

Descriptive Notes

The Newsletter of the Description Section of the Society of American Archivists

Summer 1998

From the Section Chair

1998 Description Section Meeting

I hope that you're planning to attend the SAA Annual Meeting in Orlando this year. There are many things happening in the area of archival description, and the annual meeting is a good place to hear all about the latest developments. The Description Section will be meeting on Thursday, September 3, 1998, from 10:30 am until 12:30 pm. For those of you who remember last year's meeting at 8:00 am on Saturday, this should be a better time slot!

The agenda for this year's meeting is:

1. Reports from SAA Committees and SAA Representatives

¥ CAIE, Kris Kiesling (Committee on Archival Information Exchange)

¥ OCLC, Susan Westberg

¥ CC:DA, Michael Fox (ALA Committee on Cataloging: Description & Access; Michael will include reports on the Cataloging from Metadata Task Force and the Rule 0.24 Revision Task Force)

¥ MARBI, Rutherford Witthus (US MARC Advisory Board)

2. Section Reports

¥ *Descriptive Notes* newsletter, Ann Hodges

¥ Section web site

¥ Finding Aids Fair

3. Section Mission Statement and Bylaws

4. Proposals

¥ Publication proposals

¥ 1999 program proposals

5. Election of Vice Chair/Chair-Elect

Updated information on the annual meeting agenda will be posted on the Section web site. Be sure to drop by and check the web site before you head off to Orlando at the end of August. The address is

<http://www.library.yale.edu/~dsmith/saa/saadescr.htm>.

Finding Aids Fair

The Section is organizing a small Finding Aids Fair for this year's SAA Annual Meeting. Due to planning and

resource constraints, the Fair will feature only paper finding aids and finding aid tools. We hope to be able to display past and present Coker Award winners, and to provide information about international descriptive standards. The Fair will be held in the International Archives and Information Technology Expo on Friday, September 4, 1998, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

If you have a finding aid, or finding aid tool (e.g., thesaurus, description manual) that you would like to share, please let me know by e-mail at heywood@unhcr.ch; If you will be attending the annual meeting, bring a copy of the finding aid to the display booth at 10:00 am on Friday. Finding aids can also be submitted via U.S. mail to: Ann Hodges, UTA Libraries, Special Collections Division, P.O. Box 19497, Arlington, Texas 76019. Include your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, and institution name.

Don't Miss These Sessions!!

Last fall, the Description Section sponsored four program proposals for this year's SAA Annual Meeting, and three of them were accepted by the Program Committee. Many thanks to the people who came up with the ideas, put the proposals together, found people to speak, or agreed to speak. Don't miss the following sessions (you will find more information about the sessions in the Meeting Program):

Thursday, September 3, 1998
Session #3 - 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm
"Toward Integrated Archival Description: The Convergence of EAD, USMARC, and APPM"

Friday, September 4, 1998
Session #13 - 11:00 am - 12:30 pm
"Fishing for Compliments or Collecting Criticism:
User Evaluation of Archival Description"

Friday, September 4, 1998
Session #23 - 1:45 pm - 3:15 pm
"Using Digital Technology to Integrate Archival Formats"

P.S. Do you want more sessions dealing with descriptive issues? Is there some issue that you want to know more about? Then put on your thinking cap and come to Thursday's Section meeting armed with ideas for session proposals for the 1999 SAA Annual Meeting.

Heather Heywood

The Description Section Needs You!

The Section is seeking nominations/volunteers for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect. This is your opportunity to become involved in the Section and SAA. The time commitment is not overwhelming, you can follow up some issues you're interested in, and you get to learn more about what goes on behind the scenes at SAA. No previous experience is required -- SAA staff are very friendly and willing to help with any questions you have!

The Chair serves for one year and is responsible for implementing the Section's program, organizing the annual Section meeting, and reporting to the Section membership, SAA membership, and SAA Council on pertinent activities. At present, the program for the 1998/1999 year includes finalizing the mission statement and bylaws for the Section. Apart from that task, the program is open for new ideas and initiatives. Usually, the Vice-Chair steps up to become the Chair, but this will not be possible for 1998/1999 due to unforeseen circumstances.

