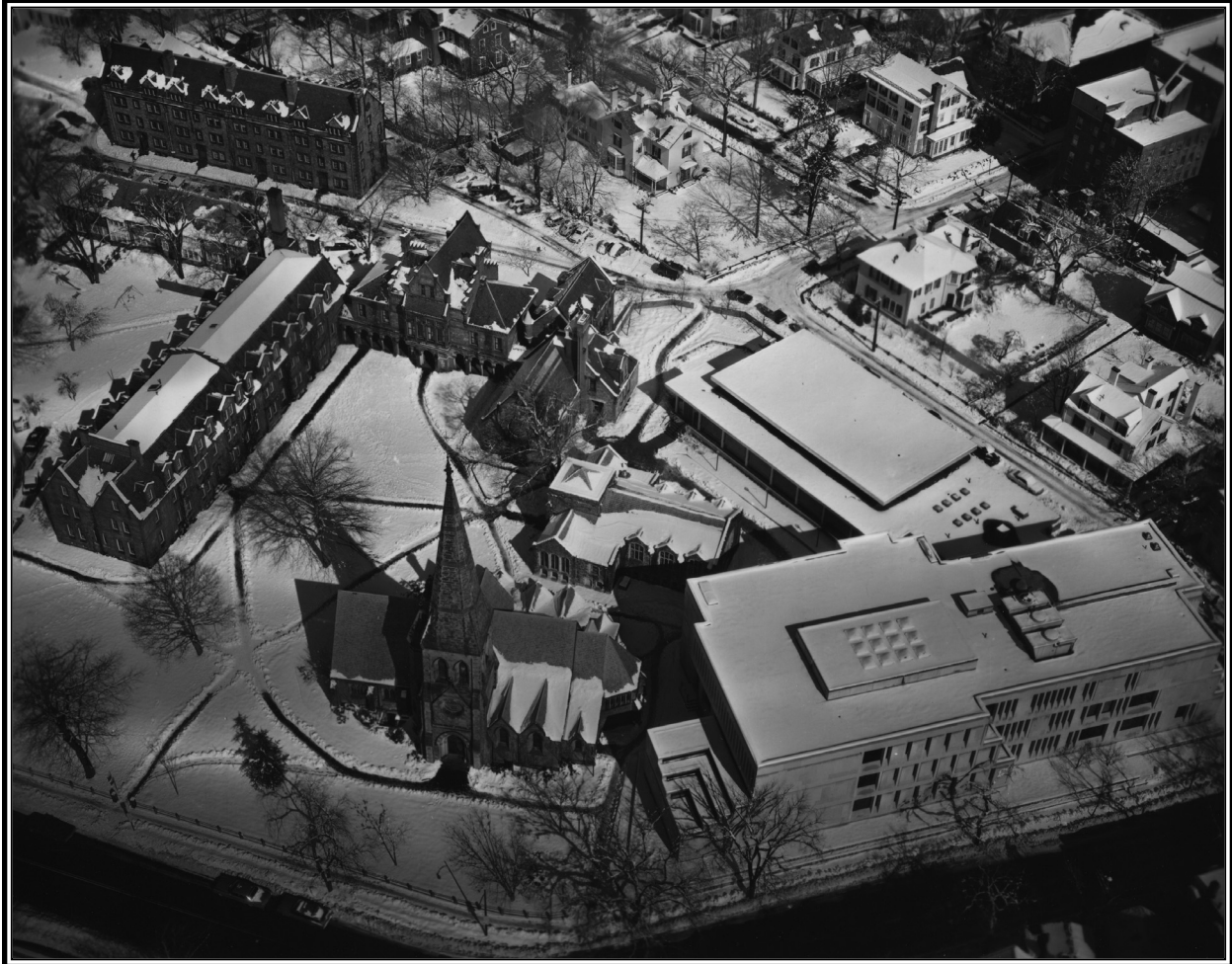


Volume 37, Number 1 • January 2010

NEA

# NEWSLETTER

NEW ENGLAND ARCHIVISTS



C O V E R -- The corner of Brattle and Mason Streets in 1965 showing the EDS campus, designed by Boston Architects Ware & Van Brunt in 1872. *Photo courtesy of Lesley University Archives.*

I N S I D E -- Richard Cox discusses the future of archival appraisal (*Archival Insight*, page 4) and Paige Roberts shares her experience at the Rare Book School (*Around & About*, page 26). Also, learn about the most recent slate of candidates before the coming NEA election (*NEA 2010 Elections*, page 15).

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE

N E A

# New England Archivists

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE

**College Archives & Special Collections**  
**Wallace E. Mason Library • Keene State College**  
**299 Main Street • Keene, NH. 03435**  
 <[www.newenglandarchivists.org](http://www.newenglandarchivists.org)>

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Membership in *New England Archivists, Inc.* is open to all.

**Dues** of \$30/year (\$40 for institutions) should be sent to: Rodney Obien, College Archives & Special Collections, Wallace E. Mason Library, Keene State College, 299 Main Street, Keene, NH. 03435.

**Notices** of archival events should be sent to: Michael Dello Iacono at <[michael.delloiacono@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:michael.delloiacono@hms.harvard.edu)>.

The *NEA Newsletter* is published quarterly in January, April, July and October. The contents of the *Newsletter* may be reproduced in whole or in part provided that credit is given.

**Articles** and **News** of interest to archivists, historical society members, historians, and other NEA members should be sent to: Michael Dello Iacono at <[michael.delloiacono@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:michael.delloiacono@hms.harvard.edu)> or to NEA Newsletter Editors, c/o College Archives & Special Collections, Wallace E. Mason Library, Keene State College, 299 Main Street, Keene, NH. 03435.

Contributions to the NEA Web site should be sent to: <[webcoordinator@newenglandarchivists.org](mailto:webcoordinator@newenglandarchivists.org)>.

## Deadlines for submitting materials are:

November 15 for January issue	February 10 for April issue
May 15 for July issue	August 15 for October issue

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# From the Editors

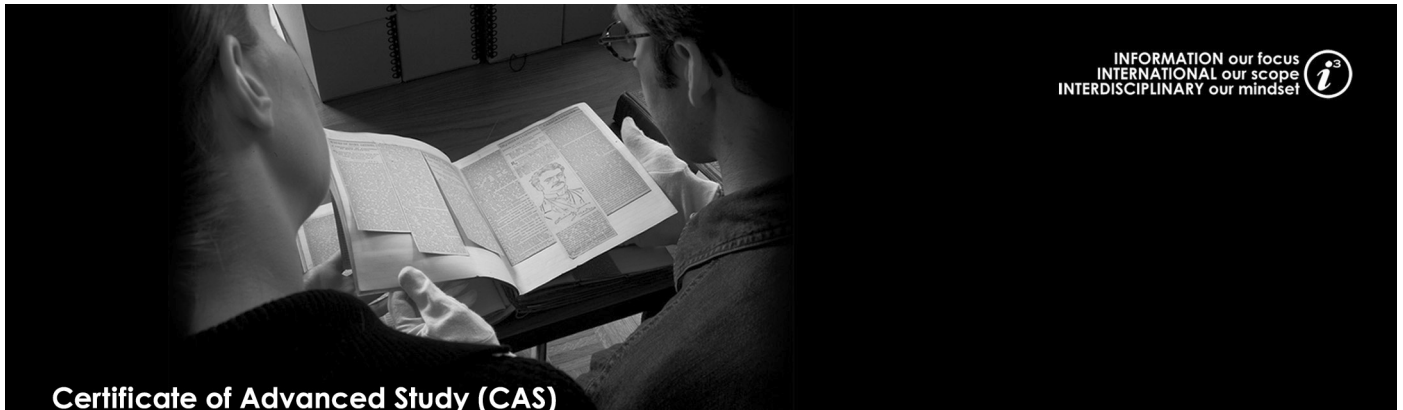
- Cyndi Harbeson

In some ways, each new year is a time of assessing or – dare I say it? – appraising where we are in our own lives (or in our careers) as we look back at what we've accomplished over the past year and look forward to the year ahead while resolving to do things differently. Perhaps, then, it is only fitting that our first issue of this new year focuses so much not only on looking back at the past NEA meeting held last November, but also on the very topic of appraisal. For those of you who were unable to attend the meeting at UMASS Boston, this month's *Archival Insight* is a shortened version of Richard Cox's keynote address in which he discusses the very relevance and future of archival appraisal. Also be sure to read through the session reports from the meeting and catch up on all the latest information that came out of some great sessions.

In *Around & About*, Paige Roberts shares her experience at the Rare Book School, where she attended a class on cataloging maps. Her enthusiasm for the school and its programming is sure to make just about anyone want to go back to school (or at least to the Rare Book School).

January also brings us ever closer to election time (at least for our organization) and we have an extraordinary slate of candidates on the ballot. Candidate statements appear both in this issue and are also available online. Voting this year will take place by e-ballot and you should be receiving more information about the voting process very soon, if you haven't already.

In closing, on behalf of the entire newsletter committee, I would like to welcome our newest committee member, Michael Dello Iacono, to the team as News and Notes/Calendar editor and thank Stephanie Schneider for her dedicated service to the committee. ■



INFORMATION our focus  
INTERNATIONAL our scope  
INTERDISCIPLINARY our mindset



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# ARCHIVAL INSIGHT

## Arguing About Appraisal: From Hilary to Helen and Beyond

by Richard J. Cox, Keynote address from New England Archivists Meeting, Boston, MA, November 2009

Traveling from Phoenix to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, one cannot help but notice both the change in elevation and the transformed landscape. This experience merely prepares you for the magnificent ragged gash you are about to see, something that one finds difficult, ultimately, to describe. Staring at the magnificent canyon, with the North Rim far in the distance, reminds me of our profession's decades of discussions about archival appraisal. The trip to appraisal has been interesting (after all, some of our best minds have struggled with the archival function), but the gap from one side of the canyon to the other (the gap between daily practice and academic discourse) represents a vista we struggle to understand. For while we seem to have many more ideas about appraisal, and conceptions about appraisal methodologies, we really must wonder just how much the application of appraisal has changed. And now, perhaps, we also must scratch our heads about whether it all really makes any difference.

My intention is to reflect on how archivists have considered appraisal, how appraisal has been challenged by forces ranging from mundane changes in recordkeeping technologies to complicated legal, cultural, and ethical issues, and whether appraisal is still relevant as part of our professional and societal mission. Appraisal is getting harder.

### Looking Backward

There have been so many estimates about the rate of growth of documents and texts, all simply attesting to our inability to keep up, that there is hardly need to provide any specifics of such estimates or even to worry about whether they are any more than crude approximations. Given the chance, we want to look at our archives as stable and permanent, housed in substantial neoclassical structures radiating permanence. If we have stopped building government and financial structures to look like neoclassical temples (which we have – now they look like shopping malls), we probably should cease conceptualizing our archives buildings and our programs in this way. Maybe the Internet is the new archival symbol – whatever that might mean.

For a very long time, longer than I care to imagine, I have been writing and teaching about the centrality of appraisal to archival work. What we do (or do not do) in our appraisal activities influences what we do or can do in all other archival functions; if we fail in making good appraisal decisions (or for that matter, we fail in making the public understand what appraisal represents) we cannot do very well in any other archival endeavor.

It is not difficult to identify landmark writings in archival appraisal. T. R. Schellenberg set the stage more than a half-century ago by rejecting Jenkinson's no appraisal approach and others began to build on the former. F. Gerald Ham brought in the social history perspective, Leonard Rapport suggested that older appraisal decisions could be questioned, Boles and Young tried to systematize the decision-making process, and then Helen Samuels, James O'Toole, David Bearman, and Terry Cook (among others) added a chorus of voices for a complete rethinking of archival appraisal.<sup>1</sup> Since the halcyon days of musing about appraisal and its aims, methods, and results, we have had precious little research about its outcomes – both successes and failures.

