

The First



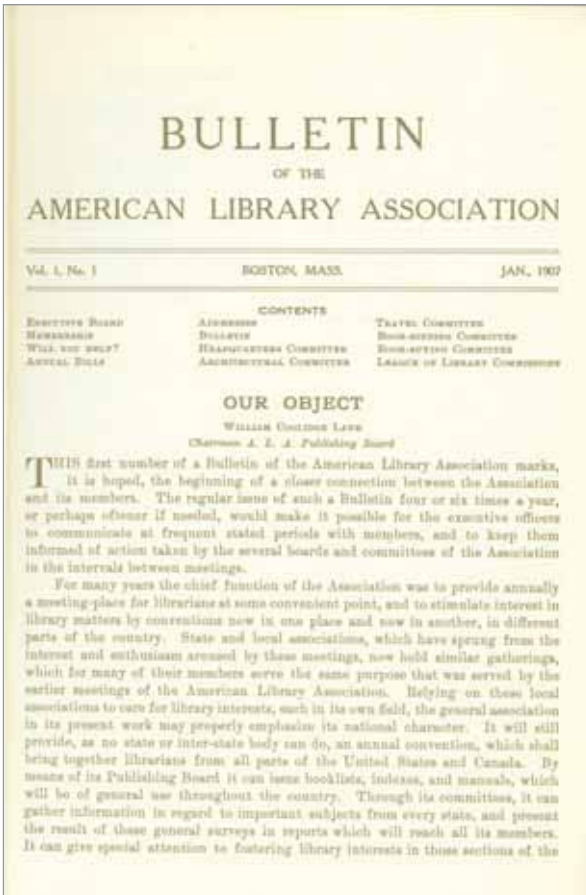
100



YEARS

In its first 100 years, ALA's member journal grew from the *Bulletin of the American Library Association*—largely a way for executive officers to communicate with members, with content consisting mostly of conference proceedings, reports, and membership listings and information—into *American Libraries*, the four-color news-and-features magazine it is today.

1907-1910



1907

The January premiere issue includes a memo from publishing board chairman William Coolidge Lane challenging ALA members to respond to the content of the *Bulletin* as promptly as "to a written letter enclosed under a two cent stamp."

1908

The *Bulletin* is designated as the "official organ" of ALA, an action prompted by the sale to R. R. Bowker of *Library Journal*, which had served as ALA's journal from its founding in 1876.

1909

ALA's finances are often presented with "such circumstantial minuteness" that the plain facts "are not readily apparent save to the few who are closely concerned with its budget and bills," explains the *Bulletin* in presenting its yearly summary. The Association's balance as of January 1, 1908: \$949.59.

1909

First photographs appear: "photomicrographs" of the magnified edges of sheets of paper.

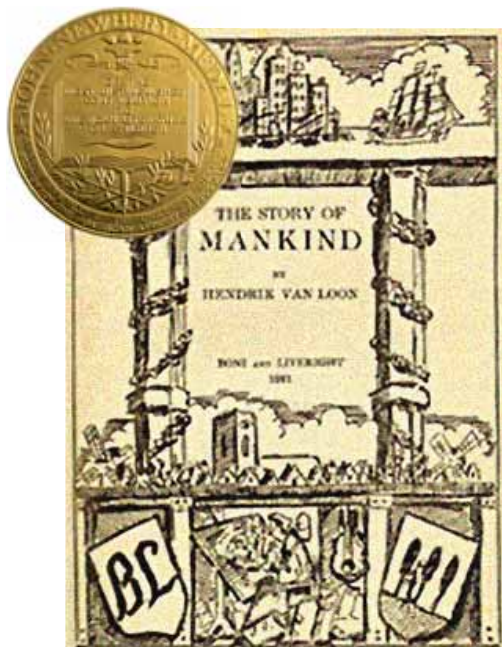


1909

ALA Headquarters opens in the Chicago Public Library in a 50-by-60-foot room the *Bulletin* calls "splendidly lighted" by nine chandeliers.



