



ACWR NEWS

VOL. 4 No. 1

March 1994

ACWR Treasurer honored

Reprinted from CONTINUUM,
the SSIHM Archives Newsletter

November 7, 1993 – Two hundred programs and name tags ran out, but the cookies and punch held up! The Archives Gala Open House honoring Sister Celeste Rabaut, Archivist Emeritus, for her 18 years of service in the IHM Archives was an EVENT. Would you believe that 800 IHMs, dozens of family members, along with professional colleagues and friends managed to keep the celebration a surprise?

Celeste had entered wholeheartedly into preparations for the open house though somewhat puzzled that Dorothy McDaniel was expected for the program; "a bit much" was her private thought. Warned on Friday that she might be expected to say a few words, Celeste was still not prepared for the eight foot bulletin board, "A Celebration of Celeste," nor for congratulations read by Rose Matthew Mangini from Archbishop Adam Maida, the Society of American



Rose Matthew Mangini (r) surprises Celeste Rabaut with honors from IHM community

Archivists, and Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious. A thoughtful, appreciative tribute by IHM President, Dorothy McDaniel, preceded the award itself: Archivist Emeritus, "with all rights and privileges thereunto appertaining." Dorothy noted Celeste's many contributions to the congregation, as a

librarian at Marygrove College for 30 years, as Archivist for 18 years along with a six year term as General Secretary. She cited also Celeste's work with the Claiming Our Roots (COR) writers group, and her contributions to community history.

Celeste's gracious response included acknowledgement of her predecessors, mentors and coworkers, together with her gratitude for her IHM sisters, family members, and friends who were present for the celebration.

During the remainder of the afternoon guests milled about, following notes in a browse-about brochure, wending their way through "refrigerator rooms," various displays and eventually making their way up to the main floor IHM Heritage Room.

Afterwards, Celeste's entrance to Ligouri Dining Room was greeted by a standing ovation from some seventy family members and guests. All in all, the general feeling was that of a splendid sort of day, a "right and good" testimonial to an IHM sister who has served extraordinarily well.†

New York Archivists expand membership and services

by Mary Serbacki, OSF

On December 1, 1982 at the administrative center of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Buffalo, NY, a group of religious archivists met for the first time to get acquainted, exchange ideas, and perhaps plan for future meetings. That original group, which included five representatives of area college archives and four area congregations of women religious, decided that there was, indeed, value in coming together on a regular, albeit informal basis.

Known today as Western New York

Archivists, the former Religious Archivists of Western New York was originally organized for archivists of specific religious collections. As the group grew and developed, other special archives repositories were incorporated into the association. Today's members are responsible for collections documenting the contributions of individual dioceses, churches, synagogues, communities, congregations, and academic and social service institutions throughout the western New York area.

Members meet informally at differ-

ent repositories several times a year. The meetings provide a forum for presentations and discussions of important issues in the archival field, an opportunity to share experiences and information, and a support system for those who work alone in small archival centers.

During the past year members of WNY Archivists completed a two-year project to develop a joint policy on access to records in their custody. The resultant "Recommendations for Institutions Holding Archival Materials" is based on widely accepted archival

A note from the President



Dolores Liptak, RSM
ACWR President

As Spring beckons, we greet you once again and call your attention to several important articles in the newsletter.

First of all, please **note the plans for the conference that ACWR is sponsoring in October 1994**. You will soon be receiving further details

concerning both the rich program and the gracious ambiance that our Monroe hosts offer. While recognizing your need to attend the yearly national SAA, including its WRA session, we urge you to consider attending this special, because first, ACWR conference. We see it as the best possible opportunity for our two hundred (plus) members to share with others the richness of their experience as archivists or historians of religious life.

Secondly, be sure to **read carefully** the advice given by Sister Madanne Gell about preparing for one of the worst situations that could befall your archives: fire. How have you prepared for this eventuality? Do you, for example, have an inventory of the artifacts in your archives that are considered precious to your community? Are there historic materials in other parts of your motherhouse over which you should have at least intellectual control (e.g., are the sacred vessels or the paintings in your chapel or cor-

ridors listed anywhere)? Have you, furthermore, urged your congregation to install proper fire doors and water sprinklers? Finally, do you know what professional experts to consult in the case of any natural disaster? We would be delighted to hear the advice you can offer on either disaster planning or on other areas of concern. Perhaps, instead, you have questions about how to proceed with preventive measures. Each issue could certainly feature helpful advice or address questions about the typical issues that concern archivists. If you want to be part of such a plan, please write to the national office. Patricia Hodge, RSM, will be delighted to dialogue with you.

