MORE GOLD TO BE MINED
BY JOHNATHAN LAWLER

ACADEMIC HISTORY AND ACTIVISM
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VISIONARY ARCHIVES
BY ODETTE ALLEN

NEWSLETTER OF THE SEATTLE AREA ARCHIVISTS
Letter from the editor

Professionalization: How Are We Moving the Profession Forward?

Hello and Welcome,

For this issue I have chosen to focus on issues and approaches to the topic of professionalism. I felt this was a timely topic with the Northwest Archivists Conference so recently attended. In addition it is a topic that we need to continue to explore and discuss because our profession as a whole does not have a very good track record of self advocacy. There are still strains of archival theory which argue against outreach or proactive records cultivation. But the truth seems to be that unless a significant percentage of society knows what archives are and values them as a resource, our profession will indeed die out, ceding itself to digital resources and more savvy information professionals.

This is not a call to take up arms against IT developers or pick fights with librarians. (Though I admit to coveting the recognition and financial resources both receive in our society.) Instead, I would like to add my voice to those who advocate for an evolution in our profession, individuals who are working not only to increase awareness of what archives offer, but who are proactively seeking support and cultivating relationships to sustain archives.

Professionalization can be a lengthy process for work that does not have immediate popular appeal, and comparatively speaking archivists have a rather young profession. Though some can be fond of tracing the history of archives back to the Greeks, the actual professionalization of our work in the United States is not even a hundred years old, beginning with Mr. Jenkinson publishing his archival manual in 1937.

My point is that our profession has had to evolve quickly throughout a century of astonishingly divergent informational needs and methods of record generation. In response the profession has evolved in amazing ways, maintaining our work and our relevance despite significant discouragement. However, while we have maintained our sense of relevance and mission, we have not been particularly outspoken as a profession. We have not attained the level of public recognition or governmental support held by librarians, nor have we cultivated a profession which can begin to sustain itself independently. Speaking for myself, I ardently desire both recognition and support.

To that end, we have three approaches to specific questions of professionalism. Johnathan Lawler discusses digitization processes making religious texts available; Leslie Schuyler reviews documentation and racism at Lakeside School, continuing the professional discussion of racism and social justice from the last issue; and finally yours truly will discuss the somewhat unconventional approach now being used at the Tacoma Community College Archive.

Our next issue comes out in July, and will be focused on issues around advocacy. I would love to hear from you in any capacity. Send me your thoughts, articles, ideas and admonitions.
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Thoughts? Rebuttals? Fantastic Articles?
Send them to Odette Allen
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MORE GOLD TO BE MINED:
A REVIEW OF THE HOUSTON PACKER PURITAN COLLECTION AT THE JOHN RICHARD ALLISON LIBRARY

By Johnathan Lawler

Puritanism often conjures images of straight-laced, stoic fuddy-duddies. However, the reality of this movement within the Christian tradition is much more nuanced.

A collection of rare books located at the John Richard Allison Library in Vancouver, BC allows the public to delve more deeply into some of the essential writings of Puritanism. Through an impressive digitization project, library staff provides theologians, pastors, and the general public the ability to mine the depths of this literature. Theologian Dr. J. I. Packer recognized the importance of Puritan thought writing, “...let us continue to explore the Puritan heritage together. There is more gold to be mined here...”

Puritanism developed in late 16th – early 17th century England. Proponents of a continuation of the Protestant Reformation, “They were given the name of ‘Puritans’ because they insisted on the need to ‘purify’ the Church by a return to biblical religion.” 2 Dr. J. I. Packer, and Dr. James Houston, recognized the value of these writings and donated their collection of early Puritan literature to the Allison Library. The Allison Library supports the students and faculty of Regent College and Carey Theological College. Regent College provides, “...Christ-centered graduate programs and courses [that] bring together vibrant evangelical faith and rigorous academics.” 3 Carey Theological College has much the same mission.

