

AALL Legal History and Rare Books Special Interest Section (LHRB-SIS) 2012-2013 Annual Report

The officers of LHRB-SIS for 2012-2013 were Michael Widener, chair; Jennie Meade, vice chair/chair-elect; Sarah Yates, immediate past chair; and Kasia Solon Cristobal, secretary/treasurer. In an online election conducted in April, Sabrina Sondhi was elected vice chair/chair-elect, and Kasia Solon Cristobal was re-elected secretary/treasurer.

Membership stood at 203 in July 2013, down from 220 a year earlier. This was a smaller drop than that reported by many other SISs.

LHRB, in cooperation with Cengage Learning, held its fifth annual Morris L. Cohen Student Essay Competition in the spring. The essay contest committee, chaired by Rob Mead and Marguerite Most, awarded first place to Sarah Levine-Gronningsater, a Ph. D. candidate in American History at the University of Chicago, for her essay, "Louis Napoleon's Secret Service: Gradual Emancipation, Antislavery Legal Culture, and the Origins of the Lemmon Slave Case 1852." Ms. Levine-Gronningsater was unable to attend the annual meeting in Seattle, so the runner-up, Matthew Axtell, a Ph.D. candidate in legal history at Princeton University, presented his essay, "Customs of the River: Legal Change and Shifting Hydrology in the 19th-Century Steamboat Economy," at a lively and well-attended session.

Having Mr. Axtell speak at the meeting of the Morris Cohen Essay Contest Committee was one way of circumventing the new restrictions on SIS programming at the annual meeting. These restrictions have disproportionately impacted programming by small SISs such as LHRB. Its educational efforts would be dramatically reduced if were not for creative avenues such as using committee meetings for programming.

The single program LHRB was permitted to sponsor, "Law Libraries and Advocacy: Using Special Collections to Tell the Story of the Japanese American Internment," was a big success, thanks in part to the work of the Education Committee and its chair, Laura Ray. In addition the Education Committee supported several independent program proposals, one of which, "Wine and the Law," was another success at the Seattle meeting.

Two issues of *LH&RB*, the SIS newsletter, appeared under the editorship of Mark Podvia, totaling 176 pages. It remains probably the most substantive newsletter of any SIS. The newsletter is now part of Spinelli's Law Library Reference Shelf in HeinOnline, thanks to an agreement with Hein approved by the SIS and signed by the AALL Executive Director. In addition, Volume 5 of *Unbound: An Annual Review of Legal History and Rare Books* was published.

The webmaster, Kurt Metzmeier, successfully migrated the LHRB website to AALL's new platform. Laurel Davis was appointed co-webmaster for 2013-14, and will take over from Kurt the following year.

In an agreement with the Technical Services SIS, the Rare Book Cataloging Roundtable was taken over by the LHRB-SIS. The move was designed to eliminate scheduling problems for both SISs.

Respectfully submitted,
MICHAEL WIDENER