## MUSEUM ARCHIVIST Summer 2005 Volume 18, Number 2

#### **Newsletter of the Museum Archives Section**

The editors wish to thank the following individuals who contributed to this issue: Nancy Brown-Martinez, Kristine Kaske, Catherine Pate, Betsy Butler, Amy Duke, John Fleckner, Kristen Overbeck Laise

#### From the Chair...

I hope that all of you are looking forward to the SAA's 69th Annual Meeting at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside, August 14-21, 2005. Below is a list of some events that I hope you will work in to your busy conference schedule. The Working Group is open to all members of the Museum Archives Section. Please come and share you experiences with your colleagues. The Section Meeting is for all who would like to attend. Please note that you must be a member of the Museum Section in order to vote. Be sure to come and hear your fellow Museum Archivists in Session 708, Beyond the Obvious: Finding Social History in Institutional Records.

Have a safe trip south and I look forward to seeing many of you in New Orleans.

Best.

Kristine L. Kaske <kaskek@si.edu>

### **Working Group**

Wednesday, August 17, 2005

2:00 PM-4:00 PM

The 2005 Museum Archives Section Working Group will gather at the SAA Annual Meeting on Wednesday August 17, 2005 from 2:00 to 4:00pm; the location is TBA. This gathering will give us the opportunity to discuss and share experiences we have had with demanding donors and challenging researchers.

What creative solutions have you devised to handle taxing situations? Do you have written policies and procedures that help prevent difficulties? How does the newly approved (02/05/2005) SAA Code of Ethics for Archivists help Museum Archivists deal with these situations? Come and bring stories of your experiences.

Code of Ethics

http://www.archivists.org/governance/handbook/app\_ethics.asp Please RSVP to kaskek@si.edu for this event.

# **Section Meeting**

Friday, August 19, 2005 8:00 AM-10:00 AM The 2005 Museum Archives Section Meeting will be on Friday August 19, 2005 from 8:00 to 10:00am. We will begin with a social half hour followed by old business and updates on current section projects. We will also discuss of future projects. Please come with intriguing, cross-session and multidisciplinary ideas for 2006 session proposals.

Agenda items are due to the chair Kristine Kaske, < kaskek@si.edu>, by August 1. The agenda will be distributed to members via listserv <a href="http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/museum/listserv.htm">http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/museum/listserv.htm</a> and on the Museum Archives Section website prior to the meeting.

# Session 708, Beyond the Obvious: Finding Social History in Institutional Records

Saturday, August 20, 2005

9:45AM-11:15AM

Marisa Bourgoin, Chair, The Corcoran Gallery of Art

Kristin Parker, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

"Transported by Travel: How the Travel Diaries of Isabella Stewart Gardner Captured Her Fascination with World Culture and Led to the Creation of Her Museum" Sarah R Demb, *International Records Management Trust* 

"The Rebel Record: Anthropological Field Notes Documenting the Victorian Iconoclast" David H DeVorkin, *National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution* "Beyond the Obvious in a Museum Context: The Changing Role of Women in Astronomy"

Bernadette G Callery, Carnegie Museum of Natural History

"Plaster and Dynamite: Using Field Records and Correspondence from the Carnegie Dinosaur Expeditions as Evidence of Paleontological Rivalries in the Early 20th Century"

Look past the museum's public displays and discover within its institutional records the evolution of the scientific or artistic disciplines practiced and the attitudes and methods of the researchers, artists, collectors, curators, and donors. Field records reveal the scientific rivalry between competing museums and the social freedom of Victorian anthropologists, collectors' travel diaries express a spiritual as well as physical journey, and institutional records support the increased visibility of women in astronomy.

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#### News:

Modified Book Trucks Help Architecture Archive

By Nancy Brown - Martinez, Center for Southwest Research, University of New Mexico

Shifting and retrieving oversized architectural plans are a lot easier now at the John Gaw Meem Archive of Southwestern Architecture since the archivist had roll tops put on two old book trucks. If you have to access oversize plans, maps, or manuscripts— here is a suggestion for you.\*

The John Gaw Meem Archive of Southwestern Architecture is part of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. Located in a climate controlled vault three levels below ground, it houses thousands of drawings by over twenty-five regional architects.

