

7-2016

## President's Page

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July 2016

Dear MAC Members,

Our Annual Meeting this year in Milwaukee was fabulous and energizing. This was our largest MAC meeting ever with 424 registrants. The sessions were thoughtful and well planned, and our breaks and reception were fun and engaging. Thank you to the Local Arrangements Committee cochairs Michael Doynen and Anna Stadick, Program Committee cochairs Amy Cooper Cary and Colleen McFarland Rademaker, and their tireless committee members for planning such an excellent meeting.

I also want to acknowledge the hard work and commitment to the organization by Development Coordinator Carol Street and Vendor Coordinator Miriam Kahn, who was this year supported by Katie Blank. Carol's diligence in identifying fund-raising opportunities contributed to the significant financial support of the Milwaukee meeting. Miriam and Katie brought together vendors who serve as key partners in helping each of us achieve success within our organizations. We cannot underestimate these contributions to MAC and the importance of these relationships.

And now, I would like to share my "State of MAC" address, given at the Members' Meeting on April 29.

### **The State of MAC**

This past year, it has been an honor to serve you, the membership, as MAC president. MAC is in a solid place with a strong membership and financial support.

One of my primary tasks this year was to lead MAC Council in the responsibility of drafting the organization's new Strategic Plan for the next five years. We looked at building on the previous strategic plans, the work and goals of the organization, and defining where we want to go and need to go in the future. If you have not yet had a chance to read the plan, it is available on the MAC website ([midwestarchives.org/mac-council-minutes-reports](http://midwestarchives.org/mac-council-minutes-reports)). This blueprint will guide us through 2020 with an emphasis and focus on publications, administration, marketing and outreach, membership, and education. The plan is nothing short of ambitious, but without ambition the organization will not stretch and grow for the future. Allow me to briefly look at our goals for each focus area and highlight some of our accomplishments over the past year.

#### **We will explore ways to improve our educational resources.**

This year we will unveil a redesign of *Archival Issues*. Long term, we'll be looking at driving more content to the newsletter and journal, and ultimately making the content of the *MAC Newsletter* available online on our website and in formats beyond PDF.

*(Continued on page 7)*

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**President's Page**

*(Continued from page 2)*

**We will evaluate the governance and technical infrastructure of the systems that are the foundation of MAC's activities.**

Maintenance of our infrastructure is an ongoing and necessary practice. We'll be implementing regular governance housekeeping, as well as developing a records retention schedule for the organization.

We implemented MemberClicks (our member management system) and our symposia 10 years ago. It's a time for reflection, time to analyze what we've learned, and define how to move forward. In the immediate future, we will be working to address membership and election issues. If you don't have confidence in MAC's procedures and systems, how can you have confidence in the people serving you? For this trust to be maintained, our services need to be impeccable.

In regard to the symposia, 10 years is a good time to take stock of how they continue to meet member needs.

As our treasurer reports, the organization is financially stable, and our budget now better reflects where we earn and spend our income. But, we rely on our Annual Meetings as part of our financial support, and costs to have meetings will only continue to go up, particularly AV and technical support. Meetings are necessary and important, and they are growing, so how do we continue to offer them economically?

**We will promote the organization to new audiences and improve the marketing materials serving as the public interface for the organization.**

MAC's current website design is also 10 years old; it's time for a redesign. Refreshing our Internet presence will help us accommodate changes to the newsletter, improve our use of social media, and maintain quality information for members.

We will also focus on a consistent marketing plan. "Got Archives? Get MAC!" has been a successful initiative, but we need to be more consistent about using it. You the members own it, but do you know where to find the materials?

To kick off outreach this past year, MAC supported a table at the SAA Cleveland meeting in August 2015, where 30 MAC volunteers had almost 400 interactions answering questions and chatting with people who stopped by. The MAC members promoted our symposium in Minneapolis and the Milwaukee meeting, gave away MAC clips and

bottle openers, and engaged people about our mission. The table also served as a great hangout for MAC members during the meeting.

Finally, we will build clarity around MAC's advocacy agenda. We will initiate a task force to determine the best ways to focus our advocacy work, whether it be for the profession, our colleagues, our institutions, or how we work with other professional organizations. Most important, we need to better understand what our members need from us in this area.

**We will increase the number, diversity, and retention of our members.**

Members are the foundation of MAC. Whatever benefits we gain from networking and learning from each other come from the variety of experiences of our members. MAC membership has hovered in the 700s for the past several years. Yet growth and expansion of membership will only benefit all of us. Is a membership base of 1,000 possible and realistic? How do we get there? To understand how to grow, we need to understand who we are. Next year we will be conducting a census of our members, and I hope all of you will participate.

SAA cannot be the only professional organization addressing the inclusiveness of the profession. As Dennis Meissner said in his plenary address on April 28, "Diversity is a fact, but inclusion is a choice." How do we make MAC more inclusive? I recognize my bias is to be more optimistic about where MAC is on the inclusion continuum. But you are equally right if your experience tells you that MAC still has a long way to go. I challenge you to tell your MAC leaders when our policies and procedures need to change and to help us identify those pockets of creativity where inclusion is already flourishing and on which we can build.

**Last, we will explore alternative ways to make continuing education available and cost effective for archivists.**

Over the next few years, we will be investigating ways to share Annual Meeting content more widely and will be appointing a task force to explore the feasibility of funding internship stipends for students and new professionals.

One of the greatest projects of the past five years has been the development and implementation of the MAC

*(Continued on page 8)*

**President's Page**

*(Continued from page 7)*

Speakers Bureau pilot, an idea that grew out of the last strategic plan. The program has consistently offered affordable and free education to MAC members and, more important, non-MAC members in seven states, on a variety of topics from strategic planning to records management, preservation, and grant writing. I am happy to report that Council has approved the Education Committee recommendations on keeping the program and improving it for the future. The Education Committee will be appointing a coordinator for the program, offering two to three workshops per year, maintaining the program as free or low cost, and developing publicity mechanisms for the workshops. This is an exciting commitment to education and outreach by MAC.

As I said, we're ambitious!

I encourage you to stay tuned over the next five years as we report on our progress with this plan, get involved as we call on members for your input and participation, and get in touch with me if you have questions, concerns, or suggestions for the future of MAC. MAC serves you, and your ideas challenge those of us in leadership to serve you better.

Thank you.



Jennifer Johnson  
President, Midwest Archives Conference

**Save the Dates! MAC Fall 2016 Symposium:  
“Archivists and Copyright” October 7–8, 2016**

This one-and-a-half-day workshop will introduce participants to the “Best Practices in Fair Use” initiative and provide opportunities for collectively exploring strategies for managing risk and for balancing often-competing demands for access and privacy.

Venue: Hilton Garden Inn, 1401 Briarwood Circle, Ann Arbor, Michigan



*Courtesy of the Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan*

**Presenters:**

Melissa Levine, lead copyright officer, University Library, University of Michigan

Aprille Cooke McKay, assistant director for University Collections and Records Management, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan