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Defining Data and Functions for Archives & Museum Systems

For the Museum Computer Network meeting in Santa Monica in October, I put together a list of 100 vendors of archives, museum and records management software! With so many systems to choose between, users are going to need considerable help. The accompanying list of 75 consultants may be of some use here, but I think it is fortunate on the whole that another strategy is beginning to emerge. Let's call it "codification" or "rationalization" of the data, functions, and structures of archives and museum information systems.

The purpose of a number of ongoing efforts is to develop frameworks within which local requirements and the offerings of different vendors may be compared. These frameworks are common definitions of the modules of archives and museum systems, the functions of each module and the data of the system as a whole. This newsletter contains a review of an evaluation framework sold by Willoughby (In-Box), a data model advanced by the ICOM Committee on Documentation (Standards), and news of an effort to provide a functional definition of a generalized archival system (Conferences - SAA). My vendor list suggests that five modules may be present in a full fledged system: Collections (including Records) Management, Information Retrieval, Events Management, Membership & Development and Space (Exhibits and Storage) Management. Other specialized functions often desired by archives and museums but handled by separate systems include: Index Preparation, Funds Accounting, Slide Library Management, Interactive Video Development & Presentation and Volunteer Management. Generic requirements include Word Processing, File Management, Project Management, Desk Top Publishing and Business Graphics.

Efforts to adopt a more uniform perspective on software in this market will, in turn, set minimal standards and reward vendors who provide fully capable systems. Over the coming year, I will be involved in a contract to provide a design to the Research Libraries Group for a local archives/museum system that will serve as a workstation to RLIN. During the contract period, numerous institutions will participate in requirements definition exercises, and a general model of requirements and data will be constructed which I would hope to present for profession wide review. I am confident that such dissemination of models of archives and museum systems will, in time, lead us to a stronger market and better systems. DB □

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MACHINE-READABLE VIEWS
Thomas E. Brown

Society of American Archivists

Every annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists has its ups and downs for those interested in the archival administration of machine-readable records. The Atlanta conference was no exception.

Interest in automated records has apparently moved into the mainstream. This was clear when chairs and representatives from various committees and task forces solicited the involvement of the newly restructured Committee on Automated Records & Techniques (CART) in projects of common concern. Conversely, when approached by CART, other groups generously allowed time on already crowded agendas to hear CART proposals and initiatives of mutual interest.

Several workshops and formal sessions were exclusively devoted to automated records. Each was well attended. Audiences frequently included leaders of the Society -- current and former officers, council members, and chairs of a variety of task forces, sections and committes. Additionally, several presentations in more traditional sessions alluded to the impact which today's electronic record keeping practices will have on the archives of tomorrow.

For me, the otherwise solid conference had two disappointments. The first came on a proposal to the College and University Section. Building on earlier successful work with the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, CART proposed to identify college and university organizations and associations whose members create and maintain records and to work with them to develop guidelines for preserving archival documentation, especially in machine-readable form. When CART outlined its proposal to the C&U Section meeting, the group responded with indifference.

The second disappointment came in a session on "Documenting the AIDS Crisis". AIDS may be the first epidemic fought with the computer. To document AIDS and the struggle against it must, therefore, involve the long-term preservation of some machine-readable records. And some of the records must come from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). A prime candidate is CDC's AIDS Database containing microlevel data from the Case Report Form. Yet the representative from CDC made no reference to the archival retention of this or any other non-aggregated master file or database. When questioned, the CDC representative acknowledged that no such plans existed. This not only violates legal requirements but also abrogates social responsibility. Seemingly, CDC erroneously believe that publishing tabular data in the Weekly Morbidity and Mortality Reports fulfills its legal and social obligations. For all our sakes, lets hope that CDC is managing the battle against the epidemic more effectively than it is managing its information resources.

Two new publications

New York State Archives & Records Administration has just published A Strategic Plan for Managing and Preserving Electronic Records in New York State Government. This solid report presents recommendations of the Special Media Records Project in three sections. The first outlines the strategic issues in the management and preservation of all types of electronic information. The second delineates seven objectives for managing and preserving information from automated information systems. The last describes 27 activities to be undertaken during the next five years to achieve the objectives of section two.

The report has two strengths seldom found in government documents relating to automated records. First, it is a soup-to-nuts strategy to ensure the proper archival management of automated information systems. Indeed, it could be used as a primer on archival involvement in information resources management. Secondly, the report outlines a comprehensive plan for the archival administration of automated systems in the state of New York by dividing the problem into 27 manageable tasks. As such, the report should serve as a model for other archives

attempting to gain administrative control over their organizations' electronic records. [The report is available without cost from the New York State Archives, Cultural Education Center, Albany, NY 12230.]

The second report, from the National Archives & Records Administration (NARA), is another example of the quality work being done by NARA's Archival Research and Evaluation Staff. Written by Thomas E. Weir Jr., the report is entitled "3480 Class Tape Cartridge Drives and Archival Data Storage: Technology Assessment Report".

3480 class cartridges are a new magnetic format for computer data storage. The market for this class of drives is substantial and growing, and is expected to dominate the mainframe tape market by 1991. This poses two questions for NARA; 1) should the National Archives use 3480 class tape cartridge drives for storage of its archival records and 2) how should the National Archives acxcession information from agencies using this class of drives. The conclusion of the report is that NARA should adopt a wait-and-see attitude for a year or two.

The strength of the report is its analysis of future data storage technologies. Archives will have to deal with this coming technology and, while much is being written on the subject of optical disk, this is the first report to explore the archival implications of a new technology in magnetic storage. Those of us who are traditionalists in machine-readable records believe that magnetic storage will remain viable into the twenty-first century. In this sense, the report provides a solid basis for dealing with the future. Although the report's title suggests it would have interest only for an insomniac, don't judge this report by its cover. [Available from NTIS in paper or fiche; order # PB8-233135/AS, $12.95 (paper) plus $3.00 handling.]

Reprise for Reference Service

In the last issue of this newsletter, I presented a continuum of machine-readable records reference services. A colleague, James A. Jacobs, Data Services Librarian at the University of California at San Diego, has developed a similar framework describing seven different levels of reference services for machine-readable data that can be offered by a traditional library. The list is in ascending order of complexity and cost. In general, one level of service presupposes the prior establishment of all the levels of service below it. His seven levels are:

1: Offer passive referral services
2: Provide active educational & referral services
3: Purchase Machine-Readable Information (MRI)
4: Inventory and/or establish an archives for MRI already on campus
5: Provide minimal computing services
6: Provide data consultation services
7: Provide information products and data analysis services

It is noteworthy that traditional libraries can begin to include data services with minimal effort using this paradigm but the traditional archives needs to reach level four before it can incorporate machine readable records into its holdings. As Jacobs puts it, it "will take much more effort and time to accomplish this fourth level of service." The relative ease with which libraries may incorporate data products in comparison to what the traditional archives faces may explain why the growth segment for data services is in traditional libraries expanding their activities. Conversely, the need for traditional archives to begin at level four may have limited their involvement in data products and services. This may partially answer a question that has haunted members of SAA's Committee on Automated Records and Techniques. Over 200 archivists have been trained through a core curriculum on automated records, so why are there so few viable archival programs for machine-readable information?

