

# SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA ARCHIVISTS NEWSLETTER

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## Documenting the Colorado River Compact and its Influence on the West

Not unlike quite a few other folks, when the Western Archivists Meeting was understandably cancelled this past April, our kickoff panel session fell through the cracks. Our thoughts were to spotlight the Colorado River Compact, a landmark document which will reach its centennial in 2022. We also wished to prepare for this event, as archivists from four different states and varied repository types reviewed the compact's development, impacts, oversights, and connections.

The panelists included: moderator Peter Blodgett, H. Russell Smith Foundation Curator of Western American History at the Huntington Library; organizer Patty Rettig, Colorado State University; David Keller, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; Jim Kichas, Utah State Archives; and Steve Hussman, University of Arizona. In an effort to share this research, we present this article.

(continued on page 2)



**The Mexican Water Treaty casts its dark shadow over American cities, farms and factories. It is reaching out to grab, and give to landowners in Mexico, Colorado River water which comes entirely from the United States and is pledged to and vitally needed by United States Communities.**

Mexican Treaty pamphlet, May 1945. From the digital MWD Image Collection.

## In This Issue

1  
Feature  
5  
President's Message  
8  
Highlights from WAM

10  
Collections Spotlight  
12  
News and Announcements  
15  
Exclusives

22  
Calendar

## COMPACT ORIGINS

The Colorado River Compact originated from three desires: development, flood control, and power supply. Because of the competing interests among many parties, some recognized that a state-level consensus should be found in order to sensibly move forward. The compact idea, relying on a clause in the U.S. Constitution, emerged from Colorado attorney Delph Carpenter. Once the seven basin states agreed to the concept and authorized representatives, the Colorado River Commission began meeting in January 1922, with direction to finish within a year. Negotiations proved bumpy, with the state commissioners led by the representative from the U.S., Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover. By late November, compromises had been reached and a final document was signed in Santa Fe.



Colorado River Commission, 1922. L-R: W. S. Norviel (Arizona), Delph E. Carpenter (Colorado), Herbert Hoover (Secretary of Commerce and Chairman of Commission), R. E. Caldwell (Utah), Clarence C. Stetson (Executive Secretary of Commission), Stephen B. Davis, Jr. (New Mexico), Frank C. Emerson (Wyoming), W. F. McClure (California), and James G. Scrugham (Nevada) From the Delph Carpenter Papers, courtesy of the Water Resources Archive, Colorado State University Libraries.

The compact was meant to settle issues and eliminate litigation as a way to move forward with the original three desires. The compact is now the cornerstone for the Law of the River, an extensive set of legal decisions and legislation that governs the state allocations of the river's water and that has emerged from the creation of the compact. Because many modern concerns were not included, the compact has an ongoing legacy of contention related to Mexico, Native Americans, wildlife, environmental issues, and water quality.

Yet the seven states and the federal government are bound together by the compact, forced to work on issues cooperatively. Carpenter's papers now reside in the Water Resources Archive at Colorado State University and contain a wealth of details on Colorado River Compact history.

*Patricia J. Rettig, Head Archivist Water Resources Archive, Colorado State University*

## REACHING FOR WATER: METROPOLITAN AND THE COMPACT

This presentation was originally a sort of "lightning talk" about the Colorado River Compact. It covered California developments from 1922 through 1945, ending with the U.S. Mexican Water Treaty of 1945, all of which the Compact made possible. Originally the narrative included images of: Boulder Dam, the Colorado River, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's Colorado River Aqueduct. Extensive correspondence and photographic records are available for researchers by appointment at Metropolitan.

In 1922 the Compact's seven states anticipating sharing water with Mexico initially proposed a 750,000 acre feet allotment. In 1944 this number was optimistically doubled for the U.S. Mexican Water Treaty. As this grim Metropolitan booklet cover suggests, Southern California vehemently resisted the treaty, which ended up "giving away" 1.5 million acre feet of Colorado River Water. (*Booklet image shown on front cover page.*)

Mexico had many reasons not to have compromised in its water negotiations, dating back to the 1848 U.S. conquest of Northern Mexico. After 1945, water relations remained unchanged for years. In 2010, arguably, a 7.2 Mexicali earthquake, causing tremendous infrastructure damage, brought change. The United States offered Mexico free Colorado River water storage in Lake Mead to give the country time to rebuild its infrastructure without losing water supplies. Later, in 2017, a compromise framework was created for both countries to share in surplus and shortages, allowing Mexico to store water indefinitely, while creating a conservation partnership.

*David Keller, Senior Analyst/Historian, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.*

**DEVELOPING THE UPPER BASIN**

With the passage of the Colorado River Compact of 1922, the Colorado River Basin was divided into a Lower Basin unit (comprised of Arizona, California, and Nevada), and an Upper Basin unit (composed of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming). For the first 25 years after the compact was ratified, the bulk of development occurred in the Lower Basin. As the size and scope of this development grew, a movement to begin developing the Upper Basin's water allotment gained momentum.

Negotiations for how to divide the Upper Basin share of the river began when representatives from each Upper Basin state met to discuss the issue in 1946. Governor Henry Blood and Utah State Engineer Ed H. Watson represented Utah's interests in this negotiation. Records for both are held by the Utah State Archives and reveal a concerted effort to ensure that Utah received an equitable portion of the Upper Basin river allotment.

Two years of negotiation and planning ultimately culminated in the Upper Colorado River Basin Compact of 1948. This new accord added another chapter to the expanding Law of the River by guaranteeing a fixed percentage of water from the Colorado River to each Upper Basin state on an ongoing annual basis.

