

Inheriting the Records
Management Challenges of
Historic Organizations

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Archivist, Music Library Association

Pop-Up Session:
Real World Reinvention & Renewal
MARAC Buffalo
27 October 2017



The Music Library Association

Founded in 1931, the Music Library Association is the professional association for music libraries and librarianship in the United States.

The mission of the Music Library Association is to provide a professional forum for librarians, archivists, and others who support and preserve the world's musical heritage.

In 2011 MLA became the US branch of the International Association for Music Libraries, Archives, and Documentation Centres.

Collection Overview

- Repository: Special Collections in Performing Arts, University of Maryland, College Park, MD
- Presidential Collection, 1931–2017 [ongoing]
- Regional location of Atlantic Chapter Archives
- Archives of chapters without local repositories
- Records of chapters that no longer exist
- About 300 linear feet; in flux with ongoing chapter transfers, de-accessions, and re-appraisal
- Paper documents, financial ledgers, printed publications, sound recordings, photographs, copy negatives, scrapbooks, microfilm, realia, born-digital files, and musical scores

A Complex Custodial History

- Founding through 1970s: Library of Congress
- February 5, 1982: MLA Archives transferred to the University of Maryland, College Park
- November 5, 1982: Joint Committee on the MLA Archives forms with 8 voting members: 4 from MLA and 4 from UMD
- Records regularly accessioned since 1982

