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NEA

# NEWSLETTER

NEW ENGLAND ARCHIVISTS



C O V E R — Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), Magazine Beach, Charles River Basin, Cambridge, MA July 1935. The Metropolitan Park Commission was established by the MA Legislature on June 3, 1893, creating the Metropolitan Parks System, now under MassParks, Dept. of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). A 2011 NEH grant enabled DCR to purchase archival supplies to rehouse the MDC photo series that this image comes from. Photograph taken by MDC Parks Engineering staff, Image No. 0926. Courtesy of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Archives.

NEW ENGLAND  
ARCHIVISTS

40

FORTY YEARS AND  
NEW FRONTIERS

I N S I D E — Susan Martin highlights online exhibits from the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Center for the History of Medicine at Countway Library, and the National Postal Museum at the Smithsonian (*Internet Tidbits*, page 11). Session Reports and photographs from NEA's Spring 2013 Meeting held at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA (Page 16). Genna Duplisea, 2013 Student Writing Prize winner, examines the role of the modern archivist (*Archival Insight*, page 13). And as always, we include news from repositories around New England and the people who care for them.

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](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: Kristine Reinhard, 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](http://www.newenglandarchivists.org)>.

**Notices** of archival events should be sent to: Heather Cristiano at <[Heather\\_Cristiano@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:Heather_Cristiano@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: Heather Cristiano at <[Heather\\_Cristiano@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:Heather_Cristiano@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 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

## 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](mailto:jane.ward@comcast.net)>.

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# From the Editors

- Heather Cristiano

Summer is officially here, and so is the third of four special Newsletter issues celebrating NEA's 40th anniversary. As part of our retrospective, Alyssa Pacy in *From the President* walks us through NEA's humble beginnings in 1973 to a fifth decade of achievement and historic precedence.

If you missed the Spring 2013 Meeting held at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA, be sure to read this issue's session reports on topics such as collaboration, diversity, mentoring, and changes in the archival profession throughout these past 40 years of NEA's history.

In a similar vein of exploration, this year's 2013 Student Writing Prize winner, Genna Duplisea, examines the role of the modern archivist in her paper "Overcoming 'Supposed Neutrality': The Role of Activism in Archival Work." Duplisea examines concepts and practices in which activism can operate in archival work, stemming from the conversation started by Howard Zinn in the 1970s regard-

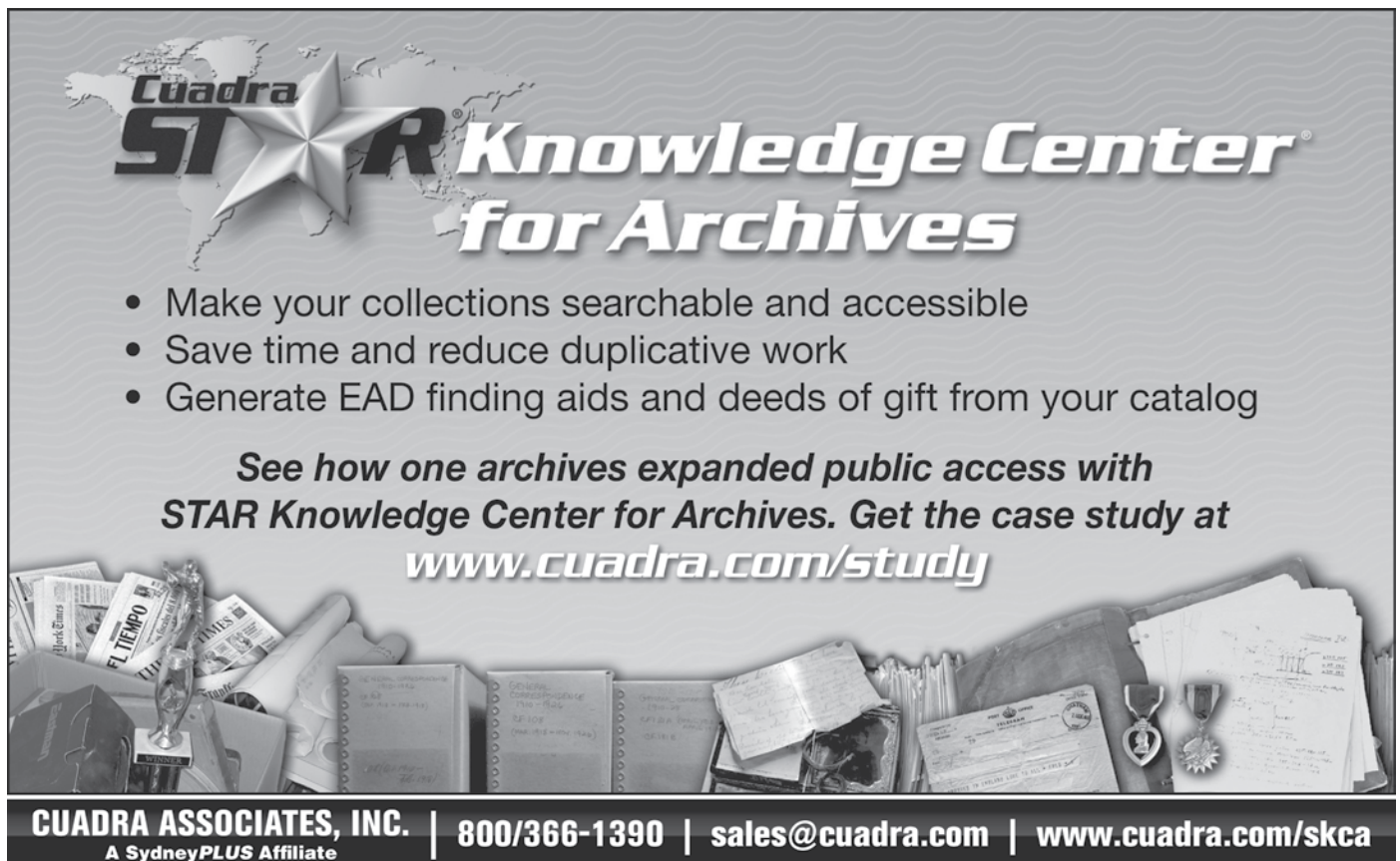
ing "the relation between professing one's craft and professing one's humanity."

If this year's extreme New England weather is keeping you indoors, check out some of the great online exhibits featured in *Internet Tidbits*, such as the Voynich cipher manuscript, caring for the sick and wounded of the Civil War, and the *Hindenburg* and *Titanic* disasters.

Our *Calendar of Events* is chock full of great professional events offered by SAA, COSA, and ARMA—but don't forget to save the date for NEA's Fall 2013 Symposium, Giving Color to Ideas, at Amherst College on October 26th. ■

## Editors Wanted

Do you have keen literary skills and an eye for detail? If so, join the NEA Editorial Team. Four editors serve for three-year terms to produce the quarterly NEA Newsletter. We are currently looking for two editors to serve from Jan. 2014 – Jan. 2017: one to cover *Inside NEA/This Season in NE History*, and another for *Session Reports/Internet Tidbits*. Layout is done by a professional – editors provide eyes, ideas, and energy. Email Heather Cristiano <Heather\_Cristiano@hms.harvard.edu> for details.



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# Inside NEA

FROM THE PRESIDENT

- Alyssa Pacy



**H**appy 40th, NEA! NEA held its first meeting at Bentley College in April 1973 with 50 people in attendance paying dues of \$2 to become members. Forty years later at our Spring meeting at the College of the Holy Cross in March, over 300 people joined us for a historic three-day meeting. We were treated to a mind altering talk by plenary speaker Dr. George Church, a geneticist from Harvard Medical School, in which we envisioned storing archival data on the moon. We delighted in the Oxford-Style Debate, seeing our colleagues trade repartees around the question of archivists collecting everything. We were inspired by keynote speaker Tom Scheinfeldt, Director of George Mason University's Rosenzweig Center for New Media, to collaborate across disciplines and allow for the serendipitous exchange of ideas to percolate into innovation. We held 40th Anniversary sessions on disaster recovery, diversity within NEA, speed networking, roundtables, mentoring, and a retrospective on NEA. StoryCorps, the largest oral history project in America, was on hand to interview NEA members to collect a perspective on our organization and profession.

The 40th Anniversary Meeting was important in other ways beyond programming: we used the celebration as an opportunity to increase public awareness of archival work and engaged with the city of Worcester around the importance of collecting and preserving local history. With funding from Mass Humanities—a foundation supporting programs that use humanities disciplines to enhance civic life throughout Massachusetts—we launched a project called *Why Worcester?*, to collect the oral histories of Worcester's vibrant and diverse immigrant community and to reveal the story behind their journey to the city. Partnering with the Worcester Historical Museum, Worcester Cultural Development Office, Worcester Women's Oral History Project, and the Lutheran Social Services of New England, we invited StoryCorps to collect a snapshot of the Worcester immigrant experience. The oral history archive, which now resides at the Worcester Historical Museum, NEA's archives at UConn, and the Library of Congress, includes

voices from Bhutan, Liberia, Cameroon, Iraq, and the Congo. As part of this project, NEA offered a free, beginners oral history workshop taught by Charlene Martin and Maureen Ryan Doyle of the Worcester Women's Oral History Project. The workshop was open to the public and 50 people attended. *Why Worcester?* was a great success and will serve as an example for future outreach to the communities where we hold our meetings.

