
HOW'D YOU DO THAT?

I/1 Feb. 1997: Outreach ACWR ANSWERS FOR THE ACTIVE ARCHIVIST

Many of us have very specific, practical questions about how to do some of the archival tasks we face each day. Others of us want to hear some good ideas about exhibits, computer programs, volunteers, or staffing issues. So ACWR is initiating this simple two-sided sheet "How'd You Do That?" to respond to our members' requests. Each issue will feature an article/interview from one of the ACWR archivists about how she or he handled a specific task. Please let us know how you like this bulletin, which will be published about three times yearly. We hope that you will take the proverbial pen to paper and give us the benefit of your own wise archiving. -- RMcQ

"The phone rang and a voice I recognized from the College of Mount St. Vincent [Riverdale, NY] asked if I could prepare an information brochure on the Sisters' Cemetery for use on Founders' Day. During the College Freshmen Orientation Tours there had been questions about various grave markers and names and about the Cemetery in general -- questions which the tour guides could not answer. An information flyer seemed the best solution. Could I help? Certainly.

"The phone was placed on the receiver. Now what to do? A search of the finding aids in the Archives showed a diagram of the Cemetery, a recent news clipping giving its history and a list of the Sisters buried there. The Cemetery is used now only for burial of Community Presidents. Most of the questions were about the different headstones at the top of the Cemetery where former chaplains and two Academy students were buried. So research began. A book about the Academy published in 1884 gave a few answers about the two students and one of the chaplains. Another book, published in 1927, provided more facts about the different headstones for the Sisters who had served as Civil War nurses. Research was continued by Anne Courtney, S.C., and brief factual statements for 19 graves were written -- one line each consisting of name, dates, work, or reason for burial in the Sisters' Cemetery.

MOUNT ST. VINCENT SISTERS' CEMETERY

	N	O	P	Q	R	S			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2									
3	A	B	C	(A: MOTHER MARY JEROME ELY, ETC.)					

“From the Sisters, we chose people connected to the Academy and College as well as Sisters of Charity: our first three major superiors; the first and second directresses of the Academy; the first dean of the College; the first and last Sisters buried there; and five Sisters who served as Civil War nurses. The Archives provided information about the more recent chaplains.

“Meanwhile, I contacted two local cemeteries that had old, historic gravestones and asked for brochures they had prepared. Next, we went up to the Cemetery and took photos and drew diagrams and using these, composed a sketch which covered the 19 graves we had chosen to highlight. Then we roughed out a possible brochure and showed it to a few people with production experience. It was decided to do a “homemade” flyer first and, if it proved interesting and useful, it would subsequently be done at an outside graphics firm.

“Thus it was that a cemetery opened in 1857 became in 1996 a ‘tourist’ spot on the campus and in the community. It was also an on-site, in-place form of outreach for the Archives of the Sisters of Charity of New York.”

**Sister Rita King, S.C.
Archivist, Sisters of Charity of NY**

Sister Rita King, S.C. is well known to ACWR members for her excellent photography and her work on the election committee. She currently serves the members as Vice-President, President-Elect.

HOW'D YOU DO THAT?

1/2 OCT. 1997: OUTREACH ACWR ANSWERS FOR THE ACTIVE ARCHIVIST

This issue of "How'd You Do That?" consists of an interview with Rosemarie Kasper, SNJM, Archivist for the Oregon Province of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. In it, Rosemarie describes some of the issues that face Archivists who reach out into the local, civic community. The pros and cons of a large-scale event such as described here need to be weighed carefully to be sure the project is "doable." Bea Weisner, SNJM, conducted the interview.

A SPRING EVENT AT MARYLHURST, OREGON

Q. I understand that the event planned in cooperation with the Oswego Historic Review Commission was a tremendous success. Would you tell us about it?

A. Once a year the Oswego Historic Review Commission sponsors an activity that is called "The Spring Event." Each year a different neighborhood is selected as the focus. Great effort is made to highlight the architecture and history of the chosen site.

Q. How did you feel about having the campus of Marylhurst chosen?

A. To be chosen was a great honor but we gave the matter a lot of thought and consulted the Province Executive Board. To make it a worthwhile and accurate presentation we would have to put in hours and hours of work and seek the cooperation of numerous people.

