The Institute for Historical Study

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INSTITUTE PLANS

Following a most successful evening at the home of Rosemary Levenson last May, at which Institute members and friends saw slides of Mrs. Levenson's trip to China and had an opportunity to discuss her experiences there, the program committee has planned two major events for the fall months: one will be held on the Stanford University campus in connection with Peter Mellini's exhibition of caricatures from VANITY FAIR (see announcement below); the other will be held at the Chinese Cultural Center in San Francisco in connection with Vincente Tang's exhibition on Chinese-American history. Both meetings will be open to the general public, with a lower admission price for Institute members. There will be an announcement of dates, times, and topics of these meetings in the next newsletter. We feel that such activities are an excellent way of bringing Institute members and friends together and of publicizing the work of the Institute. If you hear of, or are planning, an exhibition of particular historical interest, be sure to get in touch with Jules Becker, program committee chair, about the possibility of planning an Institute activity around it.

At the May Board meeting, it was decided that a first priority should be the recruitment of new members, and that we should have as a goal the doubling of our present membership by the next annual meeting in February, 1981. A concerted membership drive will begin after the summer holidays, but we hope that members will begin now to think about potential candidates. The Board approved a new membership application form which should enable the Institute to do a more effective job of identifying and satisfying members' needs. If you have been thinking about joining, you don't have to wait until next fall; you may obtain a membership application by writing in care of the Institute address or telephoning; (415) 655-1529 or (415) 451-8682 (evenings and weekends). We would also like to hear about people who may wish to receive a brochure explaining the goals and benefits of the Institute, or be added to our mailing list. In submitting names and addresses, please indicate whether someone is to receive a brochure or be placed on the mailing list.

Members who will be attending professional conferences are invited to pick up, or send for, extra copies of the Institute brochure to distribute.

The next Institute Board meeting will be held on July 17th at 602 Calmar Avenue, Oakland. There will be no August Board meeting.

EXHIBITION AT STANFORD

"In VANITY FAIR, 1869-1914", an exhibition of English caricaturing, opens at the Stanford University Museum of Art on September 23, 1980, and runs through November 18th. It features caricatures of celebraties from all walks of life by artists such as Spy, Ape, Max Beerbohm, James J. Tissot, and others. The exhibition has grown out of the collecting and research of Peter Mellini and Roy T. Mathews (Michigan State University) for their book, IN VANITY FAIR, soon to be published by Scholar Press, London, and the University of California Press.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Two major conferences of interest to Institute members and friends are scheduled for the late summer and fall in southern California:

The American Historical Association--Pacific Coast Branch annual meeting will be held in Los Angeles at the University of Southern California, August 20-23rd. The Western Association of Women Historians (which helped us get started with a seed money grant last year) is sponsoring a presentation and luncheon at the conference, to which Institute members are cordially invited. The program is titled "Slave Narratives, Slave Society, and Inter-Racial Abolitionist Activity in Antebellum America." For more information, call or write to Frances Keller, 835 Junipero Serra Blvd., San Francisco, 94127. (415) 334 5772.

The Public History Program at UC Santa Barbara and the California Committee for the Promotion of History are sponsoring a conference in the fall of 1980 on "Demonstration of the Uses of Public History". The purpose is to provide a forum for the producers of public history to discuss their profession with other public historians and the consumers of public history. As much as possible, the presentations are to be demonstrations or examples of the problems, methods, and skills of the public historian. The Public HIstory Program will provide lodging free of charge for persons giving papers or appearing on panels. For information on participation and attendance, write to Albert Hurtado, 1553 36th Street, Sacramento, CA 95816. Phone (916) 457-5897.

REPORT ON THE FOUNDATION CENTER

Members of the Institute should know about the Foundation Center, 312 Sutter Street, San Francisco, (telephone: 397-0902). One of its most important services is its library, open during business hours to all comers. The library contains not only the basic guides to foundations and other sources of funds, but copies of tax reports which provide detailed information about the contribution programs of specific foundations. There are orientation programs offered for anyone who wants to begin research on finding funding sources. It is necessary to reserve a place some time in advance for the orientation program.

Another valuable service is the Foundations Panel, held the first Tuesday of each month. The panel is sponsored by the Foundation Center and the Northern California Foundations Group, led by Melinda Marble. Each month two or more representatives of local foundations come to talk about their organizations to representatives of non-profit groups looking for funds. The purpose of the panels is to acquaint groups with how foundations work and, specifically, how each of those represented operates. Seeing the foundations individually is helpful; each one is different, yet they all have many things in common.

Deborah Frangquist and Ellen Huppert have attended sessions on behalf of the Institute. To them, the most valuable aspect of the panels is meeting foundation representatives directly, seeing that they are indeed human, and hearing some of their problems. One representative said,"We need you. If you don't apply for our funds, we can't give them away." Yet, a continuing theme is that all foundations are beset with far more requests for funds than they can possibly meet.

