



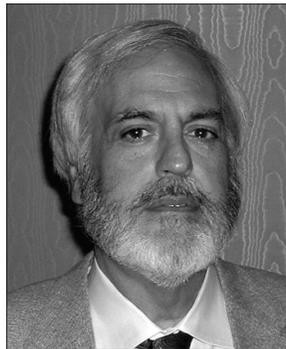
# ACA News

The Newsletter of the Academy of Certified Archivists Issue 66 Summer 2009

## President's Message

Martin L. Levitt, PhD, CA

American Philosophical Society  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



It's nearly time for me to be an ex-president. In August, at our annual meeting, I will turn the presidency over to the capable hands of Michael Bullington, CA. Mike will have to answer the question, "What next?" Knowing Mike, I am completely confident that the answer to that question, collaboratively developed by your elected officers and regents, will be innovative and progressive. I know you will join me in wishing Mike fair winds and good sailing as he takes the helm in August.

This has been a year in which much work has been accomplished by the Academy's leadership, task forces, and committees. A short list of initiatives and on-going business is illustrative of the point:

A task force under the direction of Jane Nokes, CA, has taken on the heavy lifting associated with all of the prep work for our 20/1,000 celebration in Austin. I cannot thank Jane enough, because this is no small feat. Her skill and perseverance are an inspiration to me, and, if you're going to Austin, you'd be wise to get to the party! Live music by the Cornell Hurd Band of Austin, a birthday cake, and more fun await.

Under the supervision of Regent for Outreach Todd Gilliom, CA, and Webmaster Jordon Steele, CA, the ACA rolled out a revised and greatly improved web site, which includes many of the Web 2.0 and social networking features much in demand these days.

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Academy of Certified Archivists  
90 State Street, Suite 1009  
Albany, NY 12207  
Phone: (518) 463-8644  
Fax: (518) 463-8656  
[www.certifiedarchivists.org](http://www.certifiedarchivists.org)

## President's Message

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The Board passed a resolution to insure the routine examination and revision of the Role Delineation Statement (RDS), which I consider to be at the very heart of the Academy. Under the supervision of Task Force Chair Cindy Smolovik, CA, the RDS has been carefully revised to reflect changes in the profession since it was first established. Keeping this document current and relevant is simply essential.

A new records management policy for the Academy has been developed by another task force chaired by Cindy Smolovik. Like many organizations just past the first generation of leaders, a significant amount of non-current records had accumulated, some significant, some not, that required disposition. As you might expect, the new RM schedule provides for the routine maintenance of our records.

The Board has approved the creation of a President's Advisory Council (PAC). This group has no official standing, but the president may elect to call on the collective wisdom embodied there if he or she so chooses to seek advice. The PAC this year was comprised of Mike Bullington, Jim Byers, CA, Judy Cetina, CA, Scott Cline, CA, Mike Holland, CA, Jane Nokes, and Cindy Smolovik—six immediate past presidents and the president-elect. Again, the intent in creating such a group is simply to advise the incumbent president when called upon. It is a group with great wisdom and an invaluable collective corporate memory of the Academy; their thoughts on any number of issues have been extremely helpful.

There is a sentiment for an enduring and constructive award that will honor the first CAs, the "Class of '89," and if all goes as expected, an announcement will be made in Austin, and subsequently in these pages.

This list is by no means comprehensive, but does, I think, give the membership some idea of what ACA has been up to this year. However, let me add that the *real* heavy lifting this year—making sure important business operates smoothly—has been accomplished by the Academy's Board of Officers and Regents. The routine business of the Academy—the inquiries, the test preparation, the item bank maintenance, the certification maintenance reviews, the budgets, outreach programs, application reviews, the minutes and official records, and on and on—is undertaken by such a talented and zealous group of archivists, it seems to me ungrateful to simply let it go at that. I congratulate the Academy for their wisdom in electing such a Board, because this is an archival dream team: smart, dedicated, and eager to take on the Academy's business. This is professional volunteerism of the highest order, and I hope you will take a moment to appreciate the hard work done so well by this dedicated group. They are:

Michael R. Bullington, CA

Vice President/President-Elect

Mott R. Linn, DA, CA

Treasurer

Shelly Henley Kelly, CA

Secretary

Connell B. Gallagher, CA Emeritus

Regent for Examination Administration

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Mary Elizabeth Ruwell, PhD, CA  
Regent for Examination Development

Shelly J. Croteau, PhD, CA  
Regent for Certification Maintenance

Todd M. Gilliom, CA  
Regent for Outreach

Judith G. Cetina, PhD, CA  
Immediate Past President & Regent for  
Nominations

Morgan Davis, CA  
Chair, Nominating Committee

Anselm Huelsbergen, CA  
Newsletter Editor

Jordon Steele, CA  
Webmaster

All of these regents and officers have significant ACA responsibilities; some chair committees of CAs, who assist them in implementing and dispatching their work. It has been a pleasure to work with each and every one of them, and I want to thank them publicly for all they have done on behalf of the Academy. Further, I hope you will, too. If you happen to see or talk to one of these fine folks, in Austin or in some other context, it would be wonderful if you would take it upon yourself to thank them for their selfless service to the profession.