For now, let me simply offer many thanks for all your help and for your kind words about our newsletter. And remember the October conference!

In grateful service,
Dolores Liptak, RSM †

Lessons from the Visitandine fire in Washington, DC

by Mary Hayes, SND. Adapted with permission from HWR Newsletter.

Sister Madanne Gell, VHM, archivist for the Georgetown Visitation Monastery and Second Federation of the Visitandines in the United States shares the lessons she learned from the fire that destroyed the central building of Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School on July 8, 1993.

The central section of the school was in many ways the repository of the history of Visitation. Built in 1873, it contained the school archives, parlors with valuable antique furniture and religious art, the Archbishop Leonard Neale Room, filled with precious artifacts from the first decades of the school and a small museum-like room on the fourth floor, also containing material artifacts.

The fire began on the roof where workers had been using a heat gun to strip paint. It then spread to the attic and to the fourth floor, the site of the school archives. It completely destroyed the 120 year old building

and caused severe water damage to the chapel which separated the school from the monastery. Although extensive, the fire was contained to this section, sparing both the 1830 and 1850 wings of the monastery and the other wings of the high school.

Sister Madanne noted that ten years ago Visitation had erected 150 fire doors. These doors effectively contained the fire and saved the monastery. They also may have contributed to the almost miraculous survival of the archives which were discovered water-logged and burned at the edges, next to the elevator shaft. With the assistance of a disaster recovery team, and a legion of volunteers working in relays, these records were boxed and shipped soaking wet to a lab for flash-freezing.

As visible testimony, the fire-charred silhouette of the elevator shaft rises eerily in the gutted frame; abutting the shaft on what was once the fourth

floor, a fire door still stands.

In addition to the safety provided by the fire doors, other circumstances combined to mitigate the worst effects of the loss, including a slow moving fire that enabled faculty, staff and friends to retrieve precious artifacts (Cont. on p.5. Fire)

ACWR NEWS is the biennial publication of the Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious.

ACWR is a professional organization established to bring archivists together to confront issues and problems, to explore needs and opportunities facing religious women's archives today and into the 21st century.

Dolores Liptak, RSM Contributing Editor
Patricia A. Hodges, RSM Content Editor
Genevieve Shea, SLW Production Editor

New Orleans revisited

by Beatrice Weisner, SNJM



Beatrice Weisner, SNJM

The October ACWR NEWS carried an account of the annual meeting in New Orleans. It would seem appropriate, however, to add a few clarifications, especially for those members unable to be at the national conference. At the risk of redundancy, some of these items are repeated here.

1) Office of the Executive Secretary

This office is a clearing house for announcements, reports, and articles for the newsletter. The office is intended as the linkage through which all business will go. Materials may be sent to any other officer, but they will then go to Patricia A. Hodge, RSM, Content Editor of the ACWR NEWS. She will forward items to Genevieve Shea, SLW, Production Editor.

2) ACWR Library This is intended as an ACWR Historic Research Collection. It is a special collection reflecting the historic development of religious communities represented by our membership. This is not a library collection. It is a depository of records. This gives stability to the organization. Having the collection where the Executive Secretary is provides a space for our holdings. Though we are in a period of "growing pains," it is our hope that this collection eventually will be a research library. At present space is limited.

3) Financial Matters Money originally given and invested (the seed money of our appeal) has not been touched to date. It is being managed carefully and will support ongoing activities. Our current working bal-

ance is sufficient to meet the expenses of the national office. Incoming dues help to keep us solvent.

4) Membership There was a lengthy discussion on the question of men as members of ACWR. A few men have shown a real interest in the organization. The term used in our title is "Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious." This admits of broad interpretation. ACWR NEWS, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 3, states the conclusion of this discussion: "**ACWR is open to women and men who are seriously committed, through their work, to furthering the history of women religious.**"

5) ACWR History Some who have recently joined ACWR have asked for information on the history of the organization. This history needs to be written up for ourselves and for future members. This is part of our unfinished agenda. The information is in the minutes of past meetings and is on file in the Executive Secretary's office. †

From the ACWR mailbag

by Dolores Liptak, RSM

Question:

Isn't ACWR a duplication of the History of Women Religious (HWR)?

Answer:

No. The ACWR primarily focuses on issues and information that specifically affect the performance of archivists of women religious congregations. Thus the ACWR, through its national office, aims to point members towards internship and workshop options, publish materials generally helpful to archivists, and advocate networking with other archivists.

