



## SAA BUSINESS ARCHIVES NEWSLETTER

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

### REACHING OUT FOR SURVIVAL: THE ROYAL BANK EXPERIENCE

*by Gordon Rabchuk, Corporate Archivist, Royal Bank of Canada*

Perhaps the most obvious reason why business archivists have long remained on the margin of poverty is the tendency of some of them to view their function as unique and, therefore, indispensable. Unfortunately, this dangerous pursuit of special status has isolated business archives from the daily on-goings of corporate life and has estranged its archivists from their corporate hosts.

While many of us have welcomed the transition from academic convocation to business suit, we have unwittingly participated in the planning of our own demise with our scholarly approach to selling archives. If the future of business archives are indeed at stake, we have only ourselves to blame.

Lamenting about inherent corporate hostility towards history is certainly not the solution. Instead, we should look inward and be more critical of our marketing campaigns which have unwisely presented archives as the undisputed foundation for higher learning. If we had kept our ear to the ground, we would have recognized that the intrinsic value of business archives can only be appreciated by focusing on its ability to support the larger corporate mission. An appropriate response would have us canvassing the opinions of others within the organization whose particular needs and expectations would serve as the foundation for the development of meaningful products and services.

*(continued on pg. 8)*

#### DEBORAH SHEA DEPARTS AS EDITOR

The newsletter's past editor has moved on to less hectic things. Rumors about her institutionalization are completely unfounded, as is the story about her going under deep cover to escape the hitman contracted by a potential contributor she badgered one too many times.

No, Deborah has returned to those halcyon days when she only had to worry about making a living in the archival world. Thanks Debbie, for a job done diligently and well.

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## SANS SERIF

The summer issue of the SAA's *Archival Outlook* revives the search for a patron saint for archivists. A case for Saint Sunniva, a princess from mid-tenth century Ireland is persuasively made.

As much as it pains me to do so - my maternal grandparents were born on the Emerald Isle - I feel bound to point out that perhaps there is a better figure for us business types to call upon in our hour of need. Yes, I'm talking about none other than Malachi Postelthwayte.

Never heard of him? There you go - already he's a better fit than an Irish princess for those of us who labor alone and unrecognized in the corporate basement.

According to Meyer Fishbein, an inquiring archival mind from Baltimore, Malachi was an 18th-century English mercantilist who compiled a massive business encyclopedia. Under his entry for business college, he put forth the notion that the papers of leading businessmen ought to be preserved so that younger generations could learn from the methods of their elders.

Naturally, he didn't live to see his suggestion come to fruition - does this guy fit us like a glove or what?

### **Business Archivist Award?**

David Horn, in an interesting aside to his 'Breaking the Rules' column, raises the question of why there isn't an annual award for business archivists. He notes it would be easy to find people eligible for recognition by their peers for excellence - people who have demonstrated knowledge of their company and industry, who have built successful programs out of nothing, who serve the company and research community equally well, and who actively participate in professional organizations.

Hmmmm ... the Postelthwayte Award?

- Paul

## BREAKING THE RULES

*(This is the first of a series of guest-authored columns about cherished archival principles that we bend or break every day to meet the needs of our institutions. They are meant to stimulate discussion, so don't hesitate to respond - to ME, not the author! Or if you have confession to get off your chest, you can even write a cathartic column of your own; again, contact me. Ed.)*

*by David Horn, C.A., C.R.M.*

Education may not seem like an appropriate topic for this column, but in fact it has been a controversial issue in the SAA for many years. The point of conflict is this: Can an archivist trained by workshops be considered fully qualified?

What triggered this article was my attendance at the recent SAA Core Session on Education at the Indianapolis meeting where this question reemerged once again. The particular cause of my interest at this time was the expression by a speaker of a point of view that I had heard about from time to time but had never directly

**Fully qualified archivists *must* have completed a master's degree program with archival courses?**

encountered.

This position is roughly as follows: archival materials can be handled properly only by fully qualified archivists; fully qualified archivists must have completed a master's degree program with archival courses, preferably along the lines set forth in the recent guidelines for a Master's in Archival Studies program (MAS); no one who does not meet these qualifications should try to administer archives in any way.

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## FROM THE CHAIR

by Jean Toll, General Mills, Inc.

Minnesota archivists are relaxing somewhat after an extremely successful Midwest Archives Conference held in St. Paul in early October. Our current chair-elect, Liz Holum Johnson, who co-chaired the Local Arrangements Committee has 'retired' to her own shop after providing yeoman efforts to launch this fine event. At that session, I participated in a panel discussion entitled "View from the Edge: Collecting 21st Century Business Records." It's a topic I feel that is of particular importance for business archivists at large.

The session was chaired by Jim Fogerty of the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS), and included an intellectual property attorney from 3M ( a large Minnesota corporation which has recently decided to donate its records to MHS), and a history professor from the University of Minnesota. The three speakers addressed the issues that face business records in the coming century.

The subject of collecting and using business records is a major issue, both inside corporations and externally. I feel it is crucial that we as archivists keep an ongoing dialogue with company attorneys, historians, and each other if we are to effectively manage the collection, protection, and use of business records in the 21st century. Towards this end, our section will be working on a session proposal along these lines for SAA 1996.

### **Progress**

We can all be pleased that our section continues to move forward, improving on

projects begun by our predecessors as well as breaking new ground. Frank Muse and Ellen Gartrell are working on an expanded Business Archives Directory, and Hal Keiner is revamping the Basic Business Archives Manual. In addition, the one-day pre-conference workshop held in Indianapolis, "Building the Business Archives", was a first in what we hope will be a continuing effort to support experienced archivists.

