



The Archival Spirit, June 2009 *Spring Issue*

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

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From the Chair: Austin and Beyond

By Gwynedd Cannan

May this letter find all members busily planning for the SAA conference in beautiful, sun-bathed, downtown Austin this August. The ARCS reception will be held on Wednesday evening, August 12, from 5:30 to 7:30, hosted by Mark Duffy and the Episcopal Archives. The location is a few short blocks from the hotel and offers the perfect opportunity to meet and greet your colleagues from far-flung posts. The annual meeting will be held on Thursday, August 13th from 1:30 to 3:30. Come to the meeting with your ideas and questions. We are hoping to have time to open it up to the floor and we want to hear from you. After the business meeting, members will discuss their web-based cataloging systems and digital archives including the issues they encountered and solutions they devised.

Though we usually have everyone fill out a Member Survey Form at the Annual Meeting, we are trying something different this year. The Member Survey will be posted on the ARCS website and we invite all members, whether you are able to attend the SAA Conference or not, to fill it out. A Steering Committee Manual has been posted on the ARCS website under "Governance." Take a look to get an idea of what is expected from the various offices. The manual explains the basic requirements and provides an idea of how one can work ARCS into one's busy schedule. It leaves plenty of room for innovative ideas and bold proposals, if desired. Look over the manual, look over the Member Survey, and nominate yourself or a friend for a place on the ARCS Steering Committee.

We will continue to post information regarding the Conference on the ARCS website. Be sure to check it regularly. I'm looking forward to seeing you in Austin. The best reason for going? I'll be handing the gavel over to Alan Lefever. You'll want to be there to cheer him on!

Virtual Tour: Archdiocese of St. Louis Archives

By Audrey P. Newcomer, CA

1. **What is the mission of your Archives?** The Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Louis provides a professional repository that identifies and collects, organizes and preserves, and provides access to all historically and canonically significant, non-current documents, artifacts and other works of enduring value pertaining to the operation of the Archdiocese, its

parishes, agencies, institutions and people. The Archives makes available and extends its materials to researchers as permitted by canon law, civil law and conservation considerations.

2. **How many people work or volunteer in your repository?** We have a staff of three in the Archives Office: the director, an archives assistant, and a part time secretary. We have one regular volunteer.



3. **Describe your repository:** The Archives is the official repository for the records of the Archdiocese of St. Louis and serves as the memory of the established Catholic Church in this area. We are centrally located in the Cardinal Rigali Center, the former site of Kenrick Seminary (photo 1) where thousands of priests received their formation from 1913 until 1987. Our building houses most of the agencies and departments of the Archdiocese and is located eight miles from the Cathedral and the offices of the Archbishop and Chancellor.

The Archives occupies 6695 square feet on the ground floor and lower level of the building next to the staff entrance. Archival materials on both levels (photo 2 and photo 3) are housed in closed stacks in a climate controlled environment with an HVAC system which monitors the temperature and humidity and a fire suppression system (photo 4). The reading room (photo 5) contains secondary reference materials and a large table for researchers. It is located adjacent to the closed stacks and the director's office. A second research table near the microfilm reader has been added just outside the research room to accommodate multiple visitors. The archives assistant and volunteer have cubicles in a staff corridor. The secretary is positioned near the front door (photo 6) just beyond two exhibit cases. We have a separate processing room near the front door. An additional exhibit area maintained by the Archives is the Rosati Museum (photo 7) located on the first floor of the building near the main entrance.



4. **Describe the holdings of your repository:** The collections of the Archives hold 3885 linear feet of material and dates back to the establishment in 1826 of St. Louis as a Diocese when the Most Reverend Joseph Rosati was appointed its first bishop and the Most Reverend Louis W. V. DuBourg, bishop of Louisiana from 1817 to 1820, maintained both New Orleans and St. Louis as See cities.

While largely standard paper-based, the collection also contains 1250 sacramental registers of 102 closed parishes, 160 large pictures/photographs, 36 feet of negatives, 500 audiovisual items, 652 rolls of microfilm, architectural drawings, computer discs and ephemera. The collection is organized by record groups containing the permanent archives of the bishops, curia, agencies, departments, organizations and history. Approximately 92% of the collection is in print. Inactive tribunal, adoption, education, and building and real estate records are stored on the lower level.





5. Who uses your repository? The Archbishop, chancery and all offices and agencies of the Archdiocese and outside legal counsel use the Archives to obtain information necessary to fulfill their responsibilities. Parish staff preparing for historic celebrations or seeking assistance with annotating or finding sacramental records consult the archives. Individuals access the archives for records from closed parishes, or conducting historical or genealogical research. We received a total of 3439 requests by phone, email, postal mail, and the web. The majority of requests are submitted on forms from our webpage. We had 74 external visitors during FY 2008.



