

## **Annual Meeting 2005 Washington, DC**

### **MELA Business Meeting**

Friday, November 18, 2005

2:00-4:00 p.m.

Medici Room — Marriott Wardman Park Hotel — Washington

### **MELA Members in Attendance**

Midhat Abraham, Muhammad al-Faruque, Johnny Bahbah, Joyce Bell, Basima Bezirgan, Brenda Bickett, Joan Biella, Ali Boutaqmanti, Fehf Cannon, Leonard Chiarelli, Saeed Damadi, Mark Day, Mary-Jane Deeb, Roberta Dougherty, Christine Dykgraaf, John Eilts, Hikmat Faraj, George Fawzi, Khalil Foutah, Christof Galli, Meryle Gaston, James Gentner, Karam Habashy, Abd al-Ahad Hannawi, David Hirsch, Anchi Hoh, Michael Hopper, Mozghan Jalalzadeh, Martha Jenks, Hossein Kamaly, Kris Kern, Akram Khabibullaev, Omar Khalidi, Shayee Khanaka, William Kopycki, Connie Lamb, Peter Magierski, Fereshteh Molavi, Christopher Murphy, Sarah Ozturk, Mehdi Rahimzadeh, Andras Riedlmayer, Kay Ritchie, Jonathan Rodgers, Simon Samœil, Karl Schaefer, Rachel Simon, Arthur Smith, Mary St. Germain, Dona Straley, Fawzi Tadros, James Weinberger, M. Lesley Wilkins, Kristen Wilson, Gamil Youssef.

### **Minutes**

**T**he 2005 Annual Meeting of the Middle East Librarians Association convened at 2:00 p.m., Friday, November 18, 2005 in the Medici Room, Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, D.C.

President Lesley Wilkins called the meeting to order and welcomed all those present. Everyone in the room identified themselves and their respective institutional affiliations.

President's Report: Lesley reported that four new MELA committees have been established: The David H. Partington Award, Education, Cataloging and Bylaws. The Bylaws committee was created during the Executive Board meeting the previous night.

Over the past year, MELA noted the passing of one of its members, Hamid Mahamedi. MELA made a contribution to the Mahamedi

Memorial Fund at the Library of University of California, Berkeley. In addition, a condolence letter was sent to MELA's 'sister' organization in Europe, MELCOM-UK, upon the passing of Derek Latham, one of the early pioneers of the field of Middle East librarianship. Lesley also noted that the serious illness of two members of MELA's Executive Board over the past summer has made the board re-examine some of its housekeeping duties to ensure that more than two people are aware of essentials like MELA website account and other information.

MELA endorsed two projects over the past year with letters of support. The first was a MEMP project dealing with Iraqi serials submitted to the NEH. The second was approved during the previous night's Executive Board meeting for the WISE project proposal submitted to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). More about this project would be heard during the report of the Education Committee.

Lesley then thanked the Executive Board for its activities over the past year, and gave special thanks to Vice-President Anchi Hoh for her efforts in organizing and coordinating the MELA/ALC joint program activities and for the delicious lunch enjoyed by many just prior to the convening of the present meeting. A grateful acknowledgement was given to the meeting's corporate sponsors, Dar Mahjar, OCLC, Inc and Sulaiman's Bookshop.

Vice-President's Report: Anchi gave a short report, first thanking everyone on the joint program/planning committee, especially John Eilts, Lesley, Christopher Murphy, Hiran Dinavari, and Joan Biella. She said that the joint program was a very good and useful learning experience. She is willing to provide information on her experiences should there be further cross-organization activities in the future. She mentioned that ALC director Al Kagen talked to her during lunch and expressed interest in future collaboration between ALC and MELA.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report: The minutes for last year's meeting were approved. William went over the details of this year's Treasurer's Report, thanking those who prepaid for MELA events in advance, and hoped that next year there would be a system of making payments online through PayPal. The text of the report will appear in MELA Notes.

MELA Notes Editor Jonathan Rodgers gave his report. He announced that the new issue of MELA Notes is nearly ready to go, consisting of five articles, a brief communication, fourteen reviews, last year's MELA minutes, and books received but not reviewed. He ac-

knowledgeed the determined efforts of book review editor Rachel Simon in both soliciting books for review, and following-up with the time-pressed MELA reviewers to receive the completed reviews. He also thanked Janet Heineck, and now William, for continuing to maintain the MELA membership database and for paying the bills.