A quarter-of-a-century ago, we had the beginnings of some massive efforts to struggle with how to document big science, but except for some spin-off projects of archival visionaries like Helen Samuels and a few others, the ideas and collaboration and creativity didn't last for very long (or, at least, it hasn't been reported).<sup>2</sup> Perhaps this may change as a new era of doctoral students examine archival topics such as appraisal. I hope, over the next decade or two, we will see the development of a rich research literature on appraisal and every archival function and concept.

At the moment, the challenge is that, despite a lively literature on appraisal, most archivists still discourse about it based on the much older definition of determining the value of records, evidential and informational concepts that are more mantra than concrete attributes, and see it as more closely connected to archival representation than it

should be.<sup>3</sup> For every word in our appraisal definition, we can formulate a host of questions that we have not fully answered. And this may explain why we have debated *every* notion of appraisal, whether it is scientific or pragmatic or an objective or subjective activity. The brief tussle between Leonard Rapport and Karen Benedict about the conceptual and practical validity of reappraisal, that is, questioning past appraisal decisions, is just one minor skirmish in the appraisal wars. The debates have always been fun, but whether they have always moved us forward, especially in our ability to maintain a responsible connection to society, is not always clear.

We need to bear in mind the complexities of how archival sources are viewed. We know that people get information (and evidence) from a remarkable array of sources: books, places, architecture, maps, photographs, monuments, advertising, newspapers, television, movies, people, junk mail, letters, e-mail, magazines, art, music, and the Web. Some might even come to a museum, library, or archives, although they might not really understand the difference between these cultural repositories, except that they comprehend that they are something important for society. Archivists have often taken it for granted that they, and everyone else, understands, the archive.

When we turn and consider the reasons organizations of any kind, including government agencies, create and support archives we develop an interesting portrait. Anniversaries and special events, the work of champions or advocates, the influence of professional and technical standards, laws and other factors demanding compliance, crises and disasters, the need of public relations and marketing units, and other factors have all been documented as having some influence on the creation of archives and records management programs.<sup>4</sup> But what do any of these issues have to do with how we appraise records, especially since there have been few efforts to chart the relationship between archival appraisal approaches and records management scheduling (and the latter often takes place with little or no consideration of archival issues despite the notion that records managers believe in the records life cycle concept).

### Looking at the Present

Appraising records, if done correctly (or if done at all) ought to get archivists as close as they can come to the pulse of society (and the organizations archivists work for)

and all its debates and dissension about the past. Humans are consummate storytellers, constantly crafting a narrative trying to explain their meaning in time. Nearly everyone discovers, at some point, the value of preserving documentation of their past and that of their family and community. And, yet, as Woody Allen helps us understand, history is messy and contested.

There is a good bit of tension concerning how the past is interpreted, and archivists and archives are right in the midst of it all. Too often archivists have shied away from a good fight about what the historical record represents or from engaging in debates about the acquisition of controversial materials or testy subjects outside of their own conferences. Working in such circumstances, archivists may find it more difficult to negotiate for the preservation of historical sources or to determine just what should be in their repositories (actually and virtually). Too often, we have associated ourselves more with the feel-good heritage industry than with the evidence and accountability mandates of managing records.

When we assume responsibility for administering the Stasi files or in determining what to do with records revealing the illegal or unethical activities of our employers such purposes must be set aside. Archivists are not in business to make people or our society feel good, but to provide critical evidence for understanding our past and how we have gotten to where we are today. Of course, we should not go out of our way to be difficult or to generate controversy; we don't have to – the minute we do our jobs we will find ourselves in political, ethical, and societal dilemmas and how we approach appraisal is our best tool for defending and explaining our actions.

Archives are a form of monument, and we certainly now understand that monument building is a contentious business because they connect to and reflect societal beliefs about the past and the present.<sup>5</sup> If it is a challenge to determine how we will commemorate the destruction of the World Trade Center, the attack on the Pentagon, or the crash of Flight 93, it is no less difficult to figure out how to appraise records concerning such events. Despite numerous efforts to distance ourselves from the present and to build a kind of objectivity, what ultimately goes into the archives often gets there because of an incalculable number of factors involving power, present uncomfortable attitudes, and efforts to make archives appear neutral (an

impossible task). In the same sense, we have become sensitized to the influence or dominance of Western ideas on our basic archival concepts, a process that has both opened up and complicated the values we assign records or even what we perceive to be legitimate ways of creating records or what constitutes a legitimate archival document.<sup>6</sup>

### Speculating About the Future of Archival Appraisal

As much as anyone I have pushed, prodded, and pinched both archival appraisal theory and its applications. Some of my questions remain, but I now believe we need to go much further in our appraisal practice. First, if you are not actually doing appraisal – if you are passively acquiring stuff without much serious reflection on what it represents or if you are competing for the good stuff, then you need to restructure your program to real appraisal. This may be the easiest task ahead, although perhaps not so easy for us to admit how sloppy we may have been in filling our repositories.

Even more critical is that archivists document their own appraisal activities in order to explain to the public what archives and the archival mission are all about, that these are not just places acquiring old *Life* magazines, scouring flea markets, and building places to entertain antiquarians and hobbyists. Of course, this requires that we understand ourselves and have a clearer sense of what our objectives are in appraising records. We might want to immerse ourselves in the developing, rich literature on public memory in order to understand how we are memory builders and what this means for our self-perception (and to understand how others see us).

We need to collaborate in new ways. Decades ago I worried about archivists being more interested in competing with each other, but now the greatest opportunity may be working with citizens in equipping them to become personal archivists, that is, to give them some basic tools to care for their own records, especially those in digital form. Historian Antoinette Burton remarks “that we are, effectively, all archivists now.”<sup>7</sup> We can move well beyond this, to restate without reference to the public perception of history, to encompass all the shiny new gadgets designed to enable us to manage our private documents in both portable and digital form. These wonderful devices will generate archival questions as individuals more easily lose stuff or see it corrupted – giving archivists great new possibilities in conveying a sense of the archival mandate (and not one tied to esoteric concepts of historiography or law or

accountability but one connected to the practical maintenance of personal and family documents).

When I started working on this address I assumed I would end with a plea for a renewed emphasis of appraisal concepts and practices for accountability carried out in an ethical manner. I still believe that these are intensely important issues, substantially moving the archival profession from a passive cultural discipline to one that stands in the center of our society’s concerns for accurate information. Like journalists, an endangered profession, archivists provide accountability of the past to the present (think of records unearthed about Nazis and the looting of art and other Holocaust victims’ assets). I would argue that for archivists to be engaged in additional values, for want of a better term, such as accountability which may be far more relevant in the digital era, they need to be much more strongly committed to their own ethical sensibilities. ■

1 Rather than offer an extensive bibliographic essay here, I refer people to my *No Innocent Deposits: Forming Archives by Rethinking Appraisal* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 2004) for these and other citations.

2 The first of these are worth citing -- Clark A. Elliot. *Understanding Progress as Process: Documentation of the History of Post-War Science and Technology in the United States*. Final Report of the Joint Committee on Archives of Science and Technology (Chicago IL: SAA, 1983) and Joan K. Haas, Helen Willa Samuels, and Barbara Trippel Simmons. *Appraising the Records of Modern Science and Technology: A Guide* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1985) – because they promised so much and stimulated so much re-thinking of appraisal; again, refer to my *No Innocent Deposits* for a fuller consideration of the seminal books.

3 This is the definition from the 1974 glossary, published as “A Basic Glossary for Archivists, Manuscript Curators, and Records Managers,” compiled by Frank B. Evans, Donald F. Harrison, and Edwin A. Thompson. Edited by William L. Rofes, *The American Archivist* 37 (July 1974): 415-433. This glossary draws mostly from the work of Schellenberg dating back a quarter-of-a-century before the publication of this glossary.

4 I examined such issues in my *A Minor Nuisance Spread Across the Organization: Factors Leading to the Establishment and Support of Records and Information Management Programs* (Pittsburgh, PA: ARMA International Educational Foundation, October 2005).

5 Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 210.

6 See, for example, Anne Gilliland and Kelvin White, “Perpetuating and Extending the Archival Paradigm: The Historical and Contemporary Roles of Professional Education and Pedagogy,” *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 5, Issue 1, Article 7 (2009), <http://repositories.cdlib.org/gseis/interactions/vol5/iss1/art7>

7 Antoinette Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive: Women writing house, home and history in late colonial India*. Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 139.

# Inside NEA

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

- Peter Carini

### The Future of NEA



As you might expect, I've spent a lot of time thinking about the future of NEA and it seems like a good time to communicate some of my thoughts in this area.

At its founding, the organization identified a number of goals:

1. To "foster the preservation and use of records of enduring value."
2. To support the preservation and use of these records whether they were "public, private, corporate or belonged to an individual."
3. To increase public awareness and understanding of the importance and management of records.
4. To provide "pre-professional and continuing education in archival theory and practices."
5. To act as a "forum for the exchange of information among individuals and institutions", and
6. To create bridges to allied professions.

These goals differ very little from our current mission. Over its 37 year history NEA has been successful in achieving these goals to a greater or lesser extent. Currently, it feels like we are being fairly successful. There is action and energy. Our membership numbers are up (our highest number since 2003). We've hosted several successful meetings. We are financially stable. We are moving our administration and communication into the 21st century. We represent a large variety of record holding institutions from around the region. We offer a good range of continuing education opportunities to our members. These are things worth celebrating.

At the same time, there is room for improvement. For instance, a large percentage of the primary source records in New England are held in small, local repositories such as public libraries or small historical societies. Currently these organizations make up only about 7% of our membership. The only allied organization we interact with consistently is ARMA, and even that is sporadic. In terms of advocacy on records issues, I can attest to the fact that most politicians and the general public have no idea who we are.

The strategic plan points out many of these directions, but to move the plan forward we need to work together.

As always, we need people who are willing to take on leadership roles. But leadership can only do so much. We cannot achieve our full potential without your active participation. We need people who are willing to create programs and curriculum that we can take to the public. We need people who are willing to speak out on behalf of the organization and we need to pursue partnerships with academic institutions and granting agencies. We need members to join and represent NEA at state level organizations.

In the coming years we will move forward with our plan. The leadership will be coming to you, asking for your help, your input and your time. I urge you to look at the completed plan carefully and think about where you might fit in and where your expertise lies. Don't wait to be asked. You are the future of NEA. ■

## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING REPORT

- Danielle Kovacs



The business handled at the November 6, 2009 meeting of the Executive Board is summarized below. All **VOTING** is in bold. Complete minutes are available on the NEA website or from the secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 10:12 a.m. by Peter Carini. Minutes from the July 23, 2009 Board Meeting were presented. **All members voted to accept the July 23, 2009 Board Meeting minutes.**

## OFFICERS' REPORTS

### President

Peter Carini initiated an effort to increase support for HR 2256 Preserving America's Historical Records by New England congressional delegates. A draft of the strategic plan was shared with the membership.

### Immediate Past President

The slate of candidates was approved for the upcoming Board election. Vice President: Barbara Austen, Nova Seals; Representative-at-Large: Jessica Steytler, Chris Pratt; Representative-at-Large: Ellen Doon, Amy Greer; Secretary: Silvia Mejia, Meghan Petersen.

### Vice President

Jen Tuleja was appointed chair of the Fall 2010 Program Committee. **All members voted to appoint Rodney Obien chair of the Fall 2010 Local Arrangements Committee.** The theme under consideration for the meeting is how small institutions can adapt cutting edge practices and concepts advanced by large institutions. The meeting will be held at Keene State College in New Hampshire. Eliot Wilczek was appointed chair of the Spring 2011 Program Committee. **All members voted to appoint members of the Spring 2011 Program Committee.** The topic of the meeting will likely focus on future trends in archives.

