
Manuscript Repositories Newsletter

A newsletter from the Manuscript Repositories Section of the Society of American Archivists

Fall 2011

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From the Chair

Fernanda Perrone

First of all, I would like to welcome our new Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect, Chris Burns from the University of Vermont, and new Steering Committee members Jackie Dean, Elizabeth Wilkinson, and Melissa Watterworth Batt. I would also like to thank those Steering Committee members who have completed their terms: Deborah Dandridge, L. Rebecca Johnson Melvin, and Immediate Past Chair Sammie Morris.

Many of us saw each other in Chicago at the 2011 Annual Meeting. About 100 members attended the Section Meeting on Thursday, August 25. Tim Murray, Head of Special Collections at the University of Delaware, gave a very interesting presentation on managing printed materials – books and otherwise – in manuscript and archival collections, followed by breakout sessions. For those who could not attend, the minutes of the meeting are included in this newsletter.

The Annual Meeting was very successful, although the latter half was somewhat overshadowed by the approaching hurricane in the Northeast. Some people were forced to leave early, while others, including myself, found themselves spending extra days in Chicago, which was not a bad place to be stranded. Our thoughts are with those colleagues, though, whose homes or workplaces sustained damage. Of the sessions that I attended, I was particularly struck by Session 302, “Practical Approaches to Born-Digital Records.” This session pertained to what many of us have faced as archivists in manuscript repositories: how to handle the diskettes, CDs, and even hard drives that are increasingly found in the collections that we acquire.

The importance of this issue was borne out in the Steering Committee meeting the following day. Under the leadership of Chair Elizabeth Russey Roke, the Section will be undertaking a two-year project on electronic records in manuscript repositories. Without stealing Elizabeth’s thunder, I can tell you that we hope to involve many of you in this project, which you will be hearing more about soon.

The deadline for submitting proposals for next year's meeting in San Diego was extended to October 11. Web Liaison Laura Carroll has added a resources page on our section home page for those of you who might need help in preparing a proposal. I also encourage you to submit proposals to the section for endorsement. While we are only permitted to endorse two proposals, we are always happy to look at them and provide feedback.

Although my term as Section Chair is over, I am continuing on the Steering Committee as Immediate Past Chair, in which capacity I will be chairing the Nominations Committee. In the next few months, please consider running for Vice-Chair, Steering Committee or nominating someone that you know. The more people participate in our section, the stronger it will be. Thanks for electing me as Chair and I look forward to remaining involved in the section in the years ahead.

Minutes from Section Meeting

August 25, 2011
Chicago, IL

Section Chair Fernanda Perrone convened the meeting at 3:30 p.m. She introduced the section leadership and thanked the outgoing members of the Steering Committee. Nominations Committee Chair and Immediate Past-Chair Sammie Morris announced the winners of the Steering Committee elections and thanked the Nominating Committee. Morris noted that participation increased over last year; there were 118 ballots cast out of 974 eligible. Section members are encouraged to submit ideas for increasing participation in elections to the chair or section leadership. The following individuals were elected:

- Chris Burns, Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect
- Jackie Dean
- Elizabeth Wilkinson
- Melissa Watterworth Batt

Announcements

Tom Hyry and Bill Landis, SAA Council Liaisons, reported on the following developments:

- This is Tom's last year on SAA Council; Bill Landis is taking over as Council Liaison for next year.
- Tom encouraged section members to attend the annual business meeting because of the referendum to allow online voting on ballots. [note: this referendum was passed]
- An Annual Meeting task force has been created in response to the Chicago hotel labor dispute and to look at the current annual meeting model. [note: SAA sent out a call for participants in September]
- SAA has completed its Core Values document and it is now up on the website [<http://www2.archivists.org/statements/core-values-of-archivists>].

Nancy Melley from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) provided an update on the Grants Program. She noted that the organization does expect to exist next year, but they are uncertain about the amount of money available. There is a new grant program for next year, called Documenting Democracy; it will fund projects focused on basic and detailed processing, description conversion, etc. It will also fund digitization projects for processed and nationally significant collections that need no metadata and can be made publicly online after digitization for free. Contact NHPRC for help in putting together a project.