Greg Hunter, associate professor at Long Island University, guided the development of this workshop and set the tone and the direction of discussions by alluding to some recent articles in the July/August 1994 *Harvard Business Review*, including "Competing for the Future" which challenged management to begin looking at future opportunities rather than cost savings. The other article entitled "The Theory

of the Business - The Right Things are Being Done Fruitlessly" by Peter Drucker (September/October 1994), concludes that management theory has to adjust to the changing business

environment because historically transmitted assumptions are no longer valid. His challenge to workshop participants? "How do we make ourselves and our archives part of our company's opportunities?"

More than anything else, the shared ideas and experiences that the participants gained from the workshop helped clarify and further define their own programs' directions and challenges.

### **Upcoming**

The following regional organizations will be contacted to see whether they have an interest in using the Indianapolis workshop materials in conjunction with their own conferences: Mid-Atlantic Region Archives Conference, Society of Southwest Archives, and Archives Roundtable/NY. If you know of other groups  
*(continued. on pg. 16)*

*I feel it is crucial that we as archivists keep an ongoing dialogue with company attorneys, historians, and each other if we are to effectively manage the collection, protection, and use of business records in the 21st century.*

## ELECTRONIC OUTREACH IN THE ARCHIVES: *Bringing Them in at Digital Equipment Corporation*

by Craig G. St. Clair, Corporate Archivist,  
Digital Equipment Corporation

Suppose you opened an archives and nobody came. An archives can have the best cataloguing and preservation plan, the best storage facilities, the most adept and enlightened staff - but without researchers it is in trouble.

This is particularly true in a business environment, where the archives' existence depends on continually demonstrating a healthy number of service requests. Service, the concept of delivering accurate information in a timely fashion to in-house clients so they can do their jobs, is critical to the archives' mission. Luckily, employees are hungry for information that will make their jobs easier. If you let them know you are there, they will come.

The Digital Corporate Archives became fully operational in 1994. With the addition of permanent staff and a relocation to permanent facilities, the task of setting up a corporate archives began to revolve around day-to-day functions: appraisal, accessioning, arrangement, description, cataloging and filling requests for information. Letting employees know that the archives was open for business, that it was ready to accept new

material and eager to distribute information, was a primary goal.

How do you communicate to 73,800 employees scattered in over 800 sales offices, manufacturing plants and engineering facilities around the world? To a great extent, the answer lies in Digital's huge computer network, a system linking the corporate headquarters in Maynard, Massachusetts to company facilities from Syracuse to Singapore to Stockholm.

### ***Building an Electronic Mousetrap***

Digital employees receive company information via two electronic vehicles: LIVE

WIRE, an on-line news and information service about Digital that is updated daily, and Reader's Choice, an on-line subscription service that delivers a variety of publications and information to

**How do you communicate to 73,800 employees scattered in over 800 sales offices, manufacturing plants and engineering facilities around the world?**

employees based upon individual employee profiles. While LIVE WIRE acts as an information bulletin board that can be consulted by any employee at will, Reader's Choice automatically distributes information to employees.

Both systems are highly effective in reaching employees. Over one million pages of LIVE WIRE are accessed by employees each month. Reader's Choice can send messages to all Digital employees, or can target a specific population based on managerial level, geographic region, or area of interest.

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In June the Digital Archives began to send electronic messages on a quarterly basis to company employees world-wide. To avoid repetition, the messages carry different themes which highlight various areas of archival activity and interest. The first message outlined the archives collection policy, giving employees a general sense of the types of records the archives collects and urging employees to contact the archives about records they are holding.

The second message emphasized that the archives is more than just the repository for older, non-current records - 'ancient history' - and urged employees to contact the archives if they regularly produce reports, periodicals or publications that have long-term value.

Other electronic mailings planned for the next year include brief descriptions of recently processed collections which are now available for research, highlights of rare or unusual materials discovered

by the archives, suggestions and examples on how to best use the archives' collections, and case histories of how archival materials have contributed to major company projects.

The electronic mailing campaign is an unqualified success. The messages have prompted numerous offers of rich collections and information requests from a variety of company projects. Outreach like this brings responses from both 'unofficial' company historians and employees who are genuinely interested in the archives' function. Often, employees have collected materials for years and are eager to contribute to the company's official repository for historic documentation. These individuals have a sense of the company's past, an appreciation of its accomplishments, and a clear sense of how

their work fits into the company's overall operations.

#### ***Reaching Out Via the On-Line Catalog***

No discussion of electronic outreach at the Digital archives would be complete without a mention of the recently upgraded on-line catalog for the Digital Library Network. The catalog is the archives' primary finding aid, providing access to processed collections via MARC format records.

In a larger sense, the on-line catalog is the archives' most powerful and consistent form of electronic outreach. The catalog lists the holdings of six Digital reference libraries, the lending library, and the Corporate Archives, and brings this information directly to the employees' desktop via a client-server based network.

The result is a one-stop shopping spree of information. Searches on any one topic will turn up materials held by the various Digital libraries and the Corporate Archives. Future plans call for

adding the holdings of company research libraries in England and France. The idea is to integrate as many of Digital's information resources as possible in one union catalog. This will allow employees to make connections for information in repositories they would not initially consider.

The catalog is open to all Digital employees but access restrictions still apply to archival materials listed on-line. Employees must apply to the archivist for access to the actual collections.