### Treasurer

Tax returns for 2008 were filed with the Secretary of State prior to the deadline. The Board did not vote to pass the proposed budget, because there were a number of amendments to it. Andy Wentink will submit the revised budget to the Board for review and a vote.

## MEETINGS

### Fall 2009

The Fall 2009 meeting was held at the UMass Boston Campus Center; there was an estimated attendance of 250. The Friday evening reception was held at the JFK Library.

### Spring 2010

The Program Committee produced a full slate of sessions with confirmed speakers by the Fall 2009 meeting. Jackie Dooley of OCLC will give the keynote address, which will be recorded and offered as a podcast from the OCLC website.

## OLD BUSINESS

Krista Ferrante reported that the online membership directory will be available to members by the first of next year. The directory will open up new avenues of communication between NEA and its membership, including an e-balloting system. **All members voted to institute an e-balloting system in time for the upcoming election this spring.**

## NEW BUSINESS

With the recent threat of closure of the Massachusetts State Library, the Board discussed how NEA should respond to situations where collections are at risk. The Board felt that NEA should respond to such threats with a focus on advocating for access to and preservation of collections, rather than on issues related to staffing and budgets. Members of the Board will draft a set of guidelines and a model letter that will stress the repercussions of loss of access to collections as well as ways in which NEA can assist to ensure the continued access and safety of materials.

### Next Meeting Date

The next quarterly board meeting will be held in January 2010 at a location to be determined. ■

## It's Your Newsletter: Contribute!

The *NEA Newsletter* always needs news from your archives and other archives in New England, about NEA members, and about upcoming events. Have you recently been promoted or gotten a new job? Has your institution recently started or completed an interesting project?

Share news about your career or your institution with your colleagues by submitting a short item to the *NEA Newsletter* for the News & Notes or People columns.

If you have ideas for longer articles on important archival topics for the *Archival Insight* column, please share them with an editor. We also need people to write book reviews and session reports for NEA meetings, as well as profiles of institutions for the *Around & About* column. If you are interested in submitting articles for *Archival Insight* or *Around & About*, please contact senior editor Cynthia Harbeson at [cynthia.harbeson@gmail.com](mailto:cynthia.harbeson@gmail.com)



Please visit us online at  
[www.newenglandarchivists.org](http://www.newenglandarchivists.org)

for more information about becoming a member of NEA

## New Members - Rodney Obien

*Editor's Note: This list does not contain the names of individuals who joined at or after the Fall 2009 meeting.*

### STUDENT MEMBERS

Peter Frisman  
 Simmons College - GSLIS

Matthew Garklavs  
 Simmons College - GSLIS

Kimberly Kennedy  
 Simmons College - GSLIS

Jessamyn Leonard

Stefanie Maclin  
 Simmons College - GSLIS  
 Rebecca Meyer

Derek Mosely

Sarah J. Murray

Stacie Parillo  
 Simmons College - GSLIS  
 Miranda Rivers

Simmons College - GSLIS

Caroline J. White  
 Simmons College - GSLIS

Maria Zervos  
 Simmons College - GSLIS

### INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Darren Brown  
 Beverly Historical Society  
 & Museum

Aikaterini Dimitriadou-  
 Shuster  
 New York Public Library

Jessika Drmacich

Norman Rockwell Museum

Jennifer D. Miglus  
 Hartford Medical Society

Christine Peterson  
 Bates College

Katherine M. Wisser  
 Simmons College - GLIS

Jennifer Lanzing  
 Mohegan Indian Tribe

### INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

Systemsatics

Winsor School

## Haas Award Information

In an era when the content of many archives is increasingly under the control of both archivists and records managers, the Richard L. Haas award is designed to support projects that promote increased cooperation, understanding, and knowledge between the two professions. This award is named for the late Richard (Rick) Haas, who over two decades ago saw records management and archives as critical parts of the larger picture of information management, and strongly supported alliances between records managers and archivists.

The Haas Award is sponsored jointly by New England Archivists and the Boston Chapter of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA), and the award for 2010 is \$1,000. Traditional examples of proposals are: attendance at seminars or workshops; preparing articles of interest to both professions; research projects. The award is not limited to this, however, and we've made the description somewhat ambiguous in the hopes that applicants will be creative. Preference, however, is given to those who integrate records management and archival issues.

The award is not limited to members of NEA, ARMA, or even New England residents. Anyone, especially students and educators, is encouraged to apply. The successful candidate has up to a year to use the award after its announcement in the spring.

Applicants should submit a description of the intended use of the award and a current resumé to Judy Huenneke, the chair of the Haas Award Committee, by **May 1, 2010**. For more details on the application process, please take a look at the page on the Haas Award on the NEA website, or contact Judy at [Huennekej@mbelibrary.org](mailto:Huennekej@mbelibrary.org) or 617-450-7111.

# Fall 2009 Meeting Session Reports

## **Appraising State Forests and Parks Records: The Work of a Massachusetts Field Survey**

- *Stephanie Spano, Simmons GSLIS*

Sean Fisher, Archivist for the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, focused this session on his experiences with a two-year State Forests and Parks records appraisal project. Fisher discussed both the challenges and accomplishments he faced while surveying the State Parks regional and field offices in addition to providing important insight into effective records management practices. Fisher also reported on the valuable records and materials he discovered and provided a glimpse into the current situation of Massachusetts' State archival records.

Completed in June 2009 and costing \$5,000, Fisher approached this project in three phases. First, a twenty-five year old records center was cleaned-up in which 176 boxes were salvaged and 2,000 record boxes were destroyed. Second, Fisher undertook a comprehensive archives and records management survey of twelve offices Fisher spent 73 days onsite working in attics and closets, and combating mice nests and wasp infestations. Third, a records survey of the State Parks park offices was planned. Fisher not only discovered valuable materials better suited in the Department of Conservation and Recreation Archives and the Massachusetts State Archives, but he also assisted the agency's staff in removing obsolete records from their offices and provided guidance on effective records management practices.

At the end of this two-year appraisal project, thousands of historic photographs, hundreds of reports, and four hours of motion picture films were salvaged. In addition,

over one thousand boxes of obsolete files were destroyed. Four hundred and twenty five boxes of valuable files, reports, and photographs were transferred to the Department of Conservation and Recreation Archives. Despite the success of this project, Fisher explained that Massachusetts "has a problem" in regards to the funding of and space at the Massachusetts State Archives. While he did not have any solutions to this problem, he did have ideas for approaching it, specifically calling for a legislative investigation as well as action from the New England Archivists and other allied groups.

## **Take Your Lumps: Appraising Physical Objects**

- *Dierdre Doran, Simmons GSLIS*

This session included presentations and a panel discussion from three archivists whose work includes the appraisal of physical objects: Kristen Parker of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Anthony Reed of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline, and Susan von Salis of the Harvard Art Museum in Cambridge. Each gave a ten minute presentation relating their institution's collection policy, how the appraisal of physical objects fits into the collection policy, and some examples of unique objects in their archives' holdings.

After the presentations, they formed a panel to discuss and take questions on collecting policies and the role of the archivist in preserving objects in an archives. Kristen Parker explained the difficulty within a museum archives in determining whether to appraise certain objects as art, which falls under the direction of the museum curator, or as documentation, which is in the purview of the archivist. Anthony Reed stressed the importance of incorporating three-dimensional and two-dimensional objects within a collection and its finding aid, in order to provide a richer and more nuanced reference service to researchers. Susan von Salis offered advice on appraising objects in an archives which included: 1) if you can't save it, photograph it, 2) if you can't keep it all, sample it and 3) be creative in reusing objects for new purposes in order to keep them in the archives. The presenters agreed that objects can be utilized to good advantage in archives' outreach programs and in strengthening the overall value and depth of an archives collection.

Visit the NEA online at:

**<[www.newenglandarchivists.org](http://www.newenglandarchivists.org)>**

## Appraising Electronic Records: One State's Methods

- *Kimberly Hula, Simmons GSLIS*

Geof Huth, of the New York State Archives Government Records division, led the first segment of Saturday sessions at the NEA meeting with a bang. Mr. Huth's presentation, titled "Appraising Electronic Records," called for a significant amount of subject matter to be addressed in a small amount of time. The session followed appraisal guidelines for pre-accessioning, at-present accessioning, and re-accessioning digital materials. Mr. Huth described the standard operating procedures developed for the purpose of appraisal and used real life examples to indicate how they work in differing situations. Mr. Huth reiterated his argument that one cannot appraise electronic records as if other records do not exist, which helped to humanize the often daunting task of preserving digital media that appears so far removed from tangible archival documents. Furthermore, he spoke of the advantages of appraisal in cutting costs and maintaining capacity.

His appraisal guidelines, inspired by the New York State Archives, acted as a helpful case study in how other repositories might better their appraisal techniques by establishing pre-drafted questions and courses of action. While he would have been better served to discuss the matter for another two hours (there was so much to relay), the session effectively informed the audience of the importance of appraisal and its more prominent role in the management of archives.

## New Skills for a Digital Era

- *Kate Monea, Simmons GSLIS*

In a lively discussion moderated by Eliot Wilczek, University Records Manager at Tufts University, NEA members revisited the 2006 New Skills for a Digital Era colloquium and debated what skills archivists need for success in a digital age. To begin, Session Chair Nova Seals of Connecticut College summarized the SAA colloquium as a presentation of the practical and technical skills archivists, librarians, and records managers consider essential for managing digital information. The session attendees were then able to weigh in with their perspectives in an open forum.

Participants agreed that a willingness to collaborate and learn is fundamental for archivists to adapt in a changing world. To do this, archivists need to ask questions and understand how technology influences archives. Effective communication and cooperation with information technology specialists is one crucial skill that was discussed. Archivists must proactively reach out to IT personnel, even if that means baking cookies or hosting wine and cheese gatherings, as some session members suggested. Archivists can then verbalize their needs in a way that helps IT personnel understand the archival perspective. In addition, archivists must know their users and understand how they access information in order to better serve them. Members also discussed the importance of understanding business processes and project management skills to effectively appraise electronic records and plan for continued access.

The group concluded that while archivists are constantly developing new attitudes, there are many skills archivists already possess that are relevant in this new digital era. Of the essential skills discussed, perhaps the most important is trust in their judgment and confidence in their expertise.

## Appraise Now or Later

- *Abraham Miller, Simmons GSLIS*

"When should the archivist conduct the appraisal of a collection?" Margaret Welch of the National Park Service asked. "Should the archivist conduct a quick and dirty appraisal during accessioning or should the archivist conduct a detailed appraisal later?" Lorna Condon of Historic New England and Leslie Perrin Wilson of the Concord Free Public Library suggested conducting a basic appraisal of the incoming collection at the time of accession or earlier. The basic appraisal includes using the collection policy to determine the collection's fit at the institution, preservation concerns, and monetary, space, and time costs. Both Condon and Wilson believe that a strong collection policy and good planning are integral to conducting a "spot" appraisal of a collection.

The Concord Free Public Library was presented with an opportunity to buy a book signed by one of Concord's famous authors. Wilson's appraisal of the object allowed her to determine that it would not fit with the collecting

mission because its value was primarily artifactual. Wilson believes that the archivist can be an active shaper of historical inquiry by influencing the direction of local history with the pursuit of meaningful gifts.

Lorna Condon gave several examples to show how appraising at the time of accession is useful but also gave an example of when Historic New England decided to appraise later. Historic New England received a photographic collection where Condon worked with the creator to determine if the repository was the best fit. Even after the initial fit is determined, Condon believes it is important for the repository to work with the creators of records when conducting a later appraisal to determine which items are most important when the volume of material becomes an issue.

