Robert Kieft Appointed Librarian of the College
By Mary Lynn Morris

Robert Kieft, who had been directing library services in an interim capacity since February, 1999, was appointed to the position of Librarian of the College on October 1. In her announcement to the campus community, Provost Elaine Hansen stated that “This is a critical appointment; the Librarian is an emblem of our academic and intellectual excellence…. [President] Tritton and I remain steadfast in our conviction that Haverford must seek and hire a truly outstanding person for this key position. But we have come to the conclusion, through the course of our deliberations, that Bob Kieft already meets our highest expectations.”

Bob joined the Library staff in 1988 as Coordinator for Reference Services and Collection Development with administrative responsibility for all areas of public service including reference services, library instruction, collection development, interlibrary loan, bindery, circulation, reserves, and government documents. He provided key support, leadership and direction not only in these areas but also in the still ongoing efforts to expand and enhance cooperative efforts with the libraries of Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore Colleges.

Bob came to Haverford from the Stanford University Libraries, where he began his library career while pursuing graduate studies in drama. After receiving his Ph.D. from Stanford in 1979 and his M.L.I.S. from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1981, he held a number of positions at Stanford’s Meyer Library, including Humanities Bibliographer and Coordinator for Collection Development, Head of Circulation, and Head of Technical Operations. He also served as Performing Arts Bibliographer for the University Libraries’ research collections in theatre history, dance, and film.

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Haverford College Library Welcomes New Staff

By Martha Payne

**Joelle Bertolet**, Special Collections Assistant, joined the staff in April as receptionist, executive secretary, and research assistant for the Library's special collections. She brings to this position extensive administrative experience in a variety of organizations including a law firm, a charity, a professional association and a social services agency. Joelle has a B.A. in economics from Bryn Mawr College and has taken several courses in accounting, graphic design and computer applications. She also practices and teaches yoga in the area.

**Cecelia Buchanan**, Tri-College Instructional Technology Coordinator, arrived in July to begin a two-year position funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. In this capacity, she consults on the use of educational technologies at Bryn Mawr, Haverford and Swarthmore Colleges. Cecelia brings with her seventeen years of software research and development experience focusing on multimedia, the World Wide Web, educational technology, distributed computing and network protocols. She also has experience with group management and has worked in higher education teaching undergraduate and graduate courses, producing educational multimedia and distance learning courses, and evaluating educational technology. Cecelia has her B.S. in computer science from Columbia University, M.S. in computer science from UCLA, and Ph.D. in computer science from the University of Washington.

Our other Mellon grant-funded position has been filled by **John Hubbard**, Instructional Technology Specialist. John was hired by the Library and the Academic Computing Center to work with permanent and grant-funded staff to strengthen the use of instructional technology in the teaching/learning environment and to deepen cooperation among faculty, librarians, computing personnel and instructional support staffs. John has a B.A. in psychology, philosophy and geography from Macalester College and is currently pursuing an M.A. in the College of Information Studies and Technology, Drexel University.

**Doug Peterman** has succeeded Lucille Weeks, who retired as Acquisitions Assistant in May after more than 25 years of service to the Library. Doug orders materials for the Library’s collections, processes the books received through the bi-college approval plan and prepares the newly received books for cataloging. He came to the Philadelphia area after completing his master’s in library science degree at Indiana University, Bloomington. Doug has a B.A. in English literature from Knox College and an M.A. in French literature from the University of Iowa; he taught French to U.S. university students and English to French university students before beginning his studies in library science.

**Jutta Seibert** has joined the staff as a temporary reference librarian, replacing Mary Lynn Morris, who is Acting Science Librarian this year. Jutta has her master’s degree in social anthropology and is a B.D. in sociology from Universität Bayreuth. She is pursuing an M.A. in the College of Information Studies and Technology, Drexel University. Although Jutta is new to the Library staff, she and her husband Koffi Anyinefa, Associate Professor of French, have been members of the campus community for some years.

**Allison Tatam** was appointed Executive Library Assistant in May, the day after she received her B.A. in German studies with a concentration in education from the College. Ali had worked in the Library as a student assistant and is familiar with much of the work of this position as well as the campus in general. She is pursuing an M.A. in the College of Information Studies and Technology, Drexel University, and is interested in a career as an elementary school media specialist.

