

MAC midwest archives conference

n e w s l e t t e r

Preserving the Documents of the Past and Making Them Accessible to the Future!

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President's Page

MAC midwest archives conference

State of MAC 2024

By Jennie Thomas, President, Midwest Archives Conference

This address was delivered on May 3, 2024, at the MAC Annual Meeting.

Hello, Des Moines! I hope everyone has been enjoying their time here. Many thanks to our Local Arrangements Committee and Program Committee members, as well as to Vice President Benn Joseph, for all the hard work it took to get us here!

This past year, it has been an honor to serve you, the membership, as MAC president. This annual address provides me the opportunity to take stock of where we are, how we got here, and where we're going. This year, that kind of assessment was even more important as Council created a new strategic plan for the organization. We started our work with a list of core language that appears throughout MAC's principal documents, position statements, and past strategic plans to get to the core values of the organization. I not only want to thank Council for all the valuable time, consideration, analysis, and discussion that went into the new strategic plan, but I also want to express my deep appreciation for the 73 members who responded to our call for feedback. Without all of you, MAC's new mission, vision, and organizational priorities would not feel truly representative of the diverse body of individuals sitting in this room and living and working in the Midwest.

Now I'd like to take this time to introduce you to the final draft of MAC's new strategic plan. The mission, vision, and organizational priorities for this plan are intended to be evergreen content, meaning they can live as guideposts for future MAC leaders to use until they are considered no longer viable; freeing up time so that, instead of creating a brand new mission, vision, priorities, and plan of action every five to seven years, new MAC leaders can just jump right into creating a plan of action when their tenure begins.

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First, the MAC vision—**MAC empowers, supports, and builds community among archivists and allied disciplines.** Do we do this already? Nearly every day and in so many ways—we’re doing it right now, in this Members’ Meeting; in yesterday’s MAC Pals Meet-and-Greet; with the awards and scholarships we just gave—but could we do better, do more? I think so—I hope so, but it will take leadership and participation from within membership to come up with what those goals look like and attempt to meet them.

Our new mission is to **empower members by providing accessible archival continuing education; foster connections throughout the MAC region; and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion across the profession.**

What does accessible continuing education mean for MAC today—especially when accessible must also mean *affordable* continuing education, to members at different types of institutions and with a variety of educational backgrounds, to diverse learners with diverse stories and varying levels of access to resources. This is what the two task forces that were created last fall, the Regional Assessment Task Force and the Virtual Meeting Task Force, have been investigating for the past six months. What are the membership fees and programmatic offerings of other regional cultural heritage organizations, and what models (online, in-person, and hybrid) are out there for offering accessible, affordable, and responsive programs for membership?

With the mission and vision in place—and still using that word cloud from MAC’s guiding documents—Council outlined seven organizational priorities to guide future work within MAC. The seven priorities are, in no particular order:

- Support the work of archivists through high-quality, affordable, and accessible archival education in a variety of contexts, formats, and modalities.
- Expand MAC membership and be responsive to the needs of members.
- Create a welcoming environment, where members have a sense of belonging, to cultivate a diverse and inclusive professional community of engaged members.
- Foster a culture of creativity and collaboration among the membership.
- Promote professional standards, practices, and ethics to ensure archivists support preservation of and access to collections.

- Maintain transparency of leadership and governance by communicating and consulting with membership.
- Ensure the financial stability of the organization to safeguard ongoing services to members.

Relative to these organizational priorities, we’ve begun working with our association management company, AMC Source, on a new “What MAC Means to Me” video testimonial campaign to show the value of MAC to convert nonmembers and expand our membership base. We want to investigate how best to offer more leadership and mentoring opportunities for new members and new archivists. With the information gathered by the Regional Assessment and Virtual Meeting Task Forces, Council hopes to reimagine MAC, to create a new model for meetings and educational programs that is more accessible while remaining affordable for members and financially sustainable for the organization. We would also like the Financial Advisory Committee to convene and make additional recommendations for MAC’s short- and long-term financial health. However, none of these things can happen without you.

And I get it, things are hard right now. Whether you’re dealing with the effects of inflation, school loans, postpandemic trauma, LGBTQ+ and reproductive rights legislation, health-care costs, banned books, climate change, the gig economy, or another issue among the barrage of badness featured in the evening news and on social media, it’s a lot. And here I am asking you to do more.

I haven’t done my “What MAC Means to Me” video testimonial yet, but if I did, I would say that, to me, MAC means connections, a support network, friends. When things are hard, focusing on those connections to find the ways in which you can support one another can help forge stronger relationships and help you to feel less alone. And, just think about it, if we could get—like with the strategic plan feedback—73 people to volunteer some amount of time to investigate leadership or mentoring opportunities for new archivists, to work with the Financial Advisory Committee, to fill an open committee position or leadership role, to teach for the Speakers Bureau, or to recommend someone for the Distinguished Service Award (for which we received no nominations this year), just think about how much we could do to support our networks, to strengthen our connections and friendships, and to better MAC for all our benefits. Please consider being one of the next 73 people to volunteer your time, and

click on the “Volunteer with MAC” button on the website (<https://midwestarc.memberclicks.net/volunteerform>).

Finally, please join me in thanking our Annual Meeting platinum sponsors—Iowa State University, University Library, and Iowa State University, Park Library. I would also like to thank our continuing Council members Lindsey Hiltunen, Cara Setsu Bertram, Laurinda Weisse, and Marcella Huggard, as well as outgoing Council member Kyna Herzinger for all their time and great energy this year.

A massive thank you goes to the Nominating Committee with Chair Joshua Ranger and members Shiraz Bhathena and Sarah Lebovitz, who put together a fantastic slate of candidates. A special thanks to everyone who ran for office—I know it’s not always easy to put yourself out there like that and, if you didn’t win, maybe there’s a different position in MAC leadership with your name on it! We’re looking for both a Nominating Committee chair and a new vendor coordinator, so . . .

To our executive team—Anne Thomason, who continues as secretary, and Vice President Benn Joseph and Treasurer Jerice Barrios, who both transition off Council this year—I would not have made it through this year were it not for your steady support and incredible knowledge and skills. I am so grateful for each one of you.

Our outgoing Council and Nominating Committee folks have certainly paved the way for the success of our newly elected executive team. Please welcome Vice President Rosalie Gartner, Treasurer Mary Ellen Ducey, Council member Sasha Kim, and Nominating Committee members, Carol Street and Kristen Whitson!

Thank you for your time today, and I look forward to meeting and working with more of you in the future!



Jennie Thomas

President, Midwest Archives Conference

Vice President's Column

MAC Meetings and Symposia Update

By Rosalie Gartner, Iowa State University

MAC in Des Moines actually happened! I think the Des Moines LAC set a new MAC record for the longest-standing meeting planning committee, having planned the meeting in 2020 and again in 2024. Despite some technical issues, we had a wonderful plenary from speakers Jaime Nicolet Rutan at Living History Farms and Sara Straate from Seed Savers Exchange, giving us a glimpse into Iowa's agricultural history and its current challenges. Being both an Iowa resident and an avid gardener, this plenary was near and dear to my heart. This year's reception was at the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates, which is not only a stunning building but has ties to both the library world *and* the conference theme. I hope you had as much fun as I did discovering all the small architectural details of the building while eating a plate of delicious cheese. Conference attendance was a little lower this year than in Chicago, as expected, with about 265 in-person registrants and only 40 virtual. We still had a fantastic slate of presentations, posters, and workshops—thank you to all who presented in any way for sharing your knowledge and expertise.

