INSIDE

A Message from the new Chair Meaghan Kahlo

October 9 Meeting Recap MOHAI Archives and Library

Advocacy & Outreach: Using Elevator Speaches to Reach Key Audiences Elizabeth Knight

Local & Focused: Densho, NAAM, & WSJA’s Collections & Program Offerings Caitlin Oiye, Chieko Phillips, and Wendi Lyons

Don’t Miss It: Home Movie Day, December 8, 10 am-1 pm @ Northwest Film Forum

News From Area Archives
CONTENTS

Message from the new Chair, Meaghan Kahlo 3

News from the Board 4

October 9 SeaAA Meeting @ MOHAI’s Recap 5

Advocacy and Outreach: Using Elevator Speeches to Reach Key Audiences 6
Elizabeth Knight

Local & Focused: Densho, NAAM, & WSJA’s Collections & Program Offerings 8
Caitlin Oiye, Chieko Phillips, and Wendi Lyons

Home Movie Day is December 8, 2012 from 10 am - 1 pm. Don’t Miss It! 11
Hannah Palin

News from Area Archives 12

Haven’t renewed your membership for 2013 yet?
Don’t wait, do it now!

YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Click here to download a renewal form and mail it along with your check to SeaAA:
P.O. Box 95321Seattle, WA 98145-2321

Hello, Seattle Area Archivists!

Your steering committee has started off a new year and our goal is to provide members with relevant educational and networking opportunities.

On October 9 the Fall Membership Meeting was held at the MOHAI Library and Archives in the new MOHAI Resource Center in Georgetown. The membership turnout for this event was impressive and may well have been our best attended event yet! I hope you were able to catch up with some old friends and touch base with some new colleagues. Carolyn Marr, Librarian, was our host and we heard from her about the challenges and lessons learned with the inventory, packing and moving of the library and archives from the original Montlake location to the new location. Mary Montgomery, Assistant Librarian, discussed the deaccessioning process and Howard Giske, Curator of Photography, talked about packing the photo collection and installing a new cold storage vault. Finally, members were treated to a peek at the impressive and vast museum collection storage area and museum staff generously answered curious members’ questions.

On November 7 the Autumn Solutions Roundtable on outreach and advocacy was held in a cozy and casual space at the College Inn Pub. New steering committee member, Elizabeth Knight, Archivist in Residence at the University of Puget Sound, facilitated an expert panel that included Terry Baxter, Archivist for Multnomah County Archives, and Josh Zimmerman, Archivist and Records Manager at the Archdiocese of Seattle. Elizabeth, Josh and Terry answered members’ specific questions which had been submitted to the panel beforehand. Additional Solutions Roundtables are a valuable opportunity for members to gain answers to real problems they may be facing in their workplaces. If you have a suggestion for a Solutions Roundtable, please contact your Steering Committee.

Looking ahead to the New Year, SeaAA will be hosting a SAA Digital Archive Specialist (DAS) course March 8, 2013 on Digital Repositories. SeaAA members can receive an additional $25 off of the course registration fee, an excellent benefit to our members! If you haven’t yet renewed, now is the time! (click here to download a renewal form) The course is limited to 30 participants so be sure to register soon.

We are continually seeking content for our newsletter, Sound Archivist. This is your opportunity for broader participation with your local colleagues and we welcome your articles and news. Did you attend the SAA Beyond Borders Annual Meeting this year? Did your organization step up for Archives Month in October? Tell us about your experience! Please submit student articles, book reviews, quick and dirty solutions, descriptions of recent collections, accounts of successes or challenges, and other news from your archive. Sound Archivist is your newsletter!

Hope to see you soon at our next membership meeting! Happy Holidays!

