
Descriptive Notes

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

Winter 2009

FROM THE CHAIR

James Roth

Happy New Year! For those members who were unable to attend, San Francisco was a very productive and enlightening meeting for the Description Section. Meeting minutes capture the essence of the gathering, and I hope when you will read the minutes you find them enlightening.

The 2008 Description Expo was successful, with six institutions contributing finding aids, descriptive systems, and tools. In the past few years, we have been modifying how we present the Description Expo; we have begun to rely more heavily on electronic distribution of the Expo rather than a physically staffed booth at the Conference. This year marked the first time that the Description Expo was completely electronic with no staffed booth at the Conference. All submissions can be found online at <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/descr/desexpo08.asp>. Vice-chair Erin Lawrimore will be preparing Description Expo 2009, and we will meet in Austin in the middle of August. If you have any items, topics or issues you would particularly like to see the Expo focus on, please let Erin know.

I also encourage you to read and review the revised Description Section bylaws, which passed without opposition. Section leadership worked hard to update the bylaws to comply with requirements set by SAA council, with special thanks to Jane Rosario who shouldered much of the work.

The section was able to endorse two proposals for the upcoming SAA conference. The section's steering committee elected to endorse "More Than Just Passing Acquaintances: DACS and Companion Standards," proposed by Bill Landis, and "More Product, Less Process (MPLP) Revisited: Choosing the Right Processing Strategy for Your Repository and Collections," proposed by Jeffrey Suchanek. All of the submissions for consideration were excellent, however, and I wish everyone the best of luck as the conference grows nearer.

The Description Section is working with the Reference, Access, and Outreach section on a possible collaborative meeting next year that will focus on how and when to apply (and not to apply) MPLP principles and techniques.

Remember that the section is beginning to plan for its 2009 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, namely Mark Matienzo (past chair), Erin Lawrimore (vice-chair), Donnelly Lancaster (secretary), Sarah Keen (*Descriptive Notes* editor/coordinator), Janet Carleton (web page coordinator), Tom Hyry (Council liaison), and our stellar Steering Committee members Mary Lacy, Claudia Thompson, Jerry Simmons, Michael Rush, Jennifer Meehan, and Christine de Catanzaro. Thanks also to Jane Rosario (past-past chair) whose advice and encouragement also have been invaluable.



FROM THE VICE CHAIR

Erin Lawrimore

SAA Description Expo 2009 Piecing Together the Archival Puzzle

This year's Description Expo will focus on innovation in conveying contextual information through archival description. Maybe you are supporting collaboration among users to enhance archival contextual description. Or

perhaps you have joined with other partners to create a single portal for the dispersed records of a specific creator. This year's Description Expo – which will be completely web-based – looks to bring together resources from a variety of institutions and demonstrate creativity and innovation in how archival description can assist in piecing together the contextual pieces to build the greater archival puzzle. How are we informing our researchers about the record's creation, use, and relationship to other materials?

If you have created an inventive method of conveying contextual information, I hope that you will share your ideas with the archival community and submit your project for the Description Expo. Submissions will be gathered on an on-going basis until August. Also, as a change from previous years, we will not have a table for display at the annual conference. Instead, projects will be highlighted on the Description Section website. If you have a project that you would like to share, please send a brief project description to me at Erin_Lawrimore@ncsu.edu.



FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Sarah Keen

Greetings, everyone! This is my first newsletter as your new *Descriptive Notes* editor, and so, as is tradition, I will take a few sentences to introduce myself. First I must thank my predecessor Michelle Light who offered much guidance on the newsletter process. I hope to continue in her footsteps of quality newsletter editing and production.

I have been an SAA member since 2001 when I was a graduate student at the University of Michigan's School of Information and working at the Labadie Collection and the Bentley Historical Library. I earned my Master of Science in Information degree with a specialization in Archives and Records Management in 2002 and headed east to work at the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College as an archivist on the Jane Harman Congressional Papers Project. In 2004 after the project's completion, I joined the staff of the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections at Cornell University Library as the Project Archivist for the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences records. My duties have broadened since the end of the project and I am now the Technical Services Archivist.

Thank you to all who submitted items to the newsletter. As my predecessors have said, the success of the newsletter depends on the content that you provide, so send in your news, announcements, thought pieces, and other items relating to description at any time. Additionally if you have comments or suggestions regarding the newsletter format, layout, distribution, etc., please feel free to send them along.



SAA DESCRIPTION SECTION MEETING MINUTES

Aug. 29, 2008, 12-2 p.m., San Francisco, Ca.

