



Finishing the Year Strong

2025



Welcome back to the Keeneland Library Newsletter—a biannual update highlighting Library happenings and impacts in the Bluegrass and beyond.

The Keeneland Library team works every day to connect researchers to our world-class collections, to create and deliver education programs to racing fans of all ages, to maintain and heighten access to our rich information and image resources, and to curate and travel stimulating exhibits and outreach programs into the community.

If you haven't stopped by recently, come out and visit us. We look forward to seeing you soon!



In this newsletter you will find:

Information on education and outreach, collections and preservation, research services, development initiatives and more!

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Keeneland Library Lecture Series

There was something in the mix for everyone with our summer and fall Library Lecture Series programs.

On the heels of a memorable evening in May with jockey Diane Crump celebrating her 77th birthday with biographer Mark Shrager, *The Saratoga Special* crew, joined by their former intern and now Director of Keeneland Communications Gabby Gaudet, commemorated the publication's 25th anniversary with a packed house in June.

The great Stymie was featured in a poignant novel in short stories by Dr. Tony Ryan Book Award winning author and Lexington native Andy Plattner in July, and several newcomers in August took in Catharine Melin-Moser's account of the unlikely reign of runners bred and campaigned by Montana industrialists in the late 1800s.

Stay tuned to keeneland.com/library to book your tickets for upcoming Library Lecture Series events. Event proceeds benefit the Keeneland Library Foundation which supports Library preservation, education, and outreach projects.



Community Outreach Programs

Keeneland Library delivered 80 free in-community educational programs that reached more than 6,100 youth and adults between May and October, covering topics ranging from racing's people and places from the Colonial era to today to local history and archival best practices.

Our new Library Intern Evie Clare hit the ground running this semester with varied Library outreach efforts, and Library Director Roda Ferraro gave talks and spoke at conferences in six states and conducted industry research workshops for university equine studies students across Kentucky universities this summer and fall.

To celebrate Lexington's Sister City relationship with Deauville, France during Lexington's 250th anniversary in 2025 and to honor African American jockeys who made their mark in both Kentucky and France in the late 1800s, Keeneland Library partnered with Les Franciscaines and Deauville-La Touques Racecourse for a documentary screening, book signings, and joint trackside outreach programs that reached thousands of international racing fans in July and August.

Be sure to stop by VisitLEX in the historic former County Courthouse in downtown Lexington to check out its new Holobox that uses 3D holographic technology to provide interactive experiences with local experts. Library Director Roda Ferraro is featured as one of four cultural heritage representatives in this innovative platform.



EDUCATION & OUTREACH



Starting Gate Storytime

Starting Gate Storytime continues to delight local families and visitors to Lexington with our live readings of children’s stories that promote the love of the horse and industry awareness. If you have little ones in your life looking for special Saturday morning family outings, join us for great stories and activities. Keeneland Kids Club’s beloved mascot Buckles is always on hand to practice his reading alongside young horse and literacy lovers.

Visit keeneland.com/library for our 2026 Starting Gate Storytime lineup and join the more than 250 families who have been a part of the program series since its launch last year.



CURRENT EXHIBIT

Raíces: The Making of Latino Legacies in Racing

Keeneland Library’s newest exhibit and education initiative, *Raíces: The Making of Latino Legacies in Racing*, showcases 100 groundbreaking Latino figures at every level of the Thoroughbred racing and breeding industry from the late 1800s to today. The Library’s first bilingual exhibit, *Raíces* features biographical vignettes and never-before-displayed photographs and memorabilia of men and women in the sport from across the Americas to highlight the breadth and depth of their indelible marks on the industry’s past and present. *Raíces*—or roots—are emblematic of their respective stories, individual and collective heritage, and legacies sowed and sustained at every level of the sport.

Developed in English and Spanish with contributions from writers and photographers from six countries, the exhibit celebrates the many and varied industry professionals who continue to forge their paths across the Americas as they shape the sport’s future.

