November 1988  

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Enclosure: 1988-89 membership form (second notice only)
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

First and foremost, I would like to comment on the MLASCC’s recent Fall 1988 program hosted by the Music Department at Cal State Northridge on November 11. My sincere thanks to our keynote speaker, Victoria Steele and panelists, Romaine Ahlstrom, Stephen Fry, Victoria Steele, and John Tanno who provided a very informative morning session on "How to Look a Gift Horse in the Mouth: Libraries and Gift Collections." Each of their perspectives on acquiring and dealing with gifts was unique and absorbing. The afternoon session of the program, "Gifts with Strings Attached: The Vahdah Bickford Guitar Collection at CSUN" was presented by Dr. Ronald Purcell of the CSUN Music Dept. His fascinating lecture and slide presentation on Vahdah Bickford was enjoyed by all attending the program. A magnificent performance by the CSUN Guitar Quartet under Dr. Purcell’s direction concluded the day. To the program co-chairs, Jeannie Pool and myself, thanks.

The Chapter’s Constitution and By-laws, revised October 1988, were approved by 27 out of 28 members who voted. Many thanks to the 1988 By-laws Committee, Linda Barnhart, Susan Bower, and Steve Fry and the members of the Executive Board for their collective effort that resulted in a substantially expanded and modified document.

As 1989 approaches, plans are being made for the joint North-South MLASCC Chapter Spring Program. Tentative plans for this meeting are revolving around a tribute to Nicholas Slonimsky’s 95th birthday in April 1989. We also have a number of Chapter members who generously offered to work on preparations for the Chapter’s 50th birthday in 1991.

A final note -- the long-awaited papers from the Joint North-South 1985 Conference are finally complete, and pre-publication copies were displayed at the Fall 1988 program. As soon as we have the publication reviewed by the National and receive copyright from the Library of Congress, sales will be underway. EVERYTHING COMES TO THOSE WHO PERSIST!

My heartiest wished to all of you for a happy, healthy, and both personally and professionally productive New Year.

[Signature]
MLASCC FALL CONFERENCE HELD AT CAL STATE NORTHRIDGE

The MLASCC Fall Meeting, How to look a gift horse in the mouth: libraries and gift collections, was held on Friday, November 11, in the Music Building of California State University, Northridge. The conference, hosted by Jack Kranz and conceived by Jeannie Pool and Jack Kranz, proved to be stimulating as well as entertaining and enlightening. It is not an exaggeration to say that attendees went away with new confidence to pursue major donors, and to graciously -- but firmly -- turn down this month’s 14th offer of a stellar collection of 78 rpm recordings.

WOULD YOU CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION OF $25,000 FOR AN ENDOWED BOOK FUND IN YOUR NAME?

The morning began with an address from Victoria Steele, the Head of Special Collections at USC and the former Director of Development for Libraries at UCLA. Her talk focused on the acquisition of cash gifts, and was replete with practical hints — like the ultimate fund-raising question above — for effectively sizing up "prospects" and recognizing greater potential among your donors. The fact-filled talk cannot be fully detailed here, but a quick synthesis includes: get your donors and potential donors to feel involved in your library in a way that satisfies them; decide how a donor will be recognized for a major donation (memorialization, brass plate, sky-writing, etc.); get to know the personal history of your prospective donors to effectively plan your strategy; and carefully and slowly cultivate the person to the point of "the ask" (see above). Another handy hint — "Some people like to do the asking in the car; then the person can’t get away." We all had a lot of fun hearing the jargon of fund-raising, and picked up many ideas to apply to our own situations.