1910-1930



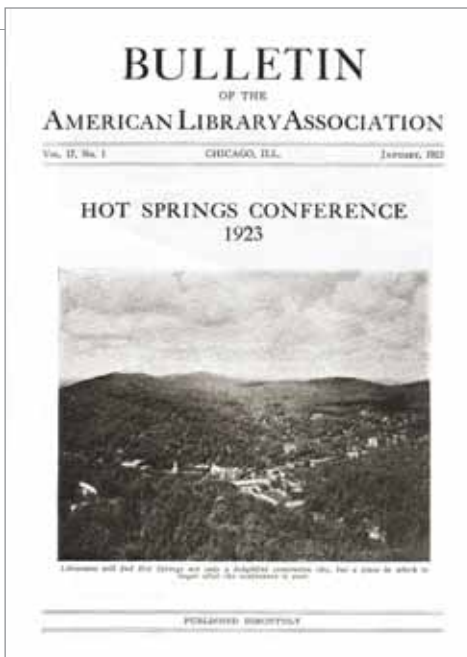
1922

Early awards coverage noted that “the hall was full to capacity, many people were turned away,” when the first John Newbery Medal was presented to Hendrik Willem van Loon for *The Story of Mankind*.

The Bulletin begins publishing salary statistics for large public libraries in the U.S., as compiled by ALA’s Committee on Salaries.

1923

Cover photographs are introduced with the January image of Hot Springs, Arkansas, the site of that year’s Annual Conference.



1917

ALA responds to the April 6 declaration of war by appointing a war services committee to establish what the *Bulletin* calls “direct official relations with the War Department” in order to provide library service to American armed forces.

1918

Ongoing coverage of the war effort says ALA’s Million Dollar Campaign to raise funds for camp libraries nearly doubled its goal, generating a total of \$1.73 million.

1928

Adult education became a major content focus. The expansion of the Association and its expense draws criticism from John Cotton Dana in a letter published in the January issue, demanding full and accurate financial reports.

1917

1918

1922

1923

1927

1930-1940

1930

The “Reading with a Purpose” series of pamphlets on popular topics is featured on the cover.

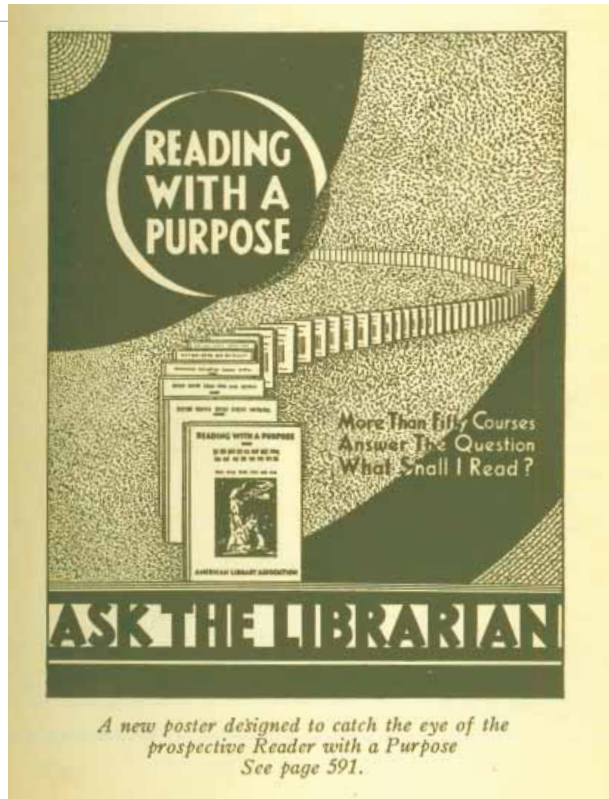
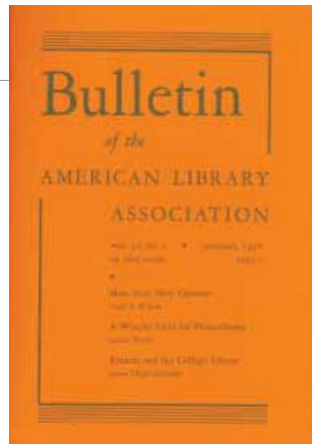


1931

Beatrice Sawyer Russell is the *Bulletin's* first named editor.

1932

ALA raises its dues to revamp the *Bulletin*, giving the journal a new look and adding articles and departments.