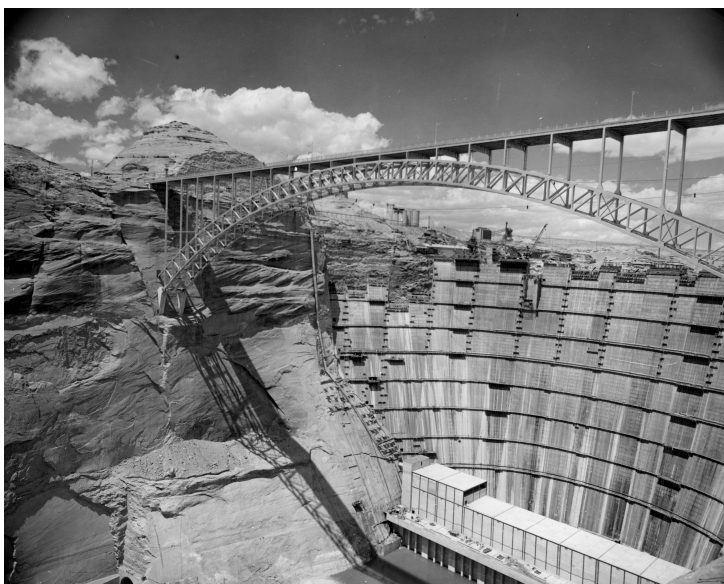
With agreement between the Upper Basin states on how to share their allotment of the Colorado River, the stage was set for the emergence of a massive, federally backed plan that would usher in an era of unprecedented growth and change in the Intermountain West.

*Jim Kichas, Utah State Archives and Records Service*

**ARIZONA'S WATER DILEMMA: THE COMPACT AND THE CREATION OF THE CENTRAL ARIZONA PROJECT (CAP)**



Central Arizona Project--System Map, c. 1974



Construction of Glen Canyon Dam, 1958

Initially, contentious water distribution issues arose from Arizona's long-running dispute over water allotment with California as outlined in the original 1922 Colorado River Compact. Additional thorny concerns over water distribution to the central and southern parts of the state and appropriate allotments for the state's tribal lands complicated this matter further. California had experienced an unprecedented population, manufacturing, and agricultural growth, and Arizona feared that it would receive much less water from the Colorado River in the future. However, California continued to argue that due to its continued expansion, it was entitled to a larger apportionment of water. This matter eventually resulted in Arizona vs. California, a series of U.S Supreme Court cases, beginning initially in 1931 and only concluding in 2000 with Arizona prevailing.

The Central Arizona Project (CAP) was created in 1968 through the Colorado River Basin Project Act of Sen. Carl Hayden. The Project featured a canal that ran from the Colorado River and Lake Havasu to the central and southern parts of the state. Both Stewart and Morris Udall helped push the construction and expansion of this project in the 1970's and early 1980's. This development also allowed for the delivery of CAP water to many of the tribal lands previously left out by the original compact decree in 1922.

*Stephen J. Hussman, Political Affairs Archivist,  
University of Arizona Libraries, Special Collections  
Department*

For archivists interested in Western History and/or the role of water infrastructure, we hope that this account highlights an area of scholarship not often examined. We'd enjoy hearing from you and hope that you'll check out our respective websites for more on the collections which provided background for this account.

**Edited by**

*David Keller*

*Metropolitan Water District of Southern California*

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is difficult to imagine a more dire situation for those of us living in California right now, with wildfires raging throughout the state in the midst of an ongoing pandemic and the increasing threat of unemployment as the State faces deep budget cuts that will affect its ability to support institutions, universities and the communities they reside in. And yet, I am heartened and inspired by the activism and ongoing commitment to social justice that I have witnessed in the archives community, and the care and support you all have shown each other.

Amidst all the uncertainty of the current moment, it is with a heavy heart that once again the Board of SCA was compelled to decide that for the health and safety of our members, it will be best not to meet in person in 2021 in Palm Springs. Though we were all looking forward to being together in person again, there was little that led us to believe that the current pandemic would be resolved in time for us to safely meet. Fortunately, this early decision gives our Local Arrangements and Program Committees the lead time they need to plan for a virtual meeting for 2021. We are now planning to reconvene in 2022 in Palm Springs again; we'll share more in 2021 as we finalize details and have a better idea of what type of meeting we can hold safely.

This cancellation was particularly painful, as we intended to celebrate the 50th anniversary of SCA together in 2021. Started in 1971, SCA has aged into the robust organization it is today through the hard work of many dedicated leaders and committed member volunteers, aided by the support of an engaged membership, and we looked forward to celebrating their achievements. Despite the change in plans, the Golden Anniversary Committee has continued their planning to mark this momentous occasion. Work has already begun to solicit photographs and other media from the membership, and an oral history program will soon be underway. If you have a story to tell or memorabilia from years past, please reach out to me at [president@calarchivists.org](mailto:president@calarchivists.org), and I will connect you with the Committee's chair, Gabriele Carey or one of the committee's other hard working members: Lynn Downey, James Eason, Sue Hodson, Jennifer Martinez-Wormser, David Uhlich, and Chuck Wilson.

To help maintain and strengthen our professional community while we are unable to meet in person, our new First Friday monthly meetings, led by Membership Director Alix Norton with the support of Steering Committee members Courtney Dean, Chris Marino, and Robin Schiff, have created a vital way for us to connect and engage with one another. Most recently, we met to discuss and share the actions our members have started to take to confront structural racism and bias in our descriptive practices. Using Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia's [Anti-Racist Description Resources](#) as a guide, we've begun the work of critically examining our institutions' archival description for racist language, be it language of erasure or explicit terms, in order to dismantle inherited practices and cultivate more accurate and just ones.