Timed to coincide with 250LEX celebrations of Lexington’s 250th anniversary and the country’s 250th anniversary in 2026, *Raíces: The Making of Latino Legacies in Racing* is freely accessible to the public and racing fans of all ages during the Library’s operating hours of Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The exhibit’s printed text is in English with an audio guide in Spanish. Contact us for more information on the exhibit’s 100-page companion book, developed by the Library Director and local designer James Shambhu, scheduled for a December release.



COLLECTIONS & ACCESS

New Virtual Galleries

Check out our two newest virtual galleries built by Library Project Curator Sarah Cantor by browsing the exhibits section at keenelandlibrary.omeka.net.



As part of 250LEX celebrations and in support of the independent, local artist-driven project **Hispanics: The Heartbeat of Kentucky's Equine Industry**, Keeneland Library provided the buildout and hosting of a new virtual gallery of paintings, photographs, poems, and more.



If you missed the Library's **Of Turf and Stone: Keeneland Through the Ages** exhibit earlier this year, spend time browsing its virtual counterpart across the decades in celebration of the 90th anniversary of Keeneland's founding.

Recent Gifted Acquisitions



THE HALE COLLECTION

Pam Taranto, wife of the late journalist Ronald L. Hale, gifted the Hale Collection to Keeneland Library this summer.

Hale meticulously built and maintained an agile, diverse equine library over his lifetime, and his industry monographs and serials are now incorporated into the Library's collections and available to researchers.



THE ALLEN COLLECTION

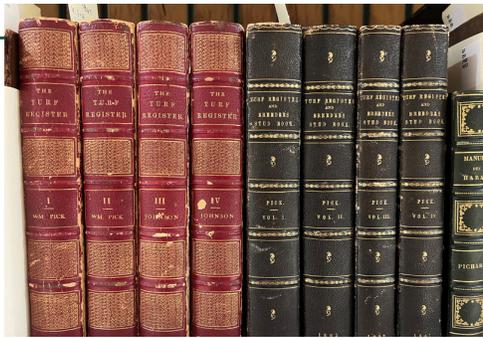
The Florida-based artist Alaura Allen gifted original watercolors featuring Black horsemen of the late 19th century to the Library this summer. Several pieces in the collection were inspired by photography in the Library's collections that represent the world's most comprehensive era photographic holdings of African Americans in the sport.



THE VAROLA COLLECTION

Research notes and monographs belonging to the Italian author and breeding theorist Dr. Francesco Varola, known in the racing world as Franco Varola, were gifted to Keeneland Library this summer by his daughter Melania Varola who lives in Brazil. Known for his influential publications *Typology of the Racehorse* and *The Functional Development of the Thoroughbred*, Varola posited his examination of stallions within the dosage framework developed by the French Lieutenant Colonel J.J. Vuillier in the early 20th century.

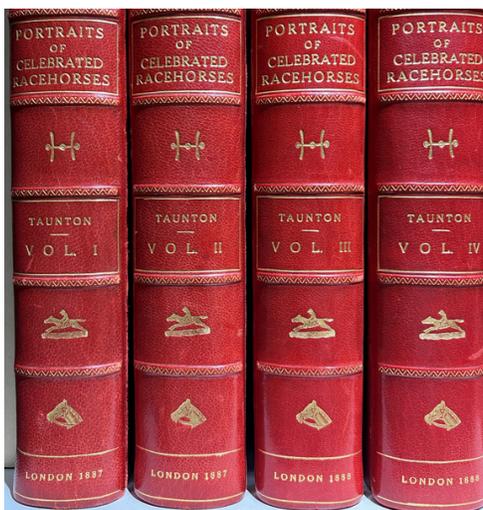
RESEARCH & PRESERVATION SERVICES



Summer & Fall Research Highlights

In addition to working with international racetracks, industry and mainstream media, and horse farms across the country, the Library continued its research support for community organizations celebrating Lexington's 250th anniversary.