1934

“To Unemployed Librarians,” begins a memo to readers from ALA’s personnel division, offering advice on registering to find work in a number of rapidly developing federally funded library projects during the Great Depression.

1936

Because the original Social Security Act virtually excludes librarians from retirement benefits, ALA promotes its own library retirement plan through the *Bulletin*. “Get under the wire before the cost goes up,” urges ALA comptroller R. E. Dooley in the September issue.

1937

“ALA Activities—Commendable or Condemnable?”, a published discussion from that year’s Pacific Northwest Library Association, takes stock of ALA’s success in several areas, including recruitment, salaries, and its stand on censorship.

1939

The name is shortened to *ALA Bulletin*.

1930

1931

1932

1934

1936

1937

1939

1940-1945



1940

The Progressive Librarians Council sends a "peace telegram" to President Franklin D. Roosevelt during the year's conference, which the Executive Board unanimously condemns, saying the telegram's wording "might be interpreted to mean that the ALA itself had taken action," as Executive Secretary Carl H. Milam writes in the June issue.

1945

Offices move into ALA's first purchased headquarters building, the Cyrus McCormick mansion, as "expansion in our present quarters is impossible," reports the June issue.

An article by Elizabeth R. Jordan addresses how libraries can help demobilized servicemen "switchback" to normal life.

1942

As libraries become increasingly involved in national defense activities, the January *Bulletin* includes a manual for directors of the Victory Book Campaign, a massive drive to collect books for servicemen.

1943

Wartime restrictions on travel cause the cancellation of the Annual Conference, as well as the August issue of the *Bulletin*.

1944

The *Bulletin* publishes a six-page list of U.S. and Canadian ALA members in the armed forces, 1940-1944.



1945

Libraries and War Bond Campaign makes the May 1945 cover.



1940

1942

1943

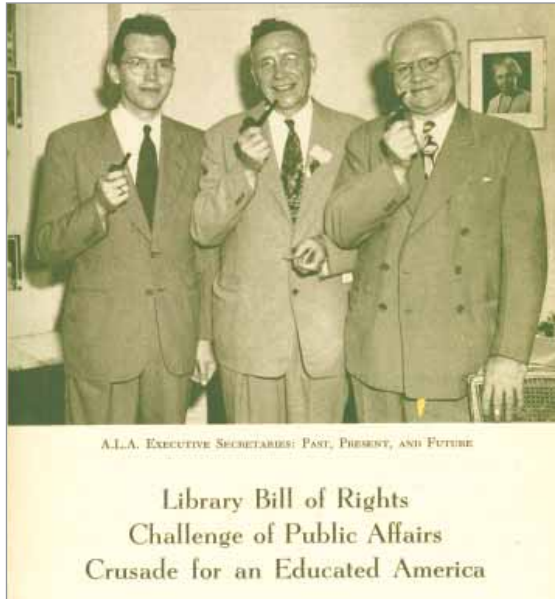
1944

1945

1945-1950

1947

Staff shortages after World War II mean "opportunities in library service have never been greater . . . for the individual librarian with professional education in library science who is young, personable, venturesome, able, and relatively inexperienced," according to an April article by Hazel B. Timmerman.



1948

At the Atlantic City Annual Conference, ALA Council adopts the Library Bill of Rights, which is then published in the July-August issue. Gracing the cover (left to right): ALA Executive Secretaries John MacKenzie Cory (future), Harold F. Brigham (interim), and Carl H. Milam (past).

1948

President Harry S. Truman issues a United Nations Day proclamation and makes the October cover, with ALA International Relations Office Director Frederick Cromwell.

1948

The *Bulletin* begins carrying advertisements—and from such big names as the *New York Times*, Gaylord, Wiley, Demco, Random House, and *World Book*. The *Handbook* is removed and published as a separate work.

1949

Damage from an earthquake lands Seattle Public Library on the May cover.



1947

1948

1949

1950-1960



1952

Eleanor Roosevelt speaks at a conference general session on the topic "Books Are Basic for Better International Relations" and graces the cover of the May issue.

Ransom L. Richardson is named AL editor.



