



VIEWS: *The Newsletter of the Visual Materials Section* Society of American Archivists

Volume 21, Number 2

April 2007

From the Chair

Greetings to all from the Section Chair's soapbox! I can't help feeling that I would be remiss if I did not use the opportunity to weigh in on the Archives & Archivists listserv issue. For those of you who haven't been keeping up with the A&A listserv it was announced in early March that the SAA Council had decided to "dispose" of the listserv archive at the end of March 2007 when the host (Miami University of Ohio) would no longer support it. This announcement raised a firestorm of protest both on the Archives & Archivists list and on other professional organization's lists.

I appreciate the difficult decision put in front of Council and especially want to thank this Section's Council Liaison, Lee Miller, with whom I talked a number of times, for his fair-minded perspective, his thoughtfulness and for the time he spent on the phone with people calling in to comment.

At this writing, Council is looking for a new home for the listserv that was hosted at Miami University. I am still not sure if I agree with this decision; I have argued both sides with a number of people, as well as in my own head. However, a decision has been made and the decision, as well as the process, provides a wonderful opportunity for all of us as archivists and SAA members to ponder and discuss some hard questions about appraisal and preservation of electronic records. I pose the following for your consideration.

- Richard Pearce-Moses sent a particularly thoughtful posting to the listserv on 3/26/07 that I would encourage people to read. He asks many of the same questions that came to my mind and challenges all of us to discuss them.

- The Task Force report that recommended to Council that the listserv be discarded has been circulated to the list by President E. Adkins (3/30/07). Its very informality is very revealing about the way the whole process evolved.

- All electronic records, from email to born digital legislation, are difficult to deal with. Let's see more session offerings with electronic records as a general category at the annual meeting. I challenge us, the membership, to propose more sessions with electronic records at their center, from appraisal to preservation, from email to born digital photographs (a problematic term in itself, especially for this section. If it's born digital, is it really a photograph, based on the definition of a photograph?). I challenge the Program Committees for 2008, 2009, and farther into the future to accept well-formed proposals with the themes of born digital or electronic records.

- The new incarnation of the Archives & Archivists listserv is managed by SAA. Does that make it a record of SAA? If so, should this listserv be the subject of a records retention schedule? Should the listserv be periodically purged? Each message cannot be appraised for long term retention. Instead, should each message be tagged? SAA's Terms of Participation for the list strongly suggests the use of labels (e.g. calls, discussion, event) at the beginning of a message for filtering purposes. Can those labels be used as the basis of an automated way of saving only posts with long-term value? Which ones? How do we define long-term value?

- What is the long-term, digital preservation commitment to both the past listserv and the current listserv? Digital preservation is not free. What is the ongoing cost of digital storage?

I am certain that these few points do not encompass the whole continuing discussion that should be had on this topic, but it's a start. As archivists, we can and should take a leading role in figuring out ways to deal with electronic records for the long term.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in the Section's Midwinter meeting, both those who were able to travel to North Carolina and those who sent detailed and thoughtful reports from the rest of the country.

Finally, with this issue of *Views*, I would like to welcome to Martha Mahard to the editor's seat.

Ardys Kozbial
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Letter from the Editor

This issue marks my debut as editor. From the outset I would like to acknowledge my gratitude and indebtedness to our former editor, Laurie Baty. Her enthusiasm and constant encouragement have contributed enormously to the success of the Visual Materials Section. It was Laurie who first insisted that I join SAA and become active in VM and took me on as a partner in her workshops. I am sure that the VM membership joins me in wishing Laurie all the best in her new position.

You won't see a big difference in this issue of *Views* from previous issues. The standard components are still here. Over the coming year I hope to work with the section leadership to articulate our ideas about what kind of information belongs in which of our various outlets. We will also take a look at things like publication schedule, on-line publication format, and additional ideas for content. I hope that Section members will write to express their ideas and suggestions for what they might like to see in the future. This issue is perhaps rather high on administrative content with the minutes of the Mid-Winter meeting and various committee updates. I hope to include one or two collection profiles in the next issue. If you are interested in contributing to future issues please contact me. I look forward to working with you.

Martha R. Mahard
Editor

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From the Vice Chair

Mid-winter in Durham, North Carolina couldn't have been better. It was my first mid-winter meeting and beyond the engaging discussions, the accomplished business, and the action items I was so pleased and comfortable with the group of attendees at the meeting. I can be a bit shy sometimes so I have to confess that I was a little nervous to be around so many unfamiliar people. If you may also be one of those people then I suggest you take the plunge because you will be welcomed and well, probably put to work also. Plus, how else will you learn the meaning of "go hang a salami, I'm a lasagna hog". If any of you would like to become more involved let me know and if you have thoughts on how to make member involvement easier please contact me.

Back in Kentucky, my thoughts are currently focused on minimal processing for large image collections, ways to get more digital images online, and finding inexpensive server space on campus. James Eason and I have been developing a workshop to address processing large image collections but it's a rather daunting task - important but overwhelming nonetheless. I find it excites me but also makes my brain swim.

I've also just completed three rewarding exhibits on the University of Kentucky campus. It has been a great outlet for my creative side, made others aware of the great visual resources that we have in the archives, and has brought our unique resources to the attention of the university's president. The exhibits have focused on three areas of personal and research interest to me: history of the libraries, university women, and student life.

I'm looking forward to the annual meeting in Chicago, the VM related sessions, and especially the members' dinner. I hope that many of you will join us for this great event. As usual I would like to see even more VM related sessions at the annual meeting and I hope that we can generate earlier discussions on potential topics for SAA 2008. See you in Chicago!

