

SAA BUSINESS ARCHIVES NEWSLETTER

Published twice each year for the Business Archives Section of the Society of American Archivists.

UNISYS DONATES BURROUGHS HISTORICAL RECORDS

Unisys Corporation has donated a large collection of records, relating to the Burroughs Corporation, to the Charles Babbage Institute at the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis). It includes over 500 cubic feet of historically valuable records, correspondence, photographs, films, video tapes, speeches, sound recordings, technical material, and product literature covering over 100 years of the company's history from 1883 to its merger with the Sperry Corporation. The donation will give historians of business and computing access to one of the most important sources on the accounting machine and electronic computer industries.

Unisys Staff Vice President David R. Curry said, "Unisys is very pleased to have a setting such as that provided by the Charles Babbage Institute and the University of Minnesota for the century of business history represented by the Burroughs Corporation collection. We are proud to continue our productive association with the Institute with this important donation, and are pleased that scholars and researchers will enjoy excellent access to these materials in the future." The collection was developed over the last decade under the primary direction of K. Anne Frantilla, Unisys Corporate Archivist.

The Burroughs Corporation began in 1886 as the American Arithmometer Company, founded in St. Louis around a machine invented by William S. Burroughs, an accountant who desired to develop practical adding and listing machines. By 1905 the firm had relocated to Detroit and changed its name to the Burroughs Adding Machine Company. It established itself as a major manufacturer of calculators, bookkeeping machines, and transit listing machines for banks. By the 1950s the corporation moved quickly into the electronic computer industry with the acquisition of the ElectroData Corporation. It became a major supplier of mainframe equipment and systems, and by the 1980s had acquired the System Development Corporation and Memorex.

The records will be maintained and housed at the Charles Babbage Institute (CBI), a research center for the history of information processing located at the University of Minnesota. CBI was founded in 1978 to conduct research and preserve records related to the history of computing. Its archival collection contains extensive holdings of the computer industry and includes

Collection represents over 100 years of corporate history

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COCA-COLA MUSEUM

A video made for in-house use by Coca-Cola Company about its new museum in Atlanta, entitled "The World of Coca-Cola," was shown to the Business Archives meeting at the Philadelphia convention of the SAA by Phil Mooney, corporate archivist at the multinational company.

Some of you may have seen the article on the opening of the museum in *The Wall Street Journal* August 2, 1990 entitled "New 'Pop Art' Museum Promotes Coke." At that time the company anticipated a half-million visitors per year to the new museum located next to the Atlanta Underground. Yet Mooney reports over twice that number visited in the first year. Attendance averages 2,500 on weekdays and 4-6,000 on the weekends with a 45 minute wait. Tickets are sold on a reservation basis to regulate space but the museum is not intended to produce a profit.

According to Mooney, two decades of planning went into the museum, although final plans took 18 months and the costs were in the millions. The exhibit firm, Staples and Charles of Washington, D.C., designed the museum. Donna Lawrence Productions of Louisville, Kentucky, produced the videos used in the computer monitors in the museum.

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PROMOTING DIALOGUE

By Sharon Bishop Laist, Ford Foundation

In conversations with David Horn at Boston Edison, I recently discovered that I belong to a rare group, the 29th person who is both a Certified Archivist and a Certified Records Manager. That statistic alone says a lot and explains my presence on the ARMA Program and my topic: "Can Archivists and Records Managers Speak the Same Language?" My premise is that they should and must in order to deliver the services their institutions value while continuing to play a role in providing a "usable past" for historians. I must say that the climate was not all sunshine and flowers at ARMA. Many records managers are facing "right-sizing" within their institutions. They are looking for new ways to sell their programs to management; and creating an archives can be the value-added component they need.

I discussed appraisal as well as other common and uncommon terms familiar to both archivists and records managers. After all, is writing record schedules so different from archival appraisal? Archivists are hearing a lot about documentation strategies. An archivist cannot sit back and leave the documentation of history to chance. Ask yourself, who controls the past? Ira Penn, the editor of the *Records Management Quarterly* says it is the records managers who "have the key to history in our pockets." Archivists in large institutions cannot operate as though they are running a rare manuscript repository. They need to have accession policies built on established retention schedules.

I found a lot of interest on the part of records managers in the work of an archivist. They also were unclear and confused as to what an archivist does. As archivists we need to change our perceptions of records managers as "the devoted executioner of the obsolete document" and records managers also need to change some of their opinions of archivists as "stiff-necked and aloof." It behooves us to remember what Morris Radoff, the first President of ARMA said of the two disciplines, that they "have only one interest, namely the guardianship of records."

