

**Notes File for the following presentation:**

**“Check-Up: A Preliminary Assessment of the Vitality of Regional Archival Associations”**

**Presented at the Society of Ohio Archives annual conference, May 2017**

**By George W. Bain**

### *Session Proposal Abstract*

From the perspective of an archivist, an important part of keeping history alive is to have professional organizations that actively represent archivists and the archival community, and help promote the identification, organization, preservation and use of the rich cultural resources with which we work. How does SOA stack up against its counterparts? The session will examine and analyze regional archival associations across the USA through a check list-type instrument that will consider the activities and projects carried out by the various regional groups. For example, do they have a strategic plan? Do they hold an annual conference? Do they have an awards program? Do they have a newsletter? Do they host a web site? Do they maintain a blog (and is this current)? Do they utilize social media? Do they have a mentoring program? The methodology will be to survey only the web sites of the regional organizations listed on the site of the Regional Archival Associations Consortium (RAAC)

<http://www2.archivists.org/groups/regional-archival-associations-consortium-raac/membership-composition>>. The more than 40 associations will be broken down into the three groups found there: multi-state, statewide, and local. The findings will be organized into a spread sheet format.

### *Spreadsheet*

The data collected and charted will be found in the related spreadsheet file.

### *Explanations of and Comments on the Columns Used*

The categories were:

**Year founded:** The first big clump is for state-level and multi-state groups that burgeoned in the 1970s.

**Mission statement:** Most of these with a “yes” were specifically stated but, in a judgment call, a few statement not identified as such fulfilled this function while others had text that included mission statement elements but were too broadly stated and thus were not included.

**Awards:** These were divided in three sub-categories—awards for students (primarily for scholarships to meetings), awards for professional development (or continuing education) (particularly for staff members in professional positions who may also be students simultaneously), and awards for merit (or distinguished service or outstanding achievement). Two things not distinguished here are (1) merit awards that are limited to archivists only or awards for both archivists and as friends and supporters, and (2) awards given to students who do well at state National History Day contests. For the latter, several states give awards for this program but Ohio is the only one seen that reaches out to include state-level NHD award winners on its web site.

**Newsletters:** This column gives the frequency of issuance (e.g., semi-annual or quarterly). If a year date is given, these were the years for the most recent issues posted on the web site. In some ways, where new tools have developed, blogs (or RSS feeds) now cover this function of communication. And the local Three Rivers Archivists group (Pittsburgh) operates solely through Face Book.

**Journals:** Journals sponsored by RAAC groups are mostly by a regional group whether by itself or collaboratively; the Society of Georgia Archivists' journal *Provenance* is the primary exception.

**Web Sites:** As expected, most groups have a web site.

**Blogs:** Most groups maintain a blog and are thus in the Yes column.

**Listserv:** A majority of groups have a listserv, with a drop-off (compared to blogs) among the local groups.

**Social Media:** Most groups utilize social media in some fashion or other. These include FaceBook (FB or F), Twitter (TWT or T), Linked-In (LI or L), Pinterest (P), Google Plus (G or G+), Instagram (I), and Flickr (Fl).

[Further note--This part of the study—Listserves, blogs, and social media--is a bit fuzzy and could use tighter definitions, e.g., into which column should RSS feeds belong? But the availability of social media provide groups with more flexibility through which members can communicate.]

**Meetings:** Multi-state and state-level groups generally meet once or twice a year, and frequently one is a full-blown conference while the others a special topics symposium. It is for this reason the listing for SOA with its annual conference in the spring and joint meeting with the local history alliance group has a 1.5; there could have been more with rating. With their smaller scale of geographic proximity of membership and more informal nature, local groups have a tendency to be more varied with meetings.

**Workshops:** This activity was defined to include training courses generated internally and to exclude externally developed (e.g., hosting an SAA workshop).

**Mentorship Programs:** This is a newer type of activity and only a few groups currently have them but this is a type of programming that merits serious consideration.

**Archives Month:** A number of groups still conduct Archives Month activities but posters are a waning characteristic on web sites. Where this program is going is subject to further review.

*Strategic Plans: This was an item ultimately NOT included. There were two few and these were too uneven for any meaningful consideration.*

### ***A Last Point***

Among state-level groups, the Society of Georgia Archivists is clearly the heads-up leader within this set of groups.

