

Description Section Meeting at SAA 2017

Sessions of Interest to Description Section Members

If you are going to be in Portland, attend the Description Section meeting! The Description Section's annual meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 26 from 4:00-5:15pm. The meeting



includes updates from SAA Council, the MLA Archives and Special Collections Committee Working Group for Archival Description of Music Materials, the Technical subcommittee for DACS, and the editorial committee of DCRM (MSS). Additionally, Chair Molly Marcusse will announce election results and incoming Chair Martha Bace will address the crowd. This year's featured presentations are from Jackie Dooley (OCLC) and Kate Bowers (Harvard) presenting "Data Dictionary for best practices of web archiving metadata," and Anila Angieli (Bibliothèque nationale de France) presenting "RDA Mapping."

Jobs Now! Conference. Sponsored by the Citizens Committee for Equal Opportunity and the Virginia Park Citizens Committee, a jobs fair, called the "Jobs Now! Conference," is held at Hutchins Junior High School, near the place where Detroit's Civil Unrest will erupt exactly two months later. The jobs fair organizers described the neighborhood as being one of Detroit's "areas of most critical unemployment." May 23, 1967. Source: Wayne State University Office of Religious Affairs, Box 18. When this material is shared, credit shall read: "Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University"

IN THIS ISSUE

Annual Description Section Meeting.....	1
SAA 2017: Alike/Different – Sessions of Interest to Description Section Members.....	2
Feature Article: Processing a Portrait Collection: Local and Archival Contexts.....	4
Calls for Speakers, Posters, & Reviewers	7
Upcoming Conferences & Workshops	8

SAA 2017: Alike/Different

Sessions of Interest to Description Section Members

Archives 2017 Alike/Different has plenty description-related workshops, presentations, and events held both before and during the conference. Below are some highlights primarily focused on description.

Sunday, July 23

9:00am – 5:00pm

- Implementing ‘More Product, Less Process’ – Pre-Conference Workshop

Monday, July 24

9:00am – 5:00pm

- Arrangement & Description of Digital Records Part 1 – Pre-Conference Workshop
- MARC for Archival Description – Pre-Conference Workshop

Tuesday, July 25

9:00am – 5:00pm

- Arrangement & Description of Digital Records Part 2 – Pre-Conference Workshop
- Arranging and Describing Photographs – Pre-Conference Workshop

1:00pm – 3:00pm

- SAA Standards Committee

6:00pm – 9:00pm

- SAA Dictionary Working Group

Wednesday, July 26

8:00am – 12:00pm

- Technical Subcommittee on Describing Archives: a Content Standard (TS-DACS)
- Technical Subcommittee on Encoded Archival Standards (TS-EAS)

2:30pm – 3:45pm

- Collection Management Tools Section
- Web Archiving Section

4:00pm – 5:15pm

- Description Section

Thursday, July 27

9:00am

- 102- The Future of Appraisal and Processing of Digital Materials: Software, Strategies and Scalability

10:45am

- 201 - What We Talk About When We Talk About Processing Born-Digital: Building a Framework for Shared Practice
- 205 - Navigating the Digital Maze of Visual Material Description and Access
- 209 - Pioneering a Gold Standard: An Odyssey to Digitize Helen Keller's Archive for Sighted, Hearing, Blind, and Deaf Audience

12:00pm

- Visual Materials Cataloging & Access Section

Friday, July 28

8:30am

- 305 - Systems Integration and the Archival Enterprise
- 310 - Beyond the Finding Aid: New Directions for Archival Description

10:00am

- 404 - Preserving the Spark: Challenges in Archiving Activist Movements
- 410 - Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran: A Digital Archive

2:00pm

- 504 - The Rights Stuff: Encouraging Appropriate Reuse with Standardized Rights Statements
- 505 - Capturing a Movement: Documenting Student Activities and Activism on Campus
- 506 - Immigration Archival Collections: Difference, Transnationality, Relevance

Saturday, July 29

10:30am

- F09 - How Do We Build a Community-Centered Archive?