Student archival assistants, Ellen Evans, Ray Waggerman, and Tim Ngo, working in the vault are flattening, repairing, processing and shelving plans, lifting and shifting those already in flat drawers to accommodate additional ones. They need space to temporarily hold plans while moving others. They also retrieve material, toting it up an elevator, for patrons working in the reading room on the ground level. All this moving and carrying in tight spaces required two or four pairs of arms and a lot of energy, muscle and maneuvering.

Wanting to get a carrying truck, I searched the library equipment catalogues and on line offerings but could not find a cart suited to our conditions. The catalogue map carts or custom made ones featured in information bulletins were too wide, flat and costly.

Facing limited funding, I decided to adapt an old two - shelf, square - cornered book truck. Ellen and I drew a sketch of this truck with four added upright supports and an open sloop - roll top, and asked the university Physical Plant to make the modifications. The Service Tech, Mark Ernest, used lightweight aluminum L- bars for the upright braces, sheet metal for the rolled trough and protective edging for the corners.

The final product is a light, narrow and maneuverable truck, suitable for plans, maps and oversize manuscript material. It is easy to handle but solid enough to carry a hefty load. It provides vital temporary holding space during shifts and also allows us to conveniently and carefully bring material upstairs to patrons. The cost was comfortable, too - under \$200. We liked the first cart so well we ordered a second from Ernest.

And yes, you guessed it, the trucks have been fondly nicknamed "the taco carts."

(\*A patent application has been filed on the architecture cart design and it is now licensable from the Science & Technology Corporation, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.)

# The Giza Archives Project Moves into Second Phase

By Catherine Pate Project Archivist, Giza Archives Project Museum of Fine Arts, Boston The *Giza Archives Project*, in progress since 2000 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston under the directorship of Dr. Peter Der Manuelian, recently began phase two of its seven-year Andrew W. Mellon Foundation funded digitization project. As part of phase one, Manuelian and crew created Internet access to the thousands of paper and photographic records of the Harvard University–Boston Museum of Fine Arts archaeological expeditions to the Giza Necropolis in Egypt. Spanning the years 1905 – 1947, the meticulous records of the discoveries of Egyptologist and MFA Egyptian Department Curator, Dr. George A. Reisner (1867–1942), represent some of the most valuable data ever compiled on the Egyptian Old Kingdom.

The integrated online resource (<a href="www.mfa.org/giza">www.gizapyramids.org</a>.) makes virtual archaeological exploration a reality for scholars all over the world by offering unprecedented ease of access to important research materials that have been buried in the MFA archives for over 60 years. These materials include digital reproductions of 21,000+ glass plate photographic negatives of sites and artifacts from the Giza Necropolis, some of which represent the only records left of excavated tombs and artwork that have since been reclaimed by nature, robbed, or vandalized. All the photographs online are reproduced in high resolution with "Zoomify" technology (<a href="www.zoomify.com">www.zoomify.com</a>) that allows magnification of the smallest detail. Browsing visually, users can also select a standpoint from over 650 locations throughout the necropolis and view the site as it appears today in 360 degrees by virtue of QTVR (Quicktime Virtual Reality) panoramas. In addition, more than three thousand expedition diary pages, nearly 20,000 object records, 10,000 maps and plans of the tombs surrounding the Pyramids, and 200 Giza related books and articles available in PDF format are integrated in a searchable database keyed to individual tombs.

Phase two will upgrade the current data and add thousands more primary resources as well as published and unpublished materials to the database, improve and increase the metadata associated with the digital records, and lay the groundwork for the transformation and expansion of the project into a *Central Giza Repository* for all information related to the past, present, and future exploration of the Giza Necropolis.

# Every Garden A Munitions Plant: War Gardens in Ohio, 1917-1945

By Betsy Butler

Special Collections Librarian/Assistant to the Director of the Collections, Historic Preservation, and Statewide Outreach Service Division Ohio Historical Society

The Ohio Historical Society announces "Every Garden A Munitions Plant: War Gardens in Ohio, 1917-1945," an exhibit created in conjunction with the Society's premier exhibit for 2005, "Ohio's Garden Path: The Flowering of Our Landscape."

Documents, photographs and historical materials from the Society's collections trace how war gardening provided Americans with lower costs, better quality food, and enjoyable recreation. The exhibit describes how citizens not only planned, planted and tended their gardens, but also conserved their garden harvest.

