



# Welcome New Members!

The following individuals have joined the Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York since June 2007.

Marcia Bassett      Tiffany Loisel  
Queens Library Gallery      Woody Guthrie Archives

Christina Benson      Abigail Malangone  
City of New York Department of      The Winthrop Group  
Parks and Recreation

Melissa Bowling      Mary Manning  
Student, Pratt Institute      Adelphi University

Janet Bunde      Joanne Devaney McIntyre  
New York University      General Society of Mechanics  
and Trademen

Jennifer Chang      Dr. Patrick McNamara  
Diocese of Brooklyn Archives

Patricia Dohrenwend      Karen Murphy  
Westchester County Archives      City of New York DEP  
and Records Center

Diana Garcia      Tiffany Nixon  
MSKCC Information Systems

Jacquelin Kilberg      Carol Shulman  
McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.      Student, Palmer School, Long  
Island University

Ann Lee      Charlotte Strum  
Kirkland and Ellis, LLP      Rockefeller Archive Center

Kristen Leiper      Cynthia Tobar  
Whitney Museum

Lindsay Turley  
Whitney Museum

## MEMBERS OLD & NEW

## Volunteer with ART

What  
can you do  
to contribute  
to ART-NY's  
success?  
Start by  
contributing to  
one of these  
committees.

**Calendar:** Review Contributions, Solicit Photographs

Contact: [secretary@nycarchivists.org](mailto:secretary@nycarchivists.org)

**Fundraising:** Take part in coordinating efforts to meet ART's Fundraising Goals.

Contact: [president@nycarchivists.org](mailto:president@nycarchivists.org)

**Programming:** Assist in selecting locations, topics, and speakers.

Contact: [education@nycarchivists.org](mailto:education@nycarchivists.org)

**Communications and Outreach:** Write for the Newsletter, Design Brochures and Invitations. Contact: [outreach@nycarchivists.org](mailto:outreach@nycarchivists.org)

**Membership & Nominations:** Membership Directory, Monthly Meetings, Mailings, Award Recipients Selection for Annual Awards. Contact [membership@nycarchivists.org](mailto:membership@nycarchivists.org)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Clare Flemming, MA, CA  
*President*

Vanessa Cameron  
Columbia University  
*Vice President*

Larry Weimer  
Rutgers University  
*Treasurer*

Mary Manning  
Adelphi University  
*Secretary*

Chris Lacinak  
AudioVisual Preservation Solutions  
*Co-ordinator, Education Committee*

Rebecca Altermatt  
American Museum of Natural History  
*Co-ordinator, Communications &  
Outreach Committee*

Aviva Gray  
Federal Reserve Bank of New York  
*Co-ordinator,  
Meeting & Nominating Committee*

---

Webmaster  
*Daniel Sokolow*

---

Editor-in-Chief  
*Rachel Chatalbash*

Features Editor  
*Celia Hartmann*

Book Review Editor  
*Kristen Nyitray*

Newsletter Layout  
*Bonnie Marie Sauer*

---



[www.nycarchivists.org](http://www.nycarchivists.org)

# Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Editor's Note</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Feature Articles</b>  |           |
| <b>Archives Internships: Creating Value for Students and Institutions</b><br>Rachel Chatalbash   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Interview with the Archivist: William Casari</b><br>Ellen Mehling   | <b>12</b> |
| <b>Repository Profiles</b>   |           |
| <b>Saving What Is Already There: An Overview of the Brooklyn Navy Archive</b><br>Daniella Romano   | <b>11</b> |
| <b>An Archives Helps History Look Forward: Central Synagogue</b><br>Anne Mininberg   | <b>15</b> |
| <b>Book Reviews</b>  |           |
| <b>Archives and Justice: A South African Perspective</b> , by Verne Harris with a foreword by Terry Cook.<br>Review by Mario H. Ramirez                                      | <b>17</b> |
| <b>The Rape of Europa</b> , directed by Richrd Berge and Bonni Cohen.<br>Review by Jenella Young.  | <b>18</b> |
| <b>Working in Women's Archives: Researching Women's Private Literature and Archival Documents</b> , edited by Marlene Kadar and Helen M. Buss<br>Review by Penny Shima Glanz | <b>26</b> |
| <b>ART News</b>  |           |
| <b>Archivists Rountable Awards 2007</b>  | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Archives Week Celebrations Around Town</b><br>Celia Hartmann  | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Archives Committee Seeks Volunteers and Nominations for 2008 Meeting Round Up: Fall 2008</b>  | <b>24</b> |
| <b>NYU Creates Masters Program in Archives and Public History</b>  | <b>25</b> |

## *Editor's Note*

Happy 2008! This year brings a new “greener” *Metropolitan Archivist*. We have gone online. We hope the color edition that we can post on the website is pleasing to all. You may remember we notified the membership last spring of the change; however if you still require a paper edition of the newsletter, please email the editor at [outreach@nycarchivists.org](mailto:outreach@nycarchivists.org).

Also, the website has been revamped. The Board thanks Brain Stevens, former board member, for his work designing and facilitating the change to the new website. We believe the new site will prove to be more dynamic and reflects better our organization. We hope that more people will get involved with contributing current news for the website.

An early plug for those interested in getting more involved with the Roundtable... in addition to volunteering to assist board members or on the Calendar and Awards committees, you can run for office! In the Spring, elections will take place for President, Secretary, Membership Coordinator and for this position, Coordinator, Outreach and Communications. If you are interested in any of the positions, feel free to contact the board member currently holding the position for more information.

Rebecca Altermatt  
Coordinator, Communications and Outreach

---

The mission of the *Metropolitan Archivist* is to serve members of the Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York (ART) by:

- **Informing** them of ART activities through reports of monthly meetings and committee activities.
- **Relating** important announcements about individual members and member repositories.
- **Reporting** important news related to the New York metropolitan area archival profession.
- **Providing** a forum to discuss archival issues.

The *Metropolitan Archivist* (ISSN 1546-3125) is issued semi-annually to the members of ART. Comments, questions, or submissions for features should be directed to editor, Rebecca Altermatt, at [outreach@nycarchivists.org](mailto:outreach@nycarchivists.org).

Deadlines for submissions are April 30<sup>th</sup> and November 15<sup>th</sup>. Similar inquiries and submissions for reviews should be directed to [outreach@nycarchivists.org](mailto:outreach@nycarchivists.org).

Preferred length of submissions is 800-1000 words for feature articles and 400-500 words for reviews.

The *Metropolitan Archivist* and ART assume no responsibility for statements made by contributors.

The *Metropolitan Archivist* accepts advertisements from businesses which provide services that would be of professional interest to ART membership. Rates and other related information can be obtained by contacting the editor or visiting the ART website at [www.nycarchivists.org](http://www.nycarchivists.org). Job advertisements can be posted directly to the ART web site by contacting the ART web master at [jobs@nycarchivists.org](mailto:jobs@nycarchivists.org).)

An advertisement (or sponsor recognition) appearing in the *Metropolitan Archivist* does not constitute an endorsement or recommendation of the advertiser's product or service by ART or the *Metropolitan Archivist*.

# Archives Internships: Creating Value for Students and Institutions

By Rachel Chatelbash

Processing Archivist, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

Perennially understaffed repositories with a large backlog of unprocessed records continually struggle to process collections more quickly so as to make them accessible to the public. In many cases, interns fill this staffing gap. The obvious difficulty in having a large intern contingent is interns' lack of experience; an intern cannot be expected to be the equivalent of a professional archivist. I believe, however, that with the right guidance and tools in place, interns can contribute positively and valuably to a repository.

## *Structuring the Internship Experience*

A successful internship must simultaneously address the needs of the institution and the needs of the intern. Furthermore, the intern's needs for direction must be balanced with the institution's resources to provide this guidance. I believe the key to this balance lies in engaging with projects and creating a work environment that includes highly structured work processes and a flexible and supportive workplace. I require all interns to read and to reference our repository's processing manual, and to create and process a collection according to an approved processing plan. The processing manual and plan provide direction, guiding the intern through many common questions and providing numerous examples to aid comprehension. In this way, time spent in direct supervision is reduced. I regularly have interns who have been with me longer help newer interns with their projects, thus fostering community and leadership skills. Furthermore, I employ practices to provide a more straightforward environment for



*Interns working at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.  
(Image courtesy of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.)*

interns who are learning. I have created standard series and headings for institutional records to make processing as simple as possible, and have broken down large collections into project-sized series for interns to process. In this way, interns are able to make the most of their projects and the institution benefits from the success of their efforts.

## *Ensuring Value for All*

The question remains, however, whether it is the value of the project and skills learned that are most important in a successful internship or whether the relationship fostered between intern and supervisor is more critical. Does this answer differ depending on the role of the person being asked the question – intern, supervisor, professor? I posed this question to colleagues, archives graduate students, recent graduates, and administrators of local archives programs; their responses are presented here.

