Architectural Records Roundtable 2002 Annual Report

The Architectural Records Roundtable (ARR) provides a forum for members to discuss issues related to access and management of architectural records and related fields. It continues to play an active and vital role in creating opportunities for archivists to meet and discuss special topics of interest, exchange ideas, and provide an avenue for professional networking. This forum is especially important for those who have architectural holdings, yet do not manage a large scale architectural repository.

2002 Annual Business Meeting

The Architectural Records Roundtable began this past year with its meeting at the SAA annual conference in Birmingham Alabama. Sarah Turner of the American Institute of Architects presided. Twenty-four people attended (12 of which became new members). Ardys Kozbial, Visual Resources Librarian, Frances Loeb Library, Harvard Design School was elected as the incoming co-chair and Beth Dodd of the Alexander Architectural Archive, The University of Texas at Austin assumed the duties of Chair at the conclusion of the meeting. Beth Bilderback , Assistant Manuscripts Librarian, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina graciously offered to continue serving as the Visual Materials section liaison.

ARR members continued to serve on program panels. This year's sessions included "Architectural Records: Unique reference needs and issues" with Megan Spriggs, Nancy Loe, Annemarie van Roessel, and "Archives Unplugged: Visual Materials in Archival Collections" with Waverly Lowell.

Proposals

- The proposal to revise the official ARR Description was approved. The former description omitted issues such as accession and appraisal, public services, rights, restrictions, etc. It read: "Supports the preservation of architectural, engineering, landscaping, and construction records and brings together care-givers to discuss the storage, conservation, arrangement, and description problems inherent in specialized records." The revised current description was submitted as: "Provides a forum for members to discuss issues related to access and management of architectural records and related fields."
- Proposal to start up an ARR email distribution list was approved. Nancy Loe, Assistant Dean, Collections Management and Special Collections, California Polytechnic State University agreed to serve as the List Manager. This list is successfully up and running.
- Proposal to start up an ARR website was approved. Early planning and development of the site is continuing throughout the year.
- ARR proposed four session proposals (and later endorsed one) for the 2003 meeting in Los Angeles.
- A more detailed report of this annual meeting, including information on general announcements and detail of discussions, is available upon request.

Activities during the year

Administrative business

- Developed a template for the Annual Meeting agenda as well as the SAA ARR Annual Report

Membership

- Current membership stands at 62
- 12 new members joined during the annual business meeting
- Through recruitment, 6 new members have joined since the annual ARR meeting
- Developed a guidelines checklist for managing the ARR membership directory and email distribution list

New projectsgoals

- Preliminary planning and preparations are in development for a SAA ARR website
- Initiate discussion regarding best practices of EAD at the architectural project level
- Promote discussion regarding next year's session proposals and tour suggestions prior to the annual meeting in the hopes that our meeting time could be better spent face to face on other topics
- Promotion of an annual round robin report from members to share information about each other's workplace, projects and issues of concern
- Promotion of a formal nomination for elected chairs prior to the annual meeting, and develop and encourage early voting for those who are unable to attend the annual meeting
- Initiate a survey of attendance intentions so that the agenda for the next annual meeting could be better planned

Current issues brought up by membership

- Use of fees?   Who charges fees and how are they administered?
- Management of digitally born records.   How are people dealing with them?
- Guidelines needed for those who produce architectural records
- Issues of privacy and safety
- Appraisal guidelines and policies
- Copy work guidelines and policies
- Updates on projects we've been working on

Other news

- ARR membership is assisting Tawny Ryan Nelb and Waverly Lowell in providing images for the upcoming SAA Manual on Managing Design Records
- Susan DuBois announced an up coming conference called "Architectural Records: Preserving and Managing the Documentation of Our Built Environment".   It will be co sponsored in part by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) and the NEH an is scheduled for spring 2004 in Chicago. Details forthcoming.

Respectfully submitted by Beth Dodd, March 31, 2003.