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Public Library Archives/Special Collections Roundtable

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Mission statement suggestions

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Valerie_W View profile More options Jul 31 2009, 4:20 pm

These are points for consideration in the mission statement:

-Act as an advocate for the Public Library Archives/Special Collections
-Promote the importance of the Public Library Archives/ Special Collections
-Educate the public as to the importance of the Public Library Archives/Special Collections

Comment on ideas: A Public Library Archives/Special Collections within the public library faces unique challenges. The Special Collections/archives is usually a smaller component within the library. The public library by its nature focuses on easy public access, circulation of materials, general reference service, media, etc.

Large public libraries would have established restricted, secure areas for viewing of irreplaceable materials not necessarily available to smaller public libraries; villages/local towns libraries.
Regardless of size, the public library archives/special collections want to maintain a high profile within their institution. The Roundtable may serve as a place for archivists seeking support and ideas for public archives under their charge.

The ideas for consideration addresss some of these needs.

The Public LibraryArchives/Special Collections Roundtable will help raise the profile of public libraries--large or small in the SAA and beyond. A Roundtable established within the SAA would serve as a platform to advocate ideas and actions for the benefit of public libraries archives/special collections. There are sure to be other benefits as the formation of the roundtable is advanced.

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MaryFK View profile More options Aug 3 2009, 8:45 am

I mentioned this in the SAA listserv, and maybe its inherent in the very idea of the RT itself (or even in "educating the public" if we edited it to simply "as to the importance of Archives/Special Collections"), but what about "fostering relationships between [local] archival/special collections institutions & public libraries"?

This is based on those public libraries that may NOT have an archives/ special collections, but have access to local institutions, and may

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not know it, or think of it. Therefore, when patrons ask, they may potentially lose out on reference materials (DISCLAIMER: I am not meaning to demean anyone/anything here - I have seen this happen).

On Jul 31, 4:20 pm, Valerie_W <vwingfi...@nypl.org> wrote:

- Hide quoted text -

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Renee_D View profile More options Aug 3 2009, 1:59 pm

This is an interesting point, and I agree that fostering cooperation across cultural organizations at the local level should be part of our mission. It is also incredibly important to educate the public library world about the importance of archives/special collections.

I also think the bigger picture here is that yes, there are still many public orgs without a formal archival/special collections program or a program that is struggling along, without recognition. The person on staff who is best qualified (or most interested) in doing that work does the work, as best they can. Many of us will be the first "archival professional" hired at our institutions, and what we will find are all kinds of collections in various state of care/ organization.

This is why, to me, public library work is so tough--AND REWARDING!-- at least in a smaller institution. You have one person who needs to understand archives, manuscripts, rare books, art, artifacts, photographs, local history, genealogy, administration, volunteer management, in addition to their regular library duties (many of us are on the regular Reference Desk rotation, as well).

So in addition to wanting to educate the public, we also want to educate the public library world AS WELL AS any local *dedicated* archival/special collections institutions about 1. the importance of public library archives/special collections, 2. the varied challenges and opportunities we are faced with, and 3. how we can cooperate on/ complement one anothers work.

On Aug 3, 8:45 am, MaryFK <ny2ky2h...@yahoo.com> wrote:

- Hide quoted text -

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