*(continued on page 5)*

Acknowledging that the outstanding topic for many of our members continues to be working conditions in the archives profession and the precarity of many of our positions, we have also devoted time in these meetings to talk about our labor. Though it has not happened as of this writing, on September 4 our Labor Task Force, co-chaired by Courtney Dean (UCLA) and George Thompson (CSU, Chico), will have shared results from their recent survey on current labor issues in California archives and provided a space for open dialogue. This task force is charged with reviewing labor issues within the archival profession and suggesting ways in which SCA can better advocate for its membership, and the Board is looking forward to their final report. If you have a related topic, or another issue you'd like to discuss in a casual forum with your colleagues, I encourage all of you to join us, and if you have an idea for a meeting, to reach out to Alix or any of the Steering Committee.

Before signing off, I want to extend my deepest thanks to outgoing Western Archives Institute Administrator Sue Tyson. Her navigation through the current crisis has been admirable, and we owe her a debt of gratitude for her quick and deliberate decisions and planning for the ongoing success of WAI.

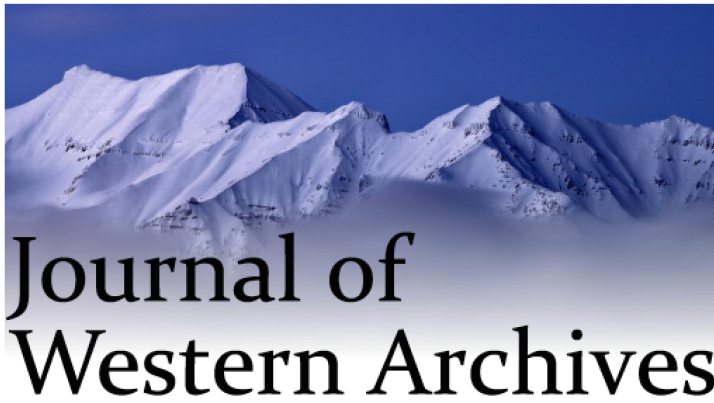
Once again, recognizing that many of you are struggling due to job loss and family needs, I want to encourage those that need assistance to apply to the [SAA Foundation's Archival Workers Emergency Fund](#). Those of you that can afford to, please consider contributing.

My best wishes to you all for good health, safety, and financial security for you and your loved ones.

*Tanya Hollis*

*President*

*Society of California Archivists 2020-2021*



# Journal of Western Archives

The *Journal of Western Archives* is a peer-reviewed, open access journal sponsored by Western regional archival organizations. The journal focuses on contemporary issues and developments in the archival and curatorial fields, particularly as they affect Western archives and manuscript repositories.

## Journal Contents

The *Journal of Western Archives* gives archivists, manuscript curators, and graduate students in the American West a place to publish on topics of particular interest and relevance to them. The journal features research articles, case studies, and review essays on regional topics. These include:

- Important Western regional issues in archives and manuscript repositories;
- Unique archival developments in the western United States;
- Technological innovations and their effect on archival theory and practice;
- The history and development of the archival and curatorial professions in the American West;
- Collaborative efforts and projects between various cultural institutions.

## Contributing to the Journal

If you are interested in contributing to the journal or serving as a peer reviewer for journal content, please contact the managing editor, John Murphy ([john\\_m\\_murphy@byu.edu](mailto:john_m_murphy@byu.edu)). Article submissions may also be made online at the journal website.

# JWA

<http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/westernarchives/>

## The Society of California Archivists, Inc.

The Society of California Archivists, Inc. exists to support and develop those who collect, care for, and provide access to the documentary heritage of California and adjoining areas. To this end it:

1. acts as a vehicle for dissemination of information about archival collections, issues, and methodology to the profession and the public;
2. provides a forum for the discussion of matters related to the creation, preservation, and use of historical documents;
3. develops, offers and supports archival education programs;
4. cooperates with individuals and organizations on matters of common concern; and
5. advocates the identification, collection, preservation, use, and appreciation of historical records and manuscripts.

The SCA Newsletter is published quarterly in January, April, July, and October. All submissions, advertisements for e newsletter should be directed to the Editors of the Newsletter:

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Copy Deadlines: September 1, December 1, March 1, & June 1

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SCA Newsletter editors  
Amanda Mack, Sue Luftschein, and Patricia Delara

## FEATURES - HIGHLIGHTS FROM WAM

## The Unintended Consequences of Archiving the COVID-19 Pandemic

Contemporary archivists, be they professionally trained or community-based, are about to become the essential workers of history, on the frontlines of collecting, documenting, preserving and shaping the narratives of this grave moment in our history. The archival imperative of such work is a given, but perhaps less explored are the risks of stress-related disorders including trauma that can affect archivists working with the evidence of human suffering on such an enormous scale and deep level of intimacy. Such serious mental health outcomes could be the unintended consequences of archiving the times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Americans must never become inured to, nor fail to record and remember the mass deaths and suffering caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the human emotional toil it continues to inflict on first responders and health care workers as well as so many families and communities. Nor should we become numb to the economic precarity the pandemic drives with over 30 million Americans unemployed, the greatest economic downturn since the Great Depression. Every day another unthinkable statistic is announced, an unfathomable government policy enacted or not, a leader's misleading or conflicting message is tweeted, a healthcare worker resorts to social media to express their despair, while newspapers publish the obituaries of those lost to the disease. Entire communities have been subjected to grief and fear. In describing Queens, New York during the pandemic, poet Diana Mehta writes, "trucks collect the dead and roll uptown to bury in a potter's field/ corpses we knew, and loved," (Mehta, 2020).

