

The Archival Spirit

July, 2016

From the Chair

Hello everyone,

Summer is here and on a college campus that means quiet walks between buildings, frequent vacation notices to emails and lots of parking spaces. But more importantly, it means SAA and specifically, that the annual ARCS meeting is coming soon. If you have not registered yet, do not delay. SAA has made it so easy now that you can click through it in just a few minutes.

Be sure to note that ARCS will be meeting Friday, August 5, from 1:00-2:30 p.m. Denise Gallo is planning a terrific program with a panel to discuss Terry Cook's idea of a paradigm shift in which the archival *raison d'être* shifts from the preservation of evidence to the definition of community. She has lined up a panel of community and religious archivists who will consider possible intersections. It promises to be a lively discussion and we need all of you for audience interaction.

Following the program, we will hold the annual ARCS business meeting and elect a new vice-chair/chair-elect and member-at-large to the steering committee. Our candidates are Janet Hauck, university archivist at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington for the vice chair/chair-elect spot and two candidates for the steering committee, Dainan Skeem, curator of the 21st Century Mormon & Western Manuscripts collection at Brigham Young University and Melanie Maxwell,

records analyst at the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta. I encourage you to read their biographical information and statements on the ARCS site; they all very well qualified.

As has been the case for the past several years, ARCS will hold a post section meeting reception. This year Angelique Richardson is working to locate a downtown site for the reception that will be in easy walking distance of the meeting hotel, so plan to attend. It is a great way to catch up on what your colleagues at other religious repositories have been up to since 2015.

That is all for now. I hope to see you all in Atlanta. Be sure to send me a note if you are interested in getting more involved with ARCS. We always need volunteers to keep our section vital and growing.

Best wishes,

*Wes Wilson, Section Chair
DePauw University Archives
Greencastle, IN*

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SAA 2016 – Atlanta

Sr. M. Claude Lane, O.P., Award

The Sister M. Claude Lane, O.P, Memorial Award committee is pleased to announce Denise Gallo as this year's recipient. The purpose of this award is to recognize colleagues who have made significant contributions to the field of religious archives and Gallo's work amply meets this criteria. Provincial Archivist of the [Daughters of Charity](#) since 2012, she has provided exceptional leadership to the archivists affiliated with the Sisters of Charity Federation. Gallo convened a meeting of the thirteen Federation archivists sparking a commitment to collaboration. Gallo has also begun to create an American Vincentian Rule Variorum that compares and comments on the differences in the rule adopted by each of the Federation congregations. This project will enable interpretation and understanding of the common roots of the community. Gallo served as president of the Archivists of Congregations of Women Religious and is incoming chair of the Archivists of Religious Collections section.



Visiting the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Atlanta

Melanie Maxwell, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta



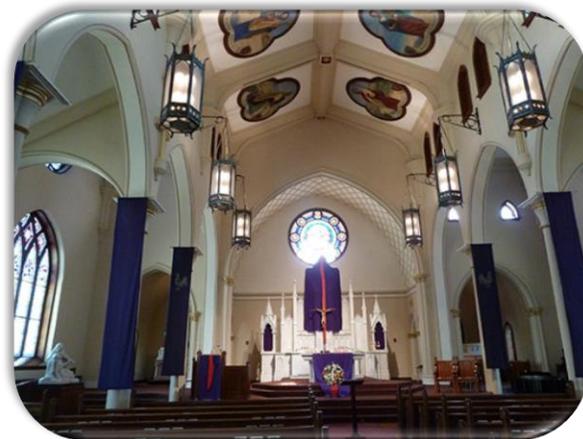
The Shrine has a smoky history, having escaped fire twice. Built in 1873, the current structure is one of the oldest buildings in the city. But there was an original wooden church on the same site that dates back to 1848. Simply called the Atlanta Catholic Church at the time, it was known for being one of the few buildings to survive the great burning of Atlanta during the Civil War. As the story goes, its pastor, Father Thomas O'Reilly, convinced the Union Army to spare his church along with several other churches

and nearby buildings, including Atlanta's first City Hall. Fr. O'Reilly's warning that Union soldiers would desert if ordered to destroy the church was apparently heeded. It did suffer some damage, however, and so construction of a new building began in 1869.

