

# 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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### MAC 2020 Recap

*Hope Bibens, Rosalie Gartner, Hilary Seo, Heather Campbell, Joan Curbow, Bethany Davis, Claudia Frazer, Kay Grigsby, Anthony Jahn, David McCartney, Becky Plunkett, Craig Wright, Marcella Huggard, Benn Joseph*



*Administration Building and Band Stand, Iowa State Fair Grounds, Des Moines Public Library Postcard Collection, Central Library Special Collections*

So far, it has been a beautiful spring here in Des Moines, and we so wish we could have shared our city with you during MAC 2020!

The Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) cochairs would like to thank the members of the LAC for all of their hard work, the Education Committee (cochaired by Amy Bishop and Janet Carleton) for planning informative and relevant workshops, and the Program Committee (cochaired by Marcella Huggard and Benn Joseph) for organizing a great program. We hope that you'll see many of the sessions at next year's meeting. We also would like to acknowledge MAC development coordinator Ida Sell for her assistance with fund-raising as well as Debbie Nolan and AMC Source for guiding us through, not only the initial planning for the meeting, but helping us to navigate all the

*(Continued on page 4)*

To the MAC community:

I hope this message finds you well. I have heard from many of you, and I share the anxiety you are feeling regarding the uncertainty of the times. As a profession, we are experiencing working from home, budget cuts, reduction in hours or pay, furloughs, layoffs, and even closures.

Likewise, we were cut off from each other with the cancellation of the MAC Annual Meeting. While it is absolutely certain that the meeting could not have occurred as planned, forfeiting the time spent together, the professional exchanges that take place, and the relationship building is a loss for us all. Many of you have inquired about the financial impact the cancellation has had on MAC, knowing that the conferences, next to membership dues, are a major source of revenue for the organization. I am happy to note that working with Debbie Nolan, our partner at AMC Source, and with the conference hotel, we were able to come to an amicable decision to invoke the *force majeure* clause in our contract; this allowed all parties to leave relatively unharmed. Many of you who registered for the meeting opted to forego a refund and offered to donate the funds to help cover meeting costs that were already incurred. Your generosity is much appreciated.

We have also been separated from the archives and special collections in which we work. How strange to be an archivist without things. I'm sure you have been busy enough, but it is a unique situation I'm sure few of us envisioned just a few months ago. Typically, we might anticipate such an unplanned separation from our collections due to a building or mechanical issue that would prevent access, not a pandemic. Yet, this new reality draws upon our experiences and resources in new ways. It reminds me of Leonard Rappoport's article on reappraisal, "No Grandfather Clause," which appeared in *American Archivist* 44, spring 1981, where he juxtaposes two worlds; one where all of the world's knowledge is on hand and easily accessible, and another where all of the records are gone. He asks, "How different would the two resultant worlds be?"

With workplace closures and stay-at-home orders, we seemed to have moved very quickly from the world of resources to the world without. Yet, I suspect you, like me, see little difference, much as Rappoport surmised. We are defined as professionals in the way we act and behave, not in the things we manage or collect. We will return. We will reopen. But, how might we act and behave differently? Luckily, we can learn together as we move forward, and MAC will be a special part of that process. How exactly? We can decide together as MAC begins a new strategic planning process to guide our operations and programs.



Erik A. Moore

President, Midwest Archives Conference

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

By Michelle Sweetser, Bowling Green State University



As I write this column on May Day (yes, there's a publication lag!), I am painfully aware of the empty spot on next week's calendar when I would have joined many of you in Des Moines for the Annual Meeting. While MAC had no choice but to cancel our meeting, it does not make it any less difficult or less painful to miss out on our signature event of the year. Many of us look forward to the Annual Meeting as a chance to catch up with professional contacts and friends, to get away from our own shops and office politics, to learn new things, to spend a day or two away from the daily grind of work and child-care duties, and more.

Many people worked hard to put together an exceptional Annual Meeting program and schedule of events. They worked tirelessly—for the better part of two years—all for what seems like naught. Therefore, I want to be certain to recognize these hard-working individuals because no formal opportunities exist to applaud and acknowledge them as they so deserve.

2020 Local Arrangements Committee: Hope Bibens (cochair), Rosalie Gartner (cochair), Hilary Seo (cochair), Heather Campbell, Joan Curbow, Bethany Davis, Claudia Frazer, Kay Grigsby, Anthony Jahn, David McCartney, Becky Plunkett, and Craig Wright

2020 Program Committee: Marcella Huggard (cochair), Benn Joseph (cochair), Sarah Dorpinghaus, Amber Dushman, Ryan Leimkuehler, Kahlee Leingang, William Modrow, Sheri Muller, Arielle Petrovich, Andrea Rile, Allyson Smally, and Alison Stankrauff

2020 Education Committee: Amy Bishop (cochair), Janet Carleton (cochair), Chad Conrady, Hathaway Hester, Brad Houston, Kathryn Kuntz, Ryan Leimkuehler, Carrie Schwier, Matt Strandmark, and Katie Blank (Council liaison)

Many thanks also to the dozens of individuals who were scheduled to share their knowledge with the MAC community through sessions, workshops, forums, and

poster sessions. I hope that you will consider other ways to share your knowledge with us: at future Annual Meetings, in the *MAC Newsletter*, or by developing your presentation into a journal article for *Archival Issues*.

As I humbly step into my new role as your vice president, I am also acutely aware of the significant amount of behind-the-scenes work that outgoing vice president Josh Ranger has performed on our behalf. Josh and I met via WebEx a few weeks ago so that he could begin to transfer his knowledge about all of MAC's upcoming events (read: a massive brain dump). In addition to opening my eyes to exactly how much I will have on my plate for the next two years and how much I have to learn, I recognize that I am fortunate to come into this role at a time when the planning for our upcoming meetings is on schedule and even ahead of schedule—a situation attributable to our excellent volunteers as well as to Josh's leadership. I hope to be able to leave my own successor in such a good position!

If there is one thing that I have learned over the past seven weeks of working from home while also attempting to manage my children's home learning, it is that flexibility is key because our plans are almost definitely going to change. COVID-19 has thrown us all for more than a few loops, speaking for my household and the profession at large. Many of us are experiencing personal turmoil at home and at the office and may not yet know what staffing, budgetary, and travel cuts we may experience in the coming months. A willingness to try new approaches and to be flexible will be essential. MAC has had to make the difficult decision to cancel the Fall Symposium, which had been scheduled for October 9–10 in Indianapolis. It is impossible to even know what things might look like in the next year. As MAC looks forward to other upcoming events (such as next year's Annual Meeting, currently scheduled for Madison, Wisconsin, April 13–18, 2021) that COVID-19 will likely also impact, know that MAC will continue to be flexible, that we will try new things, and that we will always endeavor to serve the needs of our members in a changing world.

## MAC Des Moines: “Decision 2020”

(Continued from page 1)

details of the cancellation. And last, but definitely not least, we would like to thank Josh Ranger for keeping us on track and for his efforts to wrap up after the cancellation.

We were excited to showcase our city through the various repository, architectural, art, and restaurant tours. Luckily, you can still visit Des Moines virtually through the links below:

- Des Moines Art Center Virtual Tours, <https://www.desmoinesartcenter.org/visit/virtualtoursDesMoinesVirtualFarmersMarket>, <https://www.facebook.com/DowntownFarmersMarket>
- Travel Iowa—Visit Virtually, [https://www.traveliowa.com/getinspiredetails/visit-virtually--explore-iowa-from-home/409/?fbclid=iwar1urs0d3tmanibraqaipn5pcgyip4dni-n0ri-dfz7dtnc\\_wiprnsygnw8](https://www.traveliowa.com/getinspiredetails/visit-virtually--explore-iowa-from-home/409/?fbclid=iwar1urs0d3tmanibraqaipn5pcgyip4dni-n0ri-dfz7dtnc_wiprnsygnw8)
- West End Salvage Virtual Tour, [https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=ys9G8W2o2gR&fbclid=IwAR0CqET5MCZCmFWiU4B7pKmm-R3FQtqbF9ibw\\_KHFjRRvSzwF93Rb9-wa3o](https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=ys9G8W2o2gR&fbclid=IwAR0CqET5MCZCmFWiU4B7pKmm-R3FQtqbF9ibw_KHFjRRvSzwF93Rb9-wa3o)

In the meantime, we look forward to when we can welcome you in person to the 515!

### Between-Meeting Council Actions

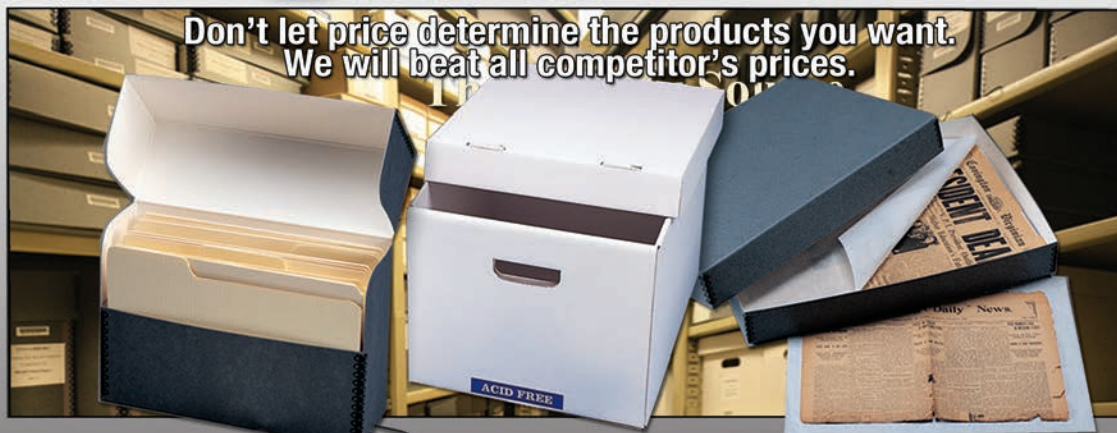
March 6, 2020, Council unanimously approved the Iowa State University Press–MAC *Archival Issues* publishing agreement.

March 18, 2020, Council unanimously approved the cancellation of the 2020 Annual Meeting scheduled for Des Moines, Iowa, May 6–9.



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## Winners of the MAC Distinguished Service Award and MAC Presidents' Award

Date: April 29, 2020

To: Erik Moore, President, Midwest Archives Conference

From: Presidents' Award Committee, Amy Cooper Cary (chair);  
Jennifer Johnson; David McCartney

RE: Winners of the MAC Distinguished Service Award and MAC Presidents' Award

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Dear Erik,

In this time of pandemic, it is especially heartening to be able to provide you with two awards from the Presidents' Award Committee: for the MAC Distinguished Service Award (which has not been awarded since 2010) and for the MAC Presidents' Award. The committee was unanimous in its decision to make these two awards.

Note that we recognize that the primary nominator of Kären Mason for the Distinguished Service Award, Christine Wideman, is not a member of MAC. The guidelines state: "Any MAC member may nominate another MAC member for the Distinguished Service Award by writing a nominating letter or E-mail, accompanied by sufficient biographical and professional documentation about the nominee to enable Committee members to make an informed decision, and submitting them to the Chair. Members of the Committee, or the Committee as a whole, are eligible to submit nominations." Kären Mason also received nominations from three MAC members, and the committee as a whole is, in this case, also willing to nominate her. Christine Wideman is named as a primary nominator out of professional courtesy, because of her long-time association with Mason.