1953

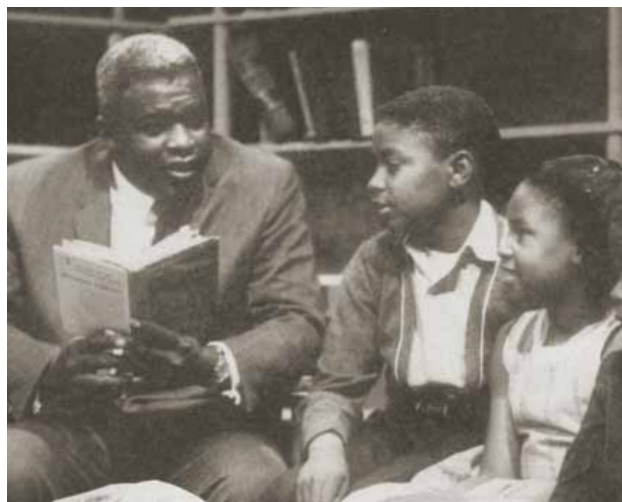
Marilyn Monroe makes the pages of the *Bulletin* in February as part of a feature showcasing Los Angeles libraries and their holdings, in anticipation of the upcoming summer conference there. The November issue theme is "Intellectual Freedom."

1957

Samray Smith becomes AL editor and serves for 10 years.

1956

Big news in AL: President Eisenhower signs the Library Services Act, predecessor to the Library Services and Construction Act.



1958

With the slogan "Wake Up and Read," the first National Library Week takes place March 16-22 as a massive effort by the National Book Committee, in cooperation with ALA, newspapers, radio and TV networks, publishers, advertising firms, library suppliers, and other organizations.



1960

Reading Out Loud, a series of 30-minute television programs featuring such public figures as Eleanor Roosevelt, Sen. John F. Kennedy, and Jackie Robinson (above) reading to children, begins broadcasting and results in extensive coverage.

1952

1953

1956

1957

1958

1960

1960-1970

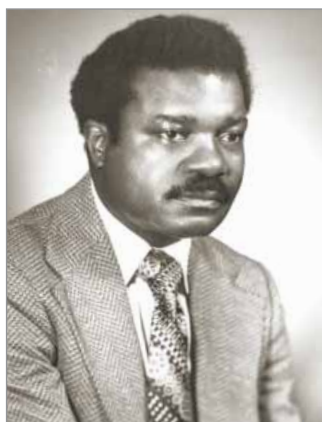


1961

A July-August cover story: A report of the American library mission to Russia by Rutherford D. Rogers is called "Yes, Ivan Reads," and details a tour that took in over 40 libraries and places of professional interest in five Soviet cities.

1961

As ALA breaks ground for its new headquarters building, the *Bulletin* staff says goodbye to the old building and offers a sneak preview of the "extremely functional, glistening white structure, thrusting itself five stories into the air."



1964

In the same year that President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act, the issue sees ink in the *Bulletin* when African-American ALA member E. J. Josey leads a protest against segregation at Association chapter conferences.



1969

The February cover features a powerful image of an "educational and cultural drop-out" hanging out on the streets, a call for social responsibility.

1961

1964

1969

1970-1980



1970

Council sessions at Annual Conference in Detroit include fiery debate over the war in Vietnam. *AL* records a roll-call vote on a successful resolution to avoid the issue.

1970

Under the editorship of Gerald Shields, the *Bulletin* gets a makeover and becomes *American Libraries*, with a cover image that mocks the librarian stereotype.



1972

AL takes a look back at “two decisive decades” in library legislation, including the establishment of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science under President Nixon in 1970.

1975

Before the invention of Photoshop, *AL* illustrates the May theme, “Challenging Sacred Cows,” by hand-blending a photo of a library interior with images of cows shot from reference books.



1974

AL Editor John Gordon Burke—who added literary features and continued Gerald Shields’ (left) critical approach to ALA politics—and three other editors resign over a freedom-of-expression flap. Later that year, Arthur Plotnik (right) is named editor.



1970

1972

1974

1975

1970-1980

1975

ALA Council sets "Policy 10.2," a balance between AL editorial initiative and responsibilities as an official voice of ALA. The advisory committee is established.

1977

The November "Money" issue features models posing with a Cadillac in Chicago's financial district. Inside: financial advice, including "grants and how to get them."



