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N E A

NEWSLETTER

NEW ENGLAND ARCHIVISTS



C O V E R—Image 509. Cast (identified) of “The Mexican Dancers,” a benefit for the Biddeford High School Alumni Scholarship fund, performed at the City Opera House, Biddeford, Maine, 1915.

Photo courtesy of McArthur Public Library, Biddeford, Maine.

I N S I D E—*Archival Insight* features John Campopiano’s recent trip to explore the archival landscapes of Iceland and Greenland (page 4). *From the President* (page 6), and other organizational news, including our annual Awards season announcement (page 6). Matthew Spry reviews Anne Gilliland’s *Conceptualizing 21st-Century Archives* (page 9). Session reporters arrange and describe the Fall Meeting (page 14). Erik Bauer is *Around and About*, connecting local teens with special collections (page 20). The Spring Meeting is Coming! (page 22). MIT Institute Archives and Special Collections announces a number recent staff changes (page 23).

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE



New England Archivists

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE

Office of Medical History and Archives
The Lamar Soutter Library
University of Massachusetts Medical School
55 Lake Avenue North • Worcester, MA 01655
<www.newenglandarchivists.org>

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

Dues of \$35/year (\$45 for institutions) should be sent to: Kristine M. Sjostedt, Office of Medical History and Archives, The Lamar Soutter Library, University of Massachusetts Medical School, 55 Lake Avenue North, Worcester, MA 01655, or join online at <www.newenglandarchivists.org>.

Notices of archival events should be sent to: Heather Mumford at <heather_mumford@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 for consideration to: Heather Mumford at <heather_mumford@hms.harvard.edu>, or to NEA Newsletter Editors, c/o Office of Medical History and Archives, The Lamar Soutter Library, University of Massachusetts Medical School, 55 Lake Avenue North, Worcester, MA 01655.

Contributions for inclusion on the NEA website should be sent to: <webmaster@newenglandarchivists.org>.

Deadlines for submitting materials are:
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May 15 for July issue August 15 for October issue

Advertising Policy:
There will be no fee to list position openings. Advertisements for archival products will be accepted as space permits. Advertising should be submitted to Jane Ward, (978) 459-2129 or <jane.ward@comcast.net>.

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From the Editors

-Pamela Hopkins

Happy New Year, NEA! As ever, your January *Newsletter* reflects on the past and takes us into the future – from Session Reports from the Fall Meeting in Newport, Rhode Island, to the announcement for the Spring Meeting, March 19-21, 2015, held in conjunction with our MARAC colleagues in Boston, Massachusetts. (Registration is now open at <www.newenglandarchivists.org/spring_2015>!)

Two of our colleagues bring us news from home and afar – don't miss *Archival Insight* with John Campopiano and his archival adventures in Iceland and Greenland and Erik Bauer's *Around and About*, in which he leads local teen explorers into the Peabody Institute Library's Special Collections.

Matthew Spry reviews Anne Gilliland's *Conceptualizing 21st-Century Archives* – you may want to check the balance on your holiday gift cards!

January's *Open Forum* features Eugenia Kim, Robert W. Hale, Jr. Professional Development Award recipient, who reports on her presentation at the Theatre Library Associa-

tion/SIBMAS joint conference (2014) and the launching of the Hub Dance Narratives of Boston (HDNB) project.

I hope you'll share your 2015 us – What new projects are you taking on? What fresh starts are you anticipating? Where do you want to go this year and how can NEA help you get there?

To that end, NEA currently offers its members four awards – the Hale Professional Development Award, the Richard L. Haas Records Management Award, the Audio/Visual Professional Development Award, and Meeting and Travel Assistance Scholarships – see page six for details and visit <www.newenglandarchivists.org/awards> for more information.

Finally, I'd like to leave you with a taste of my favorite poem about January:

In January
it's so nice
while slipping
on the sliding ice
to sip hot chicken soup
with rice.

- Maurice Sendak, "Chicken Soup with Rice" ■



**SPRING 2015
MARAC/NEA JOINT MEETING
MARCH 19-21, 2015**

#MARACNEA15

Register now for the upcoming three-day archival revolution as Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC) and New England Archivists (NEA) come together to host a joint meeting in the historic city of Boston, Massachusetts.

We're developing a regionally and professionally diverse session schedule, repository tours, a community work day, and the chance to meet up with colleagues from across our two regions.

To register and view the program online, see newenglandarchivists.org/spring_2015

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(NEA members use code NEAJM)

ARCHIVAL INSIGHT

Archival Awareness on Ice:
An Archivist's Travelogue from Up North

By John Campopiano

My October-November 2014 trip to Iceland was originally about two separate things: continuing my work to expose and promote films made in and about Greenland; and finally visiting the National Archives of Iceland. Scandinavian nations – Iceland and Greenland in particular – have long been of interest to me – culturally, cinematically, and musically. And yet when I made my third trip to Iceland on this occasion (my first visit as a working archivist), I never expected to find common themes running throughout many of the experiences I had specifically, the power of *awareness*.

Since 2010 I have had a fascination with films made in and about Greenland, specifically those centered on traditional and contemporary Greenlandic culture. There has always been something alluring about the vast openness of the Greenlandic landscape – the ways in which seemingly endless glaciers and towering mountains dominate the frozen landscape that nearly 57,000 people call home. Stark yet beautiful landscapes of this kind make for dramatic and visually compelling backdrops for films, and perhaps it is not just the landscapes themselves but also the ways in which these landscapes play an important role in everyday life that first captured my attention and imagination. Greenlanders have a unique respect for the physical and spiritual earth and I, in turn, have an enormous respect for them, their traditions, and their will to survive.

Around this same time I began exchanging emails with a significant figure in the world of Greenlandic film, someone who has played an important role in exposing Greenlandic film and culture to those outside of Greenland filmmaker Ivalo Frank. I first discovered her name after seeing a film she made in 2010 titled *ECHOES*, an experimental documentary looking at various abandoned American military bases in Kulusuk, East Greenland.

Amidst our correspondence, the idea of starting a Greenlandic Film Archive would occasionally arise. We would talk about how there ought to be a physical space in Greenland where films made in and about the country could be housed, preserved, and made available. A centralized space, we felt, could have countless benefits to not just the film community but for all Greenlanders, and would offer them an opportunity to have better access to their cinematic history – their cultural heritage. The repatriation of cultural artifacts (including films) from Denmark

to Greenland is also a strong indication that Greenlanders have a vested interest in forging new paths of cultural expression through the arts and taking control of their own future vis-à-vis the establishment of cultural centers (such as archives) in their original homeland.

For Ivalo, myself, and others involved, one way of attempting to establish a tangible, authentic representation of both contemporary Greenlandic society and a fresh perspective on Greenland's cultural heritage has been to survey the Greenlandic films in existence and gauge what kinds of support might already be in place for such a project as starting a formal film archives. Knowing of my interest in film, my training as an archivist, and my familiarity with film archives (I interned at Northeast Historic Film and spent over a year working as Project Archivist at the Harvard Film Archive), Ivalo has looked to me as an additional resource for helping to start a Greenlandic Film Archive. One idea Ivalo and others had was to create an open forum for the public to learn about and experience films that often go unseen. Thus, the Greenland Eyes International Film Festival was born.

Back in 2012, Ivalo launched the first ever Greenland Eyes International Film Festival with the hope that it would become a tool for generating awareness in Greenland and of Greenlandic films. Though recognized as a festival primarily focused on film, Greenland Eyes also embraces other visual media of contemporary Greenlandic culture including music and photography. A new photography exhibit by Greenlanders Inuuteq Kriegel and Filip Gielda, *I3* has accompanied the festival this year. The entirely black-and-white exhibit tells a photographic story of prominent contemporary figures in Greenland's capitol, Nuuk, and seeks to paint an accurate and intimate portrait of contemporary Greenlandic realities.

In addition to fully immersing myself in Greenlandic films and contributing my ideas for starting an official archives in Greenland, my other objective on this trip was to pay a visit to the Þjóðskjalasafn Íslands, or, the National Archives of Iceland. My hope was to learn a little bit about their collections, how the Archives functions day-to-day, and the kinds of logistical challenges they're facing – particularly in dealing with digital initiatives. I would learn something about all of these issues, but specifically I would discover that this idea of establishing awareness and legitimacy for one's collections is a universal goal for many archivists, regardless of geographical borders, financial limitations, or collecting focus.