Deirdre A. Scaggs
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Standards Update

SAA Council approved the formation of two new working groups to review standards development. The first is the Encoded Archival Context (EAC) Working Group, which will be a sub-group of the Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards (TSDS). The second is the DACS (Describing Archives: A Content Standard) Working Group, which will work within the Standards Committee structure.

NISO balloted to accept a maintenance revision of the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set (ANSI/NISO Z39.85-2001). This revision removed redundancies, clarified meaning, and simplified language in the element set. Results of the ballot are not yet official.

NISO currently has two standards up for review. *Information technology-Metadata Registries (MDR) Modules, Part 1: Overview* (ISO/IECCD 19773:2007) and *Information & documentation: Work process analysis for records* (ISO/TC 46/SC11NN730-ISO/CD/26122) are being reviewed this spring. *Records Management Processes-Metadata for records, Part 1: Principles* and *Part 2: Conceptual and implementation issues* were reviewed and accepted earlier in the year.

While none of these standards relate directly to visual materials, they do address areas of general relevance to our section members. As always, any additional contributions about standards of interest to *Views* readers are welcome.

Marcy Flynn
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From the American Institute of Conservation Liaison

Unless you can readily recognize a real Wothlytype or Uranotype, Visual Materials Section members might want to add a radiation detector to the list of preservation tools they use in caring for photograph collections. In “Analytical and Experimental Investigation of Uranium Based Photographic Processes and Uranium Toning”, conservators from the Getty Conservation Institute found that photographs containing Uranium can be easily identified using a handheld radiation detector. This was just one of many interesting and informative talks given at the 2007 Winter Meeting of the AIC Photographic Materials Group hosted by the George Eastman House in Rochester.

Over 150 conservators from PMG and the Photographic Materials Working Group of the International Council of Museums-Committee for Conservation attended the joint meeting. With opening remarks by Grant Romer of George Eastman House, the three-day conference included various panel discussions and group sessions along with 25 talks by photograph conservators from the U.S., Australia, Mexico, England, Germany, France, and The Netherlands. Topics ranged from “A History of Australia’s Kodak Manufacturing Plant”, highlighting the end of traditional photographic production in Australia, to “Nitrate Film, Playing without Fire!”, about the recovery and treatment of negatives damaged in a cold storage unit fire at Spokane’s Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture.

Most of the agenda focused specifically on conservation treatment, with the inherent chemistry and scientific data, but some talks and panel discussions covered material of broader interest to VMS members:

- In “Creating Long-Lasting Inkjet Prints”, Northeast Document Conservation Center Senior Photograph Conservator Monique Fischer stated that, currently, color prints made from digital files are not considered preservation quality and no standards exist for the longevity of digital prints. There are, however, ways of creating long-lasting prints, and she outlined the three most important factors: the quality of the materials used (i.e. the colorant and paper), having the correct combination of materials, and afterward, proper storage and display of the prints. She also mentioned a website for examining various inkjet papers from different perspectives that is under development at <http://www.digitalsamplebook.com/home.htm>.

- Conservators from the Getty Conservation Institute and the National Media Museum in Bradford, England, reported on the results and future plans of a collaborative project to identify photographic material using a portable laboratory. Correct and reliable identification of photographic processes is, of course, important to scholarship, preservation, and collection management. Employing major advances in the miniaturization and computerization of analytical

equipment, the advantage of this traveling laboratory is that it provides fast non-destructive identification and eliminates the need to transport photographs for the purpose of analysis.

- Maria Fernanda Valverde previewed her book *Photographic Negatives – Guide for Identification and Preservation*, which she is currently writing with the support of a Samuel H. Kress Conservation Publication Fellowship. This reference work, a compilation of existing information as well as new information found on the technology of negatives, will be a comprehensive and reliable guide for the identification and preservation of negative collections.

- Also, in “Preservation and Conservation of Photographic Black and White Negatives”, Karen Pietsch talked about a two-year research project undertaken at the FHTW Berlin in cooperation with Nederlands Fotomuseum in Rotterdam. Much of the research involves literature analysis and will result in an extensive compilation of descriptions of historic b&w negative processes and damage. The ultimate goal is to create an openly accessible reference database on b&w photographic negatives that could help professionals to identify negatives, determine possible damage, and decide on appropriate preservation and conservation treatment. Current results of the project are available at

- <http://www.photographicnegatives.net>

For VMS members interested in learning more about these and other talks given at the 2007 PMG Winter Meeting, most will be written up in the next issue of *Topics in Photographic Preservation*. For anyone now concerned about the possibility of radiation exposure, experiments by Getty conservators showed that potential radiation exposure from Uranium based or toned photographs is “negligible in comparison with the potential exposure from other more common utilitarian objects” such as Uranium glazed ceramics – or so-called *Fiesta* ware.

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Photographic postcard. Pond St., Natick, Mass., ca. 1910

Society of American Archivists

Visual Materials Section Midwinter Meeting

Durham, NC, February 23-24, 2007

Host: Paula Jeannet Mangiafico

In its fifth year!

Attendees:

- Beth Bilderback, University of South Carolina, South Caroliniana Library
- Kim Cumber, North Carolina State Archives
- James Eason, University of California, Berkeley, The Bancroft Library
- Stephen Fletcher, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
- Ardys Kozbial, Chair, University of California, San Diego
- Paula Jeannet Mangiafico, Recorder, Duke University
- Deirdre Scaggs, Chair-elect, University of Kentucky

Friday, February 23, 2007

Welcome

Administrative Group

Review of Section Bylaws

Reminder: the bylaws are reviewed every 4 years, and are next scheduled for 2008.

