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Ohio Archivist

Fall 2004 Volume 35 Number 2

Alliance for Response Activities Summary, Summer 2004

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The December 2003 Alliance for Response meeting brought together cultural heritage institutions and first responders from across Ohio. The morning presentations on cooperative disaster planning and response were followed by breakout sessions. Participants were divided into groups based on their geographic region within the state. They were encouraged to discuss follow-on activities to develop cooperative plans within their regions.

Throughout the spring and summer of 2004 these groups have met to begin planning regional activities. Each has taken a slightly different approach and focus to developing localized plans.

The Northern Ohio group, spearheaded by the Intermuseum Conservation Association and others in the Cleveland/Northeast Ohio area, is planning a regional meeting for November 4, 2004. They will use a format similar to the December 12, 2003 meeting in Cincinnati, with local speakers and others, followed by time for breakout sessions on various topics in the afternoon.

The Southeastern Ohio group is moving toward a December 2004 regional meeting. The planning committee, led by Ohio University, is working on a survey that will be distributed to potential attendees. This survey will be helpful in assessing the current and desired disaster planning activities throughout the region, and will allow the Southeastern Ohio planning committee to develop a program that meets the needs of the participants.

The Metropolitan Cincinnati group is planning a December 2004 meeting that will focus on bringing together 25-50 leaders among the region's cultural heritage institutions and first responders to formulate plans for cooperative

disaster planning and response. The meeting will include a presentation from Gary Miller, Cincinnati Red Cross, on how cultural heritage institutions and first responders can work effectively together. Breakout sessions will allow similar institutions to develop communications networks and begin cooperative planning discussions.

In Central Ohio, the planning group discussed an approach that combines the Southeastern and Northern Ohio groups' activities. A preliminary survey of area cultural heritage institutions will be a useful first step in identifying the disaster planning and response activities and needs of potential meeting participants. The Central Ohio meeting will be held in Spring 2005. Speakers from various organizations, including representatives from insurance companies, vendors, and fire departments, will help the participants focus on effective disaster planning. Discussion groups for the Central Ohio meeting will be broken out by geographic region to facilitate communications that will aid in local response to disasters. The planning committee would one outcome of the meeting to be the development of a communications "cross-grid" that can be used by cultural heritage institutions of all sizes in times of emergency.

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Ohio Electronic Records Committee (OERC) Update

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The past year has been a challenging but ultimately productive one for the Ohio Electronic Records Committee.

Charlie Arp, who has served as the ERC Chair since the Committee's inception in 1998, resigned from his positions as State Archivist and ERC Chair. He took on a new position as the Head of Records Management Operations at Battelle Memorial Institute in September 2003. ERC members are deeply grateful to Charlie for his leadership and vision during his tenure as Chair. Richard Whitehouse, Chief Legal Counsel from the Office of Inspector General, agreed to serve as Interim Chair until a new chair was determined.

With these staffing and leadership changes, the members of the ERC took advantage of this time to reconsider the mission of ERC. Two meetings were held January 14 and May 20, 2004 to discuss ERC membership, committees, agency involvement and the relationship with OHS.

The consensus was that the ERC should remain an independent committee at this point and should not seek sponsorship from other agencies. Most agreed that the mission of the ERC was to create and make available best practices concerning the creation, maintenance, preservation and access to electronic records. Individual agencies and local governments should develop their own policies and implement them based on the best practices produced by the ERC. The ERC does not have the authority to become involved in enforcement and compliance. The ERC and the best practices that it produces should provide a dialog between records managers and information technology staff.

At the September 15, 2004 meeting Rick Whitehouse handed the duties of Chair over to new State Archivist, Laurie Gemmill. At the same meeting David Landsbergen, from Ohio State University, presented a Digital Information Policy and Management proposal. The presentation was based on the white paper distributed to ERC members via the listserv prior to the meeting. The presentation and white paper are available at: <http://www.ohiojunction.net/erc/proposal.pdf> and

<http://www.ohiojunction.net/erc/091504present.ppt>. Following discussion, the ERC members voted to accept this partnership.

The ERC is now a joint effort of the Ohio Historical Society and Ohio State University, through its John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy. This partnership will enable the ERC to gather survey information important to the future of the ERC. One of the first steps will be to determine which entities have adopted ERC guidelines and their reasons. A subcommittee was formed to support the surveying work that will be conducted.

