REPORT FROM THE CHAIR
James K. Burant, National Archives of Canada
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The period between October and February is always busy for the VM chair, as session proposals first discussed in September begin to gel and are forwarded for review, comment, and support. The VM section supported or acted as co-sponsors to nine session proposals, not all of which have made it into the final program. Although not all of our proposals were accepted, there will still be a wide range of interesting and significant VM-sponsored sessions in Washington, in which I hope many of our members will be able to participate. Further details about all these sessions will soon be forthcoming!

But conference proposals are not the only concerns of the VM Chair. Regular SAA leader messages are received and circulated as needed, or responses are provided when necessary. I've responded to requests for VM Section input into such issues as archival standards, proposed changes to NFSA regulations concerning nitrate film storage, digital libraries, and the NISO image metadata initiative, answered questions about VM participation in training sessions and conferences in various regions, directed individuals and organisations to VM section members who may be able to assist them with Visual Materials problems, and kept in contact with members of the VM section leadership on matters such as the three-year plan, nominations, and planning for Washington.

 Needless to say, I have been surprised at how much work there is to being an SAA leader, and about the amount of information and e-mail traffic that comes my way as a result. I feel slightly disconnected, being located in Canada rather than the United States, but at the same time, I am very pleased to see how active the membership of the VM section is in the world of archives in the United States. Canadians seem to view visual materials as peripheral rather than a key ingredient in archival theory and practice, and there are few practitioners who speak up on such matters. In the SAA, by contrast, many VM members are vocal, thoughtful, and active participants in the archival debates, and bring new and fresh ideas to the community.

What I am looking for, as VM chair, is the help of all of those active and interested VM members in moving the section forward, in a number of areas. One of these is in the area of communications. Laurie Baty has been a stalwart for the past ten or more years in editing and putting together, often under strained circumstances, the newsletter which we all receive on a regular basis, Views. Laurie has been a wonderful and hard-working pillar of the VM section, but the hard work, dedication, intelligence and personality has not only served her well in the SAA but in her real life as well. For some time now, she and Bruce Johnson (Indiana Historical Society) have been the only volunteers actually working on the production of Views. With her assumption of the position of Deputy Director of Collections at the Holocaust Memorial Museum at the end of January, Laurie needs additional help in continuing to produce the quality publication we have come to know and respect. Such activities would include being responsible for assembling information that goes into the recurring columns, e.g., meetings, books (new publications as well as reviews), exhibitions, artful dodging (news from the field) [Gee, Jim, don't you mean gossip?—Ed.], etc.

So—are any volunteers? If you're interested, please contact Laurie directly; her contact information is on the last page of this issue. I know Laurie would be grateful, as would I, and that whoever does come forward will learn a lot, and will find out what great people there are to work with in the section, and in SAA.

I will have one more chance to communicate with you before the annual meeting through the medium of Views. However, that doesn’t mean that you can’t communicate with me anytime you want—and please feel free to do so. I know that lots of VM people will be in Washington this fall, and I look forward to seeing many of you there as well. Until then. . . .

The Visual Materials Section Web page will be found at:
http://www.gsu.edu/~libpjr/vm.htm
HISTORICAL IMAGES SEE A NEW DAY

The Bancroft Library is pleased to announce the availability of its online Guide to Cased Photographs and Related Images [http://www.oac.cdlib.org/dynaweb/ead/ead/berkeley/bancroft/banccase/]. Cased photographs are defined as daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, and early tintypes, generally dating from the period ca. 1845-ca. 1870. These fragile plates are usually housed in miniature cases, hence the term “cased photographs.” The guide also includes examples of related media, such as photographs on blackened cloth or leather, “opalotype” photographs on white glass, and even some painted miniatures that predate photography. Soon to be added are digital images of 85 salt prints of California scenes. Salted-paper photographs are the earliest form of photographic prints on paper, and California examples chiefly date from the 1850s. The Bancroft Library’s collections of George Robinson Fardon’s San Francisco views and Charles Leander Weed’s views of mining and of the Yosemite Valley are invaluable resources of early photographs of the state.

The new online guide contains digital images and detailed descriptions for more than 440 daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, and tintypes, and is linked to a similar guide to an additional 78 cased photographs held by the California State Library in Sacramento. These guides are the product of a one-year project funded by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), administered in California by the State Librarian.

The project supported efforts to preserve and provide access to these exceedingly rare and significant pictorial documents, many of which date from the era of the California gold rush, as the first step in the creation of a comprehensive state-wide digital collection of cased photographs within the Online Archive of California [http://www.oac.cdlib.org/].

