



SOCIETY OF
American
Archivists

PLASC Roundtable

A place for archival professionals in public library settings

Volume 1, Issue 1

Spring 2011



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From the Chair

Dear Roundtable Members,

Welcome to the very first edition of our newsletter! We hope that it will be a valued source of information by the professional community we serve. A big thank you is necessary for our two lovely co-editors Valerie Wingfield and Renee DesRoberts. This newsletter would not exist without their dedication and talent. Allow me to introduce us! My name is Heather Kramer and I am currently Chair, Gregg Grunow is our webmaster guru, while Valerie Wingfield and Renee DesRoberts are steering committee members extraordinaire. I speak for all of us when I say that we are very enthusiastic about continuing to serve the roundtable and the Society of American Archivists. We see this newsletter as a communication tool that we can all use to develop ideas and expand knowledge. Contributions are a large necessity for continuous

success and we invite members to submit articles to the co-editors for inclusion in future editions. Also, if you know of a good resources or internet links please consider emailing them to Greg for inclusion on our webpage.

Need advice or suggestions?

Subscribe to our roundtable listserv and be connected to our colleagues all over the world. Networking with fellow archivists and special collections librarians could help you solve some issues or answer questions. Traffic has been picking up so please send questions and comments to plasc@forums.archivists.org.

Our first annual business meeting was held during the annual conference on August, at the Marriott Hotel in Washington, D.C. It was wonderful to meet all the roundtable members that trekked from all over the United States and hear what they had to say during our open

meeting discussion. The business meeting began with introductions by myself, Renee DesRoberts, and Valerie Wingfield. Our Council Liaison is Debora Richardson also introduced herself and spoke to us about Council issues. If you are interested in reading about the meeting please see additional information in our meetings minutes on our roundtable webpage: <http://www2.archivists.org/groups/public-library-archivesspecialcollections>. A big thank you to Renee DesRoberts for undertaking the keeping and compiling of our roundtable notes for submission to SAA. Also, THANK YOU to everyone who came to support the roundtable's first business meeting! Many may be asking what is the future of the roundtable?

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That records carton better be PH neutral, buddy!

From the Chair (continued from pg. 1)



Steering Committee members Heather Kramer, Renée DesRoberts, and Valerie Wingfield at the inaugural PLASC meeting at SAA 2010 in Washington, D.C.

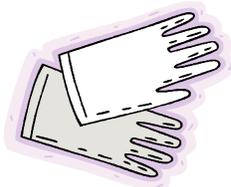
Simply put, the steering committee is looking to solidify the organization of the roundtable, offer electronic elections, and provide open communication to members. In the long term we hope to sponsor and lead projects that will be beneficial to roundtable members and the members of SAA. We also hope to foster partnerships, advocate for our common areas of interest, and provide a virtual community for our members and col-

leagues. Volunteers will be largely necessary to contribute ideas, manpower, and willpower to the success of our endeavors. We hope that each member will consider contributing what he or she can to our ongoing efforts.

Thank you all for your interest and support!

Heather Kramer
Chair

"All of my years
in libraries
convinces me
that we learn so
much more about
our collections
when someone
makes use of the
materials and
helps us better
understand and
then describe
what we have."
David S. Ferriero,
Archivist of the
United States



Notes from the field

Robert Sink, the retired institutional archivist of the New York Public Library, is researching the lives of the 155 librarians (all but 7 were women) who headed neighborhood branches of NYPL, 1901-1950. He is also studying the autonomy they achieved and then lost within a male run institution, the effort to racially integrate the branch staff starting in 1920, the librarians' publications, and the three distinct

periods when men served in the branches prior to 1950. Bob has created a blog where he writes about his research findings, presents short biographies of the librarians, and provides vignettes from his research. The blog, NYPL-Librarians is at: <http://nypl-librarians.blogspot.com>.

Jennifer Quier (Tennessee) and **Renee DesRoberts**

(Maine) have joined the National History Day Committee of the Reference, Access, and Outreach Section of SAA representing the needs and interests of public libraries.

National History Day is an annual hands-on history contest for middle and high school students which competes on the local, state and national level. To learn more go to: www.nationalhistoryday.org/.

Queries & Calls

Noah Lenstra is compiling a bibliography on the phenomenon of local history collecting in public libraries for work towards a PhD at the University of Illinois. Any references you may be willing to share are welcome; he will post the final result to the PLASC list as well. He is looking for literature not only for archives but also library science, much of this literature seems to be buried, so any tips are appreciated.

An example of this: Diantha Schull, in articulating what she calls "The Civic Library: A Model for 21st Century Participation" places supporting public memory as one of the pillars of the 21st century public library, discusses briefly a program in L.A. Public Library in which members of the public were encouraged to bring in personal photographs to be photocopied/digitized with the originals returning to patrons.

To submit resources or if you have any questions, Mr. Lenstra can be contacted via phone or email:

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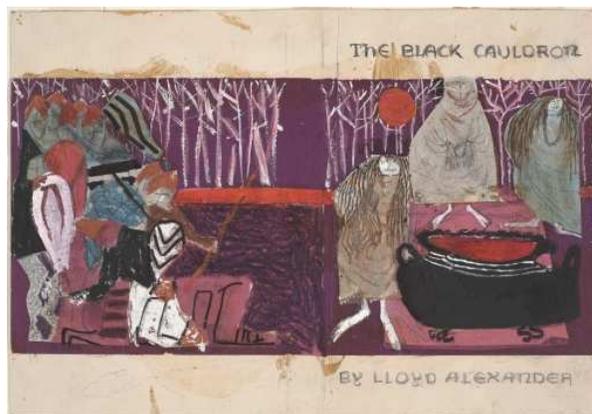
Project Spotlight:

The “Milestones in 20th Century American Children’s Literature” Project at the Free Library of Philadelphia

The Children’s Literature Research Collection at the Free Library of Philadelphia is pleased to report that the project “Milestones in 20th-Century American Children’s Literature” is going strong. Work began in summer 2010 with the hiring of a special collections archivist and three part-time archives assistants. Before long, the CLRC’s long-hidden archival collections of renowned children’s book authors Tomi Ungerer, Evaline Ness, Virginia Lee Burton, Robert Lawson, Lloyd Alexander, and Carolyn Haywood will be made accessible through EAD finding aids, MARC catalog records, and an open-access database of selected digitized materials. The project is made possible through the generous funding of a Council on Library and Information Resources grant. A secondary goal of this project is to establish a protocol for creating finding aids at the Free Library of Philadelphia, which has not previously implemented EAD,

using Archivists’ Toolkit. As they are completed, finding aids are being submitted to a regional electronic finding aid repository run by PACSCL (Philadelphia Area Consortium for Special Collections Libraries). The Evaline Ness finding aid is already available at <http://bit.ly/eByKjU>, and all of the finding aids will soon be available on the Free Library of Philadelphia’s website as well.

To track processing time, CLRC staff are participating in the metrics collaboration begun at Harvard’s Countway Library (<https://wiki.med.harvard.edu/Countway/ArchivalCollaboratives/WebHome>). Using a local version of the metrics collaborative Access database populated with processing levels and activities customized to the CLRC workflow, the archivists track their activities to the quarter hour. This allows the library to track and analyze processing time and costs, and should provide more accurate



Art by Evaline Ness for *The Black Cauldron* by Lloyd Alexander, circa 1965, in the Evaline Ness papers, CLRC, Free Library of Philadelphia.

estimates regarding processing times, staffing needs, and budgeting for future project planning.

Highlights of the CLRC’s collections are showcased and progress on this project is publicized on the department’s Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Philadelphia-PA/Childrens-Lit-Research-Collection-of-the-Free-Library-of-Philadelphia/116532001738485?ref=sgm>), its Twitter account (<http://twitter.com/flplrc>), and the library’s blog (http://libwww.freelibrary.org/blog/rss_author.cfm?id=113). Research use has already grown due to the collections’ in-

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Exhibits

Leonia (NJ) Public Library Local History Collection presents: “Old News is Good News. Leonia’s Newspapers 1883 - 2005.” (March 5th – April 30th, 2011)

Leonia’s first Mayor, Cornelius Christie, was the editor and publisher of the Borough’s first newspaper in 1883 which was called *The Sword and Distaff*. Then in 1922 an ardent suffragist named Martha Rado

launched a weekly newspaper called the *Leonia’s Life* which she edited and published for 15 years. Other titles were added for the next 34 years and by 1971 publication ceased. In 2005, after some 34 years Leonia once again has a hometown newspaper, the *Leonia Life*.

The exhibition includes newspapers, photographs, and handwritten documents from the 1820’s & 1830’s of subscrip-

tions to newspapers in the surrounding area by the Vreeland family of Leonia. Ms. Harriet Burdock, who curates this exhibit, was the first archivist hired (2006) for the Leonia Public Library. Ms. Burdock also curates various exhibits throughout the year.

For More Information:
<www.leonia.bccls.org>
(201) 592-5770



Leonia Public Library, Leonia, NJ (Courtesy photo)



**PUBLIC LIBRARY
ARCHIVES/
SPECIAL
COLLECTIONS
ROUNDTABLE**

EST. FEBRUARY 2010

Our Mission

The Public Library Archives/Special Collections Roundtable (PLASC) serves to encourage advocacy for and education about archival, manuscript, local history, genealogy, and other historic and special collections within public libraries of all sizes. The Roundtable provides an arena for discussion and dissemination of best practices of the archival, library, museum and history fields; and works to support the informational, historical, and cultural interests which converge in public library archives and special collections.

Go to <www.tinyurl.com/plasc>
For quick access to our
WEBPAGE
*Electronic Discussion List &
Leadership Contact Information*

**Project Spotlight: “Milestones in 20th Century
American Children’s Literature”**
(continued from page 3)

**STEERING COMMITTEE
(2010-2011)**

**HEATHER KRAMER,
CHAIR**

Houston Public Library,
Houston , Texas

**RENEE DESROBERTS,
Newsletter Co-Editor**

McArthur Public Library,
Biddeford, Maine

**GREGG GRUNOW,
Web Liaison**

Newport News Public Library,
Newport News, Virginia

**VALERIE WINGFIELD,
Newsletter Co-Editor**

New York Public Library,
New York, New York

increased findability, and it is hoped this will continue when materials from the collections go on display in two exhibitions this summer. Artwork from the Tomi Ungerer papers will be lent to the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art ([http://www.carlemuseum.org/Exhibitions/Upcoming Exhibitions](http://www.carlemuseum.org/Exhibitions/Upcoming_Exhibitions)) in Northampton, Massachusetts, for the exhibition “Tomi Ungerer: Chroni-
cler of the Ab-

surd,” June 21st to October 9th, 2011, and to the Tomi Ungerer Museum in Strasbourg, France for “Ogres, brigands, et compagnie. . .” from April 7th to August 7th, 2011.

For those in the Philadelphia area, exhibits of the materials are also on display on the ground floor of the Central Parkway Library in Philadelphia on a rotating basis.



A display of Tomi Ungerer’s work currently on display at the Free Library of Philadelphia.

(Images courtesy Adrienne Pruitt, Special Collections Archivist, Free Library of Philadelphia.)

Got a story idea, news or an article to share? Want to get involved with the newsletter? We’d love to hear from you!
Contact Valerie (vwingfield@nypl.org) or Renee (rdesroberts@mcArthur.lib.me.us)