Progress has been made in digitizing MELA Notes. This year volumes 34–38 (1986–1987), and numbers 60 and 61 from 1994 have been completed thanks to John Eilts and his continuous work over the years in this regard. There are now 42 issues of MELA Notes fully digitized and available for public access online, with only 25 remaining for the full run.

Jonathan reminded everyone that articles and contributions are always welcome in MELA Notes, noting in particular that articles describing significant collections of books, manuscripts and archives held by institutions or individuals, in addition to articles of a more practical nature, are especially encouraged.

Lesley read the MELA Listserv Manager's report contributed by Ali Houissa, who could not be present due to a very new addition to his family. MELANET-L membership has increased by 20 per cent over the past three years, bringing the total membership to 211 members. Although most of the subscribers are based in North America, an estimated 35 percent are based overseas. Although MELA membership is not a prerequisite for joining, new MELA members are automatically added to the listserv. Regarding institutional affiliation, Library of Congress ranks first with thirty-one subscribers, followed by Harvard with ten and Princeton with eight. Members include professional librarians, academics, specialists from both public and private sector institutes, and many active and retired MELA members. A variety of message traffic appears on the MELANET-L, including queries and responses for specific information requests, news of events and conferences, job announcements, and other developments and discussion within the field of Middle East and Islamic studies librarianship. MELA-Net's archives are available starting from October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1994.

John Eilts gave the report as the MELA Webmaster. He reported that the new mela.us domain started in January of 2005, with MELA's URL now being <http://www.mela.us>. The site has been indexed by the major search engines including Google and Yahoo. Since the new domain's inception, there have been 2,364 unique "hits". Most of these come on Tuesdays through Thursdays between 11:00pm and 1:00am.

Visitors are led to mela.us from other websites, most notably MESA's. PayPal is still being explored as an option for sending payments to MELA. A minimal sum will be needed to set this up. John will continue to explore this and will post an announcement on MELANET-L.

David Hirsch, of the George N. Atiyeh Prize committee which also included Roberta Dougherty, announced the winner of this year's award, Martha Jenks of University Texas-Austin. Martha is currently enrolled in the University of Texas at Austin's dual-degree program in Middle Eastern Studies and Information Science. The award is now in its fifth consecutive year.

Muhammad al-Faruque spoke for the Partington Award committee on behalf of its chair, Ed Jajko, who was unable to attend the meeting. This award, financed by long-time MELA member Fawi Abdulrazak and named in honor of David H. Partington, a founding member of MELA, was established to recognize significant contributions and accomplishments by individuals to the field of Middle East librarianship. In this first year of the award, the committee, which also included Jere Bacharach, labored for months in their work. The result was two awardees: John Eilts of Stanford and Geoffrey Roper of Cambridge. Their names were inscribed on a silver trophy, and each is the recipient of a framed certificate and citation as well as a cash prize of 100 dollars.

John Eilts is a founding member of MELA and served as its president and vice-president several times over the course of the past three decades. He was a prime mover in the foundation of MEMP and the drafter of its bylaws. His work with RLG contributed greatly to the way Middle East materials are electronically cataloged today. He has made important contributions to setting the standards followed by major research libraries in cataloging Middle East materials. His is a name present throughout the record of MELA's history from its earliest stages until now in his role as MELA's Webmaster. John then came forward to accept the award.

In speaking about Geoffrey Roper, the co-recipient of the Partington Award, Muhammad introduced him as the foremost modern bibliographer of Islam and the Middle East. As the second editor of the well-known *Index Islamicus* and head of the Islamic Bibliographic Unit at Cambridge University, Geoffrey oversaw the transition of *Index Islamicus* from a print-based resource to an electronic one, first on CD-ROM, then on the World-Wide Web. He was the editor of *World Survey of Islamic Manuscripts* (vol. 1-4). Geoffrey was also instrumental in or-

ganizing a conference on the history of printing in the Islamic world. Although retired, Geoffrey serves as advisor and consultant to other bibliographic projects. Since he was unable to attend the MELA, Lesley will send the award to Geoffrey.

