

MAC midwest archives conference

n e w s l e t t e r

Preserving the Documents of the Past and Making Them Accessible to the Future!

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April 2023

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2023 Annual Meeting

“My Kind of Town (Chicago Is)” and “Chicago (That Toddlin’ Town)” are two well-known songs popularized by Frank Sinatra. MAC hopes Chicago will be your kind of town for its upcoming Annual Meeting on April 12–15, 2023.

The meeting’s theme of “Dig Deep” is a gesture to the city’s famous deep-dish pizza, not for bribery scandals involving local politicians. But, more important for MACers, it highlights 13 sessions on archival practice, management, and outreach. Make certain to check the meeting program on the MAC website to note the preconference MAC workshops, the DEI Unconference, the Business Archives meeting, a two-day SAA workshop on the Arrangement and Description of Digital Records, and the POP-UP sessions being developed.

MACers will enjoy the venue selected for the meeting. Located in the heart of the city, the Hyatt Centric Chicago Magnificent Mile is ideally situated for shopping, restaurants, and exploring the Second City. Prefer a guided tour? Well, the Local Arrangements Committee scheduled some great tours on Thursday morning. Sign up early, as they promise to fill up quickly. All MACers are welcome to attend Friday’s morning break sponsored by the Black Metropolis Research Consortium. Learn how the consortium documents and preserves Chicago’s Black culture, history, and experience.

Care for extra toppings? An opening reception will be offered to MACers in the hotel’s St. Clair and Lakeshore Ballrooms. It will feature light hors d’oeuvres, a cash bar, and music. Restaurant tours will be hosted by the LAC immediately afterward. Look for sign-up sheets near the registration table.

You’re sure to enjoy the Plenary Session in which Chicagoan Sherman “Dilla” Thomas will present “Does a Tree Make a Sound if No One’s Around? Does Your Archives Preserve History if No One Sees Them?” See the unique way in which Dilla presents Chicago history on Twitter [@6figga_dilla](https://twitter.com/6figga_dilla). He is also on Instagram and TikTok.

Be sure to consult 2023 MAC Annual Meeting website (<https://www.midwestarchives.org/2023-mac-annual-meeting>) to review the program online. It contains information on registration, sessions, hotel room booking, and the schedule of events. The Local Arrangements Committee members hope that you enjoy the meeting and the opportunity to confer with archival colleagues.

MAC midwest archives conference

April 2023

April 2023

Dear MAC Members,

I hope as you read this column you are enjoying the sunshine, rain, and promise that spring usually holds. For Ohio State, this time of year also means the spring football game, a chance for those of us without season tickets to watch a game and visit the stadium. Over the last several months, we have been celebrating the football stadium turning 100. At the archives, we had been planning an exhibit for about five years, knowing the big occasion was approaching. As with all good university anniversary celebrations, we were involved in a lot of programming and events that brought home once again the value of collaborating outside the unit. The most successful collaboration was the most unlikely.



When talking about the exhibit more than a year ago, our marketing director said to me, “What about borrowing the Lego stadium?” It turns out that a professor in the university’s heart hospital built an eight-by-ten-foot replica of the stadium using Lego bricks. Occasionally on display, once at the heart hospital and a few times at the city’s art museum, the Lego stadium usually lives in the professor’s basement. Now here was an idea I could get behind! Unsure of his willingness to lend his creation, I emailed the professor who enthusiastically said, “Yes of course!” He also suggested we do a version of the fund-raiser he did several years ago where people could purchase a “seat” and a Lego figure would be added in their honor. That kicked off a series of conversations with the libraries’ and the heart hospital’s development teams, who were happy to help.

Watching our exhibit staff transport the sections of the Lego stadium to the exhibit gallery is something I will never forget—the professor uses no glue which means pieces fall and parts have to be fixed—but it was worth it! The Lego stadium was a huge hit in the gallery. It drew Lego fans of all ages to the exhibit; gave me a great talking point with students, alumni, and donors; and even made local and national news. The fund-raiser also raised more than \$32,000 to be split between the heart hospital and the archives.

What seemed like an odd partnership has benefited both of us. While I am not sure we will ever have another opportunity to team up with the heart hospital, I would certainly love to do so. It also opened my eyes to other units that may not be the typical areas we have worked with previously. As you go about your own archives, I encourage you to think broadly about collaboration. What other gems are out there to explore?

If you would like to see a photo of the Lego stadium, I hope you catch me when we are all in Chicago. I am looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible! The Local Arrangements Committee and the Program Committee have been working hard to put together an incredible program, and I can’t wait to be there with you.

As always, if you have any ideas, questions, or concerns, please contact me. I would be happy to chat over Zoom or the phone or grab coffee while we are together.

I hope you have a wonderful spring—see you soon!

Tamar Chute
President, Midwest Archives Conference

Vice President's Column

By Benn Joseph, Northwestern University

A few weeks ago, I used something called [ParkChirp](#) for the first time. This happened because I had the day off and decided to take the kids to the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), which is just down the street from the Hyatt Centric Chicago Magnificent Mile, our hotel for the Chicago Annual Meeting. The MCA is great, and I encourage everyone to check it out while you're in town. But here's the thing: parking is \$40, and that seemed excessive to me. Anyway, the best way to describe ParkChirp (or any of the myriad other parking apps that are out there) is that it's kind of like Airbnb for parking garages. You indicate where you want to park and when you'll need the spot, and it tells you what your options are on a map, with prices. Then you use a QR code on your smartphone to scan in and out of the garage. We ended up parking in the same \$40 MCA garage, but only paid \$18. All this to say: use public transit, if at all possible, but if you are driving to MAC in Chicago, there are alternatives to the \$65/day parking rate at the hotel. I can't guarantee you'll get a substantially better rate, and it might be a longer walk, but maybe it's something?

