Spring Greetings from the Chair

Welcome to the Spring Issue of *Incipit*, newsletter of the History of the Health Sciences Section of the Medical Library Association. Melissa Nasea is doing a terrific job of putting together not only a record of past and upcoming events of the Section, but also news of interest for the membership. In this issue I want to highlight several important upcoming events at the annual meeting including dates and links of import and interest.

Susan Sanders has worked diligently with the Section Programming Committee to provide us with one sponsored and 2 co-sponsored sessions. We are sponsoring a session entitled “Hall of Fame: Nursing and Allied Health Information and Scholarship in a League of their Own” which will be held Monday, May 21st from 10:30 AM-12:00 PM. Four contributed papers were accepted for a 90 minute program with Stephen Greenberg moderating the session. The History of the Health Sciences Section is also co-sponsoring a National Programming Committee session called “From the Bench to the Field: Translational Research” to be held Sunday, May 20th from 4:30-6:00 PM, as well as a program with the Chiropractic Libraries Section, “Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Evidence, Bias and Use...Oh My” on Monday, May 21st from 10:30 AM-12:00 PM.

Remember too, that the Murray Gottlieb Prize for the best unpublished scholarly paper about a topic in the history of the health sciences is given annually. The prize was established in 1956 by Ralph and Jo Grimes of the Old Hickory Bookshop in Brinklow, Maryland in memory of Murray Gottlieb, a New York antiquarian book dealer. The author of the winning essay receives a complimentary registration to the annual meeting and a $100 cash award. Plan now to submit a paper for the 2013 award. Look for detailed announcements on the HHSS listserv soon after MLA 2012 and read the award description at [http://www.mlanet.org/pdf/awards/gottlieb_nom_20090707.pdf](http://www.mlanet.org/pdf/awards/gottlieb_nom_20090707.pdf).

There are two other events to think about in Seattle to increase your involvement with the HHSS. First of all there is the Section Shuffle on Sunday night from 6:00-7:00pm, location to be announced. This is an opportunity to promote our section to the membership and it’s also an opportunity to shop for other section membership as well. You will be able to “test drive” involvement in another section for free for a 6 month period by signing up at the shuffle or the Section table in the meeting registration area. Secondly, the Annual Business Meeting for the HHSS will be Monday, May 21st from 7:30 AM - 9:00 AM in Room 211 at the Washington State Convention Center. We are a small section, always eager to have more members involved and active.

There are also other events to think about in Seattle to increase your involvement with the HHSS. First of all there is the Section Shuffle on Sunday night from 6:00-7:00pm, location to be announced. This is an opportunity to promote our section to the membership and it’s also an opportunity to shop for other section membership as well. You will be able to “test drive” involvement in another section for free for a 6 month period by signing up at the shuffle or the Section table in the meeting registration area. Secondly, the Annual Business Meeting for the HHSS will be Monday, May 21st from 7:30 AM - 9:00 AM in Room 211 at the Washington State Convention Center. We are a small section, always eager to have more members involved and active.

Finally, because of the international nature of the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Medical Library Association in Boston, “One Health: Information in an Interdependent World”, planning for section programming is being done...
early. Please visit the site http://mlanet.org/am/am2013/pdf/mla13_call.pdf for the Call for Papers and Posters information. The Section will be sponsoring a session entitled “The Role of Alternative and Indigenous Medicine in Global Health: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives”. Our section is also a co-sponsor on a contributed papers session entitled “Collaborations for Health.” Remember that the due date for abstract submission is May 1, 2012!

Please enjoy the remainder of this issue. Melissa has worked hard to provide you with timely and interesting information.

See you in Seattle!

Joan Stoddart

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### History of the Health Sciences Section

#### Treasurer’s Report

**May 2011 – February 2012**

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As of February 2012, the History of the Health Sciences Section budget is $6,299.81. As displayed in the table above, the Section will be participating in the Section Shuffle at the MLA 2012 Annual Meeting in Seattle. Since the amount we contributed to participate in the Section Shuffle is roughly the same as the membership dues we accumulated as of September 2011, our budget is holding steady at just under $6,300.

