



## LIBRARIES - FOREVER YOUNG



*The pride of the U.S. - The Library of Congress Photo by Raul654*

### Alive and Kicking

The idea is simple. You go to an institution called a 'library'. You choose a book of interest to you and borrow it. You take it home, where – in the intimacy of your quiet study or even your bedroom – you read it. Why don't we do the same with clothes or shoes, plates or cutlery? What we read in books broadens our minds, enriches us personally and, what is more, we willingly share this knowledge and enrichment with others. Such an approach has contributed immensely to the development and progress of our civilization, while an ability to write books and thus pass experience and wisdom from generation to generation gives mankind a substantial advantage over, let's say, the animal kingdom.

Those 'Prophets of Doom' who heralded

the end of printed books with the advent of the computer era, were wrong. Books continue to be printed, even though their electronic version may scroll down the computer screen. Libraries have not died, but they have changed. Though some libraries do have financial difficulties, young people frequent them as ever before by borrowing books, CDs and audio tapes. The novelty is that a lot of people now come to libraries to surf the web. Libraries have managed to combine the old with the new. While guarding their treasures such as old manuscripts, documents, pictures, facsimiles, etc., and preserving paper book collections, they have installed computers, provided online catalogues and introduced internet services such as "Ask a Librarian". Libraries remain indispensable for people of all ages and interests.

*Text by AIRC, Kraków*

The Library of Congress is the largest library in the world. It has 130 million items including over 29 million books and other print materials in 460 languages. It has been in operation since 1800 established as the reference library for the U.S. Congress. Now, however, it serves the whole nation and even the world through services like Ask a Librarian. Two copies of every book printed in the U.S. are sent to the Library of Congress.

## Famous Libraries

Located on Fifth Avenue in the heart of New York City, the **Humanities and Social Sciences Library of the New York Public Library** has famous twin research rooms (see photo), which measure over 90 meters in length and 15,8 meters in height. Chandeliers, long tables, brass lamps, tall windows, computers with access to the library collections and the Internet, materials brought by the staff to the desks - all this free of charge - make this a truly welcoming place for research.



Photo by Diliff

Dating back to 1848, the **Boston Library** is the first public library in America. All adult residents of the state of Massachusetts can use its resources. Its user-friendly image is enhanced by a service called: Mass Answers 24/7, which offers Every-Day-All-Day-All-Night librarian assistance. The online "chat" enables the researcher to 'look over the librarian's shoulder' and see the pages searched for them on their computer screen. A written list of the sites is later sent to the reader by e-mail. It is accessible from around the world! In the ZIP field enter your postal code, wherever you live.



The Boston Public Library stairway Photo © AP/WWP

## Presidential Libraries: an American Phenomenon



As can be seen in the picture above a Presidential Library does not have to be a serious and unsmiling place. Here, a clown from a history of the circus exhibit stands over two portraits of President Herbert Hoover etched in glass, at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum in West Branch, Iowa.

Photo ©AP/WWP

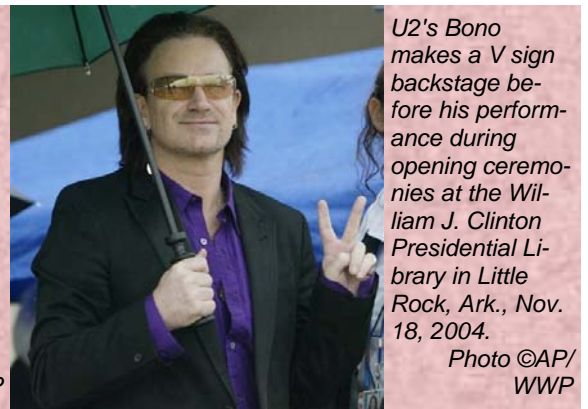
The original idea was to preserve millions of pages of presidential documents, photographs, motion picture films and tens of thousands of audio and video tapes as well as other personal memorabilia of America's presidents throughout the history. This is how Presidential Libraries came into being.

NARA stands for the National Archives and Records Administration, whose office administers presidential libraries. A congressional act of 1955 established a system of privately erected and federally maintained libraries. While this Act only encouraged Presidents to donate their historical materials to be preserved for the American people, the Act of 1986 obliged every President who took office after January 20, 1985 to deposit papers, documents and other historical materials with NARA. The rising maintenance costs made it necessary to use private endowments, linking them to the size of the facility. Presently, there are **12 Presidential Libraries**. The first is the Herbert Hoover Library and the last, opened in 2004, the William J. Clinton.



Hundreds of visitors wait in line for free admission to the Clinton Presidential Library in Little Rock, Ark., Saturday, Nov. 27, 2004. Both the exterior and the interior of this newest of the Presidential Libraries has been arousing interest nationwide.

Photo ©AP/WWP



U2's Bono makes a V sign backstage before his performance during opening ceremonies at the William J. Clinton Presidential Library in Little Rock, Ark., Nov. 18, 2004.

Photo ©AP/WWP

# THE LIBRARY: AN ARCHITECTURAL WORK OF ART

It has always been of importance for a library reading room to be properly lit and aired. No wonder that in modern library architecture translucent walls and roofs are often used. It is important to provide sufficient storage space safeguarded against predictable, if unlikely, disasters, such as flooding or fire. Ultramodern design needs to be eye-catching. It often combines glass and



Photo from Wikipedia

The Geisel Library at the University of California in San Diego

metal framework, pillars, arcades and arches.

