



# EX LIBRIS

The Newsletter of The American Library in Paris  
*Summer 2009*

## In celebration of Babar, the 2009 Library gala



Photo David Baecher

Gala speaker Laurent de Brunhoff visited the Library the day after the annual dinner to sign books for families.

### ***By the numbers***

The 2008 Annual Report was published and circulated at the Annual General Meeting on June 9. Among the library statistics in the report:

- In 2008 the Library membership grew by 22 percent to 2,169. Proportions of membership in various categories are unchanged.
- Circulation transactions (loans of materials) during the year grew by 8.4 percent to 96,904.
- The size of the collection diminished by 5 percent to 132,894 to accommodate new study and program space, and as reference and research materials are increasingly available digitally at the Library.
- The size of the children's collection remained constant at 12,000 and the Library's audio-visual holdings were also constant at nearly 7,500 items.
- The number of evening programs in 2008 (48) grew by nearly 50 percent, and total attendance for the year doubled. Average attendance at a program in 2008 was 53 — with six programs drawing

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For its annual gala soirée this year the Library staged a celebration of Babar with an homage to Laurent de Brunhoff, writer and illustrator of the iconic king of the elephants for more than six decades.

De Brunhoff's tribute to his father, Jean de Brunhoff, who conceived the first Babar books but died after completing only seven albums, crowned an evening dinner at the Cercle de l'Union Interallié that gathered 170 members, friends, and supporters of the American Library in Paris.

"I have been drawing Babar for over sixty years. I've written and illustrated over thirty Babar books. In some way Babar has become mine," Brunhoff said. "But I never forget that Babar was created by my father."

Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Alison Lurie made the principal address during the June 4 dinner, citing Babar as a symbol of family values and as "a central force in Franco-American friendship and understanding over the past seventy years."

The gala, the Library's principal fundraising event of the year, opened with a reading of two Babar stories by actress Leslie Caron, one in French and one in English.

Among other special guests were nine accomplished French and other European authors and illustrators of children's books, Brunhoff's brother Mathieu and son Antoine and his family, and Phyllis Rose, author of "Parallel Lives" and "Jazz Cleopatra: Josephine Baker in Her Time," who has been de Brunhoff's collaborator and spouse for a quarter century.

The Brunhoffs visited the American Library the following afternoon for a special members-only book signing for families, with books supplied by Librairie Galignani and fun and games for kids supplied by Helen Stathopoulos, the children's librarian, who was saluted at

*(continued on page 7)*

### **Summer hours**

The Library will be closed on **Tuesday 14 July** and from **Tuesday 4 August through Saturday 15 August, inclusive.**

The Library resumes its normal hours of operation, 10h00–19h00, on **Tuesday 18 August.**

# THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY



## **Think Green!** An author visit

Jeanine Behr Getz founded **Kids Think Big** with a mission to educate, entertain and empower kids via ecologically friendly print and electronic media.

**Think Green!**, winner of the Green Coast Award, is full of great green ideas for children and families. It is the first children's book to feature an eco-audit, showing the environmental benefits of using post-consumer recycled paper instead of virgin paper. The book will be for sale at the event. Learn more at [www.kidsthinkbig.com](http://www.kidsthinkbig.com)

**Saturday 27 June, 15h–16h30 for ages 9+ Parents welcome!**

## **Summer Reading Club** **Kidding around!**

This year's summer reading theme is 'kidding around,' featuring jokes and funny stories.

Starting Saturday 6 June, children **four years and older** may pick up a summer reading club booklet. Write down the titles and authors of all the books you read this summer, and for each, you will receive a sticker in your booklet from the Library.



Join us for an end-of-summer party with food, fun and prizes to celebrate your reading

## **LIBRARY MEMBER TIPS**

- The circulation desk closes 15 minutes before the Library closes – that is, at 18h45.
- You may reserve and renew books on-line at our website. Have your Library card number handy.
- Our on-line catalog works best with Mozilla Firefox.
- Individual membership cards are nominative – they are not transferable. Family cards are for the whole family.