[A copy of James Jacobs' outline may be obtained by writing him at: Central University Library, C-075-R, University of California at San Diego, La Jolla, CA 92093.]

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Optical Disks: Are Archivists Repeating the Mistakes of the Past?

Margaret Hedstrom

Practical, workable, and relatively inexpensive optical systems have piqued the interest of some archivists in the capabilities of this new technology. Promises of rapid search and retrieval capabilities with cheap storage costs and a stable medium seem especially tempting to repositories with large collections of graphic images, maps, drawings, and textual documents. As archivists debate using optical systems for storage and retrieval of records already in archives, we must not avoid the question of how to identify, access, and preserve information created elsewhere and stored in optical based systems.

Archivists have rarely stopped to consider what we will do with information from optical disk systems that are created outside archives by government agencies, corporations, institutions, and individuals. But we should recognize that the same features which make optical disk technology appealing for use in archives (high density storage, rapid access, image enhancement, easy reproduction, etc.) also make this technology attractive and cost-effective for many applications in organizations with active records systems. The records that offices are scanning onto optical disks today will confront archivists sooner or later as another information technology problem unless we begin developing strategies now to preserve information in this format.

No standards, guidelines, or procedures exist to help archivists handle records stored on optical disk systems, but there are important similarities between optical and magnetic systems. Archivists can apply some lessons learned from our previous experience with magnetic media systems to respond more effectively to the introduction of optical disks.

The first lesson to learn from our experience with magnetic electronic records is that the short life span of storage media, although an important problem, is not the most challenging aspect of preserving records of modern information systems. Archivists who perceive the three- to ten-year useful life of magnetic media as the main problem of electronic records are likely to consider the longer projected life of optical disks as a significant advance or even as a possible solution to many of the problems that archivists confront when preserving computer-generated records. The optical medium may last 30 years or longer, thus reducing the frequency at which the information must be copied onto a new storage device, and optical disks cannot be erased in the sense that magnetic media can. To be sanguine about optically stored information as a consequence, however, overlooks the much more crucial issue of system dependency which optical- and magnetic systems share. Optical systems pose many of the same access and preservation problems as magnetic systems -- and they raise some new issues of their own. Because both types of systems rely on software to retrieve information, archivists must preserve both the medium on which the records are stored and the means to access the records (hardware & software). Even if, indeed especially because, optical media may last for fifty years, there is no assurance that the hardware and software necessary to retrieve records from that medium will be usable or available in fifty years. Anyone who has encountered wire recordings, wax cylinders, punched paper tape or McBee cards, to name only a few obsolete information storage technologies, can appreciate this problem on a small scale.

Archivists who work with magnetic electronic records try to minimize the need for software by reformatting electronic information into a "software-independent" format. In the absence of widely adopted data and document interchange standards, this approach has been effective for certain types of machine-readable data files. Yet some archivists are becoming uncomfortable with this practice. The strategy of creating software-independent data for archival preservation is increasingly limited because information from most document-based and image-based systems cannot be retrieved or interpreted in a software-independent format. This problem is even more apparent with optical systems because there is no such thing as a "software-independent" format for

optically stored information. Archives will have to make a commitment to maintaining some hardware and some software to access their magnetic and optical records.

Standards for encryption, compaction, storage, and data or document interchange are essential to enable future access to records stored on magnetic and optical media, to make their preservation affordable, and to permit migration of information between generations of storage and retrieval technologies. The widespread development and adoption of standards by hardware manufacturers, software developers, and users of modern information systems would enable archives to limit the hardware and software needed for acceess to a small number of systems that can retrieve information from diverse applications.

Another feature that optical and magnetic systems share is that hard copy input and output documents do not necessarily provide an effective alternative for access to, or storage of, information. Even if the information could be reproduced on paper (or paper saved after it is scanned), paper-based systems do not provide an acceptable alternative format. The use of new methods to access information in fundamentally different ways changes how individuals and corporate bodies use information and may alter the longterm value of the record.

Archivists should also be aware that offices which rely upon an optical disk system to store documents or images and which retrieve information rapidly from a disk, are unlikely to develop or maintain manual filing systems for the same information. If the paper documents are saved at all they will be batched when they are scanned and stored somewhere just in case they are ever needed for verification or certification. They will not be neatly filed or indexed unless the office also uses a parallel manual file to conduct its business. Often organizations invest in automated retrieval systems because they find the best organized and maintained manual systems too unweildy to provide effective access to information.

We have learned from our experiences with magnetic systems that archival records need to be identified when the system is designed. Effective preservation of archival records from large data- and document-bases requires routines to separate data and documents with long term values from those of transient value. Even though, and perhaps especially because, appraisal and preservation strategies for information from optical disk systems remain underdeveloped, archivists should become involved in the design of optical disk applications if they are being used to store information with long-term value. In the case of optical disk image-based systems, a key issue for archivists is making sure that access points are provided that will allow retrieval of information for secondary uses other than those necessary for the system's primary purpose. One cannot search an image-based system after the fact on index terms that were not incorporated into the design. As archivists rush out to explore optical disk systems for their own applications, we should also consider how to become involved in the design of optical systems by others so that we have some chance of making the information on those systems available in the future.

Archivists need to respond to new information technologies when they are introduced rather than waiting until large backlogs of records become irretrievable because they are stored in an obsolete format. One of the lessons we have learned from working with magnetic media is that archivists waited too long to address the problems that this changing technology posed. Large amounts of obsolete and irretrievable information acculumated and valuable archival records were lost before archivists took the issue of electronic records keeping seriously. We cannot aford to repeat this mistake again with yet another new storage technology.

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CONFERENCES

Museum Terminology Control

The Second Annual Conference of the Museum Documentation Association, held in Cambridge England from September 18-24, was devoted to the topic of Terminology Control. The meeting, which was co-sponsored by the Getty Trust Art History Information Program, attracted over 160 participants from dozens of countries whose presentations and discussions, conducted in English, French and Italian, were simultaneously translated permitting considerable active enchange of views.

The Conference was preceded by a Museum Documentation Study Tour and a one day Indexing Languages Training Seminar. Participants in the study tour were uniformly enthusiastic about their behind the scenes view and frank discussions with curators at the British Museum, the Museum of London, the National Maritime Museum, the National Museum of Science & Industry, the Tate Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum. The indexing seminar conducted by Jean Aitchison, Alan Gilchrist and Dr. I.C.McIlwaine was somewhat less enthusiastically received, probably because the instructors presented a quite theoretical framework in the morning, followed by exercises that were drawn from bibliographic rather than museum traditions.

The conference proper was introduced by an overview of the purposes and mechanics of standardization, by me, and a presentation on the role of standards bodies such as the International Standards Organization (ISO) by Axel Ermert. Papers by Marilyn Schmidt on the Thesaurus Artis Universalis and Eleanor Fink on CIDOC (the documentation committee of the International Council on Museums) introduced some of the players in the efforts to achieve consensus in museum terminology control. The scene was further defined by John Perkins of the Conservation Information Network who introduced this new service and Susanne Peters of the ICOM Documentation Center who exposed the problems of controlling terminology as a means of access to the database maintained by ICOM and ICOMOS. Further perspective was provided by national reports from the UK by Michael Budd, Italy by Oreste Ferrari, Canada by Steve Delroy, and the US by Jim Blackaby.

