



The Archival Spirit, February 2008 *Winter Issue*

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

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From the Chair

Spring Thinking

By Gwynedd Cannan

As I write this letter to cap off the Winter issue, Spring's awakening and preparations for the Society of American Archivist's August extravaganza in lovely San Francisco are well underway!! I hope to see you there.

Be sure to arrive on or before Wednesday August 27th so that you can attend the ARCS reception at the Sisters of the Presentation at 6:30 p.m. that evening. Archivist, Chris Doan, will host the event – a wonderful opportunity to get to know your fellow religious archivists in a relaxed and companionable setting. More information about the reception as well as the section meeting will be provided soon!

Next, please allow me to use this forum to entice you to start seriously thinking about participating in the SAA sessions for 2009 or 2010. Session proposals are typically due by mid-October. That is a little more than a month from the time we meet in August, hardly enough time to prepare a proposal and obtain commitments from speakers. I urge you to begin now and be prepared to submit your proposal to the Steering Committee for its endorsement in August.

Unfortunately, ARCS will not be represented in the sessions of the 2008 conference. It seems improbable that a section as large and enthusiastic as ours does not have a place at every level of the national organization. While we usually don't learn the conference's theme until the August meeting, it should still be possible to adapt any of our most requested topics to any theme the SAA selects: Confidentiality and Access; Outreach; Diversity; Strategic Planning; Grant Opportunities; Managing Collection on a Small Budget; Archives and Faith Formation /Corporate Culture; Closings, Acquisitions and Mergers; and Digitization are all subjects of universal interest to archivists and should appeal to a wide SAA audience.

An informative, imaginative session is of benefit to the speaker, the speaker's archive, and the SAA as a whole. It's a good way to be noticed by your colleagues which can lead naturally to greater participation. It will bring attention to your institution and hopefully increase its understanding of its archives' value – and yours!

If August seems too soon for 2009, begin now to plan for SAA 2010. The Steering Committee has agreed that next year we will start promoting sessions for ARCS sponsorship in November. You can use the listserv to flesh out ideas and, if necessary, you can contact me or one of the other steering committee members to help develop the idea, get speakers, provide advice and support.

Session or no session, I am eager to welcome all of you to the San Francisco meeting. Let's meet, mingle, discuss and let our voices be heard.

Episcopal Church Archives Publishes Online African American Exhibit

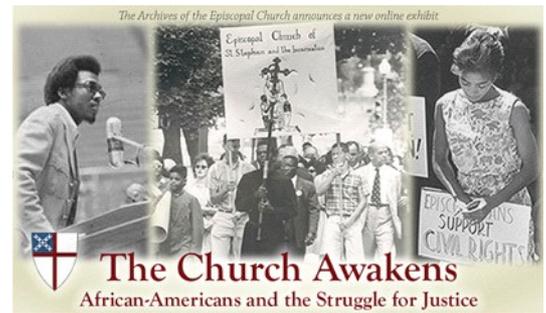
By Mark J. Duffy

The Archives of the Episcopal Church announces an electronic publication and Web exhibit entitled, *The Church Awakens: African Americans and the Struggle for Justice*. The multimedia exhibit, found at http://episcopalarchives.org/Afro-Anglican_history/exhibit/, covers the period of enslavement to the present, with emphasis on the Civil Rights era. As an educational resource for Church settings, the exhibit is designed to expand on the strength of reader input and future research.

This Web-based project offers an examination of the compelling story of how African American Episcopalians struggled to claim their rightful place as full and equal members of the Church community. The exhibit brings together a narrative overview of that development with photographs, documents, videos, and previously unheard taped interviews with prominent American figures on matters of race. Figures such as Absalom Jones, George Bragg, Pauli Murray, Jonathan Daniels, and Charles Lawrence are featured along with Church organizations such as the American Church Institute, the Conference of Church Workers, and the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity. Audio recordings include interviews with figures as diverse as Langston Hughes and Jackie Robinson.

The exhibit arose from a 1993 commitment by the Board of the Archives of the Episcopal Church to focus the Archives' acquisitions and research services program on diversity, with an initial emphasis on the Afro-Anglican experience. The 1991 General Convention had called on the Church to conduct a wide-ranging examination of persistent institutional racism and patterns of forgetting that had overtaken the legacy of the post-Civil Rights period in Church and society. Working with a donor, the Reverend John Morris, who gave financial support to the exhibit, the Archives turned to emerging Web technologies as a vehicle for making primary source materials permanently available to everyday Episcopalians and the public. The exhibit is a product of John Morris' desire to preserve a central lesson that the unified Christian community has within its grasp the capacity for extraordinary acts of justice and honor. Morris believed that such organized individual acts can renew the community and bring positive change to the larger society.