## **Red, White and Blue**

### **July 4<sup>th</sup> in America**

July 4<sup>th</sup> is Independence Day in the United States, so it's a great day to come to the American Library to learn more about the colors, symbols and history of the U.S.A. Then help us decorate the children's room with American and American-inspired flags and creations of your own.

**Saturday 4 July, 15h–16h for ages 6–12**

## **Bleu, Blanc et Rouge**

### **July 14<sup>th</sup> in France**

July 14<sup>th</sup> is the French national holiday. Come learn more about this *fête nationale*, and help us decorate the children's room with some symbols and colors of France.

**Saturday 11 July, 15h–16h for ages 6–12**

## **Saturday Series for Children** **The Books of Bill Peet**

Share the magic of the classic children's tales, written and illustrated by renowned Bill Peet, who has also gained fame as an animator for Walt Disney films. Join us to learn more about his books and career and to enjoy his wacky style.

**Saturday 18 July, 15h–16h for ages 6–12**

## **Boggle Bonanza!**

Never played Boggle before? Or are you a Boggle champion? Beginners and pros are welcome to join the children's librarian for a fun game of Boggle in English. Have fun playing in teams or individually.

**Saturday 25 July, 15h–16h, for ages 9+**

**More featured authors and readings in August ... Join us for classics and favorites ...**

## **Reading aloud for the very young**



**Ages 1-3:** Mother Goose Lap-Sit.  
Thursdays 10h30–11h00  
Drop in sessions: No sign-up needed.  
*Rhymes, songs, and stories in English*  
**4 & 25 June, 2 & 30 July, 27 August**

**Ages 3-5:** Story Hour. 10h30–11h30 or 14h30–15h30 drop-in sessions every Wednesday.

*Children attending lap-sit or story hour must have their own library card, or be covered by a family membership.*

*For all children's and teen events (except story hours and lap-sits), sign-up is required and space is limited. Please call the Library at 01 53 59 12 60 or email the children's librarian, at [hstath@gmail.com](mailto:hstath@gmail.com). Unless otherwise stated, all programs are free for Library members and 9€ for non-members.*

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday 23 June 19h30

*Evenings with an Expert* Lecture and slide show by **Robert Rubin**, chairman of the Centre Pompidou Foundation and owner of the modernist masterpiece La Maison de Verre.

Wednesday 24 June 19h30

*Evenings with an Author* Journalist and humorist **Susan Jane Gilman** on her memoir 'Undress Me in the Temple of Heaven.'

Wednesday 1 July 19h30

*Evenings with an Author* Prize-winning author **Joseph O'Neill** reads from his critically-acclaimed novel 'Netherland.'

Saturday 4 July 10h00-19h00

**Used Book Sale** all day at the Library.

Wednesday 8 July 19h30

*Evenings with an Author* **Sichan Siv**, former US Ambassador to the UN, presents 'Golden Bones: An Extraordinary Journey from Hell in Cambodia to a New Life in America.'

Saturday 1 August 10h00-19h00

**Used Book Sale** all day at the Library.

## ART ON VIEW

### ***Adaptations: Moving from Print to Film***

*Tuesday 30 June through Saturday 26 September.*

From the Classics to the *Da Vinci Code*, Hollywood has brought many successful books or plays to the silver screen. In this exhibit, discover the variety of materials that have been adapted.

## ***And after the Rentrée***

Wednesday 9 September 19h30

*Evenings with an Author* Former U.S. Ambassador to France **Felix Rohatyn** on the steps towards economic recovery.

Wednesday 16 September 19h30

*Evenings with an Author* **Thad Carhart** on his new novel, 'Across the Endless River.'

Tuesday 22 September 19h30

During **A Night at the Movies** with Judith Merians, compare excerpts from books and plays with scenes from the film versions.

Saturday 26 September

**Open House** at the Library: tours and more.

## Coming this fall...

◇ Book groups ◇ Evenings with an Author ◇ Talk about Art ◇ A Night at the Movies ◇ Writers on Writing ◇ Game Day ◇ Evenings with an Expert ◇ Check the website for updates!

