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MOUG: Papakhian Travel Grant Recipients
Happy new year, and welcome to a pre-conference issue of the MLA Newsletter. If you haven’t already registered for our 83rd annual meeting, I hope what you read within will prompt you to do so. Information on the program information, registration, and hotel and location are all linked from the Web site:

http://www.musiclibraryassoc.org/page/mla_2014_program

As has been noted elsewhere (previously in this publication and on MLA-L) there will be a few changes at this meeting. Instead of a sit-down banquet, there will be a closing reception. Hors d’oeuvres and beverages will be available and the MLA Big Band will there to entertain us. Also in the category of something new is the MLA open mic. This is being coordinated by Board member Rick McRae, there may still be time to sign up! (Contact rmcrae@esm.rochester.edu).

Some have asked why registration for this meeting isn’t lower, since we won’t be incurring the banquet costs. Well, hotel contracts are like snowflakes, no two are alike. Catering is not the only cost to contend with in planning a meeting.

An excellent article on convention planning and budgeting may be found in the Nov.-Dec. 2010 issue of this newsletter.

The annual meeting is but one of the matters dealt with by the Board, but we do spend a great deal of time on it (as do many other individuals). It is MLA’s major event of the year and we do strive to make it possible for as many members to attend as we can. The programs we have in place to help with this include: reduced registrations for conference work and for members in their first three years, and the Kevin Freeman Travel Grant.

I do look forward to seeing many of you in Atlanta in February. If you can’t make it, for whatever reason, you will be missed.

"I think I should have no other mortal wants, if I could always have plenty of music. It seems to infuse strength into my limbs and ideas into my brain. Life seems to go on without effort, when I am filled with music." -George Eliot

Warmest wishes,
Michael Colby

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Update from the Convention Managers

by Laura Gayle Green and Jim Farrington

The Convention Managers traveled to the Grand Hyatt Atlanta Buckhead for the pre-conference planning visit in November 2013. We’ve written up a few helpful details for MLA attendees and provided a few links we hope are useful!

Getting there: Laura Gayle drove from Tallahassee, FL, and Jim flew in from Rochester, NY. Jim took the MARTA train to the hotel from the airport.

Jim notes that the MARTA could not have been more convenient (unless each car of the train came with an espresso machine). The entrance to the MARTA station is right off the baggage claim area, and the airport is at the southern end of the line you want. The cost (one way) is $2.50, and at the terminal you buy a card which adds a one-time $1 cost, but the card can have funds added to it all the while you’re in Atlanta. Look for the signs for the red line to North Springs (if you take the gold line you will eventually have to change trains to the red line anyway). The trip to the Buckhead stop takes about 45 minutes. Once you exit the Buckhead station you will continue on Peachtree Street for about 2 short blocks, and the hotel is on the same side of the street.

Laura Gayle notes that for those driving to the conference, there are several parking options, but you’ll need to stay alert when you get closer to the hotel. Hotel parking is adjacent, but not accessible from the hotel’s front drive (one must drive around the block). Hotel valet parking is available at the Grand Hyatt Atlanta entrance. Hotel self-parking is $20/day and hotel valet parking is $32/day. Hourly parking is available at the Terminus property in the same block as the Grand Hyatt Atlanta Buckhead (conference hotel); I do not have prices for that facility at this time.
A number of dining options are available within close walking distance, from the Flying Biscuit and Jack’s NY Deli, to wonderful sushi at Amura Sushi, practically right outside the hotel door—just to name a few—in addition to the hotel’s restaurants. Caribou Coffee and Starbucks Coffee are also nearby; one must cross busy streets to get to those. Peachtree and Piedmont are particularly busy streets, so please use the crosswalks for your safety!! Kevin Fleming has been working on a targeted dining list (in order by distance from the hotel and including price information). A Google Maps version (without pricing) is available HERE. The Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau has a much longer list at http://attend.atlanta.net/. (scroll down to continue...)

