



The Archival Spirit, March (Spring) 2006

Newsletter of the Archivists of Religious Collections Section, Society of American Archivists

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From the Chair

By Loretta Greene

If according to the adage, “Times flies when you are having fun,” then I must be having a ball! How about you? It’s the end of March, which means the SAA conference is four months away and year-end holidays are only nine months away. “Wait!” you cry, “I’m already in the deep end of the pool and rapidly treading water. Don’t make it worse!” Actually, I am inviting you to take a breather, grab your favorite beverage, and relax with this issue of Archival Spirit – it has much to offer.

First, let me tell you that I really am having a ball this year. It is hectic, but a ball. This year the Sisters of Providence in the Northwest are celebrating the 150th anniversary of their arrival in the Northwest and my staff and I are deep in research and preparations. Anyone who has been involved in similar anniversaries (like Father Ralph, below) is nodding knowingly. What amazes me most is the new interpretations of passages in letters that I have read hundreds of times before, the clearer connection between facts and events, and a deeper understanding of relationships. It was all there before and we thought we understood it but in our hectic planning for the sesquicentennial we are also slowing down to listen and are gaining a new understanding. Now, I don’t want it to take a major celebration for you experience this but I hope a great “Ah ha!” will often creep into your work.

Amid the hustle and bustle, it is not too early to plan ahead for the SAA conference in Washington, D.C. SAA has been moving up the meeting dates and it seems even earlier this year. Pre-conference programs are July 30-August 2 and conference dates are August 2-6. The preliminary program will be on the SAA website on April 1 but I can’t wait to give you a sneak peak of Section activities!

Plan to arrive for our Wednesday evening, August 2, reception hosted at Catholic University of America. Tim Meagher, Lynn Conway, and Tricia Pyne, our D.C. Section members, readily offered to welcome us. Once again, it will be a pleasure to share with colleagues, old and new, see the Catholic University archives, and pause for refreshments before the conference tears us in numerous directions.

Last, but not least, is the Archivists of Religious Collections Section meeting on Friday, August 4 at 10:00 a.m. Lee Leumas will share with us about Hurricane Katrina including collaborative recovery and salvage efforts, lessons learned, and their application to future disaster planning. The Section meeting will also be a venue for sharing ideas about Section activities, needs, and ideas for session proposals. You will be interested to know that we actually submitted two session proposals for the 2006 conference and both of these were developed from suggestions, ideas, and volunteers from the 2005 brainstorming meeting in New Orleans.

More information about all these events will be shared in upcoming communications.

In this issue of Archival Spirit you will read the results of another request from the New Orleans brainstorming. One member asked if there was a way to learn more about each other’s repositories, a type of virtual tour. Lisa Jacobson, Section Secretary and Curator for Maryknoll Mission Archives, took on this charge. The first installment of this new column is in this issue. To get the ball rolling, Lisa featured the Maryknoll Archives. Let Lisa, Wes Wilson (newsletter editor), or me know what you think about it and how it serves your needs. Please accept an invitation to participate in an upcoming interview. Lisa has a list of questions and is open to anyone

who would like to volunteer to be featured in an upcoming issue.

That's it for now. It is time for you to read on and enjoy Archival Spirit. Don't forget to contact me (206-923-4010 or loretta.greene@providence.org) if you have any questions or needs.

Small Archive - Small Budget

By Fr. Ralph Frisch, S. T.

With a small budget, one can be thankful for being a small archive - that is until something comes along that pleads for attention and publication. This was the case this past year when my religious community (Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity) celebrated its 75th anniversary of foundation. Being on the anniversary planning committee gave me the opportunity to present a modest plan for publishing a pictorial synopsis of these 75 years. This pictorial presentation evolved from an initial plan to just present a brochure with significant dates in our history. As the committee brain stormed the upcoming events, we made the jump to presenting these dates accompanied by pictures. With this plan in mind, I began the process of photo selection, how to present them, layout, binding/printing, caption writing, and introductory commentary.

With these as the immediate thoughts, a very obvious consideration that had been lurking in the shadows came full force to the front - COST! Ah hah! Believe it or not, the past year's budget had not counted on this project. Nevertheless, because of the significance of this event, the Community leadership readily agreed to a supplement to the budget. With this in place, it was decided to do the design, printing, collating, and distribution in-house. Probably one of the more deciding factors in this was being able to exercise immediate editorial control. Due to the press of time (we were now five months into the year's celebration) this proved to be a fortuitous decision. We were in a position to evaluate and make whatever changes were deemed advisable without concern for dickering with an outside source's pricing and production terms.

