank Esther Nussbaum, NYMA President, for her three years of selfless devotion in her role. It has been a pleasure working with Esther.

Start planning for the 1991-92 AJL-NYMA season. We have booked October 20th, 1991 for the fall meeting for Synagogue Libraries. Plans are under way for Elsa Voss to host this meeting at Temple Shaaray Tefila, from 1:30 to 3:30 pm. This meeting is open to all librarians beginning to build a collection, have plans for changes in the library, and for those with established programs. This will be the first meeting for next season and will include discussions for what we wish to do at future meetings during the year. Invitations will be sent out in September with precise details.

The AJL-NYMA Mailing List has been expanded. It contains over 300 names and is available for purchase. A fee of \$25 is charged for one time use or a yearly subscription of \$50 per academic year is available. Please contact Naomi Steinberger 212-678-8982.

---

*Naomi M. Steinberger, Newsletter Editor, 212-678-8982*