Convention Managers, continued

About the Grand Hyatt Atlanta (Buckhead): guest room keys are proximity keys. Meaning if you keep your room key in your name tag/badge holder, you can likely just tap that against the reader instead of worrying about getting a key out, and sliding it in the key slot for the appropriate amount of time. Free wireless internet is available in the guest rooms, and if we meet our room block obligation, free wireless will be available in the meeting spaces too. Our meeting spaces are spread across three floors of the hotel, but with several stairways and 5 fairly fast elevators, getting to your session room on time should not be an issue. Because MLA is using fewer breakout rooms for conferences and because of the many fantastic programmatic sessions, fewer meeting space times and rooms are available for round table meetings. Round tables not listed in the MLA conference program will need to self-organize a meeting off of the official program grid. Please see the MLA Round Table Guidelines HERE for more information.

The hotel has a nice workout room, including separate dressing rooms for men and women, with a sauna in each. The hotel pool is closed for the season, and I will have information about pool options for those dedicated MLA swimmers closer to the conference dates. The hotel even has GPS units available for dedicated walkers and runners!

For those wanting double rooms, you may have to request a King room with a rollaway. The double rooms were snapped up quickly!

Association Travel Concepts has a website for booking air travel – while not all airlines have discounted fares, several do, and it’s worth checking out the rates HERE.

The preliminary program has been posted HERE. The Guidebook application will be available for MLA 2014 soon; it will have the conference schedule, exhibitor information, dining information and more. Look for more information on MLA-L and for the QR codes and short links at the conference registration desk.

We’ll also have representatives from the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau at our registration desk for a few hours during the conference to provide information for those of you who want to further explore the Atlanta area. Those days/times will be provided closer to the meeting dates. Your Convention Managers will be interested to get feedback from attendees about this service.

Thank you for reading all the way through! If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Laura Gayle Green or Jim Farrington, your Convention Managers.

Dates, rates, and links to remember:

Conference registration deadline: 24 January 2014
Click HERE to register.
*member registration by this date: $270
(see website for other categories and rates)

Hotel reservation deadline: 2 February 2014
Reservation link HERE.
*Rates are posted on this site, and the occupancy and sales tax is currently 16%. Be sure to reserve your room early— and guarantee the group rate by using this link.

Discuss the plenaries with your colleagues in the chic hotel lounge
Ready for Atlanta: Local Arrangements Committee

Kevin Fleming and Shelley Rogers, co-chairs

The Local Arrangements Committee of MLA for the national meeting in Atlanta in 2014 is excited to announce the following:

Dining options have been noted on the conference Web site HERE. This page currently provides helpful links to the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau Web page about restaurants in Buckhead, Yelp recommendations, and Urban Spoon recommendations. The LAC will be adding more information about restaurants immediately surrounding the hotel and concert venues.

Several fun and interesting tours have been planned for Wednesday afternoon, Feb. 26. Your options include: 1) the Atlanta Botanical Gardens ($40), spectacular even in February; 2) the Jimmy Carter Library ($26), which will feature a rare display of presidential china; 3) Emory University Special Collections (free), featuring various musical and other treasures; and 4) the organ crawl ($20). See the TOURS portion of the conference Web site for details.

Concert offerings (see HERE) include the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra on Thursday evening (tickets are $24.99 or $18), featuring Tchaikovsky’s Fifth Symphony, Mendelssohn’s Hebrides Overture, and Nielsen’s Violin Concerto (with Hilary Hahn). On Friday evening, enjoy fellowship and delicious refreshments at the reception that the LAC is hosting (funded by SEMLA) at 6:30 in the lobby of the Rialto Center for the Arts in downtown Atlanta’s Georgia State University.

Afterward, hear some fabulous music by Georgia’s own Johnny Mercer at 8:00 (tickets are $24.99 or $18). The concert features a pair of modern jazz icons: Carmen Bradford and Joe Gransden. Patricia S. Poulter, Dean of the College of the Arts/Music Professor at Kennesaw State University, has agreed to give the welcoming remarks to open the conference.

