

# KCAA --- *The Dusty Shelf* --- 1997

Eastern Kansas ----- Vol. 16, No. 3 ----- Western Missouri

---

## INDEX

- editorial: [Weird Reference Questions](#)
  - column: [The Corner Chair](#)
  - announcement: [Grave Interests](#)
  - announcement: [Kansas Archives Week](#)
  - minutes: [ANNUAL MEETING and BANQUET, June 14, 1997](#)
  - report: [Membership Committee](#)
  - report: [Education Committee](#)
  - announcement: [WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT IT???](#)
  - minutes: [FALL QUARTERLY MEETING, September 18, 1997](#)
  - announcement: [NEW KCAA LISTSERVE](#)
  - announcement: [KCAA Directory of Repositories](#)
  - column: [MidAmerican Archives -- News of KCAA People & Repositories](#)
  - column: [Websites of Interest](#)
  - column: [Archives Nation -- Happenings that Promote Archives and History](#)
  - column: [Newsletter Exchange -- Local, State, and Regional Association News](#)
  - column: [Publications -- Books, Pamphlets, Videos, Et Cetera](#)
  - announcement: [Copyright Extension](#)
  - [KCAA OFFICERS](#)
  - [THE DUSTY SHELF](#) publication notes
  - [1997-1998 CALENDAR \(December to June\)](#)
- 

## WEIRD REFERENCE QUESTIONS

*Move Over Archivists, Librarians Get Them, Too!*

One of KCAA's blessings is our occasional humor columnist, Bob Knecht. Over the years, he has shared "strange but true" stories of archivists valiantly confronting the ironic, the absurd, and the downright daffy in the course of earning their daily bread.

Archivists are not the only ones who confront weird situations. The very folks who keep Bob's humor column well-supplied leave our repositories and go out into the big wide world to interact

with waitresses, police officers, doctors and nurses, and ministers—among many others. They also show up at the desk of the friendly (and not so friendly) reference librarian.

LIBSUP-L, the Library Paraprofessionals Listserve, had a thread in July 1997 concerning "Weird Reference Questions." An enterprising soul compiled some of the items shared and it has circulated further. Names and locations were deleted to protect the reputations of all concerned. The situations described are all real. Some are downright embarrassing. Thanks to Maria Boccia at UNC-Chapel Hill, who forwarded it on to your editor.

### **Questions to North American Reference Librarians:**

"Do you have books here?"

"Do you have a list of all the books written in the English language?"

"Do you have a list of all the books I've ever read?"

"I'm looking for Robert James Waller's book, *Waltzing through Rapids*." (Actual title wanted: "Slow Waltz in Cedar Bend.")

"Do you have that book by Rushdie: 'Satanic Nurses'?" (Actual title: "Satanic Verses")

"Where is the reference desk?" This was asked of a person sitting at a desk who had hanging above her head a sign saying "REFERENCE DESK"!

"Which outlets in the library are appropriate for my hairdryer?"

"Can you tell me why so many famous Civil War battles were fought on National Park Sites?"

"Do you have any books with photographs of dinosaurs?"

"I need to find out Ibid's first name for my bibliography."

"Why don't you have any books by Ibid? He's written a lot of important stuff."

"I'm looking for information on carpal tunnel syndrome. I think I'm having trouble with it in my neck."

"Is the basement upstairs?" (Asked at First Floor Reference Desk)

**And then, there are the . . .**

## Actual Reference Interviews

**Patron:** "I'm looking for a book." **Mental answer 1:** "Well, you're in the right place." **Mental answer 2:** "Here's one." (Hand over nearest volume.) **Audible answer :** "Can you be a little more specific?"

**Patron:** "I got a quote from a book I turned in last week but I forgot to write down the author and title. It's big and red and I found it on the top shelf. Can you find it for me?" **Mental answer:** "Books classified by color are shelved downstairs in the third sub-basement." **Audible answer:** "What were you looking for when you found the book the first time?"

### In an art library:

**Patron:** Do you have any books on Art? **Ref:** Yes. Did you have a certain artist in mind, or a period or style in mind? **Patron:** No. **Ref:** I guess you'll have to look through our 120,000 books and see if you find anything. **Patron:** OK.

**Patron:** "Do you have anything good to read?" **Reference person** (getting her audible and mental answers mixed up): "No ma'am. I'm afraid we have 75,000 books, and they're all duds."

**Telephone patron:** Do you have books on leaves? **Library worker:** Nope, we keep them on shelves. (She then hung up. Can you tell that she's not too fond of reference duty?)

**Caller:** "I have a painting by Vincent Van Gogh. It's all blue with swirly stars on it. Can you tell me where I can get it appraised?" **Ref.:** "Sir, does it say 'Metropolitan Museum of Art' on the bottom? It does? Well, what you have there is a poster that they sell in the gift shop. I think they're about \$10.00."

**Patron:** "I am looking for a globe of the earth. **Ref:** "We have a table-top model over here."

**Patron:** "No, that's not good enough. Don't you have a life size?" **Ref** (after a short pause): "Yes, but it's in use right now!"

**Patron:** "I have to write a two-page paper on the Civil War, can you help?" **Ref:** "What aspect of the war interests you?" **Patron:** "What aspect? You mean I have to choose something in particular about it? I thought I'd just write about the whole thing."

