

ARLIS/NA

THE MEDIUM

NEWSLETTER OF THE TEXAS CHAPTER

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Milan R. Hughston, Editor
Amon Carter Museum
Fort Worth

ARLIS/NA CONFERENCE IN DALLAS/FORT WORTH IN 1988?

Last spring's issue of this newsletter featured the news that ARLIS/NA was not coming to Dallas in 1985. However, this spring we are happy to report that the Executive Board is very serious about holding a national conference in the Dallas-Fort Worth area in 1988. To that end, ARLIS/NA Executive Director Pam Parry visited the area in early April to meet with a group of Dallas-Fort Worth art librarians. The meeting was held in the Amon Carter Museum library on April 10th.

The group consisted of representatives from SMU, NTSU, TCU, Dallas Museum of Art, Kimbell Art Museum, and the Amon Carter Museum. From the beginning, the group has been favorable toward the idea of hosting a meeting in the area, and discussion followed as to the merits or liabilities involved in selecting Dallas or Fort Worth as the headquarters. No clear favorite emerged, but Ms. Parry indicated that no decision had to be made immediately. For her purposes, she only needed to report to the Executive Board that the invitation had indeed been issued. Two volunteers agreed to serve as liasons from their respective cities : Donna Rhein from Dallas, and Milan Hughston from Fort Worth.

Probably nothing of this magnitude has descended upon the ARLIS/Texas chapter since its inception. Even though 1988 seems ages away, help will be needed early on, from every corner of the state. We look forward to hosting what amounts to the first visit to Texas for many ARLIS/NA members.



MINUTES OF THE FALL 1983 MEETING, HOUSTON

The 1983 annual meeting of ARLIS/Texas took place at the University of Houston Library on October 15, 1983, with Chairman Margaret Culbertson presiding.

The minutes of the 1982 meeting were approved as published in The Medium. The Treasurer's report was read and accepted.

Vice-Chairman Milan Hughston asked members to continue sending news items to him for inclusion in The Medium, especially schedules of exhibitions and publications of interest. He extended an invitation to the group to hold the 1984 meeting at the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth. This meeting was tentatively set for the third weekend in October.

The Chairman asked for suggestions on increasing the chapter membership. Discussion centered on developing interest in the organization through area library schools. This could be done by inviting students to annual meetings, sending The Medium to the schools, and by making personal contacts with individual faculty members. All these possibilities will be explored.

Progress has been made on updating the serials union list. Members were requested to continue work on this project if it was not done in 1982-83. The question of availability of the list was raised, and since there are not extra copies, arrangements would have to be made to photocopy another institution's list. Nancy Acker Fleshman volunteered to work on the possibility of computerizing the list.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Charlotte D. Olin, Secretary-Treasurer

The theme for the day's program was the use of small computers in art libraries, and the different approaches showed how varied these uses are.

Mindy Klein, who is a partner in an independent information service called Information Network, gave the first paper. Her company was asked to organize the library of an architectural firm. The collection consisted of product catalogs, brochures, and samples of all sorts, as well as journals and books--all housed in a 10' x 10' "room". Detailed LC/AACR 2 cataloging was not needed, but quick and easy access was. Using a Lexitron word processor, color-coded cards were produced which enable the architects to locate catalogs, samples, and specifications of available products.



The firm allocated a much larger space for the library, provided computer time, and assigned a secretary to the project half-time. A simple circulation system was devised, and journal acquisition was turned over to a subscription agency.

Ms. Klein summed up the fundamentals of her work, pointing out that, especially when working with non-traditional material, one must design a system to suit the client. This takes careful planning, a full assessment of clients' needs, and a knowledge of the equipment available to carry out the task.

Jeff Fadell, of the University of Houston, gave an interesting demonstration of the capabilities of the Apple III computer which belongs to the Reference Department (thanks to fees collected for database searches). The computer is used for collecting and classifying department statistics, and can display these in a variety of forms. The versatility of the computer was quite amazing.

Milan Hughston, of the Amon Carter Museum, told of that library's use of a Lexitron word processor for in-house cataloging. This allows for ready correction of typographical errors before producing cards. The library hopes to create an inventory of its holdings of newspapers and periodicals on microfilm. The Museum has purchased a Xerox computer that is currently used for mailing lists, but in the future, the staff hopes to create an index of catalogs from various print sources in addition to an inventory of the museum's collection.