### **Appraisal Outreach: Archivists and Records Managers Talk!**

- *Irina Tsiklik, Simmons GSLIS*

Jennifer Pelose, Processing Archivist/Project Manager at the Harvard University Archives, facilitated and participated in this panel. Pelose began by providing a brief overview of the Harvard University Archives. She discussed the history of the archives, the mission of the repository, and the type of records the repository holds. The Archives collects university records, manuscript collections, records from organizations (whether connected to the university or not), historical collections created by people without association with Harvard, and university publications.

Currently the Records Management Services and the Collection Development department are working on a collaborative project to improve appraisal strategies. As Records Manager, Liz Copenhagen discussed her responsibilities for accessioning the records that come into the archives, while Virginia Hunt, the Associate University Archivist for Collection Development, discussed how her responsibilities mostly focus on the appraisal of manuscript collections. Hunt and Copenhagen also discussed at

which point in the appraisal process the two departments interact most and in what way. For example, they discussed at great length the creation of a records schedule.

As the liaison between the two departments, Pelose also provided her opinion on how their partnership is affecting processing. Specifically, Copenhagen and Hunt discussed how implementing appraisal into work schedules of departments and by educating departments and donors there will be less to weed through and fewer unwanted materials.

### **Media Neutral Schedules and Big Buckets: What That Means for Archivists!**

- *Rachel Wise, Archivist, Harvard Business School*

Jill Snyder, Senior Records Analyst in NARA's Northeast Region, provided contextual background for NARA's work to appraise records according to functional "big buckets," and led a discussion of the impact of media neutral functional appraisal on records transferred to the archives. NARA's Northeast Region participated in a pilot project to apply functional records appraisal. The existing records schedule was cross-mapped to the functional schedule.

Flexible "big bucket" appraisal allows for the retention (or disposition) of records at a level that supports the business or functional needs of offices. One of the benefits of functional appraisal is that it is easier for agencies and departments to apply retention schedules. This was also pointed out by a member of the audience who commented on a proposal for functional "big bucket" retention schedule in their own institution.

It was challenging to discuss the impact of media neutral, functional, "big bucket" appraisal on records transferred to the archives. For researchers, some commented, it might be easier to understand the function of an agency; for the archivist it might be a challenge to describe and provide access to records that previously might have been transferred to the archives at a series level.

## Primary vs. Secondary Appraisal: The Role of Archivists in Digital Environment

- *Kate Boylan, Simmons GSLIS*

This session was co-presented by Jeannette Bastian, Associate Professor at Simmons College, and Joan Krizack, University Archivist at Northeastern University. Both presentations examined primary and secondary appraisal of materials during the digitization process.

Bastian emphasized the need to apply the same basic principles of physical appraisal to the web environment. However, she noted the potential disconnect between the digital and physical collections, as users might come to rely on the more accessible digitized portion of the collections. She questioned the notion of discarding those physical collections that are digitized, because of the potential loss of context, metadata, or supplementary information in digital collections compared to their physical counterparts. She noted that thinking about this is an important factor in “wisely choosing the ways in which we represent ourselves and our knowledge.”

Ms. Krizack agreed this is an important question, but noted that digitized portions of collections act as marketing tools, attracting web users to the physical archives. For example, the number of physical visitors to Northeastern’s Archives has consistently grown, perhaps due to the fact that online materials draw more user attention. Krizack believes that digitization is something to think about not necessarily at the time of acquisition of records, but at the time of processing. She noted that funding is a key component in this process. Relative to this, she hopes to have a budget line for digitization. She believes that because the nature of the world’s knowledge orientation is changing, it is an archivist’s duty to provide users with the material they need, and context if they are able.

For further exploration, Ms. Krizack recommended looking at the digitized collection of the papers of Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner <<http://www.aaa.si.edu/collectiononline/polljack/>> on the website for the Archive of American Art. She noted that the AAA has a successful web interface with easy navigational tools and in-depth context for the collections which are available online.

## Wearing Two Hats: When Archivists Get Records Management Duties: A Discussion

- *Nadia Dixson, Simmons GSLIS*

Sally Fellows, Archivist/Records Manager for the city of Manchester, New Hampshire, and Dan McCormack, the Archivist/Records Manager for the town of Burlington, Massachusetts, presented their experience of combining the roles of records manager and archivist. Concrete information about records management is readily available from many sources. In particular, state regulations and resources from ARMA guide their records management activities. These sources provide valuable information about records management, but could not adequately describe the importance of building relationships across departmental borders. This aspect of records management, and how that relates to archival responsibilities were the primary subjects of this session.

Fellows and McCormack addressed the necessity of focusing on records management tasks to support the business functions of municipal government. They each described situations where it was necessary to make themselves a central part of municipal business. As records managers, they took an active role in defining their positions, and building the bridges necessary to affect change in records policies. Building alliances and changing habitual behaviors is never easy or straightforward, which is why real experience is an invaluable resource. Fellows and McCormack suggested attending to requests promptly, providing hands-on assistance, and attending departmental meetings. Records management requires building relationships with the people who perform day-to-day tasks, as well as the people who set policy.

Although many of their tasks center on records management, they often provide reference services to city departments and constituents. Unlike many archivists, they do not leave their researchers alone with the documents. Instead they often conduct research on behalf of city departments. Although it was unsaid, Fellows and McCormack left the impression that combining records management and archival functions shifts focus to the creators and users of records.

## Reappraisal and Deaccessioning

- Laura Cass, Simmons GSLIS

In this session, two archivists explained how they are reappraising their collections in hopes of deaccessioning a portion of the materials.

Marvin Kabakoff, a senior records analyst in NARA's Records Management Division, discussed efforts to reappraise and deaccession NARA's court case records. Currently, NARA has 650,000 cubic feet of court case files in records centers around the country. The court system no longer wants to pay to house their items in these centers, and NARA would like to reappraise the files before electronically reformatting them. The current strategy involves getting input from stakeholders (NARA, the courts, law professors, and historians) to determine how the records are being used. Concurrently, NARA employees are sampling files from each suit code – a number assigned to cases based on their subject matter – to determine the historic value, thus making it easier to assess each case file. They have concluded so far that 18% of case files will be permanent, the large majority of these being civil rights case files.

Robin McElheny, Associate University Archivist for Collections and Public Services at the Harvard University Archives, is currently reappraising the Harvard University Archives entire on-site collection. The first step in the reappraisal process was a complete shelf reading, in which they analyzed the scope, location, and condition of their materials. In this process, they found many uncatalogued and unused materials that were obvious candidates for deaccession due to redundancy or lack of historic value. They offered the deaccessioned materials back to the offices from which they came, or sometimes sent them to other archival institutions. Throughout the entire process, which will also involve a reassessment of faculty collections and a broad collections survey, McElhenny says that accurate documentation is the most important task. In the future, they plan to use Archivists' Toolkit 2.0's assessment module to manage their collections.

## Monetary Appraisal: What You Need to Know about Value Appraisals

- Marti Verso, Simmons GSLIS

Paige Roberts, an independent archival consultant, moderated the discussion on monetary appraisal by Avi M. Lev, a senior tax attorney with Davis Malm & D'Agostine, P.C., and Russell Freedman of Second Life Books.

Lev began the session with information on why the IRS demands appraisals must be made for tax reasons. The archivist must be sure to never do appraisal work for something that will be donated to his or her institution; this is the donor's obligation. It should also be noted that there are special rules and restrictions attached to tax deduction when a donated item has stipulations, so it is always wise for a donor to contact a tax attorney.

Laws have changed rapidly in the last fifteen years, so it behooves the archivist to stay abreast of these alterations. Obviously, the regulations related to donations become stricter as the value of the item increases.

Freedman works as an appraiser and went through the process he follows when appraising items. He asks the donor or the library for information on the books and then researches similar items in the *American Book Prices Current*, ViaLibri.net, and OCLC. Based on what he finds, he suggests an appropriate retail value as honestly as possible based on scarcity, prices for similar items, etc. If the item being appraised is not a book but rather a manuscript, it becomes more difficult, but the process is similar – look for comparable items.

Freedman shared the issues he sees as an appraiser – tighter IRS regulations, inability to appraise because of a vested interest, etc.

This session presented a clear introduction into the complexities of tax law and appraisal, allowing archivists to see the importance of knowledge of tax law (or a good tax attorney!) and how that affects the acceptance of donated items. ■

# NEA 2010 Elections

The NEA Nominating Committee, with the approval of the Executive Board, presents the following eight candidates for office. The candidates' information is printed in the NEA Newsletter and posted on the NEA Web site so NEA members will be better prepared to cast their ballot next month. A postcard ballot will be mailed to all current members.

Your vote is very important; many NEA elections have been decided by fewer than 3 votes! If you have any questions about the election, please contact Kathryn Hammond Baker at (617) 432-6205 or <kathryn\_baker@hms.harvard.edu>.

**From the NEA Bylaws, IV.6:** Officers and representatives-at-large shall be elected by mail ballot of a majority of those members voting, from a slate presented by the Nominating Committee. Nominees must be members of New England Archivists. At least two candidates shall be slated for each office. The slate shall include the name of any member nominated by a petition signed by not less than ten percent of the membership and received by the chair of the nominating committee not later than sixty days in advance of the annual meeting. The ballot shall contain space for write-in candidates for each office. Ballots shall be mailed to members at least thirty days in advance of the annual meeting. To be counted, ballots must be returned to the chair of the nominating committee postmarked no later than ten days in advance of the annual meeting and received by said chair not later than the second day before the annual meeting.

The Nominating Committee of New England Archivists asked the candidates to submit an autobiographical summary and to address the following question:

“The economic situation has had great impact throughout the country and across all types of institutions. More than ever, archivists must demonstrate their value to their parent organizations, audiences, and broader communities. At the same time, archivists must do more with less. How can NEA support archivists who are facing these dual challenges? What should NEA achieve in this regard in 1 year? In 5 years?”

## Candidates for Vice President



**Name:** Barbara Austen, Connecticut Historical Society

**Education:** M.S. in Library and Information Science, Simmons College; M.A. in History, College of William and Mary in Virginia ; B.A. in History, University of New Hampshire

**Employment:** Archivist, Connecticut Historical Society, 2004-present; Government Records Archivist and Project Archivist, Connecticut State Library, 2000-2003; Librarian/Archivist, Fairfield Historical Society, 1995-2000

**NEA Service:** Education Committee member, 1995-1997; Instructor, Introduction to Archives, 1996-1999; Program Committee, 1996, 1998 (co-chair), 2002 (co-chair)

**Service to the Profession:** Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board, 1998-present; Presenter at Connecticut League of History Organizations, Handling Photographs in the Archives, 2008; Presenter at Connecticut Public Television Program, Preserving Family Papers, 2007; Presenter at New England Museums Association meeting, Archives 101, 2006; Presenter at Connecticut Library Association, Handling Local History Collections, 2005; Presenter at “Archives Camp”, Acquisitions and Accessioning, 2004

**Response to Candidate Statement:** All of us are waiting for the next shoe to drop—Who will lose their job next? How much will the budget be cut? How do I prove the value of archives to my institution? Obviously, no one has any concrete answers. However I believe NEA can provide additional support to its members by expanding its web site and providing more information and training opportunities. While not wanting to duplicate Simmons, I believe the NEA could serve as a jobs clearinghouse—for both paying positions and volunteer opportunities. I would also like to see more use of “NEA Discuss” and the web site to share ideas on how other archivists are managing with less. Sometimes we are so caught up in our own situations, even what seems obvious can escape us. NEA could provide an “Ah-hah!” moment with an exchange of ideas. Libraries for

years have been engaged in cooperative purchasing of supplies, and I would like NEA to examine the possibility of reducing costs to its members through a cooperative purchasing agreement with archival suppliers. Finally, NEA could explore online or onsite workshops, online courses, or information on grant writing, selling the archives, information management, and resume writing.



