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NEWSLETTER

NEW ENGLAND ARCHIVISTS



C O V E R -- 1886 Holy Cross baseball team. *Courtesy of the College of the Holy Cross Archives.*

I N S I D E -- Susanne Belovari recounts her experiences uncovering the Jewish community of Vienna through its archives located in Jerusalem (*Archival Insight*, page 4). Also learn about May Sarton's poetry library in *Around & About* (page 20).

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE



New England Archivists

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE

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

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From the Editors

- Cynthia Harbeson

As Autumn in New England has once again arrived and as our president, Kathryn Hammond Baker, reminds us in her column, it's also American Archives Month. In honor of that occasion, this issue highlights archives, archivists, and archival collections.

In *Archival Insight*, Susanne Belovari, recipient of the 2007 NEA Richard W. Hale Jr. Award, tells the story of how she traveled to Jerusalem to find the surviving records of the Jewish community in Vienna, Austria, whose archives had been closed by the National Socialists in 1938.

In *Around and About*, Lenora P. Blouin introduces us to May Sarton's Poetry Library in the Main Women Writers Collection of the University of New England. Consisting of about 1,250 volumes of poetry written by others, the collection offers a glimpse into one woman's tastes, influences, and friendships.

Susan Martin, in her column *Internet Tidbits*, shares with us a new digital exhibit by the Maine Memory Network showcasing the history of the Wabanaki people of Maine and Quebec. "Gifts from Gluskabe" is an informative exhibit that you should be sure to browse.

In *Reviews* David E. Horn provides us with some suggestions for pleasure reading that involves archivists or archives. And Jenny Gotwals provides us with a review on the Society of American Archivists' recent publication on film preservation written by Karen Gracy.

On a more personal note, this issue marks the end of Maryalice Perrin-Mohr's tenure on the Editorial Committee. On behalf of myself and my fellow editors, I would like to offer her my heartfelt thanks for all of her hard work these last three years.

And finally, the editors would like to welcome Stephanie Naoum, Association Archivist at The Charles S. Morgan Technical Library of the National Fire Protection Association. She will be taking over the reins of the *News and Notes* and *Calendar* sections. ■

ANNOUNCING THE NEW ENGLAND ARCHIVISTS FALL 2008 MEETING

For All Time (And in All Media?): Preserving Cultural Heritage in New England

November 14-15, 2008

Simmons College, Boston, MA

The Fall 2008 New England Archivists Meeting will explore the preservation challenges, both old and new, faced by archivists at all institutions. Join colleagues in a day and a half meeting focusing on traditional preservation challenges, challenges specific to modern media, and those special challenges inherent in digital collections. Listen to speakers and be engaged in discussions during break-out sessions on specific topics. Come to learn what we can all do to ensure our collections will be available into the 22nd Century and beyond.

*For further information, please contact Program Co-Chairs
Donia Conn <dconn@nedcc.org> or Anne Sauer <anne.sauer@tufts.edu>*

ARCHIVAL INSIGHT

An Archival Information Tour: 1816 - 1905 - 2007

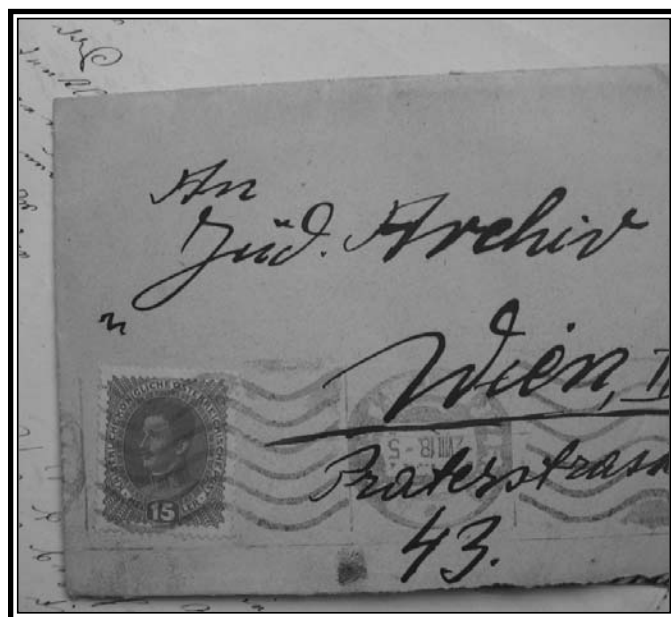
Susanne Belovari, Archivist for Reference and Collections,
Digital Collections and Archives, Tufts University

In the fall of 1904, Ezechiel Zivier traveled to inspect twenty German Jewish community archives and published his findings as *An Archival Information Tour* the following year.¹ His article represents a unique comparison of records and record keeping practices among Jewish communities; in fact, in being a comparative evaluation of archival practices and holdings it might be unique for any type of institution at the time. The conditions that Zivier had encountered in Jewish community archives, however, were rather discouraging in terms of what had survived the ages and how it was being preserved. As the archivist for the Duke of Pless, Zivier had adroitly proposed establishing a General Archives for German Jews a year earlier. The idea was quickly endorsed by the Deutsch-Israelitische Gemeindebund as well as the Grossloge (Bne-Brith), and an archival commission was set up to study the needs, the interest, and the goodwill of Jewish communities across Germany to collaborate in such an effort. The commission sent Zivier on his inspection tour, and his findings and subsequent deliberations led to the founding of the General Archives of the German Jews in Berlin in 1905, which operated until the National Socialists (NS) shut it down in 1939.²

In the fall of 2007, when I went on my archival information trip, it was to study the archives of the Jewish community of Vienna, Austria (Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde, from now on IKG). Zivier had never visited the IKG archives as it was not part of Germany but located in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The roots of this archives reach back to 1816, a time when a Jewish community reemerged in Vienna, and the archives existed until the NS closed it down in 1938. But in order to study the Viennese archives, unlike Zivier, I did not just have to take a short trip. Rather, I had to travel to Jerusalem, Israel. It is here that the Central Archives for the History of Jewish Peoples (CAHJP) resides, founded in 1939 to collect records of Jewish communities under threat, and it is here that much of the former IKG archives is now stored. As restitution historian and archivist of the IKG Holocaust Victims' Information and Support Center, I had been at CAHJP repeatedly with two colleagues in order to inventory IKG's archival holdings and to organize the microfilming of NS-related material through the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC.³ In those years, I had also been responsible for beginning to reconstruct IKG's former archives in Vienna, creating a new archival framework and processing hundreds of thousands of recently discovered archival records in Vienna.

Of course, my work responsibilities then allowed me little time to do actual research into historical documents, research I would need to write an in-depth study of the

Vienna community archives. For that, I had to return to Jerusalem, and the NEA Richard W. Hale Jr. Award 2007 offered me this opportunity. A good friend, Lilly E. Roth Heller, a Viennese Holocaust survivor, helped me obtain a rather inexpensive plane ticket through a Hassidic New York travel agency so that the award could be stretched to cover most of my ticket. I took some vacation days around Thanksgiving, packed up, and took off for the old city on the desert hills.



Envelope addressed to the 'Jewish Archives' (i.e. the Jewish War Archives) from WWI. Photo courtesy of CAHJP.

