

ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT ROUNDTABLE ANNUAL MEETING - AUGUST 14, 2013

The meeting commenced at 5:16 with Mott Linn welcoming everyone. He then introduced Beth Kaplan, our liaison to Council, who gave us a summary of Council's recent activities.

After congratulating us for having written and approved our bylaws, Beth reported that SAA has a new strategic plan to guide us for the next 3 to 5 years. The Strategic Plan has been posted on the SAA website, and comments are still being taken. Advocacy is the first goal in the Strategic Plan. To that end, an Advocacy and Public Policy Committee has been established.

Council has adopted a set of principles and priorities for continuously improving the annual meeting. This came out of the Annual Meeting Task Force. It's encouraging that the Council accepted and intends to act on the recommendations of the Annual Meeting Task Force.

The Communications Task Force just concluded its work and the Council accepted its recommendations and will be implementing those.

Other topics in the Strategic Plan include enhancing professional growth, advancing the field, dissemination of knowledge, and meeting members' needs, or trying to make SAA what its members want it to be.

There is opportunity for the Archives Management Roundtable to think about how our work aligns with those goals. If any ideas arise from this group about things that we'd like to do this year, let the Council know.

Mott thanked Beth for her summary, then introduced the theme of the Program portion of the meeting, "Show Me the Money: Fundraising Basics for Archivists." While it's important for archivists to know the basics of fundraising, fundraising is not often taught in archives programs, nor talked about in archival professional meetings. The speakers at the meeting, representing a variety of institutions, gave their own advice, garnered from years of experience. Themes included why it is important for an archive to expand its number of donors, methods for growing a donor base, ways to keep donors engaged, and how to interact with a Friends group.

Gerrienne Schaad, director of Dickinson Research Center at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, convinced the group that "Everyone's a donor! (They just don't know it yet)."

The main bullet points were:

- 1) Have an Elevator Speech prepared that takes 90 seconds or less. Sometime you know who you're talking to, and you can tailor your speech to their interests. If you don't know who your audience is, and don't know who or what they know, be prepared to tell them what you do and why it is important. Even if they may not be able to offer anything themselves, they can tell someone else who is in a position to become a donor.
- 2) Have small projects to offer that can be completed for \$3000 to \$5000, such as hire a student for a summer or finish a project. That amount is affordable for many people, and the projects can usually be completed quickly. Then write to the donor at the completion of the project, tell them what was accomplished, and perhaps they'll be inspired to give you more money.

3) Social media reaches a lot of people. People with collections can become aware of your institution through social media programs like History Pin and local tourism apps. Think outside the box to draw in donations of items for your collection, money to process, or even the time of volunteers or docents. Just to find a way to get the word out.

Question — How do you fight the perception that their donation will sit for five years before it's used? You can't say "if you don't give, will sit for five years" because that may turn people off.

Answer - - Know your donors; talk and listen, and gear your answers to them.

Question — How large was your most successful 'get'; what size of collections, and what types of organizations does this work with?

Answer - - Personal papers, business records.

Question — Do you create publicity packet to hand out to donors?

Answer - - no, Development offices at universities do that type of thing, but at her museum, there is a huge variety of folks who come in so one size does not fit all.

Question — Do you have an understanding with your development officer about what you can do?

Answer - - actually, Gerri has more experience at fundraising than the museum's current development officer (whose experience is in Athletics, which is very different from museums), so there has been little that he can contribute towards her particular needs.

Comment — One member's university has an advisory committee of librarians, archivists and staff members to advise the development officer of their needs because they are so different than other constituents within the university.

Answer - - it is true that development officers may have different standards for different constituents; perhaps the development officer is not interested in obtaining small donations because he is unaware of how useful even a small donation can be. The more you can educate the development officer to your needs, the better.

Maija Anderson, Head of Historical Collections and Archives, Oregon Health & Science University, told the group to "Just Say Yes: Raising Private Funds for Digitization Projects"

The main bullet points were:

- 1) Leave negativity in the office and learn creative ways to say "yes, if..." rather than "no, because...". There are lots of sources of money out there for digitization. Most people have heard of the public programs to fund processing and digitization projects for archives. While they can offer big awards, the competition can be tight, and the restrictions can be stringent. But there are many private sources, like individuals, businesses, and private non-profits, with money to offer. Donors can be engaged with your mission and matched to appropriate projects.

2) With private donors, you have flexibility on how to structure your project and target the collections you want to pitch. Private funding can be a great option for supporting collections that are of local or specialized interest (which are less likely to be attractive to public agencies), and you can structure your project in almost any way that works best for you, your donor and financial overseers.

