
Newsletter of the Lone Arrangers Section, Society of American Archivists

Letter from Your LAS Chair:



It has been a year for the books, to say the least. Whether institutionally preserved or held in our own memories, the pandemic has affected each of us in our own way. In the midst of all this, my focus as your Chair over the last year has been to tackle the long-overdue changes needed of the LAS leadership even before COVID19 was a household name. And to best do that and serve our members was to create a members survey to get to know the LAS members, what you want, and what we can provide. Your responses helped us define our next steps. More details about the survey's findings are included in the newsletter.

Over the last year, your steering committee has worked hard to identify how to best provide constructive and enduring leadership and to make the necessary changes to make these a reality. I would not have been able to do all this without the help of your LAS leadership team who moved from being general steering committee members to each having defined officer roles to help LAS move forward, creating a clear path to strengthen and support LAS members' needs and interests. Sauda Mitchell, your first Regional Representatives Officer, helped to resurrect and refresh the Regional Representatives program that had fallen to the wayside over the last few years. Check out her invitation to take part in an online coffee chat to

find out more about regional representation and resources.

Recently, LAS members approved the ballot to update LAS governance standing rules. We moved our admin internally to elected officers with Margaret Hewitt taking on the role of Web Liaison, identifying, updating and cleaning up our online resources while Rebecca Leung took on the role as your first LAS Events Coordinator, creating online and possibly regional events and at the annual meeting. Justin Gardner, who before finishing up his second year took on the role of Newsletter Editor, helped to strengthen and standardize the submission process, layout format, and a delivery schedule. If you didn't submit this time around, make sure to submit for future editions—we want SOLO to represent LAS members, your experiences and your knowledge. This will be the first year LAS members will be voting on specific officer roles, starting with the Newsletter Editor and Regional Representative Office B, along with Vice/Chair.

Unfortunately, Incoming Chair Elect Amy Moorman had to step down from her LAS leadership role due to personal family health issues. The LAS Steering Committee appreciates Amy's support in the governance standing rules changes she helped to instate and wish her and her family the best of luck into the future. The LAS Steering Committee, consistent with past precedent and to keep consistency through changes in governance structure, unanimously voted and approved your current chair extending her service for an additional year. I am honored to be serving as you Chair through 2022. Looking towards the future of SAA's Lone Arrangers Section, I hope that in my final year as Chair to have left the leadership in a path to success in order to best serve and support your needs and interests as LAS members.

It has been and continues to be a pleasure.

Katrina

Regional Representatives:



Calling all Lone Arrangers! Hello, my name is Sauda Mitchell, and I am your new Regional Representative Organizer. As your elected Steering Committee member for the 2020-2022 year, I look forward to coordinating the newly revamped Regional Representatives Program. Our first step is getting to know you, starting with an upcoming coffee chat! Look out for more details as we prepare to share ways you can become involved as a volunteer Regional Representative in your designated geographic region! Thank you all for completing the LAS survey. As Regional Representative Organizer, I will work with LAS Regional Representative volunteers to support them in supporting you to gain access to resources, facilitate opportunities for member networking, build skills, and social connections. I look forward to meeting everyone!

LAS Events:



Hello, all! My name is Rebecca Leung, and I was elected to serve on the Lone Arrangers Steering Committee from 2020-2022 as your Events Coordinator. After the LAS survey went out in the beginning of 2021, we got great feedback as to what you, our members, would like to see in events. There was a preference shown for professional development. Some commonly mentioned topics of interest included: working with a limited budget; sharing resources; searching for a sense of community with other Lone Arrangers; time management; the effects of COVID-19 on our work; internships; mental health; digital preservation; subject guides; grants; email archiving; outreach; equity; and getting to know more about the Section's resources. It was so helpful to receive this feedback, and I encourage you to reach out with additional ideas or comments. My first step was to create a calendar of events, which I hope to soon make public. Coming in June, we will have an introduction to the Regional Representatives program, hosted by Sauda Mitchell. Please be sure to mark your calendar for the Lone Arrangers Annual Section Meeting on July 21 at 2pm Eastern/1pm Central/11am Pacific. I do hope you will attend or consider presenting at one of the Lone Arrangers events. We want to hear your voice!

