

TENNESSEE ARCHIVIST

The Newsletter of the Society of Tennessee Archivists

Extending Our Reach: *Renovating and Innovating*

STA's Annual Meeting, Dubose Center, Monteagle, Tennessee November 5-7, 2008

Despite the economic downturn, over 40 archivists and guests from across Tennessee attended this year's Annual Meeting at the DuBose Center in Monteagle. Wednesday's pre-conference workshop on building oral history collections was presented by the Country Music Hall of Fame's John Rumble, Director of Oral History Programs, and Steve Maer, audio engineer. Thursday's slate of sessions included the basics of preservation, finding funding for archives, ethical issues in archives, archival security, and issues and trends in photographs. A late afternoon tour of the campus and archives of the University of the South (Sewanee) and in the evening the annual meeting banquet which featured former acting archivist of the United States Trudy Peterson, capped off a full day of activities.

(more annual meeting photos on pages 4 and 5)



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News and Notes

(more News and Notes on page 7)

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Federal Agencies Collaborate on Digitization Guidelines

A dozen federal agencies are launching an initiative to establish a common set of guidelines for digitizing historical materials. Basing its efforts on a combination of collaborative research and combined experience, the Federal Agencies Digitization Guidelines Initiative will address a variety of issues related to the complex activities involved in the digitization of cultural items.

Two working groups have been formed, one addressing content that can be captured in still images, the other involved with content categorizing sound, video, or motion picture film. The initiative includes a new website, www.digitizationguidelines.gov.

The Federal Agencies Still Image Digitization Working Group will focus its efforts on content such as books, manuscripts, maps, and photographic prints and negatives. The Federal Agencies Audio-visual Working Group will address standards and practices for sound, video, and motion picture film.

The agencies began meeting in 2007 to identify common practices for digitizing cultural heritage materials in a sustainable way. Establishing guidelines is expected to increase the quality and consistency of digitized documents and media that are made available to the public, streamline workflows, reduce costs, promote the exchange of research, and encourage collaboration across agencies. The guidelines will also provide common benchmarks for digitization providers and manufacturers.

The website currently features two documents developed by the Still Image Digitization Working Group. The first proposes a minimal set of embedded TIFF metadata for use in historical and cultural heritage digital imaging. The second two-part document presents a taxonomy of digital image characteristics and provides correspondence metrics and criteria to describe and validate imaging performance and quality. The website also provides a glossary of digitization terms and concepts, and presents digitization-related news and events on the subject from the participating agencies.

This collaborative effort initially formed under the sponsorship of the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program, a Library of Congress-led program initiated by Congress in December 2000 to develop a national strategy to collect and preserve digital content. Additional information is available at: www.loc.gov/today/pr/2008/08-177.html.

Next TSLA Workshop, "Using Obituaries and Death Records in Genealogical Research" Set for February 2009

The State Library and Archives' next workshop will discuss the use of obituaries and death records in genealogical research. The workshop will be presented by TSLA staff member Gregory G. Poole, and will take place at TSLA on February 28, 2009, from 10:00 AM through Noon. The workshop is free and open to the public. TSLA is located at 403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville.

When doing genealogical research one of the first things genealogists or anyone searching for their ancestors should do is find clues in obituaries and death records. Obituaries and death records are hidden gems of information about people. They are the final report on the life of an individual and contain details about that person's life that may not appear anywhere else. Obituaries often contain names of family members, location of birth, church affiliation and other insights into an ancestor's life.

This workshop will cover the basics of using obituaries and death records in genealogical research. Some of the topics included are:

(see Obituaries on page 7)

Cover photographs, clockwise from upper left: Attendees at a Thursday session; Ken Fieth, Metro Archivist; Nancy Williams; Taffey Hall, STA President; Leah High; the DuBose Center; STA past presidents Doris Martinson, Jay Richiuso, Norma Myers-Riddle, Mancil Johnson, Taffey Hall (outgoing STA president), Carol Roberts; *Center*: Dr. Trudy Peterson.

Photographs by Jim Havron.

President's Message



If you were unable to make this year's STA Annual Meeting at the DuBose Conference Center in Monteagle, you missed a great couple of days of spectacular Indian Summer weather, peak fall colors, and a great learning experience at a charming locale with friends and colleagues. We were fortunate to have, as our keynote speaker, Dr. Trudy Peterson, who gave a thought-provoking address on the importance of archives in human rights around the world, and an equally illuminating session on the secret police archives of Guatemala. These two presentations gave us a new perspective on how archives can be used to realize, understand, and discover the truth about atrocities, and how archives can be instrumental in bringing to justice the perpetrators of these atrocities. Our Opening Plenary Session presented several of our former presidents who spoke eloquently about their experiences as president of STA and their membership over the years. Our session presenters also gave outstanding sessions for the Society and we are grateful for their time and efforts, as well as the moderators who attended each session. I am also grateful for the help of the Arrangements Committee, who helped put this meeting together. And, not to be forgotten, are the members of the Education, Nominating, and By-Laws Committees, who all contributed to the meeting, and ensuring that STA runs efficiently. We are very fortunate to have members who give their time and talents to the Society!