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## The Corner Chair

Bobbi Rahder

## *KCAA Senior Co-chair*

Thanks to KCAA's voting members for selecting Lynn Ward and me as co-chairs for the 1997-98 year. Thanks, also, to Denise Morrison for her dedication as last year's senior co-chair. She made it very easy for me to be the junior co-chair, and I learned everything I know about leadership from her. And thanks to the committee members and chairs for their work last year. Everyone did a wonderful job, and KCAA is more vital because of your work.

We enjoyed a companionable evening at the Annual Meeting on June 14 at the Colony Steakhouse and Lobster Pot in Kansas City. Denise was a wonderful auctioneer, and we raised \$361 for the Minority Scholarship Fund. The officers elected for 1997-98 are: Senior Co-chair: Bobbi Rahder; Junior Co-chair: Lynn Ward; Secretary: Jelain Chubb; and Treasurer: Mary Hawkins. The committee chairs for the upcoming year are: **Awards & Nominations:** David Boutros, **Education:** Bob Knecht, **Membership:** Marilyn Burlingame & Bettie Swiontek, **Newsletter:** Stan Ingersol, **Publicity:** (open), **Publications:** Katherine Long, **Scholarship:** Ron Romig, **Minority Internship:** Pat Michaelis & Amy Leimkuhler

Thanks to new and returning committee chairs alike for committing themselves for this year. To other KCAA members: committee work is extremely rewarding and provides a good chance to get acquainted with other KCAA'ers. Besides, it's also fun! Please volunteer for a committee so that KCAA can become even stronger.

Lynn and I are planning some exciting things for this year. We would like to increase both membership and participation in KCAA. We also would like to make KCAA a more visible presence in the Kansas City Area, so if any members have artistic talent and would like to design a new logo and letterhead for KCAA, please contact me or Lynn as soon as possible. By publicizing our organization in professional journals and aggressively seeking new members, we will be recognized by the general public as the archives professionals we are.

Among the upcoming events Lynn and I have planned for this year are:

*A Chance to Socialize!* KCAA sponsored a potluck picnic, August 17, from 12-3 p.m., at Sar Ko Par Park, in Lenexa, Kansas. Those present celebrated summer together before settling down to their fall obligations.

*KCAA was a partner* with the Kansas State Historical Society in celebrating Kansas Archives Week. More on that subject later.

*We would like to incorporate discussion of current issues* into the quarterly meetings. At the September 18th meeting at Save A Connie Museum, Dave Boutros and Nancy Sherbert will lead an informal exchange regarding sharing archival information via web sites on the internet. Plan to join this discussion of a complex and controversial issue!

*The Education Committee is working on a plan* to participate with teacher organizations to train teachers on using archives for primary research. These workshops will be conducted in

conjunction with the publication of a brochure, sponsored by the Publication Committee, on how to use archives for school projects.

We have many more ideas, and will share them through the newsletter in the coming months.

Thanks for giving us this chance to lead KCAA. Contact us at any time with your ideas for meetings, publications, or other KCAA-related affairs.

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## ***Grave Interests***

On November 1st, John Mark Lambertson, director of the National Frontier Trails Center in Independence, MO, gave another slide presentation culled from his research on historical tombstones. The event was held at the National Frontier Trails Center, and was a resounding success. The presentation, "Chiseled History: More Interesting, Unusual and Humorous Tombstone Inscriptions," resulted from John Mark's research in 50 states and dozens of foreign countries where he has gathered photographs and inscriptions as a member of the Association of Tombstone Studies. John Mark generously donated his services for the talk, and at \$5 per person, we were able to raise \$250 for KCAA. Thank you to all who participated in making this event successful.

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## ***Kansas Archives Week***

*KCAA joined the Kansas State Historical Society in co-sponsoring Kansas Archives Week on October 19-25. KCAA officers Bobbi Rahder, Lynn Ward, Jelain Chubb, and Mary Hawkins were present when Governor Bill Graves signed the Kansas Archives Week Proclamation on October 1. KCAA received a copy of the official Governor's Proclamation and the pen used to sign it, which will be stored in the KCAA Archives. KCAA will also co-sponsor Kansas Preservation Week in the spring. Watch for more information about Preservation Week*

*activities in future issues of The Dusty Shelf and at our online website.*

return to [INDEX](#)

---

minutes: [ANNUAL MEETING and BANQUET, June 14, 1997](#)

---

## **Membership Committee Report**

*September 18, 1997*

**Marilyn Burlingame & Bettie Swiontek, Co-chairs**

We have completed a "quickie" membership drive. Thirty-two "last chance" forms were sent to members who had not renewed for this year, and 42 forms were sent to former members selected from old directories. Two hundred and eighty-one forms were sent to various societies, individuals, and institutions in eastern Kansas and western Missouri. As of September 18, ten members have contributed \$207.50 to the scholarship fund and eleven members have contributed \$142 to the minority internship fund.

return to [INDEX](#)

---

## **Education Committee Report**

*September 18, 1997*

The Education Committee has held four meetings since KCAA's annual meeting. We invited educators and those working with them to these meetings. Mark Adams (Truman Library education director), Bob Richardson, a teacher at Northern Hills Junior High School in Topeka and independent educator; and Paul Stuewe, a teacher at Lawrence High School, responded. All three of them gave us valuable suggestions in approaching a dialogue with teachers from the educators' point of view.

