

The Confluence

Newsletter of the Special Libraries Association - Pittsburgh Chapter

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President-Elect's Message– Carrie Wardzinski

A newfound friend that I met at SLA Annual in Boston this past year contacted me in the fall to ask if I would be willing to be a guest writer for the New York Chapter's newsletter, *Bridge to Excellence*. Each issue has a theme, and this issue's theme

was "transitions." I could write about a personal transition, a professional transition – really, anything dealing with transition. Their editors provide a lot of creative latitude for their regular and guest writers.

mind. In part, I wanted to demonstrate that other hard transitions have occurred in our past, and yet, we have endured. In fact, we have endured for 94 years as a professional group that provides opportunities for education, resource sharing, networking, and socialization. These four reasons were the prime reasons for the Pittsburgh Chapter, and as long as there is a need for these among the information professional world, our Chapter will continue to endure.

Any factual errors or errors in interpretation are mine, and mine alone. Please forgive me for any of these that you may find.



A few members of the 2016 SLA Pittsburgh Chapter board (from left to right): Leslie Eibl, Carrie Wardzinski, and Jennie Crowley
Photo credit: Brooke Hyatt

I chose to write about our chapter throughout the years, and how we have handled transition. Certainly, a chapter with such a long history has gone through some incredible transitions over the years. I wrote this piece with the current transitions we are facing at the national level in

President's Message — Leslie Eibl

Happy New Year! I hope that everyone is keeping warm as they read this. As I end one term as chapter president and begin a new one, I'm thankful for all our chapter has accomplished in the past year. 2015 has seen many changes for SLA on the HQ level, including the acceptance of a new strategic direction, implementations of this including a change in dues structure, and a transition to an association management company.

In this time of change and uncertainty, I think we can all be proud of the way we have worked together to continue our meetings, networking efforts, and general operations as a chapter. This year was successful due largely to our chapter committees, executive

board, and member participation. A huge thank you goes to all of our committee chairs and members that continue to provide new ideas and communicate our value as a chapter.

I've learned so much in the past year to enhance my understanding of what a truly dedicated group our chapter encompasses. As we move to 2016, I'm looking forward to continuing as president and serving our chapter for another year.

To help keep updated about chapter events and HQ changes, I've included some "quick links" that lead to chapter news and events, and to provide more information and recaps of current and future HQ changes and infor-

mation. As always, please feel free to reach out to me (leslieeibl@gmail.com) if I can be of any assistance in questions you may have about the chapter or if you are interested in participating on any committees.

SLA Pittsburgh Quick Links

[Chapter News](#)

[Chapter Events](#)

[Chapter Governing Documents](#)

SLA HQ Quick Links

[Key Board Initiatives](#)

[Board of Directors](#)

[Monthly Meeting Minutes](#)

The **SLA membership directory** is available online. You will need to log in and select **Pittsburgh chapter** as the unit.

Transitions Through the Years: A History of the Pittsburgh Chapter

Carrie Wardzinski

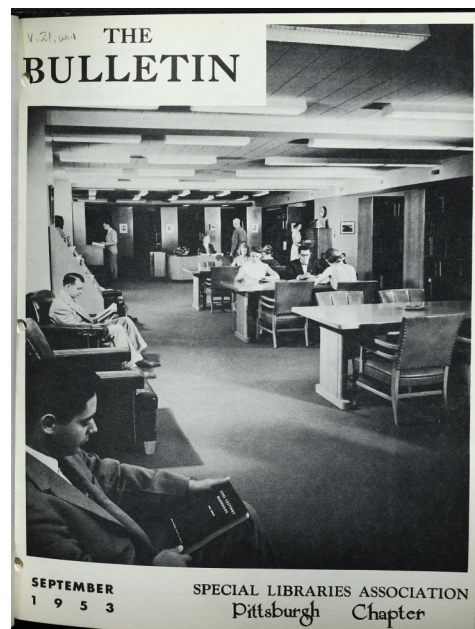
The Pittsburgh Chapter is the fourth oldest chapter of the Special Libraries Association in existence. Founded on December 5, 1922, it is only surpassed in age by the Philadelphia, New York City, and New England chapters. With such a lengthy history, the Pittsburgh Chapter has come through a number of transitions over the years.

