Remarks of Executive Director Nancy Beaumont:
FY 2015 Year in Review

It is my pleasure to provide a brief report of SAA’s activities in Fiscal Year 2015. At the risk of being a bit redundant, I’m happy to report once again that the state of the association is – really good!

My report will be a bit briefer than usual because we have an important item of business to discuss, the Council’s proposal to implement a dues increase effective July 1, 2016. Much if not all of the information that I provide today is readily available on the SAA website (particularly in Council meeting materials) and in SAA’s periodicals.

In most cases the information is too dense – that is to say, “rich” – to cover in 140 characters. But we’re getting better at pointing you to it via social media. My presentation, and Treasurer Mark Duffy’s, along with the Presidential Address and remarks by Vice President Dennis Meissner and Council member Helen Wong Smith, will be published on the conference website, and Plenaries 1 and 2 were videotaped and will be posted on the Annual Meeting website.

[SLIDE 1]

In FY15 we paid considerable attention to SAA’s Goal 1: Advocating for Archives and Archivists. To that end:

The Committee on Advocacy and Public Policy (a Council Exemplary Service Award recipient at this conference) provided for the Council’s consideration and approval:

- A revised Public Policy Agenda.

- Procedures to clarify how members can suggest advocacy action.

- And issue briefs on the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act and state freedom of information laws.

And CAPP has fielded at this meeting draft briefs on privacy and strengthening NARA’s authority.

[SLIDE 2]

In consultation with CAPP and/or in collaboration with various component or external groups, SAA issued a lot of statements in the past year, including:
- Comments to the US Copyright Office on “Orphan Works and Mass Digitization” and on “Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works.” (In fact, SAA’s Intellectual Property Working Group met with the Copyright Office—at the Office’s request—at this conference.)

- Both individual and joint statements (with CoSA and NAGARA) on “Conducting Public Business in Non-Government Email Accounts.”

- Testimony on the District of Columbia Archives.

- A statement on the Loss of IRS Email.


- An action alert on the FOIA Improvement Act.

- And, at the request of the Web Archiving Roundtable and others, a letter to Facebook encouraging those powers that be to Enable Content Downloading for Pages.

In addition, the Council and staff monitored the University of Oregon records situation and issues surrounding the University of Texas at Austin’s purchase of the Gabriel García Márquez papers.

[SLIDE 3]

Kathleen’s initiative – The Year of Living Dangerously for Archives – had her issuing nine challenges to members to engage in an activity or contribute an idea that speaks to the value of archives.

[SLIDE 4]

The newly formed Committee on Public Awareness:

- Promoted #AskAnArchivist Day on October 30 – a nimbly executed initiative that resulted in more than 6,000 tweets from 2,000 unique posters. We invite you to participate in this year’s #AskAnArchivist Day on October 1 – at the beginning of American Archives Month.

- COPA began the daunting task for aggregating content from SAA’s main website and component groups’ microsites in anticipation of launching a robust online resource on public awareness when SAA’s redesigned website goes live later this year. We anticipate that this toolkit will be refreshed and added on to over time.

- And COPA worked on development of the “Archives Change Lives” campaign that launched at this conference, including the video that debuted at Plenary 1 on Thursday.
On several projects SAA collaborated with the Council of State Archivists and the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators via a Joint Working Group on Issues and Awareness.

And we will be speaking with the Regional Archival Associations Consortium this fall about developing a memorandum of understanding to broaden our horizons and, we hope, our cadre of potential advocates and spokespersons.

**And now a few more highlights from Fiscal Year 2015:**

- **Membership hovered near 6,200 throughout the year**, varying by no more than 10 to 20 members from month to month. July closed at 6,210. It’s good news that our retention is high and that many members are moving up in dues categories – one possible indicator of a strengthening job market. But there is no question that membership seems to be leveling off.

- **More than 3,000 attendees participated in SAA’s 95 face-to-face workshops and 8 webinars in FY 15.** The DAS curriculum and certificate program is the major driver of our professional development offerings, but we also continue to offer well-received courses and webinars on such topics as records management for archivists, copyright law, DACS, and project management. The Education Committee did its research and, with Council approval, will begin packaging of an Arrangement and Description curriculum and certificate program based on the DAS model in FY16.

- **We launched a new website for The American Archivist.** The transition to a new publishing platform in April went well, with just a few display hiccups that we’re addressing. We hope you’ve noticed a better interface with the Allen Press site; we’ve certainly noticed a better response time and a more professional approach to online journal publishing.

