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Fall 1994

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## *from the Chair*

"Rather than wondering at the patina of constant use on a Georgia plow, I stare into the face of the farmer and read his secret thoughts."

The fall workshop is on the subject of archives and photographs, and I encourage you to attend even if you don't deal with this material on a daily basis. I was poking around for other opinions on archives and archive management and found this reference in a popular title, "exhibit labels can be more interesting with a bit of history added." That line screams understatement. For me, the nature of archives personifies all that is mysterious about collecting and preserving our past. Archives speak to us directly, without any of the usual intermediaries. Rather than wondering at the patina of constant use on a Georgia plow, I stare into the face of the farmer and read his secret thoughts. What price will I pay for this voyeurism? I often ask myself the same question as I handle a woman's chemise clasp, or sort through a man's wallet, but I cannot avoid the question when I work with documents. I squint at the buildings on a Sanborn fire insurance map hoping for some detail; I would peer in the windows if I could. Archives are revealing, sometimes curious, always humbling. In the arrogance of writing exhibit text, I always find that someone else said it better 100 years ago. I invite you to join us in Austin for the seminar on archives and photographs, and a little "bit of history."

**Carolyn Spears, Chair**

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## **New Committee Appointments**

Thanks to the following persons for agreeing to chair a CMC standing committee. If you are interested in working on one of the active committees, or have an idea you would like to share, please call the Chair of the committee today.

### **Membership Committee - Ms. Nicky Ladkin**

Collection Manager, Museum of Texas Tech University, P.O. Box 43191, Lubbock, Texas 79409-3191, (806) 742-2479.

The Membership Committee is to promote the activities of the CMC and encourage membership. Duties include identifying prospective members and determining the most efficient means for reaching new members, such as, promotional brochures, flyers, call a friend network or other appropriate means/materials. The Committee works with the Special Projects Committee on development of any printed materials.

### **Special Projects Committee - Ms. Kandy Taylor-Hille**

Fulton Mansion, P.O. Box 1859, Fulton, Texas 78358, (512) 729-0386.

The purpose for the Special Projects Committee is to promote networking among Committee members, and support purposes of other standing committees. Responsible for arranging special gatherings outside of the TAM Annual Meeting to encourage interaction among members. The Committee is also responsible for completing assigned projects, including graphic design of brochures or other publications.

## **OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **Programs Committee - Ms. Ali Shirley**

CMC Vice-Chair, 201 East 14th Street, Suite 503, Austin, Texas 78701, 512-463-5459.

The Vice-Chair of the CMC is by definition the Program Committee Chair and it is a big job. Correct me if I am wrong, but I don't think that Ali actually has a committee group. Since CMC prides itself in its programs, seems like we could have a few volunteers here. Please call Ali and offer your undying support.

### **ByLaws Committee - Ms. Milly Walker**

Collection Manager, Dr. Pepper Museum, 300 South 5th Street, Waco, TX 76701, (817) 757-2116.

The Bylaws Committee is a special appointment, and Milly is its ongoing caretaker. Thanks, Milly.



The Collection Managers Committee would like to extend their assistance to organizations or individuals who might have been affected by the recent flooding in Southeast Texas. What a better reason for preparedness planning and recovery. If you need assistance, or would like to assist those needing help, please contact one of the officers of the Collection Managers Committee.

## TEX-PREP UPDATE

The CMC has long been involved in the issue of disaster preparedness, and is a sponsor of the 1994 and 1995 TAM Pre-Conference Workshops on disaster preparedness and recovery. The TAM Tex-Prep Committee was recently dissolved by the TAM Council and the CMC made an initial commitment to assume the responsibilities of the Committee. At the August meeting of the CMC Executive Committee, it was decided to delay appointment of a standing committee for disaster planning pending more information concerning the scope of activities contemplated by the TAM Tex-Prep Committee. Recently, Rick Casagrande of the TAM Tex-Prep Committee conveyed his concerns for the future of Tex-Prep:

"disaster planning is an issue and a process which is on-going for both Texas museums as well as for TAM. For this reason, we do not want interest in PREP to lag and appear to be concluded with the workshop in Amarillo. From its very conception, the project has been one which the CMC has been extremely supportive (as evidenced by its generous financial support for the two workshops) and which was originally presented as a committee activity. However, due to its eventful scope and cost, it quickly became a full TAM responsibility.

"Now that the PREP manual has been published and the two workshops developed, the TAM Disaster Plan Committee has been disbanded. However, the Committee was only dissolved with the hope that the Collections Management Committee would assume the responsibility of continuing to promote disaster migration through activities appropriate to the CMC's means...There need not be any financial commitment to the project although it is hoped that this would not preclude activities which might have associated costs such as workshops or additional publications.

"At this time my hopes are that the CMC will make a commitment to sponsor timely workshops dealing with disaster preparedness, mitigation and recovery (which may be closely related to the yearly conservation workshops currently undertaken by the Committee.) I would also like to see occasional articles in the CMC newsletter and perhaps in *Museline* dealing with these subjects. I would also hope that when appropriate, the CMC would suggest sessions for Annual Meeting which deal with disaster planning.