For further questions, discussion, etc. the author's email address is [bain@ohio.edu](mailto:bain@ohio.edu).

| <b>Multi-State Groups</b>                 |             |                |               |                       |                                |                     |                 |                   |                |            |             |                 |                     |                 |                  |                |                       |
|---|-------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Organization Name</b>                  | <b>Year</b> | <b>Mission</b> | <b>Awards</b> | <b>Student Awards</b> | <b>Professional Dev Awards</b> | <b>Merit Awards</b> | <b>Programs</b> | <b>Newsletter</b> | <b>Journal</b> | <b>Web</b> | <b>Blog</b> | <b>Listserv</b> | <b>Social Media</b> | <b>Meetings</b> | <b>Workshops</b> | <b>Mentors</b> | <b>Archives Month</b> |
| Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists   | 1973        |                |               | yes                   | yes                            | yes                 |                 | 2015              | yes            | yes        | yes         |                 | FB                  | 2 x             |                  | yes            |                       |
| Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference | 1972        | yes            |               | yes                   | yes                            | yes                 |                 | 4 x               |                | yes        | yes         | yes             |                     | 2 x             | yes              |                | 2014                  |
| Midwest Archives Conference               | 1972        |                |               | yes                   | yes                            | yes                 |                 | 4 x               | yes            | yes        | yes         |                 |                     | 2 x             | yes              |                |                       |
| New England Archivists                    | 1973        | yes            |               |                       | yes                            | yes                 |                 | 4 x               | yes            | yes        |             | yes             | FB/L/P/T            | 2 x             | yes              | yes            |                       |
| Northwest Archivists                      | 1977        |                |               | yes                   | yes                            |                     |                 |                   | yes            | yes        | yes         | yes             | FB/TWT              | 1 x             |                  | yes            |                       |
| Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists      |             | yes            |               |                       | yes                            |                     |                 | 4 x               | yes            | yes        | yes         | yes             |                     | 2 x             |                  |                |                       |
| Society of Southwest Archivists           | 1972        | yes            |               |                       | yes                            | yes                 |                 | 4 x               |                | yes        | yes         |                 | FB                  | 1 x             | yes              |                |                       |

| State-level Groups                             |       |         |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         |     |      |          |              |          |           |         |                |
|--|-------|---------|--------|----------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------|------------|---------|-----|------|----------|--------------|----------|-----------|---------|----------------|
| Organization Name                              | Year  | Mission | Awards | Student Awards | Professional Dev Awards | Merit Awards | Programs | Newsletter | Journal | Web | Blog | Listserv | Social Media | Meetings | Workshops | Mentors | Archives Month |
| Arizona Archives Alliance                      |       |         |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         |     | 2016 | yes      |              |          |           |         |                |
| Association of Hawaii Archivists               | 1989  | yes     |        |                |                         | yes          |          |            |         | yes | yes  |          |              | 1 x      |           |         |                |
| Consortium of Iowa Archivists                  | 1998  |         |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         | yes | 2016 | yes      |              | 1 x      |           |         |                |
| Kentucky Council on Archives                   | 1976  | yes     |        |                |                         |              |          | 3 x        |         | yes | yes  | yes      | F/T/L/R      | 2 x      |           |         | yes            |
| Louisiana Archives and Manuscripts Association | 1998  | yes     |        | yes            | yes                     | yes          |          | 2 x        |         | yes |      | yes      |              | 1 x      | pre-conf  |         |                |
| Maine Archives and Museums                     |       | yes     |        |                |                         |              |          | 4 x        |         | yes | yes  | yes      | FB/LI/TWT    | 1 x      |           |         |                |
| Michigan Archival Association                  | 1958  |         |        | yes            |                         |              |          | 2 x        |         | yes | yes  | yes      | FB           | 1 x      |           |         |                |
| New Hampshire Archives Group                   | 1993  | yes     |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         | yes | yes  | yes      | FB           | 2 x      |           |         |                |
| New York Archives Conference                   | 2004* |         |        | yes            | yes                     |              |          |            |         | yes | yes  |          | F/L/T        | 1 x      |           |         |                |
| Society of Alabama Archivists                  | c1998 |         |        | yes            |                         | yes          |          | 2010       |         | yes |      | yes      | FB           |          |           |         |                |
| Society of California Archivists               | 1971  | yes     |        | yes            | yes                     | yes          |          | 4 x        | yes     | yes |      | yes      | FB/LI/TWT    | 1 x      | yes       |         |                |
| Society of Florida Archivists                  | 1983  |         |        | yes            | yes                     | yes          |          | 4 x        |         | yes | yes  | yes      |              | 1 x      | pre-conf  |         | yes            |
| Society of Georgia Archivists                  | 1969  |         |        | yes            | yes                     | yes          |          | 4 x        | yes     | yes | yes  | yes      | FB/TWT       | 2 x      | yes       | yes     | yes            |
| Society of Indiana Archivists                  | 1972  |         |        | yes            | yes                     |              |          | yes        |         | yes | yes  | yes      | FB           | 1 x      | yes       |         |                |
| Society of Missouri Archivists                 | 1977  | yes     |        |                |                         |              |          | 2015       |         | yes | 2016 | yes      | FB/T/G/R     | 1 x      |           |         | 2012           |
| Society of North Carolina Archivists           | 1984  |         |        | yes            | yes                     | yes          |          | RSS        | 2012    | yes | yes  | yes      | FB/T         | 1 x      |           |         | yes            |
| Society of Ohio Archivists                     | 1968  | yes     |        | yes            | yes                     | yes          |          | 2 x        |         | yes | yes  | yes      | F/L/P        | 1.5 x    |           |         | yes            |
| Society of Tennessee                           | 1977  |         |        | yes            | yes                     | yes          |          | 2015       |         | yes | yes  |          | RSS          | 1 x      |           |         | yes            |
| South Carolina Archival Association            | 1999  |         |        | yes            | yes                     |              |          | 2016       |         | yes | yes  | yes      | FB           | 1 x      |           |         | 2015           |

