



Seattle Area Archivists
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Spring 2009

Newsletter

Letter from the Chair

2

In Memoriam: John H. Ross

3

Pacific Northwest
Collection Blog at UW

4

News Briefs

6

NAGARA Digitization
Grants

8

Spring Meeting

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

At the Crossroads: Archives and Records Management

NARA – Pacific-Alaska Region

2:00-4:00 PM

Many of us consider ourselves archivists, yet often must don a records manager's hat. The intersection of archives and records management is of importance to us all.

We are honored to have Barbara Benson, University of Washington Records Officer, and Bill Greathouse, Director, Records Management Program at the National Archives and Records Administration, Pacific-Alaska Region as guest speakers at our spring meeting.

Seasoned professionals Bill and Barbara will explore the relationships between records managers and their archivists, as well as the relationship between archives and records programs that many of us manage.

Be sure to join us for this educational meeting!

Letter from the Chair

Dear Seattle Area Archivists:

In the short time I have been an archivist, I have learned that the fellowship in our professional community on a local, regional, and national level is of unique importance. It keeps us evolving, and opportunities large and small materialize through our open channels of communication. As my term as Chair is coming to a close, I wanted to take this chance to thank everyone for giving me the opportunity to serve. Chairing Seattle Area Archivists has been an important step in my professional development, and I have enjoyed exploring ways that our local archival community can support and learn from each other. Especially now, in the crises we are facing, it is critical that we form and strengthen our professional ties.

The topic of our upcoming meeting explores the ties between archivists and records managers, and we are fortunate to have two inspirational members of our archives and records management community as our speakers. I have been privileged to learn from both; I was mentored by Barbara Benson in a records management internship during my graduate studies, and have been guided by Bill Greathouse in a number of projects in my work at NOAA. Both are veteran (I mean that in the best possible way) archivists and records management professionals, and have a wealth of insight and knowledge of value to us all. Please plan to attend.

On a final note, I want to thank this past year's committee for all their hard work: Heather Davis, Emily Dominick, Kathleen Crosman, and Richard Hobbs have all contributed a great deal of time and brain power to the benefit of Seattle Area Archivists, and Emily, Heather, and Kathleen will continue to do so in the coming year. Many thanks! And thanks to all Seattle Area Archivists for your continued commitment to our organization!

Gina Rappaport
Chair
Seattle Area Archivists

Important Dates

May 26	Spring Membership Meeting
June 5	Applications Due: NAGARA Digitization Grants
July 15-18	NAGARA Annual Conference
August 3-7	NARA Summer Institute: "Primarily Teaching"

In Memoriam

John M. Ross, 1947-2009

by Mary Moore-Campagne



We are saddened by the passing of John Ross, long-time member of Seattle Area Archivists

Steering Committee

John Maxwell Ross died April 6, 2009, of natural causes at his home in Seattle following a sudden heart attack. An only child, he was preceded in death by his parents.

John was born April 3, 1947 in Brookline, Massachusetts. He was a graduate of St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland and served four years in the U.S. Coast Guard, where he was stationed in St. Louis, Missouri. His world travels eventually brought him to Seattle, where he spent the next few decades following his personal and professional interests.

An accomplished author of technical books for Microsoft Press, No Starch Press and other publishers, he also pursued other writing projects for various entities, including a planned study of the writings of E.B. White. He combined his Coast Guard radio engineering experience and his love for music and folklore to become an asset to many local organizations, including KRAB Radio, Northwest Folklife, and the Seattle Folklore Society. He was a dedicated archivist and was deeply committed to preserving the musical heritage of the past in new and different media. He was a frequent contributor to the WELL and a member of the Mudcat Café (along with other "Folk Scare alumni").

In addition to his literary and musical pursuits, he enjoyed collecting (and drinking) local Pacific Northwest wines and was familiar with many of the wineries. He was interested in tinsplate trains and frequently volunteered at the train shows held during Thanksgiving weekend at the Pacific Science Center. He served on the Wallingford Community Council and enjoyed making homemade apple cider with members of the Northwest Cider Society.