We are presenting these to you for you to share at the MAC Council Meeting, to be held virtually on Friday May 8. I will work to notify nominators and nominees of the results of the award, and to include a write-up for the *MAC Newsletter*. I want to recognize the work of the Presidents' Award Committee members who gathered nominations, and I especially want to recognize the input of Jennifer Johnson and David McCartney. Though extreme circumstances may have delayed my own action, the input of my fellow past presidents is always thoughtful, considered, and timely.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Cooper Cary

Chair, MAC Presidents' Award Committee

**Winners of the MAC Distinguished Service Award and MAC Presidents' Award**

*(Continued from page 5)*

**Winner of the MAC Distinguished Service Award: Dr. Kären M. Mason**, curator of the Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa, nominated by Christine Wideman, with support of Tanya Zanish-Belcher, Rachel Vagts, and Matthew Schaefer.

The MAC Distinguished Service Award is given in recognition of significant contributions to MAC and/or to the archival profession in the Midwest by an active MAC member. Candidates for the Distinguished Service Award must have made remarkable contributions to MAC or to the archival profession during their career. Significant contributions may include extensive or superior volunteer work in an elected or appointed role within MAC; unusually important innovation, leadership, or crisis management; and notable success in expanding the visibility and/or support of MAC. Outstanding contributions to the archival community may include striking work or activities that have dramatically improved the preservation of or accessibility to historically valuable documents or records, or that have resulted in a significantly better public appreciation of archival work and activities.

Kären Mason has been involved with the Midwest Archives Conference for more than 30 years and has served the organization in multiple capacities in governance, meeting organization, and on committees. In addition to her contributions to MAC, she has made exceptional contributions to the profession, serving as curator of the Iowa Women's Archives (IWA), a repository devoted to women's history that has gained a worldwide reputation for its excellence. As her nominators note, Mason has been a devoted advocate of underserved women's voices and has spearheaded the documentation of diverse voices in the area. She has written extensive, authoritative works on women's history, on women's representation in the archival profession, and on the importance of documenting women's voices. Mason has mentored many young archivists, and her excellence has been recognized both by the University of Iowa and by the state in awards for her work. The Presidents' Award Committee is thrilled to recognize and applaud our colleague Kären Mason for her contributions to the Midwest Archives Conference and to the archives profession.

**Winner of the MAC Presidents' Award: Dr. Janice W. Fernheimer**, director of the Interdisciplinary Program in Jewish Studies at the University of Kentucky and professor in the Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and Digital Studies in UK's College of Arts and Sciences. Nominated by Sarah Dorpinghaus, University of Kentucky via Heather Fox, Presidents' Award Committee member, Kentucky representative.

The MAC Presidents' Award was established in 1986 and is dedicated to recognizing significant contributions to the archival profession by individuals, institutions, and organizations that are not directly involved in archival work but are knowledgeable about its purpose and value. The Presidents' Award Committee comprises one representative from each MAC state and MAC's three immediate past presidents.

Dr. Janice Fernheimer is being awarded the MAC Presidents' Award for her collaborative work on the Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence Jewish Kentucky Oral History Project. Working with Sarah Dorpinghaus, Fernheimer sought to actively integrate archival resources and digital tools into her courses, and also worked with the community to enhance the Jewish-related holdings at the University of Kentucky's Special Collections Research Center (SCRC). Fernheimer has challenged students to conduct oral history interviews that have enhanced the SCRC's holdings. She has also served as a liaison to the Jewish community, working to facilitate the donation of over 40 linear feet of materials that document the Jewish experience in Lexington. Dorpinghaus points out that "Jewish Kentucky is one of SCRC's fastest growing research topics." Fernheimer is an advocate for the interdisciplinary significance of the archives, writing in scholarly publications, speaking at symposia, and editing a special issue of the *Journal of Jewish Identities* that brings this scholarship to light. She is a "scholar, teacher, innovator and advocate for archives and primary sources" and has had a significant influence on the successful practice at the University of Kentucky Libraries Special Collections Research Center. It gives us tremendous pleasure to award Dr. Janice Fernheimer the MAC Presidents' Award.

## Emeritus Membership Award

The Membership Committee is pleased to award **Dennis Meissner** the 2020 Emeritus Membership Award. He was nominated by Kevin Leonard, university archivist at Northwestern University.



*Dennis Meissner*

The award recognizes those who have contributed to the success, growth, and visibility of the Midwest Archives Conference through committee work, programming, outreach, and governance. The award intends to recognize those who work behind the scenes for MAC, as well as those who have been honored by election to office.

In his nomination, Leonard wrote, “Dennis always was willing to give freely to his colleagues his good and reasoned advice relating to collections and archival practice. . . . Dennis has distinguished himself greatly in his work on behalf of MAC, SAA, and the profession in general. His development of More Product, Less Process (MPLP) methodology has transformed our practices. Dennis has given tremendously of his time and talent. He has devoted his life’s work to the betterment of our

profession and to the service of our patrons. His efforts on behalf of MAC have been noteworthy.”

Meissner began his career at the Minnesota Historical Society as manuscripts assistant in 1973. He was promoted numerous times to positions including, but not limited to, senior records analyst (1980–1984), manuscripts coordinator (1984–1988), archival processing manager (2001–2006), head of Collections Management (2006–2014), and deputy director for Programs (2014–2016).

His contributions and service to MAC are substantial. Meissner has been a regular presence in the organization since joining in 1977. He held the offices of secretary-treasurer (1985–1989) and president (2007–2009), and served as chair of the *Archival Issues* Editorial Board (1995–1998). As chair, he revived the journal’s regular publishing schedule while maintaining an impressive quality of articles and reviews. Meissner was also speaker and facilitator at MAC’s 2006 Fall Symposium on “More Product, Less Process.”

Meissner’s influence extends beyond MAC and can be felt throughout the archival profession. With Mark Greene, he authored the More Product, Less Process methodology that generated much discussion and reexamination of archival processing. He has written and spoken extensively about MPLP and other matters pertaining to arrangement and description. He has served on various Society of American Archivists committees and was elected vice president/president-elect (2014–2015) and president (2015–2016). He has served on the board of the Society of American Archivists Foundation since 2015. Meissner won SAA’s C. F. W. Coker Award in 2004 and was named Distinguished Fellow in 2008. Other professional service includes the Hidden Collections Grant Review Panel of the Council of Library and Information Resources (2013–2015), OCLC Networking Names Advisory Group (2008–2009), the Encoded Archival Context Working Group (2007–2010), and chairing of the Research Library Group’s EAD Advisory Group.

## Archie Motley Memorial Scholarship for Students of Color

The Archie Motley Memorial Scholarship for Students of Color is dedicated to providing financial assistance to minority students pursuing graduate education in archival administration and to encouraging ethnic diversity in the Midwest Archives Conference and the archival profession as a whole. New this year, scholarship recipients were required to be residents or full-time students in the MAC region. The Archie Motley Memorial Scholarship Committee received five complete applications from which they unanimously agreed to award the scholarships to Valeria Dávila Gronros and Erik Henderson.

**Valeria Dávila Gronros** is an Oregon-based student completing her second semester in the Archives Studies program at Emporia State University in Kansas. She currently holds the position of library diversity scholar at Oregon State University Libraries and Press and has 18 months previous experience as a digitization technician in the libraries' Special Collections and Archives Research Center. Her application materials highlighted her interest and already significant work in the area of film and photography preservation, including a full-tuition and travel scholarship to attend the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) Film Preservation and Restoration School Latin America in 2017 and an internship at the Yale University Film Study Center last summer. Her interest in digitization, digital preservation, open access, and open archives recently led her to join the committee organizing "No Time To Wait," a free symposium focused on open media, open standards, and digital audiovisual preservation. She was nominated to this position after volunteering to edit the committee's streaming videos to make them available online, to caption them in English to aid the hearing impaired, and to subtitle them in Spanish to benefit Spanish-speaking audiences. Her references remarked on her initiative, curiosity, and commitment, especially in projects serving the Latinx community, as well as professional contributions impressive for a student/early-career archivist. As her current supervisor wrote, "Valeria Dávila has an incredibly bright future within the archival profession. . . . she has demonstrated her desire to serve traditionally underrepresented communities as well as gain experience within all aspects of librarianship, and she has displayed a great deal of initiative in pursuing various service and scholarship opportunities." The committee is pleased to be able to support Valeria Dávila Gronros as she continues her archival education.

**Erik Henderson** is a second-semester Information and Library Science master's student at the University of Iowa. His interest in archives developed out of his appreciation for history and his undergraduate experience working at the Grinnell College Special Collections; it was further intensified by his current position at the Iowa Women's Archives. The committee was impressed by the amount of professional involvement Henderson has already amassed, including three and a half years of archival experience and his involvement in MAC as a moderator for a student research panel session at the 2020 Annual Meeting in Des Moines (now unfortunately canceled). His essay vividly reflects a commitment to increasing black representation at predominantly white institutions and ensuring that these materials are accessible to students. It also conveys his sense of excitement and satisfaction at undertaking, as part of a work assignment, research in Iowa Women's Archives on a previously underrecognized African American woman leader and at the opportunity for the archives to help educate people about her contributions. Henderson's academic advisor highlighted his drive and determination. "As a scholar researching the history of community archives in the United States, I was excited for the opportunity to speak with a passionate student who knew that he wanted to be a part of documenting his community and diversifying archival collections. Erik has continued to share this passion, dedicating himself to his studies and a focus on archival practice through his coursework." The committee believes that Erik Henderson will have much to contribute to the profession and is pleased to support him as he completes his archival education.



## Louisa Bowen Memorial Scholarship for Graduate Students in Archival Administration

The Louisa Bowen Memorial Scholarship for Graduate Students in Archival Administration is dedicated to providing financial assistance to a resident or full-time student of the MAC region who is pursuing graduate education in archival administration. The Louisa Bowen Memorial Scholarship Committee is very pleased to award **Lena Evers-Hillstrom** a scholarship that will support her future contributions to the archives profession. Evers-Hillstrom is an MLIS student at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The committee was impressed by her strong and forward-thinking commitment to archives and the role that they play in society. Congratulations Lena Evers-Hillstrom! Her essay follows.

### Louisa Bowen Scholarship Award

*Lena Evers-Hillstrom*

The Louisa Bowen Scholarship will help facilitate my continued involvement in digital platforms for archives, including the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network project, as well as in my academic work with oral histories. Begun during my time this spring as a student in the Tribal Libraries, Archives, and Museums class at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, the seed-keeping initiative was begun under the direction of Jessika Greendeer and Dan Cornelius, two Indigenous seed keepers. The goal of the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network Collection was to kickstart the creation of a digital archive that would showcase the cultural importance of seeds not just as materials to be grown, but as living beings that have different journeys within and between tribes, and around the world. Created using the content platform Mukurtu and with the help of Erin Hughes at WiLS (formally Wisconsin Library Services), community records within digital heritage entries highlight how different seeds are being grown in a diverse range of tribal communities, as well as their cultural connections to those communities and seed keepers within those communities.



*Lena Evers-Hillstrom*

I hope to continue working with this collection beyond the end of this semester because I feel a strong connection with seeds and the resiliency in tribal communities that they represent, and I want to continue helping in the collaborative effort to make the seed entries as well represented as possible in an online format. While I have made digital heritage entries for several types of corn, my goal is to expand into making entries for other types of seeds involved in seed keeping, including squash and sunflowers. And, as the project moves forward, I hope to continue participating with seed keepers in discussion about how to utilize Mukurtu, and the access protocols and metadata fields within Mukurtu, for the project.