# RECOMMENDED READING

## ***New on the shelves***

**THE PIANO TEACHER.** Janice Y. K. Lee

**ANGELS AND AGES.** Adam Gopnik

**THINGS I'VE BEEN SILENT ABOUT.** Azar Nafizi

**THE BISHOP'S DAUGHTER.** Honor Moore.

**TALK TALK.** T. C. Boyle

**THE OTHER QUEEN.** Philippa Gregory.

## **Need a great novel?**

Try **NoveList**, an electronic readers' advisory database, accessible from designated Library computers. **NoveList**, updated every month, contains full-text reviews of picture books, children's "chapter" books, young adult titles and books for adults. In addition to these reviews, there are annotations and summaries, all fully searchable. Theme-oriented book lists are available for every reading level (great for book group ideas) and many entries include links to Web sites with information about the author.

## ***Fiction***

**HOME.** By Marilynne Robinson. Unanimous choice for the 2009 Orange Prize, a profound story of family relationships and redemption.

**THE READER.** By Bernard Schlink. The book behind the movie. Kate Winslet won an Oscar for her portrayal of Hanna, an enigmatic woman hiding a terrible secret.

## ***Non-fiction***

**BETWEEN MEALS: AN APPETITE FOR PARIS**

By A. J. Liebling. First published in 1963, the *New Yorker* writer discusses his apprenticeship in the fine art of Parisian eating.

**THE MOTHER-DAUGHTER BOOK CLUB**

By Shireen Dodson and Teresa Barker. The subtitle of the book says it all, 'How ten busy mothers and daughters came together to talk, laugh, and learn through their love of reading.'

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# NEW TRUSTEES

Six new trustees of the American Library in Paris were elected at the Annual General Meeting on June 9. Irina Boulin-Ghica, Rene de Monseignat, Caroline de Navacelle, Luis Roth, Mary Lee Turner, and Nadine Voisin, whose biographies appear below, join the board for three-year terms.



Photo Loup Besmond

**IRINA BOULIN-GHICA** was special advisor to the secretary-general of the French presidency of the European Union. In recent years she has served as cultural counselor and head of the French Cultural Institute in Bucharest, Romania; head of the European and International Affairs Department in the French Prime Minister's media directorate; and head of department in the French General Secretariat for European Affairs. Prior to joining the French civil service in 1994, she was an editor at Reuter's News Agency and at the BBC World Service. A graduate of the Ecole Nationale d'Administration and the Sorbonne, she is married to Antoine Boulin; they have three children.

**RENE de MONSEIGNAT**, following 24 years as a partner at Donovan Leisure/LeBoeuf Lamb, and 12 years at Cleary Gottlieb and Shearman & Sterling, is now an independent counsel advising international families in respect of their corporate assets and philanthropic ventures, in particular through private foundations. He also serves as a director on the board of entities controlled by these families or foundations. Born in Monaco in 1946, he was educated at the Universities of Nice and Paris, the Academy of International Law in The Hague, Sciences-Po and the Sorbonne. He is a member of the Order of Malta and a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur; he has two daughters.



**CAROLINE de NAVACELLE** is a Conférencière Nationale (lecturer) of the Ministère de la Culture and Ministère du Tourisme, a professional qualification she earned partly through her work experience as a docent at the Art Institute of Chicago and a guide at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Chicago. A graduate of the Sorbonne (Maîtrise d'Histoire), N.Y.U. (M.A.) and l'Ecole du Louvre, she currently lectures at the Grand Palais and the Gobelins and conducts architecture tours in Paris. Her husband, Gilles, is president of the Fondation de Coubertin, which promotes high-end craftsmanship. They have five children.

**LUIS ROTH** is a partner in the Paris office of Linklaters, the international law firm, where he has worked since 2001 in the capital markets department. Born in 1972, he is a graduate of Yale College (1994) and Columbia University School of Law (1997), and recently completed six years as a member of the vestry of the American Cathedral in Paris. He and his wife, Jennifer Dalrymple, have two children.



**MARY LEE TURNER** recently retired as executive director of the Asia Society Hong Kong Center. She also worked for over thirty years for IBM in marketing and communications as well as finance and planning. She is a graduate of Vanderbilt University. She and her husband, Edward Turner, have one daughter.