I am happy to assume the position of President of STA. After having risen through the ranks, first as Newsletter Editor, then Vice-President, and now President, I feel fortunate to have followed Taffey Hall, who served an unprecedented two and a half years as President. As a result, I am the President of a strong society. The society owes her a debt of gratitude for all she's done for us.

We are already planning this year's meeting, and if you were unable to attend the meeting in Monteagle, we hope to see you this year. The meeting is scheduled for the Nashville Public Library, November 11-13. In subsequent newsletters we'll have more information, and you can look for the registration information in the late summer/early fall newsletter for 2009.

In the meantime we'll be working on the many issues and projects that we've taken on: Outreach and Education. Student Scholarships. Awards and Recognition. These projects take time and volunteers and we may be calling on you to help us! If you'd like to volunteer, or to get involved, let any of the executive board members know, and we'll be happy to find a role for you.

You have a strong, dedicated Executive Board of STA. I look forward to continuing my work with them this next year. Please feel free to contact me anytime if you have suggestions, questions, or concerns about STA. I want to hear from you. I wish you all a Happy New Year!

Steve

Steve Cox
STA President

National Archivist Allen Weinstein Resigns

On December 7, 2008, historian Allen Weinstein, Archivist of the United States, submitted his resignation to the President, effective December 19, 2008. Professor Weinstein, who has Parkinson's disease, cited health reasons for his decision.

Deputy Archivist of the United States, Adrienne Thomas, will serve as Acting Archivist until a new Archivist is appointed, in accordance with the National Archives governing statute, 44 USC 2103(c).

In his letter to the President, Weinstein said "During my tenure as Archivist, my team of colleagues and I have made substantial progress in achieving virtually all of our goals. Moreover, we at the National Archives have worked diligently and successfully on our primary mission of maximizing public access to the records of all three branches of government while protecting at all costs this agency's rock-solid nonpartisan integrity." The Archivist says that the time has come for him to address fresh challenges.

Weinstein was nominated by President Bush on April 8, 2004, and confirmed by the U.S. Senate on February 10, 2005. Under the National Archives statute there is no specific term of office and the position is not intended to change hands automatically with the election of a new President. Among the major accomplishments the National Archives has seen under Weinstein's leadership over the past four years:

- An increase in the annual appropriated budget for the National Archives from \$318.7 million for fiscal year 2005 to \$411.1 million for fiscal year 2008;
- Successful deployment of two National Archives Electronic Records Archives systems, including the EOP (Executive Office of the President) system, launched on December 6, 2008, which enables the transfer, ingest and reliable storage of unprecedented volumes of Presidential electronic records;
- Inclusion of the once-private Nixon library into the National Archives system of Presidential libraries. Approximately 320,000 pages and 363 hours of audio recordings related to the Nixon Presidency have been opened for research since 2005;

(see Weinstein on page 7)

Annual Meeting *continued*



John Rumble talks to meeting attendees about planning oral history projects.



Steve Maer details the technical aspects of recording oral history.



Ken Fieth, Metro Archivist and STA President 1995-1996, addresses plenary session attendees.



Doris Martinson, Manager of the Knox County Archives and STA president 1998-1999.



Carol Roberts, TSLA Director of Preservation Services lecturing on the basics of preservation.



Top: Oral history attendees.
Center: Mancil Johnson, Tennessee Technical University Archivist and STA president, 1997-1998.
Bottom: Attendees at the basic preservation session.



Marsha Mullin, Chief Curator at the Hermitage, co-presents session on how to find funding sources and developing friends groups.

more *Annual Meeting*



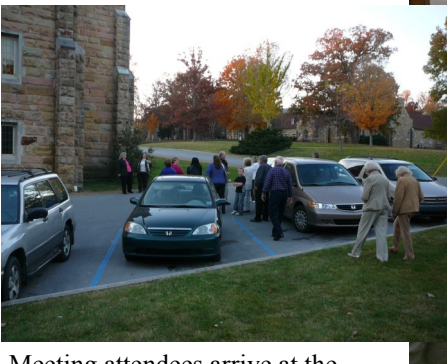
Norma Myers-Riddle lectures meeting attendees on ethical issues in archives session.



Doris Martinson lectures attendees about security issues in archives.



Genny Carter leads the Photography—Issues and Trends session.



Meeting attendees arrive at the University of the South (Sewanee) for a tour of the University Archives and campus.