The Bowen Scholarship will also help aid in my work at the Department of Oral History, headed by my supervisor, Troy Reeves. Through the Department of Oral History, I am continuing to work on a project that collects histories from individuals at the former UW colleges, which have now become branch campuses within the UW System. Part of my work involves cataloging these histories, creating indexes summarizing what people have said, and making this information accessible online for future users within the UW Digital Collections through the Oral History Metadata Synchronizer. Having worked with oral histories in the past, coming to UW–Madison and being able to continue conducting oral histories has only strengthened my viewpoint that oral histories add an extra dimension to existing historical narratives.

Through this work and the work with the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network Collection, I will be continuing to explore the diverse forms that archival collections can take, as well as the different platforms through which we can make them accessible digitally. When people think of archives, they do not always think of oral histories or seeds as traditional materials that belong in an archive. But both are just as important in showing how archives can increase representation of people's voices within a given community in a meaningful way. These activities, aided by the Louisa Bowen Scholarship, will help bolster my education at the UW–Madison Information School.

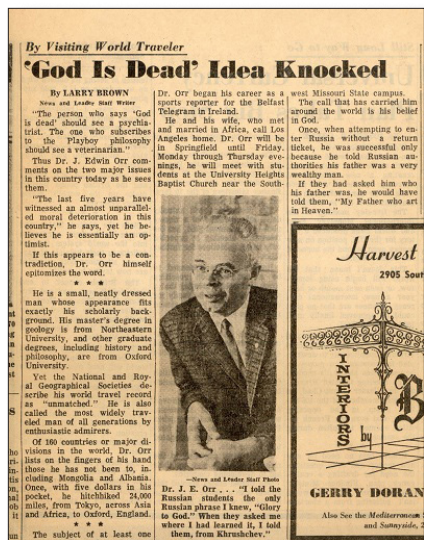
# News from the Midwest

Assistant Editors: Alexandra Bisio, University of Oregon, and Lois Hamill, Northern Kentucky University. Please submit News from the Midwest items for Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Nebraska, North Dakota, and Ohio to Alexandra at [bisio@uoregon.edu](mailto:bisio@uoregon.edu) and items from Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, South Dakota, and Wisconsin to Lois at [hamill1@nku.edu](mailto:hamill1@nku.edu). Submissions must be 150 words or less. Images are welcome!

## ILLINOIS

### Billy Graham Center Archives

The BGC Archives is very pleased to announce that the J. Edwin Orr (1912–1987) Papers, Collection 355, filling 57 boxes and covering more than 60 eventful years, are now open to the public. This is a vast of expansion of the one box of his papers, most relating to his Latin American travels and correspondence, which the archives opened in 1987. Anyone who would like more information can find the updated guide online at <https://archives.wheaton.edu/repositories/4/resources/1173>. The Reading Room at the BGC Archives is temporarily closed, of course, because of the COVID-19 crisis. But this too shall pass and when it does, this archival feast will be open to all. In the meantime, the staff will be happy to respond to any questions or comments.



## INDIANA

### Bartholomew County Public Library

The Columbus Indiana Architectural Archives has received funding from the Clarence E. and Inez R. Custer Foundation and the Elizabeth R. and Walter C. Nugent Foundation to process its Harry Weese and Associates Collection and its *Republic [Columbus, IN] Newspaper* collection. Materials in the Weese collection document over 15 projects—built and unbuilt—in Bartholomew County, including First Baptist Church, a National Historic Landmark. The *Republic Newspaper* collection includes materials for two Myron Goldsmith–designed buildings, the Daily News building in Franklin, Indiana, and The Republic building in Columbus, Indiana. The Republic building is also a National Historic Landmark.



Above: Sketch of County Home for the Aged, Harry Weese and Associates, pencil on trace, undated, Harry Weese and Associates Collection, Columbus Indiana Architectural Archives, Bartholomew County Public Library, Columbus, Indiana

## IOWA

### Iowa State University Library Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA)

Iowa State University Library Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA) has launched the ISU COVID-19 Stories Project at <https://specialcollections.lib.iastate.edu/about/projects/covid-19> to document and preserve the ISU communities' experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic. ISU students, faculty, staff, and community members are invited to share their experiences and thoughts during this unprecedented time. All stories are welcome. The archives will gather these materials and create a digital collection, as a contribution to the historical documentation of these events. For more information, visit the website, which includes instructions, links for uploading stories or linking independent projects, and a sign-up for oral history interviews. Questions can be sent to [archives@iastate.edu](mailto:archives@iastate.edu). The archives has also launched the Tell Your Story Project to see how library student workers are responding to the pandemic. Students journal their experiences during these challenging times. Those experiences are shared on the blog *Cardinal Tales* at <https://isuspecialcollections.wordpress.com> and also uploaded into the ISU Digital Repository (<https://lib.dr.iastate.edu>) for long-term access.

### University of Northern Iowa

During this pandemic, Special Collections & University Archives (SC&UA) at the University of Northern Iowa has turned to online engagement to reach patrons. Each week, staff and students take turns

creating a digital highlight showcasing various services, collections, and favorite items in the archives. For example, one student employee wrote about photographs she digitized for a patron from a 2001 campus theater performance, and she shared the excitement and inspiration she felt when she learned about the origins of that performance. The highlights are published on the website at <https://scua.library.uni.edu/highlights>, and the library's PR coordinator shares them on social media as well. These highlights are meant to be informative and lighthearted, and they help remind patrons that while the library is physically closed, SC&UA staff can still provide research and digitization services. Seeing the items that student employees choose to showcase has been a fun and enlightening added bonus.

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## **KENTUCKY**

### **Eastern Kentucky University**

Within Eastern Kentucky University's Special Collections and Archives (SCA), there is a letter that paints a desperate scene. S. C. Carrier writes to Judge William Rhodes Shackelford during a smallpox epidemic. Carrier asks Shackelford to send 50 dollars to tide his family over, because Carrier's family are "pend up and cant get out and cant do nuthen." That letter was written in 1913. More than a hundred years later, the world faces another pandemic. Documenting experiences is relevant now more than ever. That's why SCA is encouraging EKU students, faculty and staff, and the local community to document their experiences in journals, oral histories, art, or by other means. Entries would be aimed at sharing how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted their lives. Guidelines for oral history

interviews, writing prompts, donation forms, and more can be found at the Share How COVID-19 Impacts You web page at [https://libguides.eku.edu/share-covid-impacts#\\_ga=2.146235828.1224936377.1588277279-1543894471.1582906052](https://libguides.eku.edu/share-covid-impacts#_ga=2.146235828.1224936377.1588277279-1543894471.1582906052).

### **Filson Historical Society**

On March 13, 2020, the Filson Historical Society was set to host the opening of its exhibit entitled *Women at Work: Venturing into the Public Sphere*. The exhibit explores women's professional roles during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Unfortunately, it was during the week leading up to the exhibit opening that COVID-19 became a pandemic and hit Kentucky, forcing the cancellation of the event. While the last wall panels were being mounted, the curators quickly ventured into the digital sphere by creating an online exhibit. The results of this effort to digitize a massive exhibit featuring materials from the Filson's collection that tell the amazing stories of these women from the Ohio Valley who took on new roles and ventured out into a new sphere can be viewed as a permanent online exhibit at <https://filsonhistorical.omeka.net/exhibits/show/women-at-work>.

### **Northern Kentucky University**

Kentucky's Governor Beshear rapidly responded on March 6 to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the second week of March, while students were on spring break, Northern Kentucky University decided to extend the break, transitioned to virtual classes only, and mentioned the possibility of working from home, which quickly began the next week. In less than two weeks, face-to-face classes were over for the semester and the campus was reduced to critical personnel only. Since January, the



*A Spanish Beauty fashion plate, Mary Cummings Eudy, 1930. Ink and watercolor. Filson Museum Collection [1986.11.2]*

Special Collections and University Archives had been digitizing a body of 40-year-old oral histories conducted in eastern Kentucky/Appalachia for a student researcher. To support the completion of her capstone in the new virtual environment, 28 interviews were uploaded to the MS-13 Morris Garrett Kentuckiana Collection in NKU's Digital Repository at <https://dspace.nku.edu/handle/11216/3177>. To read more about the Morris Garrett Kentuckiana Collection MS-13 of which the interviews are a part, go to <https://inside.nku.edu/steelyarchives/specialcollections/alphabeticallist/garrett.html>.

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## **MICHIGAN**

### **The Henry Ford**

The Archives and Library at The Henry Ford, located in Dearborn, has launched a public version of its finding aid search and browse application, which can be accessed at <https://findingaids.thehenryford.org>. Over 1,200 keyword-searchable collection descriptions are included, along with a title listing of new and unprocessed accessions.

*(Continued on page 12)*



(Continued from page 11)

## MISSOURI

### The University of Missouri–Kansas City

The University of Missouri–Kansas City University Libraries’ Special Collections and Archives division quickly developed work-from-home projects that ensured more than 75 library staff and students were able to remain safe and employed during the limited campus closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These include a project to create transcripts and improve accessibility for digital audio content from Marr Sound Archives collections and another to inventory clippings from LaBudde Special Collection’s collection of morgue files from the *Kansas City Star*. The Marr Sound Archives is also pleased to announce that it was awarded \$33,323 by the CLIR Recordings at Risk grant to support the project Preserving 1940s Radio Broadcasts on Severely Damaged Lacquer Discs. The project will utilize IRENE technology located at the Northeast Document Conservation Center to transfer historic audio recordings that cannot be digitized with traditional playback equipment due to severe damage of the original objects.

## OHIO

### The Ohio State University Libraries Rare Books and Manuscripts Library

The Rare Books and Manuscripts Library at The Ohio State University Libraries is excited to announce that materials from its Women’s Suffrage Collection have been digitized and are now available online via its Digital Collections. Users will find nearly 40 early twentieth-century American and British postcards with both

pro- and antisuffrage viewpoints. Postcards of the 1913 Suffrage Parade in Washington, DC; cartoons satirizing suffragists; and postcards featuring key individuals involved in the British movement are included. In addition, two scrapbooks also have been digitized. Both feature small publications, clippings, leaflets, and other ephemera documenting suffrage perspectives and efforts from the late nineteenth century through the early twentieth century. This digitization project was motivated in part by the women’s suffrage centennial. 2020 marks the hundredth anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which established the right to vote for many women. To view the materials, please visit <https://library.osu.edu/dc>.



*One of the postcards from the Women’s Suffrage Collection, “Liberty and her attendants. Suffragette’s tableau, in front of Treasury Building, March 3, 1913, Washington, D.C.” On March 3, 1913, more than 5,000 women marched on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC, to demand the right to vote. An allegorical tableau staged in front of the Treasury Building was part of the event.*



*Image of a once-busy space on UW–Madison’s campus, now only empty sidewalks (left: Memorial Union; right: Red Gym), submitted by Katie Nash to the Documenting COVID-19 Project, UW–Madison Archives, April 2020.*

## SOUTH DAKOTA

### South Dakota State Historical Society

The South Dakota State Historical Society in Pierre is seeking assistance in documenting how the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis is affecting people in South Dakota. South Dakotans are encouraged to submit their electronic writings, photos, artwork, short audio or video clips, and other materials to a special digital submission page on the State Historical Society website at [history.sd.gov/archives/covid19.aspx](http://history.sd.gov/archives/covid19.aspx). “It is important to capture the ways we are experiencing this event, whether they be stories of loss and tragedy or stories of resilience, grace, and helpfulness,” said State Archivist Chelle Somsen. “Future generations will thank you for sharing a part of your lives with them.” The State Historical Society has collected items documenting South Dakota’s history since statehood in 1889. Everyday activities, life-changing events, triumphs, and achievements are all recorded in the oral histories, newspaper articles, films, diaries, photographs, books, and artifacts that make up the soci-



ety's collections. § The Museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society has released new digital activities for students and families while schools across the state are closed due to social distancing. To access digital activities based on the museum's award-winning education kits that are normally available for checkout to South Dakota schools, visit the museum's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SDMuseum/?ref=sgm> or the museum's web page at <https://history.sd.gov/museum/digital%20outreach.aspx>. There is no fee to access these programs, and they are available 24/7. Digital offerings include a variety of activities, from word searches to crafts to crossword puzzles and more. They come with answer keys as well. Museum curator of interpretation Ronette Rumpca originally designed these activities for classrooms using the museum's education kits and has adapted them to create new digital content. More content will be developed in the weeks to come. "Having one digital access point for museum education materials is a great way to utilize the resources available," Rumpca says. "We will continue to modify the education kit materials and make them easy to find for our online audience." For adults and older students, the museum is offering free admission to "The Great Tours: Washington, D.C.," one of the Smithsonian Institution's popular courses taught by Dr. Richard Kurin. He visits the monuments, the National Zoo, and more, meeting famous people and scholars like Yo-Yo Ma, General Colin Powell, and Dr. Lonnie Bunch. The tour is available 24/7 and can be accessed at <https://history.sd.gov/museum/digital%20outreach.aspx>.

