

N E A N E W S L E T T E R

Volume 33, Number 2 • April 2006



C O V E R — From the Ernst Photo Collection: Nuns kneeling in St. Clare's Chapel in Newport. *Courtesy of The Preservation Society of Newport County.*

I N S I D E — Planning for Off-site Disasters: Lessons Learned from the Artex Fire (*Archival Insight*, page 4); The Ernst Photo Collection (*Open Forum*, page 12); Building an Exhibit on "Building Brandeis" (*Around and About*, page 20)

N E A

New England Archivists

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE

**WPI Archives and Special Collections
Gordon Library
100 Institute Road • Worcester, MA 01609
<www.newenglandarchivists.org>**

NEA Executive Board

President:	Paul Carnahan
President-Elect:	Nora Murphy
Past President:	Mary Ide
Secretary:	Elizabeth Slomba
Treasurer:	Lois Hamill
Representatives-at-Large:	Tom Hyry Brenda Lawson Anne Sauer Mark Savolis Jean Nielsen Berry
Clerk:	Tracy Messer
PR Coordinators:	Tara Hurt
Development Coordinator:	Jane Ward
Newsletter Editors:	Susan Earle Michael Forstrom Maryalice Mohr Sheila Spalding
Web Coordinator:	Jonathan Penyack

Membership in *New England Archivists, Inc.* is open to all.

Dues of \$30/year (\$40 for institutions) should be sent to: Rodney Obien, WPI Archives and Special Collections, Gordon Library, 100 Institute Road, Worcester, MA 01609.

Notices of archival events should be sent to: NEA c/o WPI Archives and Special Collections, Gordon Library, 100 Institute Road, Worcester, MA 01609, or electronically to <michael.forstrom@yale.edu>.

The *NEA Newsletter* is published quarterly in January, April, July and October. The contents of the *Newsletter* may be reproduced in whole or in part provided that credit is given.

Articles and **News** of interest to archivists, historical society members, historians, and other NEA members should be sent to: *NEA Newsletter* Editors, c/o WPI Archives and Special Collections, Gordon Library, 100 Institute Road, Worcester, MA 01609, or <newsletter@newenglandarchivists.org>.

Contributions to the NEA Web site should be sent to: <webcoordinator@newenglandarchivists.org>.

Deadlines for submitting materials are:

November 15 for January issue
February 10 for April issue
May 15 for July issue
August 15 for October issue

Advertising Policy:

There will be no fee to list position openings. Advertisements for archival products will be accepted as space permits. Advertising should be submitted to Jane Ward, (978) 459-2129 or <jane.ward@comcast.net>.

Rates: Full page: \$125; half page: \$75; quarter page: \$40. Payment is requested at the time the ad is submitted. All checks should be made payable to *New England Archivists*.



Table of Contents

From the Editors	3
People	3
Archival Insight	4
Planning for Off-site Disasters: Lessons Learned from the Artex Fire	4
Inside NEA	7
From the President	7
Executive Board Meeting Report	7
Officers' Reports	7
Meetings	8
Committee Reports	8
New Business	9
New Members	10
Internet Tidbits	11
Open Forum	12
The Ernst Photo Collection	12
Reviews	15
News and Notes	16
Connecticut	16
Maine	16
Massachusetts	17
Vermont	19
News From The State Archives	19
Around and About	20
Building an Exhibit on "Building Brandeis"	20
Calendar	23

From the Editors

- Michael L. Forstrom

This April 2006 issue of the *NEA Newsletter* covers a diverse set of organizational and professional concerns. In the President's column, Paul Carnahan discusses the organization's response to archives damaged by recent hurricanes, as well as the Branding Committee's efforts to update the organization's graphic identity. In *Archival Insight*, Aimee Primeaux, Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC), discusses disaster planning. In *Around & About*, Maggie McNeely, Brandeis University, discusses exhibition preparation. And in a special *Open Forum* feature, Linda Eppich, Preservation Society of Newport County, discusses the photographic collection of the Ernst family of Newport, Rhode Island.

Aimee Primeaux's *Archival Insight* article focuses on disaster planning for off-site storage. She describes the disaster relief efforts of two local institutions, the Old South Meeting House and Redwood Library and Athenaeum, following a December 2005 fire to an off-site facility, the Artex Service Building Complex, in Dedham, Massachusetts. Primeaux provides a timely summary of this accident, and a useful list of tips for planning off-site storage.

Maggie McNeely's *Around & About* article provides a detailed account of her preparation of an exhibition on the architectural origins of Brandeis University. She discusses planning, research, preparation of material, publicity and exhibition results. Although she pays particular attention to the roll of staff in building an exhibition, she emphasizes the need to make choices about what to include, how to organize material, and how to present it. Her article, entitled "Building an Exhibit on "Building Brandeis"," suggests comparisons between exhibition preparation and architectural design.

In our *Open Forum* feature, Linda Eppich discusses the photographic collection of a family who operated a studio in Newport, Rhode Island, and the outreach that has gone into the processing of the collection. Eppich describes community-based efforts to identify photographs in the collection, including an exhibition, "Remembering Newport: A Community Research Project," in which unidentified images were run in the local *Daily News* with the hope that residents might contact the Preservation Society with information. ☺

☺ NEW ENGLAND ARCHIVISTS ☺

People

Susanne Belovari joined the Digital Collections and Archives at Tufts University, Medford, MA as the new Archivist for Reference and Collections in fall of 2005. Before coming to Tufts, Susanne was Archivist and Restitution Historian for the Holocaust Victims' Information and Support Center, Jewish Community of Vienna, Austria. In addition to Holocaust restitution research and cases, Susanne was asked to design a new archival framework and infrastructure for the archives closed down by National Socialists in 1938. She processed and cataloged newly discovered Holocaust records and historical registry material and collaborated with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Genealogical Society of Utah to have records microfilmed. She also undertook an inventory of historical IKG archives at the Central

Archives for the History of Jewish People, Jerusalem. Susanne holds a Ph.D. in comparative sociology/history from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

NEA member and fellow of the Society of American Archivists Connell Gallagher was featured in the Sunday, February 5, edition of the Burlington *Free Press*, Vermont's largest newspaper. Gallagher's 36-year career in the Department of Special Collections at the University of Vermont is celebrated in the article "The Next Chapter." Gallagher, who plans to retire in June, told the *Free Press* that he had "picked the right profession and right institution." What's the first thing that Connie plans to do upon his retirement? Process 75 boxes of his own papers, of course. ☺

Archival Insight

Planning for Off-site Disasters: Lessons Learned from the Artex Fire

Aimee Primeaux, Field Service Representative, Northeast Document Conservation Center

Disasters are on all of our minds nowadays. After the hurricanes, floods, and fires of 2005, those of us who work with cultural collections are asking ourselves how we can be better prepared. According to the Heritage Health Index released by Heritage Preservation in late 2005, 80% of collecting institutions in the United States don't have an emergency plan with staff trained in its implementation. Of these institutions, 70% are archives, 78% are libraries, and 92% are historical societies.¹ These are striking numbers, and they bring to light the urgent need to update or create disaster plans for our institutions. In the Northeast we are vulnerable to hurricanes, nor'easters, and flooding (both on the coast and in the mountains). When we see the television images of the devastation on the Gulf Coast or flooded communities in New Hampshire, we think about updating our plans, but there are other kinds of disasters we don't often consider. What about disasters to collections stored off-site? If you have a disaster plan, does it include provisions for your off-site holdings?

While most of us are familiar, at least at the most basic level, with what to do when a disaster happens to on-site collections, we don't always prepare for a disaster to an off-site storage facility. Recently, two New England institutions had to deal with this first hand after a fire broke out in an annex of their off-site storage facility. Both the Old South Meeting House and the Redwood Library and Athenaeum had portions of their collections stored in the Artex Service Building Complex in Dedham,

Mass. Early in the morning of December 3, 2005, a fire started in an adjoining building. While Artex didn't have a sprinkler system, they did have a security system that alerted employees when a window burst under the intense heat of the flames next door. The ensuing disaster had a long-term effect on both the Redwood Library and the Old South Meeting House. Two months later, both institutions are still managing the rehabilitation of their collections. Thankfully, neither organization suffered major losses, and damage to their collections was not severe.

The Redwood Library and Athenaeum in Newport, Rhode Island, is the oldest lending library in continuous use in the country. A section of the ceiling collapsed two years ago, coincidentally just before the Redwood began an extensive renovation. With a substantial rare book, fine art, furniture, and map collection, they decided to move all of their holdings off-site to ensure their safety during renovation. Most of the general collection and some rare books were taken to the William B. Meyer storage facility. Paintings, sculptures, two rare book collections, furniture, and maps were taken to Artex. The original collection of 1748 (deemed most valuable) had already been brought to Artex after the ceiling collapsed.