2023 Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois

Registration is about to go live as I write this. One thing you'll probably notice is that registration rates this year are a bit higher than in the past. I was talking to someone in the MARAC region a little while back, who was surprised we are having a conference in Chicago, as MARAC had been "priced out" of all its big cities. Chicago is still affordable as big cities go, but stuff does, in fact, cost more than it used to. Please know that a great deal of discussion went into selecting this registration rate, but in the end, it was a necessary move to support MAC programming.

We're very excited to once again be able to offer a hybrid conference as we did last year in Madison. In addition to select panel presentations, virtual attendees will also be able to attend the MAC Members' Meeting as well as the plenary. I'm very excited about having Sherman "Dilla" Thomas as our plenary speaker this year—and if you're looking for me during the plenary, I'll be wearing my "Everything Dope About America Comes from Chicago" shirt!

One thing virtual attendees won't be able to join in on, however, is the opening reception happening Thursday night at the hotel. There will be some great entertainment on tap at this time as well. And to provide an answer to

the most common question I have received so far regarding the reception: no, it is *not* an open bar! I am told this is to cut down on the number of wedding guests and high school prom attendees from other parts of the building masquerading as archivists.

We have fantastic workshops on offer, as well as the DEI Unconference being held at the Newberry Library and the Business Archives meeting in the hotel on Wednesday. Don't forget, there's also a two-day SAA workshop, "Arrangement and Description of Digital Records," being held in conjunction with MAC at DePaul University on Tuesday and Wednesday (April 11–12). In fact, this is one of the more jam-packed preconference sessions we've had in recent years (at least that I remember, but what do I know?). There are also a TON of tours being offered, which will allow you to go as far afield as the Far North Side of the city (Loyola University's Women and Leadership Archives), or just to a higher floor in the building we're already in (American College of Surgeons).

It's also important to mention that MAC Council has just approved an upgrade to the honorarium for workshop instructors, to help keep pace with inflation. That seems like a losing proposition these days, but we do what we can. This is in addition to other honorariums, scholarships, and awards that Council voted to increase over the past year, which we hope will provide additional support for potential new MAC members to attend the conference, as well as for our MAC region experts who teach our workshops.

2023 Fall Symposium, Louisville, Kentucky

Symposium cochairs Danielle Spalenka and Rusty Heckaman are continuing to plan a disaster recovery theme for the Symposium this year, which will be held November 3–4, 2023, at the Filson Historical Society. I should mention here that the Filson Historical Society is in Louisville, Kentucky (my favorite place in Kentucky), and not Lexington (my other favorite place in Kentucky), as I mistakenly put in my VP report to Council last fall.

2024 Annual Meeting, Des Moines, Iowa

Planning for MAC 2024 in Des Moines is chugging along nicely. Program Committee cochairs Jaycie Vos and Scott Brouwer are working on a program to go along with the host activities coordinated by LAC cochairs Rosalie

(Continued on page 4)

MAC NEWS—Continued

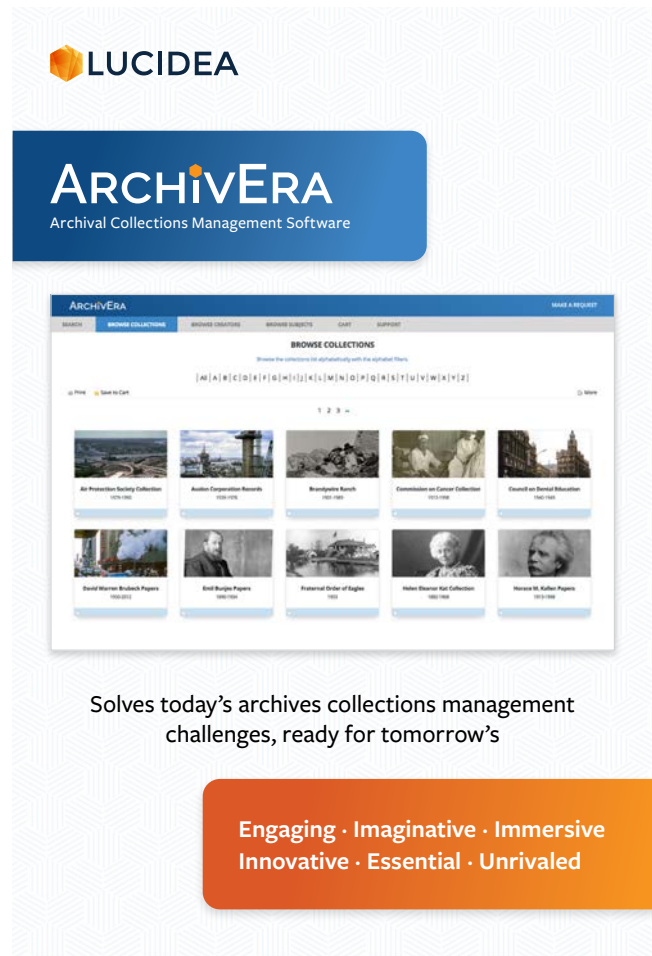
Megan Badgley-Malone, Assistant Editor

(Continued from page 3)

Gartner and Hope Bibens. I'm anxious to see what the swag is going to be—seed packets were proposed at one point, which would be perfect timing for spring planting.

Future Meetings

We have Annual Meeting sites picked out for 2025 and 2026, which certainly takes the pressure off (of me, anyway)—although since Council has not yet voted on these at the time of writing, I don't want to put them into print just yet. But what we *don't* have is a meeting site for the 2024 Fall Symposium. If you'd like to help put together a one-and-a-half-day workshop for a bunch of MAC folks to attend at your organization, please get in touch with me. It might sound daunting, but I promise it's great fun.