For the next two days, participants heard about 60 papers devoted to specific vocabularies or data structures being used in a variety of kinds of museums and special documentation projects. At the wrap up session that provided participants with an opportunity to express their feelings at the end of the conference demonstrated, the plethora of terminologies left many unconvinced that national, to say nothing of international, agreement was worth the effort. Those who sought a more positive conclusion from the meeting found solace in the agreement expressed at the wrap up session that different vocabularies could and would control different fields of data, that different vocabularies were justified by different uses and user perspectives, and that there is a widespread need in the museum community for terminology control over proper names and place names, for which methodologies and databases exist and in which areas progress can be made.

The Museum Documentation Association hopes to publish procedings of the conference before next year's meeting, scheduled for September 14-18 in York, England.

Archives Description Practices

With the support of the International Council on Archives, the National Archives of Canada hosted an invitational meeting of "Experts on Descriptive Standards" in Ottawa from October 4-7. Thirty participants, representing fifteen countries and the International Council on Archives (ICA), the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and the International Standards Organization (ISO), gathered to discuss the state of standardization of archival description and to determine the prospects for agreement at an international level.

Over the course of four days, they examined the state of archival description standards in their respective countries and heard papers on "Concepts, Principles & Methodologies" by Lisa Weber, "The Relationship between Automation and Descriptive Standards" by Michael Cook,

"The Role of Academic Training and Professional Associations in Description Standards" by Jacques Grimard, "Descriptions Standards & International Organizations" by Hugo Stibbe, and "Stategies for Development and Implementation of Archival Description Standards" by David Bearman.

The meeting adopted a number of resolutions addressed to the ICA, including a proposal to establish an international working group to pursue a standard for "description at the fonds level", an area in which the meeting reached substantial agreement. To me, the agreement around the table that a number of entities other than holdings -- entities such as repositories, records creating organizations, retention schedules, facilities, and users -- might be promising areas for development of description standards was an exciting outcome of the meeting. Clearly archivists are ready to think about the possibility of sharing authority records of various sorts in order to realize the potential benefits of information exchange at the international level.

A variety of products were brought to the meeting by participants. My attention was especially caught by a working group draft from the Archives Nationale de France which consisted of terminology for forms of material and functions and closely resembled the lists that colleagues using RLIN have been developing. Throughout the meeting, Peter Horsman from the Netherlands expressed the interest of Dutch archivists in function terminology. Others also thought the idea worth pursuing. I note that at the SAA meeting and in subsequent travels around the United States, Ray Grover of the New Zealand National Archives has also been interested in this approach. The convergence of the vocabularies being developed suggests that for governmental functions at any rate, we may be nearing an international agreement on the structure of this access point.

Society of American Archivists

The 1988 SAA meeting in Atlanta was the first, and may well be the last, meeting of archivists at which one could attend end-to-end sessions devoted to descriptive practices and standards. That it was the first, reveals how far the profession has come in using automated methods in the past few years. That it will likely be the last demonstrates how important Steve Hensen's revision of his Archives, Personal Papers and Manuscripts (APPM) guidelines, will be to establishing descriptive standards. So many issues that generated much light and no small amount of heat in Atlanta will be laid to rest when Steve is through.

Although my week began with meetings of the Committee on Automated Records and Techniques and the Committee on Education and Professional Development, the Description Section and the Government Records Section, all of which paid considerable attention to professional standards for archival description, the meeting proper began for me with a session on format integration (MARC format that is) addressed by Sally McCallum (Library of Congress) and Lisa Weber (NHPRC). The crowd attracted in a large room to hear these talks was an early signal that archivists are now vitally concerned with the mechanisms by which libraries have maintained description standards. The content of the talks in turn illustrated how substantially archivists have begun to affect library practice. Sally McCallum adopted a distinction among bibliographic item control, serials control and archival control introduced by archivists and recounted how often AMC concepts, such as the action field 583 have been employed in library practice. In her account of the merging of the bibliographic formats into a unified format, she emphasized that the merged format more clearly reflects the original intent of MARC and extends the opportunities presented by each of the separate formats to each of the others. In conclusion she underlined the importance that descriptive standards will have in guiding description practices, now that the format has been shroven of most of its prescriptive, description convention specific, structures.

Lisa Weber emphasized the role archivists must play in maintaining the new unified format and illustrated some of the challenges which lie ahead as a consequence of format integration. She identified areas in which previous efforts by archivists to reform MARC had succeeded and failed, and emphasized the importance that implementations of format

integration will have on future success or failure of archives to get what they need from the format.

The Theory and Practice of Appraisal, could have addressed description issues, since in many ways our confusion about what we are doing when we do appraisal is compounded by the absence of standardized means for recording appraisal decesions. As it was, the session did not address this issue; instead Frank Boles and Julia Young focussed on an apparently precise and empirical study they conducted which does little to help us communicate the basis for appraisal decisions.

On Saturday, the first session I attended reported on the use of the MARC-VM format. Linda Evans reported on the VM users conference whose proceedings and compendium is now available from the Chicago Historical Society. Diane O'Connor from the Smithsonian Institution reported on continuing work on the Photo Thesaurus she edited last year and on the SI Archives photographic data model (see Projects & Proposals is this issue). Jim Bower of the Getty Art History Information Program presented a paper on why Authority files need not be "Authoritative" files, explaining how the Getty AHIP Vocabulary coordination group, of which he is a member, has been integrating a variety of name authority files but permitting each project that contributes a lists to determine its own preferred form of name for its products.

Jim Bowers set the stage for the authority control session which followed. In successive papers, Marion Matters (SAA Automation Officer) presented a case study of name authority control as practiced at the Minnesota Historical Society, Bill McNitt discussed subject authority control as it is being implemented in the Presidential Libraries system, and David DeLorenzo, now at Harvard University, analysed the transaction logs produced by the system he set up at Gallaudet College to establish just what kinds of searches were conducted. He found, unsurprisingly, that 38% of searches were for subjects, 25% author, title or subject terms, 20% author/title terms, 11% genre and 5% "associated descriptors" or miscellaneous terms.

More description practice standards followed in the afternoon when Form and Genre terms received the attention of a separate session Patricia Cloud introduced the session by asking what are the purposes of authority control and who are our users? Hope Mayo spoke for one group in discussing the various vocabularies adopted by the ACRL Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS). Specialized lists produced by RBMS and under development include genre terms, printing & publishing evidence, provenance evidence, and binding terms. Each was introduced and its applicability discussed. Helena Zinkham presented the Library of Congress Graphic Materials Genre and Physical Characteristic Headings list (GMGPC) and its history. She called special attention to the often ignored but valuable introduction to the published list. In the final paper of the session, Harriett Ostroff explained why NUCMC is using the RLG list of genre and form headings for MARC tag 655 and the AAT list for MARC tag 755 at present and why she intends to create her own list in the next few years, which she feels would improve of the RLG list and provide better scope notes. Personally, I hope that this effort can be conducted with a broad base of professional involvement so that we don't risk getting just another ideosyncratic list out of the NUCMC effort.

By Sunday morning it was astonishing to see anyone left for the session on Authority Control in which Richard Szary and I presented our views of future requirements. Both of us began by asserting that we needed more clarity about the kinds of lists we were speaking about, the types of implementations intended and the purposes of control, and each of us suggested typologies of authorities that were extremely similar. I went on to examine research results from years of library and information science research on authorities, and suggest the ways in which they should affect future authority plans in archives. Rich spoke on the functional requirements of an ideal implementation, detailing the capabilities that he believes should be present in authority systems.