1. Mark Matienzo, Section Chair 2008, opened the meeting with welcoming remarks and announcements while the meeting room was expanded to accommodate more attendees.
2. Announcements and election results:
 - Revised Description Section bylaws passed without opposition.
 - Erin Lawrimore was elected the Vice Chair/Chair Elect for 2009.
 - Jennifer Meehan and Christine de Catanzaro were elected as Steering Committee members for 2008-2010 and 2008-2009 respectively.
 - Donnelly Lancaster elected DS Secretary in a run-off election during the meeting.
 - Janet Carleton appointed new Description Section Web page coordinator.
 - Sarah Keen appointed new Descriptive Notes editor/coordinator.

- The section endorsed two sessions on this year's program at SAA: session 302, Evolving Finding Aids for Basic Processing; and session 701, Less Process, More Pixels: Alternate Approaches to Digitization and Metadata.
- The Section also prepared comments on several reports and standards, including the draft report of the Working Group for Future of Bibliographic Control, the International Standard for Description of Institutions for Archival Holdings, and ISO FDIS 2709.
- This year, two issues of the section's newsletter, Descriptive Notes, were made available online from the Description Section's page on the SAA website. As always, the newsletter depends on your contributions. If you have any news or updates about your description-related activities, please send them to Sarah Keen at [skeen30\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:skeen30[at]gmail.com).

3. Reports delivered by the following representatives from SAA committees, liaisons and related groups. Full reports are posted on the Description Section web site if not included.

- James Roth, DS vice-chair/chair elect: Description Expo report
 - There were 6 contributions from Brown University; the JFK Library and Museum; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the University of Michigan Bentley Historical Society; University of Vermont; and the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.
 - The Expo website is available at <http://archivists.org/saagroups/descr/desexpo08.asp>
- Ben Primer (DS's outgoing Council rep.):
 - Enjoyed working with DS. Our incoming Council representative is Tom Hyry.
- Bill Landis: DACS Working Group report
- Lisa Carter: ALA Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA)
- Claire Sibille: ICA Section on Professional Standards and Best Practices
- Mark Matienzo: Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards (TSDS)
- Jennifer Schaffner: Rare Books and Manuscripts Section
 - Discussion throughout the SAA conference clustered around investment in the alliance of "companion standards," addressing the challenge of integrating bibliographic, archival and museum description. Archival descriptive standards are one of a constellation of interlocking standards that include not only Describing Archives: a Content Standard (DA:CS) and the various facets of Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (DCRM), but also Cataloging Cultural Objects (CCO, from the museum community) and RDA.
 - The liaison from RBMS (Rare Book and Manuscripts Section, a section of ACRL, etc.) to SAA reported here (and in several other sections and roundtables) on projects the two communities share, such as DCRM work underway on standards for rare graphics, maps, music and manuscripts. Collaboration between SAA and RBMS bridges the intellectual distance of item-level and multi-level description, between bibliographic and collection-level description. RBMS has a healthy and robust mechanism, through its Bibliographic Standards Committee, to create revise and review standards.
 - Interests and initiatives that RBMS shares with SAA include mass digitization of special collections, the impact of streamlined processing and description on reference and access, and security ("missing materials"), to name just a few. A new RBMS task force - soon to become a standing committee - on digitization of special collections is charged with developing guidelines. Seminars are planned for 2009 on MPLP reference. The RBMS Security Committee is working with booksellers, law enforcement and OCLC to develop with a procedure to 'mark' catalog records centrally for items that have been stolen or are missing.
 - This year our own Jackie Dooley and Bill Landis taught the first course at Rare Book School on archives for rare book librarians. The success of the course has led to suggestions for a course on rare books for archivists, too.

- Diane Ducharme: DCRM-MSS
 - DCRM-MSS is an editorial team formed by the Bibliographic Standards Committee of the Rare Book and Manuscript Section of ACRL/ALA, charged with developing a descriptive standard for individual modern (post1600) manuscripts as one of the DCRM suite of manuals. The hope is that will also be acceptable as one of the “companion standards” envisaged by DACS.
 - The editorial committee is chaired by Margaret Nichols, Head of the Special Materials Unit of Cornell University Library; other members are: Kate Moriarty, Rare Book Catalog Librarian, Saint Louis University; Jennifer K. Nelson, Reference Librarian, The Robbins Collection, UC Berkeley School of Law; Elizabeth O’Keefe, Director of Collection Information Systems, The Morgan Library; Heather Wolfe, Curator of Manuscripts, Folger Shakespeare Library; and myself, Diane Ducharme, Archivist, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, and SAA Liaison. Also, Bill Landis is ex-officio. He is head of Arrangement, Description, & Metadata Coordinator, Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University
 - We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Alison Bridger, Senior Manuscript Cataloger at the Folger Shakespeare Library, to the work of the committee.
 - The DCRM-MSS editorial committee had its first working meeting at ALA Annual on July 1, 2008, and has begun working with draft text of Areas 0 and 1. The committee hopes to meet for a three-day working session in the early fall and again at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in January 2009. The draft text, which is wiki-based, will be available for viewing and comment in the course of its development.