On the other hand, the HWR is primarily made up of historians whose knowledge and expertise is in researching and writing on topics of church history, with an emphasis on the role of women in the church. The aim of the HWR is to inform women historians, or those interested in learning more about U.S. Catholic history, of recently completed studies in the field.

For this reason, membership in both ACWR and HWR is especially

advantageous to archivists. While the ACWR will advance expertise, the HWR can provide a broadening view of the latest historical research or literature.

Question:

Why does ACWR collect book titles of women's congregations when the Cushwa Center at Notre Dame is the center for such historic information?

Answer:

The ACWR has collected and will collect book titles that pertain directly to the history of U.S. women's congregations because it sees itself as the most logical depository for such materials (see mission statement). It is our hope that researchers on such topics will begin to think of us as their first resource when researching women members of religious congregations. Because of the wide representation of its membership, moreover, the ACWR eventually hopes to possess the most complete collection of such bibliographic sources. In the meantime, the present holdings, consisting of several hundred books, are already impressive. At this time, they are being maintained by our national secretary, Patricia Hodge, RSM, at the Archives of the Sisters of Mercy in Pittsburgh, PA.

Although plans are not yet finalized, the ACWR also hopes to make this future research library available through the auspices of a women's Catholic college. It will be the privilege of such a college library not only to house these holdings but to advertise them as an important part of their special collections. †

Have you any questions?

Send them to

Dolores Liptak, RSM

1700 Hampshire Green Ln. #21

Silver Spring, MD 20903

MORE

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

NEXT TIME.

Micro-Marc system explained at WRA Roundtable

Elaine Wheeler, DC



Elaine Wheeler, DC

When I began work with the computer, it was truly a case of "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." I knew nothing about computers. I looked at the MARCON, Catcus and the Micro-MARC:AMC systems. All are US MARC format, but the first two were not yet on the market. Micro-MARC, up and running, was created by a team at Michigan State University under the leadership of Frederick Honhart, Ph.D., University Archives, East Lansing, MI. I asked users for strengths, weaknesses and ease of mastery by a **neophyte**. Responses were straight-forward and

favorable. Documentation is thorough. It is similar to the RLIN AMC systems.

Records are divided into three hierarchical screen types: Description, Process and Action screens with on-screen status line. The system can be used on microcomputers and can also transport records into and out of both RLIN and OCLC. Finally, the team at Michigan State University provides excellent support.

The first two chapters of the Manual cover coding data, including the preparation of the Coding Form, fields necessary for the search and report modules. It discusses the standardization of AMC fields, dates, numbering schemes, index terms, and the installation.

The documentation for chapter three, Creating and Editing Records, is excellent. A huge number of fields is available. You decide what information you will **NEED** or **WANT** and how you will record it. Then be **CONSISTENT** in preparing each record.

Chapter four, Requesting Searches, enables you to find specific information such as proper names, corporate names, and subjects. Users can read the records but not change them. Writing Reports, chapter five, is the

"workhorse" of the Micro-MARC:AMC system. It is **FLEXIBLE** and **EASY** to use. You can obtain information on any field or subfield, on one or several fields in a record. You can compare data from several fields for all the records or for a portion of them. There are 27 predefined reports which can be used as they are or changed as needed.

Chapter six describes how to convert Micro-MARC:AMC records (the software program) to/from the US MARC format, which is the standard format used for transferring archival and manuscript records between computer systems. Both use the same system of tags, subfields and indicators.

Chapter seven creates Auxiliary Indexes used in the Search Mode.

Presently the team at Michigan State University is working on a new program to incorporate the many new ideas and features users suggested and also respond to the upcoming implementation of the US MARC Integrated Format. I have had a preview of this and believe it to be excellent. Also, keep in mind that the support system is marvelous. †

Tapping archival resources for Women's History

by Anna Mary Gibson, RSM



Anna Mary Gibson, RSM

Approximately 30 women involved in archival and historical projects gathered

at the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania in Pittsburgh, PA, November 29, 1993. They participated in a program entitled "Tapping Archival Resources for Women's History." The program, part of the Pennsylvania Humanities Council's "Raising Our Sites: Women's History in Pennsylvania" project, is funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Carolyn Schumacher, Director of the Historical Society, spoke of the dearth of women's history sources. She told of current efforts to correct the situation. A house in the Lawrenceville section of Pittsburgh, in its preservation, will tell of the daily lives of late 19th century Polish women. Kim Moon, Project Director of

"Raising our Sites," spoke of the significance of weaving the stories of sexes, ethnic groups and races for a unified history.