COSLA: Gateways to Comprehensive State Information Policy

When the Chief Executive Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) met in Raleigh North Carolina in mid-October, the seminar was attended by directors of state information services, state telecommunications divisions, and state archives as well as by legislative aides and policy makers. The participation was telling in itself -- this community is learning how to make connections with information providers and information creators and has learned that policy is the first step in a new information equation.

The meeting was subtitled "A Conference for Stakeholders", and the stakeholders were made to work for their enlightenment when, after each session framed the issues, tables of eight worked on consensus reports. Unfortunately I was able to stay only for the session in which I participated, on information policy for electronic records, but it was clear from the energy of the group that the previous speakers and the consensus building format of the meeting were having the desired effect. COSLA expects to publish the conference proceedings and small group conclusions next year.

One fascinating document that was new to me was made available by Ed Levine, Staff Director of the Joint Committee on Information Technology Resources of the Florida State Legislature. Entitled "Remote Computer Access to Public Records in Florida", this January 1985 report discusses the technical and policy issues that arose from Florida's pioneering program to provide access to electronic public records. Copies are available from Mr. Levine.

National Association of Government Archivists & Records Administrators

Cooperative approaches to appraisal, automation of records management and the NARA General Records Schedule for Electronic Records occupied my dance card for the NAGARA meeting in Annapolis, July 21. Unfortunately, the Association seems not to have been able to extend beyond the State Archives despite its recent change of title and membership and the efforts of its aggressive volunteer Executive Director, Bruce Dearstyne.

The cooperative appraisal session was opened by Bill LeFurdy of NARA who, in a departure for his agency, embraced the potential of cooperation, followed by Dorothy Provine of the District of Columbia who illustrated the need with a case study of the differences between appraisals of construction permits in different U.S. jurisdictions. The session was concluded by Kathleen Roe who, recounting the year long experience of sharing appraisal reports in RLIN, reported that practice is still too uneven, too poorly conceived, and too ad hoc, for actual exchanges of appraisal data to be very useful. Rather than abandoning the effort, she called for improvements in descriptions of appraisal determinations.

Mike Miller and Bill Cunliffe of NARA presented the General Records Schedule for Electronic Records. The schedule adopts as its general principle that if a master file is scheduled, all inputs and outputs are disposable except for products disseminated in electronic form. I feel that RG20 assumes flat files, routine data, isolated systems, and working environments unaltered by the introduction of automation, and as such provides essentially no guidance to those who operate in a work world transformed by interactive, online, inter-connected information systems. Bill Cunliffe, reporting as a records manager, indicated that he felt similarly in the review phases, but obviously as a NARA employee, he has taken the position now that the GRS is necessary and is all we have.

Am. Society for Information Science

I taught a preconference workshop on records and archives management for information scientists at the annual meeting of ASIS in Atlanta. The focus of the full-day session was the impact of the advent of electronic records on traditional archival and records management practices and the design of archival information systems based on organization function and record systems structure. I argued that such systems present opportunities for those interested in taking on the role of information resource managers.

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IN-BOX

REPORTS

American Management Systems Inc., **General Functional Requirements for the Smithsonian Institution Archives (1/28/88). Feasibility Study for the Smithsonian Institution Archives (3/10/88). Analysis of Life Cycle Costs: The Mini-Computer Alternative for the Smithsonian Institution Archives (3/10/88)**, three reports, prepared as deliverables under GSA Contract GS-00K-85AFD2777, for the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

The underlying commonality of SI Archives procedures and those of most other archival repositories with some records management activity makes the first of these reports, a functional requirements document prepared by AMS, useful to a wider community. However, the "global" requirements accepted by AMS that led to recommend an in-house developed, minicomputer-based implementation, are extremely dubious; these included a presumed requirement for SIA staff to be able to modify the applications themselves and a prohibition against relying upon an outside source of expertise to operate the system, even when two of the options thereby rejected involved relying on a Smithsonian office with four times the staff of the Archives! The conclusion reached by AMS, that the SI Archives should acquire a minicomputer and develop their own software for a life-cycle cost of just under $1 million is, very simply, bad advice although the five year life cycle cost analysis itself is a good example of the genre

Bureau of Canadian Archivists, **Report of the Working Group on Description at the Fonds Level to the Planning Committee on Descriptive Standards**, March 1988 78p

The first of the proposed standards for archival description to emanate from the Canadian description projects endorses AACR2 (and then departs from it somewhat). Get a copy from Heather MacNeil, Descriptive Standards Project Officer, Canadian Council of Archives, 344 Wellington St., Rm 4101, West Memorial Bldg, Ottawa K1A-0N3, CANADA. Comments must be received by Nov 30 to be considered for the final draft.

National Academy of Science, National Academy of Engineering, Institute of Medicine, **The Future of Technology and Work: Research & Policy Issues** ed. by Bruce Henderson & David Mowery (Washington DC, National Academy Press, 1988) p. 41p.

This is a crisp, literate, but broad brush summary of a one day conference held at the Academy in October 1987. Issues are clearly delineated, and though they are not startling, it makes a useful introduction for senior staff concerned with national policy issues.

National Archives & Records Administration, Archival Research & Evaluation Staff, Thomas E. Weir Jr., **3480 Class Tape Cartridge Drives and Archival Data Storage: Technology Assessment Report**, National Archives Technical Information Paper #4, June 1988 30p. (NTIS # PB8-233135/AS, $12.95)

This is a timely and thorough assessment of the 3480 cartridge for data archives which, like NARA, are facing pressures to convert to this technology for its density and convenience. Concludes that the 3480 is meeting high standards and that conversion will be required soon, but somehow (disbelieving itself?) allows that NARA itself will hold off for now due to financial and implementation constraints. Continuing updates are promised.

National Archives of Canada, **Conservation of Photographic Materials: A Basic Reading List**, (Ottawa, National Archives, 1988). Text in English and French, 32p.

Klaus Hendricks and Anne Whitehurst have compiled a bibliography that will be of use to generalist conservators in spite of its lack of annotation. The specialist will want to use the bibliographic facilities of the Conservation Information Network's online bibliographic database to which the authors are prime contributors.

National Endowment for the Humanities, Lynne V. Cheney, **Humanities in America: A Report to the President, the Congress and the American People** (Washington DC, NEH, September 1988).

This is the first biannual report mandated by Congress in 1985. It takes a broad view of cultural education, incorporating museums, bookstores and public television. Interestingly it makes no mention of archives!

New York State University, Education Department and Archives & Records Administration, **A Strategic Plan for Managing and Preserving Electronic Records in New York State Government: Final Report of the Special Media Records Project**, August 1988 36pp.

The diagnosis of issues and problems presented by this report is a pithy summary of the challenge of electronic media. The seven objectives defined for New York State will be valid, with little modification, for any jurisdiction. But it is the 27 concrete activities suggested for the next five years that deserve the greatest attention of professionals for they are both strategic in the best sense and doable. As such it represents the first full menu of coordinated governmental response to the challenge of electronic records.