Alice Flynn, Program Director, The Palmer School Manhattan:

“What makes a successful internship? The internship experience is a success when both the student and the site benefit from the experience. At The Palmer School of Library and Information Science (part of Long Island University's C.W. Post College of Computer and Information Science), master's degree candidates are required to do an internship prior to graduating. We ask them to wait until they have completed at least 20 credits so that we can confidently say that we are

*continued on next page*

*continued from previous page*

sending professionals out into the field, and so that supervisors can give these interns professional-level work with the confidence that the work will be well done. This hands-on component of their program is meant to flesh out the theory that these students have mastered in the classroom. Students complete a Learning Contract which asks them to consider their goals and exactly what they'd like to accomplish during the time of the internship. Dr. Mary Westermann-Cicio, Dean of the College of Computer and Information Science says, "The most important factor in a successful internship is the dedication of our professional colleagues. I would also have to say that the Learning Contract allows the students to articulate those goals that are most important to them and to communicate those to the professional supervisor."

Supervisors ask us what we expect from them beyond the straightforward outcomes assessment (student evaluation). Our hope, and the goal for any successful internship, is that our students will be treated with the respect accorded a colleague, that they will be given challenging yet manageable

tasks, that they will be instructed in the ways of the organization, and that they will be productive team members in the time that they are interning. Much of what we hope students will learn and be taught has to do with how to function in the culture of the particular organization— how to learn to anticipate what's needed and then do it in a cooperative, creative way. Many of our students are offered paid positions at the end of their internships. This has a lot to do with the preparation they've received in the classroom, but it also has to do with the kind of nurturing and support they've been given at the internship site."

Christine Persche, Librarian/Digital Archivist, Cooper, Robertson & Partners:

"From a supervisory perspective, a successful internship matches a realistic work need with an eager and capable intern. The supervisor should clearly outline the objectives and expectations of the internship within a supportive and encouraging atmosphere. In turn, the successful intern brings to the experience the qualities of any good employee - a willingness to learn and work hard and a commitment to the process and ultimate goal. Ideally, the intern has the privilege of experiencing a focused work environment and the supervisor has the honor of mentorship. This kind of relationship can continue to support both supervisor and intern throughout their professional careers."

Jed Winokur, Project Archivist, The Winthrop Group:

"Personally, it was really important that I experienced as many different aspects of archival work as possible while interning. The hands-on processing of a portion of an actual archival collection was an invaluable experience and also great for my resume. Equally as important was the daily interaction with archives staff and gaining an understanding of the general set-up of the archives, itself. Gathering information on what the day-to-day of an archivist looks like, while also seeing the challenges different institutions face, was also essential to the learning experience. Working under an intelligent and realistic archivist is a must, especially for someone like myself with little experience and who is coming from a job field far from the archives world. I think the best case scenario for an internship is one in which the intern gains a basic fundamental, hands-on

*continued on page 10*

**Setting the Standard for  
Archival Storage Products  
Since 1945**



**CALL FOR OUR FREE CATALOG**  
Phone: 800/634-0491  
Fax: 800/947-8814  
E-mail: [hollingercorp@erols.com](mailto:hollingercorp@erols.com)  
[www.hollingercorp.com](http://www.hollingercorp.com)

**THE HOLLINGER CORPORATION**

**Two Manufacturing and Shipping Locations**

- Hollinger East: Fredericksburg, Virginia
- Hollinger West: Sparks, Nevada



# Interview with the Archivist: William Casari

By Ellen Mehling

**William Casari is Archivist and Instruction Librarian at Hostos Community College in the Bronx.**

**The Hostos Community College Archives functions as the institutional memory of the college. The archives collects unpublished materials of permanent historical value including official records, correspondence, papers and publications generated by the administration, academic departments, faculty, staff, special programs and student organizations since 1970. Through its collections the archives promotes an awareness of the diverse ethnic and cultural history of this unique bilingual institution and the surrounding South Bronx community that inspired it.**

**The archives, a unit of the Hostos Community College Library, also maintains a comprehensive collection of works published by and about Eugenio María de Hostos, namesake of the college. (HCC Archives Mission Statement)**

**Ellen Mehling (EM) – Where were you born? Where did you grow up?**

William Casari (WC) – Ah, where was I born? In Independence, Kansas. And when I was three I moved to Omaha, Nebraska. My Dad worked for Burroughs business machines and he got a transfer, to Omaha, where...my family was from Lincoln, my mother and father's family, so they were kind of close to where they'd grown up so...I grew up in Nebraska.

**EM – Do you remember much of Kansas at all?**

WC – Not really anything, just through pictures, and some home movies and we went back a couple of times to visit but I was so young when I left I don't really remember anything at all.

**EM – Was there anything in your childhood to indicate an interest in history or archives?**

WC – God, childhood...um, well I always liked to read. I liked to read a lot and I had a grandmother who read to me and...so I always liked to read, I don't know if that speaks to the history thing but...

in college... I was always interested in history; I took several American history classes and survey courses but I don't know particularly, childhood... no, I was always kind of interested in geography, and maps and books but then in college I got a lot more interested in history and then *that's* how I got into archives, was through the history component. So that's where my heart is; it's not in library science, although I *like* this, but my heart's in the archives end of it.

**EM – So often archivists start off doing something different, sometimes something completely different, and it's always interesting to see how they found their way to archives...**

WC – Right, well I studied...my major's in journalism and minor in history so I didn't plan on being an archivist but ten years went by and then I went to library school. And the attraction was the archives component.

*continued on next page*

---

**Interview with the Archivist: William Casari** *continued from previous page*

**EM – And that was where?**

WC – In Boston; I am a graduate of Simmons College in Boston, from the Master of Science in Library and Information Science, MSLIS, with the archives concentration, which I think it's...it's quite a bit, it's like four or five courses, so it's a big concentration.

**EM – So you started off in Nebraska studying journalism and history; how did you decide to go to Simmons?**

WC – Well that was interesting because it's kind of a not-that-fascinating story; I was living in Boston and I was working as an administrative assistant at MIT...and that was decently-paying but not great and I knew I didn't want to be an administrative assistant my whole life, at least the secretarial part of it, so I thought, 'what can I do'? And MIT offered to pay for career counseling – they did like once every three years they would pay up to \$500 for career counseling and the career counselor suggested having a credential or a specialization would be a good thing to have, so we talked about it and I took one of those career inventory tests and the Myers-Briggs and I think Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory and...I sent off for the Simmons catalog and read through it and it sounded interesting and I thought I would take one course and see, and then I took *another* course... then I started getting into the archives classes which is what I was interested in, and then it got much better. Then I was almost halfway through and I just decided to finish. The best thing was, MIT paid for at least half of it, and Simmons was across the street from where I lived... so that's the part that kind of like the no-brainer, it's not like 'Oh I researched, and I did this...and Simmons came out on top'. It's also the only library school in Boston, and it was in my neighborhood, and MIT was paying, and I was like, 'I'll try it.'

**EM – So everything fell into place, it seems...**

WC – And the courses then were, God, this was ten...this was *twelve* years ago, the courses then were \$1800 a class, and by the time I finished I think they were \$2200 a course, so that, at that time to start, that was almost a \$25,000 degree. I don't know how much it is *now*. So to have more than half of it paid for, I was like, 'Yeah, this is great!'

**EM – Yes, it is! So MIT would pay for you to take classes at another school?**

WC – Yeah they had a really good tuition...it was like \$3500 a year so it almost paid for two classes.

**EM – That's very generous.**

WC – Yeah, it was great.

**EM - Your current position is Archivist and Instruction Librarian; how long have you been working at Hostos?**

WC - I've been working here for four years. I am working on my second master's degree in Liberal Studies; most of the classes have been in Sociology. Once I get my degree it may be time to reassess and decide if I want to do something different in the future.

Hostos was founded in 1968 and chartered in 1970, so it is a relatively young school. The archives have been in existence since I've been here; before that the archival materials were stored throughout the school in various offices. New York State Archives Documentary Heritage Program grants funded the establishment of the Archives and the hiring of an assistant archivist.

Right now I am the one staff member working in the Archives; other responsibilities include teaching information literacy and working at the Reference desk. There is also one part-time assistant archivist funded by our fourth Documentary Heritage Program grant.

**EM - What are some of the collections you have in the Archives at Hostos?**

WC – The collection includes the usual founding papers and charter, yearbooks, and course catalogs. There is the Gerald Meyer Collection, which covers the history of the early years of Hostos, and also the Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art (MoCHA) Collection, which is the records of the Museum, which closed in 1990 and includes artist files, information about public programs and exhibition catalogs. The Archives also has a collection of works by Puerto Rican writer, educator and patriot Eugenio Maria de Hostos (Obras Completas) and other materials *about* him as well. Right now the Archival space is sufficient for the collections, although more storage space is always needed.

**EM – Who are the main users of the Archives and what are some typical inquiries?**

WC – We had one Duke University student who did nearly all of his thesis research on Hostos, who used our collections and his thesis then won best history honors thesis at Duke. Other inquiries are about past course offerings and college history.