**Name:** Nova M. Seals

**Education:** M.S. in Library Science with a concentration in Archives Management, Simmons College; M.A. in American and New England Studies, University of Southern Maine; B.S. in Government, United

States Coast Guard Academy

**Employment:** Librarian for Special Collections and Archives, Connecticut College, 2004-present

**Service to NEA:** Program Committee, Fall 2009; Treasurer, 2007-2009; Education Committee, 2004-2006, 2006-2007; Outreach Committee, 2004-2006, 2006-2007

**Service to the Archival Profession: most recent to least recent:** Archives Speaker/Consultant, Groton Long Point Historical Society, November 2008

**Response to Candidate Statement:** While NEA already offers excellent workshops, the current economic situation makes the development of workshops which allow archivists opportunities to refresh or gain new skills integral. In addition to current workshop offerings, workshops on project management and more advanced topics would be useful, particularly to archivists struggling with limited resources.

The NEA membership committee organized a resume reviewing opportunity at the last meeting. Resume reviewing should definitely be offered at future meetings, but more can be done. NEA should implement a program of career planning initiatives. In addition to providing links to regional archives jobs, the NEA website could also provide links to internships and volunteer opportunities. NEA should also establish a mentor program and offer opportunities for career counseling.

The additional programming and initiatives could be integrated into the strategic plan that is under development. Workshops could be developed and offered in a year, but the career planning initiatives could be phased-in, with the goal of having a program established in five years.

NEA already offers much to its members. By capitalizing on what the organization already does well and encouraging more members to become actively involved we can all support each other no matter what the economic climate.

## Candidates for Secretary



**Name:** Silvia Mejia

**Education:** M.S. in Library and Information Science, Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences, Simmons College; B.S. in Communications and Journalism, Suffolk University

**Employment:** MIT150 Archivist, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Institute Archives, August 2008-Present; Thesis Processor and Reference Assistant, MIT Institute Archives, January 1999-July 2008, Boston Architectural College, Weekend Reference and Electronic Reserves Librarian, September 2002-December 2008; Reference Assistant, Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, 1990-1999.

**Service to NEA:** NEA Member since spring 2003. Discussion Group co-moderator for an open forum on wikis and blogs, Fall 2006.

**Service to the Archival Profession:** Communication Liaison for SAA LACCHA (Latin American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Archives Roundtable) and SALALM (Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials) August 2009.

**Response to Candidate Statement:** While archivists have always had to face dual challenges, doing more with less, we are pressed more than ever to address these issues at a time of budgetary constraints. To this extent NEA can help its members in various ways: one is to raise our profile in the



New England area by building relationships with local and regional organizations and associations whose missions, goals and objectives are similar to those of NEA. Once we have achieved these relationships we should concentrate on developing educational programs and advocacy. NEA needs to focus energy and resources on advocating for our profession. We need to find new ways of communicating issues and concerns affecting archivists to those with the resources and power to make changes, such as our elected officials. Although these are more long-term goals, in the short-term NEA should concentrate efforts on recruiting and advocating to new members and provide convenient venues for archivists and archives students to volunteer for the organization.



**Name:** Jessica Sedgwick

**Education:** M.L.S., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; B.A., University of North Carolina at Charlotte

**Employment:** Project Archivist, Archives for Women in Medicine, Harvard Medical School, June 2008-Present

**Service to NEA:** None to date

**Service to the Archival Profession:** Electronic Resources Chair, Society of North Carolina Archivists, January-June 2009 (prior to relocation).

**Response to Candidate Statement:** With many archivists facing restricted funding for travel and professional development, NEA should make educational programs as accessible as possible. One way to achieve this in the next year would be to deliver these programs using existing technologies, such as webinars, streaming videos, or podcasts. This approach, which has already been implemented by larger organizations like SAA and ALA, would allow a much greater number of members to take advantage of NEA's existing programs and workshops.

From sustaining ongoing operations to developing special projects, many archives are seeking outside funding to accomplish their goals, often without institutional infrastructure to assist them. NEA could address this need by creating and maintaining online resources to help archi-

vists identify and pursue financial support for their activities through grants, fellowships, and other sources.

Additionally, in times of increased competition for resources and support, we must work to ensure that we remain relevant and visible within our broader communities. In the coming years, NEA should take a lead role in advocacy for the profession by participating in regional events, communicating with officials and community leaders, and continuing to develop programming geared toward broader audiences, such as the "Archives on the Road" program.

### Candidates for Representative at Large



**Name:** Ellen Doon

**Education:** M.L.I.S., Simmons College; B.A., Smith College.

**Employment:** Assistant Head of the Manuscript Unit, Beinecke Library, Yale University, 2004-present. Archivist, Beinecke Library, Yale University, 1999-2004. Project Archivist, American Meteorological Society, 1998-1999. Collection Assistant, Harvard Theatre Collection, Houghton Library, 1997-99.

**Service to NEA:** Program Committee Co-Chair, Spring 2009. Representative-at-Large, 2007-present. Nominating Committee, 2004/05. NEA Newsletter Editor, 2001-04. Program Committee, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting, Spring 2003. Local Arrangements Committee, Fall 2001 Meeting. Workshop co-presenter: Resources for New Archivists, Fall 2000 Meeting. Member since 1997.

**Service to the Archival Profession:** Society of American Archivists: Visual Materials Section book fair co-coordinator, 2004 and 2005; participation in session on visual materials research (August 2004); Member since 1997. Rare Book and Manuscripts Section (ALA/ACRL): Local Arrangements Committee, 2004. Member since 1999.

**Response to Candidate Statement:** NEA has positioned itself well to support its members in difficult economic times, when both positions and collections are at risk. It offers strong programs and continuing education at rea-

sonable cost within the region; within one year NEA should add enhanced networking opportunities for members through the NEA Web site and through meetings. These should include a more prominent and robust job posting service and venues for sharing ideas and advice among peers about managing collections and services with fewer resources. In the longer term, the current strategic planning initiative has laid a clear path toward a stronger advocacy program within five years. As an active participant in this planning process, I have helped to shape its crucial overall goal to raise the visibility of NEA both within the archives and allied professions and in the larger community. By achieving broader recognition, NEA will become a forceful and effective advocate for continued preservation of and access to the region's collections, and a major resource for individual members in their efforts to maintain services and uphold archival standards and ethics. If elected, I will work hard to bring this plan to fruition.



**Name:** Christopher Pratt

**Education:** M.I.L.S. Archives Concentration, Simmons College; M.Ed, University of New Hampshire; B.S. in Ed, Boston University.

**Employment:** Freelance work with local historical societies, 2006 to present; Acquisitions Supervisor, Mason Library, Keene State College, 1978-Present.

**Service to NEA:** None to date.

**Service to the Archival Profession:** Volunteer archivist for the Sullivan Town Archives, 1997-present; Secretary-Treasurer, New Hampshire Archives Group, 2006 to present; workshop teacher for New Hampshire Archives Group on appraisal, copyright, documenting collections, etc.

**Response to Candidate Statement:** An economic crisis usually causes institutions to cut costs, curtail programs, and to end outreach. Yet, we should be doing precisely the opposite or we will lose the gains we have made when times were good. This is not a time for the profession to turn inward, but to seek collaborative relationships across institutional boundaries. NEA has always presented such opportunities through its many services and its workshops.

In the future, we will have to find ways of continuing the support we give to archivists while keeping costs to a minimum. If we succeed during the next year or so, we will build a strong foundation that will reap benefits for the membership when the economy turns around in the predicted 3 to 5-year time frame.



**Name:** Jessica Steytler

**Education:** M.S. in Library Science, Simmons College Institution; B.A., Ohio University;

**Employment:** Archivist, Congregational Library (2000-present); Archivist, Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute (1999-2000); Archivist, Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary (1999); Library Assistant, Massachusetts General Hospital Treadwell Library (1998-2000).

**Service to NEA:** Member, 1997- present. Outreach Committee member 2001-2002. Outreach Chair 2002-2003. *Archives on the Road* Outreach program participant, 2001-2003. Program Committee, 2006 and 2008. Regular program participant at NEA meeting sessions, 2004-2009.

**Service to the Archival Profession:** Advisory committee member for the MBLC Connecting to Collections initiative; Program and local arrangements committee member for Digital Commonwealth, Spring 2010; Ongoing intern supervisor for Simmons GSLIS program, 2000-present. Educator and advocate at the Congregational Library, offering regular classes for churches on how to care for their historical records, 2006-present. Arranged and edited informational booklets for those classes, which are available to the public.

**Response to Candidate Statement:** In uncertain times, when the profession has to prove its worth, some ways to keep from getting cut are by strengthening one's ties both inside and outside of the community. The NEA's strategic plan draft <[http://www.newenglandarchivists.org/pdfs/NEA\\_strategicplan\\_draft.pdf](http://www.newenglandarchivists.org/pdfs/NEA_strategicplan_draft.pdf)> addresses ways we can assist members in this. From the nine-part section, the following are some of my preferred solutions to the question.

First, make it easier for members to talk to each other. Part 3b in the plan, promoting an online membership directory,

addresses this. This is a short-term goal, one that will provide opportunities for members to stay in touch and collaborate more.

A longer term goal, in the 2-3 year range, can be to build ties to allied organizations, part 5 of the strategic plan. We need to provide opportunities for the membership to get involved and, collaborate, with new groups who can help us do our work better and will be advocates for us. This sort of partnering exposes archivists to new audiences who wouldn't see us normally.

We are working in the right direction by surveying membership on their needs and creating a group for our unemployed colleagues at <seekingarchivists.ning.com>. Providing more support is a top priority for NEA.



**Name:** Amy Greer

**Education:** Ph.D. Student, Simmons College; M.L.I.S., Simmons College; M.A., University of Pittsburgh; B.A. Wheaton College, Mass.

**Employment:** Archivist, Feminist Theory Papers, Pembroke Center, Brown University, Sept. 2008-present; Manuscript Librarian, Brown Family Papers, Brown University, Oct. 2008-present; Curatorial Assistant, Harvard Law Library Special Collections, Visual Materials, June 2007-August 2008; Archival Digitization Intern, John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, November 2007-May 2008; Web Strategy Assistant, Wheaton College, 2006-2007; Assistant Director of Admission, Wheaton College, 2005-2006; Instructor of Performance and Theatre History, University of Pittsburgh, 2003-2005

**Service to NEA:** Programming Committee, November 2009; Member, 2007-present

**Response to Candidate Statement:** As the current economic situation impacts archivists, NEA has an opportunity to be a place of support, learning and so much more. Over the upcoming year, NEA could provide courses for archivists on grant writing (specific to the archives), budget management, public speaking, outreach and publicity methods, and building consortia and collaborations – essential for archivists to get the funding and support we need. NEA could

offer computer training courses in XML, EAD, and more for archivists seeking to update their skills while job hunting or taking on new roles in their institutions. Many of these courses could be available online or in various locations, lessening archivists' burden in receiving the training they require. NEA can increase job support efforts by offering public speaking and interview training, along with mentorship programs between experienced and new archivists. Over the next five years, NEA needs to build a bigger presence within New England. A key component to the value of archives is the public's understanding of what archives are, what they provide, and why they are valuable. NEA must play a bigger role in educating New England's public about archives, ultimately improving the status and position of archivists in our local communities. ■

**NEA is always looking for ideas for sessions at the fall and spring meetings.**

**Your suggestions are invited!**

Please complete and send this form to:

Nora Murphy

Reference Archivist, Institute Archives

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

77 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139-4307

Proposed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a brief description of the session you'd like to see offered at an NEA meeting. If possible, include the overall purpose and a general description of the session, and its intended audience (including skill level and topic category). If you have ideas for potential speakers for this session, please include their names and institutional affiliations.

# News and Notes

## CONNECTICUT

### Hartford Medical Society Historical Library Finds a New Home

In April of 2009, The Hartford Medical Society collection, approximately 6,000 selected volumes, along with photographs, manuscripts, artifacts, and works of art, was moved into a newly renovated 2,500 square-foot space in the University of Connecticut Health Center in Farmington.

