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N E A

NEWSLETTER

NEW ENGLAND ARCHIVISTS



COVER-- Aerial view of the Naval War College and Narragansett Bay, Newport, Rhode Island. The Naval Historical Collection celebrates its fortieth anniversary this year. *Image courtesy of The Naval Historical Collection.*

INSIDE-- Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina outlines research undertaken at various New England repositories (*Archival Insight*, page 4) while Dr. Evelyn M. Cherpach details the holdings of the Naval Historical Collection (*Around and About*, page 22).

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE



New England Archivists

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE

College Archives & Special Collections
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299 Main Street • Keene, NH. 03435
 <www.newenglandarchivists.org>

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Dues of \$30/year (\$40 for institutions) should be sent to: Rodney Obien, College Archives & Special Collections, Wallace E. Mason Library, Keene State College, 299 Main Street, Keene, NH. 03435.

Notices of archival events should be sent to: Stephanie Schneider at <stephanie.ann.schneider@gmail.com>.

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Articles and **News** of interest to archivists, historical society members, historians, and other NEA members should be sent to: Stephanie Schneider at <stephanie.ann.schneider@gmail.com> or to NEA Newsletter Editors, Rodney Obien, College Archives & Special Collections, Wallace E. Mason Library, Keene State College, 299 Main Street, Keene, NH. 03435.

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From the Editors

- Stephanie Schneider

The summer is upon us and if you find yourself on a sandy beach, this issue of the NEA Newsletter should be inspiring and a reminder of just how important the work of the archivist is to the researcher. In *Archival Insights*, Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina details her adventure in researching the lives of two African slaves in early New England, expressing gratitude to helpful archivists along the way, and issuing a call to preserve that information which is being lost. NEA President Peter Carini echoes this sentiment in *From the President*, reminding us of our important place in societal memory.

If you were unable to make NEA's spring meeting, you will enjoy catching up with the session report summaries, covering the nature of the relationship between the archivist and the researcher. Gaining insight on the nature of the researcher and balancing the needs of each is discussed.

In *Around and About*, Dr. Evelyn M. Cherpak details the collection of the Naval War College as they celebrate their fortieth anniversary. If your summer vacation brings you to Rhode Island, you may want to stop in for a visit.

Keep in mind that the Board is actively working on a new five year plan for NEA. As they continue to draft goals and objectives, you will be asked for feedback. Please take the time to respond and suggest changes so the plan can accurately reflect the needs of the membership. ■

Call For Papers

Women in the Archives, 2010 Brown University

Papers are now being invited for Women in the Archives, a one-day colloquium co-sponsored by the Women Writers Project and the Sarah Doyle Women's Center at Brown University, to be held on April 24, 2010 at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.

This colloquium is the third in what we hope will be an annual series of "Women in the Archives" events; for more information about the series and about past WIA events, please visit www.wwp.brown.edu/about/activities/wia/.

Women in the Archives explores the use of archival materials in the study of women's writing, and the construction of disciplinary practices in archival research and pedagogy. This year our theme is "England/New England" and will focus on periodization and regionality in women's writing during the colonial period. Papers might address the following themes:

- Colonial perspectives on English culture and writing (and vice versa)
- Gender and the emerging sense of regional or national identity
- Literary periodization and its complications for colonial writing
- Copyright, intellectual property, and gender

The larger concerns of the Women in the Archives series as a whole include:

- Pedagogy and interdisciplinary pedagogies
- The construction of archival spaces
- Material modes of textuality across disciplines
- Technologies of research and teaching, and the impact of digital media on the archive
- New directions in archival research
- Editing archival materials

Papers should be no more than 20 minutes long, and presenters will also be invited to join in a panel discussion.

Please send proposals of 300 words to WWP@brown.edu by October 1, 2009.

ARCHIVAL INSIGHT

Looking for Bijah and Lucy: Dirty, Dusty, and Condemned

Adapted from her keynote address given at the NEA Spring 2009 Meeting

by Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina, Kathe Tappe Vernon Professor in Biography, Dartmouth College

From my front porch in Guilford, Vermont, I could just make out the property bordering Packer Corners. On the other side of these mountains, more than two hundred years ago, this was the home of two former slaves, Abijah Prince and Lucy Terry, and their six children.

I fell in love with Lucy and Bijah from the moment I first heard of them. How could I not love a woman who arrived in New England from Africa as a small enslaved child in the early 1700s and reputedly went on to argue successfully cases before the Vermont and U.S. Supreme Courts? How could I not love the man who, as a grizzled veteran of the French and Indian Wars, extricated himself from lonely slavery in a tiny Massachusetts town and then helped the much younger Lucy to her own freedom? Soon after first learning about them, I set out to find out more about these remarkable people.”

- Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina, Mr. and Mrs. Prince

I began my research at the Guilford Historical Society. Then I went to Connecticut, to the State Library and the Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford. Not finding the answers I was seeking, I traveled to Historic Deerfield and the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, which had begun with materials collected by George Sheldon in the nineteenth century. At Historic Deerfield, I met Martha Noblick, a librarian there, who offered new insight into searching for Abijah and Lucy.

The story ended up laying in the minutiae. In Deerfield, I learned to read daybooks and account books and to decipher not only handwriting but eighteenth-century accounting methods. It was here that my husband, Anthony, joined the search. He spent his initial time in Deerfield, first with me, then on his own. Martha let him know about many small town public libraries with historical collections, which were resources we wouldn't have known about otherwise. Places like the Forbes Library in Northampton, the Jones Library in Amherst, and the Dickinson Memorial Library in Northfield, and many others often held important clues for the larger story.

Many of the institutions offer limited public access, so the archivists often asked about the nature of the research. Some were very knowledgeable about the nature and extent of their collections and could provide real direction. Others simply pointed to the card catalog. We were looking for context, and we didn't always know the interrela-

tionships between the historical figures. It was difficult to find the resources that would be most useful to our search, particularly because our project was very different from the usual requests concerning genealogy or town history. Often what we needed was a town receipt or a merchant's account book that might have a single reference of interest that would provide one more detail about the Princes' lives. In too many cases, we discovered that materials we needed had been destroyed by fire.

Another frustration was with small historical societies, often manned by volunteers who were unaware of their holdings and impatient with lengthy research. These smaller institutions had limited hours and the volunteers staffing the societies were unable or unwilling to accommodate longer visits, which made research difficult because we had to travel. At other times only a single elderly individual knew the local history and materials, and when that person died the history and knowledge was lost. While there is clearly a pride of ownership in these small places, from a researcher's standpoint it would be better if they would allow copies to be placed on permanent loan in a more accessible library.

State historical societies, on the other hand, often allowed us to fill in the gaps that appeared from smaller places. One example of this is the case of Hugh Hall. Extensive on-line searches for Boston merchants who might have had dealings with Elijah Williams of Deerfield

surfaced his name, among others. More on-line searches found an advertisement he had placed for slaves to sell in the *New England Weekly Journal* at the end of 1728, just about the time Lucy said she had arrived in Bristol, Massachusetts (later Rhode Island) and was sold. Sibley's *Harvard Graduates* gave his brief story, but Harvard's Special Collections had college records that showed an early link between Hall, Samuel Terry, and Stephen Williams. The Massachusetts Historical Society had Hugh Hall's account books and in them we discovered Samuel Terry paying the price of a slave at the same time that Stephen Williams, Elijah's brother, was making purchases as well. However, while we found some materials in the special collections of large libraries such as Harvard, Yale, and the University of Massachusetts, their holdings ultimately proved to be far less useful than the smaller places.

Useful records were often found in surprising places. For instance, we found Bijah's manumission in the Springfield courthouse land deeds. Other records were found more easily, such as the Prince marriage record, the registration of the births of the Prince children, and the Prince family medical records. Sometimes the records were there, but were buried in ledgers or not clearly marked at all, such as Elijah Williams' company military records and muster roll containing Abijah Prince. And still others, like the records of Caleb Sharp, a former slave who served with Bijah and later set up a sawmill, contained valuable information that we wouldn't have known to look for without the other research. Old maps also could be a treasure trove. We'd heard in Sheldon's *Deerfield history* that people called the place where the Princes lived in Deerfield "Bijah's Brook," but discovered in a map from the Deerfield Town Hall that it was not only true but lasted past their lifetime.

One of the big questions we had was whether they were literate. Time and again the records said "yes." In one instance, we found a record showing Bijah purchased a "secretary's guide" and account books showed them buying primers, eyeglasses, and sealing wax. We also began

discovering documents that Bijah signed. Records showed that the Princes moved gradually from Deerfield onto their hundred acres in Guilford, Vermont. We always assumed that at least at first, their lives were good there. People mentioned them in church records, and referred proudly to them over one hundred years later, but we also knew that a neighbor, John Noyes, so harassed them that Lucy, at sixty years old, had to go to the Governor and Council for protection. Our question was, what role did racism play in this?

In order to find the answer, Anthony went to the Newfane, Vermont courthouse to look at old records. He had hoped to find Bijah's probate, but instead found an attic filled with boxes of old court records. They were mouse-eaten and dusty, but revealed a history we hadn't imagined: the Princes had gone to court many times, often in retaliation against those who tried to hurt them. It began with a record in which Bijah was suing a man named Joseph Stanton, who had beaten up the two youngest Prince children, Tatnai and Abijah Jr. There were many other cases, most of them heard at the Houghton Tavern in Guilford, around the corner from where we lived. One of the great finds in Newfane was a page from Bijah's own account book, entered as evidence against a man he was suing for money owed to him. It was the first document Anthony held that he knew that Bijah had held. When Anthony went back to Newfane to pore over the rest of the documents, he discovered that the hot, dusty attic had been condemned by OSHA as being unsafe for people to work in. He finally convinced them that these were public records and was able to gain access to them.