Our initial plan was to do a symposium in the usual format and invite teachers to participate with us. Our guests convinced us, however, that teachers won't come to a presentation by an unknown group on their own time (in the summer) on a topic that may be strange or intimidating to many of them. They suggested KCAA needed to gain some credibility in the educational community, take presentations to the teachers' locales (conferences, workshops, district in-service days), have

a plan of action to increase visibility and expose them to archives over time, possibly gear a longer program or presentation to a research theme, possibly combine instruction and dialogue about archives and archival research with hands-on research in an archives, and save all-day symposium for a later date after KCAA gains some exposure and credibility.

What has evolved is our current thinking: prepare short (1-4 hr.) presentations to take to conferences, teachers' meetings, etc.; assemble handouts, information about archival research, information about area archives, possibly assembling a research theme; give presentations at educators' conferences or individual districts' in-service programs; and as a finale, do a one- or two-day symposium/dialogue between teachers and archivists.

The Publications Committee is working on potential handouts, and members of the Education Committee are checking into what other organizations have already done. We are evaluating others' publications (MARAC, Idaho State Historical Society, N.Y. State Archives, National Archives, etc.) for possible use.

We discovered there is no overall listing of currently-available educational/outreach programs/packets, etc., for KCAA member institutions, so we may do such a list as a service to ourselves and educators.

We are always interested in having interested KCAA members join us.

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT IT???

The Education Committee discovered recently that there is no resource that lists the various educational programs or activities available through the numerous archives in the Kansas City region. And so we have decided to compile such a list as part of our strategy to develop informational materials useful to area teachers. We urge you—the members of KCAA—to send descriptions, brochures, publication lists, program and presentation descriptions, or any other type of summary related to your institution's educational or outreach activities. We particularly seek items that:

pertain specifically to conducting research in archival collections

programs, information, and activities for students

materials to assist teachers in using primary sources in their teaching and in guiding student research projects.

These should be sent to: Bob Knecht, Library and Archives Division, Center for Historical Research, Kansas State Historical Society, 6425 SW 6th Ave., Topeka, Kansas 66615-1099. You can also send e-mail to [bknecht@hspo.wpo.state.ks.us](mailto:bknecht@hspo.wpo.state.ks.us) or faxes to (785) 272-8682.

[return to INDEX](#)

---

[minutes: FALL QUARTERLY MEETING, September 18, 1997](#)

---

## ANNOUNCING THE NEW KCAA LISTSERVE

*Kansas City Area Archivists has established a listserv to facilitate the distribution of its announcements & other information among members & friends. To subscribe, please send the words*

### **SUBSCRIBE KCAA**

*as the text of a message (without a subject in the subject field) to:*

[KCAA-REQUEST@cctr.umkc.edu](mailto:KCAA-REQUEST@cctr.umkc.edu)

*Postings to the list should be sent to:*

[KCAA@cctr.umkc.edu](mailto:KCAA@cctr.umkc.edu)

*Direct questions to Dave Boutros at: [BoutrosD@umkc.edu](mailto:BoutrosD@umkc.edu) or call (816) 235-1543*

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## MidAmerican Archives

*News of KCAA People & Repositories*

## Miller Nichols Library



Three collections relating to popular music in 20th century America have been acquired by the Miller Nichols Library at the University of Missouri at Kansas City. These collections are jointly held by the library's Special Collections department and the Marr Sound Archives.

The **Arthur B. Church Collection** was received in July 1996 from Arthur B. Church, Jr. Arthur B. Church was a broadcasting pioneer who owned and operated KMBC radio and television stations in Kansas City, Missouri, from the 1920s through the late 1950s. He also was the creative force behind several syndicated radio shows, including the *Texas Rangers* and *Phenomenon*. The collection documents Church's thirty years in radio and tv. It includes photos, published sheet music, scrap books, advertising brochures, contracts, telegrams, station newsletters, and broadcast recordings. Over 1,500 recordings comprise the bulk of the collection. These include 16" instantaneous cut and transcription discs, and metal parts used to manufacture the transcription discs. The collection's non-recorded portion is about 1 linear foot. The collection is not processed fully, but an initial inventory is available upon request.

The **Mel Lewis Collection** was donated by Mrs. Doris Sokoloff, Lewis's wife, in 1996. Jazz drummer Mel Lewis (1929-1990) was born Melvin Sokoloff in Buffalo, N.Y. In 1966 Lewis joined trumpeter Thad Jones to form their famous big band. Jones left the band after twelve productive years, leaving Lewis in charge. Lewis put Bob Brookmeyer in charge of the musical direction of the band and renamed the band the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra. The orchestra exists today as the Village Vanguard Orchestra. Lewis was best known for his small group approach to big band drumming. Another trademark was the "wide beat," which refers to the loose and swinging way Lewis played the ride cymbal. He was among the first drummers to vary the ride cymbal beat. The collection includes sound recordings, music scores, correspondence, festival programs, periodicals, awards, videos, date books, scrapbooks, photos, and contracts. It spans the years 1938 to 1991, but the bulk of materials document the 1960s until Lewis' death in 1990. A series of taped interviews in which Lewis discusses his drumming and music theory are a particular strength of the collection. The unprocessed collection is approximately 8 linear feet and contains over 300 sound recordings.