A special thanks goes out to all the folks who have spent 18 months (or more) planning the meeting. Having just cycled off Local Arrangements, I know exactly how much energy and dedication goes into planning the Annual Meeting.

Local Arrangements Committee

- Hope Bibens (cochair), Rosalie Gartner (cochair), Benedict Chatelain, Doreen Dixon, Anthony Jahn, Kate Orazem, David McCartney. How weird is it to thank yourself in a column you wrote!?

Program Committee

- Jaycie Voss (cochair), Scott Brouwer (cochair), Brooke Boyst, Brenda Burk, A. L. Carson, Joseph Coates, Emily DuGranrut, Lauren Gaines, Jessie Knoles, Larissa Kraye, Amy Lisinski, Glenn Longacre, Caitlin Moriarty, Sheri Muller

Education Committee

- Ashley Howdeshell (cochair), Ryan Leimkuehler (cochair), Scott Brouwer, Sara DeCaro, Marcella Huggard, Stefanie Hunker, Jeremy Pekarek, Brandon Pieczko, Denise Rayman, Tia Stenson, Lauren White, Derek Webb

Thanks also to Jenna Jacobs (vendor coordinator), Rebecca Wells (MAC Pals coordinator), Megan Badgley-Malone and Emily DuGranrut (public information officers), Elizabeth Engel (webmaster), and Natalia Gutiérrez-Jones (development coordinator).

Despite some small hiccups, the hybrid meeting went well! MAC took last year's conference feedback to heart and provided the virtual links to all registrants, not just the virtual ones. The postconference survey is out as I write this column, and I look forward to seeing what other ideas folks have for improving the meetings moving forward. Seriously, fill those out—we read them!

2024 Fall Symposium

The Fall Symposium is heading to the Quad Cities—or is it Quint Cities? What a lively discussion we had at the Members Meeting! The Symposium will be held at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois, October 18–19, 2024, covering reparative description workflows. Speakers Stephanie M. Luke, assistant professor-metadata librarian at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; and Kristen Whitson, digital specialist and consortia manager with WiLS (Wisconsin Library Services) will be on hand to guide participants through reflection, review of procedures, and discussion of workable methods of limiting harmful language in archives' descriptive practices, among other topics. The Symposium promises to be a practical and engaging two days, and participants should plan to leave with a workable plan for reparative description in their own institution.

Rock Island is a close drive for many in MAC, and the Symposium cochairs have secured a room block at the Wyndham Moline for an extremely affordable rate, which includes breakfast! Registration will open this summer, likely by the time you read this article.

2025 Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota

The next Annual Meeting will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, April 10–12, 2025. As you might have seen on the awesome potholders in Des Moines, the conference theme will be “Serving It Up,” a nod to the popularity of the hotdish. I've never seen swag as popular as the potholders were, so the meeting is sure to be well attended. Hotdish recipe competition, anyone!?

Local Arrangements Cochairs Aiden Bettine and Kate Dietrick are hard at work making sure attendees have a great meeting while balancing the needs of MAC's budget. Meeting costs have certainly risen like everything else in recent years, so LAC will be diligently balancing those needs. Program Committee Cochairs Amy Lisinski and Shae Rafferty will be working on ensuring attendees have a solid lineup of posters and sessions to attend. I look forward to working with this group to plan what promises to be a fantastic MAC meeting.

2025 Fall Symposium and Beyond

Is it happening!?! Yes! Unfortunately, I don't have any details I can provide on the location of the next few meetings as no *official* proposals have been received by the time of writing. Stay tuned for more details soon.

If you have any ideas for future meetings, please reach out.

Election Results

The Nominating Committee and MAC leadership are pleased to announce the results of this year's election. Please join us in congratulating the following newly elected MAC leaders:

- Vice President—Rosalie Gartner
- Treasurer—Mary Ellen Ducey
- Council—Sasha Kim
- Nominating Committee—Carol Street and Kristen Whitson

Thank you to all of the candidates who ran for office and all who participated in the election process!

Between Council Actions

Council approved the following motion on April 8, 2024:

MAC Council approves moving \$30,000 from the Program Initiative investment fund to our Bank of America checking account.



An archivist's job is big and broad.

“To appraise, acquire, arrange and describe, preserve, authenticate, and provide access to permanently valuable records.”

Source: Society of American Archivists

You do all of this with one primary goal—to increase visibility of, and access to, your collection.

But getting from acquisition, to description, to organization, and ultimately to access and visibility is not always a straightforward road. No matter where you are on this continuum, Atlas Systems can help you find the right path forward – for your collection and your institution.

CONNECT WITH US TO GET STARTED ON THE PATH FORWARD

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MAC Annual Meeting Recap

by Hope Bibens, Drake University, and Rosalie Gartner, Iowa State University

Archivists from across the Midwest converged on Des Moines on May 1–4, 2024, to attend the 52nd Midwest Archives Conference Annual Meeting. This year’s venue was the Des Moines Marriott Downtown, which allowed easy access to the skywalk, connecting the hotel to other downtown businesses and attractions. Over 265 people attended in person, with almost 40 attending virtually.

The meeting officially kicked off Thursday with workshops and tours. Our workshop attendees were able to take advantage of a command line workshop for absolute beginners or a workshop on emotional intelligence and transformational leadership in the archives. Local archivists served as hosts for repository tours at Drake University Archives & Special Collections as well as the State Historical Society of Iowa. Another tour group visited the Iowa State Capitol and Dome. Unfortunately, the guided tour of the Pappajohn Sculpture Park was canceled due to spring rains (which Iowa desperately needed). Hopefully, conference attendees were able to walk through at some point in the week!

This year’s plenary, “Unlocking Midwestern Agricultural History Through Archival Investigation,” featured Jaime

Nicolet Rutan (curator of collections, archives, and exhibits at Living History Farms in Urbandale, Iowa) and Sara Straate (seed historian at Seed Savers Exchange in Decorah, Iowa). The session leaned into the conference theme of “Sowing Seeds of Change” by delving into historic farming methods and keeping seeds grown by families for generations available. Keeping with the theme, we gathered for the opening reception at the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates.

The meeting provided plenty of opportunities to meet old colleagues and make new friends, fueled by many gallons of coffee. MAC Pals was well attended, with great conversation flowing throughout the meet-and-greet. During the business meeting, two distinguished MAC members—Kären Mason and Becky Schulte—received the Emeritus Award. Both gave heartwarming speeches, highlighting the importance of MAC.

Early May is a great time to visit Des Moines, and we had perfect weather on Friday evening for restaurant tours and fireworks at the Iowa Cubs baseball game. We hope everyone enjoyed the opportunity to connect with colleagues!



Annual Meeting reception at the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates



The appraisal process is an important first step.



Joel Thoreson and Michelle Sweetser at the reception



This may have been the cheesiest reception in MAC history.

Awards and Scholarships

Archie Motley Memorial Scholarship for Students of Color

The Archie Motley Memorial Scholarship for Students of Color provides financial assistance to minority students pursuing graduate education in archival administration and seeks to encourage ethnic diversification of the Midwest Archives Conference and the archival profession as a whole. We are pleased to announce this year's winners.

Kimber Van Heukelom is a student in the School of Library and Information Science at the University of Iowa. She has completed internships at the Carnegie Library Museum and the Johnston Historical Society and recently began a volunteer position processing archival collections at the State Historical Society of Iowa.

Jehoiada Calvin is a student in the Library and Information Science program at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa. He has several years of experience working in museums, archives, and special collections and has served as an archives and research assistant at the Johnson Publishing Company since 2022.

