



Archival Elements

Newsletter of the Science, Technology, and Healthcare Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists Summer 2003

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Message from the Co-Chairs

Lisa A. Mix
University of California, San Francisco
Jean Deken
Stanford Linear Accelerator Center

We invite those attending the SAA meeting in Los Angeles to come to the Science, Technology, and Health Care (STHC) Roundtable meeting on Saturday, 23 August 2003, 8:00-9:30 a.m. The STHC Roundtable provides a forum for archivists with similar interests or holdings in the natural, physical and social sciences, technology, and health care, presenting an opportunity to exchange information, solve problems, and share successes. We especially welcome STHC archivists from the Los Angeles area, as well as archivists who do not have a primary focus in these fields but may have questions to ask or collection news to share. We also encourage members to attend some of the STHC-sponsored sessions <<http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/sthc/announcements.html>>

Roundtable Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Council Representative – Megan Sniffin-Marinoff
3. Program Committee Representative

4. Program

Lisa Mix from UC San Francisco will chair a discussion of archival repositories' compliance with the Privacy Rule of HIPAA. Archivists from 3 other academic health centers (Nancy McCall from the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, Steve Novak

from Columbia University Medical Center, and Tim Pennycuff from the University of Alabama at Birmingham) will each present an overview of the policies their repositories have implemented, and assess how these policies in practice meet the challenges of the HIPAA legislation. There will be opportunity for roundtable members to share information about their own experiences with HIPAA compliance.

5. Business

- Review agenda
- Introduction of the Steering Committee members
- Report on the 2002 meeting
- Report on 2002-2003 activities
- Report on STHC Website (Rose Roberto)
- Archival Elements* Newsletter (Ewa Basinska)
- Election of officers--new co-chair
- Letter to HHS about HIPAA concerns (Steve Novak)
- Brainstorming program ideas for SAA 2004
- Roundtable Round Robin: "Hot Topics" from Membership
 - Peter Harper - CASE (Committee for the Archives of Science in Europe), proposed liaison with STHC
 - Kalpana Shankar – KEK archives
- Other new business

6. Adjournment

Our chief concern is to ensure that the STHC Roundtable reflects the interests of its participants. We welcome all suggestions relating to the above topics or concerning any other issues members might like to see addressed at our meetings. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with either of us:

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Around and About Archives

AIP Center for History of Physics Begins Project to Document the History of Physicists in Industry

Joe Anderson
American Institute of Physics

The Center for History of Physics at the American Institute of Physics has launched a three-year effort to create a national documentation strategy to identify and preserve the historically valuable records of physicists in industry. Supported by funding from NHPRC, NSF, the Andrew Mellon Foundation, and other sources, the study represents the first systematic investigation of records-keeping practices and needs in high-tech industry. The project got underway in November 2002 and field work began in March 2003. The study is a continuation, in an especially complex area, of the Center's ongoing work to develop strategies for saving hard-to-preserve records in physics and allied fields. Approximately one-third of all the physicists in the U.S. today are employed in industry, and the country's economic dominance rests on a brilliant century of corporate research and innovation. Industrial R&D is, however, one of the least documented areas in our society.

The study's key activities will consist of interviews with more than 100 corporate scientists and R&D managers at IBM, Xerox, General Electric, Kodak, and 11 other high-tech corporations; interviews with archivists and records managers responsible for industrial records in the U.S. and abroad; and records surveys to identify extant corporate records, laboratory notebooks and other sources. A principal product of the study will be published reports that present our findings and endeavor to outline new frameworks for identifying, appraising, and preserving historically valuable industrial R&D records, both past and present. For additional information on the project, contact project director Joe Anderson (janderso@aip.org).

July 2003

New Head for the MIT Institute Archives and Special Collections

Ruth K. Seidman
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Tom J. Rosko joined the MIT Libraries as Head, Institute Archives on May 1, 2003. Rosko comes to MIT from the University of Kentucky, where he was University Archivist and Director, UK Records Management Program. Prior to that he held archives and records management positions at Princeton University and New York University. Rosko has a BA from Bucknell University and a Master of Library Science degree from Rutgers University, and is active professionally in the Society of American Archivists (SAA) and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC).

At MIT, Rosko will guide the continuing development of the Institute Archives and Special Collections, <http://libraries.mit.edu/archives/index.html>, one of the most significant collections related to the history of science and technology in the United States. The collection is comprised of Institute records and faculty papers, rare books, MIT theses and technical reports, and other materials related to MIT and its history. Rosko will be responsible for managing these traditional paper materials while developing strategies for meeting the current challenges posed by electronic records.

May 2003

13 Million Documents and Counting...

Mary Eleanor (Nora) Murphy

Institute Archives and Special Collection - Massachusetts Institute of Technology

The MIT Institute Archives and Special Collections is pleased to share news of several new or re-invigorated efforts in outreach and access.

The staff has prepared a reorganized, more intuitive, listing of MIT archives holdings:

<<http://libraries.mit.edu/archives/record-groups/>>. The new presentation was developed in a records group schema so that Archives staff as well as researchers will be able more easily to identify related collections of records relevant to a particular office or research topic. The alphabetical listing, which was developed in the late 1970s, has served everyone very well for many years, but as the number of collections increased an alternate means of identifying collections was needed. The alphabetical listing will be linked to the new presentation and will also serve as an alternate access tool to accommodate individual searching preferences.

A usability study of the Archives web site in late spring provided insights about user methodology that are already proving helpful to Archives staff as we update and add to the information about our holdings and the history of MIT currently on the web site <<http://libraries.mit.edu/archives/>>. The web site will not be significantly restructured, but phrasing, terminology and links will be clarified. Future additions, changes and improvements will be guided, in part, by the knowledge gained from the study.

With the end of the year-long processing project, the "Object of the Month," an exhibit available online at our web site and in an exhibit case outside the reading room, resumed in May 2003 <<http://libraries.mit.edu/archives/mithistory/exhibits-object.html>>. The "Object of the Month" was instituted in September of 1999 to showcase examples from the collections available for research use in the Institute Archives and Special Collections. The papers of the architect Kevin Lynch and of geologist William Otis Crosby are source of the most recent exhibits.

When working with colleagues in the MIT Libraries, the staff found that describing the quantity of our holdings as over 1,100 collections was not impressive in a library system of over 2.6 million volumes. This past year we began using a phrase that has proved a useful and catchy educational tool to explain the quantity of materials in the Archives: "13 million documents and counting..."

July 2003

The Next Meeting of the Chicago Area Medical Archivists (CAMA)

Wednesday, 27 August 2003

Susan Rishworth

American College of Surgeons

Sue Sacharsky

Northwestern Memorial Hospital Archives

If you will be attending the SAA Annual Meeting, please come prepared to report back to your CAMA colleagues. We will also discuss how HIPAA has affected our work thus far, begin planning for Archives Week, and learn about current projects, researchers, and what you have been up to since spring. Afterwards, we will tour the Florence and Ike Sewell Museum, the Health Learning Center, and view examples of historical art, objects and plaques displayed in the new hospital facility.

The meeting will take place on Wednesday, 27 August 2003, between 3 and 5 pm, in the Conference Room D (3rd floor) of the Feinberg Pavilion of the Northwestern Memorial Hospital, 251 East Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois.

NOTE: Fees in the parking garages are outrageously expensive. Public transportation is your best bet unless you are getting reimbursed. The hospital is located one block east of Michigan Avenue, two blocks south of Chicago Avenue, and is accessible by CTA.

Please RSVP to Sue Sacharsky via e-mail (ssachars@nmh.org) or by phone (312/926-3090).