- Karen Smith-Yoshimura: OCLC/Research Libraries Group
- Susan Westberg: OCLC
- Gerald Stone: Canadian Committee on Archival Description
- Kathy Wisser: EAC Working Group
- Jacquelyn Ferry: 2009 Program Committee

- Chris Prom: Archon
 - Version 2.0 was released Winter 2008. This was a major rewrite which included security improvements as well as multilingual support for the staff interface.
 - Version 2.1 was released in April 2008, with updates including an accession manager, improved usability to the finding aid search, and efficiencies in data handling.
 - Version 2.2 of Archon was released August 2008, and includes improvements to the digital library (thumbnails), as well as XHTML and web accessibility compliance.
 - Next steps:
 - Developing user community/support services
 - Audio Visual Self Assessment Tool.
 - Redesigned and improved admin interface.
 - Waiting word on several short term funding sources
 - Developing business plan and assessing feasibility.

- Sibyl Roud: Archivists Toolkit:
 - In 2007-08 we started offering classes integrating DACS with the AT. Currently there are upcoming classes in Lexington, NY and New York, NY.
 - Recipient of SAA’s 2008 C.F.W. Coker award.
 - Development of an Archivists’ Toolkit Roundtable in progress. Please contact Brad Westbrook or Genie Geraud.
 - Are planning for a release in the fall which will include:
 - Customizable rapid data entry screen
 - Improved export/import of EAD
 - Improved rearrangement (drag and drop) tool
 - Improved searching
 - Support for multiple users of resource record

- Support of Java 1.6
 - Additionally planning a release in Summer, 2009 which will include:
 - Revised digital object, name, and subject modules
 - New modules for appraisal/assessment, rights management, and work orders.
- Kris Kiesling: EAD Working Group and MARBI

4. Mark Matienzo called for new business. No new business.

5. DS meeting program: Gerald Stone, Library and Archives Canada: "Are Standards Necessary?" Q and A session followed.

6. Meeting adjourned. There were a total of 72 attendees.



2008-2009 LEADERSHIP LIST

James Roth, Chair
Erin Lawrimore, Vice Chair/Chair Elect
Mark Matienzo, Immediate Past Chair
Donnelly Lancaster, Secretary
Janet Carleton, Web Liaison
Sarah Keen, Newsletter Editor

STEERING COMMITTEE

Christine de Catanzaro
Mary Lacy
Jennifer Meehan
C. Jerry Simmons
Claudia Thompson
Michael Rush, Ex-Officio



NEWS & NOTES

RLG Programs Launches Archives and Special Collections Agenda

Jackie Dooley, Merrilee Proffitt and Jennifer Schaffner, RLG Programs/OCLC Research

RLG Programs/OCLC Research has begun work on an archives research agenda (<http://www.oclc.org/programs/ourwork/collectivecoll/archives/default.htm>) to study the end-to-end process of managing collections and making them available for use. Implementation of sustainable methodologies has gained paramount importance; in that spirit, our overarching goal is to help the profession achieve economies and efficiencies that enable archival materials to be efficiently managed, effectively described, properly disclosed, successfully discovered and appropriately delivered. Taken as a whole, our projects take a system-wide view toward identifying gaps such as missing evidence, needed changes in practice, cumbersome processes, and deficiencies in implementations of technology. Working groups comprised of archivists from RLG Partner institutions are playing a central role in several of the projects.

Merrilee Proffitt (proffitm@oclc.org) has convened a working group that is analyzing instruments developed for surveying repository holdings. Repositories conduct such surveys to identify collections for processing, plan grant proposals or consortial collaborations, determine space needs, and many other purposes. Promulgation of best practices could simplify this process. Merrilee also has launched a group that will compare the wide variety of EAD encoding tools, initially looking at EAD implementation barriers, with an eye to determining how these barriers can be overcome and how successfully the various tools address them.

Jackie Dooley (dooleyj@oclc.org), who joined RLG Programs in September, has two projects underway. The first will examine data patterns that have actually been used over time in archival MARC records, based on which we will attempt to determine the most effective patterns of description. Using the nearly one million records in OCLC's ArchiveGrid database as a test bed, we are working with a data mining expert to extract a

wide variety of data sets, which can then be queried to identify descriptive patterns and anomalies. Jackie is also developing strategies for characterizing the nation's inventory of "hidden collections" as a potential aid to system-wide planning for disclosure.

Effective discovery and delivery of archival materials is the purview of Program Officer Jennifer Schaffner (schaffnj@oclc.org). Systems for disclosure must behave in useful and expected ways if researchers are to discover primary materials successfully. Jen and her working group will study how descriptive elements are used, both within various discovery environments and by researchers, as well as how users expect those environments and elements to behave. It has already become clear that search data is difficult to obtain—if you have some good statistics, Jen would be grateful to hear from you. Her second project will look at methods of delivery, particularly in the digital environment.