Mark A. Greene Award for First Time Meeting Attendees

The Mark A. Greene Award Committee for First Time Meeting Attendees has completed its work for 2024. Committee members included Ely Sheinfeld and Elias Hubbard, along with the required emeritus members Raimund Goerler and Barbara Floyd. Floyd chaired the committee.

The committee was pleased to be able to offer two \$250 awards this year.

Shandi Burrows is a new resident of the Midwest (moving from her home state of Alabama) and archival Fellow at Minnesota Public Radio. While she has attended several smaller archival conferences, she has never attended a MAC meeting before. She indicated that her attendance at MAC would allow her to broaden her professional connections in the region, where she hopes to pursue her future career.

Sasha Goryl is a second-year student in the PhD program in information science at Indiana University Bloomington, with a focus in archival science. Her research focus is folklore archives. She stated that the topic of this year's Annual Meeting fit well with her educational and career goals. She was featured in the January *MAC Newsletter* in the Up-And-Comers column and said that attending the MAC Annual Meeting would allow her to meet her colleagues in person, make connections, and share her research and professional activities.

All of the applicants this year were deserving of support, and the committee is sincerely sorry that it could not provide support to each and every one of them. To continue attracting good candidates, the committee has recommended to Council that it consider including the conference registration costs and the scholarship.

Awards and Scholarships

Emeritus Membership Award

By Greg Bailey, Iowa State University

Each year the MAC Membership Committee solicits nominations for candidates to the status of Emeritus Member. The nominee must be retired from archival work and have been a MAC member for a minimum of 10, not necessarily consecutive, years. Nominees must have made a significant and substantial contribution to MAC during their archival career.

The Emeritus Membership Award and special membership status of Emeritus Member were created to recognize those who have contributed to MAC's success, growth, and visibility through committee work, programming, outreach, and governance. The award intends to recognize those who work behind the scenes for MAC and those who have been honored by election to office.

The Membership Committee is pleased to announce that this year's recipients of the Emeritus Membership Award are Kären Mason and Becky Schulte.



Kären Mason

Kären Mason began her archival career as a research assistant in 1977 at the Social Welfare History Archives at the University of Minnesota, where she would go on to receive her MA in history. She later moved to the University of Michigan and worked at the Bentley Historical Library, first as a manuscript assistant and then as assistant archivist. She joined MAC in 1987. In 1992, Mason became the curator of the Iowa Women's

Archives at the University of Iowa, where she would go on to serve until her retirement in 2020. Her service to MAC included chairing the Nominating Committee, cochairing a Fall Symposium Task Force, cochairing a Local Arrangements Committee, and serving on Council, the Education Committee, and the Program Committee. In 2020, Mason received the Distinguished Service Award from MAC.

In one of her nomination letters, it was noted that her "service to MAC spans more than 20 years. Even after her last formal service, Kären has been a presence at MAC meetings, engaging colleagues and new archivists in network opportunities." It additionally stated, "It is not hyperbole to say that Kären Mason, in her service to MAC and to the archives profession, has put the Midwest on the archival map."

On behalf of the Membership Committee, congratulations to Kären Mason.



Becky Schulte

Becky Schulte began her professional career in 1982 with the Kansas Historical Society. Three years later, she joined the University of Kansas, where she would work for the rest of her career. She first joined as a project lead on the Kansas Collections before becoming an associate librarian and assistant curator, then reader service librarian, and finally being named university archivist in 2003, a position she held until her retirement. Schulte joined

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MAC in 1986 and, during her continued membership, would go on to chair the Bowen Scholarship Committee and the Nominating Committee and to serve multiple times on Program Committees and Local Arrangement Committees, two different times as the Kansas State Representative on the Membership Committee, and a term on Council.

One of her nomination letters noted that it was “in her volunteer service that Becky has excelled. The behind-the-scenes work, in various committees, is so integral to

MAC’s success. It is time consuming and often thankless work. One only needs to review the sheer amount of her volunteer work.” Another nomination letter stated, “Her experience and insight as a university archivist soon became a guidepost for me, and her approachable manner and easy laugh made her a colleague and friend that I have always looked forward to seeing at meetings.”

On behalf of the Membership Committee, congratulations to Becky Schulte.



Becky Schulte and Kären Mason at the Annual Meeting

“Mapping a Reparative Description Plan: Reparative Description Workflows”

October 18–19, 2024

Rock Island, Illinois

The Fall 2024 MAC Symposium will be held on October 18–19, 2024, on the beautiful campus of Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois. Our topic will be reparative description workflows. The objectives are:

- You will leave the workshop with a workable plan for next steps in limiting harmful language in archives descriptive practices.
- You will read and discuss example workflows.
- You will discuss practical ways to engage community members and stakeholders in restorative language and subject headings.
- You will have time to reflect on reparative description, the harm done in the past, and ways to move forward.

Our facilitators for the workshop have a great deal of experience thinking about reparative description and creating workflows. Stephanie M. Luke is assistant professor-metadata librarian at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She holds a BA in English from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, an MA in English from Indiana University Bloomington, and an MLS with a specialization in rare books and manuscripts librarianship from Indiana University Bloomington. Her

research focuses on reparative description and inclusive metadata in libraries and archives.

Kristen Whitson is the digital specialist and consortia manager with WiLS (Wisconsin Library Services). She holds a BA in liberal arts from Northern Arizona University and an MLIS with a specialization in archival studies from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Her work focuses on local historical digital collections, community archives, and work in Indigenous and LGBTQ+ archives.

The Symposium will take place in the Gerber Center for Student Life at Augustana College. Breakfast and lunch will be provided on Friday and Saturday. The multipurpose building includes a large conference space with audiovisual capacity and technical support. In addition, the center consists of other amenities such as library spaces (including Augustana’s Special Collections), a coffee shop, an outdoor patio, and access to the dining center.

MAC has secured a room block at the Wyndham Moline for \$109 a night in a king suite.

We hope you will join us for the MAC Fall Symposium!

Archival Issues Update

By Adriana Harmeyer, Archival Issues Editorial Board Chair, Purdue University

MAC’s publications were well represented at the Annual Meeting in Des Moines this year as *Newsletter* Editor Carol Street and I staffed the inaugural MAC Publications table at the Vendor Fair. I was delighted to speak with prospective contributors to *Archival Issues* and look forward to future conversations with members developing their ideas for publication. Article proposals or questions about publishing can be sent to me any time at aharmey@purdue.edu.

Work continues on the next issue of *Archival Issues* (vol. 42, no. 2), which will be out later this year. Space remains for additional articles in this and future issues, and we especially encourage those who may be new to professional publishing to consider contributing their expertise to our peer-reviewed publication. To submit an article manuscript or to learn more about *Archival Issues*, visit the online submission portal <https://www.iastatedigitalpress.com/archivalissues/submissions>. Access past volumes of *Archival Issues* online any time <https://www.iastatedigitalpress.com/archivalissues/issues>.

News from the Midwest

Assistant Editor: April Anderson-Zorn, Illinois State University. Please submit News from the Midwest items to April at aander2@ilstu.edu. Submissions must be 150 words or less. Images are welcome!

ILLINOIS

Principia College

In April 2024, the Principia Archives launched a new exhibit, *Athletics for Everyone at Principia*. The Archives and Collections objects on display date from as early as 1903 and celebrate over 120 years of student athletic participation at Principia. Principia founder Mary Kimball Morgan promoted character development through the “education of the whole man—physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually, as well as intellectually.” Principia continues to embrace the “whole person” physical education approach, providing opportunities for all students to participate no matter their skill level. The exhibit is on display at Principia College, Marshall Brooks Library, Elsay, Illinois, through October 2024. Visit the beautiful historic landmark campus and enjoy this exhibit or visit the abbreviated digital exhibit at <https://library.principiacollege.edu/Archives/Exhibits>.



