

Descriptive Notes



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

Winter 2008

FROM THE CHAIR

Mark A. Matienzo

Happy New Year! Since the conference, there have been a few notable happenings both within the Description Section and in the arena of descriptive standards. The 2007 Description Expo was an astounding success, with ten institutions contributing finding aids, descriptive systems, and tools. All submissions can be found online at <http://matienzo.org/Saa2007DescriptionExpo>. I'd also like to thank Jane Rosario, the section's immediate past chair, for gathering and assembling comments from the section meeting in Chicago. Many of you appreciated having materials and related reports available in advance, and this is something we will definitely continue to do. There also were some concerns in regards to the voting process for the vice-chair/chair-elect seat as we did not have enough paper ballots for everyone in the meeting. The section's steering committee will look into other options, including the possibility of electronic voting.

Like last year, the section was able to endorse up to two proposals for the upcoming SAA conference. The section's steering committee elected to endorse two sessions: "Less Process-More Pixels: Alternate Approaches to Digitization and Metadata," proposed by Karen Spicher and the Manuscript Repositories Section, and "Evolving Finding Aids for Basic Processing," proposed by D. Claudia Thompson. All of the submissions for consideration were excellent, however, and I wish everyone the best of luck as the conference grows nearer.

There also has been considerable activity in the area of standards development. Michael Rush, the chair of the Technical Subcommittee for Descriptive Standards, has encouraged us to submit comments on several standards under development. These standards include the ICA International Standard for Institutions with Archival Holdings (ISIAH) and ISO FDIS 2709 (an electronic data format standard on which MARC is based). In addition, there are a number of new task forces and working groups working on standards development. The Records Management Roundtable has created a Functions Thesaurus Working Group, which will develop a controlled vocabulary for functions and activities of corporate bodies. The ARMA International Standards Development Committee has also formed two new task forces: one on metadata for records management, and the other for website records management. You need not be an ARMA member to join a standards task force, but you must complete an application to participate. The application, plus more information on the other ARMA standards development activities, can be found online at <http://www.arma.org/standards/development/>. Finally, the Working Group for the Future of Bibliographic Control has released its draft report. Description Section Vice Chair Jamie Roth will discuss it in more detail in his column.

As all chairs of the section have, I am serving as an ex-officio member of the C.F.W. Coker Award sub-committee. The Coker Award was created in 1984 to recognize those descriptive tools, systems, and projects that have, in some significant way, set national standards, represent a model for archival description, or otherwise have a substantial impact on descriptive practices. A full description of the award and the nomination form can be found on the SAA website at <http://www.archivists.org/governance/handbook/section12-coker.asp>. The deadline for nominations is February 28.

Finally, I'd also like to add a reminder that the section is beginning to plan for its 2008 meeting. Please contact me with any suggestions or ideas for the development of the meeting's agenda or program. Thanks again to the section's leadership - Jamie Roth, vice chair; Jane Rosario, immediate past chair; Michelle Light, newsletter editor; Diane Ducharme, web liaison; and steering committee members Chris Burns, Mary Lacy, C. Jerry Simmons, D. Claudia Thompson, and Michael Rush. We'll see you in San Francisco!



FROM THE VICE CHAIR**James Roth**

On November 13, 2007, the Library of Congress' Working Group of the Future of Bibliographic Control issued a draft of its "Report on the Future of Bibliographic Control," and asked for public comment on the report until December 15, 2007. The group intends to submit the final report to the Library of Congress by January 9, 2008. [A copy of the draft report can be downloaded from: <http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/news/draft-report.html>. The announcement is on pages 6-7 of this newsletter.]

The working group was charged with three goals:

- Present findings on how bibliographic control and other descriptive practices can effectively support management of and access to library materials in the evolving information and technology environment;
- Recommend ways in which the library community can collectively move toward achieving this vision; and
- Advise the Library of Congress on its role and priorities.

Section 2. Enhance Access to Rare and Unique Materials, is of interest to all members of the Description Section, and I encourage you all to read and discuss its recommendations and implications in the next few months.

While there seems to be no archivists in this working group, many of its recommendations are informed by the findings of ARL's Hidden Collections Task Force, specifically citing Barbara M. Jones (comp.), *Hidden Collections, Scholarly Barriers: Creating Access to Unprocessed Special Collections Materials in North America's Research Libraries*, A White Paper for the Association of Research Libraries Task Force on Special Collections (2003). [<http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/hiddencollswitepaperjun6.pdf>]

It seems, too, that this is also informed by current debates in the archival community. One statement, "[t]he need for trade-offs between broad access and detailed description is increasingly recognized by special collections librarians and archivists, and there is substantial debate in the profession about these issues," suggests the working group is aware of Mark Greene's and Dennis Meissner's article, "More Product, Less Process," and its implications for the archival community.

While much of what is stated in the report seems to follow current archival thought, I do hope that many of our long-time catalogers in the Description Section will take a lead in helping us all understand the impact this report will have on bibliographic control.

