



Notes from the Chair

Greetings RAO Membership and Happy New Year to you! The RAO Steering Committee as well as RAO committees and working groups have been hard at work as we enter 2015. My goal for this "Notes from the Chair" article is to update you on the work of the RAO leadership, specifically the Steering Committee. (Inside this newsletter you will also find updates from RAO committees and working groups specific to their activities.)

During fall 2014, RAO Steering Committee members along with working group and committee chairs, identified initiatives that support SAA's strategic plan. SAA's goals are outlined below followed by the goals developed by RAO's leadership. I encourage you to read through these goals and provide comments to us. Thanks in advance for your feedback.

SAA GOAL 1: ADVOCATING FOR ARCHIVISTS AND ARCHIVES *Society values the vital role of archivists and archives.*

RAO Initiatives that support SAA Goal 1:

- Participate in #AskAnArchivist Day as a section.
- Propose primary source literacy guidelines, in collaboration with ACRL RBMS, to set benchmarks and guidelines for the use of primary sources in instruction.
- Investigate the potential creation of a resource bank focused on teaching with primary sources.
- Engage with our membership, the archival profession as a whole, and society via our communications platforms to advocate for the value of archives.

SAA GOAL 2: ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH *Archivists have access to the professional resources they need to be successful and effective in their careers.*

RAO Initiatives that support SAA Goal 2:

- Develop program content for our annual section meeting that allows attendees to engage with cutting-edge concepts and perennial issues associated with reference, access, and outreach.
- Explore possibilities of webcasting the RAO section meeting to make it accessible to all members.
- Create tools, bibliographies, guidelines, etc. (e.g., teaching with primary sources resource bank, teaching with primary sources preconference, electronic records bibliography, 23 Things website) that archivists can utilize in their careers.
- Regularly disseminate content about current trends, best practices, latest developments, and news related to RAO matters through our communication platforms.

GOAL 3: ADVANCING THE FIELD *Professional knowledge expands to keep pace with an increasingly diverse archival record.*

RAO Initiatives that support SAA Goal 3:

- Finalize a proposal for primary source literacy guidelines in collaboration with ACRL RBMS.
- Disseminate research and tools about RAO related topics.
- Collaborate with SAA component groups and leaders to disseminate RAO information throughout SAA.



Lisa Sjöberg | RAO Chair
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Join the RAO Section Leadership Team!

The 2015 Nominations and Elections Committee for SAA's Reference Access and Outreach Section is accepting nominations for candidates to run for Steering Committee membership (2 positions) and Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect. Nominees must be current members of the Society of American Archivists and the Reference Access and Outreach Section to be considered by the committee.

Steering Committee members serve a two-year term, with the appointment beginning at the annual meeting. The Vice Chair/Chair-Elect position is a three-year service commitment, with the elected person serving for one year as Vice Chair, succeeding automatically to the office of Chair for the following year, and concluding service with a third year on the Steering Committee as the Past Chair.

To nominate yourself or others for Steering Committee or Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, please visit <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/63JF3JC>.

The deadline for submitting nominations is 12 p.m., March 1, 2015. The committee will review all nominations to select a fabulous slate of candidates for the 2015 election. If you have questions about the nomination process or about serving as a leader for RAO, please contact members of the 2015 RAO Nominations and Elections Committee for additional information.

Thanks,
2015 RAO Nominations and Elections Committee
Erin Lawrimore
(elawrimore32@gmail.com)
Alison Stankrauff
(astankra@iusb.edu)
Mary Manning
(mmanning@uh.edu)

Notes from the Chair *(continued)*

GOAL 4: MEETING MEMBERS' NEEDS

SAA is an agile association that delivers outstanding service and fosters a culture of inclusiveness and participation.

RAO Initiatives that support SAA Goal 4:

- Ramp up the RAO microsite to better disseminate information to RAO members and internally document RAO processes for succession planning.
- Increase efforts to solicit feedback and conversation amongst RAO members through social media and the RAO listserv.
- Offer networking opportunities during the RAO section meeting to encourage career growth as well as involvement in RAO and SAA more broadly.
- Provide opportunities for RAO members to participate actively in defined, professional projects through RAO committees and working groups.
- Distribute widely the call for nominations for RAO leadership positions and committee/working group memberships to encourage involvement.

