



EX LIBRIS

The Newsletter of the American Library in Paris June 2017

2017 GALA DINNER

Stacy Schiff on the art of biography



Photo by Krystal Kenney

The American Library welcomed the celebrated biographer Stacy Schiff to its 2017 Gala Dinner on Tuesday 23 May. The author of prize-winning books about Benjamin Franklin, Antoine de Saint-Exupery, Cleopatra, and the witches of Salem described her literary investigations in archives and libraries and shared insights on the mechanics and mysteries of the biographer's art.

During the course of the evening at the Automobile Club de France, more than 220 guests also heard from Library director Charles Trueheart and board of trustees chairman Luis Roth – including remarks from both about the director's impending

Charles Trueheart stepping down as Library director

The leadership of the American Library in Paris soon will change hands. Charles Trueheart retires as director late this summer after ten years of service as the board of trustees concludes its search for a successor.

Board chairman Luis Roth, speaking at the Gala Dinner in late May, praised Trueheart for “expanding enormously the Library’s mission and its visibility. He has dragged us into the 21st century of libraries: a world of digital resources accessible anywhere, anytime, a vast programming lineup, and even an active social media presence.”

In a March letter to the membership of the Library announcing his departure at the end of August, Trueheart said he would be remaining in Paris and undertaking writing projects. He will also continue to oversee the American Library in Paris Book Award, which he launched in 2013 with a grant from the Florence Gould Foundation.

The board expects to announce the result of its search for a new director in midsummer in order to secure an orderly transition by the rentrée.

“Change is never easy,” Roth said in his Gala Dinner remarks, “but Charlie managed the transformation with such characteristic grace and good humor that it seemed natural, indeed, inevitable.

“What made him the right person to lead the Library as it went through this evolution? Maybe it was the journalist’s knack for listening attentively to others and for being able to tell a great story. Maybe it was in his diplomatic genes. Maybe it was his natural geniality and openness that made it possible. Maybe. After reading Stacy Schiff’s book about Salem in 1692, I actually think there was some wizardry to it, a dash of witchcraft.”

Roth also cited the work of “an incredibly talented staff of fellow sorcerers who are unfailingly dedicated to the Library’s mission and to serving its clients.”

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New Library trustees elected

Four new trustees were elected to the governing board of the American Library at the annual general meeting of the Library on 13 June; a fifth was appointed to an unexpired term by the board the next day.

The new trustees are Jade Vu Henry, Julien Horn, Heather Keane, Elizabeth Oger-Gross, and Cedric Sellin.

Two other trustees were re-elected: George Stansfield to a second three-year term, and Neil Janin to a third three-year term. Four trustees have left the board: Alain Aubry, who will join the Library's Advisory Council, Peter Fellowes, Joseph Foks, and Nicolas ver Hulst.

Luis Roth continues as chairman of the board and Rob Johnson as treasurer. Forrest Alogna becomes vice chairman and secretary. Stephanie de La Rochefoucauld was recently appointed assistant treasurer of the board.

At the annual meeting, Roth, Johnson, and Library director Charles Trueheart reviewed the activities of the Library during the preceding year, notably the extensive renovations and enhancements to the physical plant and virtual offerings carried out last year.



Jade Henry



Julien Horn

The 2016 Annual Report of the Library, with facts, figures, and lists of institutional activities is available at the Library and on the website, as are audited statements of the American Library Inc. and the USA Foundation for 2016.



Heather Keane



Elizabeth Oger-Gross



Cedric Sellin

A new president of the Library's USA Foundation

William Torchiana has been named the new president of the board of directors of the American Library in Paris USA Foundation, the Library's US-based entity.

He succeeds Marshall Wais, who was recently elected chairman of the board of the American Hospital of Paris. Wais will remain as a member of the board of the USA Foundation, which holds the Library's financial assets and investments.

Torchiana, managing partner at Sullivan & Cromwell in Paris, a former chairman of the board of trustees of the Library (2007-2012), was instrumental in leading the Library's Second Century capital campaign.



The other Foundation board directors are Paul Horne, Craig Stapleton, Gregory Weingarten, and (ex officio) the chairman and treasurer of the Library's own board of trustees, currently Luis Roth and Rob Johnson.

Library councils

The American Library's Advisory Council has two new members, Alain Aubry and Lise Hartman de Fouchier.

The American Library's Writers Council recently added three new members — according to custom, the winner of the most recent Book Award, Ethan Katz, and the most recent Gala Dinner honoree, Stacy Schiff. Also new to the Council is Bruno Racine, author and former president of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

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Arthur Marchet (1943-2017)

Arthur Marchet, a former Library trustee and longtime volunteer to the collections department, died 14 March. A retired insurance executive and bibliophile, Marchet was familiar inside the Library for many years as the principal chauffeur to collections manager Simone Gallo, since retired, on his trips around Paris and beyond to pick up donated books. They formed a lasting friendship.