Upon arriving at the National Archives, I was met by Brynja Björk Birgisdóttir, Director of Public Information and Services. She explained that part of the meeting would consist of a tour of the facilities and later a sit-down discussion. To my surprise and delight we ended up touring everything from the preservation labs to the main storage warehouses that once served as a major poultry plant for Reykjavik (a facilities issue for the current archivist, something I will not be discussing here.)

As I toured the archival facilities and spoke with Brynja, it became apparent to me that her primary goal for the next five to ten years is to raise awareness of the Archives by addressing everything from establishing a greater outward presence for the archives by improving the main building's sign and insignia, to increasing the Archives' presence on social media. For her and the National Archives, awareness is synonymous with *change* and *collaboration* – changing the public's perception of the Archives itself and the riches it has to offer, and collaborating with other repositories in order to support awareness efforts.

The best example of this type of collaboration is a project currently under way between the National Archives of Iceland, the National Museum of Iceland, the Art Museum, the Árni Magnússon Institute, the National Library, and the Natural History Museum. This effort will result in what is tentatively being called *A Point of View* – a permanent exhibition of the Icelandic visual/artistic cultural heritage. Just as Ivalo and the Greenland Eyes International Film Festival committee realized that one's reach can extend further when collaborating with like-minded groups who share similar goals, so too has Brynja recognized that part of the way to heighten awareness of the National Archives is to collaborate with other repositories in her area.



John Campopiano with Brynja Björk Birgisdóttir, Director of Information & Public Services at the National Archives of Iceland. Photograph courtesy of John Campopiano.

In addition to acknowledging the significance of creating and nurturing awareness, I was intrigued to also learn that both Brynja and Ivalo view awareness as a vehicle for obtaining public, administrative, and even governmental credibility and thus obtaining *funding*. On a much larger scale, awareness and exposure are intimately entwined with gaining financial and administrative support for projects, whether they be improving facilities for a national archives or expanding the scope of a touring film festival. This mindset of boosting awareness for fiscal gains is and will continue to be an important element as we move forward with the conceptualization of a Greenlandic Film Archive in Greenland. What's more, I think their steadfast dedication to strengthening awareness for the sake of promoting what their projects have to offer as well as to garner more financial support is a healthy reminder for all of us working in the archives field – regardless of the scope of our collections or the size of our parent institutions. Awareness in general can be a powerful tool and should be at the forefront of all of our short-term and long-term strategic planning.

When I began my Scandinavian journey I knew it would be fun, hoped it would be educational, and suspected it could be eye-opening, but I failed to anticipate just how interconnected many of the experiences would be to one another and how often I would be reminded that there can exist universal obstacles among archivists and promoters of cultural heritage. As I look ahead to the coming months and years, I hope these ideas of awareness and collaboration will continue to fuel the work being done to bring awareness to Greenlandic films, the collaborations blossoming among different repositories in Iceland, and the work I'm doing right here at home. ■

Inside NEA

FROM THE PRESIDENT

- Jill Snyder



Happy New Year, NEA! It was super seeing folks at the Fall Meeting on November 1! Thanks to everyone who made it happen! A big thanks to Abby Cramer, Keith Chevalier, Michelle Chiles, Genna Duplisea, John Healey, Keith Pendergrass, Juliana Kuipers, Colin Lukens, Jessica Tanny, Emily Tordo, and Kathy Wisser! The day was a success because of you!

Congratulations to the newly elected members of the board! The board moved the election to the fall to allow for a smooth transition between members revolving on and off. The newly elected will assume their positions in the spring.

NEA continues to work on being an inclusive community that reflects the broad diversity of New England.

The board recently voted to appoint Anna Clutterbuck-Cook to serve as NEA's first Inclusion and Diversity Coordinator for a three-year term. Anna has a strong commitment to inclusion and diversity, an understanding of collaboration and public outreach, and experience with tackling these issues both in and outside the workplace. We are excited to have her on board to take us further in identifying ways to build an inclusive and diverse organization.

As you know, NEA is due for another strategic plan. If you know me, you know I am a person who loves strategic planning, so I am especially excited that this is a project NEA is working on now.

The Task Force on Strategic Planning was recently formed to write a new strategic plan for NEA. The task

force is made up of both new and seasoned NEA members and board members. The task force will spend the next few months drafting a vision and mission. We plan to bring the vision and mission to the Annual Business Meeting, for a vote, in the spring. The task force will then spend the months following that, working on identifying goals, strategies, and action items to get us to our vision and mission. Members will have an opportunity to comment at various stages in the process. We hope to have the strategic plan finalized by fall 2015.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the joint MARAC/NEA Spring 2015 Meeting in Boston on March 19-21, 2015! ■

UPCOMING AWARD DEADLINES

A key part of NEA's mission is to help support members with research and professional development. Look below to see if you qualify for any of our four awards. [Applications for all of the awards are due by February 15, 2015.](#) Visit <www.newenglandarchivists.org/awards>.

Richard W. Hale, Jr. Professional Development Award

The Hale Award of \$1,000 is given annually by the NEA to promote the professional development of archivists in the region.

Richard L. Haas Records Management Award

The Richard L. Haas Records Management Award of up to \$1000 is given in support of a project that promotes increased cooperation, understanding, and knowledge between the archival and records management professions.

Audio/Visual (A/V) Professional Development Award

The A/V Professional Development Award of up to \$500 is given annually by the New England Archivists (NEA) to promote the professional development of members in the field of Audio/Visual.

Meeting and Travel Assistance Scholarships

The NEA is committed to the professional development of its members and recognizes the importance of attending the annual spring meeting to engage with colleagues, keeping abreast of new archival theories and technologies, and networking. NEA also recognizes the importance of offering these opportunities to student members. Scholarship funds may be used for meeting registration, meals, and travel expenses. The number of awards and award amounts vary by year.

Look for the NEA Board Meeting Minutes online!

NEA's Executive Board Minutes are now exclusively online at <newenglandarchivists.org>.

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OPEN FORUM

2014 Richard W. Hale, Jr. Professional Development Award Recipient Report

by Eugenia Kim

If someone had asked me ten years ago what I would envision myself doing in 2014, I would have promptly answered “Artistic director of a dance company and professor at my alma mater.” While the first part of that statement has come true, I am very happy that I ended up changing my career direction to become a digital archivist and librarian. For the past four years, I have been combining my dance background with my archival training to investigate how to work directly with choreographers to preserve their work and make it accessible online. During that time, I discovered that there were often two important elements missing: contextual information and metadata specifications. When I started delving into the history of Boston’s dance community I discovered that due to the lack of documentation or proper records management by most artists and organizations, it was very difficult to describe choreographic works or even identify basic information such as concert venue. Over time, I found myself investigating oral histories as a means for creating a collective memory to fill in the informational gaps. This eventually evolved into the Hub Dance Narratives of Boston (HDNB).

I applied for the Hale Award for two purposes: to attend the Theatre Library Association/SIBMAS joint conference in New York City and to help support the costs of developing HDNB. The TLA/SIBMAS conference was very timely in that two of the themes were Dance Preservation and Digital Humanities in the Performing Arts. Coincidentally, a proposal that I had submitted with Purdue University and the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts was accepted right after I was given the Hale Award. My group’s presentation focused on effective management of digital humanities projects for dance, so it felt rather relevant to the goals I had submitted to the NEA awards committee.

The TLA/SIBMAS conference featured some very interesting presentations from around the globe that I would normally not have seen at national gatherings. I was tremendously excited to be able to meet Sarah Whatley of Coventry University, a dance scholar who created the Siobhan Davies Replay online archives. Prof. Whatley had been an advisor and mentor to me since 2010 despite never having met me in person, so it was a very significant moment for me. Her latest research visualizes the relationships between the components that comprise a dance work (i.e., choreography, music, set design, etc.) by using an online interactive interface <www.siobhandavies.com/thekitchen/birdsong/>. It was truly different from any other digital humanities project that I have encountered in the United States in that it was not pure academic research and was designed with both creator and user needs in mind. Other notable projects that were presented include the Abbey Theatre of Dublin digital

archives (created in conjunction with National University of Ireland Galway <www.abbeytheatre.ie/about/access_to_the_archive/a-digital-journey-through-irish-theatre-history/>) and the Instituto del Teatro’s “layered documentation” process for contemporary dance and physical theatre.