The Allison Library established the Special Collections, Archives, and Rare Books department in 2005 to support the rigorous academics offered by both Regent and Carey. The archives assists and promotes, “the study

1 J. I. Packer, A Quest for Godliness (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1990), 34.
of Christian history using archives in order to inform present and future generations.”

The collection of Puritan literature clearly supports this mission.

Library staff devoted resources to providing the public with high resolution scans of 189 books. The online presentation of the books accurately presents the physicality of the original (see illustration 1). Users flip through the pages of each book as they would in person. Other features include a table of contents tab, thumbnails of pages, and the ability to bookmark one’s location. The Brechin Group Inc. digitized the material. Brechin completed digitization projects for institutions across the United States and Canada including Columbia University, the Canadian War Museum, and the Supreme Court of Canada. FlippingBook software provides the “real feel” of flipping through pages.

Catalog records are located in THEOLOG – a shared catalog of Carey Theological College, Regent College, Saint Mark’s Catholic Theological College at UBC, and the Vancouver School of Theology (see illustration 2). MARC records exist for all books (see illustration 3). Links are included in the subject fields in order to aid users researching a particular topic. Standardization and collaboration allow for access by a variety of user groups.

One such user group is the evangelical community, the response of which highlights this project’s importance. A blog post from the influential evangelical organization The Gospel Coalition advocated for the use of the Houston Packer Puritan Collection. This exposed the material to many pastors and lay-persons across the world. Justin Taylor, the post’s author, argued that Puritan writings are not exclusive to academics but impact the ministry of many. Comments on the blog post included: “The interface for these books is nice, and the clarity of the pages is wonderful. This is an awesome gift” and “I don’t even know where to begin – treasures upon treasures! Thank you for the amazing organizing of such a vast and incredible inheritance for us readers!”

Allison Library’s digitization project allows academics, students, pastors, and other users to continue mining for the gold in these treasures.

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Illustration 3.

**THEOLOG**

A shared catalogue of the John Richard Allison Library, the H.R. MacMillan Library and Dr. John Micallef Memorial Library

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**Location** | **Call No.**
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JRA Rare Books | BT763.O9 1677
Oral histories: One way to chip away at a legacy of privilege

By Leslie Schuyler

Racism is a sensitive topic. Particularly so in institutions that were founded by and for those in positions of power and privilege. Private schools across the country have wrestled with diversity and equity issues for the last 50 years with varying degrees of success.

Lakeside was founded in 1919 as a private school for wealthy white boys and remained that for at least the first half century of its existence. A legacy like that is a difficult thing to change, even if administrators and staff are eager for it.

In 1963, President Kennedy called for prep schools to integrate, and across the country programs were created to encourage students of color to attend schools that had previously been inaccessible (or even unknown) to them. The Lakeside Educational Enrichment Program (LEEP) began in the summer of 1965 and it paved the way for the school’s drive toward diversity.

LEEP was intended to “introduce” the school to students of color. And it did just that. As a result of that first summer, three African Americans were given scholarships to attend and went on to graduate in 1968. And since then, students from neighborhoods all over Seattle have come to the northernmost tip of the city to spend the summer of their 9th grade years “enriching” their educations. From these summer programs, the school has selected students and offered them admission. In many ways, it has made Lakeside a more diverse and inclusive place.

The records in the archives tell some of this story. There are committee meeting minutes that set out the basic goals of programs like LEEP. The headmaster at the time wrote about what he termed “broadening the base,” photos from that first summer reveal a lot about the program, and students addressed current issues at the time in their student newspaper with articles titled things like “Racism at Lakeside?” etc. But the problem with these kinds of records, and with the archival endeavor in general, is that the voices of the powerless—in this case, the students of color—are the ones left out of the history books.

Today there’s a lot of focus on the program’s success and longevity, and there should be. It helped to change the school. But what isn’t often discussed is the reality of the student experience; what it meant to be “the other” in an institution steeped in privilege.

