From the Chair

Hello Colleagues,

I hope all is well in your places of work and service!

It was a privilege to gather with many of you at the 2017 SAA Conference in Portland this past July! The ARCS Section meeting was well-attended by over 60 of us, and we were treated to a four-person panel speaking on the concept of social history ("history with the people put back in" – Fulbrook, 2005) as it is researched in religious collections. Emily Clark (Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Gonzaga University) gave us a glimpse into the mindset of a researcher studying diverse religious movements, and emphasized that increased access to religious collections is foremost in her work. Emily also gave a shout-out to her colleague and one of our members, David Kingma, University Archivist at Gonzaga!

Rebecca Hankins (Africana Resources Librarian/Curator, Texas A & M) inspired us with her current work on Islam and Science Fiction. Congratulations are also due to Rebecca, who was sworn in this past May as Obama’s Presidential Appointee to the National Historic Publications and Records Commission! Danielle Cooper (Senior Researcher, Librarians and Scholarly Communication, Ithaka S+R) updated us on the 2017 Ithaka S+R report titled “Supporting the Changing Research Practices of Religious Studies Scholars,” which found three major thematic areas in which religious studies would benefit from improved or new services: 1) discovering and accessing information, 2) information management, and 3) audience/output/credit.

At our after-meeting reception, we continued to ponder ways in which we could support these thematic areas in our own repositories.

I (Janet Hauck, University Archivist, Whitworth University) rounded out the panel, speaking about my work mentoring a university student as he applied the “Manuscript as Question” (McCoy, 2010) research model to the Records of Christians for Biblical Equality. I hoped the audience would see the excitement I feel toward inspiring young researchers, along with the fun and messiness of trying new methodologies. The section meeting closed with a brief business meeting, at which new Steering Committee members were welcomed, and departing ones applauded. Incoming committee members include Elizabeth Scott, St. Michael’s College Archives, as Vice Chair/Chair Elect, along with Brandon Wason, Emory University, as Member-at-Large.

As I continue to reflect on what we learned and discussed at SAA, it is my hope that in the year ahead, ARCS can do more than inspire. I would love to see us find a common project on which we might work, for the benefit of all members. If you have an idea along these lines, please feel free to email me at jhauck@whitworth.edu. In the meantime, carry on with all the great things you’re doing!

Best Regards,

Janet Hauck, 2017-2018 ARCS Chair
University Archivist
Whitworth University
Spokane, WA
Call for Nominations for the Sister M. Claude Lane, O.P., Memorial Award

Jillian Ewalt  
Metadata Archivist  
Special Collections and University Archives  
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The Society of American Archivists’ Awards Committee is seeking nominations for the Sister M. Claude Lane, O.P., Memorial Award. This award recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to the field of religious archives.

Criteria for nomination include:

- Involvement and work in the Archivists of Religious Collections Section (ARCS) of the Society of American Archivists.
- Contributions to archival literature that relates to religious archives.
- Participation and leadership in religious archives organizations.
- Evidence of leadership in specific religious archives.

Only individual archivists are eligible for nomination. The award is sponsored by the Society of Southwest Archivists, in conjunction with Society of American Archivists. It is named in honor of Sister M. Claude Lane, the first professionally trained archivist at the Catholic Archives of Texas in Austin, who served there from 1960 until her death in 1974. The award finalist is recognized with a certificate from SAA and a $300 cash prize provided by the Society of Southwest Archivists at the annual Society of American Archivists meeting.

For more information on the Lane Award, including past winners, see: [http://www2.archivists.org/governance/handbook/section12-lane](http://www2.archivists.org/governance/handbook/section12-lane).

To nominate an archivist for the Lane Award please follow the guidelines provided in the Nomination Form via the link on that page.

All nominations shall be submitted to the Awards Committee by February 28, 2018. If you have any questions, please contact Jillian Ewalt at ewalt@csus.edu.

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Call for Transcribers for the Moravian Lives Project

Katherine M. Faull, PhD  
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Over the last three years, teams of scholars at Bucknell University in the United States and the University of Gothenburg in Sweden have been collaborating to build an online platform that aims to make available to the scholarly and lay community the vast corpus (in excess of 60,000 from just the German and US archives) of life writings (Lebensläufe) of members of the Moravian Church from the mid-18th century to today.

From the middle of the eighteenth century on, each member of the worldwide Moravian congregation has been invited to write a memoir that should serve as a farewell to the congregation and that was often read at his or her funeral. The primary purpose of this memoir was to articulate and preserve the “inner journey” (i.e., the person’s path from a state of ignorance of grace to his or her rebirth in Christ).