DESCRIPTION SECTION LEADERSHIP

Chair

Molly Marcusse

Vice-Chair/Chair Elect

Martha Bace

Immediate Past Chair

Jennifer Mitchell

Council Liaison

Michelle Light

Secretary

Cyndi Shein

Member-at-Large

Meghan Lyon

Member-at-Large

Karen Spicher

Web Liaison

Javier Ruedas

Newsletter Editor

Alexandra A. A. Orchard

FEATURE ARTICLE

Processing a Portrait Collection: Local and Archival Contexts

Margaret E. Breidenbaugh, Graduate Intern, Cincinnati History Library and Archives, Cincinnati Museum Center

This January I began processing the World War I Servicemen Portrait Collection (SC 77), a grouping of approximately 3,000 portraits exhibited at Music Hall in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1918, and now housed at Cincinnati History Library and Archives, Cincinnati Museum Center. What follows is excerpted from a larger article I wrote in partial fulfillment of my spring semester 2017 graduate internship.

The Great War in Local Context: The World War I Servicemen Portrait Collection

December 14, 1918 – the First World War ended just weeks earlier, but that did not stop tens of thousands of people from attending the US and Allied Governments Victory War Exposition in Cincinnati, Ohio’s Music Hall. Curious visitors thronged to the concert hall to see defunct aircraft, weaponry, and even mock battles. The purpose of the exposition was to encourage local support for the war and to educate the general public about what took place across the Atlantic. No matter that the war was over; the Cincinnati exposition was a huge financial success.¹

Similar expositions before war’s end took place in thirty-five states across the country, an idea of George Creel and the Committee on Public Information under President Woodrow Wilson. Creel argued that to win the public’s enthusiasm for war, the federal government ought “to show people how their money was being spent.” Congress begrudgingly committed a small amount of money to the effort.²

The Cincinnati exposition lasted nine days. Its contents – including weapons, planes, uniforms and more – took up 40 railroad cars, which translated to 40,000 square feet of exhibit space. 164,000 visitors from the Cincinnati area and beyond came to see not only the traveling exhibit but also approximately 6,000 portraits of local men and women who served in the armed forces.³

In the space set aside for these portraits that local families lent to the exhibit, volunteers kept watch. Many were mothers of soldiers. Emma Luther Dudley could have tended to the “Gold Star” room, reserved for portraits of men killed in action. Her son Ludlow gave his life in France five months earlier.⁴ He was killed in action on the first day of the Second Battle of the Marne, the last major German offensive on the Western Front. The *Cincinnati*

¹ Scott Gampfer, “Remembering Those Who Served: The World War I Servicemen Portrait Collection at Cincinnati Museum Center,” *Ohio Valley History* Vol 14, no. 2 (Summer 2014): 94-99.

² Ibid., George Creel, *How We Advertised America* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1920), 142-143, quoted in S. Gampfer, “Remembering Those Who Served,” 95.

³ S. Gampfer, “Remembering Those Who Served,” 94-99.

⁴ Ludlow Luther in “Records of Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Nurses from Cincinnati and Hamilton County Who Died in the Service During the World War. V.06. Kolbinsky - Marx,” *The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County*, accessed February 26, 2017, <http://cdm16998.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p16998coll15/id/197497/rec/6>.

Enquirer reported that Ludlow was the first African-American from the Cincinnati area killed in action overseas. At the time of the exposition in Music Hall, his body was still buried in the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery in France.⁵ He was eventually reburied in Cincinnati.⁶

Ludlow's is one of thousands of stories waiting to be told. The collection of approximately 6,000 portraits formed a near-complete record of people from the Cincinnati area who served in the armed forces during the First World War. After the exposition closed, about half of these families agreed to donate copies of photographs to the Philosophical and Historical Society of Ohio. The World War I Servicemen Portrait Collection serves as an important record of the collective hardships and losses these families endured.⁷

The Great War in the Archives: Processing the World War I Servicemen Portrait Collection

To date I have invested around 200 hours toward processing this collection, which consists of approximately 3,000 images stored in thirty-four boxes. Primary duties have included research, condition assessment, and data entry. Secondary duties have consisted of rehousing and alphabetizing individual portraits, and writing associated biographies.

My initial task was to review how the collection was housed. Most boxes were overstuffed, risking breakage of supports and mounts. Several oversized images were stored in letter-sized folders, exposing their edges to damage. I transferred these to four dedicated archival flat storage boxes and dispersed the remaining images over a larger number of boxes to allow for safer storage. What complicated this otherwise simple step was the discovery that some names as transcribed on folders were inaccurate. I continue to cite digitized draft registration cards, scrapbooks, and census records to test the validity of previous researchers' conclusions.

