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President's Column

This year's annual meeting was held in Waco, Texas and it was a pleasure for Alison Larson and me to welcome chapter members to our hometown. This was the chapter’s first visit to Waco and we were thrilled about the many positive responses from the membership about the experience. We packed a lot of experiences into this event! Craig Bunch gave us a wonderful sneak preview of his upcoming publication of interviews with Texas artists during his presentation. We visited several special collections at the Baylor University Libraries, got a behind the scenes tour of the libraries’ digitization center and an overview of the significant Harding Black Collection and Archives. We took a look at how special collections are being incorporated into art courses at Baylor.

We did make time for some fun and site seeing as well. We tour a historic home, visited some local art galleries, eateries, and coffee houses, and got messy and creative at a letterpress workshop. Other site seeing excursions of some of our members included a visit to the Waco Mammoth National Monument and to the new home of Magnolia Market, headquarters of HGTV's Fixer Upper stars and local celebs Chip and JoAnna Gaines.

I’m grateful to all of my many colleagues at Baylor who helped make the experience a success and to the Baylor Libraries for hosting our meeting and our lovely dinner in the top deck suite overlooking the Waco skyline and field at Baylor's McLane Stadium. Speaking of the letterpress workshop, hosted by my friend and colleague Virginia Green of BlackHare Studio - the collaborative letterpress portfolio of our members will be making an appearance at the ARLIS/NA silent auction in Seattle this spring! To all of our chapter members who couldn't be with us in Waco, know that you were missed and to all of you who were able to come, thank you for making this such a great time among wonderful people.

Sha Towers
ARLIS/NA Texas-Mexico Chapter President
Art Liaison Librarian/Director of Liaison Services
Baylor University
2015 ARLIS/NA Texas-Mexico Annual Chapter Meeting in Waco, Texas
ARLIS/NA Chapters Liaison Report

Hello Texas-Mexico Chapter Members!

On behalf of the Executive Board, I am reporting on several items that have kept us busy these last few months. Feel free to follow up with me via e-mail (rfriedma@princeton.edu) with questions or comments, and if there’s anything that needs to be brought to the attention of the Board, do let me know anytime.

**Strategic Planning and Directions**

The Board has been thinking about and drafting new versions of our core values and vision statements to help guide the work of the Strategic Planning Committee. The Committee is embarking on the next phase of strategic planning at present, which is going to be a more nimble and flexible process than was previously the case. The plan is to cover a two-year, as opposed to a five-year cycle as before. The Board and the Committee will be determining how best to solicit feedback from the greater ARLIS/NA membership in this process.

**Code of Conduct**

ARLIS/NA has devised a draft of a more permanent Code of Conduct statement, called a Statement of Appropriate Conduct. A code was developed for the Fort Worth conference, but we needed something more permanent to cover all ARLIS/NA transactions. Heather Gendron, the current Vice President of ARLIS/NA, is working on finalizing and integrating the document into the ARLIS/NA website and into official documentation. It may be that all chapter sites link to it and it becomes the Code for the entire Society.

**ARLIS/NA Learning Portal**

The Learning Portal was originally created to provide virtual content from ARLIS/NA annual conferences, but has evolved to provide additional programs and sessions. The Board voted in August to provide this content free to members and to all interested parties, as you recently discovered in an e-mail that circulated on ARLIS-L. Check out what’s there, in any case, if you haven’t yet: [https://www.pathlms.com/arlisna](https://www.pathlms.com/arlisna).

**Seattle Conference**

Registration for the Seattle conference opened on Dec. 1. 33 sessions are scheduled over three days (versus 28 in Fort Worth). Most chapter, section and division meetings are scheduled to meet very early because it has proven challenging to avoid conflicting with sessions. Thanks to the Texas-Mexico Chapter for a generous $350 donation towards general conference support. The Seattle joint conference with VRA, with some cross-listing of content from the Association of Architecture School Librarians conference, looks to be shaping up to be a super event.
**Chapter Archives**

ARLIS/NA formed a Documentation Committee in recent months to oversee the policies and procedures regarding Society documentation, including oral histories and electronic records. The group is now attempting to come up with a retention schedule for the Society, which could include chapter archives. At the moment, chapters deal with records on their own, with the exception of annual reports. (Note: Web archiving for the Society beyond the ARLIS/NA website is not yet being done.)

**Chapter Discussion Lists**

All chapters have had the ability to request listservs hosted by ARLIS/NA, but the Board voted at our September meeting to waive all associated fees for listservs for the chapters. Chapters who had ARLIS-hosted listservs using L-Soft were previously paying $128 per year for this service.