It is also time to begin planning for the Description Expo at SAA 2008. In keeping with the theme of Archival R/Evolutions, I encourage all Description Section members to submit projects that involve description for digital archives/collections. Are you creating new ways to describe digital holdings? Have you documented these processes? We are looking for descriptions or the documentation associated with digital projects that are breaking new ground (Revolution) or utilizing and modifying traditional descriptive practices (Evolution). If you have any ideas or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact me at james.roth@nara.gov.

**2007-2008 LEADERSHIP LIST**

Mark A. Matienzo, Chair
James Roth, Vice Chair/Chair Elect
Jane Rosario, Immediate Past Chair
Diane Ducharme, Web Liaison
Michelle Light, Newsletter Editor

STEERING COMMITTEE

Christopher Burns
Mary Lacy
C. Jerry Simmons
Claudia Thompson
Michael Rush, Ex-Officio



DESCRIPTION SECTION MEETING MINUTES

SAA Annual Meeting

August 31, 2007, 12:00-2:00 p.m.

Notes recorded by Michelle Light

I. Welcome and Section Reports

A. Newsletter Editor: Michelle Light

Two issues of *Descriptive Notes* were posted to the SAA website in the past year. Please continue to send news items and short articles to michelle.light@gmail.com.

B. Description Expo: Mark Matienzo

Ten institutions contributed 13 submissions to this year's Description Expo. This year's Expo did not have a formal theme, and unlike previous years, the Expo did not have a staffed booth in the exhibit area. Instead, the Expo was at a table in the registration/lobby area at the Fairmont Chicago. This year's submissions include finding aids, delivery systems, and other descriptive tools. They are available on the web at <http://matienzo.org/Saa2007DescriptionExpo/>.

C. Chair: Jane Rosario

There will be changes to the Description Section's by-laws in order to be compliant with the "Revised Policies and Procedures for SAA Sections and Roundtables" as passed by Council in May 2007: <http://www.archivists.org/governance/SectRTPolicies.pdf>. Next year, the section will elect two more members to the steering committee.

In order to ensure there is enough time for the program, Jane asked for full reports in advance and for representatives to give brief synopses at the section meeting. The full reports are available online from the Description Section's web page.

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

A. SAA Council Representative: Ben Primer

Council approved changes to the governance, support, and communication of SAA's sections and roundtables. The revised guidelines are available on SAA's website. The changes recognize how sections contribute to SAA's vitality. The revisions provide broader opportunities for leadership with term limits, and they guarantee sections the space and time to meet at the annual meetings, among other things. Sections will have a couple of years to come into compliance with the new changes.

A dues increase is under consideration at the business meeting. The proposal is for a 10% increase for all membership categories, except for the top category which will be increased by 20%. The increase is due to new demands for services and activities, particularly advocacy and the need for a presence in DC. Membership has grown 38% since 1999, and 20% of members are students, the lowest paying membership category. The last dues increase was in 1999. Dues pay for less than 25% of SAA's costs; comparable organizations rely on dues for 35% of their costs. SAA is currently too dependent on revenue from workshops and the annual meeting.

B. DACS Working Group: Bill Landis

His full report is available online at <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/descr/DACSWG.pdf>.

The DACS group was constituted this year and reports through the Standards Committee. The group reflects diverse interests and specialties. There will be a DACS webpage that will include information about the group's activities as well as a web-based comment form for submissions. Council put DACS on a 5-year revision cycle, which will happen in 2009. A timeline will be posted within the year. There will be a forum for public discussion at the San Francisco meeting. The group will also be doing outreach to communities specializing in special formats, such as to the rare manuscript community for describing single-item manuscripts, the recorded sound and moving image communities, and visual image community. If you are part of a community with special needs that should be considered in DACS, email Bill at bill.landis@yale.edu.

C. ALA Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA): Mary Lacy

Mary has been active with the constituency review of RDA. Her full report, with links to comments and drafts, is available online at <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/descr/CCDADS.doc>. An RDA element vocabulary is being developed. There has been criticism of the RDA principles being too vague, so there is an effort to make them more front and center. Chapters 6 & 7 have been released, but there is more work to do on Chapter 3. What work is there left to do for archivists? We should make sure our suggestions remain in the drafts, that family names are considered, that the rules for archival description refer to DACS and not be within RDA, and that the RDA website includes links to other standards we use. RDA is meant to be a tool for the generalist; for specialized formats, one should look elsewhere. Mary is rotating off the committee. Lisa Carter is the new liaison. RDA will come out in 2009.

D. ICA Section on Professional Standards and Best Practices: Claire Sibille

Her full report is available online at <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/descr/ICACBPS.rtf>.

A working group of the Committee of Best Practices and Standards of the International Council of Archives (ICA/CBPS) is developing a new International Standard for Describing Functions (ICA-ISDF). Functions and activities are used by records managers to analyse and classify records, rather than an administrative and organizational structure. A draft of the standard was circulated to the international archival community for comment in January-March 2007. More than 30 pages of comments were received. The definitive version of ICA-ISDF will be presented at the next ICA meeting in Malaysia in 2008.