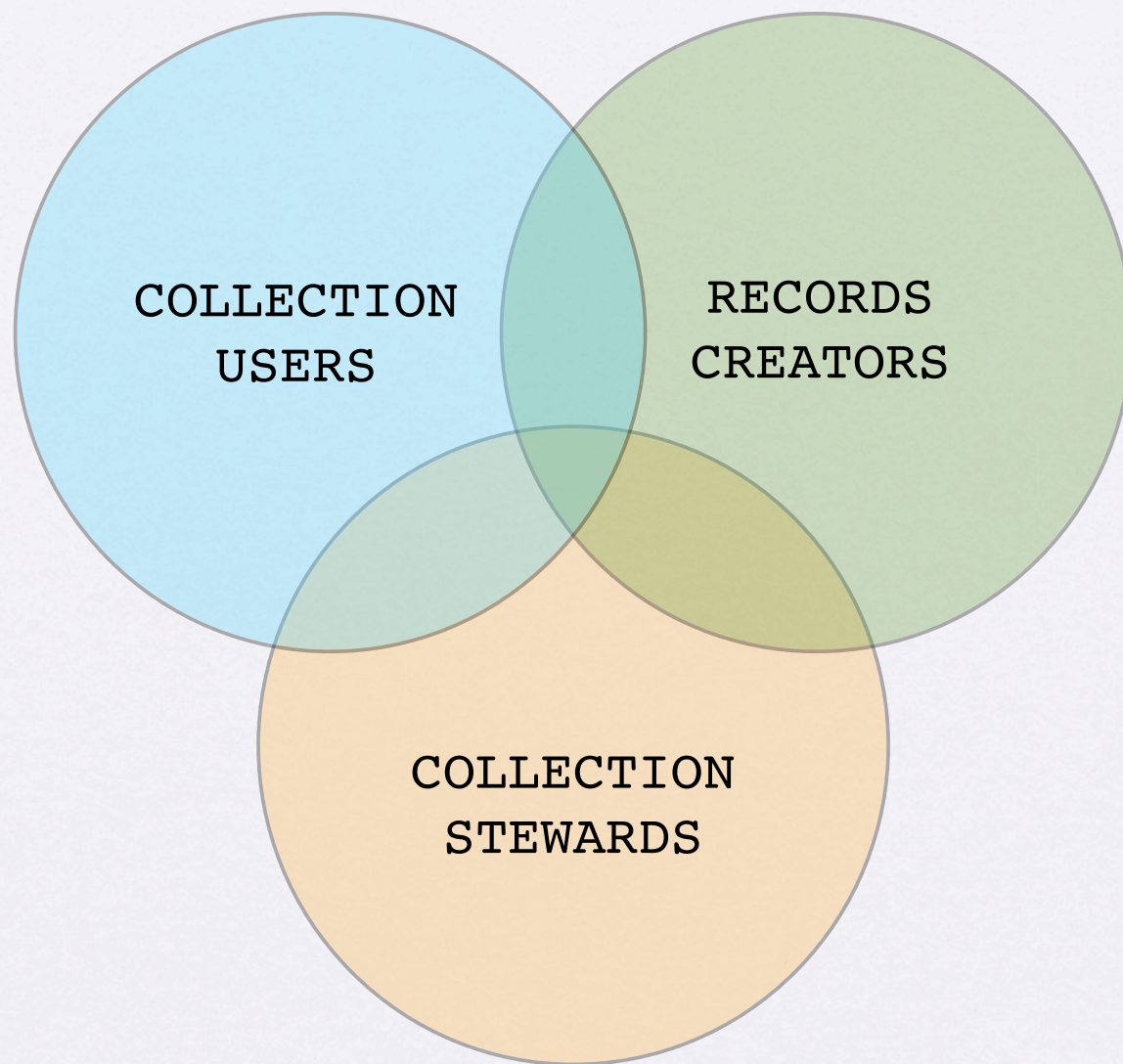
A Complex Custodial History

- May 2012: MLA Archives Policies Task Force recommended creation of a Special Officer position, Archivist
- First Archivist of the Music Library Association, 2013–2017
- Refined policies and established regional archives, implemented the Processing and Appraisal Project in 2015