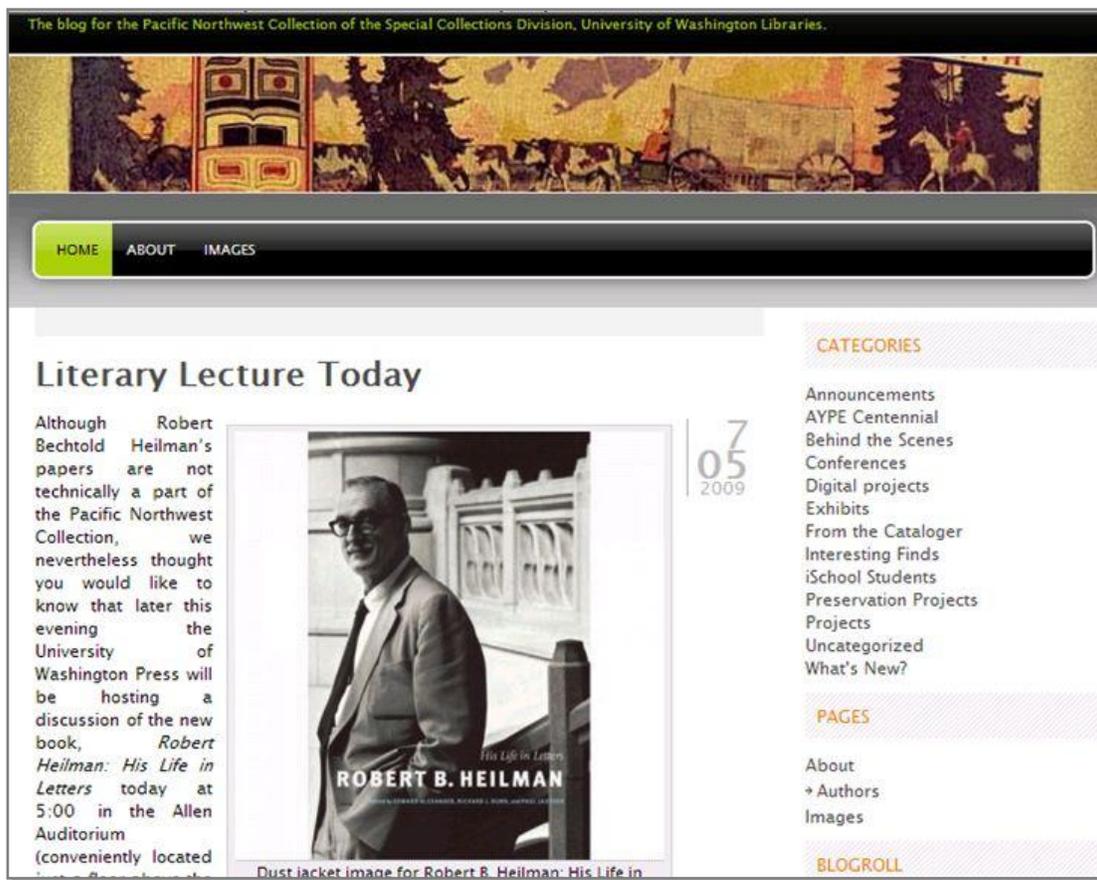
John was a philosopher, a contributor, an iconoclast and a source of knowledge; and he will be missed by the many friends he made through all his different interests.

A memorial service is being planned for some time in the future. If you are interested in knowing more about it, please contact Doug Manana at dougmanana@comcast.net.

For those wishing to honor his memory and the many contributions he made to various groups, donations to the Seattle Folklore Society, Northwest Folklife, or St. John's College (Annapolis, MD) are suggested.

