The Archival Spirit, November (Fall) 2005

Newsletter of the Archivists of Religious Collections Section, Society of American Archivists

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From the Chair

By Loretta Greene

The inaugural letter from the section Chair is usually written in an upbeat tone; however, the tragedy that has befallen our colleagues in the Gulf Coast has made us all pause. Since the SAA meeting we have each reflected on the destruction Hurricane Katrina wreaked on New Orleans. The city, museums, restaurants and attractions we visited and came to love would be unrecognizable to us now in their utter devastation. I can’t help but think about the numerous gracious people who showed us true southern hospitality. We will never know how they are faring individually; our prayers and thoughts go with them. Our colleagues are another story. The Steering Committee is contacting each of them to express our concern for them personally and to support them in the overwhelming task of recovery in their repositories and personal lives; and where recovery will not be possible we will support them as they move ahead to begin anew.

The potential loss to the Gulf Coast historical record on such a broad scale is unimaginable. In Mississippi, we know several churches are wiped out and no doubt there are others that we have not yet identified. Entire buildings, congregational, sacramental and administrative records, worship furnishings, all are washed away. In New Orleans, churches, synagogues, religious communities, and many other organizations are struggling with the overwhelming aftermath of the storm and floods. It is ironic to think that in some cases digital and microfilm formats meant as preservation tools may now be the only permanent record. We have only to look at our own repositories and imagine ourselves in the same situation to contemplate what our colleagues are experiencing.

There are several ways we can assist our section colleagues. First, your response to sign the support letter sent to national and regional historical and preservation agencies was tremendous. The letter was well received by these individuals and I know the show of solidarity was very much appreciated by our Gulf region colleagues. Second, we can help them financially. If you have not already done so, I urge everyone to contribute to the recovery grant fund jointly established by the Society of American Archivists and the Society of Southwest Archivists. Or, perhaps you are directly helping your denomination or religious community. These are concrete ways we can help when we cannot physically assist in the recovery of historical records and materials. Last, let us support our colleagues now and in the long road of recovery ahead through messages, thoughts and prayers. For after all, as archivists of religious collections we are a section that is united by more than a common record type.

While disaster recovery is in the forefront, preservation of records takes many forms. Archival Spirit articles submitted from section members demonstrate how we are working to preserve and share our heritage whether moving to a new facility, installing compact shelving, convening a meeting to identify and retain records, curating exhibits or numerous other activities. If a topic peaks your interest or you are working on a similar project and need more information, don’t hesitate to call or email your colleagues. Learning from each other is part of our mission. As I begin my two-year term as section Chair, I look forward to learning from you as well. The Steering
Committee seriously considered the suggestions and recommendations raised during the section discussion and we plan to implement some of them. When you see new features in the newsletter let us know if they are valuable to you. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me with a question, concern or need in the years ahead.

SBHLA Prepares Special Historical Exhibit for Annual Southern Baptist Convention Meeting in Nashville
By Taffey Hall

When over 11,600 Southern Baptists arrived in Nashville, June 20-21, for the Convention’s annual meeting, those who toured the Southern Baptist Convention building received a history lesson in the form of a special exhibit prepared by staff of the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

The featured displays titled “One Sacred Effort: The Southern Baptist Story,” highlight significant events in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention. They are located on the second and third floor common areas of the SBC building in downtown Nashville, and are comprised of 23 double-sided 6’ by 4’ panels, 5 upright cases, and 4 flat case units. While most of the images and documents appearing in the displays are reproductions, some original documents are used. The exhibit also includes artifacts from past SBC meetings, and Convention initiatives, and missionary work around the world.

Of prominence in the “One Sacred Effort” exhibit is the original, hand-written Southern Baptist Convention organizational minute book from 1845. (Southern Baptists, like their counterparts in other Protestant denominations in the South during the antebellum period, split from Baptists in the North largely over the slavery issue.) An 1837 letter from Southern Baptists’ first missionary, Adoniram Judson; 1849 letter from the Foreign Mission Board’s first appointed single female missionary, Harriett Baker; and hymnals used by Baptists from the 1600s are also of particular interest in the historical displays.

