

CAA NEWS

Spring CAA 2003



SPRING, 2003

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Spend a Saturday in Saratoga with CAA!

CAA is off to the races for our Spring Meeting at the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame, in Saratoga Springs on Saturday, April 12. Bring family and friends to Saratoga for a morning at the Museum and then continue with the ponies, lunch at one of Saratoga's distinctive restaurants, shop, or enjoy other distinctively Saratoga activities.

The day will begin at 10 am with Lori Fisher, Director of Curatorial Services, and Beth Sheffer, Collections Manager, at the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame, discussing the activities of the Museum as well as their experience with the production of "Seabiscuit," which was filmed in Saratoga last year. The Annual Business Meeting will be held before the presentation and light refreshments will be served. Watch your mail for further details.

Please RSVP to Amy Schindler by Wednesday, April 2, 2003 at (518) 437-3934 or via e-mail at: aschindler@uamail.albany.edu.

Additional Museum information is available through its Web site at <http://www.racingmuseum.org/>.



Hands-On-History: Teaching with Historical Records

by Mary Wallen, Director,
Albany County Hall of Records

When you watch a child read a handwritten document from a hundred years ago, you can see his face brighten and visualize his mind opening up wide to receive the information on the page. History doesn't come from textbooks; history is found in government records where our ancestors wrote down the events of their day. Places like the Albany County Hall of Records are the repositories of these records, and every citizen has a right to read these records and draw his own conclusions about events that happened in the past.

Records which Albany County holds include census records, maps, deeds, minute books, photographs, naturalizations, and police blotters. They provide a wealth of information on the growth of the community, improvements in health care, and on the lifestyles of past citizens.

Albany County invites teachers to bring their classes to the Hall of Records' search room to examine historical records and to conduct lessons based on these documents. We also offer the services of the

continued on p. 2

Capital Area Archivists of New York State

Three new exhibits at the University at Albany

Inappropriate Children's Books: An Historical Viewing, with examples drawn from the Miriam Snow Mathes Historical Children's Literature Collection in the M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany Libraries. Children's books and periodicals are written by adults for children and for the adults who monitor, buy, edit, distribute, and dispense children's reading. Therefore, children's books of all historical periods reflect the fears, biases, timidities, and cultural insensitivities, as well as the hopes and positive values, of adults. The exhibit is located in the Science Library lobby where it will be on view from mid-January to mid-April; and another section is in the Main Library lobby until mid-April. Items from the exhibit will be digitized in the Spring and Summer 2003 and available online in Fall 2003.

This exhibit is sponsored by the University Libraries Diversity Committee and was designed and mounted by Special Collections staff David Mitchell and Karen Grimwood. Mitchell, Curator Pro Bono of the Miriam Snow Mathes Historical Children's Literature Collection, will be delivering a lecture to coincide with this exhibit. The lecture is planned for April 2nd at 2pm. Please contact Amy Schindler at aschindler@uamail.albany.edu or (518) 437-3934 for further information and to RSVP.

Documenting Labor Inside and Out: Labor History in New York's Capital District traces labor history in Northeastern New York, with a special focus on the role that archival repositories play. This exhibit features a variety of items from labor collections held in the Archives of Public Affairs and Policy in the Grenander Department. The labor collections date back to the first union in Albany, the Albany Typographical Union No. 4, organized in 1850. Go to:

<http://library.albany.edu/speccoll/documentinglabor/>

The University at Albany's *Campus Buildings Historical Tour* documents the architectural history of the University at Albany dating back to 1844, when the school was known as the New York State Normal School. This exhibit includes information about University buildings that no longer exist, from the school's first temporary building on State Street (1844-1849), to the Willett Street Building destroyed by fire in January 1906. Go to:

<http://library.albany.edu/speccoll/campusbuildings/>

To learn more about these materials and others at the University at Albany, contact Brian Keough at (518)-437-3931 or bkeough@uamail.albany.edu.

continued from p. 1

Archivist to bring documents to the schools to complement teachers' lessons. We call this the Hands-On-History Program, and as the name suggests, it's an opportunity for students to handle primary sources.

