

MANUSCRIPT REPOSITORIES SECTION NEWSLETTER

Manuscript Repositories Section of the Society of American Archivists

Spring 2004

[From The Chair](#)

[Nominations Sought For Section Leadership](#)

[St. Stephen's Mission Records Donated To Marquette University](#)

[Utah State University News: Arrington Lecture](#)

[News from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Special Collections](#)

[Web Page Celebrates Discoverer Of Pluto](#)

[Emory Acquires Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney Letters](#)

[Congressional Papers An Committee Records: Private vs. Public Ownership](#)

[Leadership, Nominations Deadline, and Next Newsletter Deadline](#)

From The Chair

By Pam Hackbart-Dean, Georgia State University

Hello from the sunny South! It is hard to believe spring is right around the corner, especially when Punxsutawney Phil predicted another six weeks of winter. Soon our SAA annual meeting programs will be arriving in the mail.

An update on the statement sent to SAA Council by the Manuscript Repositories Section along with the Reference, Access & Outreach Section and the Privacy and Confidentiality Roundtable: [This was published in the previous newsletter, Fall 2003] Council met in early February and reviewed the statement, as well as a position paper from Peter Hirtle regarding the statement. Council approved Peter Hirtle's position paper and will be posting it on the SAA website.

In other section news, elsewhere in this issue there is a request for potential steering committee candidates from Susan Potts McDonald, Immediate Past Chair and Chair of the Nominating Committee. Please take a few moments to think about people you would like to see leading the section or even volunteer yourself.

Plans are moving ahead for the program portion of our meeting this summer in Boston. The topic will be "Threads of the Past: Documenting the Textile History of New England"; watch for further details in the summer newsletter.

Enjoy your spring and I look forward to seeing you all in Boston!!

Nominations Sought For Section Leadership

by Susan Potts McDonald, Chair of Nominations

Here's a great opportunity if you have wondered how you can become more active in SAA. The Nominations and Election Committee - Susan Potts McDonald (Chair), Tom Hyry, Theresa Salazar, and Steve Sturgeon -

currently seeks candidates to consider for the Manuscript Repositories Section leadership. Elections for Vice Chair/Chair Elect and three Steering Committee members will be held during the section meeting in Boston on Thursday, August 5, 2004. Candidates must be members of SAA and the Manuscript Repositories Section. In forming the slate, the committee will strive to represent the wide range of repository types found in the section as well as different geographic areas.

Duties of the offices are as follows:

Vice Chair/Chair Elect: Serves as the Vice Chair from the conclusion of the 2004 meeting through the 2005 meeting, at which time (s)he assumes the office of Chair for one year. Presides over the 2006 meeting. Also serves as newsletter editor while Vice Chair.

Steering Committee members: Serve for two years from the end of the 2004 meeting through the 2006 meeting. The three committee members elected in 2004 will serve on the Nominations and Election Committee and perform other section duties.

Please feel free to nominate yourself or send suggestions to [Susan Potts McDonald](mailto:Susan.Potts.McDonald@saagroups.org) (or by fax: 404-727-5034). The deadline for nominations is May 3, 2004. Thanks for participating!

St. Stephen's Mission Records Donated To Marquette University *by Mark Thiel, Marquette University*

Marquette University Libraries' Department of Special Collections and University Archives has acquired the records of St. Stephen's Mission, located on the Wind River Reservation near Riverton, Wyoming. The mission, established by Jesuit missionaries in 1884, serves Catholics from the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone tribes. The Wisconsin Province of the Society of Jesus now manages St. Stephen's mission.

The initial installment of records from St. Stephen's spans the mission's 119 year history, and includes Jesuit "house diaries," correspondence, general subject files, unpublished histories of the mission, photographs, and Arapaho vocabularies. The collection is greatly enhanced by the availability of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions records, also preserved at Marquette, which contains annual reports, correspondence, and hundreds of photographs from the mission. The Marquette Archives maintains more than three dozen other collections documenting Catholicism among Native Americans, including the Tekakwitha Conference, St. Francis Mission (Rosebud Reservation) and Holy Rosary Mission (Pine Ridge Reservation).

The collection will be preprocessed and microfilmed in 2003-2004. A complete set of microfilm will be supplied to the library at St. Stephen's.