The project was completed in time for distribution throughout our Community before the closing celebration. In hind sight, I now see that availability of technical equipment in house was a determining factor for expecting a successful completion of the project. The equipment, i.e. color laser printer, software for editing and publishing, etc, made for an ease of production and publication that was really amazing. Granted the production run was limited to approximately 100 copies, but this was a significant number considering the small size of the team, four but two actually doing the project.

The book (using this in a broad sense) was 75 pages with photos, three or four per page (some color, most black and white) on both sides of a page; an introduction before each section, and captions for each photo. The text had to be translated into Spanish, and printed alongside of the English. As a supplement to the photo section, there were several pages with the significant dates that prompted the project initially.

The project provided a great amount of satisfaction and, indeed, gratitude for the Community of which I am a member. It also gave me an opportunity to delve more deeply into the photos we have here, and to see more clearly the work still to be done to catalogue and sort these thousands of pictorial history items. So, I do not foresee, in the immediate future, any reason to find myself unemployed.

Archdiocese of Toronto Website

By Gillian Hearn

The Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto (ARCAT) is proud to announce the launch of its new website.

1 <http://www.archtoronto.org/archives/>

The website provides access to information on the services and programs that are provided by the Archives including Reference, Genealogy, and Sacramental Records searching

In addition, the site presents the history of the Archdiocese of Toronto, including biographies of each of Toronto's Archbishops and Bishops. In the future, we plan to highlight the histories of particular parishes, clergy, and events that have had an impact on the Archdiocese. Stay tuned.

We hope you can celebrate this launch with us by exploring our new site. Any questions, comments or suggestions may be directed to archives@archtoronto.org.

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Voice of Saint Jude, St Jude, US Catholic, 1935-1968 Microfilm and Index Available

By Malachy R. McCarthy

The Claretian Missionaries Archives of Chicago has microfilmed and indexed the Voice of St Jude [Vols. 1-27, Jan 1935 to June 1961], St Jude [Vols. 27-29, July 1961-August 1963] and US Catholic [Vols. 29-34, September 1963-December 1968]. The addition of these early issues in conjunction with issues of US Catholic already filmed by Pro Quest Information and Learning [University Microfilms Inc.] since October 1968 to the present, completes the run of this important resource. These eleven rolls of microfilm are available for purchase directly from the Archives.

The Voice of St Jude was established to promote Chicago's newly established national shrine as well as promote the Claretian Order. Initially the monthly magazine focused on devotional and family issues, but during the course of the Second World War became socially conscious, as the magazine editors applied papal social teaching to the experiences of United States Catholics. By 1951, the serial published articles dealing with urban problems, housing, racism, juvenile delinquency, and labor issues. In addition to these articles, the magazine reflects Catholic middle class concerns in articles focusing on family life and marriage, theater and movies, books and literature and health and medicine. The Voice of St. Jude and later US Catholic also educated its readers about liturgy, the sacraments, church architecture, catechetics, local and foreign missions, and theology. Together these publications shed a unique light on Catholic life in the United States during a pivotal time when American Catholics were adapting to middle-class life in a changing social and religious environment.

The 407-page index to this series of microfilms, found on the first reel of the microfilm, was created using Library Congress Subject Headings. Thus the index provides the researcher with understandable search terms, making it easy to find articles throughout the 1935-1968 run of magazines. The positive duplicate microfilm conforms to ANSI and AIMM standards.

The microfilm is available through the Claretian Missionaries Archives located at 205 West Monroe, Chicago, IL 60606. For further information contact Malachy R. McCarthy, Province Archivist at mccarthym@claretians.org, phone 312-236-7782, ext 412, Fax 312-236-7230.

Membership Directory to be Updated

By Loretta Greene

It has been five years since the Section membership directory was updated. Liz Scott and Roberta Doelling are spearheading the revision of the current online directory. In a few weeks all registered members of the Section will receive an e-mail with details about completing their update and a link to the update form on the ARCS website. This is a comprehensive new directory so members must reply in order to be included. Your prompt response to the update request will make the process smoother for those compiling the information so your attention is appreciated. So, click the link to be counted!

The Archival Spirit Virtual Tour: Maryknoll Mission Archives

By Lisa Jacobson

What is the mission of your archives?

The purpose of the Maryknoll Mission Archives is to centralize,

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collect, organize, preserve, protect, and make available for research the legacy of Maryknoll's participation in the worldwide mission of the Church.