Following this keynote address was a lively panel discussion followed which included panelists Romaine Ahlstrom, Head of Collection Development, Los Angeles
Public Library; Stephen Fry, Music Librarian, UCLA; and John Tanno, Associate University Librarian, UCR, each bringing a different slant to the topic of gifts to music libraries. Romaine Ahlstrom's relationship to gifts was recently altered due to the Los Angeles Public Library fires in 1986. Even under the current unusual circumstances, Romaine emphasized the importance of gift programs for library public relations as well as having an articulated collection policy and a mission statement for a library to present to donors and help them understand what a library won't accept, and why gifts can't always be kept together, or even kept, sometimes. Since the fire the library has received increased donations but they do refuse many proposed gifts and are currently accepting only what they know was lost in the fire. The system is now planning on becoming more proactive with its gift program, to help solicit truly needed items and much needed cash.

From the public library, we turned to academia and Steve Fry's affable aphorisms -- witness:

GREAT GIFTS DO NOT COME OUT OF THE BLUE

Steve, too, emphasized the importance of having a collection policy you can show to donors in order to maintain some degree of control over the gifts you receive and to help combat pressure from both donors and administrators with goals differing from yours. Another important consideration is whether you have the resources to process and maintain a gift collection. Approaching the donor of a large gift collection for actual cash to process and promote the archive is essential for managing large gifts. Among the many pearls of wisdom were two bits of advice:

1. Don't accept a gift if you don't want all of it; that is, if some of it is good but a lot is trash.
2. Establish a collection development policy in accordance with the purposes and strengths of your library. It should deal with types of materials accepted/not accepted and the prerogative the library maintains over accepted gifts.
After hearing Vicki Steele’s presentation, John Tanno spontaneously re-named his talk "Beware of the cold gift - or - gift giving and mistakes." John alternately entertained and appalled us with the tale of his experience with an over-zealous donor/volunteer to whom the University eventually both gave back his collection of 78 rpm recordings (plus a few that he didn’t donate) and lost a substantial amount of cash to as well. Though the tale must be told by John, the wisdom gained was condensed as follows:

1. Beware of all gifts - find out why the gift is being given and be certain that the library can meet the donor’s expectations. Then, draw up a written agreement.
2. Beware of donors who are collectors - some really cannot part with their collections and may change their minds.
3. Gifts not appropriate to your collection should not be accepted.
4. Gifts are not free.
5. Have a collection development policy (where have I heard this before?)
6. Say NO if the collection is not of interest.
7. Know when to make an exception to your policy.

All in all, the morning proved to be one of the most interesting and pragmatic MLASCC sessions in recent history! Thanks to all who participated.

After lunch and a business meeting, we reconvened to be regaled by yet another grisly tale of a gift-gone-wrong. Ron Purcell, Professor of Music and teacher of guitar at Cal State Northridge began his presentation with an informative slide show on the life of Vahdah Bickford (1885-1980), a guitarist and teacher who was eminent in early Los Angeles musical history. Among other accomplishments, Vahdah formed a nationally known women’s guitar quartet which toured the Midwest in 1905-1909, was acquainted and corresponded with virtually every guitarist of her time; and formed the Los Angeles Guitar Society in 1923, the first such organization in the United States, which still meets at Cal State Northridge.
Her entire collection of music, instruments, letters, furniture, etc. was bequeathed to Cal State Northridge -- an unparalleled compilation of the history of guitar music in the 19th and 20th centuries and the history of professional guitarists in the United States and around the world. Through unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances, Cal State only received the 19th century materials, and the remainder of the estate was auctioned (and necessarily, divided) for cash at the insistence of a would-be heir. Again, a story that should only be told by Ron -- truly a tragedy for the integrity of the collection and the history it represented. Fortunately, Dr. Purcell will be writing a biography of Vahdah Bickford which can be looked to for insights into her life and the music.

The day concluded wonderfully with a performance by the Cal State Northridge Guitar Quartet who serenaded with arrangements of music by Ravel, Praetorius, Fauré, Dowland, and Bartok. A delightful end to a most enjoyable conference.