Submitted by Deidra Woodson, HHSS Secretary/Treasurer

### Membership News

Thanks to all for your enthusiastic support of the MLA History of Health Sciences Section. We are 73 members strong, and 3 of those are new members who joined us this year. The ability of our section to promote the history of health sciences librarianship, historical inquiry, and historical collections is due to your membership in our section. It’s exciting to be among librarian colleagues who are committed to the past, and have an eye toward the future.
HHSS Membership Pins

All of our members should have an HHSS pin. If you’re a new member, but did not receive a pin and a bookmark, or a renewing member in need of a pin, please contact Susan Sanders, Membership Committee Chair, at sanders-su@umkc.edu, and one will be mailed to you. You can also stop by the HHSS booth at the Section Shuffle at MLA 2012, or ask any board member at the meeting. We want everyone to proudly display their membership in HHSS!

Susan Sanders
Membership Chair

Annual Business Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the May 2011 HHSS business meeting are included in the Fall 2011 Incipit http://www.mla-hhss.org/incipit/Fall2011.pdf. Please review the minutes so you can vote on them at the May 21st meeting.

Consortium Processing Project in Chicago

The University of Illinois at Chicago Library of the Health Sciences Special Collections Dept. is one of several institutions participating in a project of the Black Metropolis Research Consortium (BMRC) to make available hidden or unprocessed collections documenting the African-American experience in Chicago. The initial phase of the project was a two-year survey of collections to identify those which met the established criteria for inclusion.

After eligible collections were identified, teams of interns were hired and assigned to perform the necessary processing work. The interns are supervised by staff members of the BMRC in cooperation with on-site staff at the participating institutions.

Two UIC Library of the Health Sciences collections related to the history of nursing were included in the project. The first to be processed was a collection of material from the Cook County School of Nursing, which opened in 1929 after the close of the Illinois Training School for Nurses. The CCSN graduated its last class of students in 1980. The second collection processed was the student records of the Michael Reese Hospital School of Nursing, which opened in 1890 and operated until 1987.

Along with the physical processing of the collections, the interns are producing finding aids which will be made available by the owning institution.

The survey database of the Black Metropolis Research Consortium can be found at: http://bmrcsurvey.uchicago.edu/

Kevin O’Brien
UIC Library of the Health Sciences
Construction Announced

On Nov. 23, 2010 Linda Walton announced to the staff of the University of Iowa Hardin Library of the Health Sciences that significant construction was going to take place in the building from May-Aug. 2011. The library would be closed to all users and staff. Asbestos would be removed; lights, ceiling tiles, insulation, HVAC, doors, and security system would be replaced. Carpet would be replaced on the 4th floor, home of the John Martin Rare Book Room (RBR).

Planning

From Nov. 2010-May 2011 Hardin staff planned for the temporary relocation of library staff and services. Functions of the RBR were to be moved to the Main Library. Of primary concern was the RBR collection. Some books were to be moved to Main. Books which were to remain in Hardin needed an appropriate environment while the construction was in progress. Staff offices had to be relocated and appropriate work needed to be identified.

Preparation for Transport

Four groups of materials were identified for relocation:

- Especially valuable books, based on usage and vendor catalog values, were moved to the Main Library vault, including: Nuremberg Chronicle, Harvey, incunabula, Hooke, Cheselden, Vicq d’Azy, Jenner, Addison, Fuch, Samuel Johnson Dictionary, Avicenna, Vesalius, Bidloo, Da Cortona, Darwin

- Books to be used in the Heirs of Hippocrates Annotation Project

- Books to be used in the RBR Digitization Project

- Over 300 pamphlets by William Osler were moved to the temporary Ref Desk on the medical campus.

All books to be transported to Main were measured and wrapped in thin-weight paper. The paper was breathable and would assist in climate acclimatization while not creating problematic micro-environments. Tape with light adhesive was used so books could be unwrapped when needed. Labels with bibliographic and call number information was attached to the outside. Large plastic felt-lined totes were used for transport and the books were packed spine down.

The Actual Move

The move lasted from May 9-13. A temporary office with computer and supplies was set up in the Main Library.

