SPeeding to indy

indianapolis meeting

the society of american archivists' annual meeting will be held in the checkerboard flag city, september 5 to september 11, 1994. we're certain that there will be lots of interesting activities to keep our days and nights full!

the visual materials section annual meeting will be held on thursday, september 8, from 8:00 to 10:00 at the westin hotel. that evening, following the awards ceremony and reception, the section will host its annual dinner at 7:30. come to the section meeting to find out where we'll be going!

as always, there are a number of interesting sessions that should be of special interest to section members. check the box on this page for the rundown.

see you in indy!

vote!

elections committee report

katherine hamilton-smith, chair

the elections committee offers the following candidates (in alphabetical order) for the position of chair-elect: james k. p. burant (national archives of canada) and stephen fletcher (indiana historical society, indianapolis). the winner will succeed this year's chair-elect sarah rouse at this year's meeting in indianapolis. each candidate has been asked to prepare a statement, both of which follow:

james k. burant

i would like to express my deep appreciation at being nominated for the position of chair of the visual materials section of saa. i have always admired the work of the vms and the saa, and would love to be able to have an influence in the directions that the section will take. visual materials are an increasingly important aspect of archival work, and there are many issues relating to their acquisition, access, and use which will have to be faced in the not too distant future.

i completed both my undergraduate art history degree and my master's degree in canadian studies at carleton university in ottawa, in 1974 and 1979, respectively. i am currently chief of art acquisition and research, visual and sound archives division, national archives of canada, a position i have held since 1985. i have worked at the national archives since 1976, first as a photo and art reference archivist, and then for ten years as chief of collections management, first in the picture division and then in the documentary art and photography division.

i have published articles about archives and archival issues, in archivaria and other journals, including the journal of canadian art history and the urban history review, and on aspects of canadian art history. i have also organized several exhibitions for the national archives of canada, as well as for the national gallery of canada and other canadian institutions. i have been a speaker, chair, commentator, or workshop leader at seven association of canadian archivists conferences, at three ontario association of archivists conferences (aca), at the saa in 1992 and 1993. i have also spoken on archival issues elsewhere in the united states and in australia. i was the chair of the program committee for the 1994 aca conference, and have held several offices in local and provincial archival associations.

i love visual images, and am a particularly strong advocate of their proper recognition within the field of archives. i hope that you will support my candidacy at the upcoming meeting in indianapolis, which i regret i cannot attend due to fiscal restraints within the canadian government. i will be there in spirit!

stephen j. fletcher

thank you for nominating me again this year for the position of chair-elect for the
Visual Materials Section. Much of what the section will accomplish during the next several years will be affected by the work that is being completed by the SAA Task Force on Sections and Round Tables. In talking with Richard Pearces-Moses, a member of the Visual Materials section who is on that committee, I have learned that much of the discussion in this forum has been centered on empowering sections to enable them to meet their needs, and to foster more coordination and cooperation between sections. I believe the key to making this happen is through active participation in the section's committees. I have been active in the section for several years, as well as on the host committee for this year's meeting in Indianapolis. During this time I have come to know that the value my SAA membership is only realized when I am involved in the organization at the grass roots level. I worked with Bonnie Wilson and Sarah Louise in an attempt to put together for this year's meeting a "thematic track" comprising a workshop and a series of sessions that focused on digital imaging for visual material. We were able to get a general workshop on electronic document imaging on the program. In addition, SAA sponsored a one-day workshop on digitizing this spring, which I attended. Through involvement in the Visual Materials section, I have begun learning about this technology and its likely revolutionary effects on our field. We were unsuccessful, however, in our attempt to place the series of sessions on this year's program. This result occurred partly because the people who would be able to lead these sessions were not members of SAA and could not attend without reimbursement. SAA does not pay honorariums to speakers, even if the needed expertise exists outside the organization. Working with session members as Chair-elect, I would like to overcome this dilemma and assemble a program that includes a thematic track on digital issues at the Washington, D.C. meeting in 1995. I would then like to work with you as Chair on implementing the recommendations of the task force in 1996.

The ballot will be found on page 9.

FROM THE CHAIR
Bonnie G. Wilson, Minnesota Historical Society

My last communiqué, and I feel I've barely begun! Some year we might want to elect a chair for two years, but that is for another time. The main responsibility I have felt as chair is to promote and expand the Visual Materials Section. There are a number of ways to do that, and SAA has come up with a new program that can help many of us educate and proselytize about the importance of understanding and using visual materials: the Mentoring Program. You received information about this program from SAA in the March Archival Outlook. It turns out that many "mentees" requested to be paired with someone with expertise in visual materials, but only a few of us have signed up for the program so far. I encourage you to volunteer because it is a very direct way to influence more archivists to develop an interest in and affinity for our field. We have many places we need to improve visibility, such as in the Academy of Certified Archivists. The more archivists who are educated about visual materials, the more likely institutions and curricula are to place visual materials in a central position. There are still very few library and archival programs that do more than offer one course in "non print" materials. So please, for the expansion and promotion of those materials we so passionately love, contact the Mentoring Program, Debra Mills, SAA (312/922-0140; FAX 312/947-1452).

