Documents and Maps Association of Pennsylvania: 
The History of a Documents Network

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Abstract: DOMA-14, the Documents and Maps Association of Pennsylvania, was formed in 1984. Over the next twenty-five years, its members have worked to promote government documents to the patrons of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. The history of the group reflects the changing face of government documents librarianship.

Documents and Maps Association of Pennsylvania: The History of a Documents Network

In October 2010, as the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) continued to explore its future, the Government Printing Office (GPO) announced that Ithaka S+R would investigate examples of different library networks with the goal of identifying characteristics that might pertain to the FDLP of the future. While some government documents networks, such as GODORT, are well known, there is a dearth of information about many local, grassroots documents groups. In 1992, while writing about cooperation among depository libraries in the southwestern United States, John S. Wilson went so far as to state: “A review of the literature reveals that there is no documented research concerning cooperative networks or consortia among depository libraries in the United States.” Twenty years later, a few articles have provided information about the origins and projects of documents groups such as Ohio5 and INDIGO, but there still remains little written about the majority of documents groups in the United States.

This paper attempts to add to the research by summarizing the history of one library network, DOMA-14. DOMA-14 is the Documents and Maps Association of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), which is composed of the fourteen Pennsylvania state-owned universities. DOMA-14 takes its name from the first two letters of the words “documents” and “maps,” with the number of universities tacked on at the end. Lovingly known as DOMA to those of us who work with documents in the state system, it came about many years before the Defense of Marriage Act usurped the acronym. As with so many organizations, the group owes its existence to a small group of individuals who set out to make a different for their libraries and their patrons. In writing this history, it’s hoped that other networks might decide to record their own histories, as testaments to the ongoing efforts of documents librarians to provide access to government information.

The Need for DOMA-14

DOMA-14 was born on Thursday, February 2, 1984 when thirteen documents librarians began a two-day meeting in room 561 of the State Library of Pennsylvania in Harrisburg. Acting chair and founding librarian Mary Anne Burns Duffy called the meeting to order.
at 1:45 PM.\textsuperscript{4} It was a propitious time for Duffy and her colleagues to start a documents group. PASSHE had just come into being in 1983 when the fourteen state-owned institutions of higher education (thirteen former teachers colleges and Indiana University of Pennsylvania) were joined together into the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.\textsuperscript{5} In the years leading up to the creation of PASSHE, the documents librarians met informally at Pennsylvania Library Association meetings and at government documents meetings arranged by the State Library of Pennsylvania (hereafter just called the State Library). At Depository Library Council meetings, they learned how other documents librarians organized. The feeling arose that as a collective, the librarians needed to relate in a much more organized manner towards the State Library and GPO.\textsuperscript{6} In particular, they needed to take advantage of an invitation from the directors of the new PASSHE libraries, who had invited librarians with similar interests to hold meetings at the same time and place as the directors, in order to discuss problems and issues related to their specialty areas.\textsuperscript{7}

Two quotations give an idea of the discussions that led to the 1984 meeting. Geraldine Benson, Government Documents Librarian at Millersville University of Pennsylvania, relates an impromptu discussion during a Pennsylvania Library Association (PLA) meeting in Lancaster, PA:

Mary Anne Burns Duffy, Judith Feller, Claire Andrews, and I met (unplanned, we were just all there) at a PLA Meeting again at the Host in Lancaster. We sat down and started talking about how we would like to formally organize ourselves to better serve our depository status, collective [PA]SSHE unity, and academic interests.\textsuperscript{8}

Mary Anne Burns Duffy, the Documents and Maps Librarian at West Chester University of Pennsylvania, relates that the final spark came during a phone conversation:

Quite a few of us during phone conversations would say, we really should take the Directors up on their offer. One day when I was talking with Kathy Warkentin (Shippensburg) she said, “let’s just do it”. We worked on a tentative agenda and I think ran it by Judy Feller (East Stroudsburg) and Gerry Benson (Millersville) for their reactions.\textsuperscript{9}

These librarians would work tirelessly for DOMA-14 over the following years.