The Vice-Chair should be willing to organize the Finding Aids Fair for next year's SAA Annual Meeting, and generally assist the Chair in planning and implementing the Section's program. The Vice-Chair will become the Chair next year.

Elections for both Chair and Vice-Chair will be held at the Section's meeting during SAA's Annual Meeting in Orlando. While it would be great if you were at the meeting, you don't have to be there to be elected.

If you are interested, know someone who is interested, or just have questions, please contact the current Chair, Heather Heywood, by e-mail at heywood@unhcr.ch.

Comments from CAIE Kris Kiesling

By the time you receive this newsletter, EAD Version 1.0 will have been released. I reported in the last issue of Descriptive Notes that the EAD Working Group met at the end of October to discuss comments and suggestions for change that had been submitted last summer to the EAD listserv (EAD@loc.gov). After those changes were incorporated into the document type definition, the DTD had to be tested. The release of V1.0 was delayed a bit by developments in XML (Extensible Markup Language) specifications that needed to be incorporated as well. (XML is the emerging new standard for delivering documents on the Web. EAD is XML-compliant.) The new DTD is to be released in late June (EAD Technical Document 1), along with an online version of the Tag Library (Technical Document 2), which defines all the EAD elements and attributes and provides other useful information. In addition, SAA is publishing the Tag Library in hard copy, which will be available for purchase at the annual meeting.

For those of you who just can't get enough information about EAD, the next two issues of the American Archivist will be devoted to that topic. Edited by Jackie Dooley, the first issue contains six papers that explore "the context within which EAD was developed, the essentials of its structured approach to encoding finding aid data, and the role that EAD is meant to play in individual repositories and for the profession as a whole." The second issue contains six case studies on EAD implementation from repositories both large and small. Both issues are scheduled to be mailed in August.

At its June meeting Council approved the formation of an EAD Roundtable. The Roundtable is intended to be an open forum for discussion of all aspects of EAD -- from basic tagging to publishing finding aids on the Web. The inaugural meeting will be on Friday, September 4, from 3:45-5:45 p.m. (during the regular roundtable meeting slot). It will be partly an organizational meeting, but there should be plenty of time to discuss some EAD issues as well. Check the pocket program for the location.

Other Council actions affecting CAIE include the disbanding of both the Standards Board and CAIE, and the creation of a new Standards Committee that will have technical subcommittees, of which a new iteration of CAIE, possibly called the Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards, will be one. If you are arriving in Orlando a bit early but don't want to rush out to meet Mickey, please drop in on the CAIE meeting on Wednesday, September 2, 8:30-3:00. As we discuss our new charge, the subject of the Committee's relationship with the Description Section will surely be raised. Input is welcome!

News Notes

Grants & Projects

Interactive Access to John Holmes Papers

Tufts University is pleased to announce the receipt of a gift from Winslow Duke (Tufts 1953) to process and make available the papers of John Holmes. Holmes (1904-62) was a poet and professor of English at Tufts University for 28 years. A native of nearby Somerville, Massachusetts, he was a Tufts graduate (class of 1929), author of 11 books, and

regular contributor to such magazines as *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *Saturday Review*, and the *New Yorker*.

Holmes bequeathed his personal papers to Tufts. The papers and some 700 books from his personal library were transferred to Tufts in late 1962 and are now part of the University Archives. It is these papers that form the bulk of the collection. Additions to the collection have included Holmes' collection of books by Robert Frost, whom Holmes knew well, and correspondence between Holmes and Dorothy Gordon, May Sarton and others.

Winslow Duke's gift will support the work of a project archivist to arrange and describe the manuscript material in the collection, and to develop an interactive, multimedia web site that will create full-text, searchable access to the more than 500 manuscript poems. John Holmes felt strongly that his poetry "no matter what it looks like on the printed page ... will be found to have a deliberate and carefully-wrought structure in terms of sound." The relationship between the sound and the printed word inspired Holmes, in 1943, to record some of his own poetry to accompany the publication of his book, *Map of My Country*. Holmes hoped that "in the years to come, the double publication of book and recording will be familiar" to everyone.

