

4-2015

Vice President's Column: MAC Meetings and Symposia Update

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Recommended Citation

McCartney, David (2015) "Vice President's Column: MAC Meetings and Symposia Update," *MAC Newsletter*: Vol. 42 : No. 4 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/macnewsletter/vol42/iss4/4>

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Vice President's Column: MAC Meetings and Symposia Update

By David McCartney, University of Iowa

Why are we archivists? Why does what we do matter? How have archives affected those that we serve?

These are questions that get to the heart of our profession, but we usually don't take the time to consider them, especially if we're absorbed by the day-to-day demands of our work. One solution is "A Year of Living Dangerously for Archives," a 10-point action plan offered by SAA. It encourages us to consider these questions and to demonstrate to the world—policy makers, prospective users, and others—why what we do matters.

Don't let the action plan's name scare you away. Indeed, let it inspire you. Go to www2.archivists.org/living-dangerously/why-people-love-archives to learn more about how you can participate. In these challenging times, it is important for us to advocate on behalf of our profession in any way that we can. Plus, a cool factor comes with sharing stories that affirm the value of what we do.

MAC's twice-yearly meetings are an opportunity for us to share these stories among colleagues—perhaps even practice our "elevator talks" with a willing (and friendly) critic—and to pick up new ideas addressing all aspects of what we do. Here is an update on our upcoming events.

Annual Meeting, "MAC in the Bluegrass State," Lexington, Kentucky, May 6–9, 2015

You will find details about our next Annual Meeting elsewhere in this edition of the *Newsletter*, which is also online at www.midwestarchives.org. The Program Committee, led by Cochairs Lisa Sjoberg and Stephanie Bricking, has reviewed many excellent session proposals, and the result will be a meeting offering diverse topics in sessions framed in a wide range of formats. Local Arrangements Committee Cochairs Deirdre Scaggs and Heather Fox and their colleagues have lined up some fun events to welcome us to the Bluegrass State, including area tours and a reception at the Carrick House in historic downtown Lexington.

Fall Symposium, "Hard Skills for Managing Digital Collections in Archives," Minneapolis, Minnesota, September 17–19, 2015

This practical, hands-on Symposium is designed to help us sort through the current and continuing challenges of electronic records. Bertram Lyons and Joshua M. Ranger of AVPreserve will lead this two-day seminar at the historic Depot Renaissance Hotel in downtown Minneapolis. Lyons is a senior consultant for AVPreserve and archivist and digital assets manager of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress; Ranger is also a senior consultant with AVPreserve, where he leads collection assessment and inventory projects. Topics will include using open source tools to help manage datasets, setting up basic digital preservation workflows, and using spreadsheets to manage digital content. Watch for registration information this summer. Daardi Sizemore and Ann Kenne are cochairs of the Symposium Organizing Committee.

2016 Annual Meeting, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April 27–30

MAC returns to Milwaukee for the first time since 2004, and our 2016 Annual Meeting will be held at the Hilton Milwaukee City Center downtown, convenient to many attractions. The Program Committee, cochaired by Amy Cooper Cary and Colleen McFarland Rademaker, will send out a call for session proposals later this year. The Local Arrangements Committee will be cochaired by Michael Doylen and Anna Stadick, and they are already planning what promises to be an exciting and informative meeting.

2017 Annual Meeting, Omaha, Nebraska

MAC heads to Omaha in two years, the first time we'll hold our Annual Meeting there, though it was the site of our first-ever Fall Symposium in 2006. Details in the time ahead.

2016 and 2017 Fall Symposiums

Topics and venues haven't been settled on yet, but we're considering a Symposium devoted to copyright-related issues next fall. Please contact me at david-mccartney@uiowa.edu with your suggestions for Symposium topics.