



ACA News

The Newsletter of the Academy of Certified Archivists Issue 76 Winter 2012

President's Message

Brenda Gunn, CA

Briscoe Center for American History

The University of Texas at Austin



In the last newsletter, I initiated what I hope will be an ongoing discussion on advocacy as it relates to ACA. My belief is that whatever is good for the profession as a whole, is good for the Academy. Therefore, ACA should lend its organizational name to national advocacy efforts that aim to make a positive impact on the profession. Though a direct opportunity to speak out has not emerged so far this year, it occurs to me that the ACA has been conducting its own advocacy work through the outreach committee for some time now. Led by Regent for Outreach, Louis Jones, CA, the outreach committee has identified certified archivists around the country who have been willing to speak to SAA Student Chapters about the Academy and the certification process. I have received very positive feedback from students on these information sessions, and I'm thrilled about that. I hope we see an increase in applications from recent graduates this year and the next.

Putting the Academy in front of current students through organized student chapters is one approach, but there are students in archival programs without a student chapter affiliation. Let's reach out to them as well. Let Louis or me know if you are interested in helping in this effort.

If you can't participate in these advocacy efforts, there are others to be sure. I wonder how many CAs are mentors? I feel certain that it is a large number. If you aren't already involved in mentoring a student or a new professional, I encourage you to consider it. Some state and regional associations have formal mentoring programs, and of course

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President's Message

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SAA has one through its membership committee. The mentoring relationship presents an excellent opportunity to talk to someone about the benefits of certification.

You are the Academy's advocate and I thank you for your efforts.

Brenda Gunn, CA
President
(Proudly Recertified, 2012)

From the Treasurer

Mott Linn, D.A., CA
Clark University,
Worcester, MA



Dues News!

Over the years, a number of members have asked ACA to provide an electronic method for paying their annual membership dues. I plan to have this available for this year through the PayPal account for ACA that I recently set up. Many of those who have recertified in the last few years have done so using the online forms that Kristy Sorensen, CA has created. I plan to add to this type of online form the capability of paying through PayPal, either via a PayPal account or with a credit card. Daphne DeLeon, CA is preparing a way for prospective members who apply to take the exam this year to be the first ones to use this payment option. If this is successful, we will also make it available this summer for the payment of dues. Of course, you will still be able to pay by mailing a check to us.

ACA Officers

President (2011-12)	Brenda Gunn, CA University of Texas at Austin , Briscoe Center for American History Austin, Texas
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Board News

From the Regent for Outreach

Louis Jones, Ph.D., CA
Wayne State University,
Walter P. Reuther
Library, Detroit, MI



Both the ACA Outreach Committee and the Task Force for Certification within State Archives have been working to ensure that more non-certified archivists consider and seek archival certification. To this end, members of the Academy have recently made presentations to the SAA student chapters of the University of Texas, the University of Denver and Simmons College. In total, the Academy will have made over ten presentations to SAA student chapters this academic year, all with the intention of motivating these students to pursue archival certification upon graduating from their archival education programs. We are especially pleased that the SAA student chapter at Simmons College agreed to have members of the Academy speak to its SAA student chapter. There, Gregor Trinkaus-Randall, CA, SAA's current president and an active member of the Academy, joined Mott Linn, CA, the Academy's treasurer, in an effort to share the benefits of archival certification with the 20 SAA student chapter members there in attendance. The presentation was well received with many inquiries about certification.

As for state archives, the Task Force for Certification within State Archives has contacted a number of state archivists about the possibility of having members of the Academy speak to their staffs about archival certification. The state archives in Illinois, Michigan, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, have all agreed to allow for these presentations and the Task Force hopes to contact other state archives for this same purpose. There is an important role for members of the Academy in this work. **Many of you will be receiving emails requesting that you volunteer to make these presentations. We**

strongly urge you to answer this call. For the effort, you will receive points toward recertification. Most importantly, you will be contributing to the mission of the Academy and the strength of the field more generally.

