



# Smithsonian Libraries

Advancing Knowledge at Home and Around the World

## MISSION

The Smithsonian Libraries promotes new ideas through knowledge sharing. We play a dynamic role in advancing scientific and cultural understanding and in preserving America's heritage. Our expert staff and extensive collections are a crucial resource for research and education communities at the Smithsonian, within the United States, and around the world.

## OVERVIEW

At the center of research across the Smithsonian are the specialized branches and librarians of the Smithsonian Libraries. The collection contents and staff play a key role in helping the Smithsonian's research and curatorial staff make sense of the museums' innumerable, often unique, objects and their cultural and historical contexts. Scientists depend on the Libraries to support investigations into climate change, biodiversity, object conservation, ecology, and many other fields. The Smithsonian Libraries are a hidden national treasure, where experts come to test and expand knowledge and where America and the world can turn for authentic answers.

Although the Smithsonian Libraries recently dropped the word "Institution" from its official title, the Libraries still uses the acronym SIL, just as the Smithsonian uses SI.

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## DIRECTOR

**Dr. Nancy E. Gwinn (1997-present)**

## 2014 BUDGET

FY14 Federal Budget:	\$10,243,000
Smithsonian Central Pool Federal Allocations:	\$281,800
Smithsonian Central Trust Allocations (Source 401):	\$1,185,996
Unrestricted Trust Allocations (Source 402):	\$379,945
Restricted Trust Allocations (Source 610-803):	\$2,128,150
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$14,218,891</b>

## EMPLOYEES

Full-time Staff:	105
Federal Full-time Staff:	91
Trust Full-time Staff:	14
Volunteers:	39
Interns:	30

## KEY CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

1. **CAMPAIGN.** Completing the campaign and raising additional funds to combat the annual rise in costs of journal and database subscriptions, to acquire new digital resources for the use of Smithsonian research staff, and to provide access to collections via digitization.
2. **STAFFING.** Rebuilding the Libraries staff to a level that will allow us to cover our geographical dispersion with less stress and strain and finding the resources to enhance their training and professional development. Staff are now forced to rotate among the various library locations to adequately care for and protect the collections. The Libraries is also opening a new library in the National Museum of African American History and Culture.
3. **VISIBILITY.** Expanding our visibility in the nation and the world in order to attract supporters and share our resources and expertise.

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## COLLECTIONS

Total volumes owned by the Libraries exceed 2 million, more than 40,000 of which are rare books, complemented by 10,000 manuscripts. The Libraries houses the nation's largest collection of commercial catalogs—480,000, representing more than 35,000 companies dating from the 1810s. More than 180,000 microfilm and microfiche also are accessible for research in disciplines of science, history, art and technology. The Libraries also maintains a substantial and fast-growing collection of digital journals and databases to satisfy user expectations.

## SUBJECT SPECIALTIES

Our collections reflect the scholarly interests and disciplines of the Institution's research and curatorial community. Holdings are especially strong in the following:

- African art; American art; Asian and Middle Eastern art; design and decorative arts; and modern and contemporary art
- African American history and culture; American history; Latino history and culture; and Native American history and culture
- Postal history; aviation history and space flight; history of science and technology
- Natural history anthropology; tropical biology; environmental management and ecology
- Museology, material culture and conservation
- Trade literature
- Materials research and World's Fair publications and ephemera

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## LOCATIONS

### WASHINGTON, D.C.

- Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History:
  - Natural History Library (main)
  - Botany and Horticulture Library
  - John Wesley Powell Library of Anthropology
  - Joseph F. Cullman 3rd Library of Natural History
  - Museum Studies Reference Library
- National Museum of American History:
  - American History Library (main)
  - The Dibner Library of the History of Science and Technology
- Anacostia Community Museum Library
- Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Library
- Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden Library
- National Air and Space Museum Library
- National Postal Museum Library
- National Zoological Park Library
- National Portrait Gallery and Smithsonian American Art Museum Library
- Warren M. Robbins Library in the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art

### SUITLAND, MD.

- Museum Support Center Library
- Vine Deloria Jr. Library of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian

### EDGEWATER, MD.

- Smithsonian Environmental Research Library

### NEW YORK, NY.

- Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Library

### REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

- The Earl S. Tupper Library, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute

## USE OF NAME

The Smithsonian Libraries, though a plural noun, is consistently followed by a singular verb, because it is the official name for a system of libraries, with individual locations operating under the aegis of a central administration and adhering to a common mission.