Review of the Committee/Working Group Structure (again)

Decided to change the three conceptual names (again!) to "Groups" rather than "Committees" to reflect the fact that these three groups do not have chairs.

Review of the Three-Year Plan

Deirdre Scaggs (Incoming Chair) is responsible for creating the next Three-Year Plan (2007-2010).

ACTION ITEM

Deirdre Scaggs will send the new Three-Year Plan to Mark Martin (webweaver), to VisualMat (listserv) and Ardys Kozbial will send it to VMS (SAA's announcement list).

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial and Deirdre Scaggs will update the Chair and Chair-Elect perpetual calendar to reflect the following:

- January: send out current Three-Year plan for review by VM membership before Midwinter.
- February: Consider taking out an ad in either SAA Outlook or the Annual Meeting program to announce section t-shirts and/or the Book Fair.
- April: Start soliciting ideas for session proposals.

- Quarterly: Chair should ask for reports from all Liaisons and Committee Chairs that will be either posted to VisualMat and/or published in *Views*. (to be discussed further by the Chair, Vice Chair and *Views* Editor)

VM Finances

Review the need for Treasurer. A section Treasurer is not necessary at this time, but the Section should continue to review the need.

T-shirt Report

The annual VM t-shirt sale formerly funded mailing the special voting issue of *Views*. Now that mailing all issues of *Views* via US mail is a thing of the past, the section is considering what it might do with its finances. There are no major fundraising or spending efforts planned at this time.

Miriam Meislik (t-shirt coordinator) reported via email that although the section broke even in 2006, 75 t-shirts is too many and that 50 is really our best quantity. One of the ideas for the 2007 shirt is an image of one of the cows from "Cows on Parade," a public art project in Chicago. Several members of the group suggested a neutral color for the t-shirt.

When the idea of taking a break from t-shirt sales was introduced, the group resolved to continue the tradition, but to keep an eye out for flagging sales or guilt-induced purchases.

Book Fair

The Book Fair and Silent Auction was a huge success last year thanks to the hard work of Megan Friedel and Heather Lindsay. The silent auction brought in \$400.

Due to work commitments, Megan will not be able to organize the Book Fair and Silent Auction this year. The group decided that if an organizer cannot be found by the end of April, the section would not do this activity in 2007.

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial will contact Megan Friedel to get her ideas for people who would be good coordinators. If necessary, Ardys will send a general request using VisualMat.

SAA Annual Meetings

The group decided that the section should continue bringing session ideas to annual meeting, but to make sure we start reminding and soliciting ideas in the spring so that people have time to prepare.

ACTION ITEM

Deirdre Scaggs will remind Miriam Meislik to send a message to VisualMat in the spring asking for session ideas.

SAA 2007

For the 2007 annual meeting, the SAA Program Committee was able to tell us of five accepted sessions that are visual materials-related:

1. Constructing Sustainability: real-world implementations of preservation standards born-digital design documentation.
2. "Labor Beat;" Chicago Film Archives and Labor Media
3. When Good Photo Collections Go Bad: critical concepts for understanding and managing photo collections
4. Digital Imaging in the Smaller Shop: case studies from the Midwest (one of the collections involved is a photograph collection)
5. Preserving Your Audio and Video Assets: a simple, physical examination to evaluate the condition of tape materials in a collection

The VM Section endorsed number 1 above, but none of the attendees could provide information about the others. The group discussed ways the section could keep closer tabs on what other groups are doing and find ways to get to that information or have it sent our way. The Section also needs to take more of a leadership role in developing and proposing both sessions and workshops.

We are not aware of any pre-conference workshops that are visual materials-related.

Ideas for Section tours for SAA 2007:

- The Museum of Contemporary Photography is already on the books as an official SAA tour.
- Other ideas included:
- Chicago History Museum (formerly the Chicago Historical Society)
- Art Institute of Chicago
- Museum of Contemporary Art
- A gallery walk.
- Chicago Tribune photo department/library

Ardys Kozbial reminded the group that if the Section wants to do its own tour, it should be scheduled on Wednesday afternoon. The Chair and Incoming Chair will likely be booked in SAA leadership meetings and will not be able to attend or organize this tour.

ACTION ITEM

Beth Bilderback will contact the Architectural Records Roundtable to coordinate efforts. Is that section planning any tours or speakers?

ACTION ITEM

Stephen Fletcher and Deirdre Scaggs will contact the Art Institute of Chicago.

ACTION ITEM

Paula Jeannet Mangiafico will look on the web for more ideas for tours.

Ideas for a speaker at the 2007 annual meeting:

- Davis Travis, curator of photos, Art Institute of Chicago
- Archdiocese of Chicago archivist
- Chicago History Museum (online resources or new collections initiatives)
- Chicago Public Library (Glen Humphreys)
- Chicago Tribune digital image collections
- Newberry Library

SAA 2008

Brainstormed ideas for sessions (30 mins.)

- A report on the new institutional preservation survey tool for photographic collections which was developed by Harvard and tested at the Library of Congress.

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial will contact Helena Zinkham for details and feasibility.

Managing born-digital images. Brett Carnell (LC Prints and Photographs) would be a good participant, or source of suggestions for others actively collecting digital objects.

ACTION ITEM

James Eason will follow up.

Managing large sets of digital-only images (Flickr web site) that arrive in personal collections.

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial will contact Taylor Horton, who came up with the idea.

Managing Digital Assets. Get someone from the Digital Library Federation and/or the Visual Resources Association to give their perspectives in addition to the archival perspective.