July 2003

The Second Annual Medical History Symposium **Thursday, 16 October 2003**

John Zwicky
American Society for Clinical Pathology
Judith Robins
Wood Library - Museum of Anesthesiology

The American Society for Clinical Pathology will host the Second Annual Medical History Symposium at its headquarters at 2100 W. Harrison Street, Chicago, Illinois, on Thursday, 16 October 2003. There will be several speakers on topics ranging from laboratory medicine to baby bottles. Those interested in attending may contact John Zwicky, Archivist, American Society for Clinical Pathology at johnz@ascp.org.

July 2003

Conferences, Meetings, and Workshops

“Future Proof” Conference on Science Archives

Jean Deken
Stanford Linear Accelerator Center

April 2003 was the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the National Cataloguing Unit for the Archives Of Contemporary Scientists (NCUACS) project in the UK. To coincide with this anniversary, NCUACS organized an international scientific archives conference hosted at the University of Edinburgh Library. Peter Harper, Director of the NCUACS, is also President of the International Union of History and Philosophy of Science's (IUHPS) Bibliography and Documentation Commission, and head of an informal European network – Co-operation on the Archives of Science in Europe (CASE) – of people interested professionally in scientific archives. The Conference, “Future Proof: Delivering Scientific Archives in the Twenty-First Century” was held 9-11 April 2003, and was organized by NCUACS and jointly sponsored by CASE and IUHPS.

“Future Proof” brought together national and international colleagues to discuss a range of current issues: preserving scientific archives, institutional, national and discipline-based perspectives; electronic access; understanding scientific archives; and the archives of women scientists. About 35 archivists from 16 nations participated. Most were from the UK (11), but attendees also came from Austria (1), Australia (1), Belgium (1), Brazil (1), Canada (1), Denmark (1), France (2), Germany (1), Italy (1), Netherlands (2), Poland (3), Spain (2) Sweden (4), Switzerland (1) and the US (2).

The program consisted of presentations and discussions grouped around the conference themes. I was invited to give a presentation on the history and current programs of the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) Archives and History Office, and Joe Anderson of the American Institute of Physics gave presentations on the AIP's current research program to document modern science in industry and government, and on the AIP History Center's International Catalog of Sources

(ICOS). The other presentations covered institutional perspectives, national perspectives, discipline-based perspectives, electronic access, understanding scientific archives, and archives of women scientists. Megan Sniffin-Marinoff (Harvard) had been scheduled to talk on issues in documenting the work and lives of women scientists, but was unfortunately unable to attend.

The conference included a brief report on the activities of the Commission on Bibliography and Documentation of the IUHPS Division of the History of Science, and a short business meeting of CASE members. CASE colleagues concluded that their organization serves a vital purpose for them, and determined that the group should continue to exist, and should foster connections with similar national and international groups. In my role as Co-Chair of the SAA's Science, Technology and Health-Care Roundtable, I offered to link the CASE web site to the STHC web site, and to give a CASE representative (Peter Harper) time on our roundtable's annual meeting agenda in Los Angeles in August 2003.

The conference program, as well as a summary report by Tim Powell of NCUACS and links to some of the papers presented, has been posted on the web at: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/ncuacs/Edinconference.htm>. The Conference included a number of very interesting papers, and I encourage STHC members to seek them out on the web site. All of the papers delivered at the conference were exceptional, but the following three may be of particular interest to our members: "Molecular Biology: The Issues Surrounding the Purchase of the Archives of Leading Molecular Biologists by an American Private Collector" (Julia Sheppard, Wellcome Library London); "Seeking Evidence: Aspirations and Tribulations of the Environmental Science Archives at the University of Victoria, British Columbia" (Jane Turner, University of Victoria, British Columbia); "Archivalization of Science Archives: New Techniques in Making Science Archives Understandable" (Patrick van den Nieuwenhof, Vrije Universiteit Brussel). The latter two have not yet been posted to the Conference web site as of 12 May 2003, but are worth seeking out.

June 2003

SAA Los Angeles, August 2003

The Science, Technology, and Healthcare Roundtable will be meeting on Saturday, August 23, 2003 from 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. For the agenda see "Message from the Co-Chairs".

For the full SAA program, please see the following:
<http://www.archivists.org/conference/la2003/la2003prog.asp>

Tour: Exploring the Universe Tour

Tuesday, August 19, 2002, 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Please join us in the "Exploring the Universe Tour". The tour will take visitors to NASA's lead center for robotic exploration of the solar system - where they can see a spacecraft assembly facility, view the building of planetary flight vehicles, and see the mission operations center that is responsible for commanding the Deep Space Network. For more information, go to Jet Propulsion Laboratory JPL (<http://www.jpl.nasa.gov>).

The STHC Roundtable co-sponsored five sessions at the SAA 2002 annual meeting:
<http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/sthc/announcements.html>

02. Approaches to Processing: Finding Time and Funding

1:30-3:00 pm, Thursday, August 21, 2003

22. Documenting Disease

10:30 am -12:00 pm, Friday, August 22, 2003

37. A Life of Their Own: Theory, Methodology, and the Study of Documents in Context

1:00-2:30 p.m., Friday, August 22, 2003

43. Mission to Mars: The Documentary Journey of Observation and Exploration of the Red Planet

3:00-4:30 p.m., Friday, August 22, 2003

53. Cultural Sensitivity and Intellectual Property in Anthropological Papers: Ethics and Access

1:00-2:30 p.m., Saturday, August 23, 2003

SAA Science, Technology Health Care Roundtable: Steering Committee Members (2002-2003)

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|--|---|--|
| R. Joseph Anderson American Institute of Physics College Park, MD | Ewa M. Basinska - <i>Newsletter Editor</i> Massachusetts Institute of Technology Cambridge, MA | Jean Deken - <i>Co-Chair</i> Stanford Linear Accelerator Center Menlo Park, CA |
| Janice F. Goldblum National Academy of Sciences Washington, DC | Russell Johnson Louise M. Darling Biomedical Library University of California, Los Angeles | Joan Echtenkamp Klein Health Sciences Library University of Virginia Health System Charlottesville, VA |
| Jodi Koste Tomkins-McCaw Library Medical College of Virginia/Commonwealth University Richmond, VA | Dan Lewis Manuscript Department The Huntington Library San Marino, CA | Lisa Mix - <i>Co-Chair</i> University of California, San Francisco |
| Stephen E. Novak Augustus C. Long Health Sciences Library Columbia University New York, NY | Rose Roberto - <i>Web Liaison</i> NASA/Jet Propulsion Laboratory Pasadena, CA | Kalpana Shankar Department of Information Studies University of California, Los Angeles |
| Yvonne Wilson Life Cycle Management Division National Archives and Records Administration College Park, MD | John Zwicky American Academy of Pediatrics American Society for Clinical Pathology Chicago, IL | |

In Memoriam

Dr. Louise Hanson Marshall (1908-2003)

I am deeply saddened to report the death of our colleague, Louise Marshall, a long-time member of the Society of American Archivists.

The Neuroscience History Archives will host a memorial for Louise on the UCLA campus in late October or early November. We are also organizing a Memory Book of tributes from colleagues and friends, a copy of which will be given to the family and one which will go in the Louise H. Marshall Papers. Feel free to contact me (Russell A. Johnson: 310-206-2753, rjohnson@library.ucla.edu) about this or any related matters (e.g. contact information for her son, Tom Marshall, and daughter, Alice Martin).

I personally owe a huge debt of gratitude to Louise--a mentor, boss, and friend--because she showed me it was possible to pursue the history of neuroscience as an archivist, and then made it so.

Respectfully,

Russell Johnson
Neuroscience History Archives
Brain Research Institute
University of California, Los Angeles

The following is the memorial which was sent to members of UCLA's Brain Research Institute:

Dear Friends,

I am deeply saddened to report that Louise Hanson Marshall, Ph.D., died this past Saturday, July 12, at the age of 94. As most of you know, Louise was Director Emerita of the UCLA Neuroscience History Archives and has been involved with the BRI since 1975. Louise was a remarkable woman, and her energy and dedication were an inspiration to all who knew her. As Allan Tobin noted in his nomination of Louise for the Women in Neuroscience (WIN) Special Recognition Award, Louise has been a great friend to the neuroscience community both nationally and at UCLA, and she epitomized a spirit of continuing inquiry.

