

Dear MAC members,

As I write this column in January, a blanket of snow covers the ground outside the archives, and it is hard to know what will happen next week, much less have exact plans for the spring. However, if the pandemic has taught me anything, it is to be flexible and to celebrate the small victories as well as the larger ones. And so, when this newsletter comes out in April, I know that the daffodils and crocuses will be up, and we will be ready to celebrate 50 years of MAC.

Recently, I have spent time thinking about the value of professional organizations. As we prepare for our spring meeting, we have asked you to consider—what does MAC mean to you? Kasandra Brellenthin, MAC's first fieldwork student, is currently reaching out to members to hear your answers to this question. At the same time, she is digging through the MAC archives at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee to learn more about our history. We look forward to sharing what Kasandra finds both on the MAC website and in Madison during the Annual Meeting.

As a long-time member and president, what does MAC mean to me?

To me, MAC means friendship. I attended my first MAC meeting in May 2000. With my flight to Chicago arriving early that Thursday morning, I wasn't sure what to do at first until I was swept up by other Big Ten archivists and introduced around. Other archivists were just as welcoming, teaching me the ropes and suggesting the best place to find lunch. Over the years, I've called on my MAC friends for advice and feedback, to bounce ideas off of them or request help, and sometimes just to laugh. Inevitably, whether individually or in a group, someone asks, "Do you remember the time we...?"

MAC also means learning. New archivists periodically ask me why they should join MAC or read *Archival Issues* or attend a MAC meeting or Symposium. I always respond that MAC is where you find new ways to handle real, concrete, archival challenges; that we are large enough to have a lot of expertise, but small enough to ask questions and get great answers. Perhaps it's midwestern practicality that pushes us to find solutions that we can take home and try.

And finally, MAC means giving back. An organization doesn't get to its 50th anniversary without a lot of care. Looking back at our newsletters, it is astonishing to see all the different people who were officers, committee chairs, authors, and contributors. Of course, those lists do not include so many others who built MAC into the organization it is today. On behalf of MAC, thank you all so very much!

I look forward to hearing what MAC means to you both at the spring meeting and throughout the year. If you have any questions or concerns about MAC or just want to chat, please do not hesitate to reach out (chute.6@osu.edu, 614-292-3271).

See you in Madison!



Tamar Chute

MAC President