



# NCIPIT

## HISTORY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES SECTION NEWSLETTER MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION VOLUME XIV ISSUE 1 APRIL 2002

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### Greetings from the Chair

The Executive Committee of the History of the Health Sciences Section is gearing up for a highly productive and rewarding Annual Meeting in Dallas, Texas. The theme for the meeting, "Big D", highlights both the Digital world in which we all operate today and the host city, Dallas. By now, you have all received your preliminary programs and have even started registering and making arrangements for the trip to Dallas.

As you begin to add commitments into your calendar for MLA, be sure to mark down Tuesday May 21, 1-2:30 as the time for our HHSS Business Meeting. I will include our agenda in this newsletter for your convenience. This year we have invited an MLA Board Member to join us at our business meeting. I'm pleased to report that Jocelyn Rankin has agreed to attend.

In case you haven't yet noticed, our section is well represented throughout the program. We are sponsoring sessions Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday! Clearly, our Chair-Elect, Pat Gallagher, did not miss a beat! See her article in this newsletter for more details on the content of the contributed and invited paper sessions we are sponsoring.

One of our section's goals this past year was to sponsor two programs for MLA 2002. Thanks to Pat's hard work and creative energies, we have doubled that! Our other goals, to increase membership participation and to promote the Murray Gottlieb award are also being met. Since the Fall newsletter, the number of our listserv participants has grown and MLA will be awarding the Murray Gottlieb Prize to Michael Flannery for his paper entitled: "The Early Botanical Medical Movement as a Reflection of Life, Liberty, and Literacy in Jacksonian America". Congratulations, Michael!

I look forward to seeing you Down in Dallas!

Heidi Heilemann, M.L.S., AHIP  
Chair, History of the Health Sciences Section  
Archives and Special Collections  
Lane Medical Library  
Stanford University Medical Center  
Stanford, California



**HHSS Business Meeting Agenda**  
**May 21, 2002, 1:00pm-2:30pm**

- I. Call to Order
  - a. Welcome new members and old friends
  - b. MLA Board member, Jocelyn Rankin, will join us
- II. Meeting Minutes May 29, 2001 meeting
- III. Treasurer's Report
- IV. Unfinished Business
  - a. 2002 Program
  - b. Website
  - c. Listserv
  - d. Membership
  - e. Section Council
- V. New Business
  - a. Planning for 2003 Program - bring your Ideas!
- VI. Announcements
  - a. New Project Director, Oral History Committee

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**History of the Health Sciences**  
**Section Officers and Committee Chairs**

Chair *Heidi Heilemann*

Incoming Chair *Patricia E. Gallagher*

Secretary/Treasurer: *Anne Maria Frketich*

Section Council Representative:  
*Stephen J. Greenberg*

Bylaws: *Suzanne Porter*

Continuing Education: *Joan Stoddard*

Membership: *Diane McKenzie*

Newsletter: *Colleen Weum*

Program: *Patricia E. Gallagher*

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**HHSS Sponsored Programs at**  
**MLA 2002**

Please join us at MLA 2002 - [MLA@Dallas](mailto:MLA@Dallas) for the following programs:

*Non-Book Historical Collections at NLM*  
Tuesday, May 21, 2002, 3:00 pm-4:30 pm  
Moderated by Elizabeth Fee, PhD, this program will feature papers by  
Jan Lazarus on *Images Unplugged: A Photo Archivist's Most Excellent Adventure*,  
Nancy Dosch, on *Fun and Frolic with Fascinating Films*,  
John Rees on *Is There an Anarchist in the House? Archival Principles and Practices for the Non-Archivist*  
Paul Theerman on *Eureka! Look what I've Got! Gathering and Promoting Special Collections*

*Don't Put It Here: Dealing with Unwanted Library Content and Responsibilities*  
Wednesday, May 22, 2002, 9:00am-10:30am  
Moderated by Diane McKenzie and jointly hosted with the Hospital Library Section, this program will feature papers by  
Rya Ben-Shir on *Pharmaceutical Sales Reps in the Hospital Library? FDA Regs Suggest that You Say No*  
Barbara Epstein on *Dust or Diamonds? Appraising a History of Medicine Collection*  
Douglas Varner on *Stepping up to the Plate: Creating a New Service with Archival Collections in a Hospital Setting*

Library Digitization Projects

Monday, May 20, 2002 - 10:30am-12:00pm

This program is jointly hosted with the Educational Media and Technologies Section and will feature papers by

Bart Ragon on *Rediscovering Yellow Fever: the Philip S. Hench Walter Reed Yellow Fever Collection Digitization Project*

Kathleen Bauer on *Challenges in the Digitization of a Yale School of Nursing Historical Collection*

Document Delivery in the 21st Century: Different Formats, Innovative Methods

Wednesday, May 22, 2002 - 9:00am-10:30am

This program is jointly hosted with the International Cooperation Section and will feature papers by

Janet Fisher on *MLA's Sister Library Initiative: focus on basic services,*

Rolf H. Schafer and S. Grimes on *GRATISNET - from paper to the Web: Australia's document delivery network for medical and health libraries*

Rosalie H. Stroman, B. Hope on *From desktop to desktop: document delivery services at the National Institutes of Health Library*

Pam White on *Document Delivery on Island Time: Prospero Visits the Caribbean*

Eve-Marie Lacroix, Martha R. Fishel on *Delivering Articles to Users Worldwide - PubMed, Loansome Doc, and DOCLINE*

Electronic Records Management

Monday, May 20, 2002 - 10:30am-12:00pm

This program is jointly hosted with the Medical Informatics and Technical Services Sections and will feature papers by

R. Jones and Laurie Fischer [title TBA]

P. C. Bantin on *Implementing an electronic records program: lessons learned from the Indiana University electronic records project*

T. Slavin on *Electronic records issues for public records*

We hope you will join us for these interesting and informative programs, and for our Business Meeting on Tuesday 21 May 2002 at 1:00pm-2:30pm.

For more Information on the programs please

visit the Section's web site at:

<http://www.mla-hhss.org/acts02.html>

Patricia E. Gallagher, MLS, AHIP  
Program Chair, MLA 2002 History of the Health Sciences Section

New York Academy of Medicine

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New York, NY 10029



**MLA Oral History Project, an Update**

The MLA Oral History Committee and the History of Health Sciences Section have a long history of interaction. Although the Section is familiar with oral history as a discipline, I thought it would be of interest to learn how the MLA Project approaches selection of interviewees and the editing and distribution of the histories.

We are often asked how we select people to be interviewed. We find that it is best to conduct oral history interviews within a few years after a person retires; just after retirement interviewees are comfortable talking about their careers and library association activities, but if too many years elapse many people begin to forget about their years in MLA and say they have lost touch with the profession. With that in mind, we take

several approaches to finding candidates for interviewing. One important source is those who were Janet Doe lecturers, Noyes Award winners, MLA board members and past presidents. Several years ago we asked each Section to give us the names of the people who were critical in the development of their Section, and we have made use of that list of names. In addition, we have looked at areas of medical librarianship that are not well covered by the current histories and made an effort to find the best people to interview in those areas. For example, Bill Fraser and Fran Groen were interviewed to add Canadian perspective, since the charge to the committee is to cover medical librarianship in the United States and Canada. The interview with Jean Antes provided added weight in hospital librarianship and specifically addressed the circuit rider programs. Sadly, some people died before we were able to interview them, (for example, Beatrix Robinow) and other people significant in the profession and the association have declined to be interviewed.

Another factor in whom is selected to be interviewed is finding an interviewer. Interviews are always fun and interesting, but can also be quite a bit of work. When possible, we like to find interviewers who either know the person to be interviewed or know the field. For example Jill Mayer, interviewed Jane Lambremont and Phyllis Gillikin, and all three were involved in AHEC activities; and Ursula Poland conducted a wonderful interview with her friend Lucretia McClure. Of course, it is possible to do a good interview even if you do not know the person or subject area.

We have had some success working with Chapters and Sections. Richard Nollan from the Southern Chapter worked with the Oral History Project in interviewing Mark Hodges and is planning an interview with Carol Burns this year. Janet Schnall from the Pacific Northwest Chapter worked on the Gerry Oppenheimer interview and the PNC contributed interviews

with Bill Fraser done by Kathy Murray, and with Jane Belt, done by Susan Marshall. Susan Marshall also interviewed Susan Crawford as a joint endeavor with the Medical Society Libraries Section (now the Health Association Libraries Section). In addition, Betsy Humphries conducted an interview with Joe Leiter as a joint project of the Oral History Project and the National Library of Medicine.

The Oral History Project continues to work on editing the histories for distribution. The Project has a dual charge to preserve the original interview and transcript for research purposes and also to make a readable, edited version of the interview available to MLA members in order to encourage learning about the history of the association and the profession.

Editing takes a long time and much perseverance, and good editors are hard to find. The editing process involves verifying all names and dates and editing the history for readability and sense. We remove many, but not all of, the "ums" and other words that people use in conversation, but that make reading difficult. For example, many people begin each sentence with the word "and" or have a particular phrase that they use over and over again, such as "et cetera and so forth" and or "well, anyway." It is good to include a few uses of these phrases since they do give a personal flavor to the interview, but we do remove many. Spoken English does not always read well, and if you are not accustomed to reading oral interviews, it can be distracting. After reading the first draft of his interview, Gerry Oppenheimer commented, "I sound like a blithering idiot!" We certainly do not want anyone to think that! After initial editing, the manuscript is sent to the interviewee to review. Some of the interviewees are very involved in the editing process, but others are happy to simply glance at the manuscript. The second edited draft is then sent to the interviewer to review.

If all meets with approval, the editor indexes the interview and adds the table of contents. Even with the new indexing tools, creating a good index can take many hours. The project manager then works with the interviewee to improve the index and to add appropriate photographs, maps, the release form, and a resume. Finally, a title page is created. The entire penultimate draft is sent again for review to the interviewee. We feel that even with the editing, the histories reflect personality of the interviewee. The manuscript is then duplicated and bound, using a standard format. There are always a few typos that sneak through. The worst typo was on the title page and cover of Nina Matheson's interview. It read *MLA Oral History Committee Interview with Nina L. Matheson*. We were very embarrassed and wanted to redo the binding, but Nina was amused and said that the cover was correct, the person interviewed *was* Nina L. Matheson, a close personal friend of hers.

How long does the whole interview process take? At first we were editing interviews that were done ten or twenty years earlier, but this year we distributed the final interview from the backlog, a mid-career interview with Holly Shipp Buchanan done in 1990. Most interviews are now edited and distributed within two or three years but that still seems like a long time. The Oral History Committee has recently set up a timeline for interviews to encourage speedier turnaround. We have also made changes that will shorten the transcription process to a few months instead of a year. But, we are dealing with busy people who volunteer to do the interviews and the editing. We are working with several different people in both the interviewing and editing processes, and it simply ends up taking a lot more time than we wish. Currently we have four interviews being edited and six waiting for editors. The Committee decided at its last meeting to continue to work most intensely on conducting interviews and set

a goal of editing and distributing two histories each year.

Several years ago the project completed an inventory of the histories, assuring that NLM and each NN/LM had a complete set. Most of the NN/LMs have cataloged the histories. In addition, copies of individual histories are sent to the interviewee's institutions and personal copies are sent to the interviewee, the interviewer, and the editor.

The MLA Oral History Program now has its own page on MLANET: [http://mlanet.org/about/history/oral\\_history.html](http://mlanet.org/about/history/oral_history.html). The web page has a brief summary of the project and a list of the fifty-nine people who had been interviewed as of November 2001. There are links from most of the names to interview summaries and in many cases to photographs of the interviewees. When the page is updated again it will reflect interviews with Susan Crawford, Jane Lambremont, Virginia Holtz, and Dorothy Whitcomb. We also expect to do interviews with Bob Braude and Carol Burns this year.

Potential interviewers and editors should note that interviewing and editing oral histories are activities recognized by AHIP although Oral History Committee members are not allowed to count these activities.

Diane McKenzie  
Project Director MLA Oral History Committee,  
Health Sciences Library  
University of North Carolina  
Chapel Hill, NC



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## **New Project Director MLA Oral History Committee**

We are pleased to announce Victoria Pifalo of the University of Illinois - Urbana is the new Project Director for the MLA Oral History Committee.

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## **Join the LISTSERV**

Follow these 6 easy steps to join the HHSS listserv:

1. Send an email message to [majordomo@mlahq.org](mailto:majordomo@mlahq.org)
  2. Leave subject line blank.
  3. In the body of the text enter:  
subscribe hhss@mlahq.org  
youremail@place.edu  
Note: Include your full email address.
  4. Receive email from majordomo. Respond to the message asking you to authenticate your sign on.
  5. Receive confirmation message from majordomo including the all-important "Welcome to the HHSS listserv" message.  
Save this one since it will tell you all the important things like how to send a message, unsubscribe, find out who's on the list, etc.
  6. Begin participating in the listserv!!
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## **INCIPIT**

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