LAC and SEMLA members are planning to get the conference packets ready. Folders will be stuffed on Sunday, Feb. 23 at 1:00 p.m. at the reception desk in the Grand Lobby (main floor or lowest level, just inside the entrance closest to the parking deck). If you’re in town, we’d love to have you come by and help out!

Big Band arrangements for instruments and music stands are underway. SEMLA will underwrite the costs of instrument rentals.

The LAC co-chairs, the convention manager, and the assistant manager toured the conference venue, the Grand Hyatt Atlanta in Buckhead, on November 22. Hotel rates and reservations may be accessed HERE.

On behalf of the local arrangements committee, we can’t wait for you to see what Atlanta has to offer!

See you soon…
Get To Know Your (Future) Membership

In this very special edition of Get To Know, we interview Jakilah Mason and Ricky Williams, who are participants in the ARL/MLA Diversity & Inclusion Initiative. They are both enrolled in the MLIS program at the University of Pittsburgh, one of the partnership institutions. Stayed tuned: the post-conference issue of the MLA Newsletter will feature more about this initiative from our very own Mark Puente.

Jakilah Mason

What are you looking forward to most in terms of your participation in the diversity program?
This is my first time working in a library, so the whole experience feels pretty exciting. I’m most looking forward to possibly working with music materials in Pitt’s Special Collections department, but I think there are a number of exciting projects ahead of me.

Have you encountered any surprises so far when it comes to the program?
I was happy to realize that working in a library does not necessarily mean staying in an office by one’s self all day. Sitting at the reference desk offers an opportunity to interact with the public, and I think it has been one of the more valuable parts of my work.

What led you to choose music librarianship as a career path?
There were at least two reasons. First, I knew I wanted music to be a large part of my profession, but after I finished my undergrad I wasn’t sure if I wanted to devote myself solely to an academic teaching position. Second, I am really interested in informational access as a tool for combating social inequity. Music librarianship fulfilled both of these interests by offering an opportunity to help disseminate information about music. It also encourages me to keep learning, because the more knowledge about music and culture I obtain, the better the quality of assistance I’m able to offer to patrons.

Ricky Williams

What are you looking forward to most in terms of your participation in the diversity program?
Through the ARL/MLA Diversity Initiative, I have the honor of being selected as an intern with the University of Pittsburgh’s Theodore M. Finney Music Library throughout the course of study. This experience has been an invaluable asset to my education and professional development, thus far and exceeded my expectations of any field placement. University of Pittsburgh is nationally known as one of the most distinguished universities, offering many diverse programs in the arts, humanities, and sciences. Working in the Library system at a major academic research institution allows for first-hand access to many online and national resources that are currently available.

There are several prospects to network and collaborate with other subject specialist and information professionals through participation in organization committees and training sessions implemented by the university. Furthermore, I have the luxury of developing a strong rapport with undergraduate and graduate students by serving as an intermediary between the scholastic resources available and their respective research interest. In addition to becoming more familiar with subject specific databases and developing efficient reference techniques, I find it intellectually stimulating to delve into areas with which I am not familiar.

Throughout the internship, I have acquired necessary skills in librarianship such as collection development, cataloging, reference, and preservation. I am presented with an incredible opportunity to conceptualize and implement modernisms and advancements in the areas of cataloging (such as the development of RDA) by working in a collection that is comprehensive, properly managed and well-developed. I particularly value working under the tutelage of well-respected and distinguished music librarians that set and maintain a strong precedent for the library in areas of information retrieval, administration of the collection, presentation of materials, communication with faculty and staff, juxtaposed with their musical endeavors.
Have you encountered any surprises so far when it comes to the program?

As I progress through the MLIS program, I am continually impressed with the professionalism among the staff and depth of resources that are accessible. As a recipient of the fellowship, I have received the utmost respect from the administration and fellow recipients. In addition to the incredible financial benefits and the field experience, this program is distinguishable because it places a high value on intellectual diversity in different academic areas and its significance in research and the field of Librarianship.

