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Library Associates 1958-1968: The Years of Growth and Change

Elizabeth Mozley

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**EX LIBRIS DR. LEOPOLDI DE RANKE.
DR. JOANNES M. REID ET CAROLINA S. REID
DONAVERUNT.**

*Von Ranke Library Bookplate
Syracuse University*

THE COURIER

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Library Associates 1958-1968

The Years of Growth and Change

by Elizabeth Mozley

The minutes of the December 11, 1957 meeting of the Board of Trustees of Syracuse University Library Associates indicate that the publication of a bulletin was originally conceived as a means of communication between the university and the membership, "to sustain and promote their interest in strengthening the library." It was "to contain short feature articles, statements about notable acquisitions, brief notes about needs, and announcements of general interest to members of Library Associates." The trustees added that the contributors and editors should "strive for high quality of scholarship, clarity and readability" and that the bulletin be printed "in good taste, attractive and distinctive, yet modest" — specifications still adhered to in *The Courier* twenty years and sixty-one issues later.

The Courier has long been listed in the Bowker publication, *Magazines for Libraries*, which, in the 1972 edition described it as:

A handsome pocket-size 56-page journal which features five to six bibliographic articles, usually based upon materials found in the Syracuse University Library. The material is as diverse as the library collection, moving from Russian theatre to Shaker furniture and Nevil Shute. The writing style is much more relaxed than in similar journals. A casual reader will enjoy this as much as a dedicated bibliographer. In fact, it is one of the few of the genre which might be read cover to cover with delight. And the photographs and drawings help things along considerably.

The Courier's successive editors (Wayne S. Yenawine, John S. Mayfield, Arsinié Schmavonian, and, currently Elizabeth Mozley) have been able to draw upon the wide range of work done by scholars using the resources in the Syracuse University Libraries. Recently, *The Courier* has been added to three major indexes: The Modern Language Association's *International Bibliography*, *The American Historical Review's Writings in American History*; and the New York State Education Department's *Research and Publications in New York History*.

Elizabeth Mozley is executive secretary of Library Associates and editor of *The Courier*. Material for this article was taken from the Minutes of Library Associates' meetings in the Syracuse University Archives.

At first *The Courier* was published at irregular intervals and numbered in sequence by issue rather than by volume and issue numbers. It grew into a quarterly and issue 37 became Volume VIII, Number 2. Though in the last four years only three issues have appeared per year as an economy measure, the numbering remains by volume and issue as a quarterly, with one issue being a double number each year. (The present issue is Volume XV, Numbers 2 & 3).

Until 1958 the major interest of the trustees of Library Associates had been in the founding of the Lena R. Arents Rare Book Room and in acquiring proper items for its collection. Then, in April 1959, Mr. Adrian Van Sinderen told the trustees of a tour he had taken of all the libraries at Syracuse University. He had been astonished to learn of the wide range of services offered at the Carnegie Library, then the central library of a thirteen library system on campus. Mr. Van Sinderen urged that all the libraries should receive Library Associates' support, and the trustees agreed with him. It was the first of several turning points in the next decade.

Though a group of special contributors had established endowments for the libraries, it was clear that a dynamic campaign by Library Associates for new members was necessary if more funds were to be raised for the libraries. The support of the alumni seemed vital to Library Associates' program.

Dr. Wayne S. Yenawine, who was executive secretary of Library Associates in addition to his position as director of libraries and dean of the School of Library Science, suggested that membership meetings should be scheduled two or three times per year with varied programs calculated to appeal to the special interests of the Associates and to attract new members. Until then there had been only an occasional special event, such as the dedication of the Lena R. Arents Rare Book Room. This would be another significant change in the activities of Library Associates which, with *The Courier's* evolution from a members' bulletin to a small magazine, did much to widen the general membership.

Memorial gifts were sought as a source of library support, also. In the years 1957-58, thirteen Memorial Funds were established with contributions to Library Associates. They are used to add books in such fields as architecture, library science, English and American literature, engineering, art, American history, and education.

