

VIEWS: The Newsletter of the

Visual Materials Section Society of American Archivists

Volume 15, Number 1

December 2000

MOUNTAINS OF WORK IN DENVER Visual Materials Section Meeting Friday, September 1, 2000 8-10am

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 am by Chair John Slate. John told those gathered how much he had enjoyed being Chair of the VM Section and urged others to get involved in the section and SAA. He then introduced the other officers: incoming chair James K. Burant, Views editor Laurie A. Baty, and Tim Hawkins, immediate Past-Chair of the Section and Chair of the Elections and Advanced Workshop committees. Tim made a special announcement concerning a snafu with the Section t-shirts, which were not ready at meeting time and Tim was not sure when they would be ready. He passed around a sign-up sheet for people who want t-shirts, and said he would post a notice on the meeting board as to when and where they'll be available. John announced that 25 people had attended the VM Section dinner the night before at La Fabula.

John then thanked this year's SAA Program Committee liaison for VM, Sarah Rouse, for helping us get so many quality proposals accepted. The new Program Committee liaison for 2001, Ellen Garrison, announced the theme for next year's conference as "2001: A Global Archival Odyssey." She stressed the importance of submitting completed proposals, and asked Sections sponsoring multiple proposals to please rank those proposals according to membership interest. Karen Benedict, the SAA liaison to ICA, can help us find international speakers. Program proposals are due October 6. John made another plug for section participation and how easy it is to just volunteer to do something—contribute to *Views*, write book reviews, or act in a leadership role—Section committees, liaison positions, running for Section Chair.

Liaison reports:

Laurie Baty announced that she had just finished a twoyear duty on the Academy of Certified Archivists Exam Development Committee, where she focused on the issue of visual materials-related questions. Tim Hawkins has just been appointed to that committee. If you are interested in being involved in work of the ACA Exam Development Committee, please contact Tim.

As a reminder to our readers, the Visual Materials Section Web page, with back issues of *Views*, can be found at:

http://www.gsu.edu/~libpjr/vm.htm

Miriam Meislik New Chair-Elect

Beth Bilderback reminded the membership of the Architectural Records Roundtable meeting the next morning at 8 am, in the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library. She also mentioned an exciting educational opportunity that Roundtable members had enjoyed this year, a 3-day conference on architectural records held in Philadelphia, and announced that an Architectural Records Roundtable listserv had been established.

Judi Hoffman-Bashant followed with a plug for the Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Roundtable meeting, also the following morning at 8 am.

Mary Ide announced the upcoming Association of Moving Image Archivists conference, November 13-18 in Los Angeles. AMIA is projecting around 1000 registrants with lots of vendors and both basic and intermediate workshops before the conference. She also announced the association's new Web site, at <amianet.org/>; its new professional journal, *The Silver Light*; a one-day symposium on the future of archival moving image education and training; and four scholarships awarded by AMIA this year. She continued on with the report from AMIA's Cataloging and Documentation Committee for the absent Jane D. Johnson. Co-publication of the AMIA Compendium of Archival Moving Image Cataloging Practice was approved by the SAA Board the previous Wednesday, and the project was moving ahead to the contract stage. The 300-page Compendium will be available in print, while a 600-page appendix will be made available on the AMIA Web site. The AMIA C&D Committee also received \$25,000 from the National Film Preservation Board to support the work of the National Cataloging Project Subcommittee, which has hired a consultant to do a feasibility plan for a national moving image cataloging center and Web site gateway.

Committee Reports:

Tim Hawkins reported that he was the only one on the Advanced Workshop Committee, and asked for interested volunteers. Two proposals were submitted for advanced workshops for the 2000 conference, one on marketing of visual images and one on establishing copying services. The latter proposal was accepted, and Tim taught the workshop Monday and Tuesday. He thought the workshop went "okay," but would like to improve and re-do it for next year. John also urged the submission of ideas for other advanced workshops.