Closing the RBR for the summer

Because the carpeting was going to be replaced, all books were shifted up in their sections leaving the bottom shelf empty. A team of two people from the Conservation Lab covered the book sections in plastic. Hardin was closed from May 13-Aug. 17. One library staff member responsible for facilities staffed the library during the construction. Once a week the RBR curator and a staff member from University Conservation visited the RBR to check humidity, temperature, and the general condition of the books under the plastic tents.

Remote Rare Book Room

During the four months that Hardin was closed, routine work continued. The monthly newsletter was published, books were ordered, and an exhibit was planned for the return to the library. The long standing project to document the Osler pamphlet collection was completed. Work was completed on the Digitization Project and the Heirs annotations.
Return to the RBR

Return to Hardin occurred Aug. 17, but construction continued to be an issue. The 4th floor, where the RBR resides, was closed until September because carpet work and relocation of general stacks resulted in this being the last area of the building to be completed. RBR users had to be escorted through construction zones to the RBR. Construction continued “in the margins” throughout Oct. and beyond.

The books were returned in the same totes that had transported them in May. Plastic tents were removed from the shelving. Cleaning shelves and books and shifting books to include the bottom shelf was not completed until March 1, 2012. In the process, 250 volumes needing conservation were identified. The collection is now in fine condition, the new carpet is wonderful, and we are seeing the benefit of a very focused project that occurred while we were displaced.

Donna Hirst
University of Iowa

H-Net History of Science, Medicine and Technology Discussion List

For those of you who aren’t familiar with the H-Net History of Science, Medicine and Technology discussion list (H-Sci-Med-Tech), I want to bring it to your attention. It can be accessed at http://www.h-net.org/~smt/.

First, a bit of background about the parent organization of H-Sci-Med-Tech, H-Net, “2013 marks the 20th anniversary of H-Net: Humanities & Social Sciences Online. In those twenty years H-Net grew from a half-dozen listservs with a few thousand subscribers to a scholarly society with over 180,000 subscribers across 186 networks edited by over 600 scholars backed by almost two thousand advisory board members. Founded at the University of Illinois-Chicago in 1993, H-Net initially appealed to historians, but soon it broke through disciplinary walls to welcome people of all ranks and fields in the humanities and social sciences from around the world.”

I spend hours in my job looking for announcements in the health sciences to list on the online databases, ResearchRaven and ScanGrants. In the course of scouring the Web and scanning hundreds of items from multiple sources, I realized what an outstanding resource H-Sci-Med-Tech is.

For example, H-Sci-Med-Tech often features announcements of conferences and calls for papers that I have seen nowhere else on the Web (and I am on the Web a LOT!). Proud as I am of ResearchRaven, we concentrate on health or medicine-related items. Therefore, when I discover announcements in fields unrelated to health (e.g., the history of space exploration, the history of the automotive or printing industries or of computing) I send them to H-Sci-Med-Tech. H-Sci-Med-Tech helps explain how technology has influenced human society. Librarians know better than anyone how the world has been transformed by computers, the Web, new forms of communication, and changes in the printing and bookmaking industries.

Although I am not a professional historian, one of the list editors of H-Sci-Med-Tech encouraged me to apply for a position as a list editor. I did and was accepted. I am pleased that a person with a librarian background can participate in an excellent operation run by historians.

Here is an example of an announcement that I had not seen anywhere before it appeared on H-Sci-Med-Tech today. It is a call for papers for a conference called, “Medicine, Health and Irish Experiences of War, 1914-45.”
And as hard as I work to find fellowships and travel grants in the history of the health sciences to list on ScanGrants I am often (to my chagrin and annoyance!) scooped on such topics by H-Sci-Med-Tech. Thus, if you want to keep up on opportunities to spend a few months at a notable library with a fine collection in the history of the health sciences via a fellowship or grant, subscribing to H-Sci-Med-Tech is highly recommended. Periodically, H-Sci-Med-Tech also posts announcements of essay and book awards in the history of the health sciences.

Additionally, H-Sci-Med-Tech lists announcements of conferences and talks throughout the US and overseas.

The readers of H-Sci-Med-Tech are very friendly and many are scholars who post questions such as, “Can anyone suggest a book or article that would provide some background info on physicians as lifestyle authorities or their history as media figures in 20th century American culture? My searches are not turning up much. Thanks in advance.” It is particularly gratifying to step in to help early career researchers or graduate students, and you often get very touching personal notes of thanks when you do.