For the next decade and beyond, the need for a new library building was the focus of attention for everyone concerned with the libraries at Syracuse University. Library Associates members Mrs. Lyman J. Spire, Professor Mary H. Marshall, and Professor Erik Hemmingsen joined the university Senate Library Committee in visiting other university libraries comparable to the one envisioned for Syracuse University.

In 1961, Mr. John S. Mayfield, a bookman and trustee of Library Associates, was appointed curator of manuscripts and rare books. His concerns, in addition to obtaining collections for the library, were to write for *The Courier* and to promote Library Associates' programs.

Membership growth had been the special concern of Mr. David A. Fraser for some time. The number of members in Library Associates remained around three hundred, with at least that many additional complimentary members. While the large number of complimentary memberships given to those who had made gifts in kind to the library had to be taken into account when questions of income were discussed, efforts to interest alumni groups still seemed the best hope for an increase in revenues.

Mr. Fraser became chairman of the Board in May, 1963, and Dr. Van Sinderen became chairman emeritus, having presided over the organization for ten years, since its founding.

The burden of coping with the growing library in the old quarters had led Dr. Yenawine several times to ask the Board to appoint a new executive secretary. Mr. Mayfield was appointed to assume Dr. Yenawine's duties as managing editor of *The Courier*. The duties of the executive secretary were outlined as early as 1961, but in 1963, Dr. Yenawine was still filling that role in addition to his other duties. In May, 1964, Dr. Yenawine had a heart attack, but was able to return to the job after some months. Before he left Syracuse University the following year to become director of libraries at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, Dr. Yenawine stressed the need for an increase of gifts in cash from Library Associates.

By the Annual Meeting of May 1965, The Mayfield Library had become a reality. The library was a gift to Syracuse University of Mr. Mayfield's personal library. It was housed on the second floor of the University Branch of the Marine Midland Trust Company on East Adams Street until being moved to the Bird Library in its own room in Special Collections, in 1972.

The Board Meeting of November, 1965 was held for the first time in the Mayfield Library. Plans were made to start a New York City chapter of Library Associates. Mr. Chester Soling had agreed to organize the group with the help of the Syracuse members. Book exhibits were held in New York City at Syracuse University House (later Lubin House) and Mr. Mayfield spoke at the New York Library Associates' fall meeting that year. The response from the alumni who attended was enthusiastic.



John S. Mayfield, curator emeritus of manuscripts and rare books, in the Mayfield Library at Syracuse University.

In 1967, the Annual Report of the Director of Libraries Warren Boes to Library Associates showed that the Syracuse University Library had surpassed its goal of one million items in holdings and was ranked twenty-eighth in the United States in size of collections.

The university had grown and changed between 1958 and 1968. A new library building was soon to be built.

Library Associates had changed also, reaching out into the university community with its publication, *The Courier*, with its lecture series, and its student book collection prizes.* The changes that lay ahead for Library Associates brought it a new source of strength: its general membership. The wider contacts of an enlarged membership fostered a new understanding of the ways in which a friends of the library group could support and promote the libraries of a large university.

(To be continued)

Errata

The editor must correct some errors in the last issue of *The Courier*, XV, 1, Spring 1978. On page 15, "Syracuse University Library Associates: The Early Years," two of the first Board members are given titles of the opposite sex! It should read Mrs. William C. Blanding and Mr. J. Roscoe Drummond. Their names in the picture caption are correct. Also, on page 16, it was Mr. Richard Amberg who began the long association of Library Associates and the *Post-Standard*.

*These prizes were described in the previous issue of *The Courier*, XV, 1, p. 16, 22-26. They were: The David A. Fraser Freshman Book Award, the Earle B. Mayfield Sophomore Book Award, the Edith S. Mayfield Junior Book Award, and the George Arents Library Award for Seniors.