Among the images included are some of the earliest views of the booming cities of San Francisco and Sacramento (Fig. 1), dating from circa 1850-1855. Also significant are superb daguerreotypes of riverbed mining scenes and ramshackle mining towns of the 1850s, and many portraits of California pioneers and others. Among the portrait highlights are: the earliest known portrait of Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), murdered San Franciscan James King of William (Fig. 2), Mark Hopkins of the Central Pacific Railroad’s “Big Four”, John Sutter, Senator David Broderick, Lillie Hitchcock Coit, Governor Peter H. Burnett, and many others prominent in the early years of California statehood. In addition to the famous, there are many images of lesser-known pioneers (Fig. 3) as well as numerous unknown individuals. Even these hold great interest as examples of early photographic portraiture, often with beautiful clarity and detail.

The most visible results of the project are the digital images and catalog descriptions, but its most important achievement is the preservation of the fragile and unique original objects. Photographic historian Peter Palmquist, a consultant to the project, in cooperation with the Library’s Conservation Treatment department, carried out the physical stabilization of each item. The glass cover for each image was cleaned or replaced, images were sealed from the atmosphere, and the items received custom-made boxes, thus ensuring that these ephemeral images will be available for study by future generations.

Fig. 1. Sacramento Street; view toward bay down the south side of street, San Francisco, ca. 1852-1853. Attributed to William Shew. Whole plate daguerreotype. BANC PIC 1905.16242:104—CASE <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/FindingAids/dynaweb/calher/banccased/figures/brk00040749_8a_k.jpg>

FROM THE CHAIR-ELECT
Miriam Meislik, University of Pittsburgh <miriam+@pitt.edu>

The Section’s Web Images Policies site has been updated with two more links added. As a reminder, the Guidelines site will be found at [http://www.pitt.edu/~miriam/webimages.html]. The first new link added is the HANDBOOK FOR DIGITAL PROJECTS: A Management Tool for Preservation and Access by the NEDCC [http://www.nedcc.org/digital/TofC.htm]. In addition, a new category is on the site for “Other Imaging
Fig. 2. James King of William, ca. 1855. Photographed by R.H. Vance. Half plate daguerreotype. BANC PIC 19xx.490—CASE
<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/FindingAids/dynaweb/calher/banccased/figures/brk00040472_8a_k.jpg>

Fig. 3. Two Duchow sisters and a baby boy, ca. 1850. Photographed by William Snell. Half-plate daguerreotype, hand colored. BANC PIC 1955.022:002—CASE
<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/FindingAids/dynaweb/calher/banccased/figures/brk00040437_8a_k.jpg>
Issues." One link currently lives here. Please check out the Digital Print Identification Website <http://aic.stanford.edu/conspec/emg/juergens/>. This excellent site on digital processes is very helpful and interesting. Its last update was on January 12 of this year. I highly recommend a look at both of these sites.

I am still looking for a few good policies on scanning in archives and policies regarding placing images on the web to post on the site. I would also like to know if there is anyone willing to assist in writing a guideline to developing scanning policies that could be used by other archives in an effort to develop their own policies.

Please let me know if there are any suggestions to site improvement or additions. I plan to update the site further in the coming months.

ARCHITECTURAL RECORDS ROUNDTABLE
Beth Bilderback

On the Web front, the Proceedings from the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA)’s Architectural Records Conference, “Architectural Records: Preserving and Managing the Documentation of Our Built Environment,” are available on CCAHA’s Web site: <http://www.ccaha/>. This conference was held on May 3-5, 2000, in Philadelphia, PA. The program was developed by CCAHA and the National Park Service’s Museum Management Program. Co-sponsors were The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, and the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania. Hard copies of these proceedings are not available.

A Guide to the Archival Care of Architectural Records, 19th-20th Centuries. Published by the International Council on Archives last year, the French edition is available now for US$26; 20 euros; 130FFR. SAA will offer the English version when it becomes available. Serving as a guide for both experienced and inexperienced archivists, architects as well as others with an interest in preserving architectural records, this lavishly illustrated guide offers a comprehensive archival approach for the care of modern architectural records. The guide is comprised of seven chapters that offer an excellent source of information on the following topics: types of architectural records; acquisition principles, criteria and methodology; appraisal, selection and disposition; arrangement of architectural records; description of architectural records; conservation; access and dissemination: research and exhibitions. The guide includes a glossary of specialized terms and a bibliography. The authors are Louis Cardinal, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa; Maygene Daniels, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Robert Desaulniers, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal; David Peycer, Institut Français d’Architecture, Paris; Cecile Souchon, Archives Nationales, Paris; Andree Van Nieuwenhuysen, Archives Generales du Royaume/ National State Archives, Brussels.