We can promote and expand the section with creative and relevant pre-conference workshops, dynamic program proposals, lively annual section meetings, and intriguing displays during conference office hours. Mark E. Martin is in charge of developing some new pre-conference workshop proposals and will give a report at the annual section meeting. Meanwhile, three pre-conference workshops involving visual materials are offered for Indianapolis: "Sound and Light: Administration of Sound Recording and Moving Image Materials in Archives," "Through the Camera's Eye, videotaping Oral History," and "Electronic Document Imaging and Optical Discs." This last workshop may center on printed documents, so I will find out from SAA how VM-oriented it is. Call me or Jane Kenmore with questions about the pre-conference workshops. Laurie has listed for you the several program sessions that are particularly relevant for VM section members on this page. The annual VM section meeting agenda will be full of good information and a chance for creative discussion. In addition, we will have a publications fair displaying books and media that section members have suggested and brought. The display will also appear at the VM section table during office hours.

Now, about that publications fair. I really need your help in making this successful. Laurie Baty and Katherine Hamilton-Smith are helping with this, but each section member can help as well. The simplest thing you can do is fax me the title and publishing information on any item, either print or "non," published within the last two years that you have found particularly well-done or useful (FAX 612/296-9961). For those of you inclined to do a bit more, bring the book and ordering information to Indianapolis. Just let me know ahead of time that you are doing so, and I will make sure someone else is not bringing the same.

I have thoroughly enjoyed this year as chair, particularly because it gave me a reason to contact more of you and to become somewhat familiar with the ways and means of SAA. If you should get the chance someday to become the chair, take it and run.

FROM THE CHAIR-ELECT
Sarah Louise, Library of Congress

Here are three "must-dos" for VM Section members:

1) Vote by mail (ballot is included) or at the Indianapolis meeting. The Elections Committee has provided us two fine nominees for the office of VM Section chair-elect '94-'95. Views editors have gathered the facts on this issue. Now it's UP TO US.

2) Read chair Bonnie Wilson's column. She describes conference sessions of special interest to us VM-ers, and we can always use help navigating the sea of SAA workshops, panels and other events. Which leads to:

3) Put on your thinking caps and get ready to talk about program proposals for '95, when SAA meets in Washington, D.C. I'll help Bonnie chair this year's VM Section meeting and we plan to spend some time brainstorming about possible programs of interest to members and with potential for SAA Program Committee approval. I know we all want visual materials to be well-integrated into SAA's overall program, and presenting excellent conference sessions is a splendid way to ensure that. It does take advance thinking and planning. So start now. One last item: the SAA conference hotel in Indianapolis, the Westin, is featured in a new book in my office: Indianapolis Architecture: Transformations Since 1975. The Westin is located in Mile Square, the central part of town. Built in 1987 "on the vacated right-of-way of Senate Avenue between Washington and Maryland streets, this new 15-story hotel takes full advantage of its 'front yard,' Capitol Commons... . . . The fan parapet centered over the 12-story vertical element is the facade's only ornament." We hope you will help us add "ornamentation" to the Westin by coming to Indianapolis this year. Our section meeting is at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday the 8th. Hope to see YOU there.
ARCHITECTURAL RECORDS ROUNDTABLE
Mark Coir, Cranbrook Archives

Several members of the roundtable met in Montreal, Quebec April 14-15, 1994, to participate in "The Working Conference on Establishing Principles for the Appraisal and Selection of Architectural Records," a conference underwritten by the Getty Grant Program and co-sponsored by the Joint Committee on Canadian Architectural Records and Research and the roundtable. The event, however, would never had occurred were it not for the resolve of the staff of the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) to spearhead the conference and serve as its host. Many thanks are due to Phyllis Lambert, Nick Olseb, Allan Penning, and others at the CAA for their gracious support of the conference. Their contributions were greatly appreciated by all who attended.

The first day of the conference was opened to the general public. Speakers addressed issues concerning architectural documentation from several professional perspectives: that of architectural historians, lawyers, practicing architects, and archivists. The day ended with an involved discussion of functional analysis as a methodology of appraisal theory and the necessity of charting documentation strategies to carry out collecting schemes. Conferences were broken into working groups on day two in order to focus on three areas of appraisal concern: documenting architectural practices, architecture within regions, and institutional architecture. On day three, reports were made by ranceurs from each of the three working groups and an agenda for further study was discussed. Dr. Helen Samuels, chief of the M.I.T. Archives, concluded the conference by defining the salient issues that surfaced over the previous two days. The proceedings of the conference were recorded and will be published in a forthcoming issue of The American Archivist.

Former roundtable president Tawny Ryan Neib reported in April that the NHPRC (National Historical Publications and Records Commission) approved the Michigan Bureau of History's proposal to launch an effort to begin documenting Michigan's built environment and the work of the state's architectural practitioners. Work on the year-long project, entitled "Documenting Michigan Architecture Project," began in the spring under Tawny's direction.

Alan Lethco, working on behalf of the Joint Committee for Architectural Records, has begun to survey members of the roundtable to determine how our architectural holdings are being managed and used. If you have questions concerning the survey, please contact Alan at the Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota Libraries, 826 Berry Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55114.

On page 1 of this issue of Views, Laurie Baty has listed the sessions at the Indianapolis conference that pertain to architectural records. We hope you will be able to attend some of them.

Anyone wishing to know more about the Architectural Archives Roundtable or wishing to be placed on the roundtable mailing list is urged to contact me at the Cranbrook Archives, P. O. Box 801, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303-0801. My telephone number is (810) 645-3154 and my fax is (810) 645-3029. I can now be reached by E-mail on the Internet at mark_coir@cc.cranbrook.edu (all lower case, please).