#### ***Limitations: Who Doesn't it Reach?***

While electronic outreach is extremely effective in quickly reaching the employee population, it has its limitations. The archives  
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**Sending 'archival advertising' to tens of thousands of employees in an instant can scratch an archivist's creative itch and supply a rush of technological power.**

## ESSENTIAL SERVICES AS OUTREACH

### *Confessions of a Catholic Diocesan Archivist*

by John Treanor, Archives & Records Center,  
Archdiocese of Chicago

When archivists hear the word 'outreach,' they immediately conjure up images of exhibits, newsletters, educational programs, and other projects designed to increase program visibility and client contacts. Traditional archival education has taught that if you provide outreach programs, your client base will increase; this increase will provide justification for increased resources and mitigate against budget cutbacks.

Where this traditional formula falls short however, is in the realm of corporate archives. Unlike traditional archives (historical societies, government repositories) whose charters and enabling legislation call for making records available to citizens, corporate archives have no mandate to serve the public or even make records available to researchers outside the company structure. Corporate archives exist primarily to serve the corporate center - and by definition its goals are different than those of repositories that serve the public. Therefore the word outreach should conjure up a different image to the corporate archivist.

While the traditional notions of outreach should not be discarded, it is crucially important for the corporate archivist to recognize the concept of "essential service." For the corporate archives to be successful, the

services it supplies must be essential to the day-to-day operation of the organization. Although essential services will vary according to the needs of individual corporations, one of the most predominate forms is records management. The Catholic Diocesan Archives stand as a good example of the impact the assumption of an essential service like records management can have on an archives.

#### ***Both Government and Corporate Models***

While Diocesan Archives serve a religious organization, they operate under mandates found in both government and corporate models. The Catholic Church throughout the world operates within the guidelines of codified laws called Canon Law. Canon Law provides a framework for how the faithful are governed, issues are adjudicated, and Catholic Dioceses are structured. All Dioceses are mandated by Canon Law to have an archives. Since the Catholic Church has its own enabling legislation and its own judicial system, it is

easy to see where the government model applies.

In addition, all Catholic Dioceses in the United States are incorporated in one form or another as not-for-profit corporations. With

administrative centers (chanceries or pastoral centers) and branch offices (parishes, hospitals, social service programs), the structures are very similar to corporate models found throughout American business.

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**OUTREACH: St.Clair**  
(continued from pg. 5)

cannot solely depend on electronic messages to build collections or promote research, for ultimately the success of the company-wide advertisement-style approach still relies on attracting the employees interest and sparking individual initiative.

With this method, there are always nagging questions. Who did not remember to respond, or thought their material was unsuitable? How can you tell if the archives is capturing all the information which is potentially valuable? It should be made clear that this type of outreach is no substitute for a comprehensive accession program tied to records management and employee education via presentations, publications, and institutionalized procedures.

Still, what these electronic messages lack in fail-safe consistency they more than make up in quick and gratifying results. Sending 'archival advertising' to tens of thousands of employees in an instant can scratch an archivist's creative itch and supply a rush of technological power. And in the end, it warms any archivist's heart to hear an employee say, "I have been collecting this information for years; now I know where to send it so it will be safe." Or, "I have been looking for this information for months." Or simply, "I'm sure glad you're here."



**Very funny, Scotty. Now beam my clothes down. Scotty? ... Scotty??**

**OUTREACH: Rabchuk**  
(from pg. 1)

Outreach initiatives which break down the traditional barriers by encouraging dialogue between the archives and its targeted audience are essential if the former is to transform itself into a vital corporate function.

Unfortunately many of us have only embraced outreach as we lay on our professional deathbeds. Although the life of the Royal Bank's archives has never been in serious doubt, we too could have easily expired had we not changed old habits.

**Old Habits**

Since its inception in 1977, Royal Bank's archives had effectively fulfilled its conventional mandate: to preserve the bank's history with secondary emphasis on corporate image enhancing historical displays. For close to a decade the archives maintained this steady, but very unimaginative course. However, by 1986, the department had shown little signs of maturity amidst a rapidly changing corporate environment with more sophisticated information demands and heightened expectations.

Analysis of our core activity statistics confirmed a passive approach to business development and more alarming, a niche market status. Given the thrust of existing evidence, there was little doubt that the archives could easily be swept away by a major corporate house cleaning. Our whole way of thinking, including the way in which we approached our clients, had to be retooled.

**Retooling**

As a first step towards broadening support, we attacked our most pressing and fundamental problem, our poor image. According to clients, our proficiencies in managing and disseminating (continued on next page)



information were hardly innovative. We were compelled to give this issue top consideration.

In the past, the quality of research delivered and the turn around time when responding to queries had suffered due to our unbending commitment to traditional archival theory and practice. The limitations imposed by our manual finding aids frequently tested the patience of even our loyal supporters whose subject-related queries required lengthy and exhaustive searches.

Equally damaging were the dreadful comparisons with other information managing departments whose superior turn-around time to client queries exposed our unintentional - but nonetheless blatant - disregard for quality customer service.

We addressed this very issue through the creation of on-line databases which greatly enhanced the quality of service provided to customers by embellishing the descriptive access to the information. To spread the word, we counted heavily on the endorsements of clients whose satisfaction with our revamped reference service would hopefully be passed on to other Royal Bankers. There is no greater endorsement than the kind words of a satisfied client.

***Right Place, Right Time, Right Attitude***

Although an important and even integral part of our raison d'être, the automation of our search and retrieval procedures represented only one of several thrusts in our image-building campaign. The bank's upcoming 125th anniversary and its related activities drew heavily upon the archives' resources and expertise. For at least a half year before, and certainly during the entire anniversary year, record numbers of Royal Bankers sought our advice in their search for new twists on how to infuse history into product-based advertising and various internal publications.

