

# The Archival Spirit

December 2020

## From the Chair

Greetings!

A big thanks is owed to all ARCS members for enduring through an eventful and trying year, and I extend my appreciation for your support as we plan for 2021.

This year's newly elected ARCS Steering Committee officers include:

- Tim Binkley as Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect
- Elaine Nadeau as Secretary
- Mary Kosta as Member-at-Large

Returning officers include myself, succeeding Taffey Hall (now Chair-Emeritus), and Erin Louthen, continuing as a Member-at-Large of the Steering Committee. Additionally, Thomas McCullough continues to exercise a yeoman-like service to all members of ARCS through his editorial work on *The Archival Spirit* and as web liaison with the SAA.

The annual section meeting "Assisting Researchers for Publication," held virtually this past July, was well-attended beyond my own expectations, and I am thankful for the voluntary contributions by our panelists Elise Reynolds, Tim Binkley, Mac Ice, Susan Illis, Erin Louthen, and Kayla Harris. These six professionals embody years of experience in archival field work navigating their roles through diverse responsibilities at unique institutions.

For 2021, Tim Binkley will shoulder the primary responsibilities for the topics and themes discussed at ARCS meetings. Although we hope to be able to hold a national meeting in-person in connection with the planned SAA meeting in Anaheim, California, we recognize that all plans must remain tentative. Tim has great enthusiasm for growing the vitality of our section's member engagement, and more virtual opportunities might be planned throughout the new year. ARCS members interested in participating in virtual engagement events should contact Tim at [binkleyt@berea.edu](mailto:binkleyt@berea.edu).

Please consider reaching out to Thomas McCullough regarding venues for publicizing archival news or accomplishments from your own repositories and institutions. Thomas can be reached at [tom@moravianchurcharchives.org](mailto:tom@moravianchurcharchives.org).

As always, the ARCS community on SAA Connect functions as our membership's primary hub for awareness and engagement through inquiry, information, and resource sharing. Make sure to subscribe to updates through your SAA profile and designated email at <https://mysaa.archivists.org/mygroups>.

Adam G. Winters, PhD  
2020–2021 ARCS Chair  
Archivist, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary  
Louisville, Kentucky

## Table of Contents

1	Letter from the Chair
2	Call for Nominations: Sister M. Claude Lane, O.P., Memorial Award
	Update on 2021 Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious (ACWR) Conference
3	World Student Christian Federation Geneva Office Records Now Open to Research
4	Digital Exhibit: Empowered by the Word
5	Developing a Low Barrier Online Exhibit with Religious Special Collections
6	Historic Quaker Treasures Added to Unprecedented Digital Archival Effort
7	Launch of ARCC Symposium Series

Follow ARCS on SAA Connect! Follow ARCS on Facebook!

## Call for Nominations: Sister M. Claude Lane, O.P., Memorial Award

The Sister M. Claude Lane, O.P., Memorial Award recognizes an individual who has made a significant contribution to the field of religious archives. Created in 1974 by SAA, the award is funded by the Society of Southwest Archivists (SSA), and is named for the first professionally trained archivist at the Catholic Archives of Texas in Austin, who served from 1960 until her death in 1974. A cash prize is provided by SSA.

Selection criteria include:

- ⇒ Involvement and work in SAA's Archivists of Religious Collections Section;
- ⇒ Contributions to archival literature that relates to religious archives;
- ⇒ Participation and leadership in religious archives organizations; and/or
- ⇒ Evidence of leadership in a specific religious archives.

Self-nominations are accepted and encouraged!)

Learn more, and submit your nomination here:

<https://www2.archivists.org/governance/handbook/section12-lane>.

**Deadline:**  
February 28, 2021

Submit your nomination [here](#).



## Update on 2021 Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious (ACWR) Conference

After listening to our members' feedback, the ACWR Board has decided that the entire triennial ACWR Conference 2021 will be virtual only. We will cancel our in-person reservations in Charlotte, NC, for Fall 2021. ACWR will move forward with a call for session proposals in early 2021, and we are currently planning to offer conference attendees both weekly live sessions on Thursdays in September as well as access to recorded sessions through our ACWR website. Stay tuned to our Facebook page for further updates and special announcements about this new endeavor for us!

Enclosed are links for our Facebook page and website:

- ⇒ <https://www.facebook.com/acwrarchivists/>
- ⇒ <https://www.archivistsacwr.org>

*This update was kindly provided by Veronica Buchanan, ACWR Executive Secretary.*

## Get involved in *The Archival Spirit*

Those interested in submitting articles or announcements for inclusion in *The Archival Spirit* are encouraged to contact Thomas J. McCullough, newsletter editor, at [tom@moravianchurcharchives.org](mailto:tom@moravianchurcharchives.org).