I'm looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible for our commemoration of 20 years and 1,000 members in Austin. Join us as we take a moment to reflect, and celebrate!

Martin L. Levitt, PhD, CA  
President  
Academy of Certified Archivists

## Certification Maintenance by Petition: A View from a Petition Review Team Member

As Regent for Certification Maintenance for the last four years, I have come to know the archivists who review certification maintenance petitions, electronically, if not in person. The petition review teams and the regent communicate frequently about certification maintenance issues. Kristine L. Toma, CA, University Archivist and Records Manager at Texas State University-San Marcos, has evaluated certificate maintenance petitions for many years and is now serving the Academy as a petition review team leader.

This year, more petitions than ever contained incomplete, vague, and unsubstantiated information. This led to a discussion of why professionals in other career paths should take us seriously, when we don't appear to do so ourselves. Kris's well-articulated thoughts from a reviewer's point of view can be found immediately below.

Shelly J. Croteau, PhD, CA  
Regent for Certification Maintenance, 2005-2009

Certification maintenance by petition remains a popular way to maintain one's status as a Certified Archivist. Information about recertification is easily available on the ACA website under Certification Maintenance, including a link to all the forms and instructions for completing a petition. Professional archivists have a variety of areas in which to earn credits for recertification, and those who are active in the profession frequently earn far more than the minimum number of credits to maintain their CA status.

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## Foundations of the Academy: The 1988 Report of the Interim Board for Certification

In this anniversary year for ACA, it seems appropriate to cast a glance backward, historically speaking, and revisit one of the foundational records of the Academy. As early as 1977 the Society of American Archivists (SAA), through its Committee on Education and Professional Development, developed a plan for certifying individual archivists. The next decade saw additional attempts by SAA to formulate, evaluate, and realize certification plans. Ultimately the SAA Council approved a plan for certification in February of 1987 that led to the formation of an Interim Board for Certification charged in part with developing “criteria and procedures for certification by petition and . . . for initial certification by examination” (*SAA Newsletter*, August 1986, page 9). What is reprinted below is the Interim Board’s report as published in the January 1988 *SAA Newsletter*. The certification process now shepherded by the Academy of Certified Archivist was officially implemented at the 1988 SAA annual meeting held in Atlanta, Georgia.

Thanks to Teresa Brinati, SAA’s Director of Publishing, for allowing *ACA News* to reprint the 1988 report. Two sections from the original publication have been left out (the tentative chronology for certification by examination and the budget section); with the exception of a few typographical corrections and formatting adjustments, no other editing was done to the plan as it appeared in the *SAA Newsletter*.

### Report of the Interim Board for Certification

#### Introduction

In January 1987, Council and Officers of SAA voted in favor of a certification program. To initiate the program, they established a five-person Interim Board for Certification. The Board’s specific charge was to develop a plan and budget for both certification by petition and certification by examination. The Board’s report was to be considered by SAA Council and Officers at its 1988 winter meeting, and if approved, provide the basis for implementing the certification program.

SAA President William Joyce appointed to the Board four representatives from the Society: Edmund Berkeley, Jr., J. Frank Cook, Edie Hedlin, and James B. Rhoads. Carole Huxley, Deputy Commissioner for Cultural Education for New York State, agreed to serve as the public member.

The first meeting of the Board occurred on September 2, 1987, in conjunction with the SAA annual meeting in New York City. At that meeting, program responsibilities were assigned as follows: Frank Cook for budget and administrative procedures; Bert Rhoads for examination development; and Ned Berkeley for certification by petition. Edie Hedlin was chosen as Board chair. Donn Neal, SAA’s Executive Director, agreed to assist the Board with the administrative and budgetary aspects of the program.

Board members communicated by telephone and mail over the next several weeks and pursued their individual program areas. During this time, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued to four testing companies who had earlier provided verbal estimates of costs and procedures in the development of an examination program for

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## **1988 Interim Board Report**

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archivists. The deadline for submission of written responses to the RFP was November 25, 1987.