The structure of this program is a medium where aspiring librarians can develop a broad perspective of the industry, while simultaneously focusing on practical areas of research that would propel one forward in any library setting.

From an administrative point of view, the staff is extremely prompt, yet meticulous when advertising leadership conferences and symposiums. Details and logistics regarding educational and program endeavors are thorough and communicated well in advance, leaving fellows with the inspiration to gain as much perspective and knowledge as possible.

The program provides access to informative blogs on library assessment, implementation plans, and practical issues that professionals face in the field. More specifically, there is a section on important topics that range from open-access scholarship to federal funding.

One of the most advantageous services available to participants is the active list of internships, jobs, and residencies that are available in academic libraries, special libraries, and other research institutions. Also, there are services that provide insightful ideas to approaching interviews and developing a strong resume and cover letter.

I am thrilled that I was selected for this unique opportunity. I strive to exude the same professionalism and sophistication throughout my academic and professional endeavors.

What led you to choose music librarianship as a career path?

My interest in Music Librarianship was driven by intensive and concentrated musical training in the area of performance, education, and literature in conjunction with different professional avenues I delved in throughout that journey. While the curriculum for the Bachelors and Masters in Music performance was results and competition-driven, I was afforded the luxury to study with teachers that emphasized the importance of self-enhancement through mental and intellectual awareness.

In an effort to balance scholarship with practicality, I spent non-rehearsal and class hours researching topics including, but not limited to performance practices, Western and non-Western musical traditions, and music theory among other imperative topics. I spent a great deal of time listening to music of different time periods focusing on the most prolific composers, eventually to lesser-known composers.

Intrigued by the evolution of music and its relationship to other subject areas, I began to explore other disciplines such as history, languages, and the Classics among others. This experience was a pivotal moment in my perception of a library, the resources and the staff. My approach to music performing, research, utilizations of materials, and strategic planning inherently became more efficient, which led to jobs as an Ensemble Librarian and Logistics Assistant.

As a performer and teacher, I developed perspectives on collaborating and interacting as a part of a team striving to accomplish a mutual objective. Correspondingly, I have realized how imperative it is to exude integrity in all aspects of work. After working inclusively as a performer and teacher, I valued the artistic endeavors and life skills that I acquired. However, I felt compelled to diversify my career options by entering the field of music librarianship. As a future librarian, I aim to incorporate the knowledge I’ve gained from my eclectic interest and professional experiences in a manner that is practical, insightful and relevant to academia and society.

Congratulations to Jakilah, Ricky, and all initiative participants. I hope the MLA membership will join me in heartily welcoming them to MLA!
In Recognition

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Transitions

Our best wishes to all those pursuing new opportunities.

Patricia Sasser, Music Librarian, Furman University

MOUG Announcements

MOUG Announces 2014 Winners of Ralph Papakhian Travel Grants

Bruce J. Evans, vice-chair/chair elect

On behalf of the MOUG Executive Board, I would like to officially announce the 2014 winners of the Ralph Papakhian Travel Grant. There are seven winners, listed below in alphabetical order by surname.

Anna Alfeld received her MLS with a Music Librarianship Specialization from Indiana University in August of this year, received her MM in Music History and Literature from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, and a BM in Piano Performance, and Music History and Literature. Anna has been involved in various forms of music cataloging for over a decade. She currently catalogs books and scores with IU’s Cook Music Library part-time. While completing her MM work at Cincinnati, Anna was a Junior Fellow at the Library of Congress, working in the music section of the

Jennifer L. Vaughn is Technical Specialist at Syracuse University Libraries, where she performs original cataloging of historic audio recordings from the Belfer Archive. She received her MS in Information with a Music Librarianship specialization from the University of Michigan School of Information, has her MM in Violoncello Performance from Kent State University, and a BM in Violoncello Performance from the Oberlin College Conservatory. She has previous music library-related experience in numerous capacities, including as a music cataloger at the University of Michigan, and as an intern with the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. She also has had numerous symphonic cellist positions, both at the professional and collegiate level, and has won several prestigious chamber musician competitions and honors, such as attending the Aspen Music Advanced Quartet Seminar, and the Emerson String Quartet Workshop at Carnegie Hall.