Another project concerns the description of institutions with archival holdings (ISIAH – International Standard for Institutions with Archival Holdings). It will provide general information about archival institutions and the services they provide. It may be useful for generating authority lists or directories of archival institutions. Some archival descriptive systems already contain separate but linked descriptions of records, records creators, and custodians and exemplify ISIAH, for example, the UK's ARCHON or Spain's Censo Guia. The draft of standard is available on ICA website; comments should be received by October 31, 2007.

E. Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards (TSDS): Chris Prom

TSDS develops, maintains, reviews, and promulgates descriptive standards. This year, TSDS reviewed ISDF. The comments are available on the TSDS website. TSDS also put together an EAC working group. There are 12 members with a significant international component. EAC currently is in the beta version; the group will develop EAC into a formal standard.

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

The EAC working group has not met yet, but they hope to get funding for a meeting. They submitted a grant in January 2007 for funding, and it is still pending. The group will post progress reports on the web. So far, they have established an email list and are trying to work virtually. They will try to meet informally at SAA. Her report is available at <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/descr/EACsection.doc>.

G. OCLC/Research Libraries Group: Jennifer Schaffner

ArchiveGrid has been successfully migrated to OCLC. The RLIN 21 client was retired on August 31. RLIN used to keep history of NACO/SACO changes; OCLC has now decided to track this history. One difference between RLIN and OCLC was that RLIN kept institutional bibliographic records, while OCLC kept master records. OCLC has decided to adopt institutional records, and 100 million institutional records are being loaded into WorldCat. Records for archival holdings are institutional records by default. A report on the RLG / OCLC transition is available at <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/descr/RLGOCLCSAAtrans.doc>.

The work agenda of RLG is as follows: 1) They are studying research behaviors for requirements at a network level. 2) They are researching relationships among libraries, archives, and museums. 3) They are investigating the curation of collective collections, for example, partnership agreements in mass digitization. The forum on digitization matters was part of this. 4) They are looking into metadata practices, particularly tools for sharing metadata. A report on the work agenda is available at <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/descr/RLGOCLCSAAwork.doc>.

H. OCLC: Susan Westberg

OCLC is working on a registry.

Connexion now has support for non-Latin scripts. You can now use the RLIN 21 keyboards for Cyrillic, Arabic, and other languages. MARC 21 macros were converted. MARC fields 541 and 583 now have guided entries.

OCLC is offering new terminology services, for example, searching multiple thesauri.

OCLC is partnering with DLF to register digital masters, so you can see if others have digitized an item according to best practices. Anyone can view this; it is available on the DLF website.

I. RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee Manuscripts Working Group: Diane Ducharme

RBMS formed a new committee in June to formulate standards for description of single-item manuscripts. Margaret Nicols in the chair; Diane Ducharme is SAA's liaison. The chair has formed a reading list. A timeline should be available by ALA Midwinter.

J. 2008 Program Committee: Matt Darby

The theme is Archival R/Evolution & Identities. It will look at who we are, where we are, and where are we going. It will focus on SAA's three action items: technology, diversity, and public awareness. The deadline for proposals was October 12. See the web for selection criteria and the submission form.

Jane Rosario encouraged people to use the Description Section's listserv to talk about potential sessions.

K. EAD Working Group & ALA Committee on Machine-Readable Bibliographic Information Committee (MARBI): Kris Keisling

The EAD scheme went out in May. The third European conference on EAD, EAC, and METS occurred in Berlin; seven members of the EAD working group gave papers. The conference papers are available online. The working group is also considering a conference in the U.S. for EAD's 10th anniversary.

MARBI is quiet. There is an ongoing project at the University of North Texas on how MARC fields are used in databases. Not even 5% use the 520 field for describing archival materials. There was also a project to bring the German flavor of MARC into MARC 21.

III. New Business

A. Election

James Roth and Erin Lawrimore were candidates for chair. James Roth won.

B. Archivists' Toolkit: Sibyl Roud

Roud summarized the functionality and advantages of using the Archivist's Toolkit (AT); she also provided a brief history of the project. For more information, see <http://www.archiviststoolkit.org/>. In phase 2, beginning in February 2007, AT staff will work on refining the AT's performance and getting rid of bugs, develop batch import functionality, work towards sustainability, and offer support for MS SQL and Oracle. Version 1.1. will be out soon, and it features an enhanced acquisition module.

C. Archon: Chris Prom

Prom explained that Archon is a distant cousin of the AT and financed by the University of Illinois for internal purposes. It differs from the AT in that it runs on a web browser. They started a new version about 2 months ago, and it became available last week. It added a research cart feature so researchers can store finding aids, provides multi-lingual support, and is moving towards more modular code. Over the next year, they are building an accessions module and will make it more compatible with ISAAR and EAC. Ten institutions are using it in a production mode. For more information, see <http://archon.org/>.

C. Canadian Committee on Archival Description: Gerald Stone

There is a new chair of the committee, Sherry Watson. They have met twice since last year. They completed a new version of RAD, adding statement of principles and a chapter for discrete items, and allowing series as the highest level of description. The Library & Archives of Canada did a compact version of RAD that will be available on the web soon.