Elections/Nominations for 2007-2008

James Eason and Mark Martin (the two immediate past section chairs) are in charge of elections for this year. The position for which we are electing is the Vice Chair (aka Incoming Chair aka Chair-Elect). That person is the Vice Chair for 2007-2008 and the Section Chair for 2008-2009. For anyone planning by annual meeting, this person will be elected at the Chicago annual meeting, serving as Vice Chair through the San Francisco annual meeting, serving as Chair from San Francisco to Austin and running the annual meeting in Austin.

The section would like to hold its election online again this year and will pursue it.

ACTION ITEM

James Eason will contact Sue Kriegsmann about hosting an online ballot site again this year.

ACTION ITEM

If we can run the election online, James Eason will supply the election coordinator with the current membership list which he can get from Brian Doyle at SAA.

ACTION ITEM

James Eason will contact Brian Doyle to get the latest update on where SAA stands on online balloting. (We know that SAA wants to support this effort; we need to find out if they are technologically ready.)

Communications Group

Bibliography Working Group

John Slate sent in his report via email. He reported that after a lot of good work on the bibliography, there are still some entries to be added, and a few final edits. The group agreed with John that the bibliography should not include links to web sites or other electronic resources. However, if an article, for example, is available online, give the bibliographic information and then indicate this. For example: [Available online]. The group discussed the importance of web sites and that linking to articles would be a nice feature of the bibliography, but those features could be left to a future iteration of the bibliography.

John asked the group in his report about the organization of the Bibliography. What does the group think about the outline? The group is satisfied with the organization and it should stand the way it is now.

By the SAA Annual Meeting, John would like to complete a list of recommendations or guidelines for adding or considering additions to future versions of the bibliography. The group decided that this sounded like an Action Item. See below.

The group noted that the reformatted version doesn't seem to be posted to website.

The group noted that *Photographs: archival care and management* does not appear on the bibliography and it should. The group noted that publications that are reviewed in *Views* should be considered for the bibliography.

John will become Chair of the SAA Government Records Section at the SAA Annual Meeting and, although he would consider continuing to serve as Bibliography Working Group Chair, he is also happy to let someone else take the reins.

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial will ask John Slate to post the reformatted version of the bibliography to the web site by May 1. If all of the intended edits and entries are not included by May 1, Ardys will ask John to make sure that work is completed by the SAA annual meeting.

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial, in consultation with John Slate, will start looking for a new chair of the Bibliography Working Group.

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial will ask John Slate to post to VisualMat a draft version of guidelines for additions to the Bibliography and to have a final version of the document ready at the SAA Annual Meeting.

VisualMat (Listserv) Working Group

James Eason reported that this is the time for our annual discussion of moving VisualMat away from majordomo and the Berkeley web site to another place. One of the motivating factors for moving the listserv is that majordomo does not have an archival function and there is not an easy way for people to get to past postings.

James Eason will talk to Brian Doyle at SAA to find out if this is feasible now. Before making a final decision, a major question that needs to be answered is who can be on the listserv if it is hosted by SAA. Currently VisualMat is open to all, not to SAA members only. If listservs hosted by SAA are open only to SAA members, the group may want to think about other options. Anecdotal evidence suggests that subscribers to VisualMat and the section leadership would like to keep the list open, not restricted to SAA members. This should also be investigated further.

ACTION ITEM

James Eason will talk to Brian Doyle at SAA to find out if this is feasible now given the section's requirements.



North Main St., Natick, Mass., ca. 1890. Printed from a glass plate negative.

Newsletter Working Group

Outgoing *Views* Editor Laurie Baty sent a brief report via email. *Views* was published four times in 2006, all electronic and available on the VM Section web site. The *Views* indexing project is close to completion. Laurie's final issue as Editor was December 2006.

A job description for *Views* editor was posted to VisualMat and the VMS announcement list in Fall 2006. Ardys Kozbial (Chair), Deirdre Scaggs (Vice Chair), James Eason (Past Chair) and Mark Martin (Webweaver) participated in the search and Martha Mahard will assume the duties of Editor for the April 2007 issue. Martha reported via email saying that she plans to post the April issue in mid-April and that that issue will not show many changes from previous issues.

For the future, Martha would like to look holistically at the way the section uses its three avenues of communication: *Views*, VisualMat and the web site. Is there information that is better communicated via VisualMat than *Views*? Ditto with the web site. One question that will frame discussion of our communications venues: is the information more timely or archival? Does it have a long shelf-life or is it of a more urgent nature?

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial, Deirdre Scaggs, Mark Martin and James Eason will address communication issues in a variety of meetings that will include discussion of *Views*' editorial calendar, *Views*' publishing calendar, indexing, general vision for *Views*, deadlines and input from liaisons and working group chairs. This activity includes formalizing a reporting structure for liaisons and working group chairs (one idea: the chair will solicit reports from liaisons and working group chairs quarterly).

Web Site Working Group

There was no new activity from the Web Site Working Group this year. Some of the content has been updated (leadership, committees, liaisons) and all issues of *Views* are available.

The Three-Year Plan called for the web site to work toward ADA compliance and the group felt that this should continue to be pursued.

The group discussed a need to find consistent ways to both solicit and post new content. One way that this is being worked on is the Action Item related to the Chairs' Perpetual Calendar where the Chairs solicit content from liaisons and working group chairs. Stephen Fletcher suggested looking into initiating a blog on the web site to bridge communication gaps between *Views* and the web site.



The group thought that an FAQ would be valuable on the web site, but there were no volunteers to pursue this idea. The group thought that the FAQ could include tips about finding resources for jobs and internships, visual materials-related electronic resources and general questions about the section.