Jet Prendeville described the Rice University Library's use of a MICOM computer which was originally used for fund accounting and music scores. Currently, the art library is cataloging its collection of exhibition catalogs--entering and indexing artist, museum, dates, medium, and origin of the collection. In the future, the library hopes to compile a union list of catalogs in the area, listing artist catalogs, period and medium.

After lunch, Nancy Schuller, of the UT Austin Art Library, spoke on the use of computers in slide libraries at different universities and museums over the last two decades. Many systems for indexing and retrieval have been worked out during this period, as well as schemes of subject headings and thesauri, but there is no standardization. The formation of a good database can provide shelf locations, labels, circulation information, and indexing.

The slide librarian must develop a concise statement of needs and an analysis of how the system will help attain them in order to secure the commitment of his administration. Colleagues can provide valuable assistance in choosing a software package from among the many available.



Margaret Culbertson discussed on-line database searching and its advantages : currency of information, speed of the actual search, and the possibility of dealing with multiple terms [i.e., (1) Renaissance art (2) in Italy], and the ability to search by keywords instead of "official" subject headings. Disadvantages : expense, the impossibility of browsing, and the fact that not all indexes are available on-line. The handout Margaret had prepared demonstrated search strategies using the words "and", "or", "not", to pinpoint the desired information.

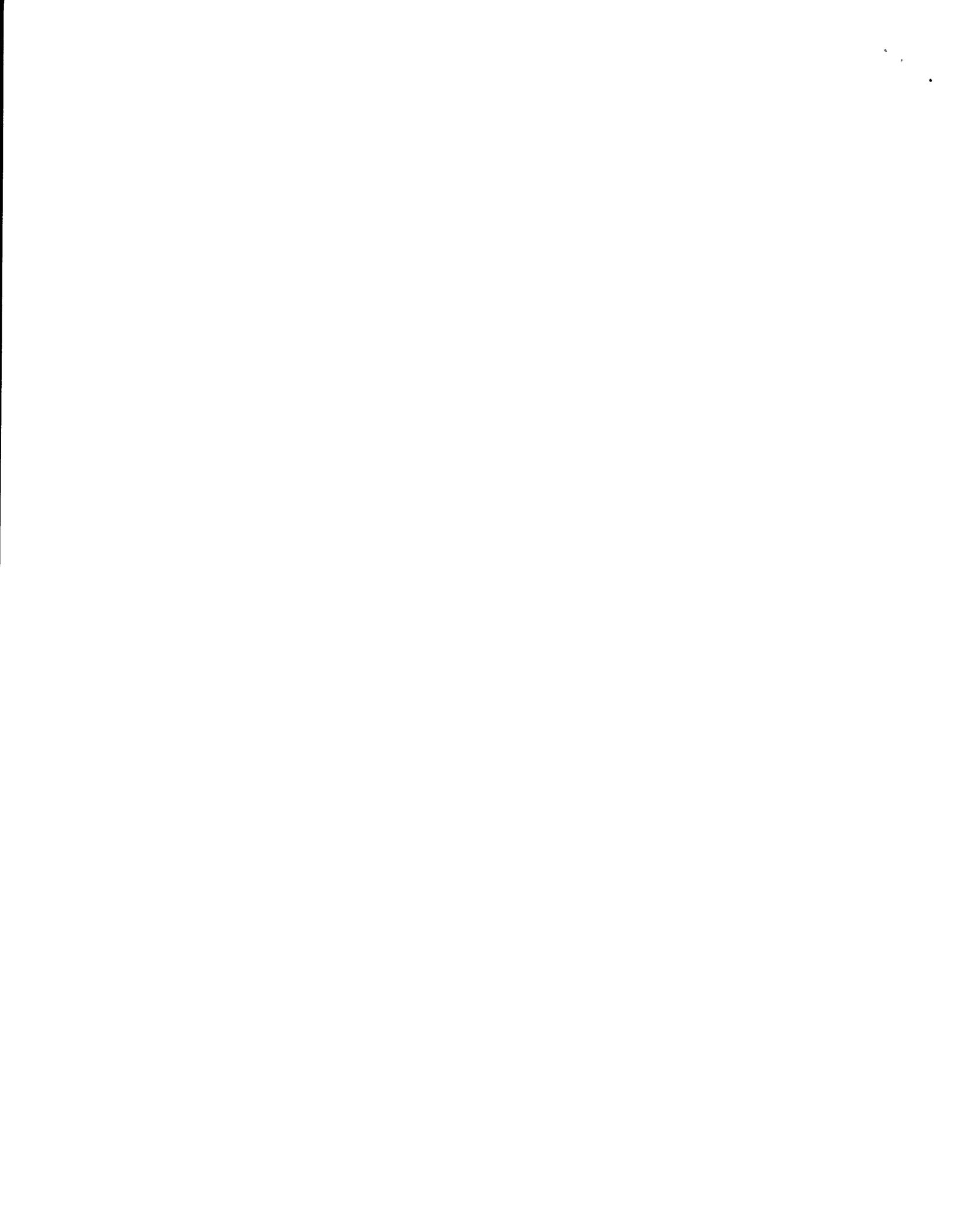
Lois Jones presented guidelines for searching the ERIC, MARC, and REMARC files through the DIALOG database. This database necessitates the use of a thesaurus, but does permit the retrieval of very specific information through combinations of search words and terms.