1975

A December cover story on "Washington Library Power" aims to provide a "helpful account of what can and cannot be expected of our friends in Washington, and a lively guide to how it all works."

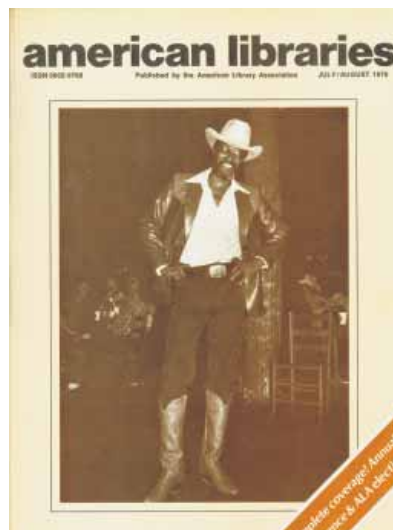


1976

In ALA's centennial year, the June issue devotes 54 pages to interviews with 29 library workers in an attempt to capture a "national profile of the American librarian."

1979

Some 900 delegates hear President Jimmy Carter address the first White House Conference on Library and Information Services. "You've got a friend in the White House," he promised.



1979

The July/August cover features ALA Executive Director Robert Wedgworth modeling full cowboy gear for the Annual Conference in Dallas.

1975

1976

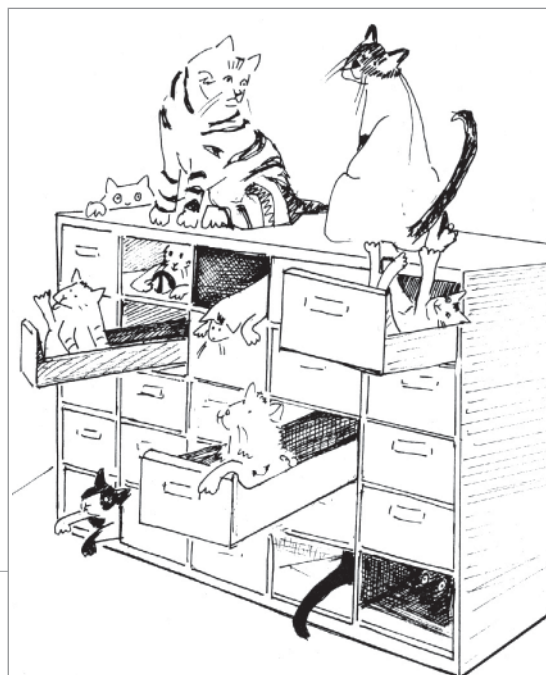
1979

1980-1990



1980

"School libraries, too!" was the message reported in November, after ALA's American Association of School Librarians national conference, where speakers included feminist Gloria Steinem.



1982

As card catalogs go online, affectionately known as "card cats," AL sponsors a popular "101 uses for a dead catalog contest." Among the facetious winning entries: Wire the drawers so users can be weaned from the card catalog by electric shock.

1980

When Illinois fails to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment by Midwinter, members push for conferences in pro-ERA states only, and create abundant opinion pieces for the magazine.



1981

ALA's new headquarters is dedicated October 27, with AL offices on the third floor, where they remain in 2007.

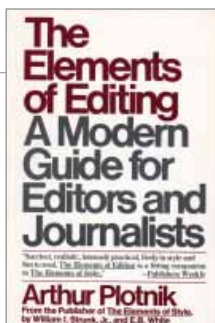


1982

As the first U.S. postage stamp honoring all of America's libraries debuts at annual conference in Philadelphia, AL offers a tour of library stamps from around the world in June.

1982

Macmillan publishes AL Editor Art Plotnik's *The Elements of Editing*, destined to become a standard journalism text.



1985

Librarians protest apartheid at Midwinter, calling for an information boycott of South Africa because of its constitutionally racist system, and landing a full page of photos in the February issue.



