Librariana VI: Shein, Urban, and Alrutz Administrations (1972-1988)

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Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center
The Newark Public Library
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URL: http://www.npl.org/Pages/Collections/njic.html

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Location: Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center
Size: 13 boxes, 5 ½ linear feet
Processed: William A. Peniston, Ph.D., 2015
Formats: Textual Materials; Photographs;
Subjects: Newark Public Library – Administration; Newark Public Library – History; Libraries -- Administration; Libraries – History; Shein, Bernard; Urban, William; Alrutz, Thomas J.
Time Periods 20th Century;
Language: English
Access policy: Open for research

Restrictions on Access

Access Restrictions
There are no access restrictions on this collection.

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Preferred Citation
Librariana VI: Shein, Urban, and Alrutz Administrations (1972-1988), Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center, Newark Public Library.

Scope and Content

Collection Description:

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Newark Public Library was directed by three individuals: Bernard Shein (1972-1977), William Urban (1977-1979), and Thomas J. Alrutz (1979-1987). Their papers have been kept together in one record group.

Bernard Shein joined the staff of the Newark Public Library in 1930 while he was still an undergraduate student at Newark University (now Rutgers-Newark). After receiving his BLS from
Pratt and his MLS from Columbia, he became a professional librarian in 1942. He served as the principal librarian at the Springfield Branch before his promotion to assistant director in 1954. In 1958 he was named Deputy Director and Personnel Officer. Following the retirement of James E. “Ned” Bryan in 1972, he became the director and served until 1977. He was active in the New Jersey Library Association, the Newark Lions Club, and the Municipal Careermen of Newark.

William Urban, born in Trenton, attended Trinity College (BA) and Drexel University (MLS) in the 1930s, where he met his wife, Ruth. He began his professional career at the University of Pennsylvania’s library, where his wife also worked. Both of them joined the staff of the Newark Public Library in 1947. Mrs. Urban served as the young adult librarian from 1948 until her retirement in 1969. Mr. Urban became the chief librarian of the Lending and Reference Department in 1962 and assistant director in 1972. He was appointed director in October 1977 and retired less than two years later in February 1979. He was known for his financial acumen; he served as the Treasurer for the New Jersey Library Association for a number of years.

Thomas J. Alrutz came to the Newark Public Library from the Fairfax (Virginia) Public Library in 1979. After his resignation in 1987, he was the chief librarian at the Mid-Manhattan Branch of the New York Public Library.

In addition to the above-mentioned individuals, John R. Abram and Charles F. Cummings served as Acting Directors in 1979 and 1987-88, respectively. Abram had joined the staff of the Newark Public Library in 1955 and had served as supervising library and chief librarian in the Lending and Reference Department. Cummings had joined the staff of the New Jersey Information Center in 1963, led that department for many years, and was the City Historian. After his service as Acting Director, Cummings became the Assistant Director for Special Collections and Statewide Outreach.

Collection Contents:

These working papers are arranged alphabetically for the most part. They cover relations with the American Library Association, the New Jersey Library Association, and other organizations; specialized library services and reports; public information; staff relations; and other topics relating to the operations of the Library.

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R1980L: Library Services to the Spanish-Speaking in Newark by Gregorio Rivera, Jr. (see also Hispanics, Service to – 1980)  
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