Even from the beginning, the librarians within the Pittsburgh Chapter faced an extreme transition within their professional lives – the abrupt change from the Roaring Twenties to the single worst economic downturn the United States has ever experienced. Pittsburgh was widely considered to be the industrial center of the nation at that time. Companies such as Westinghouse, U.S. Steel, Koppers, Alcoa, and PPG headquartered themselves in the western Pennsylvania region. These companies, and their associated libraries, were operating with somewhat limited budgets due to the Depression. Despite these financial constraints, business and research and development continued as usual, which meant that information resources were still needed. One small way that the librarians within the Pittsburgh Chapter overcame some of these constraints was

by creating their first duplicate exchange list in 1932. This list facilitated the exchange of usable materials within this regional network. Another way was by updating and expanding their Union List of Periodicals, which was originally published by the Chapter in 1924. The updated and expanded list came out in 1936, and allowed the librarians within the area to share resources widely and freely. These two efforts would not have happened without the Pittsburgh Chapter, particularly since the Union List was funded by SLA's headquarters.

As the nation transitioned to wartime seemingly overnight, the Pittsburgh Chapter transitioned too. The Depression no longer raged on, but wartime efforts did. The newly minted newsletter was put on hold. Actual printed copies could not be distributed due to scarcity of goods and rising costs, so instead mimeographed newsletters were distributed to members. Monetary aid was pledged to the "war effort" on behalf of the Pittsburgh Chapter. Individual members also contributed by offering their time and skills to the newly formed Pittsburgh Defense Council. The Chapter also combined efforts with the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh to purchase books for the Signal Corps. Nearly everything the Pittsburgh Chapter did during this period focused directly on helping the Allies win. This was a monumental shift from the previous two decades, where members had focused solely on chapter development, resource sharing, and professional advancement.

The Cold War years were, in many ways, a period of growth and stability for the Pittsburgh Chapter. Membership in the Chapter was at an all-time high, with the membership roster well north of 100 members. Consequently, attendance at meetings was strong. Additionally, the business climate in western Pennsylvania was relatively stable, with research, development, and production from companies like Westinghouse, PPG, and U.S. Steel at the forefront. This translated into a stable job market for librarians; so much so that the Chapter started sending recruiting flyers to local high schools. The field of library science was also stable during this time. There

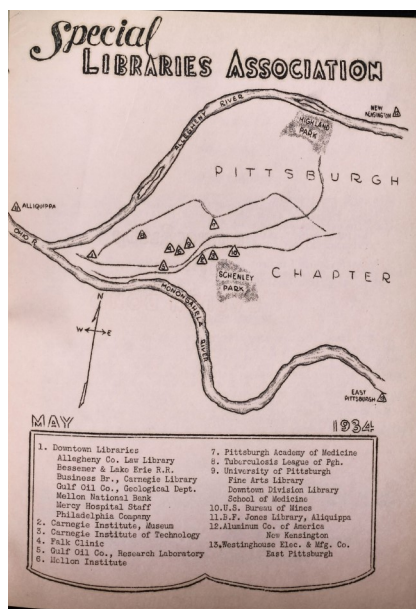


The Bulletin, September 1953
Photo credit: Donna Beck

were not many changes to the basic tenets of reference, cataloging and indexing, and information retrieval during this time.

However the advent of the digital age changed all of this, and with it brought unexpected change and transition to the entire field of librarianship. The introduction to the World Wide Web and the Internet two decades ago to the ubiquitous use of email and social media platforms currently, and everything in between, turned librarianship on its ear. All of those basic skills of librarianship did not go out the window, but they did change dramatically. This included how people search for information, how people retrieve information, and how information is saved and archived. Information professionals sometimes struggled to keep up with these rapid changes in technology. Yet it seems that the Pittsburgh Chapter, and the librarians that make up the Pittsburgh Chapter, embraced the digital age.

(continued on page 3)



A map of libraries, May 1934
Photo credit: Donna Beck

“Our Chapter was founded by 17 librarians who came together for the express purpose of discussing methodology, sharing materials, eliminating duplication in buying, and fellowship. These four reasons still stand.”

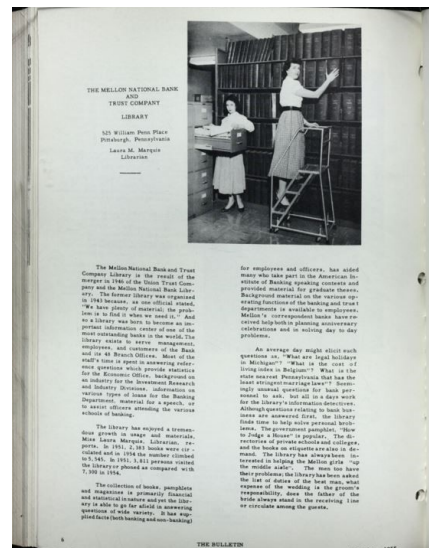
Some of this quick adoption is probably due to the presence of Carnegie Mellon University in the Pittsburgh area, and many of their librarians being active in the chapter. And some can be attributed to the change from a manufacturing hub to a technology hub after the decline of the steel industry. During this time, the Pittsburgh Chapter went to an electronic only format for their newsletter, *Confluence*. They have also had several members win significant grants for innovations in technology. Most recently, Donna Beck won a grant through IEEE for pioneering an iPad checkout program for Carnegie Mellon University's Engineering Library.