1980-1990

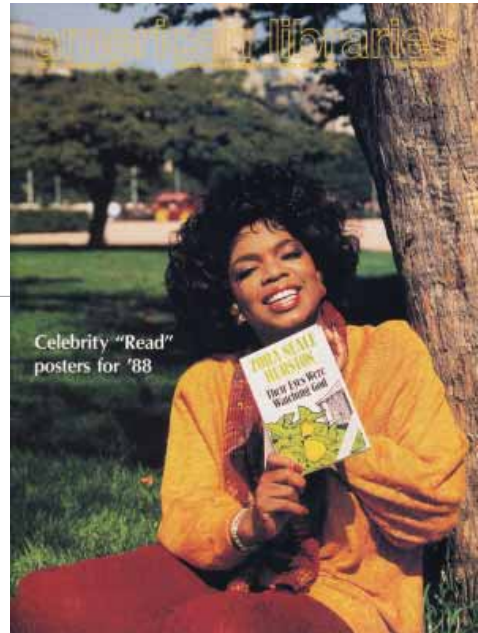


1986

In January, the “Mar-ryin’ the Librarian” article by Paul Benjamin Wiener takes a look at two-librarian marriages, to the ire of gay readers who say the article “rendered them invisible” with its “heterosexism.”

1987

Years before her book club but already the star of TV’s number-one rated talk show, Oprah Winfrey’s ALA Read poster makes the November cover.



1988

The transcript from a closed meeting of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science reveals that the FBI’s controversial Library Awareness Program was more widespread than previously known. ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom Director Judith Krug organizes resistance, and in 1990 AL publishes a guide for librarians to use in requesting their FBI files.

1989

Linda Crismond becomes the first woman to serve as ALA executive director. Thomas Gaughan is named AL editor. Three years later, the editorial staff struggles with how to exercise its editorial independence to report the Executive Board’s refusal to explain her mysterious departure.



1989

Iran’s Ayatollah Khomeini sentences Salman Rushdie to death for *The Satanic Verses*, outraging librarians everywhere. ALA protests with a full-page ad in the *New York Times*, which is reproduced in an April article on the library community’s quick response.

**In support of the publication
of Salman Rushdie’s book
THE SATANIC VERSES**

FREE PEOPLE WRITE BOOKS

FREE PEOPLE PUBLISH BOOKS

FREE PEOPLE SELL BOOKS

FREE PEOPLE BUY BOOKS

FREE PEOPLE READ BOOKS

In the spirit of America’s commitment to free expression we inform the public that this book will be available to readers at bookstores and libraries throughout the country.

American Booksellers Association
Association of American Publishers
American Library Association

1986

1987

1988

1989

1990-2000

1990

In May, Michael Gorman publishes “A Bogus and Dismal Science,” fueling the raging debate over the “I” word (information) vs. the “L” word (library) in the names of library-education schools.

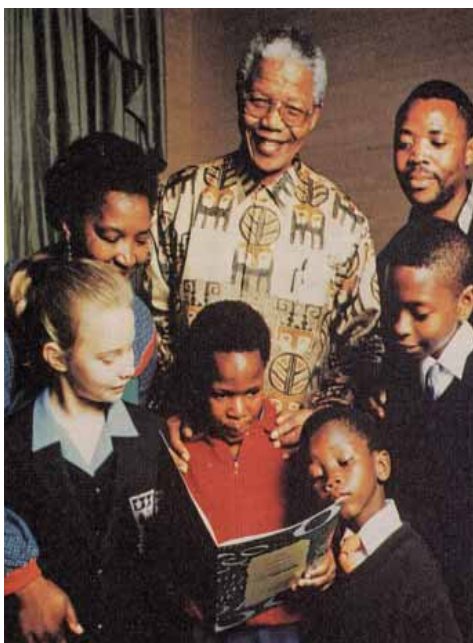


1991

A coup d'état interrupts the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions conference in Moscow, giving AL a front-row seat at a world-changing event.

1992

After being fired from *Wilson Library Bulletin* over a column on “Librarians and Sex,” Will Manley becomes a columnist for *AL*—and soon its most popular.



1992

The July/August cover featuring members of ALA's Gay and Lesbian Task Force marching in San Francisco's Gay Pride parade prompts an avalanche of responses from offended readers.



1994

March coverage of a major earthquake in the Los Angeles area ushers in an era of expanded disaster reporting.