© Susanne Belovari 2008

As usual, I stayed at the Austrian Hospice, which is a nineteenth century palatial pilgrim hostel sitting on a hill right in the Palestinian area of old town Jerusalem, surrounded by a large secluded garden rare in a city where holy sites and settlements stretch horizontally as well as vertically. Every day I commuted via cab to CAHJP and spent my time ordering documents, gleaning through papers and microfilm reels, finding out about collection documentation, and ordering photocopies. In the evenings, I would frequently hike back through modern Jerusalem. Half-starved, I'd end up eating falafel at a Palestinian booth right inside of Damascus Gate on my way back to the Hospice. Once there, I'd go over my notes, read the Austrian newspapers in the Viennese coffeehouse, and go to bed early. Despite a slight upsurge in tourism, the old city still closed down around 5:30pm after which streets were barely lit and every nook and cranny was boarded up.

One night I sat on the stony roof bench, watching a few puffy clouds turn from yellow to dark grey against a sky of ink. With the palace sitting right where it does, you see the whole old city from the roof: its crosses, domes, crescent moons, David stars, minarets, and the city wall built in 1538. You also see its thicket of satellite dishes, antennas, water containers, and solar panels - as well as all the security cameras and loud speakers. Jerusalem above the crooked, cobbled lanes has become a metal and plastic jungle expanding up from the yellow Jerusalem stone, the few concrete bricks, and the plastic corrugated wall or roof additions to ancient Mamluk buildings. Mushroom- and Martian-like it might appear and yet it is all bulbous outgrowth of history and of political as well as religious conflicts.

The Jewish Community of Vienna

And yet, right here, in the midst of the city of David, of the Holy Sepulcher and the mosque of Al-Aqsa, old documents slowly resurrect the history of my hometown of Vienna, faded like black ink does with age. It's the Vienna of its Jewish inhabitants and their community institution dating from the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. The image arises from financial bills and photographs of gravestone fragments; memories reawaken in the pale splotchy black ink used to report minutes and in the watercolor picture by a young daughter who managed to emigrate to Palestine whereas her father, the last IKG archivist, and her mother died in Auschwitz in 1943. It rests in numerous surviving cataloging cards of the

IKG library and archives, in the emigration forms from 1938 through 1942, and in the petitions for subsidies by over one hundred prayer houses and temples. It's a Vienna recreated in internal squabbles over elections and in the serious deliberations by the IKG Historical Commission regarding publications, lectures, and an historical slide show in 1908. The city comes to life ever so reluctantly in documents stretching back to the late eighteenth century recording the ever so slow progress of rights and privileges of individually tolerated Jews and eventually their religious and institutional bodies. It resides in the records about anti-semitism, carefully collected and indexed by the IKG, as it does in records telling of attempts to establish a Jewish war archives in World War I. Vienna might be proud of an 1861 proposal to give women the right to vote in community elections but the city also shows a more unacknowledged side in deportation lists, post-WW II survivor lists, and vacation camp documents for surviving children from the 1940s.



Author discussing her processing of newly discovered records with Juer-gen Mattheus, Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies (USHMM) while standing in the IKG atrium, Vienna. © USHMM 2002

These images, partial and selective, tell of the Jewish community of Vienna through its archives. Little else is left. As a community of a few dozen families, it had started to grow by the late 1700s and early 1800s having endured centuries of repeated settlements and expulsions. This growth at the turn of the eighteenth century was made possible by decrees permitting Jews to settle in Vienna, to learn a trade, or to use public spaces, for instance, and by decrees abolishing all laws of differentiation. Following the revolution in 1848/49, Vienna's Jews were finally able to legally establish one central community organization, the IKG, representing every Jew and every Jewish religious group in the city. Over the decades to come, the IKG grew as did its community; it responded to the communities needs by providing ever more religious, social, and educational services, subsidizing most Jewish associations, and having to be the arbiter among political and religious factions while presenting a united front to the outside.



Processed NS related records, IKG Vienna, 2004. © Susanne Belovari

So successful was the community and so relatively benign was the Austro-Hungarian Empire in its Jewish policies, that the Jewish community of Vienna became one of the largest in Europe. Ultimately, 170,000 Jews, more than ten percent of Vienna's population, lived in the city before 1938. Known abroad chiefly for achievements in the sciences, arts, politics, and psychology, most Viennese Jews were neither famous nor wealthy, and many had settled in Vienna fleeing from recent pogroms in Eastern Europe. After the Austro-Hungarian Empire was dissolved in 1918, the IKG came to represent over ninety percent of Jews in what had become Austria. The Jewish community of Vienna was almost a Jewish community of Austria, then, and its archives functioned akin to a Central Jewish Archives of Austria after late fall 1918.

The Archives of the Jewish Community of Vienna

When the Council of Representatives voted to establish an archives of sorts in 1816, its intention was to keep track of documents that substantiated rights and privileges issued to Jews that were routinely negated. The Council for Vienna's Jews was faced with more than the usual record-keeping nightmares of any emerging organization. It had no building and it had no rights to hire anyone within or from outside of the tolerated Jews unless the authorities acceded to their petitions. Not surprisingly, it took about twenty years for the community to have an institutional archives. In that time, it had obtained a synagogue building of its own, space to store documents, a room for the secretary, and a secretary who had time and the skills necessary to organize the scattered papers. Over the decades various men served as "archivists." At first, they were little more than secretaries on the side while working full time elsewhere, such as in the sheep wool trade. Then, they became full-time secretaries (or legal scribes) and eventually were academics, largely with degrees in history, who carried out the clerical and cataloging work needed. At the same time, they were expected to publish scientifically and had to accept the tight supervision of the community's historical commission.

Just like the community and the organization it served, the archives grew over the years. Starting around 1900, the then IKG archivist reorganized record-keeping procedures as well as arrangement of archival documents, developments driven largely by the IKG Historical Commission but also influenced by more general developments in the

archival field. Fairly unique for Europe, the IKG archives in Vienna was turning into a place for scholarship internationally. Its records offered a rare inside perspective about affairs internal and external to the community. Then, in spring 1938, the NS forced the IKG to relinquish its archives and library, closing down both. Only Dr. Leopold Moser, IKG's last archivist, was "allowed" or "encouraged" to use genealogical registry and archival material in order to substantiate "race inquiries" by individuals and various NS offices. While the ultimate goal in 1938 had been to ship the archival holdings to Berlin, the regime appears to have forgotten about the archives, and its precise fate is still unknown. Before record discoveries in Vienna over the last seven years (totaling more than one million pages), it was assumed that all IKG archival records having survived WWII had been deposited at the CAHJP in Jerusalem in the 1950s and 1960s (totaling about 1200 linear feet). That assumption was proven wrong. The IKG archives has become the largest surviving archives of a Jewish community in countries once occupied by National Socialists.



Author looking at childhood watercolor paintings by Dr. Leopold's daughter, Margaret. (stored at CAHJP). © Susanne Belovari 2008

Research Challenges

Trying to write the history of the IKG archives is a significantly different undertaking than writing about most other archives. The community it represented was annihilated as were most of its other historical records, memories, memorabilia, and artifacts. Since 1945, the small Jewish community now living in Vienna has largely resettled there from other countries (about 6,700 members), and thus local memories and hand-me-downs are hard to come by. Little is known about how the archives survived the war; how and when particular documents were packed up and sent to Israel; and how other records were left behind, forgotten, neglected, apparently awaiting their rediscovery more than fifty years later. In fact, there is only one contemporary primary source about the history of the archives and that is Dr. Avshalom Hodik's brief preface to his inventory of IKG documents stored at CAHJP, dating from the 1970s.