The **Wilbur "Buck" Clayton Collection** was donated to the Miller Nichols Library by his widow, Patricia Clayton, in 1995. The Collection spans Clayton's long career from 1928-1991. There are approximately 5000 items, including photographs, correspondence, contracts, sound recordings, printed and manuscript band arrangements, lead sheets, and assorted ephemera. Clayton (1911-1991) was a seminal figure in the evolution of jazz and was a distinguished arranger, composer, trumpeter and band leader. His career began in 1929 in California. After performing with Earl Dancers' band, Clayton moved to Shanghai in 1934 with his own band. He returned to the United States in 1936 and joined the Count Basie Band as a leading soloist and arranger. Clayton remained with the Basie Band until drafted in 1943. After World War II, Clayton led his sextet in national and international performances.

For more information regarding the following collections, please contact the Special Collections department (235-1532) or the Marr Sound Archives (235-2798).

## Southwest Missouri State University

David E. Richards recently became Head of Special Collections and Archives at Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield. He has degrees from Western Illinois University and Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. He is a member of SAA and the Academy of Certified Archivists. Before returning to the Midwest, Richards served as the Special Collections Librarian for the McCain Library and Archives at the University of Southern Mississippi. While in Mississippi, David also served as Vice-President/President Elect of the Society of Mississippi Archivists and chaired the Mississippi Library Association's Special Collections Round Table. Richards has also worked with the special collections division at LSU's Hill Memorial Library, served as a project archivist with the Louisiana State Archives, and held a nine-month fellowship with the Illinois State Archives. David became the Head of the Special Collections and Archives for SMSU Libraries in February of 1997. Basic responsibility includes providing reference assistance and overall collection management for the various manuscript, archival, and special collections of Southwest Missouri State University. The department consists of five main collections: the University Archives, the recently acquired Ozarks Labor Union Archives, the William Jack Jones French Literary Collection, the Southwest Missouri Collection, and the Rare Books Collection. In June, the department hired Jennifer Boone as Special Collections Associate. Boone, a Springfield native, holds a B.A. from SMSU in history/library science. She has served as an intern in Special Collections and Archives at SMSU and at the History Museum for Springfield and Greene County. SMSU's Special Collections department has a web page with information on hours, policies, and collections. The web page is at <http://www.smsu.edu/contrib/library/specol/>.

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## Websites of Interest:

Southern Oregon Historical Society web page: <http://www.sohs.org>

New England Archivists' web site: <http://www.lib.umb.edu/newengarch/>

Finding 10,000 pages of information on the Web about *preservation*--from making jam to the Sistine Chapel? See current information on digital preservation and access at the Preserving Access to Digital Information "What's happening?" page: <http://www.nla.gov.au/dnc/tf2001/padi/happen.html> .

What do James Bond and Mr. Bean have in common with agents Mulder and Scully? A connection to "The Fictional World of Archives" at: <http://www.victoria.tc.ca/~mattison/ficarch/index.htm>

"Hearts at Home: Southern Women in the Civil War" examines wartime activities and words of white and black women in the Confederate States: <http://www.lib.virginia.edu/exhibits/hearts>

Library of Virginia's "The Common Wealth: Treasures from the Collections of The Library of Virginia," is at: <http://leo.vsla.edu>

The revised "Ready, 'Net, Go! Archival Internet Resources" web site claims links to every archives and archival resource in the metaverse:

<http://www.tulane.edu/~lmiller/ArchivesResources.html>

The Center for American History at The University of Texas at Austin revised web pages, with new photographs & documents, at: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/CAH/>

The Billy Graham Center Archives home page lists resources for religious congregations that want to start or refine a congregational archive program:

<http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/caw.html>

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## Archives Nation

### *History, Archives, and the Public Interest*

## Roy Blunt Appointed to NHPRC

On May 22, Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich appointed Rep. Roy Blunt of Missouri as the House of Representatives' member on the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. Blunt, an instructor at Drury College from 1973 to 1983, was Missouri Secretary of State from 1985 to 1993. Senator James Jeffords (R-VT), was also appointed to the NHPRC to replace retired Senator Mark Hatfield. (Page Putnam Miller, NCC Washington Update, May 29, 1997).

## National Archives Digitized Images on Internet

The digitized images of some of the National Archives' most significant documents are now available to the public through the Internet. As part of NARA's Electronic Access Project, 5,300 documents are the first of approximately 120,000 items that will be digitized and available electronically over the next year. U. S. Archivist John Carlin stated that "the Electronic Access Project will enable anyone, anywhere, with a computer connected to the Internet to search descriptions of NARA's nationwide holdings and view digital copies of many important documents." The digitized materials including photographs, drawings, maps, charts and textual documents and can be accessed on the World Wide Web through the NARA ARCHIVAL INFORMATION LOCATOR (NAIL) at <http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html>. Additional documents will be added to NAIL monthly through April 1999. The documents were submitted by NARA units across the country.