D. Comments from the Floor

Doris Malkmus urged the Description Section to get involved with Content DM as it is developing a finding aid platform.

IV. Program

“Context-Schmontext: Contextual Information Innovations in Archival Description”

Peter Hymas, State Library of North Carolina; Dennis Meissner, Minnesota Historical Society; Daniel Pitti, University of Virginia; Katherine M. Wisser, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Chair)



NEWS & NOTES

Working Group on Bibliographic Control Releases Draft Report

The Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control has released its draft report on the future of bibliographic description in light of advances in search engine technology, the popularity of the Internet and the influx of electronic information resources.

In November 2006, Deanna Marcum, Associate Librarian for Library Services at the Library of Congress, convened a group made up of representatives of several organizations—American Association of Law Libraries, American Library Association (ALA), Association of Research Libraries (ARL), Coalition for Networked Information, Medical Library

Association, National Federation of Abstracting & Indexing Services, Program for Cooperative Cataloging and Special Libraries Association—and vendors (Google, OCLC and Microsoft)— to examine the role of bibliographic control and other descriptive practices in the evolving information and technology environment, and to make recommendations to the Library and to the larger library community.

The group's recommendations, available at its web site at www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future, emphasized the role of the Library of Congress not as a sole supplier, but rather as an important leader in the cataloging world. "We recognize that you do not have the resources to do everything," said Olivia Madison, representing ARL. "These recommendations are not for the Library of Congress alone but are intended for the entire library and library vendor communities."

- Increase the efficiency of bibliographic production for all libraries through cooperation and sharing of bibliographic records and through use of data produced in the overall supply chain.
- Transfer effort into high-value activity. In particular, provide greater value for knowledge creation by leveraging access for unique materials held by libraries that are currently hidden and underused.
- Position technology by recognizing that the World Wide Web is libraries' technology platform as well as the appropriate platform for standards. Recognize that users are not only people but also applications that interact with library data.
- Position the library community for the future by adding evaluative, qualitative and quantitative analyses of resources. Work to realize the potential of the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) framework.
- Strengthen the library and information science profession through education and through development of metrics that will inform decision-making now and in the future.

"I am very pleased with the approach taken by the working group," Marcum said. "Instead of focusing solely on the Library of Congress, the members of the group looked at the bibliographic ecosystem and thought deeply about the contributions that can and should be made by all of its parts. We are already doing in an experimental way many of the things suggested by the Working Group in its presentation. Once the final report is received, our challenge will be to analyze the recommendations, decide on which ones should be implemented and move beyond pilot projects and tests."

The report is available for public comment through Dec. 15. The final report will be released by Jan. 9, 2008, in time for the midwinter meeting of the American Library Association.

French Universities Released Manuscripts and Archives Union Catalogue: Calames

Available at <http://www.calames.abes.fr>, Calames (*Catalogue en ligne des archives et des manuscrits de l'enseignement supérieur*) gives access to the description of the collections of more than 40 libraries across France: university libraries, research libraries, and learned societies. Calames has been designed by a working group whose members are EAD experts from libraries, and librarians and engineers from ABES (Agence bibliographique de l'enseignement supérieur). It has been entirely developed by ABES, using generic XML tools and Web standards (AJAX, XQuery + SQL, XSLT, CSS).

Some features: simple and advanced search; scan of indexes (with auto-completion : "Find-as-you-type"); results filtering through facets; inheritance of control access, dates, and languages; flexible views of data (the user freely chooses which <c> to display and print); tree display and browsing; tag clouds (subjects and persons); precise URL (one per <c>); and display of thumbnails and links to digital materials.

Calames has two data sources:

- *Le Catalogue Général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France* (CGM-BPF), a series of printed catalogues published from nineteenth century until late twentieth century. Le CGM-BPF is being digitalized.
- *Palme*, "répertoire national des manuscrits littéraires français du XXe siècle," hosted in MARC at BnF until 2007. Palme has been converted in EAD by BnF.

Calames contains subsets of both corpus. They will be searchable as a whole through the national gateway CCFr: <http://ccfr.bnf.fr> Beyond these legacy data, libraries will use Calames to catalog the rest of their collections through a Web interface developed by ABES. This online cataloguing tool extends XMAX (the Internet Explorer plug-in version of XMetal) with specific functionalities : partial editing of massive EAD files; linking to authority records hosted in Sudoc (the French universities' bibliographic union catalogue); linking and inclusion of EAD files; exports (native XML/EAD, HTML, PDF, UNIMARC in MarcXML, Dublin Core, RDF); data quality control (using Schematron); one-click indexing and publishing of finding aids.

Four Major Grants Awarded to the Bancroft Library

Jane Rosario, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

Four funding agencies, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, recently awarded grants to the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, totaling over 1.5 million dollars. "It's certainly a recognition of the quality of our collections," said Associate Director David de Lorenzo, "to have been awarded funding from these extremely competitive grant organizations."

