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# MUSEUM ARCHIVIST

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Newsletter of the Museum Archives Roundtable  
Society of American Archivists

February 1989

Volume 3 Number 1

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## GREETINGS FROM THE NEW CHAIR!

I am very pleased and excited about serving as chair of the Museum Archives Roundtable! Realizing that this honor involves some work, I will give you an update on the latest Roundtable activities.

The first priority was to develop and submit program proposals for the 1989 Society of American Archivists annual meeting. Working with a top-notch program committee (Kathleen Hartt, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Jane Kenamore, Art Institute of Chicago; Maureen Melton, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Mary Elizabeth Ruwell, NEDCC; Arthur Breton, Archives of American Art), I submitted two proposals. One concerns the effects and implications of federal funding for archives programs and projects, and the other looks at national integrated databases for museums, libraries, historical societies, and archives. A GIANT THANK YOU to the program committee!!! The next item on the agenda is the program for next year's SAA Roundtable meeting. Some suggestions include working with curators and examining why museum archives are different. If you have any ideas, please call or drop me a note at Old Sturbridge Village, 1 Old Sturbridge Village Rd., Sturbridge, MA 01566 (508 347-3362).

Theresa Rini Percy  
Old Sturbridge Village

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Kathleen Hartt announced at SAA/Atlanta that she would like to transfer the reins of the Museum Archivist from her (very capable) hands to those of another Roundtable member. I'm happy to take over and will try to carry on Kathleen's excellent work in keeping us all in touch. To Kathleen: a hearty "Thank you" for your great work and congratulations on your good luck in the Annual Meeting lottery!

The first, and very critical, order of business is a plea to help Alan Bain bring our mailing list up to date. Please fill out and send him the form printed elsewhere in this issue. This will not only bring you your copy in good time and save time and money, but will also result in a directory, to be published in our Fall 1989 issue.

As Mary Elizabeth Ruwell mentioned in Atlanta, the attempt to match up archivists with particular needs to those with special skills or experience through the Museum Archivist didn't work out very well, since the responses were so varied. I'd like to initiate a regular "Queries" section where we can appeal to our colleagues' expertise; I'll start it off with one of my own questions. Finally, please let me know what is going on out there! You'll see that this issue is pretty "Northeastern;" [cont. on p.2]

## ROUNDTABLE BUSINESS

[Editor's Desk, cont.]

I apologize for my geocentric information network and will work to expand it. I'd like to hear from anyone who has news--notes on a new position or staff member, short reports on a project, publication, or activity, articles on a collection or project. I'll be looking forward to hearing from you.

Deborah Wythe  
The Brooklyn Museum

### Museum Archivist

is issued twice a year by the Museum Archives Roundtable of SAA. News items, letters to the editor, and comments from the archives community are welcome. Contact the Editor, Museum Archivist, The Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238.

Coordinator.....Theresa Rini Percy  
Old Sturbridge Village  
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Mary Elizabeth Ruwell  
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Patricia E. Williams  
American Association of Museums

## MUSEUM ARCHIVIST MAILING LIST

Dear Readers: Please help us budget our mailing and printing costs. Complete and mail this form before April 1, 1989, to:

Alan Bain, Associate Archivist  
Smithsonian Institution  
A & I Building, Room 2135  
Washington, DC 20560

if you did not respond last fall and wish to continue receiving the newsletter; all others will be removed from the list.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

SAA member? ☐ AAM member? ☐

Select from codes below for:

type of museum/organization: \_\_\_\_\_

type of holdings: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.0 Art (general)
  - 1.1 Crafts
  - 1.2 Cultural centers
- 2.0 Children's
- 3.0 College & university
- 4.0 Company or business
- 5.0 History (general)
  - 5.1 Historical societies
  - 5.2 Historic houses, sites
  - 5.3 Maritime, naval, whaling
  - 5.4 Military
- 6.0 Parks, nature, visitor centers
- 7.0 Science (general)
  - 7.1 Aero/astronautics, planetariums
  - 7.2 Anthropology
  - 7.3 Aquariums
  - 7.4 Arboretums, gardens
  - 7.5 Archaeology
  - 7.6 Natural history/sciences
  - 7.7 Physical science, technology
  - 7.8 Zoological parks
- 8.0 Religious
- 9.0 Editor
- 10.0 Consultant
- 11.0 Other \_\_\_\_\_