Q. Just what did the "event" entail?

A. At our first meeting with the O.H.R.C. in fall of 1995, we were presented with the following requirements: 1. Produce a 45-minute slide show about the buildings and history of the campus and also a history of the Sisters of the Holy Names and how they came to establish Marylhurst. 2. Plan a guided tour of the Convent and provide a walking-tour booklet for a self-guided tour of the entire campus. (The campus consists of all the college buildings, the convent, Christie Home for Children, an old laundry building designated as an historical building, as well as the beautiful grounds around each of these places.) 3. Provide a visual display of historical or current photographs as well as artifacts that might add to the interest of the display. All of these requirements had a deadline. There was monetary remuneration for expenses incurred. The O.H.R.C. would be responsible for the forms the guests would sign saying that in case of accident, neither O.H.R.C. nor S.N.J.M.s would be held responsible. They would also receive and screen the guests, oversee the parking and furnish refreshments.

Q. How were you able to meet so many deadlines and requirements?

A. We formed a committee of talented people and set to work. Our Development Officer, Anne, our Land Use Coordinator, Donna, the Assistant Archivist, Sister Bea, the News and Publications Officer at Marylhurst College (who is also the College Archivist) Sister Carole, and I, the Archivist for the S.N.J.M. Oregon Province, all contributed to the effort. We succeeded in providing the very best of all the events in the history of the Lake Oswego Historical Commission.

Q. Describe some of the difficulties that arose during the preparation. To open your large four-storied convent to the public must have presented certain problems.

A. Yes, I was concerned about the elderly and retired sisters who live here. I consulted with the sisters in charge and was assured that those who were able had become accustomed to visitors and were most gracious hostesses. The

Care Center, where the very ill live, was closed to the public. With those assurances in hand, we began the long process of dividing up the tasks, consulting with various persons in charge of departments, and attending additional meetings with O.H.R.C.

Q. Were these the only difficulties you faced during the “event”?

A. No. Actually, the biggest problem arose over the contract offered to us by the City of Lake Oswego. The contract covered the city very well but it didn't cover us as well. One clause in particular was very objectionable to us. Since we were not versed in legal issues, we sent the contract to our lawyers to have it rewritten, with particular attention to the offending clause. The contract then had to be returned to Lake Oswego City for review. Both parties had to agree to the new contract and this delayed the planning somewhat. Nevertheless, we continued our work with the slide show to minimize time lost.

Q. Were there any outstanding glitches in your carefully planned “event” or did everything go well?

A. The tour throughout the convent went well. Our Sisters who were acting as tour guides did a splendid job in making the guests welcome and informed. The tour guides were very important since they kept the people from roaming off course. As expected, the curious were impressed by the sisters' bedrooms and living quarters. Only a few rooms were open for viewing but they were typical examples. The most popular place was the new “Heritage Parlor” and the display cases at the entrance to the room. We received many compliments on these two displays. The only real glitch happened in the refreshment room. The Food Coordinator forgot to close the soda and juice machines so the guests had a free treat. This caused a change in the fee paid for refreshments. However, the O.H.R.C. gladly paid the difference.

Q. What would you say was the greatest benefit to the Archives and to the Sisters at Marylhurst?

A. That is hard to say. We received so much praise both from the O.H.R.C., the public and the sisters that it is hard to sort it out. We did advance in our Public Relations 100%. We made many new friends in the local area, our history was much better understood, and we now feel that our neighbors know us on a more personal level. This last point is quite important to us in view of our upcoming development plans. To realize these plans requires the cooperation of our neighbors and the City of Lake Oswego. We are grateful to have been given this opportunity and we feel doubly blessed by our God.

**REMINDER: ACWR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME IS NOW.
PLEASE SEND YOUR RENEWAL FORM AND PAYMENT TO
THE NATIONAL OFFICE NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 30.
THANK YOU!**

(The envelope mailing labels were printed before dues payments were received from some of our members.)

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HOW'D YOU DO THAT?