Meaghan Kahlo
Chair, Seattle Area Archivists Steering Committee
Education & Events

Digital Repositories SAA course

On Friday, March 8, 2013, Seattle Area Archivists will host another SAA Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) course. Digital Repositories offers knowledge-building discussions and activities that focus on defining, selecting, and implementing digital repositories (DRs) and a review of basic decisions that must be made before and during the development of a digital collection and digital repository program.

The course will be held at the Seattle Municipal Tower from 9 am until 5 pm.

Remember to register prior to February 8, 2013 to receive early-bird rates. SeaAA members receive a $25 discount when signing up for the course. E-mail SeaAA for the special code.

More information and course registration

SeaAA's Special Committee on Education & Professional Development is currently working on scheduling another SAA course in 2013 and looking at ways to offer other programs (some of them free or nearly free) in the near future.

Questions or problems and the solutions to those problems facilitated by area experts. In February, SeaAA held its first roundtable focusing on audio visual materials with John Vallier and Hannah Palin as our resident experts. Our second was held on November 7 with outreach and advocacy experts Terry Baxter, Josh Zimmerman, and Elizabeth Knight. We will are planning another solutions roundtable for the spring. If you have suggestions regarding possible topics for this, please send them to SeaAA.

SeaAA White Glove Award

In the coming year, SeaAA will develop a process by which members can nominate a colleague for what we will be calling the “white glove award.” Elizabeth Knight, the vice-chair of SeaAA proposed this idea and the Board has embraced it. Awardees will likely receive a discount to a professional conference or a gift certificate for archives-related expenses. Stay tuned for more information on this award via our Web site.

SeaAA Listserv

This year, SeaAA would like to offer members an archives listserv. This will be the second time this service has been offered, but we hope to improve its accessibility this time around. Questions related to the Seattle area and other inquiries will be welcome. Stay tuned, the Board hopes to launch this before the spring.

Solutions Roundtables

Solutions Roundtables offer a more casual (and less costly; they’re free) educational opportunity to SeaAA members. Roundtables are meet-ups that focus on specific archives-related
On November 9, a record number (I counted over 20) SeaAA members visited the Museum of History and Industry’s Sophie Frye Bass Library and archives facility in Georgetown. MOHAI’s new exhibit building, located in the old armory at the southern end of Lake Union, will open to the public on December 29, 2012.

Partly because of the museum’s location (on the water), the library and archives moved to a separate facility. The new building is spacious, which is a plus. But as with any large scale move, there are some kinks to be worked out, as well as some drawbacks for the library and archives in particular. They’ve gained a new facility, but they’ve lost their proximity to the UW, which also means that they will likely have to work harder on visibility and outreach.

They, like so many of us, have to balance outreach with collections care. This proves particularly challenging for an archives located within an organization whose primary focus is on the objects and artifacts, not necessarily on the records that give those objects meaning.

Librarians Carolyn Marr, Mary Montgomery, and curator of photography Howard Giske, shared some insights related to the move. The process of weeding the collection for duplicate and/or out-of-scope materials was a long but satisfying one. They discovered items and transferred some of those that didn’t fall under MOHAI’s collecting policy to other local and national repositories, developing relationships with institutions and individuals in the process.

Giske spoke about the logistics of moving photographic materials. Of particular importance was the archives’s large collection of glass plate negatives. The new facility has a special climate controlled room created specifically for photographic materials.

Thank you Carolyn, Mary, and Howard for hosting our meeting and sharing your space with all of us!

Our next member meeting will occur in late winter. Stay tuned to our Web site and Facebook page for more information.
Advocacy and Outreach:
Using Elevator Speeches to Reach Key Audiences

By Elizabeth Knight

As archivists, we often find ourselves explaining just what archives are and why they're important. People are often too self-conscious to ask if they are not really sure, so it is up to us to offer up a succinct and pithy description – an elevator speech -- that's suited to the inquirer. When discussing the archives formally or informally, seize every opportunity to use an elevator speech to describe your archives program and generate interest and support.

