



Leather Archives & Museum
LA&M

**Located in
Chicago and
serving the
world**

NEWSLETTER ISSUE 16 WINTER 2003

LA&M Installs New Archival Environmental Control System.

by Bruce Barnes

In a continuing effort to convert the building at 6418 into an archival storage facility, the LA&M has installed a new HVAC system. During the spring, summer and early fall months, the humidity level in the Archives Room was well above 80%. This had already caused mildew to form in a couple of places on the walls and was threatening to do the same to the collection. Conversely, during the very cold winter months, the humidity level might drop to less than 5%.

Humidity that was too high would cause the paper documents to curl and the leather and books to form mildew. During the winter months, when the heat is running all the time, the humidity is too low. This causes the leather to dry out and crack and the papers and books to become yellow and brittle.



The new system keeps the Archives Room at 68 degrees and 45% relative humidity year round.

After several months of research on the problem at the LA&M on the Internet, in discussions with associates who are engineers, in discussions with other archive facilities and in discussions with both Honeywell (they make control equipment) and Carrier (the air conditioning manufacturers), it was decided that we needed to install equipment that would take complete control of the environment within the Archives Room at the LA&M and regulate the both the temperature and the humidity to within an acceptable range. Because the donations contained within the Archives Room are of a "mixed media", that is to say they contain printed documents, photographs, film, video tape, leather and various other media, it was decided that the room should be kept at a constant temperature of 68° Fahrenheit and a constant humidity of 45%. So, in a room where the donated items have grown substantially since the move from Clark Street and some of the shelves are already filled to the rafters, how do we accomplish this? We had to develop a system that would allow us to cool, de-humidify, heat and humidify; sometimes separately, sometimes in combination with each other. It had to be capable of moving the air throughout the room without leaving any "dead" see "HVAC" on p. 6

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**LA&M Volunteer Position
Want Ads:**

Public Relations Liaison

The LA&M is seeking a public relations liaison to help with press releases and other PR functions. Professional experience would be helpful, but good communication skills and some of your time are all that are necessary. This volunteer does not have to live in Chicago.

Newsletter Editor

Mark Collier, currently our only editor, could use a hand in getting these quarterly newsletters published. Good writing and editing skills are sought. The volunteer should live in Chicago or have access to Adobe Pagemaker.

Please contact Rick Storer at the LA&M for more information.

Uniform Room Adoption Complete.....Thank You Portland!

On December 3, 2002 the Leather Archives & Museum received two checks from Andy Mangels in Portland, Oregon, totaling \$1,260. These two checks were applied to the capital campaign, and completed the adoption process for the Uniforms Room at the LA&M home in Chicago. Since early 2000, Andy has been organizing fundraisers at the Eagle PDX and other establishments in Portland, raising a total of \$10,100 with events such as Portland Uniform Weekend and Boots & BuzzCuts parties. The hot leatherfolk and bears in Portland have been working hard to help provide for a permanent space to archive our history. Although we can all give Andy, the Eagle, InUniform.com, and the leather, fetish, and bear community in the city of Portland a big THANK YOU now, it's really the future generations of leatherfolk and researchers interested in us who will benefit from their generosity. An official Thank You is set to be done in Portland in August of 2003 during Oregon's Leather Pride Week. The dates are August 1st – 10th.



The History of the Motorcycle Jacket. One of the new exhibits in the LA&M gallery in Chicago

New Exhibits Open In Chicago, Amsterdam, Across the Nation

The second weekend in November is no ordinary weekend in Chicago. The men of Chicago Hellfire Club hold their infamous Associate / Applicant weekend, Mr. International Rubber contest takes place at the Cellblock, this year Masters Retreat V was held, and 2 new exhibits were installed in the LA&M Main Gallery.

The History of the Motorcycle Jacket exhibit examines the role of the black motorcycle jacket in society throughout the past 50 years. Several jackets from the LA&M and private collections are on display. A new Leather History timeline display was also installed. Based on the Leather History Timeline compiled by Tony DeBlase, the display takes a quick look at 12 entries (which rotate periodically) throughout leather history. The timeline exhibit includes people, places, organizations and events which have made a mark in leather / BDSM / fetish history.