"In addition to the above issues, it was always Mary's and my hope that there would be a mechanism to continually keep the PREP manual current by inclusion of articles and newly published materials. This was the reason the 3-ring binder was used. This aspect of the project can be as active or passive as deemed appropriate by the CMC."

In his letter, Rick has outlined several activities for a proposed Tex-Prep Standing Committee. The majority of the activities, including regular workshops and articles on the subject of disaster planning, are well within the capabilities and scope of the CMC. The presence of a Committee would then serve primarily as a special topics committee, insuring that the subject is regularly presented to the membership. To this end, an appointment will be announced in the near future for a Tex-Prep standing committee of the CMC. In addition to acting as a source of program planning for the CMC and for the TAM Annual Conference, the Committee has the charge of investigating means of providing updates to the PREP manual. Please offer your assistance to this Committee, either through programming ideas or writing articles to the CMC newsletter.



## ***Review of Summer Workshop***

***Compiled by Carolyn Spears***

***Edited by Susan Metcalf***

The Summer Workshop of the Collection Managers Committee, "If the Space Fits: Off-Site/Off-Premise Storage Concerns", was held in Dallas on Saturday, August 6, 1994 at the Dallas Museum of Art. Vice-President Ali Shirley welcomed the participants, and President Carolyn Spears held a short CMC business meeting.

The workshop began with role-playing exercises using five scenarios of off-site storage problems. The participants worked first individually, then discussed their ways to combat the problems that were discussed. The first speaker of the day was Larry Francell of Fine Arts Express. He discussed his experiences with the DMA's off-site storage and the storage facilities at Fine Arts Express. His first recommendation was to consider off-site storage only if all other possibilities have been exhausted. He also stated that there were many risks involved with off-site storage, and to always move non-artifactual items first. He went on to discuss the factors to consider when evaluating off-site storage, such as location, costs, security and size. Other factors to consider are contractual agreements, what is the institution responsible for, and what is the facility's owner responsible for. Insurance, security, climate control and collections considerations are also important.

Kim Peel of the Witte Museum was the second speaker. She reiterated the recommendation, "Don't use off-site storage unless you absolutely must do so." If you have to use it, get out as soon as possible. Her suggestions included the planning of off-site storage with key personnel, determining who is responsible for what, and making sure records are kept of the meetings. Be careful determining what is to go off-site. Never store saddles and textiles off-site. Try storing more stable items. Make careful inventories, because of the turnover of staff.

Carol Malcolm of the Texas Memorial Museum discussed the recent move of the TMM wet collection to a new storage facility at the Balcones Research Center. Location of the facility, while offering good security, was difficult because it is seven miles from the Museum. But the most difficult aspect of the move was the transfer of the materials. Carol focused her discussion on the problems in moving thousands of glass jars containing specimens in diluted ethanol.

Ali Shirley closed the workshop with an overview of the Capitol restoration project, and discussed the problems associated with moving historic furniture and currently in-use furniture into a 10,000 sq. ft. facility with 30 foot ceilings. The project had anticipated moving pieces out one wing at a time, and was careful to not acquire too much storage space. When the project required almost all of the existing collection to move out at the same time, the facility was suddenly too small.

If you are interested in receiving an in-depth copy of the workshop review, please send a SASE large brown envelope. The review, completed by President, Carolyn Spears, is approximately seven pages long. Please call or write to Susan Metcalf, Biblical Arts Center, P.O. Box 12727, Dallas, TX 75225, (214) 691-4661.

**Windows To The Past:**  
**The Maintenance and Use of Document**  
**and Photographic Collections**  
**St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas**  
**December 10, 1994**  
**10:00 am - 4:00 pm**

The Fall Workshop for CMC will be held December 10, 1994. Participants will learn new information on Museum, Archival and Library collections of documents and photographs.

Registration and coffee will begin at 9:30 am. The Workshop will begin with a Welcome and introduction of the speakers at 9:45 am. Lunch is on your own.

At the time of printing the workshop was scheduled to be held at the Main Building, Rm 105 of St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas. The room location may be subject to change. For more information, please contact Ali Shirley at (512) 463-5495.

Please send Registration form to Rick Wiedenmann by December 5, 1994. Registration will also be available at the door.

**Windows To The Past:**  
**The Maintenance And Use Of Document And Photographic Collections**

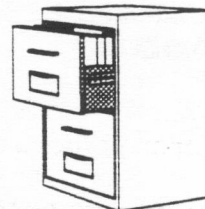
☐ \$20.00 Member

☐ \$25.00 Non-Member

☐ \$10.00 CMC

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Send Check to: Rick Wiedenmann, Collections Manager, John E. Conner Museum, P.O. Box 2172, Station 1,  
Kingsville, TX 78363, (512) 595-2810.

The deadline for the next newsletter is **December 15, 1994**. Please send any information that you want included to:  
**Susan Metcalf, Biblical Arts Center, P.O. Box 12727, Dallas, Tx 75225, (214) 691-4661,**

Ms. Valerie C. Bluthardt  
San Angelo Museum-Fine Arts  
P.O. Box 3092  
San Angelo TX 76902

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C/O BIBLICAL ARTS CENTER  
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# **Windows To The Past: The Maintenance And Use of Document and Photographic Collections**

**December 11, 1994  
St. Edward's University  
Austin, Texas  
10:00 am - 4:00 pm**