Lesley then spoke about the newly created Bylaws Committee. A number of issues have come up in the past two years that might best be looked at by the committee. Among these are special membership status for retired members, regularizing the status of the Webmaster and Listserv managers, electronic/snail-mail voting, PayPal, and reverting to having terms of presidency for one year, with the position of vice-president being president-elect. The aim of this committee would be reviewing the bylaws and presenting any proposed changes 60 days before the next annual meeting for approval by vote. Shayee Khanaka will be the chair of this committee and will be asking other members to join.

Meryle Gaston spoke briefly on the activities of the newly reconstituted Cataloging Committee and introduced the other members. The Committee is charged with identifying and considering issues, making recommendations and working with other appropriate bodies regarding issues related to cataloging and classifying Middle East library materials. The main activity of the committee has so far been in drafting, distributing, and tabulating the results of a survey on cataloging practices among MELA members and their respective institutions. Survey results were to be discussed in a session following the Business Meeting. Full results of the survey will be available on the MELA website soon.

The Committee on Education, chaired by Brenda Bickett, was up next. Brenda introduced the members of this new committee and its goals, which includes providing members with programs and opportunities to stay current with aspects of the field of Middle East studies librarianship and related disciplines. An example of this is the forthcoming workshop on Turkish studies, partially funded by the Institute of Turkish Studies, planned to precede next year's MELA meeting. Similar workshops to cover other countries are likewise envisioned.

Another activity of the committee was the drafting of a letter of support to Web-Based Information Science Education (WISE), a consortium of web-based library science schools who applied to IMLS for a Laura Bush Twenty-First Century Librarian Initiative grant, with the support of a number of library associations including MELA. The grant is to improve library science education by expanding the range of

courses available and offering them to students in all WISE schools via distance learning. MELA's participation would involve consultation and development of a course for area studies librarianship.

Discussion will also take place with library schools to encourage student internships in libraries with Middle East collections as another way to recruit persons into the professions. This will require major discussion and MELA members are encouraged to offer any suggestions or thoughts they may have in this area.

Andras Riedlmayer spoke next as chair of the Committee for Iraqi Libraries, which has labored to compile bibliographies of manuscript catalogues of Iraqi libraries and lists of museum objects that might have been stolen from Iraqi museums, as well as serve as clearing-house for information regarding the condition of Iraqi libraries. This can be found on the Committee's website hosted by the Oriental Institute (<http://oi.uchicago.edu/OI/IRAQ/mela/melairaq.html>). This past summer, MELA members David Hirsch, Shayee Khanaka, and Basima Bezirgan were involved in two workshops held for Iraqi library science educators in Amman, Jordan. These were NEH-funded events organized by Harvard University and the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science, seeking to bring Iraqi educators current regarding trends in librarianship in general, and Middle East librarianship in particular.

Other efforts by the committee included drafting a grant proposal to provide books and materials to Iraqi libraries. Funding of this grant seems unlikely now because of US government funding cutbacks for Iraqi reconstruction efforts.

The Committee on Legal Affairs chaired by Peter Magierski reported on its activities, which included compiling and posting information related to important legislation affecting Middle East librarianship including the Patriot Act, copyright and intellectual property, and the preservation of antiquities act. Some updates to the legislation have been compiled and will appear soon on the MELA website. Committee member William Kopycki recently compiled a case study of requirements for clearing books held at US Customs. This will also be posted on the website soon. MELA membership is encouraged to bring issues of interest to the attention of the committee.

Christof Galli spoke for the Nominating Committee and reported the slate of candidates for different MELA offices. These were for President: Anchi Hoh and Ali Houissa, Vice-President/Program Chair Michael

Hopper and Omar Khalidi and Member-at-Large Basima Bezirgan and Saad Dagher. The floor was opened for write-in candidates. There were no further nominees, and the election took place during a well-deserved break.

After the break, the following results of the election were read—President: Ali Houissa, Vice-President/Program Chair: Michael Hopper, Member-at-Large: Basima Bezirgan.

Reports of other meetings. Roberta Dougherty reported on her attendance at the MELCOM International Meeting held in Alexandria, Egypt, mentioning that it was a good opportunity to meet with librarians of all kinds from the Middle East. She encouraged MELA members to try to attend future meetings.