The rapid, ever-changing, pace of pandemic-related events and information lends urgency to the archivists' work of actively engaging in the collection of COVID-19 related records and narratives in their many formats and plural perspectives.

At many archives, this essential work has begun as archivists gather official documents, harvest governmental web pages, document conflicting news accounts, conduct oral histories and collect the personal stories and images of the lives of ordinary persons responding to the pandemic in journals, artworks, and posts on social media, blogs or cell phone videos.

The COVID-19 pandemic and attendant economic downturn make many vulnerable to stressor-related disorders and trauma. The term trauma is defined by the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* in the diagnostic category "*Trauma and Stressor-related Disorders*" as exposure to events with "actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence" or "*repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of a traumatic event, which applies to workers who encounter the consequences of traumatic events as part of their professional responsibilities,*" (emphasis added). Symptoms of stress-related disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorders, include but are not limited to "avoidance/numbing; dissociation, persistent negative emotional state; persistent and exaggerated negative beliefs or expectations about oneself, others, or the world, and persistent inability to experience positive emotions" (Pai, North & Suris 2017, 7).

It's widely acknowledged that first responders and health-care professionals can be traumatized in the course of their difficult and often unrelenting work. The extreme pressures, protocol uncertainties and high mortality rate of COVID-19 will only add to that load. Archivists are not exempt from this risk. Increasingly archivists agree that archival work is inherently emotional work. There is a growing body of academic inquiry into the presence, if not centrality, of affect and emotion in the archive (Caswell & Cifor, 2015; Weld, 2014). Moreover, the very nature of contemporary, engaged archival practice elicits an unavoidable emotional response from the practitioner to the materials at hand, especially when such materials contain "aversive details of a traumatic event."



Such materials might include video documentation, individual accounts, or seemingly banal public and state records. Selection, description, organization, preservation and facilitating access to such aversive archival resources all involve repeated and profound interactions with such materials, putting archivists at risk of work-related stress disorders and trauma.

Existing case studies evidencing the presence of emotion, affect and trauma embedded in archival work most often describe collections holding records of historic, systematic abuses of power in places far away in time and space: state sponsored terrorism in Guatemala and Cambodia, 18th century accounts of colonial abuse of Aborigine people in Australia, and church records of the forced separations of indigenous children in early 20th century Canada (Caswell 2010, 31; Delva 2017; Weld, 2014). However, archivists are beginning to recognize trauma-related work in a broader range of archives. More contemporary accounts are from archivists working with such diverse collections as records of the forced sterilizations and abuse of American female prisoners (Carli Lowe, email to author, Nov. 1, 2019), The Peoples Temple Archive at the California Historic Society, and LGBT archives (Isaac Fellman, email to author, January 13, 2020.). The 2019 Society of American Archivists presented a discussion on the work-related trauma experienced by Black archivists working with collections containing accounts of traumatic events historically visited on Blacks in America. "Not 'Just My Problem to Handle': Emerging Themes on Secondary Trauma and Archivists" (Sloan, Vanderfluit and Douglas, 2019) presents findings from an exploratory survey of Canadian archivists about their experiences with trauma in the archive.

The COVID-19 pandemic has once again brought trauma to the archival threshold. Archivists already share the onus of shaping historical narratives by their choices of what to collect, what stories to tell, and who gets to tell them. Archiving the pandemic is a vast and urgent task, one that taps into both intimate narratives and official public storylines. It will be up to archivists to coalesce a coherent and inclusive record of these uncertain times for the future.

However, the work is replete with "repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of a traumatic event, "and thus fraught with risk for stress-related and traumatic outcomes for many archivists. As a profession it must be acknowledged that archivists are vulnerable to dire mental health outcomes from archiving the pandemic, and non-judgmental support must be offered by colleagues, management, and the archivists themselves. Archivists and management can educate themselves to know the signs and symptoms of stress-related disorders and trauma. Radical self-care is called for: taking breaks, self-directed compassion, cultivated collaboration and meaningful communication can be essential resources in every archivist's toolbox. Archivists should, with full support of their management and colleagues, seek professional help if they are experiencing symptoms of stress-related disorders or trauma.

Archiving the pandemic is difficult and essential work that can be approached with both competency and compassion, for both its many victims and archivists themselves. Don't let the unintended consequences of archival work-related stress and trauma be added to the toll already taken by COVID-19.

*Katherine Schlesinger*  
*Graduate Certificate in Archiving, 2020*  
*University of Arizona, Tucson*

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# COLLECTIONS SPOTLIGHT

## Sherman Grinberg Film Library Digitization Project Update



**Paramount News, The Eyes and Ears of the World logo.**  
Courtesy: Sherman Grinberg Film Library.

The staff at the Sherman Grinberg Film Library, located in Chatsworth, California, continue to restore, digitize, and license the historic newsreels that make up the Paramount and American Pathé newsreel collections. Even during the challenging days of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the company continues to serve clients by conducting research and scanning motion picture film remotely.

Under the project leadership of Bill Brewington, General Manager, and Lance Watsky, Manager of the Media Archives and Licensing, the library's website now contains over 33,000 newsreel clips available for viewing. (See <https://filmlibrary.shermangrinberg.com>)

The library shares their footage for no cost with museums, libraries, and archives. Students may also use the footage for class projects and research. If a client wants to use the footage in a way that requires a license, they are asked to contact the library directly.

