

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
August 12 – 13, 2013  
New Orleans, Louisiana**

**Staff Report: Annual Meeting  
(Prepared by Nancy Beaumont)**

**2013 JOINT ANNUAL MEETING**

*For information about development of the education sessions for the 2013 Joint Annual Meeting, see the Program Committee's report at 0813-1-VI-I-ProgComm.*

*ARCHIVES 2013* promises to be a rewarding experience for all, with outstanding conference and pre-conference programming, many and varied networking and social events, a full exhibit hall, and, of course, a great host city. The Program and Host committees worked creatively and enthusiastically to ensure the success of the conference. The schedule hasn't loosened up a bit, so pace yourself!

**Registration:** As of the close of Advance registration on July 24 we had registered 1,454 “full paid” attendees (compared with 1,349 in 2012, 1,449 in 2011, 1,504 in 2010, 1,150 in 2009, and 1,406 in 2008) and 36 one-day attendees. The budgeted number of registrants is 1,450. Six individuals took advantage of a special promotion that we offered to members of surrounding state and regional organizations to attend at the SAA member rate. Our challenge for this conference – as always – will be to keep a careful eye on all expenses (especially AV, power, and food and beverage) to ensure a positive bottom line for the meeting. We count on this revenue area to support other SAA priorities and activities throughout the year.

**Exhibits/Sponsorships/Advertising:** Thanks to the outstanding efforts of staff member Carlos Salgado, we have sold 58 booths for a total of \$85,700 in exhibits revenue (budget = \$71,000). (This is compared with 46 booths and total exhibits revenue of \$69,900 in 2012.) Sponsorship support totals \$30,400 (compared with \$32,100 in 2012 and a 2013 budget of \$17,100) thanks to the very generous folks at Tessella (Silver Sponsor), Atlas Systems (Bronze Sponsor), Hollinger Metal Edge, Preservation Technologies, and OCLC Research. Onsite Program advertising reached a new high of \$14,015 (compared with our previous high of \$12,100 in 2012).

**Conference Communication:** Since it's “go live” date of January 21, the 2013 Host Committee blog (in the capable hands of blogmaster Eira Tansey) has tempted prospective attendees with all things New Orleans, from “Music Mondays” to “New

Orleans Curiosities” to great ideas for “Outings” to “Web Sites and Apps to Help You Plan Your Trip” to the much-anticipated “Dining Guide.” Many tweets and FB posts have commented on the wonderful information provided in the blog.

I enjoyed working with SNAP representatives Rebecca Stephens, Rebecca Goldman, and Eira Tansey and Membership Committee Chair Liz Scott and Vice Chair Larissa Woo to develop, post, and promote the “First-Timer’s Guide to the 2013 Joint Annual Meeting,” a tool that we will update every year based on user feedback.

During the week of July 29 we launched the new and improved conference website as well as our Sched.org-based conference mobile app. We welcome your feedback on both and hope that you will engage with the app to make the most of its social media capabilities.

As suggested by the Social Responsibility Subgroup of the Annual Meeting Task Force and reinforced by the Council, we included on the 2013 registration form an opt-out option for the print Onsite Program. Nearly 10% of registrants opted out, and we were able to reduce our print run (and carbon footprint) accordingly. We will track comments on the extent to which the mobile app may increasingly obviate the need for a print program going forward.

We once again will provide complete session descriptions in the Onsite Program, as well as materials that previously were included in the registration packet. Also published in the 2013 Program are the Strategic Plan 2013-2018 Vision, Mission, Values, Goals, and Strategies; the rules for the Annual Membership Meeting; the 2014 Call for Proposals; and an announcement about the new mobile app.

As always, we have very much enjoyed working with our colleagues at the Council of State Archivists (from the Program Committee members representing CoSA to the leaders and office staff). And we’re looking forward to working with them again for the 2014 Joint Annual Meeting!

## **PROGRESS ON RESPONDING TO ANNUAL MEETING TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

At each Council meeting going forward, I will include a staff report about the Annual Meeting that addresses the recommendations of the 2011-2013 Annual Meeting Task Force (see <http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/0513-V-B-AMTF-Final.pdf>) as well as the Council’s “Principles and Priorities for Continuously Improving the SAA Annual Meeting” (0813-1-III-A-1-AnnMtgPriorities). I hope that you will be pleased to see the progress already made!