The Hartford Medical Society was founded in 1846 with a three-fold mission: to further the professional education of its members, to provide outreach to the community, and to promote collegiality among its members. The core of the library collection came from the Hopkins Medical Society, which disbanded in 1844. Members of the Hartford Medical Society also donated books, artifacts, and manuscripts from their personal collections. In 1889 the library was strengthened with the acquisition of the library of the Hartford Medical Library and Journal Association.

In the 1960s, the arrival of the UConn School of Medicine significantly reduced the need for a private library. With the advent of the digital age, subscription to eBook and journal databases became prohibitively expensive for a small medical society. The society continued its other two missions of outreach and collegiality, as it does to this day, but members became concerned about the long-term future of the library collection. Negotiations began with the UConn Health Center for the administrative management and eventual housing of the collection. This history of medicine collection will enrich the education of students and further the work of researchers in the field. The evolution of this special library, begun in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, continues into the future, a new version of its old self.

### William Manchester Papers Now Open at Wesleyan University

Wesleyan University's Special Collections & Archives is pleased to announce the opening of the William Manchester Papers, 1934-2004. This collection spans more than 300 feet and documents his life and creative process. Manchester, the best selling author of *The Death of a President*, was associated with Wesleyan University for over forty years. Manchester wrote eighteen books, including novels, but he is best known for his twentieth-century histories. *The Death of a President* is the story of the assassination of President Kennedy, written at the request of Jacqueline Kennedy just after the event. Manchester also wrote *American Caesar*, about General Douglas MacArthur, and *The Last Lion*, a trilogy about Winston Churchill (however, failing health caused him to complete only the first two volumes). He is also known for his compelling and readable memoir, *Goodbye, Darkness*, about his WWII experiences.

Manchester's writing process was unique and colorful. He did in-depth research and his typed notes from each source were labeled by source and topic. These notes were cut apart and pasted by topic onto long pages in numbered gatherings of roughly fifty pages. From these "long notes," as he called them, he created outlines, and finally, a rough draft. Manchester loved codes, and in addition to source and topic codes, he often used highlighters to color-code by topic. The papers document this process for each book, along with Manchester's career as a newspaperman, author of numerous magazine articles, and member of the Wesleyan community.

The arrangement and description of this collection took eighteen months, and was completed by one full-time professional archivist, Leith Johnson, and one, three-quarter time archives assistant, Jenny Miglus. The Manchester Papers were formally opened in February 2009 with an exhibit, talk, and reception at Olin Library, Wesleyan University. Processing was funded by a bequest of William Manchester. The finding aid can be accessed online at: [www.wesleyan.edu/libr/schome/FAs/ma1000-169.html](http://www.wesleyan.edu/libr/schome/FAs/ma1000-169.html)

Visit the NEA online at:

[www.newenglandarchivists.org](http://www.newenglandarchivists.org)

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Third Book for Author Kathryn Jacob, Curator of Manuscripts at the Schlesinger Library

Kathryn Allamong Jacob, curator of manuscripts at the Schlesinger Library, has just published her third book, *King of the Lobby: The Life and Times of Sam Ward, Man-About-Washington in the Gilded Age* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010). *King of the Lobby* focuses on power, politics, money, and lobbying in Washington during the Gilded Age. It is about delicious food, fine wines, and good conversation, and how one man, Sam Ward, harnessed all three to create a new type of lobbying—social lobbying—and reigned as its king for a decade. His dinner parties, one guest gushed, were “the climax of civilization.” Her research took Jacob to a dozen repositories from coast to coast. To read the introduction and see images from the book, visit <[www.kingofthelobby.com](http://www.kingofthelobby.com)>

### Volunteering in the Turks and Caicos Islands

Jessica Brody, an archivist at MIT, recently completed a seven-week project to organize and make available historical collections from the Turks and Caicos National Museum. After the museum director gave a presentation at SAA09, Brody and a colleague offered their professional expertise in exchange for an extended summer stay.

500 years ago, the indigenous peoples of the Turks and Caicos Islands overfished the reefs, as they do today. Those people, the Lucayans, were annihilated within 30 years of the Spanish landfall, beginning a tradition of persecution that continues. Immigrants, the pristine environments, historical landmarks, and archival records are included on the target list. As a counterbalance, the National Museum works with the young generations to instill an appreciation of the past so as to protect their future. Brody and her colleagues cataloged 50% of the library books and prepared the archives collections for accessioning into a database. With the help the museum's regular staff she also digitized 60% of a slide collection that was donated around the time she began the project.

### The Harvard Fatigue Laboratory Records Are Now Open to Researchers

The Harvard Fatigue Laboratory records are now open to researchers at the Center for the History of Medicine, Harvard Medical School. The Fatigue Lab was based at Harvard Business School from 1927-1947 and was founded to study the psychological, physiological, and sociological stresses on human behavior and to apply that knowledge to better understand relevant problems in labor and industry. The bulk of the collection consists of research records from projects undertaken for the United States military during World War II. Previously closed to researchers, the collection was processed by Bryan Sutherland and Meghan Bannon after being requested by Countway Library Fellow Sarah Tracy, who is researching a biography of Ansel Keys. The finding aid for the Fatigue Lab records can be found at <<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HMS.Count:med00120>>

### Foundations In Public Health Policy

Since the program began in March 2009, the Foundations in Public Health Policy project staff have processed and made available for research the papers of Dr. Allan Macy Butler. Butler was Chief of the Children's Medical Service at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston and Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School from 1942 to 1960. An early believer in reform of the American 'fee-for-service' health care system, Butler advocated for government-paid medical care for the elderly and for low-income people, making him a pioneer in health maintenance services.

Project staff members are currently processing the papers of Dr. Leona Baumgartner, the first woman to become commissioner of the New York City Department of Health. The collection will be available to researchers in early 2010.

In addition to processing manuscript collections, the project staff is currently seeking students, researchers, and public health professionals to participate in a survey that will determine the efficacy and utility of our research tools, allow the Center to improve access to our historical resources, and help make our collections available to researchers over shorter periods of time.

For more information on the project, or to participate in the scholarly engagement survey, please contact Michael Dello Iacono, Project Archivist, at 617-432-6926 or <mpd13@hms.harvard.edu>.

### **Children's Hospital Boston Archives Receives Grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation**

The Children's Hospital Boston Archives has been awarded a second Basic Preservation grant of \$4,640.00, by the National Film Preservation Foundation (NFPF). The grant will cover the cost of restoring two black and white orphan films documenting the development of the field of pediatrics in the context of the story of Children's Hospital.

The first film, titled *Dinner Honoring Dr. Robert Gross (1957)*, is a sixteen millimeter, ten-minute silent film, featuring the late Dr. Robert Gross, a founding member of the American Board of Surgery and a pioneer in the field of cardiac surgery, being awarded the Ribbon of Grand Office of the Order of Leopold by former King Leopold III of Belgium. Dr. Sidney Farber, founder of the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, is in attendance. Mrs. Gross and Princess Liliane are also present.

The second film is a thirty minute film with sound, titled *The Story of Children's Hospital Medical Center*. Filmed in 1966, it features Leonard Cronkhite, M.D. in his office talking about heart surgery with Robert Gross, M.D. as narrator. The film contains scenes of the outpatient clinic, radiology department, laboratories, surgical operating room, physical therapy, play room, Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory, and the hyperbaric oxygen chamber. There are also scenes of the surgical laboratory. Several physicians discuss patient cases in this film, which is a wonderful time capsule of pediatric medicine, documenting the treatments that were considered "cutting edge" in 1966.

The hyperbaric oxygen chamber featured in this film was the first of its kind in New England. It was used by surgeons to correct certain types of congenital heart defects and to research the effects of increased oxygen pressure on the hearts and lungs of children. Doctors discovered that blue babies had a better survival rate when operated within

a hyperbaric chamber. This particular chamber was considered to be the most carefully engineered facility of its kind in the world when it was installed in 1965.

For more information on the Children's Hospital Boston Archives Program, visit online at: [www.childrenshospital.org/archives](http://www.childrenshospital.org/archives)

### **The Archives for Women in Medicine**

With a newly hired project archivist, The Archives for Women is resuming progress on its efforts to bridge a documentation gap in the manuscript holdings of the Center for the History of Medicine by collecting, preparing for access, and promoting the papers of outstanding women in the Harvard medical community.

Several exciting new collections have recently been acquired by the AWM, including the papers of Carola Eisenberg, MD, former Vice-President of Physicians for Human Rights, an organization dedicated to the championing of physicians subjected to persecution in other countries; Joanne Ingwall, PhD, pioneer in the use of magnetic resonance spectroscopy to study cardiac energetics and function; and Nancy Tarbell, MD, an internationally recognized expert in pediatric radiation oncology and Director of the Massachusetts General Hospital's Office for Women's Careers. We are looking forward to opening these and other collections of influential women leaders for research!

For more information about the AWM, contact project archivist Jessica Sedgwick at [jessica\\_sedgwick@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:jessica_sedgwick@hms.harvard.edu)

### **Lawrence History Center Founder Receives Federal Recognition**

Staff at the Lawrence History Center/Immigrant City Archives in Lawrence are most pleased and proud to announce that their founder, Eartha Dengler, received the *Outstanding American by Choice Initiative* recognition award presented by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. The initiative recognizes the significant contributions and achievements of naturalized U.S. citizens who have made a personal decision to become an American by

choice. The Center also hosted the first-ever naturalization ceremony to occur in Lawrence at the History Center's courtyard, which saw the naturalization of fifteen immigrants on September 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Lawrence History Center, formerly the Immigrant City Archives, is a repository of over 750 oral histories, photographs, city records, documents, and the Essex Company compound & collection.

To read the details of the award and for information on Eartha, visit <<http://lawrencehistory.org/press/eartha>>

For photos from the naturalization ceremony, visit <<http://lawrencehistory.org/node/315>>

### Updates from Student Chapter of SAA at Simmons College

The fall semester at the Student Chapter of the Society of American Archivists (SCoSAA) has been an exciting and busy one for students. The 2009-2010 academic year got off to a great start thanks to a visit from the Iraq National Library and Archives Director, Dr. Saad Eskander. On October 22, 2009 Dr. Eskander shared with members of the community the constant struggle he has faced while trying to reestablish the presence of the National Library and Archives. The group also welcomed an excellent panel discussion led by archivists who have dealt with disaster recovery. The event, held on November 5, 2009, included panelists from the New England Document Conservation Center, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, and Houghton Library at Harvard University. As they strive to make an impact in the profession, SCoSAA has begun collecting obsolete media for use in classroom instruction. More information about the project and the items being sought can be found here: <[http://gslis.simmons.edu/mw/scosaa/Obsolete\\_Media\\_Collection](http://gslis.simmons.edu/mw/scosaa/Obsolete_Media_Collection)>

### News from the Schlesinger Library

Manuscript staff at the Schlesinger Library (Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University) have recently processed and made available for research the papers of the following women: educator Elizabeth Blodgett Hall, includ-

ing family papers (1617-2006); author, lecturer, educator, poet, and activist Blu Greenberg, a forerunner in the movement to bridge the gap between feminism and Orthodox Judaism (papers, 1936-2006); and educator and psychiatric nurse Hildegard E. Peplau (addenda, 1922-2007). Staff also processed the records of several organizations: the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians (1930-2005), established in Massachusetts in 1930; Camp Fire for Eastern Massachusetts Council (1902-2001), founded to provide camping and club activities for girls; Woman's National Farm and Garden Association (addenda, 1913-2008), an environmental organization; Rutland Corner House (addenda, 1950-1995), a home for working women until 1953, when it became a halfway facility for mentally ill female outpatients; and South Boston Neighborhood House (1861-1996), a Massachusetts organization founded in 1901 as the South Boston Day Nursery to meet the critical need for child care for working-class immigrant parents, later changing to meet the evolving needs of the South Boston community. Finding aids are available on Harvard University's OASIS website.