These items, however, represent only a glimpse of the rich array of materials available at the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives. The SBHLA (which has served as a world center for the study of Baptist history since 1938) attempts to tell the Southern Baptist story objectively in this project, with the hope that both scholars and individuals with no prior interest in Baptist history will gain a greater appreciation for the Southern Baptist heritage and identity. A brochure describing items of interest in the displays accompanies the exhibit. “One Sacred Effort: The Baptist Story” is currently open to the public at the Southern Baptist Convention building, Monday – Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Alexian Brothers Provincial Archives
By Donna Dahl

Alexian Brothers Provincial Archives and Museum has moved from Elk Grove Village, Ill. to Arlington Heights, Ill. Located at the corporate and religious head- quarters of Alexian Brothers, the new area is larger and more accessible to visitors, and has already increased awareness and usage of the archives.

The suite consists of a museum gallery, an office/work room with space for volunteers and researchers, and an archives and artifact storage vault. All spaces are environmentally controlled and include dry-pipe sprinklers and ultraviolet shields on the lights. The closed air-conditioning system includes a HEPA filter, with positive
Hallett Movers provided excellent service in relocating the fragile artifacts and documents, and Bradford Systems handled the tear-down and rebuilding of the compact shelving. It has taken the staff almost five months to ready the department for visitors and researchers, but the time spent was well worth it, and the Grand Opening was scheduled for November 2005.

The new contact information is Alexian Brothers Provincial Archives, 3040 Salt Creek Lane, Arlington Heights, IL 60005. The telephone number is 847-463-8912 and web site: www.alexianbrothers.org.

**Daughters of Charity Receive Grant to Document Catholic Education**

*By John Diefenderfer*

The Daughters of Charity Archives of the Northeast Province was awarded a Documentary Heritage Program grant by the New York State Archives to study the Daughters’ role in the history of Catholic education in New York State. The grant funds will be used to locate records pertaining to the thirty-two educational institutions in New York State operated and staffed by the Daughters of Charity from the mid-nineteenth-century to the present. A complete list of the schools, orphanages and other educational organizations is available from the Daughters of Charity Archives of the Northeast Province.

While the immediate goal of the project is to inventory diocesan records, the project also aims to identify any relevant Parish, community or private collections held by local parishes, schools, alumni associations, former students, and historical societies. If you know of any unpublished records related to these schools, please contact John Diefenderfer, the project director at 518-462-5593 or jdiefenderfer@dc-northeast.org

In addition to traditional elementary and secondary schools, the Daughters of Charity also provided educational services to mentally retarded and developmentally disabled children through innovative case management and residential programs. The survey will also locate records relating to these non-traditional educational settings.

The Archives of the Northeast Province of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent De Paul collects records pertaining to the activities of the Daughters in the northeastern United States and Canada. The approximately 1000 linear feet of records in the collection spans the history of the Daughters in the northeastern United States and Canada from the Nineteenth-Century through the present. In addition the, archives contain collections of materials relating to the history of the Daughters of Charity worldwide, including the foundation of the community in seventeenth-century France. For more information, please contact: Daughters of Charity Archives of the Northeast Province, phone 518-462-5593, fax 518-462-5357, email jdiefenderfer@dc-northeast.org, website www.dc-northeast.org.

**Holocaust Series Artwork: A New Exhibit at Manhattan College**

*By Amy Surak*

A collection of Holocaust series works of art by artist Marty J. Kalb went on display November 2 at the Manhattan College O’Malley Library.

Sponsored by the Manhattan College Holocaust Center and the Manhattan College Archives, the exhibit includes 20 charcoal-on-paper pieces by artist and Ohio Wesleyan professor Marty Kalb. The artwork includes representations of actual documented events and original contemporary photographs. Each image represents a unique event based on the factual and emotional tragedy of the Holocaust.

