



ARLIS / New York News

The Newsletter of the Art Libraries Society of North America/New York Metro Chapter

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Spring 1997

FROM THE CHAIR

The first event of the new year, a tour of H.W. Wilson Company and Art Index, was a resounding success. Equally gratifying was the response on ARLIS-L to our posting of a description of the tour. The news that H.W. Wilson was considering retrospective conversion of the Art Index touched off a lively discussion, with ARLIS-L subscribers debating the cost benefits of vocabulary control, the value of selective versus comprehensive conversion, and the merits of Web access versus CD-ROM. We look forward to hearing more about Art Index's plans in San Antonio, where Alison Dickey, the editor of Art Index, will preside over a Continental breakfast and talk on April 7th from 7 to 8 a.m.

The year, none of our members will be attending the ARLIS/NA conference with the aid of an ARLIS/NY travel award. We normally offer two awards, one for a student member and one for a professional librarian; this year, there were no applicants. Is this heartening evidence that the economy is really and truly on the upswing (Alan Greenspan, you done good!), or should we look for some other explanation? Are the awards too meager? Too lavish? (Surely not.) Insufficiently publicized? Offered too late in the year? Please let the Board know; all of us (except the Treasurer) like giving away money.

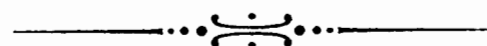
While in San Antonio, be sure to attend the AskARLIS session on "Building Successful ARLIS/NA

Chapters." Two former New York Chapter chairs, Eumie Imm Stroukoff and Alexandria de Luise, will be participating in the program. It's a good opportunity to share ideas for programming, and to learn what other chapters are up to.

You may have noticed that recent Chapter meetings and events have been held during the day, rather than the evening. The timing of events is sometimes dictated by the preferences of the institutions which host the events, but we often have a choice between daytime and evening. The Board feels that a mixture is the best way to ensure that everyone gets the chance to attend at least some of the meetings. The large turnout for recent events, such as the Art Index tour and the Spring meeting at New York Public Library, suggests that daytime programs are popular with members. We would be interested, though, in hearing from members about which times they prefer, and why.

If you are one of the 38 members who has not renewed for 1997, get in touch with Shawn Steidinger, our Secretary (e-mail: steiding@interport.net; phone: (212) 650-2438). Renewal ensures that you will be listed in the directory, and will receive the newsletter and mailings about upcoming events. On the horizon are a spring tour of Ocker & Trapp Library Bindery, a summer picnic in the park, a fall tour of Greenwood Cemetery, and who knows what other delights still to be announced.

--Elizabeth O'Keefe



◆H.W. WILSON TOUR

Thirty-three ARLIS/NY members turned out for the February 3, 1997, tour of H.W. Wilson Company. We were given a tour of the printing and binding departments (H.W. Wilson still does this on-site, rather than contracting the work out), then conducted through the abstracting and indexing division. Every index has its own domain, and its own set of journal subscriptions. Many subscriptions are multiples, since there is quite a lot of overlap among the various indexes. Since they are working against deadlines, it's crucial that every issue arrive on time; if an issue goes missing, the indexers will rush off to a library to locate a copy.

Every index maintains its own subject file, usually based on Library of Congress Subject Headings, but more current and more specific, as befits the requirements of periodical indexes. A central office maintains a master list of all subjects used; they are working on reconciling and merging the various subject headings, to facilitate retrieval in a system where one can search all or some of the files simultaneously.

There is also an abstracting unit located far afield in Dublin, Ireland. Abstracting is done after the indexing is completed; the abstracters work with the indexing record in hand. Abstracts are available only online. Art Index has abstracting from January 1994; you can get a CD-ROM with just the indexing, or with both indexing and abstracting.

Alison Dickey, editor of Art Index, talked about their indexing practices, and asked for comments, including suggestions on new journals to add to their coverage. Art Index will consider indexing electronic journals; the main concerns are stability, how well-archived, and how useful these electronic journals are. A committee of librarians reviews very small-press magazines and journals to decide which should be indexed. They index virtually cover to cover, excluding only brief squibs. There is considerable overlap among various H.W. Wilson indexes. This makes developing a shared subject indexing vocabulary more difficult, since the level of specificity required will naturally vary, depending on the focus of the index. They are working on it, though.

