Library designated a “Literary Landmark”

Since its founding in 1888, the Newark Public Library has been a cultural cornerstone for the City of Newark and the State of New Jersey. Last October, the national Center for the Book at the Library of Congress and the New Jersey Center for the Book designated the Library as a “New Jersey Literary Landmark.” The fact that Newark is—and has been—the home to many authors and others associated with the literary community, coupled with the Newark Public Library’s century-plus commitment to meet a diverse and changing population, were instrumental in the selection.

“We are delighted to receive this honor,” stated Director Dr. Alex Boyd. “The Library has a long and illustrious history of service to the many communities we serve. Being named a literary landmark validates our efforts.”

A day of celebratory events in honor of this tribute took place on October 2. Among the distinguished persons present were Dina Matos McGreevey, New Jersey’s First Lady; Dr. Clement Alexander Price, Newark Public Library Trustee and Master of Ceremonies for the day; Dr. John Y. Cole, Director, The Center for the Book, Library of Congress; and approximately a dozen notable New Jersey authors.

Serving as a lasting reminder of Newark’s prominence in the literary field, a special publication, Newark’s Literary Lights, was given to attendees of the celebration. April L. Kane, a staff member of the Library’s New Jersey Information Center, edited the thirty-two-page document. While not a comprehensive listing, many historic and contemporary figures of Newark’s literary landscape are highlighted in the booklet. Those wishing to view the publication may access a “pdf version” on the Library’s website www.npl.org.

Dina Matos McGreevey, New Jersey’s First Lady, reads to a group of Newark school children.

Some distinguished personalities who attended ceremony: Frank Miller, New Jersey State Library Advisory Board Member; Dr. Clement Alexander Price, Newark Public Library Trustee; Dr. John Y. Cole, Director, The Center for the Book, Library of Congress; and approximately a dozen notable New Jersey authors.
Happy New Year! 2002 was a year of vibrancy at the Newark Public Library. Perhaps most exciting was our designation as a Literary Landmark. This selection, the first given to a public library in New Jersey, commemorates our sustained commitment to literature and library services. Complementing that prestigious designation the Library received an additional $100,000 in municipal funding for the purchase of books.

Our Remembering Newark’s Greeks: An American Odyssey exhibit enticed busloads of visitors to view photographs and memorabilia depicting Newark’s Greek experience. Last, but certainly not least, the Library received 66 new computers from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation that will enable us to provide our patrons system-wide with better access to technology.

2003 promises to be just as dynamic.

We launched an Annual Giving Campaign several months ago to support the increasing demands for library services. Your support has enabled us to plan a full calendar of public programming for children and adults. We are particularly pleased to join with the Newark Public Schools to host a series of poetry workshops, entitled Poet On, through June.

In the research area, the Library’s New Jersey Hispanic Research & Information Center will move into customized space that will be conducive to the oral history gathering and archiving phase of this seminal initiative.

And, shortly, we will see the opening of the fully renovated Vailsburg Branch Library and the refurbishment of the Main Library’s first floor.

I hope that you will enjoy all we have to offer in 2003.

Clement Alexander Price, Ph.D., was first appointed to the Library’s Board of Trustees in 1985 by then Mayor Kenneth A. Gibson and has been reappointed over the succeeding years by Mayor Sharpe James. He has served as a Vice President of the Board, a Chair of the Personnel Committee and a member of the Director Search Committee. Currently, Dr. Price is Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee.

As a senior Board of Trustees member, his primary interest has been making sure the Library’s reputation as an excellent resource—for scholars, journalists, students, humanists, and a cross-section of citizens—has been sustained.

“The Newark Public Library is one of the city’s most important educational institutions,” states Dr. Price. “My goal is for the Library to be at the center of Newark’s now fully mature downtown and neighborhood revitalization.”

Dr. Price is a Board of Governors Distinguished Service Professor, Professor of History, and Director of the Rutgers Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience at Rutgers University, Newark Campus. He received his BA and MA degrees from the University of Bridgeport, and a Ph.D. from Rutgers University. He has served as visiting professor at Princeton University, the New Jersey City University, Montclair State University and Fairleigh Dickenson University.