David Hirsch reported on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Symposium of the History of Printing and Publishing in the Languages and Countries of the Middle East, held November 2–4 at La Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris. Papers covered a variety of topics including Hebrew typefaces, Armenian bookbinding and early Persian lithographs. The next such symposium will take place in two to three years' time, and will likely be held in Leipzig, Germany. Proceedings will be published.

Future conferences. David Hirsch mentioned the possibility of MELCOM and MELA to have a joint program at WOCMES, scheduled to be held in Amman, Jordan, from June 6–10, 2006. Further information about the conference and hotel rates will be forthcoming from the organizers. David also asked members interested in such a program to contact him.

Andras Riedlmayer gave more information he received about a training program for Iraqi librarians held in May 2005 in Amman, Jordan. This was a USAID-funded project organized by DePaul University and OCLC and included MELA members William Kopycki and Alaa al-Talmas. Trainees underwent six days of practical training in cataloging techniques and technologies.

Andras also said that he received a pamphlet from Basima Bezirgan regarding the Iraqi Association of Libraries and Information (IALI), founded in 1969. The Association seeks contacts with librarians from all over the world. This information will be posted on the Committee's website.

Library of Congress Cataloging report: Sarah Ozturk reported on the activities of Library of Congress (hereafter LC) cataloging for Middle East/North Africa Division. In FY2005 the Regional Cooperative Cat-

aloging Division cleared 16,000 items. Materials in Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Georgian, Hebrew, Kurdish, Ladino, Turkish, Yiddish, and other languages of the Middle East totaled 11,500 completions, while materials in English and other Western languages totaled 5,000. The migration to RLIN21 affected cataloging operations and especially the input of bi-directional text. LC was greatly involved in testing and reporting problems with RLIN21. The upgrade to Voyager with Unicode also took place recently.

The MENA team lost one member with the transfer of Anchi Hoh to another division within LC. In the area of romanization, the new Ladino scheme has been approved and posted. Joan Biella is also spearheading the drive for a Judeo-Arabic table. Cutter numbers for Islamic scholars in Islamic law are being updated. Development in Kurdish cataloging continues, as is cataloging for *Zaza*, an important minority language in Turkey. Classification for *Zaza* language and literature will be PK6921–6929.5. A handout was distributed of recently-approved LC subject headings of interest to the MELA community.

Mary-Jane Deeb of LC gave her report on acquisition activities for Middle East. New acquisitions of note include 220 rare Armenian and Armenian-Turkish publications and pamphlets, 5 rare Karamanli books, 150 rare books from Iran and the Persian-speaking region, 10 major award-winning Iranian films, including *Children of Heaven*, *The Circle*, and *The Inner Half*, and compact discs of classical Iranian music from the 1940 to the 1980s. Hiran Dinavari has been tremendous help in identifying Persian books and materials for acquisition and cataloging. LC also made a visit to Iran and set up exchanges with the National Library.

From the National Library of Egypt, LC has acquired a rare set of microfiche of the newspaper of the Muslim Brotherhood. This was done in exchange for books on science. The arrangement was brokered by LC staff member Fawzi Tadros.

LC also received hundreds of gift books from authors from all over the Arab world this past year.



New digital initiatives by LC include the work of Islamic art historian Christiane Gruber, who spent a year annotating and describing over 400 calligraphy sheets held by the Near East Division in a project overseen by Christopher Murphy. These calligraphy sheets, actually pages of manuscripts that have been torn and sold to collections all over the world, will be digitized and mounted in FY2006 on LC's website and will be of interest to researchers and scholars.

Work on the Timbuktu manuscripts project continues. LC will digitize and display 22 of these manuscripts (approximately 1,600 digital images—<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/mali/>). These will be available to the public in December. A global gateway project on the theme of Islam and science has begun in cooperation with the National Library of Egypt. This project will combine 60 manuscripts in LC's collections dealing with medicine, pharmacy, agriculture and mathematics with 60 of the best manuscripts on these topics held by the National Library. Noted historian George Saliba of Columbia University will write a history of Arab science for the project. Annotations and text will appear in both Arabic and English. A leading expert in Islamic manuscripts, 'Abd al-Sattar al-Halwaji, provided LC with assistance in cataloging manuscripts for the project.