We saw a demo of the Web version of Art Index (still in test mode, but it looked pretty good to us). WilsonWeb, as it's called, will offer multiple databases (24, initially); users will be able to subscribe to one or many. A 60-day trial period will be available. Later, they plan to offer full-text files. Perhaps most alluring to art historians, they are considering converting the pre-1984 printed volumes of Art Index into electronic form. A huge task, what with reconciling the subject headings and all, but what a resource.

The ARLIS/NY members who attended the tour give H.W. Wilson staff four stars for hospitality and for interest in user input.

--Elizabeth O'Keefe

MEMORIAL FOR GEORGE SIMOR

A memorial for George Simor, who died on July 3, 1996, will be held on Sunday, April 20, 1997, at 2 p.m. The memorial will take place at The Puck Building, 295 Lafayette Street, New York, 2nd floor (Pratt Institute School of Information and Library Science). All our members who knew George Simor or his wife, Suzanna, a long-time member of the Chapter, are most welcome to attend.

--Elizabeth O'Keefe

◆ARLIS/NY MEMORIAL FUND

The Chapter invites contributions to the fund from those who wish to memorialize deceased colleagues, friends, and family, or to honor the living by celebrating some milestone or professional achievement. Tax-deductible contributions will be used to support special lectures, workshops, seminars, tours, and other Chapter-sponsored events promoting the continuing education and professional development of those working in the field of art librarianship.

Contributions may be sent to:
Chris Sala, ARLIS/NY Treasurer
601 W. 113th Street, #4E
New York, NY 10025

Please make your check out to ARLIS/NY, and indicate the person you wish to honor.

MEMORIAL FUND CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions in honor of George Simor have been received from:

Paula Gabbard

Lois Hacker

Lydia E. Last

Maria Oldal

Philip Rees

Eleanor M. Townsend

The Chapter gratefully acknowledges all your contributions.

☉SPRING MEETING

Approximately 52 ARLIS/NY members braved the blustery weather to gather together on Monday, March 3, 1997, for the Spring meeting. They met the New York Public Library's Art Division, where the theme of the program was *The Perils and Successes of Curating Art Book Exhibitions*.

Liz O'Keefe, Chair of ARLIS/NY, led the afternoon with a brief business meeting. She mentioned two future meetings of interest to Chapter members: the Catalogers Discussion Group on March 10 and the New York Technical Services Librarians spring meeting on March 14. She noted that two previous ARLIS/NY Chairs, Alexandra de Luise and Eumie Imm Stroukoff, would be participating in the AskARLIS session "Building Successful Chapters" at the San Antonio annual conference. Liz then announced the George Simor Memorial Service to be held at the Puck Building on April 20.

The first guest speaker was Robert Rainwater, Assistant Director of Special Collections and Curator of the Spencer Collection. Mr. Rainwater recounted the history of the Spencer Collection, which grew out of the private collection of William Augustus Spencer who died on the Titanic in 1912. In his will, Spencer donated his collection of 322 finely bound books to the New York Public Library and set up a fund for purchasing a collection of the "Art of the Book." Today the Spencer Collection includes Western and Islamic manuscripts, in addition to 400 Japanese manuscripts and scrolls. These works are accessible through facsimiles and finely illustrated publications about the collection; in

addition, the original material can also be made available for research purposes.

Mr. Rainwater also discussed his curatorial role in a series of collaborations with contemporary artists at the New York Public Library. This began five years ago with the well-received Christian Boltanski exhibition, which developed into the Contemporary Artist Exhibition Series. Since then, Richard Long, Lawrence Weiner, and Richard Tuttle have also collaborated with Mr. Rainwater to exhibit their works at the New York Public Library and to create highly acclaimed and unique publications which serve as the catalogs for the exhibitions.

Heidi Winston, Librarian at the New York Public Library, was the second guest speaker. Ms. Winston spoke about her role as a first time curator for the art book exhibition, *Artful Interiors: Rooms with a View*. She discussed both the positive and negative aspects of the exhibition experience. The New York Public Library with its wealth of resources, funding, and interdepartmental support within the institution made the curatorial process easier. But lack of time and workspace to devote to the exhibition, in addition to New York City's diversity and competition in exhibition planning, were some of the frustrating aspects mentioned by Ms. Winston.