The Greene and Greene Virtual Archives Project has been funded by the Getty, and implementation began January 29. This two-year project will create MARC records and EAD inventories for the approximately 15,000 extant architectural drawings, letters, writings, photographs, and sketches held at the Avery Architectural Library at Columbia University, the Environmental Design Archives at UC Berkeley, and the Greene and Greene Archives at USC, and provide images of approximately 5,000 of the records on the Internet.

Jeanne Stenerson sent news from Tolz, King, Duvall, Anderson and Associates (TKDA), an architectural and engineering firm in St. Paul, Minnesota. Their archives from 1910-1986 are going to the Northwest Architectural Archives (NWAA) at the University of Minnesota in the next month or so. She has been working with Al Lathrop for several years getting ready for this event. TKDA is responsible for many National Register projects in the Twin Cities and beyond, so the NWAA is anxious to receive this collection. Last year in May, TKDA celebrated its 90th birthday with a big celebration. They had an exhibit featuring nine decades of drawings and approximately 150 photographs on display, some all the way back to 1910. TKDA also produced a 30-page booklet featuring some of its projects and people (see illustration, page 1). TKDA has been lucky to have saved most of the drawings for the last 90 years, probably because the office stayed in the same building for 73 of the 90 years. Jeanne is looking for other archivists with similar collections and situations to compare notes. Contact her at (651) 292-4410 or <stenerson.jk@tkda.com>.

As always, I welcome news to include in this column.

ASSOCIATION OF MOVING IMAGE ARCHIVISTS CREATES SMALL GAUGE PRESERVATION TASK FORCE

For much of the 20th century, home movies depicting life in the United States and around the world, documentary and promotional footage, and artistic films by well-known filmmakers and amateurs alike have been shot on small gauge film stock, from 8 mm to 28mm. Typically, these unique cultural and historic artifacts have not been given the attention of larger gauge theatrical films and as a result their identification and preservation have suffered. The Small Gauge Preservation Task Force of the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) has created a brief questionnaire to identify the scope of small gauge film materials (excluding 16mm) held by institutions and in private hands. The task force appreciates assistance with this effort. Survey input will help shape future efforts and will contribute to a symposium to be held in conjunction with the AMIA conference. For more information contact Karen
Glynn, Southern Media Archive, University of Mississippi, (662) 915-5851, e-mail <kglynn@olemiss.edu> or see the task force's Web site at <http://www.amianet.org/05_Committees/committees.html>.

CANADA FINALLY HAS A NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

On January 23, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, the Honourable Sheila Copps, in company with the National Archivist of Canada, Mrs. Ian E. Wilson, held a press conference on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, to announce the formal launch of a Portrait Gallery of Canada. This new cultural institution will be associated with the National Archives of Canada and will be housed in the former United States Embassy building at 100 Wellington Street, Ottawa, which sits right across the street from the Canadian Parliament Buildings. The building, designed by architect Cass Gilbert in the late 1920s, will be renovated, and a small addition added at the rear of the building, which will provide a total of 2,645 sq. m. of space. There will be 19 environmentally controlled galleries of varying size, a multimedia lecture space for 80-100 people, and a café and boutique. It is forecast that the Gallery will attract 250,000 visitors annually. The cost of renovations is estimated to be $22 million (CDN) with the formal opening targeted for 2004-5.

Prime Minister Jean Chretien stated that “There is no better place than here at the centre of our National Capital to create a first class showcase for the extraordinary Canadians from all walks of life, who have built and shaped our extraordinary nation.” Minister Copps noted that “The Portrait Gallery of Canada will reflect the values which link Canadians across the country. Through the gallery, we will have an opportunity to make connections across time and history, and to experience the rich and varied heritage that all Canadians share.”

The National Archives of Canada has been acquiring documentary art and photography for more than a century; its portrait collections now comprise some 20,000 paintings, watercolours and drawings, four million photographs, and some 10,000 medals and philatelic works which include portraits. They provide a unique testimony to Canada’s past and present and contribute to a better understanding of Canadian history and diversity. Among the photography holdings are the complete photographic fonds of two of Canada’s best-known and internationally renowned photographers, Roloff Beny and Yousuf Karsh.

National Archivist Ian E. Wilson noted that “This Gallery will offer visitors an unparalleled chance to see Canadians from all walks of life who have helped build our country and write our stories, as well as those of today whose lives enrich our present and chart our future. We will participate in the development of the Gallery by contributing works for exhibition from our extensive portrait holdings and by providing staff expertise and operational support.”