Although the bank's history was written by a consulting historian, the archives staff played a dominant role in its planning, production, and final distribution. A strong and lasting friendship was struck with the historian whose humble acceptance of praise for a job well done always included his sincere endorsement of the archives for its support and its progressive approach to information management and customer service. Thankfully, the historian's circle of friends within the bank - many of which belonged to senior management - were not spared from his sermons on the benefits of our archives!

***The Morning After***

But the euphoria brought on by our sudden popularity was easily deflated by the reality

that many of our new contacts were simply victims of circumstance. Few possessed any personal appreciation for history or archives, and collectively this body of unbelievers posed new mountains for us to scale. Our particular problem was how to maintain momentum once the bustle of the 125th

celebrations had died.

We worked to de-emphasize the myth that archives serve a one-dimensional purpose as the gatekeeper of the organization's history by successfully lobbying to expand our mandate to reflect our sensitivity to topical bank issues. Believing that records management has never been more important than it is today given the ever-increasing litigious nature of society, we proposed to tighten current records management guidelines and to actively solicit compliance with new instructions by meeting with Royal Bankers from all departments. With the creation of a cache of legal and fiscal documents, the bank was in a better position to build a defense if ever challenged.

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**Products and services that reflect what archivists think their clients should desire rather than what clients know they want invites professional suicide.**

In addition, by dividing the Bank into four groups, the archives staff adopted a relationship management approach whereby they were responsible for identifying contact officers from each respective department and meeting with them on a regular basis. The cementing of new and permanent relationships required input from clients about how we could better serve their information needs.

Our intrusion into the daily lives of Royal Bankers obviously had to be sanctioned by executive approval. A formal directive was circulated which naturally drew attention to the archives' services but, more specifically, invited bank-wide cooperation to strengthen the bank's memory with the introduction of tightened records management guidelines. However, the long-term effectiveness of such directives quickly fade if the foot soldiers have not been convinced of the worthiness of the initiative, so our challenge continues.

#### ***New Opportunities***

The recent crumbling of the traditional four pillars of banking sanctioned the marriage of banks and trust companies, brokerage firms, and in the not-too-distant future, insurance companies. Following the bank's footsteps, we aggressively pursued the opportunity to participate in the integration process which brought a well-respected Canadian trust company into the Royal Bank fold. Our goal was singular: we lobbied for approval to provide full archival services to the new acquisition. This experience required us to quickly adapt to a new culture whereby relationships would be won or lost depending on our abilities to meet the expectations of new family members.

#### ***A Commitment to Listen***

If there is one common attribute which links our modest rise from the 'back room' to a more comfortable standing within the organization, it was our unyielding determination to provide the best possible service to our clients. Accolades will certainly follow if clients feel

that you have done your very best to satisfy their requirements.

When we are dealing with an internal audience, as most business archives do, there is little time or need for extensive verbal presentations on the benefits of archives. Most business types prefer to see results before committing their allegiance, and products and services that reflect what archivists think their clients should desire rather than what clients know they want invites professional suicide.

An astute business archivist has to build an image not necessarily from the top down, but more importantly from the bottom up. The importance of creating and maintaining grass roots support for the archives requires a commitment to listen and react to clients' ever-changing needs. Nothing else really matters.



#### **Wish I'd seen the picture ...**

##### *Photo caption from the New York Times*

It wasn't until after a visitor to the Como Zoo in St. Paul snapped this shot of Casey, a gorilla, that she realized that the wall he had just climbed had been the last thing separating him from freedom.

- from Internet

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#### **Notable Quote #77**

"Give me a good general and a good archivist and we'll win this war!"

- Abraham Lincoln, June 1863

## MINUTES: INDIANAPOLIS

### SAA BUSINESS ARCHIVES SECTION ANNUAL MEETING, September 9, 1994 By Deborah Shea, *The Winthrop Group, Inc.*

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA -- The section's annual meeting was attended by 50 section members and 10 non-members. Steve Gietschier, *Sporting News*, outgoing section chair, called the meeting to order and had members introduce themselves. He also suggested that members indicate whether or not they had access to Internet. More than 60 percent of the attendees said they had or would soon have Internet access.

#### SAA Institutional Evaluation and Development Committee

Mary Jo Pugh, *consultant*, informed section members that the committee is seeking input as to how it can assist institutions with self-evaluation. Guidelines for self-evaluation had been published in the March, 1994 *Archival Outlook*, and a brochure on the topic is being developed. Ms. Pugh asked attendees if data about business archives would be useful to include in the brochure, and what documents or tools in particular are needed by business archivists. This list of documents and tools could be published by SAA.

Ms. Pugh also wanted to know if site visits should be scheduled or if some form of accreditation should be devised as part of the self-evaluation process. In addition, she asked what services does SAA need to provide to make archival institutions stronger. (*Comments should be forwarded to Jean Toll, General Mills, incoming section chair, so that a statement concerning section needs could be prepared for the committee.*)

In response, Frank Muse, *CoreStates*, suggested something should be devised to assist management in judging the effectiveness of an

archives program. Gordon Rabchuk, *Royal Bank of Canada*, added that products and services should be based on what the client or company wants. Hal Keiner, *CIGNA*, pointed out the difficulty in developing one set of guidelines to encompass all issues pertaining to an archives. Ensuing discussion suggested that the effectiveness of the archival program should be judged in relation to the program's mission statement.

#### Task Force on Sections and Roundtables

Beth Yakel, Council liaison, indicated that the task force report is near completion. Created in 1992 after the SAA annual meeting, the task force has spent the past year collecting data and interviewing section chairs. Yakel requested that section members inform her of problems and questions that they would like addressed at SAA Council. She also noted that there is a need to strengthen the sections.