Each drawing is visually captivating and hauntingly poignant. The exhibit features the work “Treblinka” which presents a mass grave of silent bodies at the Polish extermination camp. This strangely beautiful piece reveals undulating human forms in a disquieted sea of chiaroscuro. “Expulsion” reveals two naked, emaciated individuals being cast away, echoing a long, sullied history of Jewish expulsion and drawing a biblical thread to man’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden. In “Killing Four Jews” the viewer is forced to stand in line with the executioner as a culpable bystander witnessing the murder of four innocents who hold hands in fright and solidarity. This evocative image shows two sinister assassins, pillars of ruthlessness, juxtaposed with distant innocents staring down the barrel of a gun.

Through creative and aesthetic means, the artwork compels the viewer to consider actual historical events.
thereby increasing an intellectual and emotional awareness. This exhibit, Kalb declares, “confronts the viewer with some of the worst instances of torture, suffering, and the industrialization of murder by a modern government for the sole purpose of killing Jews and ‘undesirables’.”

The exhibition, which runs until November 24th, held its kickoff on the evening of Tuesday, November 1st at 7:30pm with a lecture by visiting scholar and Duke history professor Claudia Koonz speaking on “How Racism Became Respectable: An Exploration of Nazi Public Culture.”

The Manhattan College Holocaust Resource Center was established in 1996 as a way to promote Catholic-Jewish dialogue and to educate people about the Holocaust and its significance for the present. For more information on Manhattan College’s Holocaust Resource Center, the Archives, the College and directions, please visit www.manhattan.edu.

Marquette University
By Mark G. Thiel

The Archives and Special Collection Department at Marquette University recently launched Native America Images, an online archive of 19-20th century pictures of native people and communities throughout the United States along with those of local Catholic parishes and schools and the clergy and religious who served there. In addition, Marquette’s Western Survey of Catholic Records about American Indians is well under way. Information from background research, questionnaires, and on-site repository visits is being compiled into an online guide, which is targeted for next summer. For more information on both projects, please see www.marquette.edu/library/information/news/fall05.

Mapparium Celebrates 70 Years, New Exhibit Opens
By Judy Huenneke

The Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston, is pleased to announce the 70th anniversary of the world-famous Mapparium, a stained glass globe of the world large enough to walk through. First opened in 1935, it was then and remains today the only architectural structure of its kind. The Mapparium is located in the building constructed in 1934 as the home of The Christian Science Publishing Society.

To help celebrate the anniversary, the Library opened an exciting new exhibit on the history and significance of the Mapparium, scheduled to run from September 29 through January 6, 2006. The exhibit contains artifacts, letters, and photographs, on display for the first time, from the remarkable construction and history of this attraction. Included in the exhibit is a 1941 memo discussing closing the Mapparium immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor and a 1966 letter discussing updating the world map.

On hand for the exhibit’s opening ceremony was Cynthia Friend, the daughter of the Mapparium’s architect, Chester Lindsay Churchill. Local television station Channel 5 and publisher Rand McNally are co-sponsors of the exhibit.

Visit www.marybakereddylibrary.org

Christian Archives in Southeast Asia
By Bob Shuster

Thirty-five people from 15 different organizations and seven countries met together in August to talk about preserving documents of the modern history of Asian Christianity. The workshop, titled, “Rescuing Asian Christian Heritage,” was held in Singapore and sponsored by the Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF; headquartered in that city) and Singapore Bible College (SBC). From August 24-25, participants listened to lectures; went through hand-on exercises on different aspects of archival work, and
networked with one another about their work and possible areas of cooperation. Dr. Tan Kang-San, director of research for OMF, gave a keynote on the importance of history for the Christian church and stressing the great growth in Asian Christianity in the last hundred years. He reminded the group that for many Christian congregations, this was the first generation, the starting point for the story of their fellowship. Mrs. Cindy S. Lu, director of the library of SBC, talked about doing oral history interviews in Southeast Asia and the special problems and opportunities it presented. Bob Shuster, archivist of the Billy Graham Center Archives in Wheaton, Ill., gave talks on basic archival management from beginning planning through appraisal, collection, description, arrangement, reference, outreach and preservation. The group also a field trip to see the Singapore National Archives, first class in both its staff and facilities.