James Eason, Ardys Kozbial, Mark Martin and Brian Doyle started discussions at the 2006 SAA Annual Meeting about the feasibility of moving all or part of the web site to SAA. Moving the web site has been often discussed by this group with the possibility changing with technology and SAA policy. The first time the Section tried to move the web site, SAA policy dictated the design of the web sites. Because the VM Section has a long-established look and feel, the web site stayed put. SAA has since relaxed its rules on design and the section would not have to change that. The next stumbling block is the back issues of *Views*. Historically, the amount of server space that SAA has been able to offer to the sections has not been adequate for the 64 pdfs that make up the back issues of *Views*. At the August 2006 meeting, James, Mark, Ardys and Brian discussed the possibility of using the space available like a portal. Put the more dynamic information, the pages that change frequently, on the SAA site and link to the back issues of *Views* that sit on the LSU server. Having some of the web site at SAA will allow more people (for example, Webweaver, Chair and Newsletter Editor) to post information to the web site.

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial will open conversations with Mark Martin about the feasibility of moving this action forward.

ACTION ITEM

Deirdre Scaggs will contact Brian Doyle about SAA's parameters for hosting section web sites.

Other Publications Working Group

Due to job constraints, Laurie Baty has put the VM Reader on hold until spring 2007.

According to the minutes of the 2006 Midwinter meeting, the VM-focused issue of *American Archivist* was on Laurie's list of things to do after the VM Reader gained momentum and therefore, there hasn't been much work done on this front.

ACTION ITEM

James Eason will contact Laurie Baty to see if she is still interested in pursuing this. James or Laurie will contact Mary Jo Pugh, Editor of *American Archivist*, to clarify some questions that have come up.

ACTION ITEM

James Eason will contact Megan Friedel and Deirdre Scaggs who may have an interest in coordinating or writing for that issue.

Education and Special Topics Group

This group of working groups was reorganized once again after a long history lesson about what we have tried in the past. For this year anyway, we're settled on the name of this group and the working groups that compose it.

Consensus was reached on including the following working groups:

- *Professional Development and Education Working Group*. Paula Jeannet Mangiafico agreed to chair this group which will handle work on all topics of education including Advanced Workshops. Paula will also serve as the Section's liaison to SAA's Director of Education.
- *Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Roundtable*. There are no changes to the Roundtable. Martha Mahard is the Chair and Miriam Meislik is the Vice Chair.
- *Digital Collecting Working Group*. Stephen Fletcher has volunteered to chair this new group.

Other ad hoc working groups may form and disband under the Education and Special Topics Groups umbrella as specific charges or needs come up.

ACTION ITEM

Paula Jeannet Mangiafico and Stephen Fletcher will write descriptions and missions for their groups, sending them to Ardys Kozbial for vetting by section leadership. The descriptions will then be posted on the VM web site.

New Initiatives

Summaries of SAA Sessions

Solicit summaries of SAA sessions for the VM web site, beginning with the 2007 SAA Annual Meeting. The group agreed that these summaries should be reports and not reviews. The group also agreed that attempting to take this on retrospectively is simply too big and therefore not feasible.

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial will figure out how to post Miraim Meislik's list (compiled by Heather Moore) of past VM sessions on the VM web site.

ACTION ITEM

Deirdre Scaggs and/or James Eason (notes are unclear and they will figure it out) will create a framework of basic questions for the reporters/summarizers to address as a guideline for submission.

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial will find a coordinator who will receive submissions, review, and post them to the VM web site.

Liaisons

This discussion was started by Ardys Kozbial wondering if one way to get increased participation from the membership is to rotate liaisons and to rotate editorship of *Views*. Currently liaisons and the editor serve at the discretion of the Chair. Would it be useful for liaisons to serve 3-year terms and the editor a 5-year term? Changes of this kind should be reflected in the bylaws, which are due to be reviewed at the 2008 Midwinter meeting.

Paula Jeannet Mangiafico read out the list of current liaisons. There are seven.

1. Academy of Certified Archivists (vacant)
2. American Institute for Conservation (Robert Burton)
3. Architectural Records Roundtable (Beth Bilderback)
4. Association of Moving Image Archivists (vacant)
5. AMIA Cataloging and Documentation Committee (Abigail Leab Martin)
6. Descriptive Standards Committee (Marcy Flynn)
7. SAA Council (Lee Miller, term determined by SAA, not the section)

Because the Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Roundtable (VMCAR) has such a close relationship to the section, it is counted as a Working Group and the chair of that roundtable (currently Martha Mahard) is counted among the working group chairs.

James Eason will serve as a new liaison (the 8th) to a new SAA Task Force, the Trusted Archival Preservation Repository Task Force.

James Eason pointed out that although Marcy Flynn is listed as a liaison to the SAA Descriptive Standards Committee, in reality there isn't an SAA Committee of that name. SAA has a Description Section and a Standards Committee. Marcy is a member of the Standards Committee meeting and she reports on all standards, not only descriptive. The name of her "liaisonship" should be changed.

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial will clarify this with Marcy Flynn and change the web site to reflect this liaison role more clearly.

Ardys Kozbial and Paula Jeannet Mangiafico asked Karen Glynn (Visual Materials. Archivist, Duke University) to serve as AMIA liaison (currently vacant). It was pointed out that the section also has AMIA liaison for descriptive issues? Is this necessary?

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial will check with Karen Glynn about her willingness to serve as liaison and Ardys will look into the need for a liaison specifically for AMIA descriptive issues.

Although the section does not have a formal relationship with the Visual Resources Association, Kim Cumber volunteered to monitor the VRA listserv because some of their work is sometimes useful to the section. The two groups do not usually share descriptive practices, but technology use (digitizing) can be complementary. Kim will post items of interest to VisualMat.

