

Chicago Area Religious Archivists (CARA)
By-Laws

A group of archivists of religious collections from the Chicago area met in Chicago in the fall of 2007 to discuss the possibility of forming the Chicago Area Religious Archivists (CARA). The goal was to create a group through which archivists for religious institutions and agencies, as well as curators for religious manuscript collections, could network with other archivists of religious collections, share common concerns and information, become familiar with other religious archives in the Chicago area, and host educational programs for professional development. During that meeting, it was decided that a set of by-laws would be written to formally establish the organization.

Article 1: Name

The name of the organization shall be the Chicago Area Religious Archivists (CARA).

Article 2: Purpose

The aims of the Chicago Area Religious Archivists (CARA) are to:

1. provide an opportunity for Chicago area archivists of religious collections to meet together
2. to share information on issues of professional interest to them
3. to inform members about the religious archives collections in the Chicago area
4. to familiarize them with the resources available to help them manage their collections
5. to stimulate cooperation and resource sharing among archivists of religious institutions and agencies, and
6. to present programs and organize activities that may be of interest to its members.

Article 3: Affiliation

The CARA shall be a member body of the Chicago Area Archivists (CAA).

Article 4: Membership

1. Membership shall be open to all individuals with an interest in the activities of religious archives and religious manuscript repositories in the Chicago area, and who are also dues paying members of the Chicago Area Archivists (CAA).
2. All dues-paying members shall be eligible to vote, hold office and attend regular meetings of the CARA.

Article 5: Steering Committee

1. The activities of the CARA will be governed by a Steering Committee of 5 members, each serving a term of two years.
2. The Steering Committee will meet a minimum of two times a year, and will be responsible for organizing meetings and formally representing the CARA when needed.
3. The Steering Committee shall designate one of their number as Chair, one as Vice Chair, one as Secretary, and one as Treasurer. Their duties shall be those normally associated with these positions as outlined in *Sturgis' Standard Code of Parliamentary Rules of Order*. The Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in his/her absence.
4. A CAA Representative will be annually chosen by the Steering Committee from among its members to report back to the Steering Committee details from CAA meetings and events that are open to the general CAA membership.
5. The Steering Committee will also appoint a Communications Editor from the CARA membership as a whole who will be responsible for circulating information to the membership.
6. The Steering Committee will establish annual dues to cover reasonable meeting, mailing, and associated costs; ask the membership for special assessments; and solicit donations and grant funding to promote the purposes set forth in Article 2 above. Any change in dues must be ratified by a simple majority of dues-paying CARA members.
7. The Steering Committee will serve on a volunteer basis, and shall solicit volunteers to fill vacancies that occur on the Committee between regular elections.
8. Mid-term appointments shall be ratified by a majority vote of dues-paying members of the CARA. Those appointed mid-term will take the place of the resigning Steering Committee member for the remainder of the term.

9. The Steering Committee will be responsible for the proper disbursement of CARA's funds.
10. A Steering Committee report shall be presented at each annual business meeting. This report should summarize the Steering Committee's activities.

Article 6: Meetings

1. The CARA will hold a minimum of two meetings per year, with the two main meetings ordinarily held in the spring and fall of each year, usually during the day.
2. The spring meeting will include the annual business meeting for the organization.
3. To conduct official business, a quorum shall consist of fifteen percent (15%) of the total membership.

Article 7: Election of Steering Committee Officers

1. The election of new members of the Steering Committee will occur every two years, on odd-numbered years, at the spring CARA business meeting.
2. In December of the year preceding the bi-annual election of the Steering Committee Officers, the Chair of the Steering Committee will begin soliciting nominations for candidates for the Steering Committee. Any dues paying member who is in good standing will be eligible to run for office.
3. Those present at the next annual business meeting will be presented with a slate of the candidates who have agreed to run, and will vote from that list for the Steering Committee members.
4. The five candidates receiving the largest number of votes will serve as the members of the next Steering Committee. Their term of office will begin in June of that year.

Article 8: Archives

1. Official records of the CARA will be deposited in an archival repository, as designated by the Steering Committee.
2. All outgoing officers shall deposit their records in the archives.

3. The Secretary shall arrange the transfer of all records to the archives.

Article 9: By-Law Amendments and Revisions

1. These by-laws may be amended or revised by submitting a written copy of the proposed amendment or revision to the Steering Committee.
2. The amendment or revision shall be adopted if a simple majority of dues-paying members vote in favor of the proposal.
3. A current copy of these by-laws shall be made available to any member upon request to the Steering Committee.