

To: TCLC Continuing Education and Development Council
From: Nancy Nitzberg
Date: December 9, 2016

Re: Report on Attending the Association of Jewish Libraries 51st Annual Meeting in Charleston, South Carolina. June 19-22, 2016.

Attending the Association of Jewish Libraries 51st Annual Meeting provided a fine opportunity to learn more about how others are managing collections similar in nature to those at Gratz College, as well as to meet or renew acquaintanceships with many of the individuals responsible for such collections. There were also opportunities to meet with vendors, and to visit the Addlestone Library at the College of Charleston which included an excellent presentation and an opportunity to discuss various library issues with the staff members.

Below is the program for the Annual Meeting:

http://jewishlibraries.org/images/downloads/Upcoming_Conference/2016_ajl_conference_program.pdf

There were so many sessions of interest, often scheduled simultaneously, that it was difficult to choose what to attend. I tried to target specific presentations within the sessions so that I would not miss topics pertaining to priority issues for the Tuttleman Library of Gratz College.

In this report, I will mention highlights of selected presentations and events I attended.

Sunday, June 19:

Thanks to the Amtrak schedule, I arrived in plenty of time to visit the vendors' area as soon as it was open to conference attendees, but before it became busy. A highlight was having an opportunity to speak with the representative from MLA Solutions, the provider of our integrated library system. I was able to ask questions of Art Graham regarding the most recent upgrade of the system, and receiving answers on the spot. The opportunity to be there in "real time" with a computer set up facilitating accessing the Gratz College catalog made this a very productive session. There were a few issues that were not resolved at that impromptu meeting, but Art took careful notes and upon my return back to the library, I heard from a company representative with answers to those questions. It has been smooth sailing since that time. In particular, I've been able to prepare circulation reports more easily, as well as to differentiate library patrons from authors (when they are one and the same person!) when doing a search for a library patron in the circulation module.

That evening, there was the "Welcome Dinner," an informative event in regard to the presentations, but also, of course, provided an opportunity to meet colleagues from many institutions who are employed in a variety of roles. In particular, I sat with catalogers from Yeshiva University who described their immensely detailed approach to adding information to their records to make them more "discoverable" to

researchers. I have since checked their catalog when finding that they own the same resource that I am adding to our collection, to ensure thoroughness.

Monday, June 20:

A session I very much looked forward to attending included the presentation by Yoram Bitton, the Music Librarian at Hebrew Union College's Klau Library in Cincinnati. Having very similar collections, I learned how he is currently arranging printed sheet music. The answer is, "by publisher." Perhaps that would make a good (but perhaps interim?) way to organize our uncatalogued materials, no longer having a music librarian on staff. However, so much of our sheet music is cataloged with LC classification and is so easy to find when I receive a request for it, that I have hopes to continue in the LC classification tradition. To group music by type facilitates visiting researchers being able to peruse the form of music of which they have an interest since like materials are together regardless of publisher. I observed this personally when we had a scholar visit from Colorado who was interested in the Hebrew "art song" of the early to the mid-20th century. She was able to target her interest by LC call number, and wanted to examine the many items she found in order to select which she would have scanned.

The next session offered a presentation by staff members from the Israel and Judaica Section of Library of Congress. The aspect of their presentation that I found most useful was changes in subject headings, the updating of which facilitates their application with the result of researchers being better able to find resources that are of use, such as "illegal alien" to "non citizen." Apparently, that change has since received the attention of a few members of Congress. When copy cataloging and downloading records, I check the Library of Congress for cataloging of recent publications to accurately supplement the subject headings of a record, if there is a lack of such information on the downloaded catalog entry.

At Gratz College, I often am asked questions regarding the history of Gratz College and the Gratz Family (a large, extended family with many individuals prominent in 18th and 19th century Philadelphia commerce, education and philanthropy). The will of Hyman Gratz specified that funds should be used to establish a Jewish college in Philadelphia. To approach writing and speaking on this subject, it's very interesting to me to hear how such histories are presented about other Jewish institutions and individuals and how their presence impacted the regions in which they were located. At this conference, one presentation by Dale Rosengarten dealt with the lives of two Jewish artists, Theodore Sidney Moïse and Solomon Nunes Carvalho, both born and raised in Charleston, SC, and with the freedom they encountered, were able to pursue their artistic ambitions. The presentation which followed was on a more general historic subject was given by Yaakov Aronson. It dealt with Jewish involvement in the history of SC, especially Charleston. (It was nice to hear the mention of the Gratz family, in particular, Rebecca Gratz and her influence on Jewish education, during this talk, but also to learn about what was being done in Charleston during the same era.)