# NHPRC Revises Strategic Plan

On June 19 the National Historical Publications and Records Commission unanimously adopted a strategic plan that revises the plan adopted in November 1996. The November strategic plan had only two items in the top funding priority: funding for state records and electronic records projects. The revised plan, effective in 1999, has three top level funding priorities: eight founding era documentary editing projects, state records projects, and supporting new opportunities posed by electronic technologies. The revised plan calls for up to 60% of its appropriated funds each year to be devoted to the three top level funding priorities and at least 40% of its appropriated funds for grants for other projects. The "other" category includes "projects to protect and otherwise make accessible historically significant records, to publish documentary editions other than the eight founding-era projects judged to be of critical importance, and to improve the methods, tools, and training of professionals engaged in documentary work." (Page Putnam Miller, NCC Washington Update, June 19, 1997)

# Court Rules Against National Archives

U.S. District Judge Paul Freidman ruled October 22 that the Archivist of the United States erred in allowing federal agencies to destroy electronic records and mail even when paper copies exist. The ruling was in the case of Public Citizen v. John Carlin. The Organization of American Historians, the American Historical Association, and the American Library Association, co-plaintiffs, challenged General Records Schedule 20, issued by the Archivist in 1995. It gave all federal agencies blanket approval to destroy all types of electronic mail and word processing records if paper copies exist. Judge Freidman stated that "the Archivist has abdicated to the various departments and agencies of the federal government his statutory responsibility under the Records Disposal Act to insure that records with administrative, legal, research or other value are preserved by federal agencies."

Freidman held that the general records schedule was designed to handle records concerning housekeeping functions, such as personnel, maintenance, and procurement--not unique program records. A State Department e-mail on an impending crisis and a GSA electronic file on procuring desks have different value. Friedman stated: "Congress did not intend that records of such disparate value be lumped together under one disposition schedule. Such a method for disposing of records is not consistent with the responsibility placed on the Archivist to insure the protection and preservation of valuable government records." He noted that "agencies, left to themselves, have a built-in incentive to dispose of records relating to their mistakes." Thus Congress has directed the Archivist to oversee the activities of federal agencies to ensure that the nation's documentary history is preserved for the public. The opinion also considered the unique value of electronic records. "Electronic communications are rarely identical to their paper counterparts," Judge Freidman wrote, but are "unique and distinct from printed versions of the same record." He emphasized that it is necessary and practical to destroy some electronic records. The issue: evaluating electronic records to distinguish valuable ones from useless ones. The Court ordered that General Records Schedule 20 is null and void. The Society of American Archivists was not a co-plaintiff in the case but issued a statement in May, 1997 that discussed

the problems with General Records Schedule 20. (Page Putnam Miller, NCC Washington Update, November 6, 1997).

## Assassination Records Board

In June the Congress of the United States reauthorized the JFK Assassination Records Review Board for one more year. The board is an independent Federal agency created to oversee the identification and release of records related to Kennedy's assassination. It has facilitated the transfer of nearly 10,000 documents to the National Archives for inclusion in the JFK collection, which now numbers approximately 3.1 million pages and is used extensively by researchers. Board members have stated that an additional year will allow them time to complete important work, especially on CIA records. (Page Putnam Miller, NCC Washington Update, July 2, 1997)

## Nixon Tape Tangle: To Cut or Not to Cut?

Congress passed the Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act in 1974. It called for the 3,700 hours of tape recordings and the records of the Nixon administration to be placed in the custody of the National Archives and stated that original materials should not be lost or destroyed, but that private portions of Nixon's conversations be returned to Nixon or his heirs. In spring 1997 U.S. District Judge Norma Holloway Johnson ruled that the National Archives must return the portions of the tapes that contain private conversations to the Nixon Estate "forthwith." The National Archives appealed her decision in June, arguing that cutting out personal portions of the tapes would be "tantamount to destroying them" since the tapes are old and deteriorating. Given the tapes' fragility, the National Archives has contended that they may be forced to return entire original tapes to Nixon's Estate. The National Archives would keep a master copy, which—in any case--has better audio quality than the original, if the 819 hours of "personal and private" material are excluded from the 3,700 hours of tapes. (Page Putnam Miller, NCC Washington Update, July 11, 1997).

## Destruction of Naval Records Investigated

A mid-November letter from Paul Gaffney, Chief of Naval Research, to U. S. Archivist John Carlin expressed the tremendous sense of loss that Navy researchers feel over the destruction of agency records by the National Archives. Gaffney stated that the records had permanent value constituted the core of the Naval Research Laboratory's corporate memory. The records included bound and numbered laboratory notebooks, and 600 cubic feet of correspondence and technical memoranda documenting the work of the pioneers of American radar, path-breaking acoustic and oceanographic research, early sonar research, the first U.S. satellite program, and the early rocket-based astronomical research. Gaffney contended that the Naval Research Laboratory received no advance notification of the National Archives' intent to destroy the records. Carlin responded by ordering an investigation and noted that "if the process is flawed, or the evaluation criteria are inadequate, then obviously the situation must be fixed." But he insisted that the records in question were destroyed according to "procedures established years ago for evaluating

naval laboratory records," and that Navy officials were consulted in the development of the disposition schedule. National Archives staff did not consider the material that was destroyed "to meet the tests for permanent value." Carlin also contended that the Navy was notified about the pending destruction and "raised no objection." Gaffney's letter proposed that the National Archives and the Navy Research Laboratory "form an independent ad hoc advisory group to review the case" and take steps to avoid a repetition in the future. The American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, and the Society of American Archivist have indicated to Gaffney that they would be willing to recommend individuals with appropriate expertise to serve on an independent review panel. (Page Putnam Miller, NCC Washington Update, November 19, 1997).