ACTION ITEM

Stephen Fletcher will write a description of liaison duties. In order to keep the liaison roles filled, an option for one person to serve multiple terms will be included. The final version of the description will be posted on the VM web site and considered for inclusion in the bylaws in 2008.

Encouraging More Members to Get Involved in the Section

Brainstorming session.

- Send reminders to liaisons that will help keep them involved and contributing.
- Stay in tune. Consider new ways to get younger folks involved (consider new technologies and social interactions: blogs, RSS feeds, etc.)
- Reduce exclusivity at meetings that inhibits newer attendees from participating – look outward rather than inward.
- Use break-out sessions or discussion groups at the annual meeting to get newer people involved who may be intimidated by large meeting.
- Give a 5-minute introduction at the annual section meeting about the section
- Don't waste time talking too much about past year. Focus on our future and draw involvement that way. Maybe the Chair should report on the past year and the Chair-Elect should lay out next year's goals.

ACTION ITEM

Deirdre Scaggs and Ardys Kozbial will discuss the viability of a new format for the annual meeting that would include break-out sessions tied in to different working groups or issues. Results of these discussions can be worked into the Midwinter agenda.

Miscellaneous Topics and Assignments

Advanced Workshop Proposal

James Eason and Deirdre Scaggs brought a draft of their advanced workshop proposal that will address the topic "Managing Large Photographic Collections." First the workshop creators and the group clarified that "large collections" means a single collection, like a newspaper morgue or a photographers corpus of work rather than managing an archives that is made up of a large number of individual collections of photographs. The group reviewed the proposal and offered many suggestions. It was unanimously felt that the proposal described a 2-day workshop and most of the group was ready to sign up.

Digital Photography Seminar

Stephen Fletcher is interested in organizing a seminar on born-digital photography. After discussion, it seemed that this could fit into a seminar style pre-conference workshop.

ACTION ITEM

Ardys Kozbial will get more information about seminar style workshops from Solveig DeSutter to see if the group is interpreting that accurately.

Midwinter Meeting Review

The group discussed and debated continuing the Midwinter meeting.

Difficulties include: lack of members' institutional support; traveling in the winter; burden on the chair; too few people making it difficult to spread assignments around; little follow-through at times.

However, the group felt that the positives are significant: much of the section's work is accomplished at Midwinter, leaving more time at the annual meeting for speakers and other business; camaraderie and bonding (for some, midwinter leads to more involvement in larger section activities). James Eason reported on VM accomplishments that came directly from Midwinter meetings: topical editors for *Views* (exhibits, books reviews), *Views* index, the Book Fair and Silent Auction developed; advanced workshops committee reconstituted; annual meeting tour planning initiated, session and workshop ideas formulated.

The date of the Midwinter meeting originally and purposely coincided with the Midwinter SAA Council meeting in Washington DC. The section should remember this when planning and consider Washington DC every few years, or when Laurie Baty will have us back to her house.

ACTION ITEM

Deirdre Scaggs will add to the Three-Year Plan a review of the continuation of the Midwinter meeting at the 2010 meeting.



Photographic postcard, railroad station and Pratt's Shoe Factory, Natick, Mass., ca. 1910

AMIA Updates

MIC RENEWS PARTNERSHIPS WITH RUTGERS AND GEORGIA TECH. The Library of Congress has provided the funding for the Moving Image Collections (MIC) initiative to continue its partnerships with Rutgers University Libraries and Georgia Institute of Technology. Agreements finalized in October 2006 will further site maintenance and development and allow work on MIC to progress as the Library of Congress solidifies its infrastructure at the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center in Culpeper, Virginia.

Rutgers will resume mapping metadata for organizations wishing to contribute records to the MIC union catalog and develop the cataloging utility for MIC, adapting its own Workflow Management System (WMS) already in use for the Rutgers Community Repository and the New Jersey Digital Highway. The METS-compliant MIC Cataloging will include all the metadata necessary to manage both analog and digital moving images throughout their lifecycles. It will also allow organizations to input records directly into the MIC Union Catalog for those organizations that lack expensive metadata expertise or the infrastructure to manage and share their materials globally.

Georgia Tech, under its contract, will be developing the MIC Service Providers Directory. This directory parallels the Archive Directory, but will list individuals and organizations supplying professional services and products for archival moving image collections. Georgia Tech will also continue ingesting and indexing MIC Union Catalog records and updating the MIC website.

The Moving Image Collections (MIC) initiative is a collaboration between AMIA and the Library of Congress. MIC documents moving image collections around the world through a union catalog of titles and directory of archives, allowing users to search across multiple repositories to find current detailed descriptions of moving images, and the images themselves, for the first time. It offers a wealth of informational resources and a technology base to support research, collaboration, preservation, and education. It is a key access program of the Library of Congress's National Audio-Visual Conservation Center.

Visit MIC at: <http://mic.loc.gov>

DIGITAL ASSET SYMPOSIUM, MAY 11 IN LOS ANGELES

As a part of AMIA's commitment to educating professionals and the public about the preservation of our cultural heritage and the protection of our future, the Digital Asset Symposium will focus on the entire lifecycle of a digital audiovisual asset: creation, workflow, and storage requirements. The event offers in-depth information on rapidly advancing technology, with an emphasis on case studies. Case studies will be drawn from a mix of studio, broadcasting, national archives, and educational institutions, providing an unusual opportunity to compare approaches in different communities. The day is planned

to allow for vigorous interaction between presenters and attendees.

The symposium will take place at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, Mary Pickford Center for Motion Picture Study, Linwood Dunn Theater, 1313 North Vine Street in Los Angeles.

For more information and to register, please visit the DAS 2007 website at: www.das2007.org or contact the AMIA office at: 323-463-1500.