In June I began collecting preliminary oral histories from significant contributors to the Boston concert dance community for inclusion in the HDNB. Each interview focused on a set of five questions with allowance for variations depending on the interviewee. These first oral histories are intended to be used for gathering feedback on the direction of the HDNB as well as giving a framework upon which to develop the online presentation component. Dance artists I’ve interviewed include Jeannette Neill, Ruth Birnberg, Jody Weber, Diane Arvanites, Rozann Kraus, Peter diMuro, and Marcus Schulkind. The backgrounds of these individuals span from dance center founders, professors, company directors, administrators, and educators. One disheartening reality that I learned was that the amount of effort required to conduct and process the interviews made my current set-up too inefficient to carry out the project in a timely manner. On the other hand, I did discover that there used to be a well-funded collaborative network in the Greater Boston region that had strong ties to other cities across the nation.

In retrospect, the result of attending the conference and starting activities for the HDNB led to a combination of opportunities and realizations:

Continued on page 9

Reviews

Gilliland, Anne. *Conceptualizing 21st-Century Archives*. Society of American Archivists, 2014. 322 pages. \$69.95 (SAA members \$49.95). ISBN 978-1-931666-68-8.

~Matthew Spry

North of seven dozen acronyms describing standards, working groups, paradigms, organizations, committees, and frameworks are referenced in *Conceptualizing 21st-Century Archives*. For those in the archives and library fields, this will not be a startling figure. However, it does capture the scope of author Dr. Anne Gilliland's effort to document recordkeeping practices and changing theories over the past century. By charting this evolution so methodically, she provides the reader with the necessary historical context for recent developments, emerging areas of study (e.g., digital archaeology and digital forensics), and speculation about the future of archives as a profession.

In the book's opening, Gilliland frames the archival paradigm as ever-evolving, especially over the last three decades, as digital records have surged in volume and expanded in complexity. She notes that the nature of born-digital records challenges traditional notions of provenance and archives as physical places; post-custodial approaches have emerged as a result. More community-centric perspectives have and will continue to inform increasing plurality in planning, practice, and theory. Silos that previously existed as professional distinctions hardened over the course of the 20th century have begun to erode. With so much change, what components of the "traditional" ways of archival thinking should be repurposed as the field enters a new phase? Which ones are candidates for de-emphasis or even disposal?

Of particular importance to this reader was the emphasis on shifting approaches to archival description in chapter five. While Gilliland aptly describes the historic push-and-pull between bibliographic and recordkeeping modes of description, she also emphasizes the potential of Resource Description Framework, linked data, social tagging, and automated tools as ways to democratize description and empower Web users to reuse data about archival objects. That said, she argues for the archivist's continuing role in "documenting context" as a critical piece of the description puzzle (124). Without rich and robust metadata, tools like

pattern recognition and data visualization will not be especially fruitful.

Overall, this book is a thorough blend of the history of recordkeeping, present practice, and thought-provoking speculation about its future, and is essential reading for both archives professionals and students alike. That some of the questions Gilliland poses throughout the book remain unanswered is certainly reflective of the current climate of innovation in the digital age. For archivists, what was once specialized has morphed into interdisciplinary; what used to be "brick and mortar" has become networked and distributed. The author recognizes that given the frequency of shifts in practice and theory over the last century, there will be even more in the future due to the accelerating rate of technological change. Regardless of the specific documentary expression of the record, however, archival expertise will continue to weigh heavily in decisions about long-term access and preservation. ■

Open Forum from page 8

- In order to increase the quality of the project as well as produce it within a reasonable amount of time, I decided to team up with local and national organizations to write several grant proposals for funding.
- While there is no guarantee that the proposals will be funded, the process helped me develop relationships with valuable collaborators and also define my goals more clearly.
- Working on the HDNB also put me in touch with other information professionals working on similar initiatives; we will be presenting our respective projects at the NEA/MARAC joint meeting in March 2015.

Perhaps the biggest takeaway from this experience was how a little support could create an extensive chain of events. I often feel torn between two worlds when it comes to funding. On one hand, \$1,000 is considered fairly small in the archival world when starting a new initiative. On the other hand, that same amount of money would enable someone to rent a local black box theater for two nights. For me, that money was a springboard to not only launch a dauntingly large project, but was also a much-needed psychological boost. It is a tremendous boon to the New England region that this kind of opportunity is available and I thank the NEA for continuing to support the professional development of archivists for over thirty years. I greatly look forward to seeing what next year's recipient will use the award for! ■

News and Notes

CONNECTICUT

The Connecticut State Library Receives the Betty M. Linsley Award for 2014

The recipient of this year's Betty M. Linsley Award from the Association for the Study of Connecticut History is the Connecticut State Library for its most recent publication, *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut* from 1819 to 1820, Vol. 20. Under the expert guidance of its editor, Dr. Douglas M. Arnold, this volume supplies historians and the public with further documentation essential to understanding the state's early nineteenth-century history. This volume includes debates over the Missouri Controversy, the impact of the financial panic of 1819, Governor Oliver Wolcott's important annual messages to the General Assembly, along with much other material pertaining to the state's political, economic, and social concerns.

Particularly highlighted are the critical tax reforms of 1819, long sought by the state's recently empowered Republicans, all admirably explained and interpreted by Dr. Arnold in his learned introduction and footnotes. Volume 20 continues the long tradition of editorial excellence in the publication of *The Public Records* of both the Colony and of the State of Connecticut. The *Public Records* series documents many important chapters in Connecticut's history, including the state's participation in the Revolutionary War, economic and political readjustments to peacetime, the adoption of the U.S. Constitution and the political ascendancy of the Federalist Party, partisan rivalry between the Federalists and the Jeffersonian Republicans, and the War of 1812. It also contains valuable information on social and economic history and developments in the state's towns and localities. Recent volumes of the series have covered the postwar defeat of the Federalists by a Reform coalition, the adoption of a state constitution and the end of public financing of religion in 1818, and tax and fiscal reform in subsequent years.

Volumes 18 (1816-1817) and 19 (1818) won the Homer D. Babbidge, Jr. Award from the Association for the Study of Connecticut History in 2008. Dr. Arnold and his colleagues are currently preparing Volume 21 (1821-1822) for publica-

tion in 2015. The *Public Records* are edited and published in accordance with an Act of The General Assembly and funded through the Historic Documents Preservation account.

Since 1855 the Connecticut State Library has acquired historical records from the three branches of state government. In 1909, the General Assembly made the State Library the official State Archives. The Archives contains more than 42,000 cubic feet of records documenting the evolution of state public policy and its implementation, the rights and claims of citizens, and the history of Connecticut and its people.

For more information, please contact Allen Ramsey, Assistant State Archivist, Connecticut State Library, at <Allen.Ramsey@ct.gov> or 860.566.1100 ext. 302, or visit the Connecticut State Library on the web: <www.ctstatelibrary.org/organizational-unit/state-archives>.

MAINE

McArthur Library Launches Online Local History Catalog

The McArthur Library in Biddeford, Maine is pleased to announce the launch of their new online Local History Catalog: <mcArthur.pastperfect-online.com>. Patrons may now search and browse the library's special collections online, most notably the extensive image collections. It includes access to more than 4,000 digital images, and well over 6,000 item records, with more records being added regularly.

The catalog was made possible by the 2011 award of a Historical Records Collections Grant for Cataloging Software by the Maine State Archives and the Maine Historical Records Advisory Board (MHRAB), which allowed the library to purchase PastPerfect Museum Software. The library then began cataloging 150 years' worth of collections, a task accomplished by one archivist and a host of dedicated volunteers and interns. Current materials now searchable online include artifacts, art, prints, the archives, and roughly one quarter of the library's image collections. Check back often for new additions!

For more information, contact <reference@mcArthur.lib.me.us>.