"Saving the history of humanity is a very expensive and labor-intensive activity. Acquisitions of archival collections most often come as gifts from individuals or organizations that simply don't have the funds needed to assist with the cataloging and preservation work," said de Lorenzo. To make these collections accessible to the research community, fund-raising efforts fall mainly on Bancroft Library administration and staff, and the Library Development Office. "It's always a team effort to develop these increasingly complicated and competitive proposals. We are fortunate at Berkeley to have a high caliber of curators and archivists with both subject-matter expertise and archival management skills."

The four grants will fund projects to improve access to and preservation of major segments of Bancroft's wide-ranging holdings, which include materials from the entire sweep of Western civilization: millions of historic and literary manuscripts, rare and unique books, photographs, diaries, and letters, and thousands of original paintings, drawings, prints, maps, and rare artifacts.

1. The National Historical Publications and Records Commission granted \$64,000 to process the Spanish Borderlands collection. Part of Bancroft's extensive Western Americana holdings, this collection tells a story of encounter, exploration, and settlement in the West from the mid-1500s through 1820. Creating finding aids for the World Wide Web will make the collection available to a wider audience. This one-year project begins October 2007.
2. The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) granted \$261,356 to begin processing the *San Francisco Examiner* Photograph Archives, donated in 2006. With 3.6 million negatives and 1 million photo prints, these archives doubled the Library's existing print holdings and tripled its negative holdings. The two-year NEH project focuses on general preservation assessments, prioritizing archival re-housing needs, and preparing immediate storage of nitrate-based negatives for proper storage. In addition, 2,000 negatives will be digitized as a pilot to assess the most cost-effective means to convert such large holdings of this media.
3. The NEH also provided a three-year grant of \$450,000 to improve housing, storage, and environmental conditions for the Bancroft Pictorial Collection. This grant funds facilities and equipment customized to meet the preservation needs of the fragile holdings in this collection, including its Honeyman collection of rare prints and paintings and its extensive holdings of Latin Americana and World War II posters.
4. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation each granted \$397,293 to fund a survey of the Bancroft Library's entire manuscripts collection, including over 25,000 cartons that are currently listed as unavailable to researchers. Survey staff will create a detailed overview of Bancroft's manuscripts collection, identify priority areas requiring funding or further development, and create an integrated collections management system that will help identify work flows to provide increased access to collections with more efficiency.

Princeton Economics Processing Project Completed

Daniel Santamaria, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library

Princeton University's Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library has completed a two-year project to process all of its economics-related public policy collections to modern standards. Twenty-eight collections, totaling over 1,100 linear feet, were processed through the generous support of the John Foster and Janet Avery Dulles Fund and a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). Electronic finding aids for each collection are available on its website for researchers: <http://diglib.princeton.edu/ead/index.html>.

These collections provide a rich resource about American economic thought and policies in the 20th century and the impact of American economic policy and the ideas of some of the leading economic thinkers on the emerging world economy, especially in developing nations. The collections as a whole document economic activity that spans the globe, including every settled continent. The main subjects documented by the papers are public and international finance, economic development, and economic policy, as well as monetary policy, policies during World Wars I and II, business history, and demography. These records provide insight into the economic debates that thrived during the 20th century, whether they be the establishment or disavowal of the gold standard, international monetary policy and free trade, the various approaches to what was called Third World development (including population control), or means to alleviate depression and/or inflation. In a time when free market ideas are ascendant, these collections bear testament that the path was neither linear nor smooth.

The collections document both the theory and practical application of economics and include the papers of scholars, United States government officials, advisors to governments throughout the world, bankers, lawyers, businessmen, a policy advocacy group, and organizations devoted to economic development. Among the important collections are the papers of Edwin W. Kemmerer, advisor to many countries on monetary policy during the 1920s; Jacob Viner, one of the most prominent economic scholars of the 20th century; Nobel Laureate W. Arthur Lewis; and Albert O. Hirschman, a leading scholar in the field of economic development. Records of prominent organizations were also processed as part of the project including the records of Development and Resources Corporation, a for-profit corporation involved in economic development around the world, including a substantial project in Iran; Women's World Banking, a non-profit international financial institution that facilitates the participation of women entrepreneurs in the modern economy; and the Economists' National Committee on Monetary Policy, an advocacy group for monetary policy, especially for the gold standard, in the United States.

The project began in October 2005 with the hiring of project archivist Adriane Hanson to oversee the work on the 28 collections. She was joined in January 2006 by special collections assistant Christopher Shannon and a small group of student assistants. In two years, the team arranged and rehoused all 28 collections, ranging in size from 1 box to 450 boxes. Hanson wrote finding aids and catalog records for each of the collections, which are now available online to aid researchers in discovering and utilizing these rich resources.

Radcliffe Institute Makes Multi-Million Dollar Investment to Process Important HoldingsJenny Corke, *Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute*

According to a review published in *The American Archivist* (Fall/Winter 2005), 60% of libraries across the United States are unable to share at least a third of their collections with researchers because they have not been processed for use; 34% acknowledge that more than half of their holdings are unprocessed. Believing that the documents that lead to historical understanding should be readily available to scholars, the Radcliffe Institute's Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America has announced that it will accelerate processing for nearly 5,000 linear feet of its holdings.