Maija offered a case study of a privately funded archival processing project performed at Univ. of Chicago's Special Collections Research Center from 2005-2010: Hyde Park Historical Society Collection, a heavily-used collection consisting of 189 linear feet of mostly unprocessed material dated 1830-2009, related to the development of the university neighborhood. There was a decades-old agreement that the center would provide space and reference and access and services, but that the collection would remain the property of the Society. Not surprisingly, there was no provision for who would pay for or provide the processing. Periodically the Society asked why their collection had no finding aid, no acid-free boxes, and how it could be better organized. The Collection always replied that there was limited staff time and resources to spend on a collection that they didn't own.

When the Society appointed an energetic liaison for their archives program who was interested in having the collection processed, rather than saying, "No, because...", the center said "Yes, if..." and presented a one-page proposal that established a time line and a budget for doing basic MPLP processing of the collection, accounting for staff time (a graduate student) with Center-provided archival supervision. They were pleasantly surprised when the Volunteer raised the five-figure budget amount within several months. The project was completed on time and on budget. Open houses were held throughout the project so donors could see the progress, and then to celebrate its completion. After the success with this project, the Center applied the same model to other unprocessed collections that had been deposited with them, successfully. The donors were impressed with how quickly the work got done; they loved meeting the archivist and the student and the fact that they had created a job for a student, and they loved the final product and having the EAD finding aid available online.

Maija said that archivists who are new to fundraising and who are uncomfortable asking for money should know that no donors were ever offended by being told that it would take money to process their collections.

Maija then told about a second case study, for a digitization project in 2010, where she worked at the Health Historical Collections and Archives at Oregon Health and Science University, Portland, Oregon. Fundraising was an expectation of the position. A faculty member was interested in the development of Starr-Edwards Heart Valve, the first successful artificial heart valve, which had been developed at their medical school from 1958-1960. He discovered the charitable arm of Edwards Life Sciences, which was founded by one of the co-inventors of the Starr-Edwards heart valve. The faculty member pushed for her to apply for it, so she drew up a proposal for a small digitization project which also contained a processing component, focused on photographs and artifacts related to the Starr-Edwards valve. She fitted the proposal to the parameters of the Edwards Life Sciences Fund, focusing on Edwards as a businessman and on the value of the collection to educate the public about the history of cardiology, and she received the grant. She then worked with an archivist and a student worker to execute the project over a six month period.

Tips and lessons learned:

- 1) Everyone's a donor or a future donor; everyone you encounter represents an opportunity, so forget preconceived notions of what a donor looks like, who has how much money or who may be interested in your institution.
- 2) Make the project meaningful to the donor. Start with the donor rather than the project: look for any meaningful collections that need processing and digitizing, and then ask the people who are clamoring to use the collections if they have any ideas on how they can help to raise the money to make that happen.
- 3) Eliminate jargon and technical language from the dialogue that you have with donors. Be clear about what you're going to do with their money (e.g., "organize and preserve", rather than "process" or "arrange and describe") so they understand what they're paying for.
- 4) Realize that what's important about the project to you may not be interesting or impressive to the donor. Pitch the project so you will accomplish your goals, but make the donor's wish the grand finale.
- 5) Take the lead in defining the project. Explain what is possible to the donor; give them a well-scoped project proposal so the limits are defined. Integrate the donor's ideas to make them feel included, but if additional requests are getting expensive or are becoming outlandish, you can point to the proposal. Rather than saying "no" to the new requests, say "yes, we can add this to the project if you can help us to raise the additional funds." Be clear about the expected outcomes with your donors to avoid misperceptions about who is in charge and what is going to be done. Donors can become involved by consulting with them on the content of the collection, and have them help you plan events and communicate to constituents.
- 6) Cover your bases with administrators and development staff to ensure that you are following the correct financial procedures and policies for your institution, and to ensure that whatever relationship you establish with a donor is in coordination with any other existing relationship that your institution is trying to cultivate; you are not competing with them.
- 7) Find your own donors; don't expect the Development Officer to find them for you.

To summarize, fundraising from private sources is a flexible way to raise money for processing and digitization projects that are meaningful to your institution. Be creative in how you design projects so you can present appealing opportunities to potential donors that engage your donors in the process, not by letting them run the show, but by honoring the passion and knowledge that drives them to support your archives.

Question — How do you explain to private donors the concept of a dean tax or administrative overhead costs, that not all of the money is going to go to the archives?

Answer - - let the donor know that X% will be knocked off the top; it's not your policy but you have to acknowledge it. In planning a project, add that money into the budget to offset the amount being withheld by the university.

Question — Do you have any tips on educating the Development Officer?

Answer - -perfect your elevator speech, construct a dog-and-pony show for sites tours, or a targeted 'exhibit' of items of interest. Development needs to know that a lot of your budget comes from donations, and that they can be an open door if Development wants to bring a donor in.