Father O'Reilly died in 1872, so he did not see its dedication a year later as the Church of the Immaculate Conception. He was buried in a crypt under the altar, however, likely as a tribute to his role in the early Catholic and community history of Atlanta. In 1883 a second priest, twenty eight year old Father Thomas Francis Cleary, was also buried in the crypt. Though only in the parish for two years, Fr. Cleary's early and tragic death from tuberculosis had made a strong impression. Time passed and the crypt passed out of the parish's collective memory. In 1954 the Church of the Immaculate Conception



Looking for a unique religious historical destination while in Atlanta for *ARCHIVES*RECORDS 2016*? If so, I'd like to suggest [the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception](#), Atlanta's first Catholic church. Continually located at its present site since the 1840s,—48 Martin Luther King Junior Drive SW—the Shrine is about one mile or 10 blocks away from the conference. A southbound #16 MARTA bus can reduce your foot travel considerably. During the week, mass is held at 12:30pm, and tours can be arranged by calling 404-531-1866 in advance. The Shrine also has a gift shop, but it is only open in conjunction with the 8:30am and 11:00am Sunday Masses.



was re-dedicated as a Shrine. But then again, in 1982, fire nearly destroyed the structure. Though severely damaged, it was still salvageable and in the course of renovation the long forgotten crypt with its two tombs was discovered. These are now preserved under glass at the main altar of the church, thus adding to the Shrine's interesting history.

From the Members

Dr. William Henry Jernagin is Recovered

I liken my archival career to that of Adam West's Batman. The dual identity of wealthy Bruce Wayne, socialite who used his influence during the day to cure the ills of society; concurrently, at night he donned a mask and cape transforming into Batman justice-provider aiding the police. I too have a dual identity. I work during the day in Beulah M. Davis Room as University Archivist saving materials from errand pen usage in the reference room. On the weekends, I conduct archival workshops for local churches who desire to preserve their collections. Since 2014 I had the pleasure of working with the Mount Carmel Baptist Church [MCBC] on Third and I Streets, NW Washington, DC. Mount Carmel is a 140 year old church. They are located in highly gentrifying Washington still they welcome their new neighbors with warmth. My initial archival visit was greeted by a coterie of women who served on one of three committees: library, heritage/history and archives. I talked they listened, asked questions, took notes and ordered supplies.

The initial materials reviewed were the papers of William Henry Jernagin 1869-1958. He served as the senior pastor at from 1912-1958. From that pulpit, he greeted various African heads of state; formulated the National Fraternal Council of Negro Churches, Washington Bureau; hosted prominent Baptist, political and educational leadership; mentored young men for ministry; and organized the earliest ecumenical civil rights prayer conference at the Lincoln Memorial. Jernagin served as president of the National Sunday School and Baptist Training Union over three decades, despite futile attempts to relinquish the position because he was popular with both young and old members. In a January 17, 1957 letter to Bishop W.J. Walls, he wrote:

"Last week I was in Atlanta, Georgia, when they arrested five of our leading men and put them in jail. I went in jail with them until they were bonded and fingerprinted. I addressed the meeting at Wheat Street Baptist Church Wednesday night which Dr. Borders held and also the meeting that Dr. King had at the Ebenezer Baptist Church on Thursday afternoon before returning to Washington that night with a very fine spirit that our men are exhibiting in the South and the bus boycott. I felt it should encourage them all I could in their efforts. A thousand Christian leaders meeting in Jackson, Mississippi not only will encourage our brothers and sister in the South, but will attract the attention of the world the united effort of the colored ministry of America and let the enemies of our race know that we are determined we will not be satisfied until all of our citizens will become first class citizens and each of them will have a ballot to protect them." [MCBC Archives]

The MCBC archives are a coveted collection of primary sources that the heritage/history committee uses to promote pride and sensitivity within the Sunday school population and throughout the larger congregation. They will remain an integral part of their local history telling, but now the papers have a larger context. The end product of my on-going relationship with Mount Carmel resulted in the publication of *William Henry Jernagin in Washington, DC Faith in the Fight for Civil Rights* published by The History Press 2016 using the archival records of MCBC archives along with reminiscences of parishioners who knew him. A portion of the profits will be donated to the archives committee to continue their work ultimately offering reference services to researchers seeking to recover more of their parish history and careers of their other 9 pastors. I hope to continue with Mount Carmel. Batman once quipped "a true crime fighter always carries everything he needs in his utility belt."

*Ida Jones
Morgan State University
Washington, D.C.*



*Dr. Jernagin and wife Cordelia,
ca. 1947*

[Image Courtesy of MCBC Archives]

Moravian Archives, Bethlehem PA, nearing completion of NEH-funded project to assess Caribbean records

In March 2016 the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, received a \$37,982 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to fund a planning project for the conservation and digitization of 120 linear feet of archival records documenting Moravian mission work in the eastern West Indies, with an emphasis on the history of the Caribbean's enslaved populations.