The agenda and minutes of the first meeting give a glimpse into the issues that Duffy and the others faced in cobbling together a group of librarians who knew little about each other, each other’s libraries, or each other’s institutions. The first day of the two-day meeting was devoted to allowing the librarians to get to know each other and to learn basic information about each institution’s collections: what types of documents they included (federal, state, local, international), whether the documents were separate or integrated into the general collection, the size and current staffing levels, what records or catalogs they maintained, and what procedures and policies they followed.\textsuperscript{10} The second day of the meeting allowed the librarians to become familiar with the services provided
by the State Library, which is the regional library for Pennsylvania and oversees distribution of state documents to state depository libraries.\textsuperscript{11}

\textbf{The Early Years}

The formative meeting led to the idea that DOMA-14 should take a survey of their document collections, with the results distributed to each librarian. This survey would develop into the \textit{Directory of DOMA Libraries} and would come to be considered one of the early achievements of the group.\textsuperscript{12} As happened so often, one of the founding librarians, Katherine Warkentin of Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, took the lead on the project. She sent an initial questionnaire to all of the DOMA-14 librarians in early March 1984, only a month after the first meeting. The librarians were asked to record basic information about their collections, such as that discussed in the meeting. The survey paid special attention to microfiche collections, the availability of microprint readers and copies, and whether a library offered database searching. Each librarian was also to indicate what major reference sources, such as the \textit{American Statistics Index} or the \textit{CIS U.S. Serial Set Index}, their libraries owned.\textsuperscript{13}

While the results of the very first DOMA-14 survey have not survived, it’s evident that the project was a success because the group continued to develop union lists of their holdings and to develop ties of collaborative collection development over the following years. Warkentin updated the holdings lists annually and distributed the results widely. In 1990, an ad in \textit{Dtpp: Documents to the People} for an updated version resulted in requests for copies from as far away as Texas and Hawaii.\textsuperscript{14} The librarians at those institutions that were federal depositories also started making copies of their current item selections and sending them to the other thirteen librarians.\textsuperscript{15} This DOMA Union List of item numbers became useful during the years when Pennsylvania depository libraries were inspected. The minutes of a 1993 meeting indicate that the inspectors were “very impressed” with the union list.\textsuperscript{16}

With the DOMA-14 directory well established, the librarians looked for a new project to benefit the group. After the initial meeting in 1984, the group formally passed a resolution in which it requested that the council of library directors purchase a fiche-to-fiche copier. While the library directors’ chair indicated support for the group and their plans (“This group has been the most active and creative of the … ‘common interest’ groups and in my opinion their resolutions, plans and aspirations are creative and positive steps toward the greater interlibrary cooperation in their area”),\textsuperscript{17} the idea soon ran into trouble. Before making a decision, the directors requested statistics to prove the need for such a copier. Specifically, the directors wanted to know how extensive the current Interlibrary Loan traffic for microfiche among the PASSHE libraries was. Because no records were kept to indicate where Interlibrary Loan requests for microfiche originated, the DOMA-14 librarians could not answer this question.\textsuperscript{18}

While this first project never bore fruit for DOMA-14, it led the group to look into alternate, and more far-reaching, projects. In response to the setback, Warkentin wrote: “I discussed the proposal [for the fiche-to-fiche copier] with our director here at
[Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania] and he feels that we would be better off to pursue (sic) a proposal dealing with professional development.” In response, at the second formal DOMA-14 meeting, which occurred in November 1988, the group established a Committee for Professional Development. Members included Roger Horn (Clarion University of Pennsylvania), Loanne Snavely (Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania), and Claire Andrews (Kutztown University of Pennsylvania). The charge of the committee was to “develop proposals for funding and support from the State System of Higher Education and... [library] Directors.” Recommendations for the committee included looking into automation efforts, cooperative purchasing and housing of major indexing collections, publication of the DOMA-14 survey, bibliographic instruction, and cooperative item selections. In spite of the many suggestions, the group found a focus quickly, leading to DOMA’s most ambitious project.

