

# International Archive of Women in Architecture

## Archivist's Report September 26, 1998-Sept. 18, 1999

This has been a year of transitions. The esteemed manuscripts curator, Laura Katz Smith, left in March 1999 for the University of Connecticut. Her duties were largely assumed by an experienced reference and Special Collections librarian, Jan Carlton. The IAWA has not suffered under Ms. Carlton's watchful eyes as she updated the mailing database, improved the physical arrangements of many of the collections, handled correspondence, and provided excellent services to visiting researchers including an unexpected scholar from Germany. She also supervised the current IAWA exhibition in the Newman Library lobby. (This will be fully digitized for online display.) Ms. Carlton also opened the Reading Room Saturday, Sept. 18, by appointment with the IAWA.

### Acquisitions

This year the archive grew with the accession of 13 new collections, bringing the total number of IAWA collections to 178. There were also significant additions to five existing collections. With the addition of 18 cubic feet, the archive grew from 328 cu. ft. of the previous year to 347 cu. ft.

The significant donations included the Kathleen Cruise papers (7.5 cu. ft.), the Claire Rufer-Eckmann papers (1.4 cu. ft.), Saffa 58 material (0.5 cu. ft.), the Berta Rahm papers (1.0 cu. ft.), the Jean Linden Young papers (1.5 cu. ft.), and the Elisabeth-Charlotte Harling papers (1 cu. ft. of drawings, site plans, and photographs via Inge Horton).

Smaller new collections include the Evelyn Chi-Chan Hermann-Chong papers, books from the Organization of Women Architects and Engineers of Japan, the papers of Irina Patruilus of Romania, a book from Raili Pietila, the Annemarie Hubacher papers, a brochure from Mojca Svirgelj-Cernigoj, and the Sarelle T. Weisberg papers. Additions to existing collections were made to the Silvia Paun papers, the Sena Sekulic-Gvozdanovic papers, the Verena Huber papers, the Evelyne Lang Jakob papers, and the Heidi Wenger papers.

IAWA Advisor Evelyne Lang Jakob brought five new collections and additions to four existing collections to the archive when she attended last year's Board meeting. Subsequently, Special Collections had two sets of slides of images from the Berta Rahm collection made for Ms. Jakob at a cost to the department of \$180.

Among other materials, the Archivist received from Milka Bliznakov 1930s' drawings of Virginia Herz Curry, some of which are in this year's IAWA exhibition in the lobby of Newman Library. Ms. Carlton processed six acrylic panels of Ms. Junko Matsukawa-Tsuchida, including "Four Secrets of Living in the Aging Society" and "Postwar History of Women Architects in Japan." Current copies of the *Guide to the IAWA Collections* were continuously available at the Special Collections reference desk

for patrons. All maintained the Web copy of the guide current on information about IAWA accessions. Only the most recent collections are lacking.

One book was added to Special Collections for the IAWA:

Title:	The architect: reconstructing her practice, edited by Francesca Hughes.
Imprint:	Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, c1996.
Description:	xix, 250 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.
Note:	Includes bibliographical references.
Subject:	Women-owned architectural firms -- Management.
Subject:	Women architects -- Psychology.
Subject:	Gender identity.
Subject:	Structuralism.
Added Entry:	Hughes, Francesca.

### **Manuscript processing**

Ms. Smith devoted a considerable amount of time to the IAWA before she left, especially organizing new collections. She processed the Kathleen Cruise papers, the Claire Rufer-Eckmann papers, the Berta Rahm papers, and the Jean Linden Young papers, along with a additional processing of the Han Schroeder collection. She also processed the IAWA records of Milka T. Bliznakov and Smith's own (5 cu. ft.). She added three inventories to the Internet, bringing the total to nineteen now available online. New to the Internet are the inventories of Jean Linden Young (with images), the contents list for the IAWA records, the Kathleen Cruise papers, as well as significant additions to the Han Schroeder inventory.

### **Reference contacts**

The Manuscripts Curator's reference contacts increased 33.79% in the first six months of this year. These contacts were overwhelmingly from researchers not affiliated with Virginia Tech, and while several resulted in a quick response, many involved extensive investigation into the collections for the researchers. Two noteworthy reference situations were (1) the two-day visit of Dr. Regina Prinz of Braunschweig, Germany, in March to look at the German and Austrian women architects papers. (2) Earlier this month, Ms. Cordula Mohr (University of Hamburg) arrived unexpectedly to delve into the IAWA in an attempt to find a focus for her dissertation topic.

### **IAWA on the Internet**

The Archivist enhanced existing web pages, added new ones, and recorded use statistics, including creating a homepage for newsletter with the table of contents for issues 1-10 (minus 8-9), converted Milka Prize announcement to web access with links, added Barnard feminist art conference to homepage, and supervised the upgrade of the biographical listings to a searchable database.