#### Business Archives Directory

Frank Muse reported that the update to the *Directory of Business Archives in the US and Canada* has been compiled on his office computer using the GENCAT program. He anticipates completing the directory early next year. He would like to include in the update telefax numbers, e-mail addresses, and information about software systems. Data about software will be contained in an appendix. To obtain the additional information a questionnaire will be sent to the membership in September. Muse would like to put the directory on the Internet and have some sort of message center to collect updates.

#### Program Committee for 1995 SAA Meeting

Clive Smith, *World Bank*, announced that as of yet, no theme for the 1995 Annual Meeting has been determined. He is seeking "reasonably concrete" proposals by early October. For the 1994 meeting, there were five to six sessions related to business archives. Smith indicated that the program committee has already met to brainstorm ideas for sessions.

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## Newsletter

The Chair was kind enough to recognize Deborah Shea for past work on the section newsletter (*embarrassed thanks from this reporter*) and to thank also Paul Lasewicz, the new newsletter editor, for agreeing to take on the task.

## Election of Officers

The Steering Committee selected two candidates for office during a teleconference; they also decided that the election would be uncontested. Jean Toll received 15 nominations from the Committee and the membership. Attendees confirmed the candidates, and the results are as follows: Chair Elect - Liz Holum Johnson, *HB Fuller Co.*; Steering Committee Three-Year Term - Ellen Gartrell, *Duke University*. This will be Gartrell's second year on the Committee, as she has just finished serving the last year of Joan Gosnell's term.

The other officers are: Chair - Jean Toll; Past Chair - Steve Gietschier; Steering Committee - Jean Hrichus, *Chase Manhattan Bank*, beginning second year of her term, and Clive Smith, beginning the last year of his.

## New Business

Becky Haglund Tousey, *Kraft General Foods*, announced that Jane Kenamore, SAA Education Officer, is seeking proposals for pre-conference workshops.

Ellen Gartrell announced the publication of a report on the advertising conference held last year. The report, "Advertising in America: Using its Past, Enriching its Future", and a brochure describing the Center for Sales, Advertising, and Marketing History at Duke were distributed at the session.

Sue Box, *Phillips Petroleum*, sought advice regarding a survey she received from a consulting firm. She did not respond to it because she felt the information sought was proprietary.

Tousey volunteered that Kraft is in the process of establishing benchmarks to help strengthen its program, and may be sending out a survey to help determine what functions other

companies are doing well. Tousey stressed however, that the Kraft survey would only contain questions that Kraft themselves would be willing to answer, and expressed the belief that this was information sharing among archivists as opposed to a survey prepared by a consultant.

The point was raised that because of differing circumstances among businesses, bench marking may be difficult if not dangerous.

David Moltke-Hansen, *University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill*, stated that he responds to surveys if the information: will be useful; will be available to others or assist his peers; or will benefit another repository. He also responds to surveys prepared by graduate students.

Jean Hrichus added that she would share information with a consulting firm provided she could get the same kind of information back; however, she would take issue with being sent a survey by a for-profit company.

"Business Archives in Japan", Karen Benedict, *Winthrop Group*

Benedict, the guest speaker, has visited Japan on three occasions, most recently last year when she spent six months in Kyoto. During her visits she encountered no records managers and few professional archivists, but many archives. While she observed some "unique" recordskeeping practices during her travels, she found that there was no universally accepted system for preserving and maintaining archival records, and formal education and training for archivists was at a rudimentary level.

In brief, since the mid-19th century, each governmental agency has been responsible for preserving its own records. By 1970, over 100 years later, there were only 15 government and regional archives in Japan. Since the passage of the Public Archives Law in 1987 establishing the National and Prefectural Archives, over 45 governmental archives have been created.

The standard practice for maintaining records (or scrolls) in the traditional archives was to  
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maintain them until an "official" organization history was published, and then discard the majority. Any records that were left were bound. In the aftermath of World War Two, many records were either burned or recycled.

The creation of the Ministry of Education in 1951 spurred some interest in private records. However, like the government model, the records are kept until an institutional history is published. In 1952, the Ministry began offering three-day workshops in archival techniques, but it wasn't until 1985 that a professional association for archivists was formed. In Benedict's opinion, businesses are only beginning to understand that archivists are not bureaucrats.

While many businesses believe that amassing information is important, the system is totally decentralized - again following the governmental model. Each department is responsible for collecting its own information, and there is little sharing with other departments. The records are discarded after the corporate history is prepared. This history is generally written by either a consultant or a committee of employees - including those responsible for collecting the records. According to government statistics, more than 13,000 business histories have been published by Japanese companies.

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## **BREAKING THE RULES: HORN**

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In my experience, this view has been a persistent and continuing train of thought in the SAA. Since business archivists, like other archivists, are not likely to have completed graduate courses in archival studies, are we as a section breaking the rules by emphasizing workshops as the way we receive and provide education? Is the SAA in danger of breaking its own rules by providing workshops at all?

I cannot pretend to be objective about this topic. Since 1977 I have been teaching SAA's basic archival workshop, as well as participating in other workshops on a variety of topics. The speaker singled out the introductory workshop in his talk, saying that it and other workshops - basic, advanced, and specialized - are merely "archives appreciation" courses and should be labeled as such. People who have completed one or six or a dozen such workshops should not conclude that they have thereby learned to do archival work.

Soon after attending that session, I happened to sit in at the SAA awards program. An award given almost every year is the Sister M. Claude Lane Memorial Award to an outstanding religious archivist. Listening carefully to the accomplishments of the winner, I did not hear about master's degrees. I did hear about someone who had become an archivist after a career of service in her religious community, who seemed to have learned about archives from workshops, and who had indeed taught in such workshops.

I am sure that many business archivists have had similar careers: they have worked for a company in some capacity, and at some time have volunteered or even been assigned "to do something about the old records". Showing initiative, they have discovered the SAA and other archival organizations, signed up for workshops, attended meetings, joined committees and generally given and taken in the busy give-and-take of professional archival work.

Furthermore, in both business archives and in other institutions, people who have become archivists in this way have brought to their work some important elements that cannot be learned in graduate school. They know their institution thoroughly: the jargon, the principal activities, the highlights and lowlights of the firm's history - they might even have known the founders and other executives.

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## **DATELINE: INTERNATIONAL**

### **ICA/SBL STAVANGER CONFERENCE**

*by Susan C. Box, Corporate Archivist,  
Phillips Petroleum Company*

STAVANGER, NORWAY -- The International Council of Archives, Section for Business and Labour Archives (ICA/SBL) held a conference here August 21-22, 1994. Opened by Section Chair Anna Christina Ulfsparre of Sweden, the topic was "The Oil Industry and the Challenge of Records Management". The focus of the conference was on two main issues: 1) the present and future use of technology in information handling; and 2) the challenges of handling information found in a wide variety of media.

The gathering was administered by the Norwegian Documentation Center for Business Archives (NDNO) under the guidance of Hans Eyvind Naess, Director of the NDNO and Secretary of the ICA/SBL. It was held in the conference facilities of the beautiful and unusual Rogaland Art Museum.

More than 75 archivists and records managers from 13 countries registered for the conference, which was conducted entirely in English. Speakers from Norway, the United States, Great Britain, the Netherlands, France, and Sweden represented private and state-run petroleum companies, academia, labor and industrial archives, and local and national governments.

Some of the items discussed were: the lack of labor records pertaining to the petroleum worker available for research; that most laws specific to petroleum industry records pertain to technical records only; that petroleum industry operators produce and retain too many revisions of the same document, an excess of documentation which might affect safety

through retrieval problems - which is becoming even more of a problem with electronic records; and private industry's need to have easier access to local and state regulatory information. Plans are underway for the ICA to publish all of the papers as a "proceedings document."

The papers created much discussion and interaction among attendees during breaks, and have prompted dialogues that have continued after the closing of the conference. Since returning to the States, I have had ongoing discussions with the archivist from Astra, a Swedish pharmaceutical firm, who is interested in learning more about electronic data conversion; the archivist from Statoil (the Norwegian state-run oil company) who is interested in learning more about documentation strategy and outreach (a completely new concept to him); and the archivist from Esso Norway who is researching digital imaging. Since the Esso Norway archivist will be in Dallas in October for an Exxon conference, we've made plans for a side-trip to the Phillips Petroleum Company headquarters in Bartlesville, Oklahoma to look at our various digital imaging projects and the corporate archives.

In addition to the professional and personal enjoyment of being with people from around the world, attendees were treated to a tour of historic Stavanger and the petroleum industrial region. We had the opportunity to dine on reindeer meat and mountain berries at the opening banquet held in the historic and exclusive Stavanger Club, established in 1784. We also thoroughly enjoyed the unusually sunny and balmy weather, a departure from Stavanger's normally wet Augusts.

As both a speaker and an attendee, I found the 1994 ICA/SBL conference to be very worthwhile. Future conferences are currently being planned that will focus on other industries and issues.

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## **HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY RECEIVES SAA AWARD**

**TORONTO, CANADA --** The Hudson's Bay Company of Toronto received the Society of American Archivists 1994 J. Franklin Jameson Award for its donation of the HBC archives to the Province of Manitoba and its establishment of the Hudson's Bay History Foundation with the tax savings it received to provide for the maintenance of the collection.

The HBC collection is a valuable compilation of materials produced and gathered by the Company since its founding in 1670. Its 7000 linear feet of detailed business records - journals, ship's logs, maps and architectural drawings, rare books, art, 175,000 photographs, not to mention accounting ledgers and internal correspondence - documents the evolution of the Canadian Northwest almost from the date of first European contact, and stands as one of the nation's most significant historical resources. The collection was housed in London until 1974, when the HBC moved its world headquarters to Canada. Since then, the collection has resided under a special arrangement at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba in Winnipeg.

In addition to donating this incredibly diverse collection, the company also committed a portion of the \$23 million in tax savings it received for this gift to ensure that the bulk of collection maintenance costs will not fall on taxpayers' shoulders. According to the HBC archivist Judith Beattie, monies from the company will pay for 9 of the anticipated 12 collection staff positions, including microfilmmers and a conservator. The remainder of the tax windfall will fund other foundations, including one for the promotion of popular history.

And the company isn't done yet. Beattie states that a similar donation of museum-quality artifacts is being considered, again with the HBC using the tax savings to fund the establishment of a maintenance foundation.

The Jameson Award was established in 1989 and is conferred on individuals or organizations not directly involved in archival work who promote greater public awareness, appreciation, or support of archival activities or programs.

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## **ICA BUSINESS AND LABOR SECTION STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT**

*by Jean Hrichus, Corporate Archivist,  
Chase Manhattan Bank*

**STAVANGER, NORWAY --** The Steering Committee met here in August with a brief agenda to finalize sessions for the ICA World Congress meeting in China in 1996 and determine the logistics for electing a new steering committee and section chairman.