Researching and Remembering Doris Moore

By Katy Sternberger, CA, DAS. Research Librarian, Portsmouth Athenaeum

As a research librarian at the Portsmouth Athenaeum in New Hampshire, I not only provide reference services but also conduct in-depth research to facilitate access to our collections. Incorporated in 1817 and one of fewer than twenty membership libraries remaining in the United States, the Athenaeum specializes in local history and genealogy. Researchers worldwide use our unique library and archival resources. After two hundred years of collecting, however, our PastPerfect authority files and catalog records need revising, especially as we continue to gain more context with new acquisitions. Research requests often present an opportunity to enhance the catalog. One such inquiry recently sparked my investigation into the life of New Hampshire's first Black social worker.

The Athenaeum houses a collection of twelve photographs originally from a scrapbook created by Doris Moore (1916–1993). The photographs, some with handwritten captions, show the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion serving in England and France in 1945. Also called the “Six Triple Eight,” the battalion was the only all-Black, all-female unit to travel overseas during World War II. While fulfilling a request for images from this collection, I noticed that our catalog records seemed minimal and contained errors.

Previous research had focused on Moore's war service and that she went on to become a social worker, but who, really, was Doris Moore as a person? By checking in newspaper databases, looking through digitized yearbooks, and locating Find a Grave records, I gathered details about Moore's life in order to augment our records on her and her photograph collection.

A Portsmouth native, Doris Moore was born on March 12, 1916, and grew up in the South End of the city. The youngest of three children, she was the daughter of James H. Moore, described as “a local window washer,” and Sarah Annie (Fields) Moore, both originally from North Carolina. The couple lived together in Portsmouth for more than five decades. For many years, the Moores attended the People's Baptist Church on Pearl Street in Portsmouth, where Martin Luther King Jr. preached on October 26, 1952.

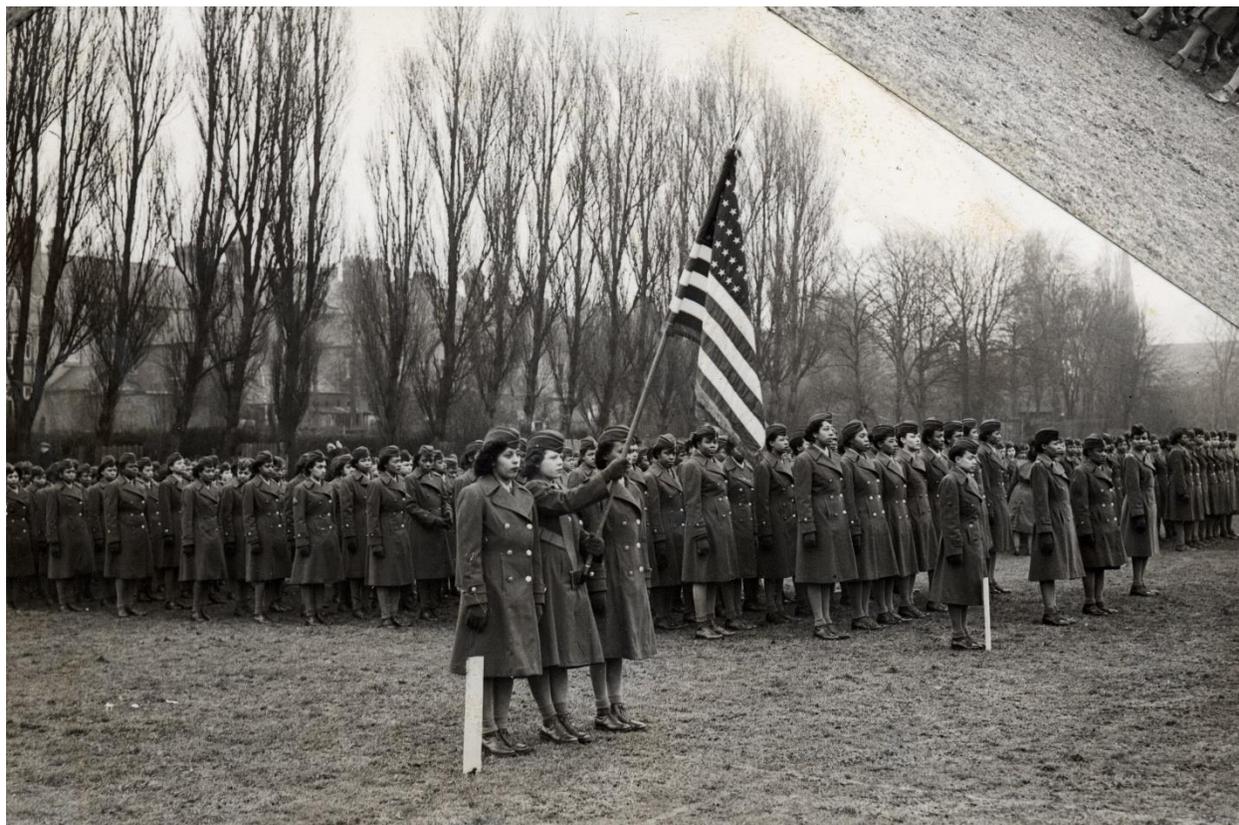
Evidently, Moore was known for asking questions in history class—her “talent” was recognized in the ninth grade “class will” published in the *Portsmouth Herald* newspaper when she graduated from junior high school in 1934. Her schooling was not sequential (for unknown reasons, she graduated from sixth grade in 1929 but did not begin seventh grade until 1931), but education was clearly important to Moore, along with working to support herself. After earning a bachelor's degree from Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia in 1942, Moore returned to Portsmouth and became a machine operator at the Morley Company, which manufactured buttons.