In Louise's memory, we are putting together a book of memories and anecdotes about Louise. Russell Johnson, who has done so much work with the Neuroscience History Archives, is coordinating this, so please send your anecdotes and memories to him at rjohnson@library.ucla.edu.

The Neuroscience History Archives (NHA) began when Louise Marshall and Horace "Tid" Magoun established the Neuroscience History Resource Program (NHRP) at UCLA in 1980, which evolved into the Neuroscience History Archives (<http://www.neurosciencearchives.org>). For many years Louise worked full-time as Director of the NHA without taking salary or compensation, out of pure dedication. It was only at the age of 92 that she chose to reduce her work hours and take the role of Director Emerita, turning over the reins to Dr. Joel Braslow.

*Louise's many achievements include the recent publication of *American Neuroscience in the Twentieth Century* by Horace W. Magoun, which she edited and compiled from Dr. Magoun's papers, and the 1998 publication of *'Discoveries in the Human Brain: Neuroscience Prehistory, Brain Structure, and Function'*, co-authored by Louise H. Marshall and Horace W. Magoun. Just before her death, Louise completed a biographical tribute on Horace W. Magoun for the National Academy of Sciences.*

In 2002, Louise was a recipient of the Lifetime Contribution Award from the International Society for the History of the Neurosciences, at the Eighth Annual meeting of the ISHN, held on the UCLA campus. In 2001, Louise was the first recipient

of the Women in Neuroscience Special Recognition Award. In the citation accompanying that honor, it was noted that she had "...sequentially, three complete scientific careers on top of a rich personal and family life: first, as a physiologist; second, as a facilitator, organizer, and editor of neuroscience and neuroscientists; and third, as an historian of neuroscience. ...because of her contributions to efforts to define and survey the field, launch a professional society (Society for Neuroscience), and document the history of its practitioners, organizations, and ideas, she has truly been a woman in neuroscience."

Louise received her Ph.D. in Physiology from the University of Chicago in 1935, following undergraduate work at Vassar. She began her career as a research physiologist who taught courses in nutrition, metabolism, and excretion. She took time off to start a family, then joined the NIH wartime Aviation Medicine Unit, followed by twenty years with the National Institute of Arthritis and Metabolic Disorders, working in the field of renal physiology. She joined the National Research Council (NRC) at the National Academy of Sciences in 1965.

Quoting again from the WIN Special Recognition Award citation, "As the NRC staff officer responsible for the Committee on Brain Sciences, Dr. Marshall was instrumental in helping to shepherd the founding of the Society of Neuroscience and served as its first Secretary-Treasurer and newsletter editor. Under her directorship, the IBRO Survey of Research Facilities and Manpower in Brain Sciences in the United States (Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences, 1968) sought to define the nascent field of 'neuroscience' and to determine who was doing what kind of brain and behavior research, and where."

In 1975, Louise joined the UCLA Brain Research Institute as managing editor of the journal Experimental Neurology. After her official "retirement" in 1979, she continued to work for more than twenty years, devoting herself to the field of neuroscience history and to the task of establishing that field as a discipline in itself. As noted in the WIN citation, the SFN's "display of history-themed posters is due in no small part to Dr. Marshall's foresight and persistent example, as well as her unflagging lobbying of the SFN Council for a separate 'History' theme session--at first as a voice in the wilderness trying to promote the production and recognition of high caliber historical research, and finally as one of a growing body of presenters whom the Council acknowledged by creating the 'History of Neuroscience' poster theme."

Through Louise's dedication and leadership, the UCLA Neuroscience History Archives have played a major role in preserving neuroscience history and in educating new generations about the legacy on which the discipline is founded. The NHA responds to inquiries from all over the world, and has created an ongoing heritage documenting the history of neuroscience and the progress of the discipline. The NHA identifies, collects, and preserves primary source materials, assists neuroscientists who seek to have their papers preserved and made available for study, and facilitates neuroscience history research and education.

A memorial program will be held on the UCLA campus in October or November. In lieu of flowers, Dr. Marshall's family has requested that contributions be made in her memory to the Francis Parker School in San Diego, California, or to the Neuroscience History Archives, UCLA Brain Research Institute. Additional information will be sent in the near future.

On behalf of Allan Tobin and myself, I want to say how much we will all miss Louise's great spirit as well as her unflagging dedication to neuroscience and the BRI. Many generations of scientists and historians will reap the benefits of her untiring efforts to carefully document the evolution of the neurosciences in its stages of infancy. Her death is a great loss, both personally and professionally.

Sincerely yours,

*V. Reggie Edgerton
Acting Director
Brain Research Institute
University of California, Los Angeles*

JPL Historical Sources, 1936-1958: The Army Years

John F. Bluth

Independent Contractor

Former Jet Propulsion Laboratory Archivist

Today the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, California is known as the lead NASA center for the robotic exploration of outer space. However, JPL had its beginnings as a rocket research arm of the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in 1936. During World War II and until JPL joined NASA in 1958, JPL did rocket research exclusively for the US Army, first the Army Air Material Command and Army Air Corps, and later Army Ordnance. In the 1930's the eminent Caltech professor and aerodynamicist Theodore von Kármán mentored Caltech graduate student Frank Malina and rocket enthusiast Jack Parsons. Their discoveries heavily influenced the course of rocket and guided missile development in the United States.

The following briefly describes some of the records generated by JPL as a major scientific and technology center during the course of its research work for the US Army. Many of the records described are located in the contractor-operated JPL Archives, located off lab in east Pasadena. (Please see <http://beacon.jpl.nasa.gov/Services/Directory/HistColl.htm> or contact jplarchives@anteon.com for specific information.)

Internal Conference Minutes

JPL's research facilities were located in the Arroyo Seco, just above the Rose Bowl. During World War II four separate technical conferences of engineers and technicians were held every other week, from 1940 until 1946. These staff meetings at times were long, tedious, and hot, some held on Saturday mornings during a 44-hour workweek. They were somewhat like seminar meetings, getting together the Lab staff who were few in number to report progress, discuss problems, and plan future activities. Von Kármán would come the 7 miles or so to the Lab's Arroyo Seco site from Caltech. With the engineers and technicians, he would discuss everything that was going on in solid and liquid fueled rocket motor research. Everybody met in one room. They all knew what everybody's problems were; now and then somebody would make a good suggestion for new work.

The minutes of these conferences, extant in dittoed or mimeographed original and microform, gave a vivid account of the evolution of the Lab and its research work during World War II. Initial uncomplicated experiments were quickly replaced by morphological series studies looking at all possible variables of chemicals, motor designs and configurations.

Originally the minutes were classified SECRET or CONFIDENTIAL. They often included reports supplied before hand as well as minutes taken during the meetings. Unfortunately conference minutes between 1939 and April 1944 were lost by 1970.

External Monthly Summaries

A series of Monthly Summaries for the US Army Air Corps began in June 1942. The series described contract work completed and plans made by each Section chief, telling how money had been spent and how it would be spent when more was appropriated. A Combined Bimonthly Summary (CBS) started in September 1947 continued this type of report.

Internal Administrative Committee Minutes

Added to the above were Minutes of JPL Administrative Committee Meetings (extant: sporadic issues, 1945-1946). The Administrative Committee reported to the JPL Executive Board, the latter a part of the Caltech administration.

Internal Executive Board Minutes

JPL Executive Board Minutes are extant for 1944 to 1948, a complete sequence that shows an erratic meeting schedule.

Internal Section Meeting Minutes

Minutes were also kept of meetings of various sections, starting at least by November 1945 but no files of such minutes are known to exist.