Promoting war gardens with posters and building a stronger nation through rationing and good nutrition are also covered.

An online exhibit accompanies the physical display. It includes several interactive features and activities based on items from Society collections, such as printable recipe cards based on wartime recipes and a Victory Garden template to print out and use to plot a war garden. Users are invited to submit their own garden photos online, along with their name and a caption.

"Every Garden A Munitions Plant: War Gardens in Ohio, 1917-1945," is on display in the Ohio Historical Society's Archives/Library registration area until November 2005. The exhibit is open to the public during regular Archives/Library hours, Wednesdays and Saturdays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Thursdays 1-9 p.m. To see the online exhibit, visit <a href="http://www.ohiohistory.org/garden/">http://www.ohiohistory.org/garden/</a>>

"Ohio's Garden Path" examines how the nation's most popular leisure-time activity evolved in Ohio. Drawing on more than 300 historic images and artifacts, the exhibit studies the relationship between architecture and landscape. The exhibit opened April 1, 2005 and continues for 29 months at the Ohio Historical Center << <a href="http://www.ohiohistory.org/places/ohc/">http://www.ohiohistory.org/places/ohc/</a>>>, located at I-71 and 17th Avenue in Columbus, (exit 111), about four miles north of downtown Columbus. The Center is open year-round on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Thursdays from 9 a.m.-9 p.m. and Sundays and holidays from noon-5 p.m. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$3 for students and is free to children ages 5 and under. Members of the Ohio Historical Society also are admitted free. Parking fee: \$4 per vehicle (free for members); \$10 per commercial bus; vehicles transporting school students pay no parking fee.

For more information, please call 614.297.2300 or 800.686.6124.

OHIO'S GARDEN PATH: THE FLOWERING OF OUR LANDSCAPE Now on display at the Ohio Historical Center in Columbus. Explore how garden styles, plants and the use of home grounds have evolved in the hands of each generation.

Review:		
	Archival of the Fittest	

By Amy Duke, Registrar Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO

As the singular edited publication available on the subject, <u>Museum Archives: An Introduction (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)</u> bears the heavy burden of appealing to and assisting both museum staff with little or no archival training and professional archivists new to the museum field. Likewise, the book aims to address the needs of diverse museums and relate to employees in museums of all shapes and sizes. Skillfully achieving this ambitious goal, perhaps because its contributors represent diverse institutions,

<u>Museum Archives</u> takes on myriad roles: as a manual it offers practical, informative instructions on planning, implementing, and maintaining a new archives program; as a reference tool it is easily and quickly accessed for answers to specific questions; as a resource guide it offers a wellspring of information on professional organizations, continuing education, related publications, listservs, funding sources, and archival product vendors. The guide even includes sample policies, procedures, and forms, as well as a list of online sources for more of the same. Lastly, <u>Museum Archives</u> arms the reader with ammunition to garner support and fight the many battles waged at the intersection of the museum and archival fields.

Opening with an impassioned foreward, Peter Marzio, Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, lends the book an invaluable validation of museum archives programs. Among the more than 8,300 U.S. museums listed in the <u>Official Museum Directory</u> (only 847 of which boast accreditation), a mere 35 archives were listed in the SAA museum archives directory as of the year 2000. Thus, <u>Museum Archives</u> is a more than a manual for stewards of archival collections—it is a mandate for the museum community as a whole.

Following the foreward, Ann Marie Przybyla lays out the curious irony still plaguing museums, whose raison d'etre is the preservation, presentation, and interpretation of collections. She states, "[U]ntil relatively recently museum professionals, although avid collectors by nature and necessity, generally did not recognize the importance of documenting their own activities by collecting, maintaining, and making accessible the records of their institutions." The publication of this book represents a major milestone in advancing the role of museum archives in every museum.

Though the first great wave of American museum building emerged alongside modernism (which valued the *mastery* of knowledge), it was not until the 1970s, when society acknowledged postmodernism (and its emphasis on the *organization* of knowledge and the acceptance of multiple meanings and histories) that museums began looking inward. Finally, they began valuing their process in addition to their products, much like the artists of the time. The first evidence of this, as the book describes, was the draft of museum archives guidelines in 1979, at the first organized gathering of archivists working in museums. After forming a museum archives task force in 1981, the SAA published William Deiss' manual <u>Museum Archives: An Introduction</u> in 1984. Now, with the recent revision of the guidelines and publication of this book it seems there is but one more hurdle in elevating the role of museum archives: accreditation. Perhaps the book will be a wake up call for the AAM accreditation commission's formal evaluation of institutional archives.

