“It’s Like I Can Touch You”
Care of 3D Archival Collections Workshop

Thursday May 18
1:00-4:30
Standish Room, 3rd Floor of the Science Library
University at Albany

Sponsored by CAA and the University at Albany Libraries Preservation Department

Have you been wondering how to handle those 3D objects in your collections? Are you afraid to have your patrons touch them? If so, then this is the workshop for you. Learn about collecting, curating, caring for, and containing objects such as textiles, glassware, specimens, and other non-paper artifacts. Speakers for this half-day workshop will be Gwen Spicer, Spicer Art Conservation, Jean Root Green, College of Saint Rose, and Rachel Donaldson, Foundation of New York State.

“Buried Treasures: A New Archive of Images from Albany in the 1930’s and 1940’s”

During the Depression, Albany’s City Engineer and Public Works crews were busy improving the streets, sidewalks, buildings and other public places of the city, aided by the Works Progress Administration and other federal employment programs. Their work was documented in the Common Council Reports for that time and in photographs, many of them showing “before” and “after” conditions. While the original photographic prints are long gone, the negatives were preserved, and for almost 20 years have resided at the Albany County Hall of Records.

continued on page 2
“It’s Like I Can Touch You” continued

Nurses.

The workshop will cover:

- Curatorial Care of Collections: collecting policies; value and use of 3D objects in archival collections
- Care of 3D Archival Collections: types of objects typically found in archives; condition problems; improving the storage environment; proper handling; packaging/housing solutions for storage and exhibition

A tour of the University Libraries Preservation Department is also planned.

Pre-registration is required for all attendees by May 11, 2006. There will be no charge for members of the Capital Area Archivists. The cost is $5 for all others.

To register please contact:
Amy Schindler
LE-355, Science Library
1400 Washington Ave.
Albany, NY 12222
aschindler@uamail.albany.edu
518-437-3934

“Buried Treasures” continued

“This collection of negatives was like a time capsule,” said County Clerk Thomas G. Clingan, “but researchers could not easily make them out and as fragile originals they could not be handled.”

Now, through grants arranged by State Senator Neil Breslin and Assembly Member John J. McEneny, many of these formerly-inaccessible portraits of Albany’s past have been digitally converted into high-quality images that will soon be available for viewing by the general public. A slide show of some of these photos premiered on the County’s web site during Archives Week, October 9 through 15.

The photos are selective, reflecting the City Engineer’s work “to construct, maintain, alter, and repair streets, highways, sidewalks and public places of the city.” While not every area of the city is represented, the businesses, transportation, fashions and buildings of Depression-Era Albany appear in the background in photos of broken sidewalks or newly paved streets. The Albany Riverfront looked very different from today; as do many City neighborhoods. Vintage automobiles appear in many of the street scenes and you might just see someone you know walking to school or shopping on Pearl Street.

“For years, I’ve wanted to make these ‘Buried Treasures’ available to the public, and now, thanks to Neil Breslin and Jack McEneny, the public will soon be able to view these historic images at any time of the day or night, right from their own homes,” said Mr. Clingan. “We included the best of this collection in this first phase, and hope to extend it to still more images in the future,” he added.

The Hall of Records web site is www.albanycounty.com/ACCHORM.

For further information contact Thomas G. Clingan at (518) 487-5110.

Spotlight on Local Repositories: Cleaning Up “the Attic” in City Hall

The Schenectady City Archives, also known as the Efner History Center, has been on the attic level of Schenectady's City Hall for more than 50 years. For many years, William B. Efner, a Schenectadian who eventually became city historian, did extensive research and collected artifacts, photographs, books, and papers on the history of Schenectady and its people. When his history collection became too large for his home on Front Street in the Stockade,
“Cleaning Up the Attic” continued

Mr. Efner donated it to the city, and it was moved into City Hall. Over the years, important municipal records as well as artifacts and papers from businesses, organizations, and the general public were collected and added to the library. The library was formally renamed for Mr. Efner after his death in 1962.

The City Archives' mission is twofold: to preserve the Library's historical treasures for the future, and to make them more accessible to the public. To do this, the City Archives applies archival practices, resources, and technology to its facility and collections. The City Archives' records include municipal records; city directory and scrapbook collections; postcards and photographs; books with a particular focus on local and New York State history; collections from labor unions, civic organizations, the public schools, and businesses such as ALCO, General Electric, and Schenectady Railway Company; maps, atlases, insurance maps, and blueprints; military records, posters and pamphlets; and writings by local historians.

In April 2004, Cynthia Seacord took over the volunteer archivist position at the City Archives when Mayor Brian U. Stratton accepted the Schenectady County Historical Society's offer to manage the City Archives and History Center. Cynthia is a Schenectady County native and Schenectady County Historical Society volunteer for over five years. She is currently on its board where she also serves as secretary. A graduate of Union College with honors in history, Mrs. Seacord also has a master's degree from the College of St. Rose in secondary education, and taught history before entering the always-interesting world of archives.