Jennifer Schaffner from OCLC Research gave an update on the ALA/ACRL Rare Books and Manuscripts Section activities. She is serving as a representative to this ALA section to get communication moving between it and SAA. RBMS is working on security guidelines that are archives friendly. Also, new Guidelines for Borrowing and Lending Special Collections for Research Use and Exhibition [http://www.rbms.info/committees/task_force/borrowing/index.shtml] have been approved by ACRL and ALA and will go to SAA Council for endorsement. There is also a task force that is looking at manuscript and rare book collection programs.

Jennifer also provided an update on OCLC Research activities. The goal of the new Born Digital Special Collections project is to explore the array of skills and expertise held by special collections librarians and archivists that are crucial to effective management of many types of born-digital materials; describe how those areas of expertise do or don't pertain to various types of born-digital materials; and outline some of the most basic steps that a library can take to begin to exert minimal control over born-digital materials.. The Collection Assessment project will investigate management and assessment of archival collections. Finally, Archives Grid is under study and will be expanded and be made freely available to the public.

Jackie Dean, from the Working Group for Data-Driven Decision-making in Processing and Public Services provided a summary on the survey of More Product, Less Process (MPLP) and the repositories who use it. The goal of the survey is to inform the development of tools, best practices, and guidelines for implementing MPLP. The Chairs of the Working Group are Dan Santamaria and Shannon Bowen Maier.

A representative from the SAA 2012 Program committee announced that the theme for the Annual Meeting is Beyond Borders. They are looking for panels and sessions that address innovative collaborations across borders of the allied professions (libraries, museums, etc.). One thing that is new this year is that each individual may not be on more than one proposal. The deadline for submitting proposals is October 3 [note: this was changed to October 11].

Program

L. Rebecca Johnson Melvin, University of Delaware, introduced Timothy D. Murray, Head of Special Collections, University of Delaware Library who spoke on "Managing Print Materials – Books and Otherwise – in Manuscript and Archival Collections."

- Printed material that's intrinsic to the collection (maps, pamphlets, etc.). Archivists should ask themselves, "Is it important? And how to we provide access?"

- Approaches: extreme librarian or extreme archivist at the ends; many approaches to take, most often depends on institution (resources, etc.); possibilities include removing material for cataloging and adding a note to the record, catalog, but retain material with archive, retain without catalog record, or employ a combination of approaches
- Murray introduced a case study involving papers of a playwright Barrie Stavis. Stavis wrote plays based on historical events. His collection includes research files and "stuff" he was interested in back to the Spanish Civil War. Stavis' writing process included collecting historical materials on those topics. For instance he wrote a play on Joe Hill and collected genealogical materials and information on Mormonism in connection. He also collected original labor and communist pamphlets, (Russian, union, US) and labor magazines, in connection with his writing. Lots of this material is interesting outside the context of Stavis' work. How do we keep this material connected with the original collection yet make it visible to scholars interested in those topics?
- How do you decide what to catalog? If not catalog, what do you do with it? How do you decide what materials get cataloged ahead of the rare books? Is it even doable to catalog on an individual basis? Do you tell researchers that material has been cataloged or even discarded? Do you provide lists?

Break-out Group Discussions

The Section then broke out into 3 small groups for further discussion on the problems of print material in archival collections. The following is a summary of topics these groups discussed:

- Literary manuscripts and the purchase of collections. How do we work with donors so we don't get libraries of books that duplicate general collection?
- Cataloging of ephemera, random newspaper collections.
- How do you help people to find material either cataloged or in manuscript collections?
- Item level indexing and cataloging - it seems to depend on the mission of the institution and its patrons. How will they look for the material? Cross-references between the finding aid and catalog record and access points are powerful.
- MPLP considerations. Specificity of finding aid helps in the research experience.
- Making lists of materials cataloged seems like a lot of work. Important step is connecting with donors to be sure we get what we want and not extraneous material.
- Could you create individual MARC catalog records for all the printed material yet physically keep it in the collection? The decision to catalog depends on nature of collection and how it relates to creator, and also repository resources.
- Time, MPLP considerations, and institutional past practice tends to dictate how repositories deal with print material in collections.
- Donor relationship issues--what happens when archives are required to maintain materials? How do we work with donors to keep this from being a requirement?
- Improved search and discovery systems may be a solution to some of the decisions of whether to catalog or not.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Russey Roke
Section Chair

Minutes, Steering Committee Meeting

August 26, 2011

Chicago, Illinois

Present: Elizabeth Russey Roke (Chair), Chris Burns (Vice-Chair), Fernanda Perrone (Immediate Past Chair), Ellen Doon, Laura Carroll (Web Liaison), Elizabeth Wilkinson, Anke Voss, Jackie Dean

Excused: Melissa Watterworth Batt

It was decided to put the Bylaws on the Section Web site. Laura Carroll will remain as Web Liaison. With the new Drupal content management system, a Co-Web Liaison is not needed. There was discussion of whether the Steering Committee meeting should be moved to Wednesday. Next year we may have an additional meeting to give Steering Committee members, both outgoing and incoming, more of a chance to interact.