MARC VM ROUNDTABLE
Janet Murray, New York Public Library

It's that time of year again, when we actually have a chance to get together and discuss problems and possibilities in visual materials cataloging. Our roundtable will meet Thursday, September 8 from 3:45-5:15. I hope that anyone interested in visual materials cataloging, and in particular cataloging using the MARC-VM format, will come ready for discussion. We will feature the usual reports from colleagues at the Library of Congress regarding GMP, LCTGM, and the continuously possible revision of Fetz. We will also have reports on RLGC's Task Force on Standards, the Working Group for Form and Genre Vocabularies, and a report from the SAA liaison with the AMIA Cataloging and Documentation Committee and time for discussion of current projects and problems.

In the last Roundtable column here, the possibility of establishing our own listserv was discussed. In the meantime, other listserv's that may serve our purposes have come to my attention: The General Archives Listserv, and the Archives Cataloging Listserv. The General Archives Listserv has some cataloging discussion on it and the Archives Cataloging Listserv, through subscribing more on archival (papers) cataloging, does have discussion relevant to visual materials. Those interested in this kind of information exchange should subscribe and try it out, then we can discuss in Indianapolis whether a more focussed group is desirable. To subscribe to the General Archives Listserv send a message to: listserv@miamiu.ohiou.edu (skip SUBJECT line) and write: Subscribe archives first-name last-name. To subscribe to the Archives Cataloging Listserv send a message TO: listserv@asuvm.mns.edu

(skip SUBJECT line) and write Subscribe LCSH-AMC first-name last-name.

Here at New York Public Library we are looking at what will go on an NYPL gopher. In the process, we are considering making local finding aids and databases available to the users electronically. This has made us assess whether finding aids created by various divisions need standardization to make them more intelligible to users who are not in the library where staff is available for consultation. We are beginning the process by re-examining our local practice manual for visual cataloging. So far this is the main impact of the electronic revolution on our cataloging. However, as I have stated in earlier columns, I am interested in whether the increased availability of finding aids, and even visual surrogates (somehow) on-line will have an impact on the information that goes in the MARC record. So, look out, I will be floating this topic again at Indianapolis.

If anyone else has topics that need addressing, please come to the Roundtable meeting in Indianapolis. If you will not be attending and have some visual material cataloging concerns, or is you have a topic which would benefit from me knowing about ahead of time, please call me at 212-930-0837, e-mail me at jfmurray@nyplgate.nypl.org, or write me to the Photography Collection, Rm. 308, The New York Public Library, 5th Ave. at 42nd Street, New York, New York, 10018.

AMIA COMMITTEE ON CATALOGING
Beth Delaney

AMIA's Cataloging and Documentation Committee's Standards Subcommittee, chaired by Martha Yee at the UCLA Film and Television Archive, has formally asked the Library of Congress whether it would or would not be willing to revise two tools used by moving image catalogers, Archival Moving Image Materials: A Cataloging Manual (AMIM) and US MARC Relator Terms for Archival Moving Images. Yee included in the request specific areas needing revision which were submitted to her by catalogers and committee liaisons. As of June 13, we have not had a formal response, however, we do expect one soon. What the appropriate revision mechanism will be has not been identified, but input from all interested archival moving image catalogers is crucial once work gets underway.

Regarding the revision of Moving Image Materials: Genre Terms (MIM), our Standards Subcommittee, the Society for Cinema Studies, the national Moving Image Database and LC have expressed interest in working together on a revision, but again, the mechanism for such a
For the second year in a row, a day-long series of basic training workshops on moving image archiving will be held on Tuesday, November 15. The conference will also feature meeting times for AMIA’s three Standing Committees on Preservation, Cataloging & Documentation, and Publications, as well as for its four Working Groups on News and Documentary Collections, Independent and Media Arts Collections, Inédits (Amateur Footage), and Education. An opening night conference reception units will be held at WGBH-TV in Boston, and the association’s traditional evening of units of recently preserved film and video works will be held at the John F. Kennedy Library.

For information on AMIA or its meeting, please contact the AMIA secretariat at The American Film Institute, P.O. Box 27999, 2021 North Western Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90027, (213) 856-7337, FAX (213) 487-4578.

REGIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORIANS
Stephen J. Fletcher, Indiana Historical Society

The 1994 meeting of the Regional Photographic Historians Group (RPHG) will be held on Thursday November 3 at the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston. The meeting is tentatively scheduled from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m., concluding in time to attend the opening reception for the Daguerrean Society Symposium, which will be held at the Boston Athenaeum.

The Daguerrean Society expanded its venue to three days, reducing the amount of time the RPHG will be able to meet, but the agenda is no less interesting. Following a brief business meeting, there will be a roundtable discussion about member’s research and an opportunity to view and discuss some rare images form the Massachusetts Historical Society collection.

The Daguerrean Society is making final arrangements for its symposium, to be held from 4-6 November at Boston University in Morse Auditorium. The call for papers has just been announced. Speakers will receive a $200 honorarium. In addition to the meeting, at least six exhibits of daguerreotypes will be held respectively at the Boston Athenæum, Massachusetts Historical Society, the Society for Preservation of New England Antiquities, Harvard College (2), and the New England School of Photography. For more information contact The Daguerrean Society at CNG Tower, Suite 1795, 625 Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222-3114.