University of Washington UW Special Collections Launches Blog for Pacific Northwest Collection

by Helice Koffler



Front page of PNWBlog, March 2009

PNWBlog: <http://pnwblog.wordpress.com/>

The Special Collections Division, University of Washington Libraries has joined the growing list of special collections and archives with a presence in the blogosphere through the public launch of its first blog, [pnwblog](http://pnwblog.wordpress.com/) on April 1, 2009. As its name suggests, the focus of this new blog is on the materials in the Division's prestigious Pacific Northwest Collection, which houses rare books, maps, ephemera and other printed materials, as well as manuscripts and archives, which document the historic

and contemporary life and culture of the region.

Although the blog only has emerged from its cocoon lately, its first post was "published" way back in August 2008. Conceived as a group blog from the beginning, after some initial planning meetings, we decided early on that the blog would be kept private until each of us had grown comfortable with posting and felt that a commitment to blogging could fit into our regular workflow

and be sustained over a period of time. During the intervening months, a core group of bloggers was assembled, composed of University of Washington Libraries regular staff members and student workers involved with the acquisition, processing and description of materials for the Pacific Northwest Collection.

After seeking approval and investigating various possibilities for publishing a blog, we settled on the popular **WordPress** platform and were up and running with an experimental site within a matter of minutes. The group soon reached a consensus on the current theme, which offered some degree of customization (as well as a few quirks). Over the next few months, a slightly shifting cast of regulars contributed posts as time allowed and met sporadically to try to fine tune content and design and decide on next steps. Having reached a critical mass of posts and having gained more confidence, we agreed to proceed with a “soft” launch phase of the blog, in which we switched its privacy setting to an intermediate stage (blocking search engines, but accessible to visitors) and announced the existence of the blog at a regular Division meeting.

Currently participating in the blog are iSchool students, Edna Bastien-Wennerland and Blynne Olivieri; Accessioning Specialist, Jeni Spamer; Pacific Northwest Curator, Nicole Bouché; and myself. Each of us has our own valuable perspective and insights to bring to the blog. To date, several posts have discussed newly acquired or cataloged materials (such as the papers of local labor leader, Phil Lelli, or rare programs for the poultry and pigeon exhibit at the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition). Other posts have included Jeni’s (illustrated) account of the successful transfer of archival materials to the offsite storage facility at Sand Point last winter, Blynne’s tips on preserving maps at home, and Edna’s progress report on the reorganization of the

map drawers in Special Collections. Looking back, it is quite interesting to see that some posts already have taken on a “historic” quality in just a matter of months.

With the “soft” launch phase now concluded, we eagerly invite you to take a look at pnwblog for yourselves (URL: <http://pnwblog.wordpress.com/>). Whether you decide to bookmark the URL, subscribe to its RSS feed or just to visit occasionally, we hope that you will enjoy our stories about working with the Pacific Northwest Collection. We also hope that by opening up some of the “behind the scenes” at the Special Collections Division in a small way, that this blog (and future Special Collections blogs?) can become a means to engage in a new sort of dialogue with our researchers, both virtual and local.

Mark Your Calendars!

NAGARA IS COMING TO SEATTLE!



National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA)

Conference Theme “Meeting the Information Challenge”

**Annual Meeting
July 15-18, 2009**

**Crowne Plaza
Downtown Seattle
1113 6th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101
Click [HERE](#) for details**

News Briefs

Seattle Municipal Archives



Firefighting Recruiting Board, 1966.

Seattle Fire Department Slides, 73079

Courtesy of Seattle Municipal Archives Photograph Collection

New Exhibit

“Strength and Stamina: Women in the Seattle Fire Department” A new exhibit on the history of women in the Seattle Fire Department was created with support from the Women’s History Consortium, part of the Washington State Historical Society. The exhibit tells the story of the women who entered a department with a strong male culture and changed the image of female firefighters from the unusual to the usual. Their story is one of courage, hard work, and perseverance.