**DOMA-14 Comes of Age**

The 1990 meeting, held at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, served as a turning point for DOMA-14 in that it set up the initiative that would occupy the group for the following decade. After initially wanting to focus on bibliographic instruction for government documents, the Committee for Professional Development finally settled on greater access for documents through records in the libraries’ online catalogs. Warkentin served as project coordinator for a PASSHE grant proposal that would fund a conference at which the DOMA-14 librarians would learn about various companies that provided online records for government documents and would listen to librarians from other academic libraries that already used the companies. DOMA-14 was one of the first groups to receive such a grant, which had been set up to encourage disciplinary and interdisciplinary associations among the fourteen state institutions.

The conference took place in conjunction with the 1991 annual DOMA-14 meeting. It was held at the Keystone Mountain Park, a mountain retreat near World’s End State Park that Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania leased. The retreat center was an environmental center with a rustic country atmosphere in the meeting rooms and bedrooms. Members were encouraged to “leave your ties and/or high heels at home” since the scenery promised to be lovely and they could stretch after the meetings by walking to enjoy the fall foliage.

After a business meeting on the first day, the second day of the meeting was reserved for the conference entitled “Getting Government Publications into SSHE Library OPACS.” Three guest speakers provided the meat of the meeting. Barbie Selby, Assistant Documents Librarian at the University of Virginia, spoke on her experience using the company Marcive while Roseann Bowerman, Government Documents librarian at Lehigh University, detailed her experience using the OCLC GOVDOC service. Finally, Debora Cheney, Acting Head of Documents at Pennsylvania State University, spoke on her library’s decision to catalog government documents in-house. Each guest spoke for one hour, which left plenty of time for the DOMA-14 members to ask questions. An hour at the end of the conference was also reserved for wrap-up discussions that focused specifically on the application of these possible services within individual system
libraries. DOMA-14 members had been encouraged to bring additional staff members from their libraries, and the presence of several cataloging librarians meant that they could address specific issues related to implementation.\(^25\)

This conference paid off. By 1995, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania and Millersville University of Pennsylvania both added documents records to their catalogs using Marcive, and both reported “a tremendous increase” in the number of documents being used. West Chester University of Pennsylvania had plans to add Marcive records starting in 1996, and Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania (which joined the FDLP in 1995) would also begin adding Marcive records to its catalog.\(^26\)

By 1998, the discussion among the DOMA-14 members concerned the implementation of a new online catalog system, Voyager from Endeavor, and the new system-wide online catalog. Much of the annual meeting that year focused on how to load Marcive records into the new system. Also, the members talked of preparing a new grant application, which would provide funding for a DOMA-14 subscription to various Marcive services for all of the state system libraries. A new committee formed to write the grant application, which was due in March 1999.\(^27\)

The application was for a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant. At the time of the grant proposal, ten of the fourteen DOMA-14 libraries were federal depositories (Bloomsburg, California, Cheney, East Stroudsburg, Indiana, Mansfield, Millersville, Shippensburg, Slippery Rock, and West Chester Universities of Pennsylvania). Of these, four (California, East Stroudsburg, Indiana, and Mansfield) did not systematically include records for government documents in their catalogs. The remaining four institutions (Clarion, Edinboro, Kutztown, and Lock Haven Universities of Pennsylvania), which were not federal depositories, relied on the other state system libraries and the State Library to provide their patrons with government documents. Because the guidelines for the FDLP recommend that depositories include their documents in their catalogs as they do any other items, the grant would allow the libraries to use the services of commercial vendors to include documents records in their catalogs.\(^28\)