## R H O D E I S L A N D

### Naval Historical Collection Observes 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Naval War College

The Naval Historical Collection is pleased to announce that an exhibit honoring outstanding naval leaders who graduated from the Naval War College is on display in their reading room. The exhibit is part of a year long celebration commemorating the founding of the College in 1884 by Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce, its first president. Profiled in the exhibit are admirals who held leadership positions in the Navy, both in wartime and peace.

They include Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz who graduated from the College in 1923 and went on to become Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas during World War II. He was the first officer to be promoted to five star ranking and following the war, was named Chief of Naval Operations. Admiral Raymond A. Spruance was a 1927 graduate of the College and during World War II achieved victories at the Battles of Midway, the Marianas, Philippine Sea, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. He served as Naval War College president from 1946-1948. Admiral Richmond K. Turner was direc-

tor of war plan before graduating from the Naval War College in 1936. He held amphibious commands in the Pacific Theater that led to allied victories. He was slated to command the invasion of Japan, an event precluded by the dropping of the atomic bomb. Admiral Ernest J. King graduated from the Naval War College in 1933. He was Commander in Chief of the U.S. Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations during World War II. He successfully prosecuted the war in all theaters and was promoted to fleet admiral in 1944. Rear Admiral Joseph C. Strasser was a 1972 graduate of the College. He holds a Masters Degree in International Relations, a Masters Degree in International Law and Diplomacy, and a Ph.D. from Tufts University. He has the distinction of being the longest serving president of the Naval War College, 1990-1995.

## V E R M O N T

### Vermont State Archives and Records

The Vermont State Archives and Records Administration added a section on special legislative sessions to its continuing issues web presentation. This followed a 2009 special session convened to address budget issues and a veto of the general appropriation bill. The presentation traces the use of special sessions, including recent trends to convene special sessions in response to fiscal issues. Continuing issues is based on the idea that archival records can be used to provide context for understanding and acting upon ongoing public dialogues. Continuing issues can be found at: <http://vermont-archives.org/govhistory/governance/index.htm>. ■

## Richard W. Hale, Jr. Professional Development Award

The Hale Award of \$1000 is given annually by the New England Archivists to promote the professional development of archivists in the region. Individual members of the NEA are invited to apply for the award. Applicants may propose participating in an educational program or workshop, preparing a paper for possible publication or oral presentation, attending a professional meeting, or any other activity promoting professional development. The award cannot be used to purchase supplies or equipment. Recipients are expected to submit a report on their project upon completion to the *NEA Newsletter*.

The Hale Award Committee, which reviews the applications and chooses the recipient, is made up of the four Representatives-at-Large on the NEA Executive Board. Elected board members are not eligible for the award during their terms of office and for one year after they leave the board.

The award honors Dr. Richard W. Hale, Jr., who was Archivist of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts from 1961-1976 and a founding member of the New England Archivists.

**Applications:** The deadline for applications is **February 15, 2010**. For further information, contact:

Melissa Watterworth  
 Representative-at-Large, New England Archivists  
 Thomas J. Dodd Research Center University of Connecticut Libraries  
 860-486-4508 • [melissa\\_watterworth@uconn.edu](mailto:melissa_watterworth@uconn.edu)

Your application should include your name, address, institutional affiliation, telephone number, date, and signature. On a separate sheet of paper (use more if necessary), please explain the activity the award would support, the expected benefits of the activity, how the award would be used, and a timeline for completion of the project. Also, please attach a copy of your resume.



## Recognize Your Colleagues and Advocates

### New England Archivists Distinguished Service Award

NEA grants the New England Archivists Distinguished Service Award (DSA) to individuals or institutions who are dedicated to the promotion of NEA objectives and who have made significant contributions to the profession, their institution, NEA and/or the archival community in New England. The award reflects the total experience of the awardee(s) and is based upon knowledge, leadership, participation and achievements in the profession.

For more about eligibility and the nominations process, see: [www.newenglandarchivists.org/resources/distinguished-award.html](http://www.newenglandarchivists.org/resources/distinguished-award.html).

### Archival Advocacy Award

NEA grants the Archival Advocacy Award (AAA) to an individual or institution demonstrating extraordinary support of New England archival programs and records, either politically, financially or through public advocacy.

For more about eligibility and the nominations process, see: [www.newenglandarchivists.org/resources/aa-award.html](http://www.newenglandarchivists.org/resources/aa-award.html).



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## AROUND AND ABOUT

### Rare Book School: It's Not Just Rare Books!

by Paige Roberts

I had heard about Rare Book School (RBS) for years, and, when I saw a course on the History of Maps advertised a year ago, I successfully applied for NEA's Hale Award (\$1,000) to cover the cost of tuition (\$850), transportation, and housing. I was fortunate enough to also receive a scholarship to attend the 50th anniversary preconference of the Rare Book & Manuscript section of ACRL in Charlottesville the week prior to my RBS course.

Founded in 1983 by Terry Belanger at Columbia University, Rare Book School is the only program in the world to offer rigorous courses on the history of books, printing, and related subjects. It moved to the University of Virginia in Charlottesville in 1992. Belanger received a MacArthur Foundation "Genius" grant in 2005 to recognize the originality and insight of his work with RBS. Because 2009 marked both the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of RBS and Belanger's retirement, I gained a personal feeling for the experience of a typical student at RBS and learned too, about the school's rich history and meaningful impact on our field.

RBS is indeed a special place. It is noted for the excellence of its faculty, many of whom are world-renowned in their fields; for its extensive teaching collections; and for the high quality of its students who comprise antiquarian booksellers, special collections librarians, conservators and binders, and collectors from a variety of institutions and settings all over the United States. The application process for the school's five-day program is competitive, and each course usually enrolls twelve students. RBS is characterized by an intensity, intimacy, and seriousness of purpose that is exhilarating, exhausting, and memorable for any archivist.

To save money, I decided to drive down to Charlottesville via route 78 through Pennsylvania. A long and generally ugly road, the drive took about 12 hours with little traffic, not much longer than it may have on the train or plane. I stayed in a dorm at the University of Virginia though not one in Thomas Jefferson's Academical Village because I wanted to be sure to have a room with air conditioning. Charlottesville is a small, thriving city with a lively downtown bursting with good restaurants and used bookstores. Shenandoah National Park and

Monticello are only a few minutes' drive away.

Upon arrival at RBS, located in a tiny underground space in the basement of UVA's library, students are presented with the *Vade Mecum*, a booklet which includes a list of participants (students and faculty), a food and restaurant guide, directions to classrooms, lists of used booksellers and RBS staff as well as descriptions of evening activities (not mandatory). It also addresses such practical issues as phone, email, ATMs, and laundry. Other courses offered at the school during the session I attended were Visual Materials Cataloging, Rare Book Cataloging, and Introduction to Archives for Rare Book Librarians. About fifty participants were in attendance. Interaction with colleagues from many different institutions across the country is a particularly valuable benefit of attendance at the school. Opening night at RBS includes a reception, dinner, and Terry Belanger's introductory lecture about the school. But initiation into RBS really begins with a Polaroid mug shot taken of each student that is then labeled and posted on the school's bulletin board for the week.

Classes began on Monday morning; each day is divided into four, 90-minute classroom sessions punctuated by lunch and by half-hour morning and afternoon coffee breaks. Generally there is a public lecture or other event on Monday evening, followed by a reception. Activities on Tuesday evening tend to vary according to the RBS week. Sometimes a video on a topic related to the program is shown. Wednesday evening is study night, when the RBS suite and its collections are open for informal reading and browsing. Thursday night is Bookseller Night, with students encouraged to visit local, antiquarian bookshops in Charlottesville. (There is a free trolley service between the University and downtown Charlottesville.) Classes end on

Friday afternoon with evaluations, an important part of the RBS week, and a closing reception.

RBS posts course evaluations and preliminary reading lists on its web site. For the course on the Introduction to the History, Collection, Description, and Use of Maps, I bought some titles listed on the annotated bibliography ahead of time, and my initial reading of these titles in addition to the MapHist listserv opened up new insights into cartographic history for me even before I arrived in Charlottesville. Taught by Alice Hudson, former chief of the Map Division at the New York Public Library, the course was very well organized, fascinating, and fun. Using frequent hands-on exercises with the maps, atlases, and globes of the RBS and UVA's Small Special Collections Library, we learned about the elements of a map, the history of cartography, printing history as related to maps, key figures in mapmaking, and map cataloging.

Like any good introductory course, we started with map basics including ancient and Renaissance mapmaking history and terms and concepts. Learning to look at and read a map is a critical skill for anyone responsible for the acquisition, preservation, cataloging, and exhibition of these types of collections. The first day focused mostly on seminal sources for geographical information, including publications, web sites, and map associations. Other places to get help included chronologies and sources of biographical information about mapmakers useful for cataloging. Because of the strength of RBS and UVA library collections, we could actually see many of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>-century French and Dutch atlases under discussion. Day Two kicked off with an examination of printing history because understanding whether a nautical chart, for instance, was printed from a wood-engraved block or copper plate could help date the item in your collection. Looking at American atlases, we learned how the topographic survey work of the United States government from the 1830s on and commercial publications flooding the market after the Civil War resulted in a proliferation of atlases depicting states, counties, and towns across the country.

Hands-on exercises are a fascinating and helpful feature of the RBS program. RBS has a strong collection of antiquarian maps of Denmark, a collection useful for examining cartographic depictions of a single place by different makers and over time. We learned, too, about such helpful resources in map history as facsimile atlases, dealers' and

exhibition catalogs, and antiquarian map journals. Wednesday focused solely on map cataloging with a knowledgeable guest instructor who had prepared a special handout related to cartobibliography. Reasons for cataloging maps include not just the primary archival goal of improving accessibility but also, by aiding inventory control, ensuring the security of collections. More than many types of materials in our collections, maps and atlases are particularly vulnerable to theft due to their financial value even when separated from their original context. In addition to a discussion about traditional library approaches to map cataloging (and challenges to describing cartographic materials in particular, such as map projections), we were presented with other descriptive practices. For example, dealers and collectors often and understandably focus on market value, the primacy of first edition, and the completeness of a collection. Especially useful was our discussion of antiquarian map web sites including the Leventhal Map Center at Boston Public Library, Newberry Library,



Students examine maps at the Rare Book School.

the Library of Congress, and New York Public Library. Certainly the most comprehensive sites in general are MapHistory ([maphistory.info](http://maphistory.info)), maintained by the retired map librarian at the British Library, and David Rumsey Map Collection ([davidrumsey.com](http://davidrumsey.com)), which sets the standard for online exhibition of historical maps. The last day of the week we checked out geographical curiosities; we handled globes, heard about map fairs held around the world, and looked at the RBS antique puzzle map dating from 1852. A highlight of the week for all of us was an opportunity to each operate the school's printing press in order to better understand the printing process.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of the course for me is the unusually strong bond our class—students and



Terry Belanger stands in front of the RBS printing press.

instructor—quickly developed despite (or because of) varying levels of knowledge and diverse backgrounds. The group included map collectors from Florida and archivists from university and government (local and state) libraries in Alaska, Maine, Alabama and places in between. We generally walked to The Corner—the edge of the University and downtown Charlottesville—for lunch and dinner at one of several local eateries in order to continue our conversations about our collections, careers, institutions, and other subjects. I remain in regular contact with RBS friends through Facebook, email, and telephone.

Alice Hudson was a remarkably thoughtful and generous teacher; she actively encouraged students to share their own knowledge with the class. One student even gave a presentation of his collection of wine bottle labels depicting maps! As an active member of the Washington Map Society, he told us about that group and other similar organizations (such as the Boston Map Society) and conferences throughout the US and around the world. Another student modestly talked about his role in founding and leading the Tampa History Center to which he donated his incredible personal collection of historical Florida maps.