Left center and above: Archivist Annie Armour giving meeting attendees a tour of the University's Jessie Ball DuPont Library and Special Collections.



STA President Taffey Hall, Dr. Trudy Peterson, and Vice-president/President Elect Steve Cox at Thursday night's Annual Meeting Banquet.



Above: Dr. Peterson speaking about the Police Archives of Guatemala at the Friday morning session.

Left: Dr. Peterson delivering the meeting's Keynote Speech at the banquet.

VP's Message



Working with the Special Collections Division of the Nashville Public Library and as an archivist with the United Methodist Church has given me a strong conviction of the importance of maintaining professional networks. This belief has been strengthened during the better part of the past two years as I have had the opportunity of serving as STA's representative to the Southern Archivists Conference. Rapid changes in technology and increased sources of information have affected the nature of records and the research habits of the patrons of these institutions. Preserving records and meeting researchers' needs in this environment is a challenge, and we are fortunate that we have a network of others in the field with whom we can share ideas and experiences.

As Vice President, part of my job will be the planning of the annual meeting for 2009. The STA meeting will be in Nashville, Tennessee, co-hosted by the Nashville Public Library. As with all our meetings it will be a chance for fellowship and sharing of ideas, and hopefully strengthening those networks on which we rely. The theme will be "Archives 2.0: Reinventing the Archives for the Virtual Generation." Sessions will focus on what archivists must do to adequately document modern life and remain relevant in this rapidly changing information environment. The meeting is scheduled for November 11-13, 2009. More information about arrangements will be coming your way soon.

The theme of this meeting may be particularly interesting to students or people who work in fields related to archives. I hope that, in addition to making plans to attend yourself, you will consider inviting someone else who may not be a member of STA, but might either have something to contribute to the general discussion or wish to learn more about the topic or the organization. Members of the "Virtual Generation" will be particularly welcome. When considering who to invite, don't forget about our scholarship programs to assist folks in attending the meeting.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please send them my way. Until later,

Jim

Jim Havron
STA Vice President

Posterity Project Blog Launches – An Information Resource for Tennessee Archivists

by Gordon T. Belt, Library Manager, First Amendment Center Library

Back in June 2008 I had the opportunity to attend a Special Libraries Association annual meeting held in the beautiful city of Seattle, Washington. I attended several sessions over the course of four days, but one of the sessions that impacted me the most was a presentation about "Web 2.0" and how this new technological tool is being used in special libraries throughout the profession. What is Web 2.0? It is a lot of things, but essentially Web 2.0 is that part of the Internet that receives its content through its users. That can include blogs, Wiki pages, social networking sites like Facebook, LinkedIn and Myspace, Google Maps, video sites like YouTube, and many more. In Seattle I learned that librarians and special librarians in particular are utilizing Web 2.0 in a variety of ways, showcasing collections, announcing exhibits, collaborating with professional colleagues, and providing information to the public. After attending this session, I wondered what are archivists doing in this new realm of technology and how can I be a part of this new information revolution? My search for information about this subject led me on a path to create a new blog of my own called the **Posterity Project**.

I launched the **Posterity Project** (<http://www.posterityproject.com>) blog in July 2008 with a mission to chronicle news and issues related to archives, history, civic responsibility, and open access to public records—topics I encounter almost daily at my work with the First Amendment Center Library. I also use the **Posterity Project** as a platform to promote archives and special collections in Tennessee – a subject of particular interest to me as a lifelong resident of the Volunteer state. On the site you'll find links to other blogs by archivists and archival institutions, news and information about collections in Tennessee, an interactive [Google Map of archives in Tennessee](#), and a series called the "Weekly Roundup" which features current news about archives and public records. I also have a keen interest in legislation affecting archives and public records and have developed an expertise in tracking legislation as part of my work for the First Amendment Center. I wanted to incorporate some of those research skills into my blog as well, so many of the posts you'll read on the **Posterity Project** cover important legislation affecting funding for archives and access to public records, including a call to action on H.R. 6056, Preserving the American Historical Record ([PAHR](#)) Act.

I hope you'll visit my humble little outpost on the World Wide Web at <http://www.posterityproject.com> and let me know what you think. There is also a RSS feed where you can click to subscribe to regular updates to the **Posterity Project**. Also, if your archive has an event or collection you want to publicize online, please feel free to drop me a line at gordon@posterityproject.com. I'm more than happy to write about it on the **Posterity Project**.

Gordon Belt is the Library Manager for the Freedom Forum's First Amendment Center Library. Before joining the Freedom Forum, Gordon was a research and information specialist and library manager at the A. C. Kalmbach Memorial Library, a specialized research library and archive dedicated to the preservation of railroad history located in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and a master's degree in history with a concentration in archival administration from Middle Tennessee State University. He is a member of the Special Libraries Association's News Division, the Society of American Archivists, and proud member of the Society of Tennessee Archivists.

