

# The Archival Spirit

December, 2015

## From the Chair

Hello everyone,

We had an excellent meeting, program and reception in Cleveland this past August. Ryan K. Lee presented his findings on studying use statistics as a method for making digitization decisions. It is a promising method for deciding what to digitize, but brought up questions for future study. Does digitization really increase use and does increased visibility increase demand for the original? We look forward to more from Ryan in the future.

Our reception was conveniently located a short walk from the convention center at the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland Archives. After a presentation by the archivist, Phil Haas, we took a tour of the surprisingly large holdings. Room after room of stacks greeted the groups of ARCS members as we were led through the repository. We were also shown some very interesting artifacts in the exhibit area.

The Steering Committee is communicating via email and one conference call so far, to plan next year's annual meeting, program and reception. Some possibilities are shaping up for our event in Atlanta including a session proposal. At this early date, it is all very tentative, but the section program may relate to the topic of the

relationship of religious archives to community archives. As many of us represent archives of religious communities, this seems to be a natural connection. We will keep you, the ARCS membership, informed as plans develop in the coming months.

Another item for discussion by the Steering Committee was that of the long-running newsletter, *The Archival Spirit*. Having worked with it in the old print days, I have a fondness for our newsletter. David has been our editor for some time, but saw a need for a more regular production schedule. He has proposed and the Committee agrees that a triennial publication schedule best suits the Section. Therefore, we can look forward to deadlines coming in late October, February and June.

That is all for now, but please contact me when you have thoughts or ideas for ARCS or would like to volunteer to get involved. I am sure we can get you started.

*Wes Wilson, Section Chair  
DePauw University Archives  
Greencastle, IN*

## Contents

### ONE

#### From the Chair

### TWO

#### Looking Back: SAA 2015, Cleveland, OH

Sr. M. Claude Lane Award  
Section Social Reception  
Section Presentation

### THREE

A poem for the New Year  
Wesley Wilson, "Digitizing  
Audiocassettes the Easy (and  
Cheap) Way"

### FOUR

Timothy Binckley, "SMU's  
Bridwell Library publishes  
*The Autobiography of the Rev.  
William Stevenson*"

### FIVE

Rena, Schergen, "Open House  
at the Archdiocese of St. Louis"

### SIX

Dee Gallo, "Seton Key Story"

#### Call for Submissions

# SAA 2015 - Cleveland

## Section Social Reception

*Thank You!*

Phil Haas, Host  
Catholic Diocese of Cleveland  
1404 East 9<sup>th</sup> Street



## Section Presentation

Ryan K. Lee  
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### Data-Driven Decision Making for Digitization

Ryan K. Lee  
L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University

#### Methodology - Data Sources

- ▶ Three data sources used
  - ▶ 2 for circulation statistics
  - ▶ 1 for online use
- ▶ Goal:
  - ▶ Compare two data points (in-house vs. online use), look for patterns and overlaps
- ▶ Parameters: June 2012-May 2014
- ▶ Used student research assistant



#### Conclusions for Phase I and Future Research

- ▶ Initial goal was met = provided list of potential collections to digitize to curators
- ▶ High use collections = deeper levels of descriptions
- ▶ Several questions to resolve regarding accessibility and use of collections in Q2, Q3, and Q4
  - ▶ Collections in Q2 inadequately described online?
  - ▶ Reasons for viewing collections in Q4 online that are not yet digitized?
  - ▶ What to do with Q3?

## 2015 Sr. M. Claude Lane, O.P., Memorial Award

*(goes to)*

**Diane Wells, CA**



*With past ARCS Section Chair,  
Loretta Zwolak Greene, right*

Diane Wells, archivist and records manager of the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia in Seattle, is the 2015 recipient of the Sister M. Claude Lane, O.P., Memorial Award given by the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in conjunction with the Society of Southwest Archivists. The award was presented at a ceremony during the SAA Annual Meeting in Cleveland, August 21.

The award honors an archivist who has made a significant contribution to the field of religious archives. Wells has held her position at the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia in Seattle since 1994. Early in her tenure, she produced a policies and procedures manual that has become a foundational resource for Episcopal diocesan records management programs. She also has creatively used her organization's archives to promote major commemorative events, such as the 150th anniversary of the Episcopal Church's presence in the Northwest. During the yearlong celebration, Wells wrote [articles](#), provided background material and photographs, and produced a history video, "One in the Spirit: 150 Years of the Episcopal Church in Western Washington." Wells maintains the blog *Archives in Action* and was one of the first religious archivists to embrace blogging as a way to maintain its profile.