**Pictured:** Women attendees of the 1905 WSCF conference in Zeist, the Netherlands. Ruth Rouse is seated in the center. World Student Christian Federation Geneva Office records (RG 46F), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

## World Student Christian Federation Geneva Office Records Now Open to Research

**ELIZABETH M. PETERS**, Project Archivist  
World Student Christian Federation Records  
Divinity Library Special Collections, Yale University  
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

The Yale Divinity School Library is pleased to announce the opening of the World Student Christian Federation Geneva Office records ([RG 46F](#)), processed by Elizabeth M. Peters, Project Archivist. The records include reports and publications, correspondence, administrative records, and materials relating to affiliated national student Christian movements and collaborating secular and ecumenical organizations. The World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) is a global ecumenical federation of student Christian groups, founded in 1895 by North American evangelist and global ecumenist John R. Mott. From the inception of the WSCF until about 1940, Mott was the primary person concerned with the archives of the organization. In the fall of 1940, he decided to deposit his WSCF collection in the Yale Divinity School Library. Those materials were catalogued by Ruth Rouse, and now constitute the World Student Christian Federation records ([RG 46](#)). The remaining records from the WSCF were kept at the organization's international headquarters in Geneva until 2018, when they were transferred to join the Mott collection at YDS. This transfer also included the Ruth Rouse papers ([RG 313](#)), Suzanne de Diétrich papers ([RG 314](#)), and Frontier Internship in Mission records ([RG 317](#)), all of which are now open to research. You can find these new finding aids and all other Yale archival collections at [archives.yale.edu](http://archives.yale.edu).

## Digital Exhibit: *Empowered by the Word*

**ANDREW REA, Archives Director**  
Society of the Divine Word, Chicago Province  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

[The Archives of the Chicago Province of the Society of the Divine Word](#) is pleased to announce its new digital exhibit, [Empowered by the Word: 125 Years of the Society of the Divine Word in North America](#).

Founded by St. Arnold Janssen, the Society of the Divine Word has more than 6,000 members worldwide who serve the spiritual and social needs of people in 80 countries. The congregation is the largest Roman Catholic order to focus on missionary work.

On Oct. 15, 1895, Brother Wendelin Meyer SVD landed in New Jersey and began selling Catholic magazines to German-speaking immigrants. Since then, Divine Word Missionaries have been champions of racial equality and trailblazers in religious intercultural living.

*Empowered by the Word* includes information about the 1920 opening of Mississippi's Sacred Heart Seminary, the first Catholic seminary specifically for African-American men; the foundation of ministries with immigrants in Canada; the welcoming of Vietnamese refugees during the 1970s and '80s; and the missionaries' impact in Appalachia's poorest communities.

Please contact Chicago Province Archivist [Andrew Rea](#) with any questions or comments.

**Pictured below:** Fr. Joseph Eckert, SVD poses with a group of recently baptized parishioners outside of St. Elizabeth's Parish in Chicago (1920s).



## Developing a Low Barrier Online Exhibit with Religious Special Collections

JILLIAN EWALT, HENRY HANDLEY, & KAYLA HARRIS  
Marian Library, University of Dayton  
DAYTON, OHIO

In a typical year, the Marian Library -- a special library at the University of Dayton that documents the Blessed Virgin Mary -- welcomes over 5,000 visitors from the campus and the community to *At the Manger*, its annual exhibit of nativity sets, also known by the French term "crèche." The exhibit normally features about 50 crèches from the Library's collection of over 3,600. 2020, however, is anything but a typical year. This year, with the closure of public galleries, staffing challenges, and increased safety measures, archivists and librarians developed a virtual exhibit instead. The virtual exhibit, *On Paper: Nativity Imagery in the Marian Library*, features images from across the Marian Library's special collections and is paired with remote programming to engage students and the public.

While the crèche collection, which includes nativity sets from over 100 countries, is the Marian Library's most publicly recognized collection (it was featured on [CBS Sunday Morning](#) last year), the library also houses rare books, periodicals, personal papers, holy cards, stamps, and an extensive circulating book collection. Many

of these special collections materials are visually rich, global in focus, and often under-utilized in exhibits. The crèche collection has typically been center stage in the annual *At the Manger* holiday exhibit, but this year was the perfect opportunity to think outside the box and feature materials from across the collections.



**Pictured:** *Christus Recens Natvs*, hand-colored holy card by F.D. Pillot, circa 1820, Paris, France, Marian Library, Auguste Martin Collection, ML.028-24.