MASSACHUSETTS

Our Marathon Lesson Plans: Healing in the Archive

Northeastern University English professors Elizabeth Maddock Dillon and Assistant Professor Ryan Cordell established *Our Marathon: The Boston Bombing Digital Archive* as a space where people could tell and share their stories. It is a crowd-sourced, digital archive of pictures, videos, stories, and social media related to the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. The archive holds almost 10,000 items, three interactive exhibits, and three major collections.

As a Simmons School of Library and Information Science graduate summer intern sponsored by the Northeastern University Archives and supported by the Project Co-Director James McGrath, Claudia F. Willett constructed a Neatline exhibit, contributed social media outreach, and created lesson plans for schoolroom use. She also helped design a Teaching Resources page to showcase five unique lesson plans for students K-12, as well as developed the plans to demonstrate mastery of grade and subject appropriate Common Core Standards. The goal of this project is to generate student submissions to the archive and encourage healing and understanding by initiating an important student/teacher dialogue.

For more information visit <<http://marathon.neu.edu>>, or contact Claudia Willett at <c.willett@neu.edu>.



Northeastern Poster dated April 21, 2013, from the Public Submissions collection at Northeastern University Archive.

Archival Materials from the Peabody Institute Library Now Available Online

The Local History Resource Center at the Peabody Institute Library in Peabody is excited to announce that its archival materials are available online for the first time.

Now many of the photographs, objects, and archival materials are available to search online, in order to expand the use of the collection beyond the city of Peabody. Some records also have embedded YouTube videos or links to other sites that relate to the record.

Prior to going live, many of the collections were reprocessed and metadata for the majority of the collection was updated. Interns from Salem State University and volunteers transcribed and reorganized materials to make them more accessible to the general public. Additionally, new finding aids and materials from the collection will be added on an ongoing basis.

The website can be viewed at <<http://peabodylibrary.org/history/index.html>>. For more information, contact Erik Bauer, archivist, at 978-531-0100 x 34 or <bauer@noblenet.org>.

Boston Summer Seminar at the Massachusetts Historical Society

In June 2015 the Massachusetts Historical Society will be hosting the first Boston Summer Seminar developed for the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA) by Dr. Natalie Dykstra (Hope College), and archivists Anna Clutterbuck-Cook (MHS) and Hanna Clutterbuck-Cook (Harvard University). Faculty-student research teams from GLCA colleges will spend three weeks in Boston conducting intensive primary-source research at MHS, the Schlesinger Library (Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University), the Center for the History of Medicine (Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, Harvard University), and Northeastern University's Archives & Special Collections. We are excited to have this opportunity to encourage undergraduate collaborative use of unique archival materials!

For more information please visit <<http://bostonsummerseminar.org>>.

Rare Portrait of Colonel Thomas Handasyd Perkins Found in the Archives at the Perkins School for the Blind - Now Restored

Colonel Perkins (1764-1854) was a notable Boston Brahmin, China Trade merchant, and member of the first board of trustees of the New England Institution for the Education of the Blind. By 1833 the school had moved into Col. Perkins' mansion on Pearl Street in downtown Boston. In 1839, Perkins allowed the school to sell his home in order to purchase the former Mt. Washington Hotel in South Boston. In honor of this generosity, the school was renamed Perkins Institution.

The cased daguerreotype measures 6 x 5 inches and is lined with a red velvet cushion. In October 2014, the daguerreotype was sent to the Northeast Document Conservation Center for treatment. After conservation more detail was revealed in the hair and face as well as much greater detail in the clothes and torso. It also received a thorough cleansing of nasty surface accretions and weeping deterioration.

To view the daguerreotype in color, please visit the Perkins Archives Blog: <<http://perkinsarchives.org/archives-blog>>.

For more information, contact Molly Stothert-Maurer, Archivist, Perkins School for the Blind at <Molly.Stothert-Maurer@Perkins.org>.



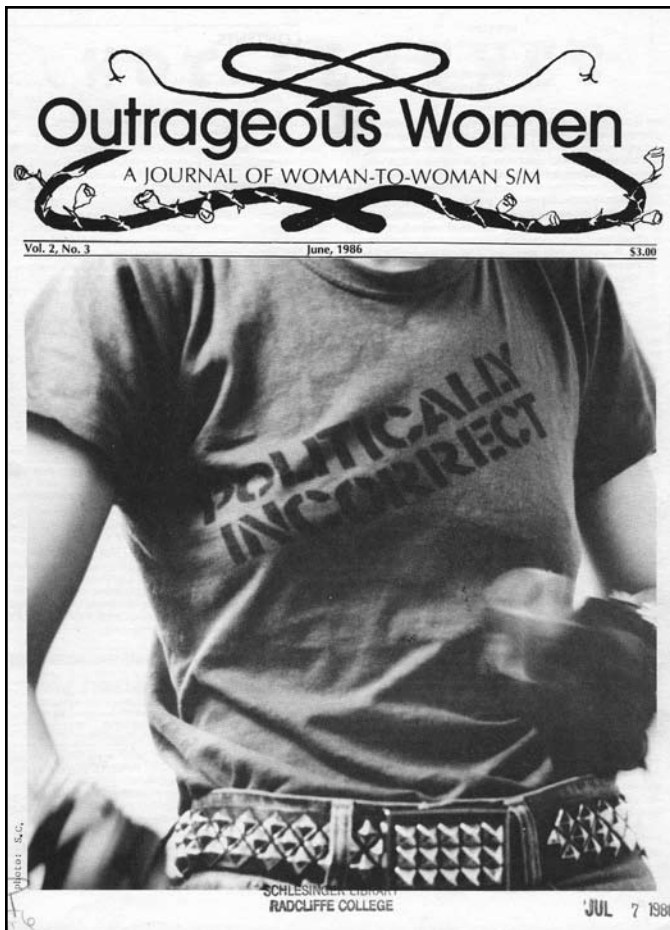
Cased daguerreotype of Thomas Handasyd Perkins, circa 1850 (right), close up of the daguerreotype plate courtesy of the Northeast Document Conservation Center (left).

New collections available at the Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America

The Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America at Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, would like to announce a number of collections processed and made available for research in the last six months. These include the papers of feminist psychoanalyst Paula J. Caplan, which include documentation of work to remove gender disorders from the DSM; papers of physics professor Dinah L. Moché, who brought a sex discrimination lawsuit against Queensborough Community College in 1976; papers of anti-ageism activist Lucile Schuck Longview, who was active in the campaign for women's equality in the Unitarian Universalist Church; and papers of Radcliffe College graduate and journalist Jane O'Reilly, which include her writings, 1970s and 1980s research files on abortion, the ERA, women in politics, etc., and audiotapes of conservative political movement speakers.

Other newly processed collections are the papers of Helen Jones Rich, composer and mother of poet Adrienne Rich and peace activist Cynthia Rich, which include family photographs and correspondence; papers of Radcliffe College graduate and economist, Marjorie Handsaker, which include correspondence with and parental advice to her daughter, Alice Kidder, who lived and gave birth in Calcutta in 1966; papers of playwright and lyricist Priscilla Dewey Houghton, which include courtship letters, play scripts, and sixty years of diaries; papers of oral historian Fran Leeper Buss, which include transcripts of interviews with low-income and immigrant women as well as Buss's own diaries and autobiographical writings; and papers of author and poet Evelyn Ames, which include writings and diaries dating from 1921 to 1978.

Papers of nurse-midwife Fran Ventre include labor reports, protocol manuals, etc., and document changing practices of midwifery education and birth center establishment in Massachusetts; papers of children's book author and adoption counselor Betty Jean Lifton include research and writing regarding the psychological impact of the adoption experience. Records of Outrageous Women, Inc., document a magazine devoted to lesbian S/M sex published in Somerville, Massachusetts from 1984 to 1988, and include letters from authors, artists, and subscribers; the records of the Women's Travel Club (Boston, Mass.), founded in 1935 to share information about women's unusual travels, include



Outrageous Women: A Journal of Woman-to-Woman S/M was published in Somerville, Massachusetts from 1984 to 1988. The records of the publication, as well as a complete run of the magazine, are now available at the Schlesinger Library.

administrative records and member biographies; the collection of Ilse Gay documents Gay's family history of poverty, alcoholism, and crime, which led to the incarceration of her grandmother, Minnie Morrell Jenkins, for forgery in 1929. Audiovisual material from the records of Lamaze International and the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) has been cataloged; and over 1,500 Radcliffe College sound recordings are also now available for research.

