

Orlando Was Great!: Report from the Orlando SAA Meeting by Sabina Collins, OSF



Orlando was superb! Lots of walking from meetings to meetings energized us and kept us awake and alert! Hospitality of staff and participants was outstanding as we searched for various meeting rooms.

It was especially delightful to be with archivists from religious communities at the Conference. Although it was a smaller number than the 166 who attended the Sinsinawa, ACWR Conference the times we met together were so special as we shared in the expertise and events that help us grow as archivists.

Our ACWR meeting program was exciting and spirit-filled. The business section consisted of introductions, reports and induction of the new officers: President-Sister Dolores Liptak, RSM Vice-President Elect-Sister Sabina Collins, OSF and Secretary-Sister Elvira Kelley, OSF. Out-going officers, Sisters Rita King, SC and Edna McKeever, CSJ were thanked.

After this ceremony, two excellent presentations were made. Ellen Pierce, Director of Archives for Maryknoll Mission, New York, shared her experiences in collecting and documenting the wide geographic areas of Maryknoll Missionary activities. This archives, which is located in Ossining, NY, is a joint endeavor of the Maryknoll Sisters, Fathers, and Brothers. In an effort to professionalize the archives, facilitate research and create better storage facilities, the women's and men's congregations merged archival operations in 1990.

Ms. Pierce explained how identifying records and transferring them to archives from central offices was consistently done. Over the years, the records kept by each group had changed. Before 1968 missionaries were required to keep diaries in the remote areas where they served. Now there is no requirement for documenting details in diary form. This archives has experienced a loss of specific detail. In some cases regional newsletters have taken over where diaries were discontinued in the 1960s.

One particular complication for Maryknoll archivists involves preservation. Because of climactic conditions in certain countries, some materials coming to archives

are insect-infested or covered in mold. When this occurs, records are sealed in plastic bags and stored in walk-in freezers for forty-eight hours to kill bugs, insects, larvae, eggs or molds spores. Only then are the materials processed, boxed in acid-free folders and added to the collection.

In closing, Ellen spoke of a pro-active approach to assure that the regional records find their way to Archives:

appoint a contact person for archives within the region; send a mailing at least yearly in the region; give personal attention to a certain area or region when news of a closed house comes up; provide outreach activities to homecoming groups, renewal groups, and orientation groups; hold private tours to the stack area; and have exhibits that highlight examples of our holdings.



Joann Kessler, OSU gave the second presentation. She explained how the Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland have preserved the memory of Dorothy Kazel, OSU, one of the four women missionaries who were murdered in El Salvador in 1980. Because Sister had contributed so many years of her religious life to ministry in the greater Cleveland

area, Sister Joann was able to mount a display that traces her contributions at every stage of her community life but highlights her special call to work in Central America. A Dorothy Kazel Room now commemorates a courageous woman whose dedication to the poor remains a fitting tribute to the spirit of the American Ursuline congregation.

A New Executive Secretary for the ACWR



In July of this year, Mary Beth Fraser became the third Executive Secretary for the ACWR, replacing Sister Rosalie McQuaide who held the position since 1997. For the first four years, Sister Patricia Hodge, RSM served as Executive

Secretary. Mary Beth Fraser is currently an American History student at The Catholic University of America. has a particular interest in the history of women religious. Besides her duties with the ACWR, she is also an Archival Assistant at CUA's Department of Archives, Manuscripts, and Museum Collections.

President's Letter:

Dear Sisters and Fellow Archivists,



Here's to my second epiphany as president of the ACWR. *Please* know that I am privileged to serve this second time. It is always such a joy to be associated with the ACWR, a group committed to preserving sister history and dedicated to finding ways to make this sacred story

come alive again. Your congregations--as well as the Church--are in great need of your services. Out of our collective archives, I am convinced, evidence of the new fire of religious life will shine forth. It is up to us to keep the coals of that fire alive; it is up to us to find ways to help recreate our "being" once again. This is no small task.

I also take this opportunity to remind you that, as our second year at Trinity College, Washington, DC commences, we begin it with a competent, new executive secretary, Mary Beth Fraser. Mary Beth comes to us highly endorsed by Timothy Meagher, Archivist of Catholic University, with whom Mary Beth also works. With us, Mary Beth shares many talents and skills. A budding historian, she is well acquainted with archives. She also is daily learning more and more about sister-history.