Elin Williams is the Music Librarian at the Victoria Conservatory of Music (British Columbia), where, as the sole librarian, she is responsible for all public service duties, troubleshooting software issues, working with staff, students, faculty, and Dean of the Conservatory to make sure the library
Special Materials Cataloging Division, cataloging music scores and contributing authority records. She was also tapped during her undergraduate work to help develop workflow for cataloging the Mariska Aldrich Memorial Archive.

Elizabeth Cribbs is the Cataloging (Music) Librarian at Northern Illinois University. She received her MLS from UNC, Chapel Hill, her MA in Music (Music History Focus) from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and her BA in Music from the University of Tulsa. She is a member of MLA’s Bibliographic Control Committee’s Descriptive Cataloging Subcommittee, is the Midwest MLA Chapter’s Web Editor, and a member of their Cataloging Committee. In her current role Elizabeth has given numerous presentations on transitioning to RDA. Previous music cataloging experience includes her time as a Graduate Assistant at UNC Chapel Hill. Elizabeth has had numerous cataloging-related professional involvements.

Chris Diamond is a Library Information Specialist IV at Baylor University, where he catalogs music scores, sound recordings (including original input of local Recital Recordings), and videos for the Crouch Fine Arts Library. He received his MLS from the University of North Texas, and has his MM in Applied Music (Vocal) and BM in Applied Music (Vocal) from Baylor University. Chris is a member of MLA’s Bibliographic Control Committee’s Descriptive Cataloging Subcommittee, and was the 2012 recipient of UNT’s Anna Harriet Heyer Scholarship for Aspiring Music Librarians.

Keith Knop is Associate Music Cataloger at Florida State University, where he is one of two catalogers who work exclusively with music throughout the eleven state university library systems in Florida. Keith recently received his MLS from Florida State University. He also has a PhD and MM, both in Musicology and from Florida State University, and has his BA in Music from Rhodes College. Keith had the opportunity to take part in the MLA/OLAC RDA testing program back in 2011.

sufficiently meets their needs, and last but not least, has responsibility for all music cataloging. She has her MLS from Indiana University (Music and Rare Books Specializations), and a BM in Recorder Performance from the Early Music Institute, Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University. During her library work, she had three cataloging internships, two with Indiana’s Cook Music Library that involved music and rare music cataloging, conservation and preservation, and one that took her to the Biblioteca Musicale Greggiati in Ostiglia, Italy. Her time at Indiana University included other diverse roles within the Cook Music Library.

Mark Zelesky is the Music Circulation and Stacks Manager at Rowan University. This includes cataloging responsibilities for all scores, books, sound recordings, and videos. His enthusiasm for cataloging helped the Music Library lead the Rowan cataloging units’ transition to RDA. Mark has his MLIS from Louisiana State University, where he was the 2008 recipient of the Florrinell F. Morton Scholarship, the highest award presented to one student each year for exceptional academic achievement. He has a BA in English Literature and a BM in Saxophone Performance from Northwestern University. Mark was a Junior Fellow at the Library of Congress, where he originally cataloged music materials, and created catalog records for hundreds of songs from musicals. While at Northwestern he was the Listening Center Supervisor & Music Circulation Assistant, and also Music Public Services Assistant.