A multimillion dollar project, this commitment will enhance access to the library's preeminent repository of richly diverse research materials focusing on the lives and contributions of American women, gender issues, and culinary history. The project will begin on July 1, 2007, and is expected to take five years, a fraction of the time that would have been required without this support.

"It is exciting to contemplate how many wonderful collections will soon be made available to scholars and students because of this decision. This project marks a singular commitment by the Institute and the Schlesinger Library to facilitating access to the history of American women," said Nancy F. Cott, the Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation Director of the Schlesinger Library and Jonathan Trumbull Professor of American History in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

What will researchers gain access to as the project moves forward? Among the unique and revealing items are collections related to Adrienne Rich, American poet; Julia Child, culinary icon; Anna Chennault, Asian American businesswoman, author and diplomat; Naomi Weisstein, pioneer in cognitive neuroscience and a strong voice for second-wave feminism; and the Massachusetts Women's Defense Corps (including photographs by Ansel Adams). These and many other collections will be available to students and researchers far more swiftly than they might have been without this commitment by the Radcliffe Institute.

Marilyn Dunn, executive director of the Schlesinger Library, said, "We are essentially putting our house in order as we also move forward, taking on new initiatives to make more of our holdings available on-line and acquiring more 'born digital' collections. Recent gifts from generous donors concerned with collection availability served as a catalyst and helped us to see what was possible. This new infusion of support will allow many additional collections to enjoy that same kind of attention."

"This support of the library is one of several strategic investments that the Institute has made to advance its mission since 1999," said Louise Richardson, executive dean of the Radcliffe Institute. "Our ambitious space plan, which included renovating the Schlesinger Library in 2005, and later the Radcliffe Gym and Byerly Hall, is another example."

The Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America collects manuscripts, books and other materials essential for understanding women's lives and activities in the United States. Among the library's holdings are the papers of important women in history, including suffragist leader Susan B. Anthony and aviator Amelia Earhart; a collection of more than 2,500 unique manuscripts of individuals, families and organizations; and a culinary collection spanning five centuries and several global cuisines.

The Beinecke Blogs: Article Now Available Online

Kathleen Burns, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University

In the summer 2007 issue of *Descriptive Notes*, the Yale Collection of American Literature at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, announced the launch of two blogs designed to promote the collections: African American Studies at Beinecke Library (<http://beineckejwj.wordpress.com>) and Poetry at Beinecke Library (<http://beineckepoetry.wordpress.com>). Since the announcement, blog creators Nancy Kuhl, associate curator of American literature, and Kathleen Burns, archivist, have written an article, "Blogging at the Beinecke: Promoting Special Collections in the 21st Century" (http://pantheon.yale.edu/~katb/Beinecke_blogging_2007.pdf), about the Beinecke's blogging experiment. The article explores the evolving mission and vision behind the blogs, details their development and implementation, and profiles the advantages of describing archival collections in a flexible online environment amidst related event and fellowship announcements. Aimed at staff working in special collections, the article was prepared to assist other institutions who are considering launching a collection-specific or institutional blog, and is a snapshot of the Beinecke's experience. The article is intended to urge further professional consideration of how blogs leverage, complement, and impact existing description and outreach practices. A link to the article is also available from the "About" pages of both Beinecke blogs.

National Archives and the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU) Announce Digitizing Partnership

Archivist of the United States Allen Weinstein and Wayne Metcalfe, vice president of the Genealogical Society of Utah, announced a five-year partnership agreement to digitize case files of approved pension applications of widows of Civil War Union soldiers from the National Archives. GSU has many years of experience microfilming historical records at the National Archives and throughout the world and in recent years has moved to providing digital capture and publishing services. Digitization makes possible unprecedented access to the unique historic documents in the custody of the National Archives.

This partnership will begin with a pilot project to digitize, index, and make available the first 3,150 of the pension files. Upon successful completion of the pilot, GSU, doing business as FamilySearch, in conjunction with Footnote.com, intends to digitize and index all 1,280,000 Civil War and later widows' files in the series. These records, of great interest to genealogists and others, are currently available only at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC. The widows' pension application files, a rich source of information about ordinary American citizens of the time, include supporting documents such as affidavits, depositions of witnesses, marriage certificates, birth records, death certificates, and pages from family bibles.

"For a number of years we have had a very productive relationship with FamilySearch," said Professor Allen Weinstein. "This agreement expands our relationship to enable online access to some of the most popular and voluminous records in our holdings. It is an exciting step forward for our institutions and for the American people," he added.

"There is an unbelievable treasure trove of genealogical information housed in the records of the National Archives; the vast majority of which genealogy enthusiasts have never seen," said Wayne Metcalfe. "The growing digital collection and indices that will stem from this relationship will be a priceless resource for countless family historians and researchers."