The Church Awakens exhibit is one component of the "Afro-Anglican Archives of The Episcopal Church." These archives include the entire holdings of the Episcopal Freedman's Aid Commission, the Episcopal Society for Racial and Cultural Unity (ESCRU), the American Church Institute, including the Episcopal Black Colleges and Bishop Paine Divinity School, the General Convention Special Program, and numerous collections of personal papers including those of Theodore Holly, David Ferguson, Edward Demby, Tollie Caution, Walter Dennis, Thomas Logan, and Henri Stines. The Afro-Anglican Archives of The Episcopal Church has been brought together to both celebrate the Church's African American heritage, and to open a research door for the General Convention's request in 2006-A123 that the dioceses study the economic and social benefits that the Church derived from the enslavement and its aftermath.



Graphic from the exhibit home page



Raphaelle Peale's 1810 rendering of Absalom Jones



St. Paul's College, Lawrenceville, VA, c. 1958

The Archives continues to add to this unfolding story and has constructed the online publication to be a growing digital repository of the Episcopal Church's African American narrative. Viewers are invited to share their comments on the exhibit or leave their personal reflections for permanent posting by using a comment form. Donors who would like to add documentary evidence to the exhibit or to the Afro-Anglican Archives of The Episcopal Church are encouraged to contact the Director of Archives, Mark J. Duffy at the Research Office, P.O. Box 2247, Austin, Texas 78768. The exhibit can be accessed from the Archives home page at <http://episcopalarchives.org>.

The Archives of the Episcopal Church is the Church's central records repository and research center with offices in Austin and New York City.

Oral History Interviews Available at Billy Graham Center

By Robert D. Shuster

Excerpt from the start of Collection 92, Tape 2, interview with Robert Ekvall:

SHUSTER: This is an interview for the Missionary Sources Collection of Dr. Robert Ekvall....

EKVALL: Leave off the doc.... I told you, I'm not a doctor!

SHUSTER: Oh? Reverend? Mister?

EKVALL: I've been Reverend, colonel, I've...everything. I've dropped all of them and I think prefer to be called just Robert Ekvall. [Chuckles] Excuse me. Go ahead.

The Billy Graham Center Archives is periodically making available through its website audio files of its oral history interviews. Now available are the interviews of Robert Brained Ekvall, Collection 92 <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/092.htm#8>

Robert Ekvall, an American, was born in 1898, the year of the second year of the first administration of United States President William McKinley. He died in 1983, the first year of the first administration of President Ronald Reagan. During his life he was a missionary, soldier, translator, poet, and scholar, among other vocations. The BGC Archives staff in the late 1970s and early 1980s recorded about four and a quarter hours of interviews with him. He talked about, among other topics, growing up the child of missionaries on the China/Tibet border before World War I; education at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, USA; service in the United States army during World War I; his ministry as a missionary in China and Tibet from 1923 through 1941; Tibetan Buddhism; and his visit back to the place he grew up in the 1980s.

Go to this address: <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/EmailList.htm> to sign onto the Archives e-mail list and receive regular announcements about the opening of new collections, additions to our website, and other events.

If you have comments or questions, contact us at bgcarc@wheaton.edu or call 630-7525910.

Billy Graham Center Archives Annual Report

By Robert D. Shuster

The annual report describing the acquisitions and activities of the Billy Graham Center Archives in 2007 is now

available on the web. It can be found at: www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/ar/2007/cover.html.

The Billy Graham Center Archives collects material about the history of 20th century North American Evangelical Protestant nondenominational Christian evangelism and overseas missions. Included in the report are pages on the reading room, the website, public service, acquisitions, processing, reformatting, space, photos from throughout the year, statistics, lists of books, articles, websites, CDs, results from archival research, sample acquisitions and more. The BGC Archives welcomes public comments. To receive regular reports on new collections, updates, exhibits and archives activities, go to: www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/EmailList.htm to sign on.

The Billy Graham Center Archives is located at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois 60187. Contact: bgarc@wheaton.edu or tel. 630-752-5910.

Christ Church Introduces a Digital Archives Site

By Carol Smith

Interested in knowing who was baptized at Christ Church in 1708? Wondering what action, if any, Christ Church took during the American Revolution? Curious about links between Philadelphia's Quaker founder, William Penn and Christ Church? These questions and more are answered in the Christ Church Philadelphia website recently unveiled by Christ Church and the Christ Church Preservation Trust.

Three years ago a newly formed Artifacts and Archives committee recommended greater access to Christ Church's treasures, both artifacts and archives, and a digital website was first proposed. Generous funding from the Barra Foundation as well as private donors made it possible for the Christ Church Preservation Trust to begin an 18-month program to catalog the artifacts, inventory and re-house the archival collections, develop policies and procedures for the care of the historic collections and develop a digital website where people around the world could glimpse the records and artifacts Christ Church has generated and preserved throughout its rich history. Curator and archivist, Carol W. Smith, assistant archivist Courtney Smerz and different transcribers guided the development and populated the entries that comprise the on-line database of archival holdings and the genealogical database.