1995

In the July/August issue, “Anatomy of the Book Boycott” by F. W. Lancaster and Lorraine J. Haricombe analyzes the effectiveness of U.S. librarians boycotting South Africa over apartheid and concludes that change is more likely to result from “effective communication than from its restriction.”

1995

ALA launches www.ala.org; it changes forever the way news and information are delivered to readers. *AL* joins the revolution in June with the debut of the “Internet Librarian” column by Karen G. Schneider.

AL editors write and publish the popular guide for library advocates, “12 Ways Libraries Are Good for the Country.”

1996

Leonard Kniffel is officially named *AL* editor after eight months as interim.

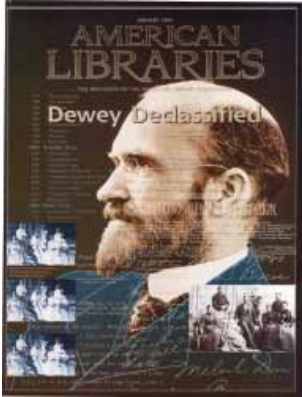
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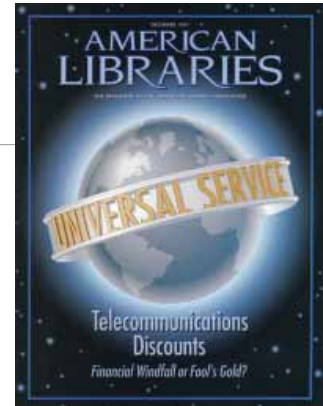
1995

1990-2000



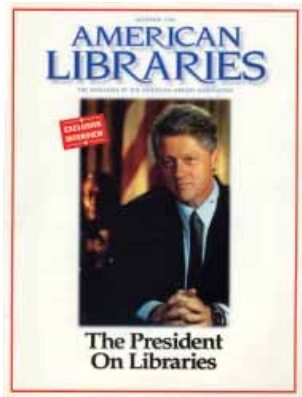
1996

In January Melvil Dewey makes the cover for the first time, years after his death. “Dewey Declassified” is an excerpt from *Irresponsible Reformer* by Wayne Wiegand.



1997

The December AL explains that universal service discounts for libraries and schools through the Telecommunications Act of 1996 mean much-needed savings, but not without hassles.



1996

An AL exclusive features newly re-elected President Bill Clinton, who shares his views on library funding, the internet, and the Communications Decency Act.

1997

American Libraries Online launches December 15.

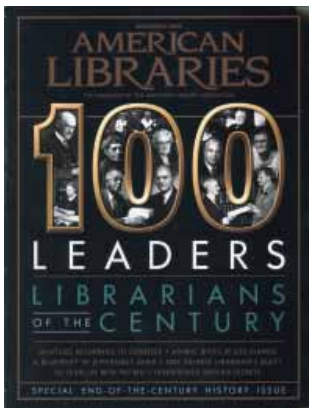


1997

Bill and Melinda Gates establish the Gates Library Foundation with a gift of \$200 million to assist public libraries in providing internet access. AL is on the scene at the Alabama kickoff the following February.

1996

In March, an interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, “Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks,” fuels national debate over the right of children to unfiltered access in libraries and media centers.



1999

The December issue features AL’s look back at the 100 most influential librarians and library advocates of the 20th century and features a pullout timeline of library history.

1999

In September, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer’s* school librarian Rupert Giles offers a heroic new image for the profession—and makes the cover.



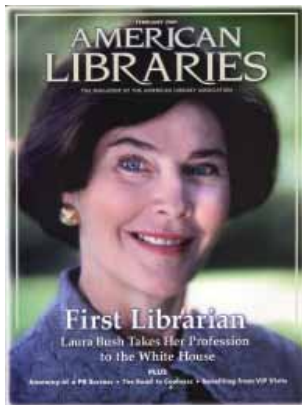
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2000-2007



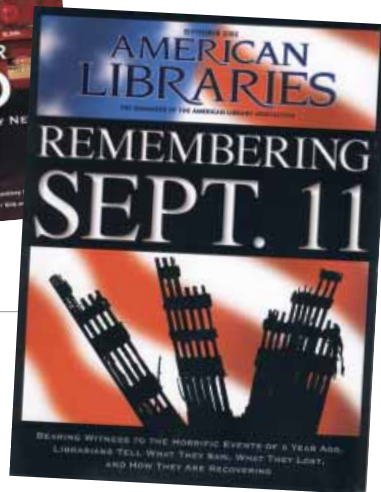
2001

Former school librarian and new First Lady Laura Bush takes her profession to the White House; *AL* follows her agenda as later that year she hosts the Library of Congress's first National Book Festival.