Because these books would be on the shelves for a long period of time, they were placed on shelves lined with linen cloth and interleaved with Japanese paper. The rest of the items at Artex were kept in archival boxes.

Lisa Long, Ezra Stiles Special Collections Librarian at the Redwood, oversaw the disaster recovery. Artex staff called her at 1:00 pm on Saturday, December 3rd. Artex personnel were busy recovering materials from the site, but they did not feel comfortable making decisions about the books. Lisa was able to reach Dedham with the director of the library by 4:00 pm. There was no electricity, and the fire marshal gave them only one hour to assess their collections. The largest room was very wet and there was a gaping hole in the ceiling. Lisa decided that everything in that room would have to wait until the next morning. The second room, which housed the original collection, had minimal damage. Water from the fire hoses had seeped under the doors and books on the bottom shelves had started to wick up the water, though books on higher shelves were dry. It was chance that this room did not sustain as much



Photo courtesy of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island.

damage as the other; if it had, the original 1748 collection would have sustained more damage. They needed to move the wet books and get them into dry boxes. The books were on compacted shelving, and an Artex worker had to crawl into the small space of the shelves in order to hand them out. The wet books were placed in clean boxes on pallets in an empty room.

The workers were ordered by the fire marshal to vacate the building by 5:00 pm. This gave Lisa time to plan for the next day. She made several calls: to James Gilbert at Munters Corporation, who scheduled a truck and crew to be at Artex by 8:00 am on Saturday; to bookbinder Jim Currier to confirm freezing procedures for 18th century books; to the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) to discuss disaster response procedures and to inform them that some of the wettest materials would be coming to them; and to furniture specialists in Newport and Boston for advice on the proper recovery of water-damaged furniture. Some soaked paintings and drawings went to NEDCC for assessment. Wet books from the rare book collection were put straight onto a freezer truck and are being freeze-dried by Munters. Although the Redwood is still recovering their collection, nothing has been lost. Some items will need conservation work, and all of the wet books will need treatment.

The Old South Meeting House is one of the historic darlings of Revolutionary-era Boston. It was also the first building to be saved from demolition based solely on its connection to historical events. Shortly after saving its famous bell tower from the wrecking ball, church preservation activists established the museum in

1877. This museum now contains nearly 2,000 artifacts, manuscripts, photos, textiles, paintings, and some pieces of furniture. The bulk of its collection had been moved to Artex in the aftermath of a mold problem in the on-site stacks. The collections would remain off-site until proper on-site storage could be built.

Emily Curran, Executive Director at Old South Meeting House, did not find out about the fire at Artex until she came to work on Monday, December 5th. By then, all of Old South's off-site collections had been moved to the Artex facility in New York City. Emily was unable to travel to New York, but she was able to speak with Artex staff by phone to make sure certain priority items were given special attention until the insurance adjuster arrived. The adjuster identified items that needed immediate attention and sent them to NEDCC for assessment and subsequent freezing by Munters. Materials that couldn't be dried on-site or frozen were taken to Fine Arts Enterprises, a storage facility in Boston that specializes in museum collections. Triage took place there, and the collection is still being stabilized. By calling the New England Museum Association (NEMA) and other colleagues in the area, Emily found staff to help with recovery and initial stabilization. Eventually, she hired Museum & Collector Resource in Concord, Mass. to help with the stabilization. Because the fire did not occur on-site, staff had to deal with a major disaster while also maintaining daily on-site operations.

As you revise and update your disaster plans, consider your off-site storage facility. Based on lessons learned by Lisa Long and Emily Curran, here is a list of tips from which we can learn:

- Always provide the storage facility with your emergency contact information and instructions to call in the event of an emergency.
- Ask the storage facility about their disaster plan, and make sure that they have a relationship with the local fire department.
- Have a standing agreement with disaster recovery companies such as Munters, BMS Catastrophe, or Belfor, so that if a disaster happens, you know who to call, and they are familiar with your collections.
- Pack for a disaster. When you pack items to send them off-site, always pack as if you are expecting a disaster. Leave books in sturdy archival boxes and, if you interleave them, use wax paper rather than tissue paper. High-quality enclosures will absorb moisture without staining.
- Identify a facility to call for secondary storage in case of a disaster. Include this in your disaster plan and make sure they know that they are on your list.
- Make sure your on-site plan is updated to include provisions for an off-site disaster. Keep your disaster team members up-to-date on where off-site collections are located. And make sure they will be able to travel to the site in case of an emergency. ☺

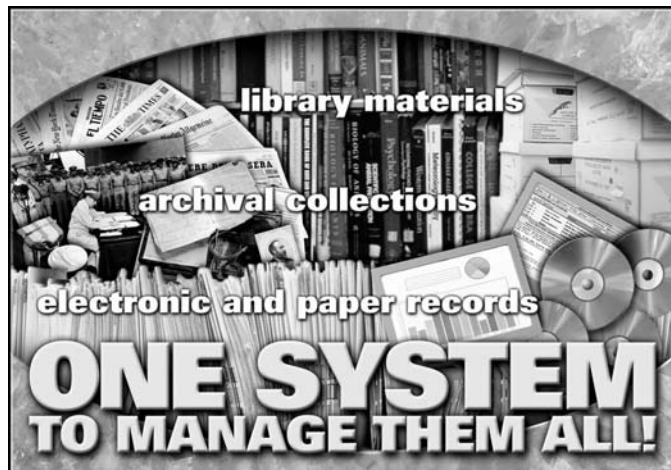
¹ Heritage Preservation. *A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America's Collections*, 2005, <www.heritagepreservation.org/HHI/index.html> (February 2, 2006).

NEA's New Graphic Identity

- Mary Ide

The New England Archivists has a new graphic identity. After more than a year of work, including a survey of the membership, the Branding Committee presented its recommendation to the board in January. The board overwhelmingly adopted the committee's recommendation (shown here and on the inside front cover).

The Branding Committee also recommended that the organization use a tagline with its logo. The committee narrowed the tagline choices down to two options. The board unanimously selected one of those options to appear with the logo. The new tag line is "Taking the Past into the Future." The logo may appear in four versions: grayscale, with or without the tagline; or gray and cranberry, with or without the tagline. The logo color, a deep cranberry, is intended to be evocative of New England's historical brick buildings and cranberry bogs. The color version of the logo can be seen on the NEA Web site at <www.newenglandarchivists.org>. The board asked the Public Relations Committee to manage and oversee the



Cuadra STAR solutions meet the full range of archive, library and records management automation needs. With STAR's robust browser-based retrieval, you can search both within and across collections. And, now you have a choice between managing the collections on an in-house server or through our hosted ASP service.



11835 W. Olympic Blvd., Ste 855, Los Angeles, CA 90064
Phone: (800) 366-1390 • E-mail: sales@cuadra.com • Internet: www.cuadra.com

N E A

New England Archivists

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE

implementation of the new NEA graphic logo and tagline, including maintaining an NEA style sheet.

The new logo was developed for NEA by two graphic designers, Doug Scott and Tyler Kemp-Benedict, from the WGBH Educational Foundation Design Department. Doug Scott, WGBH Design Director, has been with WGBH for 30 years and is an adjunct faculty member at the Rhode Island School of Design and Yale University. Tyler Kemp-Benedict, an Associate Designer, came to WGBH in 2001 after working with KB-Creative, Minelli, Inc. and AIB Studio Influx. The Branding Committee wants to publicly recognize and thank Doug Scott and Tyler Kemp-Benedict for their extraordinary contributions to NEA.

The Branding Committee members were Paul Carnahan, Tara Hurt, Mary Ide, Lianne Kearney, Tracy Messer, Rodney Obien, Anne Ostendarp, Michael Rush, Kelcy Shepherd, Karen Spicher, Phyllis Steele, Cynthia Swank, Valerie Wingfield, and Nanci Young. In addition to developing a new logo and tagline, the committee evaluated and recommended a slight revision to the NEA mission statement, considered a name change for the organization, and identified NEA's top six target audiences. ☺



**Back Issues of the
NEA Newsletter
Now Available Online!**

Visit us online at
<www.newenglandarchivists.org/newsletter/index>
to view issues of *NEA Newsletter*
dating back January 2002.

Also, stay tuned for current issues available
online exclusively to NEA members.

Inside NEA

From the President

- Paul Carnahan



The New England Archivists is moving forward with outreach and improvement of internal communications in three important and exciting ways. These initiatives take the form of contributions to hurricane relief in the south, use of a new logo, and services to members through the World Wide Web.

In January the NEA Executive Board decided to contribute \$500 to the relief fund established by the Society of Southern Archivists and the Society of American Archivists to benefit archives damaged by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The board also decided to match individual member's donations to the same fund made during the period of January – June 2006, up to another \$500. The board is undertaking this effort because of the severity and wide geographic spread of the damage inflicted by these storms. Members who would like to make contributions can send them to SSA-SAA EDA Grant Fund, Society of American Archivists, 527 South Wells Street, Fifth Floor, Chicago, IL 60607.