**Kieft (cont.)**

Bob is a member of the Modern Language Association and the American Library Association. Within ALA, he is an active member of the Reference and User Services Association and is currently Vice-Chair/Chair Elect of its Collection Development and Evaluation Section. He has contributed reviews and articles to American Reference Books Annual, Choice, College and Research Libraries, and Reference Services Review.
New Abolitionist Letters Bring Excitement to Special Collections
By Meena Rajan '00

In January, 1999, Special Collections did something unremarkable: it purchased some letters from a Quaker family. But this purchase was in fact not so "unremarkable," for it consisted of 100 letters from various 19th-Century abolitionists to Benjamin Coates, the brother of Joseph Potts Hornor Coates, HC 1836, and uncle of Henry Troth Coates, HC 1862, William Morrison Coates, HC 1863, George M Coates, HC 1863, and Edward Hornor Coates, HC 1864. The collection is remarkable, and even exciting, because it includes letters from such major figures as ex-slave Frederick Douglass; Henry Highland Garnet, a militant and outspoken black agitator for African American justice; Mary Ann Shadd Cary, the first black woman newspaper publisher in North America; Joseph Jenkins Roberts, the first black president of Liberia; and a host of other African Americans who corresponded with Coates about strategies for alleviating the horrors of slavery.

These letters to Coates were written between 1848 and 1880, the great majority being from 1859, 1867, and 1868. Coates corresponded often with Joseph Jenkins Roberts, who sent him two uncancelled Liberian stamps, which are among the materials purchased by Special Collections. He was in touch with leaders of the American Colonization Society, an organization which raised money to send slaves and free blacks to Liberia. He also corresponded with a wide variety of others, including the editors of several black newspapers.

Over the summer, Marc Chalufour '99 and I worked with the letters to learn more about them and their authors, the events and issues they cover, and their recipient, who turned out to be something of an elusive figure. Our work began with transcribing the letters. For some letters this task was easy. We read the letters and then typed them word-for-word, mistakes and all. Other letters, however, presented more of a challenge because the handwriting left much to be desired. To decipher particularly difficult words, we examined the letterwriter’s alphabet. Each letterwriter has a distinctive style--some don’t dot their i’s, while some do; others cross their t’s when at the end of the word but not in the middle. To be able to read some words, we had to examine letter forms in words we could read in order to compare them to those in words we could not. Using this process, we were able to infer almost all the words in all the letters.

While transcribing, we also read historical sources to familiarize ourselves with events in the United States during the period when the letters were written. We researched and annotated the personal names, place names, publication titles, and other references in the letters. About some, information was easy to find and plentiful; other information was more problematic. In one letter, for example, reference was made to “Mr. Washington’s letter.” Only after a month’s familiarity with the literature did we realize that the Washington in question was Augustus Washington, who wrote articles for the African Repository, the journal of the American Colonization Society, and not Bushrod Washington, an officer of the American Colonization Society and nephew of President George Washington. Though time-consuming, this investigative work was fun and rewarding when we were able to transform an organization or person from a mystery into a footnote!

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Abolitionist Letters (Cont.)

In order to gather as much information as possible, Marc and I sometimes had to leave the confines of Haverford to use material in other collections. Our journeys took us to the Library Company of Philadelphia and the Library of Congress. Despite all our efforts, however, Benjamin Coates, well-connected though he was, remains a shadowy figure. So far, we know little more about him other than his having had a wide range of correspondents: he was a Philadelphia Quaker, was active in the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, and was in the textile businesses with various members of his family. Although we know he was connected to the American Colonization Society, we do not know if he was a member. As far as we have been able to tell, Coates left Philadelphia only once and he never married, a rarity in his time.

So Coates himself is still something of a mystery, but as the result of our hard work more is known about Benjamin Coates’ contacts and abolitionist activity than ever before. Penn State University Press has agreed to publish the collection, with introductory essays by Emma Lapsansky and Margaret Bacon; the publication date is set for December, 2000. Marc and I look forward to seeing in print the results of the research and editing we did on the letters this summer.

Lapsansky Appears on TV Special
By Allison Tatem

“Black Philadelphia Memories” premiered on August 4, 1999, at 8:00 PM on WHYY TV12. This prime-time special focused on the history of the black community in Philadelphia beginning with the arrival of the first African Americans in the 17th Century. Program segments touched on such areas as entertainment, business, civil rights and the Underground Railroad, often capturing the spirit of different eras and people through artifacts contemporary with important events and interviews with descendants of prominent black historical figures.

Haverford College’s own Dr. Emma Lapsansky, Professor of History and Curator of Special Collections, contributed a rich historical background to the production by discussing the everyday life of black Philadelphians in the 18th Century and by detailing the abolition movement in the area. With an undergraduate degree in American history and an M.A. and Ph.D. in American civilization from the University of Pennsylvania, Emma joined the Haverford faculty in 1990. Since then her courses on Quakerism, the U.S. West, the history of books and reading, and colonial U.S. history have spread her contagious love of history to Library staff and students alike.