

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
January 23 – 26, 2013
Chicago, Illinois**

**President's Report
(Prepared by Jackie Dooley)**

This report covers the period from August 12, 2012, through January 14, 2013.

Advocacy Actions

The decision of the Georgia Secretary of State in September 2012 to effectively close the Georgia Archives to public use due to budget cuts led to widespread outcry across the nation in protest of this action. The response from the citizens and professional organizations of Georgia was truly impressive. I sent a letter to the Secretary of State adding SAA's voice to the protest. The aggregate howl and cry clearly had an impact: first, the secretary of state agreed to maintain some open hours and retain five staff members (instead of three), and discussions are now underway to place the Archives under the state university system (where the state library already resides). I will be writing a letter to the chair of the university's advisory committee suggesting some points for consideration and offering SAA's assistance, should the group have a need for our help.

The untold devastation that Hurricane Sandy wrought on the Northeast in November 2012, particularly New York and New Jersey, also resulted in a huge response from throughout the nation. SAA participated by promoting our National Disaster Recovery Fund for Archives. Our calls for donations garnered \$5,232.19 to bolster the fund, and we awarded \$2,000 grants to five local organizations.

Presidential/Leadership Blog

Off the Record, which was launched on 30 July, has been an effective means of informal communication to the membership and beyond for the past five months. Eighteen posts are now online—ten written by me, five by other members of the Council, two by committee chairs, and one by immediate past president Gregor Trinkaus-Randall—all of whom have my profuse thanks. I've been delighted at this widely distributed authorship of the posts, which I believe is important if this means of communication is going to continue on into the future.

Some posts have generated considerable comment, particularly those in which the author specifically solicited it or took a controversial stand. In addition to comments posted on the site, I've seen considerable feedback from other directions, including direct messages to me, Twitter conversations, others' blogs, and miscellaneous other venues.

I believe that this blog has helped raise SAA's profile and credibility in the eyes of many of the members who follow it. Clearly a segment of our membership values informal communication highly.

Collaboration with ARL for DAS Workshops

The Association of Research Libraries program director responsible for ARL's special collections and archives working group continues to work closely with SAA's Education Director toward collaboration to offer DAS workshops to ARL member libraries. Members of the working group enthusiastically support this endeavor, as do other ARL units up to and including the Board. A call went out to all ARL directors in December soliciting host sites for the one-week curriculum of DAS courses that we have devised. Program development will continue in the coming months, and we hope to have the first offering in place sometime in the spring or summer.

Visit to ALA Washington D.C. Office

While in Washington D.C. in October for the semi-annual ARL meeting, I stopped by the American Library Association's Washington office to get acquainted and learn about ALA's advocacy program. As a professional organization that has a far larger membership than does SAA, as well as an enormous endowment, ALA is well positioned for a large (16 staff) and effective advocacy program. I was extremely impressed with the knowledge, skill, and passion of both the director and the three other staff members whom I met. Importantly, I learned that ALA considers issues related to archives, particularly government archives, to be squarely within their purview, particularly in the contexts of legislative action and open access to information. SAA would do well to stay in good touch with ALA in the advocacy arena and to consider collaborations as appropriate. We could learn a lot from their tactics and professionalism, and we have many issues in common.

NARA Symposium on Education Across the LAM Community

In October 2012, David Ferriero (AOTUS) contacted the presidents of SAA, ALA, and AAM (American Alliance of Museums – formerly the American Association of Museums) to ask us to serve as an informal planning committee for a one-day symposium he will host on issues related to education across the archives, library, and museum communities. He is particularly interested in addressing overlapping needs for skill development that might be satisfied by educational opportunities appropriate to more than one of these communities. Delmas is funding this meeting.

After initially scheduling the meeting for December, David has delayed it until the spring. No firm date yet.

CoSA/NAGARA/SAA Leadership Meetings

The leadership (presidents, vice presidents, and executive directors) of the above three organizations holds a conference call every month or six weeks to discuss *ad hoc* issues of mutual interest. Periodically we meet with designated NARA staff to address a topic on which NARA would particularly like to update us and/or discuss. These meetings serve well to keep avenues of communication open across our allied organizations.