[library.si.edu](http://library.si.edu)

# Smithsonian Libraries

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## GUIDES TO RESOURCES

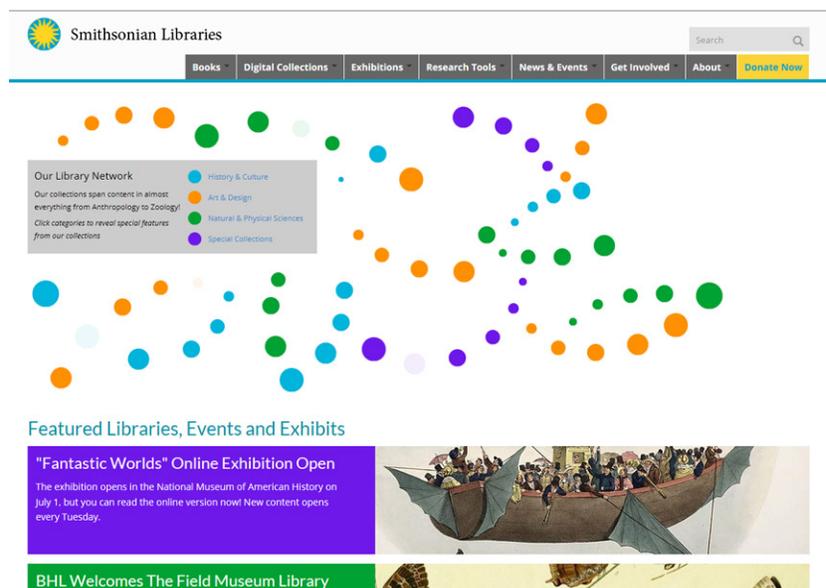
### Online Catalog

The Libraries' online catalog, the Smithsonian Institution Research Information System, is available at [sir.is.si.edu](http://sir.is.si.edu).

### Smithsonian Libraries Website

The Libraries website is filled with content of value to scholars, students, and the casual visitor, including links to databases, a digital library containing digitized versions of SIL collection volumes, online exhibitions, research tools, and opportunities to donate.

[library.si.edu](http://library.si.edu)



### Galaxy of Images

Available through our website, the Galaxy of Images contains over 16,000 illustrations from digitized books and journals in the SIL collections. They are available for use for educational purposes and can be licensed for use in commercial enterprises.

[www.sil.si.edu/imagegalaxy](http://www.sil.si.edu/imagegalaxy)

# Smithsonian Libraries

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## GUIDES TO RESOURCES

### **Smithsonian Research Online**

A database developed by the Libraries containing a bibliography of all known publications produced by Smithsonian researchers and a digital repository of as many full texts as can be collected. Reports generated from the database are included in the Smithsonian Dashboard and can be prepared on demand to support administrators and scholars.

[research.si.edu](http://research.si.edu)

### **Biodiversity Heritage Library**

The Libraries hosts the Secretariat for this large-scale collaborative project, whose goal is to make more efficient the research process in biodiversity through creation of a comprehensive digital library of related publications from libraries throughout the world. The BHL currently contains over 138,000 volumes and over 43,000,000 pages of texts and illustrations, which are freely available through creative commons licenses.

[www.biodiversitylibrary.org](http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org)