The Maryknoll Mission Archives is the official repository of all non-current assets of administrative, legal, financial, and historical value created or received by the Fathers & Brothers (Society), the Sisters (Congregation), and the Lay Missioners (Association) in pursuit of their religious and legal obligations and in the transaction of their business. The Maryknoll Mission Archives also seeks to document the lives of individual missionaries, their work, and the peoples and missions that they serve.

How many people work in your repository? Do you have volunteers?

We have a staff of five people in the Archives department: a director, an archives assistant, an archivist, and two Maryknoll missionaries (a priest and a Sister) who serve as curators of their respective collections. On occasion a missionary will do volunteer work in the Archives to assist with special projects, but we do not have a formal volunteer program.

Describe your repository: office space, reading room, storage area.

We are located on the ground floor of the Fathers & Brothers headquarters in Ossining, NY. Our office space is approximately 940 sq. ft. and is divided into 3 areas. Our archives assistant has a work space in our main office. One end of this office serves as a reading room. There are two tables for researchers. The director has a separate office connected to the main office. The remaining staff works in a third office space across the hall from the main office. We have two storage areas that are climate controlled and together comprise 4460 sq. ft. The storage areas are located under the main chapel and are made up of 12 alcove areas converted from individual altar bays. (See accompanying photos).

Describe the holdings of your repository: volume of material, media, types of collections, etc.

The collections in the Maryknoll Mission Archives primarily date from the early twentieth century to the present. We have over 4,000 linear feet of records and on average add an additional 150 to 200 linear feet each year. Included are the papers of the founders, Bishop James Anthony Walsh, Father Thomas Frederick Price, and Mother Mary Joseph Rogers as well as the personal papers and creative works of individual missionaries. We collect the administrative records of each Office/Department and records created in each of our mission Regions around the world. The formats of materials in our Archives include paper, film, audio and video tape, photographs, and artifacts. While the majority of our collections are paper, we house over 1 million photographic items, 425 films and videos, 600 architectural drawings, and about 500 artifacts.

Who uses your repository? Describe reference services and research use at your institution.

During the past year, we responded to about 600 reference requests. Just over half of those requests were internal to the Maryknoll organization. We do allow outside researchers to use our collections. About half of our reference requests arrive via e-mail. The remaining requests are made predominantly by phone or in-person. A relatively small percentage of requests are made via written letter or fax.

While we do receive a significant number of requests for genealogical information, many of our external researchers are



at her desk



Maryknoll Reading Room



Maryknoll Stacks

conducting research for theses, dissertations, articles, and books. We recently hosted a researcher from Hong Kong who has completed several books about the Sisters' ministries in Hong Kong and another researcher from Holland to study our Asmat language texts from Indonesia.

Are there any interesting projects that you are currently undertaking?

During the past year, we began using the EmbARK Database system for our Artifact Collection. The database system is very flexible and we have customized it to meet our specific needs. We can create reports to find out how many rosaries or chalices we have in our collections as well as all of the objects linked to an individual missionary. We can also attach a digital image of the object to the record. In the near future we plan to expand this system to include data on all of our collections.

Our Archives is a participant in the Internet Mission Photography Archive funded by a grant from the Getty Foundation. We digitized and cataloged over 3,000 photographic images from our collections documenting Maryknoll's work in China from 1918 to WWII.

Are there particular collections or aspects of your repository you want to highlight?

We have a complete set of Maryknoll's mission magazine dating back to 1907. We are also building an outstanding collection of language texts for use by researchers. There are over 100 language texts from the Philippines, Indonesia, Tanzania, and Bolivia.

The Maryknoll Mission Archives was founded in 1990 to bring together the archival collections of the Fathers & Brothers and the Sisters in one area (the Lay Missioners had not yet been established as a separate entity.) Being a collaborative office allows us to better serve the needs of researchers and share resources in an economical and efficient manner.

Where are you located? What is your contact information?

The Maryknoll Mission Archives is located in Ossining, New York about 30 miles north of New York City.

Our contact information is:
Maryknoll Mission Archives
P.O. Box 305
55 Ryder Road
Maryknoll, NY 10545
(914) 941-7636 ext. 2500
archives@maryknoll.org
www.maryknoll.org

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Editor's Notes

The Archival Spirit is published three times a year by the Archivists of Religious Collections Section of the Society of American Archivists. Feature pieces as well as announcements of acquisitions and projects are welcome. Send submissions to: Wesley W. Wilson at wwwilson@depauw.edu.

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