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Get Published—with MAC!

Archival literature is a mainstay of our profession. What would we do without it? From theory to practice, it grounds us as an enterprise, gives us a forum for the exchange of ideas, and documents dynamic changes in our thinking and techniques.

Did you know MAC is one of the country's main players in the production of archival literature? Between its journal *Archival Issues* and the *MAC Newsletter's* substantive articles, MAC puts a hefty lot of professional reflection at our fingertips yearly. And it's not just for MAC members—the writings reach users well outside the MAC region, and for years to come.

But MAC can't sustain this impressive pace without you. We want to hear your thoughts, your research, your case studies. We want to see your words in print. We want to be your publisher!

If you have an idea, we want to hear from you! Please feel free to check out the MAC publications' guidelines on the website, and contact *AI* editor Brandon Pieczko at bpieczko@iu.edu or *Newsletter* editor Adriana Harmey at aharmey@purdue.edu. Get published—with MAC!

2022 Fall Symposium Recap

MAC held its “Driving Outreach to Victory Lane” Symposium at the Indiana State Library in downtown Indianapolis on October 13–14, 2022. The program committee, consisting of MAC members and cochairs Jackie Shalberg, archivist and historian, National Model Aviation Museum, and Bethany Fiechter, university archivist, DePauw University, hosted 26 people for the full-day event on Friday and a half day on Saturday. The Symposium was made possible due to generous sponsorships from the Indiana State Library, the Society of Indiana Archivists, the IU Libraries, the IUPUI School of Informatics and Computing Department of Library and Information Science, and the University of Kentucky Libraries.

On Friday, a lecture by Carey (Beam) Champion, director and associate librarian, Wylie House Museum, Indiana University–Bloomington, provided a history of archival outreach within the profession. Carrie Schwier, outreach and public services archivist and associate librarian, Indiana University Libraries, University Archives, defined

why inreach and outreach are important, as well as how goals can be mapped to existing or new resources. She also brought forth factors to consider when planning for outreach initiatives. Carol Street, undergraduate research archivist, University of Kentucky Special Collections Research Center, Margaret I. King Library, provided innovative examples of inreach and outreach. Time was also dedicated to assessing mission statements guided by an outreach assessment tool created by the speakers.

The second half of the day was reserved as an unconference. “Unconference” is defined as a participant-driven meeting. Topics were submitted by attendees prior to the event via an online collaborative tool called Padlet. Three groups discussed inreach within organizations; outreach to new constituencies; marketing outreach in a world of email and social media overload; outreach to underrepresented communities; onboarding; those who will never visit in-person or are outside of the humanities; and sustainability.



The 2022 MAC Symposium was held at the Indiana State Library.

(Continued on page 6)



An unconference session with speaker Carey (Beam) Champion and attendees



The “Swag Gallery” table, provided near the back of the meeting room, where attendees could display their institution’s swag, network, and discover new outreach ideas among colleagues



A special cake was purchased to celebrate MAC's 50th anniversary with MAC President Tamar Chute, university archivist, Ohio State University, and Vice President Benn Joseph, head of collections services, Northwestern University Libraries.

On Saturday, attendees gathered to present their own outreach ideas as part of a homework assignment from the previous day. Additional time was devoted to addressing outreach planning and sustainability. A one-year outreach

plan was presented as part of a larger workbook that included tools for project management, publicity, and postevent assessment.



Speakers Carrie Schwier and Carol Street converse before the Symposium on Saturday morning.

(Continued on page 8)

MAC NEWS—Continued

Megan Badgley-Malone, Assistant Editor

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In addition to the Symposium, attendees were invited to a networking event hosted by the Society of Indiana Archivists at the Garage Food Hall, part of Indy's Bottletworks District. The event was organized by Lydia Spotts, lecturer, IUPUI School of Informatics and

Computing Department of Library and Information Science, and Brandon Pieczko, digital and special collections librarian and associate faculty, Indiana University School of Medicine's Ruth Lilly Medical Library, and editor of MAC's *Archival Issues*.



Society of Indiana Archivists' presymposium networking event

All images provided by MAC Symposium organizing committee cochairs and speakers.

Treasurer’s Report

Jerice Barrios, Archives of the North American Province of the Cenacle

Fall 2022 Council Meeting

September 14, 2022

Treasurer’s note: This report from the Fall 2022 Council Meeting was delayed due to illness. Also, you may notice that 2022 Statement of Activity has a different appearance due to the use of QuickBooks categories and formatting.

2022 Budget Update

MAC’s first in-person Annual Meeting since 2019 was a financial success, with \$45,002 in expenses, and \$46,695 in revenue. What a great way to celebrate MAC’s 50th anniversary as an organization! Many thanks to everyone who attended, as well as everyone who had a hand in pulling this off, especially considering the technological challenges involved in running a hybrid conference. Also, special thanks to our sponsors and vendors for supporting the conference.

We are still waiting to see what financial repercussions will result from switching to digital-only publications. So far this year, royalty revenue has been robust at over \$7,000, but subscriptions account for only \$400, and only \$510 in advertising was sold. We are saving significantly in printing costs, but copyediting and design costs remain the same.

As is usual for the fall report, we saw 2022 expenses exceed income by \$16,104. The end-of-year membership drive should bring that number down significantly.

Invested Funds

Compared to this time last year, the invested funds are down about \$4,000, from \$304,036 to \$299,832. Still, we are in a very comfortable position, with ample funds to support our initiatives.