DEPARTURES FROM FORT WORTH.....

Art Documentation editors George Boeck and Erika Esau have moved to New Orleans, where George has taken a position as Folklife Coordinator at the Louisiana State Museum. Aside from her duties as Editor of Art Doc (and taking care of son Max!), Erika will be finishing her dissertation in art history, with the generous help of a fellowship from her department at Bryn Mawr College. They also report that they are living in a beautiful neighborhood of restored Victorian homes in Algiers--still in New Orleans, but on the other side of the river. George takes the free ferry to work every day--quite romantic! They would love to hear from any ARLIS members who may be visiting the Crescent City. Their address is : 205 Olivier (rear), New Orleans, 70114.

ARRIVALS IN FORT WORTH.....

As Erika sped away to New Orleans, she may have passed her successor on the road, for the new librarian at the Kimbell is Jeannette Downing, of the New Orleans Museum of Art. Jeannette, who begins August 1st, is a native of Shreveport and received her bachelors degree from Newcomb College of Tulane University. Her M.S. in library science comes from Simmons College in Boston. While attending Simmons, Jeannette interned at the Museum of Fine Arts cataloging exhibition catalogs. After completing her degree, she moved back to New Orleans to become the librarian at New Orleans Museum of Art, a post she has held for the past 4 1/2 years. Jeannette has been an active ARLIS member and is currently chair of the Gerd Muesham Award Committee. She is also program planner for the next ARLIS/NA conference for the Museum TOL group. We are certainly glad to have a proven ARLIS worker in the Texas Chapter--welcome!



OTHER NEWS OF MEMBERS

Austin member Carole Cable and her husband added an octagonal library to their house which was mentioned and illustrated in The New York Times. The article, "Regional Styles Enter the Architectural Mainstream," appeared on September 22, 1983, section C, page 1. The architect was Lawrence Speck.

LIBRARIAN POSITION

It is with pleasure that we report the re-vitalization of an art museum library that has been out of operation for several years. Through the efforts of the present director, the Fort Worth Art Museum has begun a search for a full-time librarian. The job description mentions the collection consisting of books, periodicals, exhibition catalogs, vertical files and slides. An MLS is required. A foreign language is preferred. Responsibilities include original cataloging, compiling reading lists and bibliographies and supervision of the library. The salary is negotiable. Those interested should write : Director, Fort Worth Art Museum, 1309 Montgomery Street, Fort Worth, Texas, 76107.

Therefore, the art museum library triangle in Fort Worth will once again be complete. Contemporary art researchers may visit the Fort Worth Art Museum, European and Oriental inquiries can be sent to the Kimbell, and the field of American art and photography is covered by the Amon Carter Museum.

AREA EXHIBITION DURING ALA MEETING IN DALLAS

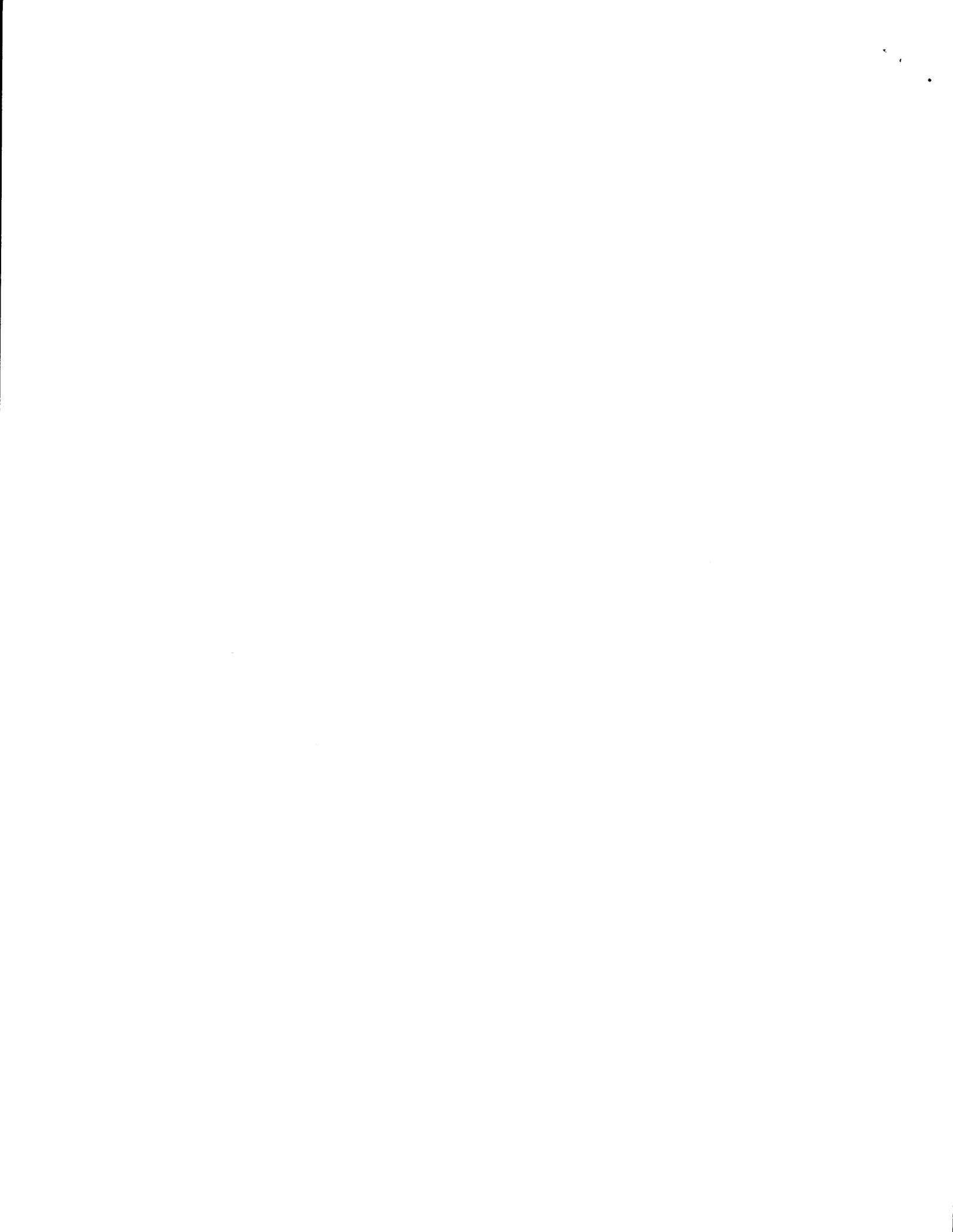
For those of you visiting the Dallas/Fort Worth area during the annual meeting of the American Library Association in Dallas, June 23-28, the following is a partial list of museum activities during that time :

DALLAS MUSEUM OF ART : Magdalena Abakanowicz (fiber artist); Costumes and Featherwork of the Lords of Chimor (Textiles from Peru's North Coast); Rodin's "Gates of Hell" exhibited in the sculpture garden; Wealth of the Ancient World (Hunt Collection)

AMON CARTER MUSEUM : Views of a Vanishing Frontier : Watercolors of Karl Bodmer; Three Documentary Photographers : Morris Engel, Robert Frank, and Marion Post Wolcott

FORT WORTH ART MUSEUM : Selections from Permanent Collection; Childe Hassam : Etchings and Lithographs

KIMBELL ART MUSEUM : Chinese Ceramics of the Transitional Period, 1620-1683; Henri Matisse : The Development of an Artist



VISUAL RESOURCES ASSOCIATION, 1984 MEETING

The Visual Resources Association met in conjunction with the College Art Association in Toronto, Ontario, February 23-24. The group was greeted by sunshine and pleasantly cool days in the dazzling city of Toronto. Tours of the visual resources departments of the Art Gallery of Ontario and York University highlighted days filled with formal and informal meetings held at the Sheraton Centre.

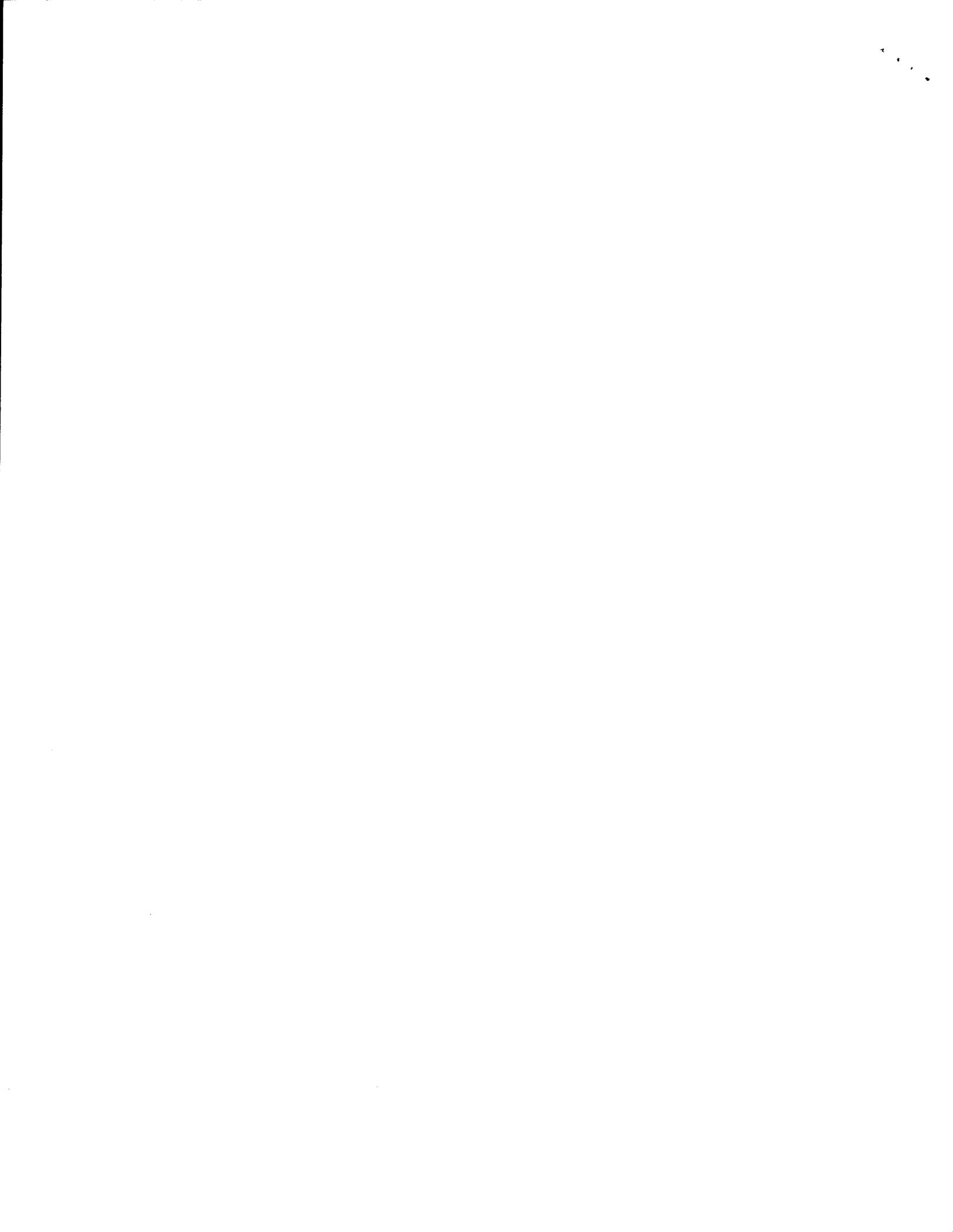
The Art Gallery of Ontario is in walking distance from the Sheraton Centre. Many of us enjoyed a short tramp through the streets of Toronto, a comfortable blend of historic preservation and modern architecture. Catherine Jonasson, head of the Gallery's Audio-Visual Centre, greeted us for a tour of her facility, which encompasses slide, film, video, and photograph collections. There was time before and after the tour for examining the Museum's permanent collections and "The Mystic North," an impressive exhibition of symbolist landscape painting from Northern Europe and North America, 1890 to 1940.

The second annual VRA business meeting opened the first formal program sessions. Christine Sundt, president, called the meeting to order. Ira Bartfield (National Gallery of Art, Washington), recently appointed chairman of the membership committee, presented his plans for a membership drive and new brochure entitled "You Don't Have to Re-Invent the Wheel...Join the Visual Resources Association." The President announced that the VRA Constitution and By-Laws were ratified unanimously by the members. The VRA also received approval from the IRS for non-profit status.

New business included a discussion of the new Slide Buyer's Guide, edited by Norine Cashman (Brown University) and Mark Braunstein (Rhode Island School of Design) and other upcoming VRA publications : Guide to Equipment (Christine Sundt, ed.), Guide to Photography of Visual Resources Collections (Patrick Young, ed.), Guide to Automation (Suzanne Babineay-Simenuer), and Guide to Management of Visual Resources Collections (Nancy Schuller). Nancy DeLaurier volunteered to organize a committee to conduct a survey, the second in ten years, on the issue of professional status among visual resources curators.

Regarding the next meeting in Los Angeles in 1985, the President stated that she had been approached by a representative of ARLIS/NA for the purpose of working together in preparing a program. A weekend workshop on automation at the Getty Museum was mentioned along with other topics.

After the business meeting ended, the formal program, Automation : Present and Future in the Visual Resources Collection, began. Presentations included "Pitfalls of the Mainframe Computer" (given by Nancy Kirkpatrick and Susan Solomon, Princeton), "Cataloging Slides Bit by Bit : Managing a Slide Collection with



dBase II" (Martine Culbertson, The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia), "The IBM-XT and Advanced DB Master" (Marian N. Fox, University of Florida, Gainesville), and "SAAL-PC : A Software Package for the IBM-PC for Use in Art History Slide Collections" (Suzanne Babineau-Simenauer for Sheila Hannah, Albuquerque, New Mexico). The last speaker, Martine Culbertson of The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, was unable to attend the meeting. A copy of her paper, "Cataloging Slide Bit by Bit : Managing a Slide Collection with dBase II", was available at the meeting.

A roundtable discussion on micro-computers in visual resources collections was held at the Sheraton Centre on Friday and gave users as well as the uninitiated the opportunity to share a variety of information from database to interface, jet printers, computer user groups and publications.

An afternoon tour to York University rounded out the scheduled proceedings. Michelle Metraux, who replaced Nancy Kirkpatrick as the Curator of the Slide Collection, showed us her facility in the Department of Visual Arts, which encompasses studio and performing arts programs, in addition to art history. Following a wine and cheese reception in the University Art Gallery, a long bus ride found the group back at the Sheraton Centre, where weary bodies could be rested for a time before a farewell dinner at Tom Jones Steak House.

Mary Lampe, Amon Carter Museum

ANNUAL MEETING IN FORT WORTH

Program plans for the ARLIS/Texas annual meeting have not been finalized, but do mark your calendars. The meeting will be held in Fort Worth at the Amon Carter Museum on Saturday, October 20, 1984. William B. Walker, Chief Librarian at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, will be a featured speaker. Chairman Margaret Culbertson is open to suggestions should anyone wish to contribute to the program. You may contact her at the central library at the University of Houston.

Final details and registration forms will be published in the next newsletter, which should be out after Labor Day. Please plan to attend.

CHAPTER OFFICERS' NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The time is approaching for the biennial change of chapter officers. Milan Hughston will be taking over as Chair after the October 1984 meeting, but the supporting positions of Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect and Secretary-Treasurer must be filled through a vote at the October meeting. Charlotte Olin has agreed to chair the nominating committee for these chapter officers, and her committee will be considering potential candidates this spring. Other committee members are Lois Jones and Jet Prendeville. Please contact Charlotte or one of the committee members with suggestions for candidates or if you would like to volunteer for service. Charlotte can be contacted at Texas Christian University Library, Fort Worth, 817/921-7117, through August.