Any research that touches upon the Holocaust or any other genocide faces the above challenges inherent to a history of discontinuities and absences. In my case, this is compounded by the fact that the Jewish community in Austria was always a minority and as such was subject to overall discrimination, bias, and enforced silences in official records. Add to this a prevalent characteristic of our profession, that archivists overall have been rather lackadaisical in documenting their own work, and you will come to understand how labor-intensive my search and analysis of primary sources has been and will continue to be. This is true whether I try to discover biographical information about IKG archivists or try to survey and describe archival practices over the years, when I attempt to determine the size and content of archival holdings before 1938 or want to situate IKG's archives within the context of other Jewish archives elsewhere, most of which were destroyed.

Research Results

Over the last few years, I have presented at various national and international conferences about my work with IKG archival records and published in their proceedings. Since receiving the 2007 Hale Award, I have incorporated some early findings in my presentation and proceedings article to *Third Meeting of the Brazilian Scientific Archives* in Rio de Janeiro in fall of 2007, and my proposal for the SAA 2008 Research Forum was accepted entitled

The Vienna Jewish Community Archives: 1816 to 1938 (working title). My next goal is to complete a historical article solicited by the journal *Libraries & the Cultural Records*. Yet, the research and material has grown to such an extent that I am seriously considering additional avenues. I am truly thankful to the NEA Hale Award and its donors for having given me the opportunity to go back to Israel and work on recreating the lost history of an important archives. And while I do not know yet in detail how the IKG archives compared to those Zivier inspected, I want to encourage others to undertake similar archival information trips. We as individuals and as a profession can only learn from our professional ancestry – whatever the technology might be. ■

1. Zivier, Ezechiel, Eine archivalische Informationsreise, Monatsschrift fuer Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums 49 (1905), pp. 209-254.
2. See the following Web sites about the General Archives and the Central Archives for Research on the History of Jews in Germany which was founded in 1987 and was based on the idea of the former General Archives: <www.uni-heidelberg.de/institute/sonst/aj/englisch.htm> and <www.uni-heidelberg.de/institute/sonst/aj/>
3. The colleagues, Dr. Ingo Zechner and Lothar Hoelbling, a philosopher and a historian respectively, also worked for the IKG Holocaust Victims' Information and Support Center.

Promote your photograph collections by sharing an image of an historic event, place, or person with the NEA community.

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.



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Inside NEA

FROM THE PRESIDENT

- Kathryn Hammond Baker

Overcoming the Curse of Knowledge

As archivists, we are positioned between records creators, users, and funders—the people who make archives, those who use archives, and the people who pay us to curate archives. This triple relationship demands from us truly exceptional communication skills—but we are hindered by our status as technical experts, something that researchers Chip and Dan Heath call “The Curse of Knowledge”.

In *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die* (New York: Random House, 2007), the Heaths describe a 1990 Stanford University experiment in which a group of research subjects were divided into two groups: tappers and listeners. Tappers were told to tap out songs from a list of popular tunes; each was partnered with a listener who was asked to identify the songs. Tappers predicted that listeners would guess correctly fifty percent of the time. In fact, listeners were only able to identify two and a half percent of the songs. Why was the tappers’ assessment of listeners’ success rate so far off? Tappers had the song in their heads and couldn’t imagine what it was like not to know it.

“Our knowledge has cursed us. And it becomes difficult for us to share our knowledge with others, because we can’t readily re-create our listeners’ state of mind.” (*Made to Stick*, 20) What can we do about it? The Heaths suggest that we either “don’t learn anything” or transform the way we communicate our ideas. Effective ideas are **simple**, expressing a meaningful core; **unexpected**, memorably highlighting a knowledge gap; **concrete**, incorporating people with whom listeners can identify; **credible**, containing convincing detail; **emotional**, appealing to self-interest and identity; and tell a **story** in miniature. Impossible?

In his 1961 special address to Congress, President John F. Kennedy could have announced his new national objective this way: “Our mission should be to become the international leader in the space industry through maximum

team-centered innovation and strategically targeted aerospace initiatives.” He didn’t. He beat the Curse of Knowledge and put himself in his listeners’ shoes. What he said was: “I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to earth.”

It’s American Archives Month. Go to the library and check out *Made to Stick*. You’ll be glad you did. ■

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING REPORT

- Danielle Kovacs




The business handled at the June 19, 2008 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 10:18 a.m. by Kathryn Hammond Baker. Minutes from the March 28, 2008 Board Meeting were presented. **All members voted to accept the March 28, 2008 Board Meeting minutes.**

OFFICERS’ REPORTS

Treasurer’s Report

Nova Seals reported that the federal taxes were filed and that the state taxes were about to be filed. She also announced that the Spring 2008 Meeting was financially successful.



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MEETINGS

Fall 2008 Program and Local Arrangements Committees

The Program Committee presented the line-up of confirmed plenary speakers and discussion group leaders for a variety of topics relating to aspects of preservation from traditional preservation methods to digital media preservation. Also presented was a tentative schedule for the sessions. There was a lengthy discussion about inviting representatives from state agencies in New England to offer information and advice about state grants for archives and library preservation. **All members voted in favor to appoint Mikki Simon to the Fall 2008 Local Arrangements Committee.** The Local Arrangements committee presented their proposed budget for the Fall 2008 Meeting. There was a discussion about the feasibility of offering online registration and payment in time for the Fall 2008 Meeting. **All members voted in favor to approve the registration fees for Fall 2008 Meeting.**

Spring 2009 Program and Local Arrangements Committees

All members voted in favor to appoint Jill Snyder of NARA Northeast Region, Jennifer Jacobsen of Harvard University Archives, and Prudence Doherty of University of Vermont to the Spring 2009 Program Committee. The Program Committee presented several suggestions for sessions, some with speakers in mind. Session topics will address the various aspects of the user-archivist relationship. Local Arrangements has already begun to review potential hotels for attendees, and has compiled a list of possible tour sites of local attractions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Education Committee

Two new members to the committee were recently appointed, Jennifer Gunter King of Mount Holyoke College and Jill Snyder of NARA Northeast Region. Two stand-alone workshops were scheduled for the summer, one on EAD and the other on identifying and caring for audio-visual materials. **All members voted in favor to approve co-sponsorship of the SAA workshop, "Introduction to Digital Object Modeling and Representation: Using the Archivists' Toolkit."** The Board reviewed questions put forward in the Education Committee report regarding updating the Caring for Historical Records/Introduction to

Archives workshop. Before addressing the questions directly, the Board asked the committee to determine the target audience for the core workshops, any content issues that need to be addressed, and the process for regular updating of core workshops. The Board also advised the committee to speak with past workshop instructors, examine workshop evaluations, and review membership survey data.

Development Coordinator's Report

All members voted to reappoint Jane Ward to a three-year term as Development Coordinator.


Web Committee Report

All members voted in favor to appoint Veronica Martzhal to the Web Committee. Krista Ferrante asked the Board to review the Business pages of the Web site and make any revisions necessary before the new design is revealed this fall.

Haas Award

The committee recommended the award be used to subsidize a Sedona Conference to be held at Simmons and supported by ARMA.