"The Library has lost a real friend," said former board of trustees chairman Charmaine Donnelly. "Arthur's service to the Library was unstinting and generous. He was happy to remain in the background, but he was always there, with thoughtful and observant comments. This did not preclude his impish delight in gossip and being in the know. He was a true lover of books, with an open and curious mind."



SPECIAL EVENTS

Summer at the Library

- Late Thursday *nocturne* hours end 15 June and will resume in September.
- Throughout July and August the Library will be closed Sundays.
- From Tuesday 18 July through Saturday 19 August, the Library will be open 13h00 to 19h00 Tuesday through Saturday.
- Regular operating hours will resume on Tuesday 22 August. *Nocturne* and Sunday hours resume in September
- Care to take a few books on vacation? The Library is happy to extend due dates. Please ask at the Member Services desk.

Upcoming Visiting Fellows

The Library has selected its 2017–2018 Visiting Fellows. In the fall, investigative journalist James Verini will be working on a project concerning European geopolitics, populism, and social transformations in France and beyond. Verini has written for *The New York Times Magazine*, *National Geographic*, and *The New Yorker*, often about terrorism and geopolitics.

In spring 2018, Vanessa Manko, author of *The Invention of Exile*, comes to Paris to work on her latest novel, *Question of Illumination*, about French dancer and theatrical lighting pioneer Loïe Fuller who was active in the late 19th century.

The Visiting Fellowship, which brings writers to Paris to work on their projects for a month of residence at the Library, is made possible by The de Groot Foundation.



Photo by Antoine Canonne

‘L’heure americaine’ at the Grand Palais

In April, the Library’s collections librarian, Abigail Altman, was invited to participate in a roundtable discussion at the *Salon International du Livre Rare* at the Grand Palais.

Alongside Mathilde Schneider of the French-American Museum in Blérancourt (pictured above at right) and Viviane Ezratty of the Heure Joyeuse library archival collection (at left), Altman discussed both the American Library’s founding in 1920 and its post-war influence on French librarianship.

The topic, “*Lire à l’heure américaine, influences transatlantiques dans les bibliothèques françaises*,” focused on the innovative practices that American librarians introduced when rebuilding and modernizing French public libraries after World War I, and the women, including Anne Morgan, who played key roles in the three institutions.

Two Americans in Paris

One of several treats for guests at the Gala Dinner this year was a special music CD with a connection to the founding of the Library nearly a century ago.

The CD’s title, “Two Americans in Paris: Half a century of French-American Musical Friendship,” refers at once to Anne Morgan (1873–1952) and Edith Wharton (1862–1937) and to the two permanent institutions in whose founding they had a prominent hand: the French-American Museum in Blérancourt, and the American Library in Paris.



The CD is the brainchild of Ishtar Méjanès, a former trustee, current Advisory Council member, and longtime supporter of the American Library. She and Guy Sacre composed notes to accompany the performance of pianist Honoré Béjin, whose fine interpretations of interwar composers include works by Copland, Debussy, Ravel, and Satie.

If you’d like to purchase a copy of this unique CD, please inquire at the Library’s Member Services desk – or, when it reopens in the fall, at the French-American Museum in Blérancourt, about ninety minutes from Paris by car.

GALA DINNER 2017



Faces at the Gala Dinner

Clockwise from top left: Emma and Sammy Toutounji; Carol Bossonney, Sherry Johnson, and Véronique Bawol; Jaime and Ambassador Pilar Aleman; Priscilla de Moustier, Forrest Alogna, and Charmaine Donnelly; Ellen Hampton and John Crawford; Anne Vitek and Jeff Doniger; Véronique Cardi and François Schaub; Louise Trueheart and Anne Swardson.

Photographs by Krystal Kenney

GALA DINNER 2017



Guests at the 2017 Gala
Above: A standing ovation for Charles Trueheart, retiring director of the Library (center, in gray suit). Left: Walter and Patricia Wells. Right: Julien High and Michael Vaughn. Below left: Grant Rosenberg, Pauline Lemasson, Kirsty McCulloch Reid, Alexandra Vangsnes, and Bojan Kupirović. Below right: Gabrielle Carré, Laurence Rieunier, Libby Sainty, Lucy Gianasso, and Jennifer Dalrymple.



