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Syracuse University Library Associates: The Early Years

Elizabeth Mozley

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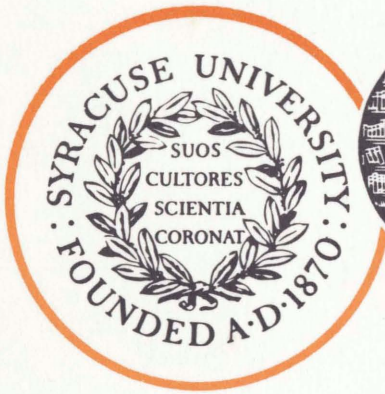
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SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY ASSOCIATES



25

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THE COURIER

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ASSOCIATES

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This photograph was taken at the second annual meeting of the Board of Trustees of Library Associates on September 21, 1954. Those present were (l-r): Hugh Gregg, John W. Brooks, Phillips Bradley, Carl R. Bye, Roscoe Drummond, Mary Marshall, Mrs. William Blanding, Harry Davies, Alonzo Flack, Adrian Van Sinderen, Wharton Miller, and William P. Tolley.

Syracuse University Library Associates: The Early Years

by Elizabeth Mozley

The first announcement that a friends of the library group had been formed at Syracuse University appeared in the May 1953 *Alumni News*. In an interview, Chancellor William P. Tolley mentioned that Syracuse University Library Associates had been organized by Professor Phillips Bradley and Dean Robert F. Oxnam. Preliminary work, in which Chancellor Tolley and Dr. Adrian Van Sinderen also participated, brought together a select group of alumni and friends of Syracuse University.

The first Board members, appointed by Chancellor Tolley, were: Mr. Richard H. Amberg, Mr. George Arents, Mr. William C. Blanding, Mr. John W. Brooks, Mr. Harry Davies, Mr. B. Churchill Loveland, Professor Mary H. Marshall, Mr. Richard Pass, Mr. Murray Salzberg, with Mr. Van Sinderen as chairman. Ex officio members were: Dr. Tolley, Mr. Hugh Gregg, Treasurer of the university, and Dr. Wharton Miller, director of the university library and dean of the school of Library Science. Professor Bradley became executive secretary. Five additional trustees on the first Board were appointed later: Dr. Harry J. Carman, Mrs. J. Roscoe Drummond, Mr. Alonzo Flack, the Honorable Murray Hearn, and Mr. Samuel A. Mehlman.

The first official Board of Trustees meeting was held October 1, 1953. Of the original appointees, only Professor Marshall and Mr. Salzberg remain on the Board. Mr. Salzberg has expressed his interest in Syracuse University and Library Associates with gifts and awards for many years. Professor Marshall has served actively on the Board in several positions, including the Editorial Committee, Library Committee, and recently, as vice-chairman and head of the Faculty Advisory Council. Mr. B. Churchill Loveland is still a contributing member, though he is no longer on the Board. And Chancellor Emeritus Tolley continues his keen interest in the activities of Library Associates, of course.

The information for this article was taken from the records of Library Associates in the Syracuse University Archives.

Elizabeth Mozley is executive secretary of Library Associates and editor of *The Courier*.

Within the first year the trustees drafted a constitution and expressed as their purpose the promotion of ways to increase library resources. The major concerns of the first Board of Trustees were the same as those today: to acquire gifts for the library (in cash or in kind) and to enlarge the membership, thereby increasing income from donations.

Many individuals assisted Library Associates in its first year. The staff and faculty of the university gave generously of their time. Gifts of books and money encouraged the new associates. The university covered all of the group's operating expenses during the first year. By June 1954, Library Associates had 143 dues paying members.

The *Syracuse Post-Standard's* pages carried news about Library Associates, thanks to Mr. George Amberg's interest. The *Post-Standard* established, in 1955, the annual Award for Distinguished Service to the Syracuse University Libraries. Dean Wharton Miller received the first award in 1955. The names of all awardees are now on a bronze plaque near the Waverly Street entrance of the Ernest Stevenson Bird Library. A list of the award winners is at the end of this article.

The trustees of Library Associates at that time were especially generous with gifts, too numerous to list here, for the Syracuse University Rare Book Department. For example, Dr. Van Sinderen gave fifty-six first editions of Samuel Clemens, a collection soon completed, with help from Library Associates, with the purchase of first editions of *Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Among Dr. Van Sinderen's many other important gifts to the library a few years later was the Kelmscott Chaucer.

Mr. George Arents, whose name the present research library for Special Collections now bears, was a generous bookman and great benefactor of the libraries and of Special Collections for many years. He also established the Lena R. Arents Rare Book Room in the Carnegie Library, now the Lena R. Arents Reading Room in The George Arents Research Library for Special Collections in the Bird Library.

Believing that the student years are the time to start a fine personal library, Mr. Arents established, in 1955, an annual cash prize of \$100 and a medal (designed by Ivan Mestrovic) for the graduating senior judged to have the best personal book collection.

