

**Manuscript Repositories Section  
Steering Committee Minutes  
The Fairmont, Chicago  
August 31, 2007**

*Welcome and introductions*

Karen Spicher, Chair  
Matt Darby, Vice-chair, Chair-elect  
Beth Bensman, Past Chair  
Paul Atwood, Web Liaison

New members: Rebecca Bizonet, Helice Koffler, and Katie Salzmann

Returning members: Kate Colligan, Tara Laver, Steve Mickle

Karen began by providing an overview of duties for the members. New members serve on the nominating committee with Past Chair and returning members assist the Chair with the development of the Section meeting.

All steering committee members will help with SAA 2008 program ideas/session development, review of any session proposals for Section endorsement, as well as any other activities.

The Vice-chair takes charge of the newsletter after the fall newsletter (which is the last issue edited by the current Chair). Also, the current Past Chair will write the "From the Chair" article for the fall newsletter. With the next newsletter, both these responsibilities fall to the Vice-Chair and the Chair.

In other projects, Amy Cooper Cary and Sammie Morris will work on the Section history and Amy will work on filling in gaps in the Section's archives.

*Endorsement process*

Karen suggested (and the committee members agreed) to keep the guidelines from last year for this year. When Karen receives proposals she will forward copies along to the rest of the committee. Members will rate each proposal using high, medium, and low.

Karen suggested we make our decision by October 5 so that we can inform applicants of our decision in enough time for the October 12 deadline.

In the week prior to October 5, Karen will send a reminder to committee members to make rankings, and then will average these, see where we stand, and if necessary the committee can email to discuss our final decision for our two endorsements.

If we receive a proposal that seems more appropriate for another section or roundtable, Karen will suggest the person contact the other section or roundtable.

### *Best practices section for website*

Currently we have two brochures on the website. During the Section meeting, we received a suggestion to develop a brochure for authors about how to accumulate their electronic records for deposit in a repository. This brochure would be something printed or electronic that repositories could provide for their authors. We can create a new best practices webpage and add this new brochure, along with the two others currently in existence, and more later as we create more material for this section.

Karen suggested that a couple members take charge of contacting other repositories/individuals for input into the author's brochure including Catherine Stollar Peters and Kevin Glick and Michael Forstrom at Yale, and Paul will check with the Bancroft Library as well. Tara pointed out that Harvard developed guidelines for faculty's electronic/digital records and we might want to check with them for information. Steve, Kate, and Tara volunteered to work on this project.

### *Section nominations*

Amy had quite a bit of trouble getting folks to run due to lack of institutional support and time. Karen pointed out that a section history will help as we'll be able to see who has run in the past. Kate mentioned that having the section member list really helped, Steve mentioned that clustering was also a problem as we wish to have more inclusion – race, gender, geographical areas.

Karen mentioned the idea of a call to the listserv, and Kate suggested a soft approach – that being on the steering committee is not that arduous and that it's a good way for folks to get involved.

Kate also suggested sending it out to student chapters as a way to get new people involved. A bit of discussion followed about can students serve and no one saw why not. The committee also discussed problems with students when they move from the lower student rate to job seeking and membership – that this issue might prevent students from serving when it entailed a two year commitment.

Katie mentioned that when asked to run she didn't really know what serving on the steering committee entailed so maybe we could highlight what members do – list that new members serve on nominating committee, then help with meeting, also select sessions to endorse and input into any matters that come to the attention of the Section.

We'll also be looking for a new web co-liaison. Paul will see what response he receives from his request for a co-liaison and will also send out an email to the Manuscript listserv.

### *Program planning*

SAA Session proposals from the Section  
Section meeting topics

Karen shared a list she compiled containing follow-up ideas and some new topics:

Electronic lit mss follow-up  
Abandoned property  
Donor agreements  
Faculty papers  
Visual materials: guidelines for fees and reproductions  
Library 2.0  
User studies  
Born digital materials  
Listserv archives  
Employment: freelancing, grants, temp positions  
Dacs/Appm

Also:

Customizing finding aids and contributing user content: does this change our tools from authoritative items.

MPLP

More item level description in digitization.

These last two seemed contradictory to the committee, so how about a panel discussing this conflict or is this a conflict. How can we move forward on this?

Kate thought that the MPLP privacy and sensitivity session later today might touch on this but perhaps there is room for more discussion. But again, maybe people will be tired of MPLP. Karen thought we could tie this into Library 2.0, particularly wikis and blogs. While there has been some theoretical talk, maybe we can locate someone doing something practical. Tara suggested some sessions in the afternoon may touch on this. The group decided that things will change and new things will happen that will generate more discussion/action in this area.

Karen mentioned offering a panel rather than papers since while many papers were quite good, sometimes the best part are the questions at the end. So how about a topic where we solicit questions ahead of time from the Section and then answer those questions (or pick and choose) during the session. Kate mentioned the possibility of using YouTube during the session. And another idea is to have some prepared questions for the panel along with questions from the audience.

Karen then suggested a topic dealing with provocative literature focusing on trends with readers and giving the public what they want. How about a panel – historian, grad student – reading articles and responding to these articles to get the discussion going. Rebecca suggested getting some specialty users such as genealogists/re-enactors to participate. Paul mentioned that in early November, Berkeley will be holding a conference on Library 2.0 which he will be attending and could see if anyone there would be interested in participating in a presentation.

Tara suggested talking to Manuscript Repositories members in the San Francisco area to get some ideas of names for the meeting and Paul can also contact folks through a local archives group.

The group decided the above idea might work best for our meeting program since we don't have such a tight deadline for determining speakers and fine tuning the topic.

#### *SAA session proposals*

We may have the best chance of getting a proposal accepted if it touches on technology, diversity, advocacy (Library 2.0 tools, etc.) along with the meeting theme of Revolution/Evolution.

Karen had an idea about how to bring in students to do research on minority studies topics. One session at this year's meeting had a panelist who said that her instructors talked a lot about how to work with archivists when doing their research. The group agreed that this might be a bit old fashioned/old school, rather than focusing on the finding aids and using the tools we create to help them locate materials.

Helice provided information about the Wilson project at the NYPL and suggested a section focusing on the success of the project and how that drove institutional change or how it didn't. Project manager, EAD coordinator, head of TS could be possible speakers.

Rebecca suggested a session addressing the challenges, advantages of working within a consortium as another topic – CA libraries and their digital library is one example, PACSCL in Philadelphia as another example.

We discussed the possibility of combining the two above into one session , but agreed that they would work best as two separate proposals. Rebecca and Helice agreed to pursue these topics, and will call on the rest of the committee for help, as necessary.

Tara also suggested following up on a session about deaccessioning, property laws, with Kate adding the name of someone from the museum side as well. Tara and Beth agreed to pursue this idea.

The discussion then moved back to the Section meeting when Kate wondered if there was any opportunity for small discussions within the Manuscript Repositories Section meeting. Beth described some of the past section meetings with small break-out groups either reporting the groups' findings during the meeting, or reporting them in the newsletter.

Karen suggested having business at the top of the meeting – such as reporting on digital authors presentation/brochure, best practices section, etc. followed by the presentation and/small groups.

For the website, Karen mentioned the idea of linking from the document that Tara presented at the meeting re abandoned property laws, adding the two presentations, the

agenda, and asking Sue Hodson if we can post information from her presentation on Senate bill 548.

We'll also get the minutes up for the Section meeting as well as the Steering Committee meeting, and everyone's contact information.

Karen thanked everyone for all their input and adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by Beth Bensman  
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