One of the highlights of 2014-2015 has been SAA's Year of Living Dangerously for Archives campaign. Certainly this campaign is near and dear to the heart of RAO archivists. I suspect that the RAO membership has been actively involved in this campaign, and I thank you for doing so. The RAO Steering Committee actively participated #AskAnArchivist Day on October 30, 2014. Together, the RAO Steers kept the RAO Twitter feed engaged and participating in the activities throughout the day.

Looking ahead to this spring, the RAO leadership will be busy planning this year's annual section meeting, creating a top-notch slate of candidates for section leadership positions, and achieving goals within the RAO committees and working groups. As indicated above, this newsletter contains updates from the committees and working groups. Please use this information not only to inform yourselves about what is happening within RAO, but also to ponder involvement in one of these groups. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact the chair(s) of the committee/working group. They are excited to hear from you!

The Marketplace of Ideas will again be the feature of this year's section meeting. We will be sending out a call for vendors in April, and we encourage you to apply to sell your wares in a hot topic discussion or a cool demonstration. Thank you to all who participated in last year's meeting whether in person or from afar through the virtual idea bar. We look forward to another successful marketplace in August 2015!

Before I sign off, I also want to thank the RAO membership for its active involvement not only in section matters, but also in advocating for archives. Please do reach out to me or any of the Steering Committee members or committee/working group chairs with any questions or concerns.

Best wishes to all in 2015!

Recap: Marketplace of Ideas III, “Even Bigger, Better, Hotter, Cooler!”

By: Mary Manning, 2014 Program Chair and Immediate Past Chair of RAO

Building on the success of the 2012 and 2013 Marketplace of Ideas program, the RAO program committee members presented Marketplace III at the 2014 RAO Section meeting in Washington DC. It was the biggest Marketplace to date with approximately 130 shoppers!

The 2014 program continued the core approach from the 2012 and 2013 Marketplaces and gave attendees a chance to connect with each other over key RAO issues in a small informal setting and in a self-directed manner. The program committee hoped to encourage spontaneity, communication, and creative problem solving and idea generation. The committee was delighted to receive a strong pool of idea vendor applications covering a wide range of hot topics relevant to reference access and outreach work from which they selected six topics/vendors to participate:



Josh Hager discusses social media strategy at the RAO Marketplace of Ideas III in Washington, D.C.

Scaling the Ivory Tower: Faculty Outreach at Colleges and Universities

Presented by Shaun Hayes, Assistant Archivist, American Heritage Center

Broad Collaboration, Narrow Focus: Strategies for Effective Social Media Outreach

Presented by Josh Hager, Correspondence Assistant, State Archives of North Carolina

Oral History Core: Ensuring Access to Personal Narrative (through Metadata)

Presented by Cyns Nelson, Oral History Specialist/Provocateur

Let's Get Digital: Providing Access to Born-Digital Records

Presented by Greg Kocken, Head Special Collections Librarian and University Archivist, W. D. McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

How I Saved History (and Am Milking It for All It's Worth): Making Historic State Law Free Online

Presented by Sharon Bradley, Special Collections Librarian, University of Georgia School of Law

The Numbers Game: Tools for Tracking Reference Statistics

Presented by Rachel M. Grove Rohrbaugh, Archivist and Public Services Librarian; Jennie King Mellon Library, Chatham University

In addition to the six market booths, the program committee had two additional opportunities for attendees to exchange ideas with one another during the program and continue this exchange beyond the RAO Section meeting--the Idea Snack Bar and Idea Seed Swap. At the Idea Snack Bar, Marketplace shoppers could post questions and share ideas through Twitter. The Idea Seed Swap consisted of “seed packets” (manila envelopes) that lined one wall of the meeting space labeled with the topics from the six marketplace booths as well as several other topics of interest to RAO members. It gave attendees a place to drop in business cards and register their interests. Program committee members compiled all the contact information for each seed packet and shared this with participants. Last year a new working group on providing access to records was, in part, sprouted from a 2013 seed swap envelope. It will be fun to see what sprouts and grows from the 2014 seed swap envelopes.

