

# Congressional Papers Roundtable Newsletter

## Society of American Archivists

### July 2001



#### FROM THE CHAIR Cynthia Pease-Miller

It is a special pleasure as chair to welcome the Congressional Papers Roundtable to the SAA meeting in Washington -- not just because I live here but also because the Roundtable was founded here. During the 1984 SAA annual meeting a few of us, less than ten I recall, gathered informally in an empty room. There we each shared our concerns and involvement with congressional papers and agreed to meet at the next year's meeting and in the interim to organize as a roundtable and to start a newsletter. Those first newsletters were compiled by Karyl Winn and sent "round robin" because we had no status and no funding. One hundred and fifty strong now, we are one of the most active groups in SAA and have a reputation as a strong network and resource for each other in this very specialized area of collecting. We have come a long way! Welcome back to Washington!

The agenda for the forum on August 29 is found on p. 4 of this newsletter. Please note the change in location. Many thanks to Karen Paul for her hard work in organizing this program. It is designed to provide us the opportunity to examine the issues raised in the *Third Report of the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress*.

The regular meeting of the Congressional Papers Roundtable is scheduled for 5:15 pm on Thursday August 30. Our program is deliberately less structured so that we can follow up on any unfinished business of the forum. In addition, Rebecca Johnson Melvin will discuss the Roundtable's web site and there will be other short reports and the election of new officers.

Three members rotate off the steering committee this year: Burt Altman, Karyl Winn, and Pam Hackbart-Dean. Thanks to all of them for their efforts on behalf of the roundtable table.

I am re-employed on the Hill as the archivist for the Senate Finance Committee. My new phone number is 202-224-4599 and the e-mail is [Cynthia\\_Miller@finance.senate.gov](mailto:Cynthia_Miller@finance.senate.gov). Looking forward to seeing you all next month.

Cynthia Pease Miller

#### CPR CONGRESSIONAL PAPERS FORUM: *THE THIRD REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE RECORDS OF CONGRESS*

**WEDNESDAY, AUG. 29, 2001 1:30 - 4:30 P.M.**  
**LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON ROOM, S-211,**  
**THE CAPITOL**

*Please note the new location. It has been revised since being published in the SAA Program.*

The Congressional Papers Forum is scheduled for Wednesday, August 29, 2001, from 1:30 to 4:30 PM. The topic is the *Third Report of the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress*.

The Advisory Committee was established in 1990 by P.L.101-509 and is required to report to Congress every five years. This *Third Report* is the first to contain discussions and recommendations regarding the preservation of papers of the members of Congress. It raises several issues of interest to congressional archivists.

The Forum is designed to provide an opportunity to discuss these issues and develop an action agenda for addressing them. Since its establishment, the Advisory Committee has proved to be a remarkable vehicle for accomplishing goals related to improving congressional documentation.

Plan to take advantage of this opportunity to make some real progress in the area of members' papers. Congressional archivists are urged to invite congressional staff from their state delegations to attend the forum with them.

**SEE THE FULL FORUM AGENDA ON p. 4**

#### **RESPONSE REQUESTED**

To assist with planning, please indicate whether you might attend. We are asking all Roundtable members to respond by e-mail to Karen Paul at [karen\\_paul@sec.senate.gov](mailto:karen_paul@sec.senate.gov) or by phone at 202-224-3351. The report has been mailed to all Roundtable members and is posted at:  
[http://www.senate.gov/learning/acrc\\_report.html](http://www.senate.gov/learning/acrc_report.html)

## INSTITUTIONAL NEWS

The **Ashland University** Archives has finished adding the congressional papers of Rep. John M. Ashbrook (R-OH) to the university archives website ([archives.ashland.edu](http://archives.ashland.edu)).

The site includes photographs and RealAudio files of some of Mr. Ashbrook's speeches. Also found is an overview of his collection.