ASSOCIATION OF MOVING IMAGE ARCHIVISTS
Gregory Lukow, National Center for Film and Video Preservation

The annual conference of the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) will be held November 15-19, 1994, at the historic Omni Parker House Hotel in downtown Boston, Massachusetts. Conference sessions will cover such topics as: History of the Film Archives Movement in North America, Educational Access and Copyright, Archives and Emerging Production and Distribution Technologies, Ethics of Film and Video Preservation, Film—Digital—Film, Restoring Videotape, Preserving the Records of Public Broadcasting, Plastics and Molecular Sieves in Storage, Political Moving Image Collections, Disaster Planning and Recovery, National Moving Image Databases, and Home Movies. A plenary session, National Strategies for Moving Image Preservation, will report on current efforts to create national motion picture and audio-visual preservation plans in the United States and Canada.

COLLECTION SNAPSHOTS
North Dakota Television Newsfilm Preservation Project
Gerald G. Newborg, State Archivist

The State Historical Society of North Dakota recently completed a project funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to preserve its television newsfilm collections. The collections, originally estimated to be approximately 2.5 million feet of 16 mm film covering the period 1953 to 1978 are the product of three broadcasting companies in the state representing six stations and one independently produced news program. The project was to inspect, clean, and splice the film, assemble it on cores, identify the material, place the film in archival quality film cans, and transfer the film to videotape. The purposes of the videotape transfer were to prolong the life of the film by reducing the need to project or view the original film and aid in further identification and access. Cataloging was not part of this project, although every effort was made to retain all existing identification and add to available information on individual segments and the collection as a whole.

The project began officially on February 1, 1992. Two technicians were hired to work as full-time staff. In addition to the two film technicians, four staff members and one volunteer participated in the project, representing over 12,000 person hours for the duration of the project.

Prior to the official start of the project, staff set up a database file using DBase with fields for the basic technical information needed as well as essential identifying information. This included core and segment number, original (station-supplied) number, length of segment, color or black-and-white, sound type, and identifying information on person or subject, location, and activity. Because the card file was segmented into “old film” and “new film” categories, it was possible to concentrate on entering the earliest card file information into the database prior to the time the technicians would be starting. Once entered, staff could organize the database by original number, check for missing numbers, and insert records for these missing numbers. Staff then created a report format that, when printed, would serve as a work form for the project technicians. By setting up this database and printing out the technician work forms, the amount of information that is entered more than once is greatly reduced, thereby ensuring greater accuracy. As technicians assembled the cores, they verified or corrected the information transcribed from the cards, added any missing data, and assigned core and segment numbers. The database could be updated with each successive activity, such as the addition of core numbers, segment numbers, and correction of any errors which may have been in the index. Transfer to video provides another opportunity to check a new printout of the database, although in practice the old work sheets might be used and the data entry done on a cumulative basis. Appraisal of the collections was considered largely done at the point the materials were acquired and there was thought to be little in the collections that do not meet criteria for inclusion. One exception, in the Focus on the News collection, in particular, was service-bureau furnished segments which may not have been used. While these have not been disposed of,
they will not be transferred to video tape and there will be no effort to do extensive content description of the materials. Within the WDAY/WDAY-TV collection, national news segments not filmed by the station were segregated and placed on separate cores. These will also likely receive a lesser description in the future and will be evaluated separately for transfer to videotape. Some may be transferred to VHS because of particular reference interest. Our practice is generally not to appraise individual film segments or categories of stories, but rather to provide a lesser level of description. We believe item appraisal to be contrary to accepted archival practice.

The WDAY/WDAY-TV collection appears to be as deep and rich as originally thought. The station benefitted from a stable staff, with one news director in place from 1956 through 1989. The station also began with a system in place for organizing its film holdings, a system which lasted throughout the 16mm film era. Although tightly wound, the film was in very good condition, apparently stored in cans under good conditions. While some segments had been lost or strayed, the collections provide a good representation of aired news stories. The main difficulties encountered related to the large number of small segments, and the amount of curl in the film from being tightly wound. Most was good quality film, however, and had made only a single pass through the projector. There were only a couple of thousand feet of negative film. The collection, originally estimated to contain one million feet of film, actually contains over one and one half million feet on 1443 cores. Each core has, on average, 25 segments.

The MeyerBerman Collection was more disappointing. The company suffered from frequent turnover in the news department. Although KFYR-TV is and was the dominant news station in the western part of North Dakota, and probably produced as much newsfilm as WDAY-TV, the collection is less than one-third as large, with only 438 cores. Each core contains on average 27 segments. KFYR's practice was to place its film stories in numbered slots. When the capacity of its film storage was reached, a slot would be emptied, the contents discarded, and the new film put in its place. As a result, the earliest film from these stations exists. The collection is very strong from the late 1960s onward, but disappointing for the earliest period. The film was in good condition, but not as well organized as WDAY.

KXJB-TV, a Fargo rival to WDAY, did not make as much of an effort in its early history to go out and gather news. While its studio equipment was often superior to its rivals, it spent less on other camera equipment. This collection was on cores or reels and that level of organization is primarily all that was available. The collection provides a different perspective from WDAY, and also reveals a different news organization. The collection is contained on 325 cores, but these cores average 45 minutes in length because we did not want to disturb the existing order of this otherwise unidentified collection. Each core, on average, contains 26 segments.