Mary Beth is anxious to hear from you and wants to be of service. She is well-trained in finding ways to do just that. Welcome her aboard! Call on her to help you. She promises to reply. Although her office hours are limited to Tuesday and Thursday, 10:30-3:30, she will return your calls or letters if you contact her at any other time. Don't forget also that the officers and board are all prepared to be of help as well.

Blessing on this new year.

Sincerely,

Dolores Liptak, RSM

ACWR News

General Editor: Dolores Liptak, RSM
Content & Production Editor: Mary Beth Fraser

Any questions or comments? Please send them to:

- ACWR National Office
- Trinity College
- 125 Michigan Ave., NE
- Washington, DC 20017
- 202-884-9441
- Fax: 202-884-9229

Announcements, Thanks, & Welcome

A Special Thank You....

Sister Rose Matthew Mangini, IHM, who has graciously and professionally produced the ACWR News for the past four years, is passing on the mantle to Mary Beth Fraser at Trinity College. ACWR thanks Sister for these years of dedicated service in preparing the newsletter.

Comings and Goings:

Pauline Ingram, OP, has agreed to take the place of Elvira Kelley on the ACWR Election Committee which will be chaired by Anita Therese Hayes, BVM. Elvira was installed as ACWR secretary at the business meeting in Orlando on September 3.

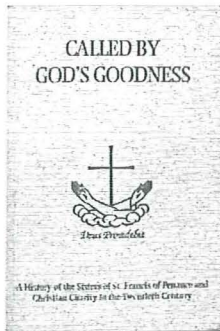
Welcome New Members:

Ellen Marie Bayer, OSB, Norfolk, NE
Carrie Bohman, Madison, WI
Brigid Clifford, SCN, Nazareth, KY
Catherine Laboure Conway, SCL, Leavenworth, KS
Andrew M. Cooperman, St. Louis, MO
Larry Eberhardt, OFM Conv., Mt. St. Francis, IND
Jane Farrell, IHM, Monroe, MI
Mary Anna Fay, OSB, Crookstown, MN
Maria Gonzalez, Paterson, NJ
Helen Haigh, CSJP, Bellevue, WA
Sister Catherine Marie Kawa, Grand Prairie, TX
Mary McHugh, RSHM, Tarrytown, NY
Catherine McMahon, RSCJ, St. Louis, MO
Pat McQuinn, SC, Mount St. Joseph, OH
Mary Shimo, CBS, Marriottsville, MD
Hildegard Varga, OSB, Canyon, TX
Albina Vautour, LSA, Walden, NY



The May Board Meeting Plans Future ACWR

Business. *Seated:* Dolores Liptak, RSM, Marjoire Buttner, OP, & Rita King, SC; *standing:* Edna McKeever, CSJ, Joann Kessler, OSU, Elvira Kelley, OSF & Rosalie McQuaide, CSJP; Sabina Collins, OSF not in photograph.



Gians Ackermans, Ursula Ostermann, OSF, and Mary Serbacki, OSF, eds. *Called By God's Goodness: A History of the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity in the Twentieth Century*. Buffalo, NY: The Holling Press, Inc., 1997. Reviewed by Mary Beth Fraser, Executive Secretary.

Gians Ackermans, Ursula Ostermann, OSF, and Mary Serbacki, OSF, in *Called By God's Goodness*, examine the historical and spiritual development of the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity in the twentieth century. From their origins in the Netherlands and Germany to missions in Java, South America, and North America, the sisters have carried on the tradition of their founder, Mother Magdalen Damen. At the same time they have adapted to their changing environment.

The first three chapters of *Called By God's Goodness* establish the early history of congregation, the development of the administration and government, and explore the Franciscan Sisters' spirituality. This first part emphasizes the way in which the sisters have faced episodes of crisis. Ackermans and Ostermann both refer to the problems met during World War II and the changes brought by the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s. The remaining two chapters (roughly two-thirds of the book) focus on the individual histories of the various provinces throughout the world. These stories written by members and friends of the congregation, illustrate its cohesion and diversity as it spread from Germany and the Netherlands to Poland, the United States, Brazil, Indonesia, and Africa. In each venue, the sisters provided health care, education, and other social services while being guided by the spirit of St. Francis and Mother Magdalen. These sections also show the manner in which the communities have adapted and changed to address the needs of their individual environments.