6. Are there any interesting projects that you are currently undertaking? We have been placing photographs and brief descriptions of the closed parishes on our webpage at <http://www.archstl.org/archives> using JOOMLA and hope to have a full complement of entries by the close of the fiscal year. We will also be implementing the TRIM electronic records management system over the course of the next three years. We are inputting retention schedules and look forward to being able to more easily accommodate the receipt of electronic documents.

7. Are there particular collections or aspects of your repository you want to highlight? Our early bishop collection helps to depict the history of the Church in the US during its initial development and is frequently consulted by historical researchers. We have an extensive sacramental register collection (photo 8) from which we produced 1221 certificates and 1532 annotations in FY2008. We have the negatives and associated copyright of St. Louis photographer, Richard Finke.

8. Where are you located and what is your contact information?

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Thanks for the tour, Audrey!

Vice Chair/Chair Elect and Representative-at-large

By Loretta Greene, Past Chair

The Section has two positions open for election this year: Vice Chair/Chair elect and Representative-at-Large. The Vice-Chair/Chair Elect position is 6 years total: 2 years as Vice Chair; 2 years as Chair; 2 years as Nominating Committee Chair. The term of office for Representative-at-Large is 2 years. This position is part of the ARCS Steering Committee, serves in an advisory capacity to the Chair, and may be assigned specific responsibilities by the Chair. Elections will be held at the Section meeting in Austin on Thursday, August 13, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. The following candidates have agreed to let their names stand for these positions. Nominations may be made from the floor at the time of the Annual Meeting.

CANDIDATE FOR VICE CHAIR/CHAIR-ELECT

Terry Reilly, Special Projects Officer, The Nickle Arts Museum,

Calgary, Alberta Terry Reilly has been involved with the Archivists of Religious Collections Section for many years, receiving the Sister M. Claude Lane Award in 2003 for her work in religious archives particularly as it relates to work with aboriginal and ecumenical issues. Terry served as Archivist of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada from 1979-2003. She is currently Special Projects Officer for the Nickle Arts Museum at the University of Calgary after serving as Director of Archives and Special Collections from 2003-2008. She is a member of the SAA Program Committee for Austin.



In 2009-2010, Terry will work on two chapters of the proposed new SAA Reader on Issues in Contemporary Religious Archives. She will spend a sabbatical year as a fellow of the Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice at St. Paul's College, University of Manitoba. When asked to stand for election, Terry enthusiastically replied, "Yes!" and says she looks forward to actively serving the Archivists of Religious Collections Section as Vice Chair/Chair elect.

CANDIDATE FOR REPRESENTATIVE-AT-LARGE

Taffey Hall, C.A., Archivist, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, TN

Taffey Hall recently completed a two-year term as President of the Society of Tennessee Archivists and with that behind her is eager to become more involved in ARCS. Other professional activities include: past Vice President of the Society of Tennessee Archivists; former member of the Governing Board of the Southern Archivists Conference; and SAA's Key Contact Representative for Tennessee. She is active in the Association of Librarians and Archivists at Baptist Institutions and Tennessee Baptist Historical Society, editor of the SBHLA's quarterly newsletter Baptist Echoes, and has published in the journal Baptist History and Heritage.



Taffey's response to the request to put her name on the ballot for Representative-at-Large was quick and sure. "We have such a great group of people. I am glad for my name to be placed on the ballot and hope I'll be elected!"

Sr. Mary Felicitas Powers Dies

By Tricia Pyne

I am saddened to share with you the news of Sr. Felicitas Powers' death. Her contributions to Catholic archives were tremendous. She was also a founding member of Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists.

Sr. Mary Felicitas Powers, a Sister of Mercy for 71 years, died at Mercy Convent on April 8, 2009. She was 89. Born Elizabeth Loretto Powers, Sr. Felicitas was the daughter of Loretto McMahan and Charles F. Powers of Savannah. Sr. Felicitas graduated from St. Vincent's Academy, and entered the Sisters of Mercy in Baltimore on Sept. 8, 1938. Sr. Felicitas was an educator and taught in elementary school, high school and on the college level in Baltimore, Savannah, Columbus and Washington, D.C. She taught for several years at St. Vincent's Academy in Savannah and was the principal of Mt. de Sales Academy in Macon, Ga., and Mercy High School in Baltimore. Sister earned a BA from Mt. St. Agnes College in Baltimore and an MA from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. Her Master's Dissertation was titled, "A History of Catholic Education in Georgia."