Archivists are rewarded by sharing the excitement shown by students when they personalize history. A fourth grade girl giggles when she imagines cows strolling in downtown Albany as she reads "Cow Lane" on a 1794 map. A youngster studies a page from a 1905 Almshouse register and concludes that the inmate probably couldn't find a job because he was a recent immigrant and couldn't speak English. The late 19th century and early 20th century prisoner ID cards cause students to wonder about the nature of the crimes and the length of the punishment. Six months in jail for being homeless? A teenager is so excited about seeing his grandfather's name in a city directory from the early 1900's that he runs to the nearest phone to call him up.

In the past year, Albany County Hall of Records reached 316 children in 12 elementary school classrooms with archival documents. Local teachers are encouraged to contact the Archivist, Craig Carlson, at 436-

Mid Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC) 2002 Finding Aid Award Announcement

Submissions are now being accepted for the 2002 MARAC Finding Aid Award to recognize outstanding achievement in the preparation of finding aids, paper or electronic, by institutions in the MARAC region. The finding aids must be issued by an institution in the MARAC region. Nominated finding aids must have been available to the public in the calendar year 2002. More information is available at: <http://www.lib.umd.edu/MARAC/maracawde.htm#Finding>
Contact Brian Keough for nomination information, at (518)-437-3931 or: bkeough@uamail.albany.edu.

Capital Area Archivists of New York State

State Archives Welcomes New HDI Records

In 1999, the New York State Archives assumed responsibility for maintaining and expanding the Historic Documents Inventory (HDI), a vast Cornell University survey of the holdings of New York State's historical records repositories. Between 1978-93, HDI surveyors created more than 23,000 MARC records describing the holdings of approximately 1250 historical records repositories throughout New York State. These records were loaded into Excelsior, the shared online catalog of the State Archives and the State Library, in late 1999.

In early 2001, the State Archives began working with several repositories seeking to add new MARC records to the HDI and to revise existing HDI records. To date, more than 650 records describing the holdings of 10 repositories have been incorporated into the HDI, and the State Archives has added these records to the RLIN national bibliographic database.

The State Archives actively encourages every repository in the Capital District to contribute MARC records to the HDI. Adding records to the HDI is a great way to enable researchers to learn about your collections—and to meet the new Documentary

Heritage Program and Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund requirements concerning online access to descriptive tools! A guide outlining the submission process is available on request. This manual details HDI content requirements and the file formats that the State Archives can accept and includes information for those interested in engaging a consultant to produce MARC records.

If your institution participated in the original HDI survey, the State Archives can produce MARC-export or ASCII-text files that contain all of the HDI records describing your holdings. Several repositories throughout the state have requested such files. Some have added the HDI records into their local online catalogs without making any changes, thus increasing access to their holdings with minimal effort. Others edited the old records as needed, added new records describing material accessioned after the HDI survey was completed, and then submitted both the revised and new records to the State Archives.

To obtain a copy of the HDI Guide for Contributors or an electronic file containing all of the HDI records describing your repository's holdings, contact the Access Services unit of the State Archives at (518) 474-6926 or dhs@mail.nysed.gov

If you would like a paper copy of the HDI records describing your holdings, the ever-popular county "red guides" are still in print! For ordering information, consult the State Archives Web site (<http://www.archives.nysed.gov>)

◆ The College of Saint Rose catalogs videos with grant money

The Archives of the College of Saint Rose recently cataloged videos using grant money from the Regional Bibliographic Databases Program for a special cataloging project of non-book materials. College Archivist, Jean Root Mahalov, and volunteer, Mary Lindner, completed original cataloging for a total of ninety videos. Included were College Commencements, Convocations, Rose Days [an annual College pageant 1924-1968] and lectures held at the College. Original item records were added to OCLC and can also be seen in the College's Online Catalog and in CaDiLac Online [CDLC's Virtual Online Regional Catalog]. For more information, contact Jean at 454-5190.



CAA's Web site will be going through changes and updates in the weeks ahead. The site has found a new home and will be moving in the near future. The current address, <http://www.albany.edu/sisp/people/students/saa/CAA/index.htm>, will be shortened and the new site will provide easier access for the new CAA Webmaster Amy Schindler. After the move has been made we will provide a forwarding link, so the site will not be "lost." The move also means the pages will be easier to update, so you can expect to find more current information throughout the site including events at institutions and repositories in the Capital Region. Please send any events you would like to advertise or updates to contact information for your repository to Amy Schindler at aschindler@uamail.albany.edu.