Paula Baxter, Curator of the Art and Architecture Collection and co-curator of *Artful Interiors*, spoke about the pitfalls and unpleasant aspects of curating an exhibition. Some of the challenges in curatorship mentioned were the struggles and politics involved within the institution. Paula's criteria for exhibition planning were to tie the exhibition to the institution and its collections; to be realistic about the work load involved in conjunction with your regular job; to be aware of potential viewers' expectations; and to realize the importance of promoting art.

After a series of questions from the floor, the program ended with members viewing the two exhibitions and marveling at the beautiful works of Richard Tuttle and fine illustrations included in *Artful Interiors*.

--Eumie Imm Stroukoff

◆ PROFILE: RALPH OCKER

Skill at binding rare volumes and beautifully restored works... High quality bindings and fine workmanship... These descriptions apply to the work of Ocker & Trapp Library Bindery. Many leading university, museum, public and special libraries regularly ship their materials to this well-known and respected bindery company for binding and rebinding. In addition to customers in the region, orders are shipped from all over the country. And many of us know Ralph Ocker, President of the Company.

Ralph Ocker has been a friend to libraries for many years. He has also been a special friend to ARLIS/NY. He is an individual member of the Chapter, and many ARLIS/NY institutions have benefitted from Ralph's insightful knowledge and advice about the bookbinding process. His generosity and reputation have made him well-known, but what else do we know about Ralph? Here is his story...

Ralph Ocker was born in 1933 in Stuttgart, Germany. His parents strongly opposed Hitler's Nazi regime and suffered with many during the war years. Because of the Allied bombing raids, Ralph was evacuated to live in the countryside with relatives in Schwabisch Gmund when he was 10 years of age. In this little town, Ralph came across a bookbinding shop and had his first introduction to the art of bookbinding.

Ralph and his parents were reunited in 1945. At the age of 15, he enrolled as a bookbinding apprentice in a Stuttgart edition bindery where he learned about machine operations for mass-produced binding. After three years of training, he passed the test as an industrial bookbinder, then graduated as a Journeyman. Ralph continued to learn more about the trade by enrolling in fine hand-binding courses given by the local bookbinders' guild, and then also worked in a different bindery to further his experience.

At 18 years of age, Ralph, repulsed by Germany's war crimes and politics, decided to leave Germany and began to apply for a visa to the United States. He could not come to the States without a

sponsor, but the Canadian borders were open during the 1950s. In 1954, Ralph arrived in Canada and found a job as a farm worker in Alberta. After a series of adventurous jobs during that year, Ralph found a sponsor in the United States through a good friend. In November 1955, Ralph motorcycled his way through a camping trip to Vancouver, San Francisco, and then arrived in New York.

Ralph worked at F.M. Charlton, a trade bindery in Manhattan; at Dess & Talan Library Bindery in the Bronx; and at Jos. Brown Bindery, a trade and short-run edition bindery. He married Christa Holder in 1957 -- they are the proud parents of three sons and one daughter and have four happy grandchildren. Ralph wanted to start his own bindery and in 1962 founded Central Bookbinding Company, which specialized in fine and hand-binding. He dissolved this venture and founded Ocker & Trapp Library Bindery in 1964, with his partner Herbert Trapp. From the beginning, the emphasis was on high quality standards and customer service for libraries. One of Ralph's sons, Peter, continues his father's love of bookbinding and has become a partner in Ocker & Trapp. His responsibilities in production and administration include keeping up with the newest bindery innovations and bringing the latest automated equipment to the company.

The work of the conservation department at Ocker & Trapp reflects Ralph's lifelong interest in fine bindings. Millie Suter, director of the conservation department, handles rare bindings, deacidification, encapsulation, restoration, and preservation photocopying. Both Ralph and Millie are members of the American Institute for Conservation, the Guild of Bookworkers, and other professional associations.

Today Ralph has a successful and highly respected bindery. He is well-known for his generosity and caring manner toward his employees and his customers. His love of fine bookbinding and enthusiasm for the art of the book shine through in his dealings with librarians.

--Eumie Imm Stroukoff



NEWS OF MEMBERS

Welcome new members:

Joy Kestenbaum, student at the Palmer School, part-time reference librarian at the Cooper Union, and adjunct associate professor at the New York Institute of Technology

Carol Kleinert, librarian at the Thomas J. Watson Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art

Tom McNulty, art librarian at Bobst Library, New York University

Roland Samieske, systems librarian at the Thomas J. Watson Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art

--Shawn Steidinger

Congratulations:

Maria Oldal has been appointed Head of Cataloguing and Database Maintenance at the Pierpont Morgan Library. In her new position, she will be responsible for providing support for current book cataloguing operations, and for helping plan an institution-wide collection information system. The MARC-based system

will list all the Library's holdings (including books, manuscripts, drawings, seals, and archives), and have the capacity to link bibliographic records with images and full-text.

Maria has worked at the Morgan Library as a cataloguer since 1991. In 1995-1996, Maria was Moderator of the Cataloguing Section of ARLIS/NA, and from 1995 to 1997, she served as ARLIS/NY Secretary.

--Elizabeth O'Keefe

ARLIS/NY in San Antonio:

❖ Coordinators for business meetings and discussion groups:

Kitty Chibnik (Architecture Section)

Sherman Clarke (ArtNACO and Cataloging Problems Discussion Group)

Deborah Kempe (AAT Advisory Committee)
Betsy Peck Learned (Chapter Officers' Breakfast)

Daniel Starr (Cataloging Advisory Committee)

Evalyn Stone (Museum Library Division)

Eumie Imm Stroukoff (Gerd Muehsam Award)

Kay Teel (Cataloging Section)

❖ Session and Ask ARLIS moderators:

Peter Blank (*Under Exposed: 19th Century Photography, and Keeping Pace: The New(est) Art Histories: What Are They, Why Are They, and What Do We Do About Them?*)

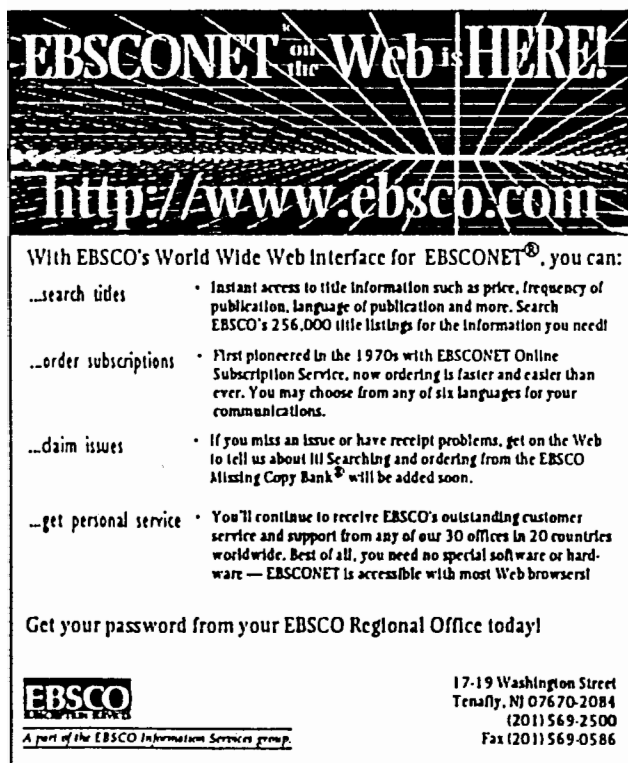
Sherman Clarke (*False Economies?: Balancing Quality and the Bottom Line in Providing Access to our Collections*)

Greta Earnest (*Apples and Oranges: Juggling Visual and Verbal Reference Queries*)

Linda M. Kruger (*Every Trade a Business, Every Business Not a Trade: The Commerce and Uses of Trade Catalogs*)

Deirdre E. Lawrence (*The Literature and Images of Mexican Art - Historical and Contemporary*)

Betsy Peck Learned (*Building Successful ARLIS/NA Chapters*)



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❖ Session and Ask ARLIS panelists:
 Paula Baxter (*Four Directions: Viewing the Ethnic Decorative Arts of the Southwest: A Panel Discussion*)
 Peter Blank (*False Economies?: Balancing Quality and the Bottom Line in Providing Access to our Collections*)
 Kitty Chibnik (*Art and Architecture Initiatives at RLG*)
 Sherman Clarke (*Tiptoeing into the Closet: Que(e)rying, Building, and Accessing Our Collections*)
 Alexandria de Luise (*Building Successful ARLIS/NA Chapters*)
 Ted Goodman (*Discovering Our Past and Tracing Our Histories: The Early Leaders and Founders of Art Libraries*)
 Deborah Kempe (*What Can Art/Architecture Librarians and Visual Resources Curators Learn From Each Other?*)
 Clayton C. Kirking (*The Literature and Images of Mexican Art - Historical and Contemporary*)
 Linda M. Kruger (*False Economies?: Balancing Quality and the Bottom Line in Providing Access to our Collections; and Every Trade a Business, Every Business Not a Trade: The Commerce and Uses of Trade Catalogs*)

Deidre E. Lawrence (*The Literature and Images of Mexican Art - Historical and Contemporary*)
 Julie Mellby (*Under Exposed: 19th Century Photography*)
 Kenneth Soehner (*Are We Equal Partners? Managing Publication Exchange Programs in the 90s*)
 Eumie Imm Stroukoff (*Building Successful ARLIS/NA Chapters*)

NEWS OF LIBRARIES

The John McEnroe Library of the New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting & Sculpture, a non-profit art school, is seeking donations of the following:

- ◆ Reference books -- encyclopedias (OED would be ideal), art dictionaries, foreign language dictionaries, ALA directory, Official Museum Directory, Who's Who in American Art, Art Index, art history surveys, etc.
 - ◆ Artists' monographs (any)
 - ◆ Museum catalogs
 - ◆ Library shelving, files to hold magazines, etc.
 - ◆ Computers (we do not have an OPAC)
- We are a new art library with extremely limited resources and funding, so any donation

would be very much appreciated. If you do not have anything, but know of an institution or individual who does, please let me know.

Thanks!

Please contact: Yvette Cortes, Librarian

New York Studio School
 8 West 8th Street

New York, NY 10011

Phone: (212) 473-5932

E-mail:

ycortes@vax.simmons.edu

--Yvette Cortes

The Uris Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art, will be vacated

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and closed for several months beginning August 1, 1997, due to construction in the Greek and Roman wing. Uris Library will continue to serve their staff and teachers, but will not be open to the general public.

--Emily Roth

□ ARLIS/NY PORTFOLIOS

Due to popular demand, ARLIS/NY is selling the "2nd edition" of its clear portfolios. This 2nd edition portfolio will be a smoky tint, with the famous skyline design... but the price is still only \$10.00! We will be selling them at the ARLIS/NA conference in San Antonio. Use them to carry your conference papers and show your support of ARLIS/NY! For further information or to place your order, contact Eumie Imm Stroukoff at (212) 708-9441 or eimm@moma.org.

□ TOUR OF OCKER & TRAPP LIBRARY BINDERY

ARLIS/NY is pleased to sponsor a tour of Ocker & Trapp Library Bindery.

❖ When: Saturday, May 10, 1997 at 9 a.m. sharp.

❖ Where: A van, graciously provided by Mr. Ocker, will pick people up at 40th Street and 5th Avenue (southeast corner of 5th Ave.) in Manhattan.

The van will leave promptly at 9 a.m. Attendees will be driven back to New York after the tour at 1 p.m., to arrive back in Manhattan by 2 p.m.

SPACE IS LIMITED, so please RSVP by April 28 to Elizabeth O'Keefe at (212) 685-0008.

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Send renewals, changes of address, and contributions to: Shawn Steidinger, Secretary of ARLIS/NY, Thomas J. Watson Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10028.

Editor: Kay Teel. Submissions may be sent via e-mail to: teelk@elmer1.bobst.nyu.edu, via fax (with cover sheet): (212) 995-4366, or on 3-1/2" IBM-compatible diskette with paper copy of text to: 57 Second Avenue #51, New York, NY 10003-8612. If you have questions about content, deadlines, or format, please call during daytime hours: (212) 998-2488.

1997 deadlines for ARLIS/NY News:
Vol. 18, no. 3 (Summer 1997): May 14
Vol. 18, no. 4 (Fall 1997): November 15

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