VISUAL MATERIALS SECTION LEADERSHIP ROSTER

http://www.gsu.edu/~libpjr/vm.htm

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Elections/Nominating

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Newsletter

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Laurie A. Baty

Three-Year Plan

Miriam Meislik

Web Site

Tim Hawkins

Website Images Policies and Guidelines

Miriam Meislik

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Tim Hawkins

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As Chair of the Bibliography Committee, Larry Landis reviewed a number of items over the past year and recommended two for inclusion in the section bibliography: Seizing the Light: A History of Photography by Robert J. Hirsch, and The American Tintype by Floyd Rinhart, et al. Four other titles were also possibilities, but he had not yet had the chance to look at them: Burning With Desire: The Conception of Photography by Geoffrey Batchen, The Aerial Photo Sourcebook by Mary Rose Collins, A New History of Photography, and Ghost in the Shell: Photography and the Human Soul, 1850-2000 by Robert A. Sobieszek. Larry asked for further recommendations and input from the membership.

Laurie A. Baty, Chair of the Publications Committee, gave her "annual request" regarding items for Views-exhibit information, book reviews, news, anything! Please send this information to her at <lab0254@aol.com>. She also discussed a problem with the SAA database, which was changed after last year's annual meeting and had dropped out names. Most of the VM Section did not get all three issues of Views this past year. Laurie had pointed out the problem to Susan Fox and it was somewhat corrected by the April issue and mostly corrected by the August issue. If you are not getting your copy of Views, please contact SAA so that they can track down the remaining problems. Views is now available on the VM Section Web site at http:// www.gsu.edu/~libpjr/vm.htm>. Deadlines for submissions to Views continue to be October 1, February 1, and June 1. Laurie thanked Bruce Johnson for his 11 years as assistant editor. She also announced that they are working on a cumulative index for Views from 1989 (when Laurie took over as editor) to the present, and will post the index on the section Web site when it is finished.

Tim Hawkins reported for the absent Miriam Meislik concerning the Web Site Images Policies and Guidelines Committee. Miriam has gathered some links and would like to post guidelines and policies, but she needs help. Please contact her at <miriam+@pitt.edu> if you are interested. Her page can be viewed at http://www.pitt.edu/~miriam/webimages.html>.

James Eason briefly reported on the VMCAR/VM listserv, VISUALMAT, and how to subscribe. Judi Hoffman announced that the listserv was now official and available through the SAA Web site.

Richard Pearce-Moses, the VM Section liaison to SAA Council, encouraged participation in SAA not only through the Section but in general. He feels it is very important for visual material people to be vocal and have their views represented by membership in Council and SAA committees. He also encouraged submission of an advanced workshop proposal as a way to gain recognition while learning ourselves. Richard is concerned that the Section faces a challenge in promulgating visual materials practices; while once the Section enjoyed an identity through being somewhat of a ghetto, that identity is beginning to break down with the widespread acceptance of non-visual materials-specific standards and practices, such as EAD. The best way to contact Richard with thoughts or questions is by e-mail.

The meeting was turned over to Elections Committee Chair Tim Hawkins at 9:00 am. He read candidate Miriam Meislik's statement in her absence. Because only one candidate was running for Chair-Elect, Tim called for a show of hands versus the usual balloting, and Miriam was elected.

All leadership addresses will be found on page 2 of this issue of Views.

There was some question of whether or not the Section Bylaws allow nominations from the floor, but it became a moot question when there were none.

The meeting was then turned over to incoming Chair James K. Burant. James introduced Susan Tucker of the Newcomb Center, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, who presented an interesting slide show and discussion of turn-of-the-century scrapbooks. The presentation prompted a lively discussion of why scrapbooks became popular at that moment in time, as they are again now.

Jim read a call by Kris Kiesling for a liaison from the Section to the SAA Standards Committee, and Marcy Quinn volunteered to serve as that liaison.

Jim then led a discussion on program proposals for the 2001 Annual Meeting. He suggested that perhaps Susan's presentation begged the question of a proposal on scrapbooks in archives; how to handle, preserve, and digitize them. Douglas Haller agreed to shepherd a proposal on scrapbooks and albums, dealing with both issues of the past and what they mean for archivists in the future. Other ideas for program proposals, and the person shepherding the idea, were: the image of archivists (James K. Burant); appraisal of and creation of records schedules for architectural and landscape records (Waverly Lowell); copyright and access issues for still, moving, and digital images (Sara Meyerson, Douglas Haller?); fading, storage, access, and other problems with color slides and transparencies (Margie Compton); and contracts for outsourcing preservation of visual materials (Sara Meyerson).