## ROUNDTABLE BUSINESS

### MINUTES

#### MUSEUM ARCHIVES ROUNDTABLE MEETING SEPTEMBER 29, 1988

The Roundtable meeting, held in conjunction with the Society of American Archivists annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, was called to order by Mary Elizabeth Ruwell, Chair, at 11:15 AM.

Mary Elizabeth gave a brief recap of events over the past year, including a summary of the successful museum archives session held at the American Association of Museums convention in June, 1988. The Museum Archives Roundtable is sponsoring two sessions at this SAA meeting -- "A Common Agenda? Archives, Museums, and Historical Societies" and "Museums as Cultural Institutions." She reported that SAA Council has decided not to sponsor a proposal submitted by the Museum Archives Task Force which would have created a series of regional museum archives workshops. SAA will contribute up to \$75 to fund the newsletter or other administrative activities. SAA Council also asked for recommendations on archival matters to be included on the agenda for the next White House conference on libraries and information science. Mary Elizabeth then introduced several speakers.

John Burns, Archivist from the California State Archives, spoke about the Committee on Goals and Priorities and asked that museum archivists plan activities in coordination with the agenda laid out in the CGAP report of August 31, 1988. He presented the Chair with a copy of the report.

Sara Stone, Director of the Foundation for the Documents of Architecture, discussed the computerized cataloging project for architectural plans and drawings. The project is based at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., is in close contact with other Getty Museum-funded projects, and includes as members

the National Archives of the United States and the National Archives of Canada. Currently, the project is still in the development stages and no plans have been made for distribution beyond member institutions.

The next speaker was Laurie Baty, National Historical Publications and Records Commission, who distributed a pamphlet on funding sources for museums and a handout on past museum archives projects funded by the NHPRC. Among current projects being funded are archives at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Old Sturbridge Village, the Buffalo Museum of Science, and the Museum of Modern Art. Pat Williams of the American Association of Museums was not present to make a report, but Kathleen Hartt (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston) and Kristine Haglund (Denver Museum of Natural History) were introduced as participants in next year's AAM annual convention program.

Mary Elizabeth briefly discussed the attempt to "match" museum archivists with similar concerns, saying that unfortunately few of the newsletter forms returned indicated an interest in matching subjects. Gregor Trinkhaus-Randall (Peabody Museum, Salem) suggested that the next Chair get in touch with the College and University Roundtable, which ran such a program with great success.

Arthur Breton (Archives of American Art) asked for suggestions for a Smithsonian two-day workshop. Among the recommendations were collections management, working with curators, and copyright. A need for some mid-level, rather than beginning, workshops was expressed.

The Peabody Museum of Baltimore's computer program was highly praised. It is a cataloging program based on WordPerfect and is available from Elizabeth Schaaf for \$5. Also, the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles is using ARGUS, a collections management program for artifacts.

Roundtable members were asked to  
[cont. on p.4]

## ROUNDTABLE BUSINESS

[Minutes, cont.]

volunteer for the program committee to plan for the next SAA meeting, in Saint Louis. The committee will consist of Jane Kenamore (Art Institute of Chicago), Arthur Breton, Maureen Melton (Boston Museum of Fine Arts), and Kathleen Hartt. After some discussion, Deborah Wythe (Brooklyn Museum) agreed to take over the newsletter. Kathleen Hartt was heartily thanked for starting and carrying on such a good publication. Alan Bain was also thanked for offering to continue to provide the mailing list and distribute the newsletter.