**Pictured:** *Nativity miniature from Book of Hours, use of Rome*, hand-colored engraving, printed by Pierre Viduoue, 1523, France, Marian Library Rare Books Collection.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had several impacts on the Marian Library's exhibit program. The Marian Library's two exhibit spaces, which are normally free and open to the public, have both been temporarily closed. Like many institutions, the pandemic also brought financial challenges to the University of Dayton and, in addition to several staff furloughs (who have now thankfully returned) the Marian Library lost its Curatorial Assistant position. This staff position had a critical role in providing support for *At the Manger* and oversaw the 20 volunteers who did much of the groundwork. The closure of exhibit spaces and the loss of a critical position were both challenges that the library continues to adapt to.

With limited staffing resources, closed gallery spaces, and increased workloads due to COVID-19 safety measures, librarians and archivists sought a low-barrier strategy for filling this exhibit gap during the holiday season. Additionally,

there was no funding or financial support for creating a digital exhibit. Staff selected the theme "paper" which was slated for a future *At the Manger* (and also an accessible theme when thinking about a special collection— most of which is on paper). Additionally, working with the theme of "paper" meant that some of the research and curatorial materials had already been compiled so staff didn't have to start from scratch. Librarians identified items that had already been digitized, including a collection of stamps that is available on eCommons, the University of Dayton's institutional repository, and a book of hours from 1523 that had been digitized in conjunction with a previous exhibit. Other items that had been

(continued on page 6)

(continued from page 5)

digitized for previous reference requests or outreach initiatives were also prioritized. Librarians filled in gaps by selecting a handful of additional items from the collection. There are a total of 22 images in the exhibit and 12 of those items were digitized specifically for that purpose.

The exhibit is designed in Scalar (a free online exhibit platform hosted by Alliance for Networking Visual Culture). Several staff members had experience working in this platform so there was little additional training needed.

In order to engage the public with the online content, librarians filmed a short curator talk video to highlight a few favorite items including paper crèches, stamps, and a book of hours. The curator talk was used to promote the exhibit to alumni and the public. Additionally, staff developed a co-curricular learning session for undergraduates. The session includes an asynchronous, active learning tutorial in which students learn more about the Marian Library, reflect on artifacts or images from their own religious or cultural traditions, and analyze an item from the exhibit.

While exhibits always require some resources, libraries can apply low-barrier strategies to make the process more approachable in times of limited resources and funding. In this case, using previously digitized images, a free online exhibit platform, and a collaborative approach allowed the Marian Library to provide a Christmas exhibit that fulfills community expectations while reducing the amount of resources and time needed.

The exhibit can be visited at: <https://scalar.usc.edu/works/on-paper-nativity-imagery-from-the-marian-library/index>

## Historic Quaker Treasures Added to Unprecedented Digital Archival Effort

CAROL SMITH, Archivist  
Christ Church Preservation Trust  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

18th-century manumissions and 17th-century burial records are among tens of thousands of early Quaker documents recently added to a major digitization project spearheaded by Christ Church Preservation Trust. Contributed by Haverford and Swarthmore Colleges, these records will be available to free online access for the first time.

The "Digitizing Philadelphia's Historic Congregational Records" project began two years ago, when the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) awarded a Hidden Collections grant to Christ Church Preservation Trust. The \$385,000 award -- funded by the Andrew Mellon Foundation -- allowed the Trust to digitize the records of eleven of Philadelphia's historic congregations, including the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, Gloria Dei, Christ Church, Mikveh Israel, the First, Second and Third Presbyterian Churches, St. Paul's and St. Peter's Episcopal Churches, St. George's Methodist Church and the First Baptist Church.

Since the spring of 2018, more than 60,000 records have been scanned at The Athenaeum of Philadelphia's [Regional Digital Imaging Center](#). Scholars will be able to access these documents through the American Theological Library Association's religion and theology digital collections portal and OPenn, the University of

(continued on page 7)

399  
 "he read but did not mention the Persons Name who signed it. The  
 Friend let him know that if he did quarter any Troops in our mee-  
 ting House it would be taken very unkind. he queried who kept  
 the Keys, and was informed that Friends could not deliver the Keys  
 and if he used it for that purpose he must take it by Force or break  
 it open -- On the 15<sup>th</sup> Inst. John Sad Howell called at the House  
 of another Friend, a Quarter Master Col  
 other person to quarter some Troops in the Worship Houses of this

**Pictured:** Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends in Philadelphia, 1771-1777, discussing the inhabiting of the Quaker meeting house by the Provincial Army. Accessible via [Philadelphia Congregations Early Records](#). View this specific page of the meeting minutes at <https://philadelphiacongregations.org/records/items/show/567#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=412&xywh=3234%2C89%2C4537%2C2111>.