Lastly, I'm thrilled to report another NEA "first" during our historic 40th year: we gave away 14 scholarships for members to attend our spring meeting: four for workshops and 10 to defray registration and travel costs. Currently, I am working with the NEA board to develop permanent meeting scholarships in an effort to help our unemployed and underemployed colleagues, as well as students—since attending NEA meetings are a great way to network and keep abreast of emerging trends in our field.

As NEA moves into its 5th decade of existence, we will use our 40th Anniversary Meeting as a model to bring more robust, cutting edge programming to our members. Our spring meetings will be longer and hosted at a hotel; and our fall meetings will be shorter—like a symposium—and hosted at an academic institution. I would like to thank everyone who made the trip to Worcester to participate in our 40th Anniversary Meeting. I would also like to say a well deserved "thank you" to everyone who helped make our historic meeting possible. A lot of hard work and dedication from our volunteers went into creating an engaging, informative, and fun celebration. I am honored to serve as president during this historic time for NEA and I look forward to a fantastic year. ■

## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING REPORT

- Silvia Mejia



The business handled at the March 21, 2013 meeting of the Executive Board is summarized below. All **VOTING** is in bold. Complete minutes are available on the NEA Web site or from the Secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 1:18 pm. All members voted to accept the January 25, 2013 Board Meeting minutes with the appropriate amendments.



### Archival Journal Proposal

Mike Lotstein was unable to attend the meeting, but the board went ahead and discussed the journal proposal. Although the proposal was well received, the board has some questions for Mike, including the type of support he is seeking from NEA. The board also expressed the need to have voting rights if it is providing financial support to the journal. The board will follow up with Mike and will ask him to attend the June meeting.

### Vice President's Report

**Scholarships:** NEA gave out four scholarships at \$50 each and ten registration/travel scholarships of \$100 each. Some questions came up during the scholarship process and the board recommended that NEA investigate what other organizations do, their scholarship criteria, and how many scholarships are given out—before making any decisions.

**2015 Meeting Location:** The two locations being considered for the NEA/MARAC joint meeting in spring 2015 are: New Haven, CT and Brooklyn, NY. The membership will be surveyed to determine the location.

### Fall 2013 Symposium

The symposium is in planning mode and will be the first modified meeting of the upcoming two-year trial period. The date for the Fall 2013 Meeting has been changed to Saturday, October 26. No workshops will be offered. The planning committee is working on morning activities, and Peter Nelson will offer a tour of “the Bunker”, the Five Colleges high-density storage facility.

### Immediate-Past-President's Report

**Election process:** There were 358 eligible voters, 161 members voted. The new officers are: Vice President/President elect: Jill Snyder, Treasurer: Juliana Kuipers, Reps-at-large: Erica Boudreau and Tessa Beers. Since the election process depends on the number of eligible voters to be entered in the Votenet system, it is important that renewal reminders go out on time. The board recommended that the membership secretary send out early renewal reminders to the membership. It was also recommended that typos be cleaned out to prevent further delays.

### Hale Award

Ellen reported on behalf of Joanie. She said that there were three applications for the Hale Award. She also announced the winner of the 2013 Hale Award as Graham Stinnett, who will use it to fund his attendance at the Digital Humanities

Conference on Digital Testimonies of War and Trauma in the Netherlands. The project provides anonymous digital space for Chechens and Russians to preserve their narratives.

### Strategic plan

The board went over the strategic plan updating and making changes as needed and checking off items completed. The secretary will update the strategic plan and provide an updated version to the board. The new version will be posted on the NEA Web site.

Maria moved to dissolve the Financial Planning Committee.

**All members voted in favor.**

### Membership Committee

Joanie has taken the role of liaison between roundtables and the board. The board approved the creation of an ex-officio student position to work with the Membership Committee. The new student position will be appointed annually by the new Students and New Professionals Roundtable.

### Treasurer's Report

**Wild Apricot:** NEA is investigating Wild Apricot, a system designed for non-profit groups that will integrate membership registration and event registration. In addition, Wild Apricot offers several features not in use by NEA yet, like discussion forums, nicer email communication out to the members, and a feature to collect donations more easily. The price is \$1,080 per year, regardless of the number of features used, and it is based on the number of users. Since the data needs to be exported from NEA's current system, and cleaned up before it can be ingested into the new system, the board discussed the idea of hiring a student from Simmons do the work. The board will talk to Simmons faculty for recommendations. The board discussed changing the bylaws to make membership renewals one year from when the member joined. The board will discuss revolving membership at the June meeting.

Nova moved to approve the implementation of Wild Apricot online membership software. **All members voted in favor.**

The board thanked Ellen Doon for all her years of service with the board.

### Adjournment and Next Meeting Date

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00pm. The next quarterly Board meeting will take place on June 7, 2013 in Lowell, MA. ■

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

for more information about becoming a member of NEA.

## New Members - Kristine Reinhard

### STUDENT

Katherine Bartolomea  
Simmons College

Laina Marie Finney  
Simmons College

Dallas Foster  
Emmanuel College

Kate Markopoulos  
Simmons College

Elizabeth McGorty  
Simmons College

Martina Podsklanova  
San Jose State University

Leslie Rowell  
Old Stone House Museum

### REGULAR

Nancy Franzen Barringer

Andrea Belair  
Yale University

Alexandra Marie Bisio  
Boston College

Marisa Bruhns  
MIT Lincoln Laboratory

Liz Coffey  
Harvard University

Andrew Elder  
UMass Boston

Terence Falk  
Private Consultant

Abigail Malangone  
John F. Kennedy  
Presidential Library and  
Museum

Amy Sloper  
Harvard University

Albert Steg  
Center for Home Movies

Justyna Karolina Szulc

Megan Frances Wheaton-  
Book  
Wheaton College


### INSTITUTIONAL

Laurie Coleman-Snead  
Longyear Museum

Kristen Gwinn-Becker  
History IT

Amy McDougall  
Town of Shirley


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# News and Notes

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Museum Exhibition and New Book Part of Scottish Rite Masons 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The Scottish Rite Masonic Museum and Library (National Heritage Museum) located in Lexington, Massachusetts, was founded and is funded by the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite Masons of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States. Chartered in 1813 in New York City, this Masonic organization celebrates its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013. The bicentennial celebration includes the publication of a book-length history of the organization and an exhibition at the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum and Library.

*A Sublime Brotherhood: Two Hundred Years of Scottish Rite Freemasonry in the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction*, is an updated, illustrated history of the fraternity. It covers the founding of the organization and highlights some of the people, buildings, traditions, and objects that illuminate our understanding of how the organization began, where it has been, and what it looks like today. To be published in May 2013, *A Sublime Brotherhood* is lavishly illustrated with objects and documents from the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum and Library's collection. Research for the book was conducted at the Museum's Van Gorden-Williams Library and Archives, one of the largest Masonic repositories in the United States.

An exhibition, entitled "A Sublime Brotherhood: 200 Years of Scottish Rite Freemasonry in the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction," opens June 16, 2013 at the Museum and Library in Lexington. The exhibition will feature founding documents, early photographs, and regalia drawn from the museum's object collection and from the library and archives. Aimee E. Newell, Ph.D, Director of Collections at the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum and Library and a contributor to the book, is the curator of this exhibition.

For more information contact Catherine Swanson at <cswanson@monh.org>.

### Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts Collection Highlighted in 2013 Publication

The Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts in Boston and the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum and Library in Lexington, Massachusetts have partnered to produce *Curiosities of the Craft: Treasures from the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts Collection*. This book will be available in May 2013.

The catalogue includes of over 150 highlights from the Grand Lodge Collection of more than 10,000 items, which were acquired since its founding in 1733. Since 2004, the Grand Lodge Collection has been housed at and managed by the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum and Library. These objects represent the rich heritage of Freemasonry in Massachusetts and tell stories of life in the fraternity, in the state, and around the world.

The book features Masonic aprons, jewelry, pitchers, medals, photographs, certificates, letters, and scrapbooks. Object essays by Aimee E. Newell, Hilary Anderson Stelling, and Catherine Compton Swanson, interpret and contextualize this important material culture. *Curiosities of the Craft* will be an invaluable source for archivists in understanding the Masonic objects in their own collections.

For more information contact Catherine Swanson at <cswanson@monh.org>.

### IMLS Grant Awarded to Harvard/MIT Team for Boston-Area Residency Project

A Harvard/MIT team received a 2013 Laura Bush 21st-Century Librarian Program Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to test a residency program in the Boston area originally developed by the Library of Congress for the Washington D.C. area. The project, "Testing the National Digital Stewardship Residency Model in Boston, MA" will run from June 2013 through May 2016. It will include two rounds of residents hosted by Boston-area institutions. The project will help ten students gain the skills, experience and professional network needed to begin successful careers in digital stewardship and to lay the foundation for replicating the residency program across the country.