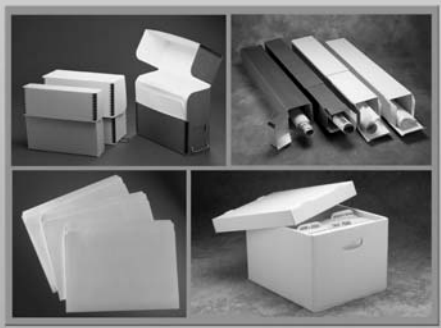
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There was a lengthy discussion about various possibilities for accepting online payment for registration on the NEA Web site. There are fees associated with offering online payment and many Board members were concerned about how these fees would be covered. Even though the option is a desirable one, there are still more questions that need to be answered. The issue of online payment introduced the similar topics of online balloting and membership renewal. Both topics require future consideration.

Mentoring Report

Ellen Doon presented a report based on conversations she had with representatives of mentoring programs from SAA and RBMS. While the mentoring programs are handled differently by each organization, the most important aspect for both seems to be defining and managing expectations of the mentor and the mentee. A discussion followed concerning where a mentoring program would fit into the organization at NEA and what members might want from such a program. The Board decided to pursue this further by following up with both the Membership Committee and Membership Recruitment and Retention Task Force.

Next Meeting Date

The next quarterly Board meeting will take place at Simmons College on November 14, 2008. ■

Please visit us online at

www.newenglandarchivists.org

for more information about becoming a member of NEA

New Members

- Rodney Obien

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Reviews

READING FOR ARCHIVISTS

- David E. Horn, CA, CRM, Head Librarian, Archives and Manuscripts Department, John J. Burns Library, Boston College

Archives are so important in our age that it is not surprising that many books – fiction and non-fiction – have been written about them. The detective novelist Michael Innes devoted one of his novels to a search for literary manuscripts.

Innes, Michael, *The Ampersand Papers*, Golancz 1978; Penguin 1980.

Innes is an academic, an Oxford professor. His real name is J. I. M. Stewart, and he has written several books on English literature as well as many novels, including a series of mysteries with detective Sir John Appleby. The premise of this book is that one of the ancestors of the ancient but no longer rich Ampersand family might have been an acquaintance of Shelley and other eminent literary figures and might have left an assortment of correspondence and writings.

Innes uses the cliché that English titled families really despise “literary types,” but Lord Ampersand gradually comes to realize that there might be a lot of money in such papers. The Lord and his Lady vaguely remember the sensational discovery of manuscripts in a croquet box “somewhere” and are still surprised that the documents created such a stir.

Archivists will enjoy the discussions in this detective

story, and they will have many questions as the tale races to its stupendous conclusion: Are there really some genuine Shelley papers? Manuscripts of poems? New poems (gasp!)? Is the provenance certain?

Another academic who was fascinated by mystery stories was Robin W. Winks, a long-time professor of history at Yale University.

Winks, Robin W., Editor, *The Historian as Detective: Essays on Evidence*, Harper Torchbooks, 1969.

This book is a compilation of essays and stories by a wide variety of historians. One of the stories is the tale of the aforementioned croquet box. Christopher Morley tells of “The Secret of the Ebony Cabinet: a Search for ‘Lost’ Papers.” His essay begins: “The scholar’s first task is to find the evidence, and often this is the most exciting part of his work” (page 89). In this case the search is for the papers of James Boswell and his notes for his biography of Samuel Johnson. It is not known whether the two friends ever played croquet.

Winks gives us comments from a variety of sources: Jacques Barzun in *The Modern Researcher*; David Donald’s biography of Charles Sumner, with its discussion of medical and psychological evidence; notes on the interpretation and re-interpretation of ancient sites, from *Stonehenge Decoded*, by Gerald S. Hawkins and John B. White.

There are twenty-six chapters in this delightful book. Some of the authors write about the art and science of history, but most of the stories, usually excerpted from longer works, follow the exploring scholars on their quests for evidence, for papers that solve some of the many mysteries of historical and literary research. Winks’ bibliography – pages 541 to 543 – lists additional sources for intellectually stimulating writings on sources.



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For more information, contact Erin Logsdon, Digital Solutions Consultant, 508.597.1946 or logsdon@nelinet.net

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.

Gracy, Karen F. *Film Preservation: Competing Definitions of Value, Use, and Practice*. (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2007). ISBN: 1-931666-24-5. \$56 (\$40 for SAA members)

- Jenny Gotwals, *Manuscript Cataloger, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University*

Film Preservation: Competing Definitions of Value, Use, and Practice is not a definitive book on “how to be a film archivist” or “how to preserve films,” (in the model of SAA’s recent publications on photographs or architectural records) nor does it aim to be. Instead, Gracy attempts to create an “archival ethnography” of the field of film preservation, gathering data by interviews, and exploring the cultural fields in which film archives function. Many chapters of *Film Preservation* are interesting and insightful on their own, but together they do not add up to the kind of cohesive work suggested by the book’s title.

Gracy begins by defining preservation as central to the concept of the film archive, as indeed it is. Several chapters are instructive and thought-provoking, particularly to someone, like myself, who is not a film archivist. Gracy gives a basic history of the development of film archives, describes the stakeholders in the U.S. film archival world, and narrates the step-by-step process of film preservation, from choosing titles to be preserved, to inspecting and splicing the film, to publicizing the new print.

One problem throughout the book is that the audience is unclear. Sometimes Gracy describes archives in a manner that suggests she has never been a working archivist, or is explaining them to others who are not. Several chapters are taken up with somewhat abstruse theoretical explanations of concepts (e.g., cultural institution) that seem meant only to show that Gracy has indeed read quite a bit of theoretical literature (one chapter is titled “The Social Economy of Film Preservation: Implementing a Bourdieuvian Framework”). I found it strange that Gracy continued to employ extensive quoting of multiple theorists, particularly since she herself seems to have a good grasp of their concepts, and does a great job explaining their ideas in her own words. In addition, a series of charts accompanies the chapter on “Documenting the Process of Film Preservation,” but Gracy’s textual explanation of the process is by far superior to the too-simplistic or too-abstruse flow chart boxes.

Film Preservation is based on Gracy’s PhD dissertation, which probably explains its reliance on cultural theorists. In my view, this is also the main flaw of the book: it was conceived as a research project, not as a professional text. What, I am left to wonder, is SAA getting out of the publication of this volume, and what audience is the volume serving? Why didn’t the SAA publications committee ask Gracy to write something more along the lines of “Introduction to Film Archives and Archivists,” which could have left out some of the more theoretical sections, and served as a good text for archives students of all persuasions? Or, SAA could have asked for a more complicated text, in which Gracy posed questions for students studying to become film archivists, or for those currently in the profession. I would have preferred either approach to the current one that attempts some of both without satisfying either. ■

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News and Notes

CONNECTICUT

Thomas J. Dodd Research Center Receives Distinguished Service Award from the Society of American Archivists

The Thomas J. Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut received the 2008 Distinguished Service Award during a ceremony August 29, 2008, at the 72nd annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists at the Hilton Hotel in San Francisco. Director Thomas Wilsted accepted the award on behalf of the center.

Established in 1995, the Dodd Center has become “a center of campus intellectual life by linking collection development and preservation to public programming and the academic curriculum in a vital and exciting way,” the award selection committee noted. The center, which is named for the late Connecticut Senator Thomas J. Dodd, houses the university’s archives and focuses on building research collections that document the U.S. Congress, human rights, and public policy. It provided assistance to the African National Congress of South Africa by preserving records documenting its activities while in exile for thirty years.