I wish you all a great rest of the semester, a joyous holiday season and a pleasant winter. I look forward to seeing you in Seattle.

Rebecca Friedman  
ARLIS/NA Executive Board, Chapters Liaison  
Assistant Librarian, Marquand Library of Art & Archaeology  
Acting Librarian, School of Architecture Library  
Princeton University
ARLIS/NA Texas-Mexico Chapter 2015 Annual Business Meeting Minutes

ARLIS/NA Texas-Mexico Chapter
Saturday, November 7, 2015
Hotel Indigo, Waco, Texas

Executive Committee Present:

Sha Towers, President (Baylor), Edward Lukasek, Past President (MFAH), Jon Evans, VP/President-Elect (MFAH), Jenniffer Hudson Connors, Secretary, (Stark Foundation), Alison Larson, Treasurer (Graduate Student)

Members in Attendance:

Sam Duncan (Amon Carter Museum of American Art), Chia-Chun Shih (Kimball Art Museum), Craig Bunch and Heather Ferguson, (McNay Art Museum), Eric Wolf (Menil Collection), Helen Lueders (MFAH), Joel Pellan, (MFAH), Beth Dodd, Elizabeth Schaub, and Laura Schwartz (UT Austin), and Shari Salisbury (UT San Antonio).

Meeting called to order at 9:32.

Sha welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. Introductions around the room, names with institution affiliations and updates in titles, responsibilities.

Secretary’s Report

Jenniffer Hudson Connors submitted minutes from previous meeting held March 20, 2015. Moved by Eric, Seconded by Jon. Minutes approved.

Treasurer’s Report

Alison Larson noted that there was $1,800 estimate in reimbursements for fall conference coming. Baylor Libraries picked up the tab on some of the expenses for this conference. Expected bank balance of $3,200 as of December 1, 2015. PayPal account has been set up as per our previous discussions. (The full text of this report appears at the end of this document)

The Medium Editor’s Report

Jon Evans expressed his thanks for the solid participation for the fall issue. We still need someone to write about the visit to the Harding Black archives and the connoisseurship class. He is looking for photos as well. What is our mechanism for collecting our own archives, photos etc. Is there a way through ARLIS/NA to capture images?
Lois Swan Jones Committee Report

Lynn Wexler sent a report. Thanks to all committee members. Alison Larson received the award (round of applause!) Alison has now accepted a position on the committee.

Rebecca Pad received an award as well and wrote about the experience for The Medium. Hopefully Rebecca will also serve on the committee for the next year’s award selection. Generally it is part of the award recipient’s obligations. Sam and Beth will continue to serve on the committee. Lynn as chair should contact Rebecca to see if she’ll be on committee since she has moved. Discussion of recipient’s obligations to the committee followed. It is strongly encouraged for the past winner to serve.

Lynn suggested that we increase the amount of the award since we are going to Seattle. The chapter discusses the amount annually depending on conference location. $875 is the most we’ve ever given. Beth moved we increase the award to $750 for the 2016 Lois Swan Jones professional development award; Edward seconded. Discussion – if you haven’t donated please consider doing so it is very important, and we don’t do any fundraising. We’d like to see more people applying for the award, perhaps use it as a recruitment tool. Joint conference with VRA is coming up – others outside of Libraries might benefit from ARLIS membership. Marketing strategies are via e-mail, and on our website. Good opportunity to remind folks we are out there. Is there a list of art librarians? Search the ARLIS/NA membership list for Texas and Mexico members who are not members of the TX-MX chapter. New ARLIS membership from Texas and Mexico triggers an email to the chapter president. It appears that the new member must check a box when enrolling, but we aren’t sure.

Helen has volunteered to serve as the Award committee chair.

Sha will alert Lynn to invite Becca to renew her membership to fulfill the obligations of the award recipient – to serve on the committee. New terms begin in January 1, 2015.

Alison reported we are in good financial shape to increase the award, but we should continue to encourage members to contribute, and explain donation options: check, credit card, Paypal, etc.

Motion passed.

Jon suggested Sha check in with the management team of ARLIS to see how those e-mails get to the president.

Board Liaison Report

Eric Wolf is no longer on the Executive Board – so no Board Liaison report. The slate of new officers has been elected – incoming officers will begin their terms in Seattle.
Nominations for Next VP/President-Elect

Call for nominations from the floor – Nomination committee presented Joel, no other nominations were made. Edward made motion to accept nomination – and Jon seconded. Motion passed. Joel is the new VP/President-Elect.

