

# THE ARLIS/New York News

Art Libraries Society of New York  
a regional chapter of ARLIS/North America

Vol. 7 No. 4

Fall/Winter 1986

Greetings,

Yes folks it's holiday time again.  
The new officers of ARLIS/NY are: Vice Chair/Chair Elect: Ross Day ;  
Secretary: Adina Lerner ; Members-at-Large: Virginia Kerr and Edward  
Goodman. Congratulations to one and all.  
For Your Information --- Some of the New York chapter members who are  
actively involved with the annual conference are: Pat Barnett of the  
Watson Library at the Metropolitan Museum and Amy Lucker of the Brooklyn  
Museum are co-coordinators of Workshop II, Creating a Database on a PC-  
Indexing a Non-Print Collection using AAT; Pat Barnett is involved with the  
session Radical Uses of MARC Format for Non-Print Collections Utilizing  
AAT and is chair of the AAT Advisory Committee. Matthew Hogan of the  
Franklin Furnace is on the Muesham Committee and Bob Kaufman of the  
Costume Institute and Janice Ekdahl of MOMA serve on the Wittenborn  
Committee. Ross Day is moderating a pane discussion entitled Seeing  
with New Eyes: Re-Viewing Historic Ethnographic Photographs and will also  
chair the meeting of the Indigenous Arts and Cultures SIG. Likewise,  
Alison Pinsler will moderate the session Preserving and Maintaining the  
Moving Image and the chair an organizational meeting on film and video  
issues. Paula Baxter of MOMA and Russell Furgeson of the New Museum are  
on the panel Reference in the Art Library. Linda Swieszkowski and  
Stephen van Dyke of the Mid-Manhattan Library will discuss Collection  
Development of Art Techniques Materials. Linda will also host a meeting  
of the Professional Concerns Committee. Angela Giral of the Avery Library  
is involved with a number of sessions and meetings dealing with computers,  
including an overview of AVIDOR, the Avery project of indexing architectural  
drawings and putting them onto videodisc. Lastly, Clive Phillpot of MOMA  
heads the International Relations Committee.

If you have any copy my new address and phone numbers are: 40 Prospect  
Park W, Apt. 2F ; Brooklyn, NY 11215 ; 718-499-7275.  
Once again, please call Daniel Starr ASAP about the pot-luck.  
See you at the party/meeting.

*Alison Pinsler*



ARLIS/NY

ART LIBRARIES SOCIETY/NEW YORK

October 20, 1986

To: Chairs of ARLIS/NA Chapters

From: ARLIS/New York - Professional Concerns Committee

Re: Professional Concerns Open Discussion  
ARLIS/NA 15th Annual Conference -- Washington, D.C.  
Tuesday, February 17, 1987 5:00-6:30pm

The members of the Professional Concerns Committee (PCC) of the ARLIS/NY chapter would like you to join them for a discussion at the ARLIS/NA 1987 conference in Washington, D.C. We believe professional concerns should be addressed at the national level. What are "professional concerns?" The phrase begs ambiguity. For our purposes, however, we are defining "professional concerns" as those matters which transcend institutions and specializations, that is, the business aspect of being a librarian. As we approach parity with other professionals our needs extend beyond the discipline of information science. Addressing professional issues under the auspices of SIGs and TOLs confines these talks to an institutional or disciplinary perspective. We need to expand our perspectives and focus on our shared concerns. The need for a forum within ARLIS/NA to consider and debate these types of issues seems clear. The precedent has been set for support of librarians as professionals by other library organizations. Should ARLIS/NA undertake this type of support?

To familiarize yourselves with the kinds of issues we have been discussing we're enclosing a copy of a questionnaire which the PCC distributed to the ARLIS/NY membership. In brief, the issues are parity, advanced degrees, financial security, ethics, salary, continuing education. We're presently planning a series of programs for our membership treating these issues.

In addition to the aforementioned issues we have considered: 1) the impact of technology/automation on art librarianship. With the exciting advances in shared cataloging and information retrieval have come significant changes in the role and function of the cataloger and reference librarian. Cataloging activities are becoming both more complex and more clerical, as are aspects of reference work. How will this clerical trend affect currently practising librarians? 2) Many times, in either a union or a non-union institution an employee has nowhere to turn for support when a problem arises in the workplace. Where does the individual librarian turn for advice or council? Should ARLIS/NA consider providing a pro bono attorney to provide legal council in these situations?

We recognize that not all of these issues are of concern to the entire ARLIS/NA membership; indeed, there are other important issues that could be considered under the aegis of a professional concerns forum. We hope that you share our interest and would like to meet with us to exchange ideas and opinions. Please bring this matter before your membership and let us hear from you. We have arranged for a meeting room at the conference hotel. Our meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 17, 1987 at 5:00-6:30pm.

*Linda Swieszkowski*

L. Stanislava Swieszkowski, Chair  
ARLIS/NY Professional Concerns Committee

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HOLIDAY MEETING

THURSDAY, 11 DECEMBER, 1986

Center for Arts Information  
1285 6th Ave. (between 51st & 52nd Sts.)

5:30pm

Our annual holiday meeting will be in the new quarters of the Center for Arts Information. (See the summer issue of FYI:For Your Information for background information.) Laura Green, Director of Information Systems and Services, will give us a tour and a talk about the Center.