Elizabeth Russey Roke suggested that the section meeting needed to be more dynamic, less like another conference sessions, and more interactive. While the break-out section received a good response, many people left. There was discussion of working with other sections and roundtables, introducing joint programs, two-part programs, or rotating programs. The question of when conference themes were decided was raised. Knowing the theme beforehand could help determine what we focus on for the next two to three years. Fernanda Perrone raised the question of the long list of announcements at the beginning of the section. Most people agreed that the announcements were necessary and helpful, although possibly some information could be distributed or solicited beforehand.

Elizabeth Russey Roke led a discussion of the section's strategic plan, noting the strategic goals of the SAA: technology, diversity, and public awareness/advocacy. This year the nominating committee will make an effort to have a more diverse slate of candidates.

Discussion followed of endorsements and session proposals. The Web site will be used as a forum to share ideas about sessions. Next year's program was discussed. A decision was made for the section to focus on electronic records in manuscript collections for the next two years. The Acquisitions and Appraisal section will be approached about joint programming. A plan for lightning talks on electronic records was discussed. Participants will be asked to bring donor agreements regarding electronic records, and background reading such as the work of Adrian Cunningham will be recommended. Chris Burns and Elizabeth Russey Roke will work on the program.

Related section projects could include building a Web resources page on electronic records in manuscript collections or revising the section brochure on donating personal papers. Other possible collaborators include the Oral History and Visual Materials sections. Projects will enable section members not on the Steering Committee to become more involved.

Respectfully submitted,
Fernanda Perrone
Immediate Past Chair

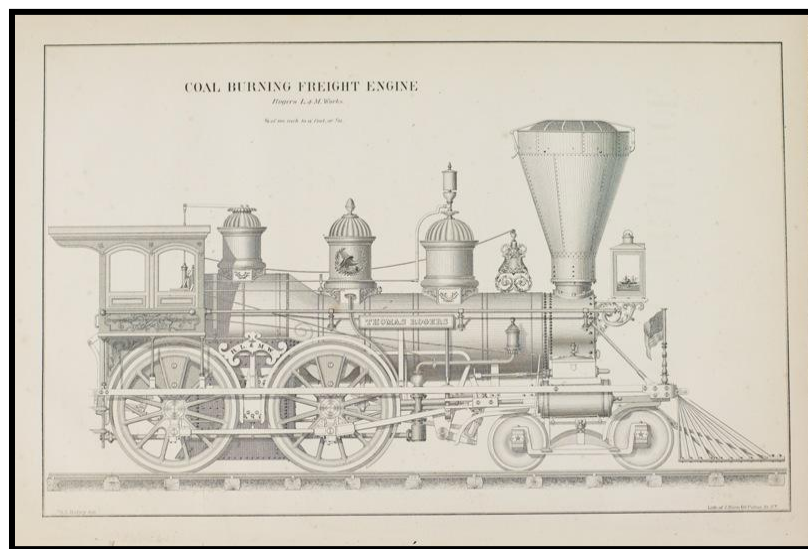
News from Members

Railroad history exhibition opens at Rutgers

Fernanda Perrone

Rutgers Special Collections and University Archives

Special Collections and University Archives at Rutgers is delighted to announce the opening of a new exhibition, *All Aboard! Railroads and New Jersey, 1812-1930*, which will be on display October 27, 2011 to January 6, 2012.



Frontispiece, Alexander Lyman Holley, *American and European Railway Practice in the Economical Generation of Steam*. New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1861. Lithograph by J. Bien. Courtesy Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries.

Railroads had a pervasive presence and an immense influence in New Jersey during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They were both a product and an agent of the process of modernization. Many problems related to railroads in that era would be familiar today as well: fare increases, service disruptions, accidents, noise, and government regulation. But aside from their many problems, railroads were a key element in the development of the state and the nation. Railroads likewise influenced visual imagery, music, and literature.

