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And They Were There--Reports of Meetings

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And They Were There

Reports of Meetings — 2013 CAMA Medical History Symposium

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2013 CAMA Medical History Symposium — American College of Surgeons, Chicago, IL, October 31, 2013

Reported by: **Ramune K. Kubilius** (Northwestern University, Galter Health Sciences Library) <r-kubilius@northwestern.edu>

One-day local conferences or symposia can often draw presenters of interesting research findings and audiences that share common interests. For almost a dozen years, a small informal group of Chicago area archivists, archivist-librarians, and librarians has sponsored an annual one-day medical history symposium in Chicago and its suburbs. The idea grew out of a desire to offer an event during Archives Week in Chicago, highlighting interesting research being done in Chicago area libraries' Special Collections and medical archives. Most of the presentations, both invited and contributed, usually have some connection with Chicago area medical history. The **CAMA (Chicago Area Medical Archivists)** symposium usually is held during that week, or at least, during American Archives Month, observed nationally during the month of October. The 2013 symposium was held on October 31st, Hallows' Eve at the large Board of Regents Room of the American College of Surgeons headquarters building in Chicago's Gold Coast. Six presenters shared their findings about interesting persons (personalities, really), health issues from a historical perspective, and commemorated anni-

versaries. Some speakers presented already-published findings, while others presented findings of "research in progress," with the possibility of publication still to come. Listening to the presentations was a small but interested group of colleagues and medical history affectionados.

The symposium provided some insights into the lengths people go to during the research and publication process. Doing historical research is often whimsical and often takes researchers on detouring paths. Sometimes, medical history research may offer special challenges since clinical and patient confidentiality issues may be involved. Tracking down necessary sources and photographs, as well as where they may be located, can be daunting. Purchasing needed sources through Internet sites may sometimes be warranted. Decisions about publishing aren't always easy for any author, and perhaps especially for an author who may be writing outside his or her usual professional area. The selection of publication genre by an author may yield different stories. For example, an officially published institutional anniversary commemorative publication may not offer the same opportunities to tell stories about personalities that a biography might. Challenges that archivists and collections librarians may have in common involve difficult decisions on retention of print materials. A decision to retain a short run print journal, for example, might later result in having a unique holding of the first consumer health publication. That publication in turn may offer proof to disprove claims that another journal holds that honor of being first.

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When historical research is fruitful, oftentimes, findings are shared in articles, books, and presentations. In 2013, attendees at the CAMA medical history symposium had the opportunity to hear about the first century of **Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science** by archivist **Kelly Reiss**. A book, *Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, A Centennial View* by **Judith R. Masterson** was published in 2012 by the university. Surgeon **Donald Wood** spoke on the topic “**Lloyd M. Nyhus, MD, FACS**: Surgeon, Mentor, Visionary.” His 2013 book, co-written with **Michele Rapaport** and published by **University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC)**, is entitled *Lloyd M. Nyhus, MD, FACS: Surgeon, Mentor, Visionary for 20th Century Surgery*. Other 2013 symposium speakers presented on topics that may continue to be researched, or will provide fodder for more presentation or publication. **Dr. Brigid Lusk** of the **UIC Nursing History Resource Center** shared information on “Nurses’ Exposure to Radiation in the Early Twentieth Century,” and librarian **Holly Burt** spoke on “Patient Safety: Physicians and Librarians-Partners in Charge.” Library school professor **Catherine Arnott Smith** shared her findings (including the Chicago connections) on “Two Sisters: The Doctors Riddle Against The World,” and archivist **Sue Sacharski** concluded the day’s programming with an interesting story she called, “The Little Old Lady in Black: The Hospital Haunting of Edith Patterson.”

Chicago will be the site of various meetings in 2014 that promise medical history buffs and researchers opportunities to network and continue delving into medical history. In May 2014, the annual meeting of the **Medical Library Association** (May 16-21) will include presentations organized by its History of the Health Sciences Section. Earlier that same month, from May 8-11th, the **American Association for the History of Medicine (AAHM)** will gather in Chicago, and meetings of affiliated and related groups, e.g., **Archivists and Librarians in the History of the Health Sciences (ALHHS)** and the **Medical Museums Association (MEMA)** are scheduled to take place prior to that conference. And in the fall of 2014, another **CAMA Medical History Symposium** will again be scheduled...