### **Site Selection / Contract Requirements**

- I have had a preliminary conversation with a contact in Washington, DC, as we look at options for dormitory housing for the 2014 Joint Annual Meeting. In addition, the

headquarters hotel is reexamining the possibility of providing free wireless in the meeting space based on our ongoing site selection negotiations with Marriott.

- Negotiations with our first-choice city for 2015 (Midwest) are proceeding well and I expect that we will be able to sign all contracts (totaling up to six, including the convention center and hotels) in September. Please note that whereas we were able to negotiate down the room rate in each hotel by approximately 12% from their original bids, the rates are not as low as in New Orleans. Thus far all hotels have agreed to our stringent fair labor practices contract language; we are awaiting the convention center's agreement on this. All hotels and the new LEED-certified convention center have responded to our requirements regarding "green-ness" and all have indicated that they donate left-over food to a worthy cause. All hotels within our proposed block are offering free wireless for guests and the convention center will provide free wireless access throughout the meeting space.
- We are still in negotiations with the two (Southeast) cities in contention for the 2016 Annual Meeting. It may well be that social responsibility concerns may point us to one city over the other. I welcome a Council discussion of that possibility.
- We have reserved dates for the preferred 2017 host city (West, convention center plus hotels) and will begin negotiations in the fall. Those negotiations will depend to some extent on finding the best balance of multi-year hotel agreements.

### **Social Responsibility Concerns**

- See above regarding convention center and hotel contracts going forward.
- I have actively monitored the UNITE HERE and UnionSmart.org websites since November 2010 and will continue to do so.
- As above, we initiated in 2013 an opt-out option for receiving the print Onsite Program. In addition, we are using only recycled/recyclable materials for name badges and have confirmed with the hotel and the reception caterer that all leftover food will be donated to those in need. We will have signage to this effect at all food events. In general, we are ramping up our efforts to publicize what is being done.
- We are offering six community service projects in conjunction with the 2013 Joint Annual Meeting, three of which are archives-related (City Park Archives Inventory Project, City Park Archives Scanning Project, and Louisiana Historical Center Architectural Records Project) and three of which pertain to the wider New Orleans community (Second Harvest Food Bank, Lower Ninth Ward Service Project, and St. Bernard's Service Project). Kudos to our very dynamic working group for researching and organizing the options. (The projects were publicized in advance of the conference via *In The Loop*, the home page, and social media and are noted on page 57 of the Onsite Program.) I will report out on rates of participation when that information is available.

## **Online Access / Delivery of Meeting Content**

- As above, we have deployed for 2013 a new web-based mobile app for access to conference information via smart phones and tablets.
- We have retooled the conference website for 2013 (although this launched just two weeks before the conference).
- Although I have been talking with two vendors (Peach New Media and Learning Times) about virtual conferencing options for 2013 (and particularly the possibility of providing – for a small fee – MP3 audio with synched slides for a select set of sessions identified by the Program Committee), we were not able to reach an agreement in time to provide a reasonable set of sessions via this method. Plan B, which would have used in-house PSAV services to provide audio with synched slides for just the seven “01” sessions and which we would then have made available free via the SAA website, came in at a cost of \$12,125, making it unfeasible to implement. Going forward, we will begin discussions with vendors in the early fall, well in advance of the Program Committee meeting.
- I am currently working with Convention Recordings, provider of CDs and MP3s for at least the last 10 SAA conferences, to obtain complete sets of past session recordings for posting on the SAA website at no fee to users. We hope to post the 2006-2011 recordings soon after our return from New Orleans.

## **New Approaches to Meeting Content and Structure**

The 2014 Program Committee has been very responsive to the Annual Meeting Task Force’s suggestions in this area (as reinforced by SAA Vice President/President-Elect Danna Bell-Russel and me). The 2014 Call for Proposals reflects two already-adopted changes in “the way we do the conference”:

- Education sessions will be offered at either 60 minutes or 75 minutes; no sessions will be 90 minutes as in previous years. We hope that this may serve to loosen up the schedule a bit.
- Proposers are encouraged to suggest an “alternative format” for a 60-minute session, including world café, fishbowl discussion, Pecha Kucha 20x20, or any other format that they believe would most effectively present their information.

The tri-chairs for the 2014 meeting (Jami Awalt, Rachel Muse, and Arlene Schmuland) are very excited about trying new ideas for both programming and networking options.

I’m happy to address any questions or concerns that you may have.