This can produce a powerful negative feeling on the part of staff people who have to say 'no' many more times than 'yes'. The lesson to be learned is that one may have to try over and over before achieving success and should not be deterred by the first negative responses.

Any Institute member who is interested in attending a Foundations Panel should check first with Ellen Huppert (655-1529) so that we may coordinate our efforts and not wear out our welcome by arriving in too great a number.

HISTORICAL RESOURCES INFORMATION EXCHANGE

In the last issue of the newsletter we announced that we welcome information about new or little-known historical resources, archives, and the like which may be of interest to our members. So far we have received the following announcements:

> Peter Mellini reports that last spring the records of the California State Board of Medical Examiners, 1876-1978, were cataloged by a former student of his for the California State Archives. The data therein should be useful to historians in a number of areas. For more information, write to the California State Archives, 1020 O Street, Sacramento, CA 95814.
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> Lorrie O'Dell reports that John Swingle, antiquarian bookseller for many years in Berkeley, donated his personal collection of materials on the history and life of Berkeley, for the period of 1842-1942, to the Berkeley Public Library in 1974. Among the more than 300 items in the collection (which includes books, manuscripts, maps, promotional circulars, photographs, etc.) are an autograph letter from Luis Peralta, circa 1842, concerning his recently-acquired portion of the Peralta Land Grant in what is now Berkeley, and five original photographic panoramic negatives, with modern prints, of the Berkeley Fire of 1923. A detailed index of the collection is available for examination at the Berkeley Public Library main reference desk during regular library hours. If you wish to look at the items in the collection, you should telephone first for an appointment: (415) 644-6648.

We plan to run this column as a regular feature of the newsletter and hope that our readers will share their riches with us. We also invite you to use this column for queries involving your own research. Address your contributions and/or queries to the Newsletter Editor at the Institute address.

PROFILE

Institute member Annegret Ogden was born and educated in Germany, where she studied French and German literature at the University of Munich and the Free University of Berlin. Follwing marriage and a move to New Haven, Connecticut, Annegret earned a Master of Library Science degree at Southern Connecticut State College and worked as a cataloger of rare books in the Yale Historical Medical Library. Then came a period of first-hand experience as an American housewife and mother before she returned to her work as a librarian at St. Joseph's Hospital in San Francisco and, since 1972, The Bancroft Library on the UC Berkeley campus. She is presently an Associate Librarian in cataloging and public service. In the following account she explains how her work as a librarian led to historical research of her own, and she shares with us her perceptions about the work of a 'pop' historian:

Advice books for midwives suddenly captured my imagination. They made me aware of my home in a particular historical context, one in which life-giving and preserving functions were all part of a mother's tasks. At that time I had begun my first job, as cataloger of rare books in the Yale Historical Medical Library. Later on I had two children, moved to Berkeley, and went to work in The Bancroft Library at the University. It was there that a collection of household advice books started me on a five-year investigation of the changing job descriptions for American housewives. For twenty hours a week I helped others to search through library resources, and for the remaining work week I tracked down my own documentation for my forthcoming book, WHY SHE DID IT AND WHY SHE WON'T DO IT ANY MORE: THE AMERICAN HOUSEWIFE, 1776-1980. Now I see myself in the double role of librarian and 'pop' historian.

Recently I had the opportunity to confront the general reading public when I was invited to be the guest speaker at the Alumni Camp of the University. The immediacy of the audience reaction surprised me; I knew right away when an idea touched ground and when it evaporated in the mountain air. Most intriguing to my auditorsseemed to be the notion that the housewife, and of course the home, have a legitimate history, an evolution which shapes our present-day standards of family behavior. To most of my listeners, it came as a surprise that their own attitudes about who does what in the home, and what today is considered right and wrong, derive from conditions in the past, often from conditions that have undergone major changes. Roles shaped by economic and cultural factors in earlier times linger on in our homes long after the original script has been altered or discarded.

These outmoded role models I called 'ghosts'. When I described individual ghosts which haunt us with their unnecessary obligations, my audience responded with immediate recognition. As a 'pop' historian, I found that one effective image can do much to communicate well-established facts, and I began to understand that the 'pop' historian must evoke the past as a personal experience.

Since I spent a whole week in the company of my audience at the Alumni Camp, I had many opportunities to compare my ghosts with theirs. A physicist was haunted by the ghost of a supermother who wanted her to postpone her career until she had completed her job of raising her children, while her whole life had been directed toward achievement in her profession. "I never feel that I have done enough for my family," sighed a doctoral candidate in English literature who found comfort in sharing her lot with Harriet Beecher Stowe. Some men among the alumni families discovered that although they had felt very uneasy in the presence of their particular household ghosts, an historical perspective could provide them with a new, non-threatening view of themselves.

I found that being a 'pop' historian is not unlike a 'pop' singer. You can never count on making a hit, but the audience certainly makes the event. I count as successful those times when we, my audience and I, can deal with the historical material together, and in a personal way.