Chapter Donation for Next Conference

Last year’s contribution was large because we were the host chapter. Suggest we go back to previous donation levels around $250 - $350. We currently have 36 members. Jon moved that we contribute $350 to the welcome party in Seattle. Eric seconded. Motion passed.

2016 Chapter Meeting Location Discussion

Jon, as incoming president, has no strong commitment to Houston, but there are good things going on there. Mexico City is an option. Discussion about the added cost of going international – there may be funds available from outside grants. Value of the US Dollar to the Peso may be an advantage. Craig is willing to help advise on venues etc. We might lower the registration price to offset the cost. We could wait until June/July for the next fiscal year. But, the need to get the planning started early is important. Since ARLIS is in New Orleans, folks might save money there. Sam suggests El Paso. Do we have any members in El Paso? With the new VP Elect also being from Houston we might want to select another city for one of the chapter meetings. Galveston has new gallery opening in November 2016 – not enough art venues to support ARLIS chapter events as professional development. Austin? Strong interest in Mexico City, if the financials are right. This past year we took online survey of members on conference dates – desire vs ability is hard to read in poll. Discussion is better.

Jon will explore options and see what costs are involved. Building relationships among our membership is important. What about going to Denton to reach out to the SLIS students? We might poll members to find out why they did NOT attend. Was it just scheduling or was it financial. Action Item – send a different survey to those who attended and those who did not. Some institutions won’t be sending multiple staff members to the same conference in the future, more diverse investment in staff participation. Programs must be educational and support professional development to justify financial support from our institutions. Jon suggested post conference survey be done by Sha and the current officers, and not wait until January’s transition of officers.

Shari – promoting and advertising our chapter. Currently when we advertise the meeting and awards the e-mail only goes to Texas-Mexico chapter only. We should also send those emails to the national listserv to get more visibility among the larger membership.

Members agreed. Executive Council should keep that in mind.

Eric moved that we express our gratitude to Sha and Alison for the superb conference. Shari seconded the motion. (Applause) Motioned passed.
**Webmaster’s Report**

Sam stated that last May there was talk of moving the chapter website to the ARLIS/NA platform to align the domain name and URL, it also saves hosting charges and other monies. He has been doing the website for seventeen years and is encouraging this migration. Based on savings and Sam’s recommendation, Sha suggests we move forward. Alison is willing to take over managing the chapter website, with Sam and Joel’s help with the migration.

Sam moved that we migrate the website to the ARLIS/NA host, Jon seconded. Motion carried. (Applause!)

No other new business.

Eric moved to adjourn, Beth seconded. Motion passed.

**Treasurer’s Report**

As of 11-6-15, the chapter’s Wells Fargo account balance is $2,471.41. This amount reflects expenses of $689.92 since the last Treasurer’s report of March 2015. There is no income in the period April – October 2015 to report. Reimbursements from Baylor Libraries and Eventbrite.com are estimated at c. $1800 combined. The Eventbrite.com payout to the chapter will be processed five days after the close of our fall meeting (today) in the amount of $810.57. Offline sales totaled $90.00. The Baylor Libraries reimbursement will be c. $1000 and should be received by the chapter within 30 days. Conference registration fees will closely offset the fall meeting expenses for the Indigo Hotel meeting room/breakfast and for the letterpress workshop.

Chapter balance estimate by 12-1-15 is approximately $3,200.00. (+/- $200)

A Paypal account has been established for the chapter and will be integrated with the chapter website shortly, and hopefully in time to process 2016 membership dues for members not present at the fall meeting.

Jenniffer Hudson Connors
Secretary, ARLIS/NA Texas-Mexico
Librarian & Archives Manager
Nelda C. and H.J. Lutcher Stark Foundation
Cooper House

“...to refute those who delighted in saying, 'too bad about Charley Storrow! Just going to seed! His *only* chance to count again is another war.' No, such deference to what-will-people-say was no good. He'd have to suspend work on his History; forego, perhaps forever, the life he had chosen.”

-Madison Cooper Jr., *Sironia, Texas*; p. 1138. [1]

The Cooper Foundation was kind enough to host the reception of the 2015 ARLIS/NA Texas-Mexico Chapter meeting in Waco, Texas, and to provide a tour and brief history of the house and its former owner, Madison Cooper Jr. Most known for writing the sprawling novel *Sironia, Texas*, Cooper Jr. also left the entirety of his $3 million dollar estate to fund the Cooper Foundation’s local philanthropic activities in Waco.

The house itself, listed in the National Register of Historic Places and restored in 1985, is elegant with its fair share of quirks. Two of the upstairs bedrooms are joined by an outside balcony walkway, a design decision that seemingly follows more from a literary-Romantic tradition than an architectural one. A series of stained glass windows is complemented by one that was installed upside down (or, given the French inspiration of much of the décor, perhaps *tête-bêche* would be more appropriate?). When you are told halfway through the tour that the house receives a lot of interest from paranormal investigators, this is a statement that you can understand. *If anywhere, why not here?"*
But it was the 3rd floor attic, by far, that got the biggest reaction from our band of librarians and archivists. As described by Michael Barr in the December 2015 issue of Texas Highways:

"Best of all, the attic office where Cooper Jr. wrote the book is just as he left it. An open checkbook sits on the battered table he used for a desk. A faded 1958 calendar hangs on the wall next to a rusty pea-green filing cabinet. It’s this dusty, claustrophobic, third-floor cubicle that draws the attention of most anyone who has ever dreamed of writing the great American novel." [2]

In a certain sense, Mr. Barr is correct. The “as-it-was” mise en scène of Cooper Jr.’s attic office definitely evokes the myth of the man-as-loner-writer-artistic genius. At the same time, the place is without a doubt a true archival ... let’s say, fixer upper. Papers of all kinds (maps, files, old pamphlets, books) crumble in the open or in deteriorating boxes. One could almost hear the collective gears beginning to turn in the minds of those present. "Where would we start with this? What could we still save?"

At the same time, one has to wonder of the focus on the mythic rather than historic could simply be in keeping with Cooper Jr.’s life and legacy. Sironia, Texas is by most accounts loosely based on Waco and the Wacoans he knew and lived with, but slightly removed and blurred – sacrificing the historic detail for the story to be told. Cooper dictated in his will that his literary files be burned and his correspondence destroyed, so as not to "embarrass his women friends." As his will suggests, he seems to have seen his legacy chiefly as the work to be done by the Cooper Foundation – which continues on.


Joel Pelanne
Assistant Technical Services Librarian
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
"Interviews with Texas Artists" Presentation by Craig Bunch

Craig Bunch gave a presentation describing his experience writing a book of interviews with 64 notable artists in Texas. Feeling there was a need for a book like this, Craig started in 2010 with about 10-15 artists he was interested in interviewing even before he had a publishing contract. Along the way, he received recommendations from his subjects for other potential artists to include.

Most of the interviews were conducted after Craig visited the artists’ studios. His studio visits provided the inspiration for the 10-12 questions he would send each artist. While the questions were individualized, the one question Craig asked of all of them was, "Which artists have meant the most to you?" The majority of the artists wrote down their answers, while some preferred to have Craig record them. Craig also asked each artist to submit a color photograph of a work they were proud of and that they wanted included in the book. He found it interesting to get images in this way because he got some surprises.

Craig said he did not find anything uniquely Texan about the artists he interviewed. The one common thread was the fact that all have worked at one time or another in found materials. “I was so happy most of these people accepted. Most of them didn’t know me,” Craig said. The book, with a working title Interviews with Texas Artists, is due to be published in fall 2016 by Texas A&M University Press.

Shari A. Salisbury
Reference Librarian / Subject Specialist for Art & Art History
The University of Texas at San Antonio
Baylor Book Arts Presentation by Sha Towers

On Friday, November 6, 2015, Sha Towers introduced the Baylor Book Arts Collection to a receptive audience of librarians eager to get their hands on the wonders arrayed before them. In Anne Evenhaugen's words, "An artist's book is a medium of artistic expression that uses the form or function of "book" as inspiration." (Smithsonian Libraries Unbound blog, quoted in the Baylor catalog). I feel reasonably sure that all artists' books are examples of the book arts, but I suspect that "the book arts" go well beyond artists' books.

Sha began the collection in 2007 and said it now numbers between 800 and 900 items. My search on "Baylor Book Arts" in the library's catalog last night produced a healthy fraction of that number: 624 hits. This morning the number is 626, and at the top of the list is the "virtual exhibition catalogue for the February 2015 exhibit in the Crouch Fine Arts Library." Check it out. The 2015 accessions I clicked on each provided a thorough note that helped me appreciate the item's significance.

Sha discussed how the Book Arts Collection at Baylor has been used with various groups such as the medical humanities class. He introduced Virginia Green, who teaches a special topics class in Book Arts. The majority of her students are graphic design students. Because it is a teaching collection, a wide variety of forms and media are represented. Some pieces are bought from budgets of other departments, such as Medical Humanities.
Books are stored in the Central Libraries’ Rare Book Room and are normally viewable by appointment only, but ARLIS/Texas-Mexico fall meeting attendees were treated to close to two dozen—by my count—delightful examples that we were invited to handle. Obviously, the tactile dimension is very important here. Among the titles I jotted down: *The Alder* (book by Peter and Donna Thomas, 2012; poem by William Everson) and *Imbue* (studio of Ellen Ziegler; poems by Patti Smith). Given our obvious delight in feeling and manipulating the materials—often visually stunning—I can’t imagine the makers of most of these books relishing an entirely digital future for their art.

Craig Bunch
Assistant Librarian
McNay Art Museum
Baylor University Libraries Digital Collections

Located in Baylor University’s Moody Library, the Ray I. Riley Digitization Center acts as command central for the library’s digitization efforts. Meeting participants were greeted by the Digitization Center’s Digital Projects Group staff who serve “…the special collections, holding institutions, and museums of Baylor University through digitization of rare and unique items, preservation of digital files, and presentation of digital collections...”[1] Staff members Eric Ames, Steven Bolech, Kara Long, and Daryl Stuhr graciously fielded participants’ questions, introduced the projects they were working on, and described the center’s digitization equipment as participants viewed it in use.

Powered by CONTENTdm, the Baylor University Libraries Digital Collections home page provides access to myriad digitized content organized by type and subject—such as oral histories and Baptist and religious materials—and by the collection in which the material is housed as is the case with the Armstrong Browning Library and Crouch Fine Arts Library. Additionally, the “Curated Collections” includes material drawn from collections across the Baylor campus and the “Browse All Items” feature allows the user to view an alphabetical list of all of Baylor University Libraries Digital Collections. Eric Ames noted that their most popular collections include the JFK: John Armstrong Collection, Frances G. Spencer Collection of American Popular Sheet Music, and the Armstrong Browning Library – 19thCentury Women Poets Collection.


Elizabeth Schaub
Director, School of Architecture Visual Resources Collection
The University of Texas at Austin
On Friday, November 6, following a full morning of presentations on Baylor University’s campus, which included behind-the-scenes tours of the Ray I. Riley Digitization Center (RDC), ARLIS/NA Texas-Mexico chapter members broke for lunch with plans to reconvene at 1:30PM. At that time, the group gathered at the steps of the Carroll Library Building (one of the oldest buildings on campus) to visit The Texas Collection’s exhibition of Harding Black pottery entitled: *Lifting the Veil: The Ceramic Legacy of Harding Black*, presented by Baylor’s Texas Collection and Department of Art. Inside the Carroll Library, John Wilson, Director of The Texas Collection provided a warm welcome and brief introduction to Baylor’s oldest special collections library, which serves as the University Archive that collects, preserves, and provides access to materials on the history, heritage and culture of Texas. Wilson explained how the current exhibition came to be, only after a meeting with Paul A. McCoy, Baylor Professor of Art who was uncertain how to ensure that Baylor’s remarkable collection of Harding Black’s glaze notebooks, ceramic pieces, and most notably, his test collection of pots, vases and tiles numbering in the thousands would be preserved and made available to ceramic artists and researchers, now and in the future. Wilson noted that in 2015, The Texas Collection partnered with the Department of Art in an effort to process, digitize, and document the objects to create an online digital collection of Black’s works.

On view in the Guy B. Harrison, Jr. Reading Room through December, the exhibition features a well thought-out, representative selection of Harding Black’s pottery (bowls, vessels, sculpture, and test tiles), spanning over sixty years of the artist’s studio production and glaze formula research and experimentation. Wooden display cases around the circulation desk are filled with lustrously glazed, chiefly wheel-thrown objects. Side-by-side, noteworthy examples of Black’s early work (1930s-1940s), mid-career (1950s-1970s), and late career (1980s-1990s) intermingle and sit quietly gleaming, beckoning visitors for closer inspection. The highly refined glazed surfaces of these wheel-thrown vessels, juxtaposed with a few unglazed hand-built terracotta sculptures (ca.1966) from across the room, remind visitors of the breadth of Harding Black’s ceramic dialogue. Central in the reading room is yet another display case, this one highlighting one of Black’s glaze formula notebooks and selections of his test tiles. The exhibition installation is beautifully enhanced with several enlarged photographic reproductions of Blacks’ works, all printed on canvas and mounted high on the walls above the book cases circling the reading room.
Paul A. McCoy, who directs the ceramics program at Baylor and serves as Acting Curator for The Harding Black Collection and Archive, organized the current exhibition and has contributed to several exhibition catalogues and reviews of Black’s artistic legacy over the years—dating back to the early 1990s. McCoy moved to Waco in 1986 to direct Baylor’s ceramics program and shortly thereafter became acquainted with Harding Black when another colleague in the ceramics field urged him to do so. The two artists developed a friendship that lasted the rest of Black’s life, which was influential in Harding Black’s decision to gift his personal pottery collection and entire body of glaze research to Baylor University in 1995. During our visit, McCoy provided an insightful lecture on the life, legacy, and career of Harding Black, along with the storied details of how this collection found its home at Baylor University. Crediting Texas Collection director John Wilson, McCoy explained how their efforts to digitize and process the archival collection fulfills the mission of Baylor University’s Harding Black Ceramic Collection and Archive by encouraging and supporting future research and scholarship in the ceramic arts in a manner that celebrates Harding Black’s contributions to the development of 20th century American ceramics.

Being a life-long resident of San Antonio with a love for the arts, I was somewhat familiar with the name Harding Black, who got his start teaching local pottery classes to children and adults for decades (1930s-1950s) at San Antonio’s Witte Museum, and remained active into the 1990s operating a pottery studio and shop on Broadway Ave. However, while listening to Paul McCoy’s lecture, I quickly realized that I knew absolutely nothing about the significance of this famed San Antonio potter and his personal contributions to the ceramics community—most notably, his glaze research. McCoy explained how with hard work and persistence, Harding extended the research conducted by ceramic artists Edgar Littlefield, Arthur Baggs, and others, to unlock the glaze secrets of China’s Ming (1368-1644), Song (960-1279) and Tang (618-907) Dynasties. In doing so, Harding created one of the largest bodies of personal glaze research in the United States during the 20th century—all without any formal academic training! Speaking to Harding’s selfless commitment to teaching and furthering human knowledge, McCoy emphasized that while Harding was alive,
the artist generously shared his research freely, requesting only that the recipients continue testing and extending his work.

Now, thanks to the recent collaborative efforts between the Baylor University Art Department and The Texas Collection, with assistance from the Baylor University Electronic Library and Central Libraries, the Harding Black Collection and Archive is available online to future generations of artists and researchers, continuing Harding’s tradition of documenting and freely sharing knowledge. Presented using CONTENTdm, Baylor’s Harding Black Collection and Archive portal, is available to researchers, who have access to browse video interviews with Harding Black and others, or navigate the extensive digital collection of Black’s work by vases, bowls, and porcelain objects or by glaze color. Black’s works, which have all been photo-documented and described, can be cross referenced against his glaze formula notebooks using his glaze codes inscribed on most pieces of the test collection. By making this collection available, Baylor University provides researchers with the knowledge to try their hand at recreating the artist’s most famous glazes, or better, extending the boundaries of Harding Black’s career-long research in the field of ceramic arts.

References


Heather Ferguson
Archivist
McNay Art Museum
The Armstrong Browning Library

Of the many wonderful surprises our members encountered in Waco was our afternoon tour of what is considered the ‘jewel’ of the Baylor University campus – the Armstrong Browning Library.

Our guide, Jennifer Borderud, the Access and Outreach Librarian and Associate Director of the ABL greeted us and explained that the primary function of this splendid facility is to promote research devoted to the study of the lives and works of the Victorian poets, Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Jennifer stated matter-of-factly that it houses the world's largest collection of books, letters, manuscripts, and memorabilia pertaining to the Browning family as well as a substantial collection of primary and secondary materials related to 19th-century literature and culture.

The Library was founded by Dr. A. J. Armstrong, long-time chairman of the English Department, who was already very interested in the poets, but on his first visit to Italy in 1909, he met Browning's sixty-year-old son Robert Wiedeman Barrett Browning, known as Pen, who was living in Asolo, Italy as a sculptor and artist. Armstrong was entertained there as Pen's guest and the visit produced in Armstrong a firm intent to pursue and acquire everything he could concerning the famous couple.
Things got complicated when Pen Browning died in 1912 without leaving a will, and to satisfy relatives and creditors the Browning heritage was dispersed during a six-day auction sale. By hook or crook, Armstrong managed to obtain the names of the purchasers plus the prices paid and raised the funds to buy almost all of it back!

By 1925, Baylor’s Browning collection was clearly the largest single concentration in the world; equally clear was the need for a separate building for the vast and growing collection. In 1943, Baylor president Pat N. Neff offered $100,000 toward the construction of the library and challenged Armstrong to raise the remaining funds. Rising to the challenge, groundbreaking was held on May 7, 1948 with the grand-opening ceremony held on February 25, 1950.

The grand three-story Italian Renaissance-style building, with exterior walls of Indiana limestone and front terrace and steps of granite, is decorated with sixty-two magnificent stained glass windows, soaring marble columns, black walnut marquetry paneling, intricate ceiling designs, and an impressive terrazzo entrance floor bearing a brass-inlaid bells and pomegranates motif, a motif that is reflected throughout the building.

The associate architects for the main floor of the building were Eggers and Higgins of New York, who also served with John Russell Pope as associate architects for the Thomas Jefferson Memorial in Washington, DC. The finest artisans and craftsmen, under the direction of chief architect and engineer, Wyatt C. Hedrick of Fort Worth, and builder, S. B. Swigert Construction Company of Waco, Texas, spent three-and-a-half years assembling a truly amazing structure that has been voted as one of the most beautiful college libraries in the world.

Edward Lukasek
Catalog Librarian
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Browning and Kress Collection Paintings

Among its many other treasures, Baylor's Armstrong Browning Library (ABL) is home to several paintings owned by Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning that hung in their in Florence home, Casa Guidi. The ABL also holds five paintings gifted by the Kress Foundation in 1961. The Kress paintings are part of a larger collection of 3,000 works given by the foundation to art museums and libraries throughout the United States. Distributed to nearly 100 institutions across 33 states between 1929 and 1961, these works were intended to create study collections in areas which might otherwise have less access to European masterpieces.


In the spring of 2015, Baylor art history professor Heidi Hornik taught an upper level art history seminar on connoisseurship, during which the students selected one of the works from the Kress and Browning paintings for an in-depth study that included analytical visual investigation, review of primary and secondary scholarship sources, provenance and attribution, and assessment of any existing curatorial files. During our visit the ABL, one of the class members of this seminar, Nathaniel Eberlein, spoke to the chapter about his experience with the course. Nathaniel is a University Scholar in the Honors College focusing on art history and great texts. Nathaniel worked with the 14th century *Madonna and Child*, attributed to a follower of Pietro Lorenzetti of the Siene School. Nathaniel discussed his analysis of the painting that had likely been an altar piece and in particular, talked about his investigation of the tooling and pattern of the halos as clues to provenance and attribution. Nathaniel presented his research at Baylor's annual URSA Scholars Week (Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Achievement) and was the recipient of the "Excellence in Use of Baylor Libraries Primary Source Collections" award.

Sha Towers
Art Liaison Librarian / Director of Liaison Services
Baylor University
Letterpress Workshop at BlackHare Studio

The culminating event of the Waco conference was a visit to BlackHare Studio, where eight chapter members participated in a workshop devoted to letterpress printing. Our hostess and teacher was master typesetter and designer Virginia Green, Associate Professor of Art at Baylor University, along with her husband Michael.

Established in 2010, the studio is a letterpress and fine art facility housed in a building behind Green’s home in Robinson, Texas. While modest in scale, the studio manages to pack in more than a dozen presses – some no larger than a laptop and others the scale of a small Volkswagen, not to mention paper, ink, lead type, printers’ trays, flat files, and all of the other accoutrements that one would want and expect in a well-appointed artists’ studio. Green maintains a very tidy operation that allows her to simultaneously manage her commercial projects under the moniker VGreen Design, while also pursuing her personal artistic endeavors, and accommodating group events such as this workshop.

We spent our first hour and a half learning about the history of the studio, the variety of presses on-site, and the basic aspects of the letterpress process. Virginia shared her extensive knowledge of letterpress printing,
enlightening us about terms such as pica, em, kerning, and leading, and then enumerating the finer points of creating a finished print. We then got down to the business of trying our hand at selecting and setting type. Each of the attendees took turns inking the type and then running sheets of paper through the press. The entire process was more complex and time consuming than anticipated, yet also more gratifying.

We came away with a new or renewed appreciation for the art of letterpress and those who work in this demanding field – not to mention three prints of our own handiwork! We produced enough work that some of it will find its way into our chapter offerings for the Society’s next silent auction, which we hope will benefit ARLIS/NA.

Many thanks to Virginia and Michael for their expertise and hospitality and to Sha for organizing this memorable experience!

Jon Evans
Chief Librarian
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Waco Mammoth National Monument

As an added incentive to register for the ARLIS/NA Texas-Mexico Chapter meeting, chapter treasurer Alison Larson posted an offer of free tickets to area attractions on the event Facebook page. Since I have had a lifelong fascination with paleontology and archaeology, I was thrilled to win a ticket to the Waco Mammoth National Monument. Did you realize the fossilized remains of mammoths had been discovered in Waco? I had never heard of this!

It all began in 1978, when Paul Barron and Eddie Bufkin came upon a large bone protruding from a dry creek bed between the Bosque and Brazos rivers. Strecke Museum staff at Baylor University identified it as a femur bone from a Columbian mammoth, and an excavation team was organized. The excavators were rewarded with the discovery of about 23 Columbian mammoths, 18 of which were grouped in a nursery herd (primarily females and their young), the first and only such find in the U. S. All of the remains excavated through 1990 are now housed at Baylor University for preservation and further scientific study. Fossil specimens excavated since then are housed in situ in the rock bed protected by a climate-controlled shelter which facilitates further study as well as tours of the site by visitors.

The finds in this location date from the Pleistocene Epoch, also known as the Ice Age. I was interested to learn that even then, this geographical area was warm and was not covered in ice. In addition to mammoth bones, the remains of a camel have also been unearthed at the site.

The Columbian mammoth is related to the Woolly mammoth, although the Columbian mammoth was larger (2-4 feet taller) and had less hair. An illustration drawn roughly to scale on an interior wall of the shelter places the mammoth and visitors in perspective.
The cause of death of the mammoth herd is somewhat of a mystery. Researchers do not believe their deaths (occurring all at once) were caused by human hunters, since no spearhead marks have been found on the bones. Likewise, the bones are free of teeth marks, ruling out predators. Researchers hypothesize that the nursery herd as well as a camel were trapped and drowned by a catastrophic flood. With its location between the Bosque and Brazos, the area was probably prone to floods, and subsequent floods likely buried the remains.

The Waco Mammoth Site opened to the public in 2009, but it was just this year that it was designated a national monument. If you make it to Waco again, Waco Mammoth National Monument is worth a visit.

Shari A. Salisbury
Reference Librarian / Subject Specialist for Art & Art History
The University of Texas at San Antonio
Amon Carter Hosts Its First Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon

What do a lawyer, architect, curator, social worker, librarian, student, gallerist, and retired English teacher have in common? Each attended the Amon Carter Museum of American Art’s first Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon, held on Saturday, October 10, in the museum’s research library. The Amon Carter joins other museums around the country in realizing the important role the community can play in enhancing the encyclopedia’s content by helping share the art knowledge available in museums.

With access to one of the most important American art research collections in the country, twelve participants spent the day working under the guidance of a seasoned Wikipedian to either create or improve a diverse list of American art articles. With no promise of a byline and knowing the likelihood that their work would be shaped by future writers, participants came together in an altruistic way to help share the museum’s intellectual assets via this collaborative and cumulative knowledge-sharing platform. A clever Wikipedia reporting tool, Herding Sheep, collects the impressive amount of work that was accomplished that day. A round-up of social media posts are available with #ACMwiki on both Twitter and Instagram.

The library has plans for two additional Edit-a-Thons in 2016.

Sam Duncan
Library Director
Amon Carter Museum of American Art
Stark Foundation Breaks Ground for New Library & Archive

The Stark Foundation in Orange, Texas broke ground recently for a new Library & Archive. The two-story building will house an Art Education Studio on the first floor and the Eunice R. Benckenstein Library and Archive on the second. Located in downtown Orange, the new wing will be an addition to the Stark Museum of Art, at an estimated cost of $7-8 million dollars.

The 7,000 square foot library includes a research and reading area, small exhibition/display area, archival storage, workroom, offices, and a restroom. “This new facility will allow us to preserve the historic documents of the Lutcher and Stark families, local history, and the institutional archives of the Stark Foundation,” said Jenniffer Hudson Connors, Manager of the Stark Foundation Library & Archive. She continued, “the archival material has been in storage throughout our properties; combining the research library and archives in one state of the art building will make the collections available to historians and scholars for many years to come.”

From left to right: Jennifer Restauri, Stark Museum of Art Curator of Education; Gus Harris, Stark Foundation Chief Properties Officer; and Jenniffer Hudson Connors, Manager, Stark Foundation Library & Archive.

Jenniffer Hudson Connors
Librarian & Archives Manager
Nelda C. and H.J. Lutcher Stark Foundation