Trego, Lori A., Ohio Department of Administrative Services, **National Information Management Survey of Automation and Machine Readable Records**, (Columbus Ohio, 1987) 46p.

This is a useful summary of the state of planning, program development and policy for electronic records in the fifty United States based on phone interviews conducted in March and April 1987.

U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, **Informing the Nation: Federal Information Dissemination in an Electronic Age**, OTA-CIT-396 (Washington DC, US GPO, October 1988) 333p. Available from GPO for $14.00, stock # 052-003-01130-1

This long-awaited report confronts the policy implications of electronic dissemination of a growing portion of the $6 billion government information dissemination budget head on, calling for acceptance of the method of dissemination through all available avenues, including depository libraries, countering the argument for government to play no role in value-added information dissemination, and revealing the emerging problems for FOIA in an age of electronic record keeping and distribution. Highly recommended for its definition of the issues and its balanced policy proposals.

JOURNAL ARTICLES & BOOKS

Barnett, Patricia J., "The Art & Architecture Thesaurus as a Facetted MARC Format", Visual Resources, vol.4#3 p.247-260 examines the relationship between precoordinated library subject headings and the post-coordinated approach of the AAT. Those who might be put off should know that it really has little to do with MARC.

Linking Art Objects and Art Information, a special issue of Library Trends edited by Deirdre Stam and Angela Giral (vol. 37 #2, Fall 1988) includes articles by scholars, registrars, curators, systems analysts and information specialists on a variety of problems involved in the design of art information systems. Taken as a whole the volume is one of the most exciting treatments of museum information issues ever - the individual articles each deserve a full review, but instead I'll just recommend the book as a whole.

Palmer, Roger C., **Understanding Library Microcomputer Systems**, Pacific Information Inc., Studio City CA, 1988 129 p. plus source code on floppy disk for the Book Acquisition System.

Roger Palmer has written the ultimate case study of the definition, design and development of a software system, issued together with the code for the resulting system. The book can be read as an historical account of how systems are designed or as a sort of manual for the

resultant system. Its strength, I feel, is as a teaching tool; in a graduate seminar it would be a great critical assignment.

Roberts, Helene; "Do you have any pictures of..?: Subject Access to works of Aret in Visual Collections and Book Reproductions", Art Documentation v.7 #3 p.87-90, is an interesting discussion of the reasons one collection chose to use ICONCLASS.

Sunderland, Jane & Sarasan, Lenore; **The Checklist Kit for Comparing Automated Museum Collections Systems** (Winnetka IL, Willoughby Associates, 1988) $15 from the publishers.

The Checklist kit consists of an introductory guideline for the use of the checklists, an article by Lenore Sarasan entitled "What to look for in Automated Museum Systems" first published in Museum Studies Journal (v.3#4, Winter 1987), and two sets of forms to be copied and used in comparing possible systems. Included are four pages of vendor profile forms, and 24 pages of features evaluation forms addressing collections management functions, general systems features, data structure features, user interface features, query features, report features, "special features", and documentation and support (which could as easily have been in the vendor evaluation). The layout of the forms permits the user to employ them first to determine the degree to which each feature is required or desired by the repository (ranking them as "must have", "might need", "don't need", "frill") and subsequently to use the same form to assess what each system provides (yes, no, when planned, can't tell). It will come as no surprise that Willoughby's systems look very good when evaluated against this checklist, but it is not because the checklist is ideosyncratic. Indeed, the checklist features are extremely well thought out and fairly comprehensive, like Willoughby's systems. Any such list could always include other features and exclude some of those included, and Willoughby's overlaps with my own (published as v.1 #4 of Archival Informatics Technical Reports) in many ways. I like their layout better and some of their questions are better stated, but on the whole (not surprisingly) prefer mine. Still, I would recommend this publication to anyone considering purchasing a system; this is one $15 investment in preliminary research, that is well worth it. Willoughby's has again performed a service for the museum market, and should again to be thanked for it.

NEWSLETTERS

ICOM News (ISSN 0018-8999) vol.41#2 1988 contains an extensive outline of the basic syllabus for Professional Museum Training, now 17 years old. The Training committee would like to revise the syllabus and is inviting suggestions to Dr. Patrick Boylan, Director of Museums and Art Galleries, Leicester Museums, Art Galleries & Records Service, 96 New Walk, Leicester LE1 6TD UK.

Interactive Media International Newsletter (PLF Communications, 9 Cross St. Court, Cross St., Peterborough, Cambs. PE1 1UF ENGLAND, £125 p.a.) featured museums and interactive video opportunities in its May 1988 issue in an article by Isobel Pring. Short news items on video in museums and cultural institutions are regular features.

Mid-Atlantic Archivist (ISSN 0738-9396) Vol.17 #3, Summer 1988 p.12-13 includes an article by Kathleen Roe on the patron registration system of the Pennsylvania State Archives that serves as a useful reminder that requirements for automation of archives do not end with cataloging of holdings.

Network News, vol.1 #4, Autumn 1988 (free from Conservation Information Network, 45034 Glencoe Ave., Marina Del Rey CA 90292) reviews the development of UDC classification 77 for photography and the PHOCUS database developed by Klaus Hendricks and Anne Whitehurst and available through CIN.

OCLC Newsletter (ISSN 0163-898x) free from OCLC, 6565 Frantz Rd., Dublin OH 43017-0702, has a brief summary of the June 22, 1988 NISO meeting in its July/August issue along with a status report

distributed to that meeting on the state of all NISO standards as of June 10, 1988.

Recordfacts Update (ISSN 0899-7475, free from National Archives, Office of Records Administration, Records Administration Information Center, Washington DC 20408) contains a miscellany of records management information. While generally reliable, Vol.2#1 contained some most improbable calculations of the floor space requirements of filing cabinets.

SAA Newsletter (ISSN 0091-5971) September 1988 contains a report by SAA Preservation Program Officer Paul Conway on recent research on the storage of microfilm masters which Conway states may require archivists to revise their procedures.

SPECTRA, The Quarterly Journal of the Museum Computer Network (vol.15 #3, Fall 1988) contains a valuable article on "Computer Software, Equipment and Services Procurement by Museums and other Conserving Institutions - Introduction to Basic Contractual Issues and Protection of Museum and Academic Property" by Mark H. Biddle Esq., Partner in Dechert Price & Rhoads, Philadelphia (p.2-8).

EPHEMERA

AASLH Special Report #2, (Insert to History News vol.43 #4, July/August 1988) entitled **Common Agenda Museum Information Survey**, is a data collection instrument intended to develop a standard for reporting on historical repositories. The survey instrument will test the standard and provide uniform information on American cultural history museums.

ARMA's Micro/PC IAC has issued the 4th Edition of its **Software Directory for Automated Records Management Systems** (from Walter Moy 415-591-4472, 1988, 41p.). The directory consists of very short descriptions of packages sold by 28 firms (a few defunct).

Library Technologies Inc. (1142E Bradfield Rd., Abingdon PA 19001, 215-576-6983) has published a pamphlet entitled **Library Database Preparation Services: A Primer** (July 1988, 8p.), that addresses MARC tape formats, how to extract records and solve duplication problems, OCLC specific issues, barcoding and authority control questions, and other issues relating to database loading in clear terms, but with good detail. Users will want to compare this with the Library Systems Newsletter report on Processing OCLC tapes in June 1988 (v.8#6 p.41-45).