Deborah Smith
Occidental College
TWO MLASCC STUDENT MEMBERS RECEIVE FULBRIGHTS
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It was announced at the Fall Meeting that two MLASCC student members, Irene Alm and Alyson McLamore, have received Fulbright scholarships. Irene is in Italy for the year and Alyson is in England. Congratulations to them both!

MLASCC REVISED BY-LAWS PASSED

By a vote of the membership, it was announced at the fall meeting that the revised MLASCC by-laws have been approved. Thanks to Steve Fry, Linda Barnhart, Susan Bower, and the Executive Board for all the hard work.

GLENDALE CONFERENCE PAPERS COMPLETED
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All those who attended the Fall Meeting were delighted to see the finished product of the joint Northern California and Southern California MLA conference of May 1986 in print. The proceedings of that conference will be published by MLASCC and soon available for purchase. Many thanks to Steve Fry for the many hours of works spent editing the papers!

IS YOUR MLASCC MEMBERSHIP FEE OVERDUE? .

If you have received a second notice for renewing your MLASCC membership in this newsletter, please mail your check today. According to our newly-revised by-laws, membership dues are payable **before** the Chapter’s fall meeting! Remember that student membership is free; however, student members will not remain on the mailing list if the membership form is not returned. Thank you.

- The Membership Committee
MUSIC ASSOCIATIONS AROUND SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The following is a list of names and addresses of societies in the Southern California area specializing in various unusual media and provided as a resource for MLASCC members.

Association of Recorded Sound
Louise Spear, president
UCLA Music Department
Ethnomusicology Archive
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Society for the Preservation of Southern California Musical Heritage
P.O. Box 374
Lomita, CA 90717

Society for the Preservation of Film Music
10850 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 770
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Radio/TV Archive
UCLA Music Department
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Performing Arts Library Network
Ruth Leonard
Thousand Oaks Library
1401 E. Janss Rd.
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362
MLA NATIONAL CONVENTION IN CLEVELAND OHIO -- March 1989

Plan now to attend the Music Library Association's 58th Annual Conference, March 14-18, 1989, in Cleveland, Ohio. The program will feature:

--March 14-15: Preconference workshop, "Music in an Online Environment"

--March 15-18: Sessions on musical iconography at the Cleveland Museum of Art, preservation planning, shared systems and regional library networks, managing administrators and music publishing in the 1990s.

For more information contact Martin A. Silver, Music Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA 93106  (805) 961-3609

MOUG MEETING IN CLEVELAND, MARCH 19-20

The Music OCLC Users Group will hold their annual meeting on March 19-20 before the MLA National Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. The sessions are entitled Authority Control in the Online Environment and Introduction to New OCLC Products and Services. In addition, there will be small group sessions and meetings of the LS 2000 Interest Group and ENHANCE participants' working session. Registration deadline in January 31, 1989. If you are interested, contact Laura M. Snyder, Mog Program Chair, Conservatory Library, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio 44074.
MLA SEeks Nominations for 1987 Publications Awards

The Music Library Association is now inviting nominations for awards for 1987 publications in the fields of music and music bibliography. One prize will be awarded in each of three categories:

--The Vincent H. Duckles Award for the best book-length bibliography or other research tool in music published in 1987.

--Award for the best article-length bibliography or article on music librarianship appearing in 1987.

--Award for the best review of a book or music score appearing in the 1987 issues of Notes.

Nominations should be addressed to: Karl Kroeger, 9260 Newton Street, Westminster, CO 80030
GUIDELINES FOR ARTICLE SUBMISSION: Articles about music, music librarianship, or other items of interest to local music librarians are welcomed. The editor reserves the right to edit all material. Please include your name, title and institution. To be considered for the Newsletter, articles should be received one month prior to scheduled publication every August, October and March. Please address all articles, news items, and changes of address to: Deborah Smith, Editor MLASCC Newsletter, Occidental College Music Library, 1600 Campus Road, Los Angeles, CA 90041 (213) 259-2942.