Finally, Senior Program Officer Ricky Erway (erwayr@oclc.org) will carry forward the *Shifting Gears* project (<http://www.oclc.org/programs/events/2007-08-29.htm>), including looking at large-scale digitization of archives and special collections.

Project updates will appear periodically on the RLG Programs website (<http://www.oclc.org/programs>). We welcome your ideas and questions at any time.

Finding Aid for Albert C. Barnes Correspondence Available

Katy Rawdon, The Barnes Foundation

The Barnes Foundation's Archives and Library Department is pleased to announce that processing is completed and a finding aid is available online for the correspondence of the institution's founder, Albert C. Barnes (1872-1951).

Assistant Archivist Barbara Beaucar worked for five years organizing and cataloguing this collection of 125.5 linear feet, which contains personal and professional letters and records that document the activities of his chemical companies, Barnes and Hille and the A.C. Barnes Company, the acquisition of his world-renowned art collection, and the development of the educational program which led to the establishment of the Barnes Foundation, an institution over which he presided until his death in 1951. The bulk of the correspondence (1924 – 1951) reflects Barnes's work as a businessman, art collector, author, and educator, and includes evidence of his evolving educational theories, his finances, travels to Europe and the American West, essays, lectures, and publications, and his opinions regarding art and artists. Correspondents include John Dewey, Paul Guillaume, Henri Matisse, William J. Glackens, Bertrand Russell, Leo Stein, Georgia O'Keeffe, Owen J. Roberts, Paul Cret, Charles S. Johnson, Alain Locke, James Weldon Johnson, Charles Demuth, Horace Mann Bond, Maurice and Charles Prendergast, and Alfred Maurer, as well as many well-known art dealers.

Prior to Ms. Beaucar's work, which was funded by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the materials in this collection were unprocessed and largely inaccessible to researchers. The online finding aid, which includes one of the few factual accounts of Dr. Barnes's life, is available at: http://www.barnesfoundation.org/ead/acb_frameset.html.

Dr. Albert Barnes established the Barnes Foundation in 1922 to promote the advancement of education and the appreciation of the fine arts and horticulture. The Foundation carries out its mission through teaching, research, and other programs related to its art collection and arboretum, as well as through public access to the arboretum and to the Gallery, which houses its main collection of paintings, sculpture, and other works of art. The Barnes Foundation Archives and Library is open to qualified researchers by appointment only. Information about the Archives and Library Department can be found here: <http://www.barnesfoundation.org/archivesandlibrary.html>.

Updates from the Archival Research Catalog of the National Archives and Records Administration

Kristen Albrittain, Archival Research Catalog Staff, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park

9/11 Commission Textual Records:

On January 14, 2009, more than 150 cubic feet of textual records created by the 9/11 Commission were opened to public research. The records, which were accessioned by the National Archives following the Commission's closure in August 2004, comprise about 35% of the complete collection and include those documents that best reflect the scope and purpose of the independent, bipartisan Commission's investigations. Among the records are interviews, office files, and background information on "the terrorists, past terrorist events, al Qaeda in general...[and] emergency responses to the attacks in New York City and Washington, DC." Due to the sensitive nature of the material, extensive screening has been undertaken to protect personal privacy and national security interests. Further records will become available as they are processed by National Archives staff. So far, approximately 4,350 file units and 1,250 digitized items from the collection have been described in the online Archival Research Catalog (ARC). Users may access these records via the Search Identifier: siLegislative 9/11 Commission. For more information, visit NARA's Press/Journalists webpage and follow the link to the press release titled "National Archives to Open 9/11 Commission Textual Materials," posted January 8th (<http://www.archives.gov/press/press-releases/2009/nr09-41.html>.)

Rosenberg Grand Jury Transcripts:

Digitized transcripts of testimony from more than 40 Grand Jury witnesses in the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg atomic espionage investigation are now available in ARC. The records were opened in response to court orders by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York this past summer and can be accessed through the file unit description ([ARC ID 2321340](#)). A list of witnesses and their available testimony can be found at: <http://www.archives.gov/research/arc/topics/courts/rosenberg-jury.html>.

New Finding Aids Search and Delivery Platform at the National Library of Medicine

John P. Rees, History of Medicine Division, National Library of Medicine

The Archives and Modern Manuscripts Program at the History of Medicine Division, National Library of Medicine is pleased to announce the release of a new finding aids search and delivery platform.