Theresa Rini Percy (Old Sturbridge Village) was nominated as Chair of the Roundtable for the coming year. She was appointed by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting concluded with some job announcements for archivists at the Buffalo Museum of Science and the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum. Mary Elizabeth thanked everyone for coming and for their help over the past year. The meeting adjourned at 12:45PM.

Mary Elizabeth Ruwell  
Northeast Document Conservation  
Center

### RESPONSE FROM COUNCIL

Last year, the Museum Archives Roundtable submitted a request to SAA Council for funding for a workshop on museum archives. In his letter notifying us that the request was denied, Council member Paul Chestnut urged us to consider less costly methods, noting that "your request for a workshop led to a lengthy debate on the merits of specialized workshops and priorities of SAA's education commitments. No immediate conclusions were reached, but we sought alternative means for roundtables to assist in the overall activities of SAA's education officer. Instructional packets in-

cluding such items as bibliographies and case studies could be developed, and lists of consultants and other sources of assistance compiled."

Chestnut also asked that we think about archival issues that should be included on the agenda for the next White House conference on libraries and information science, since previous conferences have given archives short shrift. If you have any suggestions, please forward them to Frank Evans (National Archives, 8th & Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20408), who is representing SAA on this project.

### SAA SESSION REPORT

#### MUSEUMS AS CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

The Museum Archivists Roundtable sponsored a very notable session at SAA in Atlanta: "Museums as Cultural Institutions: The Roles They Play in Developing or Continuing Trends, and the Archives They Maintain." Alan L. Bain of the Smithsonian Institution was the chair. The speakers were Peter Marzio, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, "A Permanent Legacy: Archives in the Life of a Museum;" Sally Gregory Kohlstedt, Syracuse University, "Making Connections: The Museum Network in Urban Culture;" and Robert Rydel, Montana State University, "The Strange Story of the Philadelphia Commerical Museum." Clearly, the audience was enthusiastic and pleased to listen to these articulate advocates of museum archives. A few members of the audience suggested that the session be repeated at a museum conference, possibly the AAM, since our group was already "churched."

The presenters discussed the historical trends of museums as cultural institutions; the uses of archives, especially in the growth and development of museums; and areas which could be reviewed for development of documentation strategies to enhance archival collections. One can think of many trends created and  
[cont. on p.5]



## ROUNDTABLE BUSINESS

[Session Report, cont.]

maintained by museums that still exist today, though in somewhat different forms. For example, museum directors and curators of the nineteenth century had informal personal/professional networks; a similar phenomenon still exists but has changed, in part because of the introduction of professional organizations and professional training. Similarly the growth of private collections has been sustained and possibly expanded, leading to the question: are private collections documented?

Presenters also discussed the important role archives can play in their museum's well-being and the use of archives by curators in research and exhibition planning. The significance of certain record groups in an archives sometimes requires maintaining highly-detailed series; important, for example, are records which may be called on for fundraising, building expansion, development, and donor recognition. Archivists must plan for these demands: there are records we must collect and maintain, possibly in their entirety.

Part of the usefulness to the archival profession of having such dynamic advocates of museum archives is in the criticism and the support they give to us. The influence they have, especially on directors and curators, is inestimable; we do not yet know the scope, but I hope it is unending. I attended this session because I am the archivist for the Museum of American Textile History as well as our manuscripts specialist and assistant librarian; it was one of the best that I attended at SAA in Atlanta, 1988.

Jessica Randolph  
Museum of American Textile History

↔  
[Alan Bain reports that this session will be repeated, as "Museums as Cultural Institutions: Documentation through Archives," at the AAM convention in New Orleans, June 18-20, 1989. Hear! Hear!]  
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## ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM ACCREDITATION

[Editor's note: Museum archives could hardly have a more articulate advocate than Patricia Williams, Accreditation Program Director at the American Association of Museums. Her talk in Atlanta, "AAM and Archives," was so informative that I asked her to summarize it for the whole Roundtable.]

