



# ASERL Celebrates 60 Years: New Ventures & Longstanding Partnerships

**T**he 2016-17 program year marked ASERL's 60th anniversary. Legend holds that in February 1956, a group of library directors escaped the (relative) cold of Southern winters to gather at the then-new Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach to consider whether a new regional research library association could support their organizational and professional development needs. They established ASERL in early 1957 and thus began a long and colorful history, building important and enduring professional relationships between libraries and librarians across the Southeast. While the faces have changed with the passage of time, all of the libraries who were represented at the Fontainebleau Hotel more than 60 years ago remain members of ASERL to this day.

ASERL today is a very different organization, of course. After decades of being an all-volunteer organization, full-time staffing was secured in May 2000; leading to a full complement of programming, and activities reaching far beyond the library dean/director level as had long been the tradition. In this past year alone, ASERL launched several new ventures – from deployment of new software tools, to recording oral histories from past ASERL leaders, to new partnerships with other library consortia across the country. Looking ahead, we celebrate the enduring entrepreneurial spirit of our membership and rededicate ourselves to supporting member interests in fostering excellence in library services.

Research libraries continue to grapple with seemingly-endless demands for on-campus space in their

buildings. At the same time, the transition from large, print-centric library collections to electronic access to scholarly content continues. ASERL's numerous shared print programs encourage libraries to retain print materials of core importance to their university's mission. For example, the Collaborative Federal Depository Program allows participating libraries to build specialized collections of documents published by the federal government. Participants agree to catalog items when needed, share those improved collections, and provide expert subject services. This process allows libraries to “divide and conquer” the responsibilities of improving access to this large body of important print material.

Similarly, the Scholars Trust program, a partnership between ASERL, the Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC), and the Florida Academic Repository (FLARE), houses more than 28,000 print journal titles at library facilities across the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic. Most recently, the Scholars Trust program joined with several other well-known print retention efforts in other parts of the country to establish a new, cross-regional network, the Rosemont Shared Print Alliance. Through Rosemont, ASERL and its partners will greatly increase the number of journal titles that are protected by retention agreements and provide an unparalleled level of assurance that the scholarly record will endure well into the future.

These new and deep collection retention agreements are dependent on the decades of trusted resource sharing relationships enjoyed by ASERL libraries. ASERL offers an array of services to support members' interlibrary loan needs, from

a flat-rate courier service for physical deliveries, updated policies and processes to ensure reliable interlibrary loan services, to discounts on software tools to speed delivery of electronic content to users.

As electronic access to content becomes increasingly ubiquitous, a library's collections of rare and special materials take on new prominence. This past year, ASERL provided several opportunities for Special Collections leaders to collaborate, leading to the establishment of a Visiting Program Officer charged with developing a suite of ongoing programs to meet the needs of this community. The VPO will spend the next year developing profiles of members' needs and capacities, determining professional development interests, and drafting a plan for our first-ever shared online exhibit to premier in 2019.

Libraries across the country struggle with attracting and retaining a diverse workforce. Despite years of efforts, a recent Ithaka S+R survey documented that most academic libraries have not been successful in hiring people from unrepresented groups, especially at upper management levels. ASERL has undertaken a series of activities to bolster our members' efforts to build a workforce, collections, and services that better reflect the diverse communities they serve. One concrete step: A first-ever comprehensive ASERL library salary survey to help identify and resolve disparities in personnel compensation. ASERL is fully committed to supporting our members' Diversity and Inclusion needs into the future.

# COLLABORATIVE STEWARDSHIP FOR LEGACY PRINT COLLECTIONS & IMPROVING RESOURCE SHARING

## Rosemont Shared Print Alliance

In October 2015, ASERL became one of five library organizations to establish the Rosemont Shared Print Alliance, an organization committed to ensuring the preservation and availability of print journal literature. Partners include the Big Ten Academic Alliance, the Florida Academic Repository, Scholars Trust (includes ASERL and the Washington Research Library Consortium) and WEST (Western Regional Storage Trust). Together, our mission is to collaboratively develop, manage and coordinate the identification, retention, registration, discovery of and access to a shared, distributed collection of print journals in the United States. We aim to add 100,000 new print journal titles retained by our group by 2021, an ambitious and aspirational goal. We will add new partners to help us grow our retained titles and provide greater retention assurance through planned redundancy. For more information about Rosemont activities, see <https://www.rosemontsharedprintalliance.org/>.

## Collaborative Federal Depository Program

- Forty libraries have signed Memoranda of Understanding with ASERL to retain content published under the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). There are now 219 Center of Excellence collections covering 215 SuDoc stems and three content formats. Content published by six Cabinet-level federal agencies are protected under this program, and documents from 14 additional agencies are being retained by two libraries.
- Since the ASERL Disposition Database went online in 2012, more than 67,000 FDLP items posted for disposal have been adopted into new library collections, a significant growth in this information asset in the region.

## Scholars Trust Print Archive

- Together with our WRLC and FLARE partners, the Scholars Trust archive continues to grow: The archive contains 34,712 holdings records, of which 28,034 (80%) are unique titles within the archive.
- The JRNL database is being used by ASERL, WRLC, FLARE, TRLN and WEST to manage print journal archive holdings data. Another Rosemont partner – the Big Ten Academic Alliance – will also start using the JRNL database in the coming year.
- To ensure our efforts are known by and can be shared by other libraries, ASERL regularly provides data describing the content retained by Scholars Trust to the PAPR database, a national clearinghouse of journal retention data hosted by the Center for Research Libraries (CRL). In turn, CRL identifies possible errors in our data so inaccuracies can be corrected and re-submitted into the databases. Scholars Trust is also considering a new partnership with CRL to secure collection analytics to help guide future planning.

## Resource Sharing

- ASERL established its first no-fee, reciprocal resource sharing agreement in 1983. In 2013, the WRLC group of libraries signed onto the ASERL agreement, significantly increasing the breadth and depth of collections available to ASERL researchers. During this past year, ASERL and WRLC conducted a comprehensive review and update of our shared ILL policies to ensure our libraries and their patrons continue to enjoy top-notch service and efficient processing.

- ASERL also supported the development of the OBILLSK shipping portal developed by Texas Tech University. Two ASERL libraries (University of Kentucky and