A second meeting of the Board occurred November 8-9 in Washington, D.C. Joining the Board on November 8 was Ms. Betsy Ranslow, a credentialing consultant retained by SAA to assist in developing a proper contractual agreement with a professional testing company. During this meeting the Board increased its familiarity with testing procedures, discussed the petition process, and began formulating preliminary budget figures. Each member subsequently submitted to Hedlin a draft document covering his area of responsibility. Those drafts, plus the responses of the testing companies and Ms. Ranslow's analysis, form the basis for this report.

### **Primary Assumptions of the Board**

In implementing a plan for certification, the Board was governed by the Council resolution passed in May 1984 and the revised certification plan published in the August 1986 *SAA Newsletter* as refined by Council at its January 23, 1987 meeting. The refinements altered the period for seeking certification by petition from two years to one year and changed the examination instrument from a multiple choice/essay combination to exclusively multiple choice.

The Board assumed that the certification program would need to be self-supporting and that any funds provided by SAA during the start-up phase would be refunded to the Society as soon as possible. Further, the Board assumed that it was bound by the time frames described in the August 1986 *SAA Newsletter*. The 1986 plan called for the Interim Board to develop "criteria and procedures

for certification by petition" within nine months and "criteria and procedures for certification by examination" within eighteen months. The plan presented below clearly falls within these time frames.

Finally, the Board assumed that an implementation plan for the recertification program should properly be left to the Academy of Certified Archivists. Given the short deadlines and broad responsibilities accompanying the planning for certification by petition, examination development, and initial administrative activities, the Board did not feel able or believe it wise to focus on recertification as well. With these assumptions in mind, the Board presents the following plan and timetable for implementation of a certification program for archivists.

### **Certification by Petition**

Certification by petition is a simpler process than certification by examination. It does not require the services of outside professionals and, because it is a one-time-only option, does not require a mechanism for continued availability. Nonetheless, it is imperative that the procedures accompanying this process be clear and fair, and that they reflect a broad range of opinion. In addition to the steps listed below, the Board recommends that the Society obtain legal advice in this area to assure maximum compliance with sound professional practice.

The Board also recommends that those persons granted certification by petition be designated as "charter members" of the Academy of Certified Archivists (ACA). This title suggests the unique character and special status of the ACA's first members, thereby offering recognition of their professional standing and their support of the

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## 1988 Interim Board Report

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Academy. As with all membership in the Academy, charter members must seek recertification after eight years. The following timetable assumes the availability of certification by petition by July 1, 1988. However, given the late-February date for the meeting at which SAA Council will consider this plan, the Interim Board recognizes that this time frame may be optimistic. Nonetheless, the Interim Board expects this service to be in place and available for announcement to the profession at SAA's 1988 annual meeting in Atlanta.

Administrative aspects of the program are included below. Cost estimates have been placed in the "Budget" section of this report. In general, the Board believes that the steps leading to a program of certification by petition are as follows:

1. In early March, 1988, Ned Berkeley, with the assistance of a subcommittee of two SAA members, will prepare the draft of a petition instrument. The subcommittee members should consist of highly respected archivists whose institutional affiliation and areas of expertise provide a broad professional perspective. Cost considerations suggest that they ideally should be reasonably close to Charlottesville, Virginia.

The petition instrument will be divided into three parts: education, employment experience, and professional activities. It will be a self-scoring document with a certification statement at the end where the applicant certifies to the correctness of the data entered and that he or she understands that the certification, if granted, will extend for eight years. Although the subcommittee will prepare a draft petition, at this time it will NOT

assign any points to any part of the document.

The draft petition will be reviewed by the Interim Board and the subcommittee will make changes as suggested.

2. The revised draft will be duplicated and sent to 50-100 archivists, reflecting a cross-section of archival functions, institutions, geographic regions, etc., on a test basis to determine usefulness and to identify problems. Testers will be asked to indicate the weighting of points (probably totaling 200) to be assigned to the three major sections, and to individual items, and to indicate what they believe a passing score should be. These test copies will be returned to the subcommittee for review and evaluation.

3. Berkeley will work with the Executive Director to design a certificate to be issued to the charter members of the Academy of Certified Archivists, and to make initial designs for the printed petition instrument and other material to be mailed to members requesting information about the program.

4. The subcommittee will meet to refine the petition and to affix points based on the returned sample petitions and will send the revised instrument to the Interim Board for review.

5. After making any necessary changes, the Board will submit the petition instrument to Council for its review and approval at its late-spring 1988 meeting. Assuming Council approval, a copy of the instrument can be printed in the next issue of the *SAA Newsletter*. (The Board believes that an announcement of the availability of the petition should be included in each issue of the *SAA Newsletter* published during the one-year period.)