David Roepke

**Baylor University** Baylor Collections of Political Materials has finished processing the papers of Hyde Murray, Minority Counsel to the House Committee on Agriculture, 1958-1978, which was during the time W. R. "Bob" Poage (D-TX) was vice chairman/chairman of that committee. The BCPM contains 1000 lin. ft of Poage's papers ([www.baylor.edu/~Ben\\_Rogers/Poage/welcome.html](http://www.baylor.edu/~Ben_Rogers/Poage/welcome.html)). Brian Culp, Archivist at the Dole Archives, has already used the Murray papers on several occasions to research events in the life of Bob Dole, who was on the Agriculture Committee during this time. He found information about Dole's trips to India and Rome and Dole's support for a Bread and Butter Corp in the mid 60's. Students are currently preparing the finding aid for the Murray Papers. The collection also includes about 4 lin. ft of materials from Hyde's father, Congressman Reid Murray (R-WI) ([www.baylor.edu/Library/BCPM/reidmurray.html](http://www.baylor.edu/Library/BCPM/reidmurray.html)).

Ben Rogers

In April, The Associated Press reported that seven missing cartons, documenting the first ten years of Sen. Frank Church's (D-Id) career were found in storage at a Senate Office Building. The papers include correspondence, memoranda, speeches, news releases, and notes from foreign trips. Church passed away in 1984 at the age of 59 after serving four terms in the Senate (1956-1980). His papers are held at **Boise State University** Special Collections Department ([library.boisestate.edu/Special/PARGRAPH/mss56.htm](http://library.boisestate.edu/Special/PARGRAPH/mss56.htm)). The Senate Historical Office shipped the long-lost boxes to Boise to be added to the rest of the collection.

Alan Virta

Layne Library at **Dakota Wesleyan University** in Mitchell, South Dakota, has the Senator Francis H.

Case (R-SD) Collection and the Senator George S. McGovern (D-SD) Collection.

The Case Collection consists of his congressional and senatorial papers from 1936 to 1962, as well as photographs, memorabilia and mementos. Strengths include his work with Native Americans, bringing interstate highways to South Dakota, and his work the development of the Missouri River for irrigation and power generation. Part of the collection is temporarily inaccessible to researchers because of minor spring flooding, but it should be available this fall.

The McGovern Collection consists of George McGovern's personal collection of photographs, papers, and memorabilia. The Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library at Princeton University holds his congressional papers. A finding aid to Layne Library's McGovern Collection currently is available in paper format and will soon be mounted on the library's home page ([www.dwu.edu/library/](http://www.dwu.edu/library/)).

Please visit our home page at for more information about these collections.

Laurie Langland

**Missouri Southern State College** has the papers of Congressman Gene Taylor (R-MO). The papers document Congressman Taylor's 16 years (1973 to 1989) as Congressman from Missouri's 7th District. The publication for this is *The Guide to the Papers of U.S. Congressman Gene Taylor of Missouri*, published in 1990. The collection is located in the Archives and Special Collections Department in George Spiva Library at Missouri Southern State College.

Charles E. Nodler Jr.

The Oklahoma Humanities Council recently granted more than \$10,000 to the Carl Albert Center at the **University of Oklahoma**. The funds will enable the center to convert two existing in-house exhibits into traveling exhibits.

One of these exhibits is titled "Climbing Capitol Hill and Staying," and it highlights the impact that women have made in transforming national government, especially the U.S. Congress. Drawing on the holdings of the Library of Congress, the Schlesinger Library, and other repositories, the Center's archivists used reproductions of

photographs, sheet music, campaign buttons, cartoons, and pamphlet covers to show the impact women have made through their involvement in such national issues as abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, equal pay, education, care of the elderly, prohibition, protection of the mentally and physically challenged, child welfare, birth control, health care, sexual harassment, and drug enforcement. Among the women depicted are Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Edith Nourse Rogers, Maggie Kuhn, and Margaret Chase Smith. The exhibit was created in conjunction with the conference "Women Transforming Congress: Gender Analyses of Institutional Life" that the center hosted in April 2000.