ERC members were also pleased to learn that its resources are being acknowledged nationally. The MERresource Service is a subscription service provided by Cohasset Associates (<http://www.cohasset.com/>) offering a wealth of information on managing electronic records. It includes links to four Ohio ERC documents: Managing Website Content, the Trustworthy Information Systems Handbook, Electronic Records Guidelines, and Databases as Public Records.

A subcommittee was formed to propose a set of by-laws for the ERC, including membership criteria. This will position the ERC to add new members, especially those representing local governments. The next meeting of the ERC is scheduled for December 6, 2004.

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Midwest Archives Conference Looks to the Future

Submitted by Paul Eisloeffel, Nebraska State Historical Society (current MAC Vice President)

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We all know how important our local and regional archival organizations are to us, both professionally and personally. While we toil in our respective stacks, saving history for another day, these organizations are out there offering support, encouragement and illumination. Groups like SOA and the Midwest Archives Conference (MAC) are really bigger than the sum of us, and through the giving and taking of their individual members they help to make us stronger as professionals and as a profession. We have only to hook up with them to take advantage of the benefits.

At the very heart of these organizations are its meetings. Goodness knows we need them, especially in these times of diminishing resources. These gatherings blend archival continuing education with the camaraderie and accessibility we all crave. MAC has traditionally offered two meetings per year, based on the notion that the face-to-face experience with colleagues and mentors is important to our professional well-being.

Lately, MAC has realized that shrinking travel budgets and increased demands on our time have set its Spring and Fall meetings in competition with one another. While MAC wants to continue its commitment to offering educational and collegial opportunities to its members, it feels the need to better respond to the realities of its members' everyday professional lives.

With that in mind, MAC is gearing up for a change in 2006: What was formerly known as the Spring Meeting (currently slated for Bloomington-Normal, Illinois, April 27-29) will become MAC's Annual Meeting, with all the events, tours and broad-reaching content we've all come to expect from a MAC gathering. The Fall offering will be a slightly shorter, more content-focused symposium, feeding many of our members' needs for continuing education. For each of these Fall symposia, MAC will seek partnerships with local groups, like SOA. And as always, MAC's offerings will be bargains!

So, keep watching for news of MAC's meetings. You can find this and other information (like how to join, if you are not already a member) on MAC's website, www.midwestarchives.org. And especially mark you calendars for MAC's 2005 meetings: Chicago, Illinois (April 28-30) and Bloomington, Indiana (October 13-15).

If you have any questions about MAC's meetings or would like to help in any way, feel free to contact me (Paul Eisloeffel) at 402-471-4750 or pje@nebraskahistory.org.

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News and Notes

University of Cincinnati

Kevin A. Grace, long-time assistant head, has been named as Head and University Archivist of the Archives & Rare Books Department, University Libraries, University of Cincinnati.

The Archives & Rare Books Department is pleased to announce the unveiling of its new website - <http://www.libraries.uc.edu/libraries/arb/index.html> - with enhanced library features, more exhibits and finding aids, with more to come throughout the next year and beyond.

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The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board (OHRAB) Update

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The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board is the central body for historical records planning in the state. One of the major tasks OHRAB members addressed during the past year was the creation of a new strategic plan. The Ohio 2003 Plan had served as a Statement of Priorities and Preferred Approaches for Historical Records Programs in Ohio 1995-2003. Following on a successful bicentennial year for Ohio, the board turned its attention towards creating a new strategic plan that would serve as a guide for historical records related activities in Ohio through 2010.

OHRAB members created a draft plan and solicited comments from interested parties as well as from attendees of its September 2003 Conference, The Future of Our Past. OHRAB presented a draft plan to the Ohio Historical Society's Board of Trustees at a joint meeting in March 2004. The objective was to harmonize activities of the board with those of the Society.

In August 2004, the board met at the Ohio Historical Center. The recent restructuring of the Ohio Historical Society, particularly the restructuring of the Archives/Library Division, was discussed. OHS Executive Director Bill Laidlaw thanked Jim Strider for accepting his new responsibilities as Director of Collections, Historic Preservation and Statewide Outreach Services. OHS views these changes as a strengthening of its commitment to the Archives/Library and is looking forward to developing a true partnership with the board. Bill expressed his dedication and that he is pleased by his appointment as State Coordinator for OHRAB. Rachel Tooker, OHS Chief Operating Officer, discussed the necessity of the restructuring to build a stronger organization less dependant on state funds. She stated that OHS will feel the loss of the significant leadership of George Parkinson, but expressed her confidence in Jim Strider's ability to be an effective advocate for the Archives/Library. Jim Strider expressed his firm belief that OHS has a role in leading historical organizations in the state.