<http://oculus.nlm.nih.gov/cgi/f/findaid/findaid-idx?c=nlmfindaid>

Based on the University of Michigan's DLXS software, for the first time users can search and browse the current content of 219 EAD encoded collection guides. Our plans are to soon add 300+ EADs describing all our manuscript holdings, many of which were never described before beyond their catalog records.

Users can perform Basic and Advanced Boolean searches limited by:

- Entire Finding Aid Content
- Container List only
- Names
- Places
- Subjects
- Biographical/Historical Note
- Any Scope and Content Note

These search features are available both across the entire set of finding aids and within each individual guide. Additional features include a Save to Bookbag option with an Email function.

Users should note that some of these features are dependent on your session cache, which by federal government privacy rules are emptied once you exit the application.

Look for more DLXS content beyond EAD in the near future!

Litchfield Historical Society Receives Grant

Linda Hocking, Litchfield Historical Society

The Council on Library and Information Resources has selected the Litchfield Historical Society to receive a *Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives* grant of \$101,209 to create online finding aids for its archival holdings dating from 1776-1835. The Society was one of 15 organizations selected from 118 applicants. CLIR created the national project to identify and catalog hidden collections with funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Litchfield was a political and cultural center of rural New England during the period in which U.S. governmental systems formed and solidified. Collections included in the project document the Revolutionary war; 19th century female education; early legal education; the development of American common law; politics, family life, religion and slavery in the early national period.

During the next two years, the Society will identify collections to include based upon research value, national or state historical significance, usefulness to future programming, research, and exhibition, and age and condition of materials. Staff will create online finding aids for the collections using the University of Illinois' Archon™, an open source content management system which allows for the creation of descriptive records compliant with archival standards.

Other grantees include Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture at the College of Charleston; California Historical Society; Center for the History of Medicine, Countway Library, Harvard Medical School; Getty Research Institute; Goucher College; Library of Congress; New York University; Northwestern University Library; University and Jepson Herbaria, University of California, Berkeley; University of Michigan Library; University of Pennsylvania Libraries; and as a collaborative project, Emory University, Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center, and Amistad Research Center.

For information about the project, or the Society's collections, please contact Linda Hocking, Curator of Library & Archives, at archivist@litchfieldhistoricalsociety.org or 860-567-4501.

Morehouse College Martin Luther King Jr. Collection Open for Research

Courtney Chartier, Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center, Inc.

The Archives & Special Collections of the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center, Inc. is pleased to announce the recent release of a significant portion of the Morehouse College Martin Luther King Jr. Collection. The collection was purchased in 2006 by a group of prominent Atlantans on behalf of Dr. King's alma mater, Morehouse College. As the sole academic library of Morehouse College, the Robert W. Woodruff Library was named custodian of this unique and valuable resource.

The collection consists of handwritten and typed manuscripts, correspondence, index cards and office files, and over 1,100 volumes from Dr. King's personal library. Materials span the length of Dr. King's career as a student at Morehouse College, Crozer Theological Seminary and Boston University, as a minister at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and Ebenezer Baptist Church, as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and as a leader of the Civil Rights Movement.

Iconic documents include handwritten annotations to a first edition of "Letter from Birmingham City Jail"; an early draft of Dr. King's speech at the March on Washington titled "Normalcy Never Again"; several drafts of King's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech and lecture. Major series are Correspondence, with letters, cards and telegrams sent to King after his stabbing in Harlem and to the King family after his assassination, and Writings by Martin Luther King, Jr., with handwritten and typed drafts of Dr. King's books, sermons and speeches.

To date, approximately 43 feet of collection material has been arranged and described on an item level. The finding aid has been encoded in EAD and is available at <http://www.auctr.edu/mlkcollection>. Manuscript items in the current release of the collection have been scanned and matched to concurrent metadata. Using a script to automatically harvest descriptive information from the EAD, metadata was then matched to the correct scans within CONTENTdm, the digital content management system already used by the Library. These digital surrogates are available only in the reading room of the Archives & Special Collections. The book collection has been catalogued, but not digitized, and is available for research in the original form.

The team working on the Morehouse King Collection (project manager, two archivists, an archives assistant, a cataloguer, and a digital technician) collaborated with multiple institutions across the country. Locally, the team has sought advice and technical support from the Digital Library of Georgia and the Archives and Records Management Department of the Georgia Institute of Technology. Nationally, the Library participates in a collaborative with the Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center (HGARC) at Boston University and the King Papers Project at Stanford University. With funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Archival Collaborative aims to create a website that highlights the holdings of both the Morehouse King Collection and HGARC's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Archive via a search engine that will compile results from both institutions' finding aids. Undergirding this work are the extensive scholarly records already created by the King Papers Project.