CATALOGING AND METADATA FOR MOVING IMAGES, MAY 18-19 AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

For the first time, AMIA will be offering a regional workshop to take place May 18-19 on the campus of New York University. This 2-day workshop is unique in its mindful synthesis of metadata and cataloging concepts to provide a greater understanding of the foundations of metadata practice and the application of cataloging principles to all types of moving image resources amidst rapidly changing production environments and evolving technologies. Learn what traditional and emerging standards have developed in both the bibliographic and archival domains and how they can be applied to moving images. Gain a basic understanding of the types of metadata necessary to a well-maintained collection.

Topics to be presented include a comparison of cataloging and metadata, the value of standards, management of resources through their lifecycles, descriptive, administrative/preservation/technical, and rights management metadata, local and international standard identifiers, collection-level description, and a presentation focusing on the Archivists' Toolkit, a project funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

For more information and registration, please visit the AMIA website at: www.amianet.org/events or contact the AMIA office at 323-463-1500.

JOINT TECHNICAL SYMPOSIUM, JUNE 28-30 IN TORONTO, CANADA. The 2007 Joint Technical Symposium will take place June 28-30 in Toronto, Canada at the Isabel Bader Theater. The 3-day event is expected to draw 400-500 attendees from around the world. AMIA is co-hosting this event in coordination with the Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations (CCAAA).

JTS, first held in 1983, is an international gathering of organizations and individuals involved in the preservation of image and sound materials. Staged tri-annually, the JTS provides the foremost opportunity for technical colleagues and those interested in the field to meet and share knowledge. Attendees traditionally include film, video and audio archivists, asset managers, laboratory technicians, engineers, and other preservation specialists from a broad conservation of feature films, television, independent productions, news film, and amateur productions.

To learn more, visit the JTS website at: <<http://www.jts2007.org/>>

2007/08 AMIA SCHOLARSHIPS

AMIA administers a number of scholarships in support of the education and training of moving image archivists. The Eastman Kodak Company sponsors the Kodak Fellowship in Film Preservation by providing both financial assistance and first hand experience for a student of merit pursuing a career in moving image archiving. The student selected as the Kodak Fellow will receive a \$4000 scholarship, complimentary registration to the 2007 AMIA Annual Conference, and a six-week internship at Kodak and other film restoration facilities. Applications must be postmarked by May 1, 2007.

Five \$4000 scholarships, the CFI Sid Solow Scholarship, Mary Pickford Scholarship, Sony Pictures Scholarship, Rick Chace Scholarship, and Universal Studios Preservation Scholarship will be offered to students of merit pursuing studies in moving image archiving and preservation. Applications must be postmarked by May 15, 2007.

The 2007 Image Permanence Institute Internship in Preservation Research was instituted to award a student of merit who is committed to the preservation of moving images to acquire practical experience in preservation research. The student selected will receive a \$5000 stipend for living expenses during the three-month internship and travel reimbursement to and from Rochester, New York related to the IPI internship. Applications must be postmarked by May 1, 2007.

The Rockefeller Archive Center Visiting Archivist Fellowship was established to encourage professional exchange and enhance professional development. The Fellowship is a unique opportunity for a professional archivist from the developing world interested in improving their skills and knowledge through a study period at the Rockefeller Archive Center and at the AMIA Annual Conference. Applications must be postmarked by April 15, 2007.

For additional information and application procedures visit the AMIA website at: <http://www.amianet.org/scholarship/scholarship.html>

AMIA 2007 CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER 26-29 IN ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

Save the date! The AMIA Annual Conference will be in Rochester, New York, September 26-29. Bookmark the website and check back for updates: <<http://www.amiaconference.com/>>

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VisualMat - the listserv update

Since 1999, VisualMat has functioned as our Section listserv and has been open to anyone with an interest in the administration of visual materials collections. The list currently has 598 subscribers engaging, thankfully, in low-volume and on-topic postings.

Members (and the list manager!) are frequently frustrated to learn that there is no list archive. A promised software upgrade on the host server at U.C. Berkeley has never materialized and is no longer forecast. In 2007 SAA is undergoing major changes in its website and online services to members, and the Section may soon be presented with a centralized listserv option. It is possible the Section leadership will elect to move VisualMat to the SAA server. Factors under consideration are 1) whether the list can remain open to non-SAA members and 2) whether SAA will be able to support a list archive. We believe SAA Council is amenable to opening new discussion lists to non-members. A final draft of the 2006 Task Force on Sections and Roundtables report is in the works and "discussion list" polices are part of these recommendations. The issue of long-term maintenance of past messages is unresolved, as anyone following recent Archives & Archivists listserv discussions can attest.

Finally, we want to avoid list redundancy. SAA has created the VMS announcements list, to which all Section members are automatically subscribed. Only the Chair can send messages to this list, and replies go only to the Chair. If SAA creates a Section discussion list that is entirely or partially redundant with VisualMat, this would yield three "lists" and unacceptable complexity.

In short, listserv changes may be coming this year. Updates will, of course, be posted to VisualMat and published here in *Views*.

A description of VisualMat and the Terms of Participation are available on the SAA website:

http://www.archivists.org/listservs/visualmat_terms.asp

To subscribe, send a message from your own email account to:

majordomo@listlink.berkeley.edu

- You need no subject line, but in the body of the message type: subscribe visualmat
-
- To unsubscribe, use the same address, with the message: unsubscribe visualmat

James Eason
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Visual Materials Mid-Winter Meeting attendees, from left: Beth Bilderback, Ardys Kozbial, Deirdre Scaggs, Stephen Fletcher, James Eason, Paula Jeannet Mangiafico. Photograph by Stephen Fletcher.