We are proud to announce the launch of the “Moravian Lives” project, which is now accessible at [moravianlives.org](http://moravianlives.org). This platform employs cutting-edge technologies and methodologies such as the use of computer-based inquiry and the analysis of historical materials. Visitors to the site can search the metadata of the archival memoir databases by name, place, or archive through the “map” interface. They can also transcribe memoirs from the Moravian Church’s archival facilities in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, or Stockholm and Gothenburg, Sweden. There are some memoirs from Moravian repositories in London and Herrnhut in the database, with more being added daily.

The Advisory Board of Moravian Lives includes the archivists from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and Herrnhut, Germany, along with some of the most prominent scholars and practitioners of the genre of the Moravian memoir in the world.

We are asking for your help to start building up a collection of transcribed documents. Please go to the site and explore the map interface. Then go to the Transcription Desk, create a login for yourself, pick a memoir (German, English, or Swedish) and start transcribing! Through your work we can gain new insights into the lives of Moravian women and men from the past. Become part of a project that has already been hailed as ground-breaking and significant by researchers in both the United States and Europe, and leads the way in the ever-growing field of research into Pietistic networks.
The Battle of Pasrur

David Staniunas
Records Archivist
Presbyterian Historical Society
Philadelphia, PA

“The church has found that it must contend not only with political upheaval and nationalistic religion but also with division in its own ranks” – so the UPCUSA Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations wrote in 1967 on the state of Presbyterianism in Pakistan. Fifty years on, we glance back at the fractious period in the life of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church of Pakistan, culminating in a riot at General Assembly.

In 1967, the United Presbyterian Church of Pakistan and the Lahore Church Council counted membership of 70,000, some 10 percent of all Pakistani Christians. Their congregations operated in strong headwinds: following the 1965 war between India and Pakistan, many Christians living in border areas were arrested by the Pakistani government on suspicion of having pro-India sympathies. While for many their detentions were brief, the roundups sent a shock through the Synod. It duly began to prepare plans for greater consolidation, and a focus on strengthening the lives and livelihoods of Pakistani Christians. Being Presbyterian, this manifested in a dispute over administration of mission work – would hospitals, schools, and seminaries be subject to Synod, or would they be governed by autonomous boards, each with a seat reserved for Synod? Concern about state authority and disputes about the centralization of church government would soon be channeled through a dispute over the Confession of 1967. Between 1965 and 1967, members of Synod, among them K. L. Nasir, a teacher at Gujranwala Theological Seminary, had attended the UPCUSA General Assemblies which had prepared the Confession of 1967, and had come away adherents of Carl McIntire, who habitually protested outside of these Assemblies. A faction of Gujranwala faculty, believing the Confession was unorthodox, boycotted a June 1967 called meeting of Synod, and gathered that July, styling themselves the General Assembly. In R. Park Johnson’s account, the Nasir General Assembly took no actions, it was “in actuality no more than a party caucus. It was not followed up in any way in practice.”

The dispute swiftly spread, to the extent that church sessions were divided against each other. The Nasir group spent the next year suing the Synod in 13 different jurisdictions, seeking to block various Synod actions. On the 8th of February an ad hoc committee of Synod brought the various combatants together to agree on procedures for electing commissioners to the 1968 assembly, and to impel K. L. Nasir and his colleague Nazir Yusuf to drop their suits. A month of relative calm followed, and Synod set 1 April to assemble at the Presbyterian school in Pasrur.

The roll call began over “continued vociferous objections” of members of the Nasir party sitting in the front row. The confrontation escalated as a group of men, some of them not commissioners to the assembly, gathered to in the main aisle and stood, shouting and elbowing each other. The secretary, Piyara Lall, continued to call roll, “then suddenly fists began to fly, the Secretary was manhandled, chairs were thrown back and forth across the aisle […] Panic ensued, as most of the...”

[continued on page 4]
“…delegates fled from the auditorium, scrambling over and upsetting chairs and benches in their flight.”

After about a ten-minute interruption, three-fourths of the assembly returned to their seats. Nasir’s faction withdrew from the assembly and gathered on the lawn behind the auditorium. Synod would ultimately excommunicate nine ringleaders of the violence, and recommend that Nasir and Yusuf be removed from their posts at Gujranwala. That August, Carl McIntire’s Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions would send Ara Euredjian as a missionary to Pakistan. McIntire himself would visit in September for the opening of Faith Theological Seminary.

Yusuf’s and Nasir’s factions would later split with each other. Nasir’s group continues as the United Presbyterian Church of Pakistan. The Synod merged with the Lahore Christian Council in 1992, creating the Presbyterian Church of Pakistan, a mission partner of the PC(USA) and member of the World Council of Churches. The Battle of Pasrur is just one among the scores of stories contained in a tranche of India-Pakistan records which the Presbyterian Historical Society opened to researchers late last year, Record Group 500, India-Pakistan mission records, 1852-1999.