**NADINE VOISIN** is a partner in the Paris office of Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP, specializing in employment law. After graduating in business law from the University of Paris II and obtaining a post-graduate degree in European law in 1979, she entered the Paris office of the Dutch law firm Nauta Dutilh, where she was in charge of the labor law group. In 1997, she joined the law firm Moisand, Boutin et Associés, where she developed a labor law practice. She joined Hughes Hubbard & Reed as a partner in 1999. She and her husband, Jean-Patrick, have two children.



# LIBRARY GOVERNANCE

## The Spring Appeal

The Library's spring appeal for donations from the membership and our friends around the world surpassed expectations, and nearly tripled last spring's figures, by garnering more than €22,000 in contributions ranging from €25 to €3,000. These contributions are among the many ways the Library's operations and services are supported beyond income from membership fees.

## Comings and goings

**Abigail Altman**, who has done so much to enhance the library's programming and development efforts, has become the librarian at Ermitage International School in Maisons-Laffitte. We wish her every success in her new professional challenge.

Her successor as programs manager is **Ann Mah**, Paris blogger, former book editor, and author of the forthcoming novel "Kitchen Chinese."

**Ariel Vanderpool**, after a too-brief time on our circulation staff, is returning to her job as a librarian at the Stanford University Medical Libraries. We wish her the best.



*Ann Mah*

## Statistically speaking

*(Continued from page one)*

more than 100 people (David Sedaris, Ted Stanger and Jean-Marie Colombani on the US presidential elections, David Lodge, Don Morrison on the death of French culture, and the panel discussion 'I Married a Frenchman').

□ The library membership's composition by country of origin — as declared on membership forms — also remained constant, reflecting the often-underappreciated diversity of our community.

About 35 percent of the members claim the United States as their country of origin, 23 percent France, and 7 percent United Kingdom, with notable populations in descending order from: Canada, Korea, Australia, Ireland, German, India, Italy, New Zealand, Japan, Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium, Algeria, Turkey, and 33 other countries.

About 3 percent list themselves as 'binational,' a figure that almost certainly understates the fact. A hefty twelve percent — 244 members — did not specify a country.

The Library's 2008 Annual Report is available at the Library and for downloading from our website. See the Newsletter & Reports page.

Also available on the website or for inspection at the Library are the 2008 financial statements, as audited by Deloitte & Associates, of the American Library in Paris, Inc. and of the American Library in Paris—USA Foundation.

## 2009 Annual Meeting

## New trustees, new councils

Six new trustees were elected to the board of the American Library in Paris, Inc., at the Annual General Meeting of the Library on Tuesday 9 June.

They are Irina Boulin-Ghica, a French foreign ministry official, Mary Lee Turner, former executive director of the Asia Society Hong Kong Center, museum *conferencièr*e Caroline de Navacelle, and Paris attorneys Luis Roth, Nadine Voisin, and René de Monseignat. Their profiles are on the facing page.

Leaving the board due to the end of their terms are its vice chairman, Sarah de Lencquesaing, its treasurer, Sally Warren, and its secretary, Ishtar Méjanès, as well as Diane Johnson, Betty Turock, and James Lowenstein. Trustee Walter Wells has also resigned. The United States Embassy liaison officer who has served as the U.S. ambassador's representative on the Library board, Dr. Cynthia Doell, has stepped down for a new diplomatic assignment.

Board Chairman William Torchiana and Library director Charles Trueheart paid tribute to the outgoing trustees in their remarks at the gala dinner June 4.

Torchiana also announced that the board had voted to create two new councils that will advise the board and assist in the Library's efforts to raise its profile and its endowment. An advisory council, chaired by Ambassador Lowenstein, will be composed initially of outgoing trustees Méjanès, Turock, and Wells, as well as by Pierre-Louis Roederer and Jean Perrette.

A Writer's Council being organized by Diane Johnson initially will include authors Julian Barnes, Mavis Gallant, Philippe Labro, and Adam Gopnik. It will advise the Library on its collections and consider other ways of raising the Library's literary profile.