For those members who feel uncomfortable about membership dues being spent on hurricane relief outside of New England, please rest assured that the board discussed this issue thoroughly before making a decision. Although many votes on the board are unanimous, this issue divided the board. In the process of this discussion, we decided on a two-part donation that includes personal donations from members as a way of gauging how enthusiastic our membership is about making the donation. If our members wish to see NEA donate a full \$1000 to this cause, and be listed alongside other regional archival institutions as a major donor, the thinking went, they will need to make significant contributions from their personal funds rather than taking the “easy” way of contributing funds from the NEA treasury.

Along different lines, NEA has adopted a new logo to update its image and attract more attention to the profession. Following the capable leadership of Mary Ide, the Branding Committee has worked hard to find a new graphic identity for the organization. As you will see

elsewhere in this issue, the organization has adopted an attractive new logo that is both forward looking and reminiscent of our folder-based traditions.

At the same time we are adopting a new look to appeal to archivists and non-archivists alike, we are working on communication within our own organization. As many of you may have learned at the Spring 2006 Conference, we are now making available new online tools to increase collaboration and communication within the organization. These enhancements will include new e-mail distribution lists, an online membership directory, and the potential for members to set up their own blogs and Web pages. A further improvement in electronic communications is that back issues of the *NEA Newsletter* will be on our Web site soon.

As I leave the NEA presidency I am pleased that the organization is moving forward with these and other projects. NEA is a strong organization to which many people devote a lot of time and energy. It has been a pleasure working with you as your president and I look forward to seeing projects through to completion as the Immediate Past President. ☺

Executive Board Meeting Report

- Elizabeth Slomba

The business handled at the January 17, 2006 Executive Board Meeting is summarized below. All **VOTING** is in bold. Complete minutes are available on the NEA Web site or from the secretary.

Paul Carnahan called the meeting to order at 10:30 pm. Minutes from the October 14, 2005 Executive Board Meeting were presented. **All members voted to accept the October 14, 2005 Executive Board Meeting Minutes.**

Officers' Reports

Vice-President

The Fall 2006 Conference will be held at the University of New Hampshire in Durham on October 20-21, 2006. **All members voted in favor to appoint Bill Ross, chair, UNH, Eleta Exline, registrar, UNH, Barbara Rimkunas, Exeter Historical Society, Paige Roberts, Springfield**

College, and Elizabeth Slomba, UNH to the Fall 2006 Local Arrangements Committee. All members voted in favor to appoint Donna Longo DiMichele, chair, Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services, Liz Andrews, MIT, Allison Cywin, University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, Ed Desrochers, Phillips Exeter Academy, Suzy Taraba, Wesleyan University, and Sarina Rodriguez Wyant, University of Rhode Island to the Fall 2006 Program Committee.

Immediate Past President

There are no nominations for the Archival Advocacy award.

Treasurer

Lois Hamill presented the final statements for 2005 and the proposed budget for 2006. The Hale and Haas Awards income and expenses are now not counted as part of the operating budget. The board debated who should be required to attend board meetings and who would be reimbursed according to a proposed travel reimbursement policy. It was agreed that the proposed policy would be revised and reconsidered at a later date.

The board reviewed the proposed income for 2006 from membership, interest, vendors and other sources. Attendees expressed concern over dropping membership numbers and mentioned the critical need for renewing old members and recruiting new members.

There was a lengthy discussion about the Education Committee's income and expenses and plans for workshops in 2006. In response to the increasing costs for providing food at breaks, the board debated whether or not to raise workshop fees to cover food costs. **All members voted in favor to raise workshop fees to \$25 for a half day workshop and to \$50 for a full day workshop and the fees to take affect after the Spring 2006 Conference.**

The board then reviewed the proposed expenses for 2005 and the deficit in the budget. There was a brief discussion of potential and expected branding costs, which would be absorbed by various committees. Attendees discussed the one-time only costs in the budget, such as payment for an SSL certificate for the Web site and contract labor costs for cleaning up and preparing the membership database for conversion to the online directory.

After considerable discussion about where and how to trim

expenses and the inclusion of the cuts in the budget, the board reviewed the revised budget. Paul Carnahan discussed NEA's investment in providing value to the membership, such as the online membership directory, and in recruiting and retaining members. **All members voted in favor to accept an NEA Budget of \$47,868 in expenses.**

Meetings

Spring 2006 Local Arrangements and Program

There was a brief discussion about the program for the Spring 2006 Conference and local arrangements issues.

Committee Reports to the Board

Ad Hoc Committee for NEA Policies

All members voted in favor to appoint an Ad Hoc Policy Review Committee, which will report to the board at the Winter 2007 Executive Board Meeting. All members voted in favor to appoint Susan von Salis as chair of the Ad Hoc Policy Review Committee. There will be two additional people to be appointed later serving on the committee.

Branding Committee

Mary Ide discussed the recommendations from the Branding Committee for the new logo and taglines for the NEA graphic identity. The consensus choice of the committee (based on the committee and membership input) was for the file logo since that logo design emphasizes archivists. There was a brief discussion of a recommended font. **All members voted in favor to adopt the color and grey-scale graphic identity proposals as contained in the Branding Committee report.** The board then discussed the proposed taglines, reasons to use taglines, and the connection to NEA's mission. **It was moved that NEA adopt the use of a tagline in the graphic identity. Six members voted in favor of the motion; 2 voted against.** The motion passed. **All members voted in favor that NEA adopt "Taking the Past into the Future" as the official tagline.**

The job descriptions for the Public Relations Coordinators need to be updated since they will be in charge of the graphic identity style sheet. The new graphic identity will be implemented through the normal course of NEA business, though some of the registration and other conference mate-

rials for the spring conference will use the old logo since they have already been printed.

Membership

The online membership directory will be password accessible to members only. The Web and Membership Committees will be demonstrating the directory at the Spring 2006 Conference. Registration for access to the directory will be automated through email to the membership. **All members voted in favor that NEA use the Skybuilders online membership directory as the primary administrative membership database.**

Membership Secretary

The board reviewed the membership numbers submitted by Rodney Obien and discussed the numbers of members who have not yet renewed and the true benchmark number for membership.

Newsletter

Attendees discussed the proposal of putting PDFs of back issues of the newsletter online, making the current issue available to members only. **All members voted in favor that NEA put PDFs of the newsletter on the Web site, with back issues available for public access and the current issue available to members only, pending implementation of the online membership database.**

Outreach

All members voted to appoint Ben Johnson, Massachusetts Historical Society to the Outreach Committee for a term to run 2006-2009.

Web

Jonathan Penyack led a live demonstration of the proposed online membership directory. Additional functionality of the online membership directory can include customizable functions, list management, capability to run reports and surveys, blogging capabilities, and Web page space for members.

New Business

College and University Archivists Conference Steering Committee

All members voted in favor to appoint Elizabeth Slomba, chair, University of New Hampshire, Karen Adler Abramson, Brandeis University, Jeff Marshall, University

of Vermont, Rodney Gorme Obien, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Betsy Pittman, University of Connecticut, and Nova Seals, Connecticut College to the College and University Archivists Steering Committee. One additional member will be appointed later.

Katrina Relief funds

A flyer about the solicitation for donations to SAA Katrina Relief Fund will be in the registration packet for the Spring 2006 Conference; donations will be collected at the registration desk as well. SAA will track donations and report to NEA the donation amounts. The NEA matching offer will apply to donations made between January 1, 2006 and June 30, 2006.

Privacy Policy

There was a brief discussion about the proposed Privacy Policy, but further discussion was postponed to a later meeting.

Next Meeting Date and adjournment

The next quarterly Executive Board Meeting will take place on Friday, March 10, 2006 from 11:30-4:00 at the Burns Library, Boston College. The meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm. ☺

Video Transfer
MEDIA ASSET MANAGEMENT
TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR MEDIA ASSETS

Ingesting media...

A CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM THAT MANAGES, SEARCHES, RETRIEVES AND DELIVERS YOUR MEDIA

LIVE FEED IMAGERY AUDIO VIDEO DIGITAL FILES

DIGITAL LIBRARY

www.vtiboston.com • 617.247.0100 • 580 Harrison Ave., Boston, MA

New Members*- Rodney Obien*

Please visit us online at www.newenglandarchivists.org for more information about becoming a member of NEA

Hazen R. Allen Rauner Special Collection Library Dartmouth College	Kathlyn L. Furr National Museum of the Morgan Horse	Francesca Livermore Bailey Library University of Vermont	John Reazer Harriet Beecher Stowe Center
Dennis Barrow Fairfield Historical Society	Michelle Gachette Harvard University Archives	Margaret Long Scituate Town Clerk	Barbara Rimkunas Exeter Historical Society
Jane Beck Vermont Folklife Center	Claire Gilbertson Vermont Historical Society	Jane Magiera Genzyme Corp.	Jenny Rosenzweig Upstate History Alliance
Jane Belcher Vermont Historical Society	Ian Graham Wellesley College Archives	Lee Mandell Archivist's Tool Kit New York University	Kate Rubick Envision Research & Editorial
Susanne Belovari Tisch Library Tufts University	Gillien Graye	Joyce Mazzucco Town of Randolph	Felicia Share Simmons College
Mary Pat Brigham Vermont Historical Society	Bernadette H. Harrington	Jennifer Miglus	William J. Shepherd Catholic University of America Archives
Elizabeth Cousins	Anita Heath US Air force ESC History Office	Honor Moody	Judith Solberg Holderness School
David D. Doughan	Barbara Heck Sterling Memorial Library Yale University	Madeleine W. Mullin Weston Public Library	Heather Soyka
Shana Drake Simmons College	Howard Gotlieb Archival Resource Center Boston University	Jeremy Naidus Simmons College	Katherine Stefko Archives & Special Collections Bates College
Marie Ellsworth NYS Archaeological Association	Anne Howe Historic Harrisville, Inc.	Elizabeth Peterson Mt. Holyoke College	Peter K. Steinberg Simmons College
Eleta Exline Dimond Library University of New Hampshire	Linda Hurteau Special Collections & Archives Wesleyan University	Katherine E. Pinkham Governor Dummer Academy	Sturgis Library
Ronda Faloon	Lois Kauffman Winthrop Group, Inc.	Colleen Couture Previte Framingham State College	Hugh Truslow
Stephen Farrar	Christopher Kemp Simmons College	John Quatralo	Andrew Wentink Middlebury College
Faith Ferguson	Jocelyn M. Leadbetter Maine Medical Center (Archives)	Margaret Ragland Simmons College Library	Alison Zaya
Krista Ferrante Simmons College		Connie Rawson Cary Memorial Library	

Internet Tidbits

- Kathleen J. Barker

At the tender age of twelve, future president John Quincy Adams began a diary that he would keep for the next sixty-eight years. This amazing collection of fifty-one volumes is now available online thanks to the Massachusetts Historical Society (and a grant from the Save America's Treasures program). *The Diaries of John Quincy Adams: A Digital Collection* presents grayscale images (taken from microfilm) of nearly fifteen thousand pages from Adams's diaries <www.masshist.org/jqadiaries>. Spanning the years 1779 to 1847, these volumes contain a treasure trove of information about Adams, his famous family, and early nineteenth-century American life and politics.

Diary entries can be searched by date or browsed using a number of different pathways. The "Browse by Volume" tool allows visitors to select a particular volume from a list that notes the dates represented in the volume, a brief note on the type of entries contained therein, and a short description of where Adams was or what he was doing during the period in which the diary was kept. Visitors less familiar with the life and times of John Quincy Adams should take advantage of the "Timeline Index." This expandable time-

line provides an overview of Adams's life and a select number of links to relevant passages. Similarly, the "Selected Pages" tool offers visitors a series of links to diary pages highlighting potential themes of interest to visitors, including people Adams met during the course of his life, events in which he participated, places he visited, and highlights of his career. While not designed to be a comprehensive subject index, this feature (along with the timeline) provides quick and informed access to highlights from the diaries.

The main display for each page of the diary includes links to a printer-friendly image and an enlarged image (both of which pop up in a new window). Since John Quincy Adams often wrote entries for the same date in multiple volumes, the main display for each page also includes a menu indicating the dates represented on the page being viewed, as well as links to other pages and diary volumes that contain entries for the same date(s). Although the site does not include any transcriptions, Adams's handwriting is clear and enjoyable to read, especially in the large pop-up image. Any visit to the site would not be complete without a stop at the "Getting Started" page, which includes more information about the search tools, the organization of the diaries, notes about available published transcriptions, and links to other Adams-related materials available through the Society's Web site. ☺



HUDSON MICROIMAGING DIGITAL CONVERSION SERVICES

High Resolution Color Scanning, Pre-press management, Digital Photo Enhancement
Microfilm, Photographs, 35mm Slides, Glass Plate Negatives, Manuscripts,
Documents to CD/DVD, CD/DVD based retrieval systems, OCR, Rekeying

PRESERVATION MICROFILM SERVICES

Manuscripts, Bound Volumes, Fragile Collections
Microfilm Duplication Services, Re-master Existing Reels

HYBRID SOLUTIONS

Preservation Microfilm with Digital Use Copy
Digital Images to 35mm or 16mm Preservation Quality Microfilm

Phone (845) 338-5785
E-mail: info@hudsonmicroimaging.com
Website: www.hudsonmicroimaging.com



...helping libraries, archives,
museums, historical societies,
and other institutions create a future

- ◆ Educational Programs ◆ Consulting
- ◆ Vendor Discounts
- ◆ New England Collections Online (NECOL)
- ◆ New England Regional Depository

For more information, contact Amy Benson, Director of
Digital Services, 508.597.1937 or benson@neline.net



Providers of contract services to
*Libraries,
Museums & Archives*

THE DONOHUE GROUP
INCORPORATED
860-529-2938 (Connecticut)
617-948-0759 (Boston)

www.dgiinc.com

Open Forum

The Ernst Photo Collection

Linda Eppich, Conservation Projects Coordinator/Archivist, The Preservation Society of Newport County

Large collections of photographs are not unique. But a large collection of the work of one family of professional photographers and artists is somewhat unusual. The Preservation Society of Newport County (PSNC), in Newport, RI, holds a large group of the work of a local studio, the Ernst family of Newport—William W. Ernst, Alphonsine (Thuot) Ernst (1873-1952) and their daughter Marie-Jeanne Ernst (1909-1986). The collection was purchased by Curator Paul Miller in 2000.

William Waldon Ernst came from Marietta, Ohio, but little is known about his background; he was an accountant when he met Alphonsine in New York City. Alphonsine was born in Providence, RI, and with four brothers and four sisters grew up in Canada and Fall River, MA. Parents Mr. and Mrs. Zephyrin Thuot were French Canadian immigrants, and the Thuots were a devout Catholic family. Sister Marie Emma and her husband, William Cote, had six daughters, and their descendants are the last of this family. The sisters were all artistically talented, and produced both original fine art and photographic art.

Alphonsine began her artistic training with Mr. Dunning of Fall River in 1892, and worked in New York from 1893-1903 in the photographic studio of Ira Hill and Walter Pach as a photographic retoucher. She stayed with her brother and continued her artistic training while in New York, studying with George DeForest Bush and William Chase. She and her broth-

er Marcellin operated a studio at 55 Bellevue Ave. in Newport before her marriage. Alphonsine and William were married in 1908 in Fall River, MA, and Marie-Jeanne was born in 1909. The Ernst family lived and worked in Newport, listed at the same address of 126 Bellevue Ave. for the entire history of the firm. The residence was very likely upstairs over the studio, as issues of *The Newport City*



Percy Belmont's coach, ca. 1915-20. *Courtesy of The Preservation Society of Newport County.*

Directory never listed a separate residence. The building was torn down to make way for a parking lot after the 1960s and the firm's closure. In 1909, William advertised his studio and then the next year broadened the advertisement to include the paintings and miniatures painted by his wife. Many of the small photographs are of her original miniatures, most likely completed for residents of the Newport summer colony. A large mural by

Alphonsine was commissioned for St. Anne's Church in Fall River. Other original art, mostly portraits, is still owned by the family descendants and local Massachusetts churches.

William and Alphonsine separated in the 1920s, according to family correspondence; no divorce was ever recorded in Newport. Since the Thuots were devout Catholics from a French Canadian family, the subject of divorce was seldom mentioned in the family. Alphonsine remained in Newport and continued the photographic business and her own original artwork; William removed to Texas. Marie-Jeanne Ernst joined her mother in the studio's business after her graduation from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1931. She also taught art classes at Miss Collin's School in Newport, beginning after her RISD graduation and continuing until 1963. Both women often exhibited their paintings at the Art Association of Newport; Alphonsine was a charter member. Marie-Jeanne closed the studio in 1964 and worked in Providence at the D. D. Gunning Studio until 1967.

The collection consists of small snapshots, hand-tinted portraits, graduation class photos, religious portraits, photographs of police and firemen of Newport, landscapes, seascapes and marine photos, architectural images, and photographs of original artwork produced by Alphonsine and Marie-Jeanne Ernst. Most are gelatin silver prints; other types must still be identified. There

are a few clippings of the studio's ads and several Art Association catalogs featuring the exhibited work of either Alphonsine or Marie-Jeanne. The collection also documents structures, landscapes, and events now long gone, like the Hurricane of 1938, demolished mansions, and a biplane that landed on Easton's Beach in Newport.