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6. The Interim Board will hold an Open Meeting at the 1988 annual meeting in Atlanta where members may ask questions about the process of certification by petition. Copies of the petition will be available at that meeting and at the SAA booth during the entire meeting.

7. All petitions will be returned to the Chicago office where they will be turned over to a staff member (temporary) who will check them for completeness and correctness, note problems or questions, and forward them to Berkeley for review by his subcommittee. The subcommittee will hold meetings in early September 1988, early January 1989, and early July 1989 to review petitions. It will forward to the Executive Director lists of persons whose petitions are successful. He will notify the petitioners of the award of charter membership in ACA. The Board believes that recognition should be afforded charter members in a number of ways, including the reading of their names at the 1989 annual meeting and a special ribbon to attach to their identification badges.

8. Appeals of rejected petitions will be forwarded by the Executive Director to the chair of the Professional Standards Committee. The chair, with the concurrence of the two Council-elected members, will appoint a committee of three archivists (including at least one Fellow) to an Appeals Committee. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final.

### **Certification by Examination**

Certification by examination involves a process that is complex, time-consuming, and labor-intensive. It requires activities and approaches

with which most archivists are unfamiliar, but that are necessary if the examination is to be viewed as fair, objective, and based upon a broad professional consensus.

For these reasons, both SAA Council and the Interim Board engaged the services of Betsy Ranslow, a credentialing consultant, who assisted in the preparation and dispatch of an RFP to four nationally recognized testing companies: the Professional Examination Service and Professional Testing Company, both of New York City; Assessment Systems, Inc., of Philadelphia; and the Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey. The Board felt that only through responses to an RFP would it obtain sufficient data to form the basis for reliable cost estimates.

Of the four companies, one (Assessment Systems, Inc.) declined to participate. The remaining three submitted proposals describing their services, procedures, and costs. A comparative analysis of the three proposals, prepared by Ranslow, is included in the appendices to this report. Based upon this information, the Professional Examination Service (PES) appears to offer the most favorable combination of quality service and affordable costs. However, the financial implications in choosing a testing company are substantial. Therefore, the Interim Board leaves to Council the final decision regarding a testing firm.

Each company has proposed somewhat different procedures. The following outline of steps is therefore a generic approach that may not completely mirror the procedures of the testing firm chosen. In all cases, however, the development of a program for certification by examination requires a great deal of interaction

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## Officers and Board News

President (2008-09)	Martin L. Levitt, PhD, CA American Philosophical Society Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Vice President/ President-Elect (2008-09)	Michael R. Bullington, CA McDonald's Golden Archives Elk Grove, Illinois
Treasurer (2008-10)	Mott R. Linn, DA, CA Clark University Worcester, Massachusetts
Secretary (2007-09)	Shelly Henley Kelly, CA Neumann Library University of Houston- Clear Lake Clear Lake, Texas
Regent for Examination Administration (2007-09)	Connell B. Gallagher, CA Emeritus Underhill, Vermont
Regent for Examination Development (2008-10)	Mary Elizabeth Ruwell, PhD, CA U.S. Air Force Academy Colorado Springs, Colorado
Regent for Certification Maintenance (2007-09)	Shelly Croteau, PhD, CA Missouri State Archives Jefferson City, Missouri
Regent for Outreach (2008-10)	Todd M. Gilliom, CA National Personnel Records Center, NARA St. Louis, Missouri
Immediate Past President & Regent for Nominations (2008-09)	Judith G. Cetina, PhD, CA Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Archives Cleveland, Ohio
Chair, Nominating Committee (2008-09)	Morgan Davis, CA Dole Institute of Politics Lawrence, Kansas

Contact information for the Officers and Regents is available on the ACA website ([www.certifiedarchivists.org/html/contacta.html](http://www.certifiedarchivists.org/html/contacta.html)).

### From the Vice President

Michael Bullington, CA  
McDonald's Golden Archives  
Elk Grove, Illinois

As I pen this column, I note that the Major League Baseball All-Star Game is just around the corner marking the end of the first half of the season. Reality has set in for several clubs who had lofty opening day expectations. Yet, for others their current standing is a testament to their belief that was rooted in spring training that they could succeed. These clubs know that they need to continue to perform at this high level in order to have a chance to participate in the World Series. There is a cliché that a baseball season is a marathon—not a sprint. This can also be applied to ACA as it continues to evolve and meet challenges to fulfill its mission.