Also ironic is the timeliness of <u>Museum Archives</u>. Within a year of the publication, President George W. Bush's proposed 2006 budget recommended zero funding for the NHPRC, the same granting program celebrated for its pivotal role in the evolution of professionally administered museum archives. It was this grantor that awarded 24 museum archives development projects between 1978 and 1988, ushering in the museum archives movement, and representing the birth of the museum archivist community. Without the historical context outlined in the book, this crisis might be lost on the reader.

At a manageable 260 pages, the book is comprehensive, yet written and edited with a concise and casual language. Editor Deborah Wythe succeeds in her goal, as stated in the preface, of bringing to the book the flavor of the informal dialogue and fluid exchange of ideas she and her colleagues shared in the formative years of the "movement". Indeed, the various contributors' voices illustrate the breadth and depth of museum archivists' experiences, reflecting the complexity of archival work in this setting. The book warmly welcomes the reader into the community of museum archivists, and all but holds the reader's hand as he or she embarks on a new archive program or attempts to revive one.

While Deiss's 1984 manual had been an invaluable authority for 20 years, the second edition is a welcome expansion from one voice to many. No two museums are alike and readers are sure to relate on some level to the diverse issues peppering the collective experience. Like Deiss, the contributors are working archivists, grappling with many of the same questions as the target audience, not armchair archivists, positing theory without testing it in the field themselves.

In its dual appeal to new archivists and trained archivists new to the museum field, Wythe deftly integrates fundamental museum and archival principles and vocabulary without getting mired in material that can be found elsewhere. Divided into four sections, <a href="Museum Archives">Museum Archives</a> is book-ended with an "Introduction" detailing the evolution of the field, describing the museum setting, and offering first steps; it closes with "Museum Archives Issues," rounding out the historical information in the introduction by bringing the reader up to speed on such timely, sensitive issues as NAGPRA and restitution of Nazi-looted art in the archives.

At the heart of the book are the chapters comprising "Archival Fundamentals" and "Managing Archival Collections". The former walks the reader through appraisal and arrangement to description and research use; while the latter delves into records surveys, accessioning, preservation, records management, security and disaster planning, and the variety of record formats commonly found in archives, including electronic records.

If the above sections are the heart of the book, the rich, colorful sidebars illustrating and enhancing the descriptions and directives in each chapter are the soul. These intimate musings range from case studies and anecdotes to examples and excerpts from policies and finding aids. Each sidebar, clearly set off with a different font against a screened background, is among the inviting design elements contributing to the book's success and facilitating its ease of use. The decision to embrace the expense of a hard cover for a book that will be referenced frequently is appreciated, while the costly frills of dust jackets and color photography are not missed here.

The photographs selected add another layer of intimacy as they convey the varied collections found primarily in the contributors' archives: photographs depicting expeditions, installations, visiting artists and public figures, public programs, milestone celebrations, building construction, storage rooms, even staff members. Other formats illustrated include broadsides and exhibition catalogues, architectural

drawings, blueprints and models, and t-shirts. Missing from the milieu are images of visually interesting paper records, such as founding documents, manuscripts, correspondence between staff, artists, and donors, exhibition planning and design materials, and scrapbooks of newspaper clippings, to name a few. It is the mundane records created and compiled in the course of daily business that are perhaps most voluminous and more often overlooked in terms of preservation than collections of photographs, architectural records, and ephemeral publications.

A subtle common thread weaving through the book is the notion that archivists must remain visible in order to remain vital. While this is true for all museum staff, it is particularly sound advice in deflating the perception that archival work is static. On the contrary, Wythe frames archival work in a dynamic and creative context, continually balancing its role as a repository with its potential as a laboratory and encouraging readers to emerge from the shadows to assume a pro-active position. The book insists both the physical space occupied by the archives be visible and the archivist, who can and should take an advisory role in numerous museum functions, from records management, to intellectually integrating object and archival collections, to initiating collaborative projects with various departments. In her chapter on outreach, Marisa Bourgoin wisely advises readers to approach curators with ideas for exhibiting archival collections, develop programs with educators, advocate the use of collections in publications and commemorative events, influence the care of permanently active records, partner with human resources on new staff orientation, and dialogue with IT staff on web projects and electronic record preservation. With archivists acting in this capacity they will undoubtedly remain a force on administration's radar.