What a wonderful chance for librarians to help scholars (and not just historians—check out the H-Net discussion list on medical anthropology as well) and remind them and the world that we can answer their questions. The full list of discussion lists can be accessed at http://www.h-net.org/lists/.

H-Sci-Med-Tech is a community eager for stimulating discussion on the history of health, science and technology and offers medical librarians a chance to very publicly show what we know. I emphasize “very publicly” because all of its doings are posted on the Web. The folks at H-Net seem to have excellent search optimization skills because the presence of its many discussion lists in Google and in other search engines is impressive.

All in all, H-Sci-Med-Tech is a marvelous resource and a place to share and display our know-how. Who could ask for more?

**Hope Leman**

Center for Health Research and Quality

Samaritan Health Services
THE STAR IS BORN: 60+ years of newsletters from the America's last leper colony

In 1941, a small newsletter was published by residents of Carville, Louisiana. This newsletter was remarkable because it was the first patient publication of its kind: one that set out to eradicate fears and hearsay about Hansen's disease, more commonly known by another term, leprosy. Carville, Louisiana was the last treatment center for Hansen's disease in the continental United States. Sometimes called “the last leper colony”¹, Carville is a small town located about 85 miles upriver from New Orleans.

On the publication of that inaugural edition, the editor remarked:

“We...some sixteen members of the patient body, have hitched our wagon to THE STAR because we sincerely believe that is will fill an important place in the life of our community. Further, this it will provide an excellent means of occupational therapy...A prominent Public Health Official remarked, “It is unfortunate that the general public is not conversant with the real facts concerning Hansen’s Disease.” We plan to publish many of these facts and to contradict the mass of misinformation that is constantly published in even the best newspapers and magazines.” ²

Contradicting the misinformation about leprosy was needed. In the 1890's, residents of New Orleans were terrified to learn that a treatment center for leprosy could be located in their city, so a more isolated location was selected. Even in the isolated setting, the lease of a plantation in Carville was done under the pretense that it was going to be an ostrich farm³.

Although Carville no longer houses patients with Hansen's Disease, (many of them are older and have relocated to a long term care facility in Baton Rouge, Louisiana), the STAR is still published twice a year, promoting educated public opinion of Hansen’s disease and furnishing vocational rehabilitation for interested patients.⁴ The Carville colony is now known as the National Hansen's Disease Museum⁵, offering exhibits and walking tours as well as access to archives.

We invite all MLA and HHSS members to join the official HHSS listserv. The members-only listserv will be used to promote and communicate activities of the Section. It may also be used as a forum for its members to discuss relevant issues and concerns. Be assured that email traffic will not overwhelm any of us. It will, however, provide a convenient means to communicate.

While joining the listserv is an optional benefit of being a member, we strongly urge members to sign on.

Instructions for Signing On

• Send an email message to majordomo@mlahq.org

• Leave the subject line blank

• In the body of the text, enter: subscribe hhss@mla-hhss.org your email@place.org

• Respond to the email you receive to authenticate

• Receive confirmation and begin participating

Questions? Contact Listserv Chair Donna L. Hirst at donna-hirst@uiowa.edu
Section Officers and Committee Chairs

Officers and their terms:
Chair: Joan Stoddart, 5/11-5/13
Chair-Elect: Susan Sanders, 5/11-5/13
Secretary/Treasurer: Deidra Woodson, 5/11-5/13
Immediate Past-Chair Chair: Michael Flannery, 5/11-5/13
Section Council Representative: Michael Flannery, 5/11-5/13

Committee chairs:
Bylaws: Patricia Gallagher
Continuing Education: Stephen J. Greenberg & Patricia E. Gallagher
Listserv: Donna L. Hirst
Membership: Susan Sanders
Newsletter: Melissa Nasea
Task Force on Advocacy for Staffing and Support of History of Health Sciences Programs: Lucretia McClure
Oral History Committee Liaison: Patricia Gallagher
Murray Gottlieb Prize Jury Liaison: Stephen J. Greenberg
Program: Susan Sanders

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