This RBS course was professionally useful in a fun and intense learning environment. I am grateful to NEA's Hale Award for making my attendance at Rare Book School possible and would encourage all NEA members to consider applying for a course at RBS. ■

Promote your photograph collections by sharing an image of an historic event, place, or person with the NEA community.

The *NEA Newsletter* is seeking submissions from repositories in New England for back cover pictorial features in *This Season in New England History*. Send submissions in JPG or TIFF format, along with a caption detailing the subject of the photograph, to: [cynthia.harbeson@gmail.com](mailto:cynthia.harbeson@gmail.com). Photographs must be scanned at 600 dpi or better.

# Internet Tidbits

- Susan Martin

The Archives & Special Collections of Wheaton College, Norton, Massachusetts, has recently launched its redesigned website <<http://wheatoncollege.edu/archives/>>. The streamlined website, while still relatively small, has a lot of built-in potential for growth.

In addition to detailed information about the use and mission of the archives, the site includes four sections: Online Exhibits, College Archives, Manuscript Collections, and Rare Book Collections. "Online Exhibits" focuses on the history of Wheaton College from its founding as a women's seminary 175 years ago. This section's three illustrated essays describe the school's traditions, noted individuals, architecture, and other subjects. Among the many interesting pages are "A Day in the Life of a Wheaton Female Seminary Student," derived from the 1850-1851 diary of Elizabeth Morville, with a complete schedule of activities; and a list of 1875 "Wheaton Seminary Rules," which includes restrictions on visiting the post office, answering the doorbell, talking from windows, borrowing clothes, and receiving gentleman callers without letters of introduction. Another highlight is Walker Evans' book, *Wheaton College Photographs* (1941), a small volume of photographs of campus buildings that has been reproduced in its entirety for the site. Users may select individual photographs to enlarge or flip through them page by page.

The layout and organization of the online exhibits is straightforward and consistent, but navigation is only available through the sidebar on the left. I would recommend adding "next" and "previous" links at the bottom of each page to direct readers through the exhibits.

The three sections following "Online Exhibits" outline in detail the types of material available at the Wheaton archives. "College Archives" contains alphabetical lists of publications, oral history interviews, and moving images, as well as information on the Wheaton audio collection. Under "Manuscript Collections," researchers will find a list of manuscripts and special collections held at Wheaton, with links to online finding aids when available. And the last section, "Rare Book Collections," includes descriptions of Wheaton's ten non-circulating book collections. Click on

the link to J. Edgar Park's Historical Collection on Women to see a complete listing of individual books in the HELIN Library Catalog.

Additional features, accessible from the right-hand sidebar on the archives home page, include the "Unidentified Photograph Challenge" that asks users to name locations, time periods, events, and people depicted in various photographs. Two women in a photograph from the 1950s have already been identified. This feature, aside from being helpful to archives staff, has the potential to provoke a lot of discussion on people and events in Wheaton's past. And lastly, "Out of the Classroom and Into the Archives" explores how faculty at Wheaton have used archival resources in their classrooms. These reports, illustrated with images from the archives, incorporate examples of student projects and even, in one case, a short video by Wheaton College archivist Zeph Stickney explaining specific items from the collections. ■

## Volunteer with NEA

Opportunities for volunteer participation in New England Archivists activities abound. NEA is a volunteer-run organization; without the participation of its members, NEA would cease to function. There are many committees, offices, and projects that need assistance from members.

<[www.newenglandarchivists.org/join/volunteer\\_with\\_nea.html](http://www.newenglandarchivists.org/join/volunteer_with_nea.html)>

Professionals in the archival field already possess skills and experience needed to support and advance New England Archivists. Willing volunteers should jump in and identify a role that suits them among varied opportunities. The opportunity to meet, converse, and do meaningful work with colleagues is of great professional and personal benefit. In addition, service to a professional organization such as NEA adds an important dimension to a professional resume.

## Reviews

Penney, Darby and Stastny, Peter. *The Lives They Left Behind: Suitcases from a State Hospital Attic*. Photographs by Lisa Rinzler. New York: Bellevue Literary Press, 2009. Paperback edition. 205 pgs. \$14.95 ISBN: 1934137146.

- Phoebe S. Bean, M.L.S., Rhode Island Historical Society

At their best, archives tie the past to the present and make the actors in each space more alive.

Accepting its first patient in 1869, Willard State Hospital at Seneca Lake, NY, was officially abandoned in 1995 after having provided services to over 54,000 people. Almost half of these died there. The patients came from diverse backgrounds, but most of their stories ended in this same place.

In the aftermath of the closing, Craig Williams, currently curator of photography and social history at the New York State Museum, was guided by two of the local hospital volunteers through the intimate spaces of the facility. One of them remembered a storage space in the attic of one of the side buildings and led him there to re-discover an archivist's dream—a room filled with suitcases of patients' belongings labeled, alphabetically organized, and covered in decades of pigeon droppings. Advised by the state museum to "just keep ten, and throw the rest away," Williams had all 427 suitcases wrapped in plastic and moved to the Museum's storage.

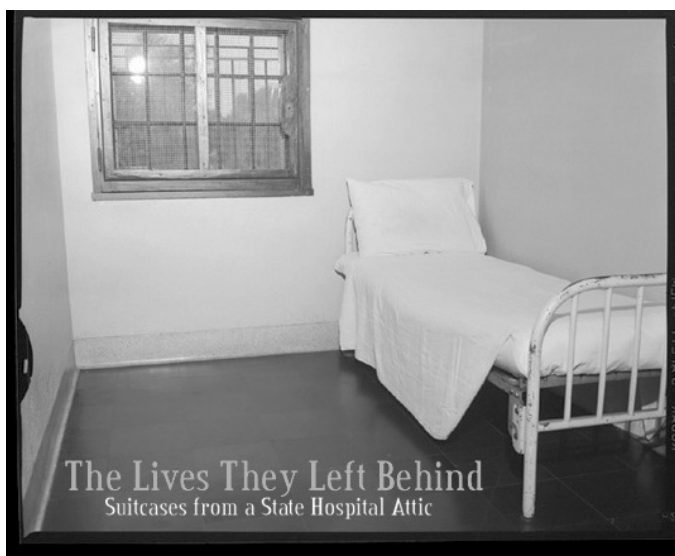


Image from the Willard Suitcase Exhibit Online Website, <[www.suitcaseexhibit.org](http://www.suitcaseexhibit.org)>

Eventually, of all suitcases found in the attic, 29 of the owners were selected for further research and 10 individuals receive a detailed chapter in the book, *The Lives They Left Behind: Suitcases from a State Hospital Attic*. Unlike the story of Boston's elite McLean hospital, described in *Gracefully Insane: Life and Death Inside America's Premier Mental Hospital* by Alex Beam (New York: PublicAffairs, 2001), this tells the story of America's working people.

The book provides breakdowns of the numbers of patients by occupation, gender, age and nationality. It also provides insight into the social factors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that affect the materials. An example of this is: the "over representation [of foreign-born suitcase owners] may reflect the fact that foreign-born urban residents had fewer community connections than those coming from rural upstate areas, and thus brought more of their belongings to Willard."

Penney is a well-know advocate of patients rights, and occasionally her explanations of an inmate's psychiatric conditions seem overly apologetic, as if every condition was misdiagnosed and could have been treated alternatively in a non-institutional setting. But this tone is balanced by Stastny, a psychiatrist and documentary filmmaker, and by the patients' letters and interviews that allow the reader to hear their direct voices.

The authors use an impressive range of sources to build the context for the mixed materials in the suitcases: published annual hospital reports, personal medical files, staff interviews, and, of course, the poignant materials themselves. These include family correspondence, newspaper clippings, diaries, certificates, cherished photographs of happier times, and often the person's last symbol of dignity—a pair of fine shoes, a shaving kit, or a delicate wedding veil. Overall, this book shows the intensity that original materials can reclaim with the aid of a well-constructed presentation. Verne Harris wrote: "Far from being impartial custodians of archives, archivists are active shapers of social memory and documenters of society." *The Lives They Left Behind* is an excellent study of materials, their custodians and interpreters working in concert to bring some of the cruel lessons of history to life.

Also see: The Willard Suitcase Exhibit Online. <<http://www.suitcaseexhibit.org>> ■

# Calendar of Events



Press releases and other announcements should be sent to Michael Dello Iacono at <[michael.delloiacono@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:michael.delloiacono@hms.harvard.edu)>. Please provide the date, time, place, and a brief description of the event and the name, address, and telephone number of the person to be contacted for information.

**January 25-February 5, 2010 and June 7-18, 2010.** National Archives and Records Administration, "Modern Archives Institute" in Washington, DC. For details see <[www.archives.gov/preservation/modern-archives-institute/](http://www.archives.gov/preservation/modern-archives-institute/)>

**March 19, 2010.** "Project Management for Archivists," Society of American Archivists, Amherst, MA. For more information, see <[www.archivists.org/menu.asp?m=education](http://www.archivists.org/menu.asp?m=education)>.

**March 19-20, 2010.** New England Archivists Spring 2010 Meeting, "The Open Archives: From Doors to Data" in Amherst, MA. For details see <[www.newenglandarchivists.org/pdfs/Spring\\_2010\\_flyer.pdf](http://www.newenglandarchivists.org/pdfs/Spring_2010_flyer.pdf)>

**March 23-27, 2010.** Public Library Association annual conference in Portland, OR. For details see <[www.placonference.org/general\\_information.cfm](http://www.placonference.org/general_information.cfm)>

**July 18-24, 2010.** Society of American Archivists, "Archives Leadership Institute, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI. For information, see <<http://www.archivists.org/menu.asp?m=education>>.

**August 10-15, 2010.** Joint Annual Meeting of the Council of State Archivists, the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, and the Society of American Archivists, "Archives\*Records/DC" in Washington, DC. For details see <[www.archivists.org/conference](http://www.archivists.org/conference)>

**August 17-21, 2010.** Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP) annual conference, "Book Culture from Below" in Helsinki, Finland. For details see <[www.helsinki.fi/sharp2010](http://www.helsinki.fi/sharp2010)> ■

## Attention Student Members!

**Enter to win \$200  
with the Student Writing Prize**

### RULES

1. The prize is open to all current **student** members of NEA.
2. One entry per person.
3. Essays should be between 1,500 and 2,000 words in length and must be the entrant's own previously unpublished work. Submitting work originally created for a class assignment is acceptable as long as it meets the other criteria.
4. Submissions will be judged by the NEA Newsletter Committee on the following: originality, clarity of ideas, grace of expression, and relevancy to the archival profession.
5. The winner will be awarded \$200 and the winning entry will be published in the NEA Newsletter.
6. Entries should be emailed in an attachment to Cynthia Harbeson ([cynthia.harbeson@gmail.com](mailto:cynthia.harbeson@gmail.com)). Please include your name, address, phone number, and email address. Entries must be received by **February 1, 2010**.
7. NEA is not responsible for late or misdirected entries or technical malfunctions.

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## THIS SEASON IN NEW ENGLAND HISTORY



### **Harvard Medical School**

When it moved to 688 Boylston Street in 1883, the Harvard Medical School donated its old building on North Grove Street to the Harvard Dental School. The Dental School flourished in the succeeding years, erasing its deficit, tripling its student body, increasing the number of its departments and faculty members, and benefiting from clinical opportunities of the nearby Massachusetts General Hospital. Well before the turn of the century, however, the Dental School outgrew the North Grove Street building. The healthy financial situation of the school permitted the purchase of a lot for the construction of a new facility and, not surprisingly, in 1906 land was procured on Longwood Avenue, adjacent to Harvard Medical School.

*Courtesy of the Harvard Medical School, Countway Library of Medicine, Center for the History of Medicine*