

11/85

CONGRESSIONAL PAPERS NEWSLETTER

c/o Mary Boccaccio
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The Congressional Papers Group met at SAA in Austin. Connell Gallagher called the meeting to order, briefly discussing the history of the group from it's first meeting in 1984. Karyl Winn (University of Washington) then discussed the status of the Group and the maintenance of the newsletter which appeared during the past year. Originally her institution had taken up the financial burden of producing the news letter and a mechanism is needed to keep it going. The mechanism depends on what form the Group takes - a Roundtable or a subgroup within one of the other SAA sections. Karyl took a poll and the majority supported Roundtable status. This means that SAA would assist mailings and provide meeting facilities at the SAA annual meeting. The Senate History Office expressed willingness to assist in mailings and other communication. It was mentioned that a grant could be sought from NHPRC to support a newsletter. Some discussion followed and the group voted again in favor of Roundtable status.

Karyl Winn suggested that another editor be appointed and Mary Boccaccio (East Carolina) volunteered and was appointed. Anybody who has news notes, technical notes or other information, please send it to Mary Boccaccio at the above address.

Ben Primer (Mathias papers) talked about his bibliography project. He distributed a handout and talked about soliciting articles and so spreading the work of compiling a bibliography. Connie suggested a literature search and centralizing the information. Ben at Johns Hopkins will be the central location and the newsletter will report on progress. An LC data base search was mentioned. Ben is interested in seeing un published works. Finding aids are also good to look at when considering how to approach a collection. Possibly representative samples could be filmed and made available on microfiche. There is now an NHPRC grant for establishing a clearinghouse for archival matters in general and perhaps this could be investigated in terms of this project. Areas of the bibliography include general reference, congressional history, records management, machine readable records and office automation systems, acquisition, appraisal, arrangement and descriptiuon, guides and registers, oral history, management of collections. Anyone who would like to volunteer for a section of the bibliography or contribute information, please contact Ben Primer at Johns Hopkins University.

Frank Mackaman (Dirksen Congressional Center) reported on the July Harpers Ferry Conference. The report of the conference is available from him on request. 7 basic actions were discussed that, if taken, would

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enhance the job of the archivist dealing with these collections. Lydia Lucas (Minnesota Historical Society) had volunteered to work on a statement on minimum standards relative to the discussions at Harpers Ferry. Lydia's statement will be fully discussed through the Roundtable.

The final point of discussion was a session or sessions for SAA in 1986 in Chicago. The Group broke up into small sections for discussion and then reported back to the main group. Photographs, documentation, processing, minimum standards, case files and users were all discussed. Connie took the suggestions and suggested a session to next year's program committee. The meeting then broke up.

I am including the mailing list so that everyone will know who everyone else is and perhaps people who are geographically close will be able to get together or at least talk. By the same token, I would encourage anyone who has a question, an idea or a process that worked to contact the newsletter so that we all will have the advantage of everyone's effort. Myself, I am interested in odds and ends of technical information. For example, the Senators, or at least Senator Javits, used 2 different sizes of dictaphone records during the 60's and 70's. One was green and the other red. They are plastic, much like floppy disks and came with a record player but the smaller record player, green I believe, will not play the larger record. Secretaries frequently paperclipped a note to these records which caused a ridge. These records will play reasonably clearly with a weighted arm. They can be hooked into a tape recorder and the records copied. There is a small recorder at the Javits Collection at SUNY Stony Brook. Does any one have a larger tape recorder for the red records?

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