Gerri also inserted that you can offer the Development Office resources such as photographs; make yourself known to be a resource for them. Collaborations may lead to other donors. Our Development officer may take along a special collections person to an alumni group to raise interest.

Question — Do you or your boss set goals for projects?

Answer - - yes, there may be goals that says that some particular projects won't go forward without funding (e.g., a speaker series which is almost 100% funded by donations), but not for processing or digitization projects.

Question — Crowdfunder funding for archival projects?

Answer - - one library is considering it, e.g. "Sponsor a Journal Subscription" or chip in to purchase a book.

Mott Linn, Head of Collection Management, Clark University, said that "It is Good to have Friends: The Basics of Working with Friends Groups."

Knowing about Friends groups is important for archivists because most groups interact with archives and special collections areas because they often have the material that is most interesting to the benefactors.

Friends of the library: a group of people from a community who come together to support the library.

There are different kinds of communities (academic or geographic), different kinds of support that a Friends group can bring in, and there may be different areas of support within the library, e.g. just supporting Special Collections within a library, or supporting the whole library without restriction.

Knowing about Friends groups is useful whether the Friends support just your group, or if you're managing up to your bosses, you can make suggestions.

When considering the establishment of a Friends group, one thing to do is to calculate a cost- benefit analysis, or figuring out how many resources you'll be able to get out of it, versus how many resources you put into it – resources of both money and time. Friends groups often don't raise enough money for all of the resources that are put in to keep them operational, so what do you get back?

Aside from money, Friends groups can provide volunteers, advice, and marketing, which includes the areas of public relations and advocacy. Any given Friends group might provide any combination of those things. It's up to you to decide what your priorities are, and what you think can be provided by your particular group. As managers of archives, setting priorities and goals is something we do routinely. With a Friends group, you decide what you wish them to accomplish, and proceed from there.

Advocacy model – This is a Friends group who just provides advice. These Friends are people, usually alumni, who care about the library and who go on to be library directors, library consultants, etc. They usually come together once or twice a year to discuss the issues of the library. They provide a way to bounce ideas off of people who have informed opinions. This model is not very widespread, so we won't discuss it further.

Once your basic goal has been established, you need to create your objectives, which should be realistic, not difficult to achieve, and quantifiable. Then you need to determine how to accomplish them? For example, if your goal is to increase your membership, one possible objective might be that you want “to increase membership by 200 people during this fiscal year.” Thus, you have a timeframe and a specific number to aim for; these types of goals are much more likely to be achieved because you have something tangible to shoot for.

Another important aspect is the budget, because you're putting money in and expecting money back out. One of the real benefits of money raised by Friends groups is that it can be spent however they wish it to be spent, without being restricted by unrelated administrators. They can raise funding for a project that would not be in the budget otherwise.

Membership is the lifeblood of the group. To some extent, a large membership in and of itself is important, and it's impressive to possible donors, foundations, and administrators. As a result, you have to set dues with different ranges. You need to have some low tiers so that many people can join, but you also need to have higher tiers, which offer more prestige at higher donor levels. There should be some benefits to becoming a Friends member, such as offering special tours, events, borrowing privileges, more benefits.

How do you increase membership? You do outreach through a variety of ways: word of mouth, brochures, bookmarks, calendars, posters, banners, social media and mass media. Presenting programs to the public can also be ways to reach new members. You can target local organizations like book clubs. Make it easy on people to join, like enabling them to sign up at any time they discover the Friends group, rather than just at one time. Keep in touch with members through newsletters and social media. Have activities with a broad appeal to different constituents, such as a program with an author. If you hold a fundraiser, get the Friends to contribute labor. Other ways to raise money are to hold an auction, raffle, dinner, or used book sale.

Volunteers are very useful because they're free labor, but you need to recruit them, allow for time to interact with them, to manage them through training and feedback. Just as you acknowledge donors with a letter of acknowledgement, you need to acknowledge your volunteers somehow (e.g., add their name on a list in your annual report or give them a specialty shirt).

Marketing – almost every part of the Friends public exposure is a marketing opportunity that you can take advantage of. Try to think of ways to get yourself publicized in the news or on air. Advocacy is also a part of marketing—get the Friends talking to their friend about the needs of the archives or parent organization, or conducting something like a letter-writing campaign. Finally, because there are many Friends groups, you can take advantage of ideas that others have developed; there are plenty of resources for fundraising.

Question — Do you create Bylaws for Friends groups?

Answer - - yes, and that can be handy if the Friends group goes rogue.

Question — Are there any places with defunct Friends groups?

Answer - - yes; several examples were given of places with Friends groups that were deemed unnecessary or not worth the investment.

Question — How can you make a Friends group self-sustaining?