2023 Budget

We are looking forward to returning to Chicago for the 2023 Annual Meeting, but we must recognize that it is an expensive city, as is reflected in the proposed budget. If we want to keep our registration fees in line with previous years, Council may need to decide to subsidize the conference from invested funds.

**As of September 8, 2022,
our total assets were valued at \$342,407.70**

Bank of America Checking \$ 42,575.85

Lincoln Investment Accounts

Program Initiative Fund	\$ 128,626.36
Mark A. Greene Emeritus Scholarship Fund	\$ 5,567.77
Invested Reserve	\$ 60,867.05
Bowen Endowment	\$ 39,783.53
Motley Endowment	\$ 64,987.14
Total:	\$ 299,831.85

Five-Year Retrospective of Total Assets

September 29, 2018	\$ 282,450.35
August 20, 2019	\$ 304,648.60
October 8, 2020	\$ 306,799.08
September 30, 2021	\$ 344,433.72
September 8, 2022	\$ 342,407.70

(Continued on page 10)

**MAC Proposed Budget 2023:
Income**

Income	2023 Budget	2022 Budget
Advertising	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Checking Account Interest	\$ 3.00	\$ 3.00
Endowment Income: Bowen ¹	\$ 1,500.00 ¹	\$ 750.00
Endowment Income: Motley ²	\$ 3,000.00 ²	\$ 1,500.00
Endowment Income: Ed. Init.	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,200.00
Endowment Income: Program Init.	\$ 0.00	\$ 7,000.00 ³
Gifts—MAG Emeritus Scholarship	\$ 0.00 ⁴	\$ 3,500.00
Gifts—General/Operating	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Gifts—Student Scholarship	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00
Journal Subscriptions	\$ 500.00 ⁵	\$ 5,000.00
Meetings (Gross)		
Spring Meeting	\$130,000.00 ⁶	\$65,000.00
Fall Symposium	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00
2024 Spring Meeting	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Memberships	\$ 40,000.00	\$40,000.00
Royalties	\$ 5,000.00 ⁷	\$ 3,900.00
Speakers Bureau (Ed. Init.) Fee	\$ 150.00	\$ 150.00
Total Income	\$194,603.00	\$141,253.00

**MAC Proposed Budget 2023:
Expenses**

Expenses	2023 Budget	2022 Budget
Administrative		
(Includes Zoom license)	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00
Bank Charges	\$ 230.00	\$ 230.00
Contract Services—Financial (includes bookkeeper and tax accountant)	\$ 5,700.00	\$ 5,700.00
Contract Services—AMC	\$ 38,192.00	\$37,080.00
Credit Card Fees	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Insurance	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00
Journal Awards—Even yrs only	\$ 0.00	\$ 500.00
MAC History Project	\$ 0.00	\$ 7,000.00 ⁸
Meetings		
Annual Meeting	\$ 113,700.00 ⁹	\$59,000.00
Fall Symposium	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 5,500.00
2024 Annual Meeting	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
Memberclicks	\$ 3,700.00	\$ 3,700.00
Membership Renewal Mailing	\$ 985.00	\$ 985.00
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Publication Expenses	\$ 4,000.00 ¹⁰	* ¹¹
Scholarships and Awards	\$ 5,650.00 ¹²	\$ 3,400.00
Speakers Bureau (Education Init)	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,200.00
Taxes / Annual Report to IL	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
Vendor Coordinator	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
Total Expenses.	\$189,832.00	\$135,270.00

1. At the 2022 Fall Council Meeting, Council agreed to raise the Bowen scholarship to \$1,500.
 2. At the 2022 Fall Council Meeting, Council agreed to raise the Motley scholarship to \$1,500 per award.
 3. This was a one-time source of income to pay for the 2022 MAC History Project.
 4. Fund-raising for this scholarship will conclude in 2022.
 5. Because our journal is now available as free-source digital, a sharp downturn in subscriptions is expected.
 6. This figure is based on the Chicago LAC projected budget presented at the 2022 spring Council Meeting.
 7. So far in 2022, the royalty income has been over \$7,000, so it seems reasonable to adjust expectations for 2023.

8. This was a one-time expense for the 2022 MAC History Project.
 9. This figure is based on the Chicago LAC projected budget presented at the 2022 spring Council Meeting and also includes a plenary honorarium increase to \$1,000.
 10. This is a rough estimate based on 2022 costs for copyediting and design of the newsletter and journal.
 11. Publications expenses were unknown, due to the switch to all-digital publication.
 12. See footnotes 1 and 2.

**Midwest Archives Conference
Statement of Activity
January–July 2022
Income**

40000	DIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS REVENUE	879.00
	40100 General/Operating Fund	879.00
45000	PROGRAM SERVICE REVENUE	74,737.13
	45100 Scholarships	1,975.00
	45110 <i>Mark A. Greene Emeritus Scholarship</i>	1,070.00
	45120 <i>Student Registration Scholarships</i>	905.00
	45300 Annual / Spring Meeting	46,695.38
	45301 <i>Registrations</i>	27,511.38
	45302 <i>Virtual Registrations</i>	6,569.00
	45303 <i>Tours</i>	360.00
	45304 <i>Student Registrations</i>	10.00
	45305 <i>Sponsorship</i>	9,500.00
	45306 <i>Vendor Displays</i>	1,510.00
	45307 <i>Program Advertising</i>	555.00
	45308 <i>DEI</i>	(100.00)
	45309 <i>Workshop</i>	500.00
	45310 <i>Guest Registration</i>	280.00
	45500 Membership Dues	17,510.00
	45510 <i>Memberships</i>	17,510.00
	45600 Newsletter / Archival Issues	8,556.75
	45601 <i>Royalties Revenue</i>	7,646.75
	45602 <i>Subscriptions</i>	400.00
	45603 <i>Advertising Revenue</i>	510.00
TOTAL INCOME		75,616.13