NEW APPROACHES TO BUSINESS RECORDS

The session by this name chaired by Patrick Nolan, of the Hagley Museum and Library, at Philadelphia was one which evoked many comments from the floor and afterward.

On one hand there was Steven L. Wright, new business archivist at the Cincinnati Historical Society (CHS), speaking on how that society has designed a program to appeal to local business to transfer historical records there.

On the other hand there was Bruce Weindruch, founder and CEO of the History Factory in Washington D.C., who subtitled his talk "Archival Consultants Coming Out of the Closet."

First the Cincinnati story. The historical society there is very aware that the story of Big Business will be told, as most corporate archivists work for big businesses. The focus of their new program is smaller businesses which might be ignored by historians of the future because their records are not being saved now. Since 85% of American workers are employed in small and medium-sized businesses, neglect of this collecting area would lead to the loss of a significant portion of labor history in this country.

CHS has prepared a brochure describing its program. On the records survey level, Wright assesses a business's historical records for \$35 an hour. The processing service costs \$175 per cubic foot for labor and material. Storage is free when access to the records is unrestricted; a \$16/foot/year fee is charged for storage of closed records. Corporate membership in the society, which includes Business History lectures, exhibits in the business lobbies and other activities, is a prerequisite for the program.

The historical society is not competing with for-profit records storage centers in this new business archives program. There are internships available through local colleges and volunteers are used. Wright finds that his best local contacts are the Cincinnati Society on World Affairs and the Japanese Society of Cincinnati, with its strong sense of history. He estimates that by the year 2000, over 200 businesses in Cincinnati will be 100 years old; this is the market CHS is cultivating now.

According to Wright, this program will lead to what all archivists want -- "Meaningful and non-accidental historical records." He called for an SAA task force to educate businessmen and women on the value of archives.

Weindruch, whose eleven-year-old firm did over \$2 million in business last year and received full-page coverage in *Forbes Magazine*, says his opening line when he first began the business in a recessionary year was, "We don't do books." He was trying to distinguish his market-oriented history service from the academic style, which is to come into a corporation to write a book.

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ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: HOW TO GET AT IT

603-964-9294

Cynthia Swank of Inlook Group gave a talk based on her research into organizational culture at the recent SAA meeting.

She suggests that historians begin with artifacts which convey the culture in physical terms. First look at the physical environment. Are doors open or closed? Is there an after-hours bar? Is there an art collection? What is it like? Is there unusual furniture? What do these physical factors convey about the corporation?

Next look at the symbols. Is there a portrait of the founder in every office? What symbols appear on newsletters and internal memos?

Consider the formal internal correspondence next. Is it frequent or rare? Does it go to everyone or only to a few? Is there a company newsletter? What is like? Finally, consider the stories told about the firm - - are they team-playing stories? Do they convey an interest in integrity?

Next, Swank suggests coming up with values derived from a close look at the artifacts. For one ad agency she studied, she came up with four key values: collaboration; consensus; curiosity; emotion. Values are often conveyed through the words repeated over and over in oral history interviews.

From the values, Swank comes up with underlying assumptions. For example, "People are good and trustworthy and active," or "Human relationships can be competitive in the short-run but still collaborative at best."

Of special interest to archivists is the collection of stories, on tape, when retired directors gather for reunions. Values and assumptions from the past are usually conveyed in those shared stories.

Journal as Model for Other Archival Collections?

The Lake County Museum in Lake County, Illinois, which houses the Curt Teich Postcard Collection mentioned in the last newsletter, produces *Image File*, a news journal based on that collection. Samples of these were distributed at the SAA convention in Philadelphia at a session entitled "Don't Blink, You'll Miss It!" about signs, symbols, artifacts and structures of the North American roadside. For samples of this journal to use as a model for your own business archives, contact the Collection at (312)526-8638.

BUSINESS ARCHIVES SECTION ANNUAL MEETING

By Elizabeth W. Adkins, Section Chair

We had a very stimulating and enjoyable Section meeting in Philadelphia, with 62 members in attendance. Ed Rider, outgoing chair, skillfully directed discussion on a number of issues. While we didn't get a chance to do so at the meeting, let me take this opportunity to thank Ed for his yeoman's efforts in managing Section activities for the past two years.