Under the annual changes of board officers and committee assignments, Torchiana will remain as chairman, David Chaffetz has become vice chairman, Etienne Gorse has become treasurer, and Jonathan Schur has become secretary. The three other members of the reconstituted board's executive committee are assistant secretary Celestine Bohlen and at-large members Shelley de Rouvray and Nicolas ver Hulst.

# SCENES AT THE GALA

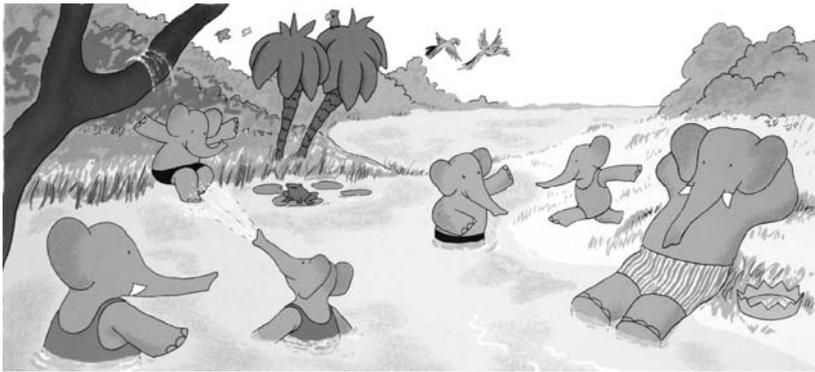


*Clockwise from top left: Leslie Caron reads Babar stories; Laurent de Brunhoff speaks at the conclusion of the dinner; Alison Lurie; left to right: former US Ambassador Craig Stapleton, board of trustees chairman William Torchiana, guest Anthony Nahas and trustee Diane Johnson; Pierre Le Tan's original invitation for the Babar dinner; and, at center, children's librarian Helen Stathopulos and volunteer Walter Wilson. Photos by David Bacher*



*For a slide show of gala and book-signing events, please visit our website.*

# A DINNER, AN AUCTION, A TRIBUTE



**'What Could be Better than Swimming in Summer?' by Laurent de Brunhoff, one of four prints auctioned silently at the gala dinner.**

**Courtesy Mary Ryan Gallery, New York**

## A son's tribute to his father

*What follows are excerpts from Laurent de Brunhoff's remarks at the 2009 gala. The full texts of his remarks, and of Alison Lurie's, may be read on the Library website.*

It is impossible for me to accept your praise without myself paying tribute to my father, the creator of the character Babar, the founder of the city of Celesteville...

I don't think my father, Jean de Brunhoff, ever imagined himself as anything but a painter. Having studied with Orthon Friesz, one of the masters of Fauvism, he nevertheless remained to the side of avant-garde movements. He was not attracted by the spectacular.

In 1924 Jean de Brunhoff married the daughter of a doctor, Cecile Sabouraud, my mother. ... She occasionally told us stories, and one day she told us the story of a little elephant who ran away from a hunter and arrived at a great city. There he dresses like a man and eventually returns to the jungle by car to be crowned king of the elephants. We liked this story so much we told it to our father, who decided to have some fun by turning it into an illustrated book for us...

My father's brothers and friends were enthusiastic about Babar and encouraged publication. Jardin des Modes brought out the first edition in 1931. Discovering in himself the soul of a storyteller, my father continued Babar with passion. ...

In October of 1937, my father died at the age of 37.... Today I have long since passed the age my father was at the time of his death. When I first brought Babar back to life, when I was twenty, with my first book, *Ce Coquin d'Arthur*, I did it because I wanted to go on having the elephant's company. And I have had had his company throughout my life.

I have been drawing Babar for over sixty years. I've written and illustrated over thirty Babar books. In some way Babar has become mine. But I never forget that Babar was created by my father.

## Gala...

*(continued from page 1)*

the gala for her imagination and dedication to the most active corner of the Library.

A silent auction during the course of the gala evening put on offer four Laurent de Brunhoff serigraphs of Babar and his family. After active bidding during the dinner hour, the same purchaser made the winning offers on all four and garnered the Library €6,500.

