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## MLA in Memphis, Tennessee

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## MLA in Memphis, Tennessee

The Peabody Hotel  
February 22-25, 2006

By Lisa Rae Philpott  
Music Library, University of Western Ontario

This year's MLA Continuing Education Workshop, Digitizing Music, was sponsored by the Education Committee, and was a pre-conference offering. I was fortunate to be placed on the waiting list, and was pleased that a larger venue was found, thus permitting me to attend this session.

MLA's opening reception is the traditional beginning of the conference proper. Following on the heels of the New Members roundtable and reception, this reception provides the opportunity to meet- and-greet other MLA'ers and visit with our many wonderful vendors.

The seventy-fifth Annual Conference was opened by MLA President (and UWO SLIS grad) Bonna Boettcher (Cornell U). Local library dignitaries Judith A. Dresscher (Director Of Libraries, Memphis Public Library) and Dr. Sylverna Ford (Dean of Libraries, University of Memphis) welcomed us warmly, and spoke about their institutions. Drescher regaled us with describing how her staff "hangs around Beale Street" hoping to persuade local musicians to record their music *and* donate their music, papers, programs, notes, napkins (with snippets of tunes, etc.) to the MPL. She also encouraged attendees to listen to the MPL's radio station WYPL FM 89.3 from 8 pm to midnight and from 4 am to 8 am to sample their programming of soul, Sun Studios, sixties, seventies, and current pop music. She mentioned Memphis would be

rooting for its homegrown talent, Three-6 Mafia, nominated (and winners) in the Best Song category for "It's Hard Out Here for a Pimp" in the film, *Hustle & Flow*. Ford, a Northerner, described Memphis as a well kept secret and urged attendees to visit the museums and take-in live performances on Beale Street. Her recommendations? "Experience music. Eat BBQ. See the Mississippi River."

*American Libraries'* reporter Gordon Flagg was welcomed. Annie Thompson (Conference Manager) welcomed new exhibitors, and thanked the sponsors for their underwriting of coffee breaks. Anna Neal (Program Chair) offered updates to the program. Allie Goudie (Chair, Development Committee) described how valuable MLA was to her during her thirty-year career in isolated Western Illinois, and encouraged members to donate to the Association: by choosing to forego just one cup of Starbucks weekly, one could easily afford to give annually to the cause. And, the Merry Auctioneers offered a rendition of the "Marketing Blues," sung to the tune of "Heartbreak Hotel," accompanied by Rick McRae, trombone.

**Plenary I. MLA'ers: Past, Present and Into Our Future** Jane Penner, UVA

The MLA Archives reside at the University of Maryland, College Park, and include significant oral history accounts, due to the efforts of Carol June Bradley. Marjorie Hassan has spent two years reformatting the archive onto gold CDs. Conference attendees were invited to experience the Archives' interactive computer program at the MLA table; the web site is under construction. The panel members were then introduced.

Dena Epstein is an MLA pioneer, and a pioneer in the field of American music publishing. She is the author of *Sinful Tunes and Spirituals: Black Folk Music to the Civil War* (1977); *Music Publishing in Chicago Before 1871 : Firm of Root & Cady* (1969), and the recipient of two NEH grants. Her library career at the University of Chicago spanned 22 years; she has served on the MLA Board, and was its President, 1977-79. In 1986 she was awarded the MLA Citation for Distinguished Service; in 1996 her husband Mort established the Dena Epstein Award for Archival and Library Research in American Music as an anniversary gift. The Society for American Music bestowed its Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005.

Epstein joined MLA in 1931 – three years before AMS was founded! There was no TV, no computers, and not many music librarians. In 1937 she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from the U of Chicago. There were no jobs, so she was advised to go library school at the U of Illinois. However, Illinois told her that because she had a music degree, she was ineligible! Setting the record straight, she replied she had an *arts* degree, and she was accepted on condition that she must accept the best job they could find for her. While studying for her Masters degree, she catalogued half-time, working her way

through 800 titles of Chicago sheet music. A study of this collection eventually became approved as her thesis project.

She married Mort during WWII; they settled on the East coast. At that point, the *MLA Newsletter* was a mimeographed quarterly. Dena wrote the editor, Richard Hill, offering an article about Chicago music publications. Mort had occasion to visit DC on business, and met with Hill. Later, Dena learned that Hill had borrowed her thesis via inter-library loan, and that eight instalments of her thesis had appeared in *Notes* - without anyone telling her! Dena eventually met with Hill in New York City regarding the publication in book-form of the appendix to her thesis, but that never happened.

With two children, no library would hire Epstein, as she was deemed “not reliable.” But she was able to make weekend trips to the New York Public Library, where she furthered her research. She became interested in slave songs of the US, culminating in her 1977 publication, *Sinful Tunes and Spirituals*. During her sixteen years spent outside of librarianship, she served MLA. She stopped in to visit at the U of Chicago in 1964, and was offered a part-time job! Her entire thesis was republished in *Detroit Studies in Music Bibliography*, with the support of Bruno Nettl.

Joseph Boonin has been a member of MLA for over fifty years. His careers have included music publishing (Jerona Music and Joseph Boonin Music) and distribution; he retired from the NYPL in April 2003. He studied librarianship at Drexel, has served on the MLA Board and has liaised with the Music Publishers Association.

Boonin declared that “the profession sucked me in!” In 1954 he had no idea what to do with his life. He was always in love with music. One day he stumbled over the current periodicals, and discovered *Notes*, and decided it was “way cool!” He read all of 1954, and back through 1943! He decided “I gotta have this!” One could subscribe to the issues for a mere four or five dollars and it cost an additional dollar to join the Association. “What the heck, they could probably use the other dollar.” He received notice of the 1959 Cleveland meeting – two weeks after it happened!

Eventually he met fellow MLA’ers at ALA in Washington. He was treated as a colleague from the start, and said “There are only two kinds of music librarians, No. 1 are the ones you know; No. 2, the ones you don’t know. You need to increase the No. 1’s.”

Amanda Maple is a mid-career music librarian. She has co-authored the *Guide to Writing Collection Development Policies for Music*, and has served as an assistant editor to *Notes*. She is also a harpsichordist.

Maple described herself as an enthusiastic music librarian. She entered the profession through the back door, as a paraprofessional supplementing her income. Working for NYPL’s Suki Sommer, Amanda discovered the joy of colleagues, expanded her love of music and music publishing.

Boonin: Red book. Green book. Manual typewriters. 3 by 5-inch cards. We weren’t plugged in *anywhere!* The cataloguer for Hebraic and Slavic languages had four typewriters, and on the Hebraic one, the carriage-return was on the other side (described as a way to “mess with your mind” after a long week!). Joe was late to

Michael Duffy is a recent graduate of Northern Illinois (2002), belonging to the Mid-West Chapter. He contributed a poster session at the Vancouver Conference (2005).

Duffy has been involved with music since grade seven. Playing trumpet, he involved himself in every available musical opportunity, from music camps to study of music at the university level. At Western Michigan University he spent lots of time in the library, looking at microfilm dissertations. In terms of his own study of Bach’s chorale *Alle Menschen*, in retrospect, had he only asked for help, he could have saved hours of research time! In 1999, Duffy called Don Roberts, which, unbeknownst to him, was an interview! He became enrolled in a dual masters degree, and knew that he had found his calling. An evenings/weekends supervisor at Northwestern, Duffy is now employed at Northern Illinois. He finds his job challenging and rewarding, and is completely engaged. He is a “complete librarian” and is responsible for reference and cataloguing.

*How did technology developments impact your job?*

Epstein: “Technology had not been born!” The University of Chicago had a computer, but there was no music on it.

technology, with his entree to NYPL, whose vendor had gone belly-up. He found himself playing catch-up over a ten-year career. With a collection of LPs “rotting on the shelves,” he needed to develop a comprehensive circulating CD collection – and train the LOL’s (little old ladies, although actually they can be of either gender) who tried to play CDs

on a turntable! “Remember Schwann? This reminds me of Anna Russell!” Joe’s career was pretty much a fight with technology, as acquisitions was old-fashioned and not at all automated: he made lists.

Maple recalled seeing her first RLIN terminal in 1986, and it was housed in the back staff area. There were no PCs on desks. She remarked she finds it amazing how the PC has changed and expanded reference service; she also noted she read her first e-mail message in 1990. Music librarians’ facility with equipment and technology means we can help other colleagues (in other disciplines/areas): “Don’t panic about videos, we can do this together!” Technology is a wonderful aspect of our jobs.

Duffy has grown up with technology, including web site design, although networks are a new experience. He was fortunate to begin a new job at the same time that a new computer system was launched. In the summer of 2003, he took a week-long learning technologies course, which offered ways of using technology to enhance one’s teaching. He created an instructional web site, which he updates regularly. Technology makes our jobs easier.

*What other challenges have you faced in your career?*

Epstein’s biggest difficulty was the inability to get a job, with two children!

Boonin described modulation as his biggest challenge. His working career spanned 1959-2003, with a thirty-one-and-a-half year leave from librarianship! His transition from cataloguing to businessman (as music distributor/publisher with a staff of three), meant that he was burned-out after thirty

years in business. He had no idea of how to get back into music librarianship, but Suki Sommer said, “We’ve got an opening.” It was difficult to walk away from business and take up the challenge of developing a sound/video collection. But, after thirty years of Crumb, Xenakis and Ligeti, there was great comfort in know that every CD is four-and-three-quarter inches!

Maple reminded us that one develops collections “one title at a time” and that James Coover described the development of collections for current and future users “as a most profound and sacred trust.” It is difficult to balance shrinking budgets with burgeoning collections possibilities, but one can still tailor a collection to a community, title by title. Access issues include the move away from ownership, necessitating a need to establish a balance between print and digital resources. Music librarians must still spend time developing a collection title by title – in the same manner as art history and humanities collections librarians do.

Duffy found the newness of his job to be challenging: adjusting to a regular schedule of cataloguing, and AACR2 was daunting, due to the complexity of music. He took a music cataloguing course which provided him with tools he needed, and he enjoyed it! He relishes his reference duties, and is in the process of developing a portfolio for tenure purposes – a process with some attendant fear. However, his new contacts at MLA (Austin meeting) provided the opportunity to publish his first article, “Selected Research and Writings on Instruction for Music Librarians: An Annotated Bibliography,” in *Music Reference Services Quarterly*. MLA is large and daunting, but mentors have been helpful: Darwin Scott, Don Roberts, Stephen Wright, Mark Scharff, and Ralph Papahkian.

*What do you see for the future?*

Boonin read a prepared statement:

“1. MLA - it is essential that MLA reach out in two directions:

a. Toward para-professionals who work in music libraries but are not librarians. Often these folk are not only the workhorses of some of our most significant collections, but they are the most musically knowledgeable in a number of other collections.

b. Toward libraries, particularly public libraries, that have enfolded their music and/or recorded sound units into larger, not music specific, entities. These libraries often lose their music specialists in the process and it represents a loss not only of a major element in MLA, thus affecting its future vitality, but for communities that could and should benefit from the immense knowledge base offered by MLA and its membership.

## 2. Music Librarianship

It seems that we are steadily moving into an environment where an increasingly greater part of our subject material – and I definitely include scores, books, recorded sound and image – will be available either as a web alternative (musicalamerica.com, grovemusic.com, classicalmusic.com, Naxos Music Library) or solely via the web. I don't think that the CD will remain the principal means of distribution for recorded music much past 2010. The message will be divorced from any present or past medium and we – as a profession as well as an association – have to be ready beforehand to deal with this.”

**Information Literacy Assessment for**

Epstein reminded attendees that American music sources are often to be found in non-musical sources. In 1959 there was no reliable description of slave music before the Civil War, prompting her researches. “Be prepared to look into non-musical sources!”

Maple reiterated the importance of the past; her mentors Richard Smiraglia and John Sheppard instilled a sense of confidence and purpose in her. She finds it reassuring that “at the end of the day, I have more work than I had at the beginning of the day!” which is indicative of job security! She recommended Ned Quist's article in *Careers in Music Librarianship II*. [Editor's note: This book is reviewed on p. 38 of this issue.]

Duffy stressed the need to keep up with technology – to help sooth frustrated patrons.

Questions were invited from the floor. Memorable MLA Moments were mentioned: past-president Laura Danker recalled her first Dena Epstein lunch, and how everyone knew Dena! Michael Ochs wondered how one differentiated between the old-timers and younger MLA members. Are oldsters those who “knew Dick Hill personally?” He attended his first MLA meeting (a joint meeting with ALA) in Chicago, where he met Geradine Ostrove. He described meeting Dena as his most memorable MLA moment!

Bonnie Jo Dopp, MLA's Archivist, congratulated the panel and organizers for enriching the Association's archives with this session. Dena has influenced the future of MLA with her generous endowment for research into American music.