The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 am. Notes submitted by Judi Hoffman-Bashant.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

James K. Burant, National Archives of Canada <jburant@archives.ca>

Denver was great! A visually exciting city (the magnificent backdrop of the Rockies, and the wonderful architecture of the State Capitol, the Denver Public Library, and the Denver Art Museum), it also offered a wide variety of attractions for everyone attending the conference—from micro-breweries to baseball games, shopping, a food festival, and oh, yeah!, the SAA conference itself. For our section members, there was a cornucopia of Visual Materials events during the conference—2 workshops, 9 sessions, the annual business meeting, 2 roundtable meetings, and visits to the Denver Art Museum, the Colorado Historical Society, and the Denver Public Library exhibits. While I tried desperately to get to every event, I didn't succeed, not least because some of the VM sessions were opposite each other in the program—something we've asked the Program Committee to look at again and amend for next year in Washington, DC.

My own feelings about the Conference were very positive. Although my pre-conference visit to Rocky Mountains National Park was perhaps my own visual highlight for the week, my professional concerns about visual materials were given a boost by outgoing SAA president Thomas Hickerson's address in the opening plenary. In this address, he stated that one of the SAA's major concerns for the 21st century should be the need for greater attention to be paid for non-textual records. especially records which documented art, architecture, theatre, performance, and other cultural aspects of our lives—and went so far as to state that up to 50 percent of archival resources should be devoted to non-textual records. This was encouraging indeed. As I attended further sessions on the digitization of visual materials, both in terms of methodologies. and collaborative projects, on image access, on aspects of film archives, and on cataloguing and identification, I could feel the energy and enthusiasm of the presenters and the audiences toward the efforts being made in dealing with visual materials. The Section meeting, attended by over 60 people, was a huge success (other than the lost t-shirt problem), with many participants engaging in thoughtful discussions about 2001 session proposals, the reports of the various committees, and reacting to a stimulating and enjoyable presentation on albums and scrapbooks by Susan Tucker of Tulane University. One VM member later told me that Susan's talk had been the magic moment of the conference for her, and that it had inspired her as nothing else had during the other three days.

Still, with the conference now in the past, it is time to move forward. Seven session proposals were discussed during the business meeting, and several of these have moved forward to the Program Committee for review. In addition, VM has thrown its support behind other, non-VM specific session proposals where our interests are likely to be involved. There are other ongoing projects which Miriam Meislik and I will be working on in the next several months, as we try to move the section's agenda forward, prepare for Washington in 2001, and maintain the VM Section's interests in the larger SAA community.

FROM THE CHAIR-ELECT Miriam Meislik

Thank you to everyone who took time to vote in the Visual Materials Section election. I was excited to be asked to run (again) and very excited to be elected.

As most of you know by now, I am chair of the Web Site Images Polices and Guidelines Committee [See following report—Ed.] This committee evolved from an idea that we as the Visual Materials Section need to take a leadership role in informing other SAA members about the issue of putting their collections on the World Wide Web. I am particularly interested in protecting our visual resources. I am looking for members willing to contribute to the site and make suggestions on ways we can inform our colleagues about placing their visual resources on the Web.

I plan to spend this year working closely with James Burant, our new chair. Please contact me with ideas and suggestions. I want to know what issues and challenges you feel face the visual materials profession. Don't forget to think about program proposals!

WEB SITE IMAGES POLICIES AND GUIDELINES COMMITTEE

Miriam Meislik

The committee is currently composed of one member. There is now a Web site for the committee containing links to sources regarding scanning, copyright, image protection, and image creation that provides a one-stop site for information regarding the placement of visual images on the Web. We intend to continue to build this site by including links to guidelines and policies created by other institutions as a reference for other section members and other archivists. It would also be nice if we could actually post policies and guidelines on the site. If anyone is interested in being part of this committee or has any suggestions about site design and topics covered, please email the suggestions to me. The site is at http://www.pitt.edu/~miriam/webimages.html.

AMIA CATALOGING AND DOCUMENTATION COMMITTEE Jane D. Johnson

The Cataloging and Documentation Committee has been working right along on several projects. One thing to look for in the near future is a C&D section on the AMIA Web site. The Committee has submitted a host of interesting documents for this site, which is being revamped as we speak http://amianet.org/>.

Among the Web site additions will be selected portions of the long-awaited *Cataloging Compendium*, which is now complete and awaiting publication. The *Compendium* presents the varied cataloging practices of its 27 participating institutions, in order to help provide solutions to cataloging problems and generate discussion of moving image cataloging issues. We hope to announce availability of a full print publication very soon.