The Academy will be celebrating its twentieth anniversary this upcoming August. Like the front running baseball clubs, its founding members and officers were determined to make the ACA successful and reach its full potential. Greg Hunter, CA, the Academy's first president, noted that since the Academy was not incorporated, the first officers were personally responsible for the decisions that they made. How many of us would have continued as officers knowing that we would have to personally bear this responsibility? Subsequent administrations faced other challenges; one of the most important was to keep ACA financially stable. They

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## Vice President

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persevered and remained focused despite these and other challenges that included naysayers, doubters, and detractors questioning ACA's purpose and reason for being.

For those who are attending this year's anniversary celebration I ask you to raise your glass to our founders and to each other—because without your own personal commitment ACA would not be as strong and vibrant as it is today.



## From the Webmaster

Jordon Steele, CA

Biddle Law Library, University of Pennsylvania  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

In May 2009, the Academy of Certified Archivists debuted its new website. As promised, the new site has an updated look-and-feel from the previous version. We have also restructured (and hopefully simplified) the navigation of the site. The major change is that the homepage now serves as the space to get the latest news on happenings within ACA. Change is always rough though, so if you have any questions or suggestions don't hesitate to contact me at

webmaster at certifiedarchivists dot org.

I am also working with members of the ACA Board to develop strategies for incorporating our online presence into the Academy's outreach efforts. As we approach our annual meeting, I look forward to continuing to serve the Academy in my capacity as Webmaster.

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between archivists and the testing company, and can be described generally as follows:

1. *The development of "task statements."* These are statements describing the tasks that archivists typically perform, such as appraisal, arrangement, description, reference services, and outreach. The Board will solicit a broad range of archivists and archival institutions for existing task statements and other materials or information from which task statements might be developed. Bert Rhoads, together with two subcommittee members, will review the materials so gathered and prepare draft task statements. The draft statements will then be reviewed by a nine-person panel that is representative of the major groupings within the archival profession and includes archival educators as well as practicing archivists who are authorities in the major archival functions. The draft statements will be modified as necessary by the panel and will be reviewed by 100 archivists. The final set of task statements form the basis for future steps in examination development. The testing company will review the work of the panel and make further refinements, if needed, in consultation with the examination subcommittee.

2. *Development of "knowledge, skills, and attitudes" statements (KSAs).* A separate panel of seven archivists will be convened to develop these statements. Working from the task statements, the panel will identify the types of knowledge an archivist must possess to perform a given task, the skills that must be brought to bear, and the attitudes that are necessary to its successful

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## Heather Wade University Archivist Emporia State University Emporia, Kansas

By Linda Hocking, CA

Heather Wade, CA, began her career as a historian with a background in museum administration. After working in several archives including the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Chemung Valley History Museum in Elmira, New York, she joined the faculty of the University Libraries and Archives at Emporia State University (ESU) in Kansas.

It was at this point that she sought certification. The exam provided Wade with a mechanism to demonstrate that her knowledge and experience was equivalent to what she would have received through a more traditional archives academic program.

Wade credits the exam with providing a foundation for the Archives Studies Certificate Program that she helped create in the School of Library and Information Management at ESU. “I based the program’s academic and practicum requirements strongly on the knowledge requirements needed to pass the ACA’s certification exam. I recommend taking the CA exam to my students in order to impart on them the importance of standards, of challenging oneself, and of achieving goals.”



Photograph courtesy of Heather Wade

University Archivist Heather Wade, CA, works in a temporary acquisitions room in the Emporia State University Archives during the Archives current relocation.

Finding equilibrium between duties is difficult for most archivists, and Wade is no different. She states, “It is very challenging to balance the demands of administering a dynamic archives, mentoring and teaching up-coming archivists, and meeting tenure and promotion requirements as university faculty. The ‘seven domains’ tend to multiply exponentially in an academic environment!”

It is no small surprise that Wade sometimes has trouble finding time for all her duties. In addition to serving approximately 300 researchers per year, in the four years that she has been at Emporia State she has

built a team of two full-time assistants, a legion of student employees, interns and practicum students from various disciplines. They have

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## Academy Profile

This feature profiles members of the Academy of Certified Archivists. If you would like to suggest someone to be featured, or if you yourself would like to appear in the column, please contact:

Linda Hocking, CA

[archivist@litchfieldhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:archivist@litchfieldhistoricalsociety.org)

## Academy Profile - Heather Wade

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renovated the space in their archives, and moved out of it again when additional funding was found to provide further renovations (they will return next year). The staff is engaged with community organizations through outreach and programming. If that is not enough, they have also implemented Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS), created an astounding 200 detailed finding aids from scratch in a customized online cataloging system, and built a gallery to display their holdings. This new gallery had over 800 visitors in its first year.

