

THE WATERMARK

Newsletter of the Association of Librarians in the
History of the Health Sciences

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TIME CAPSULES

Those of you who subscribe to the *Archives & Archivists List*, an electronic bulletin board, will recall "The Great E-Mail Time Capsule Debate of 1991." The message I sent over BITNET on November 5 resulted in a lively discussion on time capsules. In the next 10 days, more than two dozen messages were sent over the network. Besides gathering considerable information on the subject, I was impressed by how useful electronic networking can be and how eagerly colleagues from various institutions responded to my request for information.

This is how it all began. My institution has been celebrating its 100th anniversary last year (1991). As part of the centennial activities, the administration was planning a time capsule, and I was invited to participate in the decision-making process. It was then that I sent my E-mail message, asking for feedback from the archival profession.

From the variety of responses sent to the discussion group, it became clear that the archival profession does not and should not promote time capsules. One person thought it was a waste of time, and another one noted that there was nothing found in time capsules that already had not been preserved in the archives. As a prominent archivist said, "Every archives is a time capsule. Why hide something for 100 years?"

Many of us agree, however, that time capsules are good public relations tools. Often archivists are invited to attend the opening ceremony of a time capsule and planners consult special collections librarians and conservators. The idea of a time capsule continues to fascinate the general public, and we should try to divert this public interest in preserving documents or memorabilia to archives and special collections.

According to the *Encyclopedia Americana*, the name "time capsule" was coined by the Westinghouse Electric Corp. when the company buried a torpedo-shaped container at the site of the New York World's

Fair of 1939. It is to be opened in the year 6939 A.D. Most time capsules today are placed in cornerstones of buildings or buried in the ground, the custom originating in ancient Babylon and Egypt, where inscriptions and figurines were hidden in temple foundations.

Here are some additional findings:

- There is a company in Nampa, Idaho, which makes time capsules. They have been in business since 1973.
- Time capsules come in different sizes and shapes, and cost \$1,000-\$4,000. They are made of stainless steel and filled with an inert gas (argon).
- Some of the most prestigious institutions commissioned time capsules in recent years. A medical school on the East Coast placed, in addition to the usual memorabilia, a pacemaker, X-rays, and pathological specimens in their time capsule. (Are we preserving our germs for posterity?)
- An on-line search we conducted indicated that articles on time capsules appear occasionally in the popular press.
- Time capsule enthusiasts have an organization, International Time Capsule Society, in Atlanta, GA.
- At least two institutions, Georgia Department of Archives and History, and Canadian Conservation Institute have written guidelines on time capsules.

As I put the finishing touches on this piece, I read in the *New York Times* (24 November 1991) that a time capsule was found in New York City during the demolition of a 1904 slaughterhouse. An archivist wearing white cotton gloves was present at the opening of the capsule, which contained newspapers, company records, and coins.

There is greater public interest in time capsules that most of us realize. As special collections librarians and archivists, we are likely to be asked our opinion sometime during our careers. I hope this summary will help prepare us for that moment.

by Inci Bowman
Moody Medical Library
The University of Texas, Medical Branch at Galveston



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ASSOCIATION OF LIBRARIANS IN THE HISTORY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES

Annual Meeting

University of Washington, Seattle, Thursday April 30,
1992

8:00 a.m.: Bus departure from hotel to Waterfront Activities Center, University of Washington

8:30-10:00 a.m.: ALHHS business meeting

10:00-10:30 a.m.: Coffee break

10:30-12:45 p.m.: Program: Collecting 20 Century Health Science Materials for the 21st Century

As we approach the 21st century, history of health sciences librarians/archivists must address a number of complex questions which affect our acquisitions for the future. Questions of scarcity, uniqueness, space and the need, perhaps, to justify the continuance of institutional support with finances and personnel. The following speakers will address these questions from their particular concerns and viewpoints:


1. William Helfand: 20th Century Ephemera
2. W. Bruce Fye: 20th Century Rare Books
3. Barbara Craig: Manuscripts and Archives
4. Joel Howell: The Historian's Role as Researcher and Teacher and the Use of 20th Century Materials