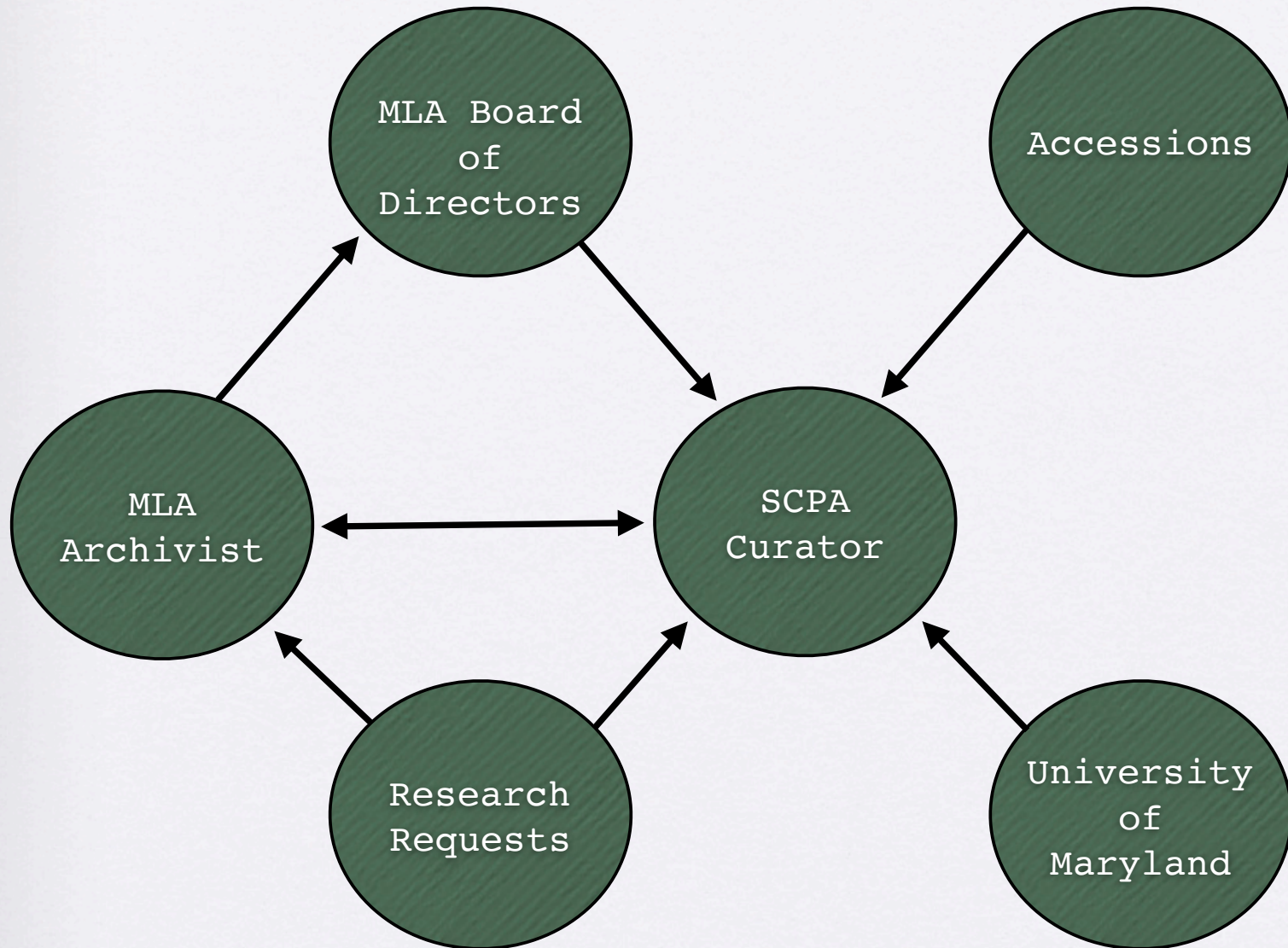
A Complex Custodial History

- Second Archivist appointed February 2017 for a 5-year volunteer position
- Began as the graduate student hired for the 2015 Processing and Appraisal Project
- 2015 Project included revised collection arrangement, chapter records transfers, re-appraisal, weeding
- Current focus includes finding aid, appraisal, access, and collection advocacy

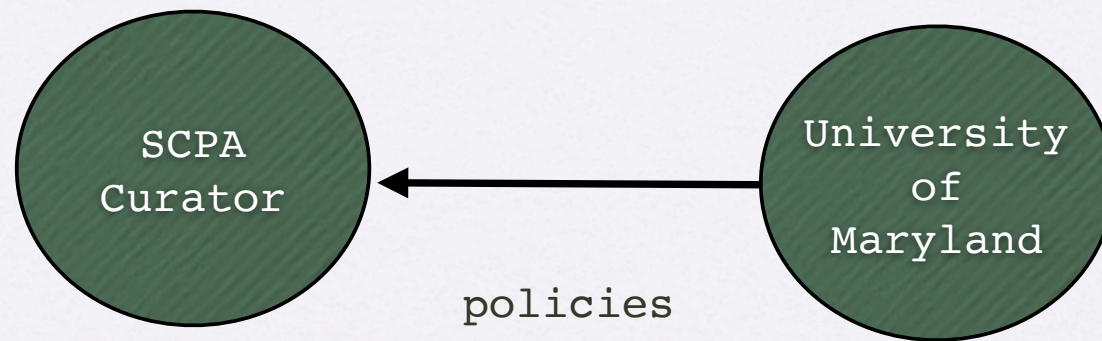
MLA Archives: Who's Involved?