1/3 December • 1997 • OUTREACH

ACWR ANSWERS FOR THE ACTIVE ARCHIVIST

Setting up Our Heritage Exhibit

Sister Margaret Harrison, OP, archivist of the Dominican Sisters in Sparkill, New York presents the story of the process used to set up a permanent heritage exhibit for the community. She takes her presentation from the initial step up to the formal opening.

INITIAL IDEA

The idea of a permanent exhibit of our history was presented by the archivist to the administration in 1987. An exhibit had been set up for our centennial celebration in 1976. This served for several years but was dismantled when the allocated space was needed.

The purpose for establishing a heritage center was to encourage interest in the past and present history of the congregation by preserving and displaying all kinds of available memorabilia which make visible the early and ongoing history of the congregation, and to place our history within the context of the larger Dominican Family, the Church and society.

FORMING THE COMMITTEE

The first task was to form a *heritage committee*. This committee was to develop a plan, to appraise the site and to make recommendations concerning the use, to work with the archivist in identifying appropriate materials, and to formulate a budget according to needs. The financing for the project was allocated by the congregation over a period of five years. The qualities suggested for the members of the committee were a commitment and genuine interest and appreciation of our heritage, an ability and willingness to make a commitment of time, and a creative ability regarding the use of space.

In October, 1990 the committee was formed with seven sisters. Four sisters were to be responsible for selecting the materials to be displayed and to write the appropriate narratives. Three sisters were to decide how the materials would be displayed. We decided to visit heritage centers of sisters' congregations as well as other historical exhibits. This took some time as the members of the committee had other commitments.

CHOOSING THE ROOM

The room chosen was the former oratory. Since it is

on the first floor near the front entrance, we felt it would be accessible to many people. However, it was not very large and our first task was to decide how to increase the amount of display space. The stained glass windows on the full length of one side of the room contributed to the ambiance of the area but it limited wall space. The room also received a great deal of sunlight and we knew that reducing the effect of ultra-violet light on objects on display would need attention.

GETTING HELP

We requested a *technical site visit* from the Lower Hudson Conference. In February, 1991 Mr. James McCabe visited the exhibit space and made suggestions on how to mitigate potential ultra-violet light damage to objects, and how to select safe materials for display case construction, etc. We discussed a variety of organizing concepts with him as well.

A scale model was made by one of the sister artists to help us determine how we would add to the space. The question of whether the panels were to be display cases or walls had to be resolved. The removal of the confessional and altar backdrop also gave additional space.

FIRST PHASE

Our goal was to have the *first phase* of the exhibit completed for our Chapter in 1992 because it would be the best opportunity for all our sisters to visit the exhibit. We decided that the title of the exhibit would be **Call and Response**. This is the title of our Constitutions and we felt that the exhibit would illustrate how the members of the congregation had responded to the needs of the times. We divided the room into two sections. The first section would show our *beginnings* and would continue to the fire which destroyed the buildings in Sparkill in 1899. The constraints of space and the desire to have something completed for Chapter influenced our decision to stop there.

The division of tasks was decided upon. Research of the materials available in the archives was conducted and narratives written to accompany the artifacts and photographs. A local sign company was contacted to determine what materials would be available to display the photographs and narratives on the walls. Another local company was contacted to provide display cases for artifacts. Solar shades were purchased to alleviate the problem of the ultra-violet rays from the windows. Track lighting was also installed.

SECOND PHASE

When it came to the *second phase* of the exhibit, we first attempted to continue the historical content that had been introduced in the first room. After many attempts to do this, we came to the conclusion that there would not be sufficient space to follow this plan. At first we were not completely sure of how to proceed to show how the members responded to various needs since 1900. We realized that so much had happened since Vatican II and we wanted to include all this as well. We were also aware that people other than the members of the congregation would be viewing this exhibit and we had to be able to display the material in a way that would be understandable to them. This was the most difficult phase of the exhibit and took most time to execute.

THEMATIC APPROACH FOR DISPLAY

We finally decided on a *thematic approach*. We felt that this would be a way to include the various topics that had surfaced during our discussions. We chose the themes of *Government, Ministry, Membership, Spirituality, and Stewardship*. We decided to use quotations from our Constitutions for each of the themes. Since the scope of the topics to be included in *Ministry* was so vast, we knew we needed to erect more walls. It was also decided to use a site model to illustrate the various uses of our property in Sparkill to make the theme of *Stewardship* more interesting and also because the wall space was limited.

