



Editor's Keyboard

Gregg Sapp

On Fate and Turning Fifty

It is probably not news to any of *LA&M's* readers that 2007 marks the gala fiftieth anniversary of LAMA. Let the trumpets blast a great fanfare in celebra-

tion, and I hope that whether you personally make it to the royal shindig at Annual Conference or not, this special issue of the journal will enable you to share in some degree in the festivities.

At the same time, another, a somewhat less auspicious, fiftieth milestone is occurring in this same calendar year, for it is also in the year 2007 that *moi*, your humble editor, reaches the half-century mark in his life's journey. Odd, isn't it, that both LAMA and I should have been born in 1957, and today here we both are, Siamese twins joined at the keyboard, turning fifty together. Mere coincidence? (Play *Twilight Zone* or *X-Files* music in your heads now.) *I think not.*

Call it fate, kismet, karma, or divine intervention, but I think I was born to be a LAMA member. Our stars are aligned. Other landmarks in our lives have eerily coincided. For example, in 1978, when I turned twenty-one and attained full adulthood, the division likewise came of age in a sense, since it was in that year the erstwhile Library Administration Division (LAD) became LAMA and organized into its contemporary structure. Again, you see, the confluence of events defies mere probabilities. Of course, then, when I became a librarian and began seeking professional involvement, service in LAMA was my destiny. You might say that I became LAMA-tized.

By the way, the reason I know it was in 1978 that LAD became LAMA is thanks to Bob Moran and Bob Daugherty's timeline of LAMA's history, published in this issue. The research that they undertook in support of LAMA's fiftieth anniversary is far above and beyond the call of duty. Not only does their contribution provide a useful chronology that shows the division's progress and achievements, but it is also likely to bring back fond memories for anybody like me who has been affiliated with LAMA for a few years or more. Bountiful thanks are due them. And, as if hours and hours of patient, painstaking research were not enough . . .

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The above doodle, semi-hieroglyphic, or cave painting is, I presume, a llama (and a strikingly realistic image too, if I do say so) taken from Bob Daugherty's e-mail correspondence with me. I ask you—what more proof do you need of this man's dedication to LAMA?

Also in this issue is Brian Gray's "Gentle Introduction to LAMA Web Resources." Brian is LAMA's first Web coordinator, and inasmuch as this position is likely to become increasingly vital to the organization, the membership stands to benefit greatly from becoming familiar with our Web presence, for it enables a degree of participative interaction that was previously impossible. I particularly urge you to make use of the editor's blog (<http://blogs.ala.org/LAandM.php>). Let me hear what you have to say. *All of it.*

Feature articles in this issue are Bill Sannwald's "Designing Libraries for Customers" and Vera Fessler's "The Future of Technical Services (It's Not the Technical Services It Was)." Both contributions offer surveys of the state of the art in, respectively, the architectural design of new public libraries and the frontiers of library education for technical services. These pieces belong in the fiftieth anniversary issue by virtue of their being grounded in the present but also looking toward the future—like LAMA.

Regular features and columns in this issue include Marta Mestrovic Deyrup's ChangeMasters piece on Marianne Gaunt, University Librarian at Rutgers University. By the way, keep your eye out for a forthcoming monographic anthology of ChangeMasters features, which will include several never before published. It will be completed during

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- It is also the best of times for the LAMA sections and committees. Each is busy creating top-notch programs and publications. Attendance at LAMA programs has never been higher. At every conference, I hear people talking about the LAMA programs and their high-quality speakers. Our preconferences and regional institutes offer a variety of topics with talented experts. Two publications are expected before our Annual Conference, and ten more are in the works. New formats allow us to look at a variety of ways of delivering these works—print and digital download, just to name two—allowing a publication to get into the hands of the customer much sooner. A new mentorship committee is being formed to address issues in this critical area to librarianship.
- LAMA awards are flourishing. The John Cotton Dana Award is entering its sixty-first year. The collaboration with the H. W. Wilson Company is one of the longest partnerships within ALA. Some of LAMA's newer partnerships are the prestigious ALA/IIDA Interior Design Awards, which continue to receive hundreds of nominations. Two other noteworthy awards are the Library Building Awards, in conjunction with the American Institute of Architects, and the Yankee Book Peddler library school student writing award.

I know each of you can come up with your own list of best things about LAMA. I've only mentioned a few. So, even though we are in the "best of times," it is also true that "the times, they are a-changin'." As we move forward with the search for a new executive director, there is no limit to what can be accomplished.

It seems as if this presidential year has flown by. As you read this column, my time will quickly be coming to an end. A new change in leadership will take place after Annual Conference with the very talented and capable Bede Mitchell taking over as the fifty-first president. And, by the time you read this, we will have held our elections and the fifty-second president will have been selected. Congratulations to our new leadership that will keep us moving forward in the "best of times."

I want to conclude this column by thanking each of you for your support, energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to making LAMA the best organization possible. I am truly grateful and humbled by your dedication. This is a year I will never forget. LAMA is not about a single person or individual effort, but about all of us working together. That truly has been evident during this past year. Thank you to each of you for making it so.

2007, another birthday present to the members of LAMA. Also, always important are the regular columns, including John Lubans's witty "On Managing," Bob Moran's insightful "Where Is Our Future?" and Bonnie Osif's helpful "Manager's Bookshelf." Columnists of this caliber make my editorial job easy.

When you read the contents of this issue of *LA&M*, you will find clear and incontrovertible evidence that this division

is dynamic, vibrant, and growing stronger every day. Here's hoping that many of you will be able to share in Annual Conference celebrations. Having achieved the milestone of its fiftieth anniversary is a testimony to LAMA's enduring health, fitness, and relevance.

As for yours truly, at fifty, well . . . let me check my cholesterol level and get back to you on that.