A grand pot-luck will be our refreshments, so PLEASE call Daniel to let him know what you will bring. ARLIS/NY will provide the drinks and WILL reimburse you for the food. Call Daniel Starr at 212-708-9440. Let's make this our best-fed meeting!

TOURS

There will be two tours of the Equitable Art Collection preceding the meeting. Each tour can accommodate 15 people, so reservations are essential. Please fill out the form and mail it as soon as possible. Each tour will last ½ hour and will begin at 4:00 and 4:30. Between the tours and the meeting you can visit the Whitney's branch in the Equitable Center and see Thomas Hart Benton's "America Today" murals and commissions by Roy Lichtenstein, Sandro Chia, Scott Burton and Sol LeWitt; tour the Paine Webber Gallery; run over to the Museum of Modern Art or the new American Crafts Museum; or finish your shopping at Saks!

NAME:

PHONE:

I shall \_\_\_\_ / shall not \_\_\_\_ attend the meeting.

I will bring \_\_\_\_\_ for the refreshments table.

I would like to go on the 4:00 tour \_\_\_\_.

I would like to go on the 4:30 tour \_\_\_\_.

Mail to Daniel Starr ; MOMA ; 11 W. 53 St. ; NYC 10019

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Wednesday, November 12, 1986  
William A. Gillard Lecture  
St. John's University

Speaker: John N. Berry III,  
Editor Library Journal

Topic: Who's Qualified to Qualify: Professionals & Library Education

Berry began his presentation by refuting charges that the MLS is dead, citing the high placement statistics for MLS graduates. The good news regarding salaries was that many state library associations have adopted a salary of \$20,000 as the minimum amount to be paid to a beginning librarian. He did mention, however, that mid-career librarians face the problem of no positions to advance into and consequently they remain at salaries not commensurate with their experience.

We cannot, according to Berry, as we so often do, look to law and medicine as examples of healthy professions. Law is glutted with practitioners and medicine is suffering from public distrust and besieged by a grassroots citizen healthcare movement. I felt that, unfortunately, Berry was mistaken in his belief that law and medicine are beleaguered professions. They look awfully healthy from the outside!

Professionalism is a term which can only be attributed meaningfully to individuals -- a state of mind. While librarians have assumed the professional model for librarianship, this has not convinced those whom we serve of our professionalism. Berry did not mention a remedy. Historically, we're a new profession. It has only been thirty-nine years since graduate education was established as the prerequisite to holding a library position. The hoped for elevation of library science to a true science never occurred. Consequently we've made slow progress. Critics trace the undoing of our "profession" to situations such as: the massive Federal downgrading of librarians which has been only temporarily stayed; "Vartanization," or the hiring of "distinguished members" of other professions to head libraries, e.g., V. Gregorian, D. Boorstin, and so forth; and the use of paraprofessionals as a device to stretch the personnel budget.

Our cherished faith in our rightful place as information professionals in the "New Information Age" may be dashed. Why? Berry didn't say. But, he saw our role as the spokespeople for the information poor. Librarians, e.g., public information professionals, would be serving our clients, providing confidential service and acting as activists we would be fighting for the "right to knowledge." Contrary to the medical profession we should not make ourselves into an elite, in other words accreditation and certification are both inappropriate and unnecessary. "Let's create a free society and help every citizen to become a librarian (a person capable of finding the information they need.)" The audience's comments ranged from polite mentions of idealism and utopian ideas to disagreement.

## A REPORT FROM THE ARLIS/NY AVERY INDEX SESSION

The online Avery Index training seminar, cosponsored by ARLIS/NY and Columbia University took place on the rainy afternoon of November 11th. Twenty-two ARLIS members met at the Avery Library and were taken to one of the newly renovated online training classrooms at Columbia's School of Library Service where the session was held. Avery Indexers Ted Goodman, Janice Woo and Virginia Kerr demonstrated how the Avery can be searched as a RLIN special database. Ted began with a brief history of the Index and also discussed some of the production aspects. Janice followed with a step-by-step run through of the RLIN search commands and index codes. As the two-hour session drew to a close, Virginia described the Index's broad subject scope and coverage.

In response to an informal questionnaire, over half of those present indicated that their libraries are RLIN users; eleven of the attendees had used the printed Avery Index and only one person had experience searching the online version. However, other RLIN special databases had been searched by three people while the RLIN catalog system had been used by seven. About half the attendees also mentioned that their libraries use DIALOG and other online systems.

To accommodate this diverse audience the session also covered basic RLIN search techniques as well as the more advanced aspects of searching peculiar to the Avery Index. Everyone agreed that they learned about the Avery Index and some felt that they had also been taught something about RLIN and online databases in general. A few of the attendees indicated that there were still areas that had not been totally explained and eight people thought it would be good for ARLIS/NY to sponsor a repeat session since fifteen pre-registered people were unable to attend. Eight wanted sessions on database searching policies and procedures and five were interested in a database searchers 'rap' group. Other suggestions were seminars on how to create an in-house database and how to cope with archaic structures in subject headings. It's commonly thought that art librarians aren't techno cognoscenti, but it seems that the librarians of ARLIS/NY are ready and willing to enter the online environment.

Janice Woo

The executive board of ARLIS/NY is currently discussing another seminar at the Avery Library and a variety of other computer sessions and workshops, as well as cosponsoring a meeting with the museum computer group CIAO Manhattan.

Alison Pinsler