**EM – I read a bit online about the ‘Grand Concourse One Hundred’ proposal. How long has that been in the works and how did that get started? What are some of the goals of this project?**

WC – The ‘Grand Concourse One Hundred’ is an urban studies seminar that will coincide with the centennial in 2009 of the Grand Boulevard and Concourse in the Bronx, where Hostos CC is located. It will include projects on local history, impact of the new Yankee Stadium and possibly research on Art Deco apartments in the neighborhood. There are a lot of Art Deco and Art Moderne apartment buildings built in the mid-1930s and early 1940s, some in better condition than others. I live in the neighborhood, in fact I live in one of those Art Deco buildings. The Concourse Centennial will form a cohesive element for the students but they are free to choose among several research projects and will perform field

visits to places like the new Yankee Stadium site and the construction site that will become the Gateway Center, former site of the Bronx Terminal Market and the Bronx House of Detention, now both demolished. Other resources include the Bronx Historical Society and the Hostos Archives itself.

**EM – What do you like to do when you are not working?**

WC - Biking; I do a lot of bicycle riding. I am going to do the “Tour de Bronx” this weekend, which is a 40 mile bike ride.

**EM - Do you collect anything?**

WC – Personal photographs, mostly.

**EM – If you could work at any archives, real or fictional, what would be your dream job?**

WC – I would like to work in an archives with a media or moving image component. It would be great to work somewhere where you don’t have to constantly explain what you do and then justify why it’s important! I would like to make archival collections more integral to day-to-day operations, not just anniversaries and exhibits.

**Will you be the one to prevent your collection from entering the endangered species list?**



**Make Hudson Microimaging your partner in the effort to save the archives.**

Hudson Microimaging’s hybrid services combine the 500-year life expectancy of preservation microfilm with the access benefits of digital images.



Call Toya Dubin at 845-338-5785 to seal the fate of your collection.

[www.hudsonmicroimaging.com](http://www.hudsonmicroimaging.com)

HUDSON MICROIMAGING

**We have a passion for preservation.**

*Internships continued from page 6*

application of archival theory, such as the implementation of DACS and the production of an EAD finding aid, which they can then use to further understand what they have been taught in the classroom. With the help of various internship environments I was able to gain a perspective on the field which I then used to make the decision to earn an Archival Certificate - something I had considered, but interning helped me to solidify.”

Sang Ae Park, Project Records Manager, Town of Morristown, NJ:

“I think that archives internships are one of the most helpful and valuable experiences in becoming a professional archivist. Through internships, I have gained practical processing skills, trained myself to arrange items logically in a given subject field, gained comprehensive understanding of the profession, and learned to evaluate researchers’ needs. Coursework at Pratt provided me with basic and theoretical knowledge of archives. My internships, on the other hand, were training sessions to enhance theoretical knowledge from school, and have led me my goal of working in the field. Creating processing plans, selecting proper preservation methods, establishing series in a collection, categorizing records, completing finding aids, and encoding finding aids in EAD are all skills I have picked up from my internships. I did not learn these skills in the classroom. Even doing labor-intensive work in a dusty environment, I have become confident of my interests in the field. I believe that my internships were successfully

completed due to excellent professional guidance from my supervisors and personal strong eagerness for becoming a professional archivist.”

Lesley Espenship, Student, Pratt Institute, School of Information and Library Science:

“I believe a successful internship depends upon a willing collaboration between both supervisor and intern. As an archives intern, I expect to be provided with enough information to complete my tasks, and also strive to bring a willingness to work independently, to problem solve, research and most importantly, learn. I feel I must be given a balance of being taught and guided in constructive ways, while being allowed the freedom to make mistakes and learn from them.

Another important aspect of the internship experience is being given the opportunity to work on a wide variety of archives duties. This creates a broader understanding of the job of an archivist, which prepares me for my future career. Also, it is important that the tasks I particularly enjoy, excel at, or hope to improve upon are considered, and that my responsibilities continue to evolve to accommodate my interests and skills.

Internships can provide a wonderful opportunity to develop a mentor/mentee relationship between supervisors and interns. Throughout the course of my internship, I’ve learned about archival work in addition to being offered a general overview of the archives profession. My

supervisor has encouraged me to join professional organizations and electronic discussion lists, and engages me in relevant discussions about the field. I believe that the mentoring aspect of an internship, which provides professional information and encouragement, truly separates a good internship from an excellent one. Preparation for the career ahead is a key attribute of a successful internship, as today’s interns are tomorrow’s archives professionals.”

*A Wealth of Opportunities*

All responders described internships as an opportunity for students to apply their classroom learning, to develop new practical skills, and to gain a better understanding of the field. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance, of mentoring relationships, both personally and professionally. Interns develop their skills and their professional identities through their internship experiences and in the process, the institution benefits as well.

*Rachel Chatalbash, Processing Archivist, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum*

***Have you Subscribed to ART’s Electronic Bulletin Board?***

Post Job Listings  
Share News Bulletins  
Discuss Matters of Interest to the Local Archives Community

To reach the list, visit:  
**[www.topica.com/lists/NYART](http://www.topica.com/lists/NYART)**

Here, you can join or read the list. Once you have subscribed, you can post to the list either from the above web page or directly by email at **[nycart@topica.com](mailto:nycart@topica.com)**

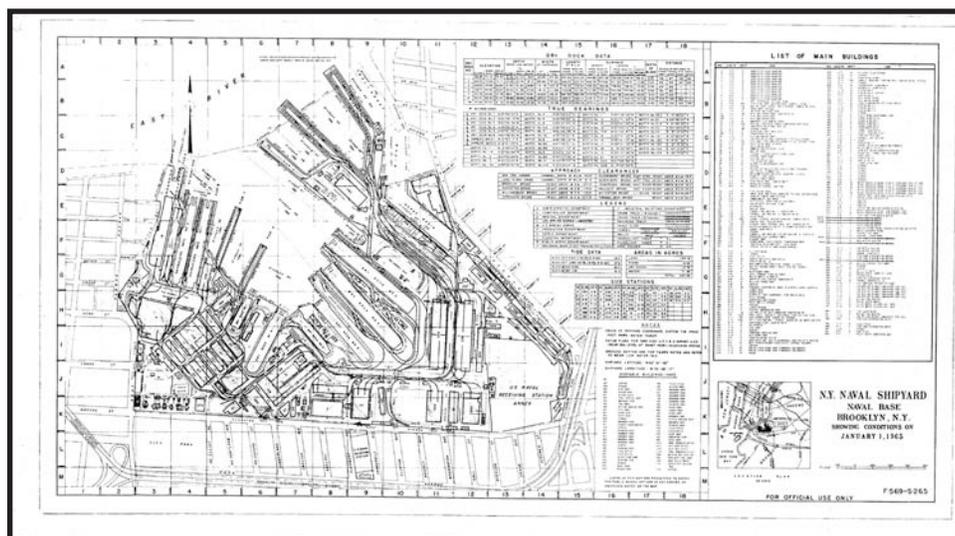
# REPOSITORY PROFILES

## Saving What's Already There An Overview of the Brooklyn Navy Archive

### An Archives Helps History Look Forward: Central Synagogue

## Saving What's Already There: An Overview of the Brooklyn Navy Archive

By Daniella Romano  
Chief Archivist,  
Brooklyn Navy Yard



Overview map of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, one year prior to decommissioning, 1965. (Image courtesy Brooklyn Navy Yard.)

The Brooklyn Navy Yard is located across on the East River between the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges. Today, it is a vibrant and active industrial park, with over 230 businesses, managed by the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation operating under mandate to create and retain industrial jobs in New York City. The mission of the Brooklyn Navy Yard Archive is to document the past and present of the Yard, and to serve the BNYDC as it develops the Yard for the future. This particular parcel of land has historically met the needs of the nation's military, and its aim now is to meet the industrial needs of Brooklyn and New York City. Since the earliest days of colonial America, this site has been grown, reshaped and resurfaced according to function and, as such, it acts as a mirror

of the society that shaped it. The early success of the Archive is attributed to the continuing support of the State Archive Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund; to BNYDC senior management for support of the department's growth beyond records management; and, to an invested community of Brooklyn, New York and national institutions, historians and advocates eager to help us share this resource with the public.

The known history of the site begins with the Lenape, who found the natural wetlands a great spot for clamming. In the early 1600s, furriers and Belgian Walloons saw it was an accommodating area to settle, and the Rapelje family purchased land at the "Bend in the River" from the Dutch

West India Trading Company. They developed farmland and built a mill over an existing waterway. In 1781, real estate developer John Jackson and his brothers purchased the land from descendents of the Rapelje family, built a toll bridge, a shipyard and the 28-gun frigate USS *Adams*. In 1801, the Secretary of a fledgling United States Navy purchased the site from Jackson to develop as one of this country's first five naval shipyards. After 165 years of service, the Federal Government decommissioned the Yard in 1966 and the City of New York purchased it for \$24 million. Following a period of New York City industrial flight and decline, the Brooklyn Navy Yard numbers are back up and industry is booming.