1:00-2:00 p.m.: Lunch at the Plaza Cafe

2:00 p.m.: Short walk to UW Special Collections for tours

3:00 pm: MeMa business meeting, ALHHS members may wish to join it at Health Sciences Library (HSLIC) Rare Book Room

Return to hotel on your own

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MURRAY GOTTLIEB PRIZE

Edwina Walls has been selected the recipient of the 1992 Murray Gottlieb Prize for her essay "Hot Springs Waters and Facilities for Healing: the U.S. Public Health Service Clinic and Camp Garraday." This annual award is sponsored by Ralph and Jo Grimes of the Old Hickory Bookshop in Brinklow, Maryland. It is in memory of Murray Gottlieb, a New York antiquarian bookdealer. The award, which carries with it an honorarium of \$100, is for the best unpublished essay on the history of medicine and allied sciences written by a health sciences librarian. It will be presented to Edwina on Wednesday, May 20 at 11:30 a.m. during MLA's 1992 annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

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APPOINTMENTS

Phyllis Kauffman is now in charge of the historical collections, Center for the Health Sciences Library at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

PUBLICATIONS

Diana Hook and Jeremy Norman have completed the magnificent catalog of the Haskell F. Norman Library of Science and Medicine on which they have been working for a number of years. Contact Jeremy for details.

The History of Medicine Division of the National Library of Medicine has just prepared a brief report on the printed books it acquired during the recently ended fiscal year (October 1990-September 1991). Compiled by Margaret Kaiser, it consists of an introduction noting highlights of the year and a list of the acquisitions arranged by century of publication. HMD also has available a similar report for fiscal year 1990 (October 1989-September 1990). For single copies of either or both reports, write: Chief, History of Medicine Division, National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, MD 20894.

Judith Overmier and John Senior report their volume, *Books and Manuscripts of The Bakken*, is forthcoming from Scarecrow Press and will be available in May. Full particulars available from Scarecrow Press, 52 Liberty Street, Box 4167, Metuchen, New Jersey, 08840.

If you haven't received your reprint of "How to Collect Old Medical Books in Europe: Where to Go and What to Look For," send to D.J. Canale and G.S.T. Cavanagh for a copy. It's a reprint of Garrison and Neumann's advice in 1911; it's as charming now as it was then.

CONGRATULATIONS

The Rare Book Collection of Washington University School of Medicine Library, St. Louis, has been awarded the second phase of a cataloging project grant by the Horncrest Foundation (Ossining, New York). Susan Alon reports that the two-year grant, in the amount of \$60,800 is being used to catalog and conserve more than 6,000 newly acquired titles from the 15th to 19th century.

Barbara Irwin recently received the annual University Excellence Award for Service from the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey "for her extraordinary skills and knowledge as special collections librarian and archivist at UMDNJ's University Libraries."

W. Bruce Fye has been selected to deliver the annual Morris H. Saffron Lecture at the Medical History Society of New Jersey's annual meeting, Tuesday, May 19, 1992. Bruce will speak on "Medical Book Collecting and Scholarship: Past, Present and Future." His presentation is the keynote address at a meeting on "Bibliophilia and Medical History" that will also include talks by Estelle Brodman and Thomas A. Horrocks.

ODDS AND ENDS

The portrait of Nobel Prize winner Joseph Erlanger that hangs in the Archives and Rare Books Reading Room of the Washington University School of Medicine Library was on the cover of JAMA last Fall.

Interested in planning a 1993 celebration/program/rare book exhibit in memory of Paracelsus? Contact Susan Alon at the Washington University School of Medicine Library, St. Louis, Missouri, 63110.

Nigel Phillips
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The directory information survey for Special Collections in the History of the Health Sciences (MLA/ Scarecrow Press, 1993) will be going out to you the first week in March. Judith Overmier and Nancy Zinn hope you will all send in lots of information...remember ALHHS helped fund this survey!

ACQUISITIONS

Four hundred titles have been added to the McGovern History of Medicine Collection at HAMTMC Library. Two hundred were purchased from the Texas Medical Association Library with special funds from John P. McGovern. The remainder were added through gifts from individuals, including Dr. McGovern, and from small professional groups like the Houston Ophthalmological Society and the Houston Surgical Society.