Dr. Price is the author of many publications that explore Afro-American History, race relations and modern culture in the United States and in New Jersey. He is the recipient of numerous academic and service awards and honors, including the Richard J. Hughes Award from the New Jersey Historical Commission, and the Governor’s Alice B. Paul Award for Humanitarian Service. The Friends of the Newark Public Library selected Dr. Price to deliver the 2002 John Cotton Dana Distinguished Lecture.
In our continuing series of articles about NPL’s Branch Libraries, this focus will be on our two storefronts: First Avenue and Madison. Both hold Club Success homework-assistance classes, have free Internet access, and offer such amenities as computers and photocopiers. Their strategic partnerships with community organizations and customized collections/services make them cultural anchors in the communities they serve.

First Avenue Branch, 282 First Avenue, (973) 733-8091, located at the corner of First Avenue and N. 10th Street

With children/adult activities (e.g., English for Speakers of Other Languages [ESOL] classes, Club Success, arts and crafts, storyhours, film programs, holiday contests) taking place from opening to closing, the First Avenue Branch Library has become one of the most-popular and well-utilized facilities in the system. Its 1,500 square feet of space houses 4,000 children’s books and periodicals, 6,000 adult materials and 300 videocassettes. It also has a rotating collection of Spanish-language books and magazines available for its many Latino patrons.

The First Avenue Branch, which opened in 1974, is across the street from the First Avenue Elementary School. It serves that school and others in the area, such as Abington Avenue and Dr. William Horton. In addition, many other organizations—Babyland, Shiloh Rainbow Academy and First Avenue Resources—bring groups to the Branch for special activities and library orientations.

Madison Branch, 790 Clinton Avenue, (973) 733-8090, located between Leslie/15th Streets and Fabyan Place/17th Street

Opening in December 1974, and renovated in 1999, the Madison Branch Library offers its services to a diverse community in the Clinton Hill South Ward. Its convenient location serves the Madison Avenue and Hawthorne Avenue Elementary Schools, as well as cross-sections of students from Avon Avenue and Bragaw Avenue Elementary Schools, University High School and Blessed Sacrament Catholic School.

Branch Manager Patricia Dozier, Librarian Paul Williams, and a part-time assistant staff Madison.

While the community needs are extensive and vary, Madison’s selection of books, videos, newspapers and popular magazines fulfill the requirements of students to complete required readings and assignments, as well as serve other patrons who follow current events and trends. And for those entering or returning to the job market, there are a variety of civil service test books, and interviewing and resume preparation materials. Of special community interest are the library orientation classes for students and organizations.

Assistant Secretary of State Lizette Delgado reads to an enthusiastic group of Newark school children during Branch Libraries’ celebration of Read and Grow @ Your Library. “Read and Grow” was Governor McGreevey’s challenge to New Jersey’s youth to read at least eight books this past summer.
Pictured here are some of the authors who attended our daylong “Literary Landmark” celebration.
During the past few months, the Library was packed with Standing-Room-Only audiences at a multitude of programs. Be sure to make the NPL your first choice for top-notch free cultural programs. To find out more about what’s happening at your library, visit www.npl.org and click on “Programs,” or call Herb Williams, Program Coordinator, at (973) 733-3610.

Musical group Eco Del Sur performs at opening reception for Hispanic Heritage Month celebration.

Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana Spanish Dance Company performs during Hispanic celebration.


Angelique Lampros and Peter Markos (front row), two Greek-American educators from Newark, talk about their experiences while they curated the recent NPL exhibition entitled Remembering Newark’s Greeks: An American Odyssey.

NPL celebrates Kwanzaa.