And it’s tricky to be an archivist for a private school with such a focus on diversity and inclusivity, because even though Lakeside values its history (hence, the archives) it doesn’t necessarily want to be reminded of its origins.

One way the archives has managed to capture the experiences of the
powerless is to actively seek them out by conducting oral histories with alumni.

In 2010, one of the first three African American students to attend Lakeside shared memories of his 10th grade English class. He was the only black student in a room full of white kids; an experience that was brand new (and terrifying) for him. He had never been north of the ship canal (Seattle’s de facto racial dividing line) before he boarded a bus to Lakeside. Simply coming to campus was a test of courage. The first book they read—aloud in class—was Huckleberry Finn. Every time one of the white students read the “n” word, it sent waves of panic through him. The next book they read was Native Son, in which a black man kills a white woman. The experience, he said, was “searing.”

Needless to say, it was a traumatic introduction to life at his new school. His story is essential to understanding the Lakeside of today. But the culturally accepted version of the institution’s history doesn’t tell it. With so much focus on progress and success, the concept of struggle is lost. And this leads to a kind of collective amnesia which ultimately leads to a lack of empathy for current struggles surrounding equity and inclusion.

It’s unclear what will ultimately solve this problem. Can we celebrate progress at the same time as we give voice to those whose experiences question it? The answer has to be yes. But for now, as archivists, the least we can do is capture and preserve those voices until our communities are ready to hear them.
Dates and Details

Upcoming Events:

BASEMENT TO BAR STOOL:
INFORMAL MEET UPS!

Next meet-up, July 11th!

Where: Capitol Cider, Downstairs Game Room
818 E Pike St, Seattle
(206) 397-3564

When: 6pm

That's right. A regular professional drinks night. If you haven't joined us yet, you should really be there. We're still in a basement, but now it's a bar.

There has been discussion of alternating our locations between The District Lounge and Capitol Cider on Cap. Hill. To that end, dates and locations through 2016:

- July 11th, Capitol Cider
- Sept. 12th, The District Lounge
- Nov. 14th, Capitol Cider

SEATTLE EVENTS CALENDAR:

- Friday, June 10th, Jazz Intoxication, Washington Hall, 7pm
  - Jazz Intoxication is a one night only event and the first performance in the newly-rehabilitated Washington Hall. Relive the first documented jazz performance in Washington state by local musicians, exactly 98 years later in the place where it happened, with an immersive theatre experience and dance party. Industrial Revelation, led by music director D’Vonne Lewis and joined by vocalist Josephine Howell, will recreate Ms. Lillian Smith's Jazz Band. Jazz Intoxication is directed by Tyrone Brown, with a script by Rachel Atkins, and produced by Hidmo, 206 Zulu, and HistoryLink. Tickets from $15-$50. Purchase tickets at http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2547104

- Saturday, June 11th, Historic Cabin Tours, 12-4pm
  - Tour the cabins of two pioneers and enjoy the boardwalk of a rare 120-acre wetlands preserve located less than a mile from I-5. David Denny, an early Seattle settler, built his cabin on Lower Queen Anne Hill, near Seattle Center, as a real estate office in 1889. The John Barker Cabin, built in 1883, is the oldest structure in Federal Way, housing a number of vintage furniture and household items. Each structure represents a different style of cabin-architecture, providing
visitors of all ages with a sense of the 19th-century pioneer lifestyle, all in beautiful surroundings. At West Hylebos Wetlands Park, 411 S 348th Street, Federal Way. Sponsored by the Historical Society of Federal Way, [www.federalwayhistory.org](http://www.federalwayhistory.org)