JPL Reports

Formal reports of experiments and their results form the largest segment of historical JPL records. They were prepared by Lab personnel and others starting in 1936. For the first years they were issued infrequently, were limited in scope, and appeared in varying series. However, between 1944 and 1953 nearly 1500 engineering and other reports were created at JPL. Report procedures came from the practices and procedures of the Administration Section of the Army Air Material Command at Wright Field as well as administrative structures and practices at Caltech. In 1955 a bibliography of JPL publications was prepared that listed, by generic type, "all official reports" of the Lab since 1936.

These reports were distributed in accordance with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense Guided Missile Technical Information List and/or the Joint Army-Navy-Air Force mailing list for the distribution of solid propellant technical information (later JANAF list). For this reason JPL reports are found scattered today in many repositories.

Internal Project Notes and Section Technical Reports and Memoranda

Project Notes on narrow technical subjects were first produced by 1944. They were not an official JPL publication and could not leave lab nor be cited in other JPL reports. Nineteen selected Project Notes exist on microfilm with a twelve page Bibliography of all Project Notes compiled in 1954. However, no location is known for most listed in the bibliography.

Other Document Types

Other abortive series-type reports were unique or short in sequence. These included Operating Manuals (two known) and Test Reports (nine known).

A Secret Index of Reports Prepared by Jet Propulsion Laboratory

An index was prepared in June 1945 at the same time as the first description of the Lab's history, organization, and functions was written. In September 1946 a Lab-wide central uniform filing system was implemented.

Employee Newspapers

Two newspapers have existed for Lab employees up until 1968, a stapled-together set of sheets of paper - the *GALCIT-Ear* (six issues, mimeographed, 1944-1945), and the printed and staple-bound monthly - *LabOratory* (1951 – 1977).

Graphic Materials

Over a hundred thousand still images relating to JPL through 1958, mostly black and white from 4x5 inch negatives, are available at the JPL Archives. Moving image 16mm report films analogous to JPL's written reports were started in 1941 and continued during the Army years.

Memoirs

The only major memoirist for the early years has been Frank Malina, von Kármán's assistant and first Acting Director of the Lab. He extracted information from his personal *Letters Written Home . . . 1936-46*, [ca. 1959] and he also wrote three detailed history articles in 1967, 1969, and 1971 that told of his involvement with the initial Rocket Research Project - Caltech's GALCIT Project # 1, the founding of JPL, and the beginnings of the Corporal guided missile project. My biographical sketch of Malina's life can be found in American National Biography Online (<http://www.anb.org/articles/13/13-02215.html>).

Book-length Studies

Theodore von Kármán wrote his autobiographical *The Wind and Beyond* (with Lee Edson, Little, Brown, 1967). Michael Gorn wrote a biography of von Kármán, *The Universal Man: Theodore von Kármán's Life in Aeronautics* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992).

The life of Hsue-shen Tsien, a Chinese national instrumental in early JPL rocket research and a major player in later rocketry in the People's Republic of China, is recounted in Iris Chang's *The Thread of the Silkworm* (Basic Books, 1995).

Jack Parsons' life is described as a contributor to basic JPL rocket technology and later as an occultist in John Carter's *Sex and Rockets: The Occult World of Jack Parsons* (Feral House, 1999).

A dissertation has been completed by Ben Zibit: "The Guggenheim Aeronautics Laboratory at Caltech and the Creation of the Modern Rocket Motor: How the Dynamics of Rocket Theory Became Reality" (City University of New York, 1999).

In 1971 Frank Malina, as he tried to historically describe what JPL had done during World War II, noted:

"There are difficulties in writing the history of technology. Not only are demands made on authors to understand the technical matters of a development but interpretations are expected of them that require a historical perspective on a world-wide scale which cannot be obtained only from chronologies and formal technical published and unpublished reports. If in addition, authors wish to attract the attention of the lay public, then, if the greatest care is not taken, approximations to the truth recede further and further into space".

The post- World War II US military-industrial complex that characterized the era had a nexus at JPL but Malina's concerns remain prime in trying to extract a reasonable history of technology from the sources cited above.

May 2003

JPL Stories: Profile of a Successful Program

Rose Roberto

Library, Archives, & Records Section
NASA/Jet Propulsion Laboratory

In February 2000, the JPL Library, Archives, and Records section launched a very successful monthly series, called "JPL Stories." Teresa Bailey, the program's creator and coordinator says that she began the program because, "Stories entertain, influence, teach, inform and uplift." She also realized that storytelling is a vivid, memorable way to pass on an organization's history, values, and vision.

When most people think of storytelling, they often picture small children in a public library setting. However, historians know that many communities worldwide record and preserve their culture through stories. Oral historians have used people's memories and their personal stories as a vital tool for understanding of the recent past. While JPL also has an oral history program, with detailed interviews of former directors, chief scientists, engineers on key projects, and some family members of these groups, JPL Stories complements this program because it is brief (stories are less than one hour), interactive (audience members have direct contact with storytellers), and invites the JPL community into the section's physical space on a regular basis.

JPL Stories are also less formal than lectures, seminars, and other academic presentations around the lab. The focus of the stories is on a more personal aspect of life or work. And the presenters are from a cross-section of current and former employees. For instance, Edward Stone, former JPL Director and prominent scientist, told his story about how he became Voyager's chief scientist and embarked on the "Journey of a Lifetime"—basically, his boss, the President and Provost of Caltech "highly encouraged" him to do it. Rosaly Lopes, the Science Coordinator for the Galileo Mission, told her story about how she became a volcanologist and mentioned that the night that data from the Jupiter's moon Io was transmitted, she and other team members were in a small hotel in a tiny town in Italy for a conference. Their laptop received the data at 3:00 am and, at the end of the transmissions, she and three colleagues wanted to celebrate. In the hotel lobby, however, she was given strange looks and was denied purchase of brandy, because the hotel clerk had seen her go to her room with three men. They ended up toasting with mineral water. Jurrie van der Woude, a former JPL Information Officer, talked about how he accidentally got a job processing film for a planetary scientist named Bruce Murray at Caltech, then ended up coming with him to JPL when Bruce Murray became JPL's Director. Initially, van der Woude worked in JPL's Photo Lab, then he moved to Public Relations. He also shared a few tales about his run-ins with a JPL security guard out to get him.

Teresa Bailey says that the program assumes that every JPLer has a JPL story. The program seeks to pass on institutional memory to the JPL community. Parts of personal stories come out in formal lectures lab-wide, but this program provides a venue where storytellers can relax and may share things that are not necessarily spoken of during other types of presentations but are an important part of JPL's culture. Although there is much work to be done by the coordinator and other staff members who publicize the event and manage the program's logistics every month, it is also a fun event that promotes the Library and Archives groups to the rest of the institution.

For more information about the program, upcoming stories, and "Stories on the Story," please go to:

<http://beacon.jpl.nasa.gov/WhatsNew/JPLStories.htm>

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Archivists and Artifacts: The Custodianship of Objects in an Archival Setting

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Like most of my colleagues in the archival profession my principal training has been document-based. I have in my custody, however, at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, a large and significant collection of historical objects, including medical and surgical instruments, materia medica, antique baby bottles, desks, rugs, chandeliers, paintings, sculpture, and other objects, big and small. Perhaps the most surprising "artifact" among the hospital's extensive historical collections is a 2600-year-old Egyptian mummy and his wooden coffin, bearing hieroglyphic messages from a distant time and place.

Ambiguities in the Original Concept

Throughout the 1990s two MGH staff physicians with historical interests independently collected substantial sums of money, deposited in escrow accounts. One of these two funds was earmarked for endowing an MGH Archives and the other for endowing an MGH Museum. These apparently compatible purposes eventually came to rival one another. At the same time money was also being actively solicited for a mural to commemorate the birth of surgical anesthesia on October 16, 1846, for which the MGH takes credit. It is thought by some that the money funneled into the commissioning of this historical painting was deflected from the more serious and urgent purpose of endowing a program or programs aimed at preserving the hospital's historical legacy of documents and artifacts.