More prizes were established by other Board members. Beginning in 1958, freshmen could compete for the David A. Fraser Book Award of \$25.00. In 1962, sophomores could win \$50.00 for the Earle B. Mayfield Book Award, and juniors try for the \$75.00 Edith S. Mayfield Book Award. The four awards were last given in 1966.

Winifred Hughes, then Executive Director of the Alumni Office, cooperated in efforts to enlarge the membership by appealing to a wider group. Thirty Alumni Clubs appointed Library Associates representatives. By 1955 one-hundred-eighty members contributed

\$4,285.00 and many library items. Library Associates made a \$2500.00 contribution toward the purchase of the William Hobart Royce Collection of Balzac, among other purchases.

In 1956, Dr. Wayne S. Yenawine succeeded Wharton Miller as director of libraries and dean of the library school. He also assumed the duties of executive secretary of Library Associates, following Professor Phillips Bradley. In his annual report in 1957, Dr. Yenawine noted that gifts of books and manuscripts from Library Associates members that year were valued conservatively at \$30,000.00.

By 1957, John DePol had designed Library Associates' symbol, the three bookmen in a library, used on a brochure to solicit new members. It is still used on the letterheads and *The Courier*.

It was about this time that the Board of Trustees directed Dean Yenawine to arrange for the publication of a bulletin about Library Associates and the library. He would be assisted by the university Office of Information Services and the Syracuse University Press. In April, 1958, the bulletin appeared as *The Courier*.

In the first issue, Dr. Van Sinderen, who was still chairman of Library Associates summarized the first five years:

Our program has been fourfold:

- a. To acquire for the University by gift and purchase important books and special collections
- b. To stimulate student interest in books and in reading
- c. To improve the physical facilities of the Library
- d. To dramatize the importance of the Library in University life

He added, "A little has been accomplished; a very great deal remains to be done." (*The Courier*, 1, p. 5)

At that trustees' meeting on April 17, 1958, Mr. Lester Wells presented his first annual report as rare book librarian, noting that space in the Lena R. Arents Rare Book Room was already exhausted. Plans were underway at the university for the new library building. The five-year-old friends group was kept well-informed on the concerns of the Syracuse University Libraries, thanks to the effort and attention of the director and the rare book librarian.

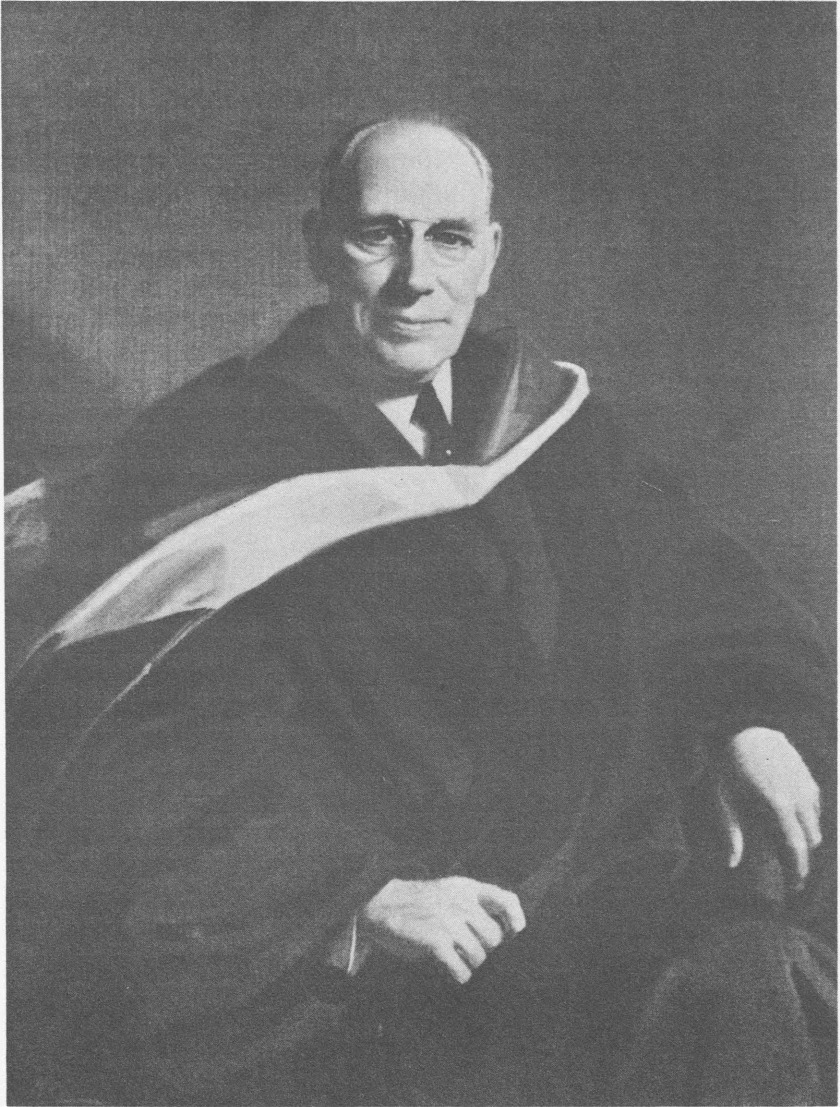
(To be continued)