Unfortunately, this prediction did not come true, but, in keeping with that spirit, one goal of the project is to present as many poems as possible in both full-text and audio file format. Only those few he recorded in 1943 will be read by Holmes himself, the rest will be recorded by former students of Holmes, and current Tufts students interested in the sound of poetry.

African American Photography Archive

A second NHPRC grant has been awarded to the Regional Archivist Program of the **Texas African American Photography Archive** to arrange, describe, catalog, and rehouse collections totaling over 16,000 prints and negatives. The grant will also provide funding for a project archivist to appraise, rehouse, and conduct preliminary arrangement and description for collections at the African American Museum of Dallas and at Wiley College and Jarvis Christian College, two historically black colleges in East Texas.

The TAAP Archive focuses on the growth and development of vernacular and community photography among African Americans in Texas. It provides a broad overview of African American photography in the urban and rural areas of Texas, spanning the period from the 1870s to the present and representing a variety of processes and makers. It consists of over 32,000 photographic negatives and prints and more than 20 oral histories collected from African American photographers. The TAAP Archive's web site is at www.docarts.com.

New Archives in New Orleans

The Hermann-Grima and Gallier historic house museums in New Orleans are undertaking a project to establish an archives. The project archivist will appraise, arrange, describe, and inventory the collections, and will also create a records management program and assume responsibility for identifying and accessioning records of permanent value from various institutional departments and committees.

Guide to Jewish Community in New Orleans

Greater New Orleans Archivists received a grant from the Southern Jewish Historical Society toward the printing of an archival guide to the Jewish community in New Orleans. The guide was begun in 1994 by Andrew Simons at the Amistad Research Center. Although Mr. Simons has since moved on to the British Library, his research has been expanded and edited. When the guide is completed in 1998, it will include information from 23 institutions as well as a brief history of the Jewish in New Orleans.

Evanston Historical Society Gets Grant

The **Evanston Historical Society** has received an NHPRC grant to arrange, describe, and make available for use 1,000 linear feet of archival collections documenting education, churches, civic and social organizations, businesses, and residents of the city of Evanston, Illinois. The collections comprise records, papers, photographs, slides, maps, atlases, city and telephone directories, local newspapers, clippings files, biographies of residents, histories of Evanston homes, and books and publications by Evanston authors or relating to Evanston.

The Society's Collections Manager and Project Archivist will work closely with the Illinois State Archives and the Cook County Local Records Commission to coordinate management of 250 feet of noncurrent public records (dating from the 1840s) of the City of Evanston and Ridgeville Township. The Society also holds 750 feet of personal papers and organizational records documenting the history of Evanston since the mid-nineteenth century. These include approximately 180 feet relating to individual Evanston houses, as well as records of women's clubs and other civic organizations and papers reflecting the political life of Evanston.

Lincoln Inaugurated at N.I.U.

On April 1, Drew VandeCreek began work on the new Abraham Lincoln Historical Digitization Project at **Northern Illinois University's Founders Library**. Supported by a generous grant from the Illinois State Library, the Lincoln Project is a consortium of public and private Illinois libraries, museums, historical societies and archives that will cooperate to produce digital copies of their collected Lincoln historical materials. Beginning in the summer of 1998, these materials will be displayed on a free-use web site at <http://lincoln.lib.niu.edu>.

The site will present Lincoln's life through primary materials, such as letters, legal briefs, newspaper clippings, and three-dimensional articles like clothing and furniture, that are held in the collections of its partner institutions. The project will present the materials in an interpretive context with brief historical summaries, timelines and analyses, but the main thrust of the site will be to allow visitors to explore their own historical questions and forge their own interpretations of events.

The site will incorporate new multimedia techniques to give students, scholars and Lincoln enthusiasts around the world a new perspective on the sources. The digital materials will comprise a large database available for users to search by subject or theme, thus pulling together divergent materials in new ways. This approach makes the site a prime resource for student research papers and scholarly investigations.