How to display *Membership* was a challenge for us. Many ideas were offered but they did not prove to be workable. Finally, we decided on a book with the names of the professed members and associates printed in a calligraphy style.

FORMAL OPENING

It was with great joy and gratitude that we were able to *formally open* our completed exhibit on **October 29, 1995**. Members of the various religious congregations, friends and benefactors of the congregation, as well as local community leaders were invited.

Thank you, Sister Margaret Harrison, for sharing your story with the membership.

IDEAS - IDEAS - IDEAS

Member archivists who have suggestions for **topics** to be used in future issues of **How'd You Do That?** are invited to send these to the editor.

Do **YOU** have something you would like to write about (300 to 500 words--material for approximately 1½ or 2 sides)? Your article will be most welcome. Please let us know.

HOW'D YOU DO THAT?, a simple two-sided sheet, is published three times yearly by the ACWR. Its purpose is to share ideas about exhibits, computer programs, volunteers, staffing issues, and the like, and thus help member archivists who may be looking for answers to some of their questions.

Beginning with this issue the editor/desktop publishing editor will be **Sister Magdalene Lovrich, OSF**. She can be reached at the following address:

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HOW'D YOU DO THAT?

2/1 February/March • 1998 • OUTREACH

ACWR ANSWERS FOR THE ACTIVE ARCHIVIST

HERITAGE ROOM *The Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth*

*This issue supplements, as it were, the December story concerning **Heritage Room Displays**. Sister Mary Rebecca Conner submitted the article. Committee members include Archivists, Sister M. Seraphine Sheehan and Sister Catherine Labore Conway; Community Director Sister M. Kathleen Stefani; Community Secretary, Sister Forge, and Retired SM College Faculty, Sister Thomas Aquinas O'Connor and Sister Mary Rebecca Conner.*

Sister, how did you begin?

The Heritage Room was a **dream** over a period of five years. It began with the desire of the Archives Room Staff to show the treasures of the SCL Archives to the world! Plans in December of 1991 were limited to a request for the purchase of two display cases to be placed in one of the parlors, but alas, time passed. By 1996 the request and dream had grown to larger vision and this time it was carried out.

Who carried out the project?

A committee of sisters who had all been members of the Community with an average of some fifty years each. They **knew and loved the story** of who the SCL's were and how they came to be. They believed this story was still alive and needed telling today. They deeply felt the desire to share their history with as many people as possible. They felt the best way to share it was to display the tangible, the visible, and the meaningful souvenirs of its story. The Heritage Room dream thus began and now tells the tale of who the SCL's were. But more, it reflects why they are still pursuing and believing in the same visions

now.

What influenced the committee's decision as to the place for the display?

Fortunately, we had a vacant room, measuring 18 x 37 feet located off the main hall in the motherhouse. It was a beautiful paneled room with three large southwest windows, three doors and a floor of terrazzo tile. Even empty, it was lovely, yet simple. Designing was begun which called for display space, for security of artifacts, for the possibility of social interaction or study by visitors with an atmosphere of simplicity, dignity and quiet. A deadline was set and research was begun.

How did you arrange for display cases?

Display cases were selected from catalogs and local cabinet-makers were asked to bid on providing similar ones. The **local craftsmen** came through magnificently and provided six cabinets, one glassed-in display board, one portable display table and two portable display boards with four panels each—and all for less than the catalogs asked and with no shipping charges!

Tell us about the organization of the materials for display.

The committee organized archival materials and made decisions about what was to be included and how it might be arranged. It was agreed that the first exhibit should be limited to the first fifty years of the SCL story. The room was to include maps, photographs, documents, antique furniture, books, journals, and many sentimental but meaningful objects. All had been preserved and truly revealed the **personality and the life of the early pioneer Sisters**. The clergy and the lay people who were helpful to them in the early period of their history were also to be featured. It was hoped that the spirit of the Community, with "simplicity, charity, and humility" as characteristic virtues, would be reflected in the display. Research moved forward and choices were made.

And then what?