The program committee for 2014 concluded its work on Marketplace III by circulating a brief survey to RAO members to our membership via the listserv and social media in mid October. Despite a limited response, the committee received some great suggestions for refining and improving the marketplace concept.

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Recap: Marketplace of Ideas III (continued)

The Marketplace concept required a great deal of preparation and planning by RAO program committee members, vendors, and SAA staff. A good marketplace needs a nice location and good facilities. Rene (Mueller) Craig and her team at SAA provided a wonderful space and worked closely with the program team to troubleshoot problems as they arose. A great marketplace needs great shops and the 2013 vendors (Shaun Hayes, Josh Hager, Cyns Nelson, Greg Kocken, Sharon Bradley, and Rachel M. Grove Rohrbaugh) were stellar and generous with their time and expertise. Finally, huge thanks to program committee members Lisa Sjöberg, Jean Green, and Rachael Dreyer who brainstormed, planned, organized, advertised, and much more. It took a village to make the Marketplace III live up to its claims, “Even Bigger, Better, Hotter, Cooler!”



Shaun Hayes discusses faculty outreach strategies at the RAO Marketplace of Ideas III in Washington, D.C.

Back by popular demand, our fourth Marketplace of Ideas will be featured at RAO’s 2015 annual meeting this summer in Cleveland, OH. Stay tuned for plans for the 2015 Marketplace as they unfold.

The Marketplace of Ideas is coming back to an RAO Section Meeting near you!

By: Lisa Sjöberg, RAO Chair

The RAO Steering Committee is pleased to announce that the Marketplace of Ideas will again be the focus of the 2015 RAO Section Meeting. The Program Committee is busily making preparations. Thank you to all who participated in the assessments of the 2014 Marketplace, so we can provide an even better experience in 2015. The Program Committee is developing ways to integrate more virtual components into the Marketplace as well as a hub for Marketplace materials that will be available to everyone post-meeting.

Please note that a call for vendors will be distributed in mid-April, and we are excited to review your proposals. The Program Committee is interested in vendors wishing to highlight Hot Topics and Cool Demos:

Hot Topics

What is an RAO Hot Topic? An RAO hot topic is an issue, a concern, an idea that has sparked recent attention in RAO circles. It can be something that seems novel or cutting-edge; it can be an enduring issue that is garnering new attention or approaches.

What Makes an RAO Hot Topic HOT? An RAO hot topic can be provocative and even fractious; it can also be surprising and funny. Above all else, a hot topic should engender passion, engagement and excitement.

Cool Demos

What is an RAO Cool Demo? An RAO Cool Demonstration is a presentation of an approach or technique that has enhanced services, simplified processes, or transformed workflows and approaches. It could be a simple fix or adaptation, or a reinvention of the wheel.

What Makes an RAO Cool Demo COOL? An RAO Cool Demo should be widely applicable to RAO archivists and simple enough to explain in a low-tech manner in a short period of time. Think of it as an app that works without a mobile device.

If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions for the 2015 Marketplace of Ideas, please contact one of the Program Committee members: Lisa Sjöberg, RAO Chair (sjoberg@cord.edu); Rachael Dreyer, RAO Vice-Chair (rdreyer@uwyo.edu); Jodi Allison-Bunnell, RAO Steering Committee Member (jodiab@orbiscascade.org); or Matt Herbison, RAO Steering Committee Member (herbison@gmail.com).

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you at the 2015 Annual Marketplace!

Access to Electronic Records Working Group: Forging Ahead!