The acquisition of the collection was made possible thanks to a 2003 travel grant from the Simmons Religious Commitment Fund at Marquette University. Questions about the records of St. Stephen's Mission, or other Native Catholic Collections, should be addressed to Mark Thiel, 414- 288-5904 or email mark.thiel@marquette.edu

Utah State University News: Arrington Lecture *by Stephen C. Sturgeon, Utah State University*

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, professor of early American history at Harvard, delivered the ninth annual Leonard J. Arrington Mormon History Lecture to a packed audience at the Logan Tabernacle on Thursday, October 23. Her talk, entitled "Rachel's Death: How Memory Challenges History," was an extended reflection on the differing perspectives and accounts of the accidental death of her great-grandmother, Rachel Davis Thatcher, in Gentile Valley, Idaho in 1882. Dr. Ulrich discussed how conflicting versions of the accident and aftermath were reported in the newspapers and contemporary correspondence, as well as subsequently handed down through different branches of the family. She also spoke at length about the guilt that Rachel's sister (and "sister-wife" in polygamy), Sarah, felt about Rachel's death, and how these feelings grew out of the internal dynamics of this polygamous family.

The Arrington Lecture series is sponsored by Utah State University's Special Collections & Archives, and was established in conjunction with the Leonard Arrington Mormon History Archives housed in the department. Past speakers have included Howard Lamar, Richard Bushman, Donald Worster, Claudia Bushman, and Jan Shipp. The lectures are published in booklet form by USU Press, and are available for purchase from Special Collections.

News from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Special Collections *by Su Kim Chung, University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

Vassili Sulich Papers

The personal papers and photographs of dancer and choreographer, Vassili Sulich, were recently donated to the Special Collections Division of the UNLV Libraries. A native of Croatia, Sulich had a successful ballet career in Europe before moving from Paris to Las Vegas in 1964 to dance in the world famous Folies Bergere show at the Tropicana Hotel. After nine years as principal dancer and ballet master, Sulich formed the Nevada Dance Theatre, the first professional dance company in Nevada. Initially composed of dedicated volunteers from Las Vegas Strip production shows (rehearsing for free in their spare time), it evolved into a professional, nationally known ballet company under the creative direction of Sulich. He choreographed some 51 ballets before retiring from the company in 1997.

In addition to his work for the Nevada Dance Theatre, Sulich's ballets have been performed by companies all over the world from Hong Kong to Rio de Janeiro. He has also choreographed dance segments for the San Francisco Opera and Seattle Opera.

The Vassili Sulich Papers join a growing number of collections at the UNLV Libraries that document the history of arts and entertainment in Las Vegas including the papers of noted show producers, Donn Arden, Matt Gregory, Harold Minsky and Jess Mack, and costume designer Jose Luis Vinas.

Early Las Vegas Digital Exhibit

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Libraries announces the relaunching/newly-revised version of "Early Las Vegas," a digital exhibit using historical photographs, video and audio clips from the research collections contained in the Special Collections Division of the UNLV Libraries.

Based on best practices exemplified by the Denver Public Library, and incorporating the CONTENTdm digital content management software system, "Early Las Vegas" is divided into six photographic galleries: The Cottages, The Depot, Early Las Vegas, Fremont Street, Hoover Dam, and Night Club Las Vegas. Each of these galleries is designed to simulate an actual gallery experience by having the user move horizontally through the exhibit. Each item in the gallery has been cataloged in CONTENTdm in the Dublin Core (DC) metadata standard. Suitable commentary and research related to the photographs, and the video and audio clips, is included in each exhibit. In addition, the Hoover Dam gallery has an extended version, that includes much more research and content regarding the construction of the dam.

The video and audio clips can be viewed by downloading the free RealPlayer software. Information on doing this is provided at the website.

This revised digital exhibit was the result of a UNLV New Investigator Award (NIA) granted to the Head, Bibliographic and Metadata Services Department of the UNLV Libraries, and the Manuscripts Librarian, UNLV Special Collections Department, in collaboration with the UNLV Department of History. All comments and suggestions regarding the content and design of the website are appreciated, and can be directed to Brad Eden, Head, UNLV Libraries Web and Digitization Services Department, at beden@cmail.nevada.edu

Users can access this exhibit at the following URL: http://www.library.unlv.edu/early_las_vegas/index.html

Web Page Celebrates Discoverer Of Pluto *by Jeanette Smith, New Mexico State University Library*

You can't blame the staff of the New Mexico State University Library for having stars in their eyes. The library recently mounted a web page on planetary astronomer Clyde W. Tombaugh, who discovered the planet Pluto. The page, found at http://archives.nmsu.edu/exhibits/tombaugh_website/ includes an overview of the Clyde W. Tombaugh Papers, a biography, a bibliography, a listing of astronomy collections held by the library and information on the processing of the papers. The page is a collaborative project of archivists Maura Kenny and Melissa Gottwald.