(Continued on page 12)

EXPENSES

51000 PAYROLL EXPENSES (Mac History Project Intern)		3,706.63
51200 Salaries and Wages	2,835.00	
51500 Payroll Taxes	216.88	
51600 Workers' Compensation Insurance	82.75	
51700 Payroll Service Fees	572.00	
52000 CONTRACT SERVICE EXPENSES		5,670.00
52200 Accounting Fees	1,425.00	
52400 Professional Fees—Publications	1,795.00	
52410 Copyediting	595.00	
52420 Design	1,200.00	
52600 Bookkeeper	2,450.00	
53000 OFFICE EXPENSES		3,037.11
53100 Office Supplies	33.50	
53300 Postage and Shipping (Membership Renewal Mailing)	162.98	
53400 Printing and Copying	0.00	
53900 Bank Fees and Service Charges	145.00	
53910 Merchant Processing Fees (Credit Card Fees)	2,695.63	
56000 CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, AND CONVENTIONS		36,576.49
56100 Venue Rental and Related Expenses	36,576.49	
57000 OTHER EXPENSES		1,064.98
57210 Insurance General Liability	500.00	
57600 Zoom License	564.98	

61000 MEMBERSHIP AND MEETING MANAGEMENT SERVICES	38,915.24
61000 Membership and Meeting Management Services	27,836.67
61010 Miscellaneous Annual Meeting Expenses (includes giveaways, transportation, workshop instructor, etc.)	7,925.97
61020 Plenary Honorarium	500.00
61030 Printing and Copying (\$727.60 for renewal campaign letter + \$1,925 for MAC History Project digitization of old newsletters)	2,652.60
63000 AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS	2,750.00
63010 Motley Scholarship	1,500.00
63020 Bowen Scholarship	750.00
63030 Mark A. Greene Emeritus Scholarship Award	500.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$91,720.45
Expenses in excess of income	\$16,104.33

Archival Issues Update

By Brandon T. Pieczko, Archival Issues Editorial Board Chair, Indiana University

I hope this update finds you all well. The current issue of *Archival Issues* (vol. 42, no. 1) is in progress, and we anticipate it will be published by early spring. Three articles and seven publication reviews have been accepted by the editorial board for publication and are currently in the copyediting phase. The topics of the articles to be featured in the next issue include community archives, oral histories, and engaging underrepresented groups in the archival appraisal process.

The Editorial Board is currently seeking article submissions for the next issue of the journal (vol. 42, no. 2). We encourage submissions on a wide range of topics related to archives and special collections and

from diverse points of view, and will consider a variety of potential formats including research articles, case studies, and opinion pieces. Although *Archival Issues* regularly publishes contributions from well-established professionals, we particularly encourage submissions from authors who have not published previously. If you have an idea for an article you would like to discuss or have a manuscript ready to be reviewed, please consider submitting to *Archival Issues*. You can contact me directly at bpieczko@iu.edu, or visit our online submission portal (<https://www.iastatedigitalpress.com/archivalissues/submissions/>) for details.

News from the Midwest

Assistant Editor: Lois Hamill, Northern Kentucky University.
Please submit News from the Midwest items to Lois at hamilll1@nku.edu.
Submissions must be 150 words or less. Images are welcome!

KENTUCKY

Filson Historical Society

With support from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Filson Historical Society is excited to announce the relaunch of the *First American West*, an online collection of letters, financial records, maps, and objects relating to the Ohio River Valley from the mid-1700s through the early 1800s. Originally a collaboration with the Library of Congress and the University of Chicago, *The First American West: The Ohio River Valley, 1750–1820* (FAW) was an early digitization project that launched in 2000. While it was an early standard-bearer for digital history, it became unavailable in 2016 when the Library of Congress ended support for the project. In this relaunch, an NEH-funded research team has expanded the project to highlight the experiences of those originally excluded, including the voices of women, those enslaved, and the Indigenous communities that called this region home. You are invited to explore and learn more at <https://filsonhistorical.omeka.net/first-american-west>.



Map of the Falls of the Ohio, 1824
[RXSM 627.13 F624 1824]

MINNESOTA

Bethel University

The Bethel University History Center recently created a digital exhibit with StoryMapJS featuring its collection of copies of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Over the centuries, John Bunyan's 1678 publication became one of the most influential pieces of literature across the globe. Bethel University holds 114 rare versions in several languages, dating from 1727 forward, once owned by the Klingberg Children's Home in New Britain, Connecticut. Using a digitized foldout map of the character's journey from an 1853 edition, the exhibit overlays illustrations from various copies in the collection. This exhibit is an adventure through *The Pilgrim's Progress*, world literature, and art history. This virtual exhibit can be found at <https://cdm16120.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16120coll60/custom/illustrated-journey-exhibit>.



Woodcut frontispiece from *The Pilgrim's Progress*, 1727 edition, depicting author John Bunyan. Image courtesy of Bethel University History Center.

SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota State Historical Society

South Dakota native and author Joseph Bottum will be the featured speaker at the South Dakota State Historical Society's 2023 History Conference and Governor's Awards for History. The event will take place April 21–22 at the Pierre Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center. Bottum is a faculty member at Dakota State University looking into the ethical dimensions of the computer revolution. Born in Vermillion and raised in Pierre, he has philosophy degrees from Georgetown University and Boston College, served as an editor for *The Weekly Standard* and *First Things*, and has published several books on poetry and religion and numerous essays on American culture. He recently delivered the graduation poem at Princeton University. Bottum will speak Saturday afternoon about how history and place provide our moral compass as a society. "Great Faces—Great Places: History Makers in South Dakota" is the theme of this year's conference. Speakers will share about some of the most influential and interesting people of South Dakota's past.