Principia College Cheerleaders, circa 1973. Principia College Photograph Collection. Courtesy of the Principia Archives.

IOWA

Loras College

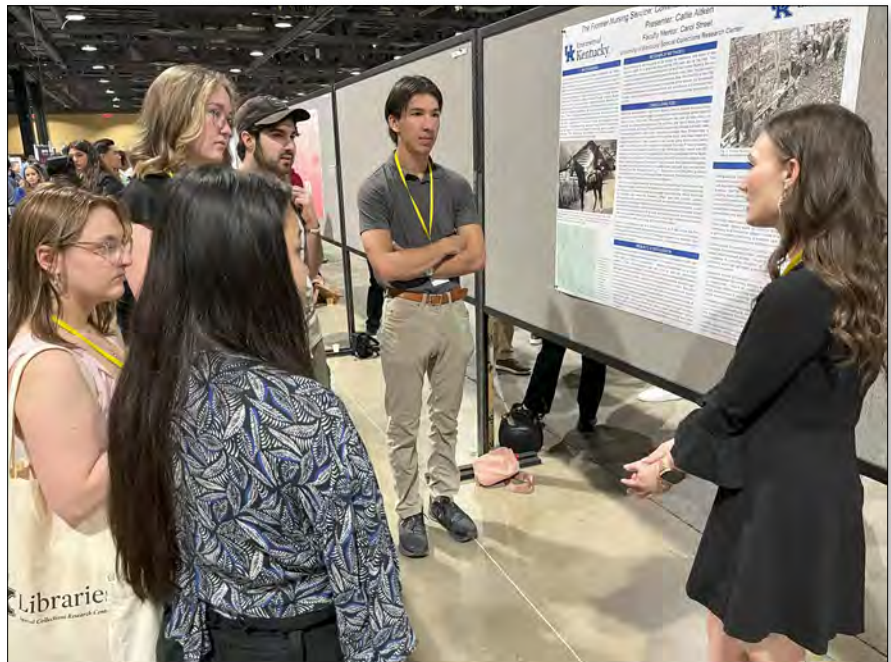
The Loras College Library has recently acquired the papers of haikuist and teacher Bill Pauly and haikuist Sister Mary Thomas Eulberg. Both poets were mentored by Father Raymond Roseliep, an early advocate for haiku in the Midwest, whose papers also reside at the college. With these additions, the library is pleased to announce that these collections will form the base of a new Haiku Collection focusing on Midwest authors.

KENTUCKY

University of Kentucky

In April, the University of Kentucky Special Collections Research Center

(SCRC) sent nine undergraduate Learning Lab interns to the National Conference of Undergraduate Research in Long Beach, California, to present their archival research using unprocessed collections. The culmination of their one-year SCRC internship, research encompassed rural health-care solutions, Black Civil War soldiers, Bourbon heritage marketing strategies, land ownership in the Kentucky frontier, art and coal mining, Thomas Henshaw marginalia, a nurse’s diary from a psychiatric hospital, Holocaust survival narratives in education, and women’s correspondence from eighteenth-century France. For more information on their conference travel experience, follow the Learning Lab on Instagram @ukylearninglab.



Callie Aitken, UK Libraries Learning Lab intern, presents on health care in rural Appalachia at the National Conference of Undergraduate Research. Photo by Carol Street.

MINNESOTA

Norwegian-American Historical Association

The Norwegian-American Historical Association has received a generous grant for \$297,453 from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The funds, awarded by the NEH Humanities Collections and References Resources, will be used to preserve, digitize, and make accessible collections that document the relief efforts of Norwegian-Americans for occupied Norway during World War II. The three-year project, titled *Alt for Norge: Norwegian-Americans Fighting for Two Homelands*, will result in the digitization of five collections: American Relief for Norway, Inc. Papers; Camp Little Norway Papers; Hermana Rye Haugan Papers; the Photographic Collection of Campbell Norsgaard; and Jacob Sterrerud Papers. Learn more about the project at naha.stolaf.edu/neh-grant.

NEBRASKA

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Through a collaboration between UNO Libraries' Archives and Special Collections and the Office of Latino and Latin American Studies, 22 bilingual oral histories from Voces of a Pandemic Collection, part of the *Conversaciones: Latino and Latina Voices of Omaha* project, have been recorded, preserved, and shared online. Digital Initiatives Archivist Wendy Guerra is the repository lead coordinating from preaccessioning to online public access. The project was partly funded by Humanities Nebraska and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, UNO's Office of Research and Creative Activity, and UNO Libraries' Eugene S. and Sunny M. Thomas Fund for Innovation. *Conversaciones* is part of UNO Libraries' strategic priority to cultivate, share, and preserve digital resources and scholarship. Some of

the Voces oral histories collected were created in collaboration with the Voces Oral History Center at UT–Austin. The stories were collected by OLLAS director Cristián Doña-Reveco and faculty member Isabelle Beulaygue for the *Conversaciones* project.

The Shirley and Leonard Goldstein Papers at the University of Nebraska at Omaha have been processed. The collection was donated in honor of the Goldsteins by their children. It documents humanitarian activism, including international work, especially on behalf of Soviet Jewish emigres, Cambodian refugees, and others. The earliest documents are from Shirley's parents, Ben and Selma Gershun, in Council Bluffs, Iowa. In the 1970s, Goldstein made trips to the Soviet Union, where she met with Soviet Jewish dissidents. Goldstein smuggled materials for the dissidents and smuggled out their stories until she came under scrutiny by Soviet authorities and was denied entry. A Shirley and Leonard Goldstein Supporting Foundation grant supported student processing supervised by Lori Schwartz, Hagel and Technical Services Archivist. Letters to Shirley, while Leonard served in WWII, were digitized along with photo albums and scrapbooks from his time in the Pacific theater. More information is available at <https://www.unomaha.edu/criss-library/news/2024/02/goldstein-papers-available.php>.

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Campbell Norsgaard stands on a German airplane after Norway was liberated in June of 1945. Courtesy of the Norwegian-American Historical Association.

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SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota State Archives

Shane Balkowitsch, a Bismarck, North Dakota, wet plate collodion photographer and artist, presented the South Dakota State Archives with a wet plate collodion image of Olympian Billy Mills.

Mills, an Oglala Lakota track and field star, won a gold medal in the 10,000-meter run at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. Mills was recently in Balkowitsch's studio in Bismarck. Balkowitsch noted, "Billy Mills is a national hero for his effort at

the Tokyo Games in 1964. It was important for me to immortalize this man in the historic wet plate process and equally as important to find an archive to have the history preserved."

Balkowitsch has donated over 30 plates to the South Dakota State Archives. Most of the images are of Native Americans from South Dakota, as part of his photographic project, Northern Plains Native Americans: A Modern Wet Plate Perspective. Balkowitsch has donated other plates to numerous archives and museums throughout the world.

WISCONSIN

Marquette University

Since 1977, Raynor Library's archives unit has been the official repository for the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, a body created by the Catholic Church in 1874 to protect, promote, and administer its US Native American mission interests. To improve access to these records, the library has begun scanning the hundreds of microfilm reels in the collection. Already, upward of 24,000 documents from the 1920s are available online in the library's institutional repository, and digitization continues. These newly digitized BCIM microfilm collections complement an existing collection of digitized BCIM photographs. See the microfilm collection at <https://epublications.marquette.edu/bcim> and the photograph collection at <https://cdm16280.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p4007coll4>.