After prolonged deliberation by an early iteration of the MGH Archives Committee, the hospital decided to hire a professional archivist to establish an Archives Program, with the expectation that a Museum Program would follow in due course. While interviewing for the archivist position I optimistically offered that I had sufficient knowledge of museum practices (based on two years of part-time experience at Harvard's Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments) to receive and preserve artifacts, pending the establishment of a museum and the hiring of a museum head.

Policies and Procedures

When I created the policies and procedures for the MGH Archives and Special Collections (in my first month of operations) I included language about artifacts and how I would deal with them. A few excerpts from this comprehensive and carefully worded document follow:

Mission Statement: The mission of the Archives and Special Collections Department of the Massachusetts General Hospital (hereinafter the "Archives") is to document the history of the hospital and the people who are a part of that history through

identifying, collecting, and preserving historically significant records and artifacts. The Archivist and Curator of Special Collections (hereinafter the "Archivist") has the dual role of dealing with official archival records produced by the MGH and dealing with other historically significant papers, images, and artifacts that do not constitute official records. The Archives will:

- 1. Serve and promote the interests of the MGH by appraising, collecting, organizing, preserving, and providing physical and intellectual access to its historically significant records and artifacts in a responsible manner according to established guidelines.*
- 2. Promote good public relations for the MGH by publicizing its history of accomplishments in health care, research, and social responsibility by means of publications, exhibits, tours, and other appropriate educational measures.*
- 3. Serve the information needs of the MGH administration (as a primary goal) and advance knowledge in the health fields through making historical information available to scholars outside the MGH community (as time permits, and within guidelines established by legal and ethical considerations and in accordance with hospital policies).*

Collecting Policies of the MGH Archives and Special Collections:

[Omitted paragraphs, indicated by stars, discuss the acquisition and treatment of official administrative records, historical patient records, publications, photographs, films, sound recordings, etc., of significance to the history of the hospital.]

The following materials will be within the scope of the collecting policies:

[****]

7. Equipment, instruments, and artifacts that have sufficient exhibit value. Ordinarily such objects should relate specifically to the history of the MGH, but may also include representative items that are of special importance to the history of medicine in general. (Historically significant objects too large for practical archival storage may be documented by means of photographs, measurements, and written descriptions instead of being physically preserved.)

[****]

11. Fine arts relating to the history of the MGH and other fine arts owned by the MGH, including paintings, drawings, and sculpture.

12. Antiques and artifacts owned by the MGH, including: antique furniture, clocks, carpets, and mementos; historically significant medical and surgical instruments; and historically significant laboratory equipment.

[****]

The following factors will be considered when making decisions about what to collect, although the ultimate decision in each case will be at the discretion of the Archivist:

1. The Archives will not accept: temporary storage of anything; materials having no connection to the MGH or to medical history; or collections that are offered with conditions or obligations to retain materials as an integrated collection or in any prescribed form.

2. Condition, size, volume, and costs of storage will be considered in making decisions about what will be accepted into the Archives.

[****]

The policies and procedures that I drafted were vetted and approved by the MGH Archives Committee, the hospital attorneys, and the MGH administration, as represented by its Chiefs Council. Many of the artifacts and art works included in the broad net cast by the collecting policies were, of course, already in the possession of the MGH but were unlisted, never photographed, scattered, uninsured, and subject to no centralized control, intellectual or physical.

With the help of administrative allies I was able to secure the use of a 26-by-55 foot storage room near the loading dock at a facility rented by the hospital about five miles from the central campus. I filled this high-ceilinged space with recycled, baked enamel steel shelving and proceeded to use it for artifact storage, arranging for newly received paintings and objects, and those not currently on display, to be moved there after accessioning, tagging, and preliminary description. (I maintain paper-based records in several locations, including the Harvard University Depository, which provides bar-coded retrieval and next day delivery. Historical patient records are on deposit at the Rare Books and Special Collections Department at Harvard Medical School's Countway Library under conditions of controlled access. Daguerreotypes are on deposit at Harvard's Fogg Museum. Collections and books needed for ready reference are kept close at hand in my central archives office area, along with materials being processed.)

Art and Artifacts Inventory Project

About two years ago I inaugurated an effort that has come to be known as the Art and Artifacts Inventory Project. One of the main incentives behind this push was the lack of insurance coverage for items not listed and described by hospital records. I was fortunate in having available for this purpose several energetic women from the MGH Ladies Visiting Committee, a volunteer service organization dating back to 1870. I drafted forms for their use, including a preliminary survey form that was sent out with a cover letter from the MGH President encouraging departments to cooperate with the Archives, and a detailed inventory form for use during on-site visits to offices and storage areas. The latter form has space for insertion of a photograph. We are currently in Phase II of the Project (on-site visits). Phase III will bring a qualified appraiser to the MGH to put a dollar value on items identified in Phase II that are suspected of being worth more than the \$10,000 per item deductible that is a condition of the hospital's insurance coverage.

Many of the ladies who belong to the LVC are attached to prominent Boston families and have considerable interest in and knowledge of antiques. They are better equipped than I am to identify and describe antiques that have no relationship to science or medicine. I have tried to provide oversight for this project as much as my limited time permits, but the hours I have available are few. A by-product of the inventory, the result that interests me most, will be that a more-or-less complete record of the art and artifacts the MGH owns will be accessioned and preserved in the Archives, even though most of the items listed and described will remain in the offices and conference rooms in which they were found.

External and Internal Users of Artifacts

My principal external clientele at the MGH Archives and Special Collections consists of scholars in the history of medicine, typically interested in doing research in nineteenth-to-early-twentieth-century administrative or patient records. There's an advantage, I think, in also having available object-based evidence of the history of medicine, such as ivory-handled scalpels, rendered obsolete by the acceptance of aseptic surgery, or an original Morton Inhaler, illustrating the mechanics of how ether was administered at the MGH in 1846 in the first public demonstration of surgical anesthesia, an event that forever transformed the practice of medicine. Gigli saws, trephining devices, lithotomy tools, and old topical radiation therapy machines fascinate all but the most jaded medical historians. Direct inspection of artifacts is especially important when studying the experimental development of science or technical aspects of the history of medicine.

My most frequent object-based request is from TV stations or publishers who want footage or photographs of artifacts to add color to a program, book, or Web site. Other scholars have wanted to focus on the objects themselves, and I have usually been able to provide an acceptable degree of access. On occasion I have discovered documentary records that supplement what can be learned from an object, and I have found such moments especially gratifying. When, for example, the Metropolitan Museum of Art needed to study Gilbert Stuart's 1822 oil portrait of William Phillips, the first President of the MGH Corporation, I was able to pull out early nineteenth-century bills, receipts, and correspondence relating to the picture, including its history of being loaned for reproduction. In the portrait Phillips holds Charles Bulfinch's architectural plans for the original hospital building. The finished structure, like a vision, seems to hover in the distance. Extant records in the MGH Archives document negotiations for land, arrangements for construction, the wages of men and the rent paid for mule teams, as well as the cost of the portrait and its gold leaf frame. Interestingly, John Doggett, a Boston entrepreneur who arranged for the framing, charged as much as Stuart, the renowned artist, did for his brushwork.

Some researchers simply have an interest in seeing old things, and I accommodate them as well as I can, given the constraints on my time. One of my regular callers is an unctuously polite Boston Brahman who phones about once a month with a question about architecture or furniture. He never seems to realize how complicated his questions can be. "I'm terribly sorry to bother you again," he'll say, "but I have a very simple question that shouldn't cause you much trouble at all. The chandelier hanging in the Phillips House looks exactly like the one in the oil painting over the fireplace in the meeting room on the second floor of the Boston Athenaeum. Is yours the original or a reproduction?" I tell this patron that, unfortunately, I have not inherited complete records about all of the thousands of objects at the MGH, but that an Art and Artifacts Inventory is on-going and there is a good chance that we will have more information in the future.