*continued on next page*

## Brooklyn Navy Archive

*continued from page 11*

The Archive's flagship collection is approximately 33,000 architectural and engineering plans dating from 1856-1966. The bulk dates correspond to wartime for the United States; peacetime typically meant periods of decline for this and other naval shipyards. The primary collection is essentially what the Navy left behind when the Yard was decommissioned, but there are many gaps in information. Luckily, the Government keeps good records, and it appears the majority went to the National Archive, to College Park, MD and to the Northeast Regional Branch on Varick Street in Manhattan. Records of the Yard's later period went to the NAVFAC Engineering Operations Command Archive at the Seabee Museum in Oxnard, CA. Other plans and records, unless discovered in series at NARA, seem to have disappeared. Some turn up on Ebay. A large number might be up in the 10,000 square foot mould loft at Bath Iron Works in Maine, sent up to illustrate the operational value of the historic site as they were considering its use in the 1980s.

The Brooklyn Navy



*Above: Before: Brooklyn Navy Yard maps and plans. Early 2004.*

*Below: After: Brooklyn Navy Yard Archive, December 2007.*



Yard, save for the extreme East and West ends, is almost entirely man-made. It is a tough site to maintain because the water table inland as far as Flushing Avenue is just a few feet down. The waterfront is built up on piles driven down over 100 feet to bedrock. Much of this work was done over the past 100 years and maintenance of an infrastructure that old makes use of historical records invaluable. Technology and standards change, foundations are built and removed or built over. Subsurface information is critical to building today, and soil samples, borings and test pilings are phenomenally expensive compared to use of historic records, so investment in building the body of knowledge pays off innovatively and long-term for BNYDC.

In early 2004, Elliot Matz, BNYDC Chief Operating Officer hired archival consultant Gina Pollara to write a grant application to

the State Archive Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund to hire a part-time archivist to organize 2,200 cubic feet of rolled-up plans kept in two dusty rooms along with paint buckets, ladders and sundry other records. They got the grant and I applied for the job. Upon hire, I requested a mask, gloves, and a Tyvek suit. This was not the corporation's first attempt at managing these records; there were in fact two prior attempts. The first was to hire an engineer to go through and label the rolls. In the 1990s our General Counsel undertook an innovative technological approach to scan and arrange the drawings within a facilities management database. Neither venture was ultimately successful, as arrangement is the first step to determine value of the records, and for that you really need the patience and expertise of an archivist.

By September 2004, I was about three-quarters of the way through conducting the simple inventory, and BNYDC hired me full-time. It was already apparent how much BNYDC needed these records. The original rush for information made for at least three requests a week, and we did not even know yet

*continued on next page*

what information we had in the collection. Being an archivist and not an engineer nor architect, I got as fast an education as I could from my colleagues. When I had pulled materials together for a request, my colleagues, and our consultant architects and engineers would go through, select what they wanted and I would send out for copying. Hoping to eventually provide all services in-house, I asked everyone how they thought about information and how they expected to find the materials arranged (provenance, though the sound approach in archive management, in this case was out of the question). I learned about the various trades and disciplines and discovered that most plans offer meticulous information over a broad spectrum. For example, a plumbing plan for Building 3's third floor might have electrical diagrams to show where the utilities are. An architect pointed out to me that we might not have many Building 3 electrical plans but he could use what he found in the plumbing plans. It was clear we needed architectural and engineering expertise in the arrangement process. We were just gearing up to apply for our next LGRMIF grant.

Chloe Cerwinka, an architectural photographer who had been working on a project at the Yard, was planning to leave an architectural firm to work part-time and focus on her photography. She and I had been exploring the Yard for months by this time, so she could photograph and I could get to know the physical site illustrated in the collection. Gina wrote another winning grant application, and we received almost our entire request for

funding to grow the Archive by one-half.

At the same time, Elliot proposed the Archive be permitted to purchase flat file cabinets to house the documents which were at that time laid out flat and in piles on a number of tables in the 1,000 square foot Archive room. Though the flattening made the plans more accessible than they were in rolls, lifting and shifting the piles took extraordinary time and energy. We got approval to purchase twelve cabinets and we applied for LGRMIF funding to purchase another 36 cabinets at the same time as we applied to hire a second person with trade expertise. When we got the award, we were pleased to be able to order the cabinets from a tenant on the Yard, the lowest bidder in the purchase process.

It was around this time I came upon a serendipitous find at NARA on Varick Street. In one box from Record Group 181, I found a few schematic plans and a finding aid that listed Naval Classification System "F-numbers", labeled on almost every plan we processed at the Archive. This list answered a lot of questions. F3 might clearly stand for Building 3, but what on earth does F623 stand for when there has been no Building 623? Steam, F682 is High Pressure, F623 Low Pressure. Now, it was clear, we would stick with the Naval Classification code. This finding aid was not a definitive list but information derived by an earlier NARA archivist and deciphering the F-numbers is still a work in progress. Between it and Chloe's expertise, however, we could avoid reinventing the wheel and get started on arrangement.

The cabinets, newly discovered F-numbers, and the expertise of a trained professional made access to the plans and information much simpler. BNYDC departments were getting their information within days instead of weeks, and the plans were safely housed. Everyone was beginning to understand the value of these plans and their fragility.

So, now the plans were more safely housed, but no one could take them out of the Archive to use in the field. We copied them, but were concerned about their safety and valuable time spent with a vendor off-site. All departments needed access to the information out in the field or distributed to contractors working for BNYDC. We understood the value of these plans and the idea of sending them off-site for any reason was making senior management worried.

Our solution was to purchase a large-format scanner to scan plans as they were requested, and then catalog them in a Filemaker Pro database that would be built internally by the BNYDC IT department.

Gina Pollara wrote a third successful grant application, and we were awarded the full amount to purchase an Océ scanner and create a part-time scanner/cataloger position. Several people filled the position over the course of the year, and one stayed on to be currently employed full-time by BNYDC. Sara Fitzpatrick is finishing her MLS at St. John's while working with BNYDC personnel, our consultants and contractors to make information available. We still get at least three document

**Brooklyn Navy Archive** *continued from previous page*

requests per week.

There are roughly 1,200 plans that are heavily water-damaged and covered with mold. About 300 are so bad that we cannot unroll them so we cannot determine the information on them. Inspection leads us to believe they are construction plans for Piers J& K and Dry Docks 5 & 6, roughly half the Yard that was developed during WWII. The documents have both operational and historical significance because on Pier K stood the largest crane in the world at the time of its construction, the Hammerhead Crane lifted guns and turrets onto aircraft carriers built in the adjacent dry docks. For the fourth year in a row, we are thrilled to receive LGRMIF funding. Additionally the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) in Andover, MA will treat the drawings so we may ultimately incorporate them with the rest of the collection and fill significant gaps in information.

Aside from the perpetual search and acquisition of missing plans, efforts funded by BNYDC to fill the gaps have resulted in a greater body of cultural memory. In partnership with the Brooklyn

Historical Society, we are officially launching an oral history program, that was originally begun in partnership with local author Jennifer Egan; BNYDC funds the scanning and cataloging of an early photograph collection of 17,000 images at the National Archive Northeast Region New York City branch, where our equipment and needs have been generously accommodated by Regional Facility Director Nancy Shader and the NARA staff.

Essentially, the Archive serves two functions: first, to assist the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation in fulfilling its mandate to create and retain industrial jobs in New York City; and second, to share with the public the cultural boon that has resulted from gathering together these records and ultimately the history of a site that dates back to the earliest days of colonial settlement. Without the one, the other would not have come about, because it is the use of history that keeps it alive. The Archive has enjoyed incredible success early on, and that is due in large part to the New York State Archive

*continued on page 25*

## Elegant Solutions for Preservation

Call for a complete catalog



*Pamphlet Binders  
Music Binders  
Archival Folders  
Manuscript Folders  
Hinge Board Covers  
Academy Folders  
Newspaper/Map Folders  
Polypropylene Sheet &  
Photo Protectors  
Conservation &  
Preservation Tapes*

*Bound Four Flap Enclosures  
Archival Binders  
Archival Boards  
Adhesives  
Bookkeeper  
Century Boxes  
Record Album Enclosures  
Conservation Cloths*

**ARCHIVAL PRODUCTS**

P.O. Box 1413 | Des Moines, Iowa 50305-1413  
800.526.5640 | Fax 888.220.2397  
custserv@archival.com | www.archival.com

**archival.com**

## An Archives Helps History Look Forward

By Anne Mininberg  
Archivist Central Synagogue

In 1993 the Central Synagogue Archives Committee initiated a project to have all of the 19thC Minutes, which are housed in our Archives, transliterated into modern German, and translated into English. These minutes consist of 1000 ledger pages handwritten in German, often interspersed with Hebrew and Yiddish words. The project, accomplished over the last 15 years, went slowly but kept its appeal by continuing to reveal interesting and worthwhile information about our congregation, Jewish life in New York and about New York City in general. The decision to do a modern German transliteration along with the translation was key. As we went along we realized although many words and ideas have shifted the nuance of their meaning, we always tried always to keep the sense of the original. Making the German available for future scholars to be able to refine our English interpretations if need be, without being able to read the archaic script enhances the long term usefulness of the project.