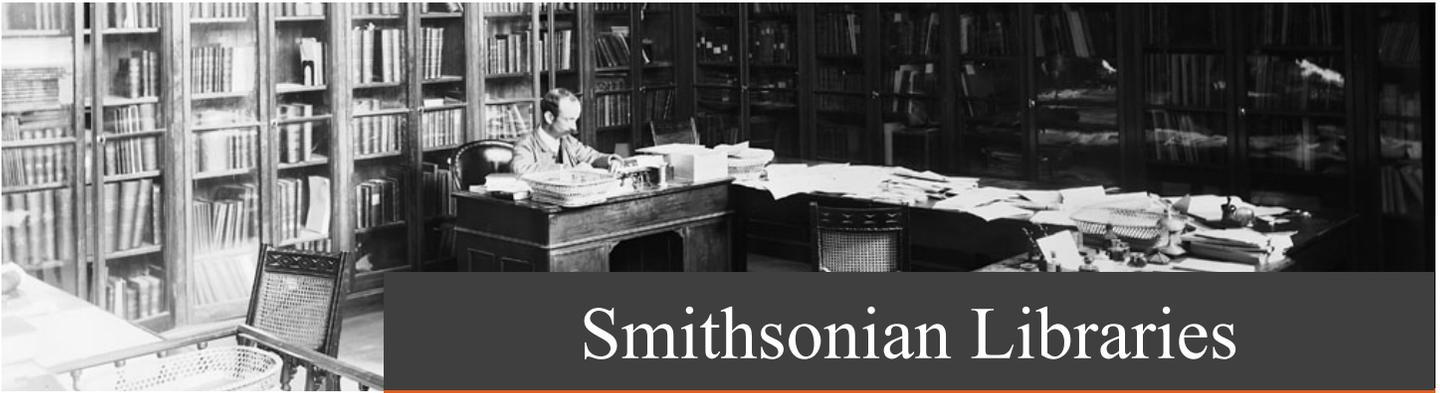
### **Cultural Heritage Library**

The Cultural Heritage Library project seeks to make freely available online noteworthy, rare, or unusual Public Domain volumes from the Libraries' technology and humanities collections. The corpus contains over 6,000 volumes on Art, Design, Language, the History of Science, and much more.

[library.si.edu/digital-library](http://library.si.edu/digital-library)

## LIBRARIES CAMPAIGN

The Libraries has been actively fund-raising since 1997, when the SIL Advisory Board was launched. In the current campaign, the Libraries has reached over 70% of its \$9 million goal (as of June 2014). The campaign is focused on programmatic needs that include acquisitions, conservation, digitization, fellowships, exhibitions, and a Futures Fund.



# Smithsonian Libraries

## THE HISTORY OF THE SMITHSONIAN LIBRARIES

In his will, written in 1826, English scientist James Smithson left over \$500,000 to the United States of America to establish in Washington an institution "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge." An Act of Congress dated 10 August 1846 established the Smithsonian Institution as a trust instrumentality of the United States, created a Board of Regents, and called for a building to house a museum with geological and mineralogical cabinets, a chemical laboratory, a

gallery of art, lecture rooms, and a library. In ten years of debate preceding the act, some of the most vocal congressional members argued for the creation of a national library and saw to it that both the new institution and the Library of Congress were given copyright deposit status. The Board of Regents selected American physicist Joseph Henry as the first Secretary of the fledgling enterprise and directed Henry to hire Charles Coffin Jewett, well-known bookman and librarian at Brown University, as the first Assistant Secretary in charge of the library.



Joseph Henry, the first Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution

A strong advocate of American science, Henry preferred to use the bequest to support basic scientific research by supplying serious scientists with funding, equipment, training, and books, and publishing of their research results in a new series called "Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge." He led the Smithsonian into the existing global network of scientific communication by establishing a publications exchange program with the world's leading scientific and learned societies. He supported Jewett's plans for creating a centralized bibliographic service and for surveying the nation's libraries. However, Henry clashed with his librarian over the nature and size of a library, fearing that the costs of housing, binding, and maintenance would consume the income from the Smithson fund. Following an intense public dispute, Henry fired Jewett in 1855. Copyright deposit status ended three years later.



1865 burning of the Smithsonian, Harper's Weekly, February 11, 1865

### THE SMITHSONIAN DEPOSIT

In 1866 following two damaging fires in the Smithsonian building ("the Castle"), Henry negotiated with Librarian of Congress Ainsworth Rand Spofford to move the Smithsonian's library, by then numbering 40,000 volumes and one of the largest in the nation, to the newly constructed fireproof rooms of the Library of Congress (LC) in the U.S. Capitol. The Smithsonian retained ownership of the collection, however, and it became known as the Smithsonian Deposit. Congress directed LC to keep the scientific portion in separate quarters and to give Smithsonian staff the same borrowing privileges as were enjoyed by Members of Congress. Further, Congress gave LC two new staff positions to support the Deposit. The Smithsonian agreed to continue to build the extraordinary collection of scientific transactions and proceedings through its International Exchange Program. The Institution considered the Smithsonian Deposit to be its Main Library for close to a century and included its holdings in reports of total collection size.