In April 1943, she registered with the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, which became known as the Women's Army Corps (WAC) once women were granted rank and privileges in the United States Army a few months after Moore's enlistment. Following her training, Moore was assigned to the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, traveling to Birmingham, England and Rouen, France in 1945 to sort and deliver massive amounts of mail. Archivists and records managers can appreciate the intensive labor involved in developing a recordkeeping system to process the seemingly insurmountable backlog of mail—some letters dating back three years. While in France, Moore was promoted to private first class.

Upon returning from the war, Moore earned a master's degree in social work from Atlanta University in 1951. At her first job in Louisville, Kentucky, she accepted both Black and white clients. But she came home to New Hampshire to care for her mother; both of her parents suffered long illnesses before dying within eight days of each other in May 1958. A newspaper clipping from the April 23, 1959, issue of the *Portsmouth Herald* announces that Moore joined the staff at the Children's Aid Society in Manchester, New Hampshire, making her the first Black social worker in the Granite State. The article notes, "Miss Moore will do social casework and specialize in locating and studying foster homes needed for children in the care of the society." She worked at the agency for twenty-two years. Moore passed away in Portsmouth on June 26, 1993, at age 77.

With this research, we now have a more complete picture of an extraordinary woman whose small photograph collection tells a story of state, national, and international significance. Archival description is an iterative process, and catalog records can—and should—evolve over time. It is worth the investment.

For more information or to view Moore's photographs in the Athenaeum's catalog, visit portsmouthathenaeum.org.



A photograph from Doris Moore's scrapbook shows the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion standing at attention with the color guard in Birmingham, England, February 1945. The battalion—the only all-Black, all-female unit to deploy overseas during World War II—underwent a military review before Lieutenant General John C. H. Lee shortly after their arrival. Lee was an unabashed advocate for racial equality in the United States Army. *Courtesy of the Portsmouth Athenaeum, Doris Moore Photograph Coll*