As the new exhibits were going up in Chicago, a new traveling exhibit was shipped to Amsterdam. This exhibit was displayed at Women in Amsterdam Leather Pride. (See the associated article in this newsletter). The exhibit focused on women and women's organizations throughout leather history.

Finally, many of you will be gathering in Chicago this May to celebrate IML's 25th Anniversary. In connection with this event, the Leather Archives Museum staff, board and volunteers dipped into the IML papers (there's quite a few boxes) to come up with a new traveling exhibit. "25 Years of IML: Men, Leather, Sashes, Lobbies, Money and Sex" debuted at Tri State Leatherfest on November 22nd, 2002. The exhibit will be shown at various events throughout the remainder of this year.

Archives Room Facelift

In March of 2003, the archives room of the LA&M will undergo some cosmetic surgery. The renovations will be made to improve the environmental conditions in the room. Here's what's scheduled to happen:

March 8 - 9: The archives room will be emptied out. The collections will be temporarily stored in the gallery and hallways of the building.

March 10 - 14: The cement floor will be sealed. Any drywall which has suffered water damage will be replaced. All surviving walls will receive a new coat of paint. We'll be using special floor sealant and paint to minimize the chemical vapors in the room. All shelving units will be cleaned.

March 15 - 16: The collections will be returned to the archives room.

This will be a major volunteer effort...a call will be put out to all kinky people in (and near) Chicago to lend a hand. Look for the results of this project in the Spring 2003 issue of this newsletter.



The Got Linked exhibit in the LA&M main gallery. A display of the chains collected during the Get Linked project in 1996 and 1997.

The Making History Project: Women in Amsterdam Leather Pride 2002

by Mindy Chateauvert

To mark the fifth year of Women in Amsterdam Leather Pride (WALP), organizers Tania Oudemans, Denya Cascio and members of The Wild Side, a women's SM group based at the COC (Dutch gay and lesbian community center), sponsored the "Making History Project" to collect historical information about women and the SM/leather and lesbian feminist communities. Funding for the history project was provided by the COC and the Dutch government. The Leather Archives and Museum provided a traveling exhibit with materials from its collections. Over 138 women and transfolk attended from eleven countries including Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Norway, the Netherlands, UK, USA, and Switzerland.

The goal of the "Making History Project" is "to document the lives and thoughts of as many different kinds of SM women from as many countries as possible." A special lab with recording facilities and for creating images for posterity offered camaras, tape recorders, videocams, website building, as well as simple pen and paper allowing every woman can choose the style of documentation that suits her best. The Making History Project consisted of three parts: a "making history lab" a multi-media workshop for video-recording interviews with individuals famous, infamous and un-famous community members, as well as written questionnaires. A history track consisting of three workshops in which presenters - and participants could share their stories of "the old days." Finally, WALP volunteers are in the process of compiling this information into a time-line format that is web-accessible, with supporting documentation deposited in Amsterdam and Chicago.

Throughout the conference, participants had opportunities to record their stories and memories. Some women told their coming out stories; others recounted women's events; while several helped to fill out a timeline, based on materials collected from the German Datenschlag (<http://www.datenschlag.org/>), the Dutch Homodok/Lesbisch Archive Amsterdam (<http://www.homodok.nl>), and completed questionnaires. The collected materials will be made available in the Homodok and copies will also be deposited at the Leather Archives and Museum in Chicago and the Datenschlag in Berlin. In addition, the WALP website provides a form for individuals to post their recollections, and the history of events and/or organizations in which they were involved. The WALP website includes an archive of past conferences, and the story of its founding in 1996 explains how this international women's event came into existence:

Denya and I [Tania] had just moved to the Netherlands from the USA in the summer of 1996. Amsterdam Leather Pride was the first large leather event that took place after we arrived. We greedily paged through the ALP program book. It looked really good, the event looked well organized. Dozens of bars, groups and shops were involved in what looked like an all-round promising event hosted by a united community. We were very pleased. Until we realized there was NOTHING for women.

Not a single bar night!

No a mixed or women's groups involved!

After my first shock I called the number in the program book. I got Jacques Happe on the phone [who] was the mover and shaker behind ALP in 1996 [and] employed by RoB Amsterdam at the time. ...