For those of you who could not attend the meeting, let me summarize the most important points of discussion:

* **Steering Committee:** the results of elections for the newly-formed Steering Committee were announced as follows: Jean Toll (one-year term); Steve Fietschier (two years); and Joan Gosnell (three years). In upcoming years, one new member will be voted in each year, for a three-year term.

* **Chair-elect:** Hal Keiner is our new chair-elect.

* **Business Archives Bibliography:** Karen Benedict reported on her efforts to assemble a bibliography of sources on business archives. Work on this project is nearly complete, and the bibliography should be published by

SAA very soon (in fact, by the time this newsletter is published, it may already be out).

* **Advocacy Brochure:** Linda Edgerly provided a report on the business archives advocacy brochure, a project which was first funded by the Kraft Foundation (now Kraft General Foods Foundation) in 1987. After some initial technical difficulties and production delays, Linda took over the project eighteen months ago. She completed the text over a year ago and has been guiding it through the review and revision process since then. The Publication Management Board approved the text and with the help of Donnie Crespo and Weyerhaeuser Company, graphics design and layout was underway at the time of the Section meeting. Printing was scheduled for late November and hopefully by the time this newsletter reaches Section members, each member will also receive one copy of the brochure. More copies of the brochure will be available from the SAA office for a small fee.

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Inquiry

Anyone with information on the location of the archives of the United Fruit Company is urged to contact Dr. Virginia Jenkins at 301/270-2069.

Annual Meeting, from page 3

* Business Archives Workshops: Phil Mooney led discussion of the Business Archives Workshop, a two-day preconference workshop which has not been offered by SAA for several years. Section members agreed that there is still a strong need for this educational opportunity, especially in light of the interest that may be generated by the

advocacy brochure. Hal Keiner pointed out that there is also a need for a more advanced workshop for business archivists who have been practicing for a number of years. Elizabeth Adkins and Hal Keiner agreed to follow up on these ideas with the SAA office.

* International Business Archives Forum: Because of the international focus of next year's annual SAA meeting (in Montreal, in close proximity to the International Congress on Archives, the Association of Canadian Archivists and the Association of Quebec Archivists), Edie Hedlin suggested the idea of coordinating an event involving corporate archivists from around the world, which Section members enthusiastically endorsed. The Steering Committee later discussed the idea of making the event a one-day forum with informal discussion topics and plenty of time for social interaction. Jean Toll has agreed to lead efforts to put such a meeting together.

We are all grateful for the work that has gone into the advocacy brochure and business archives bibliography. These projects have provided much of the focus of the Section's efforts over the last several years. Now with the revival of the Business Archives workshop and the institution of an international event, we have new and exciting challenges ahead. If you are interested in participating in these or any other projects, please let me know. We can always use another pair of helping hands!

New Approaches, from page 2

Banks were his first customers, as they were deregulated in 1980 and found off-site storage essential to save on costs. Then the banks began asking for a more active use of their archives as mergers and acquisitions began to heat up in the industry. As a result of this, Weindruch developed a line of products including answering queries from businesses in one hour turnaround on "real time."

He now has fifteen employees in the U.S. and the United Kingdom. His business has created thirty archives from scratch, maintains fourteen different business archival collections in Washington D.C., and started thirteen archives off-site for major businesses.

One compelling argument for good business archives, according to Weindruch, is that news directors are barraged with information and if a corporation gives them good information, including video news releases with history in it, they will use it. This gives the corporation good public relations--an edge on competitors. As an example, the History Factory produced information on the banks in

the San Francisco earthquake at the turn of the century at the time of the most recent earthquake and the media was so hungry for news that the History Factory was surrounded by TV camera trucks when no one could get in touch with people in San Francisco.

The History Factory follows archival procedures but accessibility, simplification, and cost effectiveness are key to its operation too.

Historian Philip B. Scranton, of Rutgers University in Camden, was asked to comment on business records. He said less history was needed on the Fortune 500 and more on ethnic, immigrant, women and minority businesses. Also more is needed on banks, especially in the 19th century, on wholesalers, and on hi-tech since the second World War.

When asked about ways in which the SAA could increase interaction between businesses and the association, Scranton suggested exhibits at trade association meetings--go to the source.

Business History on Hercules Corporation

Historical writers for the Winthrop Group of Boston, an historic archival consulting firm, produced a history of the Hercules Corporation of Delaware, a modern chemical company. The book is entitled,

Labors of a Modern Hercules.

Authors are Davis Dyer and David Sierlia.