A handful of attendees pose after “Teen Read” program that discussed Toni Staton Harris’s By Chance or by Choice.
Black History Month Celebration

Exhibition
Second-Floor Gallery
Through March 22

January
16 The Library remembers and celebrates the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with Patrik Henry Bass, author of Like A Mighty Stream, The March On Washington, August 1963. Also join the group Inspired Voices with a poetry and music performance dedicated to Dr. King.
Centennial Hall; 6pm

Auditorium; 2pm

Centennial Hall; 6pm

February
5 The Frances E.W. Harper Literary Society presents a production of Then and Now in celebration of Black History Month.
Centennial Hall; 6:30pm

11 A showing of Strange Fruit, a documentary with a devastating yet inspiring reminder of when racial terror raged through the country and when Blacks and Whites worked together to stop it. Program includes a musical performance by Ronnell Bey.
Centennial Hall; 6pm

Ronnell Bey

Sharon McGruder
Asante's African Safari
15 An all-day series of programs, cosponsored with Rutgers University, culminates with the 23rd Annual Marion Thompson Wright Lecture Series presented by Rutgers Professor Dr. David Levering Lewis on the theme “DuBois in Africa.”

Paul Robeson Campus Center, Rutgers Newark; begins 9am

Programs are free and open to the public. For more information, call Herb Williams at (973) 733-3610, or visit the Library’s home page at www.npl.org.

22 Hooray for Children series presents “Anansi, Spiderman of Africa,” performed by the Crabgrass Puppet Theatre, using colorful rod puppets. The performance is based on West African tradition. Anansi the spider is a clever trickster! The classic folklore character spins a tangled web of tales.

Auditorium; 2pm

27 Join legendary vocalist Regina Belle as she performs her many hits in her home state.

Centennial Hall; 6pm

Regina Belle

13 The musical group Inspired Voices presents “Faces of Our People,” a program of Black history told through the song and the poetry of Langston Hughes. (Two performances.)

Centennial Hall; 10am and 6pm
O r perhaps for this commentary, we should instead headline this article *Homework Help@your library*, since it includes resources as well as websites.

The Newark Public Library has compiled subject guides to homework help websites as well as kid-friendly search engines. To access them just visit [www.npl.org/Pages/InternetResources/SubjectGuides](http://www.npl.org/Pages/InternetResources/SubjectGuides) and use the options for Homework Helpers for Grade School and High School. BJ Pinchbeck’s Homework Helper ([school.discovery.com/homeworkhelp/bjpinchbeck](http://school.discovery.com/homeworkhelp/bjpinchbeck)) is a popular directory with pointers to sites about science, math, art and music and more.

Q and A NJ ([www.qandanj.org](http://www.qandanj.org)) is an online reference service designed to provide fast answers to your questions.

Q and A NJ is now also providing free live online tutoring help for 4th to 12th grades through an alliance with Tutor.com. Students may click on the “live homework help” link on [qandanj.org](http://qandanj.org) and connect to an expert tutor in math, science, social studies or English. You may also send a question directly to the NPL by emailing reference@npl.org.

Of course, for homework help, the Library is a great place to visit in person as well as virtually! Club Success ([kidsplace.npl.org/club.html](http://kidsplace.npl.org/club.html)), the Library’s teacher-supervised homework clubs for children in grades 1 through 8, provides assistance and access to computers for research and report writing at the Main Library and all Library branches. Club Success is funded in part by the Lucent Technologies Foundation and the Newark Public Schools.

For more information about homework help call Arts and Humanities Reference (973-733-7820) or the Library’s Youth Services Coordinator (973-733-5642).

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The NPL is continuing its schedule of free computer classes into 2003. The classes are held in the Technology Training Center, which is located on the third floor of the Main Library. Selected classes are also offered in Spanish. Registration is required for each class, since seating is limited to ten participants. Many of the classes are designed for first-time computer users:

**Mouse Clinic**—Point and click with greater ease. Learn the proper way to hold the mouse device. Practice moving and clicking on selected text. Use drop down menus and scroll bars.

**Typing**—Using the very popular Mavis Beacon typing tutorial, learn to type or to improve your speed and accuracy.

**Word Processing I**—Create, open, save, close, preview and print lists, letters, and other documents. Learn basic formatting, including font selection, numbering and underlining. Typing skills are required.