The documentation, preservation, and cataloging of this large collection required about fifteen months to complete, with the part-time Archivist and volunteers working on a limited basis. The 610 photographs, 20 catalogs and ephemera were rehoused in appropriate archival sleeves and acid-free, lignin-free boxes, arranged according to content of the images. This was the original arrangement method used by Paul Miller when the collection was first received; in keeping with accepted archival procedures, this arrangement method was followed as closely as possible. The collection data is on a customized Access database; a portion of the images have been scanned and

included in the database. Several categories of information are available, and can be researched by appointment with the Archivist (401) 847-2075 or <leppich@newportmansions.org>. The society's Web site, <www.newportmansions.org>, included the text of the summer exhibition and several of the scanned images. This was under the Education and Research heading; the text was similar to that of other summer exhibitions. Requests for information directed one to an e-mail address for a contact.

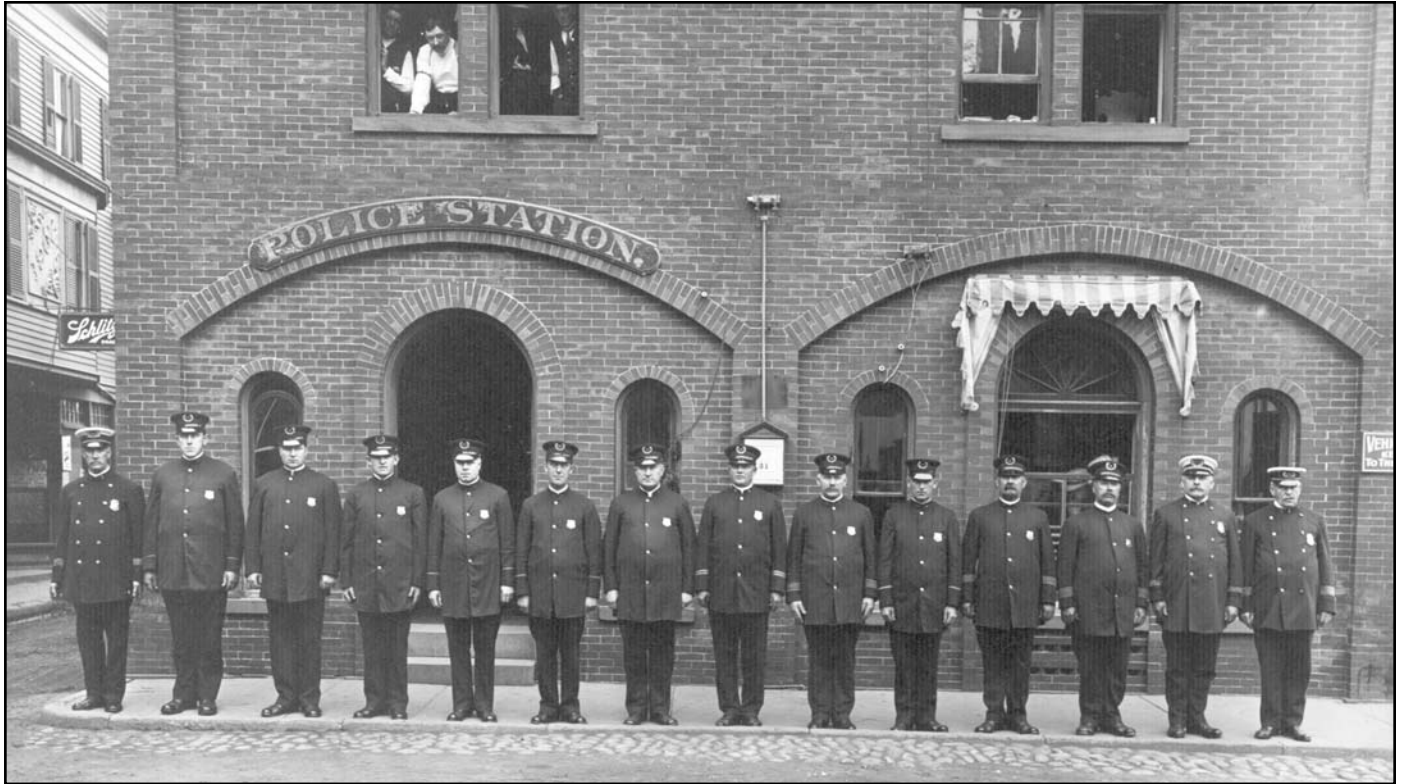
The Preservation Society then had a dilemma; too many of the images of people or places in the photographs remained unidentified. Ascertaining the identities of those that were unknown became a passion, and a summer exhibition was planned, entitled "Remembering Newport: A Community Research Project." Over 100 images were scanned and reproduced on foam core and in the two binders that accompanied the exhibition. Then the PSNC membership and its "publics" (visitors, longtime

residents of Newport, etc.) were contacted through the Education and Public Programs Department and the Newport *Daily News*. The *Daily News* ran a weekly column with an image in the Thursday issue and invited Newport residents to attempt to identify the image, with directions to contact the Preservation Society. Using community resources to work on exhibitions and collections-related research appears to be increasingly common practice, as evidenced by the growing number of sessions that emphasize this collaboration at annual meetings of the American Association of Museums (AAM) and the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH).

The exhibition at PSNC headquarters at 424 Bellevue Ave., which ran from June 11 – November 11, 2005, featured the reproductions in the library. The two binders that accompanied the exhibition were used for visitors' comments about the images. Some images truly engaged the interest of the visitors; numerous com-



Ernst Studio, 126 Bellevue Avenue, Newport, Rhode Island. *Courtesy of Maron Andrews, Edgar Town, Mass.*



Newport Police Department, ca. 1920-25. *Courtesy of The Preservation Society of Newport County.*

ments were written in the binders for these. A smaller number of images remain unidentified. In September of 2005, some reproduced photographs moved to the King Center, the Newport community's senior citizen center. Two Round Table discussions, organized through the Public Programs Dept. by John Tschirch, were held; one was planned for PSNC headquarters, and the other was held at the King Center. Eileen Warburton, a historian interested in the local history of Newport, chaired these sessions. Ninety people attended the two round tables; most were senior citizens or longtime residents of Newport. The result: more photographs were identified, and the binders of comments have been retained in the Archives so that additional information can be added to the database. Involvement of Newport residents, visitors and PSNC members made this project a great success.

Recently family members, descendants of Marie Emma (Thuot) Cote, have loaned additional research information to the Preservation Society's Archives. This collection includes original studio photographs, several hundred original negatives, some glass plate negatives, letters, and family portraits. Included among the negatives are many architectural images of Newport buildings, marine scenes, and portraits. The collection will assist in research to the PSNC photography collection.

The Archives of The Preservation Society of Newport County is a fledgling project, only eighteen months old; the archivist is part-time and relies on volunteer or intern support. Most of the archival material collected to date consists of institutional records of the organization; this will be ongoing, as the Preservation Society has been recently accredited by AAM.

Administration felt the need to record the history of the 60 year-old organization and its progress during this birthday period. The Ernst Photo Collection is the largest historical photographic collection under Archives auspices; however, more archival research material is being sought, along with the institutional records no longer in use by departments.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to John Tschirch and Melanie Haley of the Public Programs Dept.; docents Robert Regalbuto and Joanne Blumsack for research and cataloging; volunteers Jill Kelly and Nancy Greene for documentation assistance; Paul Miller and Charles Burns of the Curatorial Dept. for the exhibition's installation; Maron Andrews of Edgarton, MA, for loan of the negative and family collection; and Eileen Warburton for Round Table leadership. ☺

Reviews

Preservation and Conservation for Libraries and Archives, Nelly Balloffet and Jenny Hille. Chicago: American Library Association, 2005. 214 pp. \$125. ISBN: 0-8389-0879-9.

This review was originally published in *The American Archivist* 68, 2. Revised version reprinted with permission of the Society of American Archivists <www.archivists.org>.

-Amy Braitsch, Curator of Archives, The Historical Society of the Town of Greenwich

The authors of *Preservation and Conservation for Libraries and Archives* are not only practicing book and paper conservators, but they also hold MLS degrees and have taught workshops on various preservation subjects and conservation techniques for a dozen years. Their love of paper materials, familiarity with archives and libraries and, most of all, eagerness to teach are readily conveyed to the reader. The result is an instructional reference work, which is clear, concise, and practical. Its focus is paper-based materials, which still comprise the bulk of many of our collections; however, an appendix on the care of photographs provides a

good review for those familiar with photographic materials and sound introduction for those just starting out.

The text is equally divided between safekeeping materials (preservation) and hands-on treatment techniques (conservation). While some of the material covered is inherently technical, the authors avoid formulae and equations, opting for simple sentences that get to the point. The book's tone is calm. Balloffet and Hille cover common problems, including torn documents, broken bindings, and mold bloom, and mention possible causative factors before discussing problem-solving and prevention.