The Sherman Grinberg Film Library, which was first opened in the 1950s by the early stock footage pioneer, Sherman Grinberg, includes more than 20 million feet of classic 35mm black and white film from 1897 to 1957. The newsreel collections include the historic Paramount newsreels, which were initially called the Eyes of the World during the silent era, and later the Eyes and Ears of the World during the time of the "talkies". The collection also includes the American Pathé newsreel library, which is America's oldest newsreel collection (1895-1956). The library also has the Industry on Parade series of early manufacturing films, the Allied Artist Scenic stock footage collection, and over 3,500 mid-20th century television and movie theater commercials.

The newsreels contain an amazing variety of world-changing events and topics including the Great Wars (WWI, WWII and more); movie premieres, Academy Awards, and celebrities; world leaders and politics; sports including the Olympics, college, and professional games; science, technology, and medicine; natural disasters and civil unrest; fashion, culture, crimes, and human interest, just to name a few subjects.



**Lily Turner-Graham and Lance Watsky with 35mm Lasergraphics Director Film Scanner (Photo: Bill Brewington).**

Approximately 40% of the newsreels have been restored and digitized and are available to watch on their website. If you can't find newsreel footage for your project on the website, contact the library and send them keywords, and they can create a custom finding aid for your review.

After you review the finding aid, let the Grinberg staff know what footage you are interested in, and they will search for the footage in their vaults. If the footage is available, they will restore and digitize the footage and send you digital screeners at no cost to you.

Much of the newsreel footage in the Grinberg collections has rarely, and in many cases, never been publicly viewed since it was put into storage during the late 1950s. The Sherman Grinberg Film Library can be thought of as a lost film collection of international importance that contains an unexplored trove of never-before-seen historic newsreels.

To contact the Sherman Grinberg Film Library, email: [Lance@shermangrinberg.com](mailto:Lance@shermangrinberg.com); or call 818-717-9200.

*Lily Turner-Graham  
Lance Watsky  
The Sherman Grinberg Film Library*



American Pathé News logo. Courtesy: Sherman Grinberg Film Library

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# NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## SCA's 50th Anniversary: Chatting With Archivists

The SCA 50th Anniversary Committee is working hard to help us mark this milestone at our virtual conference next year. One exciting part of our plan is an oral history program, which is under the able leadership of Chuck Wilson.

Chuck joined the Society of California Archivists in the early 1970s, shortly after it was organized. He was working at the California State Archives, one of the oldest archival institutions in the state. Dr. William N. Davis, the State Archivist, was on the organizing committee when SCA was founded. He was enthusiastic about SCA because not all archivists had the ability to travel to SAA meetings, and Dr. Davis felt a regional organization would be a great thing for archivists who worked in repositories up and down the state.

Chuck has been SCA's president, a task force co-chair, has headed the Local Arrangements committee a couple of times, and served for many years as chair of the Awards Committee. He's now on the 50th Anniversary Committee and wants to conduct oral history interviews with as many "veteran" members as he can.

I asked Chuck why celebrating our anniversary is important, and how oral history fits into the plans.

"We are a much larger organization than we were in the 1970s, and as archivists we should be taking care of our own history. This is perhaps the last time we will have an opportunity to be in contact with those who were instrumental in establishing SCA and augmenting their stories with others who have contributed through the years. This is a chance to take a look at who we are and how we got to where we are today."

The interviews are conducted and recorded via Zoom. Every interviewee shares how she/he got involved with SCA and what that involvement looked like: serving on committees, representation on the board, offices held, etc. Chuck also asks interviewees how the organization has changed over the years. And of course, he is looking for stories about the fun times at the annual meeting, at Western Archives Institute, and other programs. Not to mention the decades' long friendships so many of us have found in SCA.

Chuck hopes to interview representatives from each of the five decades that SCA has been around, as well as those who have been involved with the organization's changes and transformations. So far, he's talked with former presidents and others from the 1990s and 2000s. There are still quite a few to go, and Chuck would be glad to hear ideas from all of you about potential interviewees.

Chuck and the committee members are also investigating ways to make the interviews available for members to watch or listen to, so stay tuned for more information. He also hopes the stories he captures can be used to write our own history someday.

Here are the members of the 50th Anniversary Committee. Feel free to contact any of us if you have thoughts about the big event.

Program ideas: Sue Hodson, [shodson405@gmail.com](mailto:shodson405@gmail.com)

Photos: James Eason, [jeason@library.berkeley.edu](mailto:jeason@library.berkeley.edu)

Interviews: Chuck Wilson, [cwa1989@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cwa1989@sbcglobal.net)

Newsletter stories or posts for social media:

Lynn Downey, [clio1954@gmail.com](mailto:clio1954@gmail.com)

*Lynn Downey*

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## Super Archivists and Everyday Heroes

Do you have colleagues that are going above and beyond? Are there individuals that excel in connecting archivists, or connecting communities to archives, even in these trying times? And what about those stalwarts who have been doing fantastic work for years, but remain under-sung heroes? Please give some thought to nominating colleagues or organizations that merit special recognition by SCA. We know people are doing amazing work, and we want to hear about it!

The Awards Committee is making plans to celebrate deserving colleagues and archival programs at the Spring 2021 AGM. We have several long-standing awards for which we will seek nominations, but are also eager to hear about anyone, or any program, that is deserving accolades. We are very open to considering "special awards," and would be happy to hear your ideas informally, or as formal nominations.

Formal nominations will open this Fall, with deadlines announced via the West\_Arch listserv. Please consider honoring a colleague with a nomination for the **Career Achievement Award**, or recognizing service to SCA over a twelve year period with a **Sustained Service Award**. Sponsored by Hollinger Metal Edge, Inc., the **Archives Appreciation Award** recognizes an agency, organization or institution that has provided extraordinary support for archival programs of all sorts.