Shane Balkowitsch (left) holds the glass plate he created of Olympian Billy Mills, which was presented to Manuscript and Photo Archivist Matthew T. Reitzel (right) during the 2024 South Dakota State Historical Society's conference in Pierre.

Outreach and Engagement

Assistant Editor: Erin McBrien, University of Minnesota Libraries. Contact Erin at emcbrien@umn.edu if you would like to guest author a column or have a good idea to share.

Research Library Volunteer Adding Value to Outreach

By Michael Barera, Milwaukee County Historical Society

Terry Johannes, a volunteer at the Milwaukee County Historical Society's Research Library, was born and raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He is German American on both sides of his family, both of which came to Milwaukee County in 1848. His family settled in Whitefish Bay, and his father's side were farmers while his mother's side were tavern owners. Terry became interested in history at a young age, in large part due to his grandfather, who grew up in the 1880s and 1890s, as well as his father, who grew up during the Great Depression. His grandfather especially was a big influence on him. His family also owned and operated a greenhouse on Green Bay Avenue from 1885 until 1963. Terry graduated from the Milwaukee Public Schools and then the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. About 10 years ago, his daughter bought him an MCHS gift membership. He had also been coming to the MCHS book sales for a few years before he started thinking about volunteering here. In September 2022, Johannes's wife passed away, and he was looking for something to do that was constructive. He talked to Lead Archivist Steve Schaffer about volunteering in the Research Library at the book sale in 2022 and started volunteering there in January 2023.

When Johannes first started volunteering at MCHS, he was working on creating metadata for digitized photographs. After a month or two of volunteering, we received a donation of about 300 glass-plate negatives from a local family. Schaffer knew that Johannes had been collecting glass-plate negatives himself and had an interest. Because of this, Johannes has been creating metadata for glass-plate negatives and slides ever since. The Addicks Family collection spans from the early 1890s through 1917. It documents an upper-middle-class Milwaukee family. The father was a bookkeeper, a role that Johannes noted was somewhat similar to a modern-day certified public accountant. The Addicks Family collection consists of many skyline photos, ships on the Milwaukee River, shots of the family, and documentation of their house. As Johannes recounts, "When I got done with the Addicks Family [glass-plate negatives], I felt like I knew them."

Terry Johannes has worked on creating metadata for numerous other glass-plate negative and slide collections, including those from the City of Milwaukee Traffic Bureau, the Milwaukee Wheelmen, the Milwaukee

Socialists, a "Scenes of Early Milwaukee" collection, and collections from or documenting the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the Chicago & North Western (C&NW) Railway, the LaFeber Brothers hat and cap company in Wauwatosa, and a retail design program at Cardinal Stritch University. As of February 2024, Johannes was working on the WPA collection.

Glass-plate negatives were used by professional photographers through the 1920s and employ essentially the same technology as celluloid negatives but use a different base material. The quality and clarity of glass negatives is superior to celluloid ones, but they are also more expensive and more fragile and were largely replaced when photography became more of a mass medium in the early-to-mid-twentieth century. Johannes uses the FilmLab smartphone app to instantly convert negatives to positives on his phone. The app is both for his own convenience, allowing him to see the image more easily for metadata creation, as well as for scanning and sharing images on Facebook. Johannes has seen negatives as tall as 10 or 12 inches. Most of what he has been working with are slides, not negatives. Unlike glass-plate negatives, glass-plate slides are positive photographs printed onto glass. They are used with a magic lantern that projects the image. Just like glass-plate negatives, glass-plate slides are known for their high quality and image clarity.

During his volunteer work, Johannes has learned the most from the Milwaukee Wheelmen collection. That collection came with a lot of information and has sparked the most conversation on social media. The Wheelmen collection came with a small ledger with detailed information on each of its 110 slides. At first, Johannes "didn't even know the Wheelmen existed." They were the Milwaukee chapter of a national association, the League of American Wheelmen, formed during the "bicycle craze" in the 1880s. They rode and raced on both high-wheel (penny-farthing) and safety bicycles, the latter of which are the predecessors of modern bikes. Fred Schmitz took the photos in the collection and credits his family's photo business. The Wheelmen were also a social group. Terry Andrae was one of their members, namesake of Andrae State Park, now part of Kohler-Andrae State Park. Terry

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OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT—Continued

Erin McBrien, Assistant Editor

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Andrae's father, Julius, started building bikes as they became more popular, and his son won more fame for his exploits with the Wheelmen. Schmitz put the collection of his photos together in 1925. It includes his hunting and fishing photos from northern Wisconsin and some family photos in addition to his Wheelmen photos. The latter also includes photos of an "Old Timers' Club," showing Wheelmen members later in life. Schmitz sold the collection in 1930 and died in 1931. As Johannes puts it, "I couldn't believe the amount of comments we got about the Wheelmen."

Johannes's favorite slide is from the Wheelmen collection. It shows a group of Wheelmen posing with their bikes in Juneau Park with the C&NW Depot and numerous mansions clearly visible in the background. Johannes noted the Wheelmen "just kept on growing . . . as bicycles got more affordable."

Jolie Diepenhorst, former MCHS community programs manager, initially had the idea to feature Terry Johannes's work and highlights from the glass-plate slides and negatives on social media. She struck up a conversation with Johannes and asked him about what he was doing as a volunteer. He explained his work with enough enthusiasm that she came up to the Research Library to take a closer look. It was her idea to feature his work on social media

on Tuesdays. Using the FilmLab app, she did quick scans of the negatives and slides using the light table that Johannes uses, featuring two or three images every Tuesday. This social media initiative probably started in November, according to Johannes. These images are posted on the MCHS Facebook page. Some people on Facebook wanted more information to accompany the images, so now Johannes writes a short statement for each post. There have been a lot of comments, especially on the Wheelmen posts. Today's post (February 13) already has six comments, just 40 minutes after going live. It features four images posted together along with a digital newspaper clipping for additional context.

Regarding his advice to anyone interested in volunteering at MCHS, Johannes says, "Do it." He emphasizes not to be afraid about not knowing enough. Research Library volunteers will be working in an environment surrounded by archival research materials. Johannes notes that MCHS's collection of Milwaukee city directories and the knowledge of its two archivists has been helpful. He recommends volunteering at MCHS.

Terry Johannes notes that "it's the best [volunteer] job I've ever had." It is worth it for him because he has been able to help catalog the history of Milwaukee, and also it "has been a fantastic source of knowledge for me."



Glass slide from the Milwaukee Wheelmen collection of the Milwaukee Wheelmen on a Sunday outing at Juneau Park, c. 1890–1910



A photograph created from a glass negative from the Addicks collection. This photograph was taken from the roof of the Goll & Frank building looking north, c. 1890–1910.



A photograph of the Pabst Theater created from a glass negative from the Heath collection, c. 1890–1910.

Electronic Currents

Assistant Editor: Danielle Spalenka, Indiana University. Contact Danielle at dspalenk@iu.edu if you would like to guest author a column or have a good idea to share.

Student Online Voices Echo in University Archives

By Emily B. Collier, University of Kentucky Libraries

Today's student organizational records are electronic: a post to Instagram or X; an article, profile, or organizational page published to the university web or news site; or journals and newsletters released only online. These are not records that can be gathered in boxes and left on a shelf until processed. Despite the common assumption that the Internet is forever, it is turbulent and ephemeral with a changing landscape that frequently loses content. Uploaded documents are taken down, URLs are shifted or removed, and social media posts are deleted.