Finding aids for these and all other Schlesinger Library collections can be found here: <http://guides.library.harvard.edu/schlesinger_finding_aids>.

Visit NEA online at:

<www.newenglandarchivists.org>

R H O D E I S L A N D

Rhode Island Historical Society Reopens

The Rhode Island Historical Society is thrilled to announce that construction on the Library has concluded following the water event in December 2013 and planned renovations that took place over the summer and fall. The building's windows and HVAC system were both replaced and upgrades were made to the fire and security systems. Cataloging and processing has continued throughout this project. The staff is now working diligently to re-shelve collections that were moved to make way for the construction projects. The Library will re-open for full service January 14, 2015.

For more information, please contact the Rhode Island Historical Society Library at <reference@rihs.org> or 401-273-8107, or visit their website: <www.rihs.org>.

O T H E R N E W S

Historic New England Increases Access to Family Papers

Beginning this fall, finding aids newly available online will help make the contents of twenty-six manuscript collections at Historic New England accessible to researchers, scholars, authors, and anyone curious about New England's social and cultural history. The finding aids reveal essential details about nationally significant figures and events and the social, cultural, economic, agricultural, and literary history of New England. From correspondence and financial records that document the lifestyle of generations of the wealthy Codman family of Lincoln, Massachusetts, to account books and legal documents that record the agricultural operations at Casey Farm in Saunderstown, Rhode Island, these collections teach us about the daily lives of New Englanders through the centuries.

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) provided major support for the project. The project also received valuable contributions from the Bedford Family Foundation and an anonymous foundation. Access the finding aids and collection highlights online at <www.HistoricNewEngland.org/FamilyPapers>. ■

Fall 2014 Meeting Session Reports

The Digital Launch of the Nimitz “Gray Book”

Moderator: Lisa Long Feldman, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

Speakers: Allen Benson, U.S. Naval War College; Evelyn Cherpak, U.S. Naval War College; Diana Coderre, The Digital Ark; John Hattendorf, U.S. Naval War College, Anurag Spatzenegger, The Digital Ark

~Barbara Austen

Lisa Long Feldman moderated this session and introduced a template for use by the participants in following the presentations. The template consisted of seven sections: Identification of collection material for digitization, solutions, outcomes or deliverables, parameters for vendor, marketing, evaluation, and staff considerations. Each speaker addressed one of these sections and Feldman asked participants to fill in the questions with a project of their own to discuss later (which unfortunately did not happen).

Allen Benson led off the session by describing the February 24, 2014 launch of a new website at the Naval War College featuring the “Gray Book” kept by Admiral Chester M. Nimitz. The “Gray Book” is actually eight large volumes with over 4,000 pages of text on onion-skin paper in which Admiral Nimitz wrote a daily record of combat situations he encountered between 1941 and 1945. Although the volumes had been microfilmed (2009) and scanned at low resolution and burned to disk (2012), the decision was made to re-digitize the work to provide greater access. By outsourcing the digitization, faculty and staff at the College could focus more on the content and less on technical details.

Diana Coderre of The Digital Ark discussed project management, starting with a detailed Request for Proposal to potential vendors. The Digital Ark handled the logistics of moving the volumes from Washington, DC to Providence, RI created a log with data on each page they scanned to which Naval War College staff had access to answer any questions, created three master files stored in three geographically di-

verse locations, and produced derivatives. They also built a full text digital index.

Anurag Spatzenegger discussed the website developed by The Digital Ark that included not only the Gray Book but information on Nimitz himself. This additional information served to “humanize” Nimitz and was compiled by Evelyn Cherpak from the Historical Collection at the College and from interviews with family members. Omeka was the platform for the site. The day of the launch was so successful that there were over 20,000 requests for download that nearly crashed the site.

The success of the launch served as part of the evaluation process, but Benson conducted a survey of college staff and faculty who were advisors on the project. He discovered that while there was cooperation between departments the project leader needed to communicate more. In assessing the importance of the project and the information in the Gray Book, Professor Hattendorf discovered that while the data document the war operations, the entries also illustrate Naval War College training being applied in the field. Nimitz used a “running estimate” of the situation, which combined orders, intelligence, and what he observed to assess each day’s actions. The running estimate is how officers are trained to be commanders at the Naval War College. This example is the only one known of its kind.

Throughout the session, Benson repeated a theme he found throughout the project: that we need to be aware of the ecology and social consequences of the archival process. This was a small project as far as digitization goes, but its impact was immense for the public, for the college and for the staff.

Establishing a Records Management Program

Speaker: George Despres, Brandeis University

~Allyson Glazier

The main objective of this session, Establishing a Records Management Program, was just that: to give participants some concrete steps and suggestions to begin such a program at their own institutions, regardless of type – academic, corporate, or independent. George Despres broke this intimidating and immense project down into individual steps and a series of exercises. First, know thy institution –

what functions does your institution have? What is its mission and where can one learn more about the institution? Think charters and bylaws, for example. This step will help you to understand what information exists and what needs to be preserved or destroyed according to regulatory policies, both within and outside of the institution. This is called a retention schedule, an internal policy that can help manage an institution's many different types of records. Brainstorming both the functions of an institution as well as different metadata fields for each can be helpful in creating a robust and specific set of records series.

One of the most important steps in creating a records management program involves "socializing" the program. No matter how many policies one creates or how many records you preserve, it is critical to have cooperation and understanding by your institution's staff. Without their commitment to the success of this program, it cannot function efficiently. Getting out into each department within your organization and speaking to staff about their needs and concerns can be useful in getting "buy-in" and gaining trust.

Once this functional analysis of the organization and the socializing of your new program have been considered, it is

important to start talking to storage vendors, if storage is not to be managed in-house. Think about important questions to ask and what information you will need to know in order to make the right choice in vendor. Despres reminded us that, while you can always change vendors, they can charge extra to discharge your holdings with them and transfer them to a new storage vendor. This cost can be substantial if you plan on storing a large number of boxes in long-term off-site storage. Therefore, make sure you ask many questions so that an educated choice of storage site and management can be made. In addition to physical storage space, it is important to consider electronic records management, including the storage space, but also its integration with current systems, technical support offered, security, and of course, cost. These questions are related to questions to ask vendors as you shop for the best system for your individual situation, but they also require another systemic look at your organization and how electronic records (and which records) should be captured and at what point in their life cycle.

Creating a records management program from scratch can be daunting. Your organization might not have many departments that might be able to provide support your goals – such as a legal department that could offer legal guidance.

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While these limitations may require a stretching of organizational role(s) and possibly a disruption of the status quo, Despres maintained that it is possible to successfully convince management that records management is a critical part of running an efficient organization. He also recommended showing both management and staff members pictures of key “problems” – closets full of unorganized paperwork, security concerns, etc., to sell your program. It is often easy to ignore a problem when it is hidden in the basement! Bringing records management “eye sores” to light can make for a very persuasive argument!

While there are many different ways to research and establish a records management program, George Despres’s presentation broke the process down to the basics and helped to make this daunting task a little less intimidating to professionals across many different types of institutions.

Codices and Widgets and Plugins, Oh My! Putting WordPress to Work for Archives

Speaker: Emily Tordo, Assistant Archivist, Phillips Academy Archives & Special Collections

~Annalisa Moretti

More and more often archivists find themselves tasked with the responsibility of representing their institution and collections on the web. But establishing an online presence that is effective, user-friendly, informative, and modern can be an intimidating process. At this fall’s meeting, Emily Tordo, of Phillips Academy, led an informative session on designing a website using WordPress and other tools.

The session began with a discussion about making a decision tree before beginning to work on your site. When embarking on such a project, it’s important to ask yourself a number of questions: who are you – what kind of institution and materials are you representing? What is the point of your website – is there a specific purpose? Who is your target audience? What are your resources, including staff time for setting up your site and maintaining it, your budget if you have one, and available IT support? And finally, are there restrictions, like copyright and permissions, that you should keep in mind when curating the content on your site, or technical restrictions on the design, such as a broader institutional branding?