The first eight women admitted to the first year of the MBA program, 1963. HBS Archives Photograph Collection: Student Life. Harvard Business School.

For more information please contact Andrea Goethals <[andrea\\_goethals@harvard.edu](mailto:andrea_goethals@harvard.edu)>, Manager of Digital Preservation and Repository Services for the Harvard Library; or Dr. Nancy McGovern <[nancymcg@mit.edu](mailto:nancymcg@mit.edu)>, Head of Curation and Preservation Services for MIT Libraries.

### New Exhibit at Baker Library

Baker Library Historical Collections is pleased to join in the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's admission into the full MBA program at Harvard Business School (HBS) with *Building the Foundation: Business Education for Women at Harvard University, 1937-1970*. *Building the Foundation* traces the history of business education for women at Harvard University, from the founding of the one-year certificate program at Radcliffe College in 1937, to the HBS faculty vote to admit women into the two year MBA program, and finally to the complete integration of women into the HBS campus life by 1970.

The exhibition will run until October 11, 2013 in the North Lobby, Baker Library, Bloomberg Center, Harvard Business School.

Visit <<http://www.library.hbs.edu/hc/wbe>> to learn more about the exhibition, to find materials that could support further research, and to view some of the items featured in the exhibition.



Management Training Program students. Radcliffe College Archives, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

### NHPRC Grant Establishes Archives at Berklee College of Music

Berklee College of Music's Stan Getz Library has received a two-year NHPRC start-up grant to establish a college archives and records management program. In October, the college hired its first archivist and some of our progress may be viewed on the newly redesigned archives site: <<http://library.berklee.edu/archives>>. Updates include the archives' mission statement, more featured recordings from the Berklee Oral History Project, and finding aids for two recently processed collections: the John LaPorta papers and the Donald Bacon papers.

For more information, please contact Sofia Becerra-Licha, Archivist, Berklee College Archives, Stan Getz Library, Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA at <[sbecerralicha@berklee.edu](mailto:sbecerralicha@berklee.edu)> or 617-747-8001.

### Newly Available Collections at the Harvard University Archives

Collections Services staff at the Harvard University Archives have recently completed work on the following collections:

Records of the Hasty Pudding Club, 1795-2011 (12 cubic feet): Founded on September 8, 1795, the Hasty Pud-



ding Club is best known today for its annual theatrical productions starring male members in drag, a tradition that began in 1844. <<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.ARCH:hua13012>>

William Cameron Blackett personal archive, 1900-1937 (1.5 cubic feet): Blackett (1890-1925) was a member of the Harvard College Class of 1912. The collection documents his undergraduate social life and his service in artillery and aerial observation units in France during World War I. <<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.ARCH:hua02013>>

Gerald James Holton personal archive, 1919-2011 (70 cubic feet): Holton, Professor of Physics and History of Science at Harvard since 1976, has focused his research on the physics of matter at high pressure, the history and philosophy of science, the role of science in contemporary America, and science education. <<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.ARCH:hua12012>>

### **Simmons College Second Annual Graduate Symposium**

The second Annual Graduate Symposium took place on Saturday, March 30, 2013, as a collaborative effort of the diverse Simmons GSLIS student organizations. Developed in 2012, the Symposium provides an opportunity for students to present on their research interests, prepare for future professional conferences, network with their peers, and explore how related professions are converging. This year's theme was "Collaboration: Libraries, Archives, History and Museums (LAHM)." Professor Martha Mahard presented the keynote speech and nine students presented papers based on independent research. With more than 50 in-person and approximately 85 livestream attendees, the Symposium reached a larger and broader audience than expected in its second year. The growth of the Symposium signifies the potential of this event for the greater LIS

graduate school community. The Symposium's success is rooted in the establishment of a new tradition instigated by the Student Chapter of the Society of American Archivists (SCoSAA) for a future of collaborative initiatives carried on by the GSLIS community. For more information, please contact SCoSAA, Simmons College, Boston, MA at <[scosaa@simmons.edu](mailto:scosaa@simmons.edu)>.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

### **Manchester City Archives Receives Grant from NH Conservation License Plate Grant Program**

The Manchester City Archives has received a grant of \$3,855 from the New Hampshire State Library's "Moose Plate" Grant fund to de-acidify, mend, rebind, microfilm and scan two volumes of the Record of Corporations/Articles of Agreement, 1838-1874. These grants are awarded to New Hampshire cities and towns, libraries and historical societies to aid in the preservation of rare historic documents.

The Record of Corporation books document the growth of industry and business in Manchester. They also reveal the wide scope of participation of individuals living throughout New Hampshire in developing landmark companies such as the Stark Mills and Manchester Mills. In addition, the Articles of Agreement/Record of Corporations books allow researchers to view the development of Manchester and New Hampshire small business enterprises from blacksmithing to making and selling cigars.

A digitized copy of each book is available to the public on the Manchester City Archives web site for immediate access. Microfilm copies for preservation and disaster recovery purposes have been sent to the New Hampshire State Library and the New Hampshire State Archives.

For more information, please contact Sally Fellows, Manchester City Archives at <[SFELLOWS@manchesternh.gov](mailto:SFELLOWS@manchesternh.gov)> or (603) 624-6455. ■

### **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. We also need people to write reviews, long articles, and session reports for NEA meetings. If you have any ideas for articles, etc., please contact an editor.

**E-mail us your news!**  
<[Heather\\_Cristiano@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:Heather_Cristiano@hms.harvard.edu)>

## People

**Jane E. Ward** has been promoted to Librarian at the American Textile History Museum in Lowell, Mass., as of January 1, 2013. Jane worked part-time as the Cataloging Project Coordinator at ATHM from 2002 until 2006, when she moved into the full-time position of Assistant Librarian. Prior to her joining ATHM, Jane worked at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Mass., The Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

**Giordana Mecagni** has been appointed Head of Special Collections and University Archivist at Northeastern University. Ms. Mecagni has been most recently Acquisitions Archivist in the Center for the History of Medicine at the Countway Library, Harvard Medical School, a position she has held since 2008. She began her archival career at Harvard in 2002 as a library assistant at the Schlesinger Library, and then in 2005 she moved to Countway to be the first Archives for Women in Medicine staff member. Before Harvard she held positions at Associated Grant Makers in Boston. Mecagni holds a BA in Sociology and Women's Studies from the University of New Hampshire, and an MS in the Archives Concentration at Simmons College.

**Kate Wells** joined the Providence Public Library staff as the Rhode Island Collections Librarian in May. The Rhode Island Collections includes materials by, for, and about Rhode Island, and features monographs, pamphlets, photographs, maps, ephemera, and manuscript collections, as well as the only index to the *Providence Journal*. The Providence Journal Rhode Island Room was recently re-opened to the public after renovation. Ms. Wells relocated to Rhode Island after most recently serving as the Special Collections Librarian at Fitchburg State University in Massachusetts. She has previously worked for Armstrong Atlantic State University and Georgia Historical Society in Savannah, GA. She holds a MLIS and an MA in History from Simmons College.

In April 2013, **Heather Cristiano** assumed the role of Archivist for the Harvard School of Public Health. In addition to her current position as Records Management Assistant at the Center for the History of Medicine, Countway Library, Harvard Medical School, Heather will now work with Center and HSPH staff to identify and prioritize archival material and provide support as the school prepares to celebrate

its centennial this year. Heather received her MLS from Simmons College, and has previously interned with the Phillips Library, the Boston Public Library, and the Providence Public Library.

**Amber M. M. LaFountain** began in April 2013 as Project Archivist for the "Private Practices, Public Health: Privacy-Aware Processing to Maximize Access to Health Collections" project at the Center for the History of Medicine, Harvard Medical School. The project is a collaboration between the Center and the Chesney Medical Archives at Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, on behalf of the Medical Heritage Library, and is funded through April 2014 by a Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, through the Council on Library Resources (CLIR). The primary focus of Amber's work will be processing the papers of Erich Lindemann, noted psychiatrist and specialist in the fields of community mental health and social and disaster psychiatry. Prior to this appointment, she was Processing Assistant for Hematology collections at the Center, and Digitization Assistant for the Chinese Progressive Association Records at the Northeastern University Archives and Special Collections. ■

### Award Announcements

NEA is pleased to announce that **Graham Stinnett**, Human Rights Curator at the Dodd Center at UConn, is the winner of the **2013 Hale Award**.

NEA is pleased to announce that **Gregor Trinkaus-Randall**, Preservation Specialist with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, is the winner of the **2013 Distinguished Service Award**.



# Internet Tidbits

- Susan Martin

**“By Hand: Celebrating the Manuscript Collections”** - Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library <<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/exhibitions/hand-celebrating-manuscript-collections>>

This online exhibit, built to commemorate Beinecke's fiftieth anniversary, features correspondence, photographs, journals, literary drafts, illuminated manuscripts, and other material from the library's extensive collections. The broad subject headings (Love-Work, Time-Place, and Individual-Authority) yield an interesting juxtaposition of images as the user scrolls through. Some of the most striking items include the famous Voynich cipher manuscript, an 1853 receipt for the purchase of slaves, and a sketch of the Gila River Japanese internment camp drawn by one of the internees and inscribed with an arrow: "We live here."