Central Synagogue's Archives earliest records date from 1845. These include some from Congregation Shaar Hashomayim (founded in 1839), which merged in 1898 with Ahawath Chesed (founded in 1846). The combined congregation was later named Central Synagogue. The handwritten script of these 19thC records is in a now archaic form and much of the style of the language is no longer used. Starting in 1899 the records were kept in English. A major hurdle was finding people who could read this archaic script as well as the handwriting of the many secretaries who wrote the minutes over the years. We needed people who were skilled in translation as well as having very high caliber English skills. It was a situation of finding people who were both willing



*CK Bill photograph of the sanctuary building. 1872. (Image courtesy of Central Synagogue.)*

and able, since this script was taught in German-speaking schools in Europe before World War II. Those here in the 1990s were already elderly. The person also had to have basic computer skills along with a great deal of patience. John Strauss, a grandfather of a Bar Mitzvah child at Central offered to help us. He was a retired businessman, who was educated in Germany and wanted to help us in a way that also satisfied his intellect. His work was exemplary; he was very proud of his accomplishments and worked at it until he died. Jules Schulback, a congregant and also a retired businessman who was educated in Germany, became engrossed in the project. He handwrote out many pages for which others then had to do the computer entry. These two gentlemen were able to do this as volunteers. Later, Inge Lasting Klepeis, also German-educated, and a retired professor of 19thC German literature, came to work for us in a paid capacity. She was highly skilled in the language but was not Jewish; therefore we helped her learn many of the words relating to Jewish holidays and religious practices.

All along the way, consultations with our clergy, native Hebrew speakers, and scholars in several disciplines were needed to be sure that

*continued on next page*

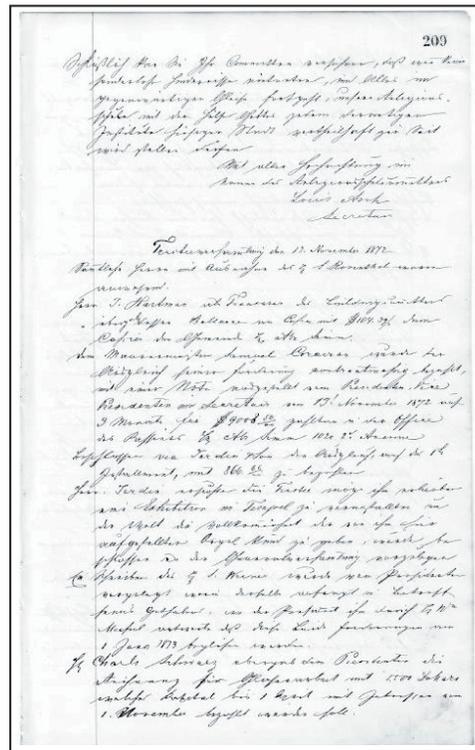
we had the best possible interpretations into English. We needed both knowledge of orthodox holidays and practices to understand the material and the capability to read the 19thC Hebrew and Yiddish references to get the full meaning. All of these adjunct translators were invaluable to this project. Innumerable skills and support from many of Central's multi-talented staff were also invaluable.

You can now easily read about the many issues in New York City which concerned our congregation, its struggles, and successes including the decisions involved to build the sanctuary building at the corner of Lexington Avenue and 55<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, in which we conduct our services. The minutes also give much information about the community activities in which the congregants participated and the many social services which they undertook for the benefit of congregants and the Jewish community of New York. These minutes also highlight the evolution of the congregation from its European orthodox traditions, its reforming attitude and changes into what became ultimately an American version of Reform Judaism.

The 19thC minutes are now printed in five volumes as a research resource. Three volumes include the Board of Trustees Minutes 1864-1899; one the Monthly and Special Meetings 1888-1898, and one the General Meetings of 1867- 1884 along with the 1845-1846 minutes of the group of congregations which included Shaar Hashomayim. An index has been developed for volumes I-III. Volume IV and V is to be done soon. With these volumes our history is more accessible, and our ability to serve researchers greatly expanded.

The building, consecrated in April 1872 was made a National Landmark in 1975. It suffered a devastating fire in 1998 which damaged the roof. Water from the firefighters and subsequent heavy

rain damaged the interior. It was reconstructed with the help of many of the archival records of its original construction and many historic photographs. The interior now has improved lighting, handicapped accessibility, and air conditioning. It reopened on September 9, 2001.



Board of Trustees Minutes. 1872.  
(Image courtesy of Central Synagogue.)

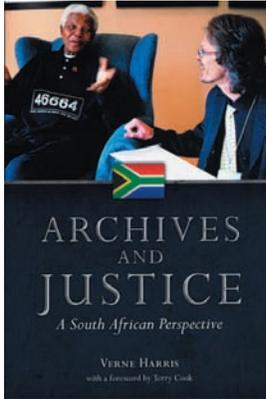
The original ledger books also required considerable conservation. Northeast Document Conservation Center worked with us to make the most useful and safest plan for them. The conservation of the largest ledger book, which contains the material of the first three volumes of the project was conserved in 2003. NEDCC made a microfilm master and service copies, CDs of the original so it can be digitally accessed, and a facsimile copy of the ledger on paper giving an extra wide margin at the head, tail and fore edge. They made the gutter margin yet wider so that the text can be fully accessible on a copying machine with minimal stress on the binding. This book allows

researchers to easily use the original text for reference and not do any damage to the facsimile or to the original ledger. The remaining ledgers are scheduled to be conserved soon in the same way.

The sanctuary building is open for visitors each Tuesday and Wednesday from 12 noon -2PM. Free tours are given to the public on Wednesdays at 12:45PM. No reservations are needed for individuals or groups under 10 persons. Group Tours can be arranged through our Events Office at 212 838-5122, ext. 3003. A fee may apply for Group Tours. Our website, [censyn.org](http://censyn.org), has the latest information of our services and special event schedules.

*This substantial project was realized over the last 15 year with a great deal of volunteer dedication, generous support from the Rubinstein Family Archival Fund, conservation support from the Gilder family and allocations of the Archives budget.*

# Reviews



**Archives and Justice: A South African Perspective.** Verne Harris with a foreword by Terry Cook. Society of American Archivists, 2007. 476 pp.

Reviewed by Mario H. Ramirez.

Often figured as technicians rather than thinkers, lovers of practice and the practical rather than theoretical ingénues, archivists by their own admission frequently demonstrate a resistance to the theorizing of their daily process that risks arresting the profession in a moment of evolutionary stasis. Owing much to the definitions and practical models posited by such figures as Theodore Schellenberg and Ernst Posner, as well their own professional proclivities, archivists are typically hard pressed to reach beyond their current spheres of knowledge and risk challenging what for them are a professional givens. Into this admittedly tradition bound realm steps the figure of Verne Harris. An archivist in South Africa by trade, Harris has gained notoriety in the archival world due to his deconstruction

laced interventions into our assumptions of what constitutes the foundations of our practice and the motivations behind our efforts to preserve the remnants of historical memory. As Terry Cook notes in his introduction to this compilation of essays, Harris' multidisciplinary and passionate approach to archives demands a veritable paradigm shift in the ways that we consider the premises behind what we do, "carrying archivists up out of their traditional rhythms and set scores, to envision a new *Future* for our profession."

Although heady in his evaluation, Cook's words speak directly to the rarity, and therefore necessity, of the type of interventions that Harris attempts in his work. By bringing to fore the work of philosophers such as Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, and applying their thoughts on archives and memory to a rethinking of archival theory and practice, Harris seeks to break with what he terms as a pattern of over reliance on "positivist formulations" in the archival world that have heavily determined the primarily empirical focus of its training and consideration. Resisting this tendency indicates to Harris a resistance to the profession's insularity that not only delimits its receptivity to new ways of thinking about itself, but also its capacity to document all sectors of society. Throughout this impressive compilation, which is made up of five sections and includes twenty-one essays on such varied themes as electronic records, description,

postmodernism and appraisal, identity and the law, the reader is indeed exhorted to consider the ways in which opening oneself up to inclusion of the marginalized in the archival equation troubles the manner in which we conceive of our main intents and purposes as archivists. Never one to settle for a model of the archivist as simple handmaidens of knowledge and/or curators of dust, Harris instead posits a model of the archivist as a purveyor of difference, a subject of politics who engages in the real as well as documentary struggles of the subaltern.

Indeed, Harris is at his best when, rather than simply explaining why he uses Derrida and company, he uses the multifaceted analytical tool kit at his disposal to interrogate everyday questions of records destruction, police surveillance, political abuse and mnemonic censorship in South Africa. Writing primarily for *The Natal Witness*, a newspaper based in Pietermaritzburg, Harris' journalistic endeavors in particular, contained in the last section of the book, provide the reader with an insightful demonstration of Harris' capacity to use his training as an archivist and his engagement with, for a lack of a better term, post-structuralist theories towards the revelation of new ways of thinking. Although certainly in evidence in his series of essays devoted exclusively to his work in South Africa, Harris' ability to deploy the lessons he learned at Derrida's knee is at its most skillful when he uses

*continued on page 18*

---

## The Rape of Europa.

Directed by Richard Berge and Bonni Cohen.  
117 minutes.

