Other News—Janet Carleton, Editor, Ohio University

Presidential Libraries

By Nancy Sandleback, Benedictine Women of Madison

Wouldn't it be interesting if everyone who ever held the office of president—not just that guy living in the White House—had his or her own presidential library?

Now, I'm not begrudging our presidents their libraries, but wouldn't it be nice if more of us had a whack at our own personal libraries? Libraries devoted to our accomplishments? Captain of the Safety Patrol and uh, and uh … Hmmm, there has to be something else I've accomplished since then.…

For a history major who was personally responsible for killing a forest of trees, I have a shockingly small amount of personal papers. I suppose that's the result of one too many moves over the years or the occasional frenzied streak of weeding. I discovered long ago that paper not only takes up a lot of storage room, it's heavy—whether I'm lugging it around in my backpack or hefting boxes of it into a U-Haul. It's also expensive to move when your middle-aged family members and friends will no longer lift those boxes and you have to start dishing out to a mover.

Anyway, I digress. I do regret the loss of letters a friend attending grad school a few states away sent me in the eighties. They were marvelously witty. And I deeply regret the loss of a photo album of pictures from my undergraduate years. The latter would have easily funded my library in blackmail payments.

My personal correspondence has fallen victim to the ease of E-mail and cell phones, though I am not in doubt that with all the spyware and eager ears attached to the latest electronic eavesdropping equipment, my conversations haven't been recorded somewhere. (Listen closely and you can hear their heads hit the table out of sheer boredom.) This leaves my presidential library with a few remaining photo albums, scrapbooks, writings, and books. Oh, and my teacup collection. In other words, the architects won't need to figure in a lot of exhibit space.

As for where my library should be located, I'd insist it be established in my hometown, which needs a new library anyway. And I want a Center for the Research of Coca Cola to go with the library. Why Coca Cola? Because cans and cans of Coca Cola are the only reason I've accomplished anything—college, grad school, and getting up in the mornings. Ah … the power of caffeine. Maybe my library should have a theme song. A slightly different version of "Hail to the Chief." Something like

Hail to caffeine the beverage chosen by the nation
Hail to caffeine! We salute you, one and all.
Hail to caffeine as we pledge our devotion
In proud fulfillment of a great, noble call.

Hmm … maybe not.

Women Artists Archives National Directory Now Open

International scholarship on contemporary women artists entered a new era in February with the first release of the Women Artists Archives National Directory (WAAND). WAAND unites on-line information on archival repositories into a single union catalog. Partnering with more than 80 institutions that include the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the Library of Congress, and the National Association of Woman Artists, WAAND currently directs users to information on eight hundred discrete collections indexed to more than five thousand individual artists' names. Outreach to identify and enlist the support of additional archival institutions will follow this initial release. WAAND was developed by Rutgers University Libraries, with initial funding by The Getty. Please search our innovative on-line directory to archival materials on women visual artists and artists' organizations in the U.S. http://waand.rutgers.edu/

MAC's 35th Anniversary

Don't forget to attend the celebration!
Join your fellow MACers for cake and memories!

Electronic Currents—continued

(Continued from page 21)

of people with the markers, images of the surrounding area, and even scans of materials in private collections. (All user-submitted images are reviewed for copyright and content restrictions.) Users are also asked to participate in a waymarking program, where people find a marker and send in GPS coordinates. Since launching in 2005, Web site statistics have increased to more than ten thousand visitor sessions per month. Even more importantly, the Web site has resulted in an intergenerational tool for users to learn more about Ohio's history. Scouts and 4-H groups are using the site, as well as retirees who tend to travel the state for leisure purposes.

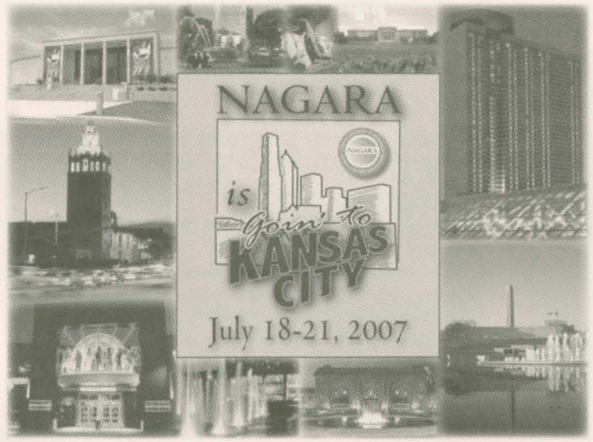
User-generated content often poses a problem for archivists, however. Many archives are struggling with digital preservation plans for their own digital content, and the idea of taking on large numbers of "unvetted" user photographs can be overwhelming. Before beginning a program that relies on user-generated content, archivists need to consider long-term plans for user content, whether it be photographs, audio, video, or objects. *Remarkable Ohio* staff decided early on that OHS could not take on the burden of assuring digital preservation for user generated content. User images are stored separately from "official" OHS content, and the Web site includes a disclaimer that user photographs do not become the property of the society. The review process provides staff with an opportunity to evaluate user photos and suggest potential candidates for acquisition into the permanent collections. If a photograph shows potential for acquisition, staff may contact the user to initiate the donation process.

As boundaries between game-playing, learning, and socializing soften in favor of a work-life balance, archives should take advantage of opportunities to engage audiences through user generated content. Archivists are experts at bringing primary sources to the public. New Web technologies can go one step further and provide a way for the public to interact with primary sources by adding comments, reviews, or even their own user-generated content.

The Buck Stops Here: Responsibility and Opportunity

NAGARA 2007 Annual Meeting • Kansas City, MO

July 18-21, 2007
Hyatt Regency Crown Center



You won't want to miss the NAGARA 2007 Annual Meeting when we visit Missouri -- top-flight educational programs, superb networking opportunities, and great receptions and tours.

Check out the NAGARA website (www.nagara.org) or contact the NAGARA office (nagara@caphill.com) for more information.