Given the reorganization of the Ohio Historical Society and the efforts underway to improve OHRAB's effectiveness by clarifying organizational

procedures and structure, the board determined it would be better served by a short-term strategic plan. A strategic plan was approved at the August 2004 meeting, which is intended to provide guidance for the next two to three years. The plan will be reviewed and revised each year. It is available at http://www.ohiojunction.net/ohrab/strategic_plan.html

In response to the priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan, two new subcommittees were formed at the August meeting. One subcommittee will draft bylaws to help strengthen OHRAB and its internal organization. Another subcommittee was formed to work with public records issues. This subcommittee's work will build on the momentum created in response to the Ohio Newspaper Association's June 2004 public records audit.

There have been various membership changes in the past few months. William K. Laidlaw, Executive Director of the Ohio Historical Society, is now State Coordinator. Laurie Gemmill, State Archivist, has been appointed to a four-year term and will serve as the Deputy State Coordinator. For an updated list of board members or to find out more about OHRAB, please visit the website at: <http://www.ohiojunction.net/OHRAB>

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SOA 2005 Annual Meeting...Save the Date!

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The Society of Ohio Archivists will hold its Annual Meeting April 14-15, 2005 at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. This year's theme, "The Business of Archives: Tools of the Trade," includes sessions and workshops relating to business issues, technology, and archival fundamentals.

A pre-conference workshop on Grant Writing for Preservation and Digitization Projects will be presented by Tom Clareson of OCLC.

Conference partners and sponsors include: the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Group, OhioNET, the Ohio Historical Society, Wright State University, Metal Edge, Inc., and Central Business Group.

Visit the conference web site at: <http://www.ohioarchivists.org/conference> for preliminary program information and conference details.

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Society of Ohio Archivists Spring Meeting, April 15, 2004, Session Notes

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Opening Plenary—April 15, 2004

Session report by Gillian Hill

Dr. Frederic Krome, of the American Jewish Archives, delivered an extremely interesting opening plenary address. He explained the significance of the 350th anniversary of American Jewish life in the United States, and examined specifically the prominent role of Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, of the AJA, in the 300th anniversary of 1954.

Although there had been Jewish visitors to the American colonies earlier, 1654 has been the date traditionally observed as the beginning of continuous Jewish communal life in the United States. In that year, twenty Jewish refugees arrived in what was then known as New Amsterdam (New York) from Brazil.

For this 350th anniversary, Congress has passed a resolution proclaiming September 2004 as American Jewish History Month. The celebrations will be marked by a traveling exhibition scheduled to open at the Library of Congress in September, and set to run until December. From Washington DC, it will move to Cincinnati, to the Union Terminal Building, where it will remain until May 2005. It will then be in New York City for two months and finally in Los Angeles for two months.

The first real celebration of the anniversary was the 250th anniversary in 1904, but the 300th anniversary was a major event, mainly based in New York City. Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, who founded the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati in 1947, played a historical part in the celebrations. He has been widely acclaimed for bringing Jewish history to the masses during his seventy-year career. (He died in 1995 at almost one hundred years of age.) His goal was to collect the papers of as many Jewish people as he could—the average American Jew, as well as more prominent people. His active participation in the 300th anniversary celebrations provided him with the opportunity to contact many people, and to substantially increase the collections and publications of the AJA. While Jacob Rader Marcus wrote and collected for a

mainly Jewish audience, Dr Krome noted that American Jewish historiography has come a long way in recent years. It is much less “ghettoized”, and has become more integrated with general American History.

This presentation was a fascinating introduction to a remarkable man, and to the history of the Jewish experience in America.

Wright State University Panel

Session report by Christine Crandall

Panel of six students from the Wright State University Public History program discuss their aspirations and what drew them to this field and program.

Timothy Binkley - Discussed the dilemma of deciding between the archives route and museum route as well as the educational and professional choices offered to students. He himself is re-entering the museum field and discussed the importance of having a master’s degree. He discussed the varied work and audience one encounters in an archives and the work he did at Greenfield Village where curators and the public don’t meet. He believes that the best of both worlds is to blend museum and archival work.

Mike Arbagi - Archives are our link to the past and its importance to human progress. Arbagi spoke about the preservation of business records and the gratifying aspects of genealogical work and preservation. Documents that are foundations of a society give meaning to youth and especially visual aspects which can give insights to different time periods. The connection of the past and present connects archives to improving the quality of life in the world.

Andrea Spence - Spence is pursuing a career in records management and currently works in WSU’s archives with their records manager. She spoke about how records management is public history and that it can be fun because the manager gets to be a part of the entire life-cycle of the record.