Elevator speeches are easy to craft. It just takes a bit of thought. Start by listing your key audiences, such as administrators, potential champions and donors, students, library or museum staff, etc. Next think about the mission and vision for your archives and start jotting down various ways to state them for each audience. Involve your staff and volunteers in crafting elevator speeches too. Once you have a few elevator speeches you like, memorize them and use them, and encourage your staff and volunteers to use them too.

I recently worked as Consulting Archivist for ‘Supporting and Building Emergent Archival Programs in the Northwest’, a two-year, NHPRC-funded grant project which was awarded to the University of Oregon in 2010. UO administered grant for the Orbis Cascade Alliance and the Project Lead was Jodi Allison-Bunnell, Northwest Digital Archives Program Manager. Seven colleges and universities in Oregon and Washington participated in the project, which had a strong focus on building archival programs through effective advocacy. The project culminated with a day-long final forum on advocacy in March 2012. I led one exercise at the final forum on creating and utilizing elevator speeches. Here are some examples I developed. Can you guess who the intended audience might be for each?

Example #1: “The archives is filled with unique and interesting stories just waiting to be told.”

Example #2: “Unlike libraries, which collection published materials like books and journals, archives collect and make accessible mostly unpublished materials. These are the primary sources used by researchers and historians to tell the stories of the past.”

Example #3: “The archives manages institutional records of permanent value. The library is well-positioned to relieve the burden on offices and departments to answer history questions and provide access to inactive records.”

Example #4: “Long-timers retire and our memories fade. The archives assures that the story and history of this institution is preserved and accessible in perpetuity.”

Example #5: “Brain scientists say that when a person loses their memory, they lose their identity. Without the archives, the stories, people and history of this special place would fade.” Here are some elevator speeches developed by project participants.

"The collective memory of an archives is gathered from many diverse individual memories. Without these collections, we could not understand the past." Intended audience: Pastors of churches who are about to retire, urging them to write their memoirs or donate their diaries/journals/papers. -- Nolan Bremer, Cataloger, Professor of Religion (Emeritus), Concordia University

"I hook people with what they want." -- Terry Baxter, Archivist, Multnomah County Archives
"The special collections in our archives provide students with unique perspectives and points of view that add value to the learning experience. Think of the archives as an extension of your classroom, laboratory or studio. An active learning space that offers students the chance to examine, analyze and critically reflect on unique materials and ideas." Intended audience: Faculty. -- Jane Carlin, Library Director, University of Puget Sound

"Archives connect us with our past and insure that our present will be treasured in the future." -- Zoie Clark, Technical Services Assistant/Archivist, George Fox University

“We collect original materials—things like photographs and handwritten documents—to use in classes and research. We're always looking for new materials to add and new ways for people to use them!” -- Eva Guggemos, Assistant Professor Archives/Special Collections & Instructional Services, Pacific University

"The Archives preserves and makes accessible the Linfield legacy. We provide students with experiential learning opportunities with primary materials while at the same time opening doors for them to new careers!" -- Rachel Christine Woody, Archivist, Linfield College

Developing some new elevator speeches for your audiences, or using any provided here, can be a first step toward refreshing your outreach and advocacy efforts… and you will always have something to say as a conversation starter or enhancer, no elevator required. ◆

Solutions Roundtable Recap: Advocacy & Outreach

On November 9 at the College Inn Pub, outreach and advocacy experts Terry Baxter, archivist at Multnomah County; Josh Zimmerman, archivist and records manager at the Archdiocese of Seattle and creator of the Archives Preservation Roadshow; and Elizabeth Knight, the consulting archivist for Northwest Digital Archives on a NHPRC-grant funded project, met with SeaAA members to share some of their insights. Baxter shared the success of the Oregon Archives Crawl, an event that focuses on creating a fun, informative self-guided tour of area archives which ends with an archives party where visitors can get to know archivists and fellow crawlers.

