

Spring Meeting: Meeting Program

April 26, 1997

University of Maine, Orono, ME

Registration and coffee: 8:30-9:30

Keynote address: 9:30-10:20

by John Carlin, Archivist of the United States

Concurrent Focus Sessions: 10:30-12:00

1) To Protect and Serve--To Serve and Protect

All archivists face problems in balancing their concern for the physical security of the intrinsically valuable materials in their charge with service to patrons. This dilemma can be especially acute for archivists who work alone or in small, free-standing repositories. Drawing upon her experiences as the curator of the Ernest Hemingway Collection, a separate literary archive housed within the John F. Kennedy Library, one speaker will describe practical steps that an archivist can take to provide both access and security for manuscripts and artifacts. A representative of the New England regional office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation will discuss the character and relative importance of external threats to collections and what actions to take if a loss is discovered.

Presenters: Megan F. Desnoyers, Supervisory Archivist, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, Mass. Federal Bureau of Investigation, New England Regional Office representative

Chair: Peter Drummey, Librarian, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Mass.

2) To Build or Not to Build--What Archivists Can Do (and the Questions They Should Ask)

Archival materials are often housed in buildings that offer a less than perfect environment. Whether building a new archival repository or renovating an older one on a limited budget, archivists need to ask the right questions and make their needs known. This session will provide two perspectives. An architect, who has worked on a number of library and historical building projects, will offer his insights on what archivists can do in conjunction with architects to make their needs known. A representative from a leading conservation center will explore some of the ways that institutions with limited budgets can evaluate existing environmental problems and improve conditions by addressing these problems.

Presenters: Beth Patkus, Field Service Representative, Northeast Document Conservation Center, Andover, Mass.; Thomas Hotaling, Ann Beha & Associates, Boston, Mass.

Chair: Jane E. Ward, Curator of Manuscripts, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Mass.

3) Managing Archives in the National Park Service

Archives can sometimes be found in the most surprising places. Although the National Park Service may be recognized as the nation's leading environmental conservation agency, their mission is to preserve and protect natural and cultural resources, including archival collections. Three archivists working in the New England area will discuss their experiences in this session. The regional archivist for the National Park Service has the responsibility for traveling to sites that have inadequate or even non-existing archives. The museum curator at Acadia National Park will discuss Acadia's William Otis Sawtelle Collection, as well as other archival collections onsite. The supervisory archivist at the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline, Mass., will focus on the management of an archives within both a museum setting and the bureaucracy of a federal agency.

Presenters: Diane Godwin, Archivist, Northeast Field Area Museum Services Center, National Park Service, Charlestown, Mass.; Brooke L. Childrey, Museum Curator, Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor, Maine; Linda C. Genovese, Supervisory Archivist, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, Mass.

Chair: Roberta L. Ransley, Librarian/Archivist, Strawberry Banke, Portsmouth, N.H.

Lunch: 12:00-1:30

NEA Annual Business Meeting: 1:30-2:00

Concurrent Focus Sessions: 2:15-4:00

4) Show Me The Money!

Writing grants for special projects or even everyday operations can seem like a daunting task. What will make your grant stand out? How can a small institution compete against a much larger entity? What do grant reviewers look for? Three speakers who have been involved in writing or reviewing grants will share their experiences and strategies for writing grants large and small, what makes a grant proposal stand out, and what reviewing agencies look for in the sea of grant applications.

Presenters: Janet Roberts, Regrant Project Coordinator, Maine State Archives, Augusta, Maine; Laura Sebastianelli, Grants Manager, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Boston, Mass.; Samuel Shogren, Curator, Penobscot Marine Museum, Searsport, Maine

Chair: Greg Colati, College Archivist, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine

5) Is It Memory? Or Is It History?

Use of the term "memory" has become commonplace in contemporary historical writings. For many, it signifies a new way of looking at the past, one that takes into consideration history as a representation rather than a reconstruction of the past. This session, held as a discussion seminar, will seek to understand this historiographical turn from an archival perspective. Topics to be explored are: 1) the ways in which memory is preserved, both by looking at the emergency of written records as memory, and by considering documents as one cultural artifact among many; 2) archives as a place of commemoration and how that influences public programming and access; 3) the emphasis placed by these studies on seemingly insignificant artifacts, historical misdirections, and cultural scraps; 4) what these studies offer archivists and what is left out from an archival perspective. A reading list will be sent to registrants before the meeting. Registration will be limited to 30 participants.

Session Leaders: James M. O'Toole, Associate Professor of History, University of Massachusetts, Boston; Brien Brothman, Archival Consultant, formerly with the National Archives of Canada

Moderator: Kevin Shupe, Curator of Library Collections, Manchester Historic Association, Manchester, N.H.

6) Documenting Native Americans in New England

Traditionally archives are thought of as collections of materials created by nations of European origin, while Native American cultures have a tradition of oral history. However, since European contact with Native North Americans, there has been a continuously growing body of written documentation about and by Native peoples. How, then, does a researcher use "traditional" archives in documenting Native American history? This session's participants will reveal the different sources and methods they have used to find written records of Native Americans for research or to establish a Native American archives. Speakers include a graduate student in history who has done extensive archaeological and archival research on the English settlement of Pemaquid; a Penobscot attorney who has worked on federal recognition cases for Native Americans; and an archivist establishing a tribal archives and special collections that reflect the history of Native Americans from the sixteenth century to the present.

Presenters: Neill De Paoli, Ph.D. candidate in history, University of New Hampshire; Henry J. Sockbeson, Mashantucket Pequot Tribe, Legal Department, Mashantucket, Conn.; Donna Longo DiMichele, Head Archivist, Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, Mashantucket, Conn.

Chair: Nancy Noble, Special Collections Librarian, Westbrook College, Portland, Maine

Reception: 4:00-5:30