SCA also has several scholarships to keep in mind. The **James V. Mink Scholarship** enables archival studies students or recent graduates to attend the SCA Annual General Meeting. The **Walter P. Gray III Scholarship** funds members' attendance at SCA Workshops and related training opportunities in California. Additionally, the **Lynn A. Bonfield Scholarship** funds SCA members' participation in non-SCA sponsored continuing education. (In these days of remote education, we expect to exercise as much flexibility as possible, applying continuing education support to online workshops.)

For more information about these established awards and scholarships, please visit the "Awards" section of the SCA website at [www.calarchivists.org](http://www.calarchivists.org), or contact Awards Chair James Eason ([jeason@berkeley.edu](mailto:jeason@berkeley.edu)) with your ideas that don't quite fit in a box.

*James Eason*  
Awards Committee

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## EXCLUSIVES

## Disaster Response Grant, Virtual Internships, and New Collections Processed

The Museum of Ventura County has been awarded a Sustaining Cultural Heritage grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The grant will support the development of a comprehensive preventive conservation and disaster response plan to protect the museum's object and library & archives collections, which document the county's social, political, and economic development from the 1850s to the 1970s, as well as the region's archaeological past and its contemporary arts and culture.

When the world shut down in March due to the global pandemic, the Museum of Ventura County shifted its internship program online. Utilizing Microsoft Teams, the Research Library and Archives was able to work with three undergraduates to complete remote projects that advance the Museum's work to ensure accessible collections. While all the interns reside in Ventura County, they attend UC Santa Cruz, Beloit College, and Roanoke College.

Taking internships online while ensuring meaningful experiences for interns and meaningful outcomes for the Museum's mission was a challenge. Museum staff crafted "Ongoing Projects" that included provenance research, data cleanup, and digital image cataloging. Tracking progress on the student work was easily accomplished in spreadsheets and documents on the Teams platform. In addition to these projects, interns completed larger assignments tailored to their fields of study.

Intern projects included:

**Wilson Stroh Wilson Driving Tour:** Using the archived architectural renderings of this local Ventura County architectural firm, an intern used Google Maps to create a driving tour of some of the firm's surviving buildings. The drawings cover a wide variety of projects for both public and private parties, including but not limited to residential, educational, agricultural, business, and industrial construction and are incorporated into the map. The map can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/yxdpdgdw>

**LGBTQ Archive:** Utilizing digitized newspaper archives, the third intern was able to build a database of important events in Ventura County's history. They also were able to create an archive of articles related to the life of Lucy Hicks Anderson. Anderson was assigned male gender at birth but insisted that she was a girl from a young age and she lived her life as a woman.

The MVC has finished processing the Ventura County Star – Free Press negatives collection. The finding aid for the 169-cubic foot collection can now be found on the Online Archive of California (<https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8mw2q9j>). The collection is now (remotely) open to researchers thanks to the work of former intern Rachel Hagar, as well as the work of previous library staff who created detailed inventories for the first three series. In line with the Research Library's commitment to ensuring that collections are open to the public and usable, the later series have been minimally described. The collection of negatives documents the wide-ranging topics reported on by the Ventura County Star since 1958. We hope to welcome users interested in this collection as soon as it is safe to do so.

*Deya Terrafranca*  
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## June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives DRDI Award Oral History Project

As an undergraduate at the University of California, Riverside, I wrote a seventy-page thesis on World War II housewives. Part of the work involved interviewing my 99-year-old great-grandmother, Rose Marie Rodholm, to whom I dedicate this piece. Fascinated by women's history, I am currently pursuing projects that focus on women's issues and achievements. This initial thesis was the start of my interest in oral histories and the archives that preserve them. And so, as an MLIS candidate at UCLA, I knew that the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archive in West Hollywood was the perfect opportunity. Responding to the needs of students wanting to gain hands-on experience while providing digital assistance to repositories during the COVID-19 pandemic, the UCLA Department of Information Studies initiated a Digital Resource Development Initiative (DRDI) that would provide awards to students to support their creation of innovative digital resources or work with repositories. Funded by a DRDI award, I performed transcription editing, standardizing, and video captioning for the Mazer.

For other archives looking to crowdsource transcriptions, having a clear standard for your transcripts is recommended. Developing a guide that can be shared and viewed by those writing out the transcriptions is also helpful. Creating a spreadsheet tracking who typed and checked the transcripts and when supports future referencing. The Mazer already had such a spreadsheet and I began by delving into their YouTube video collection. I reviewed the videos and transcriptions that had been previously created by community members during a volunteer day. Utilizing my skills previously developed as an oral history assistant at the UCLA Center for Oral History Research, I formulated a standard transcription guide to reformat the current transcripts. This was then placed in a [shared drive](#) so volunteers had a reference to draw on when generating transcripts from scratch.

Utilizing this guide, I standardized approximately seventy transcripts while simultaneously editing and uploading them onto YouTube. Lacking prior experience using YouTube Studio, I had the opportunity to explore its back end and work hands-on with matching transcription text to timed intervals. To support the eventual transfer of the videos to Vimeo and then onto the Mazer's website, I constructed a preservation plan. Vimeo requires files to be in .vtt format. Knowing that YouTube Studio has a conversion option to .vtt, I documented how to download the transcribed videos onto Vimeo.

The plan also included ways to upload the videos onto the Mazer's website and I drew up a wireframe for visualization. Although I only spent June and July assisting the Mazer, I knew that others would be continuing what I did not manage to accomplish, so I included a proposal to embed the videos into the website, described how to create a scrollable text box to place the transcription next to the video, and organized the videos into helpful series and sub-series for visitors. Taking the time to meet with the next DRDI awardee, we reviewed what I had done and set up a plan to continue the process along smoothly.