The group talked quite a bit about the difference that personal interaction can make. The benefits of helpfulness, even in the face of requests that aren’t necessarily a part of an archivist’s job description, seemed to resonate with the roundtable attendees. Elevating the position of archivists in society begins in individual repositories. Knight talked about the professional shift from a focus on archival materials to the people archives serve. The group seemed to agree that archivists are providing a service, and should strive to provide that service well by answering questions and performing tasks that may not seem to be “part of our job.” We’re ambassadors for our profession, and as such, we should work on our customer service skills. Or, as one of our experts put it, “be nice!”

According to Zimmerman, part of the service archivists can provide is professional advice on how to help members of the public care for and preserve their own personal family records. Why keep all of our knowledge to ourselves, especially when family records—which document the history of everyday citizens—are largely kept by those very citizens, and not on the shelves of an archival repository? This is a major goal of the Archives Preservation Roadshow that Zimmerman organized two years ago.

This roundtable was another success, and we would like to thank Terry, Josh, and Elizabeth for their time and insights!

SeaAA hopes to hold another roundtable in the spring. To send ideas for upcoming Solutions Roundtables, please e-mail us.
The Seattle area has a number of archives and cultural organizations that focus on a specific segment of our population. Sound Archivist chose to highlight some of these in the next few issues as a way to inform our members about their collections and programs as we work toward building a more inclusive community of archivists and cultural history professionals in the Seattle area.

Denshō
Caitlin Oiye

Denshō is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the history of the Japanese American community during World War II. We have a mission to educate, preserve, collaborate and inspire action for equity through the use of digital technology. In 1996 we began collecting oral histories from Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II. Since then we have recorded and processed over 708 interviews as well as digitized over 11,000 historical photographs, newspapers, and documents. These resources are all available through our Densho Digital Archive (http://archive.densho.org).

We are currently working on a number of exciting projects. This November we launched the Densho Encyclopedia (http://encyclopedia.densho.org), a free online resource that covers key concepts, people, events, and organizations involved in the incarceration. There are currently over 300 articles written by scholars and experts from the United States and Japan and we will be adding 700 more in the coming years.

Densho also developed an education program designed to train teachers on how to integrate primary sources and activities into their World War II incarceration curriculum. Over the next year we will be putting on a number of workshops and look forward to working with teachers around the country.

And finally, Densho is in the process of creating a new and improved digital repository. In addition to an updated website. We have partnered with a number of organizations in Hawai‘i, Oregon, Wyoming, and California to increase the number of digitized historical collections available to students, teachers, scholars, filmmakers, journalists, and the general public. The digital repository will be up and running in September 2013.
Northwest African American Museum
Chieko Phillips

The mission of the Northwest African American Museum (NAAM) is to spread knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the histories, arts and cultures of people of African descent for the enrichment of all. Since opening in 2008, NAAM has accepted approximately 200 historical objects into its permanent collection. The bulk of this collection was gathered from the Colman School before the building was renovated. Items gathered from the building include papers and objects left by the occupiers who inhabited the space from 1985 to 1993 while advocating for the creation of the African American Heritage Museum and Cultural Center. The remainder of the permanent collection is a mix of ephemera, studio art, periodicals, photographs, documents, clothing and books that have been donated by community members. NAAM has never purchased objects for our collection.

To decide which items were appropriate for our permanent collection, NAAM established a Collections Committee comprised of staff, board members and community members to decide whether donations would be accessioned into our collection. Discussions took many factors into account but some of the most essential questions asked were:

1) Is the object geographically tied to the Pacific Northwest?
2) Does the object illustrate useable stories about or told by African Americans?
3) Is the object in a state that NAAM is realistically able to care for it in perpetuity?

Sample objects in NAAM’s permanent collection include a cheerleading uniform from the Central Area Youth Association, the 1976 Arrow yearbook from Garfield HS, 1943 class photographs from Colman School, a trumpet from local jazz legend Floyd Standifer, and a plate from the Coon-Chicken Inn restaurant.