In the "Foreword" of this book, the editors attribute the phrase, "on the steps" to the Sisters of St. Francis. By this phrase they mean that the "steps" are the "transition-points spawned by historical realities." *Called By God's Goodness* expands on this idea and shows how sisters world-wide have not stood still; rather, they have been ever ready to respond to the needs of the people around them.

NB. *Called By God's Goodness* is available in paperback, by contacting Mary Serbacki, OSF, Sisters of St. Francis, Archives, 4421 Lower River Road, Stella Niagara, NY 14144 USA.



History of Women Religious Conference, by Elvira Kelley, OSF

From June 21-24 I attended the HWR Conference. It was a first for me. The general theme of the conference was "The History of Women Religious Through

Multiple Lenses." Speakers presented religious life from a variety of perspectives--social, cultural, ethnic, gender and religious. Thus, we all found ourselves viewing our story through many lenses.

As a relatively new archivist, I found entering the world of women religious historians both exciting and humbling. Especially interesting for me was being able to put faces on so many women whose books/reviews I had read. Karen Kennelly, CSJ, editor of HWR News and Notes which I had been reading for four years and many others, came to life for me in a way they could not do on paper only. And what beautiful women they are! Women, who, as one speaker said, have such a "naked love of the charism" of their congregations.

Even the size of the conference was a surprise--225 participants, some of whom were "pure" historians, some archivists and some combination archivist-historians. However, size was also a source of disappointment for me, albeit a fortunate one for the planners. I could not go to everything! So many choices for each session, ranging from a former student's account of the mentoring of a beloved teacher to the hands-on case study for conducting an oral history interview to the scholarly research for the stories of little known pioneer women of one's community.

I was fortunate in that my partner, Jordan Dahm, OSF, who is currently updating our congregation's history, decided to go to other sessions than I attended. Since Jordan is more directly involved in our history at this time, I let her choose the session she felt most beneficial to her and then I selected from the remaining offerings. Even so, it was difficult.

Why did I find the conference humbling? It was a great privilege to be among these women whose depth and knowledge of history far outdistanced mine. I felt like a small seedling in a garden of beautiful and varied flowers.

Would I go again? Indeed I would. I have only words of praise for the organization and for the conference they sponsor. For those of you who have not taken the opportunity to attend one, I encourage you to think seriously of doing so next time--regrettably, three years from now!



My Experience at the National Archives, by Sister Catherine Sopko, RSM

Upon retiring after eighteen years of service to the US Department of Education in Washington, DC, I wanted to enjoy myself as well as acquire

some experience in archival work before returning to my native state of Ohio. A notice in *the Washington Post* soliciting volunteers for the National Archives prompted me to apply, and on being accepted, I was appointed a staff aide in American Indian Records. This was interesting and rewarding work as I assisted in answering letters from persons who asked if certain ancestors were members of Indian tribes. This required my research of Indian logs and documents so that I could locate the ancestor's name. Next I worked with applications of California Indians who applied long ago for tribal enrollment and compensation for land taken from them by the United States. My last assignment was helping to organize old files of District of Columbia building permits that were used to authenticate historic properties.

Throughout my time of service, I was able to attend various kinds of archival workshops free of charge by assisting with chores such as distributing materials.

The overall experience was helpful to me as I begin work with the archives of St. Charles Hospital in Oregon, Ohio, and as I work with the archives of the Sisters of Mercy in Fremont, Ohio. Preserving such records is vital. Both cases require a gentleness and respect toward documents and the individuals and places they involve. My work at the National Archives also taught me patience in searching for and organizing material and pride in the people whose lives embody the archives.

US Catholic Documentary Heritage Project, by Joseph Coen

The Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists (ACDA), and the Archivists of Congregations of Women Religious (ACWR), as well as archivists at Catholic colleges and universities, are working together with the US Catholic Historical Society (USCHS) to create the US Catholic Documentary Heritage Project. The aim of this collaboration is to provide an online guide of repositories and collections of primary sources documenting the history of Catholicism in the United States. This project will place information from Catholic archival repositories and collections on the Internet via the cooperation

Continued next column.