Using a variety of media, the *All Aboard* exhibition will explore the experimental phase of railroads in New Jersey, the pioneering era under the Camden & Amboy Railroad — the state-sanctioned monopoly

that affected politics for decades -- and the lively polemical campaign between opponents of the monopoly and its defenders. Other themes highlighted in the exhibition are technology, immigration, suburbanization, and the development of agricultural, bedroom, and resort communities. Among the visual images represented will be Thomas Edison's 1903 motion picture, *The Great Train Robbery*, which was filmed in New Jersey.

The exhibition features rare broadsides, pamphlets, and images documenting the history of railroads in the Garden State from Rutgers University Libraries' collections. Among the manuscripts included is a petition by Catherine Nutt, whose husband was hit by a train while working near the tracks. The exhibition coincides with the publication of *Railroads and New Jersey: A Bibliography of Contemporary Publications, 1812-1901* by the late Donald A. Sinclair and David J. Fowler (Rutgers University Libraries, 2011).

For more information on the exhibition or to order a book, please contact Fernanda Perrone at hperrone@rulmail.rutgers.edu.

Archives Take Center Stage: Ceremonial signings for new acquisitions at UD Library

Rebecca Johnson Melvin

University of Delaware Library

The University of Delaware has held three “ceremonial signings” of donor agreements to publicize three high-profile gifts of manuscript collections in the last two years. The most recent and largest event was the September 16, 2011 event to announce the gift of Vice President Joe Biden’s senatorial papers to the University. Biden, an alumnus of the Class of 1965, represented Delaware in the U.S. Senate from 1973-2009. He was elected to a seventh term in the Senate in 2008, but resigned in January 2009 when he was sworn in as the 47th vice president of the United States. The Vice President was invited to deliver the inaugural James R. Soles lecture on the Constitution and Citizenship at the University on September 16, one day prior to Constitution Day. His visit also coincided with Congress Week 2011, a national celebration organized by the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress to promote understanding of the history of Congress, legislative process, and current issues facing Congress. The story of Biden’s campus visit, along with a photo album, is available here: <http://www.udel.edu/udaily/2012/sep/biden-papers-lecture-091611.html>

After visiting Morris Library, where his papers will be housed, the Vice President was accompanied by the University President, the director of the University of Delaware Library, and two other University officials to Mitchell Hall, where an audience of 650 awaited his delivery of the Soles lecture. After welcoming remarks and the Library Director’s announcement of the senatorial papers gift, the Vice President signed a ceremonial document on the stage and the audience responded with a standing ovation. The atmosphere of the occasion, combined with the lecture in honor of a beloved professor who mentored many Delawareans in political and public policy careers, was truly celebratory and a great opportunity to have archival resources take center stage before the University community.

The Library also worked with University administrators on public celebrations of two other gifts in the past two years. On February 17, 2011, the University President hosted a reception and signing at his

home to announce the gift of Congressman Mike Castle's papers: <http://www.udel.edu/udaily/2011/feb/castle-papers-022111.html> and a similar event was held on November 24, 2010, to mark the gift of papers from Senator Ted Kaufman <http://www.udel.edu/udaily/2011/nov/senator-kaufman-papers-112410.html>. The three gifts of the personal papers of Castle, Kaufman, and Biden document the public careers of former members of Congress and are significant additions to existing political papers at the University of Delaware Library. In addition to celebrating the donors, these signings have helped raise the profile of these archival sources and the Library for faculty, dignitaries, University supporters, and the general public.

Papers of Eleanor K. Grimm acquired by the American College of Surgeons

Susan Rishworth

American College of Surgeons

Eleanor K. Grim (1891-1975) has long been an intriguing figure in the history of the American College of Surgeons (ACS), which will be celebrating its centennial in the year 2012-2013. Miss Grimm, newly graduated from business school in 1913, began working for Dr. Franklin Martin, Founder of the ACS, during the year that it was founded as his personal secretary.



Eleanor K. Grimm, Courtesy American College of Surgeons.

Throughout the years that they worked together, they initiated many of the departments and programs that currently exist at the College. Miss Grimm edited all College publications, performed all secretarial work in connection with the business of the Regents, Governors, Councils, and Committees, handled details of the Clinical Congresses, aided in the establishment of Sectional Meetings, and presided over

the medical motion pictures program. After Martin's death in 1935 she served on the Administrative Board as Administrative Executive and Secretary to the Board of Regents.