The Pittsburgh Chapter finds itself in the midst of transition again. Like many other chapters, we have lost a significant number of members over the last decade for myriad reasons: unemployment and underemployment, retirement, politics, and the increasing cost of membership. And because of these, our disbursement from Headquarters is lower, which has affected the quality of our programming and our scholarship awards. Also, like other chapters our size, we are having problems finding members who are willing to take on officer positions. It would be easy to become discouraged at this point; any organization would, given these circumstances. We could easily point to the declining membership rosters, the smaller budgets, and fewer attendees at events, and say that our chapter has reached the end of its life and is no longer useful, or even needed. Instead we need to take the long view and examine our history of weathering transitions. We have encountered some difficult and unexpected situations over the last ten decades: economic downturns, wartime, and the para-

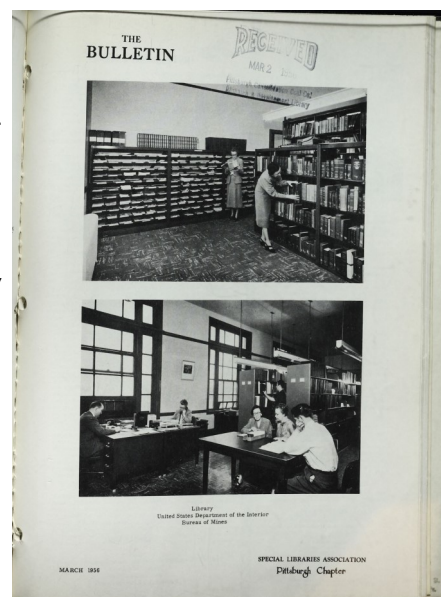
digm shift to the digital realm. Yet, we should take heart from and be bolstered by the knowledge that our group has responded to these transitions – both internal and external – and evolved as a chapter. Our Chapter was founded by 17 librarians who came together for the express purpose of discussing methodology, sharing materials, eliminating duplication in buying, and fellowship. These four reasons still stand. We continue to provide invaluable professional development and training for information professionals in our region. In this past year, we have had seminars on open access and archival methods. We continue to provide mentoring to newer information professional entering the field. Two of our long-time members have won the Rose Vormelker award for mentoring. We even have our own annual chapter award for mentoring! We continue to take advantage of our close network to locate hard-to-find materials. I cannot tell you how many times I have contacted the head of the chemistry library at the University of Pittsburgh, asking if she had a particular resource on hand. I contact her directly because she is a member of the Pittsburgh Chapter. And certainly, we still continue to enjoy spending time with each other. Nearly every program has a dine-around beforehand, and we have regular happy hours too. As long as our Chapter is fulfilling the vision set out by the founders, we need to look beyond the numbers and come through this transition too.

All historical information was taken from the archives of the Pittsburgh Chapter of SLA.

A special thanks to the editors of the SLA NY chapter newsletter, Bridge to Excellence, for their permission to reprint this article.



The Mellon National Bank and Trust Company Library, September, 1955
Photo credit: Donna Beck



Library, United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Mines, March, 1956
Photo credit: Donna Beck

Welcome New Chapter Members!

October
Olivia Glotfelty

November
Heather Anderson
Carla DelPriore
Rebekah Miller
Emily Schon

SLA Pittsburgh Unlocks the Mysteries of Open Access

Ryan Splenda



From left to right: Introduction by Carrie Wardzinski, Dr. Collister explains her examples of 'How can I help?'

Photo credits: Leslie Eibl

Dr. Lauren Collister, Scholarly Communications Librarian at the University of Pittsburgh, spoke with the SLA Pittsburgh Chapter on October 21, 2015 about the topic of Open Access (OA) in celebration of Open Access Week. Her inspiring presentation covered many aspects of OA including the broadest definition of this topic, which can most easily be thought of as the "4 Rs": Read, Remix, Reuse, and Redistribute.