FamilySearch will make the digitized materials available for free through www.FamilySearch.org and in 4,500 family history centers worldwide, or on a subscription-based web site operated by a third party, subject to National Archives approval. They will also be available at no charge in National Archives' research rooms in Washington, DC, and regional facilities across the country. In addition, FamilySearch will donate to the National Archives a copy of all the digital images and the associated indexes and other metadata that they create.

This agreement is one of a series of agreements that the National Archives has reached or will reach with partners to digitize portions of its holdings.

California Loyalty Oath Digital Collection Launched at the Bancroft Library

A new digital collection documenting the Loyalty Oath Controversy at the University of California has been released by the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. The California Loyalty Oath Digital Collection website (<http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/collections/loyaltyoath>) brings together a selection of 3,500 pages of fully-searchable electronic text and 30 images drawn from the holdings of the institutional archives of three University of California campuses – Berkeley, Los Angeles, and San Diego – and the Office of the Secretary of the Regents. The site also includes 15 audio clips taken from interviews with some of the controversy's participants and observers.

The Loyalty Oath Controversy erupted in 1949 when hundreds of University employees refused to sign a special anti-communist oath mandated by the Regents. The protest spread to every campus, attracted international attention, and was supported by faculty at universities across the country. Many faculty and staff, as well as students and alumni, viewed the oath as an attack on academic freedom. The Regents, many of whom believed that the threat of rampant international Communism required the oath, refused to back down. Eventually, dozens of tenured faculty and staff were fired and the reputation of the University was severely damaged. The oath was negated, and the terminated employees reinstated, by order of the California Supreme Court in 1952.

The documents include correspondence, administrative directives, minutes, newsletters, and committee reports representing the debates, positions, and activities of the Regents, administration, faculty and staff, students and alumni, as well as many individuals and groups beyond the University. Some materials, such as “closed session” minutes of Regents’ meetings, have not been publicly available until now. Supplemental materials on the website include a timeline, bibliography, and links to additional resources for study and research. The website was funded in part by a gift from UC President Emeritus David P. Gardner.

The California Loyalty Oath Digital Collection website takes advantage of technology tools developed by the California Digital Library (CDL). The CDL's Interface Customization Tools allow focused access to digitized documents through the website while at the same time allowing those documents to exist as part of the larger, collective collection available through the CDL's Calisphere website (<http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/>), the University of California's free public gateway to a world of digitized primary sources from institutions throughout California. The result is broader access without more effort or work. The California Loyalty Oath Digital Collection can be searched and browsed as part of a topical, curated website or alongside other topics in Calisphere, bringing these great historical resources to the broadest possible audience.

Tennessee Governor Don Sundquist Papers Now Available

Cathi Carmack, Tennessee State Library and Archives

The Archival Technical Services Section of the Tennessee State Library and Archives recently completed a 3-year processing effort to make available for research the Gov. Don Sundquist Papers, 1995-2003. The 579-page finding aid describes the records of Sundquist's two 4-year terms in office as Tennessee's governor. Topical highlights include Sundquist's failed proposal for a state income tax, the TennCare health insurance system, and numerous capital punishment cases. Senior Archivist Greg Poole led the project, assisted by James Castro and A/V specialist Greg Yates. A PDF version of the complete finding aid will soon be available, along with those for all Tennessee governors, at <http://www.tennessee.gov/tsla/history/govpapers/gplist.htm>.

Syracuse University's EAD Project

Michele Combs, Syracuse University Library

Thanks to a Central New York Library Resources Council grant, Syracuse University's Special Collections Research Center (SCRC) now has search functionality for its EAD finding aids (see <http://library.syr.edu/information/spcollections/findingaids/index.html>). The grant also funded the conversion of 85 additional finding aids to EAD. As a result, SCRC now has 50% of its finding aids converted to EAD and searchable online. The search uses a combination of SWISH-E, a free open source system for indexing collections of files (in this case XML files), and perl to execute searches. It offers full-text as well as targeted searching (search by date, collection title, collection creator, type of material, etc). Both full-text and targeted queries search across the entire set of EAD finding aids. The targeted search makes use of various EAD elements (unitdate, titleproper, genreform, etc) to allow users to narrow their search focus, and boolean operators permit the combination of up to three search terms. SCRC anticipates the search capability will be useful not only to students and researchers who visit the SCRC website but also to in-house public service staff in responding to research queries. For more information, contact Michele Combs, Librarian for Manuscripts and Archives Processing, Syracuse University Library Special Collections Research Center, mrrothen@sy.edu.

Project DOCUMERICA Photojournalist Names Cataloged at NARA

C. Jerry Simmons, National Archives and Records Administration

During August 2007, the NARA Authority Cataloging Team launched a project to re-catalog 63 personal names for photojournalists that reference approximately 15,000 images from the Project DOCUMERICA collection at College Park, Maryland. A special project of the then fledgling Environmental Protection Agency, Project DOCUMERICA records the state of America's environmental and cultural conditions in the early to mid-1970s. The collection contains images ranging from the controversial to the poignant, with a clear emphasis on the environmental concerns of the day; among them air pollution, coal mining and health issues of coal miners, racial diversity, urbanization and housing, recycling, land development, preservation of wetlands, and Native American issues.