Diane has chaired SAA's Archivists of Religious Collections Section and represented it within conference programs, speaking on such topics as documenting faith communities, utilizing volunteers, and administering clergy misconduct records.

She has been actively involved in the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists, and served as the NEHA Vice President for two years. Diane also is a founding member of the Episcopal Archivists Network, and has served on its Steering Committee since 2004. This group works to establish standards, conduct workshops and consult with dioceses to educate and promote professional management of records and archives within Episcopal Church administration.

# From the Members

## Digitizing Audiocassettes the Easy (and Cheap) Way

For decades cassette tapes were kings of the audio world. Introduced in the U.S. in 1964 as the Compact Cassette, by 1968 they had almost entirely supplanted the 8-track and reel-to-reel tape. They had the advantage of being portable and people could make their own recordings from inexpensive cassette recorders up to high-end cassette decks and amplifiers. But now the cassette tape is dead.\*



The DePauw Archives has more than 2600 audiocassette tapes. Our archives hold many of this audio format, slowly deteriorating until we are able to digitize the recordings on them. If need be, we can play a cassette tape for users on one of the many cassette player/recorders that are still available. Produced in the millions, these machines will be around for a long time.

There are two good reasons for creating digital facsimiles of our audio cassette tape recordings (referred to as cassettes from here on). The first is that accessing the recordings from the original cassette causes wear to the tape. In time this degrades the audio signal, especially with the natural breakdown of the physical medium. The wear can be exacerbated by any sticky-shed syndrome that may exist. Not all tape manufacturers employed the unstable formulation in their process, but many did. Also, being smaller, the tape in the cassettes is thinner, particularly on the 90 and 120 minute tapes. Often the tape has been recorded on both sides which can lead to print through from one side to the other.

Second, more users can access the recording as a digital file (providing copyright questions have been answered or are insignificant) on the archives' public site. This is especially important in oral history projects when users can have both the written transcript and the interviewee's voice as well. The largest category of recordings in the DePauw Archives are presentations given on campus. These recordings can also become wonderful additions to the digital library as they often are the only document of the event.

In 2003, the DePauw University Archives received an LSTA grant to digitize its 800+ title, audio reel-to-reel tape collection. That money allowed us to hire two technicians to play the tapes, some dating back to the 1940s, on a reconditioned tape deck. The machine was kept working well enough and long enough to complete the project. However, the resulting audio files could not be made available to the public until we had space and time to load them into our Digital Library with CONTENTdm; that was last year – more than ten years after the start of the project.

Early this year I had the need for a digital audio recorder to resume interviews of retired faculty members at DePauw. After some research, we purchased a Roland R-05 because of its price (\$200), small size, high quality and ability to produce, simultaneously, both an archival wav file (uncompressed) and an MP3 file for the user recording. This very convenient capability allows us to easily download both file formats to the network drive – one for archival storage and one for the digital library. Quickly I saw the application to digitize our cassette collection.

Now we have a set-up at the front desk that allows an archives staff member to digitize our cassettes while doing other work. The digitization occurs in real time, however, so it is time-consuming. Each recording is a different length requiring the staff member to listen for the end of the recording. Because of the need for monitoring the digitization process, the digitization goes on only when there is nobody in the reading room. Even with these constraints though, many tapes can be digitized in a week and the cumulative effect is a growing number of digital recordings from our audiocassette collection with little cost in equipment and no software to learn.

\* (Or is it? Last year Sony announced that it was able to fit 185 terabytes of data on one cassette.)

*Wesley Wilson*  
*DePauw University Archives*

## An old poem for a new year

### In Memoriam, [Ring out, wild bells]

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

*Lord Alfred Tennyson,*  
*1809-1892*

## **Bridwell Library publishes *The Autobiography of the Rev. William Stevenson***

Archivists preserve historical records on an ongoing basis by taking proactive steps to ensure that future generations will be able to study the documents that have been entrusted to their care. Standard procedures include gaining full ownership, handling materials carefully, minimizing exposure to ultraviolet light, separating and disposing of non-archival items, rehousing materials in acid-free folders and boxes, arranging and describing collections (in order to know what is there), storing collections in humidity and temperature controlled rooms, and monitoring security in storage and reading rooms.