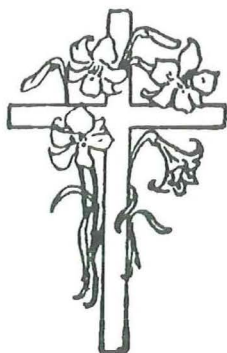
After four months of continuous, but always exciting and satisfying work, the committee felt they were ready to **present the Heritage Room** to the SCL Community and to the World!

THE LAST MINUTE DETAILS

- A Sign for the Door
- A Guest Book for Visitors
- The Hanging of Pictures
- The Housecleaning of Floors
- Addition of Living Plants

Arrangements for a blessing and grand opening were completed. The work of the committee was officially finished and blessed at a prayer service by Father Daniel O'Shea, chaplain, on May 23, 1996 and the opening of the **Heritage Room** was called a big success. **Phase I** was over. The room is now open daily and over two hundred persons have come and left their signatures in the guest book since then. **Phase II** is yet to be!

*Thank you, Sisters, for
sharing your story with the
membership.*



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Suggestions and comments are welcome.
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HOW'D YOU DO THAT?

2/2 June • 1998 • OUTREACH

ACWR ANSWERS FOR THE ACTIVE ARCHIVIST

HOW'D YOU WRITE A CONGREGATIONAL HISTORY?

• Collaboration between a researcher and a writer was the way selected by the Sisters of the Precious Blood, Dayton, Ohio.

• More specifically, the researcher was a trained historian with deep experiential knowledge of the congregation.

• The writer, too, although from another Congregation, had experiential knowledge of religious life and was a published writer.

• This then was the team of Canice Werner, CPPS and Janet Davis Richardson, csjp.

* * * * *

• Sister Rosalie McQuaide, csjp conducted this interview with the respective participants by mail.

..... The "doing" of
More Than the Doing: The Sisters of the Precious Blood, 1936-1966

Interviewer: Please describe in specific detail the initial steps of this collaboration from your viewpoint as the researcher or as the writer.

Canice ♦ The history of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, from the founding of the Congregation in 1834 until 1936, was written by [Sister M. Octavia (Mildred) Gutmann] in *Not With Silver or Gold* (1944). The next 30 years under three mothers general marked significant changes in the life and ministry of the Congregation. Using the resources of the archives and consulting with members who had lived during these years, I researched this period, wrote up the data, and talked with the archivist, Mary Linus Bax, about engaging the services of a writer to prepare a book for publication. Sister Linus, at the ACWR Monroe Conference in 1994, spoke with her friend Rosalie McQuaide, csjp, about the idea and Rosalie suggested Janet Davis Richardson, csjp.

Happily, I know both Rosalie and Janet, and they know the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Over the years, we had exchanged visits in Jersey City and Dayton. I also knew of Janet's advanced education and her extensive professional experience so I presented the idea of Janet's doing the book to our president, Sister Joyce Langhals. She suggested that Janet send some examples of her published writing (which Janet did) and proposed a contract for Janet's services, which was accepted. Janet came to Dayton to get the first batch of research data. We discussed at some length how charism, spirituality, and motivation for ministry impacted the data.

Janet ♦ At an archivists' meeting, in a luncheon conversation with the CPPS archivist, Sister Linus, I learned that Canice was looking for a writer for her research on three recent superiors general. My suggestions for some resources, such as the Network for the History of Women Religious and Karen Kennelly's newsletter, were met with Linus' comment, "*We are thinking about approaching you Janet.*" A few days for consultation with my calendar and my community followed, and then my letter to Canice expressing an interest in the project. In an initial taped interview, we discussed her vision of the project, the intended audience, and contractual arrangements such as length, deadlines and scope of

responsibilities and I shared my feelings and thoughts with her. It was clear to me that collaboration was do-able and could probably contribute to the life of the Church, and we drew up a contract. Certainly, the project promised to be challenging and delightful—that promise was fulfilled!

Interviewer: The researcher was in Ohio; the writer was in Maryland. How did you handle this distance factor?

Janet ♦ Canice sent me her research on single-spaced, typed pages including footnote material, references, other items pertinent to the text such as chronologies, listings and sketches of habit changes. We used all the available technology and services: phone, fax, computer, priority mail. I sent drafts to her and went to Ohio occasionally

for consultations. distance can lend enchantment, as the saying has it, and it was true for this team.