Light Impressions has released the 1988-89 edition of the **Photographers Biography File**, a product of the International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House. The 12 microfiche set, containing nearly 20,000 entries, is cross indexed by name variants and pseudonyms and available for $95 by calling 800-828-9629. The International Museum of Photography provides online access to the Biography File of Photographers at cost to non-profit organizations ($1.50 per logon hour plus local telecommunications, using a VT102 or equivalent or an IBM PC at 300,1200 or 2400 baud).

Recently Andrew Eskind, Director of Interdepartmental Services for the IMP sent me the first of what is expected to be at least a seven videodisc set of images from the Eastman House collection. It represents some, but not all, of the 20% of the collection that is now cataloged and contains otherwise inaccessible negatives of photographs by Mathew Brady, Anne Brigman, Nickolas Muray and others. For further information, contact Andrew Eskind at 716-271-3361.

NAGARA's Government Records Issues Series published its inaugural issue under the general editorship of Roy Turnbaugh. Subsequent issues will be edited by North Dakota State Archivist Gerald Newborg. The premier pamphlet is entitled **The New Massachusetts Archives Facility: A Study in Planning and Process** by Massachusetts State Archivist Albert H. Whitaker Jr. (June 1988, 8p.)

LETTERS

Bil Vernon, Vernon Systems, Auckland, New Zealand, writes:

We were delighted with the first independent review of COLLECTION in the summer issue of your journal. May we make the following comments on your caveats that we are small, young, far away and have not yet made a sale?

Size: We have three in our development team and are seeking a fourth. We use freelance Revelation consultants for overflows. We have four part time support staff. Over six people years of R&D has been invested to date in the system.

Young: Although the project is only two and a half years old, the principals of Vernon Systems have substantial track records in systems development. COLLECTION speaks for the understanding we have acquired of museum applications.

Far Away: New Zealand is twelve hours flying time from Los Angeles. We have fax and email. However, we recognize the need for local support and provide this by:

* training the in-house Systems Supervisor to support users
* retraining local Revelation consultants for technical support
* using museum systems consultants for implementation support
* ourselves providing application tailoring and ultimate support

We intend opening a local office.

No Sales: This reflects the lead time for such decisions. It is expected that we will have our first significant contract shortly.

The review raises questions as to Revelation's longevity and ability to handle heavy workloads.

With over 75,000 users, consistent accolades from the technical press, and an enthusiastic developer base, we are confident that Revelation has a secure future. (Note the increasing frequency of citations in such journals as Archival Informatics Newsletter).

Revelation distributes the processing load to inexpensive but powerful workstations (286 or 386 PC's). Network operating systems such as Novell link these to the file server which can be another micro, or a mini or even a mainframe. These configurations allow Revelation applications to handle large files and transaction volumes.

Michael Cook, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, England, writes:

The Museum Documentation Association (Building 0, 347 Cherry Hinton Rd., Cambridge CB1 4DH) has now issued a prototype version of an archives application within its package MODES. This package is a cheap and simple system for controlling museum holdings. The archives application has been put together by the staff of the archives department of the British Antarctic Survey at Cambridge University, in collaboration with the Archives Description Project at Liverpool University. The standards and convention of the Manual of Archival Description (MAD) have been incorporated, though as some of these are as yet incomplete, the match is not perfect. There are templates (system supplied formats, including data entry screens) for letters, title deeds, maps, and photographs, and a full set of archival data elements, arranged in 4 hierarchical levels, is available on screen. The manual includes explanatory text written by archivists and dealing with their specific problems.

The prototype is now on test at BAS and Liverpool University. Reports and amendments will be issued from time to time.

MODES is available from the MDA for £200, which makes it a very reasonably priced package, especially as support and maintenance is available.

Jane Sledge, Smithsonian Institution, writes:

In your review of Peter Homulos's presentation at the AAM, you fail to mention the CIDOC working group concentrating on international standards in your fleeting reference to CIDOC working groups .... There is an international group working on data standards .... At the 1987 meeting the Data Standards working group attempted to focus attention on data modeling efforts and techniques ... .

NEWS

Archives Library Information Center

The National Archives has established its Archives Library Information Center (ALIC) as a service to the profession as was proposed by the recent NAGARA study of the information needs of archivists and records managers. ALIC will conduct free searches of bibliographic databases, and will publish for the profession a quarterly list of its accessions and an annual list of journals to which it subscribes so as to accommodate interlibrary loans. Fees will be charged for reproduction, but not for on site use which is encouraged. [For information, call or write ALIC, National Archives Library (NNIL), NARA, Washington, DC 20408 (202)-523-8652.]

Electronic Data & Depository Libraries

The Government Printing Office issued a report in June 1988, which described five projects it will undertake experimentally to test the suitablitiy of dissemination of electronic formats to the depository libraries. Data from the 1982 Census of Agriculture and the 1982 Census of retail trade will be made available on CD-ROM, as will the Congressional Record and a EPA database, the Toxic Release Inventory. Online access to two other databases will be provided as part of the test. These are the Economic Bulletin Board of the Departmernt of Commerce, a merged database of numerous DOC files of statistics and news, and a bibliographic and full-text database from the Department of Energy. For details see the report, "Dissemination of Information in Electronic Format to Federal Depository Libraries: Proposed Project Descriptions".

SAA Automation Program Officer

The Society of American Archivists announced the appointment of Marion Matters as its new automation program officer as of August 1. Ms. Matters replaces Lisa Weber who left the SAA to serve on the staff of the NHPRC. Matters will run the program from her home office at 1936 Sargent Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105 (612) 698-6949

MAPS to Conduct Fiche Standards Study

The Mid-Atlantic Preservation Service has announced that it has entered into a contract with the Commission on Preservation and Access to explore the application of 35mm archival film standards to the production of microfiche. According to the MAPS Newsletter, the contract will be used to identify the special problems and costs in extending extant 35mm standards to the 105mm filming and processing environment. A report is due early in 1989 and progress throughout the project will be reported by MAPS.

NARA becomes member of RLG

The National Archives and Records Administration became the first Federal government agency to join RLG on March 8. As the 40th special member in the Archives, Manuscripts and Special Collections program, NARA will contribute to RLIN in conjunction with an inter-jurisdictional records project under the direction of Frank Evans.

NTIS Privatization Cancelled

On August 23 President Reagan signed a Federal Trade Bill that outlaws contracting out of the repository or the services of NTIS, effectively ending several years of study and debate on this topic.

NAPA/NARA Study

The National Academy of Public Administration has undertaken a study of electronic recordkeeping in the Federal Government on behalf of the National Archives & Records Administration. The study, which is intended to be completed in December 1988, will report on over a hundred interviews and an analysis of several hundred questionnaire returns as well as the collective wisdom of a panel of experts drawn from throughout the Federal Government, the information industry, universities and elsewhere. Project manager Sarah Kadec provided minutes of NAPA Panel meetings; a final report will be issued by the end of the year

PROJECTS & PROPOSALS

Smithsonian Art Museums Data Model

After several years of work, the art museum bureaus of the Smithsonian Institution have completed a full draft of a data model that working group members believe accommodates all the data used by their organizations in any of its activities. The model, which identifies 28 entities, hundreds of intersections between these entities and over 200 large groups of data attributes, is available from Jane Sledge, Collections Information System Manager, Office of Information Resource Management, Smithsonian Institution, Washington Dc 20560. Anyone thinking of ordering it should understand data normalization procedures and feel comfortable with entity-relationship models expressed through a data dictionary.