Another big question we had to answer was the story that the Princes had been attacked by locals. There were several remarkable discoveries here. We found a letter at the University of Vermont, in the Stephen Row Bradley Collection, that told the story. It had taken months to track down that collection, which was originally housed at Dartmouth. It took a great Dartmouth archivist to track down its current location. From the letter, we learned that in 1785, just months after Lucy's visit to the Governor and Council, a number of men described as a "mob" or "rioters" set off from William Packer's tavern in Guilford, and headed to the Prince home. There they tried to break in, and succeeded in badly beating their mulatto hired man. Lucy and Bijah, now sixty and eighty-five, apparently escaped harm. On their way out, the men set fire to the

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Princes' hayricks. Most of the men were caught and indicted. Things settled down after that, with at least one of the men, William Burrows, expressing contrition. They were for the most part poor, disaffected men, paid by the Princes' neighbor John Noyes to commit the crimes.

The Prince children, however, didn't linger in Guilford. The older sons, Caesar and Festus, had left home years before and served in the military during the Revolutionary War. Festus became a musician, and Caesar lived in the Northampton area, just like his father before him. Their daughter, Cill, went down to work for a while in a Deerfield shop and paid for her parents to visit there. Bijah died in Guilford in 1794, at the age of eighty-eight. Lucy and Festus applied to be the administrators of his estate, but moved away with the rest of the family before probate, which was never done. They went to live in Sunderland, Vermont, where Bijah had established his right to one hundred acres. This led to the biggest questions we had: why did they end up back in court? What happened to the land they thought they owned? Did Lucy really take a case to the Supreme Court, as all the history books and websites said?

The Sunderland land the Prince family lived on was quite beautiful. We knew that a man named Eli Brownson claimed to have owned it for decades, but we could find no records of any transactions. Slowly the story came together. Amidst the town records in the Sunderland clerk's office, we discovered that because of a land swindle, Bijah's property had been sold not long after he thought he acquired it. With that, the whole story—one that researchers and librarians had searched for, for perhaps one hundred and fifty years – unfolded, in this little clerk's office.

But the biggest discoveries were about to come. We heard there were uncatalogued Special Collections materials in the annex to the University of Vermont library. With only a few hours to work before they closed, we had

a cart brought out. In the last minutes, Anthony opened a lawyer's account book, and there it was: a record of the lawyer that Brownson hired to defend him against the Princes, who brought suit against him. The case went back and forth for eight years, in suits and countersuits. Lucy probably did argue in the last weeks, and the Princes eventually won. The final settlement was determined by arbitration.

The town meeting records in the Sunderland clerk's office showed the town trying to get out of having to support the family, but when Festus died leaving a white widow and three mixed race children, the town built them a house and called them the "white negroes." Lucy lived next door with her son Caesar and daughters Cill and Duruxa, until her death at the age of ninety-seven, in 1821.

That would seem to be the end of the story, but I'd like to end with a few more words on archives. None of what we were able to discover could have been done without the help of many archives and archivists. All in all, we visited seventy-two public archives, many times making multiple visits, over a seven-year period. Many of them were unaware of the treasures in their holdings, and many materials were uncatalogued or placed under "anonymous." But there are other, crucial collections, that public archives may never know about. For instance, we visited the woman whose family has owned the Prince land in Guilford for over one hundred years, and treasures its history. It was her great-grandfather who plowed under Bijah's grave, and she's been looking for it ever since.

Another woman living outside of Boston had once owned the papers of Ebenezer Hunt, for whom Bijah worked for two years in Northampton. Anthony went to her house, but most of the collection had been discarded years before when she downsized. Although she had a single account book left, Bijah wasn't in it. If only she'd realized the importance of what she owned, she might have held onto it.

All of us need to preserve what we find, even when the value of a collection may not be known. Anthony and I are so grateful to those archivists and others who helped us along the way, but most of all we are grateful to Bijah and Lucy, who revealed their story to us and allowed us to tell it. ■

It's Your Newsletter: Contribute!

The *NEA Newsletter* always needs news from your archives and other archives in New England, about NEA members, and about upcoming events. We also need people to write reviews, long articles, and session reports for NEA meetings. If you have any ideas for articles, etc., please contact an editor.

Inside NEA

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Adapted from his address given at the NEA Spring 2009 Meeting.

- Peter Carini



Last spring, at the meeting in Newport, Kathryn Hammond Baker, NEA Past President, reminded us all that this was a good time to be an archivist. Today, just a year later, it is still a good time to be an archivist, but we are all facing a very different picture.

A few weeks ago I picked up a copy of *The Nation*. The issue contained an article featuring the voices of readers who had lost their jobs in the economic down turn. I randomly picked the story of one of these individuals and began to read. As it happened, the woman whose story I had chosen was an archivist. It gave me pause. Within a week or so of reading this article, Dartmouth laid off 60 staff members. These included three people from the Library and the Registrar for the College Art Museum. Around the same time, at Brandeis, we saw an entire cultural resource eliminated due to fiscal concerns (though there's been some indication of back-peddling in this instance). Even more recently, Megan Friedel, Archivist at the Oregon Historical Society Research Library, announced that the Library would be closing for a period of time, and future services would be greatly reduced. Around the country, open positions in archives, libraries, and museums have been frozen or eliminated.

So, while this may still be a good time to be an archivist, it is also a precarious time to work in cultural institutions. Like the arts, history and culture are often seen as expendable in times of fiscal austerity. Those of us who work in these institutions know their full worth. We also know the damage that can be caused when acquisition work is slowed, accessioning cut back, processing curtailed, and research hours reduced. We know that to catch up in many of these areas will be a challenge. But it is hard to articulate how this will affect our work or even how important this work is to the public and those who hold the purse strings.

What is the importance of archives in society? In his book *Archive Fever, A Freudian Impression*, Jacques Derrida

states, "There is not political control without control of the archive, if not of memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and access to the archive, its constitution and its interpretation."¹ In other words, to be a democracy our society must provide access to its archive. We all know that archives are the memory of society; they are the evidence of past actions, decisions and rulings. As such, they are essential to our understanding of our social structures and ourselves. Without archives, past actions, good or tragic, can be forgotten or, worse yet, denied. Archives are part of our social rudder. The apparatus that helps society steer through legal, social, and ethical dilemmas. Indeed, should there be any doubt about the importance of archives and their role as memory, we only need to look at our recent past to see how often archival materials have been hidden, destroyed, or classified. Nixon's tapes, the reams of data reclassified by the Bush administration, and most recently revelations about the careful erasing of CIA interrogations videos.

Each archivist represents a piece of our societal memory: the memory of an institution, a company, a branch of the government, or a segment of society (racial, sexual or ethnic). Should any one part of that memory become inaccessible or lost, society as a whole is the loser. Without memory we cannot properly assess ourselves, review our history or, perhaps most importantly, imagine our future. It is the future that society needs to be looking toward, imagining and reimagining. In his book *The Art of the Novel*, Milan Kundera says "the spirit of our time is firmly focused on a present that is so expansive and profuse that it shoves the past off our horizon and reduces time to the present moment only."² Kundera is speaking of the pervasive nature of the present in our society and power of the novel to "connect the past with the future. But that power is no less present in the archives we all work to keep and make accessible. How many times have you seen researchers look to the archive seeking new ways forward? Pandemic responses, institutional policy setting and legal precedent are just a few simple examples.

1 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever, A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago and London : The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 4.

2 Milan Kundera, *The Art of the Novel*, trans. Linda Asher (New York : Harper and Row Publishers, 1993), 18-19.

It is up to each of us, as the curators of memory, to be prepared to make the case for the collections in our care, to stand up, speak out or retrench if necessary. It is a daunting task and one that not all of us relish or feel equipped to take on. But remember, you are not alone; you are surrounded by a community, your community. New England, more than many other areas of the country, is fairly saturated with archivists and curators. This community is your resource. A group of like-minded professionals with a broad range of experience available and willing to help each other through the sharing of ideas and information, to help defend, rethink, restructure and move forward. And NEA is the forum for this community.

Just look at the offerings at today's meeting: new ways to reach out to researchers, approaches to backlogs, security, new approaches to artificial collections, the role of research in our profession. In addition to meetings and workshops where you can learn about new developments and mingle with colleagues, NEA offers a newsletter and listservs to further communication.

Over the next year, we will be working to enhance communication between members as well as between the NEA and its membership with a new online directory. This will make it easier for you to find colleagues, but will also result in a number of other advances. One potential result will be online registration for meetings and workshops. Another may be online voting.

To better determine how the organization serves you, its members, we will also kick off a new strategic planning process. The Board is still working to determine the shape and structure of this process, but we will be looking to you for help and input as we move forward.

So no matter whether we are facing good times or bad, you are not alone. As a community we can weather this storm. This is your organization and it is here to serve you. But it also depends on you. NEA is a collaborative effort and there is work to be done, but that work takes many hands. I hope you will all find ways to join in and work with us in the future. Thank you and I look forward to serving you in the coming year. ■

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING REPORT

- *Danielle Kovacs*



The business handled at the March 27, 2009 meeting of the Executive Board is summarized below. All **VOTING** is in bold. Complete minutes are available on the NEA Web site or from the secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 12:35 p.m. by Kathryn Hammond Baker.

Minutes from the January 23, 2009 Board Meeting were presented. All members voted to accept the January 23, 2009 Board Meeting minutes.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

President

Kathryn Hammond Baker and two other Board members, Joanie Gearin and Paige Roberts, met with members of the Simmons chapter of SCoSSA to discuss opportunities for students to get more involved in NEA. It was recommended that a representative of NEA should try to visit each section of the archives management class at Simmons to provide an overview of the organization. Other ways of reaching Simmons students include a table at the annual internship fair, NEA announcements on the SCoSAA listserv, and the creation of a volunteer database that would match students with repositories seeking volunteers, suggested by Jeanette Bastian, director of the archives program at Simmons.

Vice President

Peter Carini provided an update on the planning for the Fall 2009 NEA meeting at UMass Boston and the Spring 2010 NEA meeting at UMass Amherst.

Immediate Past President

Chris Burns reported the election results. Elizabeth Slomba was elected Vice President/President elect and Andrew Wentink was elected Treasurer. There was a tie between Karen Adler Abramson and Virginia Hunt for the position of Representative-at-Large to be decided by a re-balloting of the same membership. **All members voted to invite Karen Adler Abramson to remain as Representative-at-Large for up to sixty days during the time of the re-balloting. All members voted to ask Chris Burns to**

continue his duties as Past President to count ballots and resolve the election.

Treasurer

Nova Seals submitted tax forms for 2008 to the accountant and renewed the bulk mail permit for 2009. The net income for this quarter was just over \$9,000. Nova reported that NEA is doing very well financially and she expected the financial picture to look even brighter after the Spring 2009 meeting. There was a recommendation to move some of NEA's funds from a low-interest checking account to a money market account as well as a discussion about how the board can invest some of the income recently earned to improve benefits for NEA members.

MEETINGS

Spring 2009

Marilyn Dunn reported that more than 286 attendees registered for the Spring 2009 meeting, and that program rooms had to be changed in order to accommodate the number of individuals expected to be in attendance. She calculated that the projected income for the meeting was about \$19,000, with the projected expense for the meeting just over \$8,000. Ellen Doon announced that there were no cancellations or changes in the program.

Fall 2009

Jane Ward signed a contract with Doubletree Club Boston Bayside Hotel and secured the reduced UMass Boston price of \$119 per room. She will submit a full budget within the next few weeks. Jill Snyder and Rachel Wise announced the theme for the upcoming Fall 2009 meeting: appraisal. There will be twelve sessions, seven of which have already been planned, an opening reception at the JFK Library, and a closing reception. The Program Committee has not yet determined a keynote speaker, and they ask that suggestions be directed to their attention.

Spring 2010

The Program Committee will meet for the first time on March 28th at the Spring 2009 meeting. Danielle Kovacs reported that space in the Conference Center at UMass Amherst has been reserved for the meeting and a block of hotel rooms have been reserved onsite. The opening reception will be held at the Natural History Museum at Amherst College. She submitted a preliminary budget to be revised as planning progresses.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership

The board reviewed NEA membership benefits as updated by Maria Bernier, which included the new student membership category. It was agreed that student members would enjoy the same benefits that individual members enjoy, but they would only be required to pay half the regular membership rate. **All members voted to approve the proposed NEA membership benefits with the following amendments: membership category "regular" be changed to "individual" and within the individual category the Haas and Distinguished Serve awards be removed from listed benefits.**

Education Committee

Jaimie Quaglino reported that SAA would like to co-sponsor a workshop on Advanced Appraisal taught by Mark Greene at the Fall 2009 meeting. **All voted to approve that NEA co-sponsor the SAA Workshop Advanced Appraisal.** The committee will meet during the Spring 2009 meeting to review the roles of committee members and discuss the possibility of conducting a survey on the educational needs of members.

Web Committee

Rick Steinmetz announced that two years of Web hosting were purchased from Linode.com and that the NEA Web site has already been moved to a new server. The Web Committee expects that the new Web site to be available for the Board to review by April. The next step will be developing the membership database, which they hope will be ready for use by the Fall 2009 meeting.

Task Force to Align Job Descriptions

Joanie Gearin presented the revised job descriptions for a number of NEA committees. There was a discussion about the level of detail necessary in the job descriptions as well as a few recommendations for additional changes. Joanie will make the final edits and submit the revised job descriptions via email to the Board for review and approval.

Strategic Planning Process

The Board decided to move forward with conducting a new phase of long-range planning. Since the mission statement adequately defines the purpose of NEA, it was suggested that the Board prepare a vision statement that defines the goals of the organization for the future. There

was a lengthy discussion about how to get the membership involved in the process and Kathryn Hammond Baker recommended that the Board seek membership involvement from the beginning. It was agreed that Kathryn would announce the upcoming planning at the opening of the Spring 2009 meeting and ask members to respond to a variety of questions about NEA. Responses could be submitted on index cards provided by dropping them in the evaluation box or they could be emailed to a Board member at a later date. These responses will be consulted during a planning retreat to be scheduled in May.

Next Meeting Date

The next quarterly board meeting will take place at the W.E.B. Du Bois Library, UMass Amherst on July 23, 2009. ■

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

New Members - Rodney Obien

Robyn Christensen
 Worcester Historical
 Museum

Diane Rapaport
 Quill Pen Historical
 Consulting, LLC

Jennifer Keefe
 LIMRA International

Meldon Wolfgang
 Kappa Alpha Society

Outreach Committee needs you!

The NEA Outreach Committee is gathering images for use in our promotional items for events such as Archives Week and Archives on the Road. Please submit interesting images from your collections so we can add them to our "library." Images that can be used in a variety of formats will be most useful, as there may be a series of promotional items. Images that are graphically interesting as well as representative of either your collections and/or New England are most desirable. Please submit 300dpi jpgs to <escott@smcvt.edu> along with a very brief description of the image(s) and any necessary citation information.

INFORMATION our focus
 INTERNATIONAL our scope
 INTERDISCIPLINARY our mindset



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<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SOIS/academics/cas.htm>

Spring 2009 Meeting Session Reports

I. Theme: Researcher View

Archives Encounters: Reports from Researchers

- Steven D. Booth

Discussion in this session centered on practicing researchers and their personal encounters with archival institutions. Panelists Craig Robertson and Nancy L. Gallagher addressed archival practices as seen by researchers who do not have prior experience conducting research using primary source materials.

Craig Robertson, of Northeastern University, began the session with his thoughts on the culture of the National Archives and Records Administration and U.S. Department of State. While conducting research for his doctoral dissertation, Robertson experienced challenges regarding access to primary source materials related to the United States passport. From archivists at NARA and the Passport Office Library, he learned about the processes of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and how to file a request under the guidelines. Because his initial request lacked the necessary information, it was denied and he found himself back at square one. Robertson further discussed his frustrations about government control over records, the negative effect it had on him as a researcher, and offered suggestions for how to handle situations such as these. During his presentation, he gave an overview of the passport in the United States from 1845-1930.

Nancy L. Gallagher, author of *Breeding Better Vermonters: The Eugenics Project in the Green Mountain State*, discussed her experience researching eugenics at the University of Vermont. What originally began as an innocent thesis project turned into a thrilling case study surrounding the Eugenics Survey of Vermont. Organized in 1925 by Henry F. Perkins, chairman of the University of Vermont (UVM) Zoology Department, the survey was designed to study families and communities in the state. The information gained from the reports written by social workers was used for social reforms in the areas of child

welfare, mental health, and family development. Gallagher conducted her research at the archive of the Eugenics Survey and the Vermont Commission on Country Life at the Vermont Public Records Office. The collection consisted of over forty cartons of manuscripts, raw data, and source materials. While using the resources, Gallagher faced issues regarding public access, historical censorship, and cultural sensitivity. During the presentation, she provided the audience with detailed accounts of the families and their lives, and effects of the survey.

Archival Research in the Sciences: A Discussion with Graduate Students

- Joelle Burdette

Archivists spend considerable energy creating access tools for the collections in their care. Do these tools provide the kind of help that researchers need? Are we addressing the ways in which researchers actually use collections? These questions formed the focus of the discussion as the graduate student panelists described their experiences at a variety of repositories. The main issues addressed during the discussion included digitization (by the repository as well as the researcher), the useful levels of description in a finding aid, and collaboration between researchers and archivists.

Michael Rossi, a doctoral candidate in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology, and Society (HASTS) program, described two very different experiences within the same institution. At the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), for example, detailed finding aids to highly processed collections provided valuable information. Additionally, the freedom to browse less processed collections led him to the discovery of items relevant to his research, which were not included in the general index to the collection. In his research of the history of building a model whale, he found interactions with archivists very helpful with regard to providing contextual knowledge of the collections and institutions.

Xaq Frolich, also a doctoral candidate in the HASTS program, has used government institutional archives, private and personal collections, and law firm archives in researching the history of food regulations. He raised the issue of photograph-

ing materials to be stored as one's personal reference file, or shadow archive. He noted that some have worried that this extractive approach, where the note taking takes place almost entirely outside of the repository, removes the researcher from the collaborative research process.

Lucas Reippel, a PhD candidate in Harvard's History of Science program, is researching how objects move through the museum system from discovery, accession, research, and display, and has used manuscript and institutional archives held at the AMNH. He does not find the organizational structure of the collections to be very helpful, and therefore does not use finding aids regularly. He prefers to use collections that have not been broken up too finely. He takes extensive notes and takes a photo of items for reference purposes only (he does not use the extractive method as described above).

Alex Wellerstein, also a PhD candidate in the Harvard program, has used both personal collections and government archives in researching the history of nuclear weapons secrecy. Due to limited travel funds, he notes how important it is to have access to electronic resources and digitized items. His research requires the casting of a very wide net, and therefore he needs online finding aids to contain description down to the folder level. Being able to order copies of items (or whole folders) enables him to use collections at far more institutions than his travel budget would allow.

When the Archivist Becomes the Patron

- Juliana Kuipers

This session focused on the experiences archivists have had in the role of the patron, with a particular emphasis on how their archival training affected their research and what they brought back to their repository as a result.

Chair Juliana Kuipers, Special Materials Cataloger and Processing Archivist at the Harvard University Archives, presented on her research at Radcliffe's Schlesinger Library for her master's thesis. Focusing on the question, "how does access affect research," she described the different ways the Schlesinger Library has provided access to a collection created by a female photographer in the 1890s. The collection includes two fragile and valuable manuscript volumes con-

taining text, photographs, and original drawings; the originals are closed to the public. Access to the manuscript through the years has included a microfilm version, access to digitized photographs through Harvard's online visual resource catalog, a published but edited version of the manuscript, and finally a complete digitized version of the entire collection. Kuipers emphasized how the different means of access affected her research: having access to the entire collection – even though it was a digital copy and not the original – allowed her to see how the photographs and text related in ways previously impossible to see.

Jeffrey Marshall, Director of Research Collections at the Bailey/Howe Library of the University of Vermont, presented on his recently published historical novel, *The Inquest*. Marshall discussed the basis for his novel: the fascinating story of a young woman who died in Burlington, Vermont in 1830 after undergoing an abortion, the subsequent inquest, and the path his research took him through various repositories. Showing many examples of the primary source material he discovered, Marshall spoke on how he supplemented the scant historical record with fictitious details, based on historical fact.

Brian Sullivan, currently Archivist of Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, is the author of *If Ever Two Were One: A Private Diary of Love Eternal*, for which he conducted his research at his former workplace, the Harvard University Archives. Briefly commenting on the story presented in his book, Sullivan opened up the discussion to the audience, asking for comments and questions about research and publishing. The panel then fielded several audience questions regarding how one goes about finding a publisher as well as the ethics involved in researching at one's own repository.

II. Theme: Education Outreach

Where Processing, Reference and Outreach Meet: Providing Access to Collections Using Web 2.0 Technologies

- Joyce Clifford

A technologically savvy audience of New England archivists listened to four of their peers present their experiences with Web 2.0 technologies.

Panel chair and Assistant University Archivist of Wesleyan University, Valerie Gillespie, discussed a blog started by student processors that added value to the collection and captured the interest of users and administrators. Heather Cole, Assistant Curator of Modern Books and Manuscripts at Houghton Library, Harvard University, started and maintains a blog that highlights the diversity of Houghton collections. Ms. Cole extolled the virtues of blogs: versatility; ease of set-up; photographs, video, and audio can be uploaded; and plug-ins and widgets are available for customization. Tracking systems measure user numbers and provide user demographics. Ms. Cole concluded that blogs are a great way to bring worldwide access and attention to collections.

Robert Cox, Head of Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA) at UMass-Amherst, and Danielle Kovacs, Manuscripts Curator at SCUA, discussed the advantages of blogs and wikis from a different angle. Mr. Cox recalled two problems that needed to be addressed before his repository invested in new technologies: how to achieve maximum access to collections and how to help smaller institutions find appropriate technology solutions. Criteria for solutions included financial feasibility, familiarity, sustainability, extensibility, and interconnectivity. Blogs provided the outreach solution for small institutions because of easy maintenance and customization tools that allow layered access to collections.

After considering additional Web 2.0 technologies, Danielle Kovacs tested wikis for an encyclopedia of UMass-Amherst and a DuBoisopedia for the W.E.B. DuBois collection. Interactive wikis are excellent for exchanging information in real time and for tracking processing. Changes and edits are automatically recorded and any number of people can use a wiki simultaneously. Issues include ensuring guidelines are followed and copyright management.

Rebekah Irwin, Head of Digital Projects and Metadata at the Beinecke Library of Yale University, cautioned her listeners that new technologies can be a double-edged sword. After conducting a search on Google for her institution's digital images, she realized there was a large online audience that Yale needed to entice away from competing Web sites. Authority had shifted from the institution and a new model of shared authority was necessary. Thus, practice at the Beinecke began to change and now patrons can receive exhibit images via an RSS feed, link to the Beinecke

blog, link to exhibit blogs, and listen to podcasts about exhibits on their cell phones. An abundance of patron statistics will guide decision-making and improve access for researchers and the public alike.

Web 2.0 technologies like blogs, wikis, RSS feeds, and podcasts are helping archivists improve collection access, track processing, and provide better reference service and outreach to old and new patrons.

Potential Users/Donors/Supporters/ Archivists: The Challenges and Rewards of Reaching Out to High School Students

- Jessica Steytler

The purpose of this project is to introduce high school students to the work that we do as archivists. Every person, family, or organization, has a history -- taking care of that history so that it is saved and can be studied by anyone who is interested is what we do. We allow students to become archivists for a week -- to learn about the history of their family or community organization, to find materials that tell stories about that history, and to understand how to save that history."

- from the Facebook page for the Family and Community Archives Project: <<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=63893766030>>

The session centered on the Family and Community Archives Project (FCAP), established in 2007 between the New Haven Cooperative High School for the Arts and Humanities and Yale. Teachers and archivists (with the assistance of the principal) teamed up to teach juniors at the school about archives. Panel participants included Christine Wideman, Nancy Lyon and Matthew Mason of Yale, and Harry Murphy from the high school.

Participants identified a number of factors that have affected the success of the two year old program:

Time- The first year, archivists had seven visits over eight weeks. It proved to be hard to maintain the students' interest, but that may have had something to do with the 7:30 start time, too. In year two, the format was five visits in two weeks. This did not afford enough time, particularly due to this year's harsh winter

and associated snow days. Despite that, the students found that they were able to stay more focused. A potential restructure for year three might be six visits over three weeks.

Topic - Both Matt and Nancy struggled, particularly in the first year, with helping the students choose a topic and establish easily identifiable goals. Additionally, there were some mind-sets that were hard to overcome, such as the notion that “archival” doesn’t necessarily mean “old.” Some archival concepts were also hard to convey.

Activities - Students were given tutorials on basic archival concepts and vocabulary. They visited Yale to see what an archive looks like and at the end of the program mounted an exhibit that showcased the topics they’d researched: possible causes of paranormal activity in a house; the history of a basketball team’s trophies; and what it was like for family members when they were the students’ ages.

The panelists reported that overall, the experience has been a positive one for teachers, archivists, and students.

Teaching History of Education with the College Archives

- Amy Greer

Colleen Previte, Archivist and Special Collections Librarian, and Kelly Kolodny and Julia Zoino-Jeannett, both Assistant Professors of Education at Framingham State College, worked collaboratively to incorporate the treasures of the archives into the Education in American Society course taught to all incoming education students. Previte, in her first year as the College’s archivist, discovered a plethora of materials related to the development of public education in the United States. As the first Normal School in the U.S., Framingham State College greatly influenced the trajectory of education in this country and trained many education reformers. After reviewing the Education department’s curriculum, Previte approached Kolodny and Zoino-Jeannett about utilizing archival materials in their education survey course.

Upon Previte’s suggestion, Kolodny and Zoino-Jeannett developed a plan to have each section of the course spend one class period in the archives, introducing their students to primary sources. The professors planned the visit to the archives in conjunction with the history of education section of the course. Previte, Kolodny, and Zoino-Jeannett selected six notable education reformers whose papers are held in the College archives for the students to review. Kolodny and Zoino-Jeannett created a booklet of photographs, biographies, and critical thinking questions which was given to the students before visiting the archives. The materials from the six collections were set out in different stations and the students were given a set amount of time to look at and utilize each set of materials. The intent of the class session was for students to use archival materials to think critically about the development and evolution of education in the United States.

In reviewing the curriculum of the College, Previte believes the archives can be used for a number of courses on campus. Given the success with the Education in American Society course, Previte hopes to use this same model to connect with other education professors and other departments. The three presenters believe archival research and exposure to primary resources strengthens the students’ connection to the institution, advances their perspective on their selected discipline, improves critical thinking skills, and presents course content through relevant, concrete, and local examples. Feedback from the students has supported the trio’s beliefs, with many students actually requesting more time with the archival materials.

As Previte, Kolodny, and Zoino-Jeannett move forward with their collaboration, they are hoping to make some changes, additions, and improvements to their use of the archives. Previte hopes to add a Blackboard component to the archives session in which students can continue having a dialogue with her about the archival materials they reviewed in class and how to conduct further research. They also hope to expand their collaboration to honors and graduate level courses, encouraging students to do original research utilizing the College’s unique archival collections. Overall, the collaboration between archivist and faculty has so far been successful, and they have high hopes for the future.

III. Theme: Archivist View

Breaking the Backlog: The Schlesinger Library Backlog Project

- Mary O. Murphy

Anne Engelhart, Head of Collection Services, and Katherine Kraft, Senior Archivist, facilitated this discussion about the Schlesinger Library's Backlog Project, initiated as part of its strategic plan (2007). The Library committed to a five-year project, hiring 11 new project staff (including seven manuscripts processors) to reduce a backlog of unprocessed manuscripts, books, serials, and audiovisual resources. As managers of the project, Engelhart and Kraft described the project's history and organization, provided a synopsis of the work so far, and presented their thoughts about the usefulness (and difficulty) of creating meaningful metrics.

Kraft, Engelhart, and the 50-60 audience members raised a number of issues for consideration. Participants focused on processing speed versus privacy issues and

questioned how processors can maintain a quick processing pace while also continuing to carefully screen collections for restricted materials. They also touched upon minimal versus fuller processing, the effects of "More Product Less Process" processing on public service staff, and how access to unprocessed collections might be improved by capturing and providing more information during the accessioning process.

From Research to Practice: How Archival Research Shapes What We Do

- Jennifer Phillips

The extent to which research in the academic field of archival theory influences how practicing archivists do their work is a topic of long-standing debate. This session, attended by approximately 30 participants, sought to examine the current state of the relationship between archival theory and practice. Panelists proposed areas where archival science has or should influence practitioners, while at the same time recognizing the various limits to that influence.



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Eliot Wilczek introduced the session by contextualizing the theory versus practice debate. He pointed to models for the successful influence of theory on practice, such as the InterPARES project, which began with the development of a theory for the preservation of records, and has moved to putting that theory into practice.

As someone who is engaged in the development of theory, Ross Harvey represented the academic perspective. Ideally scholarly research investigates practice, and practice is improved on the basis of scholarly research. This model suggests research is essential to practice, but in reality there is a problem with the uptake of research. However, rather than harping on the failure of research to be translated into practice, Harvey looked instead at an area where he felt traditional archival theory had had an impact on practice: in the realm of electronic records. Harvey stated that it is appropriate to apply archival techniques in a digital environment when the theories are valid outside their original context. He then discussed how traditional archival theory had influenced electronic records in terms of the definition of what constitutes a record; in terms of the description of hierarchies; and in terms of records life cycles. He concluded that although traditional archival techniques must be adapted to new types of materials, research had influenced archival practice for electronic records.

Joan Krizack did not directly speak to the discrepancy between theory and practice. Rather she reflected upon the difficulty of conducting research. Funding is one of the major difficulties facing practitioners who desire to do research. Krizack detailed three programs that enabled practicing archivists to conduct research, including the Bentley Historical Library's resident fellowship and the NHPRC's archival research and electronic records programs. She discussed these programs in terms of the way that they elevated the level of discourse for practitioners by virtue of the articles to which they gave rise.

Kristin Eshelman represented the practicing archivist. She spoke about her own skepticism about research and archival literature. Specifically, she said that when faced with the day-to-day work of appraising and selecting electronic records, models from the realm of theory, such as OAIS and Trusted Digital Repositories, were not helpful. Instead Eshelman found it helpful to apply an appraisal model from sound recordings to electronic records, because she was able to walk through the steps of a known process

while defining local needs. In her opinion, archival theory falls short because it cannot account for local circumstance and archival literature would be more helpful were there more case studies detailing local scenarios.

The Perfect Researcher: An Archivist-Designed Role Model for Users

Session Leaders – Jennifer Fauxsmith & Barbara Meloni

This session was designed around the concept of the “perfect researcher.” The articles “My Dream Archive” by Christopher Phelps in *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 2, 2007 and “A Survival Guide to Archival Research” written by Barbara Heck, et al. in *Perspectives*, December 2004 provided inspiration for the session.

We opened by asking attendees to imagine themselves in the position of researchers, instructed to lock up their belongings and to abide by a lengthy list of rules and regulations. To begin the discussion, participants were broken up into groups to discuss characteristics demonstrated by their “ideal” researcher. A list was created from the top five characteristics from each group.

Reviewing the list generated much discussion. One attendee was a researcher rather than archivist, which provided another perspective. The group responded to questions posed throughout the session with suggestions such as the importance of making an effort during the initial reference interview to elicit as much information about their research goals as possible. In the end, the group concluded that it is up to both parties to make an effort to listen to each other and collaborate through the research process.

Reference, Security, and Access: Striking a Balance in our Reading Rooms

- Jen Tuleja

Approximately 40 people attended this session in which three panelists, Jennifer Fauxsmith of the Massachusetts State Archives, Jamie Kingman Rice of the Maine Historical Society, and Jay Gaidmore of Brown University answered questions posed by the chair, Donna Webber of Simmons College. Each panelist described his/

her institution, including access and security policies, registration and identification procedures, and instructions for use of materials in reading rooms.

After the introductions, the panelists answered questions about how security, providing access, and protecting privacy affected decisions about the amount of processing required to make collections available for research use, screening restricted material, and requesting access to restricted materials. Panelists then discussed a number of technology related issues including use of media, making duplicates or surrogates of media, and the use of scanners and cameras in the reading room.

The panelists' answers to the questions varied quite a bit in some cases due to the inherent differences between private and public institutions. For instance, the issue of privacy is handled differently within the representative archives. At the Massachusetts State Archives, access to "private" information is defined by state public records laws, while in the collection of the Maine Historical Society or Brown University, records are closed for a period of time and thereafter may be opened to researchers, according to the gift agreement, arrangements with the donor, or institutional policy. The issues of copyright and publication are handled differently, as well. Where the records of an individual or a university department might require legal permissions and usage agreements, public records do not fall under copyright laws and do not require such oversight.

The session ended with questions from the audience that highlighted continuing efforts to balance the opportunities presented by the digital environment with the more traditional concerns of security, providing access, and protecting privacy.

Creating, Maintaining and Transforming Artificial Collections to Improve Access

- *Prudence Doherty*

In this session, four archivists discussed artificial collections that they inherited and continue to maintain. Despite a professional commitment to the principles of provenance and original order, each of the speakers demonstrated that in certain circumstances artificial collections provide benefits to the archivists managing them and to users searching for relevant materials.

William Ross, head of Milne Special Collections and Archives at the University of New Hampshire, was unable to attend, and session chair Elizabeth Slomba presented his paper about the collection of American composer Amy Beach. When UNH received additional Beach material, Ross considered his options, and chose to ignore archival orthodoxy and add the new materials to an existing artificial collection. As a result, he was able to process the new materials more quickly, unite materials of the same type, and reorganize the important sheet music collection, ultimately making a premier collection more accessible to researchers.

Laura Katz Smith, curator of the Business, Road, Labor and Ethnic Heritage Collections at the University of Connecticut's Dodd Center, supports judicious development, on a case-by-case basis, of subject-based collections. At the Dodd Center, she finds that it is easier for her and for researchers to work by subject. Dodd Center users, such as rail fans, have little direct interest in donors or collectors and want to access material by subject. When eclectic items come from various sources, Smith can make them more visible in a united collection. Arranging material by subject also keeps useful resources from languishing in obscurity. Smith does worry that future archivists will not necessarily know how particular artificial collections developed.

Tom Blake, Digital Resources Manager, and Kimberley Reynolds, Curator of Manuscripts, talked about the Boston Public Library's legendary Antislavery Collection. Blake described the collection's evolution from a donation by the family of William Lloyd Garrison in the late 1890s to an umbrella collection that unites a number of related individual collections. He voiced concern about the absence of detailed finding aids and the loss of contextual information, and suggested that digitization might be used to put the smaller collections back together again. Reynolds stressed that while it is not possible to consider reprocessing 40,000 items scattered throughout the stacks, a current digitization project will greatly improve access for users, particularly because each digitized item will be accompanied by metadata derived from the existing item-level catalog cards.

Although the panelists focused on working with legacy artificial collections, session chair Elizabeth Slomba briefly mentioned an artificial collection that she helped establish at the University of New Hampshire in response to a request for a research collection that documents the history of writing and writing instruction at the university. ■

News and Notes

CONNECTICUT

The Connecticut Historical Society Provides Greater Access to Collections through NHPRC Grant

In 2008 the Connecticut Historical Society (CHS) received a two-year grant from the National Historic Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to catalog manuscript collections that had either no catalog record or had one that was only available on site in the card catalog. The stated goal for the grant was to catalog 900 collections by the end of the two-year period. Creating only basic MARC records and refraining from processing any collections, the project team reached the halfway mark in their cataloging at the end of May, four months ahead of schedule.

As a result of this project, the team has uncovered some unique, previously unknown materials in the CHS collections. Many of these individual collections will require more detailed processing at a later date in order to flush out the richness of the materials. For now, however, researchers have better access to a larger portion of the collection than ever before.

Some of the more notable newly-cataloged collections include: records of N.N. Hill Brass Co. detailing the sales, labor accounts, orders, and inventories of this East Hampton bell manufacturing company; the papers of Daniel Burnap, a clockmaker, jeweler, farmer, and Justice of the Peace in Andover, Connecticut, including a notebook with pencil-drawn designs of clock parts; the Herman and Miriam Katims music collection, which includes many of their songs and manuscript musical compositions as well as copyright registrations; the Stonington selectmen's records including their assistance to the poor, schoolhouse expenses, and labor for highway repair; the papers of Keith Hook, one-time President of the Hartford School Board, which provide a history of Hartford school issues for the 1960s; and the papers of John Milton Niles, ninth U.S. postmaster general and founder of the *Hartford Times* newspaper. The project's success in increasing access to the CHS collections is evident in the number of researchers who are already requesting these newly-cataloged collections.

MAINE

Bowdoin College Acquires a "Lost" Longfellow Letter

The Bowdoin College Library's George J. Mitchell Department of Special Collections & Archives has acquired an important letter that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow composed in French to a friend, Quebec physician Jean Zéphirin Nault. Writing on March 10, 1835, Longfellow expresses palpable excitement about undertaking a European journey that will prepare him for his new appointment as professor of modern languages at Harvard College. Longfellow had just resigned a similar position at Bowdoin College to accept the Harvard offer, and Harvard had granted him two years of travel to hone his linguistic skills, particularly in Germanic and Scandinavian languages.

The three-page letter, written in Longfellow's familiar, well-rounded script and signed "Henri," was previously known only through an English translation that appeared in the March 6, 1926, issue of the *Boston Evening Standard*. That translated version has formed the basis for published scholarly editions of the letter until the present day. The rediscovered original French version now offers fresh insight into Longfellow's feelings during this pivotal moment in his life, and it offers testimony about his own facility with the French language.

Re/Collected: Great Works and New Discoveries from the Brown Library

This original exhibit celebrates the treasures of the Brown Library at Maine Historical Society. *Re/Collected: Great Works and New Discoveries from the Brown Library* explores and reveals the richness of the collection: books, manuscripts, maps, broadsides, photographs, ephemera, architectural and engineering drawings and more. Heralding the Society's commitment to the history and heritage of Maine and its people, *Re/Collected* will be on display at Maine Historical Society from Friday, June 26 – Wednesday, December 30, 2009.

Re/Collected will share national treasures, such as the Declaration of Independence, printed on July 4, 1776 by John Dunlap in Philadelphia. Unusual Maine riches

abound, ranging from official boundary maps to intimate family correspondence and vital records. Visitors will also explore the Society's early history, the Civil War, and Portland's Abyssinian Meeting House.

The exhibit marks the re-dedication of the library as the Alida Carroll and John Marshall Brown Research Library to honor the devotion to Maine and its history by two notable residents.

The Brown Library at Maine Historical Society to Reopen on March 24 after Two-year Renovation and Expansion

Maine Historical Society is pleased to announce the reopening of the Alida Carroll and John Marshall Brown Library at 485 Congress Street, Portland, Maine, on Tuesday, March 24, 2009, following the completion of a two-year, \$9.5 million renovation and expansion. While the historic character of the 1907 building has been lovingly preserved, the library has been transformed into a state-of-the-art research facility, providing first-rate care of the collections. A new 13,000 square foot wing provides expanded storage, climate-control, and a home for the Maine Memory Network.

Newly named for General John Marshall Brown and his wife, Alida Carroll Brown, the library contains one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of materials related to Maine history in the state. John Marshall and Alida Carroll Brown were prominent figures in Maine business, political, and cultural life in the 19th century.

The renovation of the original building and the 13,000 square foot expansion have addressed structural repairs, fire and security systems, upgraded technology, and improved access and amenities for patrons.

MASSACHUSETTS

National Fire Protection Association Awarded Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Charles S. Morgan Technical Library, located at the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has been awarded a grant from the federal Institute of Museum and

Library Services (IMLS), which will allow the library to preserve and scan their copy of *Fires and Public Entertainments*. The Morgan Library attempts to cover all aspects of fire in the collection: history of fires and fire-fighters, research on fire behavior, fire investigations, codes and standards, public education and awareness, and technical/engineering resources.

The library received one of 53 grants given by IMLS. The grant, which totaled approximately \$3000, will cover the cost of scanning and preserving *Fires and Public Entertainments: A study of some 1100 notable fires at theatres, music halls, circus buildings and temporary structures during the last 100 years*, published in 1897 by Edwin O. Sachs. This newspaper-sized text, a compilation of narratives, chronicling fires from the late 1700s, will be sent to the Northeast Document Conservation Center for preservation/conservation.

The Schlesinger Library Announces Newly Processed Collections

The Schlesinger Library (Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University) is pleased to report that the following newly-processed collections are open to research: papers (1927-2004) of pilot, journalist, travel expert, and professor **Caroline Iverson Ackerman**; addenda (1941-2006) to the papers of feminist, activist, and author **Betty Friedan**; addenda (1846-ca.1975) to the papers of feminist, socialist, deist, and intellectual leader of the early woman's movement **Charlotte Perkins Gilman**; papers (1951-1991) of sociologist and professor **Sara "Sally" Lynn Hacker**; papers (1919-2003) of Boston, Massachusetts, community and civil rights activist **Ruth Marion Batson**; papers (1778-1928), most in German, of the **Dreyer family**; records (1917-2005) of the **Lebanese Syrian Ladies' Aid Society** in greater Boston; papers (1936-1992) of graphic and serigraphic artist **Corita**, whose work included the Boston Gas rainbow tank; and **Letters to Ms.**, 1970-1998, containing hundreds of letters to *Ms.* magazine. Finding aids are online at Harvard University's OASIS Web site: <<http://oasis.harvard.edu>>.

Visit the NEA online at:

<www.newenglandarchivists.org>

Simmons Students Create Archive for BYSO

Archives students from Simmons College GSLIS recently created an archive for the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra (BYSO), a music education organization that provides high-quality orchestral training and performance opportunities to more than 420 young musicians in New England. When BYSO contacted Simmons in 2007, they had approximately a dozen large boxes of photos, programs, newspaper clippings, letters, and other documents related to tours, concerts, and governance—much of which was in no discernible order. Andrea Medina-Smith, Stephanie Call, Katharine Dunn, and Sara Goldberg, members of the Student Chapter of the Society of American Archivists (SCoSAA), volunteered to survey, process, rehouse, and create a finding aid for the collection, which represents more than 50 years of BYSO history. BYSO plans to create an online exhibit featuring the finest selections from the collection. BYSO's Executive Director, Cathy Weiskel, highlighted the importance of the project: "We are so grateful that BYSO's history will be preserved for future BYSO students, and the public."

R H O D E I S L A N D

R.I. Civil War Volume to be Saved with an IMLS Grant

Thanks to a grant from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the Rhode Island Historical Society (RIHS) will begin the Rhode Island Civil War Restoration Project to preserve the bound volumes that record the day-to-day lives of Rhode Island's soldiers. The pilot artifact selected by the RIHS Library curators is an important volume of Civil War records that will be professionally conserved by the New England Document Conservation Center. The Historical Society was one of 53 successful projects selected from 202 applicants.

The selected volume is the *Clothing Book of Company A of the Third Regiment, Rhode Island Heavy Artillery, August 1861 - September 1865*. The regiment was led by Cols. Nathaniel W. Brown, Edwin Metcalf and Charles R. Brayton, and served at multiple locations including Hilton Head, Morris Island, Fort Wagner and Petersburg.

Collections on Monumenta Sculpture Exhibit Now Available for Research

Two collections related to Monumenta, the 1974 outdoor sculpture exhibit held in Newport, RI, are now available for research at the Salve Regina University Special Collections. The Monumenta exhibit spanned multiple locations around the city and consisted of fifty-four sculptures by forty different artists, including Christo, Willem De Koonig, Kosso Eloul, Richard Fleischner, Anne Healy, and James Rosati. The two collections contain photographs and articles related to Monumenta; an interview with William Crimmins, the exhibit organizer; and photographs and labels from a 30th anniversary commemorative exhibit. Archives volunteer Shelley Byron arranged and described the collections. More information is available at <http://library.salve.edu/spec-col/monumenta.html>.

MayDay celebrated with dPlan training

The RI Office of Library and Information Services, in partnership with the State Archives, celebrated MayDay 2009, by launching free training sessions for dPlan RI, an online template to help collections-based cultural institutions develop a disaster plan. The IMLS-funded project, Protecting the Past—RI, is repeating the training sessions throughout May and June. The MayDay training sessions were the culmination of a year-long effort by a diverse Steering Committee of emergency experts, administrators of cultural agencies, librarians, and conservators to adapt NEDCC's dPlan™ to Rhode Island circumstances and offer it to stakeholders.

The dPlan adaptation for Rhode Island is a free online interface to help institutions write comprehensive disaster plans, using a user-friendly template that allows museums, libraries, archives, and other cultural institutions of all sizes to develop a customized plan that includes: disaster response procedures, salvage priorities, preventive maintenance schedules, current contact information for staff and emergency personnel, local sources of emergency supplies and services, insurance checklists, and electronic data backup and restoration procedures. dPlan RI can serve the needs of small institutions without in-house preservation staff, library and museum systems that need to develop separate but related plans for multiple locations, and municipal agencies.

Trainees have been introduced to dPlan RI and guided by the instructor through the beginning steps for constructing a customized disaster plan for their agency. Trainees have left with a thorough, hands-on knowledge of how to use the free dPlan RI template to address prevention, response, and recovery for the needs of their particular institution.

Join RIAMCO in Austin!

Jennifer Betts, Project Manager of Rhode Island Archival and Manuscripts Collection Online (RIAMCO), will participate in the panel “Consortia: Models for Creating Sustainable Collaborations” at the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Annual Meeting, on Friday, August 14, at 8:30 am. The other participants will be from Northwest Digital Archives and the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries.

The title of this year’s SAA conference, *Sustainable Archives*, is fitting. With diminishing resources, rapidly changing technology and standards, and rising researcher expectations, many institutions have achieved more by joining consortia than they ever could alone. Panelists will share models for EAD affiliations and discuss collaborative experiences, institutional roles, and project planning.

RIAMCO received funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to create a union database of Encoded Archival Description (EAD) finding aids. Visit <www.riamco.org> frequently as new finding aids are continuously added.

VERMONT

Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA) Updates

In March the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA) consolidated its staff at the newly renovated Middlesex facility, just outside Montpelier. The main reference is now also at Middlesex, though some records remain at the Secretary of State’s Office in Montpelier until the Middlesex construction project is completed in late 2009. The new mailing address is Vermont State Archives and Records Administration, 1078 US Rte. 2, Middlesex, Montpelier,

VT 05633-7701. The main switch board number is 802 828-3700; contact information for State Archivist Gregory Sanford remains the same.

The Vermont House and Senate approved \$6.8 million to complete renovations at the Middlesex facility; build a new vault and permanent file room addition; and address deferred maintenance on the building. The capital construction bill, which includes the funding, is now awaiting the governor’s signature. If signed, the second phase on construction should start by July and be completed by December.

VSARA was created in July 2008 by bringing the State’s records management program into the State Archives under the Secretary of State. The initial priority has been to update the government’s record management practices and tools. To this end the new position of record analyst was created and three record analysts, headed by Tanya Marshall, are now working with agencies through our Targeted Assistance Program (TAP). The first general and agency-specific record schedules have been adopted, while TAP partnerships continue with agencies such as Mental Health, the Public Service Department, the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living, and the Department of Finance. To see the schedules, learn about TAP and follow our other efforts go to: <<http://vermont-archives.org/records/>>.

VSARA’s online continuing issues section received regular use during Vermont’s recent dialogue over and passage of gay marriage. The call by some for a referendum on gay marriage before legislative action led many to visit our continuing issue on the use of referenda. Preceding and following the governor’s veto of gay marriage, and the legislative override of the veto, our online history of the veto received regular use. With the governor threatening a veto of the budget the site is again receiving use, primarily from legislators and legislative staff. Continuing issues is at: <<http://vermont-archives.org/govhistory/governance/index.htm>>. ■

The *NEA Newsletter* is seeking submissions from repositories in New England for back cover pictorial features in *This Season in New England History*. Send submissions in JPG or TIFF format, along with a caption detailing the subject of the photograph, to: <cynthia_harbeson@chs.org>. Photographs must be scanned at 600 dpi or better.

AROUND AND ABOUT

The Naval Historical Collection's Fortieth Anniversary, 1969-2009

by Dr. Evelyn M. Cherpak

The Naval War College's Naval Historical Collection was established in 1969 as a division of the Naval War College Library in response to a need for professional care of archival, manuscript, and special collections materials that had been donated over the years. In February 1969, an archivist was hired to reconstitute the College archives that had been dispersed to various Federal Records Centers. Slowly, manuscripts and special collections materials on the Naval War College, naval warfare and the navy in Narragansett Bay were collected, organized, and catalogued. In 1976, an oral history program began that initially focused on interviewing College faculty and staff.