The other exhibit reviews the life of Carl Albert (1908-2000) and focuses on his role in the House leadership, first as majority whip (1955-1961), then as majority leader (1962-1971), and finally as Speaker (1971-1977). During his tenure, he witnessed the turmoil caused by Vietnam, school busing, and Watergate. When vacancies arose in the vice presidency, he was twice "a heartbeat away from the presidency." During his Speakership, the office gained more power than it had since the early 1900s. The exhibit was displayed to honor Albert after his death, and it drew upon photographs and documents donated by Albert to the center.

During 2000, the center displayed these exhibits on OU's Norman campus. The Humanities Center grants will pay for construction of new traveling cases and packing crates and for development of secondary school classroom study guides. The exhibits will be available to interested host institutions through the Oklahoma Museum Association's TRACKS traveling exhibit program beginning in 2002.

Todd Kosmerick

The Carl Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center, **University of Oklahoma**, announces the availability of an Oral History Project Procedures Manual on the Center's web site ([www.ou.edu/special/albertctr/archives/oralhist.htm](http://www.ou.edu/special/albertctr/archives/oralhist.htm)). In 1990, Dan Linke, at that time a National Historic Preservation and Records Commission (NHPRC) fellow, created the manual. The center no longer maintains an oral history program, but interest in the manual continues. It was revised in 2000, and earlier

this year it was made available in PDF and Microsoft Word formats on the Center's web site as well as Linke's ([www.princeton.edu/~linke/cacorai.html](http://www.princeton.edu/~linke/cacorai.html)).

Todd Kosmerick

The Center for Pacific Northwest Studies at **Western Washington University** recently began processing Rep. Jack Metcalf's (R-WA) papers. Metcalf represented Washington's 2<sup>nd</sup> District from 1994-2000. Metcalf retired from politics after a six-year Congressional career and 24 years in the Washington state legislature. His political career spanned 42 years and 15 elections.

The material ranges in date from 1985-2000, and is about 40 linear feet in size. It is primarily Congressional papers with some campaign materials. Well represented are issues relating to housing, Native Americans, the environment, defense and energy.

Elizabeth Joffrion

#### **SESSION OF INTEREST AT SAA**

*Interviewing the Political Elite: Implications for the Archives*

CPR members attending the SAA meeting in DC will be interested in session S31. The session will be held Friday, August 31, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Herb Hartsook, Richard Norton Smith, Stuart Kennedy, and Michael Gillette will draw upon their own experiences collecting and using oral histories to discuss the relevance and value of political oral history today.

**THE REGULAR CPR  
MEETING IS ON THURSDAY,  
AUGUST 30 at 5:15.  
PLEASE PLAN ON  
ATTENDING.**

**Check the SAA Program at the meeting for  
location information.**

## FORUM AGENDA

1:30 Opening remarks: Briefing on the Advisory Committee and the Third Report

2:00 Panel I: "Improving Archival Practices on Capitol Hill" - a staff archivist, systems administrator, and congressional administrative staff discuss preservation criteria, records management issues, and strategies to improve records management and disposition

3:00 Panel II: "Developing Public Policy Research Centers" - discussion of goals, programs, and ways and means by staff from representative research institutions

3:45 Focus groups

Panel I: Improving Archival Practices on Capitol Hill - adopting and promoting preservation criteria, archivists roles, congressional staff roles, evaluation of available resources, recommendations

Panel II: Developing Public Policy Research Centers - promotion of and steps involved in center development, evaluation of funding resources, recommendations

4:15 Summary

Focus group leaders report findings and present recommendations

## CANDIDATES FOR CPR OFFICE

The Nominating Committee (Rebecca Johnson Melvin, Jill Severn and Pam Hackbart-Dean) is pleased to present the slate of candidates for the CPR Steering Committee membership.