*Assistant Editor: Meredith Lowe, University of Wisconsin–Madison.
Contact Meredith at mclowe@wisc.edu if you would like to
guest author a column or have a good idea to share.*

A Life in Art, Literature, and Libraries: Processing the Sandra Kitt Collection

By Tyne Lowe, Bowling Green State University



Tyne Lowe

My career in libraries can be traced, perhaps, back to an unhappy occurrence: my rejections from four MFA programs in 2012.

I felt a bit lost after graduating from college, unsure how to translate my academic and personal interests in the arts into a career. I loved reading and drawing comics, but the opportunities to make a living in such fields

seemed elusive. Like many self-publishing comics artists/enthusiasts, I wondered if I should interpret this facet of my life as a potential “career” or if it could ever surpass the status of “hobby.” My first postcollege job was in a retail art gallery, which I quickly realized was a poor fit; with some desperation, I applied to those four MFA programs in illustration in hopes of escaping to a more rewarding career. Those subsequent, painful rejections seemed to answer the “career versus hobby” question, but they did not quash my desire to draw altogether. I resolved, instead, to find what I then considered a “day job” so I could draw and participate in the comics community when I was off the clock. In retrospect, I am thankful that my path from the MFA rejections eventually led me to my earliest positions in libraries, such as my role as a library assistant at the Newberry Library in Chicago. Such work in archives and special collections grew into a passion instead of simply serving as a means of supporting my artwork.

I spent the next several years pursuing my MLIS and MA in art history, taking every opportunity to study with comics scholars and to see if my worlds of “hobby” and “career” could intersect in a new way. Entering the job market, I was initially drawn to the Browne Popular Culture Library at Bowling Green State University for its remarkable collection of comics. It is one of three libraries in the Midwest with particularly strong holdings of comic books

and comic art, alongside The Ohio State University’s Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum and the Comic Art Collection at Michigan State University. However, when I accepted the manuscript archivist position at the Browne Popular Culture Library (or BPCL), I knew I would be responsible for archival collections that represented many fields of American popular culture far beyond the comics world. Established by Ray and Pat Browne in 1969, the BPCL serves as a resource for popular culture scholars in many disciplines and, locally, as a resource for the popular culture studies program that Ray Browne had established at BGSU. The library serves as a repository for popular media that has traditionally been excluded from academic inquiry; BGSU’s popular culture program was one of the first of its kind to interrogate and celebrate such media for its merit and cultural significance, and the BPCL shares this value. Comics, as I knew, still struggled to achieve widespread academic and cultural recognition, but they were certainly not alone in this struggle. The library’s greatest collecting strengths include such materials related to popular television, movies, comics, and genre fiction, including—perhaps above any other genre—romance fiction.

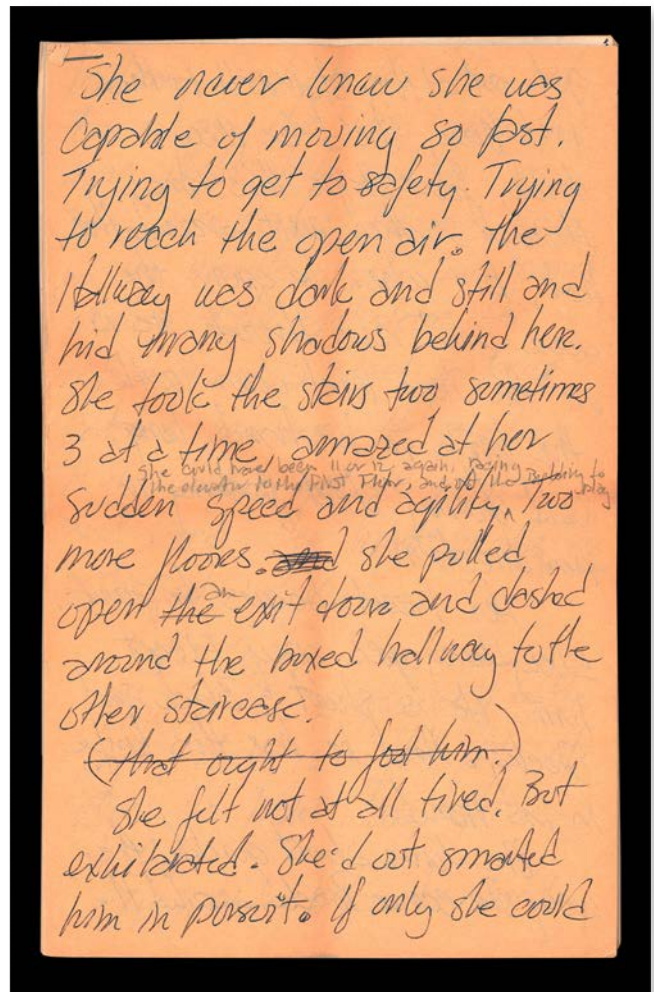
Educating myself about the field of romance fiction, a genre with which I had almost zero prior reading experience, immediately became a crucial part of my job. The BPCL is a destination for the growing community of romance researchers for good reason: our collection of historical and contemporary romance novels is one of the most comprehensive in North America, and our archives includes the papers of over 50 prominent romance writers. We also serve as the repository for the papers of the Romance Writers of America, one of the largest organizations of romance authors and publishers in the country. In the first four months in my position, I had already worked with two researchers who traveled to our library specifically to examine these archival collections. Additionally, my first major project as manuscript archivist was processing an acquisition of romance-related materials that had not been touched since their donation during the pandemic: the Sandra Kitt Papers.