As proposed, the grant would follow a two-fold path. First, the four depositories that did not already purchase records from Marcive would begin to do so. At the same time, all of the libraries would investigate more efficient and cost-effective ways of loading the records. For example, DOMA-14 would pursue the possibility of batch loading one record per item for all of the libraries and then attaching individual holding records for each library. During the second phase of the grant implementation, the libraries would further develop their cooperative collection development policies. At the time of the grant proposal, DOMA-14 collectively selected 76% of all the documents available through the FDLP. Through additional profiling, the libraries would work to select at least 85% of the available items, while at the same time reducing the amount of overlap among the collections. The goal was to create, through streamlined catalog records and increased borrowing among the libraries, a “model for further collaborative collection development activities among all SSHE libraries.”\(^29\)
The committee that wrote the grant was comprised of Theresa McDevitt (Indiana University of Pennsylvania), Larry Schankman (Mansfield University of Pennsylvania), Geraldine Benson (Millersville University of Pennsylvania), Katherine Warkentin (Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania), and Mary Anne Burns Duffy (West Chester University of Pennsylvania). Larry Nesbit, the library director at Mansfield University of Pennsylvania, joined the team later. The group began drafting the application in earnest shortly after the conclusion of the October 1998 annual meeting. Initial discussions included such topics as whether the grant should represent all of the DOMA-14 libraries or just the depositories and whether the libraries should attempt to become a 100% collective depository. Funding from the grant would pay for a subscription to Marcive cataloging for one year for all of the ten depositories, a one-year subscription to Marcive WebDOCS for all ten depositories, Marcive hyperlink records for all ten depositories, the cost of one meeting to discuss collaborative collection development, and the cost for site visits for the four new Marcive customers to visit the library of one of the six existing Marcive customers.

DOMA-14 received the LSTA grant, and implementation began in 1999. An October 1999 meeting allowed the DOMA-14 members to review the grant components and timeline and to begin discussing collaborative collection development. Each member brought their profile forms in order to identify possible items to select or deselect. However, the real bulk of the implementation started with the annual DOMA-14 meeting in April 2000 at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania. Librarians, library directors, and technical services staff from the different libraries participated either in person or via telephone call. Joan Chapa, the Marcive sales representative who had worked extensively with the grant writing team, also joined the meeting via conference call. Much of the discussion focused on the idea of receiving only one Marcive file with data that could be broken out for all of the institutions, rather than an individual file for each of the libraries. Concerns that had surfaced throughout the grant writing process emerged again. Many libraries who already subscribed to Marcive and who had spent much time and effort customizing their products worried about returning to generic, one-size-fits-all files. Other concerns centered on cost savings. Would the cost of writing a program to break out the information for each institution actually exceed the savings incurred by receiving only one file from Marcive? Continued and regular maintenance of the program needed to be considered. Finally, the group came to a consensus. Tom Briggs, System Programmer at Shippensburg University, would be contracted to write a program to see if it was in fact possible and feasible to receive only one file from Marcive. DOMA-14 would reconvene later that year to decide definitively on the one-file idea.

A series of conference calls then commenced that allowed the grant writing team, in consultation with Tom Briggs, to explore further the grant aims of collaborative collection development and possible bulk importation of cataloging records. By May 2000, one month after the annual meeting, Briggs reported that the “initial review saw no significant obstacles to merging profiles” into one file. Rather, the largest issue was cost and whether additional fees would render any cost savings insignificant. By July, Briggs completed his review and could state that the libraries at Bloomsburg University, Indiana University, Slippery Rock University, and West Chester University had the most
differences in their records. If these institutions could develop a common template, the other libraries might adapt it more easily. Documents librarians, cataloging librarians, and technical services staff from Bloomsburg University, Indiana University, and West Chester University met with Tom Briggs in Harrisburg on July 17, 2000 to attempt to agree on such a template (previous commitments did not allow representatives from Slippery Rock University to attend). The meeting went well, with agreements reached on preliminary recommendations about common templates for the two types of records received from Marcive: the short Shipping List Service records and the full Government Printing Office records.35

A final meeting took place on September 19, 2000 in Harrisburg. Documents librarians, cataloging librarians, and other technical services staff met to hash out the fine details of the proposal. Every university except Indiana University of Pennsylvania was represented (the reason for this absence is not recorded). The overriding issue had shifted from cost to the ability of the institutions to adequately individualize the records according to local call numbers and other local concerns. Many different proposals were given according to different subfields in the records. The issue at last came down to a straw poll of those institutions present, with a final vote to be conducted by email. At the straw poll, only three institutions voted yes: California, East Stroudsburg, and Mansfield Universities of Pennsylvania. These institutions were all new subscribers to the Marcive service due to the grant, and so had fewer customizations already in place. One institution, Millersville University of Pennsylvania, a preexisting subscriber to Marcive, voted no. The rest of the universities abstained.36