Wade describes their holdings with a clear appreciation of the materials in her care:

[T]he Archives administers several major collections, including the personal papers of multiple Pulitzer prize winning journalist William Allen White . . . friend and advisor of US presidents from Harrison to FDR, as well as scientists, authors, artists and other major figures of the Gilded Age in America. ESU Archives also houses the May Masee Memorial Collection . . . compiled between 1967 and 1974 by a group of authors, illustrators, friends, etc., of May Masee, the woman who created two of the first three children's book divisions in American publishing houses . . . . Other collections include an interesting set of documents and photographs showcasing the development of the Christian-Socialist movement in nineteenth-century England, and a scrapbook that offers an insider's view of Woodrow Wilson's career prior to his becoming US President.

One interesting suggestion Wade made that would help archivists have the credentials for tenure and recertification is the ability to use researcher's

acknowledgements as part of the archivist's scholarly output.

After all, the lengths that archivists go to in order to match a researcher with a needed resources is a feat of scholarship on the part of the archivist, and the culmination of the archivist's training, wisdom and creativity, all given for the benefit of the researcher. Although it is gratifying when a researcher acknowledges the archivist's contribution to a work of scholarship, too few outside of the archivist's profession understand the quality of the effort that has gone into such a huge proportion of monographs, journal articles, histories, works of fiction, documentaries, journalism, etc. (Ironically, if I had the time to write all that into article that could be published in a traditional scholarly format, then that would count toward tenure. See how it works?)

More information about the Emporia State University Archives can be found at its web site:

[www.emporia.edu/libsv/archives/](http://www.emporia.edu/libsv/archives/)

Linda Hocking, CA, is Curator of Library and Archives at the Litchfield Historical Society in Litchfield, Connecticut.

**Upcoming locations for the  
Annual Meeting of the  
Academy of Certified Archivists**  
August, 2010 — Washington, DC  
August, 2011 — Chicago, Illinois

## 1988 Interim Board Report

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performance. The testing company will review the KSAs, and refine them in consultation with the examination subcommittee.

3. *Creation of questions.* The next major step is the framing of specific questions to be included in the examination. These will be multiple-choice questions, each with four possible answers. A half-day certification examination will require 100-250 questions. These should be drawn from a pool of 200-800 questions. The testing company will assist the examination subcommittee in conducting item (examination question) development workshops. These are one-day exercises, open to any member of the archival profession. Approximately half of the day is devoted to instructing participants in the technique of item development, and the balance of the day is used for item development itself. Experience suggests that about thirty usable items may be expected from each one-day workshop. It is anticipated that these workshops will be held in conjunction with other archival meetings, particularly those of regional archival associations.

4. *Item Review.* Once the minimum number of questions necessary for the item pool has been developed, these, too, must be subjected to a review process. A nine-member panel, similar in composition to the task statement development panel, will be convened to review each individual item.

5. *Setting the pass level.* A criterion-referenced cut score will be set, using an established method. Each member of a nine-member panel will be asked to estimate the percentage of examinees who will correctly answer a particular question, and

these estimates will be averaged for each item and then across items. This exercise will provide the basis for determining the passing score for the examination.

6. *Location and frequency of the examination.* The first examination will be conducted in connection with the SAA annual meeting in St. Louis, in October 1989. The current assumption is that subsequent examinations will be held once a year in the venue of the annual meeting. Examinations can be held more frequently or in additional locations, but the costs of administering the examination, and/or the reliance upon volunteer institutions and individuals to provide this service, may increase.

7. *Other matters.* Prior to the first examination, a candidate handbook will be prepared and provision for registration of individual candidates will be made. Following the examination, the testing company will score the examinations and conduct an item analysis based upon the examination results. Among other things, this analysis will identify particular questions that a large percentage of examinees failed to answer correctly and eliminate these questions from the individual scoring process, and from the item pool for future examinations. The testing company will then notify candidates of their examination results and will provide examination results for all candidates to the SAA—or the ACA. It is anticipated that by this time the ACA will have been organized and the Interim Board will be able to relinquish its responsibilities to that body. After the first examination has been conducted and the ACA becomes fully operational, certain follow-up and maintenance activities will be required. These include additional item-development workshops and item-review activities. Eventually, the task

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statements and KSAs will need to be reviewed and modified in order to keep pace with the developments in the archival profession.

8. *Summary.* The testing company will play a lead role for about eighteen months. It will provide guidance, technical assistance, professional expertise, and supervision for the entire process and will ensure that the final product—a professional certification examination—is fair and objective and conforms to generally accepted standards. Equally essential to the success of the program is the active participation of the archival profession at almost every step of the way. This involvement will require creativity and the expenditure of time and money.