Contained within non-standard data from NARA's NAIL system, the photojournalist name headings were identified and processed for AACR2 compliance and re-linked as name references to ARC (Archival Research Catalog) records describing the Project DOCUMERICA photographs. At the close of the project, 63 non-standard name headings for photojournalists had been replaced with AACR2 and Library of Congress-compliant name headings. This action replaced and/or corrected headings in 12,368 ARC catalog records for Project DOCUMERICA photographs. Additionally, a biography note was written for each photographer, and where appropriate, new name headings were contributed to the Library of Congress Name Authority File via NACO (Name Authority Cooperative). As a follow-up to the name cataloging work, the ARC Authority Team worked with the ARC Outreach Team to develop a new gallery on the ARC web page for "Environmental Studies." This gallery provides more streamlined access to the DOCUMERICA images with special sections for browsing by topic, geographic location, and photojournalist name.

More information about Project DOCUMERICA can be found at:

<http://www.archives.gov/research/arc/topics/environment/>

American Medical Association Archives Adopts Re:discovery

Andrea Bainbridge, American Medical Association Archives

At the American Medical Association Archives we have decided to rely exclusively on our Re:discovery collections software to create finding aids. The motivations for the switch from Microsoft Word documents included consistency across collections as well as improved access for our users and ourselves. Although we still have much work to do, the project has already yielded benefits.

Carrying out the switch raised fundamental questions about how we *should* describe our records. Archivists here had used various arrangement and description schemes over the years, leaving behind an assortment of collection guides with varying depths of description. A thorough reference search could involve collection-level finding aids, accession-based finding aids, a microfilm roll index, and a 600-page PDF document detailing thousands of records acquired prior to 1994 (and not described anywhere else).

In moving to Re:discovery we faced many questions, including whether to integrate those item-level PDF records into existing finding aids. And, would we -- should we? -- still interfile new accessions with old where this was common practice? Would the database allow us to do this without disrupting the established numbering system? Microsoft Word documents had allowed us the flexibility to insert folders and boxes at will, but had also allowed inconsistencies across collection descriptions to flourish. Which were the essential pieces of information for each level of description?

The result? We gave those pre-1994 records their own Re:discovery directory, preserving their arrangement and rich depth of detail (albeit one we would never aspire to today). For the rest we wrote processing and description guidelines to standardize the work of transferring descriptions from Word documents into Re:discovery. Going forward we will have coherent, consistent printed finding aids, as well as the convenience of Re:discovery's search capabilities. Best of all, one Re:discovery search has replaced the need to consult such a wide variety of collection guides.

Digitization Initiative Underway at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library

Erica C. Boudreau, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library

The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library's Archives Division is engaged in a digitization initiative. Three metadata catalogers (two textual, one audiovisual) are working closely with a digital asset management system (DAMS) working group to identify, describe, digitize, preserve and make the holdings of the Kennedy Library broadly accessible. The digitization initiative is primarily concerned with the development and use of standards and guidelines to facilitate digitization.

We have created a thorough manual covering all aspects of the process, from physical preparation of materials to our local cataloging standards. We adhere to Dublin Core (DC) to standardize our descriptions, using the 15 main elements, some modified, plus additional "local" elements. The Dublin Core metadata elements are stored in an XML document. We also create an HTML document to provide a human-readable version of the encoded XML document. Both documents are attached digitally to each scanned object they describe.

For the majority of our textual collections, we describe our material at the folder level. Choosing this level of description provides a practical compromise between broad, collection-level description and the time-consuming practice of item-level description; Library staff is able to process materials digitally more quickly while still providing rich metadata at a granular level. Folder-level access in the digital world also replicates the JFK Library research room experience, where researchers access materials at the box and folder level. The essential experience of looking through a folder of archival materials is maintained, as is the context of the materials.

To expand on our folder-level descriptions of textual materials, all audiovisual components in our collections are described at the item level to ensure that we provide access to them in the digital world. We also create item-level descriptions for textual items that have audiovisual components (*i.e.*, a letter accompanied by a photograph) to provide further contextual information that may not otherwise be captured. In adding these rich descriptions to audiovisual materials, we are adding value to the digital files. Currently, we have created 138 descriptions for audiovisual materials, including 86 descriptions for photographs and 52 for sound recordings.

The first collection chosen for digitization is the President's Office Files, which were the every day working files of President Kennedy as they were maintained by his secretary. This collection consists of approximately 94,000 textual records, plus photographs and sound recordings. The physical preparation, scanning, quality control, and description of this collection is well underway, with our digital objects being stored in a digital asset management system, or "dark archive." The library plans to make this material available on the web in the near future. Since May 2007, a total of 338 descriptions have been written for both textual documents and audiovisual items. Approximately 35,000 pages and 72 photographs from the President's Office Files have been scanned.

The first of its kind among presidential libraries, the John F. Kennedy Library's digitization initiative was made possible by donations of hardware, software and technical services provided by the EMC Corporation.