**Webwise for Kids!**—Children in grades 4-5 and their caregivers are invited to learn tips and tricks for searching the Internet to find both entertaining and informative sites. Covered, too, will be guidelines for safe surfing.

Other classes are designed for those who are more computer literate, such as Email, the Internet, PowerPoint and Creating a Résumé.

For more information on which classes are offered when, or to register, please call (973) 733-3603 or visit the Victoria Technology Center, located on the third floor of the Main Library, across from the Technology Training Center.

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**Free computer classes continue**

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**Thanks to funding from the City of Newark, the TTC now holds classes on its new computers that feature flat screens and Pentium 4 processors.**

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NPL celebrates Black History Month

The Newark Public Library’s celebration of Black History Month features a diverse group of programs. An Opening Reception at the Main Library on Thursday, January 30, inaugurates the festivities. The evening’s program, which begins at 6pm, features Elaine R. Jones as keynote speaker; the Sankofa Dance Troupe and Asante’s African Safari will provide the entertainment.

William J. Dane, Keeper of Prints and Posters, curated the exhibition, entitled African-American Traditions in Works on Paper, which honors African-American history, art and biography. It features original prints, posters and unique materials from the Special Collections of the Newark Public Library. Several posters and prints pay tribute to the accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Others celebrate popular figures from the world of entertainment: Eddie Murphy, Bill Robinson and the Alvin Ailey Dance Company. Among the original signed prints are those by Jean Eda Byrd, Ben Shahn, James L. Wells, James Edward Jones and Mel Edwards.

A complete listing of programs for the celebration may be found on pages 6 and 7.

Exhibitions at the NPL

In addition to our Black History Month exhibition, also now on view at the Main Library is Celebrating Sculpture: Posters and Original Prints by Sculptors for Appreciation of the Fine Art of Sculpture. It is installed on the third-floor gallery through March 29, 2003.

Celebrating Sculpture features works by artists whose reputations were perceived as based on their three-dimensional creations widely displayed in art galleries and museums. Original signed graphics include works by Henry Moore, Louise Nevelson, Claus Oldenburg, Hans Arp, William Zorach, Fritz Wotruba and Varujan Bogoshian, as well as artists closely associated with New Jersey—such as George Segal, Enid Bell, Mel Edwards and Paul Harris.

Forthcoming exhibitions will be detailed in the next issue of The Second Century.
Backyard Safari program at Branches

Thanks to the Lucent Technologies Foundation grant for the Club Success Initiatives, the Library has been holding a special kids’ program at the Branches. Entitled Backyard Safari, it explores the natural surroundings found in one’s backyard, focusing on trees, birds and insects. The program is presented by the Liberty Science Center. Last year the grant funded the Center’s “Science Circus,” which thrilled children and adults alike. This year’s program is also captivating audiences.

The series began in January and continues into April. Check with your neighborhood Branch Library to determine if your location is hosting the program in the months ahead.

VTC gets new computers

The Victoria Technology Center, whose inception was funded by the Victoria Foundation, is located on the third floor of the Main Library. Thanks to funding from the City of Newark, it received a “technology update” in January. The existing computers were replaced with new state-of-the-art ones, enabling patrons to “surf the Net” and take care of their word-processing needs with greater speed and accuracy.

The VTC has nearly two dozen workstations, some of which are equipped with Microsoft Office Suite, while the others have word processing and free Internet access.

Thanks to funding from the City of Newark, the VTC now features new, faster computers with flat screens and Pentium 4 processors.
Grants create vital partnerships

Each year, the Newark Public Library forges vital partnerships with government agencies and community organizations—the Newark Public Schools, the Lucent Technologies Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the New Jersey Historical Commission, the New Jersey State Library, among numerous others. Many result in grants that enable us to provide valuable services for our patrons, add to our collections and hold free public programs. A new alliance has been formed with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. It has resulted in a $189,555 grant that will benefit our patrons—children and adults—throughout the NPL system.