Beacon Hill residents have sometimes asked to see archaeological finds gleaned from the seemingly perennial construction digs in the vicinity of the MGH. This was especially true in the wake of a newspaper article about objects unearthed during recent and somewhat controversial construction. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts reserves the right to examine and claim these old bottles, long-stemmed clay pipes, and broken jugs, but the state archaeologist has not, to date, seen fit to assert rights over anything excavated at MGH sites. She has endorsed the practice begun by the hospital's real estate office of entrusting such finds to the MGH Archives and Special Collections for safekeeping.

When art or artifacts inquiries come from internal MGH users they are often related to space change or a redecoration scheme. Such requests, e.g., for an appropriate picture to hang on a freshly painted wall, typically come to the Archives through a vice president or other well-placed administrator. The logistics of moving nineteenth-century portraits, with their bulky gilded frames, and having them cleaned or restored, can be frustratingly time-consuming. A recent change in the MGH presidency had a dramatic (and I hope short term) impact on my work, deriving indirectly from numerous reconfigurations of responsibility within the administration. It seems as if everyone is moving into a new office or renovating a new conference room. On occasion feathers have been ruffled over whose office gets the loan of which artifact. I maintain, for example, a waiting list for antique banjo clocks. None are available at the moment.

I have sometimes been able to arrange a surprisingly apt match between occupant and art, e.g., placing a scene depicting Edward D. Churchill, M.D., and his surgical residents into renovated space for the Edward D. Churchill Professor of Surgery. Not every painting owned by the MGH is of equal interest. Several years ago the hospital was seized by fervor to exhibit more pictures of women. The only known likeness of Loretta Joy Cummins, the first woman staff physician at the MGH (1916), is an amateurish oil portrait that I have been unable to place because of its garish colors and flat depiction. I have been asked to move an oil painting of Mrs. Redman (first name unknown), wife of MGH benefactor John Redman, several times for reasons that have never been clearly expressed to me, but which, I think, are related to her unappealing and woebegone demeanor. To flesh out data in the "subjects" column of my portraits database I once searched for her given name by leafing through her husband's diary, which I have in the Archives. I found myself reading more than I had originally intended because I wanted a clue to her profound sadness. Perhaps the following passage is telling. On July 3, 1819 (the occasion of their first daughter's birth) Mr. Redman noted sententiously that, "I am now placed by this event in one of the most important positions a man can occupy, to wit, the guardianship and protection of the virtue of a girl. One false principle implanted in her mind may prove the ruin not only of herself but of the whole family." Mr. Redman's portrait hangs in a conference room where I see him about twice a month. He seems a hard man. Nowhere in his diary does he mention his wife by name. The girl (Lydia) lived only 136 days.

The Ether Dome Mural

Artifacts proved indispensable when the MGH commissioned a mural depicting the first public demonstration of surgical anesthesia, which occurred in the old Operating Room (now a National Historic Landmark called the "Ether Dome") on October 16, 1846. The artist's intention was to create a composition more historically accurate than Robert Hinckley's famous painting of the same subject in the lobby of Countway Library at Harvard Medical School. In preparation for the mural the artist visited the MGH Archives, the Rare Books and Special Collections Department at Countway, and the Fogg Museum at Harvard to examine old photographs, surgical instruments, and other images and objects. I was able to show him an original Morton Inhaler of the type used on October 16, the instrument box of surgeon John Collins Warren, daguerreotypes of early ether operations, a velvet-upholstered 1840s operating chair, and other materials. (Original surgical records in the Archives also flesh out the details of this momentous event.) The artist and I had some fundamental disagreements about the way historical artifacts should be handled, but he eventually became reconciled to my refusal to allow him to remove a nineteenth-century sponge from the ether inhaler so that he could fill it with red fluid for verisimilitude. (Morton, who intended to patent "Letheon," added red dye to sulfuric ether in an unsuccessful attempt to keep the chemical constitution of its anesthetic fumes a secret.) Men with MGH associations, myself among them, posed in 1840s costume for the painting as neck-craning observers on the steep tiers of the surgical amphitheater.

The MGH Mummy

Padihershef, the MGH mummy, established residence in the hospital's Operating Room after having been donated by van Lennep & Co. (Dutch merchants trading in the Ottoman Empire) as an anatomical specimen in 1823. (We know the mummy's name, occupation, and place of origin because an Egyptologist from Boston's Museum of Fine Arts translated the coffin's painted hieroglyphics in the 1960s.) Americans were enthralled by all things Egyptian in the early 1820s, a fascination fueled in part by the work of scholars who traveled to Egypt with Napoleon's armies, and Padihershef was one of the first Egyptian mummies in the United States. He became famous when MGH surgeon John Collins Warren unwrapped his "twenty-five thicknesses...of bandage...imbued with some glutinous substances, intended to preserve them..." before an audience of scientific men in the hospital's operating amphitheater and published an illustrated report in the *Boston Journal of Philosophy and the Arts*. The dark skin of his exposed face still exudes the "whitish saline efflorescence" described 180 years ago by Warren in his article. He was later leased to the multifaceted Doggett, who shuttled him off on a highly advertised tour by boat of cities on the eastern seaboard, charging curiosity seekers 25 cents apiece.

Several years ago I opened the mummy's wood-and-glass exhibit case in the Ether Dome to allow a photographer to shoot better exposures. When I put aside my tools and lifted off the front of the case, which had been closed for twelve years, a pungent aroma of spices and natron suffused the room, a sensation common, perhaps, for a 650 BCE Theban nose, but unforgettably peculiar in the twenty-first century. Warren was similarly surprised in 1823, as recounted in his "Description of an Egyptian Mummy."

My experiences arranging for mummy loans and mummy insurance, and attempting to keep TV cameramen and their harmfully hot lights at bay while at the same time talking to reporters, have been much less scintillating. In preparation for my first mummy loan I spent about one hundred hours negotiating and drafting terms for a loan agreement, locating and hiring experienced mummy movers, and wrangling over insurance coverage (to be paid for by the borrower). How do you insure a mummy? You must determine its replacement value, i.e., how much it would cost to replace it with an "equivalent" mummy if it were lost or destroyed. Recent auction prices are the usual yardstick. I can now state with authority that no Egyptian mummies with long and intricate historical ties to a major American hospital have been sold at auction recently. After I produced records proving that the mummy had, indeed, been at the MGH since the formative years of the hospital the insurer and I negotiated a mutually acceptable figure.

Corralling Strays

Searching for artifacts that were lost or misplaced (or given away as a misguided "thank you") before my arrival has also consumed substantial blocks of my time. These searches have typically originated in the complaint by a wealthy donor that he hasn't seen something (like a sculpture once displayed in a lobby or hallway) for several years, that he has been wondering where it might be, that he is upset, and that he would like someone to get back to him as soon as possible. Experience has taught me that a millionaire benefactor's agitated state of mind can be quite contagious among top hospital administrators, and I have been asked on several occasions by the MGH administration to locate a marble lamb, or a Willard clock, or some other object, whereabouts unknown. Such artifacts often seem to have been displaced by demolition or space change years ago. Sometimes they turn up on a shelf or wall in the office of an elderly doctor to whom they had been entrusted. At other times I have found no trace, aside from a faded photograph of the object in situ at some no longer extant location in some previous era.

I have occasionally been asked by the hospital to find some suitable historical object, such as a nineteenth-century silver service, to give as a memento to a retiring administrator, or as a "thank you" to a generous donor. I have carefully explained that my mission was to preserve the historical legacy of the hospital, not to give it away, and that professional responsibility would prevent me from complying with such a request. I have remained firm to this principle even in the face of such angry objections as "But she's raised millions for the hospital," or "You have no idea what that man means to this institution." I have offered instead to purchase from dealers, with funds provided by the administration, gifts of a historical nature suitable for presentation.