By 1897 when the Library of Congress's first building opened, the Deposit held nearly half a million volumes. Among the Smithsonian's continuing contributions was the 1931 deposit of the Langley Aeronautical Collection, named for

Samuel P. Langley, the Institution's third Secretary. An LC Smithsonian Division, formed in 1900, cared for the collection until 1944. When the new LC Science Division was created in 1949, the nearly 600,000-volume Deposit became one of its principal holdings. Each time a new Librarian of Congress or new Smithsonian Secretary took office, staff raised questions about the arrangements for the Deposit. As the collection grew, the Library of Congress found it increasingly difficult to maintain. Furthermore, in a 1953 analysis, Jerold Orne reported that other than in society publications, LC's science collections were greatly lacking, particularly in historical works from the 16th to 18th centuries. Because LC depended on the Deposit as its science collection, the Library's priorities for collection expenditure had been in other areas. Now the Library wanted to build a strong national science collection.

In 1953, Smithsonian Secretary Leonard Carmichael agreed to Librarian of Congress Luther Evans's request first to integrate the Deposit volumes into LC's collections and then several years later to discontinue applying Deposit bookplates to new transfers. While the Smithsonian essentially waived control of the Deposit, it never officially relinquished ownership. Today, in 2000, the Smithsonian regularly borrows many of the Deposit, as well as other, books from LC and the two institutions maintain a close, collegial relationship.

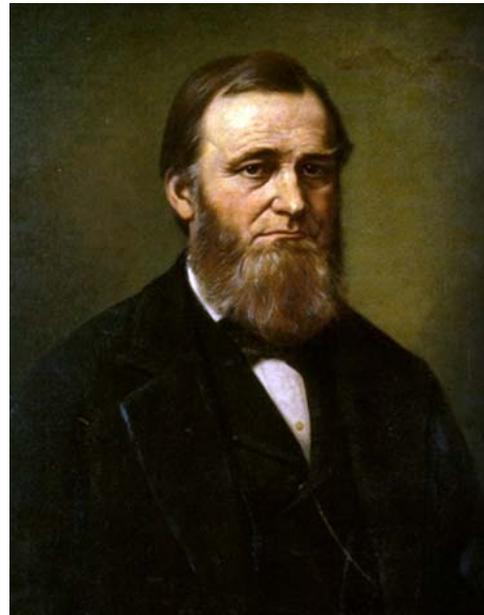
## RECREATING THE SMITHSONIAN LIBRARY

Upon Henry's death in 1878, Assistant Secretary Spencer Fullerton Baird was named Secretary. Long responsible both for managing the publications exchange program and for building the museum side of the Institution, Baird understood the curator's need to have books and journals in close proximity to specimen and artifact collections. Overcrowded conditions in the Library of Congress made retrieval of Deposit volumes extremely difficult. After the Smithsonian's U.S. National Museum (now the Arts & Industries Building) opened in 1881, Baird donated his extensive personal library to establish the U.S. National Museum (USNM) Library and placed zoologist Frederick W. True in charge. He asked exchange program staff to acquire two copies of society publications, one for the Deposit and one for the museum, and to obtain back issues of the most important scientific proceedings. This is the genesis of today's Smithsonian Libraries and Deposit volumes have largely been replaced.