Steve Lucht - Lucht had a career in public radio (WYZO in Dayton) and became interested in public history after interviewing people from museums, historical societies and archives. His speciality is audio-magnetic tapes because of the inherent instability of the format and the important history contained on them. He wants to research more about how these records are being cared for, if at all in many collections.

Andrea Rice - Rice had worked as an intern at OHS and WRHS and mainly enjoys museum work and the history behind the artifacts. She is interested in

Living History interpretation, for which there is little training. She connected archival research to being able to conduct oneself appropriately as an interpreter at a historical site. She recommended that basic communications and theater classes be included in the public history program.

Kim Richards - Richards worked in a historical house as a docent in Charleston, SC and has volunteered at historical sites. She learned about interpretation, history, management of archives and non-profits and believes that WSU has a well-rounded program. She would like to run a small historical society since it allows for a variety of tasks to be performed every day. She is writing a Master's thesis and wants to pursue a scholarly route.

Overall, these students are quite representative of WSU's Public History students.

Exploring the Ohio Memory Online Scrapbook: A Guide for Educators, Archivists, Librarians & Historians

Presented by Laurie Gemmill, Angela O'Neal, and Phil Sager

Session Report by Dawne Dewey

Presenters from the Ohio Historical Society provided an overview of the Ohio Memory Online Scrapbook and its new features. New features include better search capabilities through three new search avenues. The "fuzzy search" enables visitors to the site to search for items by using keywords or terms to find what they want. The words don't have to be exact or spelled correctly! Searching can also be done by typing in an "about search" or an "advanced search." The about search expands the search to find related materials to the main topic. The advanced search enables a search by the selection of different options at once, such as keyword, institution, and date. These search capabilities enable visitors to the site to gain better access to the more than 27,000 images or primary sources relating to Ohio history.

Also highlighted were ways that archives, libraries, and museums can use the Ohio Memory Scrapbook to promote Ohio history in their community. Participating institutions and organizations can create numerous scrapbooks from materials they submitted and then link their site to these scrapbooks as an online exhibit. Several institutions could partner to create a scrapbook on a particular topic that they all have materials on. A new feature that will help local institutions promote Ohio Memory in their community is the customizable press release. All an institution has to do is fill in the blanks with their name and what they submitted. The rest of the press release is done for them and they can submit it to the local news media.

The benefits to students and educators are endless. Students can create their own scrapbooks, using new tools, such as a longer description field and more background choices. They can take the Governor's challenge and find out how much they know about Ohio history, and teachers can enhance lesson plans by using the wealth of primary sources available on a wide variety of topics. The Ohio Memory Online Scrapbook is a wonderful resource for anyone wishing to learn more or teach others about Ohio history.

EAD Development across Departments

Presented by Beth Russell and Amy McCrory, The Ohio State University
Session report by Mary Manning

Beth Russell and Amy McCrory are two Ohio State University Library professionals who share a cross-collection interest and enthusiasm. During their presentation, Russell, special collections cataloguer at the main library, and McCrory, an archivist from The Cartoon Research Library, provided a brief history of EAD technology (Encoded Archival Description), generally, and as related to Ohio State projects. From their own collaborative experience, they described how departments can work together to use EAD, both formally and informally. A point that they emphasized was the considerable advantage of EAD and its ability to allow searching across collections. McCrory's earlier work with EAD at The Cartoon Research Library involved developing a template with which student employees could be trained to accurately enter EAD data into a finding-aid template. Both librarians have been involved in creating EAD finding aids for other departments, and curators and archivists from these other departments are involved in deciding the layout of the finding aid. Russell and McCrory have had some success converting word-processed legacy collections to EAD, but it is still simpler to enter finding aids into this format. Shorter finding aids may actually be easier to re-key than to convert to EAD using conversion software. Standardization of finding aids also makes the conversion to EAD formats easier. Some challenges to providing EAD finding aids for OSUL special collections include the huge collections with diverse types of materials. Using other statewide EAD initiatives as models, Russell and McCrory hope to spearhead a statewide, collaborative initiative, using funds from an EAD template grant, in order to provide EAD templates to state organizations. McCrory and Russell spent the final segment of their presentation consulting with audience members to find out if and how archivists from institutions around the state would employ these templates.