The exhibit is currently on display at History House in Fremont, and a second copy has travelled to the Museum of History and Industry, the Women in the Trades Fair at the Seattle Center, and the City of Seattle Emergency Operations Center. Barbara (Bonnie) Beers also spoke at City Hall during Women’s History Month about her career, an event also supported by the Women’s History Consortium grant.



Barbara (Bonnie) Beers, 1980.

Seattle Fire Department Slides, 73029

Courtesy of Seattle Municipal Archives Photograph Collection

New Intern

The Archives is thrilled to have Western Washington University intern, Andrea McConchie, through the summer. She comes with experience as a paralegal and a certificate of Museum Studies. Her expected completion date from Western is 2010. She is gaining experience in processing a variety of collections. She has also volunteered at the National Archives and Records Administration, Pacific Alaska Region in Seattle.

University of Washington Libraries Special Collections

Collection News

Phil Lelli Papers

Size: 10.45 cubic feet

Dates: 1933-2004 (bulk 1965-2002)

Scope and Content: Correspondence, clippings, minutes, photographs, and reports relating to Lelli's career as a longshoreman and union leader of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), both nationally and at Local 23 in Tacoma.

Ravenna Creek Alliance Records

Size: 25.14 cubic feet

Dates: 1984-2006 (bulk 1991-2006)

Scope and Content: This collection includes correspondence, minutes, financial records, research files, plans, drawings, legal documents, newsletters, photographs, ephemera and other materials. The files document the extensive campaign to daylight and restore Ravenna Creek, and related matters, from early planning stages through their culmination. Many files were created and maintained by the president of Ravenna Creek Alliance, Kit O'Neill.

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) - Pacific Alaska Region (Seattle)

Staff News

NARA – Pacific Alaska Region is pleased to announce that Ken House was recently hired to fill our open archivist position. Previously he worked at the Weyerhaeuser Company, the Washington State Archives and the Oregon Historical Society. He is a graduate of Western Washington University's Archives and Records Management Masters program.

Other News

NARA will be offering a summer institute for educators in Seattle. "Primarily Teaching" will take place Monday through Friday - August 3-7, 2009 (with an extra research day available in the archives on Saturday, August 8). Don't miss this opportunity to visit beautiful Seattle and learn more about:

- Narrowing your topic and "doing" history
- Using primary sources in your classroom or library
- The organization and holdings of NARA
- Holdings and organization of other archives and libraries
- Writing lesson plans using important [and sometimes surprising] documents

At the same time you can earn graduate credit and/or clock hours! Class size is limited to the first ten applicants. For more information and an application is available at: <http://www.archives.gov/education/primarily-teaching>.

The Seattle Public Library Hugh and Jane Ferguson Seattle Room

Seattle Public Library has consolidated its historical holdings into a new department called "Special Collections." The new department will be managed by Jodee Fenton who has been in charge of the Hugh and Jane Ferguson Seattle Room. These holdings include local history, rare books, the Albert Balch Autograph Collection, library archives (historical materials), genealogy, the Library's art collection, and aviation. The department will also be responsible for exhibitions in the Central Library. Wish us luck!

NAGARA Digitization Grants

Last year National Association of Government Archivists and Records Administrators (NAGARA) sponsored a grant opportunity resulting in genealogically valuable records being scanned at one state historical society and one county government even as you read this message. A session at the 2009 conference in Seattle, July 15-18, will review the progress of these grants, with frank commentary from donors and recipients.

Meanwhile . . .

They're back! NAGARA announces a new grant opportunity (almost twice as large as last year's) to local, state, and federal government offices for scanning historical records with genealogical value. Details are on the NAGARA home page.

Check out:

<http://www.nagara.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=122>

Applications are due June 5, 2009. Everything you need to know in order to apply (including whom to contact for questions) is available at the web page. You can also send questions directly to galen.wilson@nara.gov.

ACT FAST!

You could be the next lucky recipient of a digitization grant!



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