Reviewed by Jennella Young.



(Image courtesy National Archives and Records Administration Archives in the Documentary Film, *The Rape of Europa*.)

*The Rape of Europa* is a documentary based on by Lynn H. Nicholas' book chronicling the systematic pillaging of Europe's cultural objects during the Third Reich. It was introduced at film festivals throughout the country and remains in limited distribution around the country at alternative movie houses.

This documentary presents a compelling retell of the impact of

the Nazi regime on art and cultural history through the extensive use of archival records, photographs and film footage. Viewers will hold their breath, whispering wishes of compassion and hope as photographs of a rabbi standing atop of a mountain of Torah scrolls taken from Jewish families killed by the Nazis linger on the screen; and as footage of the young Adolf Hitler's watercolors, architectural renderings and models appear, viewers will find themselves looking for warnings of what is to come.

*The Rape of Europa* documentary does an excellent job of illustrating the conflict between the Nazi's obsessive pillage and acquisition of cultural objects and their subsequent destruction of cities, European history and people. It is a well researched documentary that features some of the world's most revered archives and the archivists who curate and provide access to the collections.

This documentary is about history, the attempt to decimate people, culture and memory, and of course the phenomenal use of archives.

See the website for audio clips, more information about the author's research through international archives, historical timeline, video clips, archival footage and links to prominent stories about restitution: [www.rapeofeuropa.com](http://www.rapeofeuropa.com).

**Jennella Young** is a Graduate Student at Pratt Institute.

---

## Archives and Justice Review

*continued from page 19*

them unselfconsciously, neither justifying their usage or trying to sell them to an archival audience, but rather giving of a perspective that is different in its approach and methodology.

This is not to say that Harris' interrogations of normative archival knowledge are not necessary, but deconstruction, as such, was never intended as an object of study, but rather a way of "reading" that could help open up alternative avenues of inquiry and perspective. Much like Derrida, Harris questions a literature and a discipline with which he is deeply engaged, leading to the asking of increasingly in depth questions that are more demanding because there is an expectation that the profession is capable of exceeding its boundaries and reaching beyond its traditions. This is precisely why this compilation makes good, if not necessary reading for the everyday archivist. Serving as a primer

on melding of deconstruction, post-structuralism and archival theory for the uninitiated, this book continues the conversation, in tandem with special issues on archives and postmodernism in such journals as *Archivaria*, on the possibilities for rethinking questions of history, memory and archival practice with the tools provided by contemporary theoretical work in the humanities. Subject to the disciplinary boundaries of history and library science, the archival world rarely opens itself up to a questioning of its own devices by outside lines of inquiry. What Verne Harris does by bringing other insights is help point towards the implicit ambiguity in archival thinking and to raise the necessary questions that will push the profession towards greater relevance.

**Mario H. Ramírez** is Project Archivist for the *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños* at Hunter College of the City University of New York.

# ART News

## Archivists Roundtable 2007 Awards

Every year during Archives Week in mid-October, the Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York presents awards celebrating professional achievement in three areas:

### **Outstanding Support of Archives**

Recognizing an individual or organization for notable contributions to archival records or archives programs through political, financial, or moral support.

*Presented to EAI-IMAP Online Resource Guide*

### **Innovative Use of Archives**

Recognizing an individual or organization for use of archival material in a meaningful and creative way, making a significant contribution to a community or body of people, and demonstrating the relevance of archival materials to its subject.

*Presented to Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery*

### **Archival Achievement**

Recognizing an individual or archival program that has made an outstanding contribution to the archival profession, or a notable achievement of value to the archives community, its patrons or constituents.

The recipient must be a member of the Archivists Round Table or an archival program operating within the New York metropolitan region.

*Presented to Brenda Parnes*

### **Innovative Use of Archives:**

#### **Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery**

Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery was acknowledged for its comprehensive project of researching and restoring the tombstones of Civil War veterans buried there. Over the past 150 years, many of the gravestones from this era had sunk beneath the grass, or names on existing plots had become unreadable due to environmental damage.

Green-Wood Cemetery historian Jeff Richman organized what became a five-year effort to trace and document Civil War veterans from the New York area interred at the site. He enlisted hundreds of volunteers – genealogists, history buffs, sometimes entire families – to undertake the painstaking work of locating demographic information on possible inhabitants. Crosschecking 19th century burial ledgers, participants searched government databases, enlistment records, necrologies and printed obituaries to cull biographical profiles of their selected soldiers.

Many engaged in complex genealogical expeditions to locate and interview descendants. Several from as far away as England, Germany and Spain contributed family photographs and letters to enrich these portraits published in Richman's book and accompanying illustrated compact disc, [Final Camping Ground: Civil War Veterans at Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery, in Their Own Words.](#)

The results are impressive: While it was originally projected to discover 200 Civil War veterans onsite, volunteers amassed documentation for 2,298 soldiers. The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs provided 1200 new replacement headstones and bronzes, which were dedicated as part of a well-attended Memorial Day ceremony. Moreover, this project has inspired future efforts to recover additional Green-Wood veterans from all U.S. wars.

*continued on next page*

# ART News

## Archivists Roundtable 2007 Awards

*continued from previous page*

This venture appealed to the Awards Committee for manifold reasons, but most importantly since this community-based initiative restores dignity and recognition to forgotten veterans of America's deadliest war. Equally significant are the contributions of scores of lay researchers, who understand the value of preserving civic records and personal ephemera to reclaim our shared history. As Jeffrey Blustein, one of the volunteers, eloquently expresses, "*This is a work of historical rescue. History isn't just about the rich and famous, it's about all the forgotten people, ordinary people who otherwise would never be known*"

The award was presented by Richard J. Moylan, President, Green-Wood Cemetery, to Jeffrey I. Richman.

## **Outstanding Support of Archives: Electronic Arts Intermix and Independent Media Arts Preservation**

Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI) and Independent Media Arts Preservation (IMAP) were jointly commended for creating the *Online Resource Guide for Exhibiting, Collecting & Preserving Media Art*. This resource is accessible on the Web, and is particularly helpful to archives and cultural heritage repositories with media-based materials.

As digital media continues to develop, a corresponding need arises for information about preserving and documenting new media. The numerous and ephemeral media formats require expertise in identification, terminology, migration techniques, assessment of degradation, and other specialized knowledge generally not found in archival repositories.

The *Resource Guide* demystifies the administration of media art collections where sophisticated technical staff is not available. Although the *Resource Guide* is primarily intended for media art, much information is applicable to single-channel video or computer media.

Elegant in design and easy to use, the *Resource Guide's* interface is divided into three sections: Exhibition, Collection, and Preservation. Each section offers best practices, case studies, FAQs, sample forms, interviews with practitioners, as well as budget and technical considerations. The Exhibition section helps users identify practical installation concerns such as media formats, display devices, video cables, and projection set up. The Collection component covers everything from acquisition to budgeting and documentation (inventory, cataloging, numbering, labeling). The Preservation section features condition reports, inspection, conservation and media migration.

Founded in 1971, Electronic Arts Intermix is a nonprofit organization dedicated to distributing and preserving media works by artists. It offers viewing access, exhibitions, public programs and educational services. Independent Media Arts Preservation supports preservation of non-commercial electronic media through education and advocacy.

EAI and IMAP merit recognition for the *Online Resource Guide for Exhibiting, Collecting & Preserving Media Art* – an outstanding contribution to the archival community. In creating this resource, they have provided both educational and practical tools for handling complex and evolving media issues. The citation was given with the recommendation that future funding be made available to refresh and sustain this exceptional resource.

The award was presented by Dr. Howard Besser, Director, Moving Image Archiving and Preservation Program, New York University, to Galen Joseph-Hunter, EAI; and Dara Kingsley-Meyers, IMAP.

## **Archival Achievement: Brenda Parnes**

Brenda Parnes has trained and advised hundreds of New York City individuals and agencies in archives and records management. An innovative and effective educator in new technologies, Brenda is an *archives evangelist* to

*continued on page 23*

# ART News

## Archives Week Celebrations Around Town

by Celia Hartmann

Project Archivist, The Winthrop Group, Inc.

Various New York archival repositories marked Archives Week 2007 with special exhibitions and events. Two of them specifically, the National Archives and Records Administration and the Brooklyn Historical Society, recognized the efforts of volunteers and student interns in making important archival materials available to a wider public.

### National Archives and Records Administration

At the National Archives and Records Administration's Northeast office, an open house on October 9 highlighted some of their ongoing projects and showed some special "treasures" from its 100,000 cubic feet of holdings that are not usually on display. Public Programs Specialist, Dorothy Dougherty gave a brief introduction to NARA, after which Nancy Shader, Director of Archival Operations, welcomed the group and Stacie Byas, Senior Records Analyst, discussed records management issues. Then Archives Specialist Richard Gelbke introduced the volunteers, staff, and interns whose work in preservation, processing, and indexing made possible the display of a variety of items:

- From the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of New Jersey Roll of Attorneys, 1790-1911, a 1791 Attorney Roll registering Elias Boudinot - delegate and representative of the Continental Congress from the State of New Jersey, and President of the Continental Congress in 1782 and 1783 - to act as counsel in

the District of New Jersey.