Dissolving a Museum and a Collection

By Katrina O'Brien, Past Head of Archives & Collections of World of Speed

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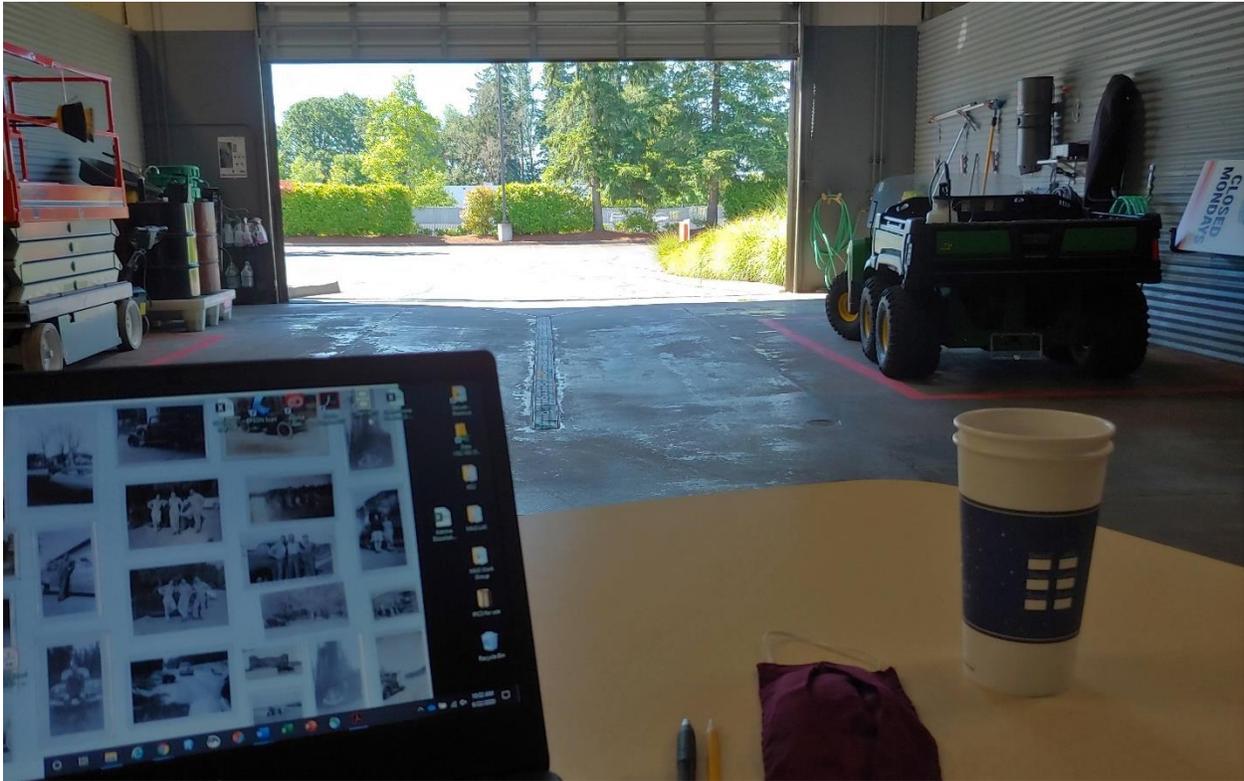
"Mandatory staff meeting today" read the email subject header. Only two other times had staff gotten that email: when a past executive director unexpectedly quit and when a co-founder died. This was not going to be a happy announcement. So after roughly two months of working from home, I along with the rest of the downsized staff were told that the Board had decided to close the museum permanently. The Ferrari exhibit, including the gloves-on display in the archives room, which was planned to open at the beginning of the pandemic, was never opened to the public. In the end, it would be four staff members, myself included, that were kept on to dissolve the museum and its collection.