At times I have been able to undo inherited problems resulting from bad decisions made before my arrival. The administration, for example, had once, as a memento, given away a handwritten volume of minutes from the 1830s, leaving a gaping lacuna in the Board of Trustees records. The recipient was a man with historical interests, who had served the MGH for many years. I called him to ask if he would consider returning the volume to the hospital for its newly established Archives, and he graciously agreed.

Restoration of Art

Trained conservators can fix cracks in nineteenth-century busts with costly glass microbubbles or less expensive treatments. What you do with damaged sculpture hinges on a variety of factors, such as available budget, what light the piece will be displayed in, and the mission of your institution. The MGH, for example, is not a museum of fine arts and has a very limited budget for historical and art-related purposes. The treatment I chose for the broken neck of Solomon Townsend, M.D. (marble portrait bust, T. Ball, sculptor, 1860), whose torso is attached to a socle on a pedestal in a well-lighted public lobby, was to have the parts rejoined by bronze pins and acrylic adhesive. Losses around the break were filled in with polyvinyl acetate synthetic wax and disguised by inpainting. The conservator also gave him a good cleaning with nonionic detergent and steam. The crack is now nearly undetectable. Torn or punctured oil paintings can be fixed with patches (less expensive) or relining (more costly, but also more durable). I was fortunate in finding a graphic arts conservator who is also a skilled artist and can touch up the rejoined seams with fresh paint in his own studio. The tangled ethics involved in historical clock repair are too complex for summary here, but if the situation argues convincingly that an antique clock on display needs to run and keep good time (involving, in most cases, some replacement parts) be sure to retain all original parts, such as bushings, baffles, escapements, and even shards of fragmented reverse glass painting.

I have discovered many objects of historical significance in rough storage at the Suffolk County Jail, a.k.a. the Charles Street Jail, the principal detention center for the City of Boston from 1851 to 1991. Only a block away from the MGH, it is itself considered a historic property. The MGH bought it for a dollar after it ceased operations as a jail and then faced ten years of hearings about what would or wouldn't be a permitted form of development. During this period of limbo various MGH departments used the space to store furniture and other objects not in active use. Amid the rubble of fallen plaster in the confines of the jail I have found such gems as wicker wheel chairs from 1918 and a 1950s iron lung (in apparently usable condition). I traced its ownership to the Department of Respiratory Care, which agreed to transfer custody of the device to the Archives and Special Collections upon the condition that I would lend it back if a certain elderly patient were readmitted and wanted to use it instead of availing herself of more advanced technologies. (Apparently this had happened in the past.) I acceded to the conditions of the gift because I thought this contingency was unlikely. Remember, when moving an iron lung, to hire four strong movers and a truck with a lift.

The MGH History Trail

In previous years I had keys to the Charles Street Jail and escorted visiting archivists, upon request, through its grim cellblocks and echoing passages. I no longer have access to its interior, but have added what remains of the building's facade as a stop on the MGH History Trail, which I created as a self-guided historical walking tour of the hospital's environs. The tour consists of 22 plaques at significant historical locations with my explanatory text and reproductions of old photographs. A four-fold brochure with brief descriptions, a map, and a location key helps patients, visitors, tourists, and the occasional interested employee navigate. Included on the tour are the Ether Dome, the MGH mummy, an 1840s operating chair, a fragment of the pre-1860 MGH wharf, a horse-drawn ambulance, and various buildings and departments. As originally conceived, the tour's first stop would have been an MGH Museum near the central campus, where visitors could view exhibits of photographs and artifacts, pick up a brochure, and watch an introductory video about the hospital's long and rich historical legacy.

Visions of an MGH Museum

The General Hospital was established by charter in 1811, but did not admit its first patient until 1821. That ten-year delay seems to have been taken by all subsequent generations of administrators as a perfectly acceptable interval between any two stages of an idea or project. I have, since assuming my responsibilities in 1998, drafted and floated several detailed proposals for a museum, or for a combined Archives-and-Museum Program, with bigger space, an adequate staff, improved climate controls, state-of-the-art exhibit cases, an elevator, and other amenities. Recently I learned that the museum idea had been added to a waiting list, but that no specific date had been assigned for its active consideration. Meanwhile, I remain the de facto caretaker of myriad objects and art works, expected to keep track of their movements from office to storage to conference room, arrange for their cleaning and repair, and provide reference services related to them. I have two small display cases in the Archives, which I fill periodically with mixed exhibits of historical documents and historical artifacts. Until the MGH launches an adequately funded and staffed Museum Program I will keep Renaissance Wax, Ethafoam, and acid-neutral artifact tags in my supply closet next to Mylar sleeves and Hollinger boxes. I will keep the names and numbers of portrait restorers, sculpture conservators, clock refurbishers, mummy experts, medical museum curators, and fine arts movers in my Rolodex, and John Singer Sargent's portrait of Dr. Storow over my desk.

June 2003

Transatlantic Searching: Sarah Parker Remond, an Early African American Female Physician

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In 1994, I was employed at the College of William and Mary. After years of travel: Asia thanks to the United States Military, Africa thanks to the United States Peace Corps, and backpacking through Europe thanks to Rick Steves, I now had a job, an apartment, and all of "small town" Colonial Williamsburg. My escape into the nineteenth century and Sarah Parker Remond all started simply enough. In 1994, James Walvin, noted author on the history of American slavery and co-editor of the journal *Slavery and Abolition*, gave a public lecture at the college on blacks in Great Britain. Prior to the lecture, I decided to read up on the subject. Somewhere between Caryl Phillips' *The European Tribe* and Paul Gilroy's *There ain't no Black in the Union Jack*, I came across mention of a nineteenth century African American physician named Sarah Parker Remond. I had never heard of her. I decided to start my search in the stacks with the usual suspects: *Notable Black Women* and the *Journal of Negro History*.

From a 1935 article by Dorothy Porter, I learned that Sarah Parker Remond was born June 6, 1824, in Salem, Massachusetts. Both of her parents were active in the anti-slavery movement and the family's activism helped to establish them as an important resource within Salem's free black community. John and Nancy Remond encouraged their children to fight racial prejudice and Sarah grew up challenging Northern bigotry by demanding public accommodations often denied to free blacks. For example, after being removed from a Boston theatre in 1853, she sued the theatre and won. Sarah's devotion to activism led her to follow in the footsteps of her brother. Charles Lenox Remond was appointed the first black lecturing agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, in 1838. He was selected by the American Anti-Slavery Society as a delegate to the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London. At that convention, Remond, William Lloyd Garrison, Nathaniel Peabody Rogers and William Adams left the floor as a gesture of solidarity with their banned female colleagues. Two years later, perhaps fueled by the events at the London Convention, Sarah joined Charles as an anti-slavery lecturer. The pair toured the East Coast with William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Susan B. Anthony. In 1858, Sarah sailed to Great Britain. She had three goals: to support the American anti-slavery cause, to live for a time away from American racism, and to pursue an education. By 1866, she was in medical school in Florence, Italy.

In 1995, I received a Minor Research Grant from the College of William and Mary to travel to London for the purpose of conducting a pilot survey of various historic institutions with possible holdings relating to Sarah Parker Remond. My thesis was simple. Scholars of nineteenth century women's history often view the antislavery movement as a springboard to women's rights. Could I find a link between Sarah's antislavery activities and her decision to become a medical doctor? I arrived in London that November with a timeline of her tour, created from dates listed in the Black Abolitionist Papers, and a short list of repositories to hit. The most difficult part of my journey would be uncovering intellectual access for a woman with little recorded past. For all that I didn't have, I had this. Sarah's work as an antislavery speaker in England granted her access to some of the most prominent female figures of the day. Would their papers also include information on Sarah? And more importantly, since Sarah left no written record of her decision to move to Italy for medical training, could I trail Sarah to Florence from materials uncovered in London?