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Pennsylvania Libraries Open Data Portal. Ranging from the late 17th century through 1870, these digital archives contain undiscovered portals into the relationship between religion and politics in colonial America.

“Unlike other major genealogical sites,” says Carol Smith, Archivist at Christ Church Preservation Trust, “this project makes research information free and easily accessible to an international audience.”

Before now, Philadelphia Quaker records in the collections of Haverford and Swarthmore Colleges were only available online through a commercial site.

“We were excited to be able to bring these records out from behind the paywall and make them more widely available,” says Pat O’Donnell, recently retired Archivist at Friends Historical Library. “This was really important to us.”

The Quaker records -- approximately 30,000 already completed scans -- consist of minutes of Quaker monthly and quarterly business meetings as well as documentation of births, deaths, marriages, burials, removals (transfers), and manumissions in the City of Philadelphia before about 1800. Historical highlights include manumission records -- such as a 1776 entry for Dinah, a formerly enslaved woman who saved Germantown’s Stenton from destruction by the British army. Documents also detail Quaker involvement in the American Revolution itself revealing both the “sufferings” of Friends due to their commitment to a peace testimony as well as their dealings with those members who were involved in the Conflict.

“These collections are part of the bedrock of the beginnings of Pennsylvania,” says Mary A. Crauderueff, Curator of Quaker Collections at Haverford College Libraries. Their inclusion in this digital portal makes them “accessible in a larger context alongside those of other historic congregations.”

Members of the public can participate in this effort to preserve and promote local history by transcribing these records, now available on one unified website at [www.philadelphiacongregations.org](http://www.philadelphiacongregations.org). Already accessi-

ble by researchers and genealogists, the collection will be of greater use once records are transcribed and searchable. More than a dozen transcribers have worked steadily through the pandemic on this effort.

The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, in partnership with the Digitizing Philadelphia’s Historic Congregational Records project team, is hosting [a transcription workshop](#) this fall. Volunteers can attend one or all four days of the free seminar -- via Zoom -- on September 14, 16, 21 or 23 at 10 a.m. Workshop leaders will review the project, share some of its archival finds, and teach basic transcription.

Please contact Carol Smith, Christ Church Archivist, with further questions at [csmith@christchurchphila.org](mailto:csmith@christchurchphila.org).

#### About Christ Church Preservation Trust

(CCPT): CCPT, a non-religious non-profit organization, was created in 1965 to ensure the maintenance and preservation of a campus of historic properties: Christ Church (founded 1695), Christ Church Neighborhood House (a community and artistic center), and the Christ Church Burial Ground, all located in the heart of Philadelphia’s historic district.

**About Friends Historical Library:** Friends Historical Library was established in 1871 to collect, preserve, and make available archival, manuscript, printed, and visual records concerning the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) from their origins mid-seventeenth century to the present. Located on the campus of Swarthmore College, this Library is one of the outstanding research facilities for the study of Quaker history. Besides the obvious focus, the holdings constitute a significant research collection for the regional and local history of the middle-Atlantic region of the United States and the history of American social reform.

**About Haverford College Libraries:** Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections collects, preserves, and makes available rare books, manuscripts, and the college archives. Materials include our world-renowned Quaker collections, which illuminate Quaker life, faith, and practice from the earliest days of the Society of Friends to the present, Haverford College records including both campus offices and student club materials, and family and person-

## Launch of ARCC Symposium Series

The Archival Resources for Catholic Collections (ARCC) Repository Working Group is pleased to share with you the website link for resources mentioned in the first talk of our inaugural Symposium Series: <https://archivalrcc.org/repository-working-group/>. Please visit this site to find:

- ⇒ A paper on the future of religious archives;
- ⇒ The results of the registration survey for the first talk;
- ⇒ The questions and answers for the first talk; and
- ⇒ A recording of the first talk.

We would like to thank Saint Mary's University of San Antonio, Texas for hosting ARCC's first public—and virtual!—webinar. Without their support, the presentation would not have been possible.

Over three hundred individuals from the United States, Canada, Europe and Oceania registered for the event. Registrants will be receiving a survey after the first week of December 2020 to provide feedback and suggestions for more focused ARCC educational presentations planned for 2021. We invite you to join our ARCC Google group to share your questions and ideas about our program! To join the group, please e-mail us at: [archivalrcc@gmail.com](mailto:archivalrcc@gmail.com).

*This announcement was kindly provided by Erin Louthen and Mary Grace Kosta.*