



12-17-2019

Archives Annual Report, 2018-2019

Meg Miner
Illinois Wesleyan University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/ames_admin



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Miner, Meg, "Archives Annual Report, 2018-2019" (2019). *Administrative Reports*. 13.
https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/ames_admin/13

This Article is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

2018-2019 Tate Archives & Special Collections Report

Meg Miner, University Archivist & Special Collections Librarian
December 17, 2019

Staffing, Accessions and Service Summary

Three student assistants helped me to provide collections access and to process digital accessions during this year. The project archivist's work on the Kindred collection ended in Spring 2019 and so we officially accessioned it this year. I finalized the archival arrangement and student assistants took on the work of labeling folders and [inputting the schema](#) into our newly-acquired subscription to ArchivesSpace. In the summer, one additional student worked on digitized collections and I mentored a [graduate school intern](#) and hired one other student to support the project the intern engaged in.

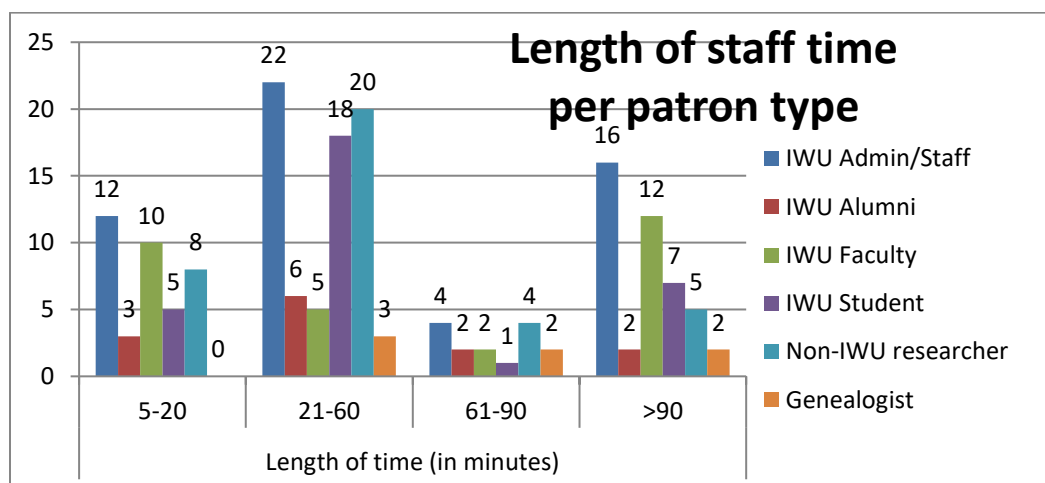
Staff support from Julie Wood and Tod Eagleton in Information Discovery & Systems (ID&S) allowed us to transition smoothly from our CARLI-hosted version of Archon to [ArchivesSpace](#) hosted by LibraryHost. The library also acquired an Omeka subscription at the request of a campus unit and I [built an exhibit in it](#) to become familiar with the uses of the application. Tod's work with my department ended in the spring when he made a lateral move to ITS due to the University's decision to make reductions in library positions. Both Julie and Amy Sutter continued harvesting selected e-records (distributed online and by email) for addition to DigitalCommons.

Our holdings grew by 91 linear feet and so our collections comprise 1464 linear feet total. We also accessioned 1.3 TB of digitized and born-digital materials.

We accommodated a total of 260 on-site visitors during this year. Faculty and students in 11 courses (Humanities and Social Sciences divisions), including one Gateway, one First Year Experience and one group of graduate students who were on campus for a summer seminar, used these collections. Archival and special collections materials were loaned for the purposes of a faculty member's use in the classroom presentations and for A/V media digitization and our collections and staff time contributed to five campus and other community activities.

We fulfilled 171 requests for full research support with 83 of them coming from faculty, staff or administrators. There were 188 patron encounters of a less research-intensive nature, 182 of whom were students or alumni.

We provided research support for 74 full research requests requiring between 21-60 minutes of staff time (up from 62 last year). There were 44 requests requiring ≥ 90 minutes of staff time (down from 54 last year).