LC Programs: In November 2000, LC sent a team to work with the National Library of Iraq, since this time LC has continued to provide assistance and advice. Attempts have also been made to bring Iraqi librarians to the United States for training, but problems and misunderstandings with the head of the National Library have surfaced. All of this is part of the effort to save 40,000 documents that are currently sitting in a refrigerated truck in Iraq.

Other LC program activities included the participation of the mayor of Baghdad for a conference and exhibition entitled "The New Iraq: Memory and National Identity", which included images of documents in the Iraqi National Archive. There was also a video presentation of people who suffered under the previous Iraqi regime. Another program was also held on "Jordan through the Ages" which included an exhibition of lithographs and other materials.

Simon Samœil gave an OACIS update. There are currently 19 libraries from the United States and the Middle East involved in the project. New participants include the American University of Beirut, New York Public Library, Stanford, the University of Utah and the University of Arizona. Efforts are being made to recruit al-Assad Na-

tional Library in Syria and the National Library of Egypt in order to include their records and holdings within the project. As of August 31, 2005 there are 37,896 titles and 48,971 holdings in the OACIS database. Three interns came from the Middle East to work on the project, two from the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and one from University of Balamand (Lebanon). An online form has been designed with Middle East libraries in mind to make their contributions possible since many libraries do not keep their bibliographic records in MARC format. One library, Tishreen University in Syria, has recently been trained in the use of these forms. Their most recent contribution to the project took place in November.

Next year, Simon and colleague Elizabeth Beaudin will talk about the AMEEL project, an electronic Middle East library for which Yale has received funding for the next four years. Digitizing of a small number of scholarly journals will be one component of the project. This will start by contacting university publications with the hopes that there would be less restriction regarding copyright permissions. AMEEL will also tackle the challenge of creating a new repository of digital objects while it attempts to arrange agreements to connect to existing repositories maintained by commercial entities such as JSTOR, Brill Publishers, and Oxford University Press. Another outcome of this project will be to enhance inter-library loan opportunities between library of the Middle East and North America.

Muhammad al-Faruque made an announcement about the Asian, African and Middle Eastern Studies section of ACRL (AAMES) forum of ALA/ACRL, of whose newsletter he is editor. He requested MELA members to participate in sections activities and encouraged broader participation in ALA activities and meetings.

Mark Day announced that he will be retiring from Indiana University in a year's time. He expected that there would be an announcement for his position by summer 2006.

Robin Dougherty invited members to attend the MESA panel during which she was to present a paper on early 20<sup>th</sup> century sheet music

Lesley then called for any new business to be discussed. Hearing none, she thanked outgoing officers Omar Khalidi for his service as Member-at-Large and Anchi Hoh as Vice President. She also thanked MELA members for giving her the opportunity to serve as President over these past two years.

With that, the business meeting adjourned.

**Middle East Librarians Association**  
**University of Pennsylvania Libraries**  
**3420 Walnut Street Philadelphia, PA 19104-6206 USA**  
**William J. Kopycki, Secretary-Treasurer**  
**Secretary-Treasurer's Report**  
**November 17, 2006**

**INCOME**

Dues, subscriptions, meeting registration	\$5,467.39
MELA/ALC lunch remainder; 2006 Lunch	\$1,465.95
Three mailing list rentals	\$300.00
David Partington Award Fund contribution	\$200.00
Turkish workshop payments	\$588.48
Bank interest	\$63.12
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$8,084.94</b>

**EXPENSES**

MELA Meeting 2005	\$2,699.47
MELA Notes No. 78 printing	\$752.60
Atiyeh Award	\$320.52
Partington Award prizes	\$200.00*
Postage and supplies	\$690.05
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$4,662.64</b>

**Checking account balance as of November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006: \$16,315.82**

**Savings account balance as of November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006: \$5,279.68**

As of November 15, 2006, we have 93 members paid-up through 2005 and/or 2006. Seventeen new members have been added since December 2005.

As of November 15, 2006, we have 34 library subscriptions to *MELA Notes*, with 20 subscriptions being handled through vendors.

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\* Co-recipient Geoffrey Roper requested that his prize money be donated to the World Organization for Human Rights, USA.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

As can be seen from the summary statements above, the MELA bank accounts continue to grow. Our major expenditures continue to be the costs associated with the MELA annual meeting, and the costs of printing and mailing MELA Notes.