Chapter one gives an overview of the corporation's 75-year-history since it spun-off from DuPont Chemical Company as a result of anti-trust action. Of special interest to business archivists are the oral histories used to write the book, as well as the many charts and graphs comparing company history to the history of the chemical market and to GNP. The use of maps to pinpoint company locations and of financial data to illustrate chapters is also interesting.

A very useful appendix, which not only lists oral history and video history interviews but all directors by years of service, includes a glossary of technical terms, footnotes, and a comprehensive index.

**Corporate
history covers
over 75 years**

Burroughs Historical Records, from page 1

records, computer manuals, photographs, programming language materials, and market reports. CBI's oral history collection has developed into the world's largest group of historical interviews on the development and application of electronic computers. Most of the records and all of the Burroughs collection are open to the public at CBI's facilities.

While the bulk of the collection reflects Burroughs' history during the past fifty years, it also includes early financial data, correspondence, and technical literature. A few letters originate from William S. Burroughs, one in which Burroughs notes three years before his death that if he could leave the company unattended for just three months, he would buy a small cottage and turn his attention to inventing more machines. Of interest to artifact collectors is the vast array of reports and pamphlets detailing the components of different calculators and listing machines. Also, the collection holds extant records of some early acquisitions of adding machine companies, such as Moon-Hopkins, Pike, and Universal.

Most of the collection is of

more recent vintage, including computer product literature, records from various departments and individuals, advertising, press releases, documents from annual meetings, patent files, publications, and audio-visual materials. Of particular interest are the photographs and films; there are prints and negatives of a wide range of computer products and company events, as well as films produced as early as the 1940s. A sample of subjects include: a Burroughs' launch computer from the 1960s, a prototype mail sorting machine, electronic computers, a Sensimatic accounting machine demonstration, the B 5000 computer, and Burroughs' military products from the late 1950s.

The Burroughs Corporation records will provide researchers with an excellent primary source from which to study the accounting machine industry, banking automation, the mainframe computer industry, technological development in the United States, and computing machine applications. While few American firms have taken any measures to preserve their history, Unisys has been a leader in this area. Its commitment to history, even during difficult times for the company, has ensured the availability and preservation of one of the most important historical resources relating to the history of computing.

Coca-Cola, from page 1

While the museum utilizes 1,200 artifacts from the archives, all originals; this represents only 20% of the total archival holdings. Questions from consumers for the archivist have doubled as a result of the new museum. There has also been more internal recognition and use of the museum.

The *Wall Street Journal* reporter also feels that some mention ought to be made in the museum to rival Pepsi-Cola, which had a big impact on the direction of Coca-Cola's history as its greatest competitor.

For archivists concerned about light sensitivity issues for the artifacts used in the museum, they will be happy to know that Smithsonian Institution lighting experts were consulted.

Mooney likes the comment made by one visitor that the museum was more relevant to him than an art museum with a bunch of Van Goghs on the walls. Business archivists can contact Mooney to borrow the video shown at the meeting to learn more about this venture in archival/business museum history.

New Look For Newsletter

In case you haven't noticed, the Business Archives Newsletter has experienced some changes since it was last distributed. April Dougal, Manuscript Processor at the University of Toledo's Ward M. Canaday Center, began contributing to the layout of the bi-annual newsletter in September.

A 1990 graduate of Bowling Green State University's Public History program, Ms. Dougal interned with the Library of Congress's Office of Interpretive Programs in 1989. She has been with the Canaday Center since July 1990, where she is responsible for local history collections, including the archives of the Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Company.

Direct any "aesthetic" questions, comments, or criticisms to: April Dougal; Ward M. Canaday Center, Carlson Library; University of Toledo; Toledo, Ohio, 43606; or phone 419/537-4550.

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Book of Illustrated Insurance Signs

After ten years of work, the Fire Mark Circle of the Americas has produced *Signs of Business*, a lavish hardbound illustrated history of insurance signs and their origins. There are nearly 1200 signs illustrated, of which over 100 are in color. These signs represent more than 400 companies.

Contact Glenn Hartley, Sr., 2859 Marlin Drive, Chamblee, Georgia 30314 to order a single copy at \$49.95.

Chase Manhattan Bank Booklet

Copies of a booklet produced in August 1990 by Chase Manhattan Bank entitled "Guide to Information Services: The Corporate Library and Archives" were distributed at the SAA Business Meeting in Philadelphia.

The description of holdings and the layout and design of the archival section are of particular interest as a model for archivists. For more information, contact the archives at (212) 552-8332.

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