“New” Vailsburg Branch Reopens

As this issue of The Second Century was on the press, the Vailsburg community celebrated the opening of its rejuvenated Branch Library. Originally built in 1927 for $71,000, the “new” branch was renovated at a cost of $1.3 million—through the generous support of the City of Newark, the Victoria Foundation and the Turrell Fund.

Vailsburg is the fifth branch to undergo complete renovation and expansion, joining Van Buren, North End, Weequahic, and Springfield. Since 1989, the City of Newark has invested approximately $10,000,000 in renovating the branch libraries.

“The revitalized Branch is an edifice of which the Vailsburg community may be proud,” noted Library Director Dr. Alex Boyd. Located in a primarily residential community, it serves children and young adults from ten elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school.

The new facility boasts a brightly colored interior design with a large multipurpose room that may be used for community activities, an inviting children’s room with special furnishings and distinct areas for different age groups, an adult area with an expanded reference section, a large area for circulation and registration activities, and a reading lounge.

Other new features inside the building include security cameras, a handicapped-accessible elevator, handicapped-accessible public rest rooms, carpeting in all public areas, modern interior lighting, air conditioning, a small classroom, an electronic video projection screen, and all new bookcases and furniture.

Compared with the original structure, the “new” Vailsburg Branch Library has 53% more interior space and 61% more books.

“Technology has an important place at Vailsburg,” explained Wilma Grey, Assistant Director for Community Library Services. “There are six public-access computers in both the Children’s Room and the adult’s area—with plans for additional computers in the near future.”

New exterior features include a handicapped-accessible ramp, sidewalk, lighting, and a children’s patio.

The Vailsburg staff, which includes library services, maintenance, and security personnel, is under the leadership of Branch Manager Edward Small.

The Branch is located at 75 Alexander Street; its phone number is (973) 733-7750.
The Newark Public Library is dedicated to its patrons, the citizens of Newark and the State of New Jersey. We believe fervently in our mission of “Enriching Lives and Expanding Horizons.” To fulfill it, the Library provides unparalleled free access to information and technology for all who seek it, serves as a cultural center for the community, and offers customized educational opportunities that meet the expressed needs of our patrons.

However, the Newark Public Library faces a budget crisis.

Like many of our fellow historical, arts, and cultural institutions, the Library is threatened by recently proposed State budget cuts.

Our role in the preservation and presentation of historical information is most severely jeopardized. We depend upon grants and technical assistance from the New Jersey Historical Commission! In a recent issue of the Second Century, we highlighted the work being done to preserve the clipping files from Newark’s oldest newspaper, the Newark Evening News. Last year we hosted the Remembering Newark’s Greeks: An American Odyssey exhibit that drew hundreds of visitors who came to remember and celebrate Newark’s rich cultural history. This year another planned initiative, the New Jersey Hispanic Research and Information Center, will be the first public archive of New Jersey Hispanic history in the state. The New Jersey Historical Commission funds each of these initiatives. If the Commission’s budget is eliminated, so too will these initiatives.

Similarly, we benefit from funding by the New Jersey Council on the Arts. Loss of support from the Council will diminish our ability to provide high-quality arts programs.

The Governor is quoted as saying that, “We must...celebrate the value of culture, that value of arts, history and humanities in our lives not only every day, but literally in the decades to come.” We at the Newark Public Library could not agree more.

As a supporter of this Library, I am sure that you do, too. I encourage you to write your State legislators today. Demand that the State budget be balanced fairly—not by withdrawal of all support for history, the arts and culture.

On January 22, 2003, Trish Morris-Yamba was elected Vice President of the Newark Public Library’s Board of Trustees. She has been a Board member since 1995.

Ms. Morris-Yamba is the Executive Director of the Newark Day Center and former host of “Black Spectrum.” She has been active in community and civic affairs for years.