The center contains Senator Dodd’s papers, including his service as chief trial counsel at the Nuremberg Trials, as well as the Alternative Press Collection, and the papers of naturalist Edwin Way Teale and children’s author Tomie dePaola. It is known for its collection of Connecticut business history, and the creation and development of Connecticut History Online.

“The selection committee was particularly impressed with the breadth and depth of the center’s development over the past fifteen years and its outstanding service to multiple constituencies,” said Ohio State Archivist Jelain Chubb, chair of the selection committee. The Dodd Center is a founding member of the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress, an independent alliance of organizations and institutions that promotes programs and research opportunities related to the U.S. Congress.

News from Central Connecticut State University

Central Connecticut State University’s (CCSU) Center for Public Policy and Social Research in partnership with the Elihu Burritt Library announces the November 3, 2008 release of online oral history interviews from their Governor William A. O’Neill, Lemon Law, and Veterans History Project (VHP) collections at <<http://library.ccsu.edu/about/departments/spcoll/oneillarch/>>.

This release constitutes the Governor William A. O’Neill Oral History Program’s first phase in mounting primary source materials for public access using ContentDM. The legacy of Governor William A. O’Neill is felt in his cutting edge state policy initiatives, while the Lemon Law, which protects consumers from defective automobiles, was a state policy initiative which reverberated nationwide. The Veterans History Project adds a human face to the challenges, triumphs, and tragedies of war. Each collection serves as a teaching and research tool for the general public, scholars, faculty, and students worldwide.

The launch kicks off with a luncheon at CCSU’s Alumni Hall on November 3rd featuring the VHP project. Veterans, local and state lawmakers, representatives from the Library of Congress, Connecticut’s Veterans Affairs, and CCSU will be on hand to celebrate the release of these historical treasures. For details contact Evelyn Green, Archivist for the Governor William A. O’Neill Oral History Program at <greenevb@ccsu.edu>.

Connecticut Historical Society Receives NHPRC Grant

The Connecticut Historical Society has received an \$88,959 grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) for an ambitious project to catalog 900 collections (approximately 600 cubic feet) and enter the records into its online catalog, thus providing greater access to its extensive collection of primary research materials. Currently, only eighteen percent of the manuscripts have an online catalog record; researchers must use both the card catalog and the online catalog to locate materials. In addition, some important collections have no catalog record of any kind. The NHPRC funds will be used to hire a project archivist to assist in creating minimal

catalog records in order to provide access to the greatest number of collections in a relatively short time. The project will focus on account books and on collections larger than 0.5 cubic feet.

Some of the collections to be cataloged are the correspondence and financial records of Commissary of Purchases for the Continental and French Armies Jeremiah Wadsworth; the papers of the Talcott family of Glastonbury, which contain significant town records; correspondence and records of Connecticut Historical Society's first librarian and noted book collector Thomas Robbins; town records for Stonington, Norwich, and Middletown, Connecticut; a collection of handwritten musical scores attributed to Herman Katims; personal papers of Connecticut Governors Gideon Tomlinson and O. Vincent Coffin; and records of the Mayflower Descendants, Connecticut Sons of the Revolution, Neptune Twine Company, and Berlin Iron Bridge Company.

MAINE

Maine Historical Society Awarded \$150,000 Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has awarded Maine Historical Society (MHS) a "Museums for America" grant of \$150,000 over the next two years. The grant will enable MHS to undertake a comprehensive inventory of its museum collections, which is one of the richest in the state and includes more than 15,000 objects that document the history of Maine, New England, and early America. It is one of only three grants awarded in Maine, and 153 awarded nationally from a total of 371 applications.

"This project is hugely important for us," noted MHS Executive Director Richard D'Abate. "The inventory will ensure that our museum collections are well-documented and cared for, and that our collections management practices meet the highest professional standards. It's a key step in making MHS collections accessible to researchers and the public, and in our planning for the future. The collections are the foundation for all that we do, including research, exhibits, school programs, and for our online museum, the Maine Memory Network."

Dr. Anne-Imelda M. Radice, Director of IMLS, added, "As repositories of our nation's treasures and our nation's history, museums are positioned to play an integral role in the education of their communities. *Museums for America* grants support projects and ongoing activities that build museums' capacities and help these institutions serve their diverse constituencies to the best of their abilities."

The IMLS <www.ims.gov> is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The IMLS works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development.

Maine Historical Society preserves the heritage and history of Maine: the stories of Maine people, the traditions of Maine communities, and the record of Maine's place in a changing world. It is comprised of the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, the MHS Research Library, the MHS Museum, and the Maine Memory Network, <www.mainememory.net>.

MASSACHUSETTS

Emerson College Acquires Large Comedy Album Collection

In December 2007, Rev. Warren Debenham of Berkeley, California donated over 700 LPs and over 600 CDs to Emerson College to become part of the American Comedy Archives which was established in 2005 by Bill Dana. Over the last several months the Warren Debenham Comedy Sound Collection has been processed and is now ready for researchers. The collection documents American comedy from the early 1930s through 2006 and consists of long playing albums and compact discs of live performances, spoken word recordings, musical theater, and film soundtracks. In addition to recordings of individual comics, the collection also contains compilations of various comedians as well as compilations of radio series that were broadcast during the early 1930s through the mid 1950s. Among the comics whose work is included in the collection are Abbott and Costello, Red Skelton, Lenny Bruce, George Carlin, Steve Martin, Adam Sandler, Gilda Radner, Pauly Shore, and Richard Pryor. The comedy of Belle Barth, LaWanda Page, Spike Jones, Steve Allen, Sandra Bernhard, and Redd

Foxx is also included. Subjects cover such topics as politics, relationships, religion, parenting, adolescence, current events, and celebrity and popular culture. Genres include adult entertainment, satire, political, comedy songs and humorous music, improvisational, stand-up, telephone pranks, party jokes, regional, and dark humor.

Papers of Latino Activist and Politician Nelson Merced Open for Research at Northeastern University

The historical papers of Nelson Merced, the first Latino member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, are now open for research. A guide to the collection is available online at www.lib.neu.edu/archives/collect/findaids/M125find.htm.

Nelson Merced was born to Puerto Rican immigrant parents in New York in 1948 and moved back and forth with his family several times before joining the United States Navy in 1965. After leaving the Navy, he lived in Puerto Rico with his parents and was active in the squatters' rights movement in San Juan. Returning to the United States in 1971, Merced came to Massachusetts in 1976. He worked for the Boston Department of Public Welfare, did graduate work at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and took the position of the director of La Alianza Hispana in 1981. In 1988, he was the first Latino elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives. He held this position until 1992, running a successful re-election campaign in 1990. In 1994, Merced took a position as the CEO of Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción just prior to the organization's proposed merger with the Escuelita Agueybana Day Care Center. The merger never took place and, in 1996, Merced left the organization. In 2005, Merced took a position as the Director of National Initiatives and Applied Research with NeighborWorks America, a nonprofit sponsored by Congress.