The World Congress theme is *Archives at the End of the Century: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead*. In line with this theme, two sessions were developed addressing issues in both business and labor archives. With the renewed focus on advocacy and outreach, the business session will look at three national approaches for marketing business archives.

Representatives from the United States, Denmark, and Scotland will discuss the advantages of marketing an archives from a private, national, and regional perspective respectively. We also hope to include an archivist from China who will comment on the concept of business archives in that country.

To capture recent trends in documenting labor history, Jaap Kloosterman (Holland) will open the labor session with an international overview followed by a discussion on the pertinent issues inherent within a labor organization (AFL-CIO), a national repository, and a university program.

As I stressed in my last report, I hope to see a larger contingent from our group attend this Congress. It's an exciting opportunity not only to network with our international colleagues but to experience their programs first hand.  
*(continued on next page)*

Besides our efforts to increase membership from the United States, the committee is also looking for papers from the business section that could be published in *Janus*. If anyone has a paper they would like to see published, please call me at 212/552-8330.

Other business of the day included the *Overview of Business Archives in Western Europe* that the section is working on. A deadline of June, 1995 has been set for printing; distribution will be through the section or your direct request to me.

Again, I hope to see more of you in China! Please contact me for ICA member applications.

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### **BREAKING THE RULES: HORN** *(continued from pg. 13)*

In addition, they know the general field of activity - education, medicine, insurance, entertainment, and the like. They are therefore more able to appraise and carefully select the records in their care, and to provide arrangement and description that will anticipate the needs of internal users than a better-trained archivist without the benefit of their experiences.

When it comes to education, the SAA should not commit to an 'either-or' approach. We do not have to choose between support of graduate programs and support for other kinds of continuing education. As the winner of the Lane Memorial Award demonstrated, there are many ways of acquiring knowledge.

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#### **Excuse me ...**

"We wouldn't all be so leery of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) if they hadn't named it after the noise that a cat makes when he coughs up a hairball."

- *KNX-AM*, Los Angeles, December 6, 1994

### **FROM THE CHAIR: TOLL**

*(cont'd. from pg. 3)*

that might like to tie this workshop into their programs, please contact Jane Kenamore, SAA.

The section is currently planning to have a similar, but less formal, gathering in D.C. in 1995. Possible discussion topics include: strategic planning as it relates to current management theories; advocacy - how to market and position yourself; access and use; legal issues; and ethics. It's likely that three topics will be chosen; each will have its own facilitator. Please let Liz Holum Johnson know of any other ideas that might be relevant to this event.

#### ***Program Ideas***

A final note before closing. We want to try to make our future SAA meetings as relevant as possible to our section members, but it takes a lot of planning to come up with ideas for program sessions. In this regard, Elizabeth Adkins of Kraft General Foods has offered to head a task force for this purpose. So please contact her with your program ideas for 1996 and 1997.

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### **So, who did YOU vote for??**

S.C. Johnson Corporation, maker of RAID, breeds 80,000 roaches a week to test its pesticides on. It maintains a number of different breeds, including some pesticide resistant ones. One of the most resistant is called HRDC. These almost unkillable roaches are so named because they were collected from the halls of the House of Representatives in the District of Columbia.

- *Scientific American*, July 1994, p. 101



## NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

### *East*

**Historical Society Opens Business Center  
by Kevin Grau, Director,  
The Rhode Island Historical Society  
Ingenuity and Enterprise Center**

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND -- In August 1994, The Rhode Island Historical Society (RIHS) opened the Ingenuity and Enterprise Center, a research center dedicated to fostering the study of creativity, entrepreneurship, innovation, and invention in business, technology, and related fields through research, preservation, and education. This Center is located in Providence, Rhode Island.

A substantial part of the Center's work is facilitating and supporting partners in its mission - to raise awareness of the value of business history and to champion preservation as a strategic practice in the business community. Rather than actually maintaining collections, the Center focuses on helping businesses understand the value of their history, and encourages broader collection of business and technology records and artifacts by collecting institutions like the RIHS library and museum departments. A key aspect of this educational thrust is the facilitation of contact between archivists, businesses, scholars, and repositories to help these groups learn from one another as part of the larger effort to preserve business's historical record.

The Center has established a Research Fellowship Program to support scholars wishing to work at Rhode Island institutions on projects related to the Center's mission. It is also developing programs and research tools to improve the accessibility of existing collections. Finally, the Center sponsors public programs like conferences and lecture series to promote the value of business history by

examining contemporary issues in business and technology in their broader historical and critical contexts.

For further information contact: The Ingenuity and Enterprise Center at The Rhode Island Historical Society, 110 Benevolent Street, Providence, RI 02906; phone 401\331-8575; email: KEVINGU@dsl.rhinet.gov.

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**Boston Business History Project at the  
Massachusetts Historical Society  
by Len Travers,  
Massachusetts Historical Society**

BOSTON -- The one hundred years from 1750-1850 saw some of the most exciting and important developments in Boston's business and commercial history. The Boston Business History Project at the Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS) is a series of related programs dedicated to studying Boston's business community during this formative century.

The Project's goal is to facilitate further research and publication. To this end, it hosted a conference entitled "Entrepreneurs: The Boston Business Community, 1750-1850" last May, the papers from which will be collected in a forthcoming publication. Another program the Project is developing is a computerized census for the city covering the time period.

The Project has also, under the aegis of MHS's Center for the Study of New England History, begun creating an extensive database of business-related source material. This material includes business directories, censuses, tax records, and voluntary society membership lists.

Portions of the database are already available to interested scholars. Researchers should direct inquiries to Len Travers, CSNEH, Massachusetts Historical Society, 1154 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02215, phone 617/536-1608.