Another effective preservation strategy is to publish historical records in print and/or digitally. Reproducing and distributing documents allow broad access to information contained in records that may be too fragile for large numbers of people to handle. Additionally, print and digital surrogates can be used by researchers at their convenience without being limited by reading room hours and the costs of travel.

During the summer of 2015, Bridwell Library, the principal bibliographic resource at Southern Methodist University for the fields of theology and religious studies, honored the bicentennial of Methodist ministries in Texas by curating an exhibition\* of early Texas Methodist documents) and publishing *The Autobiography of the Rev. William Stevenson*. Stevenson (1768-1857) was ordained by Bishops Francis Asbury and William McKendree in 1809. He served many years as an itinerant minister and pioneer church planter in Arkansas and Louisiana. In 1815 Stevenson crossed the Red River from southern Arkansas Territory (now part of Oklahoma) and delivered a sermon near Pecan Point, becoming the first Methodist, and perhaps the first Protestant, to preach openly in Spanish Texas.

In *The Autobiography of the Rev. William Stevenson*, a nineteenth-century preacher narrates his spiritual formation, his personal embrace of Methodism, and his early experiences in the ministry. In 1841 Stevenson compiled his memoirs up to the year 1816 and added this personal note: "Still I am trying to labor in the good work of the Lord, which has been life to my soul for forty years. I am now in the 73d year of my age, and waiting, in great confidence, for the fulfillment of the promise of that crown which the Lord hath laid up for all them that love his appearing." Although he lived another sixteen years, Stevenson never completed recording his life story.

*The Texas Christian Advocate* published Rev. Stevenson's memoirs as a series of seven articles in 1858 as a memorial tribute. In the decades that followed, Stevenson's memory and legacy were largely forgotten. A portion of the autobiography was republished in the *Southwestern Advocate*, successor to *The Texas Christian Advocate*, in 1936. A 1964 book by Walter N. Vernon, *William Stevenson, Riding Preacher*, utilized the memoirs heavily but did not reproduce them in their entirety. In August 2015 Bridwell Library published the original articles in a single volume edited and annotated by Perkins School of Theology Professor of Church History Ted A. Campbell. 250 copies were printed and are being distributed free of charge. An online PDF version is also available at: <https://www.smu.edu/Bridwell/SpecialCollectionsandArchives/Exhibitions/EarlyTexas/Stevenson>.

By republishing William Stevenson's autobiography in two formats, Bridwell Library has made it possible for new generations to study the reminiscences of a Southwestern Methodist pioneer.

\*<http://www.smu.edu/Bridwell/SpecialCollectionsandArchives/Exhibitions/EarlyTexas>

Timothy Binkley  
Bridwell Library  
Perkins School of  
Theology  
Southern Methodist  
University

## Open House at the Archdiocese of St. Louis

The Archdiocese of St. Louis Archives and Records hosted its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Open House for the Curia on October 7, 2015. The outreach event was scheduled for a few hours in the morning and invited parish and Archdiocesan-wide employees to visit the Archives. We counted 116 visitors! During the event, we displayed documents and artifacts, offered tours of the archives spaces, and demonstrated our content management software. And in order to reel in the apathetic types, we served up doughnuts and coffee. (Of course, we didn't allow folks to eat and drink in the same room as the displayed materials!)



Certainly even in our own institution, many people are unaware of what archives are and what they do. Offices and agencies don't realize the extent of our holdings and the unique value of having an institutional archives. So we used the Open House to give the Curia a glimpse of the great history of the Archdiocese in order to foster a bit of knowledge and a ton of pride in our past.

For the displays, there were three tables each with a theme: World War II, Civil Rights, and Sports. Rather than tell a narrative as you might do with an exhibit, we just set out items for each theme with accompanying descriptions of the items. Keep it captivating but simple! One of the favorite items this year was the photograph of Bishop Charles Koester as a young priest with Yogi Berra and Babe Ruth in 1948. In the Reading Room, we set up a mini-movie theater to play a 7-minute clip of Quiz-A-Catholic, the Archdiocesan-produced Catholic television game show from the 1960s.



We gave tours of the closed archives spaces, including our fancy movable shelving system. It's an unusual sight to see a single aisle containing 1500 sacramental registers representing over 110 parishes and institutions. Despite the seeming lackluster number of boxes on shelves, never underestimate the impression of neatly organized and labeled boxes, since no one's office really looks that way! We're guessing that a few people suddenly remembered those boxes of unknown and unused records in the office closet, and will soon send them our way.