When the University of Kentucky (UK) Latino Student Union (LSU) agreed to have its Instagram included in the University Archives housed in the Special Collections Research Center, it had over 300 posts. These included event fliers, member introductions, photographs celebrating achievements, announcements, and more that recorded the activities of the LSU over the last few years. Moreover, the comments and conversations on each post demonstrate the love and support members share for one other and their larger communities. The casualness of the social media platform allows an openness and authenticity not often found in traditional archival materials. No other record, electronic or analog, has ever been able to fully capture the voices of a student organization with such transparency or authenticity as those generated by social media. Candor is lost in meeting minutes, and yearbook photos can only hope to hint at social bonds.

And what of the LSU as an official university student organization? A brief look into the University Archives will show a handful of documents and a smattering of mentions in the *Kentucky Kernel*, the student-run newspaper. The LSU has existed only a decade, and this lack of physical records is neither unexpected nor unusual. Living organizations rarely think to distribute their records to the archives unless prompted, so the University Archives is accustomed to receiving documents decades after their creation. However, student organizations have traditionally been more problematic. Swain¹ recounts common issues, including the transient nature of students and turnover, the reluctance of some groups to allow access for political or other reasons, and "present thinking" mindsets resulting in the casual discard of documents. However, even more problematic is the shift in record format: fliers, member rosters, event schedules, and the like were all printed

products, but no longer.

The reality that most records of archival interest are now hosted online-only has a solution. Web crawling tools such as Archive-It,² created by the Internet Archive, can archive entire websites. These crawls can also be scheduled on a recurring basis, meaning that online records can be captured at different points in their lifespan, which is particularly valuable for living documents that undergo change. However, despite the robust capabilities of web archiving, there are some significant limitations.

The first limitation is the time and labor of web archiving. It takes time to select the appropriate "seeds," or targeted URLs; to scope the seeds; and to review captures and ensure quality. UK's website, the overwhelming beast that is the uky.edu domain, is home to hundreds of individual URLs that compose an enormous network of connected sites from a slew of various departments, units, and subunits. Without proper maintenance and attention, the peripheral edges of the domain may not be captured, as crawls tend to fail or time-out the farther from the main trunk they go. These end-of-branch sites often host small departments, subunits, and less-prominent student organizations. Furthermore, unless these end-of-branch sites are known to the archivist, it is hard to ensure their successful capture.

A larger limitation regarding student organizations is that many groups host much of their online presence away from the uky.edu domain altogether, and these sites are often unknown to archivists. Moreover, they tend to be more dynamic sites than the uky.edu domain. The richness and depth of social media, while excellent for supporting the historical and cultural heritage of student organizations, remain difficult to archive. Archive-It lives in a technology arms race with media proprietors who instigate changes in permissions/scripts that regularly include crawl blockers. These rapid changes mean Archive-It social media crawls almost always fail. Between the chances of missed crawls on official university sites and failed social media crawls, student organizations risk losing their voices to the whims of the wild web.

In 2022, Special Collections reached out to the LSU to partner on a mini-grant through Project STAND,³ a community that seeks to highlight the stories

of historically marginalized student organizations. The grant would fund the Wildcat Histories Project: Preserving Activist UK Student Organizations' Legacies. The goal is to use this project as a pilot for developing procedures for archiving student organizations' online content, with special attention to social media. As the LSU already had a working relationship with the University Archives for its analog materials, it was willing to partner up under the grant and donate its social media accounts.

It was clear that a new tool would be needed apart from Archive-It. After a period of research and testing, another tool came into the spotlight: Webrecorder,⁴ particularly its Chrome plug-in tool called ArchiveWeb.page. The difference between Webrecorder's technology and traditional crawling tools is the focus on interactions that occur within a browser rather than a straight crawling of HTTP requests. This level of high-fidelity, interactive archiving allows users to log in before crawling and to interact with content to generate archivable requests. Despite being a more manual procedure overall, the introduction of an auto-crawl feature helped make ArchiveWeb.page an attractive tool. A few quick tests and out came a successful WARC (web archive) of the LSU Instagram. The only major obstacle to overcome then, was if WARCs produced by Webrecorder could be uploaded and made accessible with Archive-it. The current Web Archiving Program at UK relies heavily on Archive-It for access, and it is important that all captured content is hosted on the same platform to ensure cohesion and reduce access silos.

As it turned out, these external WARCs produced by ArchiveWeb.page can be uploaded and replayed within Archive-It . . . with conditions. Data from uploaded WARCs cannot be deleted without special request, meaning any mistakes count toward subscription data even if the WARC isn't functional. Additionally, data from the uploaded WARCs are not deduplicated. Deduplication is a major attraction of Archive-It: if two copies of the same file are recognized, say a picture repeated across multiple areas of a site, Archive-it will only store one copy of that picture and serve it up whenever it appears. Not so with uploaded WARCs. As social media sites are very data-heavy, this means that every upload will be much more data-burdensome than an Archive-It crawl. Yet, at least the content is being preserved, which is a step in the right direction.

The Wildcat Histories Project resulted in a fully accessible collection of LSU records, including its online presence.

The solutions discovered are working for now, even if they aren't perfect. Yet, there was another major aspect to Wildcat Histories: how is this work maintained and how does it support the students? A truly ethical consideration of student organization archives would involve the organizations themselves moderating what is included, just as the LSU worked closely with the University Archives. This gives LSU control and it also builds the potential for stronger sustainability. Members of the LSU came to understand the importance of the archival record to support their legacies and preserve their voices and were willing to actively participate in the web archiving process. This must be translated to other organizations. Wildcat Histories included initial outreach, but this work must continue beyond the life of the grant to be successful. Previous student outreach projects like Citizen Web Archiving program at the University of Dayton⁵ and STATE-IT at Indiana State University⁶ can act as positive guides for the next moves forward. Now that Special Collections can capture and preserve social media content, the hope is that effective outreach will increase the prevalence of student activist voices within the archives and allow a more complete record of the UK's student organizations.

NOTES

1. Ellen D. Swain, "Connecting Students of the Present, Past, and Future: An Activist Approach to the Collection and Use of Student Documents in the University Archives," *Journal of Archival Organization* 2, nos. 1–2 (2004): 39–53, https://doi.org/10.1300/J201v02n01_04.
2. Internet Archive, n.d., Archive-It, <https://archive-it.org>.
3. "About Us," Project STAND: Student Activism Now Documented, <https://standarchives.com/about-2>.
4. Webrecorder: Web archiving for all! (2024), <https://webrecorder.net>.
5. Kayla Harris, Christina A. Beis, and Stephanie Shrefler, "Citizen Web Archivists: Applying Web Archiving as a Pedagogical Tool," *Journal of Electronic Resources Librarianship* 33, no. 4, (2022): 262–72, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1941126X.2021.1988463>.
6. Kayla Siddell, "Documenting Student Life: Using Omeka to Connect Students to the University Archives," *Codex* 4, no. 4 (2018): 48–61, <https://journal.acrla.org/index.php/codex/article/view/133/282>.

Mixed Media

Assistant Editor: Matrice Young, University of Iowa. Contact Matrice at matrice-young@uiowa.edu if you would like to guest author a column or have a good idea to share.

Ghosts of Galesburg: An Annual Journey Through Time

By Emily DuGranrut, Galesburg Public Library

Galesburg, Illinois, is a city that loves its history. From its time as a railroad hub to its many theaters and performance venues, the city has a rich history and residents who love to reminisce about yesteryear. As a public library, we try to cater to that love by providing programming to encourage reflection and celebration of the community, including historical presentations, genealogy lock-ins, and walking tours. One of our most successful programs every year is Ghosts of Galesburg, a tour showcasing some of the most famous figures in the city's past at iconic locations.