Canice ♦ After initial clarifications, the phones, computers, fax machines and the mail were ever-ready means of communication between Janet and me. (E-mail hadn't hit its heyday then.)

Interviewer: In a project like this, viewpoint and perspective are crucial? How did you arrive at a satisfactory understanding here?

Canice ♦ After writing the first draft of Mother Magna's administration, Janet visited me in Dayton a second time. We needed to further clarify perspectives and roles. Partially—even if

minimally—writing style and congregational lived experience were at issue. While distance, in itself, was not a major problem, the rooted sentiments of the Sisters of the Precious Blood were better conveyed by direct contact with the community. Janet's visit to Dayton and our phone calls to one another were important in bridging the gap between the actual lives of the Sisters and the data given to Janet, from which she wrote.

Janet ♦ The research was very thorough and complete and I found in it material for a readable, interesting story. Consultations by phone and in person were helpful, and of course our shared commitment to Christ.

- *Both Janet and Canice had other jobs and community responsibilities.*
- *Adjustments were made in the timeline for completion of the book.*
- *More Than the Doing: The Sisters of the Precious Blood 1936-1966 came from the printer for Christmas 1996.*

Reminder from ACWR President Sister Rita King, SC

ACWR will hold its annual business meeting at the SAA National Conference, September 2 to 6, 1998, at the Walt Disney World Dolphin Hotel in Orlando, Florida. At present the meeting is set for **Thurs. Sept. 3 from 3 to 4** followed by the WRA (Women Religious Archives) Roundtable from 4:30 to 6. Please **check** the printed schedule from SAA. As the SAA theme includes "Travel" the business meeting will include a panel sharing the **archival experience** as it pertains to **Missionary Congregations**—the collecting and documenting of a wide geographical area and of far-flung missions. The WRA Program will deal with **Records Retention**.

Reminder from Co-chair of On-Line Directory . . .

Phase I of the US Catholic Historical Society Documentary Heritage Project, in which we will create an On-Line Directory of Catholic Repositories, is in its Data Collection Phase. **159** replies have been received as of **May 13, 1998**. Responses came from **99 religious congregations, 49 diocesan archives, and 11 Catholic colleges/universities**. While this response from religious congregational archives is encouraging, we would welcome more participation. **If you have not replied yet**, please take a little time to fill out a Data Collection Form. If you have **not received a letter and form**, or if you have **any questions**, contact Sr. Rita King: 718-549-9200, x 213.

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The next issue of **HOW'D YOU DO THAT?** to be published in the fall will focus on **Beginning an Archives and Continuing**.

Expert Archivists, do you have a project that you are willing to share with the membership? Describe what you did or are doing in a 300 to 500 word presentation—paragraph form, question and answer form, whatever you choose. It can be edited as appropriate.

Please call or write to the editor. We need copy for the **February issue, 1999**.

HOW'D YOU DO THAT?

2/3 November • 1998 • OUTREACH

ACWR ANSWERS FOR THE ACTIVE ARCHIVIST

*Sister Genevieve Shea, SLW gives her story of the work involved and the manner in which she proceeded when she set up the archives for her community, **Sisters of the Living Word**, 800 North Fernandez Avenue B, Arlington Heights, Illinois. As archivists come and go, and as new groups begin archival work, this material, even though it refers largely to **beginning** archives, may be of interest not only to those familiarizing themselves with archival work, but even to those who are well on the way.*

BEGINNING AN ARCHIVES

Q. Starting an archives "from scratch" is a challenge as well as a privilege. Would you give a bit of background information about your beginnings?

A. In 1975 ninety sisters separated from an international congregation to become "Sisters of the Living Word." This event culminated several years of painful struggle over different views of "adaptation and renewal of religious life." The final decision was expressed in the advice of a representative of the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes: There are two views of religious life here, and they are incompatible. The best thing to do would be to separate and form a new group.

Q. When and how did you begin this new community?

A. On August 18 and 19, 1975 ninety of us met to choose a name for the new group, leaders to begin a temporary form of governance, and a method for assuring that places of ministry affected by this separation would have personnel in September.