Eight of this year's 11 class visits fell into >90 minute category but I am excluding them from the following analysis for the sake of examining the expenditure of staff time on individuals. Fourteen of the remaining 36 requests were for photographs. The University's image files are primarily comprised of approximately 40,000 [photographic negatives and contact sheets](#) and have minimal descriptions. There are an uncounted number of slides with even less descriptive details. Requests for images of specific individuals require an extensive amount of research followed by scanning to examine the quality of the available images. This was the case in the four longest time expenditures, between 15-20 hours each, that all originated with questions from campus Administrators or Staff. The only solution to reducing this time expenditure—devoting staff to a large-scale research and digitization project—is not feasible at this time. I anticipate that accommodating these needs on a case-by-case basis will continue.

Archives Accessions and Activities

Five archives accessions comprised in 4.8 linear feet and 1.309 TB of digital materials in eleven accessions were among this year's accruals. All but four of the digital accessions are from content delivered on media in previous years but only added this year due to a processing backlog.

The records of BFA alumna Marjorie Kouns '79 are the highlight of the University-related materials. Kouns is an accomplished artist in multiple media and she donated images and artifacts from her IWU installations and some promotional material from her career. I guided Summer 2019 Archives Intern Cynthia O'Neill as she assessed, processed and [described Kouns' collection](#) and conducted an [oral history interview](#) with the donor.

An unusual accession came in the form of panoramic photographs taken by the mason who supervised the bricklaying crew during the construction of The Ames Library. His photos provide a birds-eye view of campus and an unusual perspective of the construction site.

Most notable of archives-related activities was the research I conducted resulting in images and footage provided in support of an Advancement initiative. Communications compiled these sources and others into a film that played during the dinner honoring benefactors during Homecoming. Director of Marketing Andy Kreiss shared his views of the impact this work had on alumni: "I could hear several older alums around me audibly reacting with murmurs, oohs, and ahhs of recognition....The leg work you put in to unearth this content took this video to a whole new level."

I also created and staffed the usual Homecoming mini museum and made it possible for interested alumni to record oral histories during the weekend. The nearly day-long rains made me grateful for the Alumni Office's decision to end the practice of putting the museum in a tent and position the exhibits in the Memorial Center's Eckley Lounge this year. Now we can display our collections safely, regardless of the forecast, in a well-lit space. The foot traffic in that area is more consistent, too.

Special Collections Accessions and Activities

Accruals in special collections equaled 86 linear feet in twelve accessions and 14 GB in three born-digital accessions. The most significant of these is the Dave Kindred Collection. The acquisition was described in the [2015-2016](#) annual report and it is exciting to have such a substantive manuscript collection available to our community! We owe the consistency of the collection's analysis to Project Archivist Sarah Lindenbaum, who I was able to hire thanks to funding provided by Dave. After a 50-year sports writing career, the [archive of Dave's work](#) contains more than 300 of his reporter's notebooks; articles he's written; scrapbooks from his trips to cover the Olympics; materials related to the 12 books he's written; correspondence with

colleagues, readers, and research subjects; and memorabilia such as Muhammad Ali's boxing trunks. To provide some context for this material, the library commissioned staff in a professional studio to film a colleague of Dave's conducting an [interview about Dave's career](#).

Also notable among this year's other accessions are a collection of volumes printed by IWU's Blackstock Press, a fine press printing group founded by Professor of Art Fred Brian in 1969. The School of Art transferred their bound volumes and broadsides to us and we had all monographs cataloged. I made them accessible as a [single, named, special collection](#) and plan to cross-reference them to their named author/artist/printer in the archives' student and alumni files.

The University also transferred forty-two ceramics pieces from storage to the library at our request. Twentieth century Native American artists from Puebloan and Plains groups made them and collector Russell Mathis, Class of 1947, donated them to the University. Library staff conducting the campus art inventory identified the potential to complement the University's historic Pueblo pottery and basketry collection in the John Wesley Powell Rotunda. Now this highly visible teaching collection offers modern examples next to their earlier counterparts.