Fortunately, the Outreach Committee has just completed its work in creating a power point presentation about the Academy, highlighting its history, structure, and benefits while providing information about the certification exam. For those volunteering to provide a presentation to either a student group or state archives, but unsure of exactly what to say, the power point will provide much of the information you'll need for success. However, your own personal experiences within the profession and the Academy will ensure a thorough and engaging presentation. Should you agree to assist the Academy in making these presentations your work will be facilitated by incentives you'll be able to provide. In particular, the Academy will reimburse you up to \$75.00 for refreshments to provide to these groups. Most importantly, you will be able to administer a drawing where one person attending such a presentation will be able to take the certification exam for free.

Coupled with these efforts, the Academy will be calling on many of you to staff tables at upcoming regional archival conferences. As with the presentations to SAA student chapters and state archives, the Academy hopes to inspire non-certified archivists to join our ranks as we work to strengthen our organization and the field more broadly. Your presence at these regional meetings, as representatives of the Academy, will help to serve this purpose. We appreciate your assistance in this process.



From the Regent for Certification Maintenance

Kristy Sorensen, CA
Austin Presbyterian
Theological Seminary
Austin, Texas



Certification Maintenance

Once every five years, Certified Archivists get the chance to consciously review their professional development and service and demonstrate their continued dedication to the archives profession. If you are one of the lucky CAs due to recertify in 2012, congratulations! This will be our second year of utilizing an online submission form for the recertification petition – I hope that you find this convenient and easy to use, and that you will let me know if you have any questions or suggestions.

A few tips on preparing your petition:

Utilize the templates and forms available on the certification maintenance section of the ACA website: <http://www.certifiedarchivists.org/members-area/certification-maintenance.html>

1. Include specific dates and locations (if applicable) for all your activities.
2. Records Management work and experience can be included as part of archival activities for credit (e.g., membership in records management organizations, attendance at conferences of records managers as member or presenter, participant in records management-related seminars or workshops) but will only be counted if the petitioner also has significant work within the archival domains (arrangement, description, preservation, reference, outreach, etc.). Membership and participation in the Society of American Archivists or other archival organizations will also be looked at as indications of the petitioner's involvement in the archives profession.
3. If the title of an activity does not make its relevance to the archival profession self-evident, include a couple of sentences describing why it is a qualifying archival activity.

Don't be afraid to contact me if you have any questions or concerns! My e-mail is ksorensen@austinseminary.edu and I'm always happy to give advice or answer questions about the recertification process.

If you'd like to avoid the hassle of filling out the petition, you always have the option of sitting for the examination on August 8, 2012 in San Diego, CA (SAA Annual Meeting); Boston, MA; Minneapolis, MN; Raleigh, NC; Vancouver, BC or any city where five or more archivists request to sit for the exam. Archivists who are taking the examination for recertification don't have to pay a fee or send in any supporting documentation – all you have to do is fill out the online registration form by May 15, 2012 and let us know where you plan to sit for the exam: <https://certifiedarchivists.wufoo.com/forms/aca-2012-recertification-by-examination/>

Don't feel left out if this isn't your year to recertify – you can help your future self by taking a look at the petition material and coming up with a system to track the credits you earn as you go. A little preparatory work will help you plan your continuing education and professional service to earn credits where you need them, while saving you the headache of trying to compile five years' worth of activities all at once!

Regent for Examination Development Profiles **John D. Thiesen, High Scorer**

By Mary Elizabeth Ruwell, Ph.D., CA



Photograph courtesy of John D. Thiesen

John D. Thiesen, CA, Archivist, Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas

John Thiesen is currently holds the highest score for the ACA certification exam and has taken the exam 4 times so far: 1992 Arlington, TX (initial certification), 1997 Chicago, 2002 Oklahoma City, 2007 Chicago. Not just an archivist, since 1992, he has also been Co-director of Libraries at Bethel College, Managing Editor of *Mennonite Life*, and has an extensive list of publications and papers. He is planning to recertify by examination again in this year, so we asked him some questions:

Mary Elizabeth Ruwell: Why did you choose to certify?

John D. Thiesen: When I first took the exam, it was very near the beginning of the ACA. I decided I wanted to participate in certification if that was going to become a regular part of the archival profession. Over the longer run, certification maybe hasn't become as widely used as the ACA founders wished. Taking the exam still seems like a good way to measure my awareness of the profession and to demonstrate that awareness to others if necessary.

MER: Did you study for the exam?