At her retirement in 1951, the ACS Board of Regents commissioned her to record her recollections of the history of the College and to document it in preparation for the College's semi-centennial. Her 26 volume *magnum opus* in typescript, the ACS History Notebooks, was the result. One volume of the Notebooks with her 59 page index to the complete work can be found in the Digital Collections link on the ACS Archives website [www.facs.org/archives] along with the finding aid to that work. The Notebooks were the main source for the writing of the College's semi-centennial history in 1960 by Loyal Davis, *Fellowship of Surgeons*, but Dr. Davis only tapped the surface of the wealth of material found therein. The Notebooks treat the history of surgery from ancient times, biographies of surgical leaders in the early twentieth century, histories and development of the various functions and programs of the College including surgical education, trauma, cancer, annual meetings, international relations, hospital standardization, medical motion pictures, public relations and much more.

The ACS Archives has now acquired from the family the papers of Miss Grimm in the form of two sets of scrapbooks, which shed much more light on this remarkable woman. One set of three, which we call the "retirement scrapbooks" includes correspondence with all the founders of the College and leaders throughout the first 50 years of its existence. The other set of nine, which we call the "travel scrapbooks," detail her world travels, when she visited many of the surgeons with whom she worked closely over the years and carried letters of introduction from three of Martin's successors as Executive Director. The retirement scrapbooks are available as electronic files, free text searchable; the travel scrapbooks are available in the ACS Archives in the de-acidified paper originals.

Binghamton University Libraries receives the Vera Beaudin Saeedpour Kurdish Library and Museum Collection

Jean L. Green

University Libraries, Binghamton University, SUNY

The Binghamton University Libraries recently received the Vera Beaudin Saeedpour Kurdish Library and Museum Collection from the Kurdish Heritage Foundation at the recommendation of her family. This outstanding collection contains more than 3,000 books, journals, and newspapers in Kurdish and other languages. It also includes artifacts, costumes, maps, photographs, artwork, and other unique materials: a nineteenth century traveler's account of Kurdistan; jewelry including necklaces, headpieces, bracelets, and belts; musical instruments and recorded music; and weavings, crafts, carpets, and other textile art. The collection originated in a Brooklyn Prospect Heights townhouse where Dr. Beaudin Saeedpour, a scholar on Kurdish studies, created "The Kurdish Library" in 1986.

Born in Vermont in 1930, Dr. Beaudin Saeedpour earned a master's degree in philosophy from the University of Vermont and a doctorate in education from Columbia University. While working on her dissertation, she met Homayoun Saeedpour, a Kurd from the city of Sanandaj in Eastern Kurdistan, whom she later married. Although Homayoun died in 1981, Dr. Beaudin Saeedpour's inspiration to learn

and educate others about Kurdish history, culture, and current events became her life's work until her passing in 2010.

In 1986, Dr. Beaudin Saeedpour started the Kurdish Heritage Foundation of America along with the Kurdish Library and in 1988 opened the Kurdish Museum as well. Here journalists, scholars, students, politicians, and others came to research Kurdish culture and history under her guidance. Working with Cultural Survival, a nonprofit organization dedicated to defending the rights of indigenous peoples, she initiated the Kurdish Program. Her scholarly publications, *The International Journal of Kurdish Studies*, featuring scholarly articles on Kurdish culture, history, and contemporary affairs, and the quarterly, *Kurdish Life*, a documented chronicle and analysis of contemporary events and issues, can be found in the collections of leading university libraries. A tireless researcher and activist, Dr. Beaudin Saeedpour also wrote extensively and lectured both domestically and internationally on Kurdish affairs.

Dr. Beaudin Saeedpour once told the Associated Press "I know the Kurds better than any Westerner living" (Martin, Douglas, "Vera B. Saeedpour, Scholar and Archivist of the Kurdish Culture, Dies at 80," *New York Times*, June 8, 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/08/nyregion/08saeedpour.htm>.) and, indeed, this is the most significant collection of materials dedicated to the Kurds in the United States. It is telling then that, when speaking of Dr. Beaudin Saeedpour as a scholar, an author, and an outspoken activist, the Kurdish American Education Society (KAES) stated that "...it would not be an exaggeration to call her the mother of Kurdish cultural studies in this continent." ("Remembering Dr. Vera Saeedpour," The website of VOKRadio, accessed July 26, 2011, <http://www.vokradio.com/content/view/1207/44/>) The Libraries are truly grateful to the Foundation and the family of Dr. Beaudin Saeedpour for this significant and unique collection of materials documenting Kurdish culture and life. We are committed to preserving this treasure of information for future generations of researchers in the tradition of Dr. Beaudin Saeedpour and her Kurdish Library and Kurdish Museum.