News Alert:

ACWR is pleased to announce that Avila College, Kansas City, MO has assumed responsibility to acquire historical and archival materials, especially of congregations about to close. It is seeking funding to expand its holdings so it can become the major depository, for the archives of women religious congregations. Further details about Avila's plans will be forthcoming. Please direct questions to Dolores Liptak, ACWR President, 249 Steele Rd., West Hartford, CT 06117.

Treasurer's Note, by Joann Kessler, OSU

At the SAA Conference in Orlando I gave a report on the financial status of ACWR. That report showed some years with rather large deficits, especially this fiscal year (1998-99). The current dues of \$25.00 have been the same since ACWR began. In the past we have asked for donations to help offset those deficits but circumstances have forced the Board to consider a small increase in dues. The new amount for dues will not take effect until the year 1999-2000.

The donations you have made are greatly appreciated and we regret having to take this next step. We do hope that you will understand.

May I remind you that the fiscal year has been changed to these dates: July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999. That means that your annual dues are for that fiscal year. Dues should be paid in late summer or early fall to keep abreast of the current year.

and assistance of Catholic Online with the guidance of Catholic archivists. The project will be carried out in incremental stages beginning with the creation of an online directory containing standardized summary information about individual Catholic repositories. Later stages would include the addition of more detailed information about their collections.

An Archives committee is providing direction regarding project scope and content and will facilitate communication with the archival community. Currently, it consists of ACDA members Joseph Coen, Kathleen Signor, and John Treanor; Rita King, SC representing ACWR; Timothy Meagher, representing Catholic colleges & universities; and Timothy Walch representing Catholic historians and bringing his National Archives experience to the project. Equipment purchase and technical support for the project will be provided by Catholic Online.

Stage One of the project, involving the creation of an online directory containing standardized summary information about each repository, is still in its data collection phase. One-hundred-sixty-nine replies have

Continued on the top page 5

been received as of July 10, 1998. Religious congregations lead with a total of 101 responses to date. Diocesan archives have a total of fifty responses, sixteen Catholic colleges/universities have replied. While this response from Catholic archives is encouraging, the organization still wants to reach as many Catholic archivists and repositories as possible.

If you are the archivist of a Catholic institution and have not received a letter and Data Collection Form, please contact Joseph Coen of the Diocese of Brooklyn by telephone at (718)-229-8001, ext. 475, fax (718)-229-2658 or by e-mail at FXMLIB2@concentric.net. Repositories, which already have a website, should contact Billy Thomas of Catholic Online at bthomas@catholic.org or call (805)-869-1000 to facilitate setting up a link between sites. We look forward to the participation of as many Catholic archival repositories as possible in this exciting project.

Stage Two envisioned by the archives committee involves the addition of more detailed collections information, such as finding aids, and/or sample images of types of documents found in the repositories from these without detailed finding aids. Stage Three will involve the addition of scanned images/documents. Participation in these stages will be voluntary. The details of the later stages will be worked out with the input of Catholic archivists (including the ACDA, ACWR, and archivists of Catholic universities and colleges), the USCHS, and Catholic Online. Anyone wishing to have input to the project should contact the members of the Archives Committee at the numbers given above.

Women Religious Archives Round Table: Report on Records Management by Sister Catherine Regina Donnelly, RSM, as reported by Sabina Collins, OSF

The LCWR asked ACWR to develop a retention schedule for community records. A subcommittee of eight Sisters, chaired by Sister Catherine, was chosen representing eight congregations. Most of their work was done by phone or mail.

The first draft of Part I, Confidential Records, was presented to ACWR members in Orlando. The draft is intended to be a guide with adaptations as congregations use it.

The Records Management Committee chose special guiding principles as they prepared the retention schedule:

1. Congregational leaders, under the principle of reverence for the individual and care for the common good, create, maintain and

administer files and records on individual Sisters in a spirit of discretion, justice and charity.

2. Individual religious, under the canonical right to privacy and to one's good name, are entitled to know what is kept in files and how the material is handled.

The categories of Record Management chosen are: Personal, Medical, Formation, Former Members, Associates, Financial and Legal Records.

