



THE
PUBLIC
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of Cincinnati
and
Hamilton County

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Press Release

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***River Memories Brings Alive Many Crucial Roles
Played by Our Inland Rivers
At Main Library through mid-October***

The Mississippi River and its tributaries have long played a crucial role in the history and development of the United States, and still serve as arteries of the nation's trade, commerce, and travel industry. Like many communities two centuries ago, Cincinnati was built and developed upon the Ohio River's traffic and thrived and grew, thanks to its location on the river.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Inland Rivers Library collection at the Main Library, a special exhibit featuring river memories in manuscript logbooks, diaries, memoirs and images will be on view in the Rare Books & Special Collections Department (800 Vine Street) through mid-October. **River Memories** showcases the collection that includes books, manuscripts, photographs, maps and ephemera focusing on the commercial use of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and their navigable tributaries.

History of the Inland Rivers Library

The Inland Rivers Library was established in 1956 with the donation of the collection of the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen as its core. Under the leadership of Librarian Carl Vitz, the river materials that the Public Library already owned were incorporated into the new gift collection to form the Inland Rivers Library—a major resource for the Library that seemed a perfect fit in the Rare Book Department. The collection continues to grow, with members of the Sons and Daughters, as well as other groups and individuals, donating materials. The Public Library also purchases new river materials as they become available.

The Inland Rivers Library has a national reputation as a valuable resource for river history. Captain Frederick Way, Jr., noted river historian and former President of the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen, was one of the major donors to the collection. Two of his important reference works used extensively by river historians include *Way's Packet Directory, 1848-1994* and *Way's Steam Towboat Directory*.

About the Collection

In addition to thousands of photographs of steamboats and the steamboat industry, the Inland Rivers Library has a wide variety of hand-written documents that include freight books, account books, crew registers, and passenger lists for specifically named



Captain Frederick Way, Jr. (1901-1992) on watch in the pilothouse of the *Washington* in 1936.

steamboats. There is also a large assortment of freight bills dating from the early nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. Yet another part of the collection is the diaries, logbooks and personal papers of particular individuals who worked on the river. While books, pamphlets, photographs, maps, and manuscripts represent the bulk of what is available in the Inland Rivers Library, a multi-media collection contains a small number of phonograph records, 16mm films, audiotapes, videotapes, and steamboat models.

EXHIBIT HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Sunday: 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Information: (513) 369-6957

✓ Information about events at the Main Library and 41 branch libraries is available on the Internet site: www.CincinnatiLibrary.org.