By: Rachael Dreyer, RAO Vice-Chair and Co-Chair of Access to Electronic Records Working Group, and Amy Schindler, Co-Chair of Access to Electronic Records Working Group

Overview of the Working Group's Origins

The RAO Steering Committee approved the formation of an Access to Electronic Records Working Group in June 2014 to investigate and share current best practices for providing access to electronic records. While much scrutiny has been placed on accessioning, processing and preserving electronic materials, it seems that comparatively very little attention is given to how we provide access to these materials. And, after all, the goal of preserving these electronic archival materials is so that they can be used by researchers, just like analog collections. Particularly since this working group is working under the auspices of the Reference, Access, and Outreach Section, targeting the group's focus on access seemed appropriate. After an enthusiastic response to a call for volunteers open to any interested archivist, the working group got underway in September.

The initial tasks that were identified and approved by the RAO Steering Committee include:

- Conduct initial research to determine on which key focus areas related to reference, access, outreach, and preservation work the working group shall focus its efforts.
- Compile a bibliography of key resources, including publications, presentations and workshops, which explore how archival institutions provide access to born-digital and electronic records. Other organizations active with electronic records will also be included in this resource list.
- Conduct a survey of the archival profession regarding current practices and attitudes towards providing access to born-digital and electronic records.

The Access to Electronic Records Working Group is co-chaired by Rachael Dreyer and Amy Schindler. Greg Kocken is the leader of the initial research subgroup, Alexis Adkins and Jarrett Drake are the leaders of the bibliography subgroup, and Stacey Lavender is the leader of the survey subgroup. RAO past chair Mary Manning also participated in the initial organization and launch of the working group.

Progress!

The initial research subgroup, led by Greg Kocken, went to work immediately as the work of the other bibliography and survey groups depends heavily on the initial research group's findings. Members were divided into teams assigned to investigate current best practices, current strategies/technologies, and challenges. The subgroup's work included surveying the professional literature from 2002 to 2014 from the U.S., Great Britain, and Australia to identify current technologies in use to provide access to electronic records. One member, Rachel Muse, focused specifically on the government sector and compiled a list of websites created and maintained by the fifty U.S. states to provide access to e-records for their constituents. The subgroup did not identify any standards as yet for access to electronic records, but did point to the OAI reference model that does include an access component. Members pointed out that since OAI is intended to be a model, no specific guidelines or recommendations are made as to how or when access should be granted only that electronic records should be made available.

Reports and documentation from the initial research subgroup will be made available on the Access to Electronic Records Working Group's portion of the RAO website in the coming weeks. Thank you to subgroup leader Greg Kocken and members Joanne Archer, Sarah Bost, Katherine Demetri, Jessika Drmacich-Flach, Pamela Hopkins, Josue Hurtado, Nancy Melley, Jennifer Mitchell, Rachel Muse, Helen Schubert Fields, Amanda Strauss, Tricia Walker.

The bibliography subgroup led by Alexis Adkins and Jarrett Drake is working on an annotated bibliography and has been considering where and how to present the bibliography online, access points, the audience, scope, and other questions. The subgroup has already found that with the limited resources addressing access specifically, their work will dig into related works and broader topics to compile the parts related to access.

Additional Information

Additional information about the Access to Electronic Records Working Group's efforts will continue to be made available at <http://www2.archivists.org/groups/reference-access-and-outreach-section/access-to-electronic-records-working-group>.

Updates from RAO TPS (Teaching with Primary Sources Committee)

By: Jill Severn and Lisa Sjoberg, TPS Committee Co-Chairs

2014 has been a season of excitement for the Teaching with Primary Sources (TPS) Committee. TPS members came together at SAA in August 2014 to strategize goals and priorities. The outcomes of this meeting were three initiatives:

- A survey of teaching with primary sources content in archival/library programs
- A preconference workshop/unconference that will take place at the Cleveland Public Library on Wednesday of the week of SAA
- A project to develop a proposal for support to develop a TPS Resource bank

Work has already begun on each of these initiatives, and we are very excited about the progress thus far. As the SAA Annual Meeting approaches, please be watchful for the preconference focused on TPS to be held at the Cleveland Public Library.