The Portrait Gallery of Canada will be unique among such institutions in the world, as no other National Portrait Gallery is associated with a National Archives. Anyone interested in following the development of the Gallery, and in seeing some of the portraits that will be exhibited, can visit the Gallery’s website at <http://www.portraits.gc.ca/>.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE UPDATE
Marcy Silver, Silver Image <silverim@mindspring.com>

Prior to the Denver annual meeting in August 2000, SAA Standards Committee Chair Kris Kiesling requested volunteers from each Section to serve as standards liaisons, facilitating communication about standards work-in-progress. I volunteered to help and, since the meeting, the Committee has reviewed several documents. We have been working with Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA) on the International Records Management Standard for the International Organization for Standardization. The Committee is currently reviewing the ISAAR (CPF): International Standard Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families, for the International Council on Archives, and the NISO draft standard titled Data Dictionary: Technical Metadata for Digital Still Images. Chairs of the NISO standard are soliciting comments to the draft (available at <http://www.niso.org/pdfs/DataDict.pdf>). I encourage any VM section members with questions or comments regarding these standards to contact me.

COLORADO LIBRARY COMMITTEE SHARES RESOURCES, DIRECTIONS

The Colorado Library Resource Sharing and Information Access Board (CLRSIAB) moved into an innovative period of service this past November with its recent statewide meeting. Charged with ensuring that state residents are provided with the information they want, when, and where they want it, the group is emphasizing a marketing approach in its activities. Outreach, two-way communications, and customer needs-assessments are high priorities. The Colorado State Library, through its Networking and Resource Sharing Unit, recently launched the Colorado Virtual Library, a major revamping of its online services. The Colorado Virtual Library is a search interface that allows the user to search simultaneously multiple Colorado library catalogs, digitized image collections in Colorado, and quality Internet Web sites. Information on the Colorado State Library may be accessed at <http://cde.state.co.us/cdelib/>. The Colorado Virtual Library is available at <http://www.aclin.ig/>.
UT AUSTIN’S RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Paul Cret

The General Libraries of the University of Texas at Austin has acquired the close to 700-volume library of Paul P. Cret (1876-1945), the architect responsible for the university’s 1933 master plan, the Main Building and the UT Tower, and 18 other buildings on the UT campus. The books, published between 1560 and the 1930s, are rare, mostly large, folio-sized, and well illustrated. Also included in the acquisition are 43 albums, portfolios, and boxed sets of photographs as well as offprints, exhibition catalogs, prospectuses, annual reports, monographs, trade and industrial materials catalogs, journals, and periodicals.

In 1907 Paul P. Cret founded what became the most successful beaux-arts architectural firm in Philadelphia. In addition to his work on the UT Austin campus, he designed the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC, the Rodin Museum and the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia. For additional information, contact Janine Henri, Head Librarian, Architecture and Planning Library, jhenri@mail.utexas.edu or at (512) 495-4623.

George F. and Geraldine D. Andrews Papers on Maya Architecture

The largest, most exhaustive, and fully documented visual record of architecture of the Lowland Maya area in the world has been donated to the General Libraries Alexander Architectural Archive. According to Harold Billings, director of General Libraries, “The Andrews Papers, along with the recently acquired library of Professor Linda Schele, makes UT Austin one of the major locations in the world for the study of Maya architecture and culture.” The collection consists of three main components: (1) approximately 3,500 pages of descriptive data covering both exterior and interior architectural, decorative, and construction features; (2) more than 2,500 architectural drawings (sketches, maps, plans, sections, elevations, details, and restored views), and (3) several thousand photographs showing the buildings in their present form, with ranges from partly destroyed to substantially excavated and partly restored. For more information, contact Beth Dodd, Curator, or Nancy Sparrow, Curatorial Assistant at (512) 495-4621.

IN PRINT

The Review


I can describe this work in one word, poignant. Witness to the Fifties is a brief look into the amazing photographic undertaking to document Pittsburgh led by Roy Stryker. This collection of nearly 30,000 images was expertly taken by photographic greats Esther Bubley, Elliot Ewitt, Harold Corsini, Richard Saunders, Todd Webb, Sol Libsohn, Russell Lee, James P. Blair, Francis Nestler, Regina Fisher, Arnold Eagle, and Clyde Hare. It tells the story of a city, its people, and its businesses in a way that captures the city on the eve of great change.

The thoughts that came to mind as I looked through the pages of this exquisite book were captivating and emotional mixed with a great sense of pride in the history and people of my community. As a native of the Greater Pittsburgh Region and the curator of a vast collection of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh-related photographs, the images in this volume have a special meaning. I have seen the faces at least a hundred times and the streets a hundred more. They never fail to evoke emotion. These images can’t be “Anywhere, USA.” This is Pittsburgh.