- **Tuesday, June 14th, First Hill Walking Tour- Historic Seattle, 1:30-4:30pm**
  First Hill Walking Tour - Historic Seattle
  A guided tour of historic First Hill with the participation of the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, the Frye Art Museum, Saint James Cathedral, and the Sorrento Hotel. Guided tours conclude in the Fireside Lounge of the Sorrento where participants can enjoy happy hour prices on appetizers and drinks. $35 general public, $25 Historic Seattle members. Pre registration required. [www.historicseattle.org](http://www.historicseattle.org)

- **Friday June 17th or 24th, Not Just Tofu Tour- Wing Luke Museum, 4:30-7pm**
  Vegetarian culinary tour of Chinatown-International District! Spots go quickly so book your tickets now! We'd like you to come eat with us and talk about food, history and meet some of the families that feed us and keep us healthy. Includes full-day access to the Museum and our daily tour through the historic Freeman Hotel. We are very sorry, but we won't be able to accommodate our vegan, nut, peanut and gluten free friends. Duration: 2.5-3 hours Tour times: 4:30pm (last two Fridays in April, May and June 2016) Recommended for: All ages; route is approx. 1 mile on sidewalks and inclines. Prices: Adults: $42.95 Seniors: $35.95 Students (13-18 or with student ID): $25.95 Children (5-12): $25.95 Under 5: Free

- **Saturday and Sunday, June 25th and 26th, Museum of Flight- Grand Opening of the Aviation Pavilion, 9am-8pm**
  The Museum celebrates the opening of its new, 3-acre Aviation Pavilion June 25-26. The grand opening weekend for the roofed outdoor gallery will include live music and entertainment within the embrace of 17 classic planes. Boasting the "Pavilion Collection" of glamorous runway designs like the Boeing 747 prototype and Concorde, the festivities will also include airline-inspired fashion shows, swag bags for the first 500 visitors each day, designer eats and brews, plus stylish performances by aerial artists dangling from the rafters. The Museum and Pavilion will be open 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., and all events are free with admission to the Museum.

- **Thursday July 14th, "Frozen in Time": Curators Talk with Renton History Museum Collection Manager Sarah Samson, 6-7:30pm.**
  In conjunction with the Renton History Museum's Frozen in Time exhibit, Museum Collection Manager Sarah Samson discusses the extensive research done on the Museum's collection of glass plate negatives, and provides tips for interpreting your own historic photos. Light refreshments will be served. The Renton History Museum is located at 235 Mill Avenue S in Renton. Admission $3 adults; $1/students and children. [www.rentonhistory.org](http://www.rentonhistory.org)

- **Sunday, July 15th, E**

- **Historic Seattle Tour- Coleman Residence, 1-4pm.**
  Historic Seattle tour - Coleman Residence
  Visit this eye-popping Queen Anne Hill icon that includes wrought iron gates, exotic plantings, decorative shingles, bell-topped current, hand-carved finials, and more - all this a 20-year project to create a unique "Victorian period piece" that sheaths a 1906 cottage. $25 Historic Seattle members, $35 general public. Directions sent to participants after registering. [www.historicseattle.org](http://www.historicseattle.org)
VISIONARY ARCHIVES

How making an archive central to an institution can advance the profession as a whole.

By Odette Allen

So my goal when taking on the job of editing this newsletter was not to fill it with articles for my own nefarious purposes. In fact, my goal is to never write an article for this newsletter again, because I would much rather hear about other archival projects and ideas. (Hint, hint, y’all...)

However, I have been compelled to take keyboard in hand because my current work is appropriate to the topic of professionalization.

Professionalization as a concept generally means the work we do to legitimize and develop our profession, seek professional recognition, and cultivate security in our profession. The subtext of that work is how we run our archives on a daily basis, because while outreach events or publicity moments draw attention, society in general needs frequent reminders if something is to stick. A tool or resource needs to be regularly available, useful, accessible, and most often, regularly advertised. All of these are efforts that fall under the heading of daily work. How do we present our archive and its holdings, and who makes use of them? Can archival resources be easily found and navigated? Finally, how do we speak of our archives, and to whom? I am sure I am not alone in seeing a wide range of responses to these questions, ranging from traditional historical societies to exclusively digital archives equipped with promotional funding and annual events. In all cases, our professionalization comes down to our daily choices and efforts to communicate the value of what we do and what our institutions hold.