This project, whose purpose is to expand public access to computers and the Internet, provides for six new Gateway computers at each of the Library’s ten branches plus six in the Main Library Children’s Room—a total of sixty-six new state-of-the-art computers. The grant also provides for a laser printer at each location, as well as librarian training, software, software updates and technical support.

Keeping the diversity of our patrons in mind, at least one computer at each location will have a Spanish-language profile with an on-screen “Spanish keyboard.” And for those who are unable to read “small” type, at least one computer at each location will have on-screen access for larger icons and text through the use of the computer mouse.

The Library has received the computers and is in the process of completing the special wiring for their installation. All of the computers will be “up and running” by the first of April.

Clement Alexander Price presents Dana Lecture

Clement Alexander Price, Ph.D., presented the John Cotton Dana Distinguished Lecture for 2002. Dr. Price’s keynote address was entitled “Newark’s Twentieth Century: Reflections on the Culture of Race and Civic Life.”

The Dana Lecture, which is sponsored by the Friends of the Newark Public Library, presents talks by Newarkers who have distinguished themselves in various fields. Previous Dana lecturers have been Stephen Adubato, Ph.D., journalist and academic; Amiri Baraka, noted literary figure and community activist; John T. Cunningham, New Jersey historian; Barbara J. Kukla, award-winning editor of The Newark Star-Ledger; Samuel C. Miller, retired director of The Newark Museum; Congressman Peter Rodino; Philip Roth, acclaimed novelist; and Richard Wesley, political playwright and Hollywood screenwriter.

Dr. Price shared with the audience his reflections on how race and civic culture interacted, how they competed with each other and how, at the near beginning of the new century, civic culture “must be allowed to prevail over the seductiveness of race in the way Newark sees itself and behaves.”

In closing, Dr. Price stated, “It is now clear that the death notices on Newark issued so confidently around the late 1960s through much of the 1970s were quite premature and possibly of heinous intent. During its nadir, this city was already laying the groundwork for its brighter future. There was, in fact, a long cast of civic leaders who worked to rebuild devastated neighborhoods, to fashion new terms of engagement between ethnic groups, and to learn from past mistakes.”

Please refer to the “Board Member Profile” article on page 2 for a summary of Dr. Price’s curriculum vitae.
Friends set Book Sale dates; Seek volunteers

The Friends will hold their Twelfth Annual Book Sale from Thursday, April 24, through Saturday, April 26. This ever-popular event is one of the two major yearly fundraisers for the organization. The Friends use the moneys raised as the foundation for the grants they bestow upon the Library to support its services and collections.

As usual, the event will feature hardcover books, paperbacks, reference works, records, videotapes, cassette tapes, CDs and posters.

Hours for the public sale are 11 am to 8 pm on Thursday, and 9:30 am to 4 pm on Friday and Saturday. The members-only pre-sale will be held on Wednesday, April 23, from 5:30 pm to 8 pm. Those who are not current financial members of the Friends may join the organization on the evening of April 23 in order to gain access to the members-only pre-sale.

In addition to material donations, Jerry Caprio, Book Sale Chair, is seeking volunteers before and during the sale to help sort the more than 30,000 donated items, and to help reorganize the materials after the sale. Individuals and organizations wishing to volunteer may leave a message for Jerry Caprio by calling the Library at (973) 733-7793.

Due to limited storage space, those wishing to donate items (no magazines or “condensed” books, please) are asked to wait until March before bringing them to the Main Library. Also, please be sure that the items are in good, sellable condition.

NPL & NPS are perfect together

The Newark Public Library has formed yet another partnership with the Newark Public Schools, this time to cosponsor the Poet On series. The workshops and readings (by notable poets) for Newark school children are being held on the last Saturday of each month—through June—at the Main Library.

For more information about this poetry series, patrons are invited to call Herb Williams at (973) 733-3610.

Amiri Baraka to appear at Poetry Series.