

NERAASA 2014 Archives Roundtable Report

The NERAASA 2014 Archives Roundtable moderated by Bobbie of Area 31 (Western Massachusetts) had fifteen attendees Friday and 24 Saturday. Present were the NERAASA Archivist, Areas 12 (Delaware,) 29 (Maryland,) 31 (Western Massachusetts,) 44 (Northern New Jersey,) 47 (Central New York,) 48 (Hudson, Mohawk, Berkshire,) 59 (Eastern Pennsylvania,) and 61 (Rhode Island) and others interested in archives. Also present was the workshop contact, Anne Marie, for the 18TH Annual National A.A. Archives Workshop, October 9-12, 2014 in King of Prussia, PA.

Each individual present shared current archive work in progress in their particular area. Area 47 emphasized the importance of each area establishing policies for the proper accession and deaccession of archival material. Archival material preservation involves protection against natural disasters such as floods and acid leeching.

Digitizing records is a cost effect way for backing up most archival materials including audio and video records. Most areas are generating digital records of minutes and motions that are electronically searchable. Area 44 is digitizing by decade and has gotten back to the nineteen forties and plan on holding a Alcoholics Anonymous Book celebration in April.

All recognize that rapid technological changes have impacted each area's digital records and the challenges faced converting to new media requirements. A handout copy of GSO's "*Digitizing Archival Material Guidelines*" was provided.

One approach for many boxes of archival material was to have sorting sessions by volunteers which require trust that those volunteers will sort responsibly. The sorting needs to be done even without a clear picture of what the outcome will be but the contents of each box should be noted as eventually one or more categories will become evident. Area 59, for example, sorts and files records classed by Committee.

Area 29 emphasized the display of archival information as a way of encouraging area old-timers to contribute to the archives and of encouraging the newcomer's enthusiasm of our history.

One area made acid-free boards with the help of the New York Historical Society to highlight their collections and added that on-line information and courses are available.

Area 12 uses a 10x10 temperature-climate controlled repository, which in most cases is an expensive option for most areas, to house every edition and printing of the Big Book with the except of one printing, which mysteriously

vanished. This brought up the point that archive material is entrusted to each area to be protected.

List your lists, create time lines, and prepare short narratives as ingredients for Web-page development and longer narratives. Preparation for Web pages of course involves scanning cleaned-up documents to protect anonymity. The Archive Roundtable spent much of its time discussing the observance of this important Tradition.

Area 44, Northern New Jersey, is the host of next year's NERAASA 2015.

Yours in service,

Neal, Area 47 Archivist