Spurred on by Mayor David L. Lawrence’s Renaissance vision for the city, Pittsburgh in the 1950s was undergoing its largest facelift ever. The photographs of the Pittsburgh Photographic Library are the means to telling the story of this massive undertaking stated in one photo as “civic progress.” The details of how the old was cleared from the Point and the Lower Hill District and the construction of the new along with the creation of the Parkway system of roads, are often mentioned. It is the people who were relocated from their homes and businesses that seem to get merely a sidebar mention in other historical retellings. Here their stories are in plain view. In many photographs I felt like I was intruding into people’s homes and lives when looking at photographs such as Sol Libsohn’s images of the Homemaker Service from the Conference of Catholic Charities, June 1950, which shows someone from the charity bathing an infant in the kitchen as its brother and sister watch and then hanging wash in the living room as the children are caught in an embrace. Richard Saunders captures some of the emotion associated with the relocations of hundreds of families from their life-long residence in Pittsburgh’s Hill District with his photographs, Moving day for one of the hundreds of families in the Bedford demolition Area and Relocation of a Hill District Family, both taken April 1951. These wonderful images, both taken in kitchens, show chaos and things left behind.

The introduction is well researched and well written, serving as an excellent chronological history of the PPL. Not only is the history of an amazing collection detailed, there are also lessons in how not to manage a large photographic collection. The only problem I had was in searching the endnotes. Had I not been very familiar with the collections mentioned, it might have been difficult to know where some of the historical information was obtained. Overall, though, Witness to the Fifties is an
excellent history of the Pittsburgh Photographic Library and the era it documents.

The Books


Please contact the Editor if you're interested.

WHAT'S UP


Plan ahead:

opens June 3. The Unfinished Print. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.


[Views welcomes additions to this ongoing column documenting visual-materials exhibitions around the world. If your institution is having such an exhibition, please send the relevant information to the editor. To keep this column timely, please remember that Views is in print three months after the deadline posted on the last page—Ed.]

ARTFUL DODGING: Things Heard, Enhanced, and Passed On

Washington, DC. Laurie Baty has changed jobs again—and she firmly states that this is the last time for a while. She began her new position as Deputy Director, Collections, at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, on January 29. The Collections Division is comprised of Photo Archives, Archives & Manuscripts, Collections Management, Oral History, Art & Artifacts, Film & Video, and Conservation Management and a staff of about 50 working in these areas. Laurie may be reached at (202) 314-1788 or <lbaty@ushmm.org>.

Wauconda, IL. Section member and former Chair Katherine Hamilton-Smith, Curator of Historical Resources for the Lake County Discovery Museum, was named Curator of the Year by the Illinois Association of Museums. Hamilton-Smith received this top award at the IAM’s annual awards banquet held this past October. The Curator of the Year award recognizes excellence and outstanding accomplishment in the museum field. Hamilton-Smith joined the museum staff in 1982 and was tasked with sorting and organizing the industrial archives of the Curt Teich Company of Chicago. She has turned the
mass of printed materials and other objects into the Curt Teich Postcard Archives, the nation’s most significant and accessible collection of postcard images documenting 20th-century America. In 1996, Hamilton-Smith became curator of the museum’s Lake County objects and archival collections and was named Exhibits project Coordinator for the Museum’s $2.2 million exhibit renovation that opened this past June. Way to go, Katherine!

BE A VOLUNTEER!

John Slate, Chair of the Nominating Committee is looking for at least two Section members to run for Chair-elect for 2001-2001. This position is a great way to begin working into leadership positions within the Society of American Archivists. Think of how great it will look on your resume! If you’re interested, please contact John at City of Dallas Archives, (214) 823-8824, e-mail: <jslate@onramp.net>.

Laurie Baty is looking for help with various columns in Views: books, exhibitions, meetings, gossip. If you’re interested, please contact her at (202) 314-1788, e-mail: <lbaty@ushmm.org> or lab0254@aol.com. This activity also will look great on your resume!

Leadership Roster correction:

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Views: The Newsletter of the Visual Materials Section of the Society of American Archivists is published three times a year by and for the Visual Materials Section. For membership information, call or write the Society of American Archivists, 527 S. Wells St., 5th Floor, Chicago, IL 60607, (312) 922-0140.

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Your comments and suggestions for improvements will always receive a cordial hearing. The next deadline is June 1, 2001. Opinions expressed are those of the authors.

http://www.gsu.edu/~libpjr/vm.htm