Archives in museums are taking on an increasingly important role as funds become available to support their development and management. Even more important, however, is the growth in understanding within the institution of the importance of the archival function within the museum. In 1985, the American Association of Museum's accreditation program responded to this growth and development by incorporating questions about museum archives in the accreditation self-study. The recognition did not come easily and is only a small part of an institutional review process which takes the whole museum into account.

The steps in the accreditation program allow for several major points of review for a museum. The first is the self-study, which can take up to one year for the museum to complete. Each major area of the organization's operations and programs are included in the self-study and many supporting documents are required to accompany it. The process itself allows the museum to strengthen internal communications and to develop, on the part of the  
[cont. on p. 6]

## ROUNDTABLE BUSINESS

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### [Archives & Accreditation, cont.]

Board and staff, a greater understanding of and commitment to the museum's mission. Archives can, of course, be critical to the institution's ability to gain a better understanding of its origins, charter purpose, and current mission. Archives are essential to providing the institution with complete documentation on its organizational history and its collections development. They can be extremely useful in the development of public programs, particularly exhibitions, and often serve as sources of new programming and exhibition ideas.

All of these functions of archives are included in the self-study, though they are not captured just by questions directly related to archives in the questionnaire.

During the on-site evaluation step of accreditation review, a two-person team of senior museum professionals visits and evaluates the museum. They try to meet with all the involved staff and with representative members of the governing body. It makes their work easier and more effective if the museum has gathered and presented the appropriate documentation about itself. Archives are very useful in this respect. The team is looking at the institution's process of operating as the basis for reaching conclusions about how well the museum is meeting its mission. Throughout the entire visit, the examination of institutional documentation is critical to the evaluation. With an archival program in place, it is more likely that documentation will be available when needed.

The existence or absence of a formal archives or archival program is not currently considered a disabling deficiency in achieving accreditation. What is at issue is whether or not the museum can present the appropriate documentation, including written

organizational policies and procedures and complete collections records. The museum's processes are examined, but the museum is evaluated on its results.

The accreditation program has cooperated with the Museum Archives Roundtable to build stronger relationships with archivists working in museums. This collaboration continues to be productive and, as the accreditation program grows and changes, we expect an even more useful professional exchange.

Patricia E. Williams  
American Association of Museums

## NOTES, QUERIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### NEW ENGLAND MUSEUM ASSOCIATION AND OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE MUSEUM ARCHIVES INSTITUTE APRIL 14-15, 1989

The second Old Sturbridge Village and New England Museum Association Museum Archives Institute will be held at Old Sturbridge Village on April 14-15, 1989. The program will be of interest to the neophyte as well as to the experienced archivist. Topics to be covered include conservation administration, copyright and trademarks, photographs, access, records surveys, collection processing, management, and fund-raising. The Institute is limited to 45 participants with a registration fee of \$75.00.

For information, contact Theresa Rini Percy, Director, Research Library, Old Sturbridge Village, 1 Old Sturbridge Village Road, Sturbridge, MA 01566.



## NOTES, QUERIES, & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### MINORITIES IN RURAL NEW ENGLAND OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE RESEARCH PROJECT

Old Sturbridge Village has launched a research project on the experiences of minorities in rural New England during the early nineteenth century (1790-1850). The minorities to be examined are Afro-Americans, Native Americans, and Irish. The first phase of the project was begun in the fall of 1988 and entails a search for primary and secondary source materials dealing with the groups. Printed materials, graphics, and manuscript collections which contain relevant materials will be identified and examined and their contents evaluated. This information will be incorporated into an annotated bibliography of source materials for future research. The second phase of the project, beginning in the fall of 1989, will be a focused research effort utilizing some of the collections identified in the first phase.

Any information regarding specific collections and their contents which may be relevant to our research is welcome. Please send information to Myron O. Stachiw, Research Department, Old Sturbridge Village, 1 Old Sturbridge Village Road, Sturbridge, MA 01566.

