

MTA's Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library is the last word in research, transportation, and technical developments. New librarian Matt Barrett is leading the charge to expand the facility and its resources.

PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON



Meet the Staff: from left, Alicia Walker, administrative analyst; historian Jim Walker; Matthew Barrett, Policy, Research and Library Services Administrator, and Librarian Glenda Davis Mariner.

Everything you need to know - and *more* - about transit.

By GAYLE ANDERSON

The paper trail that leads to transportation truths is a well-trodden one, thanks to MTA's perpetually resourceful research library on the 15th floor of the Gateway headquarters building in Los Angeles.

But the winds of change are shifting the course of the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library and Research Center.

Among other things, there's a expansion underway and a new librarian at the helm – Matt Barrett, a 12-year employee of the MTA who made his mark in Transit Operations as the research analyst who delved into performance data and emerged with new management tools for decreasing the overall accident rate.

In 1996, Barrett earned a Master's Degree in Library Science at UCLA. With a professional designation in the field of information access and policy, Barrett was a natural choice to fill in for Dorothy Gray, the much loved librarian who lost her battle with a lung ailment in October 2001.

"I am honored to be heading up the library and research center that bears her name," said

Heed the Call: Who among us have transportation icons? There's a [call for collectibles](#).

PROFILE



Matthew Barrett

Title: Policy & Research
Library Services Administrator

Education: Master's Degree in
Library and Information
Science (MLIS), UCLA, 1999.
BA in History and Art History,
UCLA, 1989.

Hire date: 1991

Professional Memberships:
Barrett is an active member of

Barrett. "This library is her legacy. She laid the foundation for one of the most comprehensive transportation libraries in the country."

The Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library, named in honor of the librarian who transformed a collection of planning documents into a transportation resource of national reputation, is today one of the largest and most resourceful transportation libraries in the nation.

Expansion will increase resources

An expansion into the room next door will increase the size of the library considerably, said Barrett. When the conversion of a former office assigned to engineering is complete, the library will gain an additional 900 square feet of space that will house an exhibition area for treasures from the library's archives, a conference table for researchers, and shelving for a special section of engineering books and current reference materials.

The catalog of transportation materials and technical references contains some 200,000 volumes. That staggering total includes some 20,000 photographs and an estimated 50,000 records stored on microfiche.

"We purchased \$5,000 worth of new books in June," said Barrett, adding some 600 new books, reports and resources to the permanent collection.

"ITS is working on the installation of a new "Cybertools for Libraries" system, an online circulation and public access catalog software, replacing the Brodart system from 1985," said Barrett. Expected to be up and online by the end of this month, Cybertools for Libraries is a web-based system that will allow employees and the general public access through the MTA's web site to search the library collection online.

Check it out

In the next few months, watch for a series of improvements and new resources that enhance library services, said Barrett. The list includes:

- An online circulation catalog,
- More new books for the permanent collection,
- A new comprehensive library website on mta.net,
- An archive of photographs and records that can be accessed online,
- More research journals to the library's subscription base, and
- An expansion of the library to accommodate research staff, additional shelving, a conference table and display area for historic and educational exhibitions.

the Special Library Association and the American Library Association. The Transportation Division of the Special Library Association is the main network of U.S. transportation librarians with members from the FTA, TRB, National Transit Library, APTA, MTC, CTA, NYMTA, Texas Transportation Institute and the various university transit research centers.

Quotables: "The best thing about being a Librarian at the MTA is the ongoing discovery and re-discovery of the incredible treasures we have in the research center, particularly the archives."

Favorite activities: Urban myth busting.

CALL FOR COLLECTIBLES: Do you and your family have a history in transportation? If you go way back, perhaps you have an item or two – your grandfather's Pacific Electric operator's cap, a ticket punch or old tokens – that deserve a place of honor in the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library and Research Center? Information: barrettm@mta.net.

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