The MOUG Executive Board awarded an extraordinarily large number of travel grants this year primarily for the following reasons. The first reason is that the pool of candidates was exceptionally strong. Secondly, the Executive Board feels this is an appropriate way to acknowledge MOUG members who have made donations to support the Papakhian Travel Grants. The most recent example was instituted at the 2013 meeting, where Steve Luttmann challenged us to raise $5,000 in two months, and then he would match it with a $5,000 donation of his own (which was met in spades!). The Board and the organization is profoundly grateful to Steve for this incredible act of generosity, and to all of those generous donors from years past.
Murder, Bug Bombs, Delusions, and Disagreements: The Stories behind the Arthur B. Church KMBC Radio Collection at UMKC

Just over two years ago, I found myself driving by the Pickwick Hotel at 10th and McGee Streets in downtown Kansas City. I wish I could say that I did this to satiate some intellectual curiosity to see the building in which former president Harry S Truman wrote his autobiographical *Pickwick Papers*; or that I did it to fulfill a romantic notion that I should see that place which once housed the penthouse headquarters of radio station KMBC, the station whose collection I had been cataloging for the past several months. It was for neither of those reasons I ventured out on that inconspicuous evening. The truth is hard to admit.

In the midst of working with the Arthur B. Church KMBC Radio Collection, I had run across KMBC program producer and sometimes announcer, Fran Heyser, and as any good cataloger is wont to do, I set about establishing his name in the LC/NACO Name Authority File. When I discovered that he had been beaten to death with a metal table lamp at the Pickwick, I had a sudden urge to go there. Am I sick for having this morbid curiosity or have I just been watching too much Investigation Discovery channel? (The answer is both.) I recently learned that this abandoned hotel is slated for redevelopment as apartments for “young urbanites.” Good for them. The thought of the ghost of Fran Heyser terrorizing young urbanites amuses me. I would totally watch that episode of *Paranormal Witness* on SyFy.

In October 2012, the University of Missouri-Kansas City’s Marr Sound Archives completed an 18-month National Endowment for the Humanities grant to catalog and preserve the nearly 3,000 broadcast recordings in the Arthur B. Church KMBC Radio Collection. I served as the project cataloger, managed three students, and coordinated with sound archives staff on the preservation and digital reformatting of the recordings. When pondering what I might write for the *MLA Newsletter*, I thought it might be sensible to highlight some unique items in the collection or maybe talk a little about the project, but then I realized that I don’t normally make any sense, and when I do, it puts everyone to sleep. Instead, for the amusement of all, I want to share some anecdotes. It seems like anyone who works with unique collections has some interesting experience to share; gains some knowledge and insight into the time, people, and place represented in the collection; and develops some personal connection to some fascinating find from the collection. In order to tell the stories from our NEH grant project, I have to (1) set the stage by giving a little background about the collection, and (2) ask everyone to imagine that I’m your grandmother (the cool one), sitting on a rocking chair on the front porch. In fact, read this with a frail, shaky voice in your head. That might be fun.

About the collection
(completely lifted from the announcement I sent to various listservs)

Arthur Church, Jr. donated the Arthur B. Church KMBC Radio Collection to UMKC in 1996. Focusing on radio pioneer Arthur B. Church’s involvement with the Kansas City, Mo.-based KMBC radio station, the collection includes a timeline, business correspondence, ledgers and contracts, as well as the sound recordings (which date from the 1930s through the 1950s) and disc stampers, the metal plates used to
press (or stamp) vinyl discs. Promotional material related to KMBC is included, as well as scripts to the programs *Phenomenon* and *Life on the Red Horse Ranch*. The collection includes items related to the Texas Rangers, including songbooks and record labels for numerous pressings produced by Church. Other items found in the collection include internal and external station newsletters, newspaper clippings, music scores and memorabilia.

The sound recordings include a wide range of Church's original programming which gained national prominence as a CBS-affiliated station. Among the highlights are a number of library transcription service discs from Arthur B. Church Productions featuring the catalogs of the Tune Chasers, Bonnie King, Harry Jenks, Rhythm Riders, Tex Owens, notable Western swing group turned Hollywood film musical sensation, The Texas Rangers, along with live performances and rehearsal recordings of the Kansas City Philharmonic. Additionally, the collection includes over twenty hours of *The Brush Creek Follies*, an immensely popular barn dance show which ran Saturday nights on KMBC for over twenty years, as well as rural programming (*Night Time on the Trail*, *Happy Hollow*, *Life on Red Horse Ranch*), and nationally-syndicated soap operas (*Vic and Sade, Bachelor’s Children*).