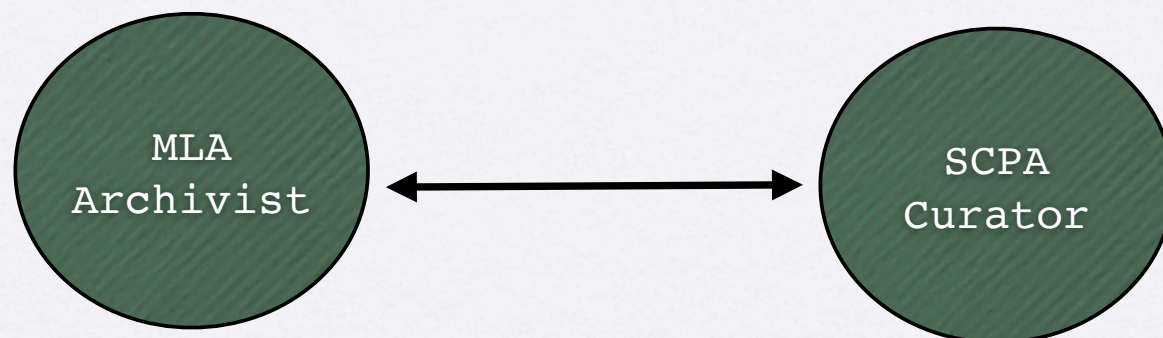
MLA Archives: Relationships



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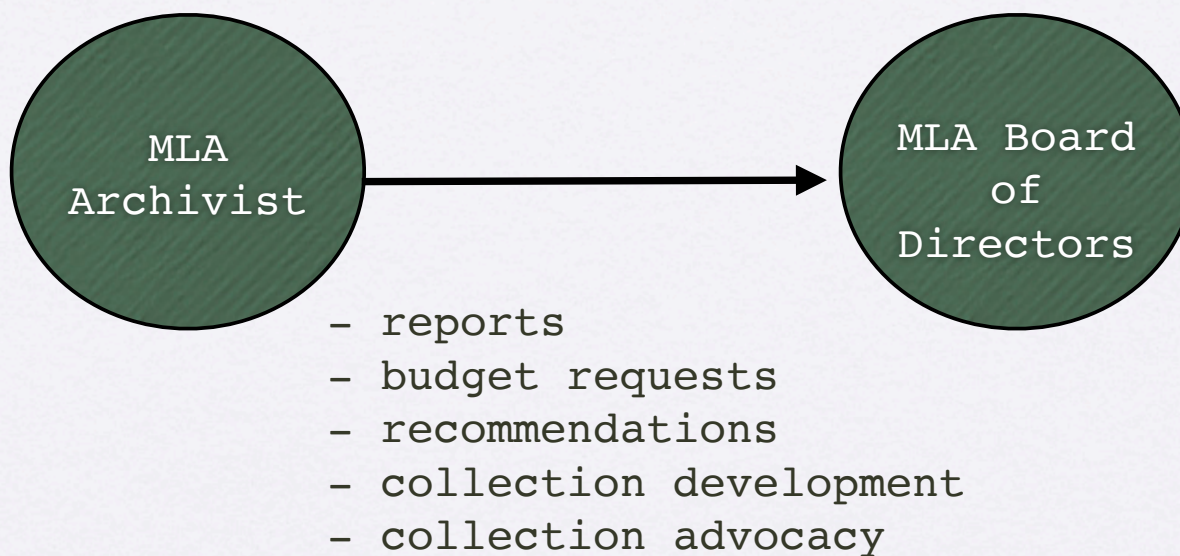


MLA Archives: Relationships



- appraisal & re-appraisal
- transfers & de-accessions
- recommendations
- collection development
- information access
- processing personnel & supplies
- storage needs & space

MLA Archives: Relationships



MLA Archives: Relationships

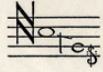


The Collection and Its Future

- About 90% of the collection is unprocessed
- Grants will be the processing future for this collection
- Collection finding aid still in progress
- Advocacy to promote scholarly value of the collection
- Challenge to physical arrangement: 30 years of changing archival practices

MUSIC-LIBRARY-ASSOCIATION

CONNECTING THE DOTS:



Henry & Sidney Cowell Writings in the Music Library Association Archives

About the Exhibit



Original Notes logo by Richard S. Hill, circa 1940s.

Document size: 19 cm x 25.7 cm

Connecting the Dots: Henry and Sidney Cowell Writings in the Music Library Association Archives presents one of many musicological research possibilities in the Music Library Association Archives. The documents and objects featured in this online exhibit are from the Music Library Association's records for *Notes*, the organization's quarterly journal since 1934. The MLA Archives are housed at Special Collections in Performing Arts in the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library at the University of Maryland, College Park.



Printing plate of Notes logo, circa 1940s.

Document size: 8.2 cm x 11.2 cm



Electrotype printing plate of Notes logo, 1945.

Document size: 5.3 cm x 7.2 cm

The Notes logo throughout this online exhibit was used from 1943-1967 (Second Series, Volumes 1-23).

 People in *Connecting the Dots*


HENRY DIXON COWELL (1897-1965)

American composer, music theorist, musicologist, lecturer, publisher, pianist, and inventor of avant-garde piano techniques. Married Sidney Hawkins Robertson in 1941. Co-wrote *Charles Ives and His Music* with Sidney, published in 1955. From 1945-1954, the Music Library Association published 12 music and book reviews by Henry Cowell in *Notes*.

Image credit: New York Public Library Archives and Manuscripts online.



SIDNEY ROBERTSON COWELL (1903-1995)

American ethnomusicologist who studied American folk songs. Graduate of Stanford University. Married Henry Cowell in 1941. Co-wrote *Charles Ives and His Music* with Henry, published in 1955. From 1949-1961, the Music Library Association published seven book reviews by Sidney Cowell in *Notes*.

Image credit: Higgins, Roger, photographer. [Sidney Cowell, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing right / World-Telegram photo by Higgins], 1948. Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress.

RICHARD SYNNER HILL (1901-1961)

American musicologist and reference librarian in the Music Division at the Library of Congress (1939-1961). Editor-in-Chief of *Notes* (1943-1961) and first president of the International Association for Music Libraries (1951-1955). Addressed in *Notes* correspondence as "Dick."

