

Society of American Archivists Description Section Meeting Minutes  
Austin, Texas  
August 14, 2009

## **I. Welcome and Section Reports**

Chair James Roth opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He expressed his gratitude to the Steering Committee for their work. He announced that the Description Section had endorsed two sessions and both were accepted.

### **A. Election results.**

The online election received 76 respondents. Here are the results:

Vice Chair: Jerry Simmons

Steering Committee: John Nemmers

Steering Committee: Christine de Catanzaro

### **B. Newsletter editor**

Sarah Keen reported that two issues of the newsletter were published this year. The newsletters are published on a January and July schedule; the next issue is scheduled for January 2010. She welcomes any comments or suggestions.

### **C. Description Expo (Vice Chair)**

Vice Chair Erin Lawrimore reported on the annual Description Expo, which is an online presentation. This year's Expo focused on innovation. There were five submissions from the following institutions: George Mason University Libraries Special Collections & Archives; OhioLINK EAD FACTORY (EAD Finding Aid Creation Tool & Repository); Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution; University of California, Irvine Libraries Special Collections and Archives; and Museum of Jewish Heritage. Lawrimore encouraged members to submit examples for next year's Expo and thanked Web Liaison Janet Carleton for her quick work in getting the Expo online.

## **II. Reports from SAA Committees, Liaisons, and Related Groups**

### **A. SAA Council Representative: Tom Hyry.**

Hyry discussed the revision of the Standards Committee and pointed out items that might affect the Description Section. He asked that members review the new SAA Strategic Plan and asked for written comments.

### **B. 2009 Program Committee: Nancy McGovern**

Next year's annual meeting in Washington, D.C., will be a joint meeting of SAA, CoSA, and NAGARA and will have no theme. The deadline for session proposals is September 30.

### **C. DACS Working Group: Bill Landis**

Landis reported that the group will become a SAA subcommittee. SAA is currently offering five workshops related to DACS. He welcomes ideas for additional workshops and encourages people to develop their own.

There has been a lot of recent work on content standards, including a revision of Graphic Materials, and the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) have begun work on a companion standard for DACS.

DACS is now five years old. He hopes that they will have their own web site by the end of the year.

The successor to AACR2, RDA, is close to release. He plans to wait until after its release and react to this new standard at that point.

**D. ALA Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA): Lisa Carter**

Carter was unable to attend the meeting but had submitted her report to James Roth, who read the report. The full report is posted on the Description Section web site.

**E. ICA Section on Professional Standards and Best Practices: James Roth for Claire Sibille**

Roth read Sibille's report, which is posted on the Description Section web site.

**F. Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards (TSDS): Michael Rush**

Rush reported that the TSDS has been busy during the past year. In December they sent comments on RDA, which seem to have been ignored. They revised the charge to the EAC Working Group. In February they voted to request a revision of EAD to the EAD Working Group. The TSDS will be dissolved. All SAA-approved standards will have their own subcommittee within the Standards Committee.

Rush is also an archival appointee to the RLG Advisory Group. Their report is on the OCLC web site; he will send the link the Description Section listserv.

**G. RBMA and OCLC/Research Libraries Group: Jen Schaffner**

Jen Schaffner was unable to attend, but Michael Rush reported on these activities in section F of these reports.

**H. OCLC: John Chapman**

Chapman reported a change to subscription that affects ContentDM. He also reported on three major initiatives: moving databases to new platform; the move to web-based library management services; and reinvention of cataloging platform.

Send emails with comments or questions to [chapmanj@oclc.org](mailto:chapmanj@oclc.org)

**I. OCLC Research Archives and Special Collections: Jackie Dooley**

Dooley also reported for Jen Schaffner.

RBMS has been having more programs for archives and special collections.

Some current projects:

- Data mining of World Cat to identify archival items or collections and analyzing the data
- Starting report on barriers to EAD implementation; will suggest improvements, have information on technical options, etc.
- Developing multi-study on determining collection assessments; the study looks at several tools developed by institutions and consortia

Jen Schaffner would have talked about her report "The Metadata is the Interface: Better Description for Better Discovery of Archives and Special Collections," which was released in May 2009. The report discusses archival user studies and what they show about description and research.

**J. DCRM-MSS: Diane Ducharme**

A committee within RBMS was charged to create a standard, DCRM (MSS), for post-1600 manuscripts and will be a companion to DACS. The charge was originally only for MARC records, but they wanted to be more useful to the archival profession. They are trying to make suggestions for titling untitled manuscripts that are difficult to title, such as individual ledger sheets, etc.

**K. Encoded Archival Context (EAC) Working Group: Kathy Wisser**

The working group is releasing the final draft schema in late August 2009 and want to release version 2009 by the end of the year. There are challenges because this is an international group. They are looking for people willing to test it. The current version differs from the original beta version. Two sessions at SAA are EAC-related.

**L. EAD Working Group: Kris Kiesling**

- Proceedings from *EAD at 10* are available on SAA web site under publications. Kiesling expressed thanks to SAA and RLG for their assistance with *EAD at 10*.
- EAD Tag Library is now on EAD web site as a PDF
- Working group meets Sunday at SAA
  - Discussing revision of EAD, in early stages

**M. ALA Committee: Machine-Readable Bibliographic Information Committee (MARBI): Kris Kiesling**

- MARBI wants to make and is working to make MARC work well with RDA
- Library of Congress wants to mashup all their authorities and thesauri and make them available for downloading

**N. Archivists' Toolkit: Brad Westbrook and Scott Schwartz**

- Archon 3.0 will be released by the end of 2009
- UCSD, NYU, and UIUC are submitting a Mellon Foundation grant proposal to combine Archon and Archivists' Toolkit

**O. NHPRC: Lucy Barber**

Barber was unable to attend. James Roth will ask for report from Barber and put it on the web site.

**III. New Business**

James Roth asked for any business from the floor. There was no new business.

**IV. Program presentation:**

Victoria Peters of Glasgow University presented “A New International Standard for Describing Functions: ICA-ISDF.”

A Q&A session followed.

V. James Roth closed the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Donnelly Lancaster Walton

**SAA Description Section Meeting Agenda**  
Salon H, 1-3 p.m., Aug. 14, 2009, Austin, TX

1. Welcome and Section Reports

- A. Election Results
- B. Newsletter Editor
- C. Description Expo (Vice-Chair)

2. Reports from SAA Committees, Liaisons, and Related Groups

- A. SAA Council Representative: Tom Hyry
- B. 2009 Program Committee: Nancy McGovern
- C. DACS Working Group: Bill Landis
- D. ALA Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA): Lisa Carter
- E. ICA Section on Professional Standards and Best Practices. James Roth for Claire Sibille
- F. Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards (TSDS): Michael Rush
- G. RBMS and OCLC/Research Libraries Group: Jen Schaffer
- H. OCLC: John Chapman
- I. OCLC Research Archives and Special Collections: Jackie Dooley
- J. DCRM-MSS: Diane Ducharme
- K. Encoded Archival Context (EAC) Working Group: Kathy Wisser
- L. EAD Working Group: Kris Kiesling
- M. ALA Committee: Machine-Readable Bibliographic Information Committee (MARBI): Kris Kiesling
- N. Archivists Toolkit: Brad Westbrook
- O. NHPRC: Lucy Barber

3. New Business

4. Program Presentation on International Standard for Describing Functions (ISDF): Victoria Peters