Between May and October, Keeneland Library fielded 1,275 research requests and licensed 1,420 photographs for print, radio, and televised news coverage, broadcasts, publications, and industry communications. Of the 35 media outlets, 46 industry organizations, and 58 community organizations receiving the Library's research services, standout projects include exhibits at presidential libraries and national parks, economic and cultural impact studies, and KET's *Lexington: 250 Years* – a documentary for which the Library supplied research and images and the Library Director was interviewed.



Preservation Updates



THE HEMMENT COLLECTION

The Library completed a digitization project of the Hemment Collection this summer. John C. Hemment was an early U.S. racetrack photographer who championed the concept of photo finish. The Hemment Collection, representing 6,500 photographic prints that capture the country's oldest Turf photography, is now fully digitized. Research Services Associate Erika Williams is currently building a new digital index for the collection scheduled for completion in summer 2026.

THE FEATHERSTON COLLECTION

Preservation work is underway on the George B. Featherston Collection. Featherston, a local radio personality, Turf photographer, and emissary of the sport, was a mainstay at Keeneland and other racetracks from the mid-1900s until his death in 1984. Library Project Curator Sarah Cantor is processing and archivally rehousing the collection, while building a digital index with a project completion target of fall 2026.



THE HAASE COLLECTION

Archival rehousing and digital indexing of the Joe Haase Collection comprising nearly 1,200 negatives of West Coast tracks in the 1930s and 40s were completed this fall. Digital Assets Associate Kirk Hoefling meticulously researched every image to identify as much metadata as possible to heighten access to this compact and compelling collection gifted to the Library by photographer Barbara Livingston in the spring.

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Sponsorships & Grant Updates



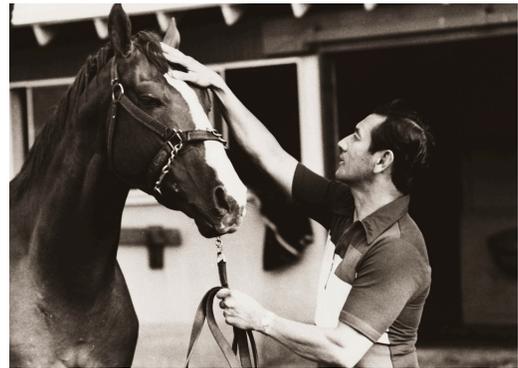
VISITLEX

Keeneland Library Director Roda Ferraro visited Les Franciscaines Museum and Library in Deauville to bring an international screening of the French adaptation of the **KET** documentary *The Legacy of Black Horsemen*, made possible through a special arrangement with **KET**, subtitling by **Full Field Agency**, and the support of **VisitLEX**. The documentary screening was paired with joint lectures, book signings, podcasts in French, and trackside outreach at Deauville-La Touques Racecourse in July and August.

SUSAN NAYLOR/SAFARI NORTH LLC

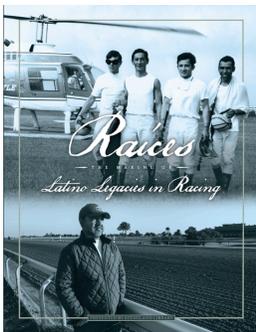
Susan Naylor's generous sponsorship of the *Raíces: The Making of Latino Legacies in Racing* exhibit and education initiative gave the Raíces development team the option to expand its contributing editors, photographers, and translators to a team of some of the sport's best content creators in six countries.

The exhibit, thanks to the additional support of a 250LEX Cultural Grant, will begin to travel in the community in 2026 after debuting in the Library.



ANONYMOUS SPONSOR

An anonymous sponsor funded the print production of the December 2025 release of the *Raíces: The Making of Latino Legacies in Racing* 100-page exhibit companion book. Packed with biographical vignettes featuring more than 150 men and women from across the Americas and hundreds of photographs, the companion book's first print run will feature text in English with a 31,000-word audio component in Spanish.