JDT: Not especially intensively. But the exam is a good prompt to do some catching up on professional reading. I usually re-read the Archives Fundamentals series and several of the most prominent archival publications of the past several years. Re-certifying by exam is also a motivation to pay attention to areas that are otherwise not my major focus of interest. I'm mostly interested in electronic records and in arrangement/description issues, but thinking about the exam pushes me to catch up on other areas of archival work.

MER: What is interesting about your archives?

JDT: We are one of two official repositories for the Mennonite Church USA denomination, which began in 2002 as a merger of two previous Mennonite denominations. We also have the records of Bethel College (celebrating its 125th anniversary this year), several regional Mennonite organizations, Mennonite congregations, many collections of personal and family papers, and a library collection focusing on Mennonites and their various contexts. The oldest item we have is an Erasmus Greek and Latin New Testament from 1522. We have a lot of linguistic diversity in our holdings. Many of the Mennonite organizations in the Plains states originated with immigrants of the 1870s, part of the larger "Germans from Russia" immigrant group, so many of our holdings that date before about 1930 are in German. There is also quite a bit of material in Russian and Dutch. More surprising to many people are our holdings of Hopi and Cheyenne materials, resulting from Mennonite missions and service activities. We have the papers

Profile: John D. Thiesen*(continued from previous page)*

of H. R. Voth who was an early ethnographer of the Hopi and a Mennonite missionary living at Oraibi starting in the 1890s. We also have the papers of Rodolphe Petter, a Swiss immigrant and Mennonite missionary who created the first writing system for Cheyenne starting in the 1880s.

MER: What are some of your challenges?

JDT: At the most general level, we struggle with the lack of resources (staff, budget, storage space) to just keep up with the most basic things that really ought to be done. We've been operating on "More Product Less Process" principles since at least the 1970s. Storage space for paper records is a particular issue right now. Beyond that, electronic records are named as an archival challenge so often that it's become a cliché. Nevertheless I would have to name it as one of our more important challenges, especially the handling of email. Before I became an archivist I was a computer programmer, and I've tried to maintain a bit of involvement in computer software over the years, so I probably bring a somewhat different perspective to this than most other archivists. I've been frustrated that the archival profession hasn't seemed to apply MPLP thinking to electronic records; the volume of electronic records makes MPLP even more relevant electronically than with paper records. And I also keep thinking of the quote attributed to George Patton (even though Mennonites are officially pacifist): "A good plan violently executed now is better than a perfect plan executed next week." It seems to me this applies to electronic records; by the time archivists have invented a perfect plan for them, they will have moved off somewhere else.

MER: John, best of luck taking the exam!**Call for Nominations: 2012 SAA Waldo Gifford Leland Award**

Please help us to recognize the best in our profession! Have you read a great new book about archives? Seen an exceptional new finding aid? Encountered a new documentary publication that is head and shoulders above the rest? Has a new web publication really stood out to you?

Nomination forms, a list of previous winners, and more information are at <http://www2.archivists.org/governance/handbook/section12-leland>. The deadline for nominations is February 28, 2012.

The annual Leland Award – a cash prize and certificate – recognizes “writing of superior excellence and usefulness in the field of archival history, theory, and practice.”

(Please note that periodicals are not eligible.)

Established in 1959, this award honors American archival pioneer Waldo Gifford Leland (1879-1966), president of the Society of American Archivists in the 1940s and one of the driving forces behind the founding of the National Archives.

Jameson Archival Advocacy Award

Do you know of an individual, institution or organization outside of the archives profession that promotes greater public awareness, appreciation, or support of archival activities or programs?

The SAA's J. Franklin Jameson Archival Advocacy Award Subcommittee is currently accepting nominations for this distinguished award.

Please consider submitting a nomination prior to the deadline of February 28, 2012. The nomination form is available online at <http://www.archivists.org/recognition/Awardsform.pdf>

More information about the award is found on the website: <http://www2.archivists.org/governance/handbook/section12-jameson>.

2012 Western Archives Institute

By: Ellen Jarosz, Associate Administrator, Western Archives Institute

The 26th annual Western Archives Institute will be held at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, **July 8 – 20, 2012**. The Western Archives Institute is an intensive, two-week program that provides integrated instruction in basic archival practices to individuals with a variety of backgrounds, including those whose jobs require a fundamental understanding of archival skills, but who have little or no previous archives education; those who have expanding responsibility for archival materials; those who are practicing archivists but have not received formal instruction; and those who demonstrate a commitment to an archival career.