### Budget and Administration

Most administrative matters related to the start-up phase of certification have been discussed in conjunction with the two respective programs. Only the two areas of publicity and SAA staffing will be discussed here.

When available, certification by petition and certification by examination should each be publicized in the *SAA Newsletter*, *The American Archivist*, newsletters of regional archival associations, and in press releases to a wide variety of related constituencies (ARMA, NAGARA, AAM, AASLH, etc.). In addition, SAA should prepare a flyer for distribution in mailings, at workshops, at annual meetings, and whenever else appropriate. Executive Director Neal estimates that SAA's primary staffing needs will occur during 1988-89, when certification by petition is available. The work of the ACA can be assumed by ACA members.

### Budget Assumptions

In preparing cost figures, the Board needed to make several major assumptions in both expenditures and income. The nature of these assumptions should be noted carefully:

First, the Board worked with the figures projected by Professional Examination Service (PES) in calculating costs (\$20,000 for examination development and a \$10,000 annual fee for test administration). Since Professional Testing Service was much lower, and Educational Testing Service much higher, a choice of either of these two will significantly alter costs. In addition, please note that the final cost figures, even for PES, remain subject to negotiation. The Board has assumed, for instance, a lowering of the \$10,000 annual fee after the first year.

Second, the budget assumes payment for examination development within SAA's 1988-89 fiscal year and payment for administration of the examination during SAA's 1989-90 fiscal year. (Ranslow's projection lumps both costs into the first year's contract with PES, without regard to SAA's fiscal year.)

Third, a higher fee will be charged non-SAA members than SAA members who seek certification. (This is common practice.)

Fourth, at least 260 persons (10% of SAA's individual membership) will seek charter membership in ACA; 20% of the 260 will be non-SAA members; and 50 persons a year will seek certification by examination, but one-third of them will be non-SAA members.

The Board also prepared a projection of income and expenditures for certification through the year 2000. This projection assumes a continuation of

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## 1988 Interim Board Report

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fifty applicants a year for certification by examination and a recertification request from one-half of all who originally sought certification. Based upon these assumptions, the Board estimates that the Academy of Certified Archivists will maintain an income base sufficient to continue the certification program.

### Conclusion

In conducting research for this report, the Interim Board has learned a great deal about the dynamics of certification programs. This experience has led to several conclusions regarding the impact of certification upon the Society of American Archivists and the archival profession.

First, it appears that a certification program is financially feasible. The Board's preliminary budget figures indicate that any major costs associated with program implementation are recoverable. The Board believes that the number of applicants projected for both certification programs is conservative. More candidates will result in more income.

Second, the process of developing a test instrument for certification by examination is in itself a rigorous exploration of the theoretical, methodological, and practical bases for current practice. It is possible, although unlikely, that this process will reveal an insufficient body of commonly accepted knowledge, skills, and attitudes upon which to base a standardized test. The Board believes that such a finding itself would be valuable in assessing the status and needs of the profession. Moreover, the inclusion of a large number of archivists, the involvement of regional

associations as well as SAA members, and the guidance of testing experts throughout the process provides an excellent opportunity for enhanced communication and professional awareness among archivists.

Finally, the certification effort is highly labor-intensive. A viable certification program will succeed only if a significant number of archivists willingly commit time, skills, and energy to this process. The Board therefore urges Council to assure full and open reporting of plans and activities at all stages of this process, and to encourage active participation from the broadest range of archivists. ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇

### Certification Maintenance by Petition

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ACA's Certification Maintenance petition review teams are charged with a straight-forward task: to verify each credit claimed on a petition and determine if the petitioner has enough valid credits to remain certified for another five years. Submitted petitions are divided into batches and distributed among review teams for evaluation; each of the three ACA members on a review team receives copies and is responsible for evaluating every entry on each petition within that batch. The Definitions and Special Instructions pages of the maintenance packet provide guidance for the team to evaluate claims for credit. Allowed credits are totaled and each petition is assigned a status of "pass" or "no pass" based on the information provided.

While this process works very well for many petitions, difficulties arise when a petition does not include sufficient information. In this case, the

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## Certification Maintenance by Petition

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team members often go in search of more information: searching the Web for a statement of professional archival components in educational events, for the number of days that educational sessions were scheduled at local archival meetings, and for online versions of articles to determine if the publications are sponsored by the individual's employer. The simple fact that team members must resort to research is frustrating because the petitioner should have provided these details in the first place. Petitions that require in-depth research by the team are often the same petitions that end up with a "no pass" status. However, the most surprising thing is not that a relatively small number of petitions lack adequate credits to pass, but that a growing number of petitions contain inaccurate, incomplete, incoherent, and occasionally misleading information.