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## WISCONSIN

### University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

The University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee Libraries is proud to join the newest cohort of the Collections as Data: Part to Whole grant led by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and funded by the Mellon Foundation. UWM Libraries' LGBTQ+ Audio Archive Mining Project will include development of openly available models for speech-to-text extraction, resulting in open and usable text data sets, and public-facing data visualizations based on audiovisual materials including oral histories in the UWM Archives. The UWM Archives houses one of the largest collections of historical and contemporary LGBTQ+ materials in Wisconsin, including a rich record of Milwaukee's LGBTQ+ communities. Use of this "mined data" will not only help researchers discover people and relationships that might have remained hidden in bounded and difficult-to-use formats, but will also help researchers generate new questions about the collections and make connections with related collections outside this repository. § On April 8, 2020, the University Archives at UW–Madison launched the Documenting COVID-19 Project (<https://www.library.wisc.edu/archives/archives/donate-your-materials/documenting-covid-19>). To date, over 30 people have submitted content and over 150 digital files. The types of materials submitted include photographs, artwork, poems, journal entries, maps, collages, survey form responses, and videos. The archives is conducting oral histories with staff and student employees, as well as anyone who expresses an interest in

sharing their stories and experiences. The goal is to make a lot of content available online in the near future so researchers and others studying COVID-19 will have access to relevant and useful primary sources. This project has been a team effort, but the majority of the development and implementation of the work that went into getting it off the ground was done by digital and media archivist Cat Phan. Her creativity, sound technical skills, efficiency, and overall knowledge of archival and digital best practices have been instrumental through this entire process and the archives couldn't have done it without her. Don't hesitate to reach out, and please share the Documenting COVID-19 Project at UW–Madison far and wide. Archives staff hope all communities stay healthy, safe, connected, and optimistic about the future!



*Rose of Treason, 2001, in the Department of Theatre Files, #14/06/01 Box 23, Rose of Treason Folder, Theatre UNI Files-Programs and Photographs, University Archives, Rod Library, University of Northern Iowa*

## Archival Resources on the Web

*Assistant Editor: Lauren White, University of Michigan. Contact Lauren at [laurenashleywhite@gmail.com](mailto:laurenashleywhite@gmail.com) if you would like to guest author a column or have a good idea to share.*

### Creating the National Bar Association Digital Collection

*By Heather Campbell, Grinnell College*

*Note: Heather Campbell was previously the public services/archives associate at the Drake University Law Library, 2018–2019.*

The National Bar Association Archives, located at Drake University Law School in Des Moines, Iowa, includes materials pertaining to the history of the National Bar Association (NBA) and the National Association of Bench and Bar Spouses (NABBS). After the law school acquired the archives in 2007, law library staff began planning to digitize the collection and make it available online. With only one staff member and two student workers dedicated to the project, progress initially was slow. In 2018, however, law library staff made a number of process improvements that led to the successful launch of the NBA Digital Collection.<sup>1</sup>

#### About the NBA Archives

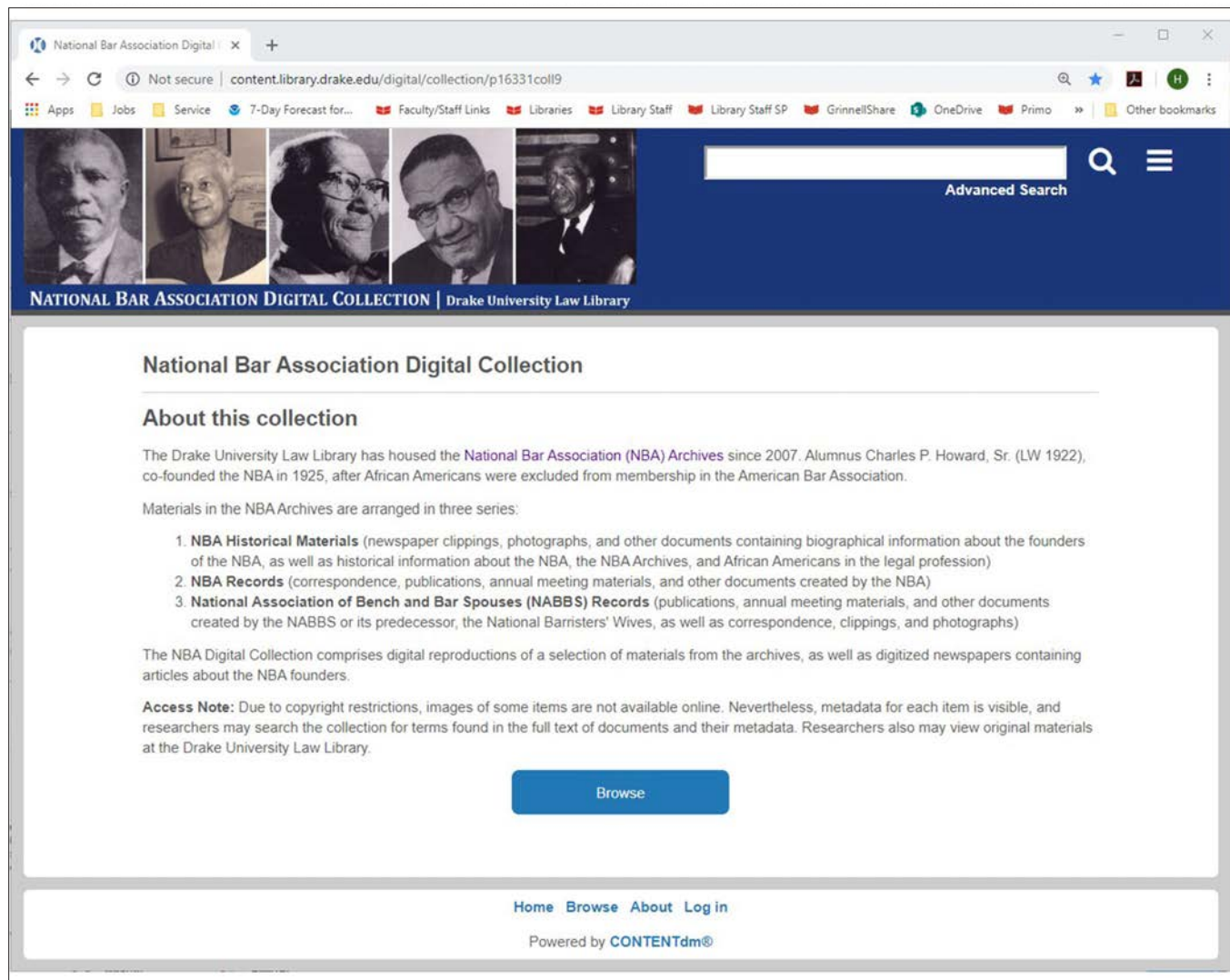
Founded in Des Moines in 1925, the NBA is an organization of African American attorneys and judges. In 1951, a group of women married to NBA members

founded the NABBS, originally known as the National Barristers' Wives. An attorney and alumna of Drake, Dr. Cleota Proctor Wilbekin (1930–2017) collected the bulk of the materials during the 1980s and 1990s, while serving as NABBS president and on the NBA's History of the Black Lawyer Committee. The Des Moines Public Library housed the collection until 2007 when it moved to the Drake University Law Library.

With its history of promoting equality and justice, Drake University Law School is a fitting home for the archives. One of the school's founders was Iowa Supreme Court justice Chester C. Cole, who wrote the opinion in an early civil rights case, *Clark v. Board of Directors of the Muscatine Schools* (1868). In that landmark case, 86 years before *Brown v. Board of Education*, Iowa's high court held that racial segregation



*National Bar Association leaders cut the ribbon on the new NBA Archives Room in the Drake University Law Library in 2007. Credit: Drake University Law Library.*



in the state's public schools was unconstitutional. In 1925, Charles P. Howard, an African American graduate of the law school, cofounded the NBA after predominantly white bar associations had denied membership to attorneys of color. Another NBA founder, attorney Gertrude Rush, had become the first black woman to practice law west of Mississippi in 1918. Howard, Rush, and three other NBA founders—S. Joe Brown, J. B. Morris, and George H. Woodson—feature prominently in the archives.

### **Initial Stages**

Two student workers and a law library associate carried out the early stages of the digitization project. The student workers used a contactless scanner to digitize photographs, clippings, correspondence, and other materials in the NBA Archives. As they scanned, the students used a

spreadsheet to record metadata for each item, including file name, extent, title, description, subjects, and keywords. Meanwhile, the university's digital projects librarian created a new digital collection for NBA materials, hosted on the same server as Drake's other CONTENTdm collections.<sup>2</sup> Library staff then used CONTENTdm's web-based administrative interface to upload the scanned files and manually enter their associated metadata.

Library staff used this process to add more than 50 items to the digital collection, but several concerns soon arose. Metadata was not always complete or consistent: students had recorded names and keywords differently; some fields contained redundant data; and arrangement information was missing, partly because a comprehensive finding aid did not exist. Moreover, it was difficult to estimate how

*(Continued on page 16)*



*(Continued from page 15)*

much of the archives remained to be digitized, as some physical materials were unprocessed. Finally, it was time consuming to use CONTENTdm's online interface to add items individually.

## **Process Improvements**

### ***Specialized Staff***

Staff changes in the fall of 2018 offered opportunities for improvement. The new archives associate, a graduate student in library and information science, brought knowledge gleaned from courses in archival administration and digital libraries. The law library also broadened its student job posting and hired a business major with data processing experience. All student workers participated in digitization efforts, but they also had specialized responsibilities. A law/politics/society major worked on processing physical materials and describing them for the finding aid, while the business major cleaned metadata spreadsheets.

### ***Expanded Documentation***

To guide the newly hired students, we expanded our instructional materials. Digitization procedures gained a section on updating the scanner settings to meet federal guidelines for digitizing cultural heritage materials, as well as to perform optical character recognition (OCR) to enable full-text searching of PDFs.<sup>3</sup> We also wrote instructions for metadata creation and added brief guidelines to each column heading in our metadata spreadsheet template. In addition, we created controlled vocabulary lists for certain metadata elements, including creator and subject, compiled mainly from the Library of Congress Name Authority File. We stored our vocabularies in CONTENTdm but also included them as drop-down lists in the metadata template. For the student tasked with making notes for the finding aid, we provided access to *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (DACS) and emphasized the importance of the scope and content element in particular. As we implemented these procedures, we consulted frequently with student workers to ensure that instructions were understandable and that tasks and timelines were reasonable.