After Jewett's dismissal in 1855, Henry chose not to name a librarian, but assigned Miss Jane Turner, the first female employee at the Institution, to keep the accession records for books. Smithsonian



The Arts and Industries Building after its opening, c. 1883



Spencer Fullerton Baird,  
Second Secretary of the Smithsonian

zoologist Theodore M. Gill was named "assistant to the national library" and took charge of the Deposit when it moved to LC. Thus began the custom of LC's support of the salaries of the person regarded as the Smithsonian's chief librarian, and an assistant librarian, who kept the records of receipts for both Deposit transfers and what was to be retained at the Institution. The custom continued for another 50 years. Most often the librarian was drawn from the curatorial ranks. These included a distinguished scholar of Oriental antiquities, Cyrus W. Adler (1892-1908), and zoologist Frederick W. True (1911-1914), both of whom bore the title Assistant Secretary in Charge of Library and Exchanges. Assistant librarian Paul Brockett directed operations from 1914 to 1925, after which English professor William L. Corbin was appointed as librarian (1924-1942). Promoted to librarian in 1942, Leila F. Clark served until 1957 and was the first to hold a library degree. Ruth E. Blanchard succeeded (1957-1964), followed by Mary A. Huffer, who served as acting librarian until 1967.

Library collections at the Smithsonian were never housed centrally. In addition to the central reference section of the USNM Library, Baird created thirteen sectional "working" libraries in curatorial areas (eventually swelling to 35) for volumes directly associated with a curator's research. Apart from the exchange program, individual curators most often decided what to acquire. Books and journals unrelated to museum collections accumulated in a Secretary's Library, Office Library, Employee's Library, and in new units, such as the National Zoological Park and the Astrophysical Observatory, as they moved to new facilities. By 1964, apart from the Smithsonian deposit, a prospective user could find libraries containing over 430,000 volumes in nearly 80 locations in the Smithsonian, spread among seven cities.

It became clear that, as the Smithsonian's research and education programs and staff expanded, and as new facilities continued to evolve from the original museum, the Institution had grown too large to be supported in such an eclectic and idiosyncratic manner. Smithsonian staff demands for resources were far greater than could be supplied by total dependence on external collections, even those of the Library of Congress or other national libraries. Duplication of collections and effort wasted staff and fiscal resources and inhibited efficient services.

### **RIPLEY UNIFIES THE SYSTEM**

When Secretary S. Dillon Ripley assumed office in 1964, he quickly determined that the Smithsonian library organization badly needed an overhaul. He hired Russell Shank (1968-1977) to report directly to him in the new high-level position of Director of the Smithsonian Institution Libraries. Shank wrote that "the richness of the libraries' collections far exceeds my expectations, especially in natural history....The depth of the collections in systematic biology in terms of both age and comprehensiveness



S. Dillon Ripley,  
8<sup>th</sup> Secretary of the Smithsonian

makes one felt like a bibliothecal Midas when wandering through the stacks." However, library staffing had not kept pace with the dispersion of the collections, which in any case had gone astray too far for effective management. Acquisition policies were needed to control the influx of materials. Well over half the estimated 600,000 holdings were uncataloged and large portions were deteriorated and in disarray.

Although hampered initially by a downturn in federal budget support, Shank forged ahead to reorganize the staff and consolidate, rationalize, and automate operations and collections, thereby creating a unified system with central support services and a union catalog. The Libraries began using OCLC and switched from Dewey to the LC classification system. By 1977 when Shank left for a prestigious university system, the quality and research value of the scientific collections were recognized nationally, and the Association of Research Libraries, whose members comprised the most prestigious research and national libraries in the United States, invited the Smithsonian Libraries to join. Subsequently, the Libraries won a permanent seat on the executive board of the Federal Libraries and Information Centers Coordinating Committee.



# Smithsonian Libraries

## THE MODERN LIBRARIES

**W**hile Smithsonian Libraries' primary mission has always been to support the research and information needs of Smithsonian staff and affiliates, in the 1990s the Libraries embraced the growing Smithsonian emphasis on education and outreach and worked hard to make its collections more visible and useful to a growing public constituency. At the same time, it shared with other libraries the fiscal constraints fueled by rising serials prices and automation costs, combined with static or reduced budgets. Like its sister institutions, the Libraries incorporated the electronic world into its collections and activities and used the Internet as a vehicle for sharing its collections and services.

In the 1980s, the Smithsonian began to acquire several significant new artifact collections, which prompted new museums covering the fields of African art, philately and postal history, and the American Indian, each requiring a new branch library under the Smithsonian Libraries umbrella.

