

# CONGRESSIONAL PAPERS ROUNDTABLE

Preconference newsletter

September 1991

**ROUNDTABLE MEETING    FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 27    10:30 AM**

## **WHAT'S NEW**

Following routine business and announcements, the program will be a discussion of what is new and innovative at repositories across the country: accessions, collections processed, exhibits, fundraising, appraisal, and research use. It will begin with short presentations by

### **Connell Gallagher, University of Vermont**

The papers of Senator George Aiken: the focus of a university course

### **Rebecca Johnson, University of Delaware**

Processing the papers of Senator John Williams: a temporary job becomes permanent

### **Bill Meneray, Tulane University**

The papers of Hale and Lindy Boggs: successful fundraising and donor relations

### **John Caldwell, Carl Albert Center**

Archives on the road: the exhibit trail across Oklahoma

All roundtable members are then invited to comment and share their own experiences.

### **Also on the agenda better communications within the roundtable.**

While little material for a newsletter seems to be generated each year, there remains a great need for roundtable members, individually and collectively, to be in touch with each other on a variety of matters. What are our alternatives to supplement the newsletter? Are enough people on an electronic mail system to make such use of it feasible? How do you feel? If you are not going to be in Philadelphia and have some thoughts or suggestions to offer, contact Bob Blesse or Cynthia Miller.

**PROGRAM ERROR: The Manuscripts Repositories Section meeting is 8:00-10:00 on Friday, not 8:00 to noon. It will not conflict with the Roundtable meeting.**

The session on the **Documentation of Congress** is scheduled for Saturday, September 28, at 1:15 pm.

The roundtable strives to keep its mailing list up to date. Please send changes of addresses to Cynthia Pease Miller, Assistant Historian, U.S. House of Representatives, 138 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.

**Mary Boccaccio** is analyzing the results of her survey and will report to the roundtable in a later issue of the newsletter.

The papers of Senator John Williams at the University of Delaware are now open for research use. An excellent guide to the collection is available. Contact **Rebecca Johnson** at the university (302-451-6293) for a copy.

#### Steering Committee Members

Bob Blesse, University of Nevada at Reno

Mary Boccaccio, East Carolina University

John Caldwell, Carl Albert Center

Carla Kemp, University of Florida

Cynthia Pease Miller, Office of the Historian, U.S. House of Representatives

Karen Paul, U.S. Senate Historical Office

The fall meeting of the **New England Archivists**, a joint meeting with the New England Archivists of Religious Institutions, will be November 1 and 2 at the University of Vermont in Burlington. For further information contact Jeff Marshall, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405 (802-656-2596).

Mary Boccaccio has prepared a survey asking what people are doing with Congressional collections. Please fill out the survey form and return it to Mary.

Connell Gallagher's paper from last year is to be published shortly in *The Midwestern Archivist*.

Bob Blesse reported on a meeting of chairs of roundtables and sections with a representative of Council. They were asked to think about scheduling, i.e. whether it was better to schedule many sections all at once as at present opposite one another or whether they should be scheduled somewhat randomly at the same time as sessions. There was agreement that not having the meetings compete with lunch was an improvement and that two hours was the right amount of time. The meetings were thought to be very important for networking, often more valuable than individual sessions. The possibility of evening or early morning meetings was suggested. There was no consensus on the original

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Minutes - 31 August 1990

Chair Bob Blesse convened the roundtable at 10:36 a.m. with some 45 persons in attendance during the two hour meeting.

A current mailing list was circulated for corrections. Members were asked to add E-mail and fax numbers as appropriate. Members also checked if they took one of the survey forms. Those not in attendance should send Cynthia Pease Miller E-mail and fax numbers; Mary Boccaccio will be sending surveys to those not in attendance.

Cynthia Pease Miller talked about the newsletter and put in a plea for articles. She can send out up to six pages per issue, so the current newsletter could be doubled in size. Moreover, we can send out three issues per year, which is one more than was circulated in 1989-1990. She also distributed an up-date to the bibliography on Congress; you can write her for a copy if you did not get one.