In the 1970s Sister Felicitas retired from formal teaching and began a distinguished career as an archivist. She served as a consultant to numerous religious congregations in setting up and reorganizing community archives. Sister was very active assisting Sisters of Mercy communities around the world, including Australia, New Zealand, Ireland and the United States. She served as the archivist for the Archdiocese of Baltimore and later for the Diocese of Savannah. Sr. Felicitas earned a reputation as an expert archivist and was in great demand. During her career she provided assistance to 35 different communities of women and men religious. In an article in the April 14, 2005 issue of the Southern Cross, Rita DeLorme said of Sr. Felicitas, "As a preserver of the records of the church and her own order, she has enabled the research of church historians and archivists of the future." In addition to her professional achievements, Sr. Felicitas was known as a skilled seamstress, a talented cook, and an expert on the computer. Sr. Felicitas is survived by her religious community, the Sisters of Mercy, her brothers Eugene Powers and Terrence Powers, her sister, Marianna Seyden, and many nieces and nephews. In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her brothers Richard, Charles, John and Robert Powers and her sister, Mary Powers Entelman. Remembrances may be made to Mercy Convent, 11801 McAuley Drive, Savannah, 31419 or St. Vincent's Academy, 207 East Liberty Street, Savannah, 31401.

Models and Resources Re-visited

By Chris Doan, Archivist, Sisters of the Presentation, San Francisco

May 12, 2009

The Models and Resources section of the ARCS website features a wide breadth of coverage both in terms of the kinds of religious archives represented and the types of resources that are offered.

A quick look around and you will notice there is something for everyone. If you are in the beginning stages of organizing your institution's archives, the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives offers on their website an article series about how to preserve local church records and historical materials. If it's time to update (or create) your archive's disaster plan, the excellent resources listed on the ARCS Preservation and Disaster Planning webpage is a good starting point to begin your research.

Just like the old saying goes, "Why try and re-invent the wheel?" Our colleagues' hard work is just a few clicks away for your own reference and inspiration. I encourage you to bookmark a few of these excellent resources in your social book-marking system for quick and easy access. You will be pleased to know all the links are active and current.

If your archive has created a manual or developed guidelines, the Models and Resources Committee wants to hear from you! Institutions both large and small are welcome and encouraged to submit their own examples. I am currently seeking manuals and guides for procedures and processes used in developing the following areas:

- 1 Digitization projects
- 1 Creating online exhibits
- 1 Preserving digital collections

Together, we can avoid re-inventing the wheel and instead help one another to get moving!

New Materials at the Billy Graham Center Archives

By robert.d.shuster@wheaton.edu

The following are updates on two examples of the new materials recently opened to researchers at the Billy Graham Center Archives at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill. For further information about any of the collections mentioned below, contact the Archives at bgarc@wheaton.edu or 630-752-5910.

Collection 81: Records of Africa Inland Mission International

The BGC Archives opened the records of the nondenominational Protestant ministry Africa Inland Mission (AIM) to researchers thirty years ago in 1979. Ever since then, it has been one of the Archives most heavily used collections. In March of 2009, an additional 23 boxes of files from the United States branch of the mission were added to the collection, as well as films, videos, audio tapes and photographs. These documents, which cover the period from 1970 up to 2000, tell the story of the AIM in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Congo, the Sudan, and other African countries, as was the Seychelles and the Comoros. The materials in this new addition illustrates a wide range of broad topics: the life of a Christian missionary; the activities of AIM and other missions in church planting, education, medicine, and development; the relationship of the mission with Africa Inland Church; the changes in and development of African Christianity in last half of the 20th century; and the political, social and economic history of the continent for the same period. The guide to the collection can be found online at: <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/081.htm>.

Collection 525: Interviews of Alfredo Enrique Gutierrez

Alfredo Enrique Gutierrez was a Billy Graham Center Scholarship student from 1995-1997. He came having already been a pastor in several Christian & Missionary Alliance churches in Florida and Texas. Gutierrez was ordained a minister with the Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination after having accepted a call from God to minister among Spanish-speaking people in the United States. He especially wanted to reach youth for Christ and inspire them to become leaders and pastors. In his interviews he describes a wide range of topics including Cuban Christianity, influence of communism on his home life, immigrating to Miami, Fla., working alongside his family at Los Pinos Nuevos church in Miami, conversion after seeing transformation in his older brother's life, ministering in Spanish speaking churches, Latin American church dynamics, likenesses of being pastor and missionary. Gutierrez's interview is especially valuable for his descriptions of ministering in Spanish-speaking congregations of different Hispanic descents. The events described in the interview cover the time period, 1963-1995. The Alfredo Enrique Gutierrez interview guide is online at www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/525.htm.

ARCS Officers and Editor's Notes

The Archival Spirit is published online 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. Deadlines for submissions are Oct. 15, Feb. 15 and May 15. Send submissions to the Newsletter Editor, Wesley W. Wilson at wwwilson@depauw.edu. Send corrections to Mark Duffy, Web Editor, at mduffy@episcopalarchives.org.

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