### MUSEUM WORKSHOPS AT METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK

The Metropolitan Museum of Art announces its twenty-second season of Museum Workshops, a program for professional development of staff and trustees in museums, historical societies, and university galleries. Five workshops will be offered this season, each designed to provide highly-focused and practically-oriented sessions taught by experts in the field. Topics this year include Strategies for Small to Mid-Sized Organizations: Managing Human and

Fiscal Resources; Strategies for Small to Mid-Sized Organizations: Buildings Management; Period Landscape for Museums and Historic Sites; Audience Research and Evaluation; and Preservation and Exhibition of Books and Manuscripts.

The program is made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, which also provides for five scholarships to each of the workshops for participants from New York State museums. For a brochure or further information, please contact Stella Paul, Coordinator, Museum Workshop Programs, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 5th Ave. at 82d Street, New York, NY 10028.

### NEW "AAT" FIELD IN MARC FORMAT

At its July 9, 1988 meeting in New Orleans, the MARBI (Representation in Machine-Readable Form of Bibliographic Information) Committee approved the addition of field 654 to the MARC format. The field, analogous to the 650 field for "regular" LC subject headings, was created for Faceted Topical Headings used as Subject Added Entries. For art librarians and archivists this means that the Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT) can now be effectively applied within the MARC format. For an explanation and several examples, see Janice Woo's report "AAT makes its MARC at ALA Annual" in Arts Newsletter, v.4, #1, Fall 1988 (published by the Association of College and Research Libraries, Art Section, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611).

### QUERY:

Have you grappled with the problem of appraising manuscripts and drafts of museum publications? Informal telephone "working group" forming to exchange ideas and develop policies. Please call or write: Deborah Wythe, Archivist, The Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238 (718 638-5000, x311).

## NOTES, QUERIES, & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### NOTES FROM CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles' newest museum, the Gene Autry Western Heritage Museum, located in Griffith Park, hosted the fall workshop of the Society of California Archivists in early December. The workshop centered on writing and editing for archivists, copyright issues, use fees, image reproduction, and media relations. The multi-million dollar Autry Museum opened in November, and while it does not yet have a research library and archives open to the public, the institution has been collecting materials and plans are underway for such facilities.

Archivists whose institutions hold blueprints, drawings or similar records will note the publication this year of Architectural Records in the Bay Area: A Guide to Research, by Waverly Lowell (NY: Garland, 350 pp., \$47.00). This volume locates and inventories the principal architectural collections in the San Francisco area, both those in public repositories and those held by private firms as well. It should be of interest not only to persons researching the history of architecture on the West Coast, but also to those of us faced with the often difficult task of cataloging and describing items which have both historical and artistic value.

### NEW ENGLAND MUSEUM ASSOCIATION LIBRARY & ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

On October 20, 1988, the newly-revived Library and Archives Committee of the New England Museum Association held its first meeting, at Old Sturbridge Village in Sturbridge, Massachusetts. The Committee was organized and will be chaired by Theresa Rini Percy, Director of the Research Library at OSV. The Committee's first priority was to establish the following goals for its

continuing work: to serve as a regional referral source for information about funding, implementing, and organizing library and archives projects, to create program proposals for NEMA conventions and special topic meetings to be hosted by the Committee, and to serve as a liaison between NEMA and the other professional associations concerned with library and archives issues.

The Committee also discussed possible topics for library/archives sessions to be held at the next NEMA meeting, including options for automation of museum information resources, elements of museum archives, and the relationships among museum curators, registrars, librarians, and archivists.

At its next meeting, to be held on January 24, 1989, at old Sturbridge Village, the Committee will more fully develop one or two session proposals for the NEMA Program Committee. Anyone who is interested in joining the group or learning more about its activities should contact Theresa Rini Percy at Old Sturbridge Village.

Maureen Melton  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

### HDI, RLIN & MUSEUM ARCHIVES

The New York Historical Resources Center at Cornell University has been working on the New York Historical Documents Inventory (HDI) since 1978. The HDI's goal is to identify, describe, and report the documentary holdings of New York repositories. Teams of field archivists survey repositories and create MARC/AMC records for entry into RLIN; a total of 1,050 repositories had been surveyed and records entered as of December 1988.