## Carter Library Descriptions on Internet

Descriptions of the collections held at the Jimmy Carter Library in Atlanta, Georgia, are now available on the Internet through the National Archives and Records Administration's website. The majority of holdings were donated to the National Archives in 1981 by President Jimmy Carter. These include President and Mrs. Carter's White House materials, and materials of their staffs. Over 37,000 descriptions represent 52 separate collections, and can guide researchers to nearly 7 million pages of publicly-available material available at the Carter library. The descriptions can be accessed at: <http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html>. (Press Release, November 26, 1997).

## National Archives Exhibits Amistad Materials

The National Archives is exhibiting materials related to Steven Spielberg's recent movie "Amistad." The Spanish slave ship Amistad entered American waters in 1839 after its human cargo mutinied near Cuba. Two years of legal maneuvers followed, but eventually the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that the Africans should go free and be allowed to return to Africa. The National Archives exhibit features that Supreme Court ruling and John Quincy Adams's written request for papers from the lower court trial of the case. Adams argued the case for the Africans in the Supreme Court. (Reuters, via Archives Listserve)

## Congress Empowers NARA to Inspect IRS

On November 5 the House of Representatives passed the Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1997. Among its provisions: authority for the National Archives to inspect IRS records to appraise the tax agency's records management practices. The IRS has prevented employees of the National Archives from seeing many of its records by claiming that the Internal Revenue Code and case law requires strict confidentiality and prohibits the IRS from legally show such documents to National Archives employees. The National Archives, on the other hand, contends that the IRS policy has complicated its review of IRS records management policies. Last year a House subcommittee requested that the IRS and the National Archives settle the problem and submit a report to Congress, but the report--submitted last spring--failed to

resolve the issue. The recent legislation provides an exception to current IRS disclosure rules upon the "written request from the Archivist" of the United States. The legislation goes to the Senate for consideration and will be an agenda item when Congress reconvenes in 1998. (Page Putnam Miller, NCC Washington Update, November 12, 1997).

## Univ. of Michigan's Making of America

The University of Michigan Digital Library Initiative has completed the first phase of its Making of America project, which now includes over 650,000 pages of books and journals from the late 19th century. The resource presently contains 1,601 books and ten journals, with over 49,069 articles documenting America's social history. The system has notable features, including the ability of users to search the full text of the 685,885 pages, retrieving results almost instantly. The system also includes browsable bibliographies for journal articles and monographs. The site can be visited at: <http://www.umdl.umich.edu/moa/>. Future goals including integrating Michigan's materials with the Making of America materials at Cornell University (<http://moa.cit.cornell.edu/>). The project is funded in part by an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant. (Press Release, November 10, 1997)

The winter issue of ALA's History Section News:  
<http://weber.u.washington.edu/~mudrock/HIST/new7.html> See the Fall 1997 issue of the Louisiana Archives and Manuscripts Association Newsletter at:  
<http://home.gnofn.org/~nopl/lama/lama.htm>.

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## Newsletter Exchange

### *Local, State, and Regional News*

## Tennessee Bicentennial Benefits State Records

Edwin Gleaves, Tennessee State Librarian and Archivist, reports that the celebration of the state's bicentennial—known as *Tennessee 200*—left an "enduring and substantial" impact on the state's archives and records. According to Gleaves, *Tennessee 200* organizers formed "a unique and productive partnership" with the Tennessee State Library and Archives during the birthday year. The partnership focused on two different projects: (1) Saving Our Documentary Heritage workshops, and (2) a World War II veterans survey. The workshop series was designed to teach citizens how to conserve, organize, and access historical documents, including those found in local and county repositories. They were offered in eight cities across the state, and each workshop was held in three parts, so that each city was visited three times. Staff of the state archives prepared the information discussed and distributed in the workshops. The workshops

were attended by representatives from over 250 different organizations, including local and county government, universities, libraries, historical societies, and churches. The World War II Veterans Survey was returned by over 7,000 veterans, who not only listed their military record but also shared memories of their time in the service. Some sent copies of diary pages attached to the survey, while others submitted unpublished manuscripts of their experience. Thousands of original photographs were also submitted. Tennessee natives who no longer lived in the state also were contacted and participated in the project. (*Tennessee Archivist*, Winter 1997).

## New Collections Accent Racial, Ethnic Heritage

Northeastern University in Massachusetts has added a project archivist to process the records of Freedom House, founded in 1949 by Muriel and Otto Snowden. Freedom House, a community organization located in Roxbury, was active in Boston's urban renewal and desegregation politics. The Snowdens's personal papers are also part of the collection. The university intends to hold a symposium to publicize the collection's availability once it is processed. Northeastern also has acquired the papers of Elma Lewis, founder and artistic director of the National Center for Afro-American Artists and the Elma Lewis School of Fine Arts. Lewis, who received a Presidential Medal for the Arts, guided thousands of young people. Her collection is approximately 125 cubic feet and includes photographs and letters. Lewis also played a role in Boston's racial politics, particularly during the busing era.