News and Notes *continued*

Obituaries

- What are obituaries and death records and how to find them
- A brief history of the obituary in American culture and social history
- Interpreting the obituary and death record, including a discussion of common medical terminology, and relating information found in an obituary with other kinds of genealogical records
- The best websites about obituaries
- Other non-traditional sources for obituaries

Seating is limited so it's best to reserve a seat. To sign-up call 615-741-2764, or sign-up by email at: workshop.tsla@state.tn.us

Gregory G. Poole is an Archivist II at the Tennessee State Library and Archives in Nashville, Tennessee. Among his publications are two books dealing with obituaries: *Robertson County Obituaries and Death Records, 1825-1950*, and *Cheatham County Obituary and Death Records, 1840-1950*.

The Tennessee Association of Museums is holding its 2009 Annual Conference, *Cast Your Net, Catch Big Ideas*, at the Chattanooga Hotel, Chattanooga, Tennessee, March 18-20.

The Tennessee River Valley nourishes a diverse natural world like it supports and interprets a rich history and culture. Join us in Chattanooga for the beautiful scenery, quality museums, and the many opportunities to learn from other museum professionals in Tennessee.

For additional information go to: www.tnmuseums.org

Professional Development

The Northern State Conservation Center is offering online museum studies classes. The class descriptions are available at: www.museumclasses.org

The Society of American Archivists has published their workshop series education calendar. For more information go to: www.archivists.org/prof-education/course-catalog.asp. Or email at: education@archivists.org

Registration for the 2009 AASLH Professional Development Workshop series is now open. For the full schedule and more details visit: www.aaslh.org/workshop.htm

Weinstein

- Restoration of public trust through the declassification and release of interagency agreements, an audit of purported reclassification activity, the return of previously withdrawn materials to public access, and the implementation of stringent new procedures to stem withdrawal of previously declassified and released records, reducing the number of withdrawn documents from more than 25,000 between 1995 and 2006 to only 7 to date;
- Preparation for the move of George W. Bush Presidential materials to Dallas, TX;
- Implementation of plans to replace the National Personnel Records Center, which houses four million cubic feet of records, in St. Louis, MO;
- Establishment of the National Declassification Initiative to begin to address the very serious challenges the National Archives faces with the policies, procedures, structure, and resources needed to create a more responsive and reliable executive branch-wide declassification program, particularly with respect to referrals of classified equities between executive branch agencies.

Professor Weinstein has been an indefatigable proponent of the National Archives, visiting 32 National Archives sites nationwide, speaking at major conventions and meetings around the country, and traveling abroad to underscore the leadership and commitment of the National Archives to the international community. He has drawn on his vast network of friends and colleagues to raise the profile of the agency, creating a popular new public program series entitled "American Conversations." His guests included Sen. Hillary Clinton, Mrs. Lynne Cheney, historian John Hope Franklin, and noted journalists and public officials who discussed all aspects of American history. He has forged new relationships with the professional archival and historical communities and has been lauded in the media for his courage in making access to archival materials a priority of his tenure at the National Archives.

Excerpted from the NAGARA Clearinghouse, 2008, Vol. 24, No. 4.

The 2009 Society of Tennessee Archivists Annual Meeting

**“Archives 2.0: Reinventing the Archives for the Virtual Generation.”
is November 11-13, 2009**

Have ideas or suggestions for session topics? Send them to STA Vice-president Jim Havron at: james.havron@nashville.gov

Suggestions will be accepted until April 2009.

WHY NOT JOIN STA?

The Society of Tennessee Archivists invite membership from all persons interested in Tennessee's archives and historical resources. Membership is on a calendar basis. STA currently holds one meeting each year which includes the annual business meeting, at which the society officers are elected by the membership. STA publishes its newsletter several times a year and invites contributions from members and non-members. STA is a member of the Southern Archivists Conference (SAC), the regional association for Southern archivists and is currently comprised of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee. SAC meetings are held every other year with each state alternately hosting the meeting.

**Full Membership, \$20.00/year Institutional Membership, \$20.00/year
Associate Membership \$10/year**

Please make checks payable to: **SOCIETY OF TENNESSEE ARCHIVISTS**, and include membership information (name, address, institutional information, phone number, fax number and email address) and **mail to:**

**Amber Barfield, Treasurer
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TENNESSEE ARCHIVES WEEK

**is
November 8-14, 2009**

It's not too early to start planning, so start planning now!

Copies of the STA Action guide can be requested from the STA newsletter editor at the address below or at:

www.tennesseearchivists.org/ActionGuide.doc

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