Throughout the last 11 years, Ghosts of Galesburg has taken on many forms. What began as a traditional ghost tour has evolved into a major event. In 2020, we went virtual for the first time, giving patrons the opportunity to take the tour on their own during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023, the tour became stationary as we focused on a particular community: the Mexican boxcar population of Galesburg. You can view the Ghosts of Galesburg 2023 tour on our YouTube Channel: [GalesburgPL](#).

History of Ghosts of Galesburg

A Jack the Ripper walking tour in London inspired the first event. When Assistant Director Jane Easterly moved to Galesburg, she was amazed at the history of the city. She remembered how interesting she found the tour in London and wondered if something similar could be done in Galesburg. Ghosts of Galesburg was born. Originally, the event was conceived as a walking-only tour, but the Galesburg Historical Society offered to loan its tram to the program, allowing individuals with mobility issues to participate.

It was originally thought that the event would only take place once, but attendees clamored for a second event, and then an annual event. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the event attracted as many as 300 walkers.

“One of my favorite memories of Ghosts of Galesburg was the year Rossann Baker-Priestley portrayed Carrie Nation,” said Easterly. “She was vehemently opposed to the drinking of alcohol and was known for attacking



Rossann Baker-Priestley as Mother Bickerdyke from the 2021 Ghosts of Galesburg tour. Image taken by Jane Easterly.

bars with a hatchet. Rossann threw herself into the part, marching back and forth in front of a local restaurant near the train station while raging against the demon liquor. I was at the back of the crowd as we moved on to the next ghost at a historic church and noticed a police car following us. When I approached the officers, one of them asked me doubtfully, ‘We got a call that you are holding a rally?’ And I had to explain about Ghosts of Galesburg. Now we give the police a heads up each year before the event. Another favorite memory was Aron Whitehurst acting as the gangster John Dillinger, who came to Galesburg for a christening. Aron stood on the Corpus Christi Catholic Church steps throwing pennies to the crowd.”

The first tour was an actual ghost walk, visiting places that Galesburgers say are haunted. It is now a historical event, with actors portraying famous people connected to Galesburg and portraying regular community members like a couple who exchanged letters during the Civil War.

Importance of the Event

Ghosts of Galesburg has become a cornerstone event for community engagement and education. By bringing to life the stories of historical figures and pivotal moments in the city’s history, the event provides a unique experience that resonates deeply with participants. As a library, we believe this is important to help foster a sense of connection and pride in the city and encourage participants to gain a more nuanced understanding of the historical forces that have shaped their community.

In addition to its educational impact, Ghosts of Galesburg plays a crucial role in the preservation of local history. Each year, the event prompts new research into the city’s past, often bringing untold stories to light. This contributes to a growing repository of historical information. These efforts are particularly valuable in a time when many communities are losing their historical records to the ravages of time and modernization. The archival work associated with Ghosts of Galesburg ensures that the history of Galesburg is preserved for future generations, maintaining a tangible link to the past.



Gary Mustain as Jonathan Blanchard during the 2021 Ghosts of Galesburg tour. Image by Jane Easterly.

The broader implications of Ghosts of Galesburg on the community extend beyond mere historical interest. The event has become a cultural touchstone, with people asking about it months in advance. It draws people from all walks of life, and even visitors from other states. By highlighting diverse aspects of Galesburg’s history, like our focus on women’s suffrage and the Mexican boxcar community, the event promotes inclusivity and broadens the community’s appreciation of its multicultural heritage.

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Overall, Ghosts of Galesburg exemplifies how historical events can serve as powerful tools for community engagement, education, and preservation.

Ghosts of Galesburg 2023—Boxcar People

The 2023 edition of Ghosts of Galesburg was themed “Boxcar People” and focused on the Mexican boxcar population that includes a vibrant yet often overlooked segment of Galesburg’s community. During the early and middle twentieth century, many Mexican families came to Galesburg when they were recruited by the railroad companies. They lived in temporary homes in boxcars provided by the railroads. These workers played a crucial role in the local railroad industry, contributing significantly to its growth and sustainability during labor shortages.

We decided to highlight these people in 2023 for several reasons. One reason was the desire to illuminate

underrepresented narratives in Galesburg’s history, fostering a greater understanding and appreciation of the city’s multicultural past. Another reason was the historical relevance of the Mexican boxcar community, which highlights the broader themes of migration, labor, and integration still pertinent to contemporary discussions about identity and community dynamics. By focusing on this unique aspect of local history, the event aimed to acknowledge and honor the contributions of Mexican American families to Galesburg, promoting a more inclusive historical narrative.

In addition to the thematic exploration, the event was synchronized with the placement of historical plaques at the boxcar camps. These plaques include the names of families who lived at the camps, recognizing their commitment and work. This initiative by the local community college helped physically embed the narrative into the community.



Actors from the Ghost of Galesburg 2023 event. Image by Anne Giffey.

The specific goals associated with the “Boxcar People” theme included educating participants about the historical conditions and cultural heritage of the Mexican boxcar community, re-engaging local audiences.

Planning and Preparation

The success of Ghosts of Galesburg hinges on meticulous planning and preparation, which begins months before the event. This preparation involves a detailed process of selecting which “ghosts” to feature, conducting thorough research to ensure historical accuracy, and coordinating with actors and local businesses to enhance the experience.

The process of selecting which historical figures to portray is both collaborative and rigorous. Some ghosts are repeated from years past, and others are new every year. From Charles Walgreen to Burl Ives, the aim is to feature a diverse array of figures to reflect the rich tapestry of the city’s past. Ghosts of Galesburg 2023’s theme was born from a suggestion from community members. Given the timing of the placement of the plaques, we thought incorporating that aspect of history would be a great tie-in.

Once the ghosts are selected, we delve into records, newspapers, and other archival materials to gather as much information as possible about each figure’s life and contributions. This research is critical for crafting scripts that are not only engaging but historically accurate.

The coordination with actors is perhaps one of the most important aspects of Ghosts of Galesburg. Local actors and volunteers from the community portray the figures. Usually, family members of the ghosts portray their ancestors, including in 2023. Each actor receives a script and appropriate costume that reflects the era of their character.

We partnered with a local restaurant, Taco Hideout, near one of the boxcar camps. Jack Perez, a descendant of

individuals who lived in the camps, owns the restaurant. This collaboration integrated the theme and highlighted a part of our community, enhancing the cultural atmosphere and providing a taste of the heritage being celebrated.

We also collaborated with Irene Ponce, Luz Schick, and Will Schick, who are experts on the topic and contributed to research significantly.

Reception and Feedback

The 2023 Ghosts of Galesburg was very warmly received, reaching participants who had never attended in years past. This was not only a welcome development, but also valuable information and context for future events. Despite the very cold weather, attendees spanning a wide range of ages joined in the event.

Reactions were overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing thanks for highlighting and deepening appreciation of the city’s heritage. As in years past, attendees appreciated the authenticity and depth of the actors’ portrayals.

Ghosts of Galesburg in the Future

As we look toward the future, the opportunities for Ghosts of Galesburg are immense. In April of 2024, we opened a new library, which is closer to Hope Cemetery where many of the city’s founders are buried. While we knew this already, the Ghosts of Galesburg Mexican boxcar event deepened our understanding of the importance of engaging storytelling and the power of integrating community elements into historical narratives.

The long-term goals for Ghosts of Galesburg include expanding its reach to include more attendees and continuing to highlight the diversity of the community. While we don’t always have a specific theme, we are brainstorming this year’s event already!

Assistant Editor: Tyson M. Koenig, Southeast Missouri State University. Contact Tyson at tmkoenig@semo.edu if you would like to guest author a column or have a good idea to share.