Thanks to the efforts of John Eilts, it is now possible to make payments to MELA via PayPal. This has been an instant success, and as of this writing there have been 61 payments made by 55 individuals (both members and non-Members). Payment by PayPal does have a cost, currently 2.9% + 0.30 USD for every US-based transaction, and 3.9% + 0.30 USD for international transactions. Our overseas members will need to check the PayPal website (<http://www.paypal.com>) to see if payments can be made from their respective countries.

The obvious impact of PayPal is that the service charge is subtracted from the amount paid, not added to the cost. For example, a triple payment of Dues, Lunch and Registration from a US-based member totals \$70.00. In practice, \$67.67 goes into the MELA bank account, while the remaining \$2.33 is paid by MELA to PayPal. Thus, of the \$3,795.00 in payments MELA has collected via PayPal, \$128.61 of this is paid as PayPal service fees, resulting in a net receipt of, \$3,596.39 for our organization.

Which brings us to a related topic: membership dues and renewals. You will notice that this year we have been fortunate to welcome 17 new members to the MELA roster, 11 of whom were only added since the introduction of PayPal this past October. The fact is that our total membership roster has actually dropped by four over the past year (97 members were listed as paid-up as per the Secretary-Treasurer's 2005 report, compared to 93 for the current year). The ebb and flow of the MELA member tide is something that should be worthy of investigation over the forthcoming period, but in the meantime I will be sending out renewal reminders to individuals who paid in 2005 but have not yet paid for 2007, and will also be sending out a general reminder to all by e-mail in September 2007.

Other behind-the-scenes developments from this office include the use of online banking services and a debit card from MELA's bank (PNC Bank); this has helped a great deal in making payments. I have also been using Microsoft Money for bookkeeping. This has enabled better tracking of payments and receipts. It can also lead to the creation of more granular financial reports as needed.

I further anticipate looking at ways to improve the MELA membership database in terms of information we collect from our members and how the database is structured. This will help MELA understand a bit more about itself as we look at our past, and towards our future.

Respectfully submitted,  
William J. Kopycki  
Secretary-Treasurer

### Editor's Report November 2005

During the year 2004–05, one annual issue of *MELA Notes*, number 78 (2005), was published (in print and electronically: <http://www.lib.umich.edu/area/Near.East/MELANotesIntro.html>) and distributed to the membership and subscribers. I expect that it will appear before the end of this year.

The current issue consists of the following articles:

- “Is the Organization for Standardization (ISO)’s Arabic Transliteration Scheme an Improvement over Library of Congress’?” by Blair Kuntz, University of Toronto
  - “Islam as Practiced by the Kazaks: A Bibliography for Scholars” by Simon Michael Braune, Indiana University
  - “CRL Middle East Political Website Archiving Pilot Project” by David G. Hirsch (UCLA), with the assistance of John Eilts (Stanford), Meryle Gaston (UCSB), Shayee Khanaka (Berkeley), Adam Siegel (UC Davis)
  - “Annotated Survey of Religious Periodical Literature Available in Tbilisi, Georgia and Mc’xeta, Georgia” by Paul Crego, Library of Congress
  - “Collection development on the Middle East in the British Library, focusing on the Arabic collections” by Debbie Cox, British Library
- Brief Communication:
- Saima Fazli, George Atiyeh Award Statement
  - 14 Reviews
  - MELA Business Meeting 2004 Minutes and Reports
  - Minutes of the 2004 Annual Business Meeting (Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>, San Francisco).

We are extremely grateful for the hard work of Rachel Simon, Book Review Editor, who continues to solicit with success a significant number of books for review from publishers and, somewhat astonishingly, many competent and helpful reviews from time-pressed or seemingly reluctant contributors. We wish as well to thank our Secretary-Treasurer, William J. Kopycki, for the much appreciated services he provides, such as maintaining the member files, taking care of the distribution of the issues, and paying the bills.

There is more progress to report this year on the MELA Notes back-run electronic conversion project: Numbers 34–38 (1986–87) and 60–61 (1994)—thanks again to John Eilts. There are now 42 issues in electronic format.

As always, the editor urges the membership to submit articles and to encourage colleagues to do so. I am seeking in particular this year articles that describe significant collections (books, manuscripts, and archives) of institutions or individuals and their histories. Additionally, submission of articles of a more practical or professional or technological nature is also encouraged.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jonathan Rodgers  
Editor