Throughout her career, Ms. Morris-Yamba has been an advocate for children and youth. Her interest in children blossomed when she established a childcare center on campus while earning her bachelor’s degree at Livingston College in New Brunswick. After earning her master’s degree at Rutgers Graduate School of Education in New Brunswick, she became director of the CHEN School in Newark. She was an early proponent of mainstreaming children with developmental difficulties into regular school programs.

“As a Library trustee, I have a wonderful opportunity to fulfill my personal commitment to enhance the educational achievements of today’s youth,” stated Ms. Morris-Yamba. “I want to ensure that the Library continues offering top-notch programs and services for children.”

She is the recipient of many honors, such as the Woman of Influence Award, Outstanding Child Care Advocate, Distinguished Service Award, Professional Woman of the Year, and “100 Most Influential” in New Jersey Award. She is listed in Who’s Who of American Women and the World’s Who’s Who of Women.

Because of her community-strengthening commitment, Ms. Morris-Yamba serves on many other boards, including the National Congress of Black Women (1st Vice President), Commission on the Status of Women in Newark (Chairperson), and Our Children’s Foundation of New Jersey (Treasurer).
In our continuing series of articles that highlights our Branch Libraries, we focus in this issue on North End and Springfield.

Like all Branches, these two offer Club Success homework-assistance, have free Internet access, and offer such amenities as computers and copiers. The customized collections and services make each Branch a cultural center in the community it serves.

North End Branch, 722 Summer Avenue, (973) 733-7766, located at the corner of Summer and Grafton Avenues

When this facility reopened in December 1994, after a complete renovation and expansion, the staff quickly reestablished a close relationship with Elliott Street School and Our Lady of Good Counsel Elementary and High Schools. Students soon visited North End for computer technology and homework assistance.

The neighborhood, once predominantly Italian, now is home to a wide range of ethnic groups. To serve the Latino population, this branch provides a growing collection of books and periodicals in Spanish and has a multilingual staff. ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes are also offered.

North End attracts a large number of short-term volunteers, ranging from those in job-training programs to students needing to complete service-hour requirements. Its NEON (N EWarkON line) Computer Center is a favorite among patrons preparing résumés and performing job searches. And the SLT (School Leadership Team) groups from the Newark Public Schools frequently use the Community Meeting Room for in-service training.

Eager to assist North End’s many patrons are Paula Baratta, Branch Manager, Heather Rivera, Merilyn Thomas, Nayda Santiago, Rhea Bernard, Rose Ann Perez, and Glenn Davis.

Springfield Branch, 50 Hayes Street, (973) 733-7736, located at the corner of Hayes Street & 14th Avenue

Springfield has the double-distinction of being the first branch to be erected and the first to undergo comprehensive renovation (completed in 1989).

The Branch’s most-frequent patrons are residents from the New Community Corporation and employees at the University of Medicine and Dentistry New Jersey. It also serves students from more than two dozen schools and learning centers.

Services and collections for children and adults are provided on the first floor. The All-Purpose Room on the second floor hosts community meetings, SAT and college-preparation classes (on Wednesday evening and Saturday morning during the school year), arts & crafts and Summer Fun activities, and special programs for holidays. Additionally, Springfield has a broad collection of health-related items for those at UMDNJ, and provides materials to reinforce the support services of Harmony House (a haven for homeless women with children).

Always ready with a smile and a helping hand are Clara Wilson, Branch Manager, Brenda Sapp, Robert May, Craig Hicks, and Caroline Alston.

Helen Lester discusses her book, Tacky the Penguin, during program at North End Branch Library.

The Bookaneers Puppet Troupe, from the Ocean County Library, delighted children with the “Tacky the Penguin” performance at the Springfield Branch Library.
Exhibitions at the NPL

Two exhibitions are now on view at the Main Library. *Portable and Popular Art: The Shopping Bag Phenomenon* is installed on the third-floor gallery through June 14. *The Portuguese of Newark* is installed on the second-floor gallery through July 18.