We are very pleased to share the SAA Council has approved the creation of a new standard for Primary Source Literacy Guidelines. This proposal was brought to SAA Council jointly by RAO and RBMS. A task force will be assembled in the coming months to develop the guidelines.

Finally, we encourage everyone to keep using the TPS Bibliography available on the RAO microsite (<http://www2.archivists.org/groups/reference-access-and-outreach-section/teaching-with-primary-sources-bibliography>). This bibliography is an ideal resource for archivists who wish to learn more about utilizing primary sources in interactions with teachers, faculty, and students. We continue to seek additions for the bibliography, so please send any recommendations you have.

From the RAO Blog

This year, in an effort to engage the RAO Section's audience, we created an "RAO Hot Topics Blog Series." Each month an RAO member contributes a blog post on a topic impacting RAO archivists. To view other posts, please visit our blog at <http://raonews.blogspot.com/>. If you would like to contribute, please contact RAO Communications Liaison Greg Kocken, kockeng@uwec.edu.

Effective Press Releases and Media Relations (Posted October 2014)

By: Erin Lawrimore, RAO Steering Committee Member

A key to gaining media attention for your archival work is effective media relations. Inviting local reporters who cover education, cultural heritage, or history-related topics for a meet-up or tour of the archives is a great way to establish a relationship. With a relationship in place, press releases will carry a bit more clout.

Even with an established relationship, however, you need to make sure that your press release is a good one. Here are a few tips for ensuring your press release will catch the attention of a busy journalist:

- Be sure that what you have to say is *really* newsworthy and impactful. Don't flood reporters' inboxes with notes about every event, activity, or acquisition.
- Keep your release short and factual. Aim for 500 words or less (definitely keep it to one page!), and include links to your website for additional information.

23 Things... in Twelve Months

By: Rebecca Bizonet, 23 Things Committee Chair

Curious about implementing or expanding social web technology for your archives, or just personally?

Are you already an expert and interested in sharing your know-how?

Please join RAO's 23 Things for Archivists in 2015 as we launch "Thing of the Month" on the RAO Facebook page [link: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Reference-Access-Outreach-Section-of-the-Society-of-American-Archivists/220623404645294>], showcasing and discussing selected Web 2.0 tools and their use in and by archives.

Be sure to check out the 23 Things for Archivists website, too, if you haven't already [link: <http://23things4archivists.pbworks.com>].

Come be part of the conversation!

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From the RAO Blog *(continued)*

Have ideas, content, or suggestions for the RAO Section newsletter?

Send them to:
Greg Kocken,
Communications Liaison,
at kockeng@uwec.edu

- Focus on your opening sentence - your sales pitch. It needs to contain all of your critical information (who, what, when, where), and it needs to convince the busy reporter to read on.
- Don't forget to include contact information (name, email, and telephone number)!

Think about reporters' deadlines and schedules before emailing a press release. For instance, many print and television reporters will appreciate releases early in the morning as opposed to the afternoon. Print magazine journalists typically plan out feature stories months in advance of publication. Be sure to send your press release at the optimal time for the particular media and event.

Finally, if a reporter *does* report on your event or activity, follow up with a "thank you." Let him know how the event went or what the lasting impact of the activity has been. This will give the reporter a sense of how you fit in to the greater community – your impact and influence. Also, this can be an incentive to report again when the next big story pops up!

RAO Steering Committee

Lisa Sjoberg, Chair (Concordia College)

Rachael Dreyer, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect (American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming)

Mary Manning, Immediate Past Chair (University of Houston)

Erin Lawrimore, Member (University of North Carolina at Greensboro)

Alison Stankrauff, Member (Indiana University South Bend)

Jodi Allison-Bunnell, Member (Orbis Cascade Alliance)

Matt Herbison, Member (Drexel University College of Medicine)

Shaun Hayes, Web Liaison (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)

Gregory Kocken, Communications Liaison (University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire)

Pam Hackbart-Dean, Council Liaison (Southern Illinois University, Carbondale)