The papers date from 1966-2002 and document Merced's campaigns as well as his activity in the State House. The focus of the collection is his work as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, including his involvement with organizations such as the Massachusetts English Plus Coalition, the Massachusetts Black Legislative Caucus, and the Mauricio Gaston Institute. During his time in the House, Merced was active in the

campaign to promote and protect bilingual education in Massachusetts as well as working for immigrants' rights and the reform of the Boston Public Schools. The collection includes extensive correspondence files as well as subject files, voting records, legislative and publicity material, newsletters, and reports.

The Nelson Merced collection is open for research Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., in the Northeastern University Libraries Archives and Special Collections Department, 92 Snell Library, Boston, Massachusetts. For a list of the Department's special collections, see: www.library.neu.edu/archives/collections/manuscript_collections/.

Sattareh Farman-Farmaian Papers Open for Research at Schlesinger Library

The papers of Sattareh Farman-Farmaian, retired Los Angeles social worker and founder and director of the first school of social work in Iran, the Tehran School of Social Work (1958-1979), are now open to research at the Schlesinger Library. Consisting of nearly two linear feet of material related to the promotion of her autobiography, *Daughter of Persia: A Woman's Journey from Her Father's Harem through the Islamic Revolution*, the papers include family and biographical information; letters from fans; speeches and interviews (many on audiotape); publicity materials; conference material; articles and clippings; and photographs. The collection was processed by Mark Vassar. The finding aid is available online at Harvard University's OASIS website: <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:RAD.SCHL:sch01196>.

American Textile History Museum Receives IMLS Grant

The Osborne Library of the American Textile History Museum in Lowell, Massachusetts, has received an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) *Museums for America* program grant for \$108,417 to catalog the library's trade material, consisting of trade catalogs, trade advertisements, broadsides, trade cards, and cloth labels (a form of advertising used on the different bolts of cloth produced by various textile mills). The grant will enable the library to completely accession the items into the museum's

database, catalog the items into OCLC, scan photos of the items to be attached to the archival record, and download all information into the Chace Catalogue, the museum's online catalog, accessible through the museum's website at <www.athm.org>. The grant runs for two years, beginning August 1, 2008.

The American Textile History Museum's Osborne Library includes 25,000 books and pamphlets, 47,000 images, 825 manuscript groups, and 712 periodical titles in its collections, covering the textile industry primarily in America but also abroad.

The 'Marge' Papers Open for Research at Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute

Cartoonist Marjorie Henderson Buell (1904-1993), who drew under the name "Marge," was the creator of the popular comic "Little Lulu," as well as other one-panel cartoons and comic strips. Little Lulu ran in the *Saturday Evening Post* from 1935 to 1945, and then became a major marketing figure, gracing Kleenex advertisements, Paramount short films, and many children's toys and products throughout the mid-twentieth century. The Marge Papers (15.5 linear feet) include business contracts, correspondence with publishers, agents, etc.; fan mail; scrapbooks; published cartoons and comic strips; original artwork; Little Lulu products such as paper dolls, crayons, hair bows, mittens, etc; comic books in English and various foreign languages; early drawings including those in high school yearbooks and literary magazines; family autograph albums and Bible; motion pictures of Little Lulu Kleenex advertisements; etc. They were processed by Jenny Gotwals with support from the Radcliffe College Classes of 1950 and 1956. <<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:RAD.SCHL:sch01138>>.

News from Children's Hospital Boston

The Children's Hospital Boston Archives was among the 776 museums, libraries, and archives to receive The Institute of Museum and Library Services' Connecting to Collections Bookshelf, a collection of professional literature about preserving archives and historic artifacts. The bookshelf includes an essential set of books, online resources, and a user's guide compiled by a blue ribbon panel

of conservation experts. For more information, visit: <www.imls.gov/news/2008/080508.shtm>.

R H O D E I S L A N D

Rhode Island's 'Protecting the Past' Project

Protecting the Past - Rhode Island now has a web presence at <www.olis.ri.gov/grants/c2c/index.php>. The Web page has links to: information about the project, a list of Steering Committee members, Web sites of project partners, selected disaster planning resources, and records of meetings. Additional content is planned.

Protecting the Past - Rhode Island is a planning project the output of which will be a Rhode Island-focused disaster planning template. The template will then be available for use by all types of cultural heritage institutions in the state. The planned outcome is that Rhode Island libraries, archives, museums, and historic sites will be better prepared to deal with institution-level disasters. The project is funded by a "Connecting to Collections" grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The Preservation Society of Newport County

In May, The Preservation Society of Newport County was awarded a \$40,000 Conservation Project Support grant from the IMLS to conduct an environmental survey of all the ten houses owned by the Society.

In July the IMLS also awarded a \$150,000 Museums for America grant to the Preservation Society to improve the strategic technology between all ten houses, which are not in the same location.

Manuscripts in the Naval Historical Collection, Newport, Rhode Island

The Naval Historical Collection recently acquired the papers of LCDR Thomas C. McLean and Rear Admiral William D. MacDougall. McLean was inspector of ordnance at the Naval Torpedo Station in Newport during the 1890s. His collection consists of letters sent and received regarding personnel matters at the station, torpedo boat trials, fuel oil tests, torpedo gear, damage to torpedo boats,


the Marconi telegraph, foreign torpedo boats, drawings of the Torpedo Station yard, and trial sheets of the Whitehead Torpedo, 1882-1899.

The William D. MacDougall collection contains seven boxes of personal correspondence sent to his father, General Clinton D. MacDougall, dating from 1886 when he was a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy and ending in 1914 with the death of the General. The letters comment on his experiences at the U.S. Naval Academy, travels to foreign countries, his ship assignments, attendance at the Naval War College, and an assignment on the presidential yacht, the *Mayflower*. Photographs of ships, menus and programs, naval notebooks and maps dated 1909-1925, complete the collection.

Audiovisual Workshop at the Rhode Island Historical Society


The proliferation of audiovisual formats during the past sixty years has created a confusing array of preserva-

tion challenges for historical institutions. A workshop held on June 20, 2008 at the Rhode Island Historical Society (RIHS) and co-sponsored by NEA offered another opportunity for archivists and librarians to demystify that part of their collections. Jim DaMico, Graphics Project Archivist at the RIHS, led a workshop entitled: "What's In Your Stacks? An Introduction to Identifying and Caring for Your Audio-Visual Materials." Using examples from the RIHS archives as well as from the instructor's personal collection, students were able to see and handle a variety of magnetic video and audiotape formats that spanned the 1950s through the 1990s. The workshop covered the history of magnetic tape and the basics in the identification, care, and handling of magnetic media. Once the students had tried their hand at identifying the different formats, the last portion of the workshop focused on re-formatting issues including traditional migration methods and new research on digitization technologies. In particular, the newly developed lossless Motion JPEG 2000 file format, currently in use at the National Archives, offers the ability to compress video to save on storage requirements without losing data. ■



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People

Paul R. Bergeron, City Clerk of Nashua, New Hampshire, was elected Vice-President/President-Elect of the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA) during the organization's annual meeting in Atlanta recently.

A municipal clerk for the past fourteen years, Bergeron was awarded his M.A. in English from the University of New Hampshire and M.Ed. from Cambridge College. He is a Certified Archivist and Certified Municipal Clerk.

Bergeron served as Chair of the Government Records Section of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) from 2002–2003 and as Leader of the Local Government Industry Specific Group (ISG) for the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA, Inc.) from 1999–2001. A member of New Hampshire's State Historical Records Advisory Board since 2002, he has contributed to NEA by serving on program, nominating, and local arrangements committees.