The Guide to Research Collections of Members of the House is now on-line through the Member Information Network. This means the guide information can be accessed by members in their offices, including district offices which may be more convenient to us, and at the Library of Congress. Cynthia is updating changes as they come to her, so if you want to make changes in your current entries or add new ones, please send her the information now. She is conducting a special telephone survey of New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania repositories which seem to have underresponded to the guide. She also now has a list of territorial delegates (some 165) that those in former territories may want to report.

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question of whether to schedule roundtable/section meetings opposite sessions, but no one thought the possibility should be dismissed out of hand.

Bob said that roundtables operated pretty much on their own; structure was up to the group as long as 20 members wanted to be a part of the roundtable.

Karen Paul reported on two pieces of legislation (H.R. 5241 and H.R. 5466) which deal with Treasury Appropriations that would set up a Center for Legislative Archives at NARA with a Director of Legislative Records at the GS-16 level. The bill would also create an advisory committee on the records of Congress.

Karen is working on an update of the guide to collections on United States Senators by means of a survey. She is also revising the Records Management Handbook. Senator Byrd is working on volume four of the history of the Senate which will focus on first-hand accounts of the institution. If you have any in your collections, please advise Karen.

Louisa Bowen noted that the Program Committee encourages proposals for next year's program although no more weight will be given to proposals from a section/roundtable than that for an individual's suggestion.

The Roundtable will have office hours at 12:30 in Booth 46 following the meeting at which time program proposals will be entertained.

The remainder of the meeting was given over to a report on the Congressional Documentation Project since the roundtable had no session scheduled in the program this year. Karen Paul reported that six teams had been working on writing definitions of the functions of congress which are:

1. Legislative
2. Representational
3. Political
4. External [Think Tanks/Quasi-Legislative bodies]
5. Administrative
6. Executive-Congressional Relations

Karen Paul presented the report on the Legislative function which defined the function's parts and indicated possible sources of documentation for each part (for instance, she had identified a number of legislative histories which have been prepared by G.A.O.). In general she said there were adequate resources for this function's documentation.

Faye Phillips described the Representational function and noted such files as constituent mail, casework, legislative/pressure

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mail. The real need, she thought, was for help for new offices on the hill and in closing offices. She thought state-by-state advisory committees and surveys of repositories and offices would be of use. There is a need for user studies to determine if anyone is using the types of files described in this function.

Sheryl Vogt, Herb Hartsook and John Caldwell reported on the political function. A handout indicated six areas for study: candidate recruitment; campaigns; political party activity at all levels of government; political action committee activities; executive branch activities in support of congressional politics and party platforms; activities of Congress relating to politics. The team proceeded to survey (see the Political Function Questionnaire attached to the team's report) some political scientists regarding the completeness of this functional definition. Several possible changes have been suggested and the team will next approach some former and current congressional staff for their thoughts. In general the team concluded that documentation for campaigns was good but that PACs were poorly documented.

Gary Hoag described the External Function which he redefined as a Congressional Membership Organization. He said there are Legislative Service Organizations (LSOs) which utilize clerk hire funds from congressional offices to operate, Political Party Policy Committees which rely on budgeted funds and Caucuses. The degree of documentation for each of these varies widely.

Cynthia Pease Miller handed out a report on the Administrative Function which dealt with the major areas of rules and procedures (elections, attendance, rules and ethics) and administrative offices (clerk, doorkeeper, sergeant at arms in the House; secretary and sergeant at arms in the Senate). She focused on the role of the National Archives in overseeing the records of this administrative function.

Claudia Anderson reported that in the area of Executive-Congressional relations there was a need for more oral history and for a member's office representative (especially in the case of the leadership) from receiving repositories. More study is needed in the area of repository differences and collection development considerations.

Finally, Bob Blesse noted that he and two others will be leaving the Steering Committee. There are three vacancies, including the chair. If anyone wants to get involved in the section, now is the chance. You can write to or talk to any member of the Steering Committee.