Shank's successor, Robert Maloy (1979-1987), implemented the Libraries' first online public access catalog in 1985 and embarked on a decade-long project of retrospective conversion and arrears cataloging. Staff completed the project in 1999 with records for 97 percent of Smithsonian Libraries holdings available on the Internet through the Smithsonian Institution Research Information

System (SIRIS). With a gift of 10,000 scientific rare books and manuscripts from Bern Dibner and the Burndy Library in 1976, the Smithsonian created the Dibner Library of the History of Science and Technology. In 2002, the Joseph F. Cullman 3rd Library of Natural History became the second large rare book repository when it opened in the National Museum of Natural History. A New Media Office, organized in 2001, operates an imaging center that produces electronic editions of rare scientific works and other specialized collections for use on the Internet. Since 1991, the Smithsonian Libraries Exhibition Gallery has featured our volumes in thematic exhibitions ranging from the history of ballooning to the works of John James Audubon, world's fairs, science and the artist's book, and building the Panama Canal. In May 2002, the Libraries opened "Odyssey in Print: Adventures in Smithsonian Libraries" to showcase the breadth and depth of its rare, unusual, and attractive holdings. In 2008, two large permanent exhibition cases in the main corridor of the Natural History Museum opened to extend the Libraries exhibition offerings.

Director Barbara J. Smith (1989-1997) paved the way for the Libraries' participation in the Smithsonian's first capital campaign. Current Director Nancy E. Gwinn created the Smithsonian Libraries Advisory Board to assist with fund-raising and the Spencer Baird Society, a vehicle for donor recognition and annual giving. A Book Conservation Laboratory and a growing educational program are other areas of emphasis.

## EDUCATION & OUTREACH

### EXHIBITIONS

Smithsonian Libraries' exhibitions are thematic, feature books and special collections from its extensive, multifaceted holdings and are organized by guest curators from around the Institution. They illustrate the synergy between library and object/specimen collections and highlight the artifactual nature of books and printing. The Smithsonian Libraries Exhibition Galleries are located on the first floor of the west wing of the National Museum of American History and the ground floor of the National Museum of Natural History.

([library.si.edu/digital-library/exhibitions](http://library.si.edu/digital-library/exhibitions))

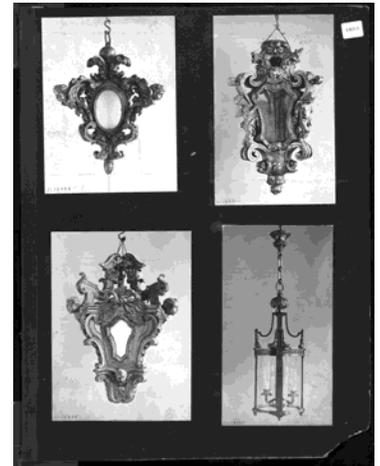


### DIGITAL LIBRARY

Smithsonian Libraries has been actively involved in digital library building since the mid-1990s. Since then over 13.5 million pages of text have been digitized, representing more than 32,000 volumes including sewing machine and scientific instrument catalogs from our exceptional trade literature collection; the complete historical publications of the Smithsonian Institution; and close to 2,000 rare books from our special collections.

Significant non-book collections have been made available online as well, including the E.F. Caldwell & Co. photo archive from the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum Library which

contains over 22,000 images of historically significant lighting and other decorative fixtures. Though still a small portion of our total collections, our digital library represents a growing and important addition to the world's online content.



### GALAXY OF IMAGES

The Smithsonian Libraries online Galaxy of Images ([sil.si.edu/imagegalaxy](http://sil.si.edu/imagegalaxy)) contains thousands of images from books, archival material and special collections; additional images and collections are added regularly. The Libraries website, besides having basic information on using and visiting the Libraries, offers many ways to navigate, use and share the Libraries' extensive online resources, which include exhibitions, a virtual book shelf of digital editions and other digitized collections.