**“Battle-Scarred: Caring for the Sick and Wounded of the Civil War”** - Center for the History of Medicine, Countway Library <<http://collections.countway.harvard.edu/onview/exhibits/show/battle-scarred>>

The strength of this exhibit is the impressive amount of descriptive data that accompanies each item. Included are letters, photographs, drawings, printed items, surgical implements, and even bone fragments documenting medical care during the Civil War, whether on the battlefield, in hospitals, or at prisoner-of-war camps. Among the highlights are three beautiful color prints of hospital buildings by lithographer Charles Magnus, as well as a set of wooden chess pieces carved by POWs Zabdiel B. Adams and Fred Guyer at Libby Prison, Richmond, Virginia. The exhibit tastefully handles a fascinating subject.

**“Fire & Ice: Hindenburg and Titanic”** - National Postal Museum, Smithsonian Institution <[www.postalmuseum.si.edu/fireandice/index.html](http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/fireandice/index.html)>

This web site from the Smithsonian tells the stories of two disasters that still capture the imagination today. The site consists primarily of images and media, including newsreel footage, route maps, photographs, postcards, and salvaged artifacts (many showing damage), not to mention the iconic radio broadcast by Chicago reporter Herb Morrison from the site of the *Hindenburg* crash. Among the many remarkable photographs are those documenting the homecoming of *Titanic* survivors, the construction of the enormous *Hindenburg*, and the interiors of both vessels. ■



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## ARCHIVAL INSIGHT

Overcoming “Supposed Neutrality”:  
The Role of Activism in Archival Work

By Genna Duplisea, 2013 New England Archivists Annual Student Writing Prize Winner

Over centuries of researchers rooting through archived information, the archivist has transformed and evolved through many models. We have been gatekeepers; we have been scholars; we have become information professionals. Archivists incorporate changing ideas, technologies, social structures, and, of course, economies into our daily work. We are great evolvers. But there’s a lingering question, one rising out of a call-to-arms that took place forty years ago: are we activists? In the 1970s, in “Secrecy, Archives, and the Public Interest,” radical historian Howard Zinn asked American archivists to think about what he called “the relation between professing one’s craft and professing one’s humanity.”<sup>1</sup> The promotion of this relationship and the enacting of democratic ideals is what I mean by “activism.” Our morals and our beliefs about society, marginalization, justice, and democracy are vital to motivating our work, because we are not mere bystanders to the historical narratives we shape. The necessity of finding an intersection between archival work and activist ideals is just as relevant now as it was in 1970. Today I want to establish concepts and practices in which activism can operate in archival work, stemming from the conversation that Howard Zinn started.

Zinn’s article sought to disentangle the archival profession from the status quo. Professionalism structures archival work around an internal set of standards; Zinn refers to this as social control, in that it preserves tradition, allowing work to be done without considering how that work affects greater society.<sup>2</sup> Zinn’s contemporary, Patrick M. Quinn noted that archivists “have necessarily found it difficult to conceptualize the historical and societal framework of their role.”<sup>3</sup> Yet archivists are professionals involved with the creation and distribution of knowledge and narratives. Whether we wish it or not, Zinn points out, archival work is inherently political, politicizing, and subject to political interpretation. And by “political” I don’t mean to jump to “partisan,” but I use it with attention to its root in “polis” and our duties, obligations, and rights as citizens. As Zinn argues,

The archivist, even more than the historian and the political scientist, tends to be scrupulous about his neutrality, and to see his job as a technical job, free from the nasty world of political interest: a job of collecting, sorting, preserving, making available, the records of the society. But [...] the archivist, in subtle ways, tends to perpetuate the political and economic status quo simply by going about his ordinary business. His supposed neutrality is, in other words, a fake.<sup>4</sup>

Each archival task—collecting, sorting, preserving, making available—requires decisions based on experience and a

professional system of knowledge, and these decisions *make* history.

One of the founders of the archival profession as we know it, Hilary Jenkinson, claimed that archivists had to be neutral in order to be servants to truth. Yet the archival process is interpretive, and archivists are the ambassadors between user and record. Are archivists aware of inherent biases, or are we unwittingly still operating under Jenkinson’s model? This question is what Zinn found so troubling, and what was still enough of an issue for former Society of American Archivists president Randall G. Jimerson to discuss in his 2005 Presidential Address.<sup>5</sup> The archival bias reinforces inequality; collections favor the white, the male, the Western, the written, the past. Jimerson points out, “Such bias derives from the basic assumptions of archival practice. It is not conscious or deliberate. It is endemic.”<sup>6</sup> To combat this, an activist approach to archival work must be constant, operating in each professional task. Archives can produce a range of narratives based on the interpretation of archivists. And where the archival bias of the past is evident, we have the power to change that narrative by broadening the scope of who participates in it. Archival work does not have to focus on government papers to act in what Zinn called “spirit of democracy,” but it must act on behalf and in benefit of the people.<sup>7</sup> We should be mindful of activist possibilities in several areas: broader collecting policies; self-awareness in arrangement and description; promotion of equitable

access; extracurricular or extraprofessional activities. While I cannot offer a means for systematically assessing activist progress, I would like to explore these elements with a few examples of the work that is being or could be done.

A broader collecting policy means even more than collecting materials from marginalized or minority individuals. One of Zinn's concerns was that archives focus too much on the past without regard for documenting history as it happens, and so we must continually break down traditional ideas of what constitutes archival material. Technologies allowing a proliferation of record-keeping across all segments of society have granted archives and communities with greater opportunities for documentation. Think of the possibilities for creating an archive for the 2011 tsunami in Japan or the Occupy movement. Anyone with a social media account or a cell phone camera might be a creator in that collection. Embracing new formats of archival materials allows for the inclusion of more voices in a narrative. Imagine what the archives of either of the examples might have been under the written model. No instantaneous or spontaneous reactions (no tweets, no Instagram), mostly official records, some press photos and clippings published at long intervals. Fortunately, in the example of the latter, a group called "Activist Archivists" emerged to engage in digital preservation practices and keep significant documentation from being lost. In the aftermath of the Japan tsunami, the "Virginia Tech: Crisis, Tragedy, and Recovery Network" used the Archive-It tool to harvest and preserve thousands of blogs, government documents, photos, video, social media, maps, and more, which not only chronicle the event, but its two anniversaries since. As history is made by individuals, archivists have the responsibility to steward that history with the immediacy with which its documentation is created.

Broadening collecting policy also means broadening the responsibility of collecting and appraisal, involving creators, and taking care to identify history being made. In 1999, Margaret Strobel described a project called "Don't Throw It Away! Documenting and Preserving Organizational History" aimed at educating and inspiring

grassroots organizations to keep their records and either maintain their own archive or transfer their papers to a repository.<sup>8</sup> Documenting social movements not only adds new voices to the established historical narrative, but it rethinks how archives are developed and makes them more deliberate, with greater involvement from the creators, rather than receiving haphazardly-collected remnants. Archives need to embrace the relevance of such materials to their collections, and archivists are in a prime position to educate external organizations about how to maintain their own documentary history. This education breaks down the model of groups and individuals surrendering their records to institutions; instead, the creators learn how to maintain their own history. A richer, more dynamic archival record will develop if perspectives of more people take part in defining and describing what that record is.

The processes of summarizing a collection and creating access points are interpretive. A collection does not reveal itself to us as if we were neutral typists. An archivist's choices in describing a collection can highlight or hide various elements, and may support traditional emphases on events or individuals or an alternate narrative. Furthermore, if archives expand their collections to include more oral histories, born-digital records, or culturally specific materials, archivists will have to be innovative in arrangement and description. Subject analysis may require input from outside sources, and the knowledge system on which our archives are based may not suffice. In describing a portal of repatriated and digitized Native American tribal materials, Kimberly Christen suggests combining Web 2.0 practices like social tagging with academic scholarship, allowing the tribal knowledge of non-academics and contributed information to work together.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, Western ideas about access, privacy, and intellectual property are not very applicable to such collections. Christen argues that archivists should address "the systems of privilege that exist and that are perpetuated by rote collections management structures; inflexible (not neutral) international metadata standards; and liberal notions of privacy, access, and the public that discount histories of exclusion."<sup>10</sup> Archivists wanting to incorporate materials according to different cultural mandates need to adapt standards of metadata, arrangement, and description to new contexts.

Visit NEA online at:

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

Technology aids our thinking and rethinking about archival structure and access, but as it loosens the con-

finer of one arrangement and becomes more user-oriented, it also poses new challenges for providing equitable access. As more content requires a computer to use because of digitization and the increase of born-digital materials, the access capabilities of user populations change. While restrictions on travel to a physical archive may no longer pose problems, dependencies on hardware or software present different problems. Decreasing technology costs may mean greater access, but they do not mean universal access. When undergraduate students have trouble navigating an archival finding aid, as has been noted in several usability studies in recent years, how can we expect community members with less education or information literacy training to feel comfortable and welcome in an archive?<sup>11</sup> Supporting Open Access and freedom of information are strong starts to equitable access, but we have to consider what these things mean outside of academic environments. We have a responsibility to make sure our audiences are not daunted by finding aids and digital surrogates.