Q. Are there any records of the people and events leading to this new foundation?

A. During these first years the secretary, Phoebe Marshall, found an unused room and began storing boxes there. Among the first were boxes of materials from the years before 1975. The Proceedings of Provincial and General Chapters surfaced the different understandings of renewal and its implications. We kept materials about the life and writings of the foundress of the parent congregation. Three boxes of such documents became the seed of the Living Word Archives.

Q. Was there any processing of this material?

A. The archival material was there—but not a listing of the contents of these boxes. With the 1978 election of a new leadership team the storage question again surfaced. How does one go about listing and storing the files no longer active? Phoebe turned to the experts for help. She took brief courses and read Policy and Procedure Manuals. Fortunately she grasped the meaning of provenance. The files of each member of the leadership team were kept separate

and intact as they were boxed and put into the storage room. At this time there was no attempt to develop record groups or finding aids.

Q. When did the formal organization of the archival records begin?

A. The record boxes had continued to accumulate. In 1990 the general offices moved into the new Living Word Center. The accumulated boxes of fifteen years were stacked on shelves in one room designated as "Archives." They remained untouched, unprocessed, for another year.

In the spring of 1991 our Coordinator of Ministry asked if I would organize the archives. My first experience of the National Conference of the Society of American Archivists began with a pre-conference workshop: 'An Introduction to Archives.' Shortly after that SAA Conference I heard about some new computer software: the Archive Control System, or ARCS, by the JCL Company. Chris Langford developed this program with the help of Brother Robert Werle, a Christian Brother in Memphis, TN. These combined circumstances gave me a start in the formal organization of the SLW

Archives.

Q. How did you continue learning archival policies and procedures?

A. Since that first year I continue to find immeasurable support from three sources: workshops and readings, help from experienced professionals, and an uncomplicated software program for accessioning records and preparing finding aids. I have learned much by visiting other archives. My big unwieldy boxes have been exchanged for more manageable Hollinger boxes. Immovable labels on boxes have been replaced by movable labels made from discarded file folders.

Q. How did you establish the record groups for your archives?

A. Brother Robert helped me understand and develop a record group numbering system. He pointed out that, by using the record group number as the accession number in processing, I can prepare a finding aid for material in a specific group.

Q. What were some of the problems you encountered in processing records?

A. One of the major problems I encountered in my early attempt was that of duplication. As I began to process the files of the first leadership team I discovered that each one had saved copies of every letter sent to the community. They had each saved every agenda and the minutes of every meeting they and all the committees had held during those first years. The annual Assembly mailings, procedures and outcomes were all safely stored in the files of each office.

One of my first efforts was

to sort this material and get rid of unnecessary duplication. Fortunately I didn't get very far before Brother Robert helped me with "Record Group" development. I learned a bit about appraisal and began to make judgments about what to save and what to discard.

Q. How have you handled photographs?

A. One problematic area has been and continues to be the photograph collection. At every Assembly and at many other gatherings Sisters have taken pictures. Attending the SAA pre-conference workshop on photo collections was an effort to help me bring a professional tone to this collection.

Our photographers and their equipment have improved so that we now get many good photos. These are stored in labeled mylar pockets and filed in chronological order.

Q. How do you display items related to your community's history?

A. Our Living Word Center is a remodeled elementary school. There is no foreseeable place for a heritage room. At present we have a large display case in the foyer. Here we exhibit items of interest related to the history, life and ministries of the Sisters of the Living Word.

Q. How are you preserving the story of these early years of the Sisters of the Living Word?

A. The sisters' experience of these early years is preserved in oral history. A few years ago we began an oral history project with the goal of interviewing every Sister of the Living Word. We now have more than half of these interviews taped. The tapes, transcript, and deed of

gift for each interview are kept in the archives. A second copy of the interview, with a picture of the narrator, is placed in a loose-leaf binder. This copy, on display during our annual Assembly, proves interesting reading for many sisters.

Q. How do you communicate the relationship between the archives and the sisters?

A. Earlier we said that organizing the archives is not only a challenge; it is a privilege. As I appraise and process the records of the early years of the Sisters of the Living Word, I recall the events and movements that have bonded us as a community. In an effort to share this experience with my sisters, I have begun writing a two-page newsletter called, **From the Archives**. This is one channel for recalling some significant aspects of these 22 years. It is also my vehicle for calling again and again for local annals. It works! Even sisters who live alone are beginning to send a summary of their year's experiences. Some day some historian will be glad the annals are filed in the archives.