Clyde W. Tombaugh is best known for his February 18, 1930, discovery of the elusive "Planet X," later named Pluto, at Lowell Observatory in Arizona. The majority of his career was spent in New Mexico, working first on the tracking telescopes at White Sands Proving Ground and later helping to establish the astronomy program at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, considered one of the nation's best. After his retirement in 1973, Dr. Tombaugh remained very active as a lecturer. Many senior library staff members remember interacting with him on a regular basis as he came and went from his office in the astronomy department, located just across the street from the library. Born in Illinois in 1906, the world-famous astronomer passed away on January 17, 1997, at the age of ninety.

The Clyde W. Tombaugh Papers were donated to the library by his widow Patsy and their two children, Annette and Alden, in 2001. The papers consist of approximately 150 linear feet of material, including correspondence with prominent astronomers and space scientists such as Wernher von Braun and Carl Sagan. The papers also include educational records, administrative files, research files, writings, technical drawings, photographs, astronomical charts and printed matter. This spring, the library is completing a three-year project to make Tombaugh's extensive personal and professional papers accessible for research.

Project archivist Melissa Gottwald presented a paper "The Clyde W. Tombaugh Papers and the Rio Grande Historical Collections: Preserving the History of Astronomy" at a January meeting of the American Astronomical Society in Atlanta, Georgia, and she repeated the presentation at a public program in Las Cruces on February 18. She discussed the preservation of the papers, as well as the astronomer's life and career, highlighting specific topics such as Pluto and Tombaugh's Mars research.

Processing of the papers was supported by grants from the American Institute of Physics and the New Mexico Historical Records Advisory Board and by private donations. The success of the project has been greatly enhanced by the cooperation of the Tombaugh family as well as the help of New Mexico astronomer Dr. Herb Beebe, who conducted an oral history project with family, friends and colleagues of Dr. Tombaugh. For more information, please contact Steve Hussman, the head of the library's Archives and Special Collections Department, at (505) 646-4756 or email shussman@lib.nmsu.edu.

Emory Acquires Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney Letters *by Susan Potts McDonald, Emory University*

The Woodruff Library of Emory University has acquired a major portion of the archive of the Nobel Prize-winning Irish poet Seamus Heaney. The collection of personal and literary papers includes thousands of letters spanning Heaney's entire career as well as printed materials, tape recordings and photographs. Heaney made the announcement Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2003, prior to a reading at Emory in honor of the University's recently retired president, William M. Chace.

This acquisition, the latest in a long series of major Irish literary acquisitions by Emory, establishes at the university the largest and most complete archive anywhere for the study of Heaney's life and work. The acquisition of the Heaney papers is the culmination of a collecting initiative that has spanned more than 15 years and that now includes the archives of many of the finest contemporary poets.

The Seamus Heaney papers join the archives of Ted Hughes, Paul Muldoon, Anthony Hecht and other major figures, and create at Emory a leading research center for the study of contemporary poetry.

The Seamus Heaney papers which Emory has acquired span Heaney's career from 1964 to the present and include correspondence with a wide literary circle including such writers as Brian Friel, Anthony Hecht, Ted Hughes, Michael Longley, Robert Lowell, Paul Muldoon and Robert Pinsky, to name only a few. The archive will cast light on the creative lives of a wide literary circle, while at the same time serving as the primary resource for future studies of Heaney's own work, according to Enniss. Once processing of the collection is completed, the archive will be available for research use by students and scholars.

Heaney, who was born in County Derry in Northern Ireland in 1939, is widely regarded as one of the finest English language poets of our time. His critically acclaimed first book, "Death of a Naturalist," marked the arrival of a major new poetic voice. During his distinguished career he has published numerous collections of poems, translations and works of literary criticism. In 1984 he was named Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Poetry at Harvard University, and in 1989 he was named to the prestigious Chair of Poetry at Oxford University. He received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1995, and the following year his collection of poems "The Spirit Level" was selected as the Whitbread Book of the Year. His 1999 verse translation of "Beowulf" was an international bestseller, the same year that his collected poems "Opened Ground" were published. More recently, Heaney was awarded the 2003 Truman Capote Award for Literary Criticism for "Finders Keepers: Selected Prose 1971-2001."