The gala as a whole netted more than €50,000, exceeding budgeted expectations.

Among the other guests at the dinner were novelist and memoirist Michael Mewshaw and Pierre-Alain Tilliette, *conservateur en chef* at the city of Paris library in the Hotel de Ville. Former U.S. ambassador to France Craig Stapleton also stopped in to the cocktail hour to convey his good wishes.

The sponsors of the Library gala were The Annenberg Foundation, Clifford Chance LLP, Alain and Shelley de Rouvray, Edouard-Francois and Sarah de Lencquesaing, Charmaine Donnelly and Gerard Pfauwadel, Jean-Francois and Ishtar Méjanès, Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, and Marshall and Deborah Wais. Significant in-kind contributions to the gala were also made by the sponsors recognized below by their logos.

The gala effort, with six months in planning, was spearheaded by trustee Shelley de Rouvray, with volunteer assistance by Elizabeth Wise, Christina Papanikolas, Caroline de Navacelle, Elizabeth Hochman, Lynn Kelley, Mary Schmemann, Walter Wilson, Claire Fong, and Ann Mah. Abigail Altman of the Library staff supported those efforts with other key roles played by Naida Kendrick Culshaw, Helene Wiesenfeld, and Helen Stathopulos.

For information about getting involved with next year's gala, contact Shelley de Rouvray at [coquille\\_1999@yahoo.com](mailto:coquille_1999@yahoo.com)



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# AT THE LIBRARY

## Bee-ing there

Twenty-five finalists from eighteen schools in the Paris region competed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Paris Spelling Bee on Sunday 7 June, hosted by Gifted in France at the American Library.

Twelve-year-old Jimmy Root from Ecole Active Bilingue Jeannine Manuel won the first prize for the Cheetahs, the 10-13 year olds, besting last year's champion, Amelie Matisse, in the 25<sup>th</sup> round by spelling the word *ufology* correctly. Eleven-year-old Matisse, from EAB Parc Monceau, sparred with Root in 13 rounds before taking the second place trophy.

Nine-year-old Loic Lescoat from Ecole Michel-Ange took the first prize among the Gazelles, the 7-9-year-olds, in the 22<sup>nd</sup> round following a heated battle with 9-year-old Niamh Howley from Institut de l'Assomption-Lubeck. Lescoat's winning word was *pesticide* after a 14-round duo with Howley, who won the second place trophy. Howley also attends the Roaming School House (RSH) for English instruction.

Both first place winners received a one-year family membership to the American Library in Paris. W. H. Smith bookstore and the Library donated books to the contestants, while the RSH contributed to the cost of trophies. Library Director Charles Trueheart and journalist Anne Swardson presided at the event as the official word pronouncers.

The event, preceded by preliminary practice sessions during the spring months, was a community enrichment activity organized by Gifted in France. For more information about Gifted in France or next year's third annual Spelling Bee at the Library, please visit [giftedinfrance.blogspot.com](http://giftedinfrance.blogspot.com)



Photo Mark Howley

**Winners and runners-up at the Gifted in France/American Library Spelling Bee: from left, Loic Lescoat, Niamh Howley, Jimmy Root, and Amelie Matisse.**

## Books at your doorstep

Student volunteers are making themselves available to deliver Library materials to older or housebound members living in the city of Paris.

If you'd like to receive a delivery (or if you are willing to volunteer to deliver books), please contact Naida Kendrick Culshaw at 01 53 59 12 65, or send an email to [culshaw@americanlibraryinparis.org](mailto:culshaw@americanlibraryinparis.org).

## A gift that gives year-round

If you're stuck for the perfect gift idea for the reader, researcher, or student in your life, you're stuck no longer. Make a gift of an annual membership to the American Library in Paris. Check the website for membership plans, or inquire at the Library for details.

## The Library — tote-ally!

Our new navy tote bags are available at the Library for just 10€. They are made of heavy-duty cotton with convenient shoulder straps. Carry your books and promote the Library. The tote bag makes a great gift, too.

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