Unfortunately, the final results of the proposed email vote have not survived. Regardless, the outcome is clear: the institutions chose not to adopt the common templates. Eleanor “Ellie” Brennan, the documents technician at West Chester University of Pennsylvania, summed up the feelings of the ten libraries who were already profiled with Marcive when she wrote: “I tend to agree that those schools with Marcive customizations (us) will lose more than we’ll gain.”37

While the DOMA-14 libraries decided not to move forward on a common import template, they still met the primary goals of the grant. The libraries that had not received Marcive records began to do so. The libraries did investigate means by which to implement more efficient and cost-effective ways of loading their cataloging records. By the time of the final September meeting, the coding and technology were in place by which a single file could have been loaded for all of the libraries.38 Only the loss of important customization for those libraries that already were Marcive customers prevented such an implementation from being feasible. Finally, the libraries began to look seriously at collaborative collection development; the topic would remain an agenda item for DOMA-14 meetings for years to come. In these ways, the work of the grant writing and coordination team was rewarded.
DOMA-14 in the 21st Century

The DOMA-14 group that met in 2001 after the conclusion of the LSTA grant was a very different group than what had first met in 1984. Over the intervening years, the librarians had become quite familiar with each other and each other’s collections. Support staff, first invited to the annual meeting in 1995, was now integral to DOMA-14. DOMA-14 also had its own email discussion list as well as its own website, designed by Warkentin at Shippensburg. In addition, changes at the State Library had resulted in a consolidation of state and federal depository services, formally overseen by two separate individuals, now under the purview of a single librarian. While this meant a single point person for DOMA-14’s interactions with their regional library, it also displayed a high-level administration decision that “has clearly made depository matters a low priority.”

The 2001 annual meeting displayed a break from the past. For the first time in many years, discussion of CD-ROMs was gone from the agenda. Instead, after lingering issues from the grant, the bulk of the meeting focused on collaborative collection development. Mary Anne Burns Duffy suggested the creation of a steering committee. Geraldine Benson, Claire Andrews, and Duffy volunteered for the committee, with the idea of looking into funding from the library directors for a full-day meeting in the fall. About this time, the group created a list of recommended core government documents for the state system libraries, with such titles as the Statistical Abstract of the United States and the World Factbook. These titles would form the backbone of what would develop into the DOMA-14 Legacy Collection, with the aim of providing permanent paper or electronic access.

The 2001 meeting also marked the end of an era because Warkentin retired that year. Her retirement started a gradual change in leadership that has shaped DOMA-14 to the present day. By 2004, Judy Feller, Roger Horn, and Loanne Snively had all retired or taken positions elsewhere. Of those who had attended the original 1984 organizational meeting, only Mary Anne Burns Duffy, Geraldine Benson, and Claire Andrews of Kutztown University remained, although the latter was rarely able to attend the meetings.

Because of these personnel changes, the 2004 meeting focused on how to carry into the future the work that had gone before. No one had updated the union list of DOMA-14 holdings that Larry Schankman at Mansfield University had created at the time of the grant, nearly four years before. Neither had work been completed on the collaborative collection development project so eagerly anticipated in the grant proposal. The DOMA-14 directory, so long a hallmark of the group, had not been updated for many years. Furthermore, the DOMA-14 webpage remained inaccessible on the Shippensburg server because, with Warkentin retired, no one could gain access to it in order to move or update it. In the light of these changes, it is perhaps not surprising that the group finished the meeting by deciding that they needed a mission statement that “would identify who DOMA[-14] is in this new age.” Ellie Brennan, documents technician at West Chester University of Pennsylvania, volunteered to write a draft mission statement that the group could discuss by email.
The 2005 meeting at Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania would be Geraldine Benson and Mary Anne Burns Duffy’s final meeting. Both retired that year. Unfortunately, Benson was unable to attend. Duffy did attend, and as was fitting for the woman who steered DOMA-14 through its early years, at this meeting she presided over the creation of the DOMA-14 Legacy Collection. At this meeting, each library decided which items it would pledge to retain in perpetuity. This work was a continuation of the collaborative collection development part of the LSTA grant. Selection of legacy items centered on the strengths of each collection, which libraries owned long runs of certain titles, and which titles might not become available electronically or would be difficult to digitize.\(^44\)