The **next issue** will address the topic of computerizing archival data.

HOW'D YOU DO THAT? is published three times yearly by the ACWR. Its purpose is to share ideas about exhibits, computer programs, volunteers, staffing issues, and the like, and thus help member archivists who may be looking for some answers.

Suggestions and comments may be addressed to the editor.

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HOW'D YOU DO THAT?

COMPUTERIZING OUR ARCHIVAL DATA

Lois Martin, Assistant Archivist for the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul of the East Central Province (Evansville, Indiana) gives her story for the guidelines the archives department used to set up a computerized program. The program is primarily used as a finding aid tool for their archival material.

Prior to Computerizing

Remember the good old days when we had the typewriter only? We spent so much time retyping material or maybe using the "white out" bottle to make our changes. I'm sure everyone would agree it took much longer to type the material and make changes. But one thing is for sure, we never had to worry about losing our material if the power went off suddenly. We used the typed material as our finding aid tool in searching for archival material.

Software Program

We are now blessed with computers. The first software program we used on our computers was DW4. It was only a word processing program and had no "search" capacity. As everyone can relate to, as soon as you learn a program, a new one comes along that is supposed to be easier and quicker. We eventually switched to WordPerfect 5.0, and then to 5.1. We are currently using WordPerfect 6.1 and had relatively few problems learning the upgraded versions so long as we stayed with the same software program.

Our archivist and I attended many workshops and seminars pertaining to the different software programs that could be used for researching. After a lengthy and in-depth study, we mutually agreed to continue using WordPerfect. Quite a bit of our inventory that was already on DW4 had been converted to WordPerfect 5.0. To convert this material to WordPerfect was not a difficult task. To change our software program to a different software program would have meant retyping our entire inventory. Since we can research on WordPerfect, we decided to continue using this program and have upgraded from 5.1 to 6.1.

Difficulties We Encountered

We revised our inventory form to be more attractive, and to make researching quicker. Our new form has a header and table. We had problems with the page splitting in half. We found this happening when we typed too many lines on the page (or in the table). We limited our typed lines per page which solved the problem.

The Amount of Archival Material Processed

The archival material we have processed thus far is approximately 2,200 linear feet. Because we are a newly established province (1969), we made an extensive effort to collect archival material from the sisters and their works.

How We Locate Our Material

We use a numbering system from one to thirty which we

call our "Record Group Numbers." Some of you may identify this as your "Classification System." Every record group number depicts a person, a mission/ministry, and/or subject. For example: Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton's record group number is 1-3, Sisters are 10-0, ministries are 11-0 (11-1 "education," 11-2 "health," 11-3 "social ministries"), and the Archive Administration is 30-0. These record group numbers are then broken down further using appropriate categories such as: administration, history, correspondence, financial, legal, publications, newspaper clippings, photographs, etc., which we use as a finding aid tool.

All of our processed material can be found in one of four ways:

1. The search capacity program is in the hard drive of the computer.
2. A backup disk on each subject is kept in a fireproof vault.
3. The typed inventory is kept in our master file.
4. A copy of the typed inventory is located with the material in each archival box.

We have designed a Computerized Program Manual which is based on our Record Group Numbers. This is a listing of every Record Group Number, the name of the subdirectory, and the document file name for which to locate or enter material on the computer. For example: St. Vincent's Hospital in Indianapolis, Indiana would be found in the Record Group Number 11-2. The subdirectory would be "Health" and the document file is "Indpls.SVH."

We also use card catalogs, cross references, and registers as another source of finding aid tools.

So, as you can see, not all of our inventory and material are on the computer. And even when it is, we still use the printed inventory as a finding aid tool.

SAMPLE OF INVENTORY FORM

Daughters of Charity Archives
East Central Province
Mater Dei Provincialate
9400 New Harmony Road
Evansville, Indiana 47720

Page 1
Inventory of _____
Record Group No. _____
R.G. Content: _____

BOX NO.	FOLDER NO.	CONTENTS