In April 2012, the NAAM’s Board ratified a Strategic Plan that called for the pause of NAAM’s collecting for five years. While there were many reasons for this decision, the prominent reason was NAAM’s decision to refocus the significant resources and staff time required to process and care for a collection on growing the programmatic offerings of the Museum. During this hiatus, NAAM will access the state, processes, and scope of our collection in regards to our new mission statement so we can resume collecting activities in the near future.

If someone wishes to donate to NAAM collection when we resume collecting, we collect information about the donor and the objects for use in the future reference.

Current exhibits at NAAM are: Bearing Witness from Another Place: James Baldwin in Turkey Photographs by Sedat Pakay, currently on view at NAAM. www.naamnw.org

Chieko Phillips is the curatorial assistant at NAAM. If you have any questions about our collecting activities, she can be reached at cphillips@naamnw.org
The Washington State Jewish Archives (WSJA) collection represents a long-standing collaboration between the University of Washington Special Collections (UWSC) and the Seattle Jewish community. Established in 1968 as an oral history project by the Women’s Division of the Jewish Federation and the then University of Washington Manuscripts department, today the collection is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding between UWSC and the Washington State Jewish Historical Society. The Society collects materials and provides an archivist to manage the collection while UWSC incorporates the materials as part of its holdings, providing climate-controlled secure custody as well as physical and intellectual access to the materials.

From those first few oral histories, the WSJA now includes over 900 manuscript and photograph collections which document the history of Jews and Jewish communities in Washington State, beginning with the first settlers in 1853. Researchers can find photographs of Bailey Gatzert, for example, who opened a wholesale grocery and hardware store in Seattle and in 1875 became the city’s sixth mayor; records dating back to 1917 of Sephardic Bikur Holim, a congregation founded by Jews coming to Seattle from Turkey; or an oral history account from one of the early Jewish settlers of the Gold Rush community of Republic in northeastern Washington. Such materials draw researchers, not only from the local Jewish community, but University of Washington (UW) students and international researchers from a variety of fields interested in the Jewish experience in Washington.

The nearly 450 oral histories in the collection are a particularly valuable resource for researchers. They also present a preservation challenge as virtually all are recorded on audiocassettes. Dating back to 1968, most of these fragile cassettes have far outlived their life expectancy of 10-30 years for magnetic-tape materials. With the support of grants and donations from the local Jewish community, we are currently in the process of digitizing these audio-recordings with the ultimate goal of providing them online to researchers.

To explore WSJA resources further, check out the subject guide at http://guides.lib.washington.edu/jewish and for any questions, please contact Wendi Lyons, WSJA Archivist at 206-543-1895 or wlyons@uw.edu.
Home Movie Day 2012, Seattle
A Celebration of Amateur Films and Filmmaking

"I would urge all of those in the Seattle area and around the country to go to their local Home Movie Day celebration. This is a day for us to come together as a nation and watch how we’ve lived through every day of our shared history.”
--Ken Burns

Join Phil Borgnes, of Sidewalk Cinema, and Hannah Palin, Film Archives Specialist at the University of Washington Libraries Special Collections, for the tenth annual Home Movie Day, on Saturday, December 8, 10:00am-1:00pm at the Northwest Film Forum in Seattle. The event is free and open to the public.

Home Movie Day is a celebration of amateur films and filmmaking held annually at numerous local venues worldwide, providing the opportunity for individuals and families to discover how best to care for their films and get a rare chance to view examples of home movies.

Home Movie Day, Seattle, will feature information about preserving home movies, a display of film equipment, magazines and ephemera, screenings of home movies from the University of Washington Libraries Special Collections and from Philip Borgnes’ orphan film collection. Home Movie Day is being celebrated in December this year in an effort to highlight films of the holiday season and to coincide with the annual conference of the Association of Moving Image Archivists, to be held in Seattle December 4-7.

