Subject: Archival-related special interest group meeting  
Date: November 1, 2000  

Attendees: Alex Bernet, Cynthia Harris, April Kane, Ginny Kowalski, David Kuzma, Cindy Lu, Matthew Lyons, Monica Malinowski, Claire McGuire, Althea Miller, Sara Miller, Christy Morganstein, Fernando Pena, Laura Poll, Anne Washington

This founding meeting of the group was an informal round table discussion to brainstorm ideas about the group's structure, goals and objectives.

An initial topic discussed was the troublesome matter of a name. Various acronyms were considered, as well as words such as "Provenance" (a French-derived archival term referring to a collection's original order or structure) and Finding Aid. There was much discussion on the importance of clearly communicating that the group is meant to include all aspects of "archival-related" work, including, but not limited to, manuscripts and archives, special collections, rare books, photographs, ephemera, museum collections, records management, and so on. (Lacking a viable synonym for all of these specialties, the phrase "archival-related" is going to have to do for this summary!) No name has yet been decided upon.

The group also discussed the matter of how the organization would be structured, including the following suggestions:

- The group could possibly affiliate itself with the Society of American Archivists (SAA, [http://www.archivists.org](http://www.archivists.org)) or the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC, [http://www.lib.umd.edu/MARAC/marac-hp.htm](http://www.lib.umd.edu/MARAC/marac-hp.htm)), the latter which is having its next conference locally in Philadelphia. One drawback expressed in regard to an SAA affiliation is that each member of the group would then be required to pay the SAA membership fee ($40.00 for students.)
- The group could become an "official" Rutgers student organization. Sara volunteered to look into school policies regarding student groups to see if this was required.
- The group should ask a member of the SCILS faculty to serve as an advisor. Matthew said that he has already approached Maria, and she has expressed enthusiasm about the group and offered her support.
- A primary theme expressed in the discussion was that the group serve as a network for people of similar interests to communicate with each other and also to increase the visibility of our interests through outreach efforts.

It was suggested that SCILS alumni be invited to participate by providing guidance from their "real world" perspective. Two alumni have already expressed their support of the group. Ginny volunteered to draft a letter to be posted to the listservs.

This network would also serve as an exchange of information regarding jobs and internships. Sara pointed out that the National Archives is always looking for volunteers. The group can also serve as contacts to prospective and new students. Ideas to achieve this are to create a manual for new students which includes archival-related resources, job information, contact names of current students and alumni, etc. It was also suggested that the group be represented on Orientation Night at the beginning of each school year.

Also on the subject of outreach, it was mentioned that the group has already been asked to speak to elementary school children about archival-related topics.

To facilitate communication and outreach it was suggested that the group establish its own website and listserv. Suggestions for things to include on the webpage as well as relevant links should be sent to
Althea (aemiller@scils.rutgers.edu). Claire volunteered to speak to Jon Oliver about the listserv [now established! Just send an e-mail to majordomo@scils.rutgers.edu with no subject and "subscribe paperpeople" in the body.]. The group also expressed the desire to influence the curriculum to include more archival-related courses, including bringing back the History of the Book course, courses on rare books, advanced archival courses, etc. It was recognized that an key factor in this effort will be to show that there is necessity for and interest in these courses. (There were fifteen people in attendance at this meeting, which is already enough for a class!) Cynthia volunteered to look into gathering data on the number of archival-related independent studies conducted over the past five years.

Other activities suggested by group members included:

- Arrange to have colloquia / lectures. Fernando said that he would speak to Maria about giving an encore performance of a lecture she gave in Lisa Covi’s Digital Libraries class.
- Support other groups and archival-related activities (gallery openings in Rutgers Special Collections, for example.)
- Build on what already exists in the SCILS program, notably the program’s emphasis on technology, to learn about techniques / issues in digitizing, learning how to use Encoded Archival Description (EAD) to create Finding Aids, etc. This could be done by arranging lectures, workshops, etc. with knowledgeable faculty, alumni or other contacts.
- Contact other student archival groups at other Universities.

The results of this initial meeting will be incorporated into a group Mission Statement, to be drafted by Althea and Claire for group consideration.