If the reader was not already a believer in the value and necessity of a formal museum archives to remedy institutional amnesia, the book is an indispensable tool for conversion. Indeed, a museum without an archives program is like a caterpillar struggling to emerge from its cocoon.

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## Article:

## Heritage Health Index to Yield Useful Data for Museum Archives

By Kristen Overbeck Laise at Heritage Preservation

Heritage Preservation, in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), recently conducted the Heritage Health Index to assess collections in all media, in all formats, in all types of institutions, and in every state and U.S. territory. The results of the study are expected to be published in fall 2005 and will provide the first-ever comprehensive picture of national preservation activity and needs. The survey data will be used to make a persuasive case to decision makers for increased support, facilitate long-range planning within the preservation field, and give institutions an opportunity to view their preservation accomplishments and goals in comparison with those of their peers.

The survey project was planned with the advice of 35 professional associations and federal agencies that work with collecting institutions, including representatives from the Society of American Archivists. More than 60 collections professionals consulted in writing the survey instrument that was distributed to approximately 15,000 archives, museums, historical societies, libraries, archaeological repositories, and scientific research collections in August 2004. Data collection concluded in December 2004.

In total, the Heritage Health Index received a 24% response rate. Heritage Preservation anticipates being able to project survey findings to the entire survey population with a  $\pm 2\%$  margin of error with a 95% confidence level. There was a balanced response to the survey by institutional type, size, and region, also resulting in low margins of error in these subgroups. Included in the more than 3,000 survey responses was a 90% response rate from the nation's largest and most significant collections, among which were state archives, state historical societies, state libraries, and state museums, as well as other major institutions such as the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Administration headquarters and units (including all presidential libraries).

While the principal goal of the Heritage Health Index was to gather data on all types of collections regardless of where there they are held, the data will also be analyzed by institutional type, size, and geographic region. In the case of archives, which are often subsidiary units of other collecting institutions, it will be possible to view results from institutions that indicated a primary function as an archives and those that indicated a primary function or secondary function as an archives. Archives in museums may be interested in the Heritage Health Index findings on the quantity and condition of unbound sheet, photograph, recorded sound, motion image, and digital collections held by museums.

The Heritage Health Index collected statistics on preservation planning and management, environmental conditions, storage, quantity and condition of holdings, agents of damage, access to collections, and scope of current preservation commitment (staffing, budget, activities). The results will be published in two reports. The full report, including an explanation of the survey methodology, all data tables, graphs, and a review of findings, will be available at no charge on the Heritage Preservation Web site. A summary report will feature key findings and recommendations and that will be illustrated by case studies and photographs of collections in need or that have benefited from a preservation effort. This concise, color publication will be designed to get the attention of busy decision-makers, policymakers, the philanthropic community, and press contacts that have limited time to review the full Heritage Health Index results.

In addition to support from IMLS, the Heritage Health Index has received major funding from the Getty Foundation and additional support from the Henry Luce Foundation, The Bay and Paul Foundations, Samuel H. Kress Foundation, Peck Stacpoole Foundation, and Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation.

For additional information about the Heritage Health Index, contact project director Kristen Overbeck Laise at Heritage Preservation at 1012 14th Street NW, Suite 1200, Washington, DC 20005, 202-233-0824, or klaise@heritagepreservation.org.

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#### Article:

"How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Artifact"

John A. Fleckner, senior archivist, Archives Center and associate director, Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

When I arrived at the National Museum of American History in 1982, the curatorial staff already had been accumulating personal papers, business records, printed ephemera, films, sound recordings, and other "archival materials" for nearly two decades. My task as the Museum's first archivist was clear: develop a central repository to manage and provide access to these historical resources deemed by the Museum to be valuable complements to the world famous artifact collections.

Initially, I gave only cursory thought to the relationships between the archival materials and the artifacts. I understood that at minimum we should make a link or cross-reference between the collections in the Archives Center and the artifacts acquired in conjunction with them, but even this obvious imperative was more often honored in the breach.