A rough search (repositories are not identified by type) in RLIN yielded HDI records for some 90 museums. Entries include both repository and collection descriptions.



## PUBLICATIONS

### NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM THE SMITHSONIAN ARCHIVES

The Smithsonian Archives has recently published a "Guide to Animal Related Records at the National Zoological Park, 1887-1985." The guide, written by Julie Hamman, an intern in the Archives, includes descriptions of all records documenting the accession, deaccession, transportation, health, birth, and death of animals housed at the zoo.

The Smithsonian Archives has also published a guide to the papers of George Sprague Myers, 1903-1986. Myers, (1905-1985) an ichthyologist and herpetologist, was a faculty member at Stanford University for over thirty years. The Myers Papers are extremely valuable in documenting his research on fishes, reptiles, and amphibians; his professional activities, especially his long-term association with the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists; his career as a faculty member at Stanford; and, to a lesser extent, his personal affairs. The papers include a large file of correspondence which contains an endless exchange of thoughts and ideas relating to twentieth-century vertebrate zoology; published and unpublished manuscripts and speeches which reveal Myers as a writer with diverse interests; teaching files; collected personal and professional materials which include records documenting Myers' initial interest in ichthyology during the early 1920's; photographs of Myers and photos collected by him; and miscellaneous research materials.

Both guides are available upon request from the Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, DC 20560.

### NHPRC REPORT ON FEDERAL FUNDING

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) announced on December 15, 1988, the availability of Federal Funding for Museum Archives Development Programs, by Laurie A. Baty, of the Commission's Records Program staff. The report, one of an occasional series by Commission staff, focuses on funding possibilities for museum archives within the larger context of Federal funding for museums, including the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Science Foundation, Institute for Museum Services, and the NHPRC.

Ms. Baty's work began at the request of the Commissioners after their June 1987 meeting, where they discussed whether the Commission should continue funding archives development programs in museums. Her introduction, a succinct explanation of why museums and museum archives are important constituencies, is followed by brief descriptions of the various Federal programs and a series of tables detailing funding levels, including a complete list of NHPRC museum archives projects.

Ms. Baty brings to the report her "Washington insider" status, having spoken, in most cases, to critical staff members at the agencies. She relays to us not just a reading of each agency's guidelines, but the reading that counts, by the people who evaluate the proposals. For the National Endowment for the Arts, for example, the conclusion is that "unless art [is] associated with the project, there [is] little chance of having the proposal funded." For the other agencies, it becomes clear that funding is for archival projects within existing programs, rather than for the development of an archives.

[cont. on p. 10]

## PUBLICATIONS

[NHPRC Report, cont.]

The final section of the text provides several ideas for ways in which the NHPRC might continue and expand its work in supporting museum archives development programs and reaching out to the museum community. The Commission was urged "to continue to play an active role in various aspects of museum archival development and other museum-related archival programs." At its meeting in October 1988, the Commission resolved to continue its support.

Bravo Laury! Thank you NHPRC!

The twenty-page report may be obtained free of charge by writing to the Commission staff at NHPRC (NPR), National Archives Building, Washington, DC 10408.

### LINKING ART OBJECTS & ART DOCUMENTATION LIBRARY TRENDS, FALL 1988

This issue, guest-edited by Deirdre Stam and Angela Giral, concerns the linking of art objects with art information in all of its manifestations, from the bibliographic index to museum registration systems. The authors present essays about systems from the user's point of view, history of past efforts, theory and new directions in construction of knowledge bases, and cases studies of recent applications. In their introduction, the editors divide the articles into several categories: scholars' working methods, the purpose of systems, the relationship of institutional setting to system shape, the logic implicit in choice and definition of data, and the harmonization of systems through the development of standards. This issue is a "must read."

Available from the University of Illinois Press, 54 E. Gregory Drive, Champaign, IL 61820; \$15.00 (single issue price).