Reparative Work and the Importance of Representation in the Field

By Matrice Young, University of Iowa

Special collections and archives, particularly in the United States, have always been Eurocentric. Collections primarily document individuals and groups that represent the majority culture, which tends to be white, able-bodied, neurotypical, heteronormative, and male. And yet, the United States is among the most diverse cultures, as it contains people from a variety of different backgrounds and experiences. They should be represented in our historical records. We all should.

I had been told by many that the libraries and archives field is inclusive. However, after starting my journey as a student, I had trouble believing that statement. When I joined the University of Iowa's library and information science program, I was hyperaware of my existence. I was one of the few racially marginalized voices present in all my classes. In most of my classes, I was the only Black student, and in many others, I was one of three students of color in general. There were fewer than 10 students of color in my cohort, and I realized quickly that this was indicative of our numbers in the field too. I wanted this to change, and I hoped my presence could do that.

Overall, the lack of racial diversity in the students was a shock, but that was not the only one. My classes rarely spoke of historically Black colleges and universities; Hispanic-serving institutions; tribal colleges and universities; or Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions. Minority-serving institutions were often not included in our syllabi, nor were their names included as options in class research projects. The lack of racially marginalized voices in our classes gave me a glimpse into the field. We still have changes to make.

When I received my Robert A. and Ruth Bywater Olson Graduate Assistantship from the University of Iowa Special Collections and Archives, I stated I wanted to work with and on marginalized voices. My department supported me enthusiastically.

My boss encouraged and allowed me to mentor and supervise the Black and brown undergraduate students we hired. I cotaught the course "Training Students, Supervising Today's Students" with my boss for staff at the University of Iowa on supervising students. In the presentation, I emphasized the importance of making

your workplace environment welcoming, friendly, and equitable for students of color and other marginalized identities. I emphasized how important it is to be wary of the microaggressions and biases that we all hold as people born in a systemically oppressive society. I made up examples of scenarios with students from different marginalized backgrounds so we could workshop how to work with people different from us and check our biases at the same time. I was determined to make safe spaces in different areas of the libraries and outside of my department too.

I saw the importance of my presence outside of the work I was doing in classes and presentations too. At the time, I was the only Black individual in our department, and given my last name, I was listed at the bottom of our alphabetical online staffing list. The presence of my photo encouraged a Black student to reach out to me via email to ask if we had any jobs available. The importance of simply having my picture, my visibility, brought others to the field, and that made me feel like my presence was meaningful even outside of active dismantling of racist systems.

BIPOC student workers approached me and told me my presence made them the most comfortable when they first began working, and often these same students come to me to talk about their race-related frustrations with their classes and programs. Students tell me that they feel comfortable talking about race and intersectionality with me, and other students feel comfortable enough to ask for help on dismantling their own biases. Our presence as marginalized people matter.

Aside from my presence as staff member, I also worked on a reparative project that was designed to figure out which of our collections were by or about marginalized people and to give them subject headings to ensure patrons and our own staff members could find them. This project is ongoing, as all reparative work and activism projects are.

From this project, my time with the Dennis Michael Warren Papers sticks out to me the most impactful. One of my strategies to identify marginalized people and groups in our collections was by searching the Iowa Digital Library (IDL) for key terms and visual indicators. In the Warren Papers, I noticed one of the images was of a Black

woman's hair, wrapped in thread and pointed straight up. The image was titled "woman with plaited hair."



Woman with threaded hair, Techiman District, Ghana. Image taken from the Dennis Michael Warren Papers (MsC0538) at the University of Iowa Special Collection & Archives.

The title stated incorrect information. The woman's hairstyle is what the Black American community calls African hair threading; it is called *Irun Kiko* by the Yoruba people, and *Isi Owu* by the Igbo people. The hairstyle is common in other West African cultures as well and has many other names aside from these. To see if this title information was transferred directly from the physical copy of the picture, my student worker Kate Dennis and I went through the collection photographs to find the original image. She found it, and we were surprised by what it said.

The image did not mention plaiting at all; in fact, it only listed the name of the individual in the photo. This image was proof that the individual who created the metadata for the photograph made their own assumptions about the hairstyle and included it as the title. While this is not inherently bad, making assumptions can cause confusion, distrust, and frustration for members of marginalized communities. It can lead to misinformation and even more dire consequences. While this is a low-stakes scenario, the assumptions that we bring could still cause harm to actual individuals and communities.



Mary I.U. Image taken from the Dennis Michael Warren Papers (MsC0538) at the University of Iowa Special Collection & Archives. Image of negative taken by Matrice Young.

I'll always remember a quote in the article "Cultural Humility as a Framework for Anti-Oppressive Archival Description"¹ by Jessica Tai, an archivist at the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library. Tai states that "archivists are unable to escape their own biases as they relate to the making and retention of records" and then quotes Canadian archival scholar Terry Cook: "archivists inevitably inject their own values, experiences, and educations, and reflect those of various external pressures, into all such research and decision-making." Tai and Cook are both right, as that's what happened with the image listed on the IDL.

There was no provenance information listing who had written the description for the image, but I reached out to the IDL to let them know that the information was incorrect. I explained to them what the hairstyle is actually called and asked them to change it. They did, and then they asked me to review other photographs as well.

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Threading hair in Twimia Chief (Odekro) Yaw Donkor's house, Twimia, Ghana, August 13, 1970. Image taken from the Dennis Michael Warren Papers (MsC0538) at the University of Iowa Special Collection & Archives.

Several photos were labeled incorrectly as plaiting, and I showed them different examples of how afro hair threading

can be styled. This entire unfortunate event shows how important it is to have members of the community, or members with shared knowledge of the intricacies of the community, participate in the description and processing of their materials.

The presence and viewpoints of marginalized people, even if they are not always present in person, can be accessed by the work we've done in other places, such as the article "Exploring the Iowa Women's Archives Disability Collections" by Abbie Steuhm (<https://saadescription.wordpress.com/2023/09/11/exploring-the-iowa-womens-archives-disability-collections>) or the resource the Homosaurus (<https://homosaurus.org>) or the website of the Archives for Black Lives project (<https://archivesforblacklives.wordpress.com>). We can be more mindful in how we interact with students, coworkers, other staff, and our patrons based on our own prejudices and cultural understandings. We can hire more marginalized staff and allow them to bring in and use their experiences to better our environment. The entire point of reparative justice is to ensure all our voices are heard, acknowledged, and woven into our historical records. Our presence, whether it be via email, article, or in-person activity, is important to creating a space that is welcoming for everyone.

NOTE

1. Jessica Tai, "Cultural Humility as a Framework for Anti-Oppressive Archival Description," in *Radical Empathy in Archival Practice*, ed. Elvia Arroyo-Ramírez, Jasmine Jones, Shannon O'Neill, and Holly Smith, special issue, *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 3, no. 2 (2021), <https://journals.litwin-books.com/index.php/jclis/article/download/120/75>.

People and Posts

Assistant Editor: Greg Bailey, Iowa State University. The MAC Membership Committee invites members to share positions, appointments, and honors in the People and Posts column. Please send items to Greg at gtbailey@iastate.edu. Submissions must be 150 words or less. Images are welcome!

People

ILLINOIS

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Rockford University
Eric Goodman
Appraisal Institute
Jane Kanter
Adler Planetarium (Institutional)
Marcella Lees
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Posts

Scott Pitol, CA, recently became the inaugural digital archivist for Naperville Heritage Society at Naper Settlement. He will be establishing a digitization lab and working with traditional and digital collections. Previously, Pitol was solutions architect/subject matter expert at Iron Mountain Library and Archival Services, university archivist and assistant professor at University of Illinois at Chicago, and corporate archivist at the Pampered Chef.

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