Members in the Lincoln Project include the University of Chicago, the Chicago Historical Society, the Illinois State Archives, the University of Illinois, Illinois State University, Southern Illinois University, the Knox College Lincoln Studies Center, the Lincoln Legal Papers Project and DePaul University. Northern Illinois University will act as the project's official host institution, and an advisory board of leading historians and scholars in the fields of humanities computing and digital education will meet biannually in DeKalb.

Historic Charleston Foundation Project

Historic Charleston Foundation has received funding for a seven-month project to arrange, describe, catalog, and rehouse its manuscript and photograph collections. Partial funding for the project, scheduled to begin in August 1998, is being provided by South Carolina's State Historical Records Advisory Board. The collections are primarily the organizational records of Historic Charleston Foundation from its birth in 1947 to the present, reflecting the history of the preservation movement in America. The materials also contain an abundance of information on the buildings of Charleston and the Carolina Lowcountry.

Bill Bradley Papers

The **Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library at Princeton University** began on June 1 a two-year project to survey, appraise, preserve, arrange and describe the papers of Senator Bill Bradley (D-NJ). The collection primarily documents the senator's 18-year tenure in Congress, but also reflects his career with the New York Knicks. Project

archivist Kristen Turner and her staff will produce a finding aid describing the 2,100 linear foot collection at the folder level.

New Directions Publishing Company

The **Houghton Library** at **Harvard University** is undertaking a two-year project to survey, appraise, arrange, and catalog the archive of New Directions Publishing Company (1936-), the premier American publisher of modern literature. The archive consists primarily of 170 cartons of correspondence between the firm's owner, James Laughlin IV, and the authors he published, including Ezra Pound, Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams, H.D., Elizabeth Bishop, and many others; some 150 cartons of proofs; financial records; photographs; and other materials. The project is funded in part by a bequest from the Laughlin estate, with the remaining funding coming from a variety of private donors. Under the terms of the bequest the collection must be cataloged within 2-1/2 years of its arrival at Harvard; for that reason, the collection will be closed until cataloging is completed.

Roger Williams Park Photographic Archives

The Rhode Island Committee for the Humanities has awarded a grant to the **Museum of Natural History, Roger Williams Park**, in Providence. The grant will support the inventory, arrangement, cataloging, and preservation rehousing of the museum's photographic collection, as well as the preparation of a procedures manual and the generation of a computerized finding aid to the collection. When completed, the finding aid and procedures manual will be available via the museum's web site at <http://www.osfn.org/museum/>. The museum's photographic archives include a century of mixed format photographic images whose main emphasis is the landscape and use of Roger Williams Park and its associated features. Also in the collection are images of cultural events sponsored by the City of Providence, and a wealth of antiquarian lantern slides once used in museum programs.

Berkeley Environmental Design Project

The **University of California at Berkeley** is undertaking a two-year project to assess, arrange, describe, and provide access to materials in its College of Environmental Design (CED) Documents Collection. The CED is an archives of more than 5,000,000 items and is the most extensive source of written and visual information on the development of Bay Area and Northern California architecture and landscape architecture. Its holdings, dating from 1890 to the present, encompass drawings, plans, specifications, photographs, tapes, personal and business records, furniture, and architectural fragments from more than 150 architects and firms. The project will result in the creation of EAD-conforming finding aids and online catalog records with full USMARC collection level records. Grant funding is being provided by the Getty Foundation.

Archives for Research on Women and Gender

The **University of Texas at San Antonio** has received a two-year NHPRC grant for the Center for the Study of Women and Gender and the Special Collections and Archives Department's cooperative project, the Archives for Research on Women and Gender. The project staff will arrange and describe manuscript materials documenting the history of women and gender in South Texas, specifically women's voluntary organizations. The project will result in the creation of online EAD finding aids, MARC records, and an archival collections subject guide. Information is available at www.lib.utsa.edu/Archives/index.htm.

Ozarks Labor Union Archives

Southwest Missouri State University received an 18-month grant which will fund the processing of 18 collections in the Ozarks Labor Union Archives (OLUA). Arrangement and description activities will include compilation of finding aids, creation of collection-level USMARC records, and mark-up of finding aids in SGML/HTML format for

distribution on the World Wide Web. OLUa contains over 1,500 linear feet of materials and is Missouri's leading repository of records documenting over 125 years of labor union history in the Ozarks. Its web site is at <http://www.smsu.edu/contrib/library/olua1.htm>.