Mary Rita Grady, CSJ, has been appointed Archivist of the Boston CSJ Archives (Brighton, Massachusetts). She succeeds Therezon Sheerin, CSJ, who retired this summer.

Giordana Mecagni was recently appointed Acquisitions Archivist for the Center for the History of Medicine, Countway Library, Harvard University. Giordana previously served as the Center's Archivist for Women in Medicine, a position in which she successfully acquired and processed women's collections, coordinated public programs, and raised funds to support the Archives. She came to Countway from the Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, and before that was the manager of the Resource Center for Philanthropy at Associated Grant Makers in Boston—a special collection focusing on the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors. Giordana received her B.A. in Women's Studies and Sociology from the University of New Hampshire (honors), and her MLIS (archives concentration) from Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science ('04).

Bryan W. Sutherland was recently appointed Processing Archivist at the Center for the History of

Medicine, Countway Library, Harvard University. Previously, Sutherland was Project Archivist at the Center, processing the paper and electronic records of the Harvard Medical School, Office of the Dean. He holds a B.A. in History from the University of Massachusetts at Lowell, and a M.S. in Library and Information Science (archives concentration) from Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science ('08).

In July 2008 **Michael Dello Iacono**, Records Assistant, and **Darla White**, Records Manager/Archivist, of the Center for the History of Medicine, Countway Library, Harvard University, received a coveted Team Award from the Harvard Medical School for outstanding performance. They were nominated for their dedication to an encompassing mission: to assist school employees to create and preserve the records that are critical to the school's current operations and the future archival footprint. White, formerly Librarian/Archivist for the Hunt Alternatives Fund, received a M.A. in History from Simmons ('05) and a MLIS from Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science ('03) as did Dello Iacono ('08). ■

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AROUND AND ABOUT

May Sarton's Poetry Library:
An Indefinitely Renewable Experience

Lenora P. Blouin, *Head of Reference (ret.) San Jose Public Library,
San Jose, California*

In 1995, after the death of the poet/writer May Sarton, the University of New England's Maine Women Writers Collection obtained a sizeable amount of material from the Sarton estate including manuscripts of novels, journals and drafts of poems, photographs, audiotapes, and 66 boxes of books from her personal library. By far the largest group of books in this collection numbered approximately 1,250 volumes of poetry written by other poets, poets who represented a virtual "who's who" in poetry. Many of these volumes were inscribed to Sarton by their authors, bringing to life the personal, intimate relationships she shared with some of the more significant writers of the twentieth century. Books of poetry by Robert Frost, Louise Bogan, Hilda Doolittle (H.D.), and Richard Wilbur were shelved among books by lesser known poets such as Ruth Pitter, Haniel Long, Frances Cornford, and Robert Francis.

The Maine Women Writers Collection, consisting of published and unpublished works by and about women authors, either native or residents of Maine, was founded in 1959 by Grace Dow and Dorothy Healy. This collection is currently housed in the Abplanalp Library at Westbrook College in Portland, Maine, a campus of the University of New England. It was because of her friendship with Dorothy Healy that Sarton decided to bequeath her poetry library which, in David E. Philips' opinion, eventually became one of the most significant acquisitions in the history of the archive.¹

During her lifetime May Sarton published nineteen volumes of poetry, and hundreds of individual poems as well as over 60 broadsides, often referred to as her Christmas poems, a practice which Sarton began in the 1940s. Sarton wrote in three major genres: poetry, fiction, and journals/memoirs, but considered herself a poet first and foremost.

Born in Wondelgem, Belgium, but later moving to the United States at the age of two, Sarton settled in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where her father George Sarton, the distinguished Historian of Science, began to teach at Harvard and to conduct research for his monumental series of books. May Sarton lived in Cambridge until 1958 when she moved to an historic old farmhouse in Nelson, New Hampshire, where she proceeded to write some of her most important works, including the memoir *Plant Dreaming Deep* and the novel *Mrs. Stevens Hears the Mermaids Singing*.

In 1973 Sarton moved to York, Maine, and lived in a house by the sea for the last twenty years of her life, lecturing, and

conducting poetry readings as well as teaching at many colleges and universities, including Harvard, Radcliffe, and Wellesley.

Although Sarton had never attended college, turning down a scholarship to Vassar to study acting with Eva La Gallienne's Civic Repertory Theater, from an early age she immersed herself in studying, reading, and writing poetry. This can be attested to by the fact that her poetry library contains many books acquired during her childhood and young adult years. Included is a copy of Rudyard Kipling's collected poems that she bought at the age of nine with her own money and which she described in her journal *At Seventy* as "a lovely edition on India paper in a red binding."² Her library also contains a 1931 volume of *Collected Poems of Thomas Hardy* and a 1938 copy of *The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats* in which Sarton's handwritten notes and comments can be seen throughout their pages. Even a cursory glance at the titles will reveal that it was the lyric poet whom Sarton admired the most. Sarton was drawn to the lyric because, as she wrote in her journal *Recovering*, "... the simple lyric is the rarest and most precious kind of poem ... that reaches the greatest spontaneity."³

Throughout Sarton's journals and memoirs there are scattered references to the many poets whom she knew or admired. Among them several stand out as significant not only because of their personal relationship with Sarton but also because of the profound impact their poetry had on her own life and work. Included among this group are the familiar names of Robert Frost, W. B. Yeats, and Louise Bogan as well as the lesser known names of Ruth Pitter and Frances Cornford.

Robert Frost, whom Sarton called a genius, maintained a prominent place in Sarton's library. According to Susan Sherman, editor of Sarton's letters and unpublished poetry, Sarton kept a photograph of Frost on her desk and often quoted lines from his poetry; "... his voice was a part of her daily life."⁴ Inscribed in her copy of the *Collected Poems of Robert Frost* are the words "To May Sarton that good poet from Robert Frost, Christmas 1948," a cherished assessment that many later critics would withhold when writing about Sarton's poetry.⁵ The works of W. B. Yeats are also well represented in this library for without a doubt his poetry had the greatest influence on Sarton's own writing. Sarton admitted that she had read everything by him and often quoted the line "There's more enterprise in walking naked" from the Yeats' poem "A Coat," because she felt it underscored her belief that the poet had to remain transparent to the world.⁶

Sarton had a special affinity to Louise Bogan whom she described to Karen Saum in an interview as "one of the most distinguished pure lyric poets of our time."⁷ Sarton was only twenty-three when she bought a copy of Bogan's volume of poetry *The Sleeping Fury* (1937). Later Sarton met and developed a bond with Bogan based on their respect for lyric poetry. Included on her library shelves was an inscribed copy of Bogan's *Collected Poems, 1923-1953* in which Sarton has highlighted three poems she believed to be significant: "To Be Sung on the Water," "The Daemon," and "Zone."