The interior must be quiet and patron-friendly. It varies from austere, nearly bare, impeccably bright and hygienic halls to old-fashioned, home-like rooms filled with much dark teak furniture and ornaments, *to suit all tastes*.

Texts by AIRC Krakow

**1** The main lobby of the Seattle Central Library with shelves specifically arranged in a non-linear formation



**2** A huge atrium welcomes patrons as work continues on the city's new library Thursday, Jan. 30, 2003, in Salt Lake City



Photos © AP/WWP



'The American School Boy' on display at the Redwood Library in Newport, Rhode Island. It is the oldest American library that continues to circulate its collection

Photo © AP/WWP

## LET'S MEET AT THE CORNER ... THAT IS, AT THE AMERICAN CORNER



On June 7 an American Corner opens in Wrocław at the Provincial and City Public Library, Rynek Główny 58. Please visit it and enjoy meeting America through books, magazines, DVDs and exhibits. Currently, there are two exhibits on display "American West" featuring the beauty of American nature and "Ah! America", which compares postcards of American landmarks from the 1920s and 30s with how they look today.

### What is an American Corner?



American Corners are partnerships between the Public Affairs sections of U.S. Embassies and local host institutions. There are over 300 American Corners around the world. They provide access to current and reliable information about the U.S. via book collections, the Internet, and through a variety of events such as public readings, films, speaker programs, workshops, meetings, and exhibits. Sponsored jointly by the U.S. Embassy and a host country organization, an American Corner serves as an information outpost similar to a public library reference service. The multi-media, book and periodical collections are open and accessible. Associated reading or meeting rooms are made available to host program events and activities. In Poland there are two American Corners located in Łódź and Wrocław.

Library in Wrocław which hosts the American Corner

Please visit their websites at <http://www.amcorners.pl>

## Win a Prize!

To win a prize answer this question:

*English can be a tricky language. The person who keeps books in order in a library is called a LIBRARIAN. Who is a BOOKKEEPER then? Send your answer to [zoom@usinfo.pl](mailto:zoom@usinfo.pl).*



Give your name and address.

The deadline is June 30

**ZOOM**  
in on america

## About ZOOM

Zoom is online at [www.usinfo.pl/zoom/](http://www.usinfo.pl/zoom/)

Subscription issues [www.usinfo.pl/zoom/subscribe.htm](http://www.usinfo.pl/zoom/subscribe.htm)

Contact us at [zoom@usinfo.pl](mailto:zoom@usinfo.pl)

### American Information Resource Centers

**Warsaw**  
Ambasada USA  
ul. Piękna 14, 00-540  
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**Krakow**  
Konsulat Generalny USA  
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31-043 Krakow  
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## EXERCISE 1:

1. Match the idioms with the explanation of their meaning. They all contain the word 'book':

(a) balance the books, (b) black book, (c) booked up, (d) by the book, (e) closed book, (f) close the books, (g) cook the books, (h) crack a book, (i) hit the books, (j) in one's book, (k) judge a book by its cover, (l) keep books, (m) know like a book, (n) nose in a book, (o) one for the books, (p) open book, (r) read one like a book, (s) take a leaf out of someone's book, (t) talking book, (u) throw the book at, (v) wrote the book on

Meanings:

1. a book recorded by voice on tape for blind persons
2. something or someone that can be readily examined or understood
3. study, prepare for school
4. a list of persons or things that are out of favor
5. strictly according to the rules
6. a puzzle, mystery, secret, something not known or understood
7. stop financial transactions, stop taking orders
8. be extremely familiar with, understand perfectly
9. falsify company's financial records
10. settle an account by saying what needs to be paid
11. open a book to study or read
12. according to one's opinion or the way of thinking
13. keep records of money earned and spent
14. know almost everything about
15. rely on outward appearances
16. busy interest in reading
17. understand somebody completely, know what he will think or do at any time
18. very unusual, something extraordinary
19. imitate or follow somebody's example
20. give the most severe penalty to someone for breaking the law or rules
21. having no tickets, rooms, etc left

Find answers to activities on this page at [www.usinfo.pl/zoom/](http://www.usinfo.pl/zoom/)

Answer to "Win a Prize" in the May Issue: The sight in the photo would be natural in any town in Alaska, for example, in ANCHORAGE

Congratulations to the May Winners: Basia from Katowice, Maya from Gliwice and Grażyna from Nowa Sarzyna

Book prizes will be sent to you by mail.

## EXERCISE 2:

Supply the missing idiomatic expressions from ex.1 in the sentences below. Make all other necessary changes:

1. I'm not on speaking terms with Jim these days. He's been in my .....
2. Chemistry was a ..... for me when I was at school and I still don't understand it.
3. He's lucky. He passed this exam without .....
4. Because it was the third time he was caught drink-driving, the judge .....
5. Linda ..... on unlucky relationships. She's been dating wrong men all the time.
6. We've been close friends and ..... each other .....

## Glossary

In the order of appearance:

1. **cutlery** - knives, forks and spoons
2. **prophet** - someone who predicts that something will happen in the future
3. **doom** - premonition, a sense of feeling that things will change from bad to worse
4. **herald** - prompt a future event or situation
5. **ascribe** - consider something to have caused an event or situation
6. **chandelier** - a large, decorative frame which holds light bulbs or candles
7. **resources** - the materials, money and other things that a person or organization has
8. **memorabilia** - things connected with a person or organization and collected out of sentiment