Next, Ms. Tordo outlined some of the predominant trends in website design, displaying examples of well-designed sites and explaining what features made them work. For example, the current trend is for shorter websites with large headers and footers that contain much of the site’s most important information; image-based menus; full-width pages; and parallax, a feature in which a background image stays static while text and content scrolls. She encouraged us to examine websites we enjoyed the design of and think about how and why they work, and how our own content might be displayed best.

WordPress <<http://wordpress.org>> is an extremely popular content management system for building a website because it is both easy to use and customize. By using themes, widgets, and plugins, WordPress can be adapted to almost all of these design specifications, even for those who are new to website design. It is available both for free and for a fee for a more customizable version. Ms. Tordo recommended a number of other platforms, such as WIX <www.wix.com> and SquareSpace <www.squarespace.com>. She also provided many resources for using WordPress and other website design tools and recommendations for hosting services.

Overall, this session was filled with many interesting and enlightening tips, and really gave a great insight into the world of web design, helping me to see websites in a different light. However, such a large topic needs more time and I hope that it might be revisited someday at a future NEA meeting.

Online Exhibits on a Shoestring

Presenters: Sofia Becerra-Licha, Berklee College of Music; Renee DesRoberts, McArthur Public Library; Ernie Gillis, Berklee College of Music

~Myles Crowley

The presenters demonstrated some of the innovative ways in which multimedia virtual displays of archival collections were developed in two lone arranger shops: McArthur Public Library in Biddeford, Maine and Berklee College of Music’s Stan Getz Library in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition to showing the products from both institutions, the presenters spent much of the session discussing the essential components of planning, workflows, implementation, and maximizing human resources.

Renee DesRoberts, McArthur's Reference and Archives Librarian, described how she used the free version of Omeka, an open source content management system for online digital collections, to display "Amateur Newspapers from the Walter Perkins Collection" <<http://walterperkins.omeka.net>>. A request from a local professor with a digital humanities class inspired DesRoberts to tackle the digitization and exhibit project in a short time on her own. Thus the presentation was focused on lessons learned with Omeka.

Reflecting on the experience, DesRoberts said that it was a "backwards way to learn," but that she was aided in her project because Omeka is user-friendly, requires no programming, and has good documentation. DesRoberts urged others to explore Omeka and she offered several specific recommendations ranging from choosing the site name carefully, to finding another person to look at your site, and dealing with space limits by storing images on Google Drive. DesRoberts stressed the benefits of good planning and that marketing and updating an exhibit site is just as important and time consuming as designing one. Although she used a standard template, DesRoberts pointed out the application has many other design choices and plug-ins including social media links. Des Roberts noted that "Less is usually more online," and, since Omeka can be multifaceted, she strongly suggested thinking through a project thoroughly prior to working with the application, which, as she learned, will save one much time.

Berklee's Sofia Becerra-Licha, Project Archivist, and Ernie Gillis, Manager of Learning Resources Web Development, described their dynamic website for digitized collection items and a back-end metadata index/management tool that they said was years in the making. The archives at Berklee was established in 2012, all collections are stored offsite, and the previous static website was not serving the needs of faculty, students, and outside researchers. Audio-visual materials are dominant in the collections as one would imagine for a music school.

Becerra-Licha and Gillis gave NEA members attending the session a good look "under the hood" of their new system. They mentioned and showed some of the resources and tools that they have employed in their project, including Drupal, Fedora Commons, FileMaker, and Islandora. Examples drawn from the website <<https://library.berklee.edu/archives/archives-virtual-display>> included eighty oral histories and Jazz in the Class, an instruction tool and

documentation of the teaching methods advocated by the school's founder Lawrence Berk.

Similar to DesRoberts' presentation, Becerra-Licha and Gillis focused on project management issues – such as the need to assess the resources, challenges, and strengths of their archive, collections, institutional and human resources. Becerra-Licha and Gillis explained how graduate archives management students and library interns worked on the database and cataloging while Berklee students, who could read sheet music, worked on metadata and transcriptions. This division of labor was supported by a close relationship with library web support and collaboration with college information technology (IT) staff. Gillis, a Berklee graduate, stressed the importance of getting to know the IT staff individually and asking about their work. He stated that a lot of IT people do not get what archivists do, but relationships and understanding can be fostered in shared projects.

Becerra-Licha and DesRoberts were enthusiastic about their projects and encouraging to those attending the session. "Do what you can with what you have!" said Becerra-Licha, advice applicable to lone arrangers and the rest of us.



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Challenges, Workflows and Insights in the Collaboration to Preserve America's Public Media

Speakers: Casey Davis, American Archive of Public Broadcasting (AAPB); Karen Cariani, WGBH Media Library and Archives

~Amy Totten

In this session, Karen and Casey discussed challenges encountered and lessons learned while developing the American Archive of Public Broadcasting (AAPB). The AAPB is a collaborative effort between WGBH, Boston's largest public TV and radio producer, and the Library of Congress; they are working together to identify, digitize, preserve, and make accessible 40,000 hours of public broadcasting audio and audiovisual content from 120 public media stations across the United States. Stating that one hundred hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every hour, Casey and Karen suggested, as a result of these types of material being so easy to produce these days, "that we are all going to be audiovisual archivists in a few years," and that the four topics covered in their presentation could be useful to any organization working to create an archive of audiovisual materials, and especially multiple organizations working together.

To set the stage, they first discussed some of the archival challenges specific to digital audiovisual material such as the very large file sizes, inherent file complexity, playback equipment obsolescence, and complex intellectual property issues, among others. They then addressed lessons learned in four areas of their collaborative work, the first area being acquiring, managing and preserving born-digital AV materials. In addition to recommending using NDSA preservation levels <www.digitalpreservation.gov/ndsas/activities/levels.html> as guidance in these endeavors, Casey and Karen suggested the following for AV material management:

- Create procedures for donors to submit digital files
- Provide donors with resources to inventory their collection
- Get as much metadata as you can from the donor
- Provide donors with instructions on file naming, drive naming, and organization
- Sometimes everyday IT operations are not good enough

Some of the other tools suggested were:

- UK Data Service. Prepare and Manage Data. <ukdataservice.ac.uk/manage-data/>
- Digital Curation Centre. Checklist for a Data Management Plan. <www.dcc.ac.uk/resources/data-management-plans/checklist>
- Library of Congress. DPOE Training Modules. <www.digitalpreservation.gov/education/>
- AMIA Education Committee Blog & forthcoming webinar series <<https://amiaeducomm.wordpress.com/>>

The second area discussed was how and why WGBH chose open source DAM software over vendor-supplied options for developing their digital media repository. Karen explained that WGBH was given NEH funding to explore using open source software to build a media preservation DAM system. They tested the Hydra tech stack and also found that Hydra has a strong sustainable community of developers and users, and provides good support and training. WGBH has concluded that going the open source route is not easy or cheap (somewhat like acquiring a free puppy), but that it allows them control and flexibility that suits their needs.

The third area discussed was the topic of generating metadata for digital AV materials, the challenges of this process, and how the metadata schema PBCore addresses these challenges since it was developed specifically for these materials <www.pbcore.org>. Other advantages are that it requires just seven fields to create viable records, is used by a variety of organizations, and can be implemented with other standards. Automating the process of gathering metadata for born-digital materials is highly recommended; some tools useful for that task are ffprobe, mediainfo, and ExifTool.

The fourth area that Casey and Karen discussed was "general lessons learned" from their experiences with collaborative projects. Among other things, they emphasized the need for patience, for planning ahead regarding responsibility for decisions and deliverables, for making the effort to understand challenges and potential obstacles at your partner institutions, and for accepting differences in workflow, budgeting, needs, and timeframes. For small organizations holding audiovisual materials and looking for potential digitization/preservation partners, Karen and Casey suggested that talking to your local library might be a good place to start. ■

People

Robert Johnson-Lally retired from the Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston on December 31, 2014. Robert has served as Archivist since 1994. Prior to this, Robert was the Project Director for the Manuscript Cataloging Project Society from 1991-1994. From 1979-1991, Robert served as Associate Archivist and then University Archivist at Tufts University in Medford, MA. Robert received his BA in history from the University of Massachusetts Boston in 1978, and his MA in history with archives training from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. A longtime member of NEA, Robert was an editor of the *Newsletter*, and was several times a member of the local arrangements and nominating committees. Capping his service to NEA, Robert served as president in the early 1990s.