Answer - - if you change your expectations about what you'll be getting from them, if not money, then maybe publicity, volunteer time, or advocacy, then maybe that's enough.

Comment — I feel that there is a generational divide. With an aging cohort, many Friends groups literally die out. Do we need to reinvent a Friends group for a younger cohort?

Comment — Sometimes it depends on the administrative structure on whether to maintain a Friends group or not. In one instance, a Friends group was recreated more as an honorary society that requires service as well.

Comment — 501C3 – IRS/governance compliance issues may complicate the existence of Friends groups as well.

To conclude the Presentation portion of the meeting, Mott thanked everyone for attending and contributing, and moved into the Business portion of the meeting.

BUSINESS MEETING

The business meeting began at 6:35. The results of the recent election were given.

Mott Linn – Chair, 3rd and final term

Sherry Williams – Vice chair

Ann Case – Secretary

Linda Whitaker – elected to Steering Committee

Susan Malbin – elected to Steering Committee

Lynn Eaton – elected to Steering Committee

Daria D'Arienzo – returning on Steering Committee

Kate Crowe – returning on Steering Committee

Mott reported on the activities of the Archives Management Roundtable in the past year:

- 1) By-laws were drawn up and submitted last fall
- 2) We shepherded through guidelines for interlibrary loan of Special Collections materials (created by RBMS/ACRL), recommending that they be sent to the Steering Committee, then onto SAA for approval. The guidelines are posted on the Standards webpage
- 3) We endorsed two proposals for this SAA meeting, "Successful Succession Planning" and "Roadmaps to Success"; both were chosen and are on the current schedule. Others that we liked were picked up by other groups.

Our task now is to generate management-related ideas for proposals for next year's meeting. Next year's sessions will be 60-75 minutes, in any format (Lightning Rounds included).

Some topics raised were:

- Leadership Tools – a session on tools that leaders should have, e.g. interaction tools to use with other people, leadership interaction with other organizations and consortia, how to prepare yourself to be the director of an organization.
- Change Management – how do you deal with having to manage up; management in times of restructuring -- how do you keep working while restructuring?; how do you restructure as the surrounding environment changes?
- Success moments in a lightening round format
- Management tips and tricks
- In conjunction with SNAP roundtable, discuss questions like “what do you wish you had known/what would you tell your manager?” If you're the “new boss in town” (in charge of new departments, as digitization specialists may be), how do you work with personnel in a new environment?
- How can we harness people in other departments (e.g., IT staff, digitization specialists, development officers) to act as adjunct Special Collection staffers?

Summarizing the general topics, the major themes raised were Leadership, Personnel/Talent Development, Shared positions, Reorganization.

Internships were discussed. A new management approach is to see internships as Tour of Duty training: since interns are short-term staff, train them properly to get what you can out of them while they're there. If it's a good experience, the interns will spread the word and your organization will benefit from the positive publicity. Conversely, students need to know what they should be looking for in an internship. Also, what is the educator's perspective on what should be accomplished in an internship? While the goal of the internship for the student is to obtain work experience, managers ought to provide them with a good, wide, practical experience base to help them along. The interns are the future of the profession; give them the best possible training. This led to a suggestion that we might consider a session on how to manage interns, volunteers, and work-study students.

As we were at the end of our allotted time, Mott urged Archives Management Roundtable members to use the listserv to discuss and share ideas. It's not being used very often, and it does provide a wonderful outlet and audience for people who have shared interests and experience.

Attending:

Mott Linn
Ann Case
Gerrienne Schaad
Maija Anderson
Sherry Williams
Daria D'Arienzo
Virginia W. Davis

Becky Schulte
Linda Whitaker
Pam Sergey
Beth Kaplan
Joe Ross
Janet Parsch
Stephen Logsdon

Cynthia Ghering
Nicole Casper
Florent Hardy
Melinda Isler
Mary Manning
Susan Malbin
Ravil Veli
Ann Hodges
Karen Weiss
Chris Ervin
Lydie Gnessougou
Rachel Binnington
Christine Di Bella
Travis Williams
Caryn Radick
Jordan Steele
Bill Modrow
Karen Cannell
Gordon Daines
Frances Maloy
Dierdre Joyce
Sarah Keen

Dan Shiman
Laura McLemore
Kevin Clair
Robert Rosenthal
Meg Hall
Peggy Lavelle
Grant Gerlich
Nicole Menchise
Erin Passehl-Stoddart
Elizabeth Wilkinson
Rachel Miller
Lisa Miller
Katherine Crowe
Rosemary Flynn
Lisa Mix
José Reyes
Adonna Thompson
Pamela Cruz
Marilyn Rackley
Lynn Eaton
Nicole Blechynden
Jennifer Hecker

Respectfully submitted,

Ann E. Smith Case
Secretary