**Undergraduate Music Majors**

Assessment is the latest buzzword in bibliographic instruction, following the creation of standards, and instructional objectives. Assessment is big – but in order to be truly meaningful, it is necessary to be able to compare students’ skills between institutions. MLA devised its Information Literacy Instructional Objectives in 2005. These received comments from the MLA Board and were submitted to ACRL for feedback. Since then, the objectives have been re-submitted to the MLA Board, and then back to ACRL. Look for additional information in the March 2006 issue of *Notes*. In the meantime, visit the web site – [exlibris.memphis.edu/music/mla/handouts.html](http://exlibris.memphis.edu/music/mla/handouts.html) – for the handouts distributed at the Memphis meeting.

Deborah Pierce (U Washington) defined assessment as the gathering of data to better understand strengths and weaknesses of student learning. It is a means to document educational quality, and a vehicle for educational improvement. Why are we doing this? Many accreditation agencies are requiring assessment, given the growing interest in accountability. Hence, administrators and funding agencies are becoming interested, too. Assessment has an impact on employability issues: Is higher

Tammy Ravas spoke about SAILS, which was begun at Kent State University in 2001 in an effort to gain institutional support and expand information literacy initiatives. Students’ information literacy skills are tested at admission to determine whether there is a change in skill levels, and whether there is a correlation to academic success. The SAILS testing addresses four standards: the need for information, ability to access information effectively, ability to evaluate sources critically, and understanding of ethical and

education necessary? Distance-education and other teaching models also require accountability. It’s an opportunity to continually improve what we are doing.

How do we decide best practices? There are many models out there: performance-based versus authentic assessment (i.e., real work tasks); quantitative vs qualitative; individual student learning versus program assessment. If there is a rubric, it is that information literacy assessment is in its infancy, and that five criteria are necessary to make assessment work: train librarians; decide what we want to learn about assessment; consider the costs (of our people, too); involve the faculty; and encourage dialogue between all of the partners. According to the ACRL Best Practices Initiative, assessment should have ongoing planning and improvement; include measurements of both the students and the program; be directly related to goals and objectives; and include peer and self-evaluation.

### **The Programs**

At present there are four potential assessment programs available: SAILS, WOREP, ICAP and ETS.

legal issues. Standard 4 cannot be measured by multiple-choice testing. Music questions are typically dense. SAILS used three trials to test questions, from one-on-one questions to small group trials to field trials (over 200 students). See Ravas’s list of sample questions at: [exlibris.memphis.edu/music/mla/ravas.pdf](http://exlibris.memphis.edu/music/mla/ravas.pdf). SAILS can be music-specific, allowing for questions across majors and concentrations (not class-specific), however it does not address all five of the ACRL standards.

WOREP assesses skills at the institutional level, making comparisons with national data. It is an initiative to compare info-lit measures with student achievement, and to compare with other institutions.

Donna Arnold (U of North Texas) described the Information Competency Assessment Project's (ICAP) instrument devised by the Bay Area Community Colleges, San Francisco. It is a credit-by-exam based on specific performance outcomes, and criterion referenced to national standards such as ACRL.

The creators welcome adaptation by others for their own use, and the tool has been tweaked extensively. There is no charge for the use of these materials, and there is useful information regarding a scoring rubric and how to develop one. This is a tool which was developed with an investment of a mere \$3,000. Visit: <http://www.topsy.org/ICAP/ICAPProject.html>.

Cheryl Taranto (U Las Vegas) outlined the ETS ([www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)) approach. This is the company which administers such tests as the GRE, GMAT, PRAXIS, SAT, ICT Literacy Assessment, the latter being Information and Communications Technology. The company administers the tests, but provides no content, and makes available core assessment (high school to college students) and advanced (upper-level undergrads). ICT proficiencies include define, access, manage, integrate, evaluate, create and communicate. This is the only system which addresses ACRL Standard 4 (evaluate, create, communicate). It is performance based, offers the ability to assess more complex tasks, and offers two levels of assessment (core and advanced). The cons: it [www.andante.com](http://www.andante.com)  
[www.allaboutjazz.com](http://www.allaboutjazz.com) Jazz site

is still in development, and it is extremely time-consuming.

Discussion followed, with the consensus being that we will have no choice regarding assessment, so we would be well-advised to be prepared. The desirability of a nationally-normed test was noted, as was the need to interface with music departments. There is a need for research in this area, and a need for MENC/AMS participation as an instrument is developed.

### **I Didn't Know That Was Available Online** Laurie Sampsel (U Boulder, Colorado)

Sampsel offered her list of favourite online resources at:

[exlibris.memphis.edu/music/mla/sampsl1.pdf](http://exlibris.memphis.edu/music/mla/sampsl1.pdf)

Attendees were invited to share theirs, which included:

[www.cpanda.org](http://www.cpanda.org) Princeton - Cultural policy  
[www.ibdb.com](http://www.ibdb.com) The Internet Broadway Database

[www.artsjournal.com](http://www.artsjournal.com) The Arts Journal  
[www.bartleby.com](http://www.bartleby.com) Unlimited free access to literature, reference and verse

[webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/fli/index.jsp](http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/fli/index.jsp) Indiana U's Film Literature Index

[www.allmusic.com](http://www.allmusic.com) All Music

[www.arkivmusic.com](http://www.arkivmusic.com) CD vendor, huge online catalogue

[www.choralnet.org](http://www.choralnet.org) Choral Music

[www.playbill.com](http://www.playbill.com) The Playbill Broadway Theatres Publication.

[www.playbillarts.com/index.php](http://www.playbillarts.com/index.php) Coverage of classical, opera, dance, jazz

[www.newmusicjukebox.com](http://www.newmusicjukebox.com) Offered by the American Music Center



[www.seventhstring.com/](http://www.seventhstring.com/) See the left-hand sidebar for an index of fake books

[www.cim.edu](http://www.cim.edu) The Cleveland Institute of Music – under Library/Resources, see the index to the Cleveland Symphony’s program notes.

[publish.uwo.ca/~metastas/](http://publish.uwo.ca/~metastas/) The Metastasio Database - Eighteenth-Century Studies, UWO  
[www.arts.ufl.edu/motet/](http://www.arts.ufl.edu/motet/) The Motet Database, U Florida

[www.operabase.com](http://www.operabase.com) Handy for finding European opera schedules

Also look for a collaborative project between SingOut! and Oberlin to go live in the New Year: this will be an online index to folk song anthologies published between 1952 and 2004.

## **Plenary II. Collaborations: An Interview with Augusta Read Thomas, Maestro David Loebel and MLA’s Don Roberts.**

Don Roberts moderated this session, as both “Gusty” Read Thomas and David Loebel are Northwestern grads (and Loebel was a student employee of the Library). Tonight’s commission, “Shakin’ (Homage to Elvis Presley and Igor Stravinsky),” will be performed twice.

Thomas is Wyatt Professor of Music at Northwestern, has been the Composer-in-

Roberts asked how the commission came about. He had spoken with Loebel a couple of Thanksgivings ago and asked, “What can we do?” Loebel responded, “Wow!” A committee was struck, a number of people were considered, and Thomas was chosen. Loebel stated, “Music dies when people stop writing it,” and he is thrilled there are composers who still want to write for orchestra. He

Residence at the Chicago Symphony (1997-2006), and is presently Chair of the American Music Center’s Board of Directors. Loebel has conducted a large list of orchestras, and is known to have donned a baseball uniform for youth concerts.

Thomas spoke about the MLA-commissioned work to be heard tonight. She was approached some two-and-a-half years ago, and was to include references to Memphis. The obvious choice was Elvis, versus any other poetic reference. She wanted something literary, elegant and graceful, so purchased a seven-CD set of Elvis’s music for background. And rock ‘n’ roll reminds her of Stravinsky. The work is in three sections, each of about three minutes’ duration. There are bell sounds, and a solo cello. She envisioned a French fabric, with eight solo violins, muted, playing fragments of Elvis songs – so that “Elvis is somewhere in the room.” The middle section is transitional, with lots of pizzicato (again, bell sounds), with two violins playing high solos. The last section is a great crescendo, from *ppp* to *fff*, with percussion (including bass drum and cymbal), an accelerando and repeated cells. She makes her music by taking from history (rock ‘n’ roll to Stravinsky in this instance) and making it personal and unusual. She is especially drawn to and interested in the beauty and sound of the orchestra.

understood the weighty responsibility of bring a new work to life, and was thrilled that Thomas made her deadline. Part way through the compositional process, she got in touch with Loebel to discuss the practicalities – such as the orchestra’s strengths and the acoustics of the hall. The entire concert grew out of the commissioned work. Loebel remarked that Memphis has a non-classical music heritage,

and one might well ask, “Is this a theatre town, a dance town, or a music town!?” No matter which, tonight’s concert will be an MMM (a Major Memphis Moment)! He recounted meeting Sam Phillips, who greeted Loebel by saying, “Maestro, Memphis is so happy....Memphis loves you!” Loebel confessed to being speechless at this greeting.

Rock ‘n’ roll is inescapable for anyone under age seventy. It is part of our musical life and influences composers, hence tonight’s program title, Rock like Bach, which features Frank Zappa’s *G-Spot Tornado*, Daniel B. Roumain’s *Hip Hop Essay for Orchestra*, David Kechley’s *The Funky Chicken*, David Schiff’s *Stomp for Orchestra*, Christopher Rouse’s *The Nevill Feast*, and Michael Daugherty’s *Motown Mondays*, in addition to Thomas’s commissioned work. For the Memphis Symphony press release, see: [www.memphissymphony.org/NewsandReviews/News-Review-Detail.cfm?ID=2394](http://www.memphissymphony.org/NewsandReviews/News-Review-Detail.cfm?ID=2394) And for a review of the concert, see: [www.memphissymphony.org/NewsandReviews/News-Review-Detail.cfm?ID=2321](http://www.memphissymphony.org/NewsandReviews/News-Review-Detail.cfm?ID=2321) Last but not least, for the composer’s program notes, see: [www.augustareadthomas.com/shakin.html](http://www.augustareadthomas.com/shakin.html).

As Chair of the AMC’s Board, Thomas serves 2,500 members of the association founded by Aaron Copland in 1939. The AMC has a \$4 million endowment, makes grants to new composers and offers the newmusicbox at [www.newmusicbox.org/](http://www.newmusicbox.org/) plus the NewMusicJukebox at [www.newmusicjukebox.org/](http://www.newmusicjukebox.org/).

Loebel described his stint working for Don Roberts as a great experience and an essential education – he was able to listen to LPs while he worked! Conductors are insatiably curious, they want to hear everything, but if that’s not possible in your

As a composer, Thomas has spent the last twenty-five years doing nothing but writing music. She strives to sum up sound and has a strong desire to communicate. She is at her drafting table daily, and has a deep need to compose. She builds a work and its form by intuition rather than using a twelve-tone row. She tries to keep an improvisational quality in her work, but everything is completely notated; the musicians are not improvising. She improvises as she goes along, but still wants the finished work to sound fresh. Her music is filled with cross-references: lots of pizzicato bass is due to the fact that she listens to lots of jazz; without a drum-set it sounds like Stravinsky. She likes Mingus – so he is cross-referenced by “duelling banjos” in the strings. She described a “way” to compose ala Hindemith, very European style and carefully crafted, as opposed to the freedom of the US melting pot, where there is no “way” to compose. She described composition as a very personal experience where one creates emotional worlds – but it is “virtually impossible to write a great piece!” (Composers are highly self critical.) However, she finds composing exhilarating as she really cares about nuance and the differences in sounds. It is unbelievably difficult, but the process of trying to notate the exact musical sense of nuance will keep her interested for life. Sadly, one can never listen to everything, but rather than listen to more Vivaldi she would like to hear something new, please! She mentioned a “favourite twenty-seven hours... How many listening hours do we have left in life? I want to listen to *new* things!”

own house, you can go to the library. He was thrilled to meet Berlioz scholar Hugh MacDonald. He also confessed he reads *Notes* for the ads. He wants to know everything, loves the New Publications column, and likewise the Necrology Index is interesting.

Questions from the floor were invited. Wendy Sistrunk asked Thomas about documentation. She replied that she appreciated Schirmer's good, clean scores, and its catalogue. She herself keeps two boxes of programs and some thirty boxes of letters. She also has a list of "important things" such as a poem that she loves. Bonnie Jo Dopp inquired about Thomas's outreach activities during her residency in Chicago. Thomas replied her tenure at Chicago began in 1997, and will end in mere weeks (she received several renewals of her term as Composer-in-Residence). It was one of the greatest things, and she will be indebted forever for the opportunity. She was able to work with amazing musicians, and got to learn something new every day. She delivered some seventy pre-concert lectures each year. MusicNOW, a chamber music series, features music of living composers who are brought to the concert featuring their works. MusicNOW has also commissioned new works. There are outreach programs to both public and high schools. The school concerts are scheduled for the first week of April: five days with two concerts a day. Each concert seats an audience of 3,000.

Someone inquired about the composer-conductor relationship during rehearsals. Thomas stated that with a clean score (no typos), the conductor shouldn't have to call, but it is fun to collaborate. Often one is invited to sit without offering input, versus being onstage, offering comments and

Thomas was asked about her complete works. She is now forty-one. At age thirty, she withdrew everything she had written, with the exception of some thirty works; she wanted to put her best foot forward. She believed in those thirty works. "Wouldn't you rather travel to Helsinki for a piece you

suggestions. Loebel said there are two kinds of composers: those with x-ray ears (like Samuel Barber) who know their score; and those for whom everything is wonderful – and who are in love with hearing their work. It may be easier to work with the latter, but it is much more rewarding to work with the former. Student composers are often cowed by the experience, but Loebel likes it when composers argue! Thomas said that is nice to be able to say, "Try that pizzicato section arco" or "May I hear X isolated?" But when you are asked/told, "Comments? We have *two* minutes," you know that conductor didn't really want your piece! Still, as a composer, she knows that musicians' time is pure gold.

Mark Scharff commented that Thomas's duelling banjos really stimulated the imagination. He inquired about her historical record and artifacts - "the papers on the wall." Thomas keeps her scores on nice large paper in a special chest. They are clean and proofed. She draws sketches of the form and counter-melodies on 8.5 by 11-inch or 11 by 17-inch paper, and uses colours. When she lectures to composers, she brings examples with her.

Joe Boonin inquired about Thomas's druthers in terms of genre. She loves a tight, big band or jazz band sound, and would love to collaborate with scat - her treatment of brass grows out of her love for big bands. Loebel said that as a student he bought all his music from Joe Boonin!

actually *like*?" So, in a catalogue of some 400 works, which twenty are her favourites? "You know your best works." Which are her three best? "Which genre?" Thomas listed *Ritual Incantations* (solo cello), *Words of the Sea* (orchestra), *Piano Etudes* and *In My Sky at Twilight* (solo soprano and chamber

orchestra).

### **System User Groups**

I attended the INNOVATIVE session. WebPAC Pro is the latest product, with plans for twice yearly upgrades. One will be able to change the sort of a result list however one wishes. And, in keyword, an algorithm will be used to produce relevancy rankings in the results list. The algorithm is a combination of adjacency and where/how the keywords appear. Mark Scharff asked which MARC fields have the most weight in the algorithm. There are four levels, whereby the third level takes into account the Boolean “and” operator, and the fourth level takes everything else into account. Another nice feature is the possibility of offering fifty-item result lists, up from the current twelve. This will be an on/off option. WebPAC PRO will no longer use frames and libraries will be able to add to a brief citation display for customization. Scope notes can affect displays, as can language. “Tokens” can be used to rearrange key elements of a page, and also to suppress elements. All of the buttons will be on the left hand side of the page.

One will be required to log-in to “My Millennium” just once. However, it means that users must be trained to log-out at the end of sessions. Spell-check will be available but expensive, offering best guess or drop-down spelling choices. A Feed Builder for RSS Feeds offers new ways of disseminating information, such as new-book lists via review files. The 2000LE Token is the means of displaying RSS Feeds in the catalogue.

Sutherland also spoke about rehearsal deadlines, and how relationships with publishers are important. A good relationship means that Sutherland can seem to “pull

### **Ask MOLA (Major Orchestra Librarians’ Association)**

I arrived at this session, already in progress, to hear one of the librarians say, “We deface the collection!” Robert Sutherland, Orchestra Librarian at the Met, stated, “Essentially, orchestra librarians do whatever it takes to get a performance onstage. And if no one knows that I have done anything, then I’ve done a really good job.” On occasion he considers himself to be a forensic librarian deciphering handwriting on parts; some of Dvorak’s own changes were dictated to the players from the podium, and exist only in those parts, amendments that aren’t likely to appear in the critical edition! He discussed the importance of the hall acoustic with respect to a work being played appropriately; and the best edition is the one the conductor wants!

Augusta Read Thomas discussed the importance of publishers and their agents. Susan Feder of Schirmer arranged the details of this week’s premiere over a year ago. The exclusivity agreement means that a work can be taken on tour; an archival copy is maintained by the publisher. The notation program SCORE is not user friendly, but it does produce beautiful scores. Schirmer extracts the parts and makes provision for page-turns. Thomas noted there is never enough rehearsal time, so it was good to collaborate with the conductor, to learn who sits where and who your five best players are, so that she could highlight the players and their positions.

rabbits out of hats.” The time line of a commission has to be pragmatic. Composers shouldn’t have to worry about business. Let them compose. Consider all of the work in

preparation, proofreading and printing. You have to feel for self-published composers!

Thomas confessed she doesn't even read the contracts that Susan Feder sends her, she simply signs them. By having Schirmer look after the business, Thomas has a clear, tranquil space in which to work.

George Boziwick inquired about the historical context of her work. Thomas described herself as a Triple A Perfectionist. She couldn't withdraw her earlier works as completely as she would have liked to have done. Having spent twenty-five years learning to write music, she wants to be able to revise as she wishes, to add small nuances and details as she sees fit. She wants to put her strongest foot forward, hence her decision to withdraw her juvenilia.

Sutherland dates and time-stamps his materials, keeping notes on conductors and composers. He noted that Schirmer includes the printing date on each score it publishes. To ensure a work has a life beyond its first performance, it is important to keep meticulous notes regarding instrumentation – does the clarinet double on bass clarinet? When one is booking a season two years in advance, one must be able to tailor exactly to the group. Occasionally a work is tied to a particular ensemble's performance of it.

Sutherland described the "Ford Made in America" commission ([www.symphony.org/](http://www.symphony.org/))

Cassaro compared *Notes* review data with other online resources: many books are reviewed only by *Notes*. Of 220 reviews that appeared on Amazon.com, ninety percent have HTML of *Notes*' reviews! Barnes & Noble listed some 366 titles, of which sixty-three percent had some sort of review from extracts of publishers' statements or brief

artistic/mia/index.shtml), whereby smaller orchestras were to perform a new piece by Joan Tower. Schirmer published the work. So, how many sets would be needed? At least nineteen complete sets were circulated; each set cost \$300 in paper alone! One has to remember that conducting is a commercial business. To be noticed, one needs a hook for the season brochure, like "I want the *early* version of Howard Hansen's Symphony." The librarian must then track it down. Or: "I heard this two-and-a-half years ago, can you get me a score?" Editorial changes are often made by the conductor. The librarian is handed a list of changes to be made to the parts – to be done in the space of a mere hour-and-a-half!

### **Plenary III Collection Development: Techniques, Resources, and Perspectives for the Music Librarian** James Cassaro (Pittsburgh), Chair

Cassaro opened this session by illustrating the reviewing history of *Notes*. The December 1942 issue contained eight book reviews; music reviews began with Series 2, volume 2, issue 3; book and music reviews were regular features with the next issue. By March 1947 (4/2), the Publications Received column appeared; the index to record reviews appeared in March 1948 (5/2), with Kurtz Myers as compiler with the following issue.

critiques. Neither Amazon nor B&N have much coverage of foreign-language materials. IAML's *Fontes* has the largest review coverage of foreign-language publications. Cassaro noted that the value of the MLA journal is quite high with respect to collection development; the use of web sites is a much less effective means of finding reviews

appropriate to one's needs.

Michael Fling (Indiana U) commented that reference librarians today can offer live chat, consult online reference databases, and download full-text e-books to their desktops. You can verify current availability of items in the stacks from home. Ready cataloguing is available. Online resources include WorldCat, vendor sites, all keyword searchable. You can view on-order items in library catalogues, and send purchase requests by e-mail from both online or printed vendor catalogues.

Until the early 1990s, centralized acquisition was the norm at Indiana U. With the advent of an integrated system, the Music Library moved to direct ordering/receiving of all firm orders, including standing orders and continuations. Music Library staff import MARC records, or key-in preliminary MARC records, with uniform titles, attaching to the order record, and then print them. Materials and invoices are checked, invoices are sent to the main library which cuts the cheque. Use of a credit card facilitates ordering, being particularly useful for emergency purchases. Subscriptions and licensing are the province of the main library. Indiana uses no music approval plans.

In the past, the requirement to use a single acquisitions department created more problems than it solved in terms of printing and mailing the orders. Expertise was lacking when OCLC was used to re-verify orders. Orders that specified *Partitur* were changed to "parts" and property-stamped (!), wasting time, effort and acquisitions funding. Since the Music Library declared its independence, the main acquisitions department has ceased to verify the music orders and the purchase orders are printed MARC records (the trick is to print *all*). Fling described SIRSI Unicorn as wretched for acquisitions purposes, since

In terms of acquisitions, Fling suggested one should heed Smokey Robinson's Mama: "You better shop around!" When choosing vendors, it is far preferable to buy Italian music from Italy; Spanish music from Spain, etc. List prices are often lower, and one can avoid the US markup. Should you surf [www.henle.de](http://www.henle.de) and convert the currency, you will suffer from sticker-shock: US prices are fifty percent higher. In the US, Ricordi is distributed by Hal Leonard, whose prices are often fifteen percent less than the Euro pricing, however, HL may not stock the entire catalogue, so order fulfilment rates can be disappointing. Fling disparaged this lack of service whereby particular titles are deemed unworthy of warehouse space, necessitating a direct order to Italy.

In terms of online stores and US editions, Barnes & Noble can ship US trade books fast. The Indiana Music Library has a corporate account with Amazon, with a thirty-four percent discount *and* free shipping. However, both of these vendors have little printed music. CDs are only available at full price. Library vendors offer the best prices on CDs.

order records offer the bare minimum of information: author, title, place and ISSN. With revised automation compliance standards (indexing/searching), they now use a two-sentence acquisitions form, as one needs: series information fields, with 4xx and 2xx, ISMN, format, edition statement, and performing medium. For MARC to OCLC, local adjustments are needed prior to printing the order. For example, for the 029 (publisher name) the second indicator must be set to 1 or 2; however, for Harrassowitz orders, the second indicator must be 0.

Fling deems the use of credit cards as essential. This obviates the need for online vendor records and the need for cutting cheques. If you cannot get a credit card solely for music purchases, then cozy up to whomever is the holder of such a card in your system! Ordering from publishers is bad unless you use a credit card. Smaller publishers that specify pre-payment by cheque translates into slow service, unless they take credit cards. Large publishers also have no retail experience.

Hal Leonard offers links to online music stores. One can e-mail C.F. Peters for a price quote, and never get a reply. Boosey & Hawkes offers custom-print editions, but delivery is erratic. On the other hand, Amazon ships what is readily available, and notifies customers about cancellations, in which case one can try another vendor. Is something truly out-of-print? Try one of the vendors with bargain basement prices like Alibris ([www.alibris.com](http://www.alibris.com)) or Bookfind ([www.bookfinder.com](http://www.bookfinder.com)). One is welcome to maintain desiderata lists, which are searched every two months, or you can input desired titles into Alibris, where they are searched continuously. Alibris also has a libraries' division for billing purposes.

On a personal note, Fling has recently celebrated his thirtieth anniversary as collection development librarian at Indiana University. It has been fulfilling and challenging to serve in a premiere music

What happens when a vendor shuts down? What do you lose? Well, you lose your firm orders and your standing orders. You also have a loss of service for those necessary notices and notifications. We all use vendors like Brode, OMI, and Thal. We may find approval plans helpful (or not). At Eastman, books arrive and are charged to a centralized

library at the best music school in the country. At the end of May, he will be riding into the sunset. You can expect to see his job posted. "If you enjoy spending your workday shopping, I urge you to apply!"

Dan Zager (Eastman) discussed vendor relationships and described collection development as an art and a highly individual process. Among the variables are the type of library (conservatory, academic, departmental or public), the curriculum requirements, and size of the budget. External constraints include pricing, exchange rates, and whether or not desired material is in-print/available.

So, you need a score: by which composer; do you require a particular genre or specific work; is it a custom arrangement, a reprint, or a publisher's series; the publication date; kind of score (full, newly edited, piano-vocal, or a competing version); does a given score "fit" well and what is its cost. Selecting is individualized; some items all librarians would buy, such as the newly found Bach aria published by Bärenreiter. Zager described a nightmare scenario whereby we were consulting new-issues slips with our MLA colleagues watching over our shoulders. Such a scenario could well incite paranoia, seeing the looks of surprise or disapproval on our colleagues' faces, and have us looking for a copy of *Music Collection Development for Dummies!*

approval plan budget; university press books are slower to arrive. Cambridge and Oxford University Press publications are on standing order. All of this is timely and the return rate is less than one percent. Scores? Well, music is idiosyncratic. You should consider using an approval plan: a) For assistance bringing in classes of material normally firm-ordered;

b) If there is a high level of predictability, as an aid to the selector; and c) If the approval line does not diminish the selector's discretionary budget.

One provides a vendor with an annual spending limit, and can add emerging composers. The profile can be adjusted regularly to address new performing and research interests. Older repertoires can be included, easily accomplished by publisher-based selections.

When selecting from vendors' selection slips, there is often minimal information included. In the case of recordings and Western art music, many items never get reviewed. In order to select the most current performances and the broadest spectrum, it is often useful to concentrate on particular recording labels or by selecting particular performers. Labels such as Albany, names like David Diamond, McCreesh, Stephen Paulus, or the organ of Los Angeles Cathedral. This is selection by names only, and it is often best to "fill a gap" than to spend endless hours seeking reviews. For example, a complete recording of the Hummel Piano Trios is probably worth having regardless of other considerations. In terms of scores, the edition or publisher is a point of consideration. Zager saw a slip for a new trumpet book of orchestral excerpts, by Hickman. This got a great review in the *International Trumpet Guild Journal*. Zager will be buying the entire series.

Sara Canino is the music librarian at Vassar College. Even though the music library is small, there are lots of opportunities – a trade-off for not having much control. A part of the music department building, the music library is considered (by the faculty) as being in the same department. Being separate

Brian Doherty, session moderator, gave an interim report of the status of *A Basic Music Library*. This is our most highly visible service outside of our discipline. As of June 2004, a task force was struck to investigate the options for updating this classic, the scope and content and the means of publication. Surveys were conducted, with some decisions taken. It was decided that *BML* should function as a serial, and the editorship should rotate (as the editorship of *Notes* rotates). The content will include reference books, periodicals, online resources, non-reference books and a guide to collection development for music. Because ALA is the current publisher, they must be offered first refusal of the next edition; a letter of understanding has been drawn up, with Booklist Online considered as model. MLA would retain ownership of content and receive royalties from a third-party license. At this point, the task force has been disbanded; its charge is completed.

### **Beyond BI: Enhancing the Music Librarian's Effectiveness on Campus**

Sponsored by the Small Academic Libraries Roundtable, this session featured primarily "solo" music librarians from smaller institutions.

from the main library means that Canino meets frequently with her supervisor, and ends up with a to-do list afterwards. The up side is that she is in her supervisor's face on a regular basis. Canino is on the local preservation committee and offers in-depth reference consultations – which is a good way



to learn about titles that need to be acquired. She also mounts exhibits in the main library highlighting the Music Library. One very successful exhibit highlighted poster art by local and Vassar artists. As faculty, Canino participates in college-wide governance committees – notably the Security Advisory and the Copyright committees at present. She has also enjoyed a term as a House Fellow (faculty members who live/work in the dormitories) and is sought out by the college historian for information. Outside activities Canino has enjoyed include promoting the presence of an unknown Cole Porter song collection and conference-hosting (although she admitted that hosting two separate conference concurrently was a bit ambitious). She attended a technology conference in Middlebury, Vermont, and found it extremely helpful in getting audio reserves up and running, as well as a database of musical instruments.

Marjorie Morris, an oboist, has been the music librarian at Rowan University for over twenty-five years. A petite marathon runner, her appearance belies her age. She confessed to finding shelter at the Roundtable, and gives it credit for her longevity and credibility in the profession. Since her arrival at Rowan, the music library has tripled in size, with the addition of a computer lab and two additional full-time staff members. Morris arrived in 1972 – to a collection of just-moved boxes which had come from a basement or closet; there was no cataloguing. As a musician, she gained credibility with her clientele. She also

- Acquire your own operating budget, apart from acquisitions, equipment, furnishings and supplies – this can be important in terms of NASM accreditation;
- Participate in committee work at the university level: insert your needs (money,

stated unequivocally that non-musicians cannot be effective as music librarians – contrary to the administration’s beliefs. Rowan has 10,000 FTE students, with some thirty graduate music-education majors and undergraduate programs in performance, composition, jazz and education. Consequently, research is conducted over broad subject areas, and Morris demands to be consulted especially when plans were afoot to add ten new graduate areas in music. She offered her opinions regarding the repercussions regarding library support for the new programs and ensembles. She attends music faculty meetings as an ex-officio member. She reminds successive chairs to send her the agendas and to keep her posted. Sitting through hours of dry, boring discussions offers opportunities to occupy herself, so she brings her knitting with her.

Morris looked up “effectiveness” in Webster’s Dictionary: capable of, able to function, influential (in a positive way), to exert authority, efficient, impressive, cogent, pleasing, satisfying, equipped. Morris makes it her job to promote credibility, visibility and funding. In her three decades of librarianship, she has had much practice in making slow, sure progress towards visibility, credibility and thus effectiveness. She shared her twelve ways:

- Be sure that the music faculty includes you; with respect to the Library Committee, Morris sets the agenda, and always serves food;
- (space, security, etc., etc.). Being visible adds to your credibility and can result in funding. Creating an e-mail distribution list for her faculty hasn’t hurt, either;
- Go after technology resistant faculty! Give them a moment or two, then offer

- assistance. This is another way to enhance credibility. An unexpected dividend occurred when an elderly retired faculty member died in 2005 and bequeathed his collection to the Music Library's Archive;
- Use appropriate signage and clip-art to get your point across (such as a reminder to students to not leave library-owned materials in classrooms and practice studios);
  - Involve yourself in campus organizations outside the department. Attend union meetings and participate in union-related work. (Morris has spent four years as treasurer and fifteen as recording secretary.) Her membership in a group of progressive faculty that helped raise political issues on campus also helped her to nail the support she needed for a second professional music librarian. Her interest in women's studies and feminist issues resulted in her picketing the Vienna Philharmonic; a photo in the *Philadelphia Enquirer* identified Morris and her sister in the front-line of the protestors.
  - Hold library-sponsored events. Publicize them properly with your name and the library's name prominently displayed. Morris organized two full recitals of women's music; she took advantage of the travelling exhibit of the Music Publishers Association's Revere Award-winning scores;
  - 
  - Grab the opportunity to bring other staff and directors into the Music Library. Offer your space for big, general staff meetings; Feeling the need to check out B.B. King's restaurant, and to explore Schwab's Emporium ("If you can't find it at Schwab's, you're better off without it."), I missed the beginning of the AGM. But I did arrive in time for the remembrances.

- offer refreshments; provide live music performances;
- Join the Friends of the Library / Friends of the Arts;
- Go to faculty recitals and concerts. Take advantages of opportunities for continuing education; take advantage of opportunities to be visible and supportive;
- Publications: Her volunteer work as Chair of the Tenure Committee was also valuable for informing the faculty of what librarians do (or should do);
- Prevent burnout. Do whatever "floats your boat," whether it be playing, pursuing feminist causes, or running. Incidentally, when running, Morris occasionally meets the University President, a fellow runner. This makes running a political opportunity! She also commented on the result of a recent survey posted on the MLA listserv of what we music librarians do. We plan exhibits, organize lectures/classes and other public programs, advance/assist music scholarship, teach music bibliography, teach other classroom subjects and serve our professional organization. Beyond BI we can be involved with performances, offer guest lectures to other disciplines, write program notes, and so on. Of the sixty respondents, all find themselves doing four or five jobs; most are classed as professionals rather than as faculty.

### **AGM Highlights**

Michael Ochs delivered a touching tribute to Stanley Sadie, "There isn't anyone here who hasn't benefited from Stanley." Ochs described the man, whom few had met, as a legend in our time, and larger than life. In addition to editing *Grove*, Sadie was an editor and reviewer of the *Musical Times*. He also

wrote or edited over 100 books. Sadie's latest book, *Mozart: The Early Years, 1756-1781* had been begun a long time ago, but was put aside. In fact, it was supposed to be a two-volume work, but during the last three months of his life, Sadie was feeling quite unwell and was hospitalized – bringing his proofs with him. One week before his death, he was finally diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's Disease and was taken home to his country estate. He attended a chamber music concert (a series which he and his wife, Julie Anne, had established), and left at the interval. After the performance, the quartet came to his house, where they played the slow movement of Beethoven's Opus 135. He went to sleep and died shortly after. It was a pleasure to have known him.

Philip Vandermeer honoured Ida Reed, Music Librarian at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (1984-97). Reed was the first MLA member Vandermeer met – at his first MLA meeting. She was a devoted member and an exemplary mentor, meticulous, involved in committees, creating new projects and collaborative experiences. When editing the fifth edition of *Duckles*, she asked for a hard copy: "I'm retyping the

Mary Davidson honoured Ruth Watanabe, long-time music librarian at the Eastman School. Born in California in 1916, Watanabe was an only child who attended the University of Southern California in the fall of 1933, gaining Bachelor's degrees in music and English, and a Master's degree in music in 1942. Of Japanese descent, Watanabe was interned in the California desert after Pearl Harbor, where she taught music appreciation classes. Howard Hanson learned of her plight, and invited her to study for her PhD at the Eastman School. She began her library career as a student circulation assistant, becoming head of circulation in 1944. She was declared

whole thing myself." The MLA Citation was a token of her enduring influence on a generation of music librarians. She was tough, warm, generous and stubborn, and regarded her thirteen-year battle with cancer as one more life challenge. She collected books, fabrics, needlework supplies, DVDs, and had "more dishes than the White House!" Vandermeer commented that her collection of Anglican choral music CDs was likely complete. A memorial service was held on Sunday, Nov. 9, 2005, featuring Byrd's *Ave Verum* and *For All the Saints*.

Ruth Henderson spoke of Melva Peterson. Peterson served three terms as MLA Secretary. She also served on RILM's Committee Mixte, and was awarded the MLA Citation in 2001. Peterson was the Music Librarian at the City University of New York for thirty-nine years. She travelled extensively (most recently to IAML in Oslo) and championed political rights as a member of the Raging Grannies. As a member of (and reviewer for) Sigma Alpha Iota, she amassed a remarkable private collection, which was donated to CUNY.

a librarian by Hanson (after one term at library school) and built a remarkable collection at Sibley, buying widely in Europe's rare book market, at auctions, and also purchasing complete sets at a discount. Watanabe's service to MLA included compiling the Music Received column for *Notes* from 1967-96, chairing a number of committees, and serving as President (1979-81). At Sibley, she taught the Introduction to Music Research course (1967 through the 1980s), wrote program notes for the Rochester Philharmonic, and was named Professor of Music Bibliography in 1979. Her Summer Institutes were legendary. At her retirement in

1984, she was named the Historian of the Eastman School. Through the late 1990s, inquiries about her well-being received the reply that she was “getting on fine.” On the occasion of her eightieth birthday, Sibley’s Special Collections were named in her honour. She will be remembered for her wit, kindness, generosity and loyalty to the Eastman School.

Geraldine Ostrove remembered Lenore Coral, who died last March at age sixty-six. Coral was both an outstanding librarian and scholar. She was noted for her conviction and commitment, and was a friend, advocate, and mentor. She was hard on people, but harder on herself. Sharp and well-informed, Coral was always greatly concerned about taking the right stand. Once she made up her mind, the action had to be of superior quality. She was a mentor of Cornell’s graduate students over a period of twenty-five years, offering friendship, concern and hospitality. Coral also founded the US RILM office in 1984, becoming its first director. She was President of MLA (1987-89), a vice-president of IAML (1991-97) and actively served in the American Musicological Society both at the chapter and national levels. She received the MLA Citation in 1991. Last year’s MLA meeting was the first one she had missed in thirty years. Her final days were spent organizing the completion of her nearly-finished book – and its subsequent editing and publication.

The Vincent Duckles Award was given to the International RILM Office for its

Memphis epitomized southern hospitality – even the panhandlers were exceedingly polite! The downtown area was wonderfully clean, with a charming trolley-car service (rides were one dollar) that offered two routes around the downtown area. The conference

publication, *Speaking of Music: Music Conferences, 1835-1966*. An essential research tool, this retrospective survey of congress reports documents some 6,000 published papers presented at 496 conferences.

Next year’s MLA meeting will be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Feb. 26-March 3, 2007.

Attendees were treated to a sung “Mister Rogers” invitation, with references to Gene Kelly’s hit, “Singin’ in the Acid Rain,” and “Can you say ‘Super Bowl Champions’?” Enticements include the Andy Warhol Museum (photos of James Cassaro, with different-colour backgrounds were projected) and “vistas that will take your breath away” (perhaps literally!). Cassaro warned us of the local predilection for serving french fries with everything (you will find them buried at the bottom of salads), including inside sandwiches – the most famous being found at the Pimanti Brothers Restaurant: [www.primantibros.com/realstory.asp](http://www.primantibros.com/realstory.asp). Cassaro also provided a glossary of “Pittsburgh speak” for the uninitiated:

Chawt = Watch out!

Bowchyins = Both of you.

Jeet jet? = Did you eat yet?

Yabyinat? = Are you buying that?

“So, yins alls come to Picksburg next year. Okel-dokel?”

hotel was the Peabody, a grand dame whose second-floor Peabody Memorabilia Museum highlighted the hotel’s history and included some sheet music by Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians. Famed for its Marching Ducks, a tradition from the 1930s, we were

treated to the Peabody's twice-daily duck parade, replete with music (Sousa's "King Cotton March") and a red carpet for our feathered friends' (mallards) trek between the fountain and their rooftop palace. The Peabody offered the coveted position of Honorary Duckmaster to MLA as one of the Association's silent auction offerings.

Memphis's attractions are many, but the conference meetings tend to keep one pretty busy. I managed to take the opportunity to visit Graceland, home of Elvis Presley, more modest in size than I would have imagined;

the visitor reception centre across the street seemed to be much larger than the residence. The number of gold and platinum recordings on display was simply staggering – and blinding! Beale Street yielded up its attractions, including A. Schwab's, Memphis Music, and numerous restaurants. Alas, the pyramid was closed for renovations, but the outside view was nonetheless impressive. BBQ was amazing. Isaac Hayes' collard greens were tasty, fried green tomatoes were delicious, but I'm not convinced about those fried dill pickles!