NISO/ISO Common Command Languages

Peggy Morrison prepared a comparison of the NISO and ISO Common Command Language proposals for the NISO meeting in September. The report lists each NISO command and its function, each ISO command and its function, and then identifies three areas of differences between the two, relating to search qualification, character masking and proximity operators. For anyone following these standards this three page summary will be a valued gift. [Copies should be available from NISO, National Institute of Standards & Technoogy, Admin Bldg 101, Rm E-106, Gaithersburg, MD 20899; (301) 975-2814]

Requirements Study for RLG

Archives & Museum Informatics has signed a contract with the Research Libraries Group to conduct an analysis of the requirements for an archives and museum information system and deliver a design document by October 1989. Interim reports on the study will be published in this journal.

Photography Repository Data Models

Diane Vogt O'Connor has made available the Smithsonian Institution Archives Photographic Data Model, a working paper being used to define the structure of information required to support the SI Archives Photo Survey project. The model consists of information about three major entities: Persons/Organizations as Creators, Photographs, and Collections as the objects of administrative activity. Attributes of these entities are defined in an informal dictionary of data elements. [Available from Diane Vogt-O'Connor, SI Archives, A&I Bldg, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC 20560].

A data element dictionary for photography collections is also being circulated by David Clark, History Computerization Project, Los Angeles City Historical Society, 2485 1 Piuma Rd., Malibu CA 90265. The list is compatible with MARC VM, but does not include all the data that could be recorded in a MARC record.

Courses on Automated Records & Techniques

THe SAA Committee on Automated Records & Techniques has compiled a list of all the courses it has sponsored on these issues since 1983. An average of 3 one and two day workshops have been offered each year!

RLG Government Records Project

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission voted at its October meeting to provide most of the funds requested by RLG for its ambitious expansion of the "seven states project", now called the government records project. The expanded effort, which will get underway early in 1989, will include NARA, the Georgia Historical Society, the District of Columbia and six additional states and will emphasize the development of form-of-material/series authority files and inter-governmental cooperation in identification and appraisal of divided archives, duplicative records series, administratively divided records and records documenting parallel functions of state and Federal agencies.

SOFTWARE BRIEFS

MINARET by Cactus Software

Cactus Software, Inc. (850 North State St., Chicago, IL 60610; 312-642-8655) has released its much awaited collections management software package, officially dubbed MINARET. MINARET is described as "a flexible database with word processing features". It imports and exports MARC records but can also support non-MARC data and allows new fields and sub-fields to be generated at user discretion. It contains a query and a reporting module, and runs on PC's. A demonstration system, with full functionality for a limited number of records, can be obtained from the publisher. The system will be reviewed in this journal soon.

DBase III Archives Accessioning

Alan Bain, of the Smithsonian Institution, Archives is offering copies of his DBase III accessioning system and a users manual to interested repositories as soon as the system is complete (documentation is holding it up now).

FONTMAX

The May issue of Research in Word Processing Newsletter (South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, Rapid City SD 57701), came with a demonstration disk for FONTMAX for use with Hercules Graphic Card Plus and Incolor Card. It allows display and printing of scientific characters, multi-lingual character sets, and numerous fonts in conjunction with the major word processors, DBase III Plus, Multiplan, Lotius 123, Framework and Q&A when used with the HP LaserJet, and numerous other laser printers. The developers, ISS International Software Systems Inc., claim the product is carried by "your local software dealer". If so, it could be worth evaluating.

MICROMARC AMC Version 2.0

Michigan State University has released MicroMARC AMC 2.0 and is distributing demonstration diskettes to potential buyers. The product was recently reviewed in Library High Tech News (March 1988) by Frederick Michels & Terry Lovegrove (p.14-15) and received an award from the Society of American Archivists at its annual meeting in Atlanta. Clearly my view that the product is inadequate is not shared by all.

Visual Thesaurus Debuts

Mark Rorvig, Director of the University of Texas Project ICON Image Scaling Laboratory is sharing the prototype version of a hypercard stack designed to serve as a visual thesaurus. The product, developed by Jeff Skaistis of the laboratory, is described as "a graphical interface meant to be used as a front-end for database searching. Its main advantage over the methods normally used for searching are its ability to provide a controlled vocabulary for searching and also the visual clues it provides for the selection of terms." The prototype requires a MacII with at least 2MB of memory, a hard card with at least 2.5 MB free, Hypercard 1.2 or later! For additional information or copies contact Mr. Gary Seloff, Curator of the NASA Visual Archives, for whom the prototype was developed and who is testing its use (716) 483-2664, or the Project Icon laboratory, EDB 564, Austin TX

S.F.Shakespeare Festival uses Q&A

The latest issue of the Q&A Quarterly Newsletter from Symantic reports on the use of this off-the-shelf integrated word processor, file manager, printing system by the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival to manage membership and development. It is interesting to see such inexpensive packages being used successfully, as producer Bobby Winston reports.

Cuadra Goes to Europe

Cuadra Associates has announced that Abacus Software (London) and Sweetens Computer Services (Preston, Lancashire) will be distributing STAR which was recently installed in England at the publishers Oxford University Press and Routledge Chapman & Hall and for BBC TV news and current affairs. The British sales are part of an aggressive European marketing push launched by the Los Angeles based text retrieval and online database vendor which has also begun in-house testing and documentation of a major new release STAR.

NOTIS AMC update

The NOTIS Users Group Newsletter #2, July 1988, edited by Patricia Cloud, Center for Research Libraries, 6050 S. Kenwood, Chicago, IL 60637, reports on a variety of difficulties encountered by NOTIS AMC users and on their status in the NOTIS problem review queue. The most serious are the public availability and lack of useful retrieval for fields 541 and 583. Potential users of NOTIS may wish to keep track of these developmentss.

EDSI Enhances Fund-Accounting

Executrive Data Systems has released version 4.3 of its Fund Accounting package and is now selling three version of the package at various prices. Version 3.0, previously sold for $1250, is now marketed at $450. The new, networked version 4.3 with improved features such as budgeting for sub-accounts, creating a DIF file for a single fund or range of funds, adding new accounts during transaction entry, and printing budget amounts and/or revenue on Statement of Functional Expenses, is being sold for $850. A full version of 4.3 with Project Reporting produces detailed project reports containing every transaction for every account or sub-account, revenue and expense reports for projects on any range of funds of sub-accounts, and project revenue/expense reports showing summary data by account for individual or consolidated funds, ranges of funds, or sub-accounts.

New for Records Management System

Zasio Enterprises, Inc. of Sunnyvale California has introduced a new product, Versatile, which has features for active records management, records disposition, records scheduling, inactive records storage, vital records management and charge back. Versatile operates on PC's and PC networks.

Building Interactive Exhibits

Clay & Wood Computer Studios [5506 Blackbird, Pleasanton, CA 94566-5336; 415-426-1220] develops interactive computer based exhibits for museums. They are anxious to demonstrate their expertise to curators.