Established in 1695, Christ Church was the first Anglican Church in Pennsylvania. The thirty-nine founding members swiftly purchased a lot on Second Street, and as early as 1696 were worshipping in their small church near the Friends' Meeting House. Furnishings came quickly. A baptismal font arrived from All Hallows Church, Barking-by-the-Tower, London, believed to have been the one used for William Penn's baptism. A handsome set of communion silver made by John East was sent by Queen Anne in 1710 and in 1712 Colonel Robert Quarry bequeathed funds to add to the church silver. Philip Syng, Sr. made a baptismal bowl for the Penn font, as well as flagons and chalices which matched the Queen Anne gift, considered among the most important pieces of early Philadelphia silver. Within a short period of time the congregation outgrew the church; the present structure was completed in 1744 and the steeple, long a landmark on the Philadelphia skyline, in 1754. Throughout the decades Christ Church added to its collections through bequests, memorial gifts and commissioned works. This project to catalog the artifacts in an electronic database provides ease of management for church staff, but also enabled the church to share the images and descriptions of its holdings on-line.

The archives grew naturally. Vestry minutes recorded the official decisions of the rectors, church wardens and Vestry. Official church registers recorded the names and dates of those baptized, married or buried at Christ Church. Sermons of past rectors and ministers, minutes of affiliated church institutions, photographs, blue prints and more have been collected in the church's Neighborhood House vault. In 1980 Christ Church together with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania applied for an NHPRC grant to organize and microfilm the church's archival holdings. The microfilm holdings have made the church's records available to scholars. The impetus behind the current project is to make the archives more widely known via the web. The microfilmed documents have now been individually catalogued and a page or two from each scanned. Those descriptions and digital images provide a sample of the types of information found within the records.

A genealogical database of those whose names appear in the baptismal and marriage records has also been created for this website to provide information on those baptized at Christ Church (or often St. James or St. Peter's) from 1708-1843 and those married from 1708-1767. More than 23,000 listings have been entered with

the hope that when more funding is available, entries through 1900 will be completed.

The website, shared by both Christ Church and the Christ Church Preservation Trust, provides both parish and historical information and can be reached at: www.christchurchphila.org. To see the on-line database of archives, artifacts and genealogical records, go to the link in the upper right corner of the home page titled, Family records/genealogy search, www.christchurchphila.org/Historic_Christ_Church/Collections_Genealogy/61/

For more information contact, Donald Smith, Christ Church Preservation Trust, 215-922-1695 or dsmith@christchurchphila.org or Carol Smith, cwsmith@verizon.net

The Indian Sentinel at Marquette University

By Mark G. Thiel

Marquette's newest digital collection – *The Indian Sentinel* – includes numerous articles pertaining to Native Americans and Catholic evangelization, primarily in the Midwest and Western dioceses of the United States. The collection is part of the holdings at the Raynor Memorial Libraries, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Users of the digital collection, built with CONTENTdm software, may search by keyword, by year, and by state/territory. Users may also browse all issues and conduct advanced keyword searches in selected fields. The ability to search almost 10,000 pages within the 319 issues will not only serve researchers, but will also assist archivists in conducting thorough reference service when working with the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, which is integrally tied to *The Indian Sentinel*. The BCIM collection contains more than 500 cubic feet of records and, includes thousands of photographic images submitted for publication, including images selected for the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Digital Photograph Collection, one of Marquette's first digital collections. More at: http://www.marquette.edu/library/information/news/2008/Indian_Sentinel.html

NEARI Meets April 26th

By Mary Rita Grady

The Spring Conference of the New England Archivists of Religious Institutions (NEARI) will be held on Saturday, April 26 at the Knights of Columbus Museum, New Haven, Connecticut. The program will include talks on records management, and on moving and consolidating archives.

For information, contact NEARI c/o Boston CSJ Archives, 637 Cambridge Street, Brighton, MA 02135-2801, or [maryrita.grady](mailto:maryrita.grady@regiscollege.edu) at regiscollege.edu.

New Jersey Catholic Records Newsletter Launched

By Alan De Lozier

The first edition has been published of the Commission newsletter, *The Recorder*, which highlights Commission objectives, membership activities and other historical items that impact Catholicism in New Jersey. I hope you enjoy what will be the first of a series of regularly produced periodicals. The direct link is <http://library.shu.edu/sc-njchcnewsletter-1winter2008.pdf>.

Please feel free to pass along this newsletter to friends, colleagues and others who might have an interest in New Jersey Catholic history. We can add these individuals to our mailing list, and they will receive future mailings. In addition, regular communications will be sent to promote events and offer news updates through our own information service. Also, if you have your own bulletins to share, we welcome your submission of ideas for consideration. Comments, suggestions and thoughts about our newsletter and the Commission in general are also encouraged. Please contact: Alan De Lozier, Executive Director, New Jersey Catholic Historical Records Commission, <http://library.shu.edu/sc-NJCHRC.htm>.

ARCS Officers and 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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