Outside the daily work of maintaining archives, of course, there is activist work to be done as well. Engaging with community groups and nongovernmental organizations to promote equity and justice are activities that should not be antithetical to maintaining a positive professional reputation. As activists with well-developed skills in information literacy and communication, archivists can contribute to social projects. Archivists Without Borders, the aforementioned Activist Archivists, and several Society of American Archivists roundtables are a few examples. Archivists do not have to be performing institutional work to be professionals, and there is no need for a division between activism inside and outside the workplace. Historian Lawrence S. Wittner argues that “if a biologist can do research to help find a cure for cancer or a sociologist can do research to help find a cure for urban gang violence, I do not understand why it is improper for a historian to do research to help find a cure for war.”<sup>12</sup> The same could be said about the work of activist-archivists.

Adopting an activist approach to archival work can be different for every community, every institution, and every professional. We work in an innovative field, and the examples in this overview illustrate means and rationales for taking on activist guidance as we reflect and evolve. Having core values of professional responsibility, equitable access, and informational integrity are strong foundations.

We have a mandate to be not neutral; such a fallacy of trying to be unbiased stewards or scholars is dangerous to advancing diversity and social responsibility. Archivists can, however, imbue our work with the will to serve as better citizens and to shape these professions into agents of activism in “the spirit of democracy.” The argument of Howard Zinn is not a relic of mid-twentieth-century social movements; nor is it a project that we have fully accomplished. Activism in archival work must continue to be a topic of conversation and motivation for evolution. Our “supposed neutrality” is, and must be fake, in order for our commitment to activism to be very real. ■

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## Endnotes

- 1 Howard Zinn, “Secrecy, Archives, and the Public Interest,” *Midwestern Archivist* 2:2 (1977), 14.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 16.
- 3 Patrick M. Quinn, “Archivists and Historians: The Times They Are A-Changin’,” *Midwestern Archivist* 2:2 (1977), 5-13.
- 4 Zinn, 20.
- 5 Randall G. Jimerson, “Embracing the Power of Archives,” *Society of American Archivists*, 2005.
- 6 *Ibid.*
- 7 Zinn, 25.
- 8 Margaret Strobel, “Becoming a Historian, Being an Activist, and Thinking Archival: Documents and Memory as Sources,” *Journal of Women’s History* 11:1 (Spring 1999): 181-192.
- 9 Kimberley Christen, “Opening Archives: Respectful Repatriation,” *American Archivist* 74:1 (2001), 201.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 208.
- 11 See Magia Krause, “Undergraduates in the Archives: Using an Assessment Rubric to Measure Learning,” *The American Archivist* 73 (Fall/Winter 2010): 507-534.
- 12 Lawrence S. Wittner, “Combining Work as an Historian and Activist: A Personal Account,” *Peace & Change* 32:2 (April 2007), 133.

# Spring 2013 Meeting Session Reports

*The meeting's theme was "Creative Collaborations."*

## Emergency Managers and Cultural Heritage Stewards: Collaborating to Protect our Treasures

Chair: Christina Zamon, Emerson College

Speakers: Gwenn Stearn, Rhode Island State Archives; Donna Longo DiMichele, Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Service; James Baker, Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency; Joseph Arsenaault, Community College of Rhode Island

- Leah Lefkowitz

This panel discussion included the speakers listed above, and was moderated by Rhode Island state archivist, Gwenn Stearn. The panelists discussed an ongoing project that they've been working on: the improvement of emergency preparedness for cultural heritage sites in Rhode Island. More specifically, they explained how librarians, museum professionals, and archivists could better prepare for disasters through communication with one another and with community emergency responders. To fund the program, the IMLS Connecting to Collections program applied for and received two national grants, one for the planning of and one for implementation of new procedures.

The philosophy behind their purposeful planning is as follows: rather than hoping a disaster will not happen, assume that it eventually will. By using this emphasis, cultural stewards can increase the likelihood that important items survive natural disasters like flooding and fires. Once professionals assume that the worst could happen to their repository, they can start working together to identify how to best protect their collections.

It's particularly important to open communication with emergency responders, because although they come to help, their priorities do not always align with those of cultural heritage professionals. For example, cultural preservation is considered only after human life, the stabiliza-

tion of the incident and of critical property infrastructure, and the protection of housing and economic structures. If cultural stewards talk to first responders before an emergency, then they can discuss what objects should be handled delicately, if possible.

Without preparatory communication, historic items could be easily, and unnecessarily, destroyed. The panelists mentioned the following example: two doors in a historic home look the same, but one is a replica and one is an original. It is easy for the curator to tell the first responders which door should not be axed unless it is essential, but there must be a discussion before the actual event.

The representatives at the panel spoke on behalf of a system that has worked. By promoting collaboration between repositories and local and state governments, we can minimize the risk associated with maintaining historic objects. Natural and mechanical disasters are very present dangers, and the more cultural professionals know about how to protect their collections, the less likely they are to lose priceless artifacts.



Lisa Long Feldmann showing off the Spring 2013 NEA swag bag.  
Photograph by Jessica Tanny.



## Throwing A “Hail Mary”: The Maryland Football Film Project

Co-Chairs/Speakers: Anne Turkos and Jason Speck, University of Maryland; John Walko, Scene Savers

- *Alison Harris*

Anne Turkos, University of Maryland archivist, began by providing some background to the project. In 2007 a survey of their football films was conducted, and they discovered that 68% of the film was in a serious state of chemical decay. They decided to raise funds in order to digitize the films. Numerous collaborations across campus were important in this effort and the development office was extremely helpful. Due to the high cost of digitization, they had to prioritize what films would get done with their current funding. They decided on first digitizing the coaching reels with the hope of eventually raising more money to finish the rest. Selecting a vendor was difficult because of both widely ranging estimates and archives staff's lack of expertise with film, but eventually Scene Savers was chosen. To save money and preserve the chain of custody, Maryland packed up all the film for transport, and Scene Savers picked it up.

John Walko of Scene Savers related that during digitization the films were inspected, cleaned, given color correction, as well as headers and tails if necessary, and transferred into digital files. John notes that from the vendor side, it is incredibly useful to know what size of reel one has when estimating cost. Once the films were digitized, Scene Savers re-canned them in archival containers, transferring the identifying information from the old reels.

Jason Speck, assistant university archivist, related that they sent Scene Savers hard drives for the digital files of the films. One of the challenges they faced was making the digitized film available due to IT staffing issues at the University. Unfortunately, the files were not accessible for almost a year after they were digitized. However, they did finally find server space and the films can now be viewed online for free or purchased for \$10 per game. At the end of the project they raised over \$100,000 and put 800 reels online, and they continue to fundraise for the remaining films and newly donated films. Collaboration was key in this situation. Both Anne and Jason stated that it would never have worked if they did not have the Athletic Department,

alumni, and many other groups across the University involved. Response from users has been very positive and will hopefully lead to more digitization.

## Experimental Relations: Using Samuel Johnson to Learn EAC-CPF

Chair: Ashley Nary, Harvard University

Speakers: Ellen Doon, Yale University; Susan Pyzynski, Harvard University; Michael Rush, Yale University; Melanie Wisner, Harvard University

- *Sarah Murray*

A team of Harvard and Yale archivists reported on EAC-CPF in the context of a joint project to create records about the lexicographer Samuel Johnson and his associates. The presentation opened with an overview of Johnson's life, the structure of EAC-CPF, and the basic tags that comprise it. This was followed by a look at U.S. implementations of the standard, including The Social Networks and Archival Context Project (SNAC), before delving into the meat of the presentation: the Beinecke and Houghton libraries' endeavor to explore and implement EAC-CPF.

Doon explained that, in light of SNAC's machine-generated records, the team sought to discover what kind of rich connections human-created records could make. Two interns together generated 78 records, significantly more than originally planned. In the process, the team met several times for planning and review and created a wiki, which is publicly available online. Rush made a Schematron schema encompassing local practices, and SNAC software was installed to provide a GUI search that their oXygen XML editor did not provide.

Lessons gleaned from the project ranged from technical to interpersonal. Team members commented that working with like-minded colleagues from similar institutes was possibly easier than working with people in other departments within their larger organizations. The lack of a long tradition of descriptive practice in EAC-CPF, which might have been daunting, in fact proved to be freeing. Limitations on the amount of data in each record had to be self-imposed, since EAC-CPF does not place any such restrictions, and the presenters noted that an institution's priorities could be

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the source of some subjectivity in this regard. It was agreed that hand-crafted records, while desirably content-rich, may not be feasible for a larger project.

Shortcomings encountered included the limited ways of denoting relationships in EAC-CPF and the lack of a display interface. Currently available tools were somewhat inadequate for making global corrections, and they reflected on the difficulty of managing the project in a document-based environment. Speculative discussion centered on future interaction between EAD and EAC-CPF, maintenance of the standard, and development of a National Archival Authorities Infrastructure, possibly hosted by NARA.

To close, Rush solicited audience participation in creating an EAC-CPF record for NEA in honor of its 40th anniversary. Doing his best impression of a cooking show host who assembles ingredients with ease and produces the finished product from an oven just moments later, Rush popped audience answers into pre-prepared tags and, voila, an EAC-CPF record was born!

## NEA at 40: Reminiscence on a Profession

Chair: Elizabeth Slomba, University of New Hampshire  
Speakers: Eva Moseley, formerly of Schlesinger Library, Harvard University; Nora Murphy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Nova Seals, Connecticut College; Amanda Strauss, Schlesinger Library, Harvard University and Simmons College; Connell Gallagher, Professor Emeritus, University of Vermont

- Katherine Lonergan

The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of New England Archivists is a cause to celebrate each generation that has helped to build and develop the organization. Elizabeth Slomba hosted a panel to do just this, featuring the stories of original member Eva Mosely of the Schlesinger Library, Nora Murphy of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Nova Seals of Connecticut College, and graduating Simmons College senior Amanda Strauss. Panelists discussed topics ranging from the challenges of being an archivist in New England to the changes in the profession, compared to changes in the organization itself, and everyone enjoyed the use of the term “cozy” to describe the feeling of connection to other members and institutions through the estab-

lished system of small archives and workshops to benefit as many as possible.

Addressing New England’s particular concerns included an agreement among the panelists that the plethora of northeastern historical sites, yielding a wealth of historical societies, causes many to be taken for granted and increases the need for particular care in contemporary disaster prevention.

Much of the change in the archival profession had to do with image. From the stereotypical scene of a dusty basement to an electronically regulated storage facility, technology has played probably the most predictable role in this transition. Nora Murphy also described the dramatic shift in archives security: whereas her work at the Massachusetts state archives in the 1970s began as a walk-in volunteer for an institution desperate for help, current applicants are likely to be the desperate ones, looking at guarded, key-coded doors and staffs of 40.

To hear of the development of the NEA from an organization whose newsletter could be published on a fifty-dollar budget, with Eva Mosely’s sons folding and stapling each copy, to a multiple-hundreds membership using new technology to find untapped resources within the group and develop new analytic formats was a great story, especially as each panel attendee was able then to continue on to take part in a new chapter in NEA’s development with the changing format of the roundtable subgroups.



NEA members and conference attendees Darla White and Jessica Sedgwick. Photograph by Jessica Tanny.

## Web Archiving: Birds of a Feather

Chair and Speaker: Tessa Fallon, Internet Archive  
Speaker: Lori Donovan, Internet Archive

- Laina M. Finney

Lori Donovan of the Internet Archive began the presentation by defining *Web Archiving* in terms of a process in which pages on the World Wide Web are captured, but not necessarily intended for use and access. She emphasized the need to capture web content for reasons of brevity in its lifespan and that it is constantly changing without leaving evidence of previous content. Ms. Donovan introduced many of the projects that the Internet Archive is undergoing to aid institutions in creating archival collections of topical web sites for research, drawing from the sites the company has already captured as a result of their web crawler.

Tessa Fallon then began introducing and discussing ten questions of web archiving, though there was not enough time left in the session to introduce every point. Important points of conversation that were brought-up were: the lack of standards that exist for web archiving and the need for quality control for what content is valuable. It was made clear from the presentation that web archiving is something all archives should be paying attention to as they are continually creating and changing web content for their own institutions.

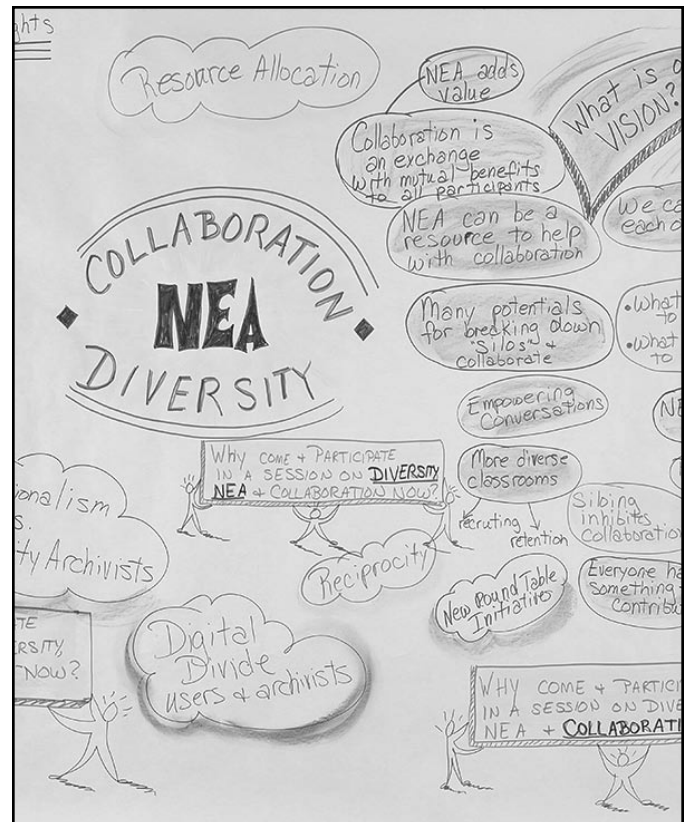
## NEA, Diversity, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Collaboration in Action

Co-Chairs: Michelle Gachette, Harvard University and Karen Adler Abramson, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.

Participatory Event

- Katherine Lonergan

The New England Archivists Diversity Task Force, co-chaired by Michelle Gachette and Karen Adler Abramson, hosted a multifaceted discussion involving all those attending the session, in order to mine as many thoughts as possible regarding issues of diversity, inclusion, and growth in NEA. The “World Café” method is based on a café envi-



Graphic drawn from themes and concepts discussed at NEA's 2013 Spring session on diversity and collaboration. Recorded/illustrated by Joni Parker-Roach, NOA Gallery. Photograph by Tom Linger, Harvard University.

ronment of several small tables at which groups of participants sit to discuss given questions in timed rounds, after which a member of the group moves to another table. In between rounds, the groups share insights and the leaders note these shared thoughts.

Questions for the groups began with the definition of diversity and its issues within NEA. One of the considerations was the further inclusion of current students as well as unemployed archivists, as well as those employed at smaller institutions, into the organization. This has recently been helpfully addressed with the introduction of a small grant for transportation costs to unemployed members who attended the conference for one or more days. Discussion of the inclusion of LGBTQ members also seemed particularly relevant considering current federal judiciary events. Regional variety arose as a subject, as did ethnic, gender, and racial diversity—this latter discussion in many groups split into encouragement to join the profession versus encouragement to join NEA, and it seemed that the resulting decision was that the problem was the profession itself. In order to encourage the ethnic, gender and racial diversity of NEA membership, it



would therefore be important to encourage similar diversity of education in the field, perhaps to hold more workshops in a greater variety of public places.

Enabling conversations among participants who might not otherwise have spoken with each other (much of the point of the World Café method) will, with hope, provide further opportunity for the NEA Diversity Task Force to better structure and articulate the methods by which NEA leadership may arrive at a more rewarding operation.

### **Archives & Community Collaborations: the TIARA / UMass Boston Experience**

Chair: Amanda Strauss, Schlesinger Library, Harvard University

Speakers: Janis Duffy, Mass Maritime Academy; Dale Freeman, UMass Boston; Joanne Riley, UMass Boston; Susan Steele, TIARA

- *Caitlin Birch*

This session told the story of the genealogically rich records kept by the Catholic Association of Foresters (CAF). The CAF, an organization founded in 1879 by Irish Catholic Bostonians to provide life insurance to struggling Catholic families, kept mortuary records on each of its members. At the time of their creation, these records served as documentation of a CAF member's initial application to join, his eventual death certificate, and the insurance benefits paid out upon his death. 120 years after the

CAF began recording these transactions, another Boston organization found in them a second life as invaluable research resources.

The Irish Ancestral Research Association (TIARA) is a volunteer-driven non-profit focusing on Irish genealogical and historical research and education. In 2002, TIARA members took an interest in the CAF records, which provided rich sources of information for their genealogical research, and began a relationship with the organization that would eventually lead to the transition of the records into TIARA's custody. Faced with a move to a smaller building, the CAF offered 80,000 mortuary records to TIARA — records that would otherwise be destroyed. In 2005, TIARA mobilized to save the records and transfer them to a storage unit and a makeshift archival facility in a member's office.

The custodial transition was a great undertaking on TIARA's part, but was seen as a temporary solution very early on. Ultimately, TIARA volunteers harbored hope that the records would one day find a permanent home in a university archive. This home eventually came in the form of the University of Massachusetts Boston, the repository that has housed the records since 2011 and was selected by TIARA based on its commitment to keep the records onsite and accessible, and its willingness to continue an active relationship with TIARA volunteers.

Since the transfer to UMass Boston, the TIARA volunteers who worked so hard to save the CAF records and who did the earliest work to promote their accessibility have



Conference attendees Molly Stothert-Maurer, Erin Ellingham, and Liz Francis at the 2013 Spring meeting. Photograph by Jessica Tanny.