AMERICA250KY GRANT

We continue to build out our deliverables on an America250KY grant that supports traveling the Library's popular exhibit *The Heart of the Turf: Racing's Black Pioneers* and its education programs across the country. More than 220,000 youth and adults have been a part of the free outreach initiative in eight states to date. Check out our traveling exhibit schedule at keeneland.com/library to find an exhibit hosting site near you.



DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Two Books, One Good Cause

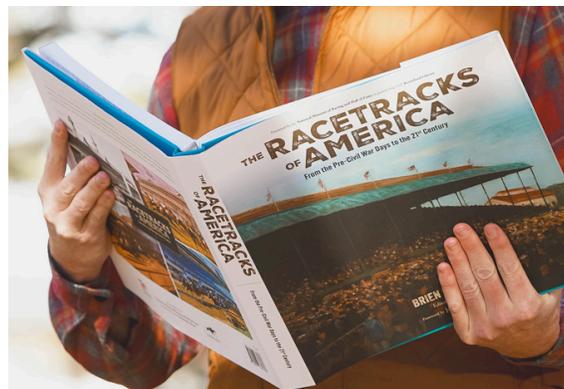
RACETRACKS OF AMERICA: FROM THE PRE-CIVIL WAR DAYS TO THE 21ST CENTURY

The joint release by the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame in partnership with Keeneland Library is here! As promised, 75 boxes of the book that weighs in at nearly 10 pounds were delivered by Sallee Horse Vans to Keeneland Library after their team dropped off yearlings to the Keeneland September Sale. We extend a heartfelt thanks to Sallee Horse Vans for their support.

Thanks also to all who joined us for our race day book signing by the Paddock on October 18th and our Author Meet & Greet in Keeneland Library on October 20th to bring home this first comprehensive chronicle of its kind. **Racetracks of America** is a 450-page, image-packed compendium of U.S. racetracks past and present with contributions by the sport's leading writers and historians. Sure to be a priceless companion to racing fans and history lovers, the book showcases the special places at the heart of the American Thoroughbred racing experience.

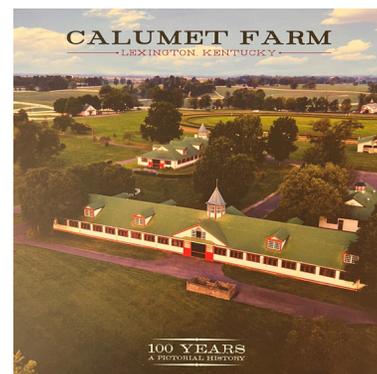
Keeneland Library invested nearly 700 hours in the book's research, image sourcing, and buildout, with Library Project Curator Sarah Cantor compiling a deep dive of the Library's image resources. Library Director Roda Ferraro was a contributing researcher, editor, and author.

All proceeds from the book's sales at The Keeneland Shop and Keeneland Library will benefit the Keeneland Library Foundation. If you are located out of town or want to ship copies as holiday gifts to friends and family, you can order your copy online at keenelandshop.com while supplies last.



CALUMET FARM'S 100 YEARS: A PICTORIAL HISTORY

Calumet Farm published a handsome pictorial history of their storied farm this year in celebration of the farm's 100th anniversary. Thanks to a generous donation from Calumet, all proceeds from the purchase of this book at Keeneland will benefit the Keeneland Library Foundation. Get your copy today at Keeneland Library, in The Keeneland Shop or online at keenelandshop.com.

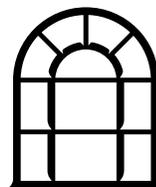


FRIENDS OF KEENELAND LIBRARY

HELP US FINISH THE YEAR STRONG

We are grateful to everyone who joined our Friends of Keeneland Library campaign in 2025. Your support matters, and we thank you!

Find out how you can help us preserve and share more by becoming a **Friend of Keeneland Library** in the final weeks of 2025 at keeneland.com/library.



KEENELAND
LIBRARY FOUNDATION