

Vice President's Column MAC Meetings and Symposia Update

By Joshua Ranger, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh



I feel like I point out somewhat redundantly that I write each of these columns three months before you get to read it. In an age of instantaneous communication, this is a bit of a quaint oddity to me; it's like I am preparing a very short-lived (and consequently boring) time capsule. But even though this time capsule will be opened very soon, let me document what is happening now, on August 1.

I just returned from a week and a half in Portland and on the Oregon coast (it was a fantastic trip, thanks for asking!). As someone on an academic calendar, the conclusion of a summer vacation always feels to me like New Year's. It is the moment the year resets, and I begin working on a new semester and the accompanying rigmarole. If I was a habitual SAA attendee, I would likely use that as my yearly axis. Perhaps you do?

Even though there is plenty to do in the early summer, it still feels like the real work, anticipation, and yes, worry about the MAC meeting cycle begins around this time of year. The Annual Meeting's call-for-proposals goes out and registration opens for the Fall Symposium. We draw closer to finalizing some of the Annual Meeting's programming, and the earliest planning activities for the next set of meetings begin.

With all of this in mind, I present some updates in this time-capsule-of-sorts.

2019 Fall Symposium: Fargo, North Dakota

One of the greatest surprises to me is the enthusiasm MAC members have for experimenting with our meetings. It's fantastic! The Fargo Fall Symposium is just one example. Not only are we trying out a new location for a meeting, but we are also tweaking the approach. For this Symposium, we are following a retreat-style format with a cohort of professionals all drawn from solo or small shop archives. It is the first time a MAC Symposium has been organized around a professional category and not an archival activity. Also, we are experimenting with presenters and moderators drawn largely from MAC leadership. I am looking forward to this departure from the standard approach to the Symposium, and if it proves successful, I hope we return to it from time to time.

2020 Annual Meeting: Des Moines, Iowa May 6–9, 2020

We are continuing to make progress on the Des Moines meeting, which will be held May 6–9, 2020. The Program and Education Committees are collecting proposals for a program that will largely be determined by the time you read this. The Program Committee is hoping to continue the precedent set in Detroit of providing a mix of 45- and 90-minute sessions, while the Education Committee, in addition to its workshops, is considering a repeat of Detroit's business archivists preconference. This was very popular last spring, and I am grateful to the organizers for entertaining this concept once more.

2020 Fall Symposium: Indianapolis, Indiana

Although it is not official just yet, it looks very much like the 2020 Fall Symposium will be held in Indianapolis—a city that looks great at 200 years old! We are currently finalizing the details, and MAC is looking forward to helping Indy celebrate its bicentennial with a program all about public programming and outreach events that would include milestones like major anniversaries and other celebrations.

2021 Annual Meeting: Madison, Wisconsin

With apologies to the wonderful cities listed above—which, like my children, I love equally, including Fargo where I've never been and little Sophie whom I've never met (kidding!)—I have saved the best news for last. MAC is heading to Madison for its 2021 Annual Meeting! Always the autumn bridesmaid, the Wisconsin capital will now play host to the whole, big, cheese-filled enchilada in the spring. Madison has a great mix (like my metaphors) of restaurants, nightlife, nature, and culture, and I cannot wait for the first-timers who come to discover our not-so-secret gem, the City of Four Lakes. Three “u-rah-rahs” to cochairs Katie Nash and Cynthia Bachhuber and their LAC, which represents every archives in town, along with PC cochairs Cara Bertram and Kayla Harris for their efforts which will soon begin in earnest and even more so after the year starts over again . . . next August.