

## **Harriet Oxman Bio**

Harriet Oxman is described as “determined, very direct, somebody to admire,” by Catherwood Library Director Gordon Law.

A retired high school principal, Oxman volunteers in the Selby Public Library bookstore near her home in Sarasota, Fla.

She also volunteers as a receptionist at the Sarasota County Sheriff’s Department.

Deputies taught Oxman how to descend buildings like a mountain climber; attached to a rope, she made it down a four-story facade.

Oxman, a champion race walker, grew up in New York City.

She transferred to ILR from Adelphi College on Long Island. “I always knew I wanted to go to Cornell. The dream came true,” she said in a telephone interview this week.

Oxman said the newness of ILR appealed to her and found all but one course interesting. She didn’t like Statistics, “but neither did anybody else in the class.”

Oxman was accepted at Cornell Law School. Due to her father’s illness, she returned instead to New York.

After earning a master’s degree in education at New York University, Oxman began teaching social studies and traveling the world during summer vacations.

Annual trips have taken her to Antarctica, Siberia, Mongolia, Tibet, Australia, the Middle East, Easter Island and many other places. Her next trip is a hiking jaunt through Switzerland.

Twenty-four years of Oxman’s career were spent at Brooklyn’s Erasmus Hall, where graduating classes numbered more than 1,000 students. She served as principal from 1972 to 1981.