The Connecticut State Library is pleased to announce the appointment of **Lizette Pelletier** to the position of State Archivist. For the past eight years, Lizette has worked as Public Records Archivist in the Office of the Public Records Administrator. Lizette served as Assistant State Archivist from 1988-1998. Her experience includes eight years as a records and information management consultant and serving as a project archivist for CIGNA and on the Central Connecticut State University Polish American Archives. Lizette holds a BA in History from the College of St. Benedict and an MA in History and an MLS with a major in Archives and Records Management from the University of Maryland, College Park.

The Academy of Certified Archivists (ACA) recently elected **Mott Linn** as its president for 2015-2016. The ACA, founded in 1989 at the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, is an independent, nonprofit certifying organization of professional archivists, whose individual members qualify for certification by meeting a series of defined professional standards. During Mott's term, he will serve one year in each of three positions: Vice President, President, and Regent for Nominations. He previously served ACA as treasurer for two 2-year terms. Mott is currently the Head of Collections Management at Clark University and was previously the Coordinator of Archives and Special Collections at Clark. He earned his certification in 1991.

Heather L. C. Mumford was recently appointed as the Archivist for the Harvard School of Public Health, a newly created acquisitions position at the Center for the History

of Medicine at Countway Library. As the first permanent full-time archivist dedicated to the School, Heather will establish archival infrastructure, foster relationships within the community, and contribute towards building a robust, comprehensive public health collection at the Center. Prior to this appointment, Heather held joint positions as the Records Management Assistant for Harvard Medical and Dental schools and a term position as the Archivist for the Harvard School of Public Health. She received her MLIS in 2011 from Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts.

In September, **Carolyn Damon Hayes** was appointed Acquisitions Archivist for the Center for the History of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. Carolyn has worked at the Center since 2011, serving first as an assistant to the Acquisitions Archivist, and most recently as Project Archivist for the Center's Archives for Women in Medicine program. Additional past projects include work in the Northeastern University Archives and Special Collections creating MARC records for the repository's manuscript collections, and internships held at the Brookline Public Library, the Boston Herald, and the Concord Free Public Library. Carolyn is a graduate of the joint MA/MLIS program at Simmons College and also holds a B.Mus. in oboe performance from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music.

In October 2014 **Christopher Markman** joined the Information Technology Services team at Clark University, working as an Academic Technology Specialist in Goddard Library. In this position he helps maintain Moodle, the university's online learning system, and provides technical support and guidance to humanities-based academic departments and their digital collections. Prior to this move, and while completing an MSLIS degree from Simmons College, he worked at Clark University in the Visual & Performing Arts department's media library as the Resource Library Coordinator.

Sarah R. Demb, Senior Records Manager/Archivist at Harvard University Archives and Records Management Services, contributed an essay to *Integrity in Government through Records Management: Essays in Honour of Anne Thurston* (Ashgate 2014). Her essay is entitled "Vital Records: The Importance of National Archives and Records Administrations to Governance and Civil Society in Sierra Leone" and is based on her experience as Project Manager for the International Records Management Trust from 2003 to 2006. ■

AROUND AND ABOUT

Special Collections and Teen Engagement

By Erik R. Bauer

As Sheila R. Spalding stated in the January 2011 issue of the NEA Newsletter, “Archivists are always looking for ways to connect with our community.”¹ As the archivist at the Peabody Institute Library <www.peabodylibrary.org>, I agree with this, but want to take it a step further. Many archivists interact with general and genealogical researchers and hold public programs, but how often do we engage with the wider community, especially teenagers? The conventional belief that teens’ interest in history is minimal may be true in the classroom, but my special collections experiences in Peabody offer surprising insights and may change the way programs are promoted to students.

Peabody, Massachusetts, once known as a center of leather manufacturing, has evolved both demographically and economically. Many of the teenagers that come to the Peabody Institute Library are from lower and middle class backgrounds. For many of these middle school and high school students, history only consists of memorizing names and dates, and any larger connection to history is lost at a time of budget cuts and fewer field trips. Compounding the problem is that under No Child Left Behind, social studies is not tested and therefore not given a greater focus in school. All of this leads students to disengage from history and avoid places that could bring history to life for them. However, when teens are given the chance to interact with archival materials and other material culture from the past, a new interest in history begins to reveal itself.

During a recent period of construction at our library, my office was located in a room off of the Young Adult Room. For the first couple of months, the students mostly ignored me and paid little attention to what I was doing. However, in the middle of March 2013, some students started to take an interest in the large dusty books that I carried around. They started asking simple questions – why was I carrying large, dusty old books to my desk? At the time I was accessioning a collection of city valuation records from 1855-1920 and this question provided the starting point for a discussion on the history of Peabody. It also helped the students better understand what an archivist does and the importance of the special collections with which I work. I answered the two teens by having them each take a guess as to what was in the books. Neither knew exactly, but both made general guesses that the books contained some kind of information. Their answers were vague but basically correct, so I set the book down to show them what a valuation book from the 1890s looks like.

The conversation continued with questions (and answers) about why the books were transferred to the library from city hall, how I had to accession the collection, and what it means to add the books into PastPerfect, our collection management software. They asked what information I put into PastPerfect, and I explained the particulars, including the physical dimensions of each book, how many volumes there were in each year, the history of where they were located, and how they were organized. I had not expected such insightful questions and was surprised to see teens taking an interest in what I was doing with our special collections.

As the conversation progressed and I could see that the students were actively engaged, I opened up one of the valuation books for the teens to see, and explained what each column meant. We discussed how each person (men only until the 1920s) had to pay taxes and how the taxes were based on land, businesses, horses and assorted farm animals, and other assets that would let the City of Peabody know what a person had to pay for their yearly taxes and poll tax. Upon mentioning the poll tax, one teen brought up how they thought that only the South had poll taxes in order to prevent African-American from voting. This is true, but what they did not realize is that even the Northern states had poll taxes that had to be paid in order to vote. In addition to their interest in the concept of these historic taxes, they were also fascinated by the aesthetic of the valuation books, in particular, the old-fashioned handwriting.

One interesting and important observation I made was that at no time did I have to tell the students not to eat or drink around the books. They correctly assumed that because the books are old they have an inherent value to them.

Our initial conversation continued into the next day with a new set of books I was working on processing. As I proceeded to bring each book to my office, the teens would ask or sometimes guess what year I was working on. This was particularly fun for them, as the books were not in order when they were transferred to the library.

At first it appeared that there was only a superficial interest in what I was doing, but when I offered to show the students where we keep our special collections they all jumped at the chance. The initial group I took up consisted of two high school students and three middle school students. What first made them realize that they were being offered something special was when they had to pass through a locked door and then enter a foyer where an old door opens to the Eben Dale Sutton Room, which is where we keep our collections. Once the lights had been turned on and illuminated the room, each student stood in amazed silence. They listened attentively to the history of how and why the Sutton Room was built, and I answered their questions about various objects, who uses the room and why, as well as what the library collects and how many books there are. All of these questions led to further discussions about what the archive collects, why I preserve books and documents, and the importance of knowing history and a little chemistry in doing my job.

There was learning on both sides; the teens were curious about the room and what was in it and I learned how to explain somewhat abstract concept without talking down to them. We covered the basics such as the concepts of accessioning and de-accessioning and how some objects are valuable not in terms of money, but in terms of how important the object or content is to Peabody's history.

For many of the students, this discussion was the first time that history became something tangible; they could look at the books and have a connection to the past that was relatable to their own lives.

When the time came for the students to go back down to the Young Adult Room of the library, they couldn't stop talking about the Sutton Room as well as the various materials there. They even brought it up with the Young Adult Librarian, who pointed out that the room is not open very often and talked more about the interesting objects they found there. Over the course of a week, I continued to bring small groups of students to see the Sutton Room, who often remarked that it reminded them of the *National Treasure* films.



Erik Bauer showing teens a valuation book. Photograph courtesy of Peabody Institute Library.