WILLIAM LICHTENWANGER (1915-2000)

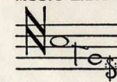
American musicologist, music reference librarian at the Library of Congress (1940-1960), Head of the Reference Section in the Music Division from 1960-1974, Associate Editor of *Notes* (1961-1963), MLA Vice-President (1967). Published *The Music of Henry Cowell, A Descriptive Catalog* in 1966. Addressed in *Notes* correspondence as "Bill."

EDWARD LEE FAIRLEY (1917-2007)

American musicologist, music reference librarian at the Library of Congress (1941-1951), cellist, Associate Editor of *Notes* (1947-1951), Foreign Service officer (1952-1969). Addressed in *Notes* correspondence as "Lee."

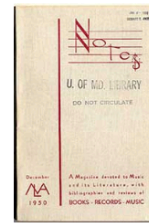
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CONNECTING THE DOTS:



Henry & Sidney Cowell Writings in the Music Library Association Archives

Henry Cowell Reviews Roger Sessions, 1950



Original copy of Notes Vol. 8, no. 1, December 1950.

Document size: 15.5 cm x 22.7 cm

By 1950 Henry Cowell had written four book reviews and six music reviews for *Notes*. He and Sidney had also developed a strong friendship with the *Notes* Associate Editor, William Lichtenwanger. Because Lichtenwanger edited and compiled the book reviews for *Notes*, the majority of correspondence with the Cowells in the MLA Archives is addressed to and from him.

Lichtenwanger made special arrangements with Princeton University Press to obtain proofs of Roger Sessions' book *The Musical Experience of Composer, Performer, Listener* for Henry to review. The proofs from the publisher did not include Sessions' musical illustrations. Henry's review draft has not survived, but the MLA Archives contain another format: printer galley proofs.

Roger Sessions (1896-1985) was an American composer, critic, and teacher. He taught at Princeton University and won a Pulitzer Prize in 1974.

Discover the story by clicking on the thumbnail images below.

Thumbnail Gallery: Correspondence



Thumbnail Gallery: Printer Proof of Henry Cowell's Draft



About

Connecting the Dots: Henry and Sidney Cowell Writings in the Music Library Association Archives is an online exhibit of archival materials from the Music Library Association. The collection is housed at Special Collections in Performing Arts (SCPA) in the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library at the University of Maryland, College Park. The Music Library Association (MLA) was founded in 1931 and has an international membership of librarians, musicians, scholars, educators, and members of the book and music trades. In 2011, MLA became the U.S. branch of the International Association for Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML).

Exhibit Banner: Detail of letter envelopes, circa 1940s. Original size: 24.1 cm x 10.5 cm.

Exhibit Curator: Melissa E. Wertheimer, [MLA Archivist](#)
UMD ISchool Faculty Advisor: Dr. Michael J. Kurtz
Curator of SCPA: Vincent J. Novara

Special thanks to the following staff members of the UMD Libraries for their assistance with this project: Cindy Zhao, David Durden, and John Davis.

Contact Us

Special Collections in Performing Arts (SCPA) is located in the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library at University of Maryland's College Park campus. We collect, serve, and preserve performing arts materials that document performance practice, instruction, and scholarship.

For more information about visiting SCPA and our collections, please [contact us](#).

For more information about the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library and our resources, please [visit our website](#).

Stay Connected



THANK YOU!

Melissa E. Wertheimer
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December 2017

Addendum for Ingest into Digital Repository
University of Maryland (DRUM)

- Additional research by the MLA Archivist for the collection-level finding aid has revealed a completed custodial history
- Documents consulted include former UMD curators' files, MLA Board minutes, issues of Notes (MLA's quarterly journal), miscellaneous MLA committee records, additional records
- 1967–1974: Juilliard School Lincoln Center Library, NY, NY
- 1974–1982: Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC
- 1982–present: University of Maryland, College Park, MD
- First location on UMD campus was Hornbake Library; second and final location on UMD campus is the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library
- Names of the repository changed over time: Special Collections in Music to 1996 and Special Collections in Performing Arts 1996–present
- 1st Archivist, Jane P. Franck (1967–1977); 2nd Archivist, Sandy Rodriguez (2013–2017); 3rd Archivist, Melissa E. Wertheimer (2017–present)