- As I reported last year, **book sales are continuing to decline, despite our move to electronic publications in response to member input.** We still sell a lot more hard-copy books than e-pubs, but will continue to experiment to arrive at a successful e-publishing model.
  - We’re nearing a critical mass of titles within the Trends in Archives Practice Series.
  - EAD3 is now available, thanks to the good work of SAA’s Technical Subcommittee on Encoded Archival Description and the Standards Committee.
  - And we have contracts in hand for six new books in the Archival Fundamentals III Series.

- **SAA’s social media presence has increased.** We ended the year with 7,682 Facebook “likes” and 8,550 Twitter followers.
• **Word of the Week**, an initiative by the Dictionary Working Group to engage members in collaborative development of the Dictionary, now has more than 1,000 subscribers.

• We conducted a simple **employment survey** in January, published the basic results, and invited members to dig more deeply into the data. We expect to repeat the survey periodically – perhaps annually – so that we can measure trends over time.

[SLIDE 7]

The 2014 Joint Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, was a blowout – our largest conference ever – with more than 2,500 attendees. Beyond providing outstanding programming to members of SAA, CoSA, and NAGARA, the conference yielded record revenues that made FY15 a very positive year for SAA. As Mark will tell you, we have our minds and hearts set on investing the net gain from FY15 in a new association management software system that will yield so many benefits to the organization….

[SLIDE 8]

And, of course, we spent a good amount of time in FY15 preparing for this conference. Paid registration for this meeting was a little over 1,700 – a very respectable number and right in line with our budget. I hope that you will complete the online evaluation form so that we can keep tabs on your preferences.

And now for some “thank-you”s….

Quite frankly not everyone arrives at the Council table fully prepared to govern or to lead. Even (and sometimes especially) those with extensive professional résumés are not always suited to the demands (and quirks) of leading a professional association. But both members and staff have truly benefited during the past three years from the leadership demonstrated by the individuals who are retiring from the Council today.

**Geof Huth:** Our poet and linguist. Although we didn’t always agree on grammar, we nearly always agreed on the point. The best emcee ever for the Leadership Forum. Willing to take on the A&A List Terms of Participation (twice!) and come up with a rational revision. Thank you, Geof, for bringing to the table your grounded-ness and creativity.

**Michelle Light:** Kathleen has referred to Michelle as our “shining light.” She certainly has been that – illuminating the way when the path was less than clear, helping to navigate the bumps along the way. Very smart. Very balanced. And a lover of strategic planning! Who could ask for more?

**Tanya Zanish-Belcher:** Smart. Kind. Pragmatic. Always willing to take on a tough assignment. Always thorough and thoughtful – and kind and pragmatic – in her approach. We look forward to continuing to work with you, Tanya, on the Committee on Advocacy and Public Policy.

**Mark Duffy:** Mark served two terms on the Council – the first as a Council member in the earliest stages of our strategic planning and the second, as Treasurer, during one of the
organization’s biggest growth periods. Mark is a visionary who also “gets” governance. And he has taught me one of my most important life lessons. I think I’ll just leave it at that….

**Kathleen Roe:** And Kathleen. What a year it’s been. That long list of advocacy statements. That long list of awareness initiatives. YOLDA. Your unceasing passion and unrelenting energy have been an inspiration to me – and I know to many others. Thank you for jumpstarting us. Please don’t leave us!

Just as SAA could not have achieved what it has as an organization in the past year without this leadership, neither could it have thrived quite so well without our very talented and dedicated staff: Matt Black, Teresa Brinati, Mia Capodilupo, Peter Carlson, Solveig De Sutter, Lee Gonzalez, Anne Hartman, Carlos Salgado, and Jeanette Spears. The rumor circulating at this conference – that Solveig is retiring as Education Director this fall – is in error. In *fact*, Solveig is not allowed to retire, and we hope that she is with us for a good long time. In *fact*, our beloved Jeanette Spears *is* retiring at the end of October, after 20 years on the SAA staff. (Those of you who know Jeanette know that there’s simply no point in arguing with her….) Jeanette has served in a variety of roles during her tenure, all of them involving a lot of contact with members – something that she does extremely well. We’ll miss her common sense (someone will have to step up!), her warmth, and that incredible smile. Thanks for everything, Jeanette!

I’d also like to thank our amazing Conference & Logistics Consultants team – Paul Henning, Allison Perrelli, and Stacey Ogren – for their excellent work, and for making it seem like there are a lot more staff on the conference than there are….

And thanks to all of you for your membership, your engagement, your good ideas, and the many volunteer hours that you commit to SAA. It’s my pleasure to work for you.