Capital Area Archivists of New York State

New York State Archives: 25th Anniversary Celebrations

By Judy Hohmann
New York State Archives

“Archives at 25” Celebrated by Two Distinguished Speakers

Presidential historian **Michael R. Beschloss** will give the first “Archives at 25” lecture on May 7 at 7:00 p.m. in “The Egg” in Albany.

Described by *Newsweek* as “the nation’s leading presidential historian,” Beschloss is the author of seven books, the most recent being the New York Times bestseller, “The Conquerors, Roosevelt, Truman and the Destruction of Hitler’s Germany, 1941-1945.” He is a regular commentator on PBS’s *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* and a contributor to ABC News. He has become a familiar face to millions of television viewers, with whom he shares his knowledge of history and thoughts on political events. Beschloss’s appearance in Albany is made possible by the Archives Partnership Trust.

Journalist **Garrick Utley** will give the second “Archives at 25” lecture on October 28 at 7:00 p.m. at “The Egg” in Albany.

Utley is a veteran broadcast journalist. A former CNN contributor and former ABC and NBC news correspondent, he is the author of “You Should Have Been Here Yesterday: A Life in Television News.” Utley served five years with CNN and three years at ABC News’ chief foreign correspondent. Before ABC, he spent 30 years with NBC News covering international affairs and reporting from more than 70

countries. From 1982-1987, Utley served as NBC’s chief foreign correspondent and garnered several of journalism’s most distinguished awards. In 1984, he received the Overseas Press Club’s Edward R. Murrow Award for his reports on Soviet-American relations, and in 1986 Utley was given the George Foster Peabody Award for his contributions to the program, *Vietnam: Ten Years Later*. Utley’s appearance in Albany is made possible by the Archives Partnership Trust.

New History Kiosk on the Thruway

The latest *History Happened Here* kiosk will be installed at the Ulster Thruway Travel Plaza near Kingston, about 90 miles north of New York City early this Spring. Like its six counterparts in other travel plazas along the highway, this kiosk explains the history of the area within a twenty-five mile radius of the travel plaza. The kiosk is a collaboration of the State Archives, the Thruway Authority and Host Marriott Services.

Literacy Project to Debut in 2003

The Latino and Chinese communities in Yonkers, Albany, Syracuse and Buffalo are participating in the development of an exciting new website undertaken by the State Archives, with support from a grant from Verizon Communications to the Archives Partnership Trust. Photographs and documents from these communities will form the core of learning materials about the historical experiences of these ethnic groups in these cities. While the materials will be interesting to a broad range of people, special

attention will be given to promoting the site to educators of Latino and Chinese immigrant children with language difficulties. The site will include document-based questions to help teachers and students meet new State Education Department learning standards.

Ulster Count Clerk's Office Launches Website

The Ulster County Clerk's Office recently launched a website for the Ulster County Archives at <http://archives.co.ulster.ny.us/>. The site includes some digitized historical records, series descriptions, and indexes to selected series, including early deed books and naturalization records. For further information, contact Laurie Hancock at ghan@co.ulster.ny.us.

Archives Magazine Wins Award

“New York Archives” magazine has received the Gold Award for magazines from the judges of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District II, the highest award in the magazine category. CASE will present the award to representatives of the New York State Archives at the end of January in New York City. This is the fourth award this magazine has received in only its second year of publication.

LOAC Conference in Saratoga

The next Lake Ontario Archives Conference will be at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, NY, on June 12-13, 2003.

Capital Area Archivists of New York State

MARAC in Trenton, New Jersey

Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference will be meeting in Trenton, New Jersey for its Spring 2003 Conference April 24-26. The conference will be held at the Lafayette Yard Marriott located in downtown Trenton, one block from the New Jersey State House, adjacent to the newly renovated Trenton War Memorial, an 1,800-seat theater on the National Register of Historic Places and within walking distance to other historic sites. For more information about the conference go to:

<http://www.lib.umd.edu/MARAC/maraccon.htm>

New England Archivists Spring meeting

The New England Archivists Spring meeting will be at Simmons College in Boston, MA on April 11-12, 2003. More information on the meeting can be found on the NEA webpage at: <http://nils.lib.tufts.edu/newengarch/meetings/index.html>

“Documentation Projects”

Thursday, March 20, 9 am-1 pm
Capital District Library Council.