Visitors to Home Movie Day are invited to bring in several reels from their family collections for preservation information and advice. Films relating family holiday celebrations are most welcome.

Depending on the condition of the films, attendees will have the chance to view their own reels of 8mm, Super 8mm and 16mm on viewers or projectors provided by Palin and Borgnes.

For more information about the Seattle Home Movie Day event, please contact Hannah Palin, filmarc@u.washington.edu, 206.321.8301, or visit the Seattle Home Movie Day Blog: http://seattlehmd.blogspot.com/ for the latest information and links to film preservation information.


Northwest Film Forum is located at 1515 12th Ave, Seattle, WA 98103. For directions and information go to: http://nwfilmforum.org/
The Seattle Municipal Archives launched its YouTube site in September, thanks in large part to the efforts of volunteer Jonathan King. The Archives is pleased with the response. The top video, a Seattle Department of Streets and Sewers film from 1926, received over 1,000 views in a month!

http://youtu.be/1gmxWMHe

Seattle Channel which used portions of a video on the Alaskan Way Seawall in their program “Seattle Inside and Out” and History Link is using copies of Mayor Clinton’s 1959 political campaign advertisements on their website.

Outreach at Seattle Central Community College
Along with archivists from NARA, Seattle Public Library, and the University of Washington Special Collections, SMA staff spoke to over 150 students in both history and English classes, in preparation for their assignments requiring use of primary sources. The SMA enjoys a steady stream of new users to archives and their creative choice of topics.

Seattle Voices: Roberto Maestas
A new recording of Roberto Maestas was added to the Seattle Voices exhibit space. Maestas reads a poem to open a Neighborhoods and Neighborhood Planning Committee meeting in 1997. The poem, similar to one written by liberation theologian Ernesto Cardenal, begins, “When you receive the nomination, the prize, the promotion, think of those who have died.”

The poem can be heard here:

http://www.cityofseattle.net/CityArchives/Exhibits/voices/maestas.htm under the 1997 section.

Recent Uploads to the Photograph Collection
New scans of Seattle City Light images uploaded to the web include:

RAINIER VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Eleanor Boba

The Rainier Valley Historical Society is embarking on a special project in archival care. Recently we took possession of a large collection of prints and negatives donated to us by photographer, newsman, and current Renton mayor Denis Law. Mr. Law’s work as a photographer for the South District Journal, the Beacon Hill News, and the Capitol Hill Times during the 60s, 70s, and 80s, document an era that has been often overlooked in our work with Southeast Seattle history. The thousands of high-quality images in this collection literally double the number of images in our archives.

These wonderful photographs document an era of transition in the Rainier Valley and surrounding communities, a tumultuous time during which Southeast Seattle was transformed from a group of small, relatively homogeneous neighborhoods to an urbanized, multi-ethnic district. The Law Collection is a huge boost to our efforts and those of others exploring post-war Seattle. In addition, the images complement our extensive collection of South District Journal newspapers where many of the photos originally appeared.

We are fortunate to have received a grant from King County 4Culture Heritage Collections Care which will allow us to obtain appropriate archival materials for storing the prints and negatives, as well as to digitize a portion of the negatives.

Volunteers are currently working to catalog this collection. Once cataloging and digitization is complete, we will make the pictures available to researchers. RVHS Executive Director Eleanor Boba is managing this project with special curation provided by RVHS Board member Karen O’Brien.

Our thanks to Mr. Law and to 4Culture for entrusting us with the responsibility of curating this unique resource.


Cover image also courtesy Rainier Valley Historical Society.
Sound Archivist is a publication of Seattle Area Archivists (SeaAA) a nonprofit organization serving the archival and records management community in the Seattle area and beyond. SeaAA provides opportunities for the informal exchange of information among its members and promotes the preservation and use of archival, manuscript, and other specialized research materials.

http://seattleareaarchivists.org

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