During her conversation with us, she explained that the OA movement includes more than one would initially think. Open education resources (OER), open data, open source software, open science, open lab notebooks, and open standards for infrastructure are just some of the many examples that are leading this movement. She also dispelled one of the major myths about OA, which is that free does not equal bad. Free encourages reproducibility, which leads to more advancements in society.

So then, what can we as librarians and information professionals do to help with this cause? Dr. Collister suggests both talking the talk and walking the walk. Examples include:

- Urging educators to post their class materials in open educational resources like Merlot for reuse.
- Suggesting to our companies that money can be saved by using open source software.
- Encourage corporate data sharing as philanthropy.
- Be active participants in the movement by using Creative Commons licenses on products that we create.
- Take MOOCs and blog about it, or even find a good OA journal or magazine and write to the journal's editor about OA.

In conclusion, Dr. Collister left us with three challenges:

1. Make our own work open for people to reuse.
2. Write to our politicians in support of open legislation (ex. The FASTR – Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act).
3. Start one conversation about "Open" with your favorite journal, your employer, a co-author, or a patron.

Presentation Links:

[Embracing Open in Your Library Prezi](#)

[Presentation Handout and Abstract in D-Scholarship Institutional Repository](#)



SLA Social Media

facebook.com/slahq
twitter.com/slahq



2015 Annual Business Meeting & Awards Ceremony – Chris Heil

The ALL INDIA RESTAURANT in Oakland was the venue for the Chapter's Annual Business Meeting on November 12. Eighteen members and friends enjoyed a wonderful selection of Indian appetizers, vegetables and entrees from the buffet. In addition to cookies provided by the Awards Committee, a poster with photos of Chapter Award winners from 2008 to 2015 was displayed as promised, to answer the Award Trivia questions in the fall issue of the CONFLUENCE.

Following the business meeting conducted by Leslie Eibl, former award winners presented the 2015 Chapter

Awards For the finale, Eve Wider helped 5 lucky attendees win the door prize drawings.

Many thanks to members of the Awards Committee, to Chapter members who submitted award nominations and to Jennie Crowley for preparing the award checks and handling the payments and receipts at the award dinners.

Start thinking of a Chapter member who could be the next Promising Professional. Nominations for that award will open in early 2016.



Business meeting, Photo credit: Sharon Palchak



Sweet treats, Photo credit: Brooke Hyatt



2015 SLA Pittsburgh Chapter Awards Committee (from left to right): Deb Martin, Margarete Bower, Chris Heil, Brooke Hyatt., and Eve Wider
Photo credit: Leslie Eibl



Chapter members Carolyn Biglow and Sharon Palchak learn more about chapter award winners.
Photo credit: Brooke Hyatt

Thank you, Chris Heil!

The 2015 Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony was beautifully organized by the awards committee under the lead of Chris Heil. Since this is Chris' last year as chair of the awards committee, the SLA Chapter board wanted to thank her for all of the work she has done with the annual meetings, awards, and thank her for the positive influence she is for the SLA Pittsburgh Chapter. Below are a few member quotes:

"Chris is so nice and puts others above herself. I always feel uplifted being around her and her cheerfulness!"

"I'm relatively new and Chris immediately reached out and was warm, kind, and welcoming. She provides a lot of guidance and encouragement and is a tremendous asset to our chapter."

"...She is organized and concise in her communication which is very helpful in making the holiday/annual business meeting go smoothly. I'd also mention she is also fun to work with."






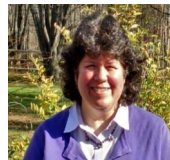


Thank you, Chris! Photo credit: Brooke Hyatt

Chapter Awards Trivia Answers– Chris Heil








The Summer/Fall 2015 CONFLUENCE ran a Trivia Quiz about our Pittsburgh Chapter Award winners. Active members are listed in Alphabetical order, with the list of their awards. Find out how you scored below!

Donna Beck	Lynn Berard	Margarete Bower	Denise Callihan	Rachel Callison	Nancy Flury Carlson
					
Catalyst Award – 2009 Innovation in Technology Award – 2013 Promising Professional Award – 2004 Publication/Authorship Award – 2008	Leadership Merit Award – 2007, Service – 1997 Lifetime Achievement Award – 2010 Mentoring Award – 2013 Publication/Authorship Award – 2011	Leadership Merit/Service Award – 2013 Leadership Service Award – 2006*	Leadership Merit/Service Award – 2009, - 2002 Mentoring Award – 2008 Publication/Authorship Award – 2004 Leadership Service Award – 2006* Lifetime Achievement Award – 2015	Catalyst Award – 2012 Leadership Merit/Service Award – 2010 Innovation in Technology Award – 2007 Publication/Authorship Award – 2008	Leadership Merit Award – 1992 Lifetime Achievement Award – 2013