Which brings me to the archive at Tacoma Community College, and its director, Candice Watkins. Candice hired me with minimal knowledge of archival theory or history, but a strong vision for what the library and archives could be. I was chosen because I take a fairly nontraditional and inarguably aggressive approach to archival practice. The archive at TCC is quite new, still developing a broad collection and establishing itself within all elements of the school. For me, this is seen as an asset, because it means that I have the opportunity to shape the archive, to develop a mission and a vision which reflects my values as well as those of the school. Fortunately for me, Candice and I share much the same vision. We both want an
archive we have an emotional connection with, we want to develop and curate a collection of documentation which not only reflects the dynamic history of the school, but which has the language and resources to engage a broad range of users. Ultimately we want to cultivate an archive the school community perceives as valuable and finds inspiring, engaging and exciting.

The user group at a community college is unique in their own right. The student population is comprised primarily of working adults, followed closely by students without the linguistic or other educational skills to dive right into a standard four year university. Students may attend the college for several years while they work through requirements, but due to the nature of the student body, the school retains a transitional, temporary feel for most of the students. Conversely, the college has worked hard to cultivate a work culture of innovation and inclusion, retaining faculty and staff members for multiple decades who do provide a sense of continuity for the school. Because of the difference in the nature of the student body and the relationships the school has formed with faculty, we have chosen to put the people of the school front and center when it comes to making collection and outreach choices. Working with the theory that human beings connect most deeply over emotional and shared experiences, we are working to create an archive reflective of those experiences within the school community. Thus, while I continue to collect administrative documentation, I also go out of my way to cultivate collections with these more personal elements.

For collection development I have chosen to follow a model loosely based on Helen Willa Samuels’s documentary systems, striking a balance between collections offered and collections solicited or developed over time. The goal has been to reflect the school and its mission, while also cultivating a mission and perspective unique to the archive. Working from an interpersonal as well as traditional approach to archival theory, Candice and I have begun to develop an idea she calls “visionary archives”. Some days I completely understand this, and some days I am not sure what exactly she is talking about. But the sentiment and intention of it I am completely on board with. We are working to create an archive reflective of a community, and to support that community actively engaging with their history. In this way the archive functions as a tool for self-recognition and context, which helps users project themselves into the future as well. We hope to create an archive that is exciting, engaging and dynamic. An archive I don’t need to explain in detail because it’s worth is self-evident. That is an archive I can get really excited about.

Which brings us back to professionalization. One of my goals with this particular approach to running and developing an archive is to contribute to development of the profession. To make daily choices that put the archive forward as a useful resource, and myself as a valuable professional. Too often archivists are told that their expertise is not valuable, either by suppressed pay grades or volunteer outsourcing. These are problems that need addressing on an individual level, but the solutions will be supported by shifting perceptions about what it is archivists do. An archive that successfully engages with a community, that holds historical value recognized by a broad range of people is, to my mind, an archive successfully representing the profession. It is an archive in a position to demonstrate its worth and the expertise of those who run it. I occasionally have moments of doubt with the concept of “visionary archives”, because I am aware just how far from the path of tradition I am straying. But if our current need for professional advancement is any indication, a tradition of unbiased acceptance is no longer just being questioned, but it is possibly no longer serving the profession. As an archivist I spend enough time thinking about and documenting the past, I am hoping this new approach will help me create a more exciting future for this archive.

TCC's Becky Sprout as a Librarian Barbarian.
SEATTLE AREA ARCHIVISTS

The Steering committee of the SeaAA:
Chair: Amy Heidrick
Vice Chair: TBA
Treasurer: TBA
Secretary: Jeff Winter
Member-At-Large: Odette Allen

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