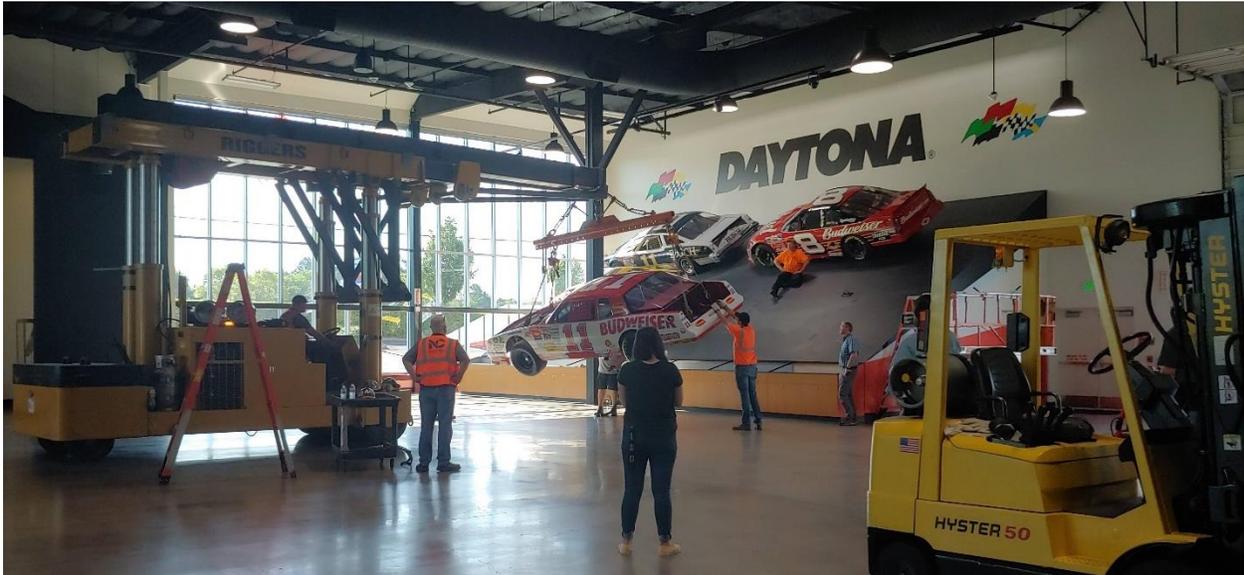


In our first week back in mid-May, the beginning of a plan for dissolution and next steps began to take shape. First off was returning all loans, including pulling items to return to over 45 active archives and collection lenders. Thankfully, the loan agreements were easily retrieved and a personalized Dissolution Loan Return Receipt was made for each. Due to COVID-19, with many lenders being seniors, open air limited access appointments were scheduled over the course of a week for lenders to pick up their items – these were some of the hardest conversations as many were shocked, saddened, and wondered what to do now. On the flip side, it was the only time my work space had an open window with fresh air.





To move forward, I had to drop focusing on the “possibilities”, projects and plans that could have been, and instead focus on rehusing the collection using the same skills and care I had utilized in starting and building that same collection. It was time to collect, organize and prepare items for rehusing.



Items that had not yet been cataloged had to be hastily added. Those low priority projects that had been pushed farther down the list had to get done. Materials stored in the warehouse had to be brought over. To do all of this, we had to keep track of what space was being used for what and when.



While my focus was on the collection and exhibits, other museum staff, including the store manager, office administrator, and interim executive director/head of education, focused on plugging through museum store items, office and public furnishings, staff and office files, educational materials, loaned and owned cars, and unrestricting funds. We were all building a master inventory and reaching out to nonprofits to let them know this was happening, what was available, and the process for receiving. And as we moved forward, their help in the archives was invaluable to keep us on schedule.



The collection covered archives, artifacts, photos, film, publications, and digital material – stored primarily by format, not subject. In deciding to provide bundles or lots by subject (rather than people cherry picking items), all items in the collection had to be unpacked and regrouped. In the master inventory, each bundle was given a lot number, title, description and the included items' catalog links.



The next step was to start emptying out exhibits. For most of the seven exhibits, the items were bundled together as a singular inventory item. Similar subject-related items not on exhibit were bundled separately. Besides the land speed racing exhibit bundle including models as well as photos, publications and other artifacts, other items in the collection relating to land speed racing were bundled together and offered separately. Besides the items in the exhibits, the display materials as well as the cases also needed to be inventoried including a photo and description for each group of items.



Once all items had been bundled, it was time to decide what was going where. Over 50 nonprofits were approved as donation recipients, having gone through the review process by staff, board, and the state department. Those wanting to receive items from the collection were required to complete an additional form with further details covering abilities for collection care as well as materials of interest, which helped in developing collection bundles that would be of interest while including items of less fanfare. In some cases, staff had to do some hustling and bartering to have all bundles accounted for but then it was time to physically move them to each organization's pile in the gallery.