Leslie Eibl	Ellie Gehman	Haley Hodum	Kate Joranson	Karen Liljequist	Deb Martin
					
Promising Professional Award – 2013	Promising Professional Award – 2012	Promising Professional Award – 2009	Publication/Authorship Award – 2009	Innovation in Technology Award – 2008	Promising Professional Award – 2011

Esther Nathanson	Ange Pollis	Amy Raimondi	Casey Sirochman	Ryan Splenda	Brian Steinmetz
					
Lifetime Achievement Award – 2011	Lifetime Achievement Award – 2008	Catalyst Award – 2011	Promising Professional Award – 2010	Leadership Merit/Service Award – 2015	Golden Retread Award 2010

Chapter Awards Trivia Answers Continued – Chris Heil

Robert (Bob) Sullivan	Mark Vrabel	Carrie Wardzinski	Amy Watson	Eve Wider	
					
Lifetime Achievement Award - 2007	Publication/Authorship Award - 2013	Leadership Merit/Service Award – 2014 Promising Professional Award - 2015	Catalyst Award – 2005 Leadership Merit/Service Award – 2008 Innovation in Technology Award – 2007 Publication/Authorship Award – 2009 Publication/Authorship Award - 2006	Leadership Merit/Service Award – 2012 Mentoring Award – 2013, 2008 Publication/Authorship Award - 2009	

*In 2006 the **Animal Friends Service Project Team** won the Chapter's Leadership Service Award. Team members included Margarete Bower, Denise Callihan, Jan Deitch, Kim Gregory, Lynn Labin, Earl Mounts, students Irene Finke, Katie Nolfi and Lu Zhou.

2015 Chapter Awards Recipients:

Deb Martin officially presented the **Promising Professional Award** to **Carrie Wardzinski**, who is serving a dual role as President –Elect/Program Chair and Employment Chair. Carrie used the award stipend to attend the SLA Annual Meeting in Boston in June, and as her nomination prophesied, “her attendance will benefit the chapter as a whole, through ideas for new programming and benchmarking against other chapters in similar circumstances.”

Margarete Bower presented the **Leadership Merit/Service Award** to **Ryan Splenda**, who is serving as Chapter Secretary and has been proactive in informing Board and Chapter members of association changes.

Esther Nathanson presented the **Lifetime Achievement Award** to **Denise Callihan**, in absentia. As Esther said, “to all of her many SLA and Chapter activities, Denise has brought great energy, a boundless enthusiasm, and an infectious laugh. The Pittsburgh Chapter is most fortunate to have her as a member.”



A few of the 2015 SLA Pittsburgh Chapter Awards Winners and presenters
From left to right: Margarete Bower, Esther Nathanson, Ryan Splenda, Carrie Wardzinski, and Deb Martin
Photo credit: Brooke Hyatt

2016 Annual Conference!

June 12-14
 Pennsylvania Convention Center
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

For more information and registration
 visit: <http://www.sla.org/attend/sla-2016-annual-conference/show-overview/>



Photo Credit: SLA Website: <http://www.sla.org/attend/sla-2016-annual-conference/>

SLA Advocacy Toolkit

<https://www.sla.org/learn/advocacy-toolkit/>

The SLA Advocacy Toolkit offers practical resources, articles, and case studies exploring these topics:

- [Developing Mission and Vision Statements](#)
- [Communicating via Storytelling](#)
- [Working with Disengaged Management](#)
- [Metrics: The 'How, What, and Why' of What You Are Doing](#)
- [Engaging in External Benchmarking](#)

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The Confluence is the newsletter of the *Special Libraries Association - Pittsburgh Chapter*. The next issue will be published in **Spring 2016**. Article submission deadline is TBA. Please contact Brooke Hyatt (brookehyatt@gmail.com) and Leslie Eibl (leslieeibl@gmail.com) co-editors, with any submissions, issues or concerns relating to the newsletter.

Wanted: Awards Committee Chair

Do you like to coordinate events and present awards?

The SLA Pittsburgh Chapter is seeking an Award Committee Chair. This person is responsible for leading a team of chapter members in the planning of the annual business meeting and organization of awards. More information can be found in the Chapter Procedures Manual.

If you are interested in this position, please contact Leslie Eibl (leslieeibl@gmail.com).



Photo credit: Brooke Hyatt

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