Southwest Studies Special Collections Online

If you want to find something in one of the nearly 500 separate collections that reside in the **Center of Southwest Studies**, you may now find it through the **Fort Lewis College** Library's new Innopac System. The Center received a \$28,779 federal grant from the Library Services and Construction Act administered by the Colorado State Library to move descriptions of its thousands of holdings from its hand-written catalog card file and isolated collections management database to the computerized search system. "This is a vast improvement over the original system, especially for accessing the three-dimensional artifacts," said FLC Archivist Todd Ellison. Now, researchers around the world can locate all formats of material in the Center through the World Wide Web and the library's OPAC. The center's web address is www.fortlewis.edu/acad-aff/swcenter/. The searchable catalog may be found at opac.fortlewis.edu/search/.

New Guide to Great Depression Sources

The **Carl Albert Center** at the **University of Oklahoma** announces a new guide: *Archival Resources on the Great Depression at the Carl Albert Center Congressional Archives*. The 34-page guide describes the way the Center's archival collections document a variety of topics on the 1930s, including drought relief and soil conservation, banking, public works projects, Prohibition, and veterans' bonus legislation.

The Center's congressional papers contain a substantial amount of material on the legislation that created the New Deal work projects and social programs that affected much of the country and Oklahoma. They also provide insight into national and Oklahoma politics of the era. There are thousands of letters from constituents who, while asking for jobs, money, and relief, reveal the conditions that people lived through and the concerns they had about the national government and economy.

The guide is available free of charge. For a copy, please contact the Carl Albert Center, University of Oklahoma, 630 Parrington Oval, Rm 101, Norman, OK 73019, phone: (405) 325-5401, fax: (405) 325-6419, e-mail: kosmerick@ou.edu.

North Carolina Governor's Records

The **North Carolina State Archives** announces the arrangement and description of these records in the Governor's Records Sub-unit: Governor James G. Martin, Communications Office, Audio-Video Tapes, 1985-1993, 21 boxes; Governor James G. Martin, Office of the Governor, Papers of James C. Green, Special Assistant to the Governor, 1988-1991, 4 boxes; Governor James G. Martin, Office of the Governor, Office of General Counsel, Papers of James R. Trotter, 1985-1993, 90 boxes.

Tower Guide at Southwestern

The guide to Senator John G. Tower's papers is now available on **Southwestern University Library's** home page at www.southwestern.edu/library/tower/tower.htm. John Goodwin Tower, a Southwestern University alumnus, represented Texas in the United States Senate from 1961 through 1984. Before his retirement, he named Southwestern University as the official repository for his papers. The 800 linear feet of materials primarily reflect his Senate activities and include records and documents, legislative files, correspondence, speeches, campaign items, photographs, memorabilia, books, and audiovisual tapes and film. Materials from before the beginning of his Senate career concern his family, education, and teaching career. Later items document his writings and his post-Senate appointments, including his nomination as Secretary of Defense and his appointment as ambassador to the Strategic

Arms Limitation Talks in Geneva. The library also holds several smaller related accessions, including the papers of political consultant and writer John Knaggs and those of Senator Tower's legislative aide, J. French Hill.

HemisFair '68 Collection Processed

The University of Texas at San Antonio Libraries Special Collections and Archives Department recently finished processing the records of the San Antonio Fair, Inc., popularly known as the HemisFair '68 collection.

HemisFair '68 was the first world's fair ever held in the Southern part of the United States to be officially recognized by the Paris-based Bureau of International Expositions (B.I.E). The theme of the fair, "The Confluence of Civilizations in the Americas," celebrated the shared cultural heritage of the United States and countries in Latin America, and the convergence of migrants from all around the world in the Western Hemisphere.

The records documenting HemisFair '68 exceed 300 linear feet and reveal the details of the planning, funding and hosting of the fair. The bulk of the records are working papers from numerous San Antonio Fair, Inc. committees and many individuals involved in planning and organizing HemisFair '68. An exhibit celebrating the 30th anniversary of HemisFair '68 is at www.lib.utsa.edu/Special_Collections/hfair.htm.