Boston College, meanwhile, is advertising itself as "the premier repository in America for Irish research materials." The college recently acquired the collections of Flann O'Brien (1911-66), novelist, poet, and playwright, who wrote in English and Irish, and the papers of Ni Dhomhnaill, a living poet who writes in Gaelic. Dhomhnaill's collection includes notebooks on Irish folklore that form the base for her poetry. (*NEA Newsletter*, October 1997).

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## Publications

### *Books, Pamphlets, Videos, Et Cetera*

The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works offers a series of free brochures, including: "Guidelines for Selecting a Conservator," "Basic Guidelines for the Care of Special Collections," "Caring for Your Home Videotape," and other titles. For information about AIC and to receive the free brochures, contact: American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 1717 K Street, N.W., Suite 301, Washington, D.C. 20006; or phone (202) 452-9545.

The Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel is an interactive slide chart that provides cultural institutions with quick access to essential information on protecting and salvaging collections.



Free copies were mailed to many cultural institutions, but if your institution did not receive one, call this toll-free number: 1-888-979-2233. The cost for the wheel is \$9.95 each, with a special nonprofit/government rate of \$5.95. The wheel is an excellent beginning to developing a disaster recovery plan for your organization.

The Commission on Preservation and Access publishes a newsletter that discusses archival issues. To be added to the mailing list, write the Commission on Preservation and Access, 1400 16th Street, N.W., Suite 740, Washington, D.C. 20036-2217. The Commission also produces publications on archival issues, including *Preservation Microfilming: A Guide for Librarians and Archivists*.

Cornell University's Department of Preservation and Conservation has announced the publication of *Digital Imaging for Libraries and Archives* by Anne R. Kenney and Stephen Chapman. The 200-page guide is an expanded version of the training manual used in Cornell's series of digital imaging workshops. It is issued in loose-leaf format to facilitate updates and includes two formula cards designed to assist librarians and archivists with determining conversion, storage, and access requirements. The price of the guide is \$75.00 plus \$5.00 for shipping and handling within the U.S., \$8.00 for Canada and \$20.00 for all other countries. Orders must be prepaid, with checks made payable to "Department of Preservation, Cornell University," with payment in U.S. funds. For ordering information, contact Pamela Clearwater, B38 Olin Library, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853, 607-255- 9841 or [pac8@cornell.edu](mailto:pac8@cornell.edu)

The national Archives of the Episcopal Church USA has published "Records Management Manual for Congregations: A Records Manual for Finance and Administration." The full manual (\$5.00 incl postage; free to parish officers) is available by contacting: Archives of the Episcopal Church, 606 Rathervue Place, P.O. Box 2247, Austin, Texas 78768 (512-472-6816).

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## Copyright Extension

The following letter was written by SAA President William Maher to express the Society of American Archivist's opposition to pending legislation that would extend the length of copyright by 20 years beyond the length currently set (from life plus 50 years to life plus 70 years).

The issue was reviewed and discussed in detail in SAA Council. The letter reflects the view that the proposed legislation would be adverse to archivists and the users of archives and manuscript collections. For additional information, you are invited to visit the following website, which contains copies of the proposed legislation and examples of letters of opposition:

<http://www.public.asu.edu/~dkarjala/index.html>

**November 7, 1997**

**Dear Senator [Representative]:**

On behalf of the Society of American Archivists, I write to express our vigorous opposition to S. 505 [HR. 2589], the Copyright Term Extension Act of 1997, and to urge you to oppose it. The proposed law disrupts the balance between public and private interests and will have a severe negative impact on the public's use of unpublished materials for teaching, scholarship, and research.

The Society of American Archivists is the oldest and largest association of archivists in the United States, representing more than 3,300 individuals and 500 institutions. It is the authoritative voice in the United States on issues that affect the identification, preservation, and use of historical records.

Because of archivists' commitment to making the documentary heritage of our nation widely available to the public, the Society is particularly concerned about the effect that copyright has on how readily and completely this documentary heritage can be used. We are firmly convinced that in order to meet the purpose of copyright as expressed in the Constitution, namely the promotion of "the progress of science and useful arts," it is necessary to have both a vigorous public domain as well as protections for the rights of holders of intellectual property. Too short a period of copyright protection may discourage authors from developing new works; too long a period of copyright protection may limit the creation of new discoveries and new products that must draw on the works of others. The challenge facing Congress is to maintain the delicate balance between the interests of current authors and the rights of the public at large now and into the future.

Currently, the Copyright Act of 1976 provides a reasonable period of protection of rights as well as a workable schedule for expanding the public domain availability of unpublished archival material. Any attempt to lengthen the term of copyright should be judged on whether the proposed change is likely to promote "the progress of science and useful arts." It is our belief that increasing the term of copyright protection from its current term of life of the author plus fifty years to the life of the author plus seventy years may accommodate corporate special interests, but it is unlikely to generate any new spurt of creative energy for the public at large. Instead it will only delay by twenty years the period when the public can draw fully on the material for inspiration. No extension of copyright term should be contemplated until there are available solid analyses of the likely impact of such an extension on the creation of new knowledge. To our best knowledge, no such analyses of the impact of the copyright term extension exist.