Two projects are the Folklife Documentation Center by Chris Mueseler, Coordinator for the Center for Gender Studies at Seton Hill College, Greensburg, PA, and the participation of women in the oil industry compiled by Barbara Zolli, site administrator of the Drake Well Museum, Titusville, PA. Ms. Mueseler told of women workers from Jeannette, PA glass industry and the Alcoa plant in New Kensington, PA.

She described techniques of interviewing and obtaining material from journals and (continued on p. 6 Tapping resources.)

ARCS offers archivists rainbow of hope

by Genevieve Shea, SLW



Genevieve Shea, SLW

Have you ever been so excited about a new discovery that you wanted to tell everyone about it? That is my experience with the Archives Control System, generally known as the ARCS program. That is also why I agreed to tell others about this software during our WRA Roundtable in New Orleans. This is a program for those of us who feel more comfortable with simple systems geared to medium or small sized archives.

Many of our members are more experienced than I am, but some will identify with my dilemma of a few years ago. I was beginning to organize the Living Word Archives in a way that would assure relative ease in finding and using records. A beginning had been made, but much was still to be done. While I was learning about the what, why and how of organizing an archival collection, I heard

about the new program developed by Chris Langford in Memphis, TN. On inquiry I found that Br. Robert Werle, FSC, had given many practical suggestions and was using the program successfully in the Christian Brothers Archives. That encouraging endorsement led me to send for the demonstration disk. The simplicity and practicality of ARCS prompted me to purchase the program a few months after I began my work in the Living Word Archives.

Since then a new edition of the program has increased its capabilities. It can produce several types of records. The content sheet includes the title, the name of the person or office producing a file folder, a brief description, a list of cross references, and other equally important data. A customized accession number can be the record group number rather than accession as understood in library science. In my work I have used a numerical system for record groups, and I use this number as the accession number on the content sheet.

The space for references is particularly helpful for cross reference. The program has the capability of printing numerous file cards for each content sheet, thus serving as a handy finding aid. Finding is also made easier by the "Finding Aid" printout which can indicate every item in a file folder,

depending upon the archivist's decision.

Another printout capability is called the "Report." It is possible to print a list of all items in a given record group, or to list all holdings related to a given person or subject. Various reports can be customized for local needs. This is an obvious advantage when the archivist is asked, "Where can I find...?" The content sheet and the catalog cards include the location of the item: shelf, box, section, or whatever the archivist wishes to indicate as location.

How much does the user have to know about computers to get all these advantages? Very little. Turn the power on, enter your self-chosen password, decide what you want to do and then glide through the day! You can choose to "Append" (add another content sheet) or "Edit" (get rid of bloopers you found in work you did yesterday). You can print content sheets, file cards, finding aids, reports and even labels. And you can easily back-up (save) all your work!

ARCS is a rainbow of hope helping archivists survive the deluge of paper work. More information about the program can be obtained from Chris Langford, 1-800-578-1275 or from Professional Software Marketing, 1-800-861-8088. †

Fire (cont. from p. 2)

from the lower floors, while priests removed an invaluable painting from the chapel donated to Visitation by Charles X of France.

Secondly, Visitation had begun to plan for the celebration of its bicentennial in 1999-2000. Providentially one of the projects already completed was a video and photographic documentation of the furniture and art collection. For insurance purposes this identification is essential. Sister Mada-anne stresses the importance of documenting not only the paintings but also the markings on the back of

the canvas. She urges curators and archivists to provide off-site copies of this documentation which Visitation fortunately had done. The school archives however did not have an off-site record. Had they not been recovered, the loss would have been incomparable.

Sister Mada-anne also urges an inventory for the sacristy. Visitation did not have one and was thus unaware of the valuable vestments which they owned. Institutions would also evaluate the capacity of their sprinkler systems. Visitation had an

adequate, working system but it sprinkled downward while the fire spread from above.

Visitation benefitted from its location in a city filled with museum professionals. Many volunteered their services. Lacking this advantage, there should be a comprehensive plan including identification of resources for immediate response.

As planned, Georgetown Visitation opened its new school year on September 7, 1993, utilizing space untouched by the fire. †

News and Notes

by Patricia A. Hodge, RSM

ACWR Articles of Incorporation were approved by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in August 1993. Consequently, the organization is now incorporated as a not-for-profit entity. Under the management of the Executive Secretary, the national office is now located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The official address is: ACWR, c/o Mercy Archives, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3165. Telephone: 412-578-6213; Fax: 412-578-6180.