NEA members and conference attendees Arabeth Balasko, Cathy Balasko, and Lisa Long Feldmann. Photograph by Jessica Tanny.

continued to aid in the collection processing effort. A unique partnership has grown between UMass Boston and TIARA, wherein the community organization that donated the records has and will continue to remain actively involved in their care, working alongside university archivists to preserve and promote the collection. It is a new model for donor/repository relations, and one that has well-served the invaluable CAF records.

### **Writing Outside the Lines: Partnerships in the Academic Environment**

Chair: Karen Adler Abramson, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum

Speakers: Arabeth Balasko, University of Massachusetts, Boston; Stefanie Maclin, Bunker Hill Community College; Leslie Fields, Mount Holyoke College

- *Elise Dunham*

The panelists in this session shared their experiences with heading collaborative projects in academic environments that promote their departments, celebrate their institutions, and incorporate the work and perspectives of a variety of individuals within and outside of the archives.

Arabeth Balasko began the session by describing her project at UMass Boston's Archives and Special Collections, which is to build an archival collection and related database that document the development of the school. The project is designed to commemorate the 50th anniversary of UMass Boston. Throughout the project, Balasko collaborated with various academic and administrative departments, retired faculty and staff, and alumni, seeking from them materials appropriate for inclusion in the commemorative collection. She found that the project and her continuing work with a variety of people and departments has created a great deal of community excitement about the archives and sees opportunity for future partnerships.

Stefanie Maclin of the Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) Archives spoke next about her department's experience with planning for a celebration—BHCC's 40th anniversary. She emphasized the importance of viewing the anniversary as an opportunity to promote archival holdings as valuable research materials and the department itself as

supportive of the mission of the school. She invited Jordan Jancosek and Kurt Vossler, Simmons College interns who assisted in 40th anniversary commemoration projects, to share their work. Maclin ended by describing BHCC's plans to promote interactive collaboration between the archives and the library by showcasing archival resources in library research guides. She hopes that by highlighting the valuable materials available in the archives, the archives will see a significant increase in use.

Leslie Fields of Mount Holyoke College closed out the session by sharing the success she has found by taking a unique approach to archival outreach. The Mount Holyoke College Archives and Special Collections department hired Mary Alice Martin, a Mount Holyoke undergraduate student, to serve as Archives Ambassador/Outreach Assistant. Fields asked, considering that connecting with the student population is an important aspect of outreach in an academic setting, why not hire a member of that student population to be at the front of outreach endeavors? Martin presented her various projects; she does the bulk of the work for the department's [Pinterest](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Tumblr](#) accounts. Fields and Martin emphasized the immense popularity of encouraging students to make buttons using the department's button maker at outreach events. Fields concludes that there is a great deal of untapped talent available in a school's undergraduate population, and that collaborations leveraging undergraduate's outreach skills can promote excitement about archives.

### **The Newport Cultural Consortium: Creating a Regional Online Catalog**

Chair: Kelli Bogan, Colby-Sawyer College

Speakers: Maria Bernier, Redwood Library & Athenaeum; Kristen Costa, Newport Restoration Foundation; Tara Ecnarro, Newport Art Museum; Matthew Keagle, Newport Historical Society; Miranda Keagle, Preservation Society of Newport County; Whitney Pape, Redwood Library & Athenaeum; Stacie Parillo, Newport Historical Society

- *Chelsea Gunn*

Structured as more of an open dialogue than a traditional presentation, this session addressed the opportunities and challenges associated with the creation of "NewPortal," an online regional catalog intended to reunite physically



Kathy Wisser speaking at NEA's first Oxford-Style Debate. Photograph by Jessica Tanny.

disconnected, but thematically linked, collections at five of Newport's cultural and historical institutions.

Stacie Parillo, archivist and registrar for the Newport Historical Society, began by explaining the common goals of the institutions: to reunite collections in order to tell a more holistic story about Newport's rich local history, and to establish a common language between organizations while maintaining the unique brand of each organization. Joining multiple proprietary content management systems and different cataloging or metadata standards, establishing a system without a full-time designated IT staff, and balancing the different points of view of each institution are among the challenges the group has worked to address in the planning stages of this project.

Matthew Keagle, adjunct curator at the Newport Historical Society, noted that NewPortal was "born from the middle," and has been developed and maintained by the people who work with collections, rather than coming from the administrative heads of each organization. The group received a \$10,000 grant from the Rhode Island Foundation's Newport County Fund, which is specifically geared toward local collaborative projects. This grant helped to finance the planning stage of the project, allowing each of the five institutions to operate on an even playing field without relying on internal funding from participating institutions. Each of the group members has spent personal spare time working on the project, and the group has met biweekly since January 2012.

During the planning period, a metadata consultant was

contracted to create a metadata map, determine appropriate standards, and look at content management systems. Among potential choices for NewPortal was Omeka, a popular open source option for sharing collections. But based on the consultant's recommendations, they have opted to commission a custom web site, which will unite each organization's disparate catalogs in a central place. The site will be designed using open source language versus an open source program, thus creating a unique product that will be paid for up front and owned by NewPortal, which ultimately result in less long-term dependence on developers, and can ideally be replicated by other regional areas hoping to unite similar but disparate collections online. Once the NewPortal system is established, the group hopes to expand to include other local cultural institutions.

### **A National Collaboration: Information Management at Federally Funded Research & Technology Centers**

Chair: Christina Zamon, Emerson College

Speakers: Dan Horvath, Carnegie Mellon Software Engineering Institute; Nora Zaldivar, MIT Lincoln Laboratory; George Despres, The MITRE Corporation

- *Chelsea Gunn*

This session focused on the process of establishing an advisory committee to foster collaboration between Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) nationwide. Because of the specific security restrictions faced by government institutions, collaboration between these repositories can be met with challenges that other types of organizations may not face in their collaborative efforts.

Dan Horvath, the senior archivist at the Carnegie Mellon Software Engineering Institute (SEI), spoke first, providing some background on the SEI, and giving an overview of the formation of the RRAC (a records management and archives advisory group for federally funded research and development centers), which formed in 2006 with the goal of sharing common opportunities between disciplines. The group meets in person twice yearly, and throughout the rest of the year communication is maintained through Share-Point and the group listserv. Some of the positive outcomes of the group, which is now in its seventh year, include: the

establishment of best practices between institutions; the creation of an automatic survey and focus group; an easy way to learn about new trends and technologies; and the creation of new repositories. Mr. Horvath noted that some institutions still do not have archives, and that the group can help provide the information and resources needed to establish them where they do not already exist.

George Despres, Manager of Corporate Records and Archives at the MITRE Corporation, spoke next, also providing some background information about his institution, which runs four federally-funded research and development centers, and manages over 7,000 employees. He spoke to the challenge of keeping information streamlined for sponsors and users, while adhering to the confidentiality requirements of classified government content. Mr. Despres reiterated some of the uses of the RRAC group, including the ability of fledgling services to survey existing repositories, benchmarking and polling, and discussions on topics specific to FFRDCs.

Nora Zaldivar, the archivist at MIT Lincoln Laboratory, closed the session by describing the experience of working with an outside digitization vendor, which is difficult due to unique FFRDC security requirements. In the case of Lincoln Laboratory, this included having Air Force declassification officers survey documents and add authoritative marks to clear them for digitization. Working with vendors that understand and are sensitive to the security protocol is vital, and Ms. Zaldivar advised identifying needs prior to beginning the project and putting them in writing up front. She noted that having a collaborative group to consult helps to mitigate some of these issues early on. Additional benefits of collaboration include the opportunity to “look strategically and outside of your-

self,” and to build relationships that serve mutual benefits and interests. Ultimately, FFRDCs work within very specific guidelines to balance the right of access by the user, while maintaining the security requirements of the repositories. The RRAC group has provided a way of sharing resources in order to best achieve this balance.

## Mentoring Leaders in Libraries and Archives

Chair/Speaker: Darla White, Countway Library, Harvard Medical School

- *Claire Lobdell*

**D**arla White lead this discussion session, which included a presentation about mentoring and an exercise in which session participants identified existing and potential mentoring relationships in order to create a “developmental network map.”

White described mentors as “people who help you navigate challenges,” and noted that not all mentoring relationships need to be formally acknowledged. Also, one mentor cannot fill all needs. Instead, we should aim to create our own “personal board of directors.”

When looking for mentoring relationships, White recommends first thinking about career goals and plans, so that you can come to the table with a sense of what you are looking for. Second, look at who in your personal and professional network is already filling similar roles. The onus is on the mentee to both find and initiate mentoring, and to foster a relationship once created by keeping in touch and making an effort to ensure a positive experience for the mentor.

Mentoring models include: the wise leader, in which a seasoned professional mentors a novice; formal, organized match programs, such as the one run by SAA; peer-to-peer, in which the relationship is between professionals at the same point in their careers; small groups that get together to support one another; reciprocal relationships, which can be hybrids of other types of mentoring; and reverse mentoring, in which a seasoned professional seeks out a novice.

White gave the same presentation at ACRL in February; it can be found in webinar form at the following URL: <https://umconnect.umn.edu/p60154799/>.



Greg Colati (at podium), Kathy Wisser, Jamie Roth, and Tom Rosko at NEA's first Oxford-Style Debate. Photograph by Jessica Tanny.