"The Basics of Preservation" focuses on important topics (including environment; staff and patron education; disaster planning and response; etc.) for archivists, both those of us who have become complacent about preventive preservation methods and those seeking an introduction to this subject matter. "Simple Preservation Techniques" provides enough information for an intern, new employee, student, or volunteer to learn the basics of rehousing, selecting archival supplies, handling material safely, and even making simple enclosures, all in fewer than 20 pages.

The conservation section begins with succinct overviews of paper types and bookbinding structure and terminology. This is useful information for us to know in order to speak knowledgeably about collection materials (damaged or not). The supplies needed to conduct paper and book repairs are described at length, and instructions for repairs are detailed and well illustrated. Recognizing the pressures to display collection materials, the authors conclude the book with the chapter "Small Exhibitions." This section helps with determining which items to select, the appropriateness of the environment and cases, when to use reproductions, and how to install and de-install the exhibition.

Balloffet and Hille's *Preservation and Conservation for Libraries and Archives* is a book I recommend as a reference book and as an instruction manual for staff. The tone of the book is respectful of the materials for which archivists and librarians care. It is also empowering for archivists and librarians; it teaches us practical ways to protect our holdings. ☺

Setting the Standard for Archival Storage Products Since 1945



CALL FOR OUR FREE CATALOG

Phone: 800/634-0491

Fax: 800/947-8814

E-mail: hollingercorp@erols.com

www.hollingercorp.com

THE HOLLINGER CORPORATION

Two Manufacturing and Shipping Locations

- Hollinger East: Fredericksburg, Virginia
- Hollinger West: Sparks, Nevada

Please visit us online at

www.newenglandarchivists.org

for more information about becoming a member of NEA

News and Notes

CONNECTICUT

Connecticut Historical Society Museum Renovations

The Connecticut Historical Society Museum is undergoing renovations between February and June to install an updated and more efficient HVAC system and compact shelving for manuscript and graphics collections. As a result, public service may be limited at times. Please call either the library (860) 236-5621 ext. 230 or graphics (ext. 236) to make sure the collections you need are available.

Historic Document Preservation Grant Program

The Office of the Public Records Administrator and State Archives held two half-day workshops on Competitive Grant Training in January 2006. Training was required for any eligible municipality interested in applying for a competitive grant from the Historic Document Preservation Grant Program in FY2007. Eligible candidates must have completed a preservation survey, records management survey, or a disaster preparedness survey.

Grant staff conducted the workshops on the following topics: choosing and designing a large project; setting goals and objectives; developing a timetable and budget; communicating a project effectively in the application; supervising a project once it is underway; the review process and criteria; administrative requirements; and completing the application forms.

The Office of the Public Records Administrator and State Archives is in the sixth year of the Historic Documents Preservation Grant Program. Since FY2002, the office has awarded \$5,393,057 to Connecticut municipalities. In FY2006, 153 grants were awarded for a total of \$1,293,861. \$300,000 has been set aside for grants in FY2006. A

municipality may apply for a maximum of \$50,000.

For more information about the grant program, see <www.cslib.org/grantforms.htm> or call LeAnn Johnson, Public Records Grant Program Specialist, at (860) 566-1100 ext. 301.

MAINE

Wiscasset's 1776 Copy of Declaration of Independence Found in Virginia

The state Attorney General's Office has located Wiscasset's missing copy of the Declaration of the Independence in Fairfax, Va. The investigation initiated two years ago by the office with the Maine Archives is a success, and the broker of the precious document has been served notice.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony printed its own copies of the declaration in Salem and distributed them throughout the Commonwealth. There were no printing presses in Maine at the time, and 34 Maine towns received them, including Wiscasset, according to Nicholas Noyes, head of the Maine Historical Society. Most copies were distributed to churches, where they were read. In some cases, the documents were read in public squares. They were poster size and did not contain any signatures.

Wiscasset's copy has notations on the back that attest to its origin. In 1995 the document was sold at auction from



**BRIDGEPORT
NATIONAL
BINDERY INC.**

"BOUND TO LAST"

662 Silver St. • PO Box 289 • Agawam, MA
413-789-1981 • 800-223-5083
info@BNBindery.com

the estate of Anna Plumstead for \$77,000. Investigators then traced its location to New York City. A state statute prohibits the sale of any permanent public document. According to State Archivist James Henderson, anything dating before 1900 would be considered a public document.

MASSACHUSETTS

Northeastern University Announcements

The Special Collections Department at Northeastern University Library is pleased to announce the acquisition of the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild records (1970-2006) and the completion of processing of the Roxbury Multi-Service Center (RMSC) records.

The National Lawyers Guild (NLG) was founded in 1937 to advance human and civil rights and, since that time, it has played a critical role in providing legal support to people active in the labor, civil rights, economic rights, international human rights, anti-war, and other movements. The Massachusetts Chapter of NLG, an association of progressive lawyers, law students, paralegals, judges, legal secretaries, and community activists, has been active since the founding of the national organization. The collection documents the governance, program, and fundraising activities of the organization, and includes committee minutes, correspondence, budgets, and publications, including the newsletter *Mass Dissent*.

The Roxbury Multi-Service Center (RMSC) is a “one stop” social service agency modeled after 19th century settlement houses. The programs documented in this collection include psychological assessment and counseling, youth development, housing and community development, sexual assault awareness and prevention, crime prevention, academic enrichment, urban beautification, gang prevention, career development, and employment counseling and training. The 29 cubic feet of material date from 1965 to 2002 and document RMSC’s efforts to make Roxbury an economically viable community and to provide social and mental health programs and services to neighborhood residents. The collection also documents RMSC’s community and political activism and its role in creating the Task Force on Children out of School, monitoring school desegregation, and developing La Alianza Hispana. Included in the collection are the records of executive directors and the Board of

Directors; correspondence, reports, and meeting minutes; grant proposals and contracts; newsletters; program descriptions, reports and statistics; and photographs, audio cassettes, and memorabilia.

The collection was processed with funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. For access to RMSC finding aid, see <www.lib.neu.edu/archives/collect/findaids/m109find.htm>.

The University Archives and Special Collection Department collects records of private, non-profit, community-based organizations concerned with social justice. For a list of department collections, see <www.library.neu.edu/archives/collect/mcoll_by_topic.htm>.

Roxbury Community College Announces Online Access

The Archives and Special Collections Department website at Roxbury Community College is now accessible at <www.rcc.mass.edu/lib>. The website provides indexes to RCC records and the Boston Black United Front Papers. RCC records include publications, such as yearbooks, annual reports, the newsletter, student publications, and publications associated with events or departments, as well as Trustees reports and NEASC self-study documents. The Boston Black United Front Papers, the bulk of which date from 1968-73, document the struggle for black community control. United Front members were also instrumental in bringing the college to Roxbury.

Archivist Cat Lea Holbrook completed processing of the United Front papers in October and is now working on papers donated by former state representative and RCC adjunct professor Mel King. These papers document King’s campaigns for mayor of Boston. The library is seeking other collections that record the history of the Greater Roxbury area. For more information, contact Cat Holbrook at 617.541.5323 or <cholbrook@rcc.mass.edu>.

War of 1812 Prize Cases Available via NARA’s ARC

Access to War of 1812 Prize Cases heard in the United States District Court of Massachusetts is now available

through the National Archives and Records Administration's online Archival Research Catalog (ARC.) The series documents the seizure of British vessels and cargo as prizes by U.S. privateer vessels during the War of 1812. Types of documents to be found include depositions, claims of owners and other interested parties, accounts of sales of prize property, decrees, opinions of the court, official and private correspondence, shipping articles, certificates of registry, cargo manifests, and British letters of marque. The series description links to 223 file unit descriptions that provide the names of the American privateers and their owners, and the names of the seized British vessels. Included are John Ordronaux, owner of the vessel *Prince of Neufchatel*, and the Schooner *Fame*. To see the series description, please visit ARC at www.archives.gov/research/arc/ and search by ARC identifier number 608051.

Archives for Women in Medicine Project Commences

The Center for the History of Medicine at Harvard Medical School's Countway Library is pleased to announce the Archives for Women in Medicine, a project of the Joint Committee on the Status of Women at Harvard's Medical and Dental Schools in association with the Countway Library. The AWM's goal is to recognize outstanding medical leaders and to document the social phenomenon that brought large numbers of women to the forefront in medicine. The AWM's objective is to acquire, process, preserve, provide access to, and publicize the papers of women physicians, researchers, and medical administrators. For information on the project, see www.countway.harvard.edu/rarebooks/awm.shtml.