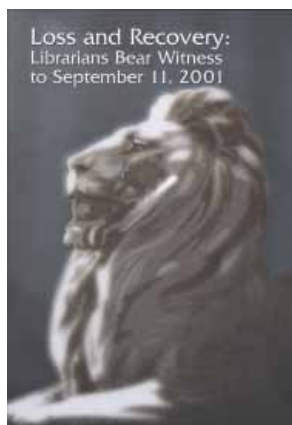
2001

Libraries represent stability to a nation traumatized by the 9/11 terrorist attacks.



2000

ALA Editions publishes a third edition of *AL* Senior Editor George M. Eberhart's bestselling *Whole Library Handbook*, with a preview of "tantalizing tidbits" in the February issue.



2002

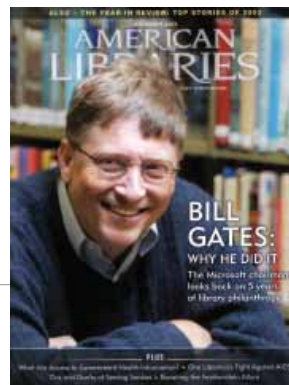
Librarians tell their story in *AL*'s video documentary *Loss and Recovery: Librarians Bear Witness to September 11, 2001*.

In August, cultural critic and Annual Conference keynoter Robert Hughes warns of the threat of patriotic correctness in an exclusive cover story, "Free Libraries, Free Society."



2002

Critics of the USA Patriot Act question its provision giving the FBI access to examine library records, as coverage of post-9/11 legal issues intensifies.



2003

In an exclusive interview, Bill Gates looks back on five years of library philanthropy.

2003

Librarians Mary Minow, Skip Auld, and Blaise Cronin weigh in with controversial takes on the Children's Internet Protection Act in "Who Pays for Free Speech?" in the February issue.

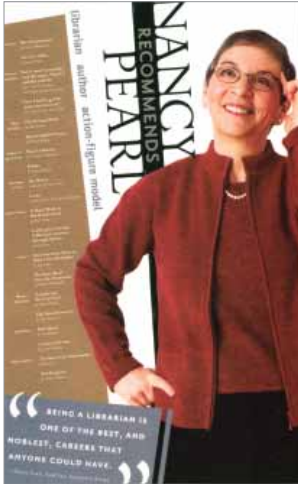
2000

2001

2002

2003

2000-2007

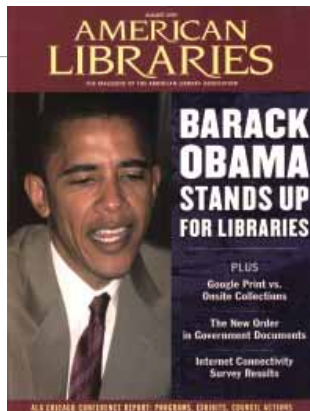


2005

Book Lust author and Librarian Action Figure model Nancy Pearl talks about her life as a reader and readers' advisor in the May issue.

2005

Rising political star Barack Obama draws an enormous crowd at the Annual Conference opening session; his speech is adapted for an exclusive August cover story.



2005

StoryCorps founder Dave Isay calls the December cover story "possibly the best ever written on StoryCorps," the national oral history project.



2006

ALA adopts new ways to reach readers: In January, the magazine introduces *American Libraries Direct*, a weekly electronic newsletter exclusively for ALA members; in June, "Technically Speaking" columnist Andrew Pace begins his blog, Hectic Pace. JobLIST takes off in August.



2006

ALA's Annual Conference in New Orleans is the first major convention in the city since Hurricane Katrina. AL produces 37 pages of coverage for the August issue.

2007

In January, *American Libraries Online* begins video- and podcasting. Redesigned and technologized, the magazine forges onward into its second century.



2005

2006

2007