Next I began to catalog the collection. This step involves creating item-level descriptions, measuring individual supports and mounts, assessing condition, and indicating future research needs. Descriptions include type of image (portrait or snapshot), frame (head and shoulder, full-length, etc.), photographer information, and inscriptions. Handwritten information conveys context and reveals memory.⁸ Dates and locations not only give clues about battles in which service members fought, but also they tell researchers what was most important to remember according to the person who lent or donated a given photograph. I record measurements of both mount and image. Condition assessment notes any damage to the support or the image, such as tears, pinholes, or scratches. Finally, I note additional

⁵ "Six Greater Cincinnati Men Give Lives to Drive Hun from Fair Fields of France," *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, October 21, 1918, *Newspapers.com*, accessed February 26, 2017, <https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/34195308/>.

⁶ Margaret Breidenbaugh, "Ludlow Luther (1897-1918): Cincinnati Area's First African American Casualty of World War I," unpublished manuscript, 3 March 2017. This is a condensed version of my original biography, adapted for inclusion in a professional article rather than a blog for general readership.

⁷ S. Gampfer, "Remembering Those Who Served," 98-99.

⁸ Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2001), 15.

action needed, including genealogical research or transferring portraits to larger archival sleeves. To date I have cataloged approximately 800 unique portraits.

In addition to these primary duties I have also written two articles for future publication on Cincinnati Museum Center's blog, "Off the Shelf." One article goes into greater detail about the life and military service of Ludlow Luther. The second article is a triple biography of Lucy Kennedy Shaffer, Frank Holmes Shaffer, Jr., and William Bakewell Shaffer, well-to-do and highly educated siblings from the Cincinnati neighborhood of Walnut Hills and close relatives of naturalist John James Audubon. I plan to complete additional biographies in the future.

What has become of the collection in the century since its donation? This question is difficult to address, considering little is known about previous attempts to process it. Judging by handwriting styles on the verso (back) of many portraits, it appears that at least two other researchers worked on this collection beginning in the latter half of the 20th century. What they achieved is not without merit. I remain hopeful that additional research will confirm the accuracy of many of their contributions.

I plan to continue processing the World War I Servicemen Portrait Collection through the end of this summer. Assuming I maintain my average of 35-50 portraits per four-hour shift, I will have cataloged nearly a third of the collection. While no small achievement, this means that the processing of this collection will again go unfinished.

The final goal of this project is to digitize the entire portrait collection in anticipation of Armistice Day 2018. While I am not able to undertake a formal internship this coming fall, I plan to volunteer a few hours a week when possible. After graduation I hope to find the time to return to this project.

Conclusion

As I continue my work at Cincinnati Museum Center, a few things come to mind. First, undertaking cataloging projects as a technical exercise alone seems inadequate. Intimate knowledge of the social, cultural, economic, and political circumstances surrounding a collection's inception make it possible to analyze individual portraits as something more than pictures evoking nostalgia. That is not to say that I have never cried while working on this particular collection. About a month ago I came across a snapshot of a young man on leave for five days. Three weeks later he was killed in combat. I had to walk away. When we invest ourselves in archival work it has the potential to be emotionally overwhelming.

Knowing more of the history of photography has not only helped me to write more accurate descriptions of images, but also it has inspired me to pursue self-study of local photographers such as J. A. Bill (1875-1950), for whom international celebrities and military personnel alike sat. Learning the steps taken to mount the US and Allied Governments Victory War Exposition has increased my appreciation for the difficulty of archival work as a logistical and representational endeavor. Now in my third year of work in the public history field, I feel ready to enter the workforce with a firm step.

Margaret Breidenbaugh is a graduate student in history at Miami University. Interested in 19th-century German cultural history, her current research revolves around a mid-19th-century German travel diarist

whose father fought in the Battle of Waterloo. Highlights of the diary include critical observations on Parisian art and culture, and a clandestine meeting with a Prussian officer. The diarist laments her distance from Heimat or home, a word that has fluid meanings in German culture. Margaret's new research explores connections among place, gender, travel, and identity formation.