When I finally talked to him in the final weeks of September 1996, and I asked him about events for leatherdykes, he stuttered the

famous words "Eh, well.... Leatherdykes? Is there such a thing as leatherdykes? I had no idea!" In spite of his clumsily admitted oversight, he proceeded to be extremely supportive in making us welcome in whatever way he could.

I called every leather bar in town, asked every owners to have ONE mixed night in their bar during ALP. All except Ray from The Web refused! Women were taboo in the leatherbars of Amsterdam, they would chase the customers away....

So we founded WALP and started our plight to make leatherwomen visible within the Amsterdam Leather community.

In 1998, the Wild Side sponsored its own SM Games events including the "1 meter Bootlicking Contest," and the "Spank-a-thon" during the Gay Games in Amsterdam in August, followed by first annual WALP conference in November.

The two history workshops held on Saturday became story-hours as we discussed the formation of the first SM women's groups in Amsterdam and Berlin in 1980, the debates with lesbian/feminist activists and the toils and troubles of self-publishing magazines, doing educational workshops at feminist conferences and finding and making play equipment.

see "WALP" on p. 6



Google.com Archived Newsgroups

by Rick Storer

Long before we were publishing our own webpages, or even surfing the web, kinky folks were connecting with each other via newsgroups (Usenet discussion forums). Alt.sex.bondage. soc.subculture .bondage-bdsm. Many of you have certainly posted to or browsed through a newsgroup at some time in your history. Some of you may still use them today.

Google.com has archived all Usenet discussion forums. The searchable database allows you to search for terms within a specific newsgroup or within a broad category of newsgroups. This tool can be of use to researchers, authors,

or anyone interested in a bit of recent history. For example, the current president of the Windy City Bondage Club here in Chicago is compiling a club history. A search for the club in the newsgroup archive resulted in a few records, one going back to 1991.

The major drawback of the database is that it is not complete. Google did not archive items which were marked by the author as not to be archived. They are also honoring requests to remove messages from the archive. The database also excludes all binary content. Thus, pictures and attached files are not included in the archive.

Although the Google.com database does not answer long term preservation issues about leather / BDSM / fetish material in newsgroups, it provides a short term resource to access a part of our history. To access the database, go to <http://www.google.com>, click on the "Groups" tab, and search away.



<http://www.leatherarchives.org>
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Take a look at our new, improved, and oh so classy website today!

<http://www.leatherarchives.org>
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<http://www.leatherarchives.org>

Leather History Bibliography

<http://members.aol.com/olliassc/dsbib.html>

For the 1998 Leather Leadership Conference in New York City, slave david stein prepared a listing of historical reference material which he subtitled "towards a bibliography". While there is no single comprehensive history book, this list of resources provides historical information on many different people, places, events and subjects. The listing is available on the website listed to the left.



Leather History Yahoo! Group

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LeatherHistory>

Yahoo! Groups serve as an electronic meeting resource for many clubs, organizations, and general online discussions in our community. Did you know there's a group devoted specifically to history based subjects? If you're already a Yahoo! user, you can sign up at the URL listed to the right. Many leather / BDSM historians are members of the list, and regularly "chime in" on various history based topics. The group has an archive which can be used to research specific topics.

\$\$\$\$\$ LA&M Finances \$\$\$\$\$

...when the Board elected to hire a CPA as the Executive Director, they should have known there would be a whole page of the newsletter devoted to money....so here it is, like it or not!

LA&M 2003 Budget

Operating Budget - Cash Basis

Cash Inflows:	
Fundraisers	\$70,800
Memberships	4,450
Endowment Income	1,000
Gift Shop / Other	<u>6,700</u>
Total Cash Inflows:	\$82,950

Cash Outflows:	
Salaries, Taxes & Benefits	\$34,800
Archival Supplies / Utilities	21,100
Insurance	9,300
Admin / Maintenance	8,500
Professional Services	7,500
Contingency Fund	<u>1,750</u>
Total Cash Outflows:	\$82,950

Capital Budget - Cash Basis

Cash Inflows:	
Campaign Donations	<u>\$102,500</u>
Total Cash Inflows:	\$102,500

Cash Outflows:	
Xft to Balloon Reserve	\$71,500
Mortgage Payments	27,250
Capital Improvements	<u>3,750</u>
Total Cash Outflows:	\$102,500

There are two big challenges to meet this budget:

1) Membership: Currently, the LA&M has only 70 members. Certainly there are more than 70 people, businesses and organizations concerned with preserving a historical record of our community. If you're not a member, it only takes \$30 do to your part.