The Focus on the News collection, produced by the North Dakota Farmers Union, includes film from both KFYR-TV (Bismarck) and WDAY-TV (Fargo), as well as film shot by the producer and received from service bureaus. The collection had been divided due to a gift by a

NDUF principal to the University of North Dakota. We preserved and transferred to video tape 90 cores held by UND. Both holdings total 751 cores.

KXJB and, especially, Focus on the News, provided the greatest problems relating to their condition. Masking tape was used to hold cores together in many cases. Much of the Focus collection had been exposed to the elements. Unprotected reels of film lay piled in an unheated garage for a number of years. As a result, staff saw more dirt, tape, shrinking, and brittleness in this collection than in the others combined.

At the close of the project, staff were more convinced than ever as to the enormous value of these collections. We are also more than ever convinced that they are complementary, with little overlap. Where stations did cover the same event, the difference in coverage has value as well.

Our initial estimates, based on information received from other institutions, were that the total time spent would be in the area of seven to eight hours of staff time for each hour of film. Actual times came close to this, with some allowance for administrative and organization time. Costing each activity is complicated by the varying salaries. For the purposes of this report, film technicians' salaries were used to compute the core assembly costs. Other costs used combinations of salaries. Supplies were purchased in economic order quantities through the course of the project. Technicians spent an average of 2.38 hours per 30-minute core for basic assembly. Cleaning added another 10 minutes per core. This is basically a 5:1 ratio for the key portion of this effort. Data entry and record keeping added another 40 minutes per core, bringing the ratio of labor time to film run time to more than 6:1. Transfer of film to video tape averaged 48 minutes per core. By adding this task to the others, the ratio increases to more than 8:1, not counting administrative and organizational time.

Cores transferred to date represent approximately 46 percent of the 2957 cores contained in the four major collections. Because of the amount of service bureau film of national news stories within the Focus on the News collection, and to a lesser extent, the WDAY/WDAY-TV collection, we have concentrated on the transfer of 2213 cores. Of that number 61 percent has been transferred to date.

For more information, please contact me, Gerald G. Newborg, State Archivist, State Historical Society of North Dakota, North Dakota Heritage Center, 612 East Boulevard Ave., Bismarck, ND 58505-0830, (701) 224-2666, FAX (701) 224-3710.

FROM THE LISTS

RGL Digital Image Access Project
Jackie Dooley, Research Libraries Group

The Research Libraries Group (RLG) has launched a one-year collaborative project to explore the capabilities of digital image technology for managing access to photographic collections. Eight RLG institutions (Amon Carter Museum; Columbia University; Duke University; Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities; Frances Loeb Library, Harvard University; New York Public Library; Northwestern University; and University of California at Berkeley) will work together to find ways to streamline indexing methods and capitalize on the online digital environment for improving access to collections, not just for local projects but for shared access in a networked environment. In total, 8,000 photographs from the collections of these RLG members will be digitized, and image access software will be created.

Working with Stokes Imaging Services (Austin, TX), the RLG cooperative project will employ state-of-the-art digital-imaging technology to enable institutions to reproduce images quickly and inexpensively at resolutions adequate for browsing, researching, and printing reference copies. The project will develop, test, and evaluate a digital image access system consisting of databases, image bases, and software for searching, retrieving, and displaying images.

Each institution will select 1,000 photographs that fit the general theme of "the urban landscape"—a topic broad enough to encompass a wide variety of images, yet specific enough to test integrated retrieval of related but separately housed and cataloged image collections.

The images will be first reproduced as 35mm intermediates and then digitized by Stokes Imaging Services. Access software will be developed by Stokes Imaging Services in consultation with the project participants, who will also evaluate the system at every stage and test its use as a reference resource and technical services tool.

The project was designed by the RLG Task Force on Photograph Preservation, a six-member group formed in July 1993 to address issues inherent in accessing and preserving large photographic collections. The task force has also developed a second, parallel project, in partnership with Stokes Imaging Services and the Image Permanence Institute, to explore relative cost-benefit tradeoffs in the technical aspects of digitization, including image capture, resolution, compression, storage, and display.

For more information about either project, please contact Patricia McClung, RLG director of Member Support & Services, at bl.pam@rlg.stanford.edu (e-mail) or voice (415) 651-2236, fax (415) 984-0344.
Verde Film To Replace Silver Halide?
John Miley
cn.jpm@forsythe.stanford.edu

I went to Xerox PARC (Palo Alto Research Center) yesterday for an interesting forum on a new technology called Verdefilm. This is a high-resolution color film developed at Xerox Canada (Dr. Hardy Sonnenberg, Manager) which at this time is targeted towards imagesetters and scanner-recorders.

It is a film which is somewhat like the silver film that we are all used to: it has a polyester base, a conducting layer, a photo-sensitive layer and then an Infrared/overcoat layer on top. A big difference: it must be electrically charged to produce an image; if it is held up in sunlight will not produce an image of any kind. Once it has been charged, it can be exposed in the normal manner. At this time the process is: use a laser-type printer to sensitize the film, expose it, and then heat-fix and print.

This film uses elemental selenium to produce images. It is claimed that elemental selenium is non-toxic to people and the environment; thus, the name "Verde" as Xerox intends that this product be fully recyclable. It is meant to be permanent under normal storage conditions, it will be made in widths up to 62" wide, and can be exposed at a rate of 6"/second.