CALLS FOR SPEAKERS, POSTERS, AUTHORS, & REVIEWERS

Archival Issues: Authors Wanted

Archival Issues, the peer-reviewed journal published by the Midwest Archives Conference accepts article submissions throughout the year. The journal has international readership, and seeks content covering all aspects of archival practice, theory, and related interests to professionals.

Both established professionals and those new to publishing are encouraged to submit manuscripts. The Editorial Board performs a blind review process and authors are generally informed of decisions within six weeks. For more information, or to submit an article, please contact Editorial Board Chair [Alexandra Orchard](#).



Matilda (Rabinowitz) Robins, Portrait, Little Falls, New York, 1913. Snapshot of I.W.W. organizer Matilda Robbins, writing at her desk. Photograph was taken in Little Falls, New York. When this material is shared, credit shall read: "Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University."

SAA Reviews Portal: Reviewers Needed

Have you seen the new [Reviews Portal](#) website? Visit and sign up for updates on reviews of the latest digital collections, technology, and other resources that are useful for archivists. Recent posts include reviews of [Digitizing Orphan Works](#), the [Digital Repository of Ireland](#), and the [Activist's Guide to Archiving Video](#).

You're invited to contribute a review. You can find guidelines [here](#). Contact the Reviews Portal Coordinator, [Gloria Gonzalez](#), for more information.

Mentors Needed

Greetings, SAA! As Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "Be an opener of doors for such as come after thee." This is the mantra of your Mentoring Program, where we strive to place experienced archivists together with those newer to the profession or those who simply want to build their knowledge bases or need help finding a job. The program has been active in creating lasting and effective professional relationships for the last 20 years.

Mentoring is a two-sided process, however, requiring both mentors and protégés. At the moment, we have a number of eager protégés, but we're lacking enough mentors to supply them all with the guidance, advice, and instruction they need. The Mentoring Program is putting out a call for SAA members who are willing to serve as mentors, ideally for at least one year. How you and your protégé frame and structure your relationship is up to you!

Please consider this service opportunity as a way to give back to the archival profession to which we've all dedicated our lives. For more information about the program, please go to [SAA Mentoring Program](#).

UPCOMING CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

Digital Directions 2017

August 21-23, 2017 Seattle, Washington

Guided by a faculty of national experts, join colleagues from institutions large and small for two and a half days of instruction on best practices and practical strategies for the creation, curation, and use of digital collections. Network with colleagues who have similar challenges, interact with faculty one-on-one, and gain a comprehensive introduction to digitization and digital preservation.

Are you just getting started in digitization and digital preservation? Trying to bring several digital projects together into a cohesive digital preservation program? Or are you well into a digital collections project and need a refresher on the latest standards and best practices?

The Digital Directions conference is geared toward professionals working with digital collections at archives, libraries, museums, historical organizations, government agencies, corporate archives, and other organizations that steward digital collections. We offer a student discount – this is an excellent supplemental training opportunity for young professionals.

Topics will include:

Assessing Risks to Digital Collections
Understanding Copyright
Digital Project Planning
Selection for Digitization
Basics of Information Security
Metadata for Digital Projects
Digital Storage
Working with Born-Digital Collections
Digitizing Audiovisual Collections

Source: <https://www.nedcc.org/preservation-training/digital-directions/dd-17>

iPres 2016

September 25-29, 2017 Kyoto, Japan

Kyoto University is delighted to announce that the 14th International Conference on Digital Preservation (iPRES) will take place from September 25th (Mon.) to 29th (Fri.), 2017 in Kyoto, Japan.

The iPRES 2017 hosted by Kyoto University will contribute to promotion of researches and development of technologies and services of digital preservation. Like previous iPRES conferences, iPRES 2017 will serve as an international forum for the global community of digital preservation, and, in particular, it will contribute to Japanese and Asian communities of digital preservation.

The main objectives at iPRES 2017 will be cultural resources in various domains and from various viewpoints. Academic societies in the areas of digital humanities and information resource management are the main communities to support this conference in Japan. This conference will be organized in collaboration with major memory institutions in Japan.