ALA Midwinter MARBI Decisions

Rutherford W. Witthus
SAA Liaison to MARBI

Proposal No. 98-1

Redefinition of Field 210 (Abbreviated Key Title) in the USMARC Bibliographic Format
Passed as proposed.

Proposal No. 98-2

Definition of fields 541, 561, and 562 in the USMARC Holdings Format
Passed with no vote on the use of \$8 code h (to link to a particular holding or copy). While this proposal was passed, it was also mentioned that these holdings fields may be made obsolete in the bibliographic format sometime in the future. The reasoning was that by continuing to maintain these holdings fields in the bibliographic format, we are continuing ambiguity not increasing flexibility. There were some who thought that they should be made obsolete now because they can be imbedded in any bibliographic record. So, for the time being, archivists who use these in the bibliographic format should continue. We will monitor the situation and, should it come up again, will ask for written comments from practitioners when we need them.

N.B. Rebecca Guenther of the Library of Congress interpreted the discussion as follows: A few comments on this discussion of making these fields obsolete in the bibliographic format: I interpreted this as a generally theoretical discussion about the nature of the fields as copy specific, and thus only theoretically appropriate in the holdings format. Since holdings fields can be embedded in the bibliographic record, the results would be the same. The point was that if a system strips holdings fields from bibliographic records if so received and puts them in a holdings record, that it be clear which fields that are defined in both formats refer to holdings information and which to bibliographic. So if these fields were only defined in holdings, a system that does that would know they belong in a holdings record if applicable. Practically speaking I don't see that it would change the current practice of recording these fields in the bibliographic record when desired.

Proposal No. 98-3

Expanding the use of field 028 (Publisher Number)
Passed with minor changes.

Proposal No. 98-4

Elimination of tag conflicts in the USMARC Bibliographic, Community Information, and Holdings formats
Passed as proposed.

Proposal No. 98-5

Additional definition of field 080 (UDC)
Passed as proposed.

Proposal No. 98-6

Definition of value s (Electronic) in 008 character positions
Passed using Option 1. This proposal was presented by OCLC to deal with the problems they encountered trying to implement Proposal 97-3R, which was approved by MARBI and proposed making 007 mandatory for items whose physical carrier is a computer file. The archives community has been watching this proposal to use as a possible model to code "manuscriptness." What was approved this time (adding value s = electronic to 006/12 Form of Item and 008/29 Form of Item) does not exactly parallel our situation. CAIE (or Standards Board) will need to bring a proposal back to MARBI this summer which will address the content vs. carrier issue and, at the same time, take into account the concerns of those repositories which have numerous single manuscripts not cataloged using APM.

Discussion Paper No. 104

Definition of Field 007 (Physical Description Fixed Field) for tactile materials in the USMARC Bibliographic and Holdings formats
Proposal requested.

Discussion Paper No. 105

Reading program information
Proposal requested.

Discussion Paper No. 106

New Type of Date code
Further discussion of dates before proposal request.

Discussion Paper No. 107

Defining Field 856 in the USMARC Authorities Format
Proposal requested.

Description Section Web Site

The section's web site has been up and running since early December and is located at <http://www.library.yale.edu/~dsmith/saa/saadescr.htm>. The site contains information on the section leadership, membership, and charge, and carries current as well as past issues of Descriptive Notes (back to summer 1992), minutes from last year's Description Section meeting, and information and documentation on descriptive standards. The site is maintained by Diana Smith, a member of the Manuscript Unit at the Beinecke Library at Yale. She welcomes suggestions for enhancements to the site and may be e-mailed at diana.smith@yale.edu.

From the Editor

Dear Section Members: I would like to encourage you not to wait to be asked for permission to include news of your grants, projects, and other activities in the newsletter. Please send your press releases, bare facts, or whatever you have to me. It doesn't have to be polished; I'll take the information in any form. Submissions are welcome at any time. If you forget where or who I am just remember to check the Section's web site.

Many thanks to those who contributed to this issue. Please submit items for future issues to Hodges@library.uta.edu, or to:

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