Beyond entertainment, the collection includes many historically significant news and political items, including CBS' *The World Today* featuring John Charles Daly, Edward R. Murrow and William L. Shirer; news coverage of the war including speeches by Adolf Hitler, Winston Churchill, Pope Pius XI, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, General Douglas MacArthur, and Admiral Chester W. Nimitz; and Kansas City 1942 election coverage and political ads. Many radio personalities began their careers at KMBC, including John Cameron Swayze, Ted Malone, Walter Cronkite and Caroline Ellis, and their early recordings can now be heard. A web site highlighting the contents of the Arthur B. Church KMBC Radio Collection can be found at [http://library.umkc.edu/spec-col/KMBC/index.html](http://library.umkc.edu/spec-col/KMBC/index.html).

**The stories behind the collection**

*The stampers under the stairs (is not surprisingly full of spiders)*

Shortly after I had hired the project students, I received that news that we all dread hearing. It goes something like, “Oh, by the way, we found a bunch more stuff that belongs to that collection you’re cataloging for that grant.” Ours was more like: “Oh, by the way, we found a bunch of metal stampers at the bottom of a stairwell. I think there’s about 1,000 of them, and they all belong to the KMBC collection.” Actually, it was exactly like that (and there were 1,400 of them). But since I’m always up for a challenge, I came up with a workflow, drew up some guidelines, and unleashed one of my deadliest students. She was a quick-witted graduate Public History major armed with a vast knowledge of home health remedies, construction cleanup experience, and a nice
Southern accent with a “no bull” attitude who drank her French Press coffee black. She was perfect for the job.

I often walked into the dusty space she was working in to check on her. I felt bad for subjecting her to all the dust and forcing her to handle the heavy stampers, but she didn’t complain much about it. She had accepted the job and planned on doing it right. As it turns out though, some complaint was warranted. About two weeks in, I received a call from the head of the sound archive informing me that they had sent the student back upstairs and she was forbidden to re-enter the space until it had been bug bombed. I was confused. What had happened? Apparently, when asked how things were going, the student casually mentioned the brown recluses crawling out of the crates. That generated an appropriate response of alarm and concern for the safety and health of the student and the archives staff. Her response: “I was just killin’ ’em with two by fours. I had planned to keep killin’ ’em.” Like I said. Deadly.

Happy Hollow is a real place
Rural programming was pretty common in the 1930s and ‘40s, and KMBC had its own in the town of Happy Hollow which gave listeners a peek into the daily lives of Aunt Lucindy, Uncle Ezra, Harry Checkervest, George Washington White (their own blackface character), and other town folk, along with musical interludes by the Humdinger Quartet. The program’s creator, Ted Malone would have a long and successful career in radio broadcasting, mostly known for his storytelling and poetry reading, and as we later discovered by going through his fan mail, very popular with the housewives...in an uncomfortable way.