- From records of the Schooner Mary captured by the U.S.S. Mackinaw in the Atlantic Ocean, checks, payable to ship's Captain G.A. Johnson, for the sale of African slaves, which contain the names of the slaves. These extremely rare instances of slaves' names are being entered into a database for easier retrieval.
- From the Voice of America Project Master Broadcast Scripts, a 1952 broadcast in Vietnamese of "Tribute to Abraham Lincoln," one of the broadcast scripts in the collection for which identifying information is being entered into a database that will be searchable by language, title, and date.
- From a five-year project to describe and enter into a database the more than 22,500 photographs from the New York Navy Yard Photograph Collection, 1898-1940s, a 1918 photograph of stockpile of bombs outside of Bldg. No. 150: Ordnance

Storehouse.

Among the treasures from NARA's vaults on view only for this event were examples of so-called Mediterranean Passports, allowing sailing vessels safe passage through seas threatened by the Barbary pirates, each signed by a President and Secretary of State. Those on view showed signatures of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, and James John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay

In summarizing the value of Archives Week events for publicizing the work and collections of NARA available at its Northeast region repository, Ms. Dougherty noted that "of the 17 people who attended, 12 had never been to our office before. We love to find new audiences and these outreach efforts seem to do well."

For more information, contact -National Archives, Northeast Region (New York City): 201 Varick St., 12th floor, New York, NY 10014; phone (212) 401-1620 or toll free 866-840-1752; fax (212) 401-1638; email [newyork.archives@nara.gov](mailto:newyork.archives@nara.gov)

*continued on next page*

# ART News

## Archives Week Celebrations Around Town

*continued from previous page*

### Brooklyn Historical Society

To mark Archives Week at Brooklyn Historical Society, four of its fall semester interns created a small exhibition highlighting the collections they have been processing.

- Kelly Chatain's collection, the Henry H. Van Dyck Correspondence, is rich with information regarding the U.S. Treasury in the years following the Civil War. On display were three colorful imprint proofs for the reverse sides of the \$20, \$500, and \$10,000 1865 gold certificates, as well as a letter from the Chief of the Currency Division discussing the certificates' design and efforts to foil counterfeiters.
- The Schroth *Brooklyn Eagle* collection, processed by Ilaria Papini, includes the records of the last managing editor of the paper, Thomas N. Schroth, and documents the labor disputes that marked the *Eagle's* final days. On display were a promotional document celebrating the *Eagle's* first 100 years of publication and a Newspaper Guild pamphlet titled *Who Killed the Brooklyn Eagle?*,



a public denunciation of the paper's management.

- Brooklyn Independence Community Bank ended its independent existence in the community in 2006; the bank has donated its records to the Historical Society, which has conducted oral histories former bank employees. Angela Perez assisted in coding the interviews, and chose items reflecting the bank's baseball team, including a quote from Robert Vivo, two Savings Bank Championship signed baseballs, and a photograph of one of the teams.
- The Society's Brooklyn Navy Yard Collections consist of several small donations from former employees of the Yard and their descendants. Qing Shen processed these materials, the bulk of which cover the Yard from its heyday in World War II to its closure in the 1960s. Items on exhibit for Archives Week included Nathan Doctors'

Navy Yard ID card and ephemera from the Yard's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

These student internship were funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services that will underwrite 30 students over three years participating in a semester-long internship at BHS, through its GATEWAI program with the Pratt School of Library and Information Science's new archival studies certificate program. Previous student interns have created finding aids for several BHS holdings, perhaps most notably the Sanitary Fair collections.

Archivist and intern supervisor, Leilani Dawson lauds the interns' work for Brooklyn Historical Society: "The archives would not be back up and running if it were not for the enthusiasm and skill the students bring to the collections. I'm grateful for their efforts and am glad that the Historical Society is their introduction to the profession!"

For more information, contact -Brooklyn Historical Society: 128 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn, NY, 11201; phone (718) 222-4111 x 295; email [ldawson@brooklynhistory.org](mailto:ldawson@brooklynhistory.org).

# ART News

## Archivists Roundtable 2007 Awards

*continued from page 20*

public employees not trained as archivists. Since 1991 Brenda has been the Regional Advisory Officer of New York State Archives for the New York City Region. In this role, she advises government and affiliated agencies in the five boroughs, and inspires ordinary local government and school system staff charged with overwhelming archival responsibilities to produce extraordinary results.

Brenda regularly conducts renowned and well-attended workshops on archival issues including *Preservation of Electronic Records*, *Conducting a Records Inventory*, and *Disaster Planning and Response for Records Managers*. These workshops help government agencies properly fulfill their records and archives responsibilities. During these workshops and as part of her daily activities, Brenda patiently explains difficult concepts and policies, as well as fields questions ranging from records inventory to disaster recovery. Most importantly, she reassures those intimidated by archival duties – sometimes via onsite visits – that they can accomplish proper management of their records. She also goes the extra mile to connect those who care for local government records to professional archivists and records managers.

Norman Ringle of New Utrecht High School in Brooklyn sought funding with Brenda's guidance. He declares, "Due to Brenda being with me shoulder-to-shoulder all the way, we have just received our third New York State grant to preserve more than 50,000 records." Eileen Antipas, Assistant to the New York City Register, a first-time grants writer who received two fully-funded New York State grants, comments:

*Brenda gave unstintingly of her time, meeting with me on numerous occasions to assist in completing the grant applications and assembling them for submission. She provided extensive advice on all the points that had to be covered in answering the questions and was extraordinarily helpful with*

*suggestions. Ms. Parnes's advice and guidance were extremely instrumental in obtaining the grants.*

In addition to training and advising non-professionals, Brenda Parnes counsels professional archivists about specific collections issues. She has long been dedicated to the archival profession and presently serves on the board of the New York Archives Conference. She supports METRO as an observer member of their Documentary Heritage Program Advisory Council. Brenda also sits on the Queens College Graduate School of Library and Information Studies Advisory Council, and is an adjunct faculty member at the St. John's University division of Library and Information Science.

Active in local history, Brenda is currently a board member of Brooklyn Heritage, one of the partners currently developing the Revolutionary War Heritage Trail. In January 1999, she was recognized as an NYC Centennial Historian. Brenda Parnes is saluted for her longstanding support of the archival profession and her enthusiastic training of archivists and paraprofessionals alike.

The award was presented by Christine Ward, Archivist, and Assistant Commissioner for Archives and Records, New York State.

Preceding the presentation of the awards, at a well-attended ceremony at the American Numismatic Society in downtown Manhattan, NYC Commissioner, Department of Records, Brian Andersson, read a Mayoral Proclamation officially declaring this to be Archives Week.

New York Archives Week is made possible in part through the generous support of The Lucius N. Littauer Foundation and the MetLife Foundation.

Thanks also to the American Numismatic Society for once again graciously hosting this year's event.

---

## Awards Committee Seeks Volunteers and Nominations for 2008

The Committee invites members to submit nominations for worthy colleagues, archival organizations and innovative projects. Committee Chair Kenneth Schlesinger notes that “It’s a great way to acknowledge exciting work and sustained contributions to our profession. Serving on this Committee is the highlight of my year and a satisfying means to give something back.”

What do they do, and how do they do it? The Awards Committee consists of a small group of individuals with a wide knowledge and interest in the archival profession, its supporters, and practitioners. “While we actively solicit nominations,” Schlesinger explains, we rely on ideas through broad reading and professional networking. For this reason, we’re always looking for new members with fresh ideas and perspectives.”

Committee member Lois Kauffman suggests “Tell us when you hear of an outstanding archives project or initiative. Let us know about project funders who merit special credit. Nominate colleagues who make heroic contributions to our field.” Echoing *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd’s recent and oft-quoted characterization of

archivists, she says “We’re seeking to celebrate and publicize the archivist heroes and innovative archival projects in New York City.”

The Committee does not involve a lot of work. Its members meet twice during the spring – but much of the work is conducted virtually. Meetings are fun, informal, with snacks, Internet cruising and plenty of gossip – from which the members often get inspiration. According to Schlesinger, “Oddly enough – and this is unplanned – we always manage to come up with an unusual thematic unity and harmony among all three awardees.” This year’s winners, he notes, “all made significant community-based contributions.”