Collections Document a Half Century of Women's Health Care Reform

The second half of the twentieth-century saw significant reform in the field of women's healthcare. The Schlesinger Library at the Radcliffe Institute is pleased to announce both the acquisition and processing of several collections documenting this dynamic movement. Among recent acquisitions are the records of C/Sec, Inc. (Cesareans/Support Education and Concern) and the papers of Kay Dickersin, professor of epidemiology and advocate for breast cancer survivors. C/Sec was a nonprofit organiza-

tion founded in Massachusetts in 1973 to provide information on cesarean childbirth, cesarean prevention, and vaginal birth after cesarean childbirth. The organization conducted research and developed educational programs. Kay Dickersin's papers detail her work with Arm-in-Arm, a Baltimore-based breast cancer support group of which she was a founder, and the National Breast Cancer Coalition. The NBCC was instrumental in increasing government funding for breast cancer research and in enlarging the role of patient advocates in the funding review process.

In addition to these new acquisitions, the records of two Boston-area organizations devoted to women's health issues, Boston Association for Childbirth Education (BACE) and the Women's Community Health Center, were recently processed and opened to research. The BACE was incorporated in 1958 with the goal of reforming obstetrical and maternity care and disseminating information about natural childbirth. The organization sponsored studies, held workshops and classes, published newsletters, and collaborated with the International Childbirth Education Association. In addition to bylaws and correspondence, the collection includes questionnaires filled out by BACE class members regarding their birth experience, providing a unique glimpse into childbirth during the 1960s and 1970s. The Women's Community Health Center of Cambridge, Massachusetts, opened in 1974 as a women-owned and women-controlled health center. While the center initially offered self-help programs and gynecological services, by May 1975 staff members were performing first trimester abortions. Through material such as committee meeting notes, workshop and program material, and patient evaluations and questionnaires, the collection documents the health concerns and experiences of women in the post-*Roe v. Wade* era.

These collections join the records of the Boston Women's Health Book Collective, which were processed

Join NEAdiscuss: An open forum for NEA Members to communicate about items of common professional interest. Open to all NEA members and moderated by the email coordinator. Send subscription requests to: proberts@SPFLDCOL.EDU.

under a grant from the National Endowment for Humanities and opened to research in January 2005. The records of the BWHBC were recently supplemented by a donation of letters regarding lesbian health issues from the Women's Educational Center. Finding aids for these processed collections can be viewed through OASIS, Harvard University's Online Archival Search Information System.

VERMONT

Fairbanks Museum's NEH Preservation Assistance Grant

Supported by a Preservation Assistance grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium has engaged the services of Conservator Mary Jo Davis to produce a preservation plan for the Museum's extensive collection of the works and archives of the well-known 20th century German painter Helmut Siber. This large collection, which the Museum received through the generosity of the Hoyt family, consists of 140 watercolor paintings depicting the weather in Northern Vermont and New Hampshire and other areas of the country. The collection includes Siber's field notes, written at the time he was painting, and his comments on lighting, color and the changing weather. The collection also includes some of Siber's earlier works, drawings of animals and birds, sketches made while an officer on a merchant ship in the South China seas, and maps and architectural drawings.

The Siber collection complements the Museum's work in the interpretation and forecasting of the weather. Many of the paintings have been on display at the Museum and have been used by teachers and students in the Museum's school programs. By completing this preservation assessment, and by following the recommendations of the conservator, the Museum hopes to preserve the materials and make them available for future exhibition and research.

News from the State Archives

The State Archives and Court Administrator's Office continue to develop the Vermont Judicial Record Program. The work has now expanded to cover District and

Family Courts. Following inquiries from municipal police departments about responding to public records requests, a section on law enforcement was added to the Program Website. Another new section, still under construction, provides information for researchers working with court records. The Judicial Record Program Web site can be accessed at <vermont-archives.org/records/vjrp/>. Assistant State Archivist Tanya Marshall is primarily responsible for developing the program.

The State Archives and Secretary of Administration completed the preliminary strategic plan for managing executive agency records. The report was mandated by the general assembly in 2005, and implementation of the plan will start in Spring 2006. The report can be found at <www.vermont-archives.org/LegReport06.p>.

The State Archives continues to work with the Municipal Land Records Commission, which was charged with improving the care of and accessibility to records affecting title to land, which are held at the municipal (town) level in Vermont. The general assembly is currently considering whether to fund additional commission work. The Archives recently updated the project Web site at <vermont-archives.org/records/vtmlrc/>.

The State Archives, working with the Vermont Department of Buildings and General Services and the architectural firm of Truex Cullins & Partners, reviewed eight potential sites for a new archives and research facility. Two sites were submitted to the general assembly, which has requested exploration of two additional sites. The governor's office has requested funding for design work during FY2007.

The 2006 session of the general assembly has asked the State Archives to testify on a variety of issues, most notably on a bill to eliminate the common law deliberative process privilege. Deliberative process privilege, the right of agencies to restrict access to records relating to the formulation of policy, has attracted broad public interest because of concerns about the transparency of government. The participation of the archives was requested because of the institution's long-standing work on records and the right to know. Many of those testifying on the bill reference the State Archives Web site on access to public records found at <www.vermont-archives.org/records/right-to-know/overview.html>. ©

Around and About

Building an Exhibit on “Building Brandeis”

Maggie McNeely, Archives Assistant, Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections, Brandeis University

On July 27, 2005, an exhibit titled “Building Brandeis: Style and Function of a University” opened at the Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections at Brandeis University. This was my first significant exhibit, and my experience building it is the topic of this paper.

The Documents

Exhibits are based on objects we want to highlight. We often know that we have this great picture of famous alumni, or a great old map of the city. What we don't have to show off will either be missing from the picture or garnered from secondary resources. But an exhibit “makes it” if the materials complete a full circle of the topic. This was so important to me that the title of the exhibit was actually the last thing I made a big decision on. My supervisor and I spent time discussing what every word in each of our brainstormed titles would imply about the exhibit. In the end, only one choice clearly represented both our intent and the progression of the exhibit.

Most exhibits, even this one with high emphasis on visual impact, include a running text. The text fills in the missing links between interesting photos, attractive documents, and ephemera. I photocopied all text I was interested in using in some way in the exhibit, and later collated, reduced, and summarized it. Different types of information were used: everything from important dates and people to interesting facts. Because this topic is so close to the heart of Brandeis, there

were adequate texts in our collection to more than fill in the gaps on architects who worked here, Brandeis history, and architectural styles.

The Method

If an exhibit is to be attractive, challenging, surprising, illuminating, and every other extra quality in addition to factual, the process requires time for discovery and the flexibility to change direction and create new paths. It also requires a certain amount of creativity, not only to come up with a good layout and color scheme, but also to string together verbal and visual elements to reveal an overall picture of the topic. The question is: do we as archivists really have the time and personnel for this part of the process? Or are we frequently resigned to pinning up our favorite items and calling it a day?

I immersed myself in materials pertaining to the subject in order of perceived significance. I followed the thread of finding aids as if it were just a really in-depth reference question, and I used our entire supply of “out” cards for materials I was beginning to pull and categorize according to possible subtopics. The subtopics changed over time, and much of the material ended up back in the boxes after having been read through. Eventually items were whittled down to individual documents. I had begun to know all of what our documentation had to say about the topic. I also read supporting secondary articles, which helped me create ties between pieces of information.

The burden of discerning the truth often falls to the researcher. Archivists are collectors, order-makers, and protectors, but often disclaim being the bearers of knowledge. However, in designing an exhibit, archivists are given the mission to reveal important facts, draw conclusions, and yes, even create hypotheses. This goes beyond the normal information specialist claim: we don't know everything, but we know where to find everything. The exhibit requires us to become “experts” on a narrow topic in order to do it justice. We put our research skills to work, and follow the threads of finding aids and catalogs for ourselves.

We cannot sever the tie between the information specialist in ourselves and the common expectation that we should be good at history. My supervisor reminded me to consider the source and to strictly evaluate every item I was thinking of using. She also impressed upon me that it is best to exhibit items that are dated, because they are more meaningful to the reader. It again comes down to good research and the strength to resist unreliable information, even if it is exciting or fills gap in the story. We must not shut off our archival wisdom in the excitement.

The Hand of the Creator

Archivists are aware that much of the context that materials have is lost when we bring them into our archives, dispose of their old containers and create a new environment for them. By extension, pulling items and placing

them in juxtaposition with other items immediately implies meaning. Each choice we make in building an exhibit colors the viewer's experience of the materials, whether we like it or not. Even by doing a very static exhibit, there is the order of an item's appearance and what was left out. We may summarize what is lengthy and feature what is exciting, attractive, illuminating, or perhaps controversial. Or maybe we have purposely left out the controversial. Building an exhibit involves some level of editing.

My choices led to a highly editorialized exhibit. The biggest factor in this was one of my goals: for Brandeisians to see their campus in a new light. I focused on why the campus was built in a simplified Modernist style, and attempted to garner respect for the two early Master Planners, Eero Saarinen and Max Abramovitz. I challenged my audience to see the buildings in the context of post-war America. I chose bold primary colors, and generally picked material that was exciting over long drawn out correspondence.