### ***Batch Ingestion***

To speed the addition of items to the digital collection, we investigated methods for ingesting digital objects in batches. We determined that CONTENTdm Project Client, a desktop application, was the best option; it uses tab-delimited text files to import file directories and their associated metadata. We knew it would be possible to create such files from our metadata spreadsheets, but first we needed to ensure that the metadata was normalized.


### ***Metadata Design and Cleanup***



Using CONTENTdm's administrative interface, we indicated the metadata elements that we wished to display for each item in the collection. We also configured each field's data type, visibility, searchability, and controlled vocabulary, if applicable. For reference, we found it useful to compile a metadata application profile (MAP). In our case, the MAP was a table of our selected elements, their mappings to the Dublin Core metadata schema (the typical element set for digital collections), values rules, and examples. These metadata tools helped us to keep track of which fields had controlled vocabularies, where boilerplate text should be used (such as in the rights field), how titles should be devised (following DACS rules), which capitalization and punctuation rules to follow, how dates should be formatted, and so on, to populate fields consistently.

For archives-specific metadata elements, we drew from our freshly published finding aid.<sup>4</sup> We provided its URL in the source field, and we used its contents to populate the series and folder fields with details about the original material's location. Those fields will be especially helpful when retrieving items for which only metadata is displayed, for copyright or privacy reasons.

The MAP proved useful for creating guidelines for the student worker responsible for normalizing metadata spreadsheets. We also suggested Excel functions to automate date formatting, concatenating text from multiple columns, and adding prefixes to file names. With those tips and his own ideas, the student quickly cleaned dozens of spreadsheets, which we then used to generate tab-delimited text files for batch ingestion into CONTENTdm.





NATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION DIGITAL COLLECTION | Drake University Law Library

Home > National Bar Association > Colored Men and Women Who Are and Have Been Members of the Bar of ...

Result 12 of 43

[← Back to results](#)

### Colored Men and Women Who Are and Have Been Members of the Bar of Iowa

Page 1

Colored Men and Women who are and have been Members of the Bar of Iowa.

(N. B.: Those marked (#) not found on Supreme Court Roll)

Name	Date of Admission	Present Address
1. Samuel K. Adams	1875	Deceased
3. S. L. Smith	1880	Deceased
5. Alexander Clark, Sr.	1884	Deceased
10. Fred L. Smith	1884	Deceased
11. John L. Waller	(#)	Deceased
13. Wm. Foster	1885	Deceased
15. W. B. Kott	1885	Deceased
17. J. B. Rush	1885	Deceased
22. O. B. Tibbs	(#)	Deceased
24. C. H. Sillars	1905	Deceased
31. John D. Redmon	1920	Deceased
8. S. L. Marsh	1891	(Not in practice)
21. S. E. Holton	1901	(Address unknown)
34. W. C. Anderson	1920	(Not in practice)
2. Alexander Clark, Jr.	1879	Oskaloosa
4. R. G. Posten	1882	Libby, Mont.
6. A. H. Higgs (Rev.)	1884	Marshall, Mo.
7. T. W. Bell	1886	Leavenworth, Kans.
9. Albert Bell	1891	Sheridan, Wyoming.
12. E. B. Williamson	1895	Washington, D.C.
14. Geo. H. Woodson	1896	Des Moines
16. Geo. I. Holt (rev.)	1896	Davenport, Iowa
18. John L. Thompson	1898	Des Moines
19. S. Joe Brown	1901	Des Moines
20. H. R. Wright	1901	Des Moines
23. J. D. Drake	(#)	Oakland, Cal.
25. Jas. A. Spears	1907	Wichita, Kans.
26. W. T. Reden (prof.)	1908	Doddsville, Miss.
27. Jas. B. Morris	1917	Des Moines
28. Gertrude E. Eish (Mrs. J. B.)	1918	Des Moines
29. J. J. Hicks	1918	Sioux City, Iowa.
30. Milton F. Fields	1918	Waterloo, Iowa.

Search this record

Page 1

1

**Object Description**

Title Colored Men and Women Who Are and Have Been Members of the Bar of Iowa

(Continued from page 17)

### Results

Thanks to these process improvements, our small staff added nearly 600 items to the NBA Digital Collection within one semester. We were pleased to receive feedback from the vice president of NABBS, who was thrilled to see the materials online. Creating the digital collection also raised the visibility of the NBA Archives in Google search results: we soon received multiple reproduction requests.

Another positive result of the project was the empowerment of student workers. Granting students responsibility for meaningful tasks, as well as opportunities for collaboration, resulted in improved procedures, efficient workflows, and an upbeat environment. Moreover, the students gained resume-worthy experience. To recognize their contributions, we held an appreciation lunch and gave the student processor a credit on the finding aid.

The screenshot displays the National Bar Association Digital Collection search interface. At the top, there are five portrait photos of African American women. Below them is the site title 'NATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION DIGITAL COLLECTION | Drake University Law Library'. The search results are filtered by 'National Bar Association' and sorted by 'Original Date Ascending'. Search terms include 'Rush, Gertrude' and 'clipping phot...'. The results list includes:

- Only Colored Woman Now Member State Bar** (1918?)  
1: NBA Historical Materials, 1912-
- Photograph clipped from a newspaper of Gertrude Rush, Annette Officer, and Hattie Wells, shown before their flight to the World Baptist.** (1947?)  
1: NBA Historical Materials, 1912-
- Photograph of Gertrude E. Rush** (1950)  
1: NBA Historical Materials, 1912-
- Mrs. Rush Dies Here** (1962)

### Looking Ahead

Although we achieved our project goal, we already can envision future improvements. Ensuring that the collection appears in the collaborative discovery systems WorldCat, ArchiveGrid, and SNAC would increase discoverability.<sup>5</sup> Rescanning some materials would improve the overall quality of the collection, as a number of images were scanned before we acquired a sheet of antiglare plexiglass to place over shiny or curled materials. Human-generated transcriptions would improve usability, particularly for items with handwriting or illegible areas. Design changes beyond our customized

header could differentiate the collection further. Finally, it would be ideal to undertake digital preservation activities to safeguard the accessibility and integrity of the digital objects. Of course, these initiatives would require time and resources. For now, we are gratified that the NBA Digital Collection expands access to the history of African American leaders in the legal profession, particularly in the Midwest.

Notes

1. National Bar Association Digital Collection, Drake University Law Library, <http://content.library.drake.edu/digital/collection/p16331coll9>.
2. Drake University Digital Collections, <http://content.library.drake.edu>.
3. Still Image Working Group, “Guidelines: Technical Guidelines for Digitizing Cultural Heritage Materials,” Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative, September 2016, <http://www.digitizationguidelines.gov/guidelines/digitize-technical.html>.
4. Heather Campbell and Elyse Dye, National Bar Association Archives Finding Aid, Drake University and Law School Archives, <https://cowles-archon.drake.edu/index.php?p=collections/findingaid&id=493&q=>.
5. ArchiveGrid, OCLC, <https://researchworks.oclc.org/archivegrid>; Social Networks and Archival Context, <https://snaccooperative.org>; WorldCat, OCLC, <https://www.worldcat.org>.

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## Electronic Currents

*Assistant Editor: Sarah Dorpinghaus, University of Kentucky. Contact Sarah at sarah.dorpinghaus@uky.edu if you would like to guest author a column or have a good idea to share.*

### **The Iowa Labor History Oral Project: Managing Oral History Projects in the Digital Age**

*By John McKerley, Oral and Public Historian, University of Iowa Labor Center, and Justin Baumgartner,  
Digital Project Librarian, University of Iowa Libraries*

In the 1970s, leaders of the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, joined the rush of scholars, archivists, and everyday people into the burgeoning field of oral history. Like so many people then and since, they were excited by oral history's potential to document the lives of working-class people in ways previously extended only to the wealthy, politically connected, or producers of high culture. Today, the project they started—the Iowa Labor History Oral Project (ILHOP)—contains almost 1,500 interviews and counting, making it arguably the largest and longest-running worker-focused oral history project in the United States (and perhaps the world). Although ILHOP has changed considerably over the last 40 years, the project has retained a commitment to the long-term preservation of and access to specifically working-class stories as it has adapted to the challenges and opportunities of digital preservation, access, and workflows.

By most accounts, ILHOP was the brainchild of James Wengert, a former Sioux City packinghouse worker turned state legislator and labor leader. A widely recognized orator and storyteller who had risen to become president of the Iowa Federation of Labor (IFL), Wengert believed that workers' stories had value in and of themselves. Moreover, he saw that a project documenting Iowa workers' lives, labors, and political activities might help unify the labor movement at a time when labor was both expanding and attracting new and powerful opponents.

But, if ILHOP was Wengert's vision, it fell to many other people to make that vision a reality. By the mid-1970s, Wengert, together with his close friend and collaborator Mark Smith, a University of Iowa (UI) labor educator who had joined Wengert as an IFL officer, had provided funding for ILHOP through a dues assessment on union members, funding the project from the same workers who would be its focus. Next, they assembled an advisory board made up of labor leaders, professional historians, and educators from around the state. They established the director of the UI Labor Center as ILHOP's director to provide continuity and to connect the project to the university. At the same time, they also developed a relationship with the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI), which was tasked

with organizing, describing, preserving, and providing access to the tapes and transcripts.

The advisory board hired a former folksinger and folklorist, Paul Kelso, as ILHOP's first interviewer. They also established a collection process that would come to define the project for much of the next decade. They focused on Iowa's many small urban areas, such as Dubuque, which were also hubs of labor organizing. An advisory board member, often Smith, would contact local labor leaders and make arrangements for the ILHOP interviewer to be introduced to people who might be interested in being interviewed.

Between roughly 1977 and the early 1990s, this process produced approximately 1,100 interviews. In 1993, UI professor of history and long-time ILHOP advisory board member, Shelton Stromquist, used these interviews to write *Solidarity and Survival: An Oral History of Iowa Labor in the Twentieth Century*. Stromquist's book revealed many of the important insights into Iowa's working-class life unearthed by ILHOP interviewers. For example, he drew on interviews with coal miners in southeast Iowa to reveal the connections between unionized miners and the organization of manufacturers throughout the rural Midwest during the 1930s and 1940s. Moreover, Iowa workers—even as early as the 1940s—were far more diverse than was often recognized before ILHOP. Skilled black workers had moved north and west as packinghouses and other businesses from major metropolitan centers opened new operations in rural areas, and communities of Mexicans and Mexican Americans came to Iowa to labor in sugar beet fields, on railroads, and in packinghouses.

Over time, ILHOP became an important resource for scholars of Iowa, midwestern, and labor and working-class history, especially among historians of meatpacking. Likewise, it was used by labor educators and by workers themselves as they shared stories from their past with new generations. To further expand the collection's potential, in 1999, ILHOP and its partners at SHSI were awarded a national leadership grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to produce and print an index to



approximately 760 of the interview transcripts. This index, published by SHSI in 2003, for the first time allowed researchers and other users to browse over 22,000 entries related to the lives and labor of Iowa workers and their communities.

also involved the development of new partners, especially the UI Libraries, which had heavily invested in digital methods over the previous decade. In 2015, the libraries and SHSI were awarded a one-year \$100,000 grant from

the National Historic Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to digitize the collection, much of which was recorded on analog cassettes and reel-to-reel tape, and to make it publicly accessible through the UI Libraries’ Iowa Digital Library website. In 2017, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) awarded ILHOP an almost \$200,000 grant to complete transcriptions of existing interviews and to create an expandable, digital edition of the ILHOP index.