Certification Maintenance by Petition requires a level of organization, detail, and accuracy that should be attainable by any professional archivist who works with donors, processes materials, and creates finding aids. Frankly, these concepts should be familiar to anyone in a professional position. Would an employer accept a travel reimbursement request with no dates specified and a vague list of expenses? Would a supervisor accept inaccurate data submitted for an annual report? Would a manager allow an employee to claim a vague number of vacation days taken sometime during the previous five-year period? If an employer requires organized, detailed, and accurate information, should a certification maintenance petition deserve less? The value of the CA designation begins with its members; if ACA *(continued on following page)*

## ACA 2009 Election Report

The Nominating Committee of the Academy of Certified Archivists is responsible for identifying candidates and conducting the annual election. The 2009 ACA Nominating Committee was composed of Judy Cetina, CA, Regent; Gerrienne Schaad, CA; and Morgan Davis, CA, Chair.

On June 11, 2009, Audrey McKenna Coleman, CA, Heather Wade, CA, and Morgan Davis gathered together at the Dole Institute of Politics in Lawrence, Kansas, to count a total of 210 election ballots.

After tabulation of the results, the following individuals received the most votes in their respective offices, and so are elected:

*Vice President/President Elect*

**Pam Hackbart-Dean, CA**

*Secretary*

**Shelly Henley Kelly, CA**

*Regent for Examination Administration*

**Daphne DeLeon, CA**

*Regent for Certification Maintenance*

**Kristy Sorensen, CA**

*Nominating Committee*

**Richard Schrake, CA**



Photograph courtesy of Morgan Davis  
Audrey McKenna Coleman, CA, Heather Wade, CA,  
and Morgan Davis, CA, process the 2009 ACA ballots.

# Editor's Endpaper

My overzealous editing of the article "Summary of Mid-Year Board Meeting" found in the last issue of *ACA News* (Issue 65, Spring 2009) caused the omission of information regarding ACA and the International Council on Archives (IAC). To correct this omission, the relevant information is being printed below.

Anselm Huelsbergen, CA  
Editor, *ACA News*

Trudy Huskamp Peterson, CA, presented a special report on the ICA and distributed a copy of the Universal Declaration on Archives which is expected to be accepted at the 2009 meeting in Malta. The 2009 International Conference of the Round Table on Archives (CITRA) meeting is about education and training. ACA is prepared to continue to offer our experience in developing an archival credential as a model for other countries. European associations are developing criteria called "competency review."

ICA has grown more politicized. National archivists used to be archivists who had advanced through the profession, but in many of the developed countries they are coming from more business-oriented venues. As a result, the ICA leadership is taking a more business oriented approach. Professional archivists are now found in the Section of Professional Associations (SPA). SPA's position is increasingly important as the voice for "the profession" within ICA. The SPA is conducting a survey of associations for a worldwide directory of associations. ♦♦♦♦

## Certification Maintenance by Petition

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members fail to respect the recertification process, employers have no reason to value certified archivists.

The CA designation is neither automatic nor awarded to individuals who have achieved a certain status or reputation; it must be earned and maintained either by exam or through the careful documentation of professional activities. Create a strong petition by becoming familiar with the Certification Maintenance requirements. Download the packet before the end of your certification period and read through the Definitions and Special Instructions. Better yet, begin your petition and update it annually—just as you would prepare for any annual performance review. Follow the instructions and provide details. Remember that a team of your peers will evaluate your petition and determine which credits are allowed. Three or four years into your certification period, calculate your credits to see where you stand. If you lack credits, perhaps you can alter your professional development plans to earn additional credits for a strong petition, or perhaps you should consider taking the exam to recertify. Both methods are valuable and equally valid for recertification. Take pride in the fact that you are an archivist and a member of ACA. Continue to learn and participate in the profession, and carefully document this activity if you choose to maintain your certification by petition. ♦♦♦♦

ACA News

Academy of Certified Archivists  
90 State Street, Suite 1009  
Albany, NY 12207  
[aca@caphill.com](mailto:aca@caphill.com)

Please send any comments,  
ideas, or suggestions about  
*ACA News* to either:

Anselm Huelsbergen, CA

726 Lewis Hall  
University of Missouri-Columbia  
Columbia, MO 65211  
[huelsbergena@missouri.edu](mailto:huelsbergena@missouri.edu)