2) Capital Campaign. See the related article on this page.

Buying the Building... aka The Capital Campaign.... aka Buy a Brick.... aka Adopt a Room..... aka Call It What You Want....let's payoff this mortgage!

Numbers appearing in this article are as of December 31, 2002

We're rounding the final bend. August of 2004 is only 20 short months away. That's only 600 more days to complete the purchase of our history's home. Shortly after Joseph Bean became the first Executive Director of the LA&M in 1997, he wrote:

At first, half a million dollars seems like an impossibly high amount, but if just 1,000 leather men and women were to donate or raise \$500 each, we'd reach our goal. Seen in those terms, the amount, which is sufficient to buy, remodel and furnish a building in Chicago's current real estate market, doesn't seem so difficult.

Donor Thank You's:

Because we didn't publish a Fall 2002 newsletter, we have quite a few Thank You's to catch up on. The clubs and organizations listed at the right have donated to the LA&M between July 2002 and January 2003. A BIG Thank You goes out to all of these organizations. Many individuals have contributed funds during this period as well. It is the policy of the LA&M to not publish individual donor names without prior written consent. If you've personally donated money and would like to be recognized in this way, please contact the LA&M.

Here's what's happened so far:

7 individuals have stepped forward to raise enough money to adopt a room. About **80** individuals / couples and families have purchased bricks. About **50** clubs / organizations have purchased bricks. About **20** businesses have purchased bricks.

A list of all donors will appear in a summer issue of The Leather Journal and will be posted to the LA&M website soon.

Amount Raised To Date: \$270,357.16

Amount Left To Raise: \$229,642.84

If you can't reach into your pocket and pull out \$500, there is a monthly donation subscription plan. By donating just \$30 / month between now and August of 2004, you'll become a part of leather history.

- Alpha Beta Foundation
- Chicago Net Tech, Inc.
- Dungeon Bear Leathers
- GayCoffees.com
- Generic Leather Productions
- Hearts Foundation (Chicago)
- In Uniform / Andy Mangles
- International Masters Association
- International Mr. Leather
- Leather Knights
- Leather Literary Project
- Lifestyle Choices Legal Resources Center
- Touche

Thank You!

Leather Collection Update

by Natalie

The first time I showed up to volunteer at the LA&M Rick showed me a list of available projects. I couldn't believe it. No one was working on the actual leather. Feeling like I had just won the lottery, the work began.

After relocating the leather to its new location, we discovered that more space was needed. Rick quickly took care of that. The leathers were then organized. Next, we decided that the leathers needed to be conditioned more than they needed to be cataloged. So, for several months, I have

been working on conditioning the items. Some of the leather is from WWII and is quite deteriorated. Part of that process includes contacting leather experts since, as Rick often says, the work we're doing is "forever." The final part of the project will include obtaining the history of each item and recording this information for the LA&M database. Cataloging will begin in January of 2003.

There are a lot of reasons to volunteer at the LA&M. The first is the satisfaction that comes from being useful. Another is the opportunity to be a part of preserving the past.

Eventually, I was even able to make the work into my Chicago Leather Club (CLC) pledge project. Clearly the LA&M benefits from having volunteers. There is something about working at the LA&M that rekindles the optimistic desire to participate and be useful to others. I highly recommend it.



WALP

continued from p. 3

In "SM Before the Wild Side - SM women in Amsterdam in the 1980s, Renske Shut recounted the political debates, especially around "violence" and penetration that divided Dutch feminists. Indeed, the sex wars seemed to be as vociferous in Holland as they were on this side of the Atlantic. Between 1980-1985, the SM

women's groups "Slechte Meiden" organized two women's conferences and published Dutch translations of four SM books, including *Coming to Power* in 1983. Renske also handed out copies of the magazine *Slechte Meiden* that she had produced with her partner Janne Vlap for several years. Entirely in Dutch and beautifully photographed and illustrated, the magazine regularly translated articles

from Pat Califia and others in the US, UK, and GDR. A full series run of *Slechte Meiden* is available in the Homodok, and I also brought a few copies back for the LA&M.