Another aim of the Open House event was to put the Archives on everyone's radar—let them know we exist and more importantly, show them what we can do for them! A computer station was set up for demonstrating the content management software HP Records Manager (HPRM).

We wanted offices to know that not only can we take those space-consuming records off their hands, they will also be able to easily search through file inventories with HPRM and access them right here in the Archives. But wait, there's more! We'll also help you manage the accumulation of pesky electronic documents on your network drive!

With all the rules surrounding Archives for the protection of materials, we hope that the Open House demonstrated to the Curia that despite the rules and regulations, we are accessible and ready to assist! We want our colleagues in the Administration to recognize our staff's names and faces, and to realize that foremost, the Office of Archives and Records exists to serve.

*Rena Schergen  
Archdiocese of St. Louis*



## Seton Key Story

## Newsletter Submissions

In keeping with plans to produce regular triennial issues of *The Archival Spirit*, submissions for the Spring, 2016 newsletter (early February) are being solicited **now**. Accompanying graphics are welcome, as always.

Send to:

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As Andy Warhol once said, everyone will have 15 minutes of fame. Ours here at the Provincial Archives of the Daughters of Charity in Emmitsburg, MD., came quite unexpectedly. About three months ago, my colleague Rob Judge, Executive Director of The National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, came into my office, closing the door behind him. “We’ve been contacted by the State Department,” he said. “They want us to come up with something that belonged to Mother Seton that would be appropriate for President Obama to give as a gift to Pope Francis when he visits the White House.” Then he put his finger to his lips: “This must be strictly confidential,” he continued. It seems that other organizations were also being asked for gift ideas but until something was selected and vetted, there could be no publicity.

“Why Mother Seton?” we wondered. Most likely the State Department had done research on American saints and noticed that the Seton Shrine was preparing for a three-day series of events honoring the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her canonization. For American Catholics, she represents a myriad of roles: wife, mother, widow, founder of a community of women religious, and pioneer of parochial education, just to name a few. It was clear, as Rob explained, that the State House staff had done their homework. Elizabeth Ann Seton was high among their choices, they told us. We never found out who the others were.

Almost all of the items exhibited in the Shrine Museum are artifacts from the Provincial Archives, so any gift needed to come from our repository. I took Bonnie Weatherly, our Archives manager, into my confidence and together we prepared a list of artifacts that might possibly meet the criteria. What stood out most were keys to the original doors on Mother Seton’s first residence here in St. Joseph’s Valley in Emmitsburg: the so-called Stone House, just across the campus from the Archives and the Shrine. One of the two keys had been on exhibit in the Shrine museum while the other was kept among our collection of Seton artifacts. Dating from 1809, this key appears to be like so many others of its time. Yet its symbolism sets it apart – it literally and figuratively opened the door to let in new students who would experience Catholic education and to send out women religious to care for the poor and voiceless by opening service ministries that continue on into our own century. That narrative provided just what was needed for a gift from President Obama to the Pope.

When the decision was finally made to accept the key, Archives needed to take the lead since it was the physical property of the Daughters of Charity, Province of St. Louise. Its path from our repository to the United States Department of State is an excellent example of the legalities archivists must observe when transferring items from their collections. In order to give the key to the State Department for the President to present it as a gift, we had to deaccession it. The State Department presented us with a Donor Form, which I prepared and Sr. Louise Gallahue, our Province’s Visitatrix, then signed. In addition to documenting the donation, the agreement also stipulated that were there a change of plans and the key not be given to Pope Francis, it would be returned. Only when that document had been completed and received had the key been legally transferred. The final step, then, was to change our records to show that one of the two “keys to the original doors of the Stone House” had been donated to the State Department. The second key will go into the Shrine Museum to replace its predecessor.

The Seton Shrine staff were (and still are) elated – what a wonderful way to let the world know about their patroness and her National Shrine. As Rob suggested, the key was “a fitting tribute for a woman who opened the doors for so many women to serve the poor,” perfect for a gift for Pope Francis, “a man who has been a strong advocate for those who are poor and marginalized.” For my part, I was elated as well – an artifact from *our Archives* would become a part of national history. And as the archivist who was lucky enough to be part of those confidential meetings and navigate the legal steps to make this property transfer happen – wow! Just wow!

Dee Gallo  
Daughters of Charity Provincial Archives  
Emmitsburg, MD