Verde film was "accelerated life" tested in 3M's labs and at the Rochester Institute of Technology for "life-quality." Initial manufacturing will be by Rexham Custom, and Quebecor Printing, Inc. From what was shown at PARC, there are many manufacturers ready to produce this material, one of whom is Agfa.

Scottish Society for the History of Photography
Richard Ovenden
ab240r@ADMIN.NLS.UK

Scotland has a long and distinguished photographic tradition. In 1843 the world's greatest photographic partnership between D.O. Hill and Robert Adamson was formed in Edinburgh. Since then, Scotland has maintained a flow of world class photographers working at home and abroad. Thomas Keith, Thomas Annan, J. Craig Annan, John Thomson, Alexander Gardner, and William Notman are among the most famous. The tradition of excellent photography has continued up to the present day with living photographers whose work continues to interest and innovate.

The Scottish Society for the History of Photography (SSHP) was founded in 1983 in response to a growing enthusiasm for Scottish photography. It seeks to promote an appreciation of the medium and an awareness of its history. To that end, it organizes talks, workshops and visits to collections and exhibitions. The Scottish Photography Bulletin is published twice a year and is only available to members of the Society (for fuller details see below). It contains critical articles on the history and practice of photography, as well as exhibition and book reviews. There is also a quarterly newsletter.

SSHP has members, institutional and individual, worldwide. The annual subscription for individuals is £12 for UK residents £17 for non-residents. The annual subscription for institutions is £27 for those in the UK, £32 for non-UK institutions. Institutional membership allows for two copies of each Bulletin and Newsletter, and an entitlement to send to individuals to attend each meeting.

Enquiries and subscriptions to Ray Mackenzie, Glasgow School of Art, 167 Renfrew Street, Glasgow G3 6RQ, Scotland or Richard Ovenden, Curator of Photographs, National Library of Scotland, Department of Printed Books, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EW, Scotland, e-mail: ab240r@admin.nls.uk.

New VRA Executive Board Officer Elected

The Nominating Committee, composed of Luz Avelar (Chair), Paula Bender, and Marcia Poore, secured two excellent nominees for the Office of Treasurer serving a 1994-1996 term on the VRA Executive Board: James Monteith, Art Slide Librarian, CUNY Graduate Center, New York and Lynda White, Architecture Slide Librarian, University of Virginia.

Appreciation for their willingness to serve as candidates is extended to the nominees. The ballots were mailed to all VRA individual members and designated representatives of institutional members. A postpaid, preprinted ballot was used to encourage a larger voter turnout. Marcia Poore served as teller and 258 valid ballots were received, almost a 50% response rate. Thank you to all who voted in this election. The Nominating Committee and the VRA Executive expresses sincere congratulations to Lynda White, the new Treasurer.

Incorporated developer migration
Doug Nishimura
<dnwp@mitvax.ics.rit.edu>

I sent this to someone in response to a phone call that I got several months ago and I realized that maybe it was important enough to post.

Since late 1991, the problem of incorporated developer migration has become more and more of a problem. When I was calling around to Ilford I spoke to Rod Parsons who was very surprised.

They had only heard of 5 cases of the problem in 6 years (since 1985). Now since that time, it is becoming a more common. It has been raised as an issue at the ANSI Standards Sub-committee IT9-2 (black-and-white paper) which (who?) is trying to put together a manufacturing specification document. This document defines various tests that a black-and-white photographic paper must meet in order to be able to claim that it meets the standards. I will digress briefly to add that the ANSI (at least physical properties and permanence of imaging media committee IT9) produces three types of documents: 1) Manufacturing (and processing) specifications, 2) test methods and 3) storage recommendations. Short test methods may be incorporated into specification documents but if a test is complex it must go into its own document.

This particular document will help to screen poor quality papers and is particularly directed at the small manufacturers in Europe and Asia who are just emerging (with 40 year old technology or worse.) This way, it is possible to buy paper based on more than just cost. We have already found some papers that apparently are quite inexpensive, but which would never last any reasonable time without yellowing and cracking.

The sub-committee has decided that it is important to create a test that will allow screening of paper. It is particularly important since all of the manufacturers (Kodak, Ilford, Agfa, Fuji, Konica and Polaroid are all represented) have said that as far as any of them know, all of the RC papers are developer incorporated. The difference is to what degree and how much other stuff is also in there. I should point out that IPI, National Geographic, National Archives of Canada, CAL (Smithsonian), Library of Congress, Smithsonian Institution, and NARA as well as a Henry Wilhelm (independent although representing Preservation Publishing) and Peter Krause (independent) are all represented in addition to the manufacturers.

At least since the companies are aware of the problem, they have all started working on trying to fix it (as far as I know.) Originally, the developer incorporation was only for rapid machine processing. These machines (like the Ekmatro) didn't use a developer or a fixing bath. The print was put into an alkaline bath that entered the paper very quickly and activated the incorporated developer in the paper. The print was then sent to a stabilization bath and then dried.

What the companies found though was that the developer incorporated papers were also popular for tray processing. The reason was that the alkalinity and the water (among other things) penetrated the
paper emulsion much faster than the developing agents in the developer. This meant that by having developers in the paper, the images started to appear much quicker. So the incorporated developers started the process and then as the slower developing agents entered the emulsion, they took over.

The transfer problem occurs mainly when unprocessed paper is kept in a stack (like the box it came in) under reasonably humid conditions. Diffusion does not tend to occur as easily without moisture (humidity) being present.