The National Film Preservation Board of the Library of Congress has generously offered \$25,000 in funding to support the work of the C&D Committee's National Cataloging Project Subcommittee, which will hire a consultant to prepare a comprehensive report detailing the feasibility of creating a national moving image cataloging center and Web site gateway. This Subcommittee is the successor to the AMIA Committee on the U.S. National Moving Image Preservation Plans (CUSNMIPP) Cataloging Task Force.

Arlene Balkansky (Library of Congress) reports that the revised *Archival Moving Image Materials: a Cataloging Manual* (AMIM2) should be available by late this summer from the Library of Congress Cataloging Distribution Service. Plans are to publish it in loose-leaf binder format and also electronically as part of the *Cataloger's Desktop* (also available from CDS). Availability and order information, including price, will be announced on the CDS Web site http://www.loc.gov/cds/>. AMIM2 updates will be posted online on the Cataloging Policy and Support Office Web site (http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/> and published in the Library of Congress *Cataloging Service Bulletin*.

The Outreach Subcommittee, which was formed to conduct a population survey of the C&D Committee membership in order to determine member interest, expertise, ideas, etc., has completed its survey and is now

compiling the responses. The report will be delivered at the annual conference and published in the *AMIA Newsletter*. A quick review shows that members believe we're on track, tend to prioritize the Committee's standards creation and Web site communication functions, and are hesitant to list their areas of expertise!!

AMIA's 10th annual conference will be held November 13-18, 2000, in Los Angeles.

For more information on the conference, AMIA projects, or AMIA in general, visit the AMIA Web site at http://amianet.org/, or contact me. I welcome input about the Committee's work, future projects, etc. Please do not hesitate to send your questions and comments.

ARCHITECTURAL RECORDS ROUNDTABLE Beth Bilderback

The Architectural Records Roundtable met in the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library on September 2, 2000. After a very interesting program on the architectural holdings by the department's staff and a tour of the storage and work areas, the roundtable held a business meeting. Mary Woolever agreed to continue for another year with Sarah Turner, AIA Archives, as co-chair. Tawny Ryan Nelb agreed to be the Roundtable's liaison with the SAA Standards Committee. Maygene Daniels provided an update on the International Confederation of Architectural Museums. She said they are forming a North American section open to individuals, and she encouraged everyone to consider participating.

Susan DuBois, Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts, reported that presentations from the May architectural records conference in Philadelphia will be online by the end of the month. There will be handouts and links used in the presentations as well. Their Web address is http://www.ccaha.org/> She also said CCAHA wants to provide a similar program in Chicago in 2002 and would like to have letters of support indicating how valuable the 2000 program was. These letters will be used in proposals to granting agencies.

Waverly Lowell, University of California, Berkeley's Environmental Design Archives, announced the imminent release of their descriptive guidelines at a minimal cost. The guide is based on the presentation she and Kelcy Shepherd made at the Philadelphia conference. Also, EDA's new Web address is http://www.ced.berkeley.edu/cedarchives/». Sarah Turner indicated they are revamping the AIA Web site so the library and archives will be more visible. Also, the AIA audiovisual collections catalogue is available for a purchase price of \$5.00 which can be put toward a rental of their resources.

There was some discussion about session proposals for next year's meeting. Waverly is working on a proposal that came out of the Visual Materials Section meeting on scheduling and appraisal of architectural and landscape drawings. The Roundtable agreed this would be a good topic and gave their endorsement. Mary Woolever agreed to work on a session looking at international architectural records projects for 2001.

New from other places includes the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Project, which can be viewed on the Athenaeum of Philadelphia's Web site at http://www.PhilaAthenaeum.org/ or directly at http://pab1.gsfa.upenn.edu/pab/.

SCHLESINGER RECEIVES MELLON GRANT

The Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America announced that it has received a grant of \$295,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to complete the cataloging and digitization of 20,000 photographs as part of the library's Photo Access project. "This will make available to the general public a treasure trove of images" said Jane Knowles, the acting director of the library.

The award builds on earlier grants from the Mellon Foundation and other sources that have already helped the library create and implement a system for providing electronic access to its holdings. "Before the Photo Access database it was often cumbersome to locate our photographs, and researchers had to rely on a staff member's knowledge of the collections," said Jacalyn Blume, the coordinator of the project. The 20,000 new photographs, along with 16,000 previously digitized images, will be available on the Internet initially as part of Harvard's university-wide Visual Information Access (VIA) database http://via.harvard.edu:748/html/VIA.html. Over 10,000 fully cataloged images are currently in VIA.