The Moravian Archives is a non-profit church organization that serves as the official repository for the records of the Moravian Church in America – Northern Province. Over 500 researchers visit the archives annually to study its holdings, which primarily document Moravian church activity in North America, South America and the Caribbean.

The Humanities Collections and Reference Resources Grant awarded by NEH will serve to improve accessibility to the Eastern West Indies Collection at the Moravian Archives. The project began long before an NEH grant was in sight. A conservation report of the collection in 2014 revealed that many materials were too fragile to be handled by researchers. This extreme condition results from long term exposure of the records to a tropical environment and damage from water, insects and fire.

Earlier this year the entire collection was surveyed by historian Dr. Jon Sensbach (University of Florida). Sensbach's report was then reviewed by historians Dr. Natasha J. Lightfoot (Columbia University) and Dr. Katherine Gerbner (University of Minnesota). An itemized list was made of the entire collection with a weighted system that took into account a variety of factors, such as enduring value in the humanities, duplication factor, genealogical relevance, and physical condition.

For about two weeks, the collection was studied by a team of conservators from the Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts. Item-level condition reports, treatment plans and cost estimates were formulated. Sights are now set on future funding efforts and ultimately towards the long term preservation and digitization of the collection. The Eastern West Indies Planning Project is the first step towards the goal of making this unique material fully accessible to researchers worldwide.

In 2012 the Moravian Archives received its first grant from the NEH in order to install movable shelving in the main vault. "Previous support from the NEH allowed us to double the capacity of our manuscript vault," said Moravian Archives director and archivist Dr. Paul Peucker. "We are excited about this new and unique opportunity to make an important piece of Caribbean history more accessible to researchers and especially to people of the Caribbean."

Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) supports research and learning in history, literature, philosophy, and other areas of the humanities by funding selected, peer-reviewed proposals from around the nation. More information about NEH can be found at www.neh.gov. Stay up to date with the Eastern West Indies Planning Project at www.moravianchurcharchives.org. The local Bethlehem newspaper recently printed a [front page article](#) that adds interesting background information on the Project.

*Tom McCullough
Moravian Church Archives
Bethlehem, PA*

***Custodia*, a new working group for Congregations of Women Religious**

The Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious (ACWR) recently announced the formation of a new working group, *Custodia*, created to gather information on issues and obstacles that will impact the archives of religious communities considering mergers or possible closure. “This issue came up repeatedly at ACWR’s Triennial meeting last August,” said ACWR Vice President-Elect Dee Gallo. “Sisters and lay archivists fear what may be happening to their records as so many congregations decrease in membership. All of these questions made us realize that as a professional organization for religious women’s archives, we had to learn as much as possible to help our constituents.”

When its board met recently, ACWR adopted a new Mission and Vision Statement that affirms that the organization will “advocate for the protection of the historical records of women religious” – even records that are in the care of congregations that are not ACWR members. “The historical records of women’s religious communities are rich with information not only about Catholic women, but also the marginalized people they served and the institutions built in their service,” noted Member-At-Large Colleen McFarland Rademaker. “The ACWR board and its members must promote the value of these records and educate the public about the role Catholic sisters played in the broader American historical narrative.”

After *Custodia* was announced to ACWR members and to related organizations, archivists and congregational leaders quickly voiced their support and interest. At present, the working group, comprised of Gallo and Rademaker along with ACWR President Sarah Cantor, Member-At-Large Jennifer Head and member Patricia Carroll, is collecting responses and case studies. While some members of the ACWR working group have specific expertise in dealing with these situations, others are actively researching best practices and possible solutions to ensure proper storage and future accessibility to congregational records. Armed with that information the group will be able to assist with advice on “best practices” for preparing collections for mergers; if closures are forthcoming, *Custodia* will also offer advice on choosing the appropriate new home for records since the collections of religious often carry restrictions that would need to be considered in any accession agreements or transfers.

Anyone interested in contacting *Custodia* with questions, scenarios or expertise is invited to contact Gallo at denise.gallo@doc.org. “Since ACWR will have a table this year at SAA, we also look forward to speaking with people and sharing information with them in person,” she said.

Dee Gallo

*Daughters of Charity Provincial Archives
Emmitsburg, MD*

Postscript

Other duties and a sabbatical leave of absence call me away from what has become an enjoyable activity on behalf of the Section. Please consider volunteering to be the next editor of *Archival Spirit*.

If I can learn enough about formatting graphics and text in MS Word, anybody can. Feel free to contact me (kingma@gonzaga.edu) or others currently in Section leadership for more information.