A copy of *Phytanthoza iconographia sive conspectus... Plantarum, Arborum, Fruticum, Florum, Fructuum, Fungorum...* was presented to the Archives and Rare Book Division of the Washington University School of Medicine Library by Jean Frederick and Verna Dorothea Rogier. The Rogier family brought the magnificent four-volume book with them in 1831 when they emigrated from Switzerland. The book, published in Germany from 1737 to 1745, contains 1,250 hand colored plates and is valued at more than \$100,000.



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POSITION ANNOUNCEMENTS

DUKE UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER LIBRARY TRENT COLLECTION CURATOR

The Trent Collection is a 20,000-volume collection of rare books, manuscripts, and secondary works in the history of medicine. The Trent curator reports to the director of the Duke University Medical Center Library. Responsibilities in the Trent Collection will include maintenance of the rare book collection, formulation of collection development policies, selection of items, preparation of exhibits, reference work, collaboration on research with patrons, bibliographic instruction, supervision of assistants, participation in other Medical Center Library functions as required, and outreach to the Medical Center and other parts of the Duke University community. This professional library position also carries with it the possibility of an appointment as a lecturer in the history department and in the projected Josiah Charles Trent Program in the History of Medicine. Responsibilities in the history department could include participation in the teaching program and other scholarly activity. Requirements: ALA-accredited MLS and significant experience in the history of medicine or the history of science. Academic or research library experience. Excellent communication and management skills. Knowledge of preservation processes. Salary range: \$26,000-\$45,000+, commensurate with experience. Applications will be accepted until position is filled. Send resume and the names of 3 references to Susan Feinglos, Acting Director, Duke University Medical Center Library, Durham, North Carolina 27710.

**BAKKEN LIBRARY AND MUSEUM
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
DIRECTOR**

The Bakken: A Library and Museum of Electricity in Life is a private non-profit educational and research institution consisting of an outstanding permanent collection of rare books, manuscripts, and instruments relating primarily to the history of electricity especially in its therapeutic applications. The Director will have overall responsibility for the implementation of the mission of The Bakken and the supervision of its staff and budget. Among his or her specific responsibilities will be fund-raising, expansion of educational outreach programs, and public relations.

Minimum qualifications: Ph.D., preferably in history of science, technology, or medicine, or equivalent experience; high leadership and administrative abilities required.

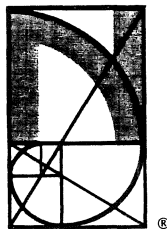
Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Starting date of appointment: negotiable, but no later than September 1992.

Deadline for receipt of applications: March 31, 1992.

Applicants should submit letter of application and curriculum vitae and also request that three letters of reference be sent to Roger H. Stuewer, Ph.D., Chairman, Search Committee, The Bakken, 3537 Zenith Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55416, U.S.A.

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**WANGENSTEEN HISTORICAL LIBRARY OF
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University of Minnesota**

Informed sources say that a search committee for the Curator's position is to be appointed with the next two weeks. Contact Ellen Nagle, Bio-Medical Library, Diehl Hall, 505 Essex Street, S.E., Minneapolis, MN., 55455, for information.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Committee Appointments, 1991-92.

Program (standing): Nancy Zinn (chair), Susan Alon, Barbara Irwin, Colleen Weum

Nominations (standing): Adele Lerner (chair), Lilly Sentz
Publications (ad hoc): Kathy Donahue (chair), Patrick Sims, Jonathon Erlen, Joan Klein.

Archives (ad hoc): Jodi Koste (chair), Sherrill Redmon, Dorothy Whitcomb

Results of the Straw Ballot on the Association's Name.

At our annual meeting in Cleveland last May, we held a lengthy discussion of the report of the Ad Hoc Name Change Committee. The views of the members present about this report and about other possible names for the ALHHS were very diverse, to say the least. As a consequence, we voted to hold a straw ballot and to add to it some names in addition to those recommended by the Name Change Committee.

The ballots were mailed out on October 10, to be returned before November 15. Voting members were to indicate their three preferences from among the six proposed names on the ballot. Their first choice would be marked with a 3, their second choice with a 2, and their third with a 1.

Sixty-five ballots were cast. If everyone had indicated three choices, there would have been a total of

some 390 points distributed among the six choices. However, some of the members did not indicate second and/or third choices so that the total number of points distributed amongst the six choices was actually 349. Consequently, in the results listed below, the percentage was calculated on the basis of 349, not 390.

Results in rank order:

1. 94 points (27%) Association of Librarians and Archivists in the History of Medicine
2. 70 points (20%) Archivists and Librarians in the History of the Health Sciences
3. 56 points (16%) Association of Librarians in the History of the Health Sciences [our present name]
4. 52 points (15%) Medical History Documentation Association
5. 39 points (11%) Association for the Documentation of the History of Medicine
6. 38 points (11%) John Shaw Billings Society

What to do next? Vote on the top two? Top four? Something else? We will need to make a decision at our meeting in Seattle. In the meantime, please let me and/or the Steering Committee members know your feelings on the changing of our name.

At our annual meeting in Seattle, in addition to attending the program being prepared by the Program Committee, we will need to make some important decisions about our name, an awards program, and a home for our archives. Hope to see you in Seattle.

Phil Teigen

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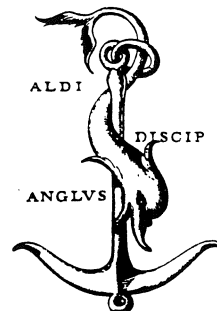
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MLA/HHSS

Annual Meeting Program

Sheraton Washington Hotel, Washington, D.C.
Wednesday, May 20, 1992

History of the Health Sciences Section Business Meeting
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m., Eisenhower Room

Program

9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., Taft Room
(Cosponsored by the Research Libraries Section)

OLD BOOKS IN A NEW AGE:

Role of a Historical Collection in Today's Medical Library

Moderator: John Parascandola, Ph.D., Chief, History of
Medicine Division, National Library of Medicine

In a time of new technology and shrinking
budgets, why should medical libraries devote human and
fiscal resources to building and maintaining collections of

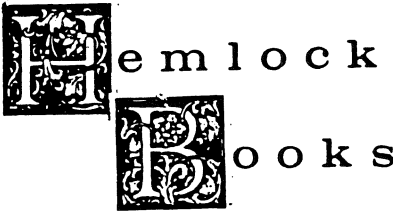
rare books, manuscripts, and other historical materials? The purpose of the next HHSS/MLA program session is to explore the role that historical collections can play in today's medical library, from the perspectives of a library director, a special collections librarian, and a faculty member user. Consideration will be given to the use of historical collections to support such activities as: teaching and research in the history of the health sciences, education in the health sciences, library exhibits, "friends" groups, symposia and other conferences, and the humanistic goals of medical institutions.

Speaking from the perspective of a medical library director will be Lucretia W. McClure, Director of the Edward G. Miner Library, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry. Nancy W. Zinn, Special Collections Librarian at the University of California, San Francisco Library will speak from the perspective of a special collections librarian. The faculty member user of the collections will be represented by Robert J.T. Joy, M.D., Professor of Medical History, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

OTHER HISTORICAL PORTIONS OF MLA

The Oral History Committee meets Sunday, May 17, from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. and again from 7:30-9:00 p.m., Monday, May 18. Awards Juries, including the Murray Gottlieb Prize Essay Jury, will meet from 7:00 - 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 19. Chapter Sharing Lunch and Roundtables...Roundtable 2 is on Archives Tuesday, May 19 11:30 - 1:00 p.m. 1:30 - 3:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 19, Poster Session II..."The Gentlemen From MLA: an Introduction to Four Leaders of the Medical Library Association." Wednesday, May 20, 1:30 - 4:00, the Dental Section is sponsoring a speaker on "Aspects of Dental History."

The Watermark is issued quarterly to members of this Association and subscribers. ALHHS officers are President: Phil Teigen, Deputy Chief of the History of Medicine Division, National Library of Medicine, 8600 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Maryland, 20894; Secretary-Treasurer: Edwina Walls, 910 N. Martin, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72205-4122; Editor: Judith Overmier, School of Library and Information Studies, 401 West Brooks, Room 123, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK 73019. Submission deadlines: May 30, August 29, November 30, February 28.



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