

## Vice President's Column MAC Meetings and Symposia Update

By Michelle Sweetser, Bowling Green State University



One of my first tasks after election to the vice presidency was to write a column for the *MAC Newsletter*. We were still early in the pandemic, and MAC had just decided to cancel the Des Moines meeting and postpone the Fall Symposium. Nothing was known and everything was up in the air. Three months later, in August, we were pretty much in the same position, not able to fully undertake planning due to our hotel contract for the 2021 Annual Meeting. I dreaded writing those columns. After all, how was I to fill a page when nothing was set in stone?

Now, though, it is my great pleasure to report some concrete news! MAC will be hosting its first all-virtual Annual Meeting on May 13–14, 2021! Although we are disappointed that we will not be gathering in person, too many health risks, travel concerns, and budgetary restrictions remain for us to responsibly host an in-person meeting in the spring. But out of these limitations, our Program Committee has developed a fantastic and timely theme. “Archivists Respond” will give us opportunities to reflect upon and share our experiences of archival work in times of pandemic, shutdowns, and civic unrest. Just as we’ve adapted to cultural, societal, and environmental changes in our daily life, MAC is adapting to a new programming reality. As we continue to work out logistical details, know that many of the Annual Meeting’s highlights will remain a part of this virtual meeting, including presentations, posters, a plenary, and more.

Our ability to plan a virtual meeting for May 2021 is a direct result of having been able to negotiate a new contract with the Madison Concourse Hotel. For those of you who were looking forward to Wisconsin beers, cheese curds, a stroll through the State Capitol, research at the Wisconsin Historical Society, treats from the Farmer’s Market, or whatever else floats your boat, know that MAC will head to Madison in spring 2022. Count on getting your fix then!

Settling these matters has had a domino effect, but it has enabled us to follow up on additional proposals for meetings and symposia. Council approved a 2021 Fall Symposium proposal from Tara Laver, Lindy Smith, and Amy Moorman. The symposium will be held in

Kansas City if we are able to meet in person. The organizers are reaching out to presenters to determine whether they are willing to participate virtually.

We anticipate deciding a format (in-person or virtual) at the beginning of March and will communicate that decision to members at that time.

Looking further ahead, we are reviving our partnership with the Society of Indiana Archivists to hold a Fall Symposium in Indianapolis in fall 2022, and MAC will celebrate its 51st birthday in its birthplace of Chicago in spring 2023. As we become more experienced with virtual programming and as we better understand member needs and interests, we may find that these events have a unique mixture of in-person and virtual components.

Finally, MAC leadership recognizes that our planning committees and our members expect that we, like our peer organizations around us, have a Code of Conduct in place to ensure that we operate in and create an environment of cooperation and collaboration. MAC aims to provide an environment in which all participants learn, network, and enjoy the company of colleagues in an environment of mutual respect. I will be leading a small working group to finalize a Code of Conduct and reporting mechanisms to bring to Council by its spring meeting. If you have questions or concerns that you would like to share, please get in touch!

### Between-Meeting Council Actions

On October 15, 2020, Council unanimously approved the minutes for the first of three fall meetings.

On October 23, 2020, Council unanimously approved the minutes for the second of three fall meetings.

On October 30, 2020, Council unanimously approved the minutes for the final of three fall meetings.