After getting myself settled in London, and tearing myself away from the bookstore across the street from my Bed and Breakfast, I made a day trip (19 miles west of central London) to look at the papers of Bedford Ladies College, now housed at University of London Royal Holloway. The Royal Holloway stands as a monument for two Victorian visionaries, Elizabeth Jesser Reid and Thomas Holloway. The campus Archives is what we all dreamed of when we decided to take up the profession. Collections are housed in the Royal Holloway Founders Building, modeled on the French Chateau de Chambord. Researchers are allowed to sit, in a small reading room, with reference books older than the institution they have just come from, and I was coming from William and Mary, and weep and weep, then thank God that they were clever enough to become archivists in the first place.

Elizabeth Jesse Reid found the college in 1849, taking its name from its first home – No. 47 Bedford Square in Bloomsbury. Few of her papers have survived, and I could find none mentioning Sarah directly. What I did come across was correspondence between Reid and Henry C. Robinson that offer the good possibility that Reid introduced Sarah to women's medical activities. A letter in the archives dated March 13, 1859 claims that Reid and her sister were "full of scheme" for funding a college and hospital for female patients and female physicians. Robinson wrote: "Mrs. Reid became quite violent on the subject of female rights and the wrongs done to women in refusing them the advantage of a scientific education." The letter included the name "Elizabeth Blackwell," written in the margin. Blackwell, the first American female physician and friend of Reid, was in fact in London that March on a "Women's Medical Movement Tour."

The Registers of student courses at the Royal Holloway Archives reveal that once at Bedford, Sarah threw herself into her studies. During her first term, she received instruction in six classes: arithmetic, ancient history, French, Latin, reading and vocal music. There were more than fifty students registered with her that year, and the average student at Bedford only studied one or two subjects. By the second term, Sarah dropped to four: French, ancient history, reading and geography. This schedule was repeated Easter term. Although eager, Sarah's record shows that she was not as well prepared. A note at the bottom of her student file states: "These classes were found to be quite unsuitable owing to the peculiar circumstances and age of the student." She was not alone in her lack of preparation. The male Professors often complained of the low standards of the female students on entry to the college. Sarah blamed American racism for her insufficient schooling. In her 1862 biography, published by *The English Woman's Journal*, now part of the women's history collection at the Fawcett Library, recently renamed Women's Library, London Guildhall University, Sarah wrote: "again and again mother would endeavor to have us placed in some private school, but being colored, we were refused." In 1835, the family was forced to move from Salem, to Newport, Rhode Island, after a committee in Salem decided that "colored" children could not be educated with whites. Of this incident, Sarah wrote, "This committee was publicly branding us with degradation. The child of every foreigner could enter any public school, while the children of native-born parents were to be thus insulted and robbed of their personal rights."

After determining that Reid had probably planted the medical seed, I next turned my attention to why Sarah picked medical school in Italy. After a delightful breakfast of toast and baked beans, at my B&B, I hopped on the tube and headed to Colindale. The British Library Newspaper Library is located in northwest London almost opposite the Colindale Underground Station and a short tube ride from my accommodations on Gower Street. Readers are admitted with a Newspaper Library reader's pass. Once in and seated, at one of the 150 reader tables, one learns that delivery times can vary between 30 and 90 minutes, according to levels of demand and availability of staff. I began poorly by firing off list after list of requests. With

each order only one or two of the items were retrieved and the nice little man with the cute little accent would smile and explain that the others just “could not be located.” After a day or two, I insisted on speaking with someone a little higher up the archival chain of command. “Look!” I began, “I’ll be here for a month, 30 full days. So, the sooner we get started here, the sooner I leave to bother some other repository with my numerous requests. “Perhaps requesting three or four items before you leave each evening and the same number before getting a bite for lunch? He asked. “Why certainly!” I said. I took a break, got some tea. When I returned, I smiled at the cart-pushing chap depositing four, formerly lost, bound volumes of nineteenth century newspapers at my desk.

During her first break from Bedford College, Sarah visited the American legation to apply for a visa to travel to France. Her passport stated:

Sarah Parker Remond - 10 Sept. 1858 –
Age 32? Stature 5 feet 1/2 in?
Forehead, high? Eyes, black? Nose, straight? Mouth, full? Chin, not prominent?
Hair, dark. Complexion, dark? Face, thin.

She was denied. The American minister, following the US Supreme Court ruling on Dred Scott, claimed that American blacks were not U.S. citizens and therefore could not have passports. After Sarah’s letters on the matter began appearing in the local press, and support for her raced through London, Benjamin Moran, secretary to the Minister, wrote, that the Remond matter had fallen like a bombshell on the family. George M. Dallas, the American minister and eleventh Vice President of the United States, announced that he would return to the United States if the attacks did not stop, adding ... that if he should go, he would be the last American Minister in England for some time. News of the matter is believed to have reached Buckingham Palace. On February 25, 1860, Moran made the following entry in his diary: “On this subject of darkies, I am reminded that the queen looked at me very oddly on Thursday, & I now suspect the Remond affair was dancing about in her mind, and that she wished to know what kind of person (if she thought of the matter all) the Secretary was that refused that lady of color a visa.” Some claim that Sarah received the visa from the British Foreign Secretary. During my trip to the Public Records Office at Kew Gardens, I could locate neither the visa nor the gardens.

Sarah Parker Remond stayed on in London during the American Civil War. By its end, she had begun lecturing on behalf of the freedmen and was an active member of the London Ladies Emancipation Society and the Freedman’s Aid Association. These organizations solicited funds and clothing for the ex-slaves. In an 1863 letter from Sarah to William Lloyd Garrison, she wrote that she was staying for a time at the home of Peter Alfred Taylor, a Member of Parliament and a Unitarian who favored social reform. His wife, Mentia, the “mother” of the British women’s suffrage movement, was active in both anti-slavery and women’s rights. Sarah’s relationship to the Taylor’s is important for its connection to Italian nationalist Giuseppe Mazzini. Peter Taylor was a close personal friend, as well as chairman of the Society of Friends of Italy. When introduced, Sarah and Mazzini would have had much to discuss. Mazzini was the son of a physician and after matriculating from University, at age fourteen, he wanted to study medicine.

Although it has been rumored that Sarah attended a nursing training program at London University Hospital in 1866, I could not find her name listed in the catalog for the nursing school. Shortly after she supposedly received that training, perhaps to help Mazzini’s cause in newly unified Italy, she relocated to Florence. Sarah completed her medical training at the Santa Maria Nuova Hospital in 1868 and is rumored to have received a diploma for “professional medical practice” in 1871. By the time Elizabeth Buffum Chace visited Sarah, two years later, she was shocked to learn that Americans were trying to ruin Sarah professionally, and socially, by bringing their hateful prejudices to Italy. Sarah married in 1877, relocating to Rome, without her husband, a few years later. Final word on her is from Frederick Douglass. After touring Paris, with Theodore Stanton, the son of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, as his guide, Douglass stumbles on Sarah and two of her sisters, who had joined her in self-imposed exile. Douglass wrote that their home, the Palazzo Moroni, was the center of an interesting interracial group that included the sculptor Edmonia Lewis. Little is again reported on Sarah until her death, December 13, 1894. She is buried at the Protestant Cemetery in Rome.

So, in the end, did my travels and research succeed in answering my initial questions? Yes and No. Although I was only able to find a small amount of documentation on Sarah, I left England with the hope that new materials might exist. There is always the off chance that additional materials are in private hands or still hidden in a collection. With our current archival trend of highlighting long forgotten women and minorities in our collections, someone might someday stumble across fruitful resources for "lost" historic figures like Sarah Parker Remond. Until then, I will keep digging and looking for answers.

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