For more information, please contact the Archives at (404) 978-2052 or archives@auctr.edu

The Smithsonian's Archives of American Art Collections Online Continues to Expand Access to Fully Digitized Collections

Karen B. Weiss, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian

The papers of painter Oscar Bluemner (1867-1938) recently became the sixty-fourth fully digitized collection added to the Archives of American Art's *Collections Online* (<http://www.aaa.si.edu/collectionsonline>) website. *Collections Online* now provides access to nearly 575,000 images, totaling over 400 linear feet of a significant cross section of the Archives' holdings, primarily the papers of artists, architects, critics, dealers, and curators. Among the collections now available are the papers of Cecilia Beaux, Romare Bearden, Marcel Breuer, Isabel Bishop, Joseph Cornell, Thomas Eakins, Winslow Homer, as well as the voluminous records of the Downtown Gallery. With generous funding through 2011 provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art, a total of 106 collections totaling over 600 linear feet are slated to be added.

Collections Online is the result of the Archives' transition from its 50 year history of microfilming, and its commitment to using the EAD finding aid's container and folder listings as the sole source of metadata. Using ColdFusion programming, the workflow starts with uploading the EAD XML to AAA's SQL Digital Collections Database, which transforms the data into an "EAD Document Object." This creates a Finding Aid Record in the database that contains all of the EAD structured descriptive and component information: biographical/historical information, scope and content notes, series descriptions, folder titles, and container and folder numbers. Uploading also generates an internal Collections Online website presentation lacking only the digital files.

The structured EAD data in the container and folder listing conveniently generates the scanning technician's file directory, while the SQL database holds the digital files created by the scanning technicians. Once scanning is completed, the entire directory structure containing the digital files is run through an internally developed image processor to generate three sizes of JPG derivatives. Once reviewed and approved by the archivist, the site is displayed on the public website, and the researcher is able to view the online collection as if they were actually in the Archives' reading room.

Call for Nominations: 2009 Waldo Gifford Leland Award

Have you read a great new book about archives? Have you come across an exceptional finding aid for a newly-processed archival or manuscript collection? Have you encountered a documentary publication that is head and shoulders above the rest? Has a web publication really stood out to you?

If you have, please consider nominating it for the Waldo Gifford Leland Award.

The annual Leland Award – a cash prize and certificate – encourages and rewards “writing of superior excellence and usefulness in the field of archival history, theory, and practice.” The Leland Award subcommittee of the Society of American Archivists invites you to nominate a monograph, finding aid, or documentary publication published in North America in 2008 for this year’s recognition. (Please note: periodicals are not eligible.) Established in 1959, the award honors American archival pioneer Waldo Gifford Leland, president of the Society of American Archivists in the 1940s and one of the driving forces behind the founding of the National Archives.

Nomination forms, a list of previous winners, and more information is at <http://www.archivists.org/governance/handbook/section12-leland.asp>. The deadline for applications is February 28, 2009.

Please help us to recognize the best in our profession!

Report Released on the RLG Partners Metadata Creation Workflows Survey

OCLC Research recently produced a report entitled, "What We've Learned from the RLG Partners Metadata Creation Workflows Survey." It shares the results of a survey of RLG partner institutions and their metadata creation workflows for both MARC and non-MARC metadata. The report is available online at www.oclc.org/programs/reports/2009-04.pdf. The report authors are: Leighann Ayers, University of Michigan; Beth Picknally Camden, University of Pennsylvania; Lisa German, Pennsylvania State University; Peggy Johnson, University of Minnesota; Caroline Miller, University of California, Los Angeles; and Karen Smith-Yoshimura, OCLC Research.

Part of Minnesota's Rich Farming History Newly Available to the Public

Minnesota Historical Society



Model RT with "U" dual narrow front wheels

Formed in 1929, the Minneapolis-Moline Company located in Hopkins, Minnesota produced farm and industrial machinery, including steam and gas tractors. At its peak, Minneapolis-Moline operated dealerships around the United States and was one of the largest agricultural companies in the world.

More than 14,000 black and white negatives make up the "Minneapolis-Moline Negative Collection" which is now available to the public. This collection includes images taken between the 1930s and 1960s of tractors, implements, and power units in the factory, dealer showroom, or working in farm fields. Images also show the interior and exterior of factories, including the Hopkins and Lake Street plants. The Minneapolis-Moline Company's commercial photographer, Arthur H. Jensen, photographed these images and donated them to the Minnesota Historical Society.

Each image is described in a searchable list in the Society's online library catalog and a topical finding aid is available. Almost 2,000 images have been printed and scanned and are now available online as part of the Visual Resources Database. Photographs may be ordered online or through the Library's Copy Service. Searchable web access to the full database of 14,180 images will be available in the near future. For more information about the collection or to leave a comment, visit the Collections Up Close blog posted by Society curator Diane Adams-Graf.

Cataloging work was supported in part by the Minneapolis-Moline Collectors group, its friends group and volunteers of the Minnesota Historical Society.