Contact sheet of headshots of Sandra Kitt, undated. The Sandra Kitt Papers (in process), MS 0235, Browne Popular Culture Library.

Despite my initial unfamiliarity with the romance field, I immediately understood the significance and future research potential for the Sandra Kitt Papers. Kitt is a widely respected, best-selling romance author who has been active for nearly 30 years; she has published dozens of novels, short stories, and other literary works throughout her long (and ongoing) career. She is a Black writer who began her career in the 1980s, an era during which few writers of color found success in mainstream North American romance markets. (To be clear, this lack of racial and ethnic diversity remains a major problem in the romance field to this day.) Kitt was one of the first Black American writers to publish with Harlequin; her 1985 novel, *Adam and Eva*, was the first Harlequin romance novel that explicitly explored the relationship of a Black couple. In 1995, Kitt finally published *The Color of Love*, a story she had originally written in the 1980s; it is considered one of the first and most groundbreaking interracial romance novels published by a major press. Kitt was instrumental in the launch of Arabesque, the first major publishing line dedicated to Black American

romance novels (later absorbed into Harlequin's Kimani Press). She has received the 2002 Service Award from the Romance Writers of America, the 2010 Zora Neale Hurston Literary Award, and much more recognition than I can include in a brief essay.



Handwritten manuscript for *The Color of Love*, page 1, c. 1980s. Sandra Kitt Papers (in process), MS 0235, Browne Popular Culture Library.

Much of Kitt's archival donation represented her long literary career, capturing many aspects of the writing and publishing process. She donated 25 manuscripts of her novels and about a dozen manuscripts of shorter stories published in anthologies as well as some unpublished works. Many of her older manuscripts, including *The Color of Love*, were written and edited by hand. She often included multiple edited drafts, synopses, chapter

(Continued on page 18)

UP-AND-COMERS—Continued
Meredith Lowe, Assistant Editor

(Continued from page 17)

summaries, character studies, and/or publishers' galleys for any given title. Kitt also sent us promotional materials for her published works, as well as press clippings with reviews, samples of her author headshots, snapshots from promotional book signings, and even printed samples of her author website as it appeared throughout the past decade. Future researchers will be able to trace every step in the development of many of Kitt's books, from conception through multiple modifications and working titles and into the literary market and fan communities. I chose to organize these literary materials into series according to their type or their stage of the literary process (writings, promotion, press features, and so on), and then by title, allowing future users to easily examine the progression of any given work as it moved between these stages or to examine each aspect of Kitt's literary career as a whole.

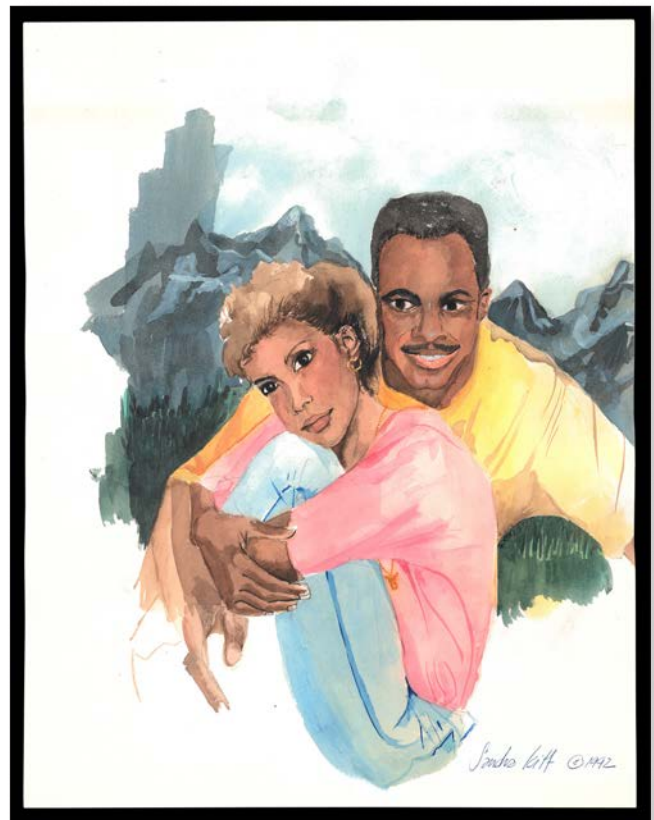
Like many of our other archival donors, Sandra Kitt chose to donate many personal materials that are not

directly related to her literary career. Unlike many other donors, however, these nonliterary facets of her life were unusually rich and well documented. Kitt was already an established library professional before she began publishing romance novels, working as an information specialist at the Hayden Planetarium of the American Museum of Natural History in New York since the early 1980s. (The meticulous organization of her donation is no surprise given her library background.) Her donation includes library-related articles she published, ephemera from events and conferences in which she participated, and even an interview she conducted with former planetarium director Neil DeGrasse Tyson.

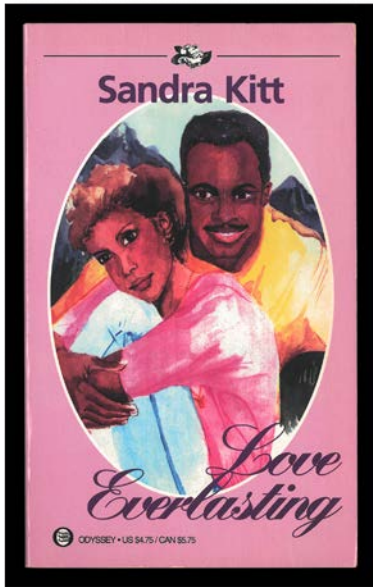
Kitt is also a gifted artist; after receiving her MFA in visual arts, Kitt worked for several years as a freelance graphic designer and has created greeting cards for UNICEF. Her donation includes a wonderful sample of her visual art: she sent multiple portfolios of works on paper in her donation, personal items like crocheted Christmas ornaments, and even two original paintings used for book cover illustrations (including a painting for her own novel, *Love Everlasting*).