Ruth Pitter, labeled by many critics as a "minor" British poet, remained important to Sarton not only as a friend but also as a lyricist whose poetry Sarton read over and over again. The copy of Pitter's book *A Trophy of Arms* (1937) contained the poem "Reflection" which Sarton returned to repeatedly. Pitter shared many affinities with Sarton, as Susan Sherman has identified in *Dear Juliette*, "... her writing was grounded in the natural world, in common things and people..."⁸

Another "modest" British poet was Frances Cornford who occupied a place of considerable influence for Sarton. In her journals Sarton stresses that she kept a copy of Cornford's *On a Calm Shore* (1960) on the turning bookcase by her desk and must have "pulled it out a thousand times as though for a drink of water from a spring."⁹

In later years, in spite of physical frailty and failing

health, Sarton remained resolute in her love for poetry. As an established poet with close to twenty published books of poetry, Sarton continued to offer support and praise for the younger poets who followed her. Works lining her poetry library by these younger poets included *Natural Things: Collected Poems, 1969-1998* by Constance Hunting, founder of the literary journal *Puckerbrush Review* and editor of *May Sarton: Woman and Poet* (1982), and *The Orb Weaver* by Robert Francis, as well as Deborah Pease's *The Feathered Wind* which Sarton called one of the most powerful books she'd ever read.

This poetry collection of over 1,200 books represents for Sarton the most essential qualities of the lyric: form, music, imagery, clarity, metaphor, and language. May Sarton's life was spent in the presence of, either in person or through their books, some of the greatest poets of the twentieth century. This rich, magnificent poetry library in the Maine Women Writers Collection is a testament to Sarton's enduring love for and association with lyric poetry, spanning more than seven decades of her life. ■

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Internet Tidbits

- Susan Martin

Maine Memory Network's latest digital exhibit showcases the art, artifacts, and traditions of the Wabanaki people. Arranged into three parts, "Gifts From Gluskabe" is based on a gallery exhibit held earlier this year at the Maine Historical Society Museum and includes images from the Hudson Museum at the University of Maine and the Maine Historical Society.

The Wabanaki people consist of the Micmac, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot Indians of Maine and the Abenaki of Quebec. Gluskabe is a cultural hero credited with the creation of the Wabanaki people, animals, and land. One popular story describes how he formed the Penobscot River to ease a drought. According to legend, Gluskabe taught the Indians how to live off the land and to use its resources wisely. Thus the items on display are his "gifts"—traditional crafts passed down through the generations to the Wabanaki of today.

The first section of the exhibit, "Early Indian Objects and Baskets" <www.mainmemory.net/bin/Features?t=fp&feat=275&supst=Exhibits>, contains images of twenty four objects, from prehistoric artifacts collected by archaeologists to baskets made during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The earliest items include a ceramic pot, a spear point, and tobacco smoking tubes dating from 2,500-2,700 years ago.

The second section, "Tools and Woodworking" <www.mainmemory.net/binFeatures?t=fp&feat=276&supst=Exhibits>, highlights 27 items, including tools used by basket makers, wood workers, and other craftspeople. Also featured are a walking stick, a fish spear, and rootclubs, many decorated with distinctive carvings. Lastly, "Birchbark, Beads and Continuing Traditions" <www.mainmemory.net/bin/Features?t=fp&feat=277&supst=Exhibits> contains seventeen items created by Maine Indians for their own use or for sale, from birchbark containers to clothing, moccasins, and purses with elaborate beadwork.

Each of the three sections of "Gifts From Gluskabe" is laid out in the same way, making for consistency across the exhibit. After reading a brief introduction, users can

browse each collection in slideshow format or view a list of all the items as thumbnails with captions. The interface makes it easy to toggle between views without getting lost. Unfortunately, the reproductions and descriptions give no indication of the sizes of the items. The text, however, written by Gretchen Faulkner of the Hudson Museum and John Mayer of the Maine Historical Society, provides otherwise detailed descriptive and historical information and includes excerpts from traditional Wabanaki stories. Captions are particularly helpful in pointing out an item's significant features and in describing how certain tools are made or used.

With this exhibit, the Maine Memory Network "demonstrates how the artistry used to create these objects was deeply connected to the natural world." While the oldest artifacts illustrate how ancient this artistry is, the twentieth-century items—such as the beautiful model canoe built by Passamaquoddy Indian Sebattis Tomah in 1936—are a particularly powerful demonstration of the continuity and the evolution of these crafts from prehistory to modern times. ■



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Calendar of Events



Press releases and other announcements should be sent to Stephanie Naoum at <snaoum@nfpa.org>. 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.

October 27-28, 2008. “Protecting Your Collections and Staff from Disaster,” presented by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts. Poughkeepsie, NY. For details, see <www.ccaha.org/education/program-calendar#>.

October 30-31, 2008. SAA Workshop. “Encoded Archival Description.” Minneapolis Central Library, Minneapolis, MN. For information see <<http://saa.archivists.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=GetEvents>>.

October 30-31, 2008. SAA Workshop. “Implement DACS in Integrated CMS: Using the Archivists’ Toolkit.” University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY. For information see <<http://saa.archivists.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=GetEvents>>.

November 3, 2008. SAA Workshop. “Basic Electronic Records.” San Antonio, TX. For information see <<http://saa.archivists.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=GetEvents>>.

November 6-7, 2008. “A Race Against Time: Preserving our Audiovisual Media,” presented by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts. San Francisco, CA. For details see <www.ccaha.org/education/program-calendar#>.

November 6-7, 2008. SAA Workshop. “Style Sheets for EAD: Delivering Your Finding Aids on the Web.” University of California, Riverside. For information see <<http://saa.archivists.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=GetEvents>>.

November 13-14, 2008. SAA’s *Managing Workshops Series* including “Financial Management Basics for Archivists” and “Management of Cultural Institutions.” Knoxville, TN. For details see <<http://saa.archivists.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=GetEvents>>.

November 13-14, 2008. SAA Workshop. “Understanding Photos: Intro to Archival Principles and Practices.” Bellevue Community College, Bellevue, WA. For information see <<http://saa.archivists.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=GetEvents>>.

November 14, 2008. SAA Workshop. “Digital Objects Modeling and Representation: Using the Archivists’ Toolkit”. Simmons College, Boston, MA. For information see <<http://saa.archivists.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=GetEvents>>.

November 14-15, 2008. “For All Time (And in All Media?): Preserving Cultural Heritage in New England.” New England Archivists Fall 2008 Meeting. Simmons College, Boston, MA. For details see <www.newenglandarchivists.org/activities/meetings/index.html>.

November 17, 2008. SAA Workshop. “Advanced Appraisal for Archivists.” Chicago, IL. For information see <<http://saa.archivists.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=GetEvents>>.

December 1, 2008. Deadline to register for the Modern Archives Institute to be held at the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC from January 26-February 6, 2009. For information see <www.archives.gov/preservation/modern-archives-institute/>.

December 9-10, 2008. “Persistence of Memory: Sustaining Digital Collections,” presented by Northeast Document Conservation Center. Chicago, IL. For details see <www.nedcc.org/education/conferences/pom2008/pombroc.php>.

December 12, 2008. SAA Workshop. “Managing Literary Manuscripts.” Provo, UT. For information see <<http://saa.archivists.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=GetEvents>>. ■

THIS SEASON IN NEW ENGLAND HISTORY



Sophie Dolvany and Albert Sabino bobbing for an apple on a string at a Halloween party, October 28, 1938. Founded in 1892 in Boston's South End by a small group of college-educated women, Denison House was a settlement house that offered camps, clubs, sports for girls and boys, classes, a library and clinic, union organization, and other services for the neighborhood's mixed nationalities. From the Denison House Records at the Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University. Link to finding aid: <<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:RAD.SCHL:sch00182>>