In his book, Henry Wilhelm points out that "Apparently, the longer a developer-incorporated RC paper remains in storage prior to processing, the more severe the brownish stain may eventually become."

Henry recommended both Polymax RC Paper and Polyprint RC Paper in his book since both are supposed to be non-developer incorporated (both are Kodak papers). It is interesting though that one of these papers tested by another manufacturer had, in fact, one of the highest levels of developer incorporation that they had ever seen.

Unfortunately, the Reilly article (that I suspect some of you have read that says that RC papers from the major manufacturers are just as good as the fiber based papers in terms of stability) was written not too long after DI became so wide spread. The article thus became dated very quickly. In Jim’s defense I’ll say that the problem was not the quality of the data, but because of recent changes in the content of the papers by the manufacturers.

With any luck, the manufacturers will either fix the problem or give up on the DI. The ANSI standards should also include a test to screen out problematic papers. When the standard comes out, any paper sold that claims to meet the standards must also pass this test. Obviously the manufacturers on the committee will want their papers to pass the test, but this is why the end users are also represented. Places like the archives would never agree to a test criteria that allows what they feel are bad papers to pass. Ditto for IPI, Henry, Peter and the other user groups.

SEPTMBER 21. Administration of Photographic Collections will be offered as part of the Western Museum Association meeting in Honolulu. The instructor is Laurie A. Baty, Program Officer at NHPRC. Cost $20. For registration information, contact the Western Museums Association office at P.O. Box 36069, Los Angeles, CA 90036-0069, (213) 749-0119.

October 7-9. Photohistory IX, the triennial international photo historical symposium, banquet, and photographica trade show, sponsored by the Photographic Historical Society of Rochester. The symposium will be held at the International Museum of Photography and Film at George Eastman House. For more information write The Photographic Historical Society, Box 39563, Rochester, NY 14604, or call (716) 288-6359.

November 3-6. Fifth annual meeting of The Daguerrean Society and the Regional Photographic Historians Group. The regionalists will meet on November 3 at the Massachusetts Historical Society and the society on Saturday at the Boston Athenaeum. For information on the regionalists, contact Ron Polito, Dept. of Art, University of Massachusetts-Harbor Campus, Boston, MA 02125-3393, (617) 929-7940, for information on the Daguerrean Society, contact Mark Johnson, President, The Daguerrean Society, CNG Tower, Suite 1795, 625 Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222-3114; (412) 338-2666 (F 12-8, Sa 12-3); fax (412) 563-5972.

November 15-19. The Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) conference, Boston, MA. Sessions, special presentations, screenings, repository tours, and the annual business meeting are on the agenda. For more information on the sessions, see the AMIA report on page 4. For more registration materials contact Gregory Lukow, National Center for Film and Video Preservation, The American Film Institute, P.O. Box 27999, 2021 North Western Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90027, (213) 856-7637; fax (213) 467-4578.

EXHIBITIONS: What’s Up


through September 4. Fay's Fairy Tales: William Wegman's "Cinderella" and...


IN PRINT:

THE REVIEWS:


Three new books can now be added to the wonderful list of published directories of photographers published in Photographers: A Sourcebook for Historical Research (1991). Each has its good and bad sides and each shows how different approaches can be brought to presenting the information culled from the tedious task of searching out early photographers from city, regional, or state perspectives. David Haynes, in Catching Shadows, presents his information in a straightforward, easy-to-find manner that I appreciate. The listings are strictly alphabetical by photographer with special appendices at the end of the book that rearrange names by place, by gender (ladies only), race (Blacks only), forename, and by decade. Haynes includes an extensive bibliography and has a detailed introduction outlining what the book does and doesn't do. The design also works for the book. There is nothing fancy here. It's strictly a working reference book. When Paula Fleming and I finally get our 19th-Century Washington, DC, photographers directory to press, I hope that the information is presented in as easy to find, straightforward manner as Haynes's work.

On the other hand, Ira Latour's Silver Shadows is an expensive design nightmare that makes me want to throw the book in a corner every time I pick it up to look at it. Someone should have hand-cuffed the designer! This book focuses on the narrow topic of northern California (although there's nothing narrow about northern California.) The essays, on the other hand (if you can read them through the heavy tightly-knurled type, are useful insights into northern California photography. There is a modest gallery of images by the photographers discussed and there is an alphabetical listing of photographers located in the area. This book does not present original research on the photographers, however, but does acknowledge its reliance on Peter Palmquist's Shadow Catchers (2 vol. 1990, 1991), Carl Mautz's Checklist of Western Photographers, and other names familiar to photographic research: Floyd and Marion Rinhart and Robert Taft. As one historian-colleague said to me, "Why don't these California people get together and do ONE book on California photographers?"