Sandra Kitt and anonymous guest, book signing, Black Books Plus, c. 1995. The Sandra Kitt Papers (in process), MS 0235, Browne Popular Culture Library.



Love Everlasting, 1992, cover. Pop Cult PS 3561 .I86 L79 1993, Browne Popular Culture Library.



Untitled cover illustration for *Love Everlasting*, 1992. Watercolor on paper. *The Sandra Kitt Papers (in process)*, MS 0235, Browne Popular Culture Library.

As an archivist, I was often challenged by the need to separate many of her materials into categories, particularly when I attempted to divide them along the lines of Kitt's highly varied areas of expertise. I encountered myriad objects that defied such easy classification. Plenty of Kitt's correspondence discusses her life as a romance author as well as her life as a librarian and, therefore, did not fall easily into the literary correspondence subseries or the library correspondence subseries. (I am particularly grateful for ArchivesSpace's notes fields to explain such anomalous items.) Some of Kitt's artwork is directly relevant to her career in the romance field, including her original painting for the cover of her novel *Love Everlasting*. The varied pursuits of Kitt's life, after all, could not be as easily disentangled as an archivist might prefer. Despite some organizational complications, I believe it is important to feature these materials from Kitt's other careers, demonstrating the collection's importance in *and* beyond the romance field. I chose to keep the materials that have little or nothing to do with Kitt's romance career in their own series and subseries, carefully storing her artwork and ephemera in flat and/or uniquely sized containers in our oversize shelving.

After having several Zoom meetings and email exchanges with Sandra Kitt herself while processing her donation, I have come to see her collection as a poignant representation of her as a person: detailed, thorough, passionate, and well

rounded. It is a rich record of her many contributions to the field of romance literature, particularly as she made history breaking racial barriers. However, it is also a living biography celebrating the many facets of her life in which she flourished, including many beyond her literary career. As a library professional who also identifies strongly as an artist, I have particularly enjoyed the opportunity to treat the materials from her many different creative and professional pursuits with equal importance. I not only identify with Kitt's interdisciplinary life, I also aspire to be more like her: the divisions between "career" and "hobby" seem rather meaningless when examining her past accomplishments because she has been able to achieve such success in so many fields. I am thrilled to finish processing her remarkable and diverse collection and publish its finding aid in February 2023.



Sandra Kitt at the American Museum of Natural History Library, undated. *The Sandra Kitt Papers (in process)*, MS 0235, Browne Popular Culture Library.

Sources

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"Romance Collections: Browne Popular Culture Library," Bowling Green State University: University Libraries, <https://www.bgsu.edu/library/pcl/romance.html>.

"About: Department of Popular Culture," Bowling Green State University College of Arts and Sciences, <https://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/cultural-and-critical-studies/popular-culture/about.html>.

"Sandra Kitt: Home," <https://www.sandrakitt.com>.

People and Posts

Assistant Editor: Greg Bailey, Iowa State University. The MAC Membership Committee invites members to share positions, appointments, and honors in the People and Posts column. Please send items to Greg at gtbailey@iastate.edu. Submissions must be 150 words or less. Images are welcome!

People

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Blanca Hurley
Erin Matson
Chicago History Museum
Anna Petrelli (Student)
University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign

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(Continued from page 21)

Posts

On January 30, 2023, **Greg Bailey** started as the head of the Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA) at Iowa State University. In this role, he provides guidance, support, and growth of SCUA's staff and collections. He had served the previous three years as university archivist in SCUA and before that as university archivist and Clements Curator at Texas A&M University (2014–2019) and university archivist and records manager at Stephen F. Austin State University (2011–2014). An Illinois native, he holds a BA from Eastern Illinois University and an MLS from Indiana University.



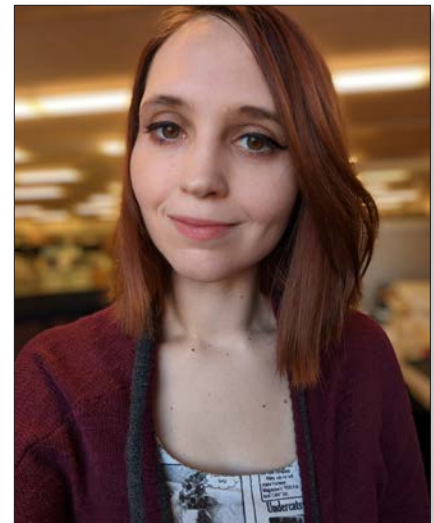
Greg Bailey

Sarah Conrad joined the University of Michigan Special Collections Research Center (SCRC) on October 10, 2022. In her capacity as processing archivist, Conrad will be processing, arranging, and (re)describing some of the library's most-requested collections. She comes to SCRC from Hagerstown Community College, where she worked as archives and reference librarian and lone arranger. She received her MLIS from Wayne State University and previously worked at the Chelsea District Library as well as at the Eastern Michigan University Archives and the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.



Sarah Conrad

Katie Jones joined the Special Collections Research Center (SCRC) at the University of Michigan on November 1, 2022. She will be serving as a processing archivist, helping to process, reprocess, and arrange its ever-expanding collections. She also intends to help launch an overhaul of the location tracking system used in SCRC. Jones joins the U-M Library from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, where she worked as an archives specialist for Archives & Special Collections. She has also served as agricultural archives specialist for UNL, as well as working with the Paleontological Society and the Farm Foundation at the University of Illinois. Jones received her MLIS from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



Katie Jones

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