The Minnesota Historical Society is a non-profit educational and cultural institution established in 1849 to preserve and share Minnesota history. The Society tells the story of Minnesota's past through museum exhibits, extensive libraries and collections, historic sites, educational programs and book publishing.

Julia Rogers Library Awarded Nearly \$200,000 Grant

Goucher College



Goucher College's Julia Rogers Library was recently awarded a \$198,121 Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources. The grant, which is the largest the library has ever received, will help fund a project titled Mapping Special Collections for Research and Teaching at Goucher College.

Goucher's project was one of 15 selected out of 118 applications submitted this year, and it was the only small college to be awarded a grant.

Goucher will use the funds to identify, analyze, and catalog about 2,000 18th- and 19th-century manuscripts, books, and other materials from the college's James Wilson Bright Collection of English language studies; records and resources from the Manuscripts and Archives Collection, which includes the college's Jane Austen Collection and its collection of papers of H.L. Mencken; and 1,000 items from the Chrystelle Trump Bond Music Collection, which focuses on 19th- and early 20th-century social and theatrical dance.

The project team members are Tara Olivero, special collections librarian and college archivist; Cindy Ogden, the bibliographic services librarian; Dr. Arnold Sanders, associate professor of English; as well as a special collections librarian, a cataloger, and a project associate. Students will help the team identify and document the items.

The Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives grant is made possible by generous funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The records and descriptions obtained through the program will be accessible through the Internet, and users will be able to aggregate information by topic and theme. For more information on the program, visit <http://www.clir.org/news/pressrelease/08hiddenpr3.html>.

CLIR Publishes Archival Management Software by Lisa Spiro

Archival Management Software
A Report for the Council on Library and Information Resources
by Lisa Spiro
January, 2009. 119 pp.

http://clir.org/pubs/reports/spiro/spiro_Jan13.pdf [PDF Download (1.27 MB file)]

With generous support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Council on Library and Information Resources has launched a multiyear program that addresses the challenge of cataloging hidden collections—those materials held in special collections, archives, and other restricted or relatively inaccessible settings. The program has two major dimensions: first, to identify hidden collections of potential value to scholars; and second, to address the thorny issue of cataloging such materials efficiently, effectively, and in such a way that the catalog records are available to scholars through the Web. In this paper, Lisa Spiro describes and analyzes some of the major technologies that are available to librarians, curators, and archivists and the implications of deploying these systems for existing workflows.

We invite members of the community to build on this report. Ms. Spiro has established a wiki at <http://archivalsoftware.pbwiki.com/FrontPage>, where you can share your experiences and observations about archival management software and workflows.

Two University Library Archivists Honored with 2008 Andrew Mellon Foundation Award

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library was honored in Washington DC on December 8th with a \$100,000 [Mellon Award for Technology Collaboration \(MATC\)](#) for leadership and development work on Archon™—a set of web-based tools for describing archives and manuscripts collections and for providing on-line access to related digital objects, such as photographs and electronic records.

Chris Prom, assistant university archivist and associate professor of library administration, accepted the award on behalf of the University at the Fall Task Force meeting of the Coalition for Networked Information (CNI). Prom and Archon Project co-director Scott Schwartz (archivist for fine and applied arts and director of the Sousa Archives and Center for American Music), developed the software with three of their students: Chris Rishel, Kyle Fox, and Paul Sorensen. The software was first released in August 2006 and has gone through several refinements.

MATC Awards recognize not-for-profit organizations that are making substantial contributions of their own resources toward the development of open source software and the fostering of collaborative communities to sustain open source development. The \$100,000 award recognizes highly significant contributions to open source projects offering benefits to more or larger constituencies. Archon was honored alongside some very well-known projects, including the Kerebos network authentication protocol, the Greenstone and Omeka digital library software, and the Open OceanMap Project.

Archon is used by many institutions worldwide, ranging from major scientific and research institutions such as the University of Florida and the Niels Bohr Archives, to smaller college archives including Wheaton College in Illinois.

The system currently uses a single web-based platform for data entry and delivery. Prom and Schwartz have plans to make Archon even better—for both archival staff and for those who use archives in their research. They acknowledge that the generous Mellon award will make that goal much easier to achieve.



FEATURE ARTICLE

Will Collection-Level Finding Aids Be Sufficient?