Most of the individuals attending (from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, and the Philippines) were from nondenominational, para-church ministries and seminaries. Some were librarians or had had some archival training, but most had no formal training in archives, just an ardent desire to ensure that the stories of the past and current generations of Christians would be available to the next. Some had been collecting interviews and documents for years and others were just thinking about starting. Perhaps the most important aspect of the meeting was the encouragement the participants gave each other and the networking that began among them. As one participant wrote “This was time well spent.”

Bernardine Franciscan Sisters to Move Into New Facility

The Bernardine Franciscan Sisters, based in Reading, Pa. will be moving into new quarters in 2006. “I am excited about our archives because within a year we will have a completely new archives attached to our General Administration,” said Sister Rose Collette, OSF. “Our Motherhouse is under renovation and I have been displaced. The archives are presently stored in an unused chapel.”

Without an office, Sister Rose works as archivist from her home and has been very busy with two major projects. The first is the identification of thousands of photographs that are then placed in archival hanging files according to the same numbering system as the rest of the collection. The second project is the creation of a database in Microsoft Access that includes a complete listing of the Sisters’ ministries from the founding to the present. The database includes the name of every sister who ever missioned at Bernardine Franciscan Sisters. “It is a real challenge since sisters in the early days didn’t use surnames,” added Sister Rose. “I have completed the handwritten listing and am about halfway through the data entry.”

Presbyterian Historical Society Installs Compact Shelving

By Margery N. Sly

To better preserve and house its collections, the Presbyterian Historical Society is installing compact shelving at its Philadelphia office. The installation process began in August 2005 and will be completed by May 2006. The archival storage area which currently houses 23,000 cubic feet will be expanded by 48% to house 34,000 cubic feet.

Some of our archival holdings are being stored offsite and are therefore unavailable during this time. In addition, there may also be periods where some materials still within the building may be unavailable for research. Researchers are urged to contact us (refdesk@history.pcusa.org; 215-627-1852) before they plan a visit to the Philadelphia office to ensure that the material they need is available. Please note that materials described in the
We look forward to reporting on a successful installation at next year’s ARCS meeting in Washington, DC.

Staff Change

Mary Rita Grady, CSJ was appointed Archivist at Regis College, Weston, Massachusetts. She is succeeding Jeanne d’Arc O’Hare, who recently retired. Mary Rita Grady may be contacted at: Mary Rita Grady, CSJ, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Philosophy Emerita, Regis College, Weston, Mass.

Archivists of Religious Collections Section of the Society of American Archivists
Annual Meeting, August 19, 2005, 8:00 a.m.
Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel

Call to Order: ARCS Chair Diane Wells called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone to New Orleans and to the SAA Annual Meeting.

The Chair first recognized SAA Program Committee representative Michelle Light who discussed the program proposal process for the 2006 annual meeting in Washington D.C. (a joint meeting with NAGARA and COSHRC). Light said there would be no theme for the 2006 meeting but that the program would focus on government archives and settings. Given that focus, however, the committee hopes the program will emphasize the commonalities in practice and theory for archivists no matter the setting. Since the usual endorsement process will be suspended for the 2006 meeting, Light urged sections and roundtables to take more responsibility for putting together sessions, and she said the Program Committee plans to be more involved in the proposal process.

The Chair then thanked everyone who helped organize the ARCS reception at Loyola on August 17 including Darla Rushing and the archives staff. She also thanked Rob Sherer from Tulane University and his wife Carol who had volunteered to help with the reception at the ARCS meeting in Boston last year. She asked that volunteers willing to help organize a reception during the 2006 meeting in Washington D.C. contact her, Loretta Greene or any member of the ARCS Steering Committee.