Throughout this journey, I gained valuable skills with transcription and video editing. The work I completed increased my familiarity with various systems and websites while the hands-on research in a remote environment encouraged me to seek out answers independently.

I would like to thank Samip Mallik from the South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA) for helping me to understand how to embed a vertically scrollable div as well as Julie Botnick, Casey Winkleman, and the Mazer Board for clarifying background information on the Mazer. Lastly, many thanks to Professor Anne Gilliland for assisting me as my academic mentor.



While I only contributed one piece of a larger ongoing project, I know that I helped to move it along and look forward to seeing the final product on the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archive's website. Although I am sure that the components I developed will evolve by the time the project is complete, having the opportunity to help make greater representation possible for the numerous women who have made important contributions to the lesbian community and larger society made the experience a memorable one. I am grateful to have been a part of their journey and that of the June L. Mazer Archives.

*Serena Rodholm*  
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*June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives*  
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## **Progress Report on the L. A. as Subject Residency Program**

The L.A. as Subject (LAAS) residency program is made possible through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The program is a collaborative effort by LAAS; Gerth Archives and Special Collections at California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH); Oviatt Library at California State University, Northridge (CSUN); and the USC Libraries. In May 2019, three residents were hired, each working in one of these three institutions termed the hubs. The goal of the project is twofold: one, to provide post-Masters practical experience working with community archives for the residents, and two, to provide guidance and training to staff and volunteers in these archives. The goal is to either prepare their collections for digitization or to digitize parts of their collections to be contributed to a common repository.

The project is guided by a project team consisting of the residents, a supervisor and a mentor for each, administrative faculty and staff from USC, a LAAS representative, and a project and evaluation coordinator. The team meets monthly to discuss the progress of the project and to make decisions as needed.

The residents received basic training in their respective hubs as well as training sessions provided by members of the project team. The progress of the project is being evaluated on a regular basis using specific surveys. Residents are assigned a supervisor in their respective hubs and a mentor who is familiar with the project and works with the resident on professional development.

The project is being conducted in two phases. Prior to the hiring of the residents, project information sessions were held for LAAS members to promote the project. Beginning with Round 1, project proposals were solicited through an online call for proposal process. The proposals were reviewed by the project team and for those that were accepted, each resident was assigned to work on up to five different community archives. The residents, along with their hub supervisors, met with archive member staff and volunteers and then collaboratively began planning the projects. It was clear that many archives needed assistance in all aspects of archival practice, and, within the boundaries of the project, the residents devised plans for their collections as well as began digitizing efforts. At the 2019 Archives Bazaar, the residents spoke to many archives promoting the project and soliciting further applications.

In December 2019 a call for proposals went out to LAAS members for Round 2 projects. Once the project proposals were received, the project team asked the residents to take the lead in evaluation of the proposals which led to a selection of another set of institutions with which to work on the project. Again, each resident was assigned up to five LAAS members to work with. Two information sessions were held at USC and CSUN respectively to meet the successful applicants, to provide basic information about the overall nature of the project and to answer questions. While the residents were wrapping up the first round of projects and beginning the next round, COVID-19 happened. All academic institutions involved asked staff to work from home and the participating archives also closed and proved to be inaccessible.

The residents were outstanding in adapting to this new reality. They soon began Zoom meetings and other methods of communicating with the different archives to continue their projects as much as possible while completing Round 1 projects. More recently, some residents received permission to work in some capacity on site and that has helped the progress of the project. In the meantime, some of the archive project members have received online training sessions from the residents and have learned to adapt to this new reality. As more institutions open, we expect that there will be more in person contact between the residents and the staff and volunteers of the project archives, albeit contactless, socially distant and masked. Depending on the course of COVID-19 spread and its consequences, the project may have to be scaled back from the original goals, but we know that everyone has given their best effort to make it work.

*Marianne Afifi*

*Project Coordinator*

*L. A. as Subject Residency Program*

*University of Southern California Libraries*

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## **Silver Linings: The “Problem” of Donations During a Pandemic**

An issue more common to records managers, manuscripts repositories often do not receive individual donations in large amounts. A small repository like the Center for American War Letters Archives at Chapman University experiences this “problem” as an increase in workflow from time to time due to the extensive outreach of our founding director, Andrew Carroll. Months can go by with an average of one donation per week, and then suddenly that escalates to several per day. As the name suggests, these are mostly comprised of correspondence; most often from the Second World War. But the archives also preserves the photographs, documents, and artifacts including uniforms that have been saved by families to tell the story of an individual’s experience of war.

But what happens when a pandemic forces the archives staff to work remotely, right after outreach efforts have exploded the number of donations? That is exactly what happened and through the inconvenience, we maintain the belief that this is a good problem to have. Silver linings can be found everywhere.

Back in November 2019, a couple of articles and interviews about the archives were published and the response was immense. Our workload increased to a point of barely keeping up with even basic accession records for the new materials. In fact, we changed the workflow to accommodate these new materials while still being able to record them, take ownership, and acknowledge the gifts of these donors.

For context, in all of 2019 there were around 200 new donations total, but almost half came in the last two months. That trend continued as two more articles were published in early 2020. By the time the global pandemic forced us to leave campus for remote work in March—an adjustment all its own for people who work with physical materials on a daily basis—we had already received over 130 new donations!

Since remote work began, our university campus has been closed to all but essential workers. During that time, we have continued to receive collections; over 70 by last count.