New University of Georgia Special Collections building to house three special collections libraries

Renna Tuten

University of Georgia Special Collections

During the fall of 2011, the University of Georgia Libraries' three special collections libraries – the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies and the Walter J. Brown Media Archives and Peabody Awards Collection - will relocate from the Main Library to the new Special Collections Libraries building (where finishing touches are currently being put on) under construction. The Special Collections Libraries have outgrown their spaces in the central library facility and, in addition to providing additional space for collections and exhibits, the new building will provide state-of-the-art climate control and upgraded security.

The new Special Collections Libraries Building will be 115,000 square feet and contain galleries for permanent and rotating exhibits as well as classroom space equipped with technology to integrate primary resources into instruction. The subterranean high-density storage vault is located underneath the building and contains over 50 miles of shelf space that will provide space for growth for 40 years.

Archival collections housed in this vault will be barcoded for streamlined retrieval via the GFA and Aeon software systems.

Currently, access to the collections is limited while the departments move. Please contact each library for further information regarding when they will be closed for research. Visit <http://www.libs.uga.edu/sclb/index.html> for more information.

NHPRC Grant Project has opened access to collections at Northwest Liberal Arts Colleges through participation in Northwest Digital Archives

Jodi Allison-Bunnell

Northwest Digital Archives at Orbis Cascade Alliance

Over one hundred additional archival collections at liberal arts colleges in Washington and Oregon are now accessible on Northwest Digital Archives (NWDA) [<http://nwda.orbiscascade.org/index.shtml>]. Funded by a \$123,188 grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), the granting arm of the National Archives and Records Administration, the project is assisting seven small liberal arts colleges in Oregon and Washington with archival program development and exposing basic information about their collections to researchers. Northwest Digital Archives is a program of the Orbis Cascade Alliance, a consortium of academic libraries in Oregon and Washington.

The project involves significant records held by small private colleges and universities in Washington and Oregon that document the activities of religious groups in the Northwest, including their roles in the development of educational institutions and the settlement of the Northwest. The religious groups documented include the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Society of Friends (Quakers), American Baptists, Jesuits, Free Methodists, and Congregationalists. Other topics include local and neighborhood history; the history of the Oregon wine industry, and the activities of individuals and organizations.

Institutions participating in the project are Concordia University, George Fox University, Linfield College, Pacific University, Seattle University, Seattle Pacific University, and the University of Puget Sound. Each institution has worked with a consulting archivist to complete collection surveys of approximately 5,783 linear feet of materials at all seven institutions, produce catalog records and finding aids for collections, and make those catalog records and finding aids available to researchers in library catalogs and through the NWDA database (nwda.orbiscascade.org). The consulting archivists are also working with participating institutions to effectively advocate for archival program development.

Participating institutions were gratified to report immediate increases in collection use directly attributable to the grant. When the project concludes in June 2012, all participants expect increased use of their collections and a documented increase in institutional support for their archives programs.

About the Orbis Cascade Alliance: The Alliance provides the popular Summit union catalog that allows students, faculty, and staff to easily search and request library materials owned by member libraries. To provide fast, efficient delivery, the Alliance maintains a courier service providing daily pick-up and

delivery of library materials at libraries in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. The Alliance also provides cooperative purchasing opportunities for databases, electronic journals, and other digital library services. www.orbiscascade.org

For more information, contact Jodi Allison-Bunnell, Northwest Digital Archives Program Manager, Orbis Cascade Alliance, 406-829-6528, jodiab@uoregon.edu

Section Leadership

Elizabeth Russey Roke, Chair
Chris Burns, Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect
Fernanda Perrone, Immediate Past Chair
Laura Carroll, Web Liaison
Bill Landis, Council Liaison

Steering Committee Members

Melissa Watterworth Batt
Jackie Dean
Ellen Doon
Renna Tuten
Anke Voss
Elizabeth Wilkinson

The deadline for the Spring Newsletter is
March 1, 2012.