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Vice President's Column: MAC Meetings and Symposia Update

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Vice President's Column: MAC Meetings and Symposia Update

By David McCartney, University of Iowa

NPR commentator Susan Stamberg has written many delightful essays over the years. One of my favorites—which I will paraphrase badly here—concerns the marked seasonal change that fall brings, something especially true for those of us who work at academic institutions. The arrival of autumn signals the start of a new school year that in many ways surpasses New Year's Day as a time that brings renewal, rejuvenation, and perhaps even a bit of melancholy. For many, fall—not the middle of winter—is the time of year that marks new beginnings.

The MAC Fall Symposium is one way to make a new beginning. By the time you read this, Fall Symposium 2014, held in mid-September at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus, will be history, but attendees no doubt learned much about the challenges and rewards of initiating and managing oral history collections. Doug Boyd, PhD, director of the Louis B. Nunn Center for Oral History at the University of Kentucky, offered a comprehensive overview of the many issues and emerging challenges concerning oral history interviews. A reception at the Spurlock Museum on campus was a fine opportunity to meet and greet. Many thanks to Bethany Anderson, Anke Voss, and the entire organizing committee for their hard work.

Looking ahead to 2015 and beyond, MAC offers more opportunities for professional development in spring and fall. Here's what's on tap.

Annual Meeting, "The Bluegrass Meets the Midwest," Lexington, Kentucky, May 6–9, 2015

By the time you read this, the deadline for session proposals will have passed, but the 2015 Annual Meeting in the Bluegrass State promises to deliver a diverse range of topics and formats that will, we hope, encourage more interactivity among attendees. While the traditional "one to many" presentation format is fine, we're looking forward to utilizing other ways to share knowledge, such as lightning rounds, speed dating, and even debates. The Program Committee, cochaired by Lisa Sjoberg and Stephanie Bricking, is striving to line up sessions that cover a variety of relevant topics. As long as we're in Lexington, we'll have to enjoy some great Kentucky hospitality too: tours of the Buffalo Trace Distillery, a local horse farm, and historical downtown Lexington are planned, thanks to

the Local Arrangements Committee, cochaired by Deirdre Scaggs and Heather Fox. Watch the MAC website for registration details in the coming months!

Fall Symposium, "Hard Skills for Managing Digital Collections in Archives," date and location TBA, 2015

Wondering how to sort through the challenges of dealing with born-digital materials in your repository? This practical symposium, with hands-on experience, will help you make sense out of the ever-changing environment of electronic records. Bertram Lyons, archivist and digital assets manager of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress and senior consultant for AVPreserve, will lead this two-day seminar. Topics will include basic digital preservation workflows and concepts, spreadsheets for data management, and using open source (read: free) tools to help you manage datasets. At press time, the location for the Fall 2015 Symposium hadn't yet been determined, but watch this space or the website for an announcement.

Annual Meeting, 2016, date and location TBA

As of this writing, we're very close to selecting our host city for the 2016 Annual Meeting; an announcement about the location and dates will be made soon!

We are always on the lookout for ideas for Fall Symposium topics and places to meet. How about your hometown? Please e-mail me at david-mccartney@uiowa.edu.

CALL FOR EMERITUS MEMBER NOMINATIONS

Each year, the Membership Committee solicits nominations from the MAC membership for candidates to the status of Emeritus Member. The nominee must be retired from archival work and have been a MAC member for a minimum of 10, not necessarily consecutive, years. For more information, please visit the Emeritus Membership Award page on the MAC website, www.midwestarchives.org/emergitus-award.