

Archivist's Report, FY 2009-2010
International Archives of Women in Architecture (IAWA)

By Aaron D. Purcell
Director of Special Collections and IAWA Archivist

Overview

During the past year, Special Collections made great progress in acquiring, arranging, describing, and promoting IAWA collections. Project archivist Sherrie Bowser led the effort to process IAWA collections and track incoming acquisitions. With the help of students and emergency hires, she processed several small IAWA collections, completed the processing of the Eleanore Pettersen Collection, and began processing the Sigrid Rupp Collection. A second financial donation from the Peck-Stacpoole Foundation, other endowment funds, and regular departmental funds covered the costs of staffing, archival supplies, and a few selected acquisitions.

Collection Highlights

- Special Collections received 7 new small IAWA collections during the past year, which accounts for almost 11% of the department's new acquisitions
- With the help of students and emergency hires, 25 small IAWA collections have been processed over the past year
- There are now approximately 360 distinct IAWA collections totaling 1,450 cubic feet
- Access to IAWA material through the Addison library catalog was significantly improved by adding records for 110 IAWA collections; at present one-third of the IAWA collections are noted in Addison
- Selected purchases that directly support IAWA collections included:
 - A set of pencil drawings from Fannie Magee, a Newcomb College graduate, of several furniture pieces, 1925
 - A copy of Charlotte Wait Calkin's *A Course in House Planning and Furnishing* (Chicago, 1916)
 - A copy of Caroline Kerrison's *Plans and Estimates for Labourers Cottages* (London, 1864)
 - A copy of Mary Fox's *The Country House* (London, 1843)

Eleanore Pettersen Collection

- In the spring of 2010, Bowser completed the processing of 350 cubic feet of material which encompasses fifty years of project files, sketches, drawings, blueprints, models, and photographs representing approximately 600 designs
- The finding aid totals twenty-three pages and is available through the Virginia Heritage finding aid database and the Special Collections website

Sigrid Rupp Collection

In the spring of 2010, Bowser surveyed the collection, which includes approximately 200 cubic feet of material. The collection spans 600 jobs and 21 years of practice. Researchers will have an intimate look into the operations of a female-owned and -operated architectural firm thanks to Rupp's photo albums, journals, telephone logs, datebooks, and project files. Physical processing of the collection began in Spring 2010 and should be completed in early 2011.

Research, Promotion, and Selected Uses of IAWA Collections

- Women's History Month, exhibit on 2nd floor of Newman (inclusion in Women's Center calendar of events), featuring materials from the Sigrid Rupp Collection, March 2010
- Exhibited IAWA material for Special Collections events, Fall 2009 and Spring 2010
- Supported IAWA exhibition at the Virginia Center for Architecture in Richmond, Spring 2010
- IAWA material used in Special Collections instructional sessions, Fall 2009 and Spring 2010
- Provided conference planning material for 2010 Union Internationale des Femmes Architectes (UIFA) conference, Spring 2010
- Supported reference request on Anna Wagner Keichline and the Decker House for an entry on the Explore Pennsylvania website, Spring 2010
- Several reference inquiries on the career of Stanislaw Nowicki, one by a faculty member at McGill School of Architecture who is writing an article about women in architectural education, Winter 2010
- Supported IAWA Annual Meeting, October 2009
- Supported research for CAUS independent study course, Fall 2009
- Provided supporting documentation for the posthumous awarding of the AIA New Jersey Michael Graves Lifetime Achievement Award to Eleanore Pettersen, Summer 2009
- Selected scanning for researchers from IAWA collections including: Beverly Willis Collection; Union Internationale des Femmes Architectes (UIFA); and A. Jane Duncombe
- Staff replied to nearly 44 reference questions related to IAWA collections

Support for IAWA

- Awarded a \$7,000 preservation grant from the Peck-Stacpoole Foundation to support the preservation and maintenance of IAWA collections, Spring 2009; with this and a previous gift from the same organization, we processed the Pamela Webb collection and are working on small backlog IAWA collections
- Students, emergency hires, and volunteers focused on processing IAWA collections in the Special Collections department included: Emily Cook, Harvey Clarke, Dayne Mauney, and Isadoro Rodriguez

Biographical Database

- Gail McMillan, Director of the Digital Library and Archives, continued to oversee the IAWA Biographical Database; there are currently 1933 publicly available records at http://lumiere.lib.vt.edu/iawa_db thanks to the work of Adowa Adasi and Jane Wills

Mission and Vision

Our efforts in developing the collections of the IAWA support the department's mission to build true research collections of manuscripts, books, and images for scholars, students, faculty, and other patrons to use. During the past year interest in IAWA materials, from faculty, students, architects, and scholars, remained steady. We have made IAWA collections a central part of our collection development efforts, our instructional sessions, and our campus outreach efforts. Special Collections is currently exploring the possibility of purchasing large-format scanning equipment, which has immediate uses for IAWA collections, grant applications, and creating a strong online presence with digitally available materials.