## Performing Artists, Meet Your Archivists: Collaborations Across Dance, Music, and Theatre for Documentation and Preservation

Chair: Amanda Strauss, Schlesinger Library, Harvard University

Speakers: Elizabeth McGorty, Simmons College; Nicole Topich, Center for American Political Studies, Harvard University; Sofia Becerra-Licha, Berklee College of Music–Stan Getz Library; Jessica Green, American Theater Archive Project; Eugenia Kim, Jeannette Neill Dance Studio and New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

- *Myles Crowley*

All the speakers in this session stressed that the ephemeral, fast-moving, collaborative nature of the performing arts creates documentation and preservation challenges and they offered strategies for archivists who work with records and archives of artists and arts groups and institutions.

Elizabeth McGorty described two mutually beneficial partnerships between Boston University’s Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center (HGARC) and both the Boston Ballet and B.U.’s Opera Institute. Both collaborations enriched the creative process through interaction with primary sources and exposed the HGARC’s collections to new audiences. McGorty also explained how a working archive can assist in marketing and performance development for arts groups such as Signature Theatre Company in New York.

Small, community-based arts groups are often skeptical about working with large institutions, said Nicole Topich, who reported on her work with the Philadelphia Dance Project, the South Asian American Digital Archives’ dance collection, and Temple University. Artists may be concerned about donor agreements, copyright, and access policies. Topich believes that archivists can build trust with dancers and other performers by emphasizing that digitization of fragile photographs and video will preserve performances as sources for new dance pieces, artistic inspiration, and cultural memory.

The next three speakers described themselves as caught between two worlds—the arts and archives. They offered three models of performing arts archives: Pianist

Sofia Becerra-Licha shared her experience at the Berklee College of Music, an institutional setting. Dancer-choreographer, Eugenia Kim, stressed the “guerilla” or “just do it” approach to digitization of hundreds of VHS tapes for the Jeanette Neill Dance Studio. Performer and researcher Jessica Green explained the training approach in her work with the American Theatre Archive Project.

The last three speakers agreed that their performing arts experience is an advantage, but that any archivist can learn the language. Archival skills and professionalism come first. Patience, open-mindedness, collaboration, and good communication are valued. The session touched upon the variety of complex rights issues such as performance, filming, recording, royalties, and venues, which archivists encounter long after the curtain comes down. Yet all the speakers were confident and enthusiastic about the abilities of archivists to help document and preserve the performing arts.

## LEADS the Way: A Collaborative EAD Project at Simmons

Chair: Jason Wood, Simmons College Library

Speakers: Justin Snow, Simmons College Library; Kathy Wisser, Simmons GSLIS; Brian Shetler, Simmons GSLIS; Aliza Leventhal and Meghann Wollitz, Simmons GSLIS students

- *Katherine Lonergan, Morse Institute Library*

Encoded Archival Description has been used to digitize a number of collections in the Simmons College Archives by a team of students over the past year.

Jason Wood of the Simmons College Library began this session with a discussion of some challenges with introducing the EAD program, such as the wide variety of metadata available in the Simmons Archives that, although necessary, has been taking significant time from other projects for the lengthy task of translating.

Professor Kathy Wisser followed with a presentation of the pedagogy used in her Simmons College class LIS440. This course involves exercises such as coding from scratch, creating finding aids specifically tailored to college archives, and focusing on feedback from other students.

LEADS (Leveraging EAD Skills) project manager Brian Shetler described the project's volunteer-based format, with 26 students total working from the Spring of 2012 until now following a successful pilot program. The completion of a course involving 440 coding, such as Professor Wisser's, provided significant experience to help design the EAD program for the Simmons Archives.

Student volunteers Aliza Leventhal and Meghann Wolnitz described the endeavor as professional development—designing a functioning, flexible system while keeping description and access in mind were some of their major goals. The mechanics, development, and design of Simmons' EAD stylesheet were addressed by Justin Snow, who showed a preview of the Simmons Library finding aids page. He noted that the group had designed away from the “cookbook” manner many other libraries tend to use, such as by employing drop-down lists instead of tables to display material. He emphasized that such small things as search bars, scroll bars, request links, and tables of contents make a strong impact on patrons' experience.

Speakers emphasized a symbiotic relationship between the Simmons Archives and the Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences (GSLIS), and Kathy Wisser brought up the possibility of collaboration between the two using EAD's sister program EAC (Encoded Archival Context). She did admit that might not be for quite some time, though.

### **It's 10 pm: Do You Know If Your Collections Are Protected From Disasters? — Safety in Numbers and Relationships**

Chair/Speaker: Gregor Trinkaus-Randall, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners; Speakers: Gerry McGonagle and Charlene Ohlen, Belfor Property Restoration

- Frances Harrell

Gregor Trinkaus-Randall, Preservation Specialist for the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, began the session by re-purposing Tip O'Neill's famous phrase: “All disasters are local.” Preparation for regional disasters must be taken at every level, down to individual departments. The scene of a disaster is not the time to be meeting other groups of responders and other levels of

your institution, including vendors. Having a disaster plan is critical and all the parts of your disaster plan depend on your relationships. Institutional partnerships can help you manage a non-regional disaster by providing staff, storage locations, or supplies. If you can work with first responders to familiarize them with your layout and collections they may be able to consider them in their response. Recovery vendors can better respond to you if you have been in contact with them before disaster strikes. Mr. Trinkaus-Randall then gave a brief update on COSTEP – Coordinated Statewide Emergency Preparedness. Currently COSTEP is working with FEMA to establish public libraries as disaster recovery centers. They have also established statewide contracts to retain three reputable recovery vendors and are working to develop a “Cultural Triage Officer” framework that will support better communication between the cultural heritage and emergency management communities.

Gerry McGonagle and Charlene Ohlen of Belfor Property Restoration gave the vendor perspective on disaster planning and recovery. They reiterated the advice to contact recovery vendors before a disaster occurs. There are many types of collecting institutions and each has different priorities and needs, so your vendor needs to understand the local issues. A key issue for a vendor is foreknowledge of the authorized decision maker. Objectives of different departments and personnel in the institution can be contradictory, so it is important to establish a chain of command in your disaster plan. It is also useful to establish how the budget for recovery efforts will be funded, so you can plan your response around the likely availability of funds. Vendor contributions can fall on a spectrum, and working with them ahead of time will aid in identifying which parts of recovery can be done in-house by staff and volunteers, and which parts require your vendors. Inviting your recovery vendor to your location can also be a good idea, as they will identify obstacles to an efficient recovery that you might not consider.

### **NEA Spring 2013 Plenary Video Now Available**

Dr. George Church's talk: **“DNA and the Future of Archival Storage”** from March 22, 2013 is now available on our Vimeo page <<http://vimeo.com/newenglandarchivists>>.

# Calendar of Events



Press releases and other announcements should be sent to Heather Cristiano at <Heather\_Cristiano@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.

**August 11-17, 2013.** Joint Annual Meeting of COSA (Council of State Archivists) and SAA (Society of American Archivists) in New Orleans, LA. For details, please visit <[www2.archivists.org/conference](http://www2.archivists.org/conference)>.

**August 15-18, 2013.** “Sequestering Tradition? A Cultural Sustainability Symposium” hosted by the Vermont Folklife Center. For details see <<http://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/education/cultural-sustainability/symposium.php>>.

**October 2013.** October is American Archives Month — an opportunity to raise awareness about the value of archives

and archivists. See <[www2.archivists.org/initiatives/american-archives-month](http://www2.archivists.org/initiatives/american-archives-month)> to get involved.

**October 26, 2013.** New England Archivists Fall 2013 Symposium, “Giving Color to Ideas” at Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts. For details see <<http://newenglandarchivists.org/meetings/meetings.html>>.

**October 28-30, 2013.** ARMA International Conference and Expo in Las Vegas, NV. For details see <<http://www.arma.org/Conference/2013/LasVegas.aspx>>.

**November 6-9, 2013.** AMIA (Association of Moving Image Archivists) Conference in Richmond, VA. For details see <[www.amiaconference.com](http://www.amiaconference.com)> ■

## Membership Survey Available

Results from this year’s Membership Survey are now available on the NEA web site through a link on the “About Us” page:

<[www.newenglandarchivists.org/about-us/about-us.html](http://www.newenglandarchivists.org/about-us/about-us.html)>



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## THIS SEASON IN NEW ENGLAND HISTORY



### **NEA presidents past, current and future gather for a group portrait at the Spring 2013 Meeting.**

Back row, from left, Bruce Stark (1991-1992), Patricia Stark (1986-1987), Wilma Slaight (1978-1979), Peter Carini (2009-2010), Ed Desrochers (1998-1999), Gregor Trinkaus-Randall (1995-1996), Jean Berry (1999-2000), Jill Snyder (president-elect for 2014-2015), Alyssa Pacy (2013-2014); front row, from left, Megan Sniffin-Marinoff (1992-1993), Elizabeth Slomba (2010-2011), Nova Seals (2011-2012), Mary Ide (2004-2005), Paige Roberts (2012-2013).

*Photograph by Jessica Tanny.*