AAHM — <http://www.histmed.org/>

ALHHS — <http://www.alhhs.org/>

CAMA — <http://www.chicagoarchivists.org/cama>

MEMA — <http://www.case.edu/affil/MeMA/memahome.htm>

MLA — <http://www.mlanet.org> 🌱

Collection Management Matters — Selecting Books on the Side

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I recently had to explain to two colleagues all of the responsibilities that fall under my job description, and when I finished they both responded: “You do a lot!” When I got promoted to Assistant Director for Collection Management, which included supervision of the Cataloging Department, I had to keep my former title and responsibilities as Head of Acquisitions and Serials, two departments that merged after I was hired as the acquisitions and collection development department head in 1997. Along the way, database selection and procurement, the open URL linking product (WebBridge), and ERM were added to my duties. I also worked with the systems librarian to launch our discovery tool, troubleshoot database and ejournal access, run collection analysis reports, coordinate the liaison program, etc. The department also handles payroll, supply orders, book repair, binding, and government document processing.

Managing e-sericals and databases can dominate my day and diminish some of the time I use to devote to book selection. I sometimes feel like I am doing book selection and collection development in my spare time or on the side. Our faculty is allocated 80% of the book budget, and the liaisons have 15% of the academic department’s allocation. We have many departments and some library liaisons that never spend their allocations. At one time or another, I have investigated the feasibility of maintaining an approval program, but I fear that I will get the same or less participation from the faculty. I have also considered patron-driven acquisitions (PDA), but I like having control over what specifically is added to the collection. In March I start selecting books for departments that have been dormant, so that the collection is kept current and balanced. When accreditation time rolls around and the department heads request reports on library holdings, we can always show that our collection provides the current scholarship in the field in print and electronic format.

If I have a department that has a significant budget, but a history of not ordering books or even responding to emails and telephone calls, I go to **Midwest Library’s** Interacq system and create a profile of books published in the LC classification area for that department. Then I open the acquisition module in Sierra and check for duplicates as I do my selection. I signed up for their STM slip service, and I occasionally will have my heart made glad when faculty members come to my office with a whole stack that wipes out their budget for the fiscal year. Aside from Interacq, I can compile lists from *Books In Print* or *CHOICE*.

In the case of *CHOICE*, I also subscribe to the cards, which I distribute to departments and library liaisons; however, I set aside and order the ones I think are essential for the library. I seldom need to create a list of titles in the online version, because the titles I need have already been ordered from the card selection. *CHOICE Reviews Online* provides Outstanding Academic Titles (OAT) as well as subject-specific Forthcoming Lists. The featured Bibliography Essay comes with a “Works Cited” list at the end, which can be useful for new purchases as well as filling gaps.

Having little time to leisurely peruse print copies of publishers’ catalogs and *Library Journal* (Oh! Those were the days!), I have become fond of what I call “ready to go” subject lists. I usually start with **Baker and Taylor/YBP Academia** (<http://www.ybp.com/acad/index.html>) and go through all of the lists, but I especially like the *Academic Essentials* and “Spotlight on...” I can export the titles to Excel spreadsheets and delete the ones I don’t want or we already own, before I give them to the library assistant for processing. When really pressed

for time, I can download the spreadsheet, cross off the ones I recognize as already ordered, and hand it to her to check the status. I also print the lists and send them to the library liaisons and departmental library representatives to see if I can get a response. This year, I got a wonderful and thorough selection from a

comprehensive list I sent the Women’s Studies Coordinator. **Midwest Library Services, Baker & Taylor/YBP**, and other vendor Websites have complete lists of the latest award-winning books, which can be useful.

My favorite “go to” selection Website is **Amazon**, which I grew to love one year when our *Books In Print Online* subscription lapsed. It may be because I shop Amazon for my own personal books, as well as for my church bookstore, and the familiar ease of use carries over. For newer titles, I like being able to read the snippets of remarks from reviewers from a cross section of library periodicals and scholarly journals, but most of all from the readers themselves. For older books that I am trying to replace because they are worn beyond repair, it helps to know that the book is out of print and the cheapest used book dealer is selling it for \$250. That makes me want to put the book back on the shelf to see if it has a few more years of circulation left in it. Best of all, I enjoy scrolling through the “Customer Who Bought This Item Also Bought...” because I can find really interesting books on related subjects, that I never came across any other place.

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