

### *Legal History and Rare Books SIS 2007-08*

The Legal History and Rare Books Special Interest Section (LHRB) had a busy and productive year. It sponsored or co-sponsored a number of excellent programs at the July 2007 Annual Meeting in New Orleans: "Taking Up the Gauntlet: The Duel in Southern Legal History," "*Rome*: The Power of Film to Teach Foundations of Roman and Civil Law," "Huey Long and the Press: Louisiana's Contribution to Modern Constitutional Law," and its roundtable "Celebrating the 400th Anniversary of *Cowell's Interpreter*." Many thanks to the Education Committee, and especially its chair Laura Ray, for spearheading another successful program proposal process.

In fall 2007, a long-incubating new initiative finally came to fruition. Together with Gale Cengage Learning, the LHRB-SIS is co-sponsoring a new Morris L. Cohen Student Essay Contest. Open to all students of librarianship, law, and history, this contest is designed to encourage scholarship and introduce new members to AALL and LHRB. The Essay Contest Committee, chaired by Katherine Hedin, will be announcing the contest shortly, and the first round of submissions will be solicited after the 2008 Annual Meeting. Our gratitude goes to Stephen Wasserstein of Gale Cengage Learning, to Fred Shapiro, librarian consultant to Gale, for proposing this exciting new venture, and to the committee for getting it off the ground.

Another major project that is nearing completion is the LHRB-SIS's first brochure, which will debut at the Annual Meeting in Portland. This brochure was the work of the Publications Committee; Stacy Etheredge, Glen-Peter Ahlers and AALL's Director of Publications Julia O'Donnell deserve special thanks.

Also debuting at the Portland meeting will be LHRB's first-ever reception, which will take place at the Annual Meeting on Sunday night. The theme is beer! If the event is successful, we may make it an annual event. Special thanks to Laura Ray, Mark Podvia, and the folks at Lucky Lab Brewpub for their work on this.

As always, Newsletter Editor Mark Podvia and Articles Editors Jennie Meade and Kurt Metzmeier continue to do outstanding work for the SIS. LHRB's thrice-yearly newsletter is both newsy and substantive. It is enriched not only by Mark's skilled editorial hand but also by regular columns by Sarah Yates (rare book cataloging), Anne Mar (recent acquisitions), Amy Taylor (exhibit news), Fred LeBaron (member news), and Dan Blackaby (legal history news). Joel Fishman edits the extensive collection of book reviews that run in every issue as well.

Also on the publications front, expect to see a new electronic journal, *Unbound*, premiere soon on the LHRB-SIS Web site. This journal will feature selected articles from past issues of the *Newsletter*, with the goal of making them available in a more permanent, and searchable, format that will be accessible to people outside of the SIS and AALL. Many thanks to Mark Podvia and Kurt Metzmeier (Webmaster) for taking on this wonderful initiative.

One of the best things about serving as chair is the opportunity to meet, and work with, people in the profession who love legal history and rare books. Many of them have contributed in large and small ways to the work of the SIS, and I am grateful to all of them. I am especially grateful to those who serve with me on the board: Stacy Etheredge, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect (2007-2009); Sarah Yates, Secretary/Treasurer (2006-2008); Laura Ray, Immediate Past Chair; and Dan Blackaby, who will be joining the board as Secretary/Treasurer in July 2008.

Karen Beck, Chair  
2007-08