Inspired by their interest in Peabody history, I have most recently brought down photographs and postcards of Peabody from the early 1900s. These old photographs provide another tangible illustration of Peabody's history and how the city has changed. One example is a photo of the Center School and how children dressed at the turn of the twentieth century. Several teens currently attend the Center School, and the photo provided an opportunity to explain that the school they go to is not the original school (the original burned down in a fire).

Another benefit of these conversations is that as students get their questions answered, they become more confident in asking questions about history and the role that archives play today. Many of the teens never knew the Sutton Room existed, but now that they do, they are excited to be part of a small, privileged group of people who have been there. Some ask if I am still working in that room, when they don't see me going back and forth from the Young Adult Room. I reply yes, that I still use the Sutton Room, but that I have other work that does not require me to be there.

The result of these short "field trips" are more engaged teens who continue to be interested in the materials that they see. With each book, box, and object I brought down, the teens continued to guess what year it was from and what was in the books or boxes. Since construction has been completed, I look forward to continued engagement with the students because inviting them to see the library's special collections is one of the many ways to demonstrate what archivists do, as well as a way to engage a wider audience with what special collections have to offer. ■

1. Sheila R. Spalding, "The Making of a History Tour," NEA Newsletter 38 no. 1 (January 2011) 4.

NEA News

Spring 2015 Meeting in Boston a Joint Meeting Between the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC) and New England Archivists (NEA)

Beantown, the Cradle of Liberty, the Hub of the Universe! As you might have heard, the Spring 2015 Meeting will be a joint meeting between the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC) and New England Archivists (NEA) held in Boston, Massachusetts. Join your colleagues at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel on March 19-21, 2015 to make new connections and strengthen old ones. The Program and Local Arrangements Committees, consisting of over forty people from both professional organizations, have been working diligently for over a year to create a *revolutionary* conference experience for all. Many meetings, conference calls, Google Docs, and brainstorming sessions have gone into planning, and we hope it shows! Below are some of the highlights of an extraordinary schedule.

The Boston plenary speakers will be... a surprise! The Program Committee isn't ready to release the names and details yet, but we promise they will be worth it! There will be two speakers: the first on Friday morning, and the second on Saturday morning after the MARAC and NEA Business Meetings (held separately).

Sessions this year are impressive, not only because of the high quality of content, but for the collaborative efforts as well. Professionals from across membership organizations have joined forces to provide a fantastic blend of experience and perspective to each topic. There will be twenty-four sessions covering a range of topics including teaching primary sources, advocacy and outreach, using RDA in archival description, overcoming professional hurdles, and many more! NEA is always looking for session reporters, so keep your eyes open for an opportunity to get published.

As has become a tradition with NEA, a community service project is in the works for Thursday afternoon, and we hope members from both MARAC and NEA will consider participating. This opportunity allows members to meet new people, visit an institution they might otherwise never see, and – most importantly – help colleagues in need! Speaking from past experience, community service proj-

ects are a great time and host institutions are always very appreciative of the help.

The reception, which will be held on Friday night at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel, will feature a pub quiz. Do you think you're the smartest archivist in the area? This will be your chance to prove it and show off your big brain! Trivia will cover a wide range of topics and contestants will compete for bragging rights and a fun sur-prize! Don't worry – participation is not required, although it is encouraged.

Dine-arounds will also be offered this year, which are very similar to the SAA "lunch buddy" structure. Conference attendees will be able to choose from a wide variety of restaurants and join a group of their MARAC and NEA colleagues for a fun meal out. This will be a great opportunity to get to know your southern colleagues in a more casual environment. Local Boston residents are encouraged to lead dine-arounds since navigating the city can be challenging for visitors. For those that don't want to brave the cold New England weather, a variety of on-site lunchtime discussions will be an option on Saturday.

We realize that Boston is a fun city, and conference attendees want to get out and explore! The Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) has arranged tours and other exciting events outside the conference sessions. The planned tours range from local repositories to local color, so there is sure to be something for everyone! Some highlights include the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Samuel Adams Brewery, and the Topsy Tour. Repository tours are free; however there is a small fee to cover the cost of the "local color" tours. LAC is also putting together recommendations for restaurants, bars, fun attractions, and things to do while in Boston. Make sure to bring your coat and gloves – wandering through the city is cold in March!

More details about the conference will be released in the coming months as planning progresses. For the social media gurus out there, the Local Arrangements Committee will be using Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, and the MARAC Blog for updates and highlights of the conference.

For more information, please contact: Program Committee co-chairs Camille Torres Hoven <cttorres@mit.edu> and Liz Francis <elizabeth.francis@tufts.edu> or Local Arrangements Committee chair Christina Zamon <christina.zamon@emerson.edu>. ■

Calendar of Events



Press releases and other announcements should be sent to Heather Mumford at <heather_mumford@hms.harvard.edu>. Please provide the date, time, place, a brief description of the event, and an internet link for contact information and/or registration.

January 30-February 3, 2015. ALA Midwinter Meeting in Chicago, IL. For details, see <www.ala.org/conferencesevents/midwinter-meeting>.

March 19-21, 2015. New England Archivists Joint Meeting with the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference at the Park Plaza Hotel in Boston, MA. For details, see <www.newenglandarchivists.wildapricot.org/meetings>.

March 25-28, 2015. ACRL in Portland, Oregon. For details, see <http://conference.acrl.org/>.

June 23-26, 2015. The 55th Annual RBMS Preconference, "Preserve the Humanities! Special Collections as Liberal Arts Laboratory" in Oakland, CA. For details, see <www.preconference15.rbms.info/>.

August 16-22, 2015. SAA Annual Meeting in Cleveland, OH. For details, see <www2.archivists.org/am2015#.VHN98vnF9Bk>.

Save the Date!

March 31-April 2, 2016. New England Archivist's Annual Meeting at the By the Bay Conference Center in Portland, Maine. For details, see <http://newenglandarchivists.wildapricot.org/meetings>. ■

New England Repositories are Growing! Recent Staff Changes

MIT Institute Archives and Special Collections

Dana Hamlin was appointed Project Archivist in April after working in the MIT Libraries in various positions since 2006, most recently as Archives Collections Associate. She received the MLS from Southern Connecticut State University in 2011. Dana is processing the records of the Director of the MIT Libraries, the papers of Jordan Baruch, and the Herb Pomeroy Jazz Collection.

Greta Kuriger Suiter arrived at the MIT Institute Archives and Special Collections as Collections Archivist in September. Greta worked at George Mason University Special Collections and Archives as a processing archivist before coming to MIT. She received the MLIS from the University of Washington in 2010 and the MA in Art History from George Mason University in 2014.

Jessica Venlet joined the MIT Institute Archives and Special Collections in October as the MIT Libraries Library Fellow for Digital Archives. Jessica was digital processing

assistant at the University of Michigan's Bentley Historical Library before moving to Massachusetts. She is also a recent graduate of the University of Michigan School of Information where she earned her Master of Science in Information.

Christina Tanguay accepted the position of Archives Collections Associate in the Institute Archives and Special Collections, and started in that role in November. Since July of 2012 she has worked in the unit as an Archives Assistant. Chris received the Master of Science in Library and Information Science, with an Archives Management Concentration, from Simmons College GSLIS in 2012.

The MIT Institute Archives and Special Collections is hosting ARL and SAA Mosaic Scholar **Sara Powell** during this academic year. Sara, a student in the Simmons GSLIS program, began in September and will be learning about archives and special collections. ■

NEA Has Eight Roundtables!

Offering opportunities for members to connect over shared interests, affiliations, backgrounds, occupational categories, practices and methodologies, and more.

<www.newenglandarchivists.org/roundtables>

N E A

New England Archivists

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE

Office of Medical History and Archives
The Lamar Soutter Library
University of Massachusetts Medical School
55 Lake Avenue North
Worcester, MA 01655

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Boston, Massachusetts 02205
Permit Number 56006

THIS SEASON IN NEW ENGLAND HISTORY



Paintings from Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States.

Plate 66, Pine Siskin and Goldfinch by Louis Agassiz Fuertes (1874-1927). EN2.07/series 114X. Massachusetts Archives. Boston, Massachusetts.