

# Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice

Interview

## In the PaLRaP Spotlight: Gillian Hayward, Library Manager

*Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, PA*

Tell us a little about your background, your career trajectory, what led you to the Longwood Gardens?

I have a bachelor of arts degree in theatre and worked for a professional theatre company for seven years after university. Once I got married and had a child, I transitioned into part-time work in the advertising department of a newspaper. I eventually wanted something more stimulating and looked for a position in one of our beautiful Brandywine Valley cultural attractions. I became a tour guide at Longwood in 2005, but it wasn't quite enough hours, so ended up taking an additional part-time job in the library, initially to do clerical work. I worked part time as library assistant for 12 years while my daughter was in school and learned an immense amount on the job from the library directors I worked with, as well as other coworkers. Because I truly loved the work, I finally decided to get my M.L.I.S. (at age 50!) and became full-time librarian in 2017. I don't have a botanical or horticultural background, but I have learned so much from working here, and I am in the right place to continue my professional development.

According to the website, the Longwood Gardens Library was created in 1953 from the personal library of founder Pierre S. du Pont and has grown to more than 30,000 items plus periodicals and online databases. Can you share some highlights of the collections? What are some most used items?

Our founder Pierre du Pont had many beautifully illustrated botanical, horticultural and garden design books that form the nucleus of our rare book collection. A favorite of mine from that collection is *Reichenbachia, orchids illustrated and described* with 19<sup>th</sup> century folios of glorious life-size orchid illustrations. His books still inspire Longwood staff in many ways, from being used as references for books written about our history to scans of garden design illustrations becoming fantastic murals for our new administration building.

Our main collection consists of modern literature to support the work of our staff, students and volunteers. Our collection policy describes it as a "professional-level collection of the most accurate scientific, horticultural, and cultural knowledge as resource for professional development, education, programming, and research activities of the organization." We focus mainly on botany and horticulture, but our collections also reflect the wide variety of other work that goes on at Longwood, including performing arts, fountains, education, photography, etc.

We share an ebook collection with nine other botanical and horticultural libraries. It's on the demand-driven acquisition model and works very well to supplement our print collections. Print periodicals are one of the most popular collections with our staff. We route approximately 150 magazines, newsletters, and journals to interested staff members via interoffice mail. They range from beautiful British garden magazines to scientific journals to small plant society newsletters.

## Who are your patrons?

Our regular patron base, with circulation privileges, is Longwood's staff, students, and volunteers. Longwood Gardens' over 80,000 member households have access to our 8,000+ eBook collection. We do welcome members and other outside guests to make an appointment to use library resources onsite.

## Describe your role at the library.

My job title is Library and Research Manager. I am part of the Library and Information and Services (LIS) division, which includes the Library, Archives, Digital Resources, Plant Information and Mapping, and Docent teams. I manage the daily operations of the library, including acquisition, circulation, reference, ILL, cataloging (my favorite), and technical services. Most years we have one or two interns that rotate through the library, and I train and supervise them in their library work. In addition, we have a large Community Read program, which is similar to public library Big Read/One Book programs. We partner with several regional library systems in four states, comprising over 150 branch libraries, plus other non-profit partners. We donate copies of the selected books to our partners, who plan programs related to the book, and we host the author for a community discussion. It's a very popular program, and fun and rewarding to engage the community in discussing books related to the natural world and gardens.

The Longwood Library is an institutional member of the Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries (CBHL). I am proud to serve on the CBHL board as treasurer, and I am book review editor for the newsletter.

## Describe the physical building, staff structure, your day-to-day tasks and schedule.

We just moved into a brand new library after three years of our collections being in offsite storage and staff working in temporary offices. It's very exciting to be in our lovely new administration building – The Grove - where the library has a seating and work area with 2-story windows facing west across the Chester County rolling hills, and an outdoor patio. The collections fit nicely into the new space, with some room to grow. Our archives storage space (which also holds the rare books) is on a different floor. Our LIS division consists of a director, library and research manager, senior archivist, digital resource manager, object collections curator, plus the Docent and Plant Information and Mapping teams. The library is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. No two days are the same in the library because of all the different tasks I do and all the different people who come through the library - which I love.

## Finally, can you tell us why you do what you do?

I've been at Longwood almost 20 years, and it's a truly wonderful place to work. It starts with the beauty and history of Longwood, and extends to the generosity, professionalism, and kindness of the staff. It was serendipity that I ended up as a librarian at one of the great gardens of the world, and I don't take it for granted. The work is challenging, and I continue to learn new things every day. More than anything, I enjoy helping people find information.