While this recent work has greatly expanded ILHOP’s reach and significance, it has also created new challenges for project management to address. For example, the issue of restricted interviews was addressed early on in the NHPRC

grant project. Over a hundred of the interviews are restricted from public access, most often because of an interviewee’s refusal to release his or her interview to the public. While these interviews are still restricted, their digitization and preservation were part of the grant terms. As the collection was being processed for mass digitization, restricted interviews were flagged and labeled as such.

Another problem lies in controlling a project that includes both physical and digital (both digitized and born-digital) assets. For example, the digital project librarian,

Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Notes
Anti-[ideology/movement]			
	in Iowa towns		
	in [city/town]		
Building, type of (i.e., barns)			
City/town			2003 Index organizes Iowa cities/towns alphabetically by name of city/town; non-Iowa cities/towns organized by state; recommend alphabetize all
	[decade]		
	[industry] factory		
	[park]		
	[prison]		
	[union] organizing, [decade]		
	baseball team		
	businesses and industries		
	churches		
	coal mines		
	gambling		
		[decade]	
	hotels		

*Excerpt from the ILHOP index taxonomy, including notes toward revision of the master index*

Although insecure funding slowed the project’s development during most of the 2000s, the founders’ instinct to locate the project in the Labor Center—an institution with both a broader and an overlapping mission—paid off. In 2013, Labor Center director Jennifer Sherer and a revived advisory board launched a bold new phase of the project. They hired a new oral historian who was tasked with conducting a new round of interviews to document the period since the 1960s and to bring the project into the digital age. This process

*(Continued on page 22)*

*(Continued from page 21)*

following best practices, barcoded the reel-to-reel and cassette tapes from the pre-2013 collection. Because the limits of analog recording and project practice placed one interview on a single tape or multiple tapes devoted to a single interviewee, project staff could easily associate single analog objects with individual digital files. In the case of the born-digital collection, however, the ability (and cost-based need) to record multiple interviews on a single SD card have caused the problem of how to create a single database with the same metadata scheme for all items.

Other challenges have been presented by the effort to digitize and expand the 2003 index. As metadata is created for new interviews, whenever possible, librarians have followed the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). Unfortunately, the index and LCSH terms have grown insufficient for accurately describing the interviews as this project has grown over time. To address this, project staff have had to adopt a flexible system that follows aspects of the controlled vocabulary established in 2003 and LCSH to both revise the 2003 index and produce new headings. Critical to this process has been the development of a taxonomy of the 2003 index, which has allowed project staff to identify both patterns and inconsistencies.

Another challenge lies with the project itself and its scope. Even as ILHOP documented Iowa workers' diversity in its first round of interviews, approximately 90 percent of the initial interviewees remained white and male. Since 2013, with the support of new partners, project staff have collected approximately 200 born-digital interviews. These interviews include new generations of women, African American workers, and recent immigrants and refugees. These born-digital interviews are being ingested into the digital collection alongside digitized interviews, which has created some new challenges, especially when indexing interviews in which the interviewee's preferred language was not English.

As ILHOP moves toward its fiftieth year, the project continues to pursue its primary mission—preserving the stories of Iowa workers—while moving further to expand and diversify the workers involved. This has meant adapting a complex system of partnerships and processes to new organizational, financial, and technological changes. Although these adaptations make the ILHOP story unique, we hope that it might yet be useful to the MAC community and other archival professionals as an example of the importance of collaboration and adaptation in the

collection and preservation of and access to oral histories, especially those of working-class people.



*ILHOP team members, past and present. Standing, left to right: Justin Baumgartner, John McKerley, Heidi Stofer, Mary Bennett, Ken Sagar, Jennifer Sherer, and Janet Weaver. Seated, left to right, Shelton Stromquist and Merle Davis.*

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## Mixed Media

*Assistant Editor: Danielle Nowak, the Morton Arboretum. Contact Danielle at [dnowak@mortonarb.org](mailto:dnowak@mortonarb.org) if you would like to guest author a column or have a good idea to share.*

### Working through COVID-19: The Sterling Morton Library

*By Kristin Arnold, Archivist; Rita Hassert, Library Collections Manager; and Danielle Nowak, Digital Assets Librarian*

Through these unprecedented times, the Sterling Morton Library (of the Morton Arboretum) in Lisle, Illinois, outside of Chicago, has had to adapt and evolve to accommodate the current circumstances. Since the temporary closure of the arboretum, the library has transformed many of its in-person services and projects into digital endeavors. Additionally, the library has been proactive in archiving the arboretum and its staff's responses to the current climate.



*Viburnum dentatum (southern arrowwood), cluster of fruits and drupes. Photographed by John Hagstrom, courtesy of The Morton Arboretum*

#### Virtual Opportunities in the Sterling Morton Library

Leafing Through the Pages is a discussion group for members of the Morton Arboretum launched by the Sterling Morton Library in 2003. Through the years, this monthly group has discussed a wide range of nature-related topics focusing on ecology, natural history, gardening, and our relationship with the natural world. Authors discussed have included Thoreau, Watts, Pollan, and Dillard with our selections including books, poetry, short stories, and films/documentaries. With the closure of the library during the pandemic, we started brainstorming

how we could continue offering this opportunity for our active and engaged discussion community. During the closure, potential attendees were invited to participate in a remote discussion using the video conferencing platform Zoom. Once attendees had preregistered, they were forwarded several discussion questions as well as supplemental information about the author. While a number of the participants were unfamiliar with Zoom, they were also eager to continue with their participation in the group. With only a few minor technological glitches, we were impressed by the reception of the overall virtual discussion experience.

Offering this virtual discussion was an opportunity to foster community and engagement during a period fraught with anxiety and, in some cases, social isolation. After our first virtual gathering in April, participants were uniformly positive and enjoyed seeing and hearing from other attendees. One participant described it as “a wonderful two-hour vacation.” Basing our measurement of success on attendance numbers (30!), ease of use, overall experience, and other factors, we will continue to create and foster these virtual experiences for the foreseeable future.

In 2020, we launched a new program in the library for arboretum staff. In addition to the library's focus on physical and virtual collections, items, and artifacts, it also supports and encourages community and connectivity. We recognize there are many different ways to share and transfer knowledge and information! In collaboration with other programs, we identified an arboretum staff need for informal learning and engagement opportunities. After brainstorming, we decided to pilot an “Office Hours” program hosted by arboretum colleagues with a focus on various topics such as the application of technology, the discovery of a new initiative, and the exploration of topics such as invasive plants, wildflowers, and plant collecting. Various arboretum staff members hosted these in-person informal peer-to-peer learning experiences. With the closure of arboretum buildings in March due to the pandemic, we recognized there would be an increased need for these learning experiences, so we rebranded them as Virtual Office Hours. Taking place three times a week and using Zoom, these virtual opportunities and

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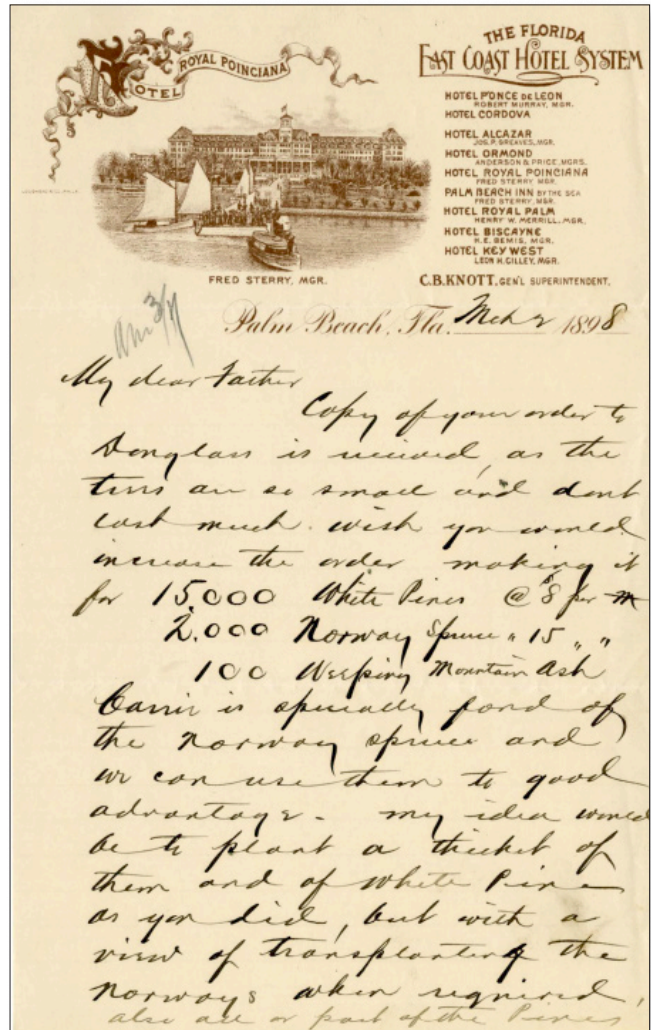
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experiences have witnessed an increase in attendance and engagement. Hour-long sessions might take the form of a presentation or might follow a question-and-answer format. Staff who might not have previously been able to attend in-person sessions due to scheduling, now have more flexibility. With colleagues working remotely, there is also an increased interest in gathering together, albeit virtually. And, this program is a direct contributor to the identified arboretum employee value to “Keep Learning.” While more casual in-person staff interactions are not possible during this time, our Virtual Office Hours have kept these peer-to-peer learning experiences fresh and impactful.

### Remote Volunteer Projects

Volunteers are a driving force behind many projects at the library. Because of their dedication, eagerness to learn, and willingness to experiment with technologies new to them, we were able to initiate two projects that they could work on remotely. Volunteers at the library have a diverse range of knowledge and skills. Some are former librarians/library staff, retired plant professionals, and/or lifelong library supporters. Understanding this, we wanted to be able to provide them with projects that would satisfy both their skills and their interests. To do so, we prepared two projects: one involving cataloging born-digital plant photographs and the other transcribing handwritten correspondence that had been digitized prior to the arboretum’s temporary closure.

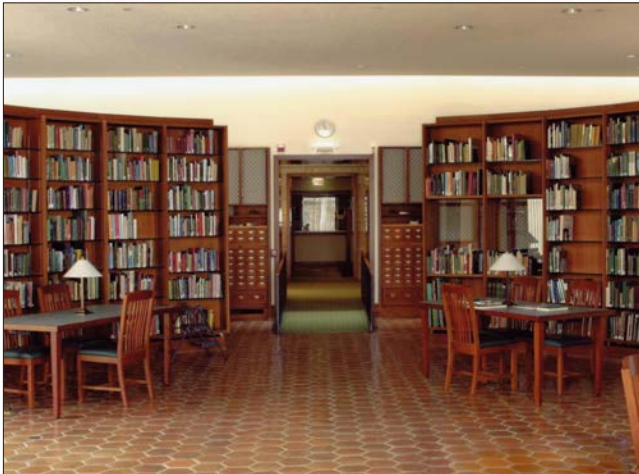
The first project, cataloging born-digital photographs, had been worked on both remotely and in person prior to the pandemic. This project, focused on the Collection of John Hagstrom Images, requires volunteers to log in to the backend of our collection management system (CMS) and then work through the program to input metadata. For our plant experts willing to explore the backend of our CMS, this project was a perfect fit. This initiative has largely been successful due to the combination of our volunteers’ plant knowledge with their technical training that took place on-site. Of our five volunteers who took part in this project, two of them took the opportunity to work on it remotely. Our collaboration with them has resulted in nearly 500 new images being cataloged and made accessible online.