Harlan Greene of the Jewish Heritage Collection at the College of Charleston's Addlestone Library is currently engaged in a digital project on mapping Jewish Charleston. Charleston is recognized for its major role in Jewish American history and the archives are used by scholars all over the world. Collections not only document Charleston's Jewish history, but Southern Jewish culture, along with the

growing Holocaust archives and the internationally important William A. Rosenthal Judaica collection diversify the offerings bringing more researchers to the online site and library. He discussed how this library and archival collection was created by grant funding, established academic programs, attracted Jewish students, and had a positive impact on the local economy: Practical outlining of how it was done making it an approach transferrable to others' plans at other organizations.

An interesting update on the National Library of Israel ("Expanding Collections and New Technology. . .") was given by Yoel Finkelman. Advancements include educational activities, technology, and international cooperation. The National Library of Israel continues to create educational materials for the school systems in Israel and elsewhere. It hosts digitized Hebrew manuscripts and for the Israel Archives Network. Its cooperation with major collections around the world guarantees increased access to wider and broader digital collections. All of these tools can help researchers, students and other libraries. (One can designate "English" on the website. <http://web.nli.org.il/sites/nli/english/Pages/default.aspx>)

Tuesday, June 21.

Rachel Leket-Mor from the Arizona State University spoke on "A Niche Collection in a Non-Knish Land: On Stewarding and Marketing a "Special" Special Collection." These resource are known as the "IsraPulp Collection" and are comprised of rare books and serials associated with Hebrew popular literature. Spanning from the 1930s to the present, a wide range of genres, this special collection focuses on trivial, non-canonized literature published by peripheral publishers, in Hebrew. The collection was established in 2004 by Leket-Mor, who serves as its curator. She described recent updates and efforts to preserve, catalog, and enable access to collection items, as well as outreach and marketing attempts to broaden its compass beyond the more standard idea of Jewish Studies.

Barry Walfish gave a presentation which featured highlights of the Judaica exhibition, "As it is Written," which he curated at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library of the University of Toronto early in 2015. The time frame of the exhibition spanned 1100 years from the 10th to the 21st century. A wide range of materials were exhibited, religious and secular, all taken from the holdings of the Fisher Library. It was certainly fascinating to have this "guided tour" and background information from the curator.

Elizabeth Vernon from Harvard Library's Judaica Division gave a paper that dealt with determining what resources are considered Judaica in a library that contains many other subject areas which may also have interdisciplinary materials. While some items are clearly Judaica (Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino, Judeo-Arabic, Judeo-Persian), there are others that are more challenging to define. I found this interesting when considering acquisitions appropriate for the Gratz College library's collection that may seem peripheral to the curricula and perhaps more appropriate to be temporarily acquired through Interlibrary Loan from an institution that has a more predictable use of such materials.

Jim Rosenbloom and Michelle Chesner hosted a round table for librarians involved in collection development. Subjects of discussion included purchasing policies and subscriptions. Cooperative purchasing was discussed by those in the NYC/Philadelphia region.

The Awards Banquet was included in the registration fee. It was another opportunity to hear enlightening presentations in regard to author awards and more, and also to meet colleagues.

Wednesday, June 22.

The finale of the conference for me was a planned visit to the Addlestone Library at the College of Charleston. The staff of the Jewish Heritage Collection which is located in the library discussed their collecting and digitizing of local history in very practical terms. Numerous items including books and photographs were displayed for our visit. <http://jhc.cofc.edu/>

Before I caught the train back to Philadelphia, I took the time to visit the Charleston Library Society (<http://www.charlestonlibrarysociety.org/>) and received an impromptu summary of the library's history from the library's director who happened to be in the reading room.

Thank you so very much to the TCLC Continuing Education and Development Council for the generous support which made my attendance at this conference possible. I have been able to implement aspects of what I've learned to better serve all researchers, and will continue to do so.