I used my departmental funds to purchase several hand-colored leaves from the 1493 incunabulum *Liber Chronicarum* (aka *The Nuremberg Chronicle*) and two manuscript leaves from the same era for use by our Latin courses. I made additional purchases that will benefit our local Environmental Studies collection, Beat-era poetry and more.

Most of this year's activities involved special collections. Our support for activities related to *The Year with the Saint John's Bible*, led by University Chaplain Elyse Nelson-Winger, continued through early Spring 2019 when the Chaplain returned the *Pentateuch* to Saint John's University.

Spring was unusually busy due to my role in hosting *Native Voices*, a joint exhibit of the American Library Association (ALA) and the National Library of Medicine (NLM). Tod Eagleton helped me install their six banners and corresponding iPads and created a complementary exhibit of his own from the University's Inuit art collection. I installed companion exhibits to our pottery collection (including the newly-accessioned items) and coordinated [four related events](#), three of which took place in The Ames Library, with Karen Schmidt and faculty in Anthropology and Nursing. Two of these events took place in the rotunda that holds our permanent exhibit of Puebloan material culture. Visitors and guest speakers alike commented on the suitability of this setting throughout the six weeks that we hosted the ALA/NLM exhibit.

Sarah Lindenbaum and I collaborated with Byron S. Tucci Professor of Hispanic Studies Carolyn Nadeau and Illinois State University's Associate Professor of Anthropology Kathryn Sampeck on exhibits we hosted on the library's entry-level. I curated materials donated by both faculty members and their [International Food Symposium](#) presenters as well as complementary selections of books from IWU's special collections. Dr. Nadeau called the exhibit "remarkable" and noted that the symposium attendees made connections between their areas of interest and the collections on display, including the permanent exhibit in the Powell Rotunda.

Cynthia O'Neill's summer internship included a formal preservation assessment of the [Leslie C. Arends Collection](#). The result of this work will guide me to the specific parts the collection that need preservation treatments. One additional benefit we gained by hosting her this summer was a connection she made for us to the Peoria Riverfront Museum. As a result, we've arranged a loan of some materials from the Arends Collection for their space-related exhibition this fall. Cynthia also created an [engaging exhibit of this material](#) for our Powell Rotunda this summer to mark the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing.

The final significant activity to report on for this year falls into the area of professional development. I participated in a course called "Born-Digital Materials in Special Collections" at the University of Virginia's Rare Book School this summer. Coursework involved digital

forensic techniques, policy frameworks, donor agreements and collection access processes for digital cultural heritage materials. This knowledge will directly benefit our ability to safely make the born-digital materials in our collections, most recently those included in the Dave Kindred Collection, accessible to researchers.

Progress on last year's goals

I completed one collection transfer item from the previous year thanks to the efforts of Gloria Redinger. She searched for suitable libraries for material that was acquired by the University in the 1980s but never formally accessioned to our library's holdings due to being duplicates or inappropriate for our repository.

My plan to expand Tod's role in archives and special collections did not take place due to his departure after the University revised his position.

I have made progress on the digital A/V holdings inventory I started last year but much work remains, including for recently digitized materials which have yet to be processed. I trained an Archives Student Assistants this summer and another in the fall on processing workflows.

I have not made any progress on my goal of receiving only native digital file formats as the archival copy for selected School of Music recordings.

Goals for 2019-2020

I plan to renew my efforts with members of the School of Music about the types of recordings that are of long-term value to the University and in what format will ensure their longevity.

Work will continue on processing the recently digitized A/V materials, updating the inventory and making links for the access copies that have companion records' locations in DigitalCommons. The latter will also require research and descriptive work to make contextual connections for patrons.

Based on the findings of our summer intern, I need to make a plan regarding the preservation needs she identified in the Arends Collection. Fortunately, these are fewer than I feared and our existing budget will cover any costs for outsourced work.

I would also like to identify another series of the University's Archives for reappraisal followed by input into ArchivesSpace with enhanced descriptions.