The Naval Historical Collection is housed in historic Mahan Hall, built in 1904. Over the years, the collection has grown and now numbers 45 archival record groups, 288 manuscript collections, 698 individual manuscript items, and 440 oral histories of flag rank officers, College personnel, WAVES and World War II veterans. Special collections consist of newspapers, pamphlets, association books, and cruise books. The collection has a national and international reputation as a premier source for research in naval history. Scholars, graduate and undergraduate students, novelists, and film makers have used these sources for books, articles, novels, theses, dissertations, and films for The History Channel and PBS stations, both here and abroad.

History

The Naval War College was established in 1884 by Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce. Luce, a naval reformer, who founded the first naval training station for recruits in Newport in 1882, initiated legislation to extend the Morrill Act of 1862 to support the education of naval personnel and merchant mariners, and supported the creation of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in 1915, believed that his greatest achievement was the founding of the Naval War College where naval officers could study the art and science of naval warfare. The College was to be "a place of original research on all questions relating to war, and to statesmanship connected with war, or the prevention of war." The first class of nine officers graduated in 1885.

During its early years, the College faced opposition from bureaucrats, secretaries of the navy, and naval officers who felt that time at sea was better spent than pursuing formal studies, but by 1910 the College had proven its value through its curriculum that included war gaming, strategy,

tactics, and international law. Lectures, a heavy reading load, and war gaming future conflicts prepared the students for sea and shore billets. The College functioned as a war planning agency for the Navy Department as students worked on problems submitted by the Department. Every major war plan between 1890 and 1917 was prepared by the Naval War College in conjunction with the Office of Naval Intelligence.

The naval leaders of World War II—Admirals Raymond A. Spruance, William F. Halsey, Ernest J. King, and Chester W. Nimitz—attended the College during the 1920s and early 1930s. There they studied and gamed war plans between Japan and the United States and a more theoretical war between Great Britain and the United States. These lessons prepared leaders thoroughly for the Second World War. In fact, Admiral Nimitz, a 1923 graduate of the college, wrote:

"The war with Japan had been reenacted in the game rooms at the Naval War College by so many people and in so many different ways, that nothing that happened during the war was a surprise... absolutely nothing except the kamikaze tactics toward the end of the war; we had not visualized these."

After the war, Admiral Spruance returned to the college as president and sought to incorporate the lessons of the war into the curriculum. Students were exposed to a broad spectrum of lectures on national and international topics as well. The *Naval War College Review* was first published in 1948 and the Global Strategy Discussions, a forum dealing with naval issues, was first held in 1949. Now called the Current Strategy Forum, it has been held in June for the last sixty years.

In 1956, the Naval Command College, a course for senior naval officers from friendly and allied nations, was inaugurated. In 1972, the Naval Staff College, a course for junior foreign officers, began. Over 1500 officers have attended the college during the last fifty-three years. Many have been promoted to senior positions in their navies. Ties of friendship and understanding have been sustained through reunions and special events.

The presidency of Admiral Stansfield Turner, 1972-1974, saw further changes in the college's curriculum that have proven their worth to this day. Three courses: Strategy and Policy, Defense Economics and Decision Making, and Joint Military Operations were inaugurated, all to the end of developing "the professional capabilities of its students to make sound decisions in both command and management" positions. Seminars, a challenging reading list, exams, and grades made for a rigorous curriculum. In 1975, a Center for Advanced Research, was established where students, faculty, and staff could conduct research on naval problems and issues. In addition, an electives program allowed students to broaden the scope of their education.

Research on strategic issues facing the navy became an integral part of the Naval War College's rationale in 1981 when the Center for Naval Warfare Studies was established. The Center for Advanced Research the War Gaming Department, and the Naval War College Press were brought together in one department. Since then the Chief of Naval Operation's Strategic Studies Group, consisting of select military officers from all the services, have come to Newport to examine where they examine future strategic issues, while the Halsey scholars pursue research on China and the Stockdale Group focus on questions of leadership.

Today, over 600 U.S. students and officers from friendly and allied navies attend the college on site where they receive a master's degree in National Security and Strategic Studies upon completion of a rigorous ten month course. Courses are offered off site to naval officers at various locations across the country through the College of Distance Education where they earn a degree while on assignment.

Archives

The archive documents the history, curriculum, administration, and programs of the college in over 1700 feet of records, dating from 1884 to the present. Holdings include student theses, lectures, faculty and staff presentations, publications, including *The Naval War College Review*, the college's scholarly journal, conference records, syllabi, presidents' files, library records, and war gaming records,

among others. Intelligence and Technical Archives, the largest record group in volume, contains military and technical intelligence sources covering war planning, logistics, aviation, military and naval forces, and political conditions from the late nineteenth century through 1940. Inventories and an ancient card catalog (assembled for several records groups years ago) exist for the record groups.

Manuscripts

Manuscripts holdings consist of personal papers, corporate papers and single items. Significant collections include those of former presidents: Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, Admiral Richard G. Colbert, Admiral William Veazie Pratt, Admiral William S. Sims, and Vice Admiral John T. Hayward. Staff and faculty have donated their papers as well. Frederick H. Hartman, a distinguished long time faculty member, John B. Hattendorf, noted naval historian and holder of the college's Ernest J. King Chair of Maritime History, and Rear Admiral Henry E. Eccles, noted logistician, author, and staff member, are three outstanding collections. Regional collections include the records of the



RADM Stephen B. Luce, founder and first president of the Naval War College. Photo courtesy of the Naval War College's Naval Historical Collection.

Naval Training Station, 1882-1974, the Naval Base, 1940-1974, the Quonset Point Naval Air Station, 1940-1974, and the Naval Torpedo Station, 1869-1950, the first naval command in Narragansett Bay. The papers of Rear Admiral Richard W. Bates have been digitized and are available on the Naval War College Library's web site. Photographs from the Naval Training Station collection are also in digital format.

Letters, journals, diaries, account books, memoirs, certificates, letter books, signatures, scrapbooks, naval messages, blueprints, and notebooks are among the single manuscript documents in the collection. Paymaster George Olney's ledger of wages paid aboard the USS *Alliance* in 1783 is the earliest dated item in the collection. It was found in an attic in Providence, Rhode Island and came as an unsolicited gift. The journal of the American privateer *Yankee*, kept by the self-styled wanderer Noah Jones during the War of 1812, is a fascinating account of the ship's first and second cruises out of Bristol, Rhode Island. The journal was featured in the exhibit of Rhode Island Treasures at the Civic Center in Providence in 2003. A recent acquisition of more recent date is a 1992 letter of Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Chief of Naval Operations, 1970-1974, commenting on the bravery and heroism of the men who served under him in Vietnam. Documents from the Civil War, the Spanish American War, World War I, and World War II as well as letters of Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, and Admiral Ernest J. King are just some of the research source materials available to patrons. Letters of enlisted personnel, officers, and WAVES who served in World War II and Second World War Intelligence files are another significant area for research.

Oral History

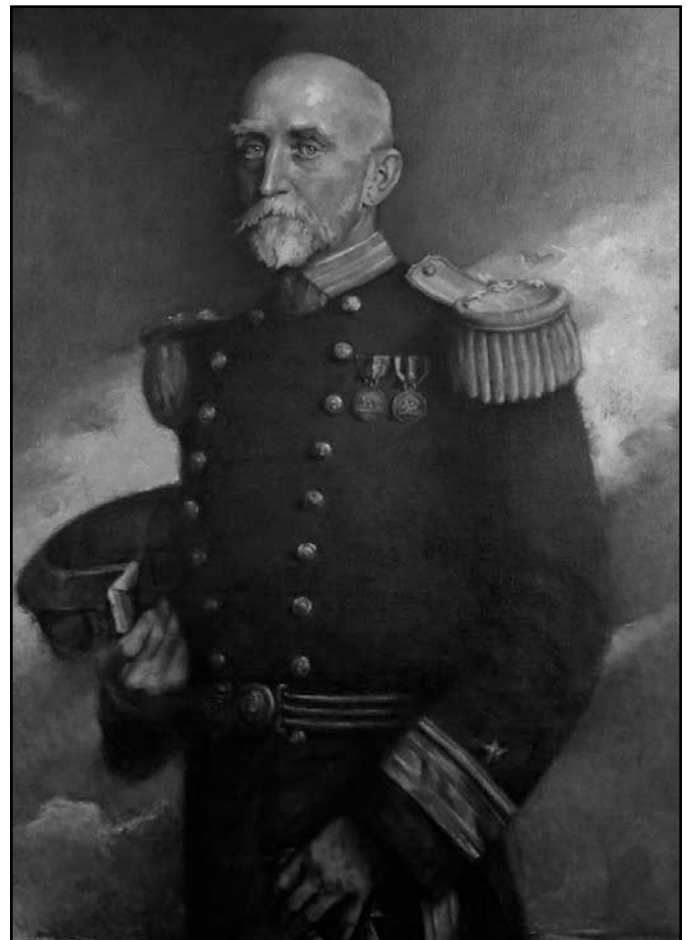
The Oral History Collection contains transcripts and microfiche of flag rank oral histories conducted by the U.S. Naval Institute and the Columbia Oral History Program. The Naval War College oral history program houses transcripts and audio tapes of College faculty and staff. Since 1993, the focus has been on interviewing WAVES, SPARS, Marines, and enlisted personnel and officers (men) who served in World War II. All of these interviews have been transcribed and are available to researchers.