The Executive Secretary developed the first draft of ACWR by-laws between September–November 1993. The four national officers have critiqued the document, proposing appropriate revisions.

When the final draft of the by-laws is ready for circulation, copies will be distributed to our full membership for approval.

ACWR membership now includes three international archivists. The latest of these members is Gayle Desarmia, SP, of Ontario, Canada. Gayle has served on the Board of the Canadian Religious Archivists. In the future look for some networking possibilities between CRA and ACWR.

Madeleine Marie Schmidt, CHM, one of our newest members and Historian and Archivist for the Diocese of Davenport, IA, is in search of the papers of Bishop John Joseph Hogan, St. Joseph/Kansas City, MO, 1868–1913. Specifically, the letters written to Bishop Hogan by members of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary are of special interest as is the correspondence between Bishop John J. Hogan and Bishop Hennessy of Dubuque between 1870–1877.

If any of our members know the location of these historic documents, please call S. Madeleine Marie at 319-324-1911. Thank you.

OUR EUROPEAN MULTI-ETHNIC HERITAGE by Dolores Liptak, RSM, was published recently by the United States Catholic Conference. Congratulations to Dolores, ACWR President, whose business address is: 1700 Hampshire Green, #21, Silver Spring, MD 20903.

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Sisters of Mercy in the United States, former Mayor of Pittsburgh, Sophie Masloff, issued a proclamation declaring December 21 (Pittsburgh Foundation Day) "Sisters of Mercy Sesquicentennial Day."

County Commissioners also prepared a proclamation statement which was read publicly at the dedication of the historic marker which now memorializes the site of the first Convent of Mercy in the United States. The marker is located in the downtown area of Pittsburgh at 800 Penn (Street) Avenue. †

Tapping resources

(cont. from p. 4)

diaries. She supplemented her talk with a photographic exhibit showing the women in various occupations and daily life pursuits. Ms. Mueseler also discussed her budget, full and part-time staff, and time expended.

Barbara Zolli described the holdings of the Drake Museum and the work involved in collecting materials and oral history tapes. She illustrated her talk with a video of a woman who had operated a well for many years and who now conducts tours. This woman demonstrated from her own experience such oil drill terms as "pulling the well" and "shooting the well." She noted the use (and the dangers) of nitroglycerin. The narrator also described life in company-owned housing on the oil well territory.

Although Carolyn Schumacher mentioned white male domination of history, she acknowledged the untapped resources covering 90 years existing in the Historical Society. Jennie Benford of the Society is at present examining and accessing this material. Ms. Benford described her tedious task of pulling from the files all cards that have

any reference to women's history.

From a small town (Litchfield, CT) with a large interest in its heritage, Catherine Canaan Fields, Director of the Litchfield Historical Society, told about local projects. Because of this community's interest in renovating the society's headquarters and in the study of early women's education in the Litchfield Female Academy, Ms. Fields was able to finance the project with several generous grants. These projects include planning and arranging an exhibit. †

New York archivists

(cont. from p. 1)

principles and practice and is intended to address the important balance between rights of access and rights of privacy. The joint policy is also intended to provide member archivists, especially those of very small organizations, with increased credibility and authority when working with superiors, boards, committees, and trustees. The fact that the group came together and established a consensus has added to the members' sense of professional development and has strengthened the position of the group as a whole.

WNY Archivists received the Organizational Award of Merit at the 1992 Western New York Association of Historical Agencies annual meeting. This award is presented annually to an organization in the 14-county area of upstate New York for outstanding accomplishments in the field of state, regional, and local history. This event marked the first time a multi-institutional association had received the award.

The current membership of WNY Archivists includes archivists from several colleges, religious congregations, churches, dioceses, and temples.

For information on WNY Archivists "Recommendations for Institutions Holding Archival Materials" contact Sr. Martin Joseph Jones, SSMN 3756 Delaware Ave, Jenmore, NY 14217, or Sr. Mary Serbacki, OSF, 4421 Lower River Rd., Stella Niagara, NY 14144. †

ACWR Conference scheduled for October 1994

by Celeste Rabaut, IHM

Plans are progressing for the ACWR Conference scheduled for October 13-16, 1994, at St. Mary Center, Monroe, MI. The opening session will be Thursday, 7:00 p.m.; the closing Sunday noon. The following financial arrangements have been made.