MORE FROM THE GALA

TRUEHEART

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Trueheart was appointed director in 2007 after a career in journalism, most recently as Paris correspondent of the *Washington Post*. He is also a former associate director of the Institute of Politics at Harvard University and a former senior warden, or board chairman, of the American Cathedral in Paris.

In his own remarks, Trueheart said, “I never tire of compliments, but I want you to know sincerely that *I* was also the lucky one, that I have *you* to thank for an opportunity I never imaged I would have, in a field not my own, relatively late in life, taking on responsibilities for which I was not prepared in any predictable sense. Somehow the institution and the person and the community all rose to the occasion.”



Charles Trueheart, Stacy Schiff, and Luis Roth at the 2017 Gala

GALA DINNER

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retirement after ten years (see related story).

Uzra Zeya, *chargée d'affaires* at the United States Embassy in Paris, made introductory comments at the outset of the dinner.

Also in attendance were other members of the board, past and present. Library Writers Council chairman

Gala sponsors

Forrest and Sandrine Poisson Alogna

American School of Paris

Canon France

Peter and Jeanne Fellowes

Charles and Clydette de Groot

GRoW @ Annenberg

Neil and Nancy Janin

Rob and Sherry Johnson

William and Maria Kelly

Ishtar Méjanès

Luis Roth and Jennifer Dalrymple

Sullivan & Cromwell LLP

Edward and Mary Lee Turner

Diane Johnson and American Library Association representative John Berry were on hand. Former Bibliothèque Nationale president Bruno Racine was there; he and Schiff (and Adam Gopnik) will serve as the jury for this year's American Library Book Award.

Schiff recalled her year of research in Paris on the Franklin book seventeen years ago with an 18-month-old in tow.

“While I labored in the archives of the Quai d’Orsay, she too headed to the 7^{ème} —for Story Hour on rue du Général Camou. I can tell you which one of us had more fun. I’m happy to report that the American Library made of that child an omnivorous reader.”

At the conclusion of her Gala Dinner talk, Schiff left the guests with the following thought about the place of libraries in the world:

“Why does a woman walk into a library? For the same reason she walks into a bar: to quench a thirst... to scratch an itch, to catch a fever, to locate something she can’t name; to visit a lost, fictional, or far-off world, because she has an aspiration; to discover, lose, reinvent, reorient herself, to revel in language that definitively laminates an image or emotion.

“Sometimes she does so purely out of ignorance, the cornerstone of knowledge. She feels at home there, enough so that she is irritated when someone takes her customary seat. At the same time she expects to be jostled a bit, nudged from her customary beliefs, gently dislocated if not downright intoxicated. This she manages with the help of treasures themselves conjured in the best libraries, the kind we celebrate tonight.”

The Gala Dinner is the Library’s biggest fundraising event of the year. Its major sponsors are listed at left.

To view scenes from the dinner, please visit the Library website and click on the Flickr icon at bottom right (a sideways colon on a pink background). The Gala Dinner was coordinated by the Library’s development manager, Krista Faurie, assisted by staff, trustees, and volunteers.

CHILDREN AND TEENS

Summertime events

Ages 1-3:

Toddler Time

The Library's popular Toddler Time will take place on 15 June and 6 July with sessions from **10h30–11h00** and from **17h00–17h30**. The program will then continue in the fall.

Sign-up is required for this activity.

Each child must be accompanied by an adult lap!

Ages 3-5:

Wednesday Story Hour

Our weekly interactive Story Hours continue with two sessions every Wednesday from **10h30–11h30** and from **14h30–15h30**. Like all of our children's programs, Story Hours are entirely in English. They feature reading, singing, and hand rhymes, and we always wrap up with a simple craft project.

From 18 July to 20 August, during the Library's summer hours, only the afternoon session from **14h30–15h30** will take place.

No reservation required. Please see the Library website for the weekly theme!

Ages 6+: Saturday Series

Our weekly Saturday activities at **15h00** will take place throughout the summer.

No reservation required. Please see the Library website for the weekly theme!

A busy spring for teens

This spring was a particularly busy one with two big events for teens in addition to our regular monthly Friday Teen Nights.

The 5th Annual **Literary Reaping** was held in March. Teen lit fans faced a fun-packed evening of literary-themed challenges. In April, eight Young Adult authors participated in our **Teen Author Smash**. Co-organized with author **Amy Plum**, the Smash is a celebration of young adult literature and a chance for members of our Teen Writing Group to show off their presenting skills.



YAFF: 500+ contenders!

The **2017 Young Authors Fiction Festival** culminated with a celebration on Friday 2 June. Over 200 people attended two separate celebrations; one for the younger grades and one for the upper grades, including the young author finalists, parents, and teachers.

The finalists were announced with awards for 1st-5th place and honorable mentions. Each finalist was awarded a certificate and a bookmark, and the Library published YAFF celebration booklets with the complete stories of the 1st to 5th place winners.

This year the Library received 500 submissions, our largest intake for YAFF yet, from more than 20 schools, homeschooling programs, and writing classes located in and around Paris.

YAFF is made possible by a small committee of Library staff and volunteers with the support of over 60 judges.

Extra copies of the prizewinning booklets are available at the Library! Contact yaff@americanlibraryinparis.org

Summer Reading Challenge

You're invited to take part in the Library's Summer Reading Challenge for children, teens *and* adults, running from 24 June through 10 September.

The Summer Reading Challenge kick-off party will take place on Saturday 24 June. Everyone is invited to dress up as their favorite literary character and come to the Library to celebrate and pick up a game card!

For children under 12: Keep track of your reading on your Summer Reading game card and submit it at the end of the summer to collect your prizes.

For teens and adults: Complete one or more of our Summer Reading Challenges to collect clues to our game. Solve the game to be entered into our grand prize drawing! Summer Reading prizes include: gift cards, books, bookmarks, book bags, theatre tickets and more! The more you read the more clues you earn toward solving the game!

If you can't attend the party on 24 June, visit our website for complete details.

Unless otherwise stated, all programs are free for Library members and €10 for non-members. Children attending Library programs must have their own membership card or be covered by a family membership. Please contact the Children's and Teens' Services department for more information about our children's programs: kidsandteens@americanlibraryinparis.org.

CALENDAR

Wednesday 21 June 19h30

Judicial independence and politics in America

In this time of upheaval and concern over separation of powers and democratic norms, United States Federal Judge M. Margaret McKeown speaks about judicial independence, politics, and the American judiciary. Judge McKeown was appointed to the bench by President Clinton in 1998 and has often been mentioned as a candidate for the Supreme Court.

Tuesday 27 June 19h30

'For refugees, everywhere'



Viet Thanh Nguyen won the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for his debut novel *The Sympathizer*. His new short story collection, *The Refugees*, offers this poignant dedication: "For all refugees, everywhere." The particular sorrow of exile and the chance of a better life in another place are themes found in both books. NPR praises *The Refugees* as "an urgent, wonderful collection that proves that fiction can be more than mere storytelling — it can bear witness to the lives of people who can't afford to forget."

Thursday 29 June 19h30

The place of libraries in the age of Google

John Palfrey, headmaster of Andover, will discuss his book, *BiblioTech: Why Libraries Matter More Than Ever in the Age of Google*. He argues that in order to thrive in our rapidly modernizing world and with dwindling government funding, libraries must make the transition to a digital future as soon as possible—by digitizing print material and ensuring that born-digital material is publicly available online. All the while libraries must continue to fulfill the vital role as public spaces in our democracy as they have done for hundreds of years. *Co-sponsored by Phillips Academy and Phillips Exeter Academy.*

Thursday 22 June 19h30

Colson Whitehead's Underground Railroad

Colson Whitehead speaks about his 2017 Pulitzer Prize winner, *The Underground Railroad*, which imagines the secret network of safe houses and routes as a literal railroad. Whitehead is the author of five other novels, including *The Intuitionist*, *John Henry Days* and *Zone One*, as well as the non-fiction *The Colossus of New York* and *The Noble Hustle: Poker, Beef Jerky & Death*.



Wednesday 28 June 19h30

The life of Richard Nixon

Veteran political writer John A. Farrell presents his new biography *Richard Nixon: The Life*, a bravura work about the 37th president of the United States. Farrell demonstrates how the political world we live in today bears the imprint of Nixon's presidency and the culture at large.



Coming in fall 2017

Author **Nicole Krauss** for her novel *Forest Dark* (3 September) ... **Marjorie Spruill** on the battle over women's rights and family values (13 September) ... **Gerald Shea** on the the history of deafness and sign language (4 October) ... **Adam Roberts** on modernized India... (11 October) ... Writing workshop with **Linda Lappin** (17 October) ... **Adam Begley** on the 19th century photographer Nadar (18 October) ... **Hilary Kaiser** on French war brides (8 November) ... a screening of the documentary *The Last Ring Home* with filmmaker **Minter Dial** (29 November) ... and more! Sign up for our biweekly email, *e-Libris*, for event updates and editions.

Evenings with Authors and other weeknight programs at the Library are free and open to the public (with a €10 suggested donation) thanks to support from Grow @ Annenberg at the Annenberg Foundation, our members, and those who attend programs.

The American Library in Paris

10, rue du Général Camou 75007 Paris France 01 53 59 12 60 www.americanlibraryinparis.org