My views began to change when, by daily association, some of the curatorial perspective rubbed off on me. I also saw that our archival program would only flourish to the degree it was seen to support the larger collections goals of the museum. Then, a decade ago, I became closely involved with the creation of the Museum's Lemelson Center. Documenting American inventors is a key element of that program and nowhere is the connection between artifacts and archival materials as historical evidence more evident than in studying the invention process.

Perhaps most important in my education about archives and artifacts, was my on-the-ground experiences with actual inventors. Of these, none was more valuable than the opportunity to document the history of the Kryptonite brand bicycle lock, developed by Boston area entrepreneur Michael Zane.

I first met Mr. Zane when he participated in a day-long bicycle invention expo sponsored by the Lemelson Center in 2000. He brought with him not only the firm's recent products but a selection of older locks, prototypes, and parts dating from his first exploration of the business possibilities in bicycle locks in 1971. Mr. Zane used these objects to tell the history of his firm and the successive product innovations it had introduced in a race against increasingly sophisticated bicycle thieves (fueled by the crack cocaine epidemic) and competing manufacturing firms in the leisure bicycling market. As Mr. Zane -- a wry and compelling narrator -- recounted his tale, I recognized that a documentary record of the Kryptonite lock story would be a

valuable addition to our invention history program and to our archival holdings in marketing and entrepreneurship.

Between 2000 and 2003 I continued to communicate with Mr. Zane and visited him twice, first to photograph and examine the materials he was offering for donation, and later to select, pack, and ship some five and a half cubic feet of business records and two dozen artifacts. The records were especially strong on the marketing side but also included documents about product testing, litigation, bicycle theft, and sales. I also recorded two interviews with Mr. Zane, the first a general overview and the second a detailed accounting of each object's place in the evolution of the lock and the firm.

The second recorded interview – during which I also photographed the objects as we discussed them -- was especially important because the archival record was largely silent on critical technical issues. For example, the K-4 model lock of 1977 was the firm's first major financial success. This version of the U-lock changed the means by which the U portion of the lock attached to the cross-bar and substantially reduced the weight of the entire lock by using tubular rather than solid steel. Mr. Zane's firm was a small, family business at the time and these innovations were conceived, attempted, and adopted on the shop floor not in a research lab where they might have been recorded in formal reports and other records. Nor do these changes (and the manufacturing cost savings they entailed) appear in the advertising copy, which focused instead on the heightened security of the new lock. The acceptance of the K-4 lock into the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and other design awards, of course, were well documented and publicized.

The three forms of evidence that document the Kryptonite lock story at the Museum – archival materials, artifacts, and oral history interviews – produced a rich record of the company's history and of the process of invention and innovation. The interviews filled gaps and provide context for the papers, photographs, advertisements, and other archival materials. They also captured information about the origins, purpose, uses, and significance of the artifacts that was not otherwise recorded.

Each inventor and invention story is unique, but the Lemelson Center is now working to build on its decade of practical experience, collaboration with curatorial colleagues, and initial analysis of the invention process, to develop a strategic plan for invention documentation. A staff team, led by historian Maggie Dennis, has identified several goals, including a web-accessible database of information on invention-related archival collections in repositories around the country. (We now have entered survey data in more than 1,200 records from more than 342 repositories.) We also hope to craft a proactive acquisition strategy for the Museum and to integrate our documentation efforts with our outreach and educational activities.

The last goal of our documentation plan is to produce a "best practices" guide on how to document invention. The guide will address both conceptual and practical issues in documenting the work of inventors, giving attention to the archival records of inventors, the artifacts produced and used in the course of invention work, and documentary materials – especially oral and video history recordings and still

photographs – created by archivists and curators undertaking documentary projects. In developing the guide we will draw on the literature and experience of professionals in the history of technology, oral history, material culture, archives, and documentary film making. We hope that the guide will make our work more systematic and effective and inspire others to undertake documentation work within the scope of their own institutional settings.

My colleagues and I warmly welcome your reactions, suggestions, comments, and requests for more information. Please contact me at <a href="mailto:flecknerj@si.edu">flecknerj@si.edu</a>. The Lemelson Center website is found at <a href="mailto:http://www.invention.smithsonian.org/about/">http://www.invention.smithsonian.org/about/</a>