Shopping Bags, a favorite exhibition at the Library, manifests the continuing and proven wide appeal of these merchandising items from around the world. The Portuguese exhibition pays tribute to the rich heritage of this culture.

Forthcoming exhibitions this year on the third-floor gallery include *The Art of Etching* (June 20–September 15) and *Japanese Prints & Posters* (September 20–November 15). Those on the second-floor gallery include *Motion Picture Posters & Stills* (July 26–September 8) and the celebration of *Hispanic Heritage Month* (September 15–November 15).

For additional information on the Library’s exhibitions, visit www.npl.org and click on Programs & Exhibits.

A photograph of Vasco S. Jardim from *The Portuguese of Newark Exhibition*

.com-mentary

The Newark Public Library is available to you—24/7—through our website: www.npl.org. At this site, you may check our calendar of events, program announcements, and exhibition previews or search our catalog. You may also conduct research using many of the Library’s reference databases. Magazine and encyclopedia articles, business information, and more are all available by entering the barcode number from the back of your NPL library card.

*Contemporary Authors* is the latest addition to the collection of databases accessible from home or work. Contemporary Authors has biographical entries for 120,000 U.S. and international authors, as well as bibliographies of their works. Pointers to periodical articles and book reviews provide more information. This literary resource is one of the many databases provided by the New Jersey State Library.

Novelist, Facts on File, ReferenceUSA, and EBSCOhost are some of the other databases that may be accessed from home or work. Visit http://www.npl.org/Pages/InternetResources for links to these and other databases.

Need help? E-mail your question to reference@npl.org or call (973) 733-7820 for personal assistance.
During the past few months, the Library was packed with Standing-Room-Only audiences at a multitude of programs. Some of these events are captured here. Be sure to make the Newark Public Library 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 click on “Kids’ Place” for children’s programs.

Vocalist Regina Belle, center, takes a moment after her performance to pose with two members of the audience: Naiima Horsley-Faunterroy and Kimberly Cooke.

Nicole Thompson, a “Youth Art Contest” winner, displays her certificate with Dr. Alex Boyd, Library Director.

Children from audience and Corky join the cast from the Happy Times Children’s Theatre after their presentation of “The Tale of Peter Rabbit.

Toni Staton Harris, front row center, returned to the Library for another “Teen Read” program that discussed her novel, By Chance or by Choice. Afterward, she posed with some audience participants and her cast members.

The Library celebrated CommUnity Arts Day with a “Hooray for Children” series program and the opportunity for children to have their picture taken with Corky, the Library’s Kids’ Place website mascot.
NPL receives two NJLA PR awards

At a special ceremony during its Spring Conference, the New Jersey Library Association presented the NPL with two top awards in the association’s Public Relations Contest for materials produced in 2002. A panel of professional experts judged the entries on effectiveness, originality, design and content.

In the division for libraries with a total operating budget of $1,000,000 and over, the Newark Public Library received the top award in the Website and the Newsletter categories.

Heidi Cramer is the Webmaster for the Library’s award-winning site (www.npl.org).

Credits for the winning newsletter (Winter 2002 issue) go to Jenkins Graphics (design), Mariano Press (printing), and J. Dennis Papp (editor).

SRC Rally is Ready

Kids, get set for another summer of fun activities @ the Library. Topping the list is this year’s Prudential Foundation Summer Reading Challenge. The kickoff rally is set for Thursday, June 26, beginning 10am in Washington Park. It will feature entertainment, refreshments, a souvenir, and a visit from Corky, the Library’s Kids’ Place website mascot. The Challenge itself begins June 23. Check with you neighborhood NPL Children’s Room for program details, or visit kidsplace.npl.org for more information on this and other summer events at the NPL.

Audience participation makes the Prudential Foundation Summer Reading Challenge kickoff rally a fun event for all. This year’s theme is “Read and Grow @ your library.”