Archival Informatics Newsletter is a quarterly publication of Archives & Museum Informatics, 5600 Northumberland St., Pittsburgh, PA 15217; (412)-421-4638. It is edited by David Bearman, whose authorship can be presumed for all items not otherwise attributed. Subscription to the **Archival Informatics Newsletter** (ISSN 0892-2179) is available for $24.00 per year, pre-paid, to U.S. addesses; $30.00 per year, pre-paid to foreign addresses; and $40.00 per year billed, worldwide.

A subscription to both the Newsletter and its companion quarterly publication, **Archival Informatics Technical Report** (ISSN 0894-0266) is available for $160.00 p.a. in the U.S.; $180.00 abroad; and will be billed at no additional charge.

Individual technical reports are available at $45 each, prepaid; $50 billed. Titles currently available include:

- ☐ Optical Media for Archives & Museums
- ☐ Collecting Software: A New Challenge for Archives and Museums
- ☐ Functional Requirements of Collections Management Systems
- ☐ Acquiring & Implementing Automated Systems
- ☐ Directory of Software for Archives & Museums
- ☐ Smithsonian Seminar on Authority Control in Archives
- ☐ Appraising Online Information Systems (November '88)
- ☐ Functional Requirements for Exhibit Management Information Systems (Jan. '89)

STANDARDS

Office Document Architecture

At the ICA Automation Committee meeting in Paris, and elsewhere, Charles Dollar has presented and circulated a draft of a paper written by himself and and Thomas E. Weir Jr., entitled "Archives Administration, Records Management and Computer Data Exchange Standards: An Intersection of Practices" in which the authors review the various standards, draft standards and proposed standards for document/image and information exchange in conjunction with their role in the life-cycle of information. In particular, they examine the role of two high level reference models for standards: the ODA/ODIF (Office Document Architecture/Office Document Interchange Format) model and the OSI (Open Systems Interconnection) model. The paper puts a variety of standards familiar to archivists and records managers, such as CCITT Group 3 and 4 FAX communications, SGML, and MARC, into the context of these models and serves as a useful introduction to the problem of using emerging standards as a means of controlling records in the electronic office. Those interested in the issue may also wish to consult "Data and Document Interchange Standards and the National Archives", National Archives of Canada, Project Report 1-6465, 60pp plus annexes, June 1987 (available from John McDonald, Director, Automated Information Systems Division, National Archives of Canada Ottawa, K1A 0N3, CANADA).

Preservation Actions Terminology

The American Library Associations Preservation of Library Materials Section, Preservation Program Management Committee, has developed a list of "Standard Terminology for USMARC 583" that will be used by preservation officers. Now that 583 has been partially embraced by the library community, archivists will have the benefits of sharing conservation and treatment information if they adopt the standard. [Copies should be available from Karen Muller, Executive Director, Resources & Technical Services Division, ALA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611]

MARC for Visual Materials

The results of the conference held by users of the MARC Visual Materials format last fall have been published by Linda Evans and Maureen O'Brien Will of the Chicago Historical Society as MARC for Archival Visual Materials: A Compendium of Practice. The compendium reviews the definition of each field and how it was used by the institutions participating in the conference. Appendixes provide full sample records from participating institutions and a report on the conference which addresses some of the underlying issues. Support for the publication and meeting was provided by the NHPRC, so the volume is available for free to those who send $5 to cover mail and handling costs to the Prints and Photographs Department, Chicago Historical Society, Clark St. at North Ave., Chicago, IL 60614.

Common Communications Format

The General Information Programme of UNESCO has issued the second edition of CCF: The Common Communication Format (PGI-88/WS/2, Paris 1988). CCF is a specification to permit systems designers to design procedures that can exchange computer files, not a descriptive convention. In effect, it serves as a bridge between the definition of ISO 2709 and the ISBD's. Although it is also not intended as a vehicle for non-bibliographic information exchange, it is a useful foundation on which to build towards archives and museum information systems.

AAT in MARC

Along with a revision of the Drawings hierarchy, the AAT distributed news of the decision, by the American Library Association MARBI committee, to create a new MARC field "Faceted Topical Subject Heading" into which AAT and MESH Thesaurus post-coordinated terms could be recorded. Rules for use of the field are being developed, and the AAT staff hopes to offer a workshop on the use of the field in conjunction with the ARLIS/NA conference

Whitehead, AAT, 62 Stratton Rd., Williamstown, MA 01267, 413-458-2151].

Standard Museum Facilities Report

The Registrars Committee of the AAM, in a breakthrough that will affect all museums and archives involved in exhibitions and loans, has adopted a standard facilities report which can be used in place of all the separate reports now required by each lending institution. It will be available from the AAM this fall, and if adopted by lending institutions should greatly reduce the burdens of arranging an exhibit.

Coordinating Archival Standards

The number of proposals for development of standards in the United States, and the request by the Description PAG of SAA at its 1987 meeting that the Society play a role in formulating standards, led to the submission of a proposal to the NHPRC to fund a working group of archivists to address how best to make the archival voice heard in forums in which standards affecting archives are under development and what criteria to apply to proposals to develop standards for the archival community itself. The project, which will be co-chaired by Lawrence Dowler (Harvard University) and Richard Szary (Yale University), will be staffed part time by Victoria Walsh. It will hold an organizational and planning meeting in December to adopt a procedure for considering proposals for standardization presented to it. Following that meeting, the group will hold a meeting in the spring to which interested parties will be invited to submit ideas for standardization efforts and proposals for cooperative involvement of archivists and others in the development of standards. Its final product will be a report on how the profession can best realize its objectives for standards over the near future and what roles the SAA can play in the realization of these aims.

Technology Choice in Voluntary Standards Committees

Specialists in standards setting will be pleased to see Martin Weiss' dissertation submitted to the Carnegie Mellon University Department of Engineering and Public Policy October 12, 1988 entitled Technology Choice in Voluntary Standards Committees. An Empirical Analysis. Outcomes of standards decision were found to be positively correlated with the financial strengths of the coalitions supporting the technologies and the extent to which they contributed to the committee, but only weakly related to the market power of firms, and not correlated with the installed base of the technologies being debated or the number of people attending the meetings. Nor do proponents positions actually change when they accept the new standard, so it is not necessary to convince the opposition that the solution is best, only that it is do-able.

APPM2 Draft Circulated for Comment

Draft two of the second edition of Steve Hensen's Archives, Personal Papers and Manuscripts: A Cataloging Manual for Archival Repositories, Historical Societies and Manuscript Libraries is now available from the Society of American Archivists [600 S. Federal St., Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60605, for $17 including handling]. The revised edition updates the text of the earlier edition in part I, Description, and then introduces six new chapters in part II, Headings and Uniform Titles. Appendixes include examples of cataloging records, MARC tagging of catalog records, and a table of MARC field/subfield equivalents. The new material is intended to permit the manual to stand alone as an archival description convention but rules in AACR2 are cited by number to support the headings for persons, corporate names and geographic names, for ardent catalogers. Comments are being solicited at this stage for a publication that will doubtless be considered authoritative; speak now or be prepared to hold your peace for quite some time!

Museum Information Sharing

Museum Documentation Association Annual Conference, to be held in at the University of York, September 14-18, 1989 York, England, will have the theme "Sharing the Information Resources of Museums". For information, or to participate, write: MDA, Building 0, 347 Cherry Hinton Rd., Cambridge CB1 4DH, ENGLAND