1898/03/02: Joy Morton to J. Sterling Morton, Courtesy of The Morton Arboretum

The second project, transcribing handwritten correspondence, was initiated after the temporary closure began. With the arboretum’s centennial approaching in 2022, transcribed letters will be an essential tool in researching how the arboretum was founded and in developing a further understanding of how it got to where it is today. With most, if not all, of our volunteers diligently staying at home, this seemed like a perfect opportunity for us to get the transcriptions completed. Of the 11 volunteers we reached out to about the project, 10 have been actively participating. So far, they have transcribed over 50 letters with many more to go.





*Sterling Morton Library Reading Room entrance. Photographed by Trent P. Roberson, courtesy of The Morton Arboretum*

### Archiving the Arboretum’s Response to COVID-19

The library and archives community across the Midwest has been proactive in collecting records that document the public’s response to the COVID-19 health crisis, which inspired us to preserve records specific to the Morton

Arboretum’s experience. This is a sensitive topic and involves records created in many departments across the arboretum, so it has been essential to gain support from the leadership team. By involving the organization’s leaders in the process, we have benefited from their guidance in identifying pertinent records, and their approval supports our efforts as we reach out to staff members. To communicate to the leadership team what we meant by “archiving the arboretum’s response,” we produced a plan identifying three main record groups that we aim to collect. These groups include announcements communicated to arboretum staff, volunteers, members, and the public; documents created by the arboretum’s COVID-19 response team; and staff reflections.

The first and second record groups, announcements and the response team documents, already fall within the scope of the organization’s document retention policy, but these records are naturally taking on a different form and sense of urgency during this time. We included these record groups in our plan to communicate that we will be actively collecting these documents as they are being produced to ensure we are capturing them in their entirety.

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The arboretum's internal and external communications are the most concise and straightforward summary of what has happened, what decisions have been made, and how the pandemic affects different groups connected to the arboretum (staff, volunteers, members, and the public). These records are not only evidence of *what* the arboretum has communicated, but also of the arboretum's most effective *means* of communication. Documents created by the response team, such as meeting notes and agendas, serve as evidence of the decision-making process.

Of the three record groups we identified, staff reflections is the biggest unknown, but it is also an intriguing opportunity to learn how the arboretum's adjusted working conditions have affected employees across departments. While we do not typically preserve such records, we believe this exceptional situation warrants it. The arboretum's announcements and response team documents are excellent resources that show how the leadership team handled the crisis, but staff reflections can offer a diverse array of observations, shedding light on the challenges and opportunities experienced by arboretum staff. It is important to capture the perspectives of a variety of employees because we are all experiencing COVID-19 and the adjusted working conditions differently. A facilities employee who is working on-site will have different insights from those of a librarian working from home.

Following the example of the La Crosse Library Archives and History Department Documenting Community Voices project, we created a Google Form to serve as a space for staff to reflect on their experiences. It consisted of eight to ten open-ended questions intended to guide reflection, particularly in regard to experiences related to the arboretum. We selected this method because it is fairly straightforward to execute and engage with. Not only is this an opportunity for staff members to journal and reflect, it will also reveal how the situation has affected working conditions, both for those working remotely and those who continue to go into work. They may bring some observations or challenges to light, which in turn may influence future decision-making. They can

help arboretum leaders understand what has and has not worked or what could be done to prepare for future crises, or they could lead the arboretum to explore more opportunities for remote work. These staff reflections will give a voice to staff and provide the institution with a better understanding of how each department has been individually affected.



**Reflection: How has COVID-19 affected you?**

The archive of The Morton Arboretum, which is part of the Sterling Morton Library, collects materials that document the Arboretum's history, mission, and contributions. While we house historic materials dating back to before the Arboretum's founding, we also actively collect content to record experiences, responses, and events taking place today. Like other organizations, families, and communities, The Morton Arboretum is greatly affected by the global spread of COVID-19. To better understand how the health crisis is affecting The Morton Arboretum and its employees, we are requesting your stories, thoughts, and observations.

Below you will find a series of questions to guide your reflection. Feel free to write in complete sentences, bullet points, or any other style— it's up to you. You do not need to answer all of the questions. You can share your name or remain anonymous. You may also fill out this form as many times as you would like. The situation is rapidly changing and we understand that your thoughts and observations may adapt.

If you have questions, contact our archivist, Kristin Arnold, at [karnold@mortonarb.org](mailto:karnold@mortonarb.org).

Thank you for contributing to the Arboretum's historical record.

This survey has been adapted from the La Crosse Public Library Archives & Local History Department's Documenting Community Voices project.

*COVID reflection form. Courtesy of The Morton Arboretum*

At the time of writing, the staff reflection form was to be distributed at the end of April, and the library team was reaching out to other departments in the arboretum to gain a firmer grasp on what records are being created. As is the case with many archival projects, this process is a work in progress, from which we will continue to learn and grow. We look forward to receiving staff reflections and collecting COVID-19–related records, through which the archives and the Morton Arboretum as a whole will be able to adapt and thrive.

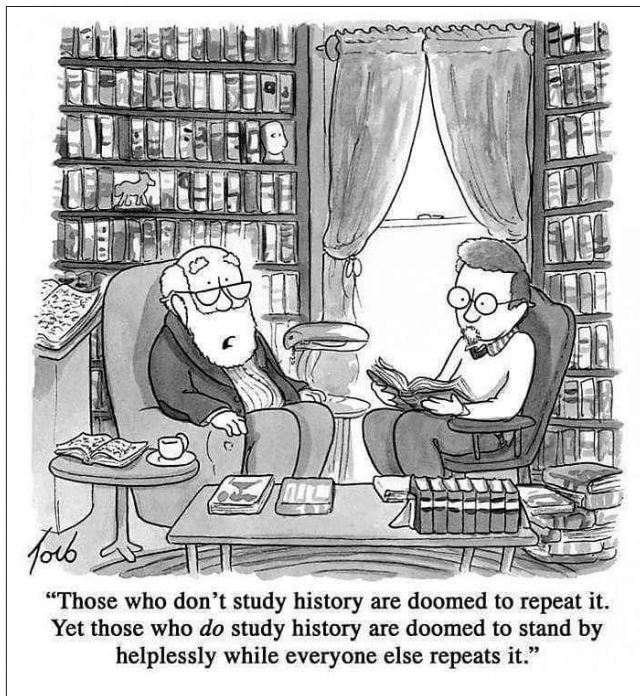
# Up-and-Comers: News for Student and New Archivists

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

## Archives Education and Student Work in the Time of COVID-19

By Kristen Whitson, 2020 Graduate of the Information School at UW–Madison

Those of us who study archives and history have a unique perspective on the world these days: we have studied daily lives and documentation and historical records from centuries of human life, so we have a deep understanding of the unprecedented nature of COVID-19.



Cartoon by Tom Toro, published in *Litro Magazine*, July 24, 2012

As archives and cultural heritage institutions around the country set about collecting community materials documenting this moment, archives students are both experiencing and recording significant shifts in our studies and work.

As you read this, I will have finished my master’s degree in library and information studies at the Information School at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. My path to this degree was long and winding; it’s a second career for me, after 15 years in human resources. Because I was fortunate to be able to switch careers midlife, the past two and a half years of graduate study have been especially wonderful. I’ve relished every classroom debate, every paper, every assignment and job that has required me to seek out another archival collection full of history and wisdom.

As I write this in my home office, my wife is sewing masks next to me. This is the fourth or fifth batch of masks she’s sewn for the employees of her manufacturing plant; they’re an essential business, making fans for hospital isolation rooms/wards. While they have access to the KN95 masks (the knockoff version of N95s), the cloth masks provide about as much protection and are more comfortable.

This is the extreme shift in perspectives we’ve undergone at breakneck speed: from worry over arrangement and description class assignments, to calculating how many masks we can finish in one evening.

The week of March 9—the before-times—was a typically hectic one for me. The lead-up to graduation was intense: two part-time jobs on campus, coauthoring a book, three different ongoing volunteer gigs, three student organization leadership roles, plus 10 graduate credits. I’m helping raise my wife’s two kids, we have nine chickens, a cat, and a beautifully supportive network of family and friends. It’s a lot, but it felt like I’d finally gotten into the groove of how to balance 150 percent of my obligations in 100 percent of my time. Every week was a marathon, a carefully choreographed dance between what I wanted to accomplish and what I might have to let go that week and pick up the next. I collapsed into bed every night, happy and exhausted.

Over the past two years, I felt so fortunate to have these opportunities that I threw myself into them wholly. I took as many credits and extracurricular activities as I could handle, and more. This year, I got involved in TLAM (Tribal Libraries, Archives and Museums) and our school’s student chapter of SAA. I applied for and was appointed a student representative role on our University Library Committee. I’ve reveled in the long and far-ranging discussions we had about the importance of representation in the archives or the impact of neoliberalism on processing times. I designed and completed an independent study on critical theory in the archives. My jobs in the Madison LGBTQ+ Archives and the Division of Housing’s records management office gave me the opportunity to try out different aspects of archives. My volunteer work in the Ho-Chunk Nation Language Division, Circus World

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Archives, and my high school's theater archive were ways to explore organically grown community archives. I was asked to help research and write a book for teenagers on Wisconsin's LGBTQ+ history.

It was too much.

And I loved it all, in all of its too-muchness.

Graduation was the light at the end of the tunnel, and every day when I woke, still exhausted, and pushed through my days (exhausted), I'd picture myself in front of the auditorium full of my classmates and professors and friends and family, having graduated with a master's degree in library and information studies.

That vision of graduation kept me going for two and a half years.

On March 11, I, like thousands of students, got the text message that UW–Madison asked us not to return right away after spring break.

The next week—what was our “Spring Break” week—was a blur of grief. I heard from my jobs, my volunteer sites, and my classes, one after another: *Don't come in. We're canceled. It's all canceled.* The rest of the semester is gone. Unique to graduating students this semester: we wouldn't see our classmates or professors or supervisors or librarians again. On one particularly heartbreaking day, in-person commencement was canceled. Not only was the light at the end of the tunnel gone; so was the tunnel.

Everything stopped. The finely tuned machine of my days and weeks came to a silent, immediate halt. I went from rising at 5:00 a.m. and going to bed at 10:00 p.m., with carefully scheduled blocks of time filling each day, to having no idea what time it was—and not particularly caring, either.

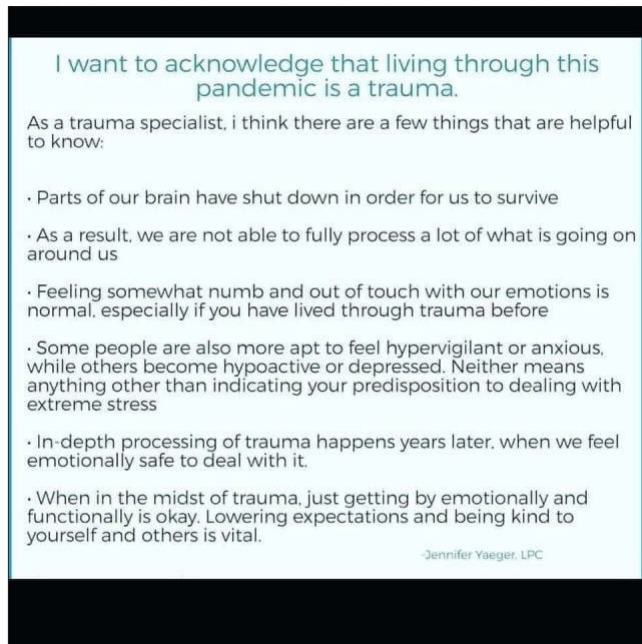
This semester was meant to be the crowning achievement in a degree program that I never thought I'd have a chance at; a program that had been deeply fulfilling and carried with it significant self-awarenesses I wouldn't have realized any other way. I have been so proud of my own work, my brain, my contributions to our program and to my classmates. It felt like a marathon I was running, successfully, with great form and in great time.