Travel Diaries and Illustrations: Fueling the Imagination of Exploration

Presented by Anna Heran, University of Cincinnati
Session report by Lonna McKinley

Anna took attendees on a tour around the world via a look at travel/exploration diaries housed in the Univ of Cincinnati Libraries Archives and Rare Books Dept. She used images of front pieces and individual pages from various diaries dating as far back as 1552 up through the eighteenth century. The tour began in Europe where drawings mainly added to existing knowledge. Since this part of the world was familiar territory, detailed maps were often included. The tour continued through the somewhat familiar territories of Eastern Europe and Africa. These books included romanticized drawings of peoples and landscapes. The tour then began to move toward the less familiar areas of Asia and Australia. Univ of Cincinnati's collection of books from Australia exploration provides extremely interesting artwork and depictions of the native peoples, the landscape, and examinations of flora and fauna. The maps lack detail because of less familiarity. The tour then headed off toward the Arctic and Antarctica. Depictions from both of these areas usually included drawings of the ships amongst the icebergs along with depiction of the flora and fauna. Exploration/travel diaries of North America included maps that had details in the East, but were basically blank in the West. These diaries also included depictions of the natives, tools and implements, and of course the flora and fauna. The tour ended in South America where diaries from the Spanish and French included maps of settlements laid out by the explorers. Anna concluded by noting that although commercial and political motivation drove these explorations, many sideline benefits came from the tremendous gains in knowledge.

Exploring the Castles of Culture: The Expressive Shaping of Library Architecture

Presented by Kevin Grace, University of Cincinnati

Session report by Lonna McKinley

Kevin explored the ways in which library architecture has conveyed the perceptions people have had of books. In medieval times precious books were locked in heavy forbidding safes. Books were a most precious commodity and had to be safeguarded. As time passed, books in university libraries were placed on study carrels or on shelves; however, they were still under lock and key by means of being chained to the carrels and shelves. The architecture of libraries reflected this sense of importance and security by creating forbidden majestic fortresses as seen in the slides Kevin presented. Kevin also pointed out similarities in the architecture of libraries and churches, which conveyed the sense of holiness of the Book. When municipal libraries began to appear, they had to be grand as well. Philanthropists such as Peabody and Morgan created grand research libraries with architecture that reflected their ability to spend the money necessary. The Library of Congress had to be grand as well.

Kevin pointed out how it could not be just a building. It had to house the written word that conveyed American culture and therefore had to be grand and majestic. In the 19th century, public libraries began to appear. They were often housed in buildings that had other functions as well. The 1880s saw a rise in Sunday School libraries. When these various types of libraries began to be able to devote an entire building to the single purpose of a library, the architecture reflected a cathedral theme often with a tower. This notion was a return to the majestic fortresses theme. When Andrew Carnegie chose to endow Midwest towns with libraries, the architecture had a very strong unchanging theme that reflected a fortress. Kevin pointed out how the design of the Carnegie libraries created a central circulation desk so that the menacing Librarian was the first thing a visitor would see.

Over time academic libraries became more utilitarian. They were often the center of campus. Their architecture was grandiose. Kevin showed how Blegan Library at the University of Cincinnati uses its architectural features to convey a sense of literature and history of books which is to impress you with the idea you are entering a holy place.

Kevin ended with a quote from Henry Ward Beecher "A Library is not a luxury but one of the necessities of Life."

Closing Plenary by Dr. Richard Cox

Session report by Gillian Hill

Dr Richard Cox, of the University of Pittsburgh, delivered a thought provoking closing plenary address, titled, "Exploring American Archival Knowledge in the Twentieth Century." He examined the development of archival knowledge as reflected in the publications.

Early archival publications tended to be practical works focussed on practice in the field. Later, the influential work of T. R. Schellenberg in the 1950s, reflected a time of self-conscious archival theory, where archivists set principles, and collected and analyzed data about practice. Records management texts began about this time. The split between records management and archives grew in the 1960s, and through the 1970s more and more specialist manuals appeared. The Society of American Archivists introduced their basic manual series at this time. By the 1980s, however, scholarly monographs on archival work began to arrive. Dr Cox cited the iconoclastic work of David Bearman, for example. Often, the writers themselves were from fields other than archives. In the last twenty years, there have been articles written on every aspect of archival work. More students are

studying for PhDs in archival studies, and are producing dissertations on narrow, specialist topics. Recently, articles on the web, and electronic journals have also added to materials available for study. Dr Cox thinks that, rather than a convergence of related disciplines, the archival profession is splitting into a thousand pieces, but that the proliferation and variety of writings on archives have enriched the public knowledge. “We must continue to examine the literature”, Dr Cox told us in closing, “Schellenberg didn’t say everything that we need to know”.

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