At the 2005 meeting, Brennan distributed the mission statement, which she had taken the lead on developing. It was read over and approved. The mission statement read:

> The Documents and Maps Association of Pennsylvania (DOMA), in conjunction with the State Library of Pennsylvania, is committed to the acquisition, distribution, and archiving of both Federal and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Government documents. To that end, DOMA is committed to collaboration amongst its members for the benefit of its primary constituency, the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The identification, preservation and archiving of DOMA legacy collections shall be a hallmark of this collaboration. DOMA seeks to identify legacy collections by region within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and secure appropriate housing among institutions within the area of interest. DOMA members will utilize technology toward appropriate institutional goals and will collaborate wherever possible to seek funding opportunities that will benefit all DOMA institutions; collegiality and collaborations shall remain the cornerstones of DOMA, as they are its founding principles.\(^45\)

In addition to this collaborative collection development work, the 2005 meeting allowed some conclusion to persistent technology issues that had plagued DOMA-14 over the previous years. Chantana Charoenpanitkul, who replaced Katherine Warkentin at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, agreed to continue as moderator of the DOMA-14 email discussion list while Kathryn Yelinek, who ultimately succeeded Loanne Snavely at Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, took over as the DOMA-14 webmaster. With the aid of Charoenpanitkul, she gained access to the site on the Shippensburg server and begin updating the site once more. Also, Yelinek became the DOMA-14 archivist, taking control of the archives that Duffy began at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. The meeting ended with a tribute to both Duffy and Benson “for their dedication to DOMA during their tenure at Millersville and West Chester Universities. They will be missed!”\(^46\)

With the loss of Duffy, Benson, Warkentin, and the other founding members, DOMA-14 found itself at a crossroads. While the last 5 years have held some times to celebrate – the State Library marked its 150\(^{th}\) anniversary of becoming a federal depository in 2008,
and DOMA-14 observed its 25th anniversary in 2009 – the group has lacked dedicated leadership. A few of the retiring librarian and technician positions have not been filled, and the remaining members wear more hats than ever before. Decreased travel funding for members meant that the 2010 DOMA-14 meeting occurred not as a separate two-day meeting but as a one-hour special interest focus group during the annual Pennsylvania state system library conference. While none of the libraries have withdrawn from the FDLP, Millersville University of Pennsylvania ceased being a state depository in 2010. There are bright spots, however. A 2009 trial resulted in the digitization of eight government documents of special interest to Pennsylvania, which had not previously been digitized. At the same time, the old DOMA-14 directory has evolved to include a union list of documents-related databases held at each university, which allows librarians with thorny reference questions to locate which colleague at which institution might have the resource necessary to assist. In these ways, DOMA-14 has responded in its own way to the changing face of documents librarianship.

Conclusion

While it’s unclear what direction DOMA-14 will take in the upcoming years, the group remains committed to collegiality and cooperation among its members and to access to government documents for its patrons. From its inception during the early days of PASSHE, DOMA-14 has grown to become a proven network of library professionals that work together to provide the best collections, services, and access to both state and federal government documents. At a time when the future of the FDLP is under discussion, it’s important to acknowledge the many such networks that exist across the country, filled with librarians and documents staff who shepherded their departments through transitions in the past, and who look forward to doing so in the future.

Author biography: Kathryn Yelinek is Reference Librarian/Coordinator of Government Documents at Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania. She currently serves as the Webmaster and archivist for DOMA-14. Her research interests include the role of depository librarians, and she co-authored the article “The Accidental Government Documents Librarian,” which was published in the January 2009 issue of “The Journal of Academic Librarianship.” She earned her MLIS from the University of Pittsburgh and her MSIT from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania.
Notes and References

All minutes, correspondence, and other unpublished documentation are held in the DOMA-14 archives, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania. Some meeting minutes are available on the DOMA-14 website at http://webspace.ship.edu/domadoma/index.html.


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8Benson, personal email to author, June 27, 2007.

9Mary Anne Burns Duffy, personal email to author, June 24, 2007.

10Saul Weinstein, Chair of SSHELCO [library directors’ council], letter to Document and Map Librarians, January 19, 1984.


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