For submissions to the next

**CAA NEWS**

please contact Rachel Donaldson, CAA Newsletter Editor at

rdonaldson@foundationnysnurses.org

Articles and announcements are accepted on an ongoing basis.
“Cleaning Up the Attic”
continued

In 2005, Seacord's application to the New York State Archives’ Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund was approved and the City Archives received $25,755 in funding to conduct a large-scale inventory of the Archives' holdings and plan for the future of the City Archives and History Center. The grant funding has allowed the City to hire Cynthia Seacord as a part-time project director as well as Rachel Donaldson and Amy Schindler, two archivists who share another part-time project position. Finding staff to fill these positions was more difficult than one might expect when you consider that all of those hired were required to be city residents. Not surprisingly, there are only a handful of archivists in Schenectady! Thanks to this funding the City Archives' has been able to make a great deal of progress in improving accessibility to its collections. The project staff has identified all of the records in the City Archives’ storage rooms including some that have been inaccessible to the public for decades because there was no comprehensive or reliable inventory. Ellen Fladger was also engaged by the project to conduct a needs assessment for the City Archives that will guide the planning for its future. Grant funds have also allowed for the purchase of a new computer, that Seacord hopes will eventually hold the complete, searchable database of the City Archives' holdings. Books which were previously inaccessible to researchers as they were stored in cartons beyond user access were also identified and are now available to staff and users.

The City Archives relies on the generosity of volunteers and donors to provide the excellent services it does to users. The books transferred from storage to the research room are housed on bookshelves that were a gift of the Schenectady Museum, which had acquired new shelving of its own. Supporters from the community also recently donated a gently used scanner and a color printer. These and other generous gifts allow the City Archives to provide researchers with improved service and access to books which were previously inaccessible to researchers as they were stored in cartons beyond user access were also identified and are now available to staff and users.

continued on page 5

Become more involved with CAA

Would you like to become more involved with planning programs for the Capital Area Archivists of New York? CAA is looking for enthusiastic individuals with fresh ideas to serve on our Ad-Hoc Program Committee. If you are interested in the possibility of joining this committee, please contact John Diefenderfer, President of CAA, at 518/462-5539 or jdiefenderfer@dc-northeast.org.
“Cleaning Up the Attic” continued

records as well as a means for conserving and preserving the Archives’ fragile and valuable documents. The Archives looks forward to continuing to improve access to its collections for the residents of Schenectady and researchers from around the world in the years to come.

The Schenectady City Archives and Efner History Center is open and staffed by Cynthia Seacord and other Schenectady County Historical Society volunteers 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and by appointment. Staff can be reached at (518) 382-5088, hcenter@nycap.rr.com or via postal mail at City Archives and Efner History Center, City Hall, Room A-1, 105 Jay Street, Schenectady, NY 12305-1938.

You can see all images in color in the online version of the newsletter available at http://library.albany.edu/caa/Newsletters/.

College of Saint Rose Archives Receives Grant

The Archives of The College of Saint Rose participated in the CDLC 2005 Regional Bibliographic Databases cataloging grant project. College Archivist, Jean Root Green, received $620 for creating original catalog records for 62 athletics, alumni, and other college banners. The records appear in the Library’s local online database as well as CaDiLaC online and OCLC. Green hopes to use the funds for the preservation microfilming of College student newspapers.

New York Archives Conference

June 14-16, 2006
Vassar College,
Poughkeepsie, NY

The annual New York Archives Conference, formerly known as the Lake Ontario Archives Conference, will take place at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie June 14-16.

The plenary speaker at this year’s conference will be Bob Arnold, Historian and former Chief of Government Records Services, New York State Archives, who will speak on his twenty years of advocating for local government and archival records. During Friday’s lunch Bob Clark, the Supervisory Archivist of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and Museum will speak on FDR and the Historic Hudson Valley.

The conference will feature workshops on disaster preparedness and cooperating with teachers doing documentary based teaching. Sessions will include “Regional Digitization Projects: Tips on the Dos and Don’ts;” “Using Interns and Volunteers;” “Making a Records Survey a Success!;” “Promoting Your Collections” and many more.

Attendees will have the opportunity to tour the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library, Hudson Microimaging or Vassar Special Collections.

The cost of conference registration $50.00 per person. The NYAC membership fee is in addition to the conference fee and is required of all attendees.

Underwriting for the conference is provided by ASR Systems Group, Inc., Kardex Systems, Inc., Eloquent Systems, Hollinger Corporation, Hudson Microimaging, and University Products.

For a complete conference program, or information on registering for the conference, contact:

New York Archives Conference
c/o
Geoffrey Williams, University Archivist
University Library, LE 356
University at Albany, SUNY
1400 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12222

If you have any questions, contact Geoff Williams at (518) 437-3936 or gwilliams@uamail.albany.edu