Sharpe James, Mayor, City of Newark
Donald Bradley, South Ward, City Council President
Newark Municipal Council
Augusto Amador, East Ward
Charles Bell, Central Ward
Mamie Bridgeforth, West Ward
Hector Corchado, North Ward
Gayle H. Cheneyfield-Jenkins, At-Large
Luis A. Quintana, At-Large
Donald Tucker, At-Large
Bessie Walker, At-Large

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2003 Annual Fund Campaign

For more than 100 years, the Newark Public Library has been “Enriching Lives and Expanding Horizons” by offering access to cultural, educational and informational resources to all who seek them—free of charge! As the largest public library in New Jersey, we are committed to providing high-quality programs and services to Newarkers and people across the state and the nation.

The 2003 Annual Fund Campaign helps ensure that access to vital resources—such as books, videos, computer training, public programs and exhibitions—remains available to the thousands who turn to us each year. Dr. Debbie Salas-Lopez, a prominent physician in the Newark community and a member of our Board of Trustees, proudly serves as the 2003 Annual Fund Chairperson. She is devoted to helping the Library remain a vibrant center for lifelong learning.

Please join Dr. Salas-Lopez and the growing number of supporters who give to the Newark Public Library by making a gift to the 2003 Annual Fund Campaign. Your generosity will enable us to advance our collections, increase our programs and upgrade our technology.

Show your support by enclosing a check (made payable to the Newark Public Library) in the reply envelope that is enclosed in this issue. For further information regarding the Annual Fund Campaign, please call Sue Mazzeo in the Development Office at (973) 424-1832.

One Book New Jersey

The Newark Public Library celebrated One Book New Jersey with a puppet show and the opportunity for patrons to meet and visit with Helen Lester, author of *Tacky the Penguin*, one of the OBNJ initiative’s read-to-me children’s books. The programs were part of the NPL’s “National Library Week” festivities.

One Book New Jersey is a statewide reading and literacy program. Its goal is to bring people together through literature by encouraging them to read the same book and then participate in discussions and other events centered on the book. The initiative’s adult book is *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury; the teens’ and children’s selections are Margaret Peterson Haddix’s *Among the Hidden*, Kate Klise’s *Regarding the Fountain*, and Helen Lester’s *Tacky the Penguin*. Copies of the books are available at all NPL locations.

Ms. Lester appeared before a delighted audience at the North End Branch Library. This was her only New Jersey library appearance in April. Ms. Lester’s message followed the story line of her book: You may not always fit in with those around you, but being yourself is okay!

The Bookaneers, the traveling puppet troupe from the Ocean County Library, presented their *Tacky the Penguin Puppet Show* at the Springfield Branch Library to the enjoyment of children and adults alike.

Author Helen Lester discusses the message behind the story of her book.
It comes as no surprise that the Friends 12th Annual Book Sale was a big success. This time it broke the previous top revenue mark by bringing in more than $7,500 while signing up more than a dozen new members. With these funds, the Friends of the Newark Public Library will focus on supporting children’s services and special collections.

“Each year I am amazed at the countless hours the volunteers work before, during and after the sale,” said Jerry Caprio, Book Sale Chair. “And it’s nice to see so many of the same patrons support the event each year.” The Friends 2003 brochure may be viewed online at friends.npl.org. A copy may be requested by calling (973) 733-7793.

Bookmark winners announced

A popular Library program during “National Children’s Book Week” (celebrated in November) is encouraging children to design their own bookmarks. This time this fun activity inspired more than two hundred entries. A selection of them may be viewed at www.npl.org/Pages/KidsPlace/cbw2002.html.

Pictured are the first-place winners and their Children’s Librarians: Funmi Songonuga (Weequahic Branch), Victoria Thompson (seventh grade, Springfield Branch patron), Jazmine Lewis (first grade, Woequahic Branch patron), Clara Wilson (Springfield Branch).