LAWCHA
The Labor and Working-Class History Association

Society of American Archivists Labor Archives Roundtable at the 2015 LAWCHA Conference

Posted on April 29, 2015 by Conor Casey

May 28-29, 2015. As part of the Society of American Archivists Labor Archives Roundtable's ongoing efforts to coordinate with LAWCHA, two conference sessions and several archival repository open houses will be on the LAWCHA 2015 conference program this year.

Program Sessions

On Thursday, May 28, 2015 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM, labor archivists Jen Eidson (University of Maryland) and Traci Drummond (Georgia State University), are coordinating a workshop titled "*Archives 101 for Labor Historians and Activists*."

Increasingly, labor historians and activists are gathering and creating their own materials for research instead of relying only on libraries and archives. Eidson and Drummond will provide tips on how to care for both physical and digital materials for the short and long-term. Tailored to non-practicing archivists, the session will cover fundamental issues such as provenance (origins of the material), legal transfer of material to the collector/creator through deeds of gift and oral history releases, preservation practices, and long-term planning for ultimate disposition of collections. The session will be instruction-based with handouts and lists of resources also provided, and plenty of time for Q and A.

On Saturday, May 30, 2015 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM labor archivists Conor Casey (University of Washington), Jennifer Eidson (University of Maryland), Tom Connors (George Washington University) and Catherine Powell (San Francisco State University) will present panel session on "*The Challenges and Opportunities of "New" Labor Archives: Founding Sustainable Labor Archives Programs in an Era of Austerity*."

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The session will focus on the challenges and opportunities for new labor repositories in the context of the crisis in the American labor movement and the recent economic downturn. Despite these seemingly prohibitive factors, academic institutions, labor unionists, and scholars have recently chosen to make significant investments in time and money to preserve labor history by founding new labor collections and repositories. This panel session employs case examples of repositories founded in the last 30 years of "new" labor collections. Presenters will outline the unique histories of their collections based on location, community of supporters, and institutional resources, examining how varies conditions have affected our core archival programmatic areas. The Labor Archives and Research Center at SFSU was founded in 1985 (Catherine Powell), the Labor Archives of Washington in 2010 (Conor Casey), the Teamsters Archives in 2010 (Tom Connors), and the George Meany Memorial AFL-CIO Archive at the University of Maryland in 2013 (Jennifer Eidson).

Labor Archives Open Houses

As well as conference program presentations, the Labor Archives Roundtable has organized archives open houses at several Washington DC area repositories.

George Meany Memorial AFL-CIO Archive, University of Maryland
Friday, May 29, 10am-5pm

The University of Maryland emphasizes the collecting of archival resources and other collections that document the history of the labor movement in North America and the Washington, DC/Maryland region. These materials help researchers better understand pivotal social movements in this country, including those to gain rights for women, children and minorities.

Our labor collections are comprised of AFL-CIO Department records, trade department records, international union records, union programs, union organizations with allied or affiliate relationships with the AFL-CIO, and personal papers of union leaders. We also have extensive photo documentation of labor union activities from the 1940s to the present in the photographic negative and digital collections. Additionally, collections of graphic images, over 10,000 audio tapes, several hundred films and videotapes, and over 2,000 artifacts are available for research and study.

Participants are invited to view the George Meany Memorial AFL-CIO Archive, a

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prestigious archive recently added to Special Collections in Labor History & Workplace studies at the University of Maryland Libraries, and unique labor materials from the Gordon W. Prange Collection.

Transportation Information:

Since Maryland is not in downtown DC, tour attendees will need to plan for additional travel time to campus. Probably 30 minute (one way) driving to and from campus. They can also travel using the metro, and take the UMD shuttle bus from the College Park metro to campus. That would probably take 45-60 minutes.

Teamsters Archives at George Washington University
Friday, May 29, 9-5 pm

The George Washington University and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters launched an initiative in 2008 to build an educational and research environment to explore the role that the American labor movement in general and the Teamsters in particular have played in the development of the United States from the late 19th Century onwards. The records of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters serve as a foundational collection to this initiative. Key aspects of this collaboration include an active archival program to acquire, arrange, preserve, and provide access to historically-significant materials documenting American labor history; an active exhibit program; academic courses; colloquia; seminars; a state-of-the-art reading room; and meeting spaces for the Teamsters and members of the GW community.

Archives, Manuscripts, and Museum Collections, Catholic University of America
Thursday, May 28, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

The Department of Archives, Manuscripts, and Museum Collections maintains 8,000 linear feet of manuscripts, photographs, and film. Approximately 900 linear feet of the collection relate to labor unions, the Catholic Church’s role in organized labor, and working-class Catholics more generally. This includes late 19th century and early 20th century labor union collections like the papers of Knights of Labor leaders Terrence Powderly and John Hayes and United Mine Worker President John Mitchell. The CUA Archives also includes CIO and New Deal related collections like the papers of John Brophy and Philip Murray and the Congress of Industrial Organizations Records. The Archives is especially strong in collections that document the Catholic

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Church and the labor movement, such as the papers of John A. Ryan, Francis J. Haas, and George G. Higgins, and the Records of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. The finding aids to a number of these and other manuscript collections are available at the CUA Archives website.

Author

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