The Institute also features site visits to historical records repositories and a diverse curriculum that includes history and development of the profession, theory and terminology, records management, appraisal, arrangement, description, manuscripts acquisition, archives and the law, photographs, preservation administration, reference and access, outreach programs, and managing archival programs and institutions.

Thomas Wilsted, CA has graciously agreed to serve as Principle Faculty Member for the 2012 Institute. Wilsted has been an archivist for more than forty years. During his career, he has worked at the Illinois State Historical Library, the National Library of New Zealand, The Salvation Army Archives and Research Center, and the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming before retiring from the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut in 2008. He is currently the principal at Wilsted Consulting, and is the author of *Managing Archival and Manuscript Repositories* (SAA, 1991) and *Planning New and Remodeled Archival Facilities* (SAA, 2007), and co-editor of *Archival and Special Collections Facilities: Guidelines for Archivists, Librarians, Architects, and Engineers* (SAA, 2010). He taught archives administration at the University of Wyoming and the University of Connecticut as well as numerous workshops for the Society of American Archivists. Mr. Wilsted is a

member of the Academy of Certified Archivists and a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists.

Tuition for the Institute is \$700 and includes a selection of archival publications. Other non-negotiable fees including program transportation, facility fees, opening dinner, and luncheon at the closing program will be available in early February. Housing and meal plans are available at additional cost.

The application deadline for the 2012 Western Archives Institute is March 30, 2012. For additional program information, see <http://www.calarchivists.org/WAI>, or contact:

Administrator
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Sacramento, CA 95814
Telephone: (916) 653-7715 Fax: (916) 653-7134
E-mail: ArchivesWeb@sos.ca.gov

The Western Archives Institute is co-sponsored by the Society of California Archivists and the California State Archives.

Slate of Candidates 2012

Vice-President/President Elect

Mott Linn, CA, Clark University (MA)
Margery Sly, CA, Temple University (PA)

Regent for Examination Development

Tomaro Taylor, CA, University of South Florida
Melinda Curley, CA, Lower Colorado River Authority (TX)

Regent for Outreach

Michele Ganz, CA, Lincoln Memorial University (TN)
Courtney Chartier, CA, Atlanta University Center (GA)

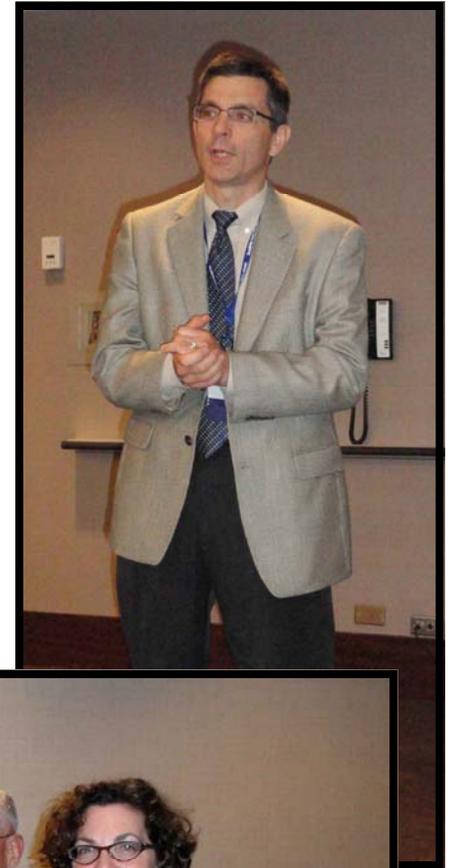
Treasurer

Tim Nutt, CA, University of Arkansas
Todd Welch, CA, Northern Arizona University

Nominations Committee

Helen Wong Smith, CA, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park
Rosemary Flynn, University of North Dakota

Editor's Endpaper



Thanks to Laura Botts, CA, for contributing these great photos of the Academy of Certified Archivists 2011 annual meeting.

Top Left: Pamela Hackbart-Dean, CA; Mike Holland, CA and Cindy Smolovik, CA; Top Center: Mary Elizabeth Ruwell, CA; Top Right: Mike Bullington, CA

Bottom Right: Cindy Smolovik; David Gracy, CA; and Brenda Gunn, CA



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