The Chair then recognized Cheryl Beredo from the SAA Diversity Committee. Beredo said the Diversity Committee works to see that SAA serves all its constituents. The Committee has promoted scholarships, reviewed SAA educational offerings, and helped implement the requirements passed in 2004 that sections and roundtables report on diversity within their groups. Beredo also said the Committee is willing to assist ARCS if the section has questions about how to communicate better with all areas of SAA.

The Chair then introduced the ARCS Steering Committee members: Vice Chair/Chair Elect Loretta Greene, Representative-at-Large Nancy Taylor, Nominating/Election Committee Chair Dale Patterson, Newsletter Editor Wes Wilson, and Webmaster Mark Duffy. She said that Secretary Suni Johnson had resigned during the year and that Nancy Taylor had agreed to take minutes during the section meeting. She urged the audience to contact steering committee members with any comments or questions they might have about ARCS.

The Chair introduced the Member Survey form and asked attendees to fill out the form during the meeting. The steering committee uses the form to chart attendance at the ARCS annual meeting, to generate ideas for future section meeting programs, to solicit volunteers, and to update the ARCS directory. Mark Duffy said the survey is the principle way the steering committee has identified members willing to serve as ARCS officers and in other volunteer capacities. Duffy also told audience members that they could check their directory information on the ARCS website and email him after the meeting with any updates.

The Chair gave the Secretary’s report. She said minutes of the 2004 ARCS annual meeting had been
Dale Patterson gave the report of the Nominating/Election Committee. He asked the three nominees to stand: Vice Chair/Chair Elect candidate Gwynedd Cannan of Trinity Church in New York City, Secretary candidate Lisa Jacobson of the Maryknoll Mission Archives, and Representative-at-Large candidate Judy Huenneke of the Mary Baker Eddy Library. ARCS Chair Diane Wells asked for additional nominations from the floor. Hearing none, she moved that the proposed slate of candidates be accepted. The motion was seconded, and the candidates elected without dissent.

The Chair then called all new ARCS members and first time meeting attendees to stand.

The Chair announced that SAA Council Member Mark Duffy is the new Council liaison to ARCS, and Duffy gave the SAA Council Liaison Report. He asked meeting attendees to scan the draft of the SAA strategic visioning statement, pay attention to where their eyes stopped, and then consider why they stopped where they did and what that means. Comments on the statement may be directed to Duffy or to SAA Executive Director, Nancy Beaumont (with a copy to Duffy). Duffy said he thinks ARCS has something to say about diversity to SAA as a whole and that Council thinks that, too. Beginning in 2007, the endorsement process for program proposals will be slightly different with each group able to endorse only two proposals. For the 2005 meeting, some groups felt their ideas were not getting to the Program Committee. The two endorsement limit will still result in twice as many endorsed proposals as needed, but the hope is that all involved will give appropriate weight to the endorsements. Duffy said there is a new awareness on SAA Council to be inclusive. However, he had heard that nine religious archivists submitted applications to serve on SAA committees last year and that only one was appointed. The SAA president is now required to report diversity counts for the appointment process. Duffy said he is unclear about how the nominating process works. ARCS member Elisabeth Whitman has served on the SAA Nominating Committee, and she suggested we find out more about how the process works by talking with Elizabeth Adkins, the vice president/president elect of SAA.

The Chair then introduced Shelly Kelly who reported on the Sister M. Claude Lane award. The award, funded and sponsored by the Society of Southwest Archivists, is awarded by SAA to recognize significant contributions to the field of religious archives. It is named for Sister M. Claude Lane, one of the founding members of SSA and a longtime archivist at the Catholic Archives of Texas. The 2005 Sister M. Claude Lane award winner is Bill Sumners. Kelly urged audience members to nominate individuals for the 2006 award by using the nomination form on the SAA website.


