

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
November 2-3, 2018
Chicago, Illinois**

**Status Report: Lone Arrangers Section's
Archivists to the Rescue! Pilot Project**

**(Prepared by: Debra Schiff, Lone Arrangers Section Chair;
Michelle Ganz, Independent Archivists Section Chair; and
Ashley Levine, Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Section Chair)**

BACKGROUND

The SAA Archivists to the Rescue! Project aims to bring low- and no-cost basic archival training workshops to non-professional archivists to teach them how to care for their collections, organize them, and make them accessible to researchers. The drive behind this effort is to help make accessible archival records that are hidden due to a lack of knowledge about preservation and archival practices.

The object of the project is to produce a fully turnkey set of workshops and instructional materials that can be downloaded and implemented by SAA members who wish to deliver the workshops in their local communities. They will be available for download from the SAA Lone Arrangers microsite, and ideally included as links on other SAA web pages.

The Project is currently in the Pilot Phase. Upon completion at the end of the year, we will begin preparation for a Beta Testing Phase. This will include revisions to the workshop materials, instructions, assessments, and associated materials as needed based on pilot assessments and instructor feedback. After the revisions have been completed, the Beta Testing will begin followed by an assessment period.

DISCUSSION

The workshops are well underway, and three sites are already completed: Trenton (New Jersey State Library), Plainfield (Plainfield Public Library), and Atlantic City (Atlantic City Free Public Library). Two more sets of workshops remain, and will be located at Chester Library (mid-October) and at the Dana Library at Rutgers Newark (early November).

The presenters for the first three workshop sites were Gary Saretzky (Monmouth County Archive), Paul Martinez (Montclair State University), Tara Maharjan (Rutgers University), Heather Perez (Stockton University), Ashley Levine (Artifex Press, NY), Annamarie Klose Hrubes (William Paterson University), Alex Plante (Hudson County Community College), Russ Gasero (Archives of the Reformed Church in America), and me (Chester Library). In addition to

the instructors named above, Annie Tummino (Queens College, CUNY) will be teaching a workshop in the Newark cohort.

Co-sponsor University Products supplied to each participant (10 per site) the following items: archival paper and folders, 2 legal-sized document cases, polyester photo sleeves, and a 15% discount for the year of the pilot project. We also received small spatulas for staple removal. We and the participants are very grateful for their generous support, as well as all the hard work by Nancy Beaumont on our behalf.

Assessments have been collected throughout the pilot phase including participant pre- and post-workshop assessments for each workshop, online feedback forms, and anecdotal feedback emailed from the instructors and participants. We also have been recording video interviews with the participants.

To view the video recordings from the workshops, visit this link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15MzLAdWKJ3lhMMo7HA5dNaIXFV-Bzbhx?usp=sharing>

To see an open, ongoing document of collected email feedback from participants, visit this link:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/10aJUxMUE4HYkGYCcFHfYPUWhZ3JS8UeCwYxwsjpUqg8/edit?usp=sharing>

To see an open, ongoing document of collected learnings from the instructors, visit this link:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1R82wttVziJ80Qu6-mYH4KYfJEQKPit_pOHN-AG93s1Q/edit?usp=sharing

Assessments are being entered by hand by project team members into online forms (one for pre-workshops and one for post-workshops) for the first 2 workshops. From the third workshop forward, the instructors will be entering the pre- and post-workshop assessments collected from their participants into Google Forms themselves. We will be analyzing the data after verifying it. SAA Lone Arrangers Steering Committee member, Jim Havron, will serve as data validation officer to ensure the assessment data is handled correctly.

An official SAA Lone Arrangers subcommittee has been created for the project so that a team is in place for the life of the project (sustainability).

To complete the Pilot Phase of the Program, the project team will:

1. Complete all of the data assessment and analysis.
2. Make all of the recommended alterations to the presentations, accompanying materials, and instruction materials as described in the video recordings, learnings from instructors, and other communications.

3. Write a white paper/journal article about the pilot experience. Submit for publication in the *American Archivist* or other archival, peer-reviewed, publication.

4. In 2019, the team will conduct a much larger Beta test with the newly improved workshops with a large organization having a large presence with multiple sites and many more participants. We have an organization in mind and are waiting to hear back from our contact. We believe that this would be an accurate test of rolling our materials out to the public, since we would provide all of the improved workshops, handouts, and instruction communications; and they would conduct them independently. Assessments of this phase will be collected and used to determine if any issues need to be resolved before closing the Beta test. Our goal is to ensure that any issues discovered in the pilot have been resolved.

5. After the Beta testing is complete, including all data analysis, we will write a grant application with SAA and AASLH to specifically target the same groups we did in the pilot, but on a national level, and using all the information and experience we obtained from both the pilot and the beta test.

a. We also would work to develop communications to those groups to inspire them to become new SAA members.

The full project will be completed when all of the workshops and accompanying materials have been improved to the point where they can be implemented as a sustainable program from SAA.

Pin Fundraiser

We sold all 50 pins at SAA the first day of the conference, making \$760. The funds have been paying the transportation costs of the workshop instructors. Thanks to all who supported the project by purchasing a pin.