Elizabeth Nielsen, Archives – Oregon State University Libraries

Since September 2006, the Oregon State University (OSU) Archives has concentrated on the preparation of collection-level finding aids for all new collections received by the Archives and for collections that have no descriptive information available online. This is per the admonition of Greene and Meissner (2005) that “all collections should have collection-level intellectual control before any collection receives folder-level control.” A report of the first 15 months of this effort was presented at the May 2008 Northwest Archivists conference, *How Do We Keep from Getting Further Behind? A Case Study in the Application of Minimal-Level Description in the OSU Archives*, and can be viewed at: <http://hdl.handle.net/1957/8635>

In the OSU Archives, a collection-level finding aid (CLD) consists of a DACS-compliant EAD collection description with no component-level inventory (i.e. no <dsc>). It is available in the Northwest Digital Archives (NWDA) finding aids database; as a PDF on the Archives website; and as a catalog record (extracted from the EAD) in the OSU Libraries online catalog, the regional Orbis Cascades Summit Catalog, and Worldcat. For large or complex collections, the CLD is considered preliminary (indicated in the <processinfo> note). In most of these cases, this preliminary CLD will include a link to a preliminary container list (using <otherfindaid> element). The OSU Archives still prepares a few “full” finding aids per year that include a component-level description, but the primary focus of the Archives’ arrangement and description activities is CLDs.

A preliminary analysis of the results of this approach, which has been underway for slightly over 2 years (September 2006 through December 2008), demonstrates the progress that can be made in addressing backlogs and raises questions and areas for future work. This analysis consists of two components – a review of the type of finding aids prepared during the September 2006 through December 2008 period and a comparison of CLDs prepared before September 2006 with those prepared since then.

The OSU Archives has a total of 356 finding aids in the NWDA finding aids database. Of these, 155 (44%) are “full” finding aids with component-level description. The remainder are CLDs; 159 (45%) are final and 42 (11%) are preliminary.

The OSU Archives prepared final CLDs prior to September 2006, but on a more limited scale; none were preliminary. Of the 159 final CLDs from the OSU Archives in NWDA, 75 were prepared from 1991 through mid-2006 (over a 15-year period). Most (53) were for personal papers or organizational records; the remainder were for institutional records (13), photograph collections (7) and moving image collections (2). Since September 2006, 84 final CLDs have been prepared; a lower number (45) are for personal papers and organizational records with an increase in the number of CLDs for moving image (13) and photograph (15) collections. During this period a final CLD has also been prepared for one oral history collection. Most (over 75%) of the collections described by a final CLD are less than 0.35 cubic foot (size of one document case); however, collections as large as 5.35 cubic feet have been described with a final CLD.

From September 2006 through December 2008, only 14 “full” finding aids with component-level description were loaded to the NWDA finding aids database. These consist of 7 new finding aids and 7 existing finding aids (prepared prior to 2006) that were EAD encoded and modified to be DACS compliant. This is a small percentage (less than 10%) of the total number of finding aids completed during this time period and demonstrates the extent to which the arrangement and description efforts of the OSU Archives have concentrated on preparing CLDs.

One of the primary benefits of the OSU Archives’ concentration on CLDs has been the reduction in number and percentage of collections for which there is no descriptive collection online. In September 2006, 412 (46%) of the OSU Archives’ collections had no descriptive information available online. As of December 2008, that has

been reduced to 314 (34%). About a quarter of the preliminary CLDs prepared during this period have been for collections for which there was previously no information available online. This approach allows information about large unprocessed collections from the backlog to be made available much more quickly than if a full finding aid was being prepared.

A second, and equally important, benefit has been the completion of a CLD for all new collections within one year of accessioning. Beginning in late 2006, the Archives developed a procedure for prioritizing and tracking preparation of CLDs for all new collections received during a calendar year with the goal of creating a CLD for all new collections received in a calendar year before the end of the following year (e.g. for all new collections received in 2007, to have a CLD prepared by the end of 2008). This has been successful for all new collections received in 2006 and 2007. For 26 new collections received in 2006, one full finding aid was prepared as well as 16 final CLDs and 9 preliminary CLDs. For 30 new collections received in 2007, no full finding aids have been prepared; however, 20 of the collections have final CLDs and 10 have preliminary CLDs.

This approach raises several questions and areas for future analysis and study, such as:

- To date, no “preliminary” CLDs have been “reworked” to full finding aids. With increasing numbers of new collections received per year, will it ever be possible to prepare component-level descriptions for these large collections and what is the impact of this on user access to complex and rich collections?
- This approach works well for describing new collections, but what about additions to existing collections that may (or may not) already have full finding aids? The majority (60-70%) of the OSU Archives’ accessions per year are for additions to existing collections.
- How do CLDs impact researchers’ access to and use of collections and the selection and delivery of materials for digitization?
- More than half (56%) of the OSU Archives’ finding aids the NWDA finding aids database are CLDs. How does this compare with the NWDA finding aids database as a whole and with other consortial finding aids databases?

If you are interested in further exploration or discussion of these questions or have other thoughts or questions about collection-level finding aids, please contact Elizabeth Nielsen at Oregon State University (elizabeth.nielsen@oregonstate.edu or 541.737.0543).