We are particularly troubled by the effect such an extension may have on the use of unpublished material of the sort frequently found in archives. Most of the individual items found in archives are of limited commercial value. However, when studied within the context of the documentary record, archival documents contribute immeasurably to the understanding of our cultural heritage at the same time they ensure the accountability of government to its citizens.

The "fair use" provisions of the current act are the basis for most current research in unpublished materials. Yet the courts have been increasingly more restrictive in the application of the principle of "fair use" to unpublished material. Consequently, many archivists and other scholars

have been reluctant to make some documentary material broadly available because of the slight risk that doing so would entail, and we have eagerly anticipated expiration of its copyright. The proposed legislation would delay, for two decades, full public and archival use of such documents.

For example, consider the case of Charles Townsend Copeland (1860-1952), the great Harvard English professor whose students included Heywood Broun, T. S. Eliot, and Walter Lippman. Under the current law, letters and early writings authored by Copeland during his formative period of intellectual development starting in the late 1870s are scheduled to enter the public domain on January 1, 2003. Under the proposed legislation, these documents would remain under control of Copeland's literary heirs until 2023. If the heirs choose to publish the documents, control over them could extend to December 31, 2047. Scholars could thus be denied the full use of these materials for over 160 years from the time of their creation.

The inability of the public to exploit, in a timely manner, the unpublished material found in archives will have a negative impact on its preservation as well. It is currently difficult for archivists to justify the expense of maintaining large collections of documentary materials that are of such limited use for fifty years following the author's death. Adding another twenty years to the term of copyright for deceased authors further diminishes the rationale for preserving them. Thus, any legislation that delays the transfer of material to the public domain would starve our documentary heritage of the everyday voices of the average citizen. The timely transfer of such materials to the public domain is the best way to ensure they will be saved and used by others to enrich the cultural heritage of all citizens.

Even if it were proven that the acquisition of new knowledge might be enhanced with an extension of copyright protection, there is no reason for extending the protection to authors who are already deceased. Simply put, dead authors are unlikely to generate new works regardless of the length of copyright protection. Therefore, any increase in the copyright term should affect only those works created after the passage of the law and only cover living authors.

In our daily work, archivists seek to maintain the delicate balance between the rights of the creator and the rights of the public to have access to information for the benefit of all the people. Our experience has convinced us that only certain corporations or the heirs of a few individuals, and not the public as whole, would benefit from the proposed legislation's "gift" of twenty more years of copyright protection. We sincerely doubt that extending the term of copyright for twenty more years for living authors would in any way advance the intellectual and cultural progress of our nation. Instead, the proposed law so disrupts the balance between public and private interests mandated by the Constitution, that we urge you to reject this bill, which benefits a few at the expense of the public at large.

**Sincerely yours,**

**William Maher**  
**President, Society of American Archivists**

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## KCAA OFFICERS

### *Co-Chairs*

Bobbi Rahder (Haskell Indian Nations Univ)  
(913) 749-8470

Lynn Ward (Liberty Memorial Museum)  
(816) 221-1918

### *Secretary*

Jelain Chubb (Kansas State Historical Society)  
(913) 272-8681

### *Treasurer*

Mary Hawkins (University of Kansas)  
(913) 864-4274

Kansas City Area Archivists is a local non-profit organization serving archivists in Eastern Kansas and Western Missouri. Annual membership dues: \$15 individuals, \$25 institutions, \$10 students, \$50 sustaining institution, \$100 supporting institution.

[return to INDEX](#)

---

## *THE DUSTY SHELF*

### *Editor*

Stan Ingersol

### *Production Staff*

Jerry Austin  
Greg Brunson

### *Preservation Notes Editors*

Nancy J. Hulston & Alan Perry

*The Dusty Shelf* is published three times a year by Kansas City Area Archivists. We honor exchanges with other organizations. *The Dusty Shelf* is compiled and edited by staff of the Nazarene Archives and mailed by staff of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-KC.

Materials for publication should be sent to: Stan Ingersol, Nazarene Archives, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131, (816) 333-7000, or via e-mail to [singersol@nazarene.org](mailto:singersol@nazarene.org).

Memberships and address changes should be sent to: Jelain Chubb, Kansas State Historical Society, Center for Historical Research, 6425 SW 6th Ave., Topeka, KS 66615 (913) 272-8681, ext. 307.

[return to INDEX](#)

---

# 1997-1998

# CALENDAR

## **DECEMBER 18, 1997**

### **KCAA STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

12:00 Noon

Adams Alumni Center, 13th & Jayhawk Blvd.  
University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS66045

## **DECEMBER 18, 1997**

### **KCAA QUARTERLY MEETING**

2:30 p.m.

Kansas Geological Survey Library  
University of Kansas  
1930 Constant Ave., West campus  
Lawrence, KS66045

## **MARCH 19, 1998**

### **KCAA QUARTERLY MEETING**

Jackson County Historical Society Archives  
112 W. Lexington  
Independence, MO 64050

**JUNE 6, 1998**

**KCAA ANNUAL MEETING**  
Kansas State Historical Society  
Center for Historical Research  
6425 SW 6th Ave.  
Topeka, KS 66615