The manuscripts curator maintained biographical information, and Tony Atkins, programmer for the Digital Library and Archives, turned it into a database searchable from any web browser. Students have mapped information from the old system into the new one, and 101 biographies are now searchable at [http://lumiere.lib.vt.edu/iawa\\_db/](http://lumiere.lib.vt.edu/iawa_db/) New biographies include those for Elizabeth

Kurian, Sarelle T. Weisberg, and Jean Linden Young, with extensive revisions to biographies for Evelyne Lang Jakob and Silvia Paun. [In the future, anyone could submit biographical information directly to a preview database, and each new submission would be reviewed by a qualified individual and, if approved, added to the publicly available, searchable IAWA Biographical Database.]

### **Donations**

The Manuscripts Curator contacted potential donors and acknowledged donations, including those of the Jean Linden Young papers, the Kathleen Cruise papers, a book from Raili Pietila, the Sarelle T. Weisberg papers, books from the Organization of Women Architects and Engineers of Japan, and information about women in architecture from Claire Bonney of Switzerland. She and, subsequently, Ms. Carlton, received and recorded donations to the Friends of the IAWA, wrote letters of thanks for each donation, and forwarded these donations to the IAWA Secretary/Treasurer.

A curator from Duke University's Center for the Study of Women in Culture contacted the IAWA Archivist with an offer of the Louise Hall collection (circa 75 cu. ft., 1891-1990s) I reviewed their preliminary finding aid and found that the collection includes letters, photographs (including class negatives, cartes de visite, cabinet cards, tintypes), papers from teaching and various jobs including architecture projects, drawings from 1932 architecture class, diaries, and more. Five oversized boxes contain with maps, blueprints scrapbooks and original artwork. I consulted with local advisors of the IAWA Board and emailed advisor Tony Wrenn, before accepting the donation. (Hall was a long-time member of the North Carolina Chapter of the AIA, and archivist of that chapter. She taught architecture at Duke from 1931-1975. Mr. Wrenn noted that Hall mentored many architects and scholars, including Dr. Mary Woods who teaches in the School of Architecture at Cornell and has just published a history of the profession.

### **Mailings**

Smith and Carlton maintained the IAWA address spreadsheet for newsletter mailings. Smith sent out 362 enveloped *IAWA Newsletters* to non-U.S.A. addresses and approximately 125 enveloped *IAWA Newsletters* to U.S.A. addresses that could not go in bulk mailing. (\$161.75) Both mailed meeting minutes to the Board of Advisors as received from the secretary.

### **Publications**

Smith and McMillan maintained a list of books available in the University Libraries about women in architecture, originally for a patron's request but now maintained for future reference. (This needs to go on the Internet.)

Smith wrote an article for the Fall 1999 *IAWA Newsletter* about what happens to collections when they are donated to the IAWA. McMillan wrote article about Smith for the next issue of the *IAWA Newsletter*.

### **Other**

The Archivist visited the Canadian Center for Architecture in June 1999 while in Montreal to deliver a paper on electronic theses and dissertations for the Association of College and Research Libraries' Rare Books and Manuscripts Section. I corresponded about sharing information upon return to VT, but have

gotten no response. (Are there really very few Canadian women beyond Phyllis Lambert (founded CCA) and Blanche Lemco Van Ginkle?)

The Archivist was contact by Business Women's Network about including the IAWA; I compiled and sent information requested. I was also contacted by ARVHA, French Association of Architects, doing a New Opportunities for Women (NOW) project, "Feminine side of architecture: the professions in rehabilitation." Forwarded information to Donna Dunay about Solange possibly representing the IAWA.

### **Manuscripts Curator handling IAWA collections**

The IAWA Archivist is chairing the search committee for the Curator of Historical Manuscript Collections and Special Collections Librarian (Ms. Katz Smith's position). The committee also includes IAWA Board of Advisor Marcia Feuerstein. A dozen letters of interest and resumes were reviewed and four candidates selected for reference checks. Two have been invited to campus for interviews. All Blacksburg Advisors will be invited to the candidates' presentations (Tuesday, Sept. 28, and Thursday, Sept. 30, at 9:30 in the Newman Library Board Room) and an informal reception in the Special Collections Reading Room (Monday, Sept. 27, and Wednesday, Sept. 29, at 4:00 p.m.). Recommendations for hiring will be made to the Dean of Libraries in early October. We hope to have the position filled by Jan. 1, 2000.

Gail McMillan, IAWA Archivist  
director, Digital Library and Archives

Laura Katz Smith, Manuscripts Curator, Special Collections  
Janet Carlton, Reference Librarian, Special Collections  
University Libraries, Virginia Tech