The theme of the coming conference is: **Keeping Cultural Diversity for the Future in the Digital Space — From Pop Culture to Scholarly Information.**

Source: (<https://ipres2017.jp/>)

MAC Fall Symposium: “Exhibits”

October 13-14, 2017 Ohio State University Libraries, Columbus, Ohio

In this one-and-a-half day symposium, we will share methods for creating captivating stories, pursuing engagement strategies, and leveraging exhibits for development work. Sessions will cover exhibit planning and development, advancing learning outcomes, and outreach efforts. With recently renovated, museum-quality exhibit spaces and situated in a community rich with gallery experiences, Ohio State offers an excellent backdrop for investigating best practices and realistic implementation.

Bring examples of your own work with exhibits and your plans for the future to share in hands-on exercises. Apply symposium principles as you experience, critique, and analyze the current exhibits at Ohio State. Through sessions, discussion, observation, and group work, gain insights, test best practices, and come away with solutions that you can apply directly to improve your archives’ exhibits.

Source: *MAC Facebook Event* for Fall Symposium 2017 - Exhibits.

MARAC Fall 2017

Buffalo, NY October 26-28, 2017

Save the date! MARAC’s fall meeting, “Reinvention and Renewal: Putting a Shine on the Nickel City” will be held on October 26-28 at the Hyatt Regency Buffalo/Hotel and Conference Center in Downtown Buffalo. More information is forthcoming.

Source: <http://www.marac.info/upcoming-conferences#Fall2017>

Blog: <https://marac2017buffalo.wordpress.com/>

DC-2017: Advancing Metadata Practice: Quality, Openness, Interoperability

Washington, D.C. October 26-29, 2017

Following up on DC-2016 in Copenhagen, with its look towards the changing role of metadata in the Second Machine Age, this year's conference will focus on technologies and practices that are advancing how we can create and manage good metadata. Interoperability and openness have been guiding principles of the DCMI community for over twenty years, and these principles have evolved through the development of Semantic Web standards and Linked Open Data. A deluge of new data sources is magnifying the perennial challenge of metadata quality but also inspiring the development of innovative tools, practices, and solutions, the focus of this year's conference.

In conjunction with each conference, the DCMI community holds an Annual Meeting at which DCMI citizens discuss ongoing work in areas such as vocabulary management, website design, and RDF validation. Together, the Conference and Annual Meeting provide opportunities for seasoned professionals, newcomers, students, apprentices, and early career professionals to share knowledge and experience. The meeting is a venue for practitioners in

public- and private-sector initiatives to network and compare notes. Following the pattern of last year's conference in Copenhagen, DC-2017 will overlap with the [annual meeting of ASIS&T](#), providing additional opportunities for professional interaction.

These gatherings advance DCMI's mission of promoting the interoperability and harmonization of metadata, from element schemas and Semantic Web vocabularies to application profiles, ontologies, and knowledge organization systems.

Source: <http://dcevents.dublincore.org/IntConf/dc-2017>

2017 Annual Meeting of the Association for Information Science and Technology: Diversity of Engagement: Connecting People and Information in the Physical and Virtual Worlds

October 27-November 1, 2017 Washington, D.C.

2017 is a special year for the Association for Information Science & Technology (ASIS&T) as we are reaching an 80-year milestone of our establishment. The theme of ASIS&T 2017 is focused on the diverse ways in which people from different backgrounds, cultures, and disciplines forge connections with each other, discover and use information, and engage with technology. We will address the opportunities and challenges of navigating through physical and digital/virtual realm with computers, tablets or smartphones to interact in work and everyday activities. Within this information environment, there also are those who choose to disengage, and those who have no access to or knowledge of technology, widening the digital divide. ASIS&T 2017 will provide an interactive platform for exploration of these complex and rapidly changing technological and socio-cultural developments.

The ASIS&T Annual Meeting is a premier, peer-reviewed international conference that gathers scholars and practitioners from around the globe to share research, innovations, and insights regarding how information and technology mediate the creation and use of knowledge within and across cultures and enhance lives. Paper, poster, panel and workshop submissions that focus on the conference theme, as well as the production, discovery, recording, storage, representation, retrieval, presentation, manipulation, dissemination, use, and evaluation of information and on the tools and techniques associated with these processes are welcome. The conference embraces plurality in methods and theories, and encompasses research and development from a broad spectrum of domains, as encapsulated in ASIS&T's many special interest groups (SIGs).

Source: (<https://www.asist.org/events/annual-meeting/annual-meeting-2017/>)

**Do you have a photo, article, or
announcement to share?**

Contact the newsletter editor:
alexandra@wayne.edu