This past May Heaney gave the keynote address at Emory's commencement ceremony and received an honorary doctor of humane letters degree. His ties to Emory go back many years, dating to his selection as the inaugural Richard Ellmann Lecturer in Modern Literature in 1988. The lectures were published as "The Place of Writing," and his notes for the series were deposited in Emory's special collections, a seed that has grown into what many scholars consider the finest archive of contemporary Irish poetry anywhere.

Congressional Papers An Committee Records: Private vs. Public Ownership

by Karen Dawley Paul, United States Senate Archivist

During the past year, a problem came to light that must be more conscientiously addressed by archivists who accept congressional papers collections—that of official committee records being transferred to the repository along with the personal papers of the member. House and Senate committee records are defined by law (44 U.S.C. § 2118, 2 U.S.C. § 72a, 18 U.S.C. § 641, and 18 U.S.C. § 2071) and by House Rule VII and Senate Standing Rules XI and XXVI as public records. They must remain in Washington, DC, as part of the archival holdings maintained at the Center for Legislative Archives at the National Archives. Ignorance of the law or "donor relations" is no excuse for accepting and maintaining committee records that either have inadvertently or deliberately been transferred back to the state and out of the custody of the respective body. Members of Congress cannot donate such records to a repository because they do not own them. Additionally, committee staff, out of loyalty to a particular member or out of ignorance, will occasionally make a decision to send his or her papers along with those of the member. **When either of these situations occurs it is the professional and ethical duty of the receiving archivist to inform both the donor and either the Office of History and Preservation, (202-226-5200), if the records belong to the House or the Senate Archivist (202-224-3351), if they belong to the Senate.**

Although information about ownership of committee records has been widely disseminated through the Congressional Papers Roundtable, there is evidence that some institutions continue to disregard this information by accepting and holding records to which they have no legal title. This past year records that were desperately needed by a committee were unavailable because they were improperly held by an institution. We are making every effort to make certain that everyone receiving congressional collections understands the law and has the opportunity to abide by it. When violations are discovered, the House and Senate expect to be able to recover the records promptly. Many institutions already comply readily by contacting House and Senate authorities when such material is discovered during processing. This notice is being distributed to all Congressional Papers

Roundtable members and to all Manuscripts Section members so that everyone will have the opportunity to be in compliance.

Members' Papers: A Working Definition

Normally, a close look at the material reveals if the creator of the files is a committee or a personal staff member. Further investigation reveals the functions of the files. While personal staff normally track legislation from several committees, committee staff work on particular legislation, nominations, or investigations in a well-defined jurisdictional area. Clues such as letterhead, titles, and the contents of a series as a whole will indicate the source.

Members' papers are defined as "all records, regardless of physical form and characteristics that are made or received in connection with an individual's career as a member of Congress." This includes records created and received by a member's staff, including the legislative staff. By tradition and practice, members' papers are the private property of the individual member. These materials are preserved either as evidence of the organization, functions, and operations of the office or as information about the individual member or the matters with which s/he dealt. **Excluded are committee records which are defined by statute and House and Senate Standing Rules.** (See citations above.) Furthermore, 18 U.S.C. 641 and 2071 provide penalties for destruction or removal of committee records.

Committee Records: A Working Definition

Congress, in the Federal Records Act (44 U.S.C. 3301), provided the executive branch with a definition of "records." This statutory definition serves as the basis for defining committee records as: *all documentary materials, regardless of physical form, made or received and maintained by committees in connection with the transaction of committee legislative, oversight, and executive business.*

These records document committee work on bills, oversight, and investigations, consideration of nominations and treaties (Senate), and impeachment proceedings. While committee staff may also have purely personal papers in their offices such items are easy to identify because they *were not prepared for transacting committee business.* (Examples include records relating to campaign activities, papers accumulated before joining the committee, materials resulting from outside pursuits, and diaries).

Manuscript Repositories Section **[Leadership list](#)**

News items, articles, letters to the editor, and comments are welcome.

Nominations Deadline: May 3, 2004

Please submit names to
[Susan Potts McDonald](#)

Next newsletter deadline: May 28, 2004

Send to [Cynthia Pease Miller](#)

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