2007 Section Elections

Nominations are being sought for Visual Materials Section Vice Chair / Chair Elect. This person will be elected by ballots cast in advance (electronically), or in-person at our August SAA meeting (Chicago). He or she will serve as Vice Chair during 2007-2008, will become Chair at the end of the 2008 meeting (San Francisco), and will run the 2009 meeting (Austin).

Members interested in serving, or members with suggested candidates or formal nominations, are encouraged to contact James Eason and Mark Martin, the recent past Chairs now serving as the Nominating and Elections working group. Nominations should include the candidate's name and contact information. All candidates must agree to run for office. Calls for nominations will also be posted to the VMS announcements list and to VisualMat. Nominations must be received before May 1, and our slate will be announced in June.

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Mark E. Martin
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SAA's Trusted Archival Preservation Repository Task Force

As announced in the *Views* (December, 2006), SAA Council has formed a task force to propose and outline a program and an institutional self-assessment tool to aid in the analysis of preservation measures. The group has now had several telephone meetings and will be making a preliminary report to Council in May 2007.

Conversations to date indicate that "preservation" will be broadly interpreted, encompassing facilities, climate control, institutional stability, appropriate staffing, conservation treatment capabilities, and disaster planning, among other factors. Initial discussion suggests a goal of developing a quantifiable tool for internal analysis of strengths and weaknesses, not one that will yield a grade or score for external comparisons of institutions. Analysis of the many related preservation survey and institutional assessment tools in existence is, of course, a significant part of the task force's early efforts.

As a Visual Materials Section member on the task force, James Eason will solicit input, when called for, via the VisualMat listserv and will make informal progress reports in *Views*.

Book Review

Photography, History, & Science

By Gerald H. Robinson.

Nevada City, Calif.: Carl Mautz Publishing, c2006. 188 p.
(Not illustrated. Includes index.)

A reader plunging into Gerald H. Robinson's *Photography, History, & Science* without first perusing the preface might become somewhat confused. This is not, as the title may suggest, a history of photography as it relates to the history of science, nor is it strictly a study of relationships among the three. Rather, it is a collection of essays on diverse topics in 20th century American photography.

As stated toward the end of the short preface, the volume originated with this community college instructor's "class notes" put together "into coherent form for the students." These essays were drawn from Robinson's *Guide for the Study of Twentieth Century Photography Styles* (unpublished?), and were purportedly "developed around the theme of War, the most pervasive and devastating activity of the twentieth century." The major essays present are on the Photo League and on Edward and Brett Weston, the latter of whom was a friend of the author. Additional topics are covered by briefer essays, which include broad observations on the history of photography, the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, surrealism and war, realism, Alfred Stieglitz, Ansel Adams and the conservation movement, historian and curator Peter C. Bunnell, vernacular photography, and styles of photographic nudes.

The first essay, apparently written in an attempt to weave these diverse pre-existing writings together and give them a theme, asserts that histories of photography are too often divorced from historical context. This thesis, however, is not illuminated through a critical examination of specific photographic histories. Rather, general observations are made that amount to little more than an obvious argument that all historical topics require knowledge of broader historical events. The author's experience as a college instructor in the history of photography is, doubtless, the key to understanding his assertions and his motivation in writing these essays. One imagines young students of photography or art history with almost no historical awareness. Perhaps some don't know Archduke Ferdinand from a flower-loving bull, Herbert Hoover from a vacuum salesman, or the New Deal from their grandmother's favorite game show. If students have "zero" knowledge of history as a starting point, teaching the history of photography in a quarter poses quite a challenge. Robinson's collected essays make some sense in this light; they spring from a need to write his own class readings to give students a smattering of historical context with their photography.

The essays on the Photo League and on the Westons are among the most interesting as well as being the most substantial, at approximately forty and twenty-five pages,

respectively. They reveal a deep knowledge on the part of the author, based upon significant research and a personal connection. Those interested in the contributions of Peter Bunnell to the history of photography may also find the tribute essay contained here to be an informative read. Unfortunately, many of the other essays do not stand up as authoritative or as significant and new contributions to the literature. The author tends to paint histories in broad brush strokes, occasionally peppered with strident assertions. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the whole is undermined by uneven copy editing. Some essays have more polish, yielding a reasonably satisfying and interesting read. Others are plagued with inappropriate punctuation, rambling sentences, and grammatical oddities. Finally, the complete absence of illustrations renders Robinson's periodic references to photographic style ineffective.

Photography, History, & Science offers numerous brief capsules on varied photographic topics and their historical context. It offers little to readers with a strong foundation in history, and less to those who like to look at pictures. Those teaching or embarking on their own research projects on Brett Weston or on the Photo League may do well to seek out this volume, but significant blemishes yield a work that is spotty at best.

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For a complete list including Liaisons go to the VM Section web site at:

<http://www.lib.lsu.edu/SAA/leaders.html>

In Print

February 16, 2007

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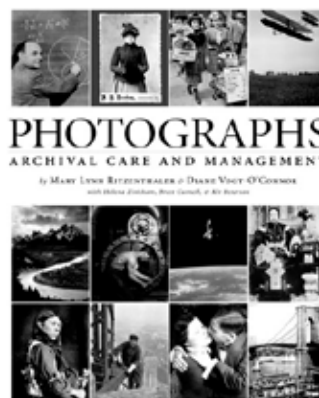
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New from SAA of interest to VM section



available from:
<http://www.archivists.org>

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Your comments and suggestions for improvements will always receive a cordial hearing. Opinions expressed are those of the authors. With the exception of the group photograph of the Mid-Winter attendees, illustrations used in this issue are from the collection of the Editor.