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**Help! Harvard Business School African-American Business Record Search**  
CYBERSPACE -- The Baker Library of the Harvard Business School (HBS), in conjunction with the HBS African-American Student Union, is conducting a survey of archival collections for materials on African-Americans in business.

Preliminary research indicates that African-American business and management activity may be documented in repositories and collections not primarily known for business holdings.

If you know of any materials that document African-American entrepreneurs, managers, enterprises, or business activities, please contact Florence Lathrop, Harvard Business School, Boston, MA 02163, phone 617\495-6360 fax 617\496-3811, email FLATHROP@HBS.HARVARD.EDU

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### *SOUTH*

**Texas Library Collects Fortune 200 Company Records**  
*by Mark E. Martin, Director of Archives, T.L.L. Temple Memorial Library*  
DIBOLL, TEXAS -- In September 1991 the T.L.L. Temple Memorial Library in Diboll established an Archives project dedicated to materials generated by the Temple-Inland Corporation and its precursors. Temple-Inland, a Fortune 200 company with interests in forest products, paper board, construction, banking, and land development, is headquartered in Diboll.

Temple-Inland's original entity, the Southern Pine Lumber Company (SPLCo), began operations in 1894 with a saw mill in Diboll in the midst of the rich long leaf pine forests of East Texas. Over the next six decades the operation grew to include another mill site in

Pineland, Texas, expanded facilities in Diboll, hardwood mills, gypsum board production facilities, a construction division, and other subsidiaries. By the 1950s, SPLCo changed its name to Temple Industries in order to better represent its diversified interests.

In 1973 Temple merged with Time, Inc. to become Temple-Eastex, and the Temple concerns entered the paper manufacturing arena. Ten years later Temple spun out of Time, Inc. to become Temple-Inland. The corporation currently controls over 1.2 million acres of land in Texas and the Southeast.

As the company was owned and operated by the Temple family until 1968 (when its stock was first listed on the New York Stock Exchange), and run by a family member until 1989, the bulk of the archival materials - approximately 1100 cu.ft. - pertains to family business records and family members' materials. Since Diboll is essentially a company town, having been largely forest and small farms before the SPLCo mill began operations, the Archives also collects community materials. These records are much more difficult to acquire, but holdings in this area are increasing as the Archives' work becomes better known.

The collection also has over 15,000 photographic images, nearly 200 audio taped interviews, motion picture materials from the Corporate public affairs office, newspapers on microfilm (including the company employee paper, 1948-1951), and the usual assortment of manuscripts, company records, and ephemera. A particular strength of the holdings is its visual documentation of forestry practices at the turn of the century and in the 1940s. The Archives is open to the public five days a week, and interested parties can contact Mark E. Martin, T.L.L. Temple Memorial Archives, 300 Park Street, Diboll, Texas 75941, phone 409\829-3543, fax 409\829\3523 for more information.

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## MIDWEST

### **CABA To Host Joint Meeting with the Twin Cities Business Archives Group**

**CHICAGO** -- The Chicago Area Business Archives group will conduct a joint meeting with the their Twin Cities counterparts on Thursday, May 4, 1995 at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

Focusing on the educational needs of individual members, the meeting will feature an informal discussion that will address issues facing both organizations. In addition, Katie Dishman, the archivist of the Exchange, will give a tour of the host facility, a futures and options exchange established in 1898.

The meeting will be held in conjunction with the Spring Midwest Archives Conference, and is open to any interested party. For further information, contact Katie Dishman of the Exchange at 312/648-5413.

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## WEST

### **"Juiceman to the World" Embarks on Fruitful Archives Project**

*by William Alley, Alley Archival Services*

**MEDFORD, OREGON** -- The Sabroso Company, a privately owned and operated fruit-processing firm, has begun processing its business records. The company, founded in 1964 by the Root family and located in Medford, processes unmarketable pears into concentrated purees that are used in everything from baby food to fruit roll-ups to juices.

The archival project's first phase entailed the processing of approximately 300 cubic feet of unidentified records which documented not only the Sabroso Company, but other companies that three generations of the Root family were involved in. Two of the more notable firms represented were the Myron Root

Company ( a pear-packing firm founded 1933), and Crater Lake Orchard.

These records, packed in cardboard boxes, old pear lug boxes, and plastic bags were tucked away in a back corner of the packing house attic. The documents included office files, ledgers, orchard records, employee records, lug box labels, and a small collection of photographs. The initial processing took place there in the attic, in temperatures that surpassed the century mark by mid-July.

But while conditions in the attic were hot and dusty, there was a remarkable lack of vermin damage. The only insect encountered was the remains of a silverfish which succumbed between the pages of a 1929 Oregon State Agricultural College bulletin. This lack of vermin damage in records that date to 1917 is indicative of the great care taken at Sabroso to keep their product free of any contamination.

Because Sabroso remains a privately-held family enterprise, its archives are solely for internal use and are not open to the public.

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### **Notable Quote #521**

"None of my inventions will be worth a damn compared to the value of a good business archivist."

*- Thomas Alva Edison, February 1912*

**EDITOR'S WISH LIST**  
*can be delivered anytime*

**1. ARTICLES**

The next issue will deal with topics concerning the ubiquitous moving image: access, usage, preservation, etc.. A future issue will confront the topic of archiving in a multinational corporation.

**2. COLUMNS / REGIONAL NEWS**

Do you have something to say? Send it in - anything from philosophy to humor to blatant self-promotion may be fit to print!

**3. GRAPHICS**

Do you think filling all this white space is easy? Dammit Jim, I'm an archivist, not a magician!

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