A lively discussion on the various topics of Records Management energized participants as they shared and listened to observations and contributions of other participants.

Sister Catherine shared with us the work that had been done by the committee thus far. They will continue this project throughout the coming year and give a report at the SAA meeting next year in Pittsburgh, PA.



ACWR Members listen with interest at the SAA in Orlando

President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History

Dolores Liptak, RSM represented ACWR at one of the four meetings held by the President's Commission formed to celebrate women in American history. The meeting she attended took place at the State Department, Washington, DC on November 12 and 13, 1998. Although minorities were represented among presenters, only one (the ACWR) was present to suggest that Catholic lay and religious women have also contributed much to the making of American society and, therefore, should be represented in the planning of a millennium celebration. Excellent suggestions were made, inclusiveness was stressed, and the expectation that celebrations on the national and local level will be forthcoming seems well founded.

The Ad Hoc Institute Committee of the ACWR needs your help! We were appointed to consider a plan for educational programs for our members. What types of programs/workshops would best meet your archival educational needs? Please complete the survey and return it to:

Stephanie Morris
Medical Mission Sisters
8400 Pine Road
Philadelphia, PA 19111

The current ACWR Archives Conference meets every three years.

Do you think this is enough? Y _____ N _____ How frequent? _____ yrs.

Are additional educational programs needed? Y _____ N _____ How frequent? _____ yrs.

Suggestions _____

How long should the additional educational programs be?

1 Day _____ 2 Days _____ 3 Days _____ Week _____ Weekend _____ Other _____

Comments: _____

What month is best? (Please list at least three top choices)

Are you aware of educational programs offered by MARAC? MAC? Comments _____

To what level of experience should the educational programs be addressed?

Beginner _____ Advanced Beginner _____ Advanced _____

The following are some suggested topics. Please rate them on a scale of one to ten. Number one (#1) being the most interested and ten (#10) being the least interested.

___ Arrangement and Description

___ Computers for cataloging

___ Cooperation among small

Religious Communities

___ Electronic Records

___ Finding Aids

___ Moving Collections

___ Paper Preservation

___ Photographs—Preservation

___ Records Management

___ Supplies (Acid Free)

___ Audio-Visual Materials

___ Confidentiality

___ Creating Record Groups

___ Exhibits

___ Merging Collections

___ Oral History

___ Photographs—Finding Aids

___ Preservation

___ Standardization

___ Writing History

Other Topics: _____

One suggestion would be to hold small group workshops (limited to 10-20 participants). Participants would come to the host archival repository and spend a day or two hearing about a particular aspect of archival administration. The small group would also do some "hands-on" work using what they had just learned. These could be held in various parts of the country (assuming enough hosts volunteer).

Would you be willing to host a small group workshop? _____
With the help of instructors from other repositories _____

Any other comments or suggestions? Have you attended a workshop or seminar that helped you a lot? If you can give us ideas of what works, we might incorporate some aspects of the successful programs in our plans for ACWR educational programs.

Thank you. We look forward to hearing from you.

Lois Martin
Daughters of Charity

Your Name

Sr. Genevieve Shea, SLW
Sisters of the Living Word

Stephanie Morris, Chair
Medical Mission Sisters
August 26, 1998

Address

Scenes from the SAA Conference in Orlando



At left: Elvira Kelley, OSF gives an address as Rita King, SC, Dolores Liptak, RSM, and Sabina Collins, OSF look on.



At right, Margaret Harrison, OP and Edna McKeever, CSJ pose by a fountain.



At right, Edna McKeever, CSJ and Rita King, SC

At left, Rita King, SC addresses group at the conference.



ACWR National Office
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Washington, DC 20017

It is Time to Renew Your Membership!

If you have not yet responded to the renewal form, you may use the form below to renew your membership. If you do not renew by December 31st, this will be your last ACWR News. Thank you to all who have responded so quickly.

Name: _____
Title: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone: _____ Fax: _____
Email: _____
Name of Congregation: _____
Annual Membership Fee:
Regular (\$25): _____ Additional Staff (\$15): _____ Retired (\$15) _____
Donation: _____

Please mail your completed forms and checks to:
ACWR National Office
Trinity College
125 Michigan Ave., NE
Washington, DC 20017