### Vice-chair/chair-elect:

**Jeff Suchanek**, University of Kentucky

Education: BA and MA, History, Youngstown State University. Employment: State Archives at the Ohio Historical Society and the Columbus (Ohio) Health Department. In 1988, he joined the Oral History Program at the University of Kentucky as Assistant Director, a position he still holds, and in 1996 became Senior Archivist of the Modern Political Archives, now known as the Wendell H. Ford Research Center and Public Policy Archive, at the University of Kentucky Libraries. SAA Activities: A member since 1995, he is currently chair of the Oral History Section and a member of CPR. In 1999, he and Mark Greene designed and compiled data from a national congressional papers conservation/preservation survey that was cited in the recently published *Third Report of the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress*. Other Activities: He has also been active in the Oral History Association since 1988, twice serving on local arrangements committees for their national meetings in Cleveland, OH and Birmingham AL. He was co-editor, with William J. Marshall, of *Time on Target: The World War Two Memoir of General William R. Buster* that was published in 1999 by the Kentucky Historical Society Foundation, and is currently working on another book based on oral history interviews he conducted with women veterans of World War Two.

### Nominations for Steering Committee (select two):

**Bill Meneray**, Tulane University

**Carla Summers**, University of Florida

**Tim Pratt**, UNC at Chapel Hill

**Geoffrey Reynolds**, Hope College

Anyone wishing to cast an absentee ballot please contact Pam Hackbart-Dean, Southern Labor Archives, Georgia State University, 100 Decatur St., SE, Atlanta, GA 30303-3202 (404-651-2477) or email [libphd@langate.gsu.edu](mailto:libphd@langate.gsu.edu).

## COMINGS AND GOINGS

**Michael Ballard**, Professor/Coordinator of the Congressional and Political Research Center and University Archivist at Mississippi State University Libraries, has been appointed to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress for 2001-2002.

**Alan Haeberle**, newsletter coeditor, is now working as archivist for Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT). He can be reached at [alan\\_haeberle@hatch.senate.gov](mailto:alan_haeberle@hatch.senate.gov)

**Stephen C. Sturgeon**, Manuscript Curator at Special Collections & Archives, Merrill Library, Utah State University, has joined the Roundtable.

**Evelyn Taylor**, project archivist for the Congressman Robert J. Lagomarsino (R-CA) archives at California State University, Channel Islands, has joined the Roundtable.

## 2002 Is Sooner Than You Think: Ideas for Next Year's Program

6 July 2001

Colleagues:

Although we are gearing up for the 2001 meeting and the Congressional Papers Forum in Washington, D. C., Program Committee members Karyl Winn, Burt Altman, and I have begun thinking about the 2002 meeting. These thoughts have included ideas for a roundtable proposal for the SAA program as well as ideas for the presentation portion of the CPR meeting.

For a possible CPR proposal for the 2002 SAA program, we wonder if we could develop a session that centers on the impact that money has on the reference process or how it can foster researcher access to collections. This might include a paper on repository funding of researchers. Such a paper could examine visiting scholar grants that some repositories offer. It can expand upon a paper I presented at the 2000 meeting of the Society of Southwest Archivists in which I discussed the Carl Albert Center's Visiting Scholars Program, which funds people who travel long distance to conduct research in the Center's archival holdings. For SAA, perhaps we could have a paper that surveys such travel grant programs at a number of different repositories. Other papers could look at programs in which repositories charge for in-depth reference service (archival staff conducting research in collections for users unable to visit the archives) or in which local people (not archival staff) are paid to conduct research for these researchers. We have run this idea by some other people already, and one response was to slant the session away from money and toward a session on making materials accessible to long distance researchers. This could include a paper on lending archival materials to such researchers, a controversial practice that some archivists have advocated. We have a few names of people to approach about presenting such papers.