The photographs are part of a significant collection of historic images that documents the lives of American women and is useful to a broad range of scholars. "Our collections are rich in images that both raise and answer questions about material culture, social history, gender and women's studies, the built environment, geography and regionalism, childhood, and a host of other topics," said Kathryn Allamong Jacob, the Schlesinger's curator of manuscripts. "The crossdiscipline research this project will facilitate is its most exciting feature."

For more information, please contact Jacalyn Blume, Project Coordinator, The Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, (617) 495-8647.

IN PRINT

The Books

Allodi, Mary, Burant, James K., and Tovell, Rosemary L. *The Stone Age. Canadian Lithography from its Beginnings*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2000. Order from the gallery at 380 Sussex Drive, Ottawa K1N 9N4, or visit the museum online at http://national.gallery.ca/>.

Brodie, Judith, and Cate, Phillip Dennis. *Prints Abound: Paris in the 1890s From the Collections of Virginia and Ira Jackson and the National Gallery of Art.* Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 2000. 183 p. \$39.95 (paper). To order call 1-800-697-9350 or (301) 322-5900.

Jezierski, John Vincent. *Enterprising Images, The Goodridge Brothers, African American Photographers, 1847-1922.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000. 320 p. ISBN 0-8143-2451-8 \$34.95 (cloth).

Kenney, Anne R., and Rieger, Oya Y. *Moving Theory into Practice. Digital Imaging for Libraries and Archives.* Mountain View, CA: RLG, 2000. about \$70.

Library of Congress. *Archival Moving Image Materials: A Cataloguing Manual.* Availability and order information, including price, will be announced on the CDS Web site http://www.loc.gov/cds/>.

Palmquist, Peter, ed. *Photographers. A Sourcebook for Historical Research.* New edition. Nevada City, CA: Carl Mautz Publishing, 2000. 154 p. ISBN 1-887694-18-8 \$45

The Society of American Archivists

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(paper) ISBN 1-887694-17X \$65 (cloth). Order from Mautz, 228 Commercial Street, PMB 522, Nevada City, CA 95959.

Slade, George, ed., with a preface by VM Section member Bonnie Wilson. *Minnesota in Our Time. A Photography Portrait*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 2000. 160 p. ISBN 0-87351-382-7 (cloth) \$45, 0-87351-383-5 (paper) \$27.50 Order from: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 345 Kellogg Blvd., West, St. Paul, MN 55102-1906 (1-800-647-7827; http://www.mnhs.org/mhspress/). To be reviewed.

WHAT'S UP

through February 22, 2001. Prints Abound: Paris in the 1890s From the Collections of Virginia and Ira Jackson and the National Gallery of Art. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

through January 28, 2001. *Art Nouveau, 1890-1914*. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

opens January 28. Modern Art and America: Alfred Stieglitz and His New York Galleries. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Plan ahead:

opens June 3. *The Unfinished Print*. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

opens June 3. *Prints by Jasper John*. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

ARTFUL DODGING: Things Heard, Enhanced, and Passed On

Colorado. We've heard about Rocky Mountain highs (at least those of us who are old enough to know about them), but a new Rocky Mountain high was reached shortly

after the Denver meeting when our former Chair Judi Hoffman hyphenated her last name to Hoffman-Bashant. Knowing that Judi has faced what would seem to be many insurmountable family tragedies in the last few years, we hope the page has now turned and wish her much happiness in her new married life. PHOTO HERE.

Indianapolis, IN. We missed Stephen Fletcher at the annual meeting, but heard from him shortly thereafter. He recently had a show of his own work, "Present Tense: Moments in Blacks, Whites, & Grays" at The Photography Gallery, in Indianapolis, "Featuring Fine Art Photography." According to Stephen, it was his first oneman show with 38 photographs. Congrats, Stephen!

Views: The Newsletter of the Visual Materials Section of the Society of American Archivists is published three times a year by and for the Visual Materials Section. For membership information, call or write the Society of American Archivists, 527 S. Wells St., 5th Floor, Chicago, IL 60607, (312) 922-0140.

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Your comments and suggestions for improvements will always receive a cordial hearing. The next deadline is February 1, 2001. Opinions expressed are those of the authors.

All leadership addresses will be found on page 2 of this issue of Views.