| Local Groups                                       |      |         |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         |      |      |          |              |          |           |         |                |
|--|------|---------|--------|----------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------|------------|---------|------|------|----------|--------------|----------|-----------|---------|----------------|
| Organization Name                                  | Year | Mission | Awards | Student Awards | Professional Dev Awards | Merit Awards | Programs | Newsletter | Journal | Web  | Blog | Listserv | Social Media | Meetings | Workshops | Mentors | Archives Month |
| Archivists of Central Texas                        |      |         |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         | yes  |      | yes      | FB           |          |           |         |                |
| Archivists of the Houston Area                     |      | yes     |        |                |                         |              |          | yes (E)    |         | yes  | yes  |          | FB/TWT       |          |           |         | yes            |
| Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York    | 1979 | yes     |        |                |                         | yes          |          | 2015       |         | yes  | yes  | yes      | F/FI/L/T     | 1 x +    | yes       |         | yes            |
| Association of St Louis Area Archivists            | 1972 |         |        |                |                         | yes          |          |            |         | yes  |      | yes      |              | 2 x      |           |         |                |
| Capitol Area Archivists of New York                |      | yes     |        |                |                         | yes          |          | 2 x        |         | yes  | yes  | yes      |              | 1 x      |           |         |                |
| Central Oklahoma Archivists League                 | no   | web     | page   |                |                         |              |          |            |         |      |      |          |              |          |           |         |                |
| Charleston Archives, Libraries and Museums Council |      |         |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         | yes  | yes  |          | FB           | mnth     |           |         |                |
| Chicago Area Archivists                            | 1982 |         |        |                |                         | yes          |          |            |         | yes  | yes  | yes      | FB/G+        | 1 x +    |           |         |                |
| Cleveland Archival Roundtable                      | 1989 |         |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         | yes  | yes  |          |              |          |           |         |                |
| Delaware Valley Archivists Group                   | 1980 |         |        |                |                         |              |          | 2014       |         | yes  | yes  | yes      | FB/TWT       | 4 x      |           |         | yes            |
| Greater New Orleans Archivists                     |      |         |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         | yes  | yes  | yes      |              | c. 3x    |           |         |                |
| Kansas City Area Archivists                        | not  | current |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         |      |      |          |              |          |           |         |                |
| Los Angeles Archivists Collective                  | 2014 | yes     |        |                |                         |              |          |            | yes     | yes  | yes  | yes      | F/T/Ig       | 2 x      |           |         |                |
| Metro Detroit Archivists League                    | no   | web     | page   |                |                         |              |          |            |         |      |      |          |              |          |           |         |                |
| Miami Valley Archives Roundtable                   | 1991 |         |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         | yes  | 2012 |          | FB/TWT       | 4 x      |           |         |                |
| Saint Louis Area Religious Archivists              |      |         |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         | 2015 |      |          |              |          |           |         |                |
| Seattle Area Archivists                            | 1985 |         |        |                |                         |              |          | 2015       |         | yes  | yes  |          |              |          |           |         |                |
| Southeastern Wisconsin Archives Group              |      |         |        |                |                         |              |          |            |         | yes  | 2016 | yes      | F/T/G+       | 2 x      |           |         |                |
| Three Rivers Archivists                            | no   | web     | page   | .....          |                         |              |          |            |         |      |      | .....    | FB           |          |           |         |                |
| Twin Cities Archives Round Table                   | 1982 | yes     |        | yes            | yes                     |              |          |            |         | yes  | yes  | yes      | FB           | 2 x      |           |         |                |