## EDUCATION & OUTREACH

### BIODIVERSITY HERITAGE LIBRARY



A key partner in the Biodiversity Heritage Library ([biodiversitylibrary.org](http://biodiversitylibrary.org)), an international consortium of natural history, botanical garden, university, and agricultural libraries, The Smithsonian Libraries hosts the BHL Secretariat. To date, the Libraries has contributed to this global initiative over 7 million digitized pages of biodiversity and taxonomic literature containing over 32 million scientific names. The BHL has received several awards, including the 2013 Computerworld Laureate award, the Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries Charles Robert Long Award of Extraordinary Merit, and the Outstanding Collaboration Award from the American Library Association.



### SOCIAL MEDIA

The Smithsonian Libraries actively engages with online visitors through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Flickr, YouTube, and a blog. Each month, thousands of people respond to updates, photos, links, videos, and questions on Facebook and Twitter. Social media participation continues to grow each month, expanding the Libraries' online reach and community. Social media followers total 66,563. Videos on YouTube have been viewed 125,428 times. In support of the Smithsonian's initiative to use technology to reach new audiences, the Libraries will continue to expand its social media efforts to spread knowledge in art, history, culture and science.

The Libraries can be followed online at:

**Website:** [library.si.edu](http://library.si.edu)

**Blog:** [blog.library.si.edu](http://blog.library.si.edu)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/SmithsonianLibraries](https://facebook.com/SmithsonianLibraries)

**Flickr:** [flickr.com/smithsonianlibraries](https://flickr.com/smithsonianlibraries)

**Instagram:** [instagram.com/SILibraries](https://instagram.com/SILibraries)

**Tumblr:** [smithsonianlibraries.tumblr.com](https://smithsonianlibraries.tumblr.com)

**Twitter:** [twitter.com/SILibraries](https://twitter.com/SILibraries)





## Smithsonian Libraries

### ADVISORY BOARD

**Augustus C. Miller, Norfolk, VA (Chair)**

**Richard T. Choi, McLean, VA (Co-Chair)**

Susan Battley, Stony Brook, NY

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Sarah Ladd Eames, Harrison, NY

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Kathryn C. Turner, Bethesda, MD

# Smithsonian Libraries

## NANCY E. GWINN, DIRECTOR



Dr. Nancy E. Gwinn has been Director of the Smithsonian Institution Libraries since 1997. She is a recognized leader in international librarianship, the preservation of library collections, the application of library technologies, and for building collaborations and partnerships.

At the Smithsonian, Gwinn's achievements include launching the Libraries' exhibition program, creating the new Website "Galaxy of Knowledge," expanding the Libraries' rare book and electronic collections, and creating the first Advisory Board and the Spencer Baird Society to assist with an aggressive fundraising program. During her tenure, the Smithsonian Libraries initiated and became the lead partner in establishing the digital Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL) and creating the program's secretariat.

She serves as the current Chair of the BHL Member Council and as Secretary of the Global BHL Coordinating Committee. On the international scene, Gwinn is active in the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), and has served on its Governing Board and as Chair of its Professional Committee, which has oversight of IFLA's professional program. She is currently working with IFLA on its first International Leadership Fellows Program and serving as Secretary of the IFLA Standing Committee on Management and Marketing. She is the Smithsonian's official representative to the Association of Research Libraries and the Digital Public Library of America. Gwinn joined the Smithsonian in 1984 as the Libraries' Assistant Director for Collections Management. Her career includes positions at the Library of Congress, the Council on Library Resources, and the Research Libraries Group.

A former Fulbright scholar at Oxford University, Dr. Gwinn holds a Ph.D. from George Washington University in American Civilization, an A.M.L.S. degree from the University of Michigan, and a B.A. from the University of Wyoming. The University of Wyoming honored her as a Distinguished Alumna and, in 2013, awarded her the Honorary Doctor of Letters degree. She has also been selected as a distinguished alumna by the University of Michigan School of Information and Mortar Board, the National Senior College Honor Society. In 2012, the District of Columbia Library Association honored her with the Ainsworth Rand Spofford Award for Distinguished Leadership. A frequent author and speaker, she received the Waldo Gifford Leland prize from the Society of American Archivists and the Blackwell North America, Inc., Scholarship Award for outstanding articles. Gwinn is married to Dr. John Y. Cole, Executive Director of the Library of Congress Center for the Book.