Luckily, I have been granted permissions to return on a limited basis to retrieve these materials from our mail services. However, once moved to the archives, there they sit collecting dust. The best stewardship we can provide at this point is to create a list of the donors’ names based on the shipping labels, occasionally being required to open and look at the included donation form. This allows me to respond to those donors inquiring as to the status of their donation.

All of this is to say that against the odds we are keeping our archival materials safe and protecting the family legacies entrusted to us by our donors; and that is the best we can do. The process of archiving has come to a standstill.

Our researchers are left to the collections that we have thus far digitized online. For the foreseeable future, this is our reality; cleaning up ArchivesSpace, fixing authority records, and those various projects we seldom have time to do otherwise. But therein lie the silver linings. When we do return, and we will eventually, we will have a deluge of new collections to pore over, new history to uncover, and new stories to tell. In the meantime, we get to spend our resources on those projects that never get done. We get to make our processes more efficient and standardized. We get to clean house.

Everyone's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic differs. Some institutions remain working in-person with social-distancing. Some have found new ways to cope with remote work. Like most the Center for American War Letters Archives and its staff are out here doing the best we can and finding the silver lining.

*Andrew Harman*

*Center for American War Letters Archives  
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## #ArchivingWomen at the Autry

To celebrate the US centennial of women's suffrage, the Autry has launched the year-long initiative *Revealing Women in the Archives* that combines workshops, programming, social media and an exhibit opening in fall 2020. The exhibit *What's Her Story: Women in the Archives* will take a deep dive into ever-present stories of women revealed from within the Autry's library and archives collections.

In January, the Autry's Library and Archives kicked-off the project by co-hosting a "Discovery Fellow" workshop with WriteGirl, a Los Angeles-based creative writing and mentoring organization for young women. The hands-on workshop encouraged these young writers to physically and intellectually interact with the woman-focused archives and to develop their own reflections about women's stories from the past. The WriteGirl Discovery Fellows will compile a zine based on their workshops which will be displayed in the final exhibit.



**ArchivingWomen tweet from @LA\_Autry (Library and Archives at the Autry), sharing women's stories in the archives and showcasing archive work.**

While COVID-19 has altered a few of the project's plans, the virtual aspect of the project has only grown. Using the hashtag #ArchivingWomen, the Autry's Library and Archives has shared women's stories found in the Autry's online collections as well as those found in other digital archives. In addition, the social media campaign draws attention to the women's stories found in the work of archival processing-- whether in the midst of digitization, re-housing, reference work, cataloging, or one of the many activities related to making these stories "discoverable." #ArchivingWomen social media content can be found on Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr and the Autry blog and other archivists are encouraged to use the hashtag #ArchivingWomen to share stories about the women found in their collections. Posts throughout 2020 will capture moments in the archives that focus on unpacking of archive boxes, but also the unpacking of women's lives.



**WriteGirl workshop participants working with archivist Liza Posas on the Assistance League of Los Angeles Institutional Archives. From left to right: Chloe Vigil Cora Reis, Leslie Awender, Emily Burton, Liza Posas, Amayah Watson, and Danielle Del Castillo.**

*Revealing Women in the Archives* further considers how women's archives are a response to the question of what women have done and how they do it. It also seeks to empower a shared discovery of women's voices and explores how attention paid to women's archives changes how we view history and ourselves. For more information, visit our website: <https://theautry.org/exhibitions/>. This project was made possible with support from California Humanities, a non-profit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Visit <https://calhum.org>.

*Victoria Bernal*  
*Women in the Archives Social Media Manager*  
*The Autry Library and Archive*

## AGM 2021 Announcement

The Local Arrangements and Program committees, in conjunction with the SCA Board, are pleased to announce that next year's Annual General Meeting will be held online in Spring 2021. Due to the uncertainty of access to conference spaces and travel during the current pandemic, the decision was made to move the annual meeting from Palm Springs into an electronic environment. The planning for the meeting is in the early stages and the dates will be announced shortly, so please check the SCA blog and upcoming newsletters for more information.

*Ellen Jarosz*  
*Local Arrangements Committee Senior Chair*

*Leilani Marshall*  
*Program Committee Chair*

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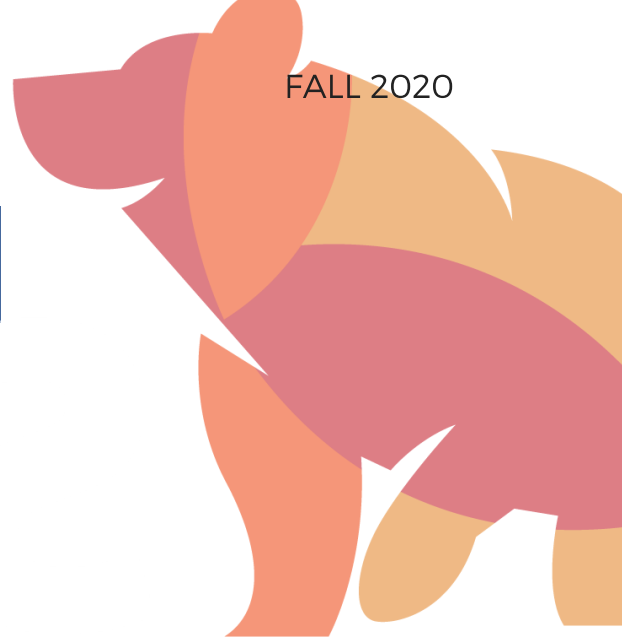
# CALENDAR

## SCA First Friday Meetings (via Zoom)

- October 2
- November 6
- Decemer 4

## Archives Bazaar

- October 17



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