## REPORTS

### NHPRC GRANT FUNDS OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE ARCHIVES

In June 1988, Old Sturbridge Village, a living history museum in Sturbridge, Massachusetts, was awarded funding for an archives implementation project from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The components of the two-year program include a review of OSV archives policies, a records survey, records scheduling, staff training, and archival planning as well as archives accessioning, processing and conservation treatment.

In September 1988, a project archivist was hired. Already changes have been made to institutional policies and manuals. A statement of institutional ownership of records and an improved definition of archives were incorporated into the museum's collections management policy. Soon, all employee manuals and guides will include the ownership statement and definitions of archives, records, and personal papers. All changes have been approved by the chief executive and chief operating officers of the museum.

Besides reviewing and updating institutional policies, planning for the records survey has been conducted. Each museum director was asked to appoint a department liaison to assist the archivist during the survey. During the planning phase, the archivist met with the liaisons and completed a planning form to document departmental records volume and location. Possible problems that may increase the length of time or complicate the survey were also noted. During the planning phase, a unique survey form was created, based on the format utilized by Temple University. Its components have been integrated into a database, using Microrim's R:Base database management program, with [cont. on p.11]



## REPORTS

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[OSV, cont.]

the assistance of OSV's Information Systems Manager. Once the survey has been completed, reports and records retention/disposition schedules will be generated using the program and distributed to departments.

Also during this preparation time, members of the Museum Education Department volunteered to help survey their records. Although this is the only department conducting its own survey, a helpful comparison between that survey and those of other departments surveyed by the project archivist will be formulated. To prepare for this project, the Museum Education Department Staff participated in a brief workshop presented by the archivist. Its purpose was to introduce them to archives, archivists, and the records survey. To facilitate the beginning of the records survey, in December sixty employees of Old Sturbridge Village were introduced to the archives program and records survey. Staff selected to attend included the executive officers, department directors, coordinators, and department liaisons. The consultant for the archives project gave a slide presentation, explained archival ethics and answered questions. The Research Library Director, Theresa Rini Percy, who is also Director of Archives, presented the reasons for her decision to apply for this grant. Finally, the project archivist explained the records survey, how it will proceed and its intended results. Once this presentation was completed, the records survey officially began.

Penny Holewa, Project Archivist  
Old Sturbridge Village

## SHELDON MUSEUM ARCHIVES PROJECT

In 1987, a \$25,000 challenge grant was given to the Sheldon Museum, Middlebury, Vermont, to hire an archivist for to catalog the research center's manuscript collection and improve accessibility for other materials. During 1988, the grant was matched and archivist Elizabeth Dow was appointed.

The Sheldon Art Museum, Archaeological and Historical Society was founded in 1882 by Henry L. Sheldon to ensure the preservation of his collection of art, artifacts, and documents relating to the history of Addison County, Vermont. The Library holds Middlebury newspapers, 1801 through the present; approximately 30,000 letters dating from the 19th century; account books of farmers, merchants, doctors, lawyers, and artisans; records of organizations such as temperance societies and the county Fish and Game Protective Association; books and pamphlets; diaries, personal and legal papers; photographs; scrapbooks on local topics assembled by Sheldon and others; and ephemera, including posters and advertising materials.

Dr. Dow says that the project is unique in Vermont. They are committed to MARC/AMC cataloging and are currently researching microcomputer systems to find the best one for the project. She plans to make extensive use of the new 654 field inspired by the developers of the Art and Architecture Thesaurus (see Note elsewhere in this issue), developing a faceted keyword thesaurus for vocabulary control. Dr. Dow welcomes comments or collaboration with anyone involved in similar work. She is currently working closely with Polly Darnell, librarian at the Sheldon Museum since 1973, to survey and assess the museum's holdings. For further information, contact Elizabeth Dow, Archivist, The Sheldon Museum, 1 Park Street, Middlebury, VT 05753 (802 388-2117).