Listeners engrossed in the goings-on of Happy Hollow could find out more by subscribing to the newsletter Happy Hollow Bugle. We came upon the newsletter when I sent my most enthusiastic student upstairs to Special Collections to see if he could find out more about the program, specifically what radio actors were cast in the various roles. My instructions were simple: Look over the finding aid and pull whatever seems like it might contain some information about the show. I figured this wouldn’t take long since there didn’t appear to be much in the Church-KMBC Collection finding aid. About ten minutes in, I received a phone call from my very excited student telling me that one of the Special Collections staff pulled a newsletter called Happy Hollow Bugle from the Ted Malone Collection, and that there was all kinds of helpful information in it. Relieved that he had found something useful, I instructed him to gather up the relevant data for identifying the characters in the show. Over an hour passed by, and just as I was beginning to wonder what was going on, he walked in. I saw him from a distance, all wide-eyed, headed straight toward me clutching a pencil and papers in his left hand, and I thought, “This is it. He’s going to tell me how he hit the jackpot of details on this show, and I might even be able to establish some names in the authority file.” He had spent an hour and a half in the archives, after all. But instead, he approached and exclaimed, “Happy Hollow is a real place!” As I was laughing (hard), he proceeded to tell me about the legal troubles that Uncle Ezra had found himself in, how some of the townsfolk had traveled to Africa, and other documented occurrences that had convinced him of its realness. Tried and tried as I might to crush his new-found beliefs so suddenly (e.g., “So there’s just a guy in town who likes to walk around in blackface?”), he remained convinced and I remained amused. The good news: we were able to identify
some of the actors. In fairness to my student, the cast of *Happy Hollow* and other KMBC stars did tour Europe and Africa. Kudos to KMBC for blending fiction and reality in their marketing so effortlessly. They had at least one person convinced 80 years later!

**Disc(h)ord on the ranch**

It seemed like everyone on the project team had discovered some new interest when working with the collection. One student became so engrossed in the developing drama on the show *Vic and Sade*, she hoarded all the discs to herself. For me, it was the Western swing group, The KMBC Texas Rangers. The unedited cuts of this musical octet perfectly demonstrate the unique chemistry the group had. It was hard not to be captivated by them, with names like: Clarence “Idaho” Hartman (bass fiddle), Gomer “Tenderfoot” Cool (fiddle), Joe “Monty” Strand (accordion), Herbie “Arizona” Kratoska (guitar and banjo), Fran “Irish” Mahaney (tenor), Rod “Dave” May (tenor), Robert “Captain Bob” Crawford (baritone), and Edward “Tucson” or “Tookie” Cronenbold (bass). Garbed in Western wear, topped with classic white hats, their versatile musical repertoire included hymns, cowboy songs, novelty, and western swing. When I guest lectured for the Conservatory (UMKC), I ended with the Texas Rangers’ rendition of “Hand me down my walking cane” which inevitably got stuck in everyone’s head. It’s entertaining and hopefully served as a distraction from the terrible guest lecture they just sat through.

As we soon discovered, the Texas Rangers weren’t without their own drama. In their early radio programs, they were often fronted by special guest, Tex Owens. Owens, who played guitar and sang with the group on occasion, was never officially a member, but somehow left his mark in history as “The Original Texas Ranger.” There seemed to be a great deal of tension between Tex and the boys which reached its climax when Texas Governor, James V. Allred commissioned the musical group The Texas Rangers, along with Tex Owens, as honorary members of the state’s famed law enforcement group. The honor bestowed upon the Rangers prompted them to compose an interoffice memo expressing their disappointment that Tex would be honored alongside them considering he had not been a member. The memo also included some disagreements between the group and Tex. You can read more about this controversy, see the original memo, and learn of the outcome from a blog post written by one of the project students: [http://info.umkc.edu/specialcollections/archives/248](http://info.umkc.edu/specialcollections/archives/248).

The End

If you made it this far, I wonder about your mental state. If you made it this far with that frail, shaky grandma voice in your head, we should be best friends because my own mental state is questionable. If you’d like to learn more about the collection, check out the web exhibit at [http://library.umkc.edu/spec-col/KMBC/index.html](http://library.umkc.edu/spec-col/KMBC/index.html) or feel free to contact Chuck Haddix, Marr Sound Archives (HaddixC@umkc.edu; (816) 235-2798; [http://library.umkc.edu/marr](http://library.umkc.edu/marr)). If you want to read more stories, we are documenting
them on our blog, *Scripts & Grooves* ([http://info.umkc.edu/specialcollections/](http://info.umkc.edu/specialcollections/)). If you’d like to tell stories of your own, we should share a drink at the annual meeting (*rodriguezsan@umkc.edu*; (816) 235-2229).