**Recipients of the *Post-Standard* Award for Distinguished Service
to the Syracuse University Libraries**

Wharton Miller	1955
Mary Hatch Marshall	1956
George Arents	1957
Phoebe Selleck Ferris	1958
Donald P. Bean	1959
Douglas Gilbert Haring	1960
Adrian Van Sinderen	1961
Lester G. Wells	1962
Sol Feinstone	1963
Martin Kamin	1964
John S. Mayfield	1965
Elizabeth S. Newlove	1966
O. Theodore Barck	1967
Nancy Woodson Spire	1968
J. Terry Bender	1969
David A. Fraser	1970
Jesse B. Watkins	1971
Warren Boes	1972
Erik Hemmingsen	1973
Walter L. Welch	1974
William Pearson Tolley	1975
Wayne S. Yenawine	1976
Frank P. Piskor	1977



The first Lena R. Arents Reading Room at Carnegie Library, Syracuse University.
Professor Mary Marshall is working at the table.



GEORGE ARENTS
From the portrait by Frank O. Salisbury
(George Arents Research Library for Special Collections, Syracuse University)



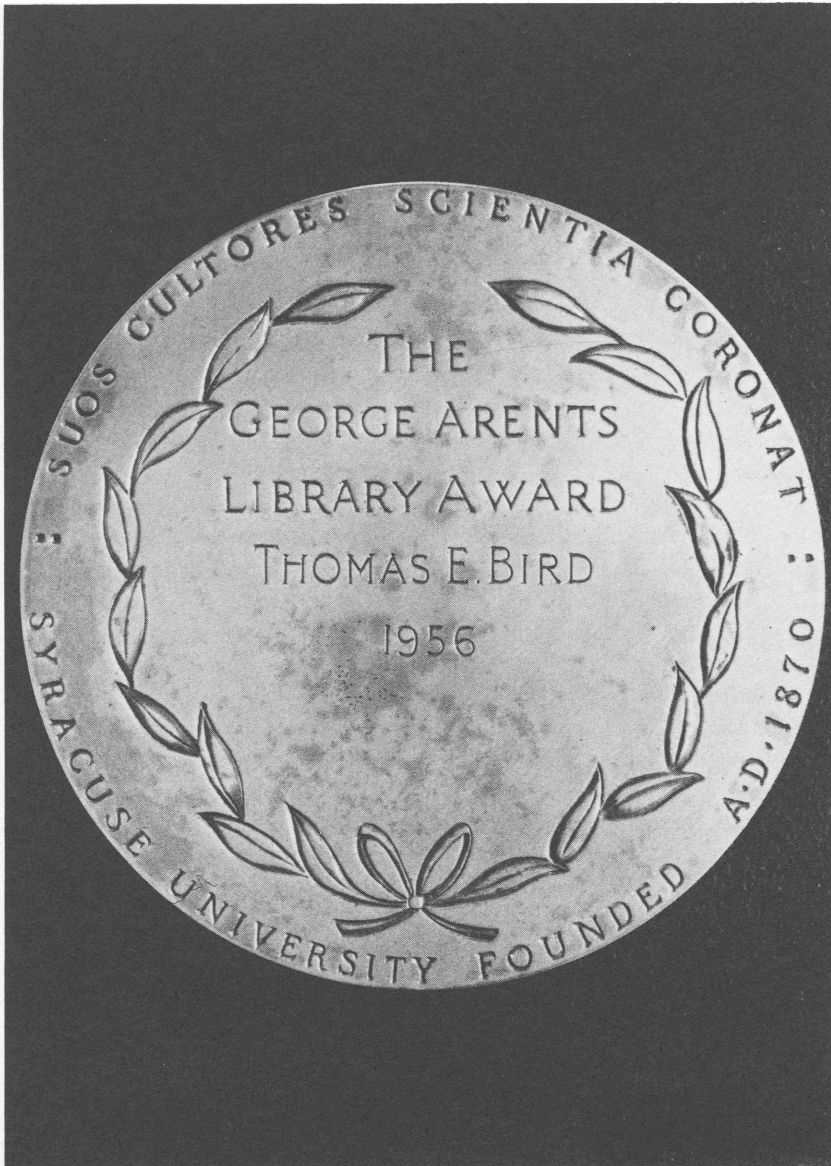
LENA RICHARDSON ARENTS
From the portrait by Frank O. Salisbury
(George Arents Research Library for Special Collections, Syracuse University)



Photographs by Alan Zenreich

**THE GEORGE ARENTS LIBRARY MEDAL
OBVERSE**

The motto, "Books the Soil of the Spirit,"
was suggested by A.E. Johnson.



**THE GEORGE ARENTS LIBRARY MEDAL
REVERSE**

The medal was designed by Ivan Mestrovic.
(Photographs courtesy of *Thomas E. Bird*, who won
the medal in 1956.)