And with 25 miles behind me and only a mile left to go, the race was canceled. For me and for everyone.

That first week, my cohort's Facebook group was filled with disbelief, grief, shock, rage, and depression. Several people had job interviews scheduled around the country and were navigating the choice to fly, perhaps unsafely, or cancel the interview, perhaps losing the opportunity. Others were making the choice to go home to parents' houses over spring break, perhaps to return or not. Within a few days, it became clear that our student jobs in campus and city libraries and archives were tenuous at best, as many libraries needed to preserve remote work for their full-time staff members. The University Archives was fortunately able to provide remote work to several of us students, so I'm still working one job. My other job in records management in University Housing isn't available for remote work.

Post-Spring-Break, online classes started or continued. Academic and Library Twitter were filled with reminders that online instruction takes years to master and many months to effectively design, and that professors should cut themselves and their students lots of slack as they pivoted to unplanned-virtual-learning in a matter of days. In my experience, that was absolutely the case. One professor discovered firsthand how painstakingly time-consuming it is to write and record lectures; she quickly scrapped assignments that asked us students to do the same thing. Another professor, previously unfamiliar with tools like Zoom, Slack, Google Hangouts, Blackboard Collaborate, or Canvas, declared herself willing to learn and asked for help from more tech-savvy students. We all jumped in to set up ongoing methods of communication. Professors have handled the switch in varying ways with varying degrees of success; some have let go of the synchronous class obligation and others have carried on during normally scheduled class times.

The details of instructional methods aside, I've heard and read from graduate students near and far that the work feels impossibly hard, ridiculously disconnected, and totally insurmountable. Though no one's fault, the details of cataloging or coding seem so outside of reality. A few weeks ago, I video-chatted with a friend about EAD tags while hearing the anti-Stay-at-Home protesters outside his apartment. We talk most days and usually start our conversations reviewing the happenings of the world outside before getting to the inanity of finishing a graduate degree.



This graphic has been making the rounds online, and I want to tell you that it has been absolutely true for me and my classmates. I've heard from classmates who can't focus for more than a few minutes at a time—especially because they feel an urge to check the news that often. Some of us feel very numb, myself included, because to begin to acknowledge the pain of what we're losing is falling into an abyss we cannot afford until the schoolwork is finished. And the weight of expectations, our own and others', is a daily conundrum: we're in graduate school *because* we are people who love to read and learn and achieve at high levels. Unable to meet our own expectations of ourselves adds heavy layers of guilt and anxiety at a time we can least afford it. Professors are understanding, sympathetic, and flexible, and still have to turn in grades in a few weeks.

We have continued to do the work, to whatever extent we are able. As a group, we check on each other and keep checking in. We're exhausted now as we were before, but in a totally different way—emotionally exhausted and drained by constant video calls, rather than exhilarated at our progress. I've watched my cohort plan video calls to do virtual readings of Shakespeare's plays and a To-Be-Read Book Group. We message each other when we have the energy, a person here and a person there. We bring each other food when we can. We offer money to those who are in dire straits. These are not our most self-actualized moments; they're moments of community survival.

I'm finishing this degree by dragging myself across the finish line and graduating into a job market vastly different than the one I expected. I always knew that getting an archives job would be difficult, particularly because I'm (gladly) bound to the Madison area by family obligations. My backup plan was to get some kind of related position at the university and keep volunteering with community archives, watch for job openings, work my way up in the University Archives or the Wisconsin Historical Society or nearby cultural heritage organizations.

Over the last six weeks, librarians and archivists have been furloughed and laid off across the country. Hiring freezes have been implemented, locally and nationally. Any of the few archives job openings—even fewer here in Madison—will be inundated with applications from incredible archivists who can relocate and who have years of experience and accomplishments that far surpass mine. I'm considering going back into HR; I have an interview next week with the Unemployment Insurance division. They need help, and so do the 392,408 unemployed Wisconsinites who have filed in the last six weeks.

Cultural heritage workers do what we do because we believe that future generations will care what we have to tell them. Terry Baxter, in his fantastic *Off the Record* blog for SAA, says that

*Bridging the temporal spans between generations is what archives and archivists have always done. . . . The creation of archives (or story, or memory, or community) is an act of love, a way of saying: Elders, you did this and it will matter to you, Offspring. Archivists commit to being the connective link, not just among those on the earth today, but among all people.*

I remain committed to the archives field, to what we do and why we do it. In my own backyard, UW–Madison's University Archives and the Wisconsin Historical Society have both undertaken community documentation projects that are already bearing rich fruit. Both organizations, and many others, are scouring their collections for artifacts that hold up mirrors to today's society: from past pandemics, past crises, past evidence of community support. I believe in our work.

While it feels surreal to be working in a "normal" job for the Madison LGBTQ+ Archive, where I find and write about collections to share with the public, I'm glad for the

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

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chance to practice my craft. I asked several gay friends in the early days of COVID-19 if this felt like the HIV/AIDS pandemic. *No*, they said. *No one cared when we were dying. No one shut down businesses and states to keep us safe. This doesn't feel at all like that.* Their stories still matter, even and especially now, and they are why we do what we do.

I was fortunate to meet Terry Baxter at a conference last year. I shook his hand, bought him a beer, and told him that this quote from his blog hangs on my wall at home—one that my professors and friends will recognize, as I find a way to work it into every paper and conversation. It's my professional touchstone, the reminder of why we do what we do:

*Archives are relational through time. They bind us, for good and for bad, to our human relatives both in the past and in the future. Our ancestors are rooting for us. They have clamored to have all of their stories heard. Fought for a deeper and more truthful narrative of us humans. Archivists uncover those stories, add them to the sum of human understanding, and move them forward through time. Why? So that our great-grandchildren will know that their ancestors are rooting for them, too.*

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## People and Posts

*Assistant Editor: Matt Gorzalski, Southern Illinois University Carbondale. The MAC Membership Committee invites members to share positions, appointments, and honors in the People and Posts column. Please send items to Matt at mgorzalski@lib.siu.edu. Submissions must be 150 words or less. Images are welcome!*

### ILLINOIS

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Academy  
Jorie Braunold  
American Medical Association  
Lisa Lofgren  
Illinois State University

### INDIANA

Beth South  
Indiana University East

### IOWA

Andrea Craycraft  
University of Iowa  
Margaret Gamm  
University of Iowa Libraries

### KANSAS

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Emporia State University  
Lynn Ward  
University of Kansas

### MICHIGAN

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Hillsdale College  
Tim McRoberts  
Michigan State University  
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Wayne State University  
John Werner  
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### MINNESOTA

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Minnesota Historical Society  
Krista Lewis  
History Center of Olmsted  
County  
Michael Peterson  
Minnesota Historical Society  
Katherine Stotis  
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Sisters of the Good Shepherd,  
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Olivia Kesselring  
SSM Health

### NEBRASKA

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University of Nebraska Medical  
Center

### OHIO

Riza Miklowski  
Michelle Smith  
Archdiocese of Cincinnati

### WISCONSIN

Jenny DeRocher  
La Crosse Public Library  
Abigail Joranger  
Kayla Livingston  
Whitefish Bay Public Library  
Northwestern Mutual

### OUT-OF-REGION

Jennifer Ho  
California State University San  
Marcos

**Matt Blessing** has retired from the Wisconsin Historical Society. Most recently, Blessing served a decade as Wisconsin state archivist and administrator of the Division of Library, Archives, and Museum Collections. He has served on MAC's Nominating, Finance, and Local Arrangements Committees, and on MAC Council (2008–2010). Looking forward, he has developed an intricate five-year plan involving wilderness canoe routes, woodpile management, and historical writing projects.



Berea College welcomes **Timothy Binkley** as the college's head of Special Collections and Archives.

Binkley comes to Berea from the Bridwell Library in the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, where he served as archivist. He has a master of arts degree in history, archives, and museum administration from Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio; a master of divinity with a peace studies emphasis from Bethany Theological Seminary in Richmond, Indiana; and a bachelor of arts degree in museology from the Defiance College in Defiance, Ohio. He was a member of the 2016 cohort of the Archives Leadership Institute and is a certified archivist.

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**PEOPLE AND POSTS—Continued**  
**Matt Gorzalski, Assistant Editor**

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**Helena Egbert** joined the Richard L. D. and Marjorie J. Morse Department of Special Collections at Kansas State University Libraries as processing archivist in April 2020. From 2016 to 2020, she worked at Oregon State University's Special Collections and Archives Research Center. Egbert started there as an undergraduate and continued through the completion of her graduate studies to process collections and provide reference services, concluding with a grant-funded project as a processing and public services archivist. She holds an undergraduate degree from OSU and a master's in library science from Emporia State University. In her new position, Egbert will lead efforts to describe department holdings and oversee collection management.

**Scott Kirycki**, digital archivist at the University of Notre Dame Archives, earned a digital archives specialist certificate from the Society of American Archivists after completing required coursework and passing a comprehensive exam in January 2020.

**Donica Martin** became director of the Champaign County Historical Archives at the Urbana Free Library in February 2020. Her areas of interest and research include local history archives; the changing roles of archives, libraries, and cultural heritage institutions; public access to archival materials; oral histories; strategic planning; and the methods and practices associated with large-scale digitization projects.

**Amy Moorman** became archivist for the Martha Smith, CSJ, PhD Archives and Research Center at Avila University in Kansas City, Missouri, on January 1. Her previous position was archivist for the Wartburg Archives and Archives of Iowa Broadcasting at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, where she had worked since 2016.

With the customary mixed emotions, **Janet Olson** announced her retirement on May 31, 2020, after 23 years, from the Northwestern University Archives. Under the mentorship of the redoubtable Patrick Quinn, Olson started at Northwestern in May 1997 (in time to attend her first MAC in Chicago) and served as assistant university archivist since August 1998. Olson's entry into the archival world coincided with the birth of EAD and the Internet, and she witnessed the immense changes as the field grew and blossomed over the next 20+ years. Along the way, she benefited greatly (and gratefully) from a wonderful community of colleagues, both local and across the country. She had the pleasure of serving MAC as a presenter of papers at conferences, as member or cochair of LAC, Program, and Nominating Committees, and as a Council member; and the honor of receiving MAC's Distinguished Service Award in 2010. In retirement, she will continue her membership in MAC, the Chicago Area Archivists, SAA, and ACA, and will maintain her role as archivist for the Frances Willard House Museum and WCTU Archives in Evanston.

**Eric Willey** received tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor at Illinois State University effective July 1, 2020.

The Chicago Area Archivists' Archives and Archivists of Color interest group named **G'Jordan Williams** as the winner of the 2020 Travel Fund Award. Williams is a graduate student as well as archives associate and education programs coordinator at DuSable Museum of African American History. In his winning essay he wrote, "I plan to apply all skills gained, and all relationships formed to aid my mission to assist Black communities in safeguarding culture by applying transformative information science. Further, I plan to use the professional network acquired at the conference to help secure funding and resources appropriated for those who will take on the privilege of culture curation." The Travel Fund Award was intended to support Williams's attendance at MAC 2020, but will now be used to send him to the archives conference of his choice in the coming year.

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# Midwest Archives Conference

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