Appointments

Concurrent with the Council's August discussion and revision of the representative's description, appointed Terry Baxter as SAA's representative to the Academy of Certified Archivists. Terry is both a second-year Council member and a Certified Archivist.

The new Communications Task Force was appointed and began its work in late August. Members are Dara Baker (chair), Brittany Adams, Brad Houston, Beth Kaplan, and Eira Tansey.

Appointed Cory Nimer as SAA's representative to ALA's Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access. CC:DA is the body within the ALA responsible for developing official ALA positions on additions to *RDA: Resource Description and Access*. SAA's CC:DA representative reports to the Standards Committee.

Appointed Daniel Pitti as SAA's representative to ICA's Committee on Best Practices and Standards. CBPS houses maintenance and development of standards and best practices and related activity within ICA. SAA's CBPS representative reports to the Standards Committee.

The new Glossary Working Group was appointed and began its work in September. Members are Rosemary Flynn (chair), Kristy Dixon, Geof Huth, Dawn Schmitz, Joseph Turrini, and Diane Vogt-O'Connor. Dennis Meissner is the Council liaison.

In consultation with appropriate parties, finalized 2012 Host Committee ([roster](#)) and 2012 Student Program Subcommittee ([roster](#)) appointments.

On the recommendation of the search committee for the new Publications Editor, I invited Chris Prom to accept this position. A superlative appointment.

Appointed Peter Gottlieb, former SAA President, to represent us on the NHPRC Board. Peter's vast experience, deep knowledge of issues, and ability to offer wise counsel will serve SAA and the profession well. He follows Tim Ericson, whose term expired on 31 December 2012 after ably serving SAA and NHPRC for three years.

Member Survey Council Conference Calls

The Council agreed in August to prepare a set of brief, informal white papers summarizing data from the 2012 member survey in six areas: continuing education, publications, member benefits, perceptions of the Council, strategic directions, and analysis of the 1,500 open-ended comments made by respondents. In order to get the conversation rolling in advance of our strategic priorities discussions in Chicago, I scheduled a series of six meetings, each led by a Council member, in which we explored each issue in some depth. These were very productive and will help move our discussions forward in Chicago.

In holding these meetings, we also came to recognize that periodic “live” discussion of the entire Council between face-to-face meetings is exceedingly valuable. Perhaps we and future Councils will identify other good opportunities for doing this.

Selection of Facilitator for Council Strategic Priorities Discussion

After Nancy Beaumont suggested Kathy Henrichs as facilitator for our strategic priorities discussions in Chicago, I spoke with Kathy and enthusiastically endorsed her to fulfill this role. Her experience is impressive, and her approach to planning the meeting has given me confidence that our discussions will be fruitful and will result in a set of priorities that will move the Society forward.

SAA Foundation Annual Appeal

I worked with SAA Foundation President Fynnette Eaton and Nancy Beaumont to plan the annual appeal to members for monetary donations to the Foundation. Tailored individual letters were sent to past presidents and all Fellows. All other members received a letter via email as well.

Invitation from ALA President to Attend Leadership Meeting

Maureen Sullivan, ALA President for 2012/2013, invited the presidents of various allied organizations, including SAA, to attend an informal meeting she is hosting at ALA’s Midwinter Meeting this month in Seattle. Her objective is information exchange across the cultural heritage sector. Because the meeting directly conflicts with our January Council meeting, Scott Cline (member of Council, 2009-2012) is representing SAA.

Working with Our Executive Director

One of the great pleasures of serving as SAA President is the opportunity it affords to work closely with Nancy Beaumont, our stellar Executive Director. We hold a weekly meeting by phone to discuss and make decisions about the myriad issues that arise, including most of those described above and a great many more. I have long admired Nancy’s dedication to ensuring that SAA is the best professional society it can possibly

be and in leading the executive office staff to serve our members to the very best of our ability. Now I see this work in great detail, and my admiration has increased all the more.

My sincere thanks go to Nancy for making the position of SAA President both enjoyable and doable. If I should be so lucky as to be seen as an effective President, it will principally be because she excels at guiding me and helping me look good!