After dissolving the museum's archives and collections over six months, I said goodbye to my favorite oversized scanner, a host of resources now offline, empty archives and processing rooms, and a building no longer a museum. But with the new year, a new group of museums and their archives and collections staff now have tons of material to process, preserve and make accessible for new audiences.



LAS 2021 Survey Introduces You to Your Fellow Lone Arrangers

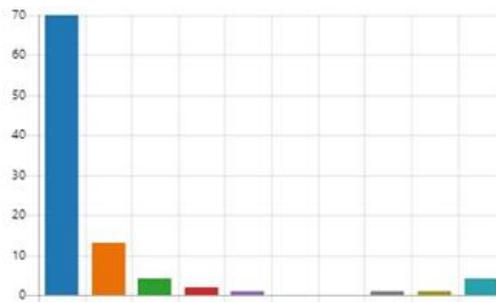
Summarized by LAS Chair Katrina O'Brien, katrinatobrien@gmail.com

In early 2021, Lone Arranger Section members were asked to participate in a members survey. The introduction read: "We need your help to make SAA's Lone Arrangers Section the best it can be for its members. LAS leadership is working to better know its members, the landscape of our profession as lone arrangers, and what you want out of LAS." Over 85 LAS members filled out the survey. Below are a few graphics summarizing those responses related to the LAS members, along with some additional findings.

1. What is your employment status?

[More Details](#)

● Full time	70
● Part time	13
● Gig/Freelance	4
● Reduced pay or hours due to ...	2
● Furloughed due to COVID-19	1
● Let go due to COVID-19	0
● Let go, furlough or reduced d...	0
● Retired	1
● Student	1
● Other	4



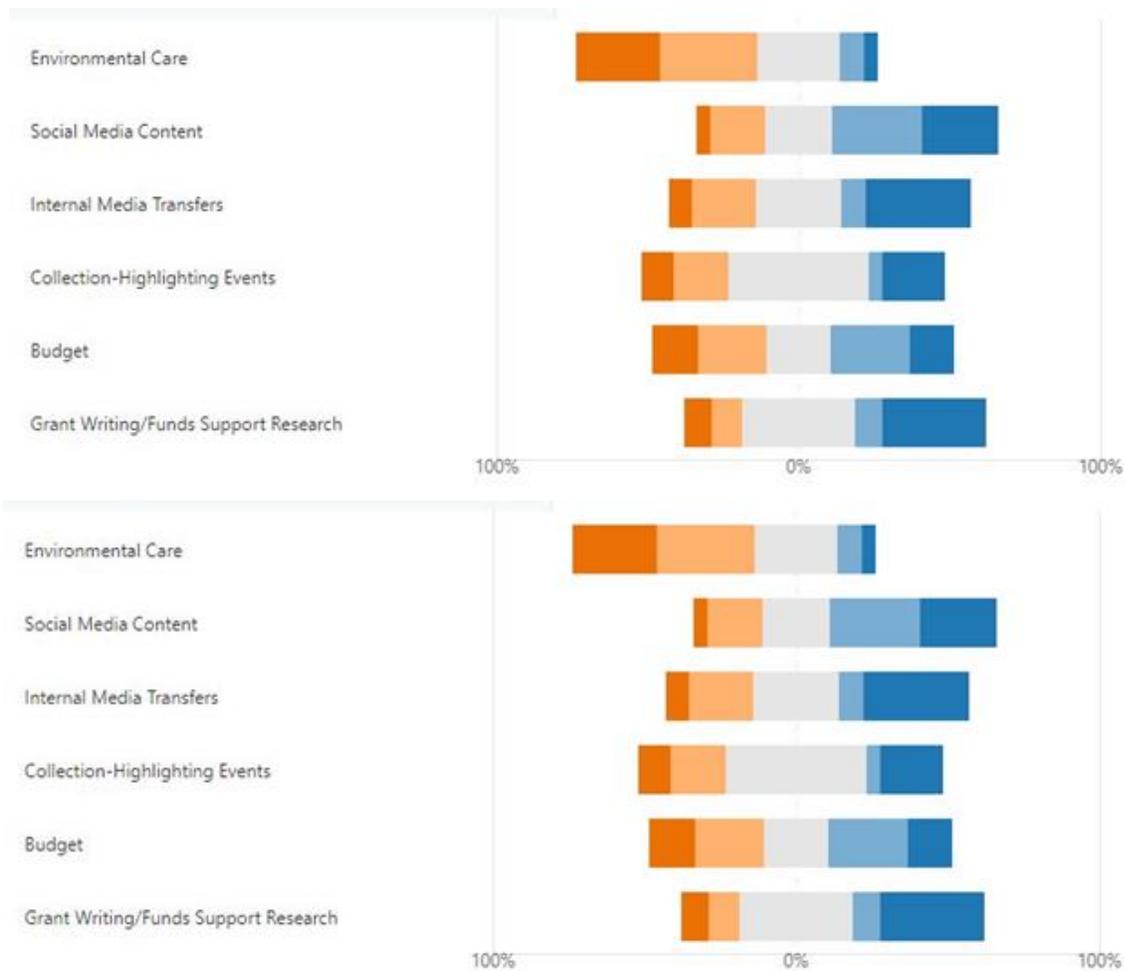
2. Which of these are part of your job:

[More Details](#)



From the responses above, LAS members' high priority duties include processing, research assistance and collection management. A close second in priorities include cataloging, digitizing, acquisitions/collection development, and policy/procedure development. As a group of lone arrangers, it may not be surprising that managing staff or volunteers were most consistently not a part of our duties, along with grant writing/funds support research, internal media content, and records management. Though looking at the variation of high and medium (and low) priority, it is safe to say many of us wear many hats while on the job.

As far as the types of archives or institutions we work with, two third of respondents work in the top five institutions, those being colleges/schools, libraries, nonprofits, religious organizations, and museums. While the regions in which we live vary greatly, the majority work in densely populated areas such as metro, urban or city center.



9. In what type of area do you work?

[More Details](#)

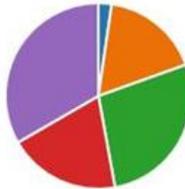
- Metro, urban, city densely-po... 44
- Suburban, residential, small to... 35
- Rural, scant nearby resources, ... 8



10. How many years have you worked in archives, records, collections, or related profession?

[More Details](#)

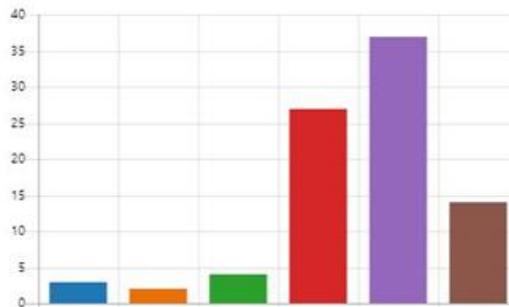
- Under 2 years 2
- 2-5 years 15
- 6-10 years 24
- 11-15 years 17
- Over 15 years 29



11. Salary range: (present or last job)

[More Details](#)

- No-pay volunteer 3
- Under \$10 per hour 2
- Between \$10 and \$15 per hour 4
- Between \$15 and \$25 per hour 27
- Between \$25 and \$35 per hour 37
- Over \$35 per hour 14



Looking at the responses of years in the field and salary, a loose interpretation suggests that there is likely a correlation between the number of respondents noting longer years in the field and number of respondents noting higher salary ranges. Also, in question 1, over 70 percent of respondents noted being employed full time with 90 percent working in mid-size towns to large cities which can also effect salary.

The complete survey responses are available through the LAS Connect page including the range of software and hardware many are using to complete their job priorities from collection management platforms (often more than one) to scanners of all kinds, as well as more details on the types of archives members work with. A quick review will show repeats of many common CMPs such as ArchiveSpace and PastPerfect as well as use of Adobe and Microsoft suites, along with a range of format specific tools. Take a look and you'll find some hidden treasures and budget hacks.

Additional survey sections cover members' engagement with the LAS newsletter, web resources, and regional representatives, as well as the members' priorities, which helped the LAS leadership define the future course of the section's resources and leadership to best suite its members. The original survey is at <https://bit.ly/2021LASSurvey>.

SOLO is published twice a year, in May/June and Dec/January. Submissions will be due to the Editor in April and November.