

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

ISSN 2150 - 8534

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Published and archived at  
the ARLIS/NY website,  
[www.arlisny.org](http://www.arlisny.org)

Two issues per year

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# ARLIS/NY News

Vol. 28, No. 2

Fall 2009 / Winter 2010

## Letter from the Chair

by Christina Peter, Frick Art Reference Library

Dear Members and Friends of ARLIS/NY:

It is my great pleasure to invite you all to the ARLIS/NY  
Holiday Party.

As one of our first programs of the year, we visited the  
Library of the Bard Graduate Center for the Decorative Arts in its  
temporary location.

With the expansion project now completed, Chief Librarian  
Heather Topcik has invited us back for our festive holiday party.  
Please come to tour the new library, to enjoy the views of the Upper  
West Side, to celebrate with your colleagues, and to welcome your  
new ARLIS/NY board.

Date:  
Thursday, December 10, 2009

Time:  
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Location:  
Bard Graduate Center Library  
38 W. 86th Street  
(between Columbus Ave. and Central Park West)

You can learn more about the BGC Library at  
<http://www.bgc.bard.edu/research/library.html>

Please RSVP to Christina Peter by Tuesday, December 8  
([peter@frick.org](mailto:peter@frick.org) or 212-547-0691). I look forward to seeing you and  
celebrating another great year for ARLIS/NY! ❖

# Metanews

by Karyn Hinkle, Bard Graduate Center

The serials and cataloguing librarians among us will notice that ARLIS/NY News has a new ISSN. Board member Elizabeth Lilker first wondered if our change from a newsletter distributed to members through the mail to one distributed in PDF form online might warrant a new ISSN, and the Library of Congress's ISSN Publisher Liaison Section staff agreed that it did – they have supplied us with ISSN 2150 – 8534 for use from now into the future.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you'd like to be published in ARLIS/NY News. We accept submissions on all ARLIS/NY events and any other topics of interest to our membership.

This issue, for instance, contains member reports on some of the ARLIS/NY events that took place this summer, and a report by Dolores Davies of UCSD on a new archives initiative our colleagues at NYU Libraries will embark on with the library staffs at UCSD and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I enjoyed collecting them! ❖

## NYU Libraries Will Collaborate with the Libraries at the University of Illinois and UC San Diego to Create a New Archival Management Tool

submitted by Dolores Davies, UC San Diego

*Mellon Foundation Grant to fund merging of Archivists' Toolkit and Archon:*

The University of California, San Diego; New York University; and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Libraries are teaming up to develop a next-generation archival management tool, thanks to a grant in the amount of \$539,000 from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

The grant will support the planning and design of a new software tool for the description and management of archives, based on the combined capabilities of Archivists' Toolkit™ (AT) and Archon™. The two predominant open-source archival tools are currently utilized by numerous academic libraries, special collections, archives, and museums worldwide, including universities like UCLA and Harvard, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the San Diego Zoo, and smaller archival repositories like the Niels Bohr Archives in Denmark and the Biblioteca Ateneu Barcelonès in Spain. Planning activities will include the development of a next-generation architectural framework as well as a complete review of the new archival tool's required and desirable functional specifications. Members of the archival community will be consulted during the planning and product development stages.

"This project will capitalize on the functional strengths of both AT and Archon," said Brian E. C. Schottlaender, the Audrey Geisel University Librarian at UC San Diego and the principal investigator for the project. "This will result in a superior archival software tool and a long-term sustainability plan for the integrated product. We are grateful to The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for its support and look forward to collaborating with our partners, NYU and the University of Illinois, on this significant undertaking."

*(continues on page 3)*

*(new archives tool continued from page 2)*

According to Schottlaender, archivists across the globe have already registered their support for the development of the new archival tool. While AT and Archon have their own well-developed communities of support, most agree that Archon's access features, combined with AT's strong archival management attributes, will result in the design of a unique and even more powerful archival data management system that will greatly benefit the archival community and scholars worldwide. At a time when libraries are increasingly interested in putting primary research materials online, this new system will allow them to do so much more efficiently, while exposing previously hidden archival collections to scholars.

Schottlaender and UC San Diego Libraries will serve as the lead institution in the development of the new archival tool, sharing project oversight with Carol A. Mandel, Dean of Libraries at New York University, and Paula Kaufman, Dean of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library. UC San Diego and NYU Libraries sponsored the development of AT, released to the public in 2006; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library supported the development of Archon, also released in 2006.

AT archivist Bradley Westbrook of UC San Diego Libraries and Archon archivists Christopher Prom and Scott Schwartz will form the archives team for the AT/Archon integration project. They are charged with the single task of determining the functional requirements and drafting specifications for the integrated application.

In 2008, the AT received the C. F. Coker award from the Society of American Archivists for its "tremendous impact on archival practice and promotion and adoption of descriptive standards." Last year, Westbrook received the Archival Award of Excellence from the California Historical Records Advisory Board for his work on the AT. Archon has also been recognized for its impact, receiving (with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library) a Mellon Award for Technology Collaboration in 2008.

The UC San Diego Libraries, ranked among the top 25 public academic research libraries in the nation, play an integral role in advancing and supporting the university's research, teaching, patient care, and public service missions. The nine libraries that make up the UCSD Library system provide access to more than 7 million digital and print volumes, journals, and multimedia materials to meet the knowledge demands of scholars, students, and members of the public. Each day, more than 7,300 people stream through the university's nine libraries, and the Libraries' vast resources and services are accessed more than 87,500 times via the UCSD Libraries' website.

The collections of the NYU Division of Libraries support the curricular and research needs of faculty and students with over 5 million print volumes, 68,000 serial subscriptions, 50,000 electronic journals, 105,000 audio and video recordings, and 25,000 linear feet of archival material. The collections are uniquely strong in the performing arts, radical and labor history, and New York City history and avant-garde culture. The Division of Libraries includes the flagship Elmer Holmes Bobst Library on Washington Square and the libraries of the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences, the Institute of Fine Arts, the Real Estate Institute, and the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign University Library is central to the intellectual life of the University. By providing and stewarding collections and content that comprise a current and retrospective record of human knowledge and by offering a wide array of services, it enhances the University's activities in creating knowledge, preparing students for lives of impact, and addressing critical societal needs. The Library integrates and manages knowledge to enable learning and the creation of new knowledge. ❖

# The ARLIS/NY Summer Picnic at the Noguchi Museum and Socrates Sculpture Park

by Rachel Frank, student member

On Saturday, June 27th, members of ARLIS/NY met at the Socrates Sculpture Garden near the Noguchi Museum in Astoria for a wonderful event. It was a gorgeous, sunny day at the Sculpture Garden. We spread out a potluck picnic and enjoyed a variety of delicious foods and conversation on a blanket in a shady spot.

We also walked through the Makers Market, a craft and design fair set up in the park where local artists were showing recent work for sale.

Finally, we crossed the street to the Noguchi Museum, which opened in 1985 to house the sculptures of Isamu Noguchi, whose studio was once located nearby. The Museum building originally housed a photo-engraving plant. It was gutted and kept raw and unfinished as a bare environment for the sculptures. ARLIS/NY was grateful to Amy Hau, who led us on a tour through the Noguchi Museum, including the recently renovated museum garden.

At the end of her tour, we had the option to stay for a panel discussion at the Noguchi Museum about the Makers Market across the street. ❖



Socrates Sculpture Park  
Photo by Suz Massen



Picnic!  
Photo by Suz Massen

More photos from ARLIS/NY events can be found on our website ([www.arlisny.org](http://www.arlisny.org)), and on our flickr page ([www.flickr.com/photos/arlisny](http://www.flickr.com/photos/arlisny)). Check them out!

# ARLIS/NY Visits the New-York Historical Society Library

by Elizabeth O'Keefe, The Morgan Library & Museum

On Wednesday, June 3, Chapter members gathered in the reading room of the New-York Historical Society for a presentation on the library's collections and services. Reference librarians Joseph Ditta and Sue Kriete described the genesis of the Society: it was founded in 1804 by prominent New Yorkers who wished to memorialize the recent War of Independence and the city's and the state's past. A selection from the library's holdings was on view, illustrating the institution's evolving collecting philosophy.

For the first century of its existence, art works and cultural curios from many cultures and periods were added to its holdings. But over time, the institution recognized that a more focused approach was preferable, and some of the holdings acquired during the earlier phase of collecting have migrated to other cultural institutions. For example, the core of the Brooklyn Museum's magnificent Egyptian collection was acquired from the New-York Historical Society, first on loan and eventually as a transfer of ownership. Current policy is to acquire chiefly material documenting the history of the United States, New York City, and New York state.

The works and objects on display for our visit illustrated some of the strengths of the collections: there were printed ephemera, such as a handbill trumpeting the remarkable feats of an armless woman who cut out silhouettes with her toes, and a poster advertising an exhibition of the Egyptian treasures; prints, such as a Currier and Ives and a selection of political cartoons; correspondence between historical figures, such as a begging letter from Gilbert Stuart to Benjamin

West, which was eloquent enough to win win Stuart a place as his pupil and assistant; a major collection of American newspapers, which includes rarities such as Civil-War-era newspapers printed on wallpaper (the Northern blockade made ordinary paper unavailable in the South); and historic photographs of New York City. The librarians also described the various means of accessing information on the collections (much of the material is described in records residing in NYU's BobCat; finding aids and in-house databases are other sources), and described Reading Room procedures. No special credentials are required to conduct research in the library, and no appointment is normally needed, except for research on the print collection.

ARLIS members who sampled the library's quirky holdings on this visit will certainly be tempted to return as researchers. ❖

## Reach ARLIS/NY members through ARLIS/NY News

Contact board member Charlotte Priddle, ARLIS/NY Development Coordinator ([cpriddle@nyss.org](mailto:cpriddle@nyss.org)), if you'd like to place a newsletter ad with us.