

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
MUSEUM ARCHIVES SECTION
Society of American Archivists Annual Conference
Thursday, August 22, 2002, 8:30am-10:00am
Sheraton Downtown
Birmingham, Alabama

Officers: Sarah Demb, Retiring Chair; Anthony Reed, Incoming Chair; Laura Peimer, Recording Secretary; Sammie Morris, Newsletter Editor; Bart Ryckbosch, Newsletter Publisher.

Museum Archives Manual, 2nd ed.

Deborah Wythe reported on the status of the *Manual*. She explained that she took over the editorship last February and recently distributed a draft of the latest version of the Manual to all the contributors for review and edits. The deadline for submission to SAA is October 30 and the Manual may be available by next year. October 1st is the contributor deadline.

She described the types of chapters and noted that the publication was aimed at beginning archivists who had never worked in a museum and museum personnel who were unfamiliar with archival theory and practice.

Illustrations for the manual are still being collected and Deborah requested participants to send in images. She also noted that she will send a copyright release from SAA to image contributors.

Publications Committee Liaison Laurie Baty suggested that soon after the Manual is available (maybe in 2 years) we should do a session on the publication at AAM.

Museum Archives Directory

A discussion commenced over the on-line Directory of Museum Archives. It was suggested that perhaps the Smithsonian could host the website.

The Directory would require periodic updating. Marisa Bourgoïn remarked that maintenance could be reduced by listing archives' general phone numbers and not individual names of museum archivists.

Laurie Baty suggested thinking about the audience for this type of service –museum archivists or archivists who work in other environments. A user survey could help identify the audience and what information would be useful to include.

Deborah Wythe proposed putting the Resource Guide from the Manual on the website with the Directory. This would make the Guide a dynamic page that could be periodically updated.

A planning committee for the Directory website was informally created that includes: Lori Ann Lindberg, Sammie Morris, Bernadette Callery.

Museum Guidelines

Andrew Martinez reported on the status of the museum guidelines. He mentioned that the Standards Committee approved the guidelines. However, the SAA Council has not yet approved the document due to a point of clarification - whether the guidelines are designed just for the archives of independent museums or also for museums within larger institutions. Council felt that the guidelines should be directed towards the former. Andrew Martinez, Anthony Reed, and Sarah Demb will continue to work on the language. Andrew said that they could e-mail copies of the guidelines for section members to view although people can also access them online through the Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN) website where the Museum Archivist newsletter is available: <http://www.chin.gc.ca/English/News/index.html>. Just go to "Newsletters," and then scroll down to "Museum Archivist."

Other Business

Bart Ryckbosch mentioned that for years now the Art Institute of Chicago has been printing and mailing the Museum Archivist, and due to the increasing expense, he would now like to pass on this responsibility. Sammie Morris thought that SAA could possibly mail it and Council Rep Thomas Battle agreed. It was suggested that to make the newsletter less bulky and therefore less expensive to mail they could change layout and print it double-sided and/or make it available as an electronic version. It is already available on the web at the CHIN website.

Maygene Daniels stressed that a hard copy should still be produced. Printing out the electronic version can be a hassle and a hard copy is more useful for outreach to audiences outside museum archives.

Sammie, Sarah, and Anthony will identify another institution that is willing to absorb the cost of mailing the hard copy of the newsletter. At the same time, they will send an e-mail survey asking Section members whether they want to receive an electronic or hard copy. A nominal fee could possibly be charged to those who want a hard copy.

Session Proposals

Janice from SAA's Program Committee discussed proposals for the SAA conference 2003 in L.A., August 18-24: "Spotlight on Archives: Showcasing the Diversity of the Archival Enterprise." She reminded members of the following issues to keep in mind when putting together session proposals:

- Make sure that proposals are complete when submitting them and that speakers have agreed to participate.
- A speaker can participate in only one session.
- Endorsements from the section are helpful when the Program Committee is making its decision.

- Chair Anthony Reed may rank proposals for the Program Committee to assist the Committee in selection.
- Carefully consider using A-V equipment – it is expensive.
- Complimentary registration is available for speakers who are not archivists or who are international.
- SAA Deadline for proposals is October 7.

Session proposal ideas from members:

1. Version of this years Working Group regarding interrelatedness of collections documentation and database systems.
2. Facility expansion session: “New facilities. Old plans.” Through records such as architectural plans, show building visions that haven’t been realized fully and/or how new construction can harmonize with collections. Maybe co-sponsor with architectural records section.
3. Impact of television & movie crews on museums. For example, discuss the effect of crews coming into a house museum to create a movie or educational program. Topics could include how television/media interprets history; how archivists deal with film crews; and the impact on the archives and collections once the film or program is released.
4. Use of movie memorabilia in theme restaurants.
5. Profiling film studios that have archives. Good contact for this: moving image archivists.
6. Highlighting research in collections.
7. “Lost L.A.” or “Hollywood Archaeology.” Focusing on historical sites/objects that no longer exist such as movie sets buried under Los Angeles highways.
8. Storage facilities. A session on selecting storage options. Issues of conservation in facilities, impact on access, commercial vs. private storage, insurance issues. Session could include someone from the library world. Could possibly have a tour of a facility during the conference to complement the session. Anthony offered to chair the session.
 - a. Advantages or disadvantages of having archives facilities in the building or in a separate site.
 - b. Retrofitting museum space to serve archives.

--Laura Peimer, Recording Secretary