We are thinking along the lines of a traditional session of three presenters and a chair (see p. 53 of your 2001 SAA programs). I am planning to approach the Reference, Access and Outreach Section, the Manuscript Section, and may be other

sections to see if these groups have ideas about refining this proposal and interest in cosponsoring it. October 6, 2001, is SAA's deadline for submitting program proposals for the 2002 meeting.

We would also like to share our ideas for the presentation portion of the 2002 CPR meeting. The meeting will be in Birmingham, Alabama, and because of the role that city played in the Civil Right Movement, we wondered if there would be interest in a presentation on repositories who have developed strategies for documenting members of Congress who are people of color. This is a very rough proposal so far. I have discussed this with a few of you already, and there has been concern that repositories may not have this as a focus; they collect the papers of members of Congress whether or not they are people of color. Others have thought a presentation that expands beyond congressional papers to include repositories that collect the papers of civil rights leaders, state politicians, ambassadors, political caucuses, and state political parties would be of interest. We would be very interested in hearing from you whether you would be interested in such a topic being presented at the CPR meeting. Perhaps you may have ideas on developing this into a second proposal for the SAA program. We would be interested in any thoughts you have about refining this or finding a person to make such a presentation.

Certainly, we recognize that the forum and the preservation task force will generate areas of focus from which we will want to consider developing SAA and CPR program proposals. However, we wanted to share with you these other ideas in order to get your input. If you have thoughts on how these proposals can be refined or if you have other suggestions for program proposals, we would love to hear from you. Please feel free to contact me by e-mail at [kosmerick@ou.edu](mailto:kosmerick@ou.edu) or by phone at (405) 325-5045.

Todd Kosmerick  
Vice Chair/Chair Elect

**Run Into Any Boxes Labeled Redactron or Robo Files Lately?**

By Jeff Suchanek

While processing Sen. Walter D. Huddleston's Collection, we came upon boxes labeled "Redactron Files" and "Robo Files," which contained constituent correspondence and the senator's replies. We knew that the Washington offices had some kind of computerized system for issuing standard replies for various issue-related inquiries but did not know how it worked. With the help of Karen Paul and some Web searching by my assistant, Sally Esterhay, we were able to come to a better understanding of the systems used.

Redactron was a company founded in 1969 by a woman named Evelyn Berezin. The company specialized in making word processors that, at first, used small reels of magnetic tape to store files. They later switched to floppy disks. Although the company was very small, it was the second largest word-processing manufacturer in the world after IBM. In 1976, Redactron was sold to Burroughs, and eventually that company phased out the word processing component.

Karen checked with Larry Draver in Production Services who recalled that in the early 1970s congressional offices could select one of three systems to answer constituent mail--Redactron, MTST, and Ty-Data. These were converter systems. They were desk-like units with keyboards that were used to input the names and addresses into the file. The information was stored on cassettes. The cassettes were converted every night to 800 bpi master tape readable on an IBM tape drive. The conversion would merge new information, delete outdated names and addresses, and update the master file. In 1977 or 1978, these three systems were replaced by System Six, which stored the information on 5 1/4 inch floppies. This system preceded the office automation systems. Mr. Draver did not know whether the responses were maintained on the system. Library items (approved paragraph responses) for the office automation systems (which succeeded Redactron) had to be retained on paper or microfilm. The "Library Item Encyclopedia" usually was kept in notebooks.

Mr. Draver also recalled that "Robo" refers to the room or office where the mail was processed. It was the room that each office had where the constituent name and address file was input by office staff, and then merged and updated every night by trained computer staff. Therefore, "Robo" does not refer to a specific system per se.

So, there you have it. If you run across these files in your unprocessed collections, now you will have more of an understanding of how it worked than is good for you to know.



**PLEASE NOTE THE NEW  
LOCATION FOR THE CPR  
FORUM:**

**LYNDON BAINES  
JOHNSON ROOM, S-211,  
THE CAPITOL**





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