The third book of regional research published last year wins the prize for sheer size. Weighing in at over 4 pounds and over 600 pages, this book, largely the work of Chris Steele of the Massachusetts Historical Society with Ron Polito's editorial input, chronicles 5,759 photographers working in Massachusetts. Like the Haynes volume, this tome has an extensive introduction that leads the reader through the mass of information compiled on each name. We were disappointed with the fact that for all intents and purposes, only city, regional, or commercial directories are used for this mammoth compilation. In addition, we wish that Polito and Steele had gone the alphabetical route in listing names. Instead, the information is presented geographically. To learn all there is about one particular person, for example, George K. Warren, one must turn to the "every name index" under Warren, only to find listings for George K, George K. & Son, George Kendall, and George Kimball—on six different pages. I for one, would prefer an approach such as Haynes—that of a master alphabetical index with an appendix by town. However, one nice feature of this book is the appendices that give considerable information, for example, a list of photographers locating outside of Massachusetts. Even with its peculiar organization, this book is worthwhile and belongs on any researcher's bookshelf. And the illustrations, to quote Matt Isenburg, "are killers."
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Visual Materials Section


Two different institutions show the two different ways in which two completely different collection guides can be put together. Ries presents her information in a straightforward manner that is standard with archival finding aids. And this makes sense, for she is presenting information about archival collections. There aren’t a lot of illustrations in the book, but there is lots of meaty information presented in a logical fashion that leads the researcher from record groups to manuscript groups to the collections of note. Ries includes a glossary of photographic terms and a solid index that affords easy access into the collections. We would like to see more collections guides of this nature being published on a more regular basis.

From archival collections to fine art collections, if the Ries volume presents a whole-wheat loaf approach to collections, the Amon Carter’s new catalogue of the photography collection is a birthday cake with butter-cream icing. The catalog is lavishly well-illustrated and contains excellent catalog entries. If one has a manageable collection, indeed this is the kind of collection catalogue we should all hope to have. The materials are arranged by artist, and each artist receives a short biographical entry with a discussion about the nature of the work held by the museum. This information includes relevant biographical material, catalog numbers, title of work, physical and technical description, image size, mount size, signatures, and provenance. Although this book serves as a document of the collection at the Amon Carter, it provides invaluable information for anyone researching major photographers.

THE BOOKS:


Kilgo, Delores. Likeness and the Landscape: Thomas Easterly and the Art of the Daguerreotype. St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society, 1994. Cloth $59.95, paper $29.95. (s&h $3.50). Available from the Missouri Historical Society, P.O. Box 11940, St. Louis, MO 63112-0040. [Knowing Dee Kilgo, this book will be spectacular—Ed.]


If you belonged to the Society of American Archivists, Visual Materials Section, you'd find a ballot in this space.

Why not consider joining the Society of American Archivists? If you're already a member of SAA, why not join the section?

SAA membership gives you The American Archivist, the quarterly journal of the Society, Views, the Newsletter of the Visual Materials Section of the Society of American Archivists and discounts on society publications, workshops, and annual meeting fees. In addition, you are supporting a profession and a professional section that involves the kinds of materials with which you work.

For membership information or to change your section affiliation, contact Bernice Brack at

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ARTFUL DODGING: Things Heard, Enhanced, and Passed On

MID- ATLANTIC

Wilmington. Jon Williams announced that the Hagley Museum recently received a small collection of photographs of the Lukens Iron and Steel Company, which includes four views of their New Orleans warehouse and office, ca. 1895. They already have several thousand Lukens photographs among their 1,000,000+ items photo archives. What makes these four 8x10 prints mounted on boards exciting is the photographer’s label pasted on the back of each of them. It reads: Ernest J. Belloq / Commercial Photography, / Copying and Enlarging, / Flash Light, Groups and Interiors, / Catalogue and Machinery Photos, / 1026 Conti Street, (Near Rampart) / New Orleans, LA. / Duplicates can be had at any time.

Storyville Portraits states that the prostitute “portraits constitute the only fragment of his work know to have survived.” Williams has been unable to find any recent updates on this. Does anyone know of any other examples of Belloq’s commercial work? These prints are quite sharp and interesting examples of industrial photography. According to Williams, “They drew my second glance even before I knew they were Belloq due to their sharpness and the wonderful details. The prints are in excellent condition.” He looks forward to hearing from anyone who might have information on this question. Contact Jon Williams at the Hagley Museum, P.O. Box 3630, Wilmington, DE 19807, (302) 658-2400, e-mail 73118@BRAHMS.UDEL.EDU

MID-WEST

Indianapolis. Pamela Tranfield began working as the Visual Collections Archivist at the Indiana Historical Society on 9 May. Pamela is from Vancouver, British Columbia, where she was the Archivist for the Jewish Historical Society of British Columbia and Yukon, primarily processing the 80,000 images in the Leonard Frank/Otto Landauer Collection. She is writing her dissertation on the description of photographs in archival institutions according to Canadian rules for archival description.

Saint Paul. The institute for Photographic Studies was recently established to foster the art and

literature of photography. It’s a non-profit educational and custodial organization. Presently the institute conducts activities through four specific programs: The IPS Archives, Circulating Exhibitions, Photography Publications, and PHOTOWORKS, a source of specifically commissioned photography projects. For more information contact the Institute of Photographic Studies at (612) 224-6954, FAX (612) 222-1824.

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 at 600 S. Federal, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60605, (312) 922-0140.


Assistant Editor: Bruce L. Johnson, Director, William Henry Smith Memorial Library, Indiana Historical Society, 315 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202, (317) 232-1879. FAX: (317) 232-3209.

Chair: Katherine Hamilton-Smith, Curt Teich Postcard Archives, Lakewood Forest Preserve, 27277 Forest Preserve Drive, Wauconda, IL 60084, (708) 526-8535; FAX 526-0024.

Your comments and suggestions for improvements will always receive a cordial hearing. The next deadline is October 15, 1993. Opinions expressed are those of the authors.

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