Special Collections

A variety of sources constitute special collections: they include newspapers and news clippings that document the Spanish American War, the Boxer Rebellion, the Russo-Japanese War, World War I, and the Vietnam War. The only extant run of the Naval Base newspaper, the *Newport*

Navalog, is housed here as well. A pamphlet collection on naval topics and a U.S. Navy ship cruise book collection are among the other holdings. Microfilms of the papers of Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce, Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, the Naval Training Station, the Navy's General Board, and Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy and compact disks of U.S. Royal Navy volunteers during World War II, 1930-1942, World War II Action Reports, and recollections of the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, complete the holdings. Access to all of the collections is available through the MERLN web site.

Naval Historical Collection publications include a general guide to collections, two subject guides on women's papers and Latin American History sources, and thirty-nine manuscript registers to major collections, including those of the College's first president, Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce; noted historian, author of the path breaking book *The Influence of Sea Power on History, 1660-1783* and second president, Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan; Admiral Raymond Ames Spruance, victor of the Battle of Midway;



RADM Alfred T. Mahan, the second president of the Naval War College and noted naval historian. Photo courtesy of the Naval War College's Naval Historical Collection.

and Rear Admiral Edward D. Taussig, who claimed Wake Island for the United States in 1899. Due to security considerations, the guides and manuscript registers are only available on the Naval War College web site to faculty, staff, and students. The Naval War College Historical Monograph Series, book length studies based on sources in the Naval Historical Collection, was inaugurated in 1975 and fifteen volumes have been published to date.

The staff routinely prepares exhibits of new acquisitions for the Naval War College Library, the Naval War College Museum, the Naval Historical Collection reading room, and other local venues. To commemorate the fortieth anniversary, an exhibit of the most valuable and historically important items in the collection is located in the Reading Room of the Naval Historical Collection.

The Naval War College Foundation, a private non-profit corporation that supports College cultural and educational projects, has generously funded the acquisition of manuscripts and documents over the years. Because of their support, the staff has been able to purchase significant and historically important naval history materials. The Foundation administers the Edward Miller Fellowship, an annual grant of \$1000 to scholars who use sources in the Naval Historical Collection and the Naval War College Library. Applications are due on August 1 of each year and should be sent to the Executive Director, Naval War College Foundation, 686 Cushing Road, Newport, RI 02841-1207.

Researchers interested in using the collections resources should contact Dr. Evelyn M. Cherpak, the curator, at 401-841-2435, or e-mail <Evelyn.Cherpak@usnwc.edu> for access. ■

2009 Archival Certification Exam

The application deadline to sit for the 2009 Archival Certification Exam was May 15, 2009. The exam will be given in Austin, Texas on Wednesday August 15th during the 2009 SAA Conference. The exam will also be given on the same day in New York City, Cincinnati, Portland, OR and Milwaukee. We will identify at least ten additional sites, including one in New England, through the Pick Your Site program. ACA will be offering two Travel Awards to help with expenses incurred with taking the exam. If you have questions or need further information, please contact either Steve Grandin at ACA headquarters <aca@caphill.com> or Connell Gallagher CA Emeritus <cbgallag@uvm.edu>.



Dr. Evelyn M. Cherpak in the Reading Room of the Naval War College's Naval Historical Collection.

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People

Robin Katz has joined the Center for Digital Initiatives at the University of Vermont as the Digital Initiatives Outreach Librarian. In this two-year position funded by a grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, Robin will implement outreach, education and assessment efforts for the CDI. She will build partnerships to integrate digital collections into the curriculum and to encourage campus and community participation in the development of digitization projects. Robin is a graduate of Brandeis University and received her M.L.I.S. from Kent State University. She was a digital library and metadata development intern at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale in 2008.

The Board of Directors of the *Lawrence History Center* announces with great pleasure the appointment of **Barbara Brown** as Executive Director. "The talent, energy and leadership that Barbara has displayed over the last fifteen months as Interim Director has moved LHC forward on many fronts -- in programming, technology, public presence, partnerships and building stabilization," according to Pam Yameen, Board President. "Through her effective leadership, more people know about the Center, use its resources, and rely on our presence in the city. The Lawrence History Center will keep moving forward, continuing to build greater recognition of our unique collection assets, and playing an ever larger leadership role in the revitalization of Lawrence."

Barbara Brown has been actively involved in the LHC/Immigrant City Archives since 1994, first as a volunteer and board member, becoming collections manager in 2005 until her appointment as interim executive director in 2007. She received her education from Lesley College, BS, American Cultural and Historical Studies, University of Massachusetts/Boston, MA, American Studies, and pursues continuing education in collections and archives management.

Stephanie Schneider was appointed Association Archivist of the National Fire Protection Association in August of 2008. Schneider will oversee the organization's archive and be responsible for implementing photograph management solutions and preservation of digital materials. Schneider brings five years of experience as an Archive/Records Management Assistant to her new role at NFPA. She holds an MLS from Simmons

College and a BA from Saint Anselm College.

The Litchfield Historical Society is pleased to announce that **Anna Chen** is joining the staff as an assistant archivist to work on a special project to catalog hidden special collections funded by the Council on Library and Information Resources. Chen joins the staff from Yale, where she is enrolled in a PhD program. Her archives experience includes cataloging 17th, 18th, and 19th century manuscript collections at both the Lewis Walpole Library in Farmington and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library in New Haven. She began working on a two-year project to create online finding aids of Revolutionary War and early republic era holdings in March.

Michael Dello Iacono was recently appointed Project Archivist at the Center for the History of Medicine, Countway Library of Medicine, Harvard Medical School. Most recently, Michael Dello Iacono served as Records Management Assistant at the Countway's Center for the History of Medicine, where he coordinated Harvard Depository services to the Harvard Medical School and School of Dental Medicine, conducted trainings, and assisted with archival accessioning and records management projects. He holds a BA in English from Salem State College, and an MLIS with a concentration in Archives Management from Simmons College.

Dello Iacono will serve as archivist for a two-year project funded through a grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) that will involve the processing and creation of finding aids for the papers of four key leaders in American public health from the latter half of the twentieth century. The collections are those of Leona Baumgartner, the first woman commissioner of the New York City Department of Health; Allan Macy Butler, Chief of the Children's Medical Service at Massachusetts General Hospital from 1942 to 1960; David Rutstein, who headed the Harvard Medical School Department of Preventive Medicine, 1947-1971; and Howard Hiatt, the Dean of the Harvard School of Public Health from 1972-1984. These collections will contribute substantially to researchers' understanding of the American health care system.

Rodney Gorme Obien, NEA Membership Secretary, is leaving Worcester Polytechnic Institute to become the new College Archivist at Keene State College in New Hampshire. ■

Reviews

Wright, Sally. *Watches of the Night*. Sutton: Severn House Publishers, 2008. \$28.95. ISBN: 978-0-7278-6618-9

-Susan Earle, *Manuscript Cataloger, Schlesinger Library*

As newsletter readers are aware, we generally review books dealing with archival theory and practice. This time, however, the book in question is a mystery novel, part of a series set in the 1950s and 1960s featuring a university archivist and former World War II scout. This character, Ben Reese, is based on an actual archivist/ex-scout, who serves as a consultant for the author. Many of Ben's activities—restoring murals, paper conservation demonstrations, and being delegated to purchase a rare book for a university board member—may strike archivists as atypical but are apparently based on fact.

The plot hinges on events that took place in the 1940s, showing the importance of preserving and remembering the past, which archivists recognize as vital. The skills Ben acquired as a World War II scout prove to be essential during the book's climactic chapters. Among these skills are awareness of surroundings and, in particular, attention to detail. The latter, also highly important in archival work, is a link between Ben's two professions.

Besides the mystery that forms the main plot of the book, Ben must contend with his immediate superior, the head of the university library, and the university's new president, both of whom are threatened by him and resent his freedom, as a tenured faculty member, to travel and go on sabbatical. I must admit I had more sympathy for these characters than is perhaps intended and found myself thinking, "Doesn't he have any collections to process?" But I concede that to the lay reader, and perhaps even to the archivist, descriptions of traditional archival work might not be terribly exciting. As it is, the life of this fictional archivist—filled with opportunities to restore frescoes, travel in Europe, and associate with the elite—comes across as exciting and enviable, though also beset with challenges from those who don't understand the importance and role of archives.

In choosing to make her protagonist an archivist, Wright is undoubtedly helping to make our line of work more widely recognized. I've often thought that processing collections involves a lot of detective work and untangling of mysteries, and as an archivist who is also an ardent lover of the mystery novel, I'm very pleased to find an archivist playing a key role in his own series of books, even if he spends less time in the archives than I'd have liked. ■

Calendar of Events



Press releases and other announcements should be sent to Stephanie Schneider at <stephanie.ann.schneider@gmail.com>. 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.

June 23 – 26, 2009. Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP) annual conference, "Tradition & Innovation", Toronto Canada. For details see <www.utoronto.ca/stmikes/sharp2009/index.html>.

August 10, 2009. SAA Pre-Conference Workshop: Understanding Digital Scanner and Camera Imaging Performance, Austin, Texas. For details see <www.archivists.org>.

August 11-16, 2009. Society of American Archivists annual conference, "Sustainable Archives," Austin, Texas. For details see <www.archivists.org/conference>.

October 5, 2009. National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) deadline. Download guidelines and applications from <www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement>.

November 4-7, 2009. Association of Moving Image Archivists annual conference, St. Louis, MO. For details see <www.amiaconference.com>. ■

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Ernest Hemingway

Ernest Hemingway, age 11 (in boat at left), with sisters and cousins, enjoys a day on Lake Walloon, Michigan, the Hemingway family summer retreat. This 1910 snapshot is one of more than 600 photographs, at least half of which are personal and family photos, of the photo collection in the Hemingway Family Collection, donated to the Julian W. Abernethy Collection at Middlebury College by Ernest's nieces, Anne Hemingway Feuer and Hilary Hemingway Freundlich in July 2007.

Courtesy of the Julian W. Abernethy Collection, Special Collections & Archives, Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont.