

**WESTERN NEW YORK ARCHIVISTS
MINUTES OF JANUARY 9, 2020, MEETING
CANISIUS COLLEGE ARCHIVES, BOUWHUIS LIBRARY, BUFFALO, NY**

PRESENT: Kathleen Delaney, Dan DiLandro, Dennis Frank, Jessica Johnson, Bill Parke, S. Mary Serbacki, Wanda Slawinska, S. Mara Walton, Ellen Winger, Heidi Ziemer

WELCOME: Kathleen welcomed everyone to Canisius College. There were self-introductions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The NYAC (NY Archives Conference) will be June 10-12 at Marist College in Poughkeepsie. Ellen shared that she has just received an ok from her congregational leadership team to fund a renovation of her heritage area to make it more "user friendly."

DISCUSSION: The topic for today's meeting was discussion and sharing around the use of the archives as a resource for planning and producing special events, publications, documentaries, etc.

- Mary spoke about the development of a documentary video on Mother Leonarda Hannappel, one of the first sisters of her congregation to come to the U.S.; principal of Sacred Heart Academy; mission superior of the U.S.
- Dennis told of a student working on a video history of the St. Bonaventure basketball team. He also noted that the university had already had its sesquicentennial and had published a book; another to come. There was also a short film. They were lucky in that those responsible for the project were very history-minded and were not seeking to produce a pure development piece (though everything is useful in that regard).
- Bill talked about things that were done for the centennial of the church: women of the church did a play. He has also prepared various exhibits using them to educate church members and visitors.
- Kathleen and Jessica told of their experiences in working on materials for Canisius' sesquicentennial. They were cautioned not to do a book; a timeline was suggested. Funding and time constraints posed continuing difficulties. The final products were a "rapid-fire" video of 150 years in 150 seconds (mixed reviews!) and a just published volume.
- Dan, too, spoke of Buffalo State's sesquicentennial some years ago. He noted that they have digitized yearbooks and the student newspaper. He is hoping to do the college

catalogs. This has helped in many ways; saves lots of time when doing reference work as the digitized versions can be searched quickly.

Each experience was different in some ways, but there were commonalities in the types of documentation provided, processes used, and challenges faced. Pitfalls, caveats, and pointers included:

- It is important to keep all lines of communication open. The more the archivist knows and understands about what information/documentation is needed and the purpose for which it will be used, the better service can be provided—accurately and efficiently. For photographic material, it is best to know at the outset (if possible) the resolution needed; prevents redoing the same work multiple times.
- Determine who the audience is for the project (whether display, publication, video). Is it for internal or external use? Promotion? Fund-raising? History? The audience will largely inform the final product.
- It is important to know the true origins of the materials; sourcing is important; accuracy of attribution as well as accuracy of the text or visual itself.
- Archivists are often “myth busters” as we try to present the facts and stress accuracy; stories are often just stories and not totally true to the past events.
- When working with other departments (e.g. institutional advancement, alumni/ae, public relations, etc.), communication is essential. It’s best if one person is charged with overseeing the project—not too many cooks in the kitchen. Coordination is also key. Give credit where credit is due and keep all vital parties in the loop.
- With regard to college catalogs: many now are available only on-line. This makes future access to the information problematic. Dennis noted that SBU also provides pdf versions of their catalog. Kathleen said that she requests both a pdf and a hard copy for archival purposes.
- Heidi noted that as we work on these anniversary projects we often become aware of taps in the collections. This is actually a benefit as one can then try to locate missing pieces.

NEXT MEETING: May 14 at St. Elizabeth Motherhouse, Allegany

REMINDER: CHECK OUT THE WNYA WEBSITE--

<http://www.archives.sbu.edu/wnya>