If you’d like additional information or are interested in participating, please contact:

Kenneth Schlesinger, Chair

Awards Committee

Leonard Lief Library

Lehman College

250 Bedford Park Boulevard West

Bronx, New York 10468-1589

718/960-7776

Kenneth.Schlesinger@lehman.cuny.edu

---

## Meeting RoundUp: Fall 2008

by Vanessa Cameron, Vice President, New York Archivists Round Table

### September

The first meeting of the 2007-2008 ART programming year brought us to the Center for Jewish History. Bob Sink, Chief Archivist and Project Director for the Center, gave an overview of the Center’s ambitious project of integrating its archival collections into an Online Public Access Catalog. Laura Leone, CJH’s Systems Librarian, gave a presentation on the technical challenges of integrating archival metadata into a bibliographic cataloguing system. Finally, Tony Gill, Director of the Gruss Lipper Digital Laboratory, discussed his approach to digitizing objects and texts and

making them available through the OPAC. The Center for Jewish History served as host.

### October

The Annual New York Archives Week Awards Ceremony took place at the American Numismatic Society in Lower Manhattan. Awards were presented to *Green-Wood Cemetery* for Innovative Use of Archives; *EAI Online Resource Guide for Exhibiting, Collecting & Preserving Media Art* for Outstanding Support of Archives, and *Brenda Parnes* for Archival Achievement. See page XX for more details on this year’s awards ceremony.

### November

November’s meeting took place at Federal Hall National Memorial where the National Archives and Records Administration staff members discussed their public programming initiatives. Tom Mills, Assistant Archivist for Regional Records Services at NARA, began the program by discussing the challenges and responsibilities of this outreach program. Lisa Rouse, National Museums Coordinator, and Nancy Shader, Regional Archives Director for NARA’s Northeast Region, elaborated on their vision for the future of the Northeast Region office. After the presentations Park Ranger Daniel Prebutt gave a lively and

*continued on next page*

## Brooklyn Navy Archive

*continued from page 14*

Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund, Gina Pollara's skill, and the enthusiastic and engaged support of our Regional Archives Officer, Brenda Parnes. With the support of BNYDC senior management, in particular Elliot Matz and Andrew Kimball, the department has grown somewhat beyond the scope of its original intended purpose. To share with the public what has effectively become a "clearinghouse" of Brooklyn Navy Yard history, we are restoring a historic building, scheduled to open in the next 3 years to house the Brooklyn Navy Yard Historical Center and an accompanying exhibition. Finally, the Archive is indebted to an invested community that recognizes and builds opportunities to celebrate Brooklyn's significant contribution to United States History.

### Meeting Round Up

*continued from previous page*

informative tour of the building. Federal Hall National Memorial served as host.

### December

The annual holiday party was held at the newly renovated MoMA Library & Archives Reading Room. The festivities consisted of plenty of food, drink, socializing and a gift raffle. Thanks to generous donations from the Municipal Archives and MoMA, many lucky attendees won prizes. Those attending brought unwrapped gifts or gift cards for children ages 5-12, which were donated to the Children's Aid Society.

# ART News

## NYU CREATES MASTERS PROGRAM IN ARCHIVES AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Recognizing how a rapidly changing global and technological environment is affecting the work of public historians and archivists, New York University's Graduate School of Arts and Science has established a masters program in Archives and Public History.

"The 21<sup>st</sup> century demands that these professionals and scholars have a broad education that will provide the necessary intellectual engagement, conceptual tools, and practical skills," said Peter J. Wosh, director of the program and a faculty member in NYU's Department of History. "This new program at NYU will provide graduates with the solid theoretical grounding, the exposure to contemporary trends, and the collaboration with broader communities necessary for future success."

Wosh, whose published works include *Covenant House: A History* (2005), *Spreading the Word: The Bible Business in 19<sup>th</sup> Century America* (1994), and *Privacy and Confidentiality Perspectives: Archivists and Archival Records* (2005), a co-edited volume, had been the director of archives at the American Bible Society and the university archivist at Seton Hall University prior to joining the faculty at NYU in 1994. He currently serves as editor of print and electronic publications for the Society of American Archivists, where he is an elected fellow. Other faculty members

in the program include full-time historians and archivists at NYU, as well as archival and public history professionals who currently work in the field.

The program's curriculum is designed to provide students with a theoretical grounding in such topics as memory, heritage, commemoration, historic preservation, and the role of the archive in humanities scholarship. Courses emphasize contemporary standards and engagement with new technologies, as public historians and archivists continually use new methods and techniques to engage non-traditional audiences. Students will work collaboratively with NYU's Division of Libraries in the areas of digital librarianship, preservation, and collection development. In addition, the program fosters close involvement with New York City's array of archival and public history institutions.

The new program combines two previous certificate programs in archives and public history that have prepared students for successful careers as archivists, manuscript curators, documentary editors, oral historians, cultural resource managers, historical interpreters, and new media specialists for more than 25 years.

For more on the program, go to: [http://history.fas.nyu.edu/object/history\\_gradprog\\_archives\\_publichistory](http://history.fas.nyu.edu/object/history_gradprog_archives_publichistory)

## Reviews (cont'd.)

### **Working in Women's Archives: Researching Women's Private Literature and Archival Documents**

Edited by Marlene Kadar and Helen M. Buss

125pp.

Reviewed by Penny Shima Glanz.

I am neither a classically trained archivist nor a Women's Studies scholar; rather someone who loves to read the published journals of her favorite authors. In this method, while looking for the first volume of the *Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery*, I found a slender 125-page volume, *Working in Women's Archives: Researching Women's Private Literature and Archival Documents*, edited by Marlene Kadar and Helen M Buss, published by Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Waterloo: 2001 (ISBN: 0-88920-341-5). Buss and Kadar have written on this topic in many of their other works which are worth reading if one prefers a more detailed look at this topic.

The book responds to the challenges scholars have faced in researching literary women through essays written by those performing research. Traditionally one would pull research from diverse areas and piece together these fragments to form an accurate and fitting story of a whole. Today, this problem is exacerbated when trying to learn the whole story of women, whose important papers have historically been pushed to the side to make room for the "real work" of men. This problem has proven a particular issue for those working in the archives of

Canadian women.

The essays describe difficulties encountered with archives of both famous Canadian women, such as L. M. Montgomery and Marian Engel, and those less famous, like Deborah How Cotton. I originally discovered this book due to its connection with the editing of Montgomery's journals by Mary Rubio. Rubio's contributed essay expresses, among other frustrations, her difficulty to find a source of funding allowing her to edit and publish Montgomery's journals because male reviewers believed that Montgomery "has a very limited appeal and challenge" (p.52). Furthermore the "shock" of Montgomery's journals shattered fantasies of an idealistic life and provided additional difficulties after publication of the first volume (p.65).

The other essayists, while united in "the conviction that we are rediscovering a part of culture that has not been appreciated a culture in which women have inscribed themselves" (p.5), bring a wide range of experiences to the collection. In reviewing the papers of Arian Engel, essayist Christl Verduyn found herself in a conundrum echoed by her subject—how to realign the conflict over interest in private papers with the knowledge of a direct wish that attention be placed instead on published public work (92)? For Gwendolyn Davies and her experiences with Cotton, however, the difficulty was even greater with a challenge to find *any* material on the author who penned the poem "Recollection:"

What Recollection is---oh!

Wouldn't thou know?

'Tis the soul's highest privilege below;

A kind indulgence, by our

Maker given---

The mind's perfection, and the stamp of heaven;

In this alone, the strength of reason lies---

It makes us happy, and it makes us wise. (p.36)

Kadar closes the essays by reminding the reader that as scholarship and reconstruction of these lives grow, they will "alter the way we read archival subjects in general, and gender in particular" (p.115). Recovery, reclamation of lives and quotidian experiences, reclamation of writing, and the ongoing rescuing of women's lives and cultures from anonymity will assist us to understand a "part of our history and our present."

While this collection doesn't provide set answers to the problem, the seven contributed essays do highlight specific difficulties associated with working in these archives and support the necessity of implementing changes to facilitate both Canadian women's archival research and research in this global interdisciplinary world. The issues and exasperations of the essays echo similar cries found throughout those in the archives world, which include finding processed, indexed, managed, and robust collections where women's work and life stories aren't belittled.

*Penny Shima Glanz is a candidate for the Masters of Information and Archive Management at Columbia University.*

# Membership Form

Please send this form with your payment to the address below.

Membership year runs from July 1 through June 30.

Please Type or Print Clearly

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position or Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Home telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

New Member?  Yes  No

Send notices to (check one):

Email  Home  Institution

My directory listing should be:  Home  Institution

I would like to assist in:  Monthly Meeting Events  Annual Awards Ceremony   
 Annual Awards Committee  Holiday Event  Education Outreach  Newsletter  
 Articles  Calendar Committee

Send completed form with a check for \$25 (plus any additional \*tax-deductible donation you would like to make), payable to the Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York, Inc. (ART) to:

Membership  
Archivists Roundtable of Metropolitan New York  
P.O. Box 151  
New York, NY 10274-0154

*\* The Archivists Round Table is a 501(c) 3 organization and all contributions to it are tax-deductible for the donors. Donors have not received any goods or services from ART in exchange for their donations.*

**ARCHIVISTS ROUND TABLE  
OF NEW YORK**  
PO Box 151  
New York, NY 10274-0154

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT #1163  
New York, NY