For more information on this ongoing project, go the WALP website:

<http://www.walp.dds.nl/>

HVAC

continued from p. 1

spots, and needed to be as automatic as possible while keeping the cost as low as we possibly could without sacrificing the many items donated to the collection.

A reputable contractor in Chicago designed an air distribution system and ran ductwork just under the level of the ceiling in the Archives Room that routes that duct work down every aisle in the room. The ducts running down every aisle ensure the proper air circulation throughout the room, no matter how high the shelves are stacked. This ductwork is connected to an air handler that has both cooling and heating capabilities. When the humidity is too high, the controller turns on the air-conditioning. Because air-conditioning not only cools the air, but also pulls humidity out of the air that passes

through the equipment, this lowers the overall level of the humidity.

In the event that the humidity level is still too high and the air-conditioning equipment has cooled the room to the point that the thermostat is set, the controller then turns on an electric heating unit that is built into the fan housing.

During the winter months, the controller must perform a completely different function - it must heat the room to 68°, de-humidify the area if the humidity goes above 45% and, in the event that the humidity goes below 45%, it must add humidity to the room. When the humidity drops below the acceptable level of 45%, the controller starts up the humidifier that is attached to the blower system, automatically fills it with water, heats the water till it boils and makes the water into steam and then starts the blowers to circulate the humidified air

throughout the room.

A controller automatically runs the fans to circulate the air within the room for 6 minutes, three times each hour. This "stirs" the air within the aisles that the collectables are stored in and make certain that there are no "dead" spots that are too cold, too hot, too dry or too humid.

The installation was completed in September of 2002 and, while it took a few weeks to pull all of the residual humidity out of the books, papers, leather items and other items in the collections, it now holds the Collections Room at a steady temperature of 68° and a constant humidity of 45%.

Bruce Barnes is owner of ChicagoNetTech Inc and Rinella Internet Services in Chicago Illinois. You can reach him via his web site at <http://www.ChicagoNetTech.com> or via email at bbarnes@ChicagoNetTech.com.

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archives@leatherarchives.org

Donations and Tax Deductions:

The Leather Archives & Museum is recognized as tax exempt under the US Internal Revenue Service section 501c(3). Donations are deductible from your Federal Income tax subject to IRS deduction regulations.



Visiting the LA&M

The LA&M will have open visiting hours as follows:

Thursday 5 PM - 8 PM

Saturday 12 PM - 3 PM

Requests to see the museum outside of these times and requests to conduct research in the LA&M archives can be arranged by contacting the LA&M.

The LA&M Newsletter

If you have ideas or suggestions for future newsletter articles, please mail them to us, to the attention of:

Mark Collier, editor

or e-mail them to:

newsletter@leatherarchives.org

LA&M in your city

While the physical gallery and archives of the museum are located in Chicago, we seek to serve leather communities all over the world. Our board members travel to leather conferences and event weekends around the US. We currently have two travelling exhibits which also make appearances around the country. If you are an event organizer, and would like a travelling exhibit at your event, please contact Rick Storer.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Notice of Meeting of the Board of Directors

Saturday April 5th, 2003 at 11am

Leather Archives & Museum

6418 N. Greenview Ave.

Chicago, IL 60626

Voting members shall be notified of all Board of Directors meetings as noted above and shall have the right to attend and may participate in the directors meetings at the discretion of the Chair, however, Voting Members of the Corporation may not vote at Board of Director's meetings

I wish to become a member of the Leather Archives & Museum. Enclosed is my donation.

Name: _____

Club or Org.: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone (day or eve): _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

I will contribute:

\$30 and become a Member of the LA&M for one year

\$100 and become a Voting Member of the LA&M for one year

\$500 and become a "Full-Brick" donor to the LA&M building fund

\$600 and become a Voting Member & donor to the LA&M building fund

\$ _____ as a donation to the operation of the LA&M

I Represent

An Individual

An Organization

A Business

Please also send

Information about

a codicil to my will

Send information on

Donating Materials

Club Colors Project

Vacation Volunteers

Local Volunteering

Regional Volunteers

Major Cash Gifts