Newsletter editor Wes Wilson reported that The Archival Spirit has been available online for one year and that submissions dropped off slightly during the last year. Paper copies of the newsletter are now mailed only to people who do not have Web access. He asked for comments from the audience about the newsletter and about the new delivery system. He received compliments on the look of the last issue. He urged audience members to submit newsletter articles about publications, projects, and other relevant topics and said the online format makes including photographs much easier. Someone asked if there is a budget to cover the cost of mailing paper copies. Chair Diane Wells said she has been mailing copies at her expense to six or seven members who had previously indicated they had no Web access and that ARCS prefers that members with Web capability access the newsletter online. Mark Duffy suggested that we mount The Archival Spirit in PDF format on the website so that it is easier to print.

Mark Duffy reported on the ARCS website and directory. He has made about 25 changes to directory information during the year. He raised the question for the steering committee about whether ARCS should develop the directory as a resource for “outsiders” by including, for example, information on institutions. He said he would like help maintaining the directory, and several people volunteered: Mark Meade, Merki Baroni, Sister Franciscia Eiken, Elizabeth Scott, Roberta Doelling, and Norman Dizon.

Dale Patterson reported on the ARCS listserv, a vehicle for ARCS members to share concerns and stay connected. ARCS members may join through the ARCS website; Patterson will email a member if the
member requests to join the listserv and is not listed in the ARCS directory. Also, if audience members include their email address on the Membership Survey form, they will be added to the ARCS listserv unless they request otherwise.

New Business:

Margery Sly, a new member of the SAA Committee on Education, said the committee is looking for ideas for pre-conference workshops, and audience members with ideas or comments should contact her directly. Someone asked about the availability of portable ways of learning like videotapes. Sly said she would take the idea to the committee.

The Chair said SAA Council has requested a 500 word statement on how technology is affecting ARCS. Wells said members would have a chance to send comments on this subject via the listserv and asked for a volunteer to coordinate and collate the information.

The Chair announced that ARCS member Jac Treanor would be named an SAA Fellow this year.

Program:

Vice Chair Loretta Greene moderated the program portion of the meeting, a discussion of the future directions of ARCS. Greene asked attendees what they would like the section to provide for them. The following suggestions were made from the floor:

- Mount a list of groups of religious archivists, dates of meetings, events, links and contact information on the website [Lori Vodden of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria volunteered to help coordinate the compilation of information about groups of religious archivists.]
- Revamp the Membership Survey form so suggestions could be anonymous
- Compile a list of archivists of Jewish collections
- Have the section act as a source of inspiration and energy to overcome the drudgery of archival work
- Sponsor a publication award
- Assist with networking for male archivists of Catholic collections
- Assist with outreach to church historians and to archivists working with religious collections at non-religious institutions
- Pool information about where workshops for church constituents are being taught by denominational archivists
- Add the ARCS newsletter editor to the mailing lists of relevant organizations connected to the work of ARCS and its members
- Feature testimonials about how individuals got into archival work in the newsletter
- Organize workshops or discussions about outreach and promotion activities—what is working and what is not: for example, Friends groups
- Facilitate an SAA publication proposal for a new book on religious archives

Chair Diane Wells thanked all the participants and attendees. She presented the ARCS gavel to incoming chair Loretta Greene, and the meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Nancy J. Taylor, Secretary
ARCS Steering Committee Representative-at-Large and acting Secretary

Archivists of Religious Collections Section Officers

Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect: Gwynedd Cannan of Trinity Church in New York City
Chair: Loretta Zwolak Greene, Sisters of Providence Archives
Secretary: Lisa Jacobson of the Maryknoll Mission Archives
Past Chair/Nominating Committee: Diane Wells, Episcopal Diocese of Olympia (Wash.)
Representatives-at-Large: Nancy J. Taylor, Presbyterian Historical Society; Judy Huenneke of the Mary Baker Eddy Library
Newsletter Editor: Wesley W. Wilson
Editor's Notes

*The Archival Spirit* is published three times a year by the Archivists of Religious Collections Section of the Society of American Archivists. Feature pieces as well as announcements of acquisitions and projects are welcome. Send submissions to: Wesley W. Wilson at wwwilson@depauw.edu.

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