COSTS:

Registration fee due September 5, 1994	\$20.00
St. Mary Conference Center prices, based on a package arrangement, include rooms for 3 nights and all meals.	
Single room	\$155.00
Double room	130.00
Triple room	120.00
Quad room	75.00
Commuter: (Sessions, lunch, dinner)	75.00

TRANSPORTATION:

The planning committee will arrange for transportation from and to Detroit Metro Airport on Thursday and Sunday prior to the opening and after the closing sessions.
\$10.00 each way. Total \$20.00

OTHER:

MEALS: Menus are predetermined but allow sufficient choices for most people. The Center is unable to handle special diets.

PARKING: There is ample parking adjacent to the Center.

DIRECTIONS: A map will be provided.

ROOM ASSIGNMENTS:

Room assignments will be made according to the date of reservation. If your choice is not available, you will be placed at the next available price level.

SMOKING: St. Mary Center is a **NON-SMOKING** facility.

HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBILITY: The Center is 95% handicapped accessible.



ACWR welcomes new members

Between mid-July and mid-December 1993 the following archivists joined ACWR as new members:

Evelyn Marie Augustyn, CSFN, PA
Anne Xavier Boyle, CSJ, NY
Kathryn Callahan, CSC, IN
Regina Decker, CDP, TX
Gayle Desarmia, SP, ONT., CA
Susan Kalcik, PA
Marie Louise Martinez, RSCJ, LA
Marie Turnbach, RSM, PA
Robert Werle, FSC, TN
Alice Whitehead, IBVM, IL

We extend a sincere welcome to all of these members. We appreciate those members who helped recruit others by spreading ACWR "good news." The membership count exceeded 200 as of mid-December, 1993.

Planning Committee prepares for October conference

The following volunteers are members of the Program Committee: Rita Connell, RSM, Rosemarie Kasper, SNJM, Dolores Liptak, RSM, Rose Matthew Mangini, IHM, Celeste Rabaut, IHM, Genevieve Shea, SLW, Carm Ternes, OSB, and Beatrice Weisner, SNJM. The program committee will develop the sessions and events via teleconference following the February 18-20, 1994 meeting of the ACWR Board.

Various steps of archival work from acquisition of materials to producing finding aids will be addressed at some point. There will be sessions for those considering computerization, for those initiating computerization, and for those experienced in computer use. The program will include sessions related to the history of religious congregations. †

COPY DEADLINE

for 1994 and 1995 issues of
ACWR NEWS
July 25, 1994 and
January 3, 1995
Please send inquiries
about articles and
request for style sheet to
Patricia A. Hodge, RSM
ACWR Executive Secretary
3333 Fifth Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3166.

Women Religious Archives Roundtable meets in New Orleans

by Stephanie Morris



Kathryn Callahan, CSC, co-chair, and Stephanie Morris, chair, WRA Roundtable, 1994-1995.

The Women Religious Archives Roundtable met during the September 1994 meeting of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), in New Orleans, Louisiana. The WRA grew out of the Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious but is now a separate group affiliated with SAA. A roundtable is a unit within the larger, national organization which enables

members who work in similar types of repositories (e.g., archives of congregations of women religious) to meet together and discuss problems they share, and their solutions. Regardless of the program of sessions during the week long annual conference, members of a roundtable are assured of a platform which can address their specific needs and, with the assistance of the roundtable, can plan sessions and speakers on these specific topics.

During the New Orleans meeting, Mary Serbacki, OSF, Chair of WRA, spoke about the new organization and the benefits of being connected with the national organization, the SAA. Ellen Finley of Zelinsky and Associates gave a brief presentation on ARCS (an automated cataloging system). WRA members, Genevieve Shea, SLW, and Elaine Wheeler, DC, commented on the automated systems used in their repositories.

Procedures for elections were adopted and new officers were elected for the 1993-1994 year. Kathryn

Callahan, CSC and Stephanie Morris were elected vice-chair and chair respectively.* These will be one-year terms, the vice-chair succeeding to the chair the following year.

Denis Sennett, SA, has agreed to speak at the roundtable during the SAA annual meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, in the fall of 1994. He has recently published [A Divine Legacy: Record Keeping for Religious Congregations and Orders](#). All are welcome to come to the WRA meeting. You should look at Brother Denis' witty and wise compendium, if you have not already seen it; you would enjoy it.

Topics of discussion for future meetings will include finding aids, exhibits, oral history programs, and other issues of interest to those working in women religious archives. †

***Ed. Note: The October ACWR News erroneously named Loretta Green as co-chair.**

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