This new New York State Archives workshop will provide a step-by-step overview of creating and implementing documentation projects. The presenters will be John Suter, New York State Archives and James Corsaro, Rensselaer County Historical Society. For more information or registration, contact Susan D'Entremont at SD'Entremont@cdlc.org or (518) 438-2500. Workshop is free.

“Internet Access to New York's

Historical Records”

Saturday, May 10, 10 am-3 pm
Fulton-Montgomery Community College, cost of approximately \$15 (includes lunch).

This workshop will provide participants with information on how to locate historical records using the Internet, explain the types of information relating to historical records available on the Internet, and identify sites that collect Internet addresses of archives, historical societies and libraries. The presenter will be Katie DeFazio, former Regional Archivist for the Central New York Region. For more information or registration, contact Susan D'Entremont at SD'Entremont@cdlc.org or (518) 438-2500.

Government Records Services, New York State Archives

“Preservation of Electronic Records” Workshop
By Jennifer O'Neill

The Government Records Services unit of the New York State Archives handles a variety of tasks, including providing advice to state agencies and local governments on preserving electronic records. Electronic records pose a special challenge to preservation efforts as technology is changing at a rapid pace and the media they are stored on has a relatively short life expectancy.

Electronic records exist in many different forms and formats. They can be found not only on computer media, such as diskettes, computer tapes and optical media, but also on audio tapes and videotapes. Some examples of electronic records include web pages, e-mail, databases, spreadsheets, and images.

Choosing the best preservation strategy can be difficult. Migration, the periodic transfer of data from one system to a newer system, has been the most common preservation technique because of its relative simplicity. Another common technique is to use standard data formats, such as ASCII, PDF and XML. Emulation is a potentially promising strategy that uses new hardware or software to imitate those that are obsolete. If you do not need to maintain the functionality of a record, printing the record to paper or microfilm may be the easiest solution. A short-term solution may be to maintain obsolete hardware and software to access your records. As none of these techniques are foolproof, it is often necessary to use a combination of different strategies to ensure preservation.

Ideally, electronic media should be used only as a temporary storage solution or as backups. Life expectancies for electronic media are short in terms of their composition and technical obsolescence. Computer tape, rather than diskettes or optical discs, appears to be the most stable storage media available. The ideal storage environment ranges between 45° and 65° F and 30% and 40% RH.

For more information on this topic, the Archives will be offering a new “Preservation of Electronic Records” workshop at various locations throughout the state this spring. In the Capital District, this workshop is scheduled for May 22nd (9 to 1) at the Town of Colonie's Public Operations Building in Latham.

Capital Area Archivists of New York
Membership Application and Renewal – 2003

Membership in Capital Area Archivists of New York (CAA) is available for individuals and institutions. Dues are only \$5 per year, and membership benefits include our informative newsletter and three meetings a year.

Please complete and return this form to:

Capital Area Archivists of New York
c/o Richard Sloma, Membership Chair
1552 Lexington Parkway
Niskayuna, NY 12309

Name

Title

Institution

Division, Department or Unit

Preferred Mailing Address

City, State, Zip Code

Is this your *home* or *business* address?

Business Telephone Number () _____ - _____
(with Area Code)

Fax Telephone Number () _____ - _____

Email Address

Institutional Website URL

Is this *a new membership* or *a renewal* ?

Please include annual membership dues of \$5, payable to **“Capital Area Archivists of New York”**

Information from this form will be included in the membership directory. Please mark any information that you do not want included in the directory.

Questions?

Contact Membership Chair, Rich Sloma at (518) 786-4879 or by email at slomar@crisny.org

Capital Area Archivists of New York Website:
<http://www.albany.edu/sisp/people/students/saa/CAA/index.htm>

For submissions to the next

CAA NEWS

please contact Jean Root Mahalov, CAA President

at

mahalovj@mail.strose.edu

Articles and announcements are accepted on an ongoing basis.