My building technique brought in even more editorializing. I used PhotoShop to juxtapose two images, to adjust the acidic yellowing of original documents, to repair image loss areas, and to add text and arrows for emphasis on some photographs. PhotoShop increased my ability to create a visually stimulating exhibit. However, it raised many theoretical questions as I changed the original items and manipulated how the viewer would see them. I took a detailed aerial shot of the campus and color-coded it according to the name of the principle architects. This piece became fueled with twice as much



Courtesy of Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collection, Brandeis University.

information as the original photo. At some point, I became very aware and uncomfortable with how much my view of the materials was going to influence the entire character of the exhibit. I kept the results in check by using only facts and views commonly expressed in the original and secondary documentation. I also used my introductory paragraph as a disclaimer, stating that the tone of the exhibit was of my choosing and that I had highlighted some points I thought were important.

At the end of the research, photo duplication, and text creation, I came in one day to realize that all I had was a pile of paper in front of me. This was my exhibit. I was worried that it was not going to reveal a full picture of our architecture — that there would be big gaps, and that this pile of paper, which took me two months to create, was not going to be significant enough. In the end, the beauty and size of the exhibit space, good lighting, and cases containing subtopics all added to the experience of these items. The space implied unity, the path

implied a story, the glass walls and locked compartments implied value.

The Materials

Specialty paper stores and art stores are also a good resource for exhibit materials. I purchased three types of paper: regular weight light-colored paper for text, three colors of cover weight paper for background color, and matt board for items displayed on a flat surface. Our Preservation Officer told me that if cover weight material were used for things that simply lie flat in a case, the items would start to curl from the humidity. However, I found the matt board difficult to cut, and left it out. She was right, and I needed to go back in and flatten photographs that were beginning to curl. Items that I reproduced were attached with double sided tape to the background color with about one-inch of border. The weight of the paper reinforced the items favorably. Items that were not reproduced were temporarily sealed in polypropylene sheets — our Preservation Officer's handiwork. The exhibit cases have a malleable lining covered with a layer of



Courtesy of Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections, Brandeis University.

natural beige linen on top. All items were secured to the interior lining of the cases with pushpins, inserted into either the color border paper or the polypropylene. This made everything very easy to work with.

Publicity

Really, an exhibit *is* publicity and has the potential to draw many different groups of people. But a publicity plan is needed in order for it to be recognized. Publicity for “Building Brandeis” included many avenues. In our case, the glass walls of our exhibit space increased the chances of a passerby coming in. We created a large foam core poster, ordered from a digital imaging lab, and placed it in a frame in front of the main path of pedestrian traffic. Campus advertisement included placement of smaller versions of the poster around the campus and in the student centers. There were also pre-existing electronic venues such as campus announcements via a listserv and online news publications. I gave invitations to library staff through an e-mail group. Like many archives, we also post current events on our Web site.

This was a special year for the University Archives because, in addition to being a quick stop on the tour of the throngs of students in orientation, we were contacted by the orientation team to give transfer students a presentation. It was a perfect opportunity to orient the students to their new home by giving a small talk and then allowing them to go through the exhibit. This was very successful, and resulted in the hiring of a new student assistant in the University Archives. It also resulted in the student orientation members firing questions at us, first about architecture, then about every myth and legend they had ever heard about Brandeis. Interaction at this level is rare, and we “ate it up.”

Our exhibit also caught the attention of the main student newspaper, *The Justice*, whose reporter indicated that the exhibit “satisfactorily explains the architectural enigmas of our university.” It was unexpected publicity, which we were happy to receive.

Results

People used this exhibit in a vari-

ety of ways. An archaeology class used it to identify the location of their dig site. A colleague told me he was happy to finally put a finger on the style of the campus. Our department has used it to answer some related reference questions and to attract researchers. For me personally, it was also a good way to make an impression on colleagues, learn my way around campus, and to know at least one Brandeis subject better than most.

In reaction to the questions that were raised as a result of the exhibit, new ways of communicating with the public have been formed. A “Fact or Fiction” database was created to record the questions and answers we collect on campus myths and legends. We as a department have also started a blog, which will highlight answers to commonly asked questions and ongoing myths.

Creating an exhibit requires a significant time and resource commitment. Care should be taken both to adequately publicize the results, and, if possible, to create projects which are offshoots of the original. For example, the materials that I scanned for this project are on the agenda to be recycled into an online exhibit some time in the near future. It is also important to take the opportunity to talk about your experiences with your colleagues. Perhaps someday archival education will include wisdom on planning an exhibit.

The exhibit, “Building Brandeis: Style and Function of a University” was open through March 2006 at the Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA. For more information, please contact 781.736.4701. ©

Calendar

Press releases and other announcements of upcoming activities to be published in the *Newsletter* should be sent to NEA, c/o WPI Archives and Special Collections, Gordon Library, 100 Institute Road, Worcester, MA 01609, or sent via e-mail to <Michael.forstrom@yale.edu>. Please provide the date, time, place and a brief description of the event and the name, address and telephone number of the person to be contacted for information.

April 24, 2006. SAA Workshop, "Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACs)." Albany, NY. Co-sponsored by New York State Archives. See <www.archivists.org/prof-education/workshop-detail.asp?id=1651>.

April, 27-28, 2006. SAA Workshop, "Archival Perspectives in Digital Preservation." University Park, PA. Co-sponsored by the Paterno Library, Penn State University. See <www.archivists.org/prof-education/workshop-detail.asp?id=1650>.

April 29, 2006. Spring meeting of the New England Archivists of Religious Institutions (NEARI). Fontbonne Hall, Framingham, MA. Contact <archives@csjboston.org>.

May 3, 2006. NEDCC Workshop, "Integrated Pest Management." Andover, MA. For details and registration information see <www.nedcc.org>.

May 4, 2006. NEDCC Workshop, "Creating and Maintaining Digital Collections." Andover, MA. For details and registration information see <www.nedcc.org>.

May 10, 2006. NEDCC Workshop, "Preservation of Scrapbooks." Andover, MA. For details and registration information see <www.nedcc.org>.

May 11, 2006. NEDCC Workshop, "Intermediate Book Repair." Andover, MA. For details and registration information see <www.nedcc.org>.

May 15, 2006. Application deadline for the archival certification examination. Contact: Academy of Certified Archivists, 48 Howard Street, Albany, New York, 12207, Tel: 518-463-8644, Fax: 518-463-8656, <aca@caphill.com>.

May 16, 2006. Application deadline for National Endowment of the Humanities Preservation Assistance Grants. See <www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/pag.html>.

May 18-20, 2006. "Archivists: Profession of the Future." VII European Conference on Archives. Warsaw, Poland. See <www.unesco.org/cgibin/webworld/portal_archives/cgi/jump.cgi?ID=9028>.

May 31, 2006. Deadline for nominations for Theodore Calvin Pease Award. See <www.archivists.org/recognition>.

June 1, 2006. NHPRC deadline (for the November meeting). For guidelines and application forms see <www.nara.gov/nhprc/apply.html>.

June 14-15, 2006. SAA Workshop, "MARC According to DACs: Archival Cataloging to the New Descriptive Standard." Atlanta, GA. Co-sponsored by SOLINET, Southeastern Library Network. See <www.archivists.org/prof-education/workshop-detail.asp?id=1672>.

July 1, 2006. NEH Division of Preservation and Access deadline. For guidelines and application instructions see <www.neh.fed.us>.

July 30 - Aug 6, 2006. SAA Annual Meeting. Washington D.C. See <www.archivists.org/conference/index.asp>. ☺

Attention Amateur Photographers!



The Public Relations Committee seeks to compile a list of photographers to be made available to all NEA committees. Individuals with high quality digital cameras can help document the NEA organization by taking photographs of members, keynote speakers, leadership and committees at bi-annual meetings, special events, etc. To join the list of photographers, contact Tracy Messer at: <tracy.messer@crotchedmountain.org>. ☺

NEW ENGLAND ARCHIVISTS
WPI Archives and Special Collections
Gordon Library
100 Institute Road
Worcester, MA 01609

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Boston, Massachusetts 02205
Permit Number 56006

This Season in New England History



Soldiers and Sailors Monument Celebration, Freeport, Maine

On May 26, 1906 exercises dedicating the new B.H. Bartol Library, which was built with town funds, Carnegie money, and a gift from Barnabas Henry Bartol, took place on the building's front steps. Following the reading of a poem by Henry L. Koopman, librarian at Brown University and a Freeport native, the assembled crowd walked over to the town park for the unveiling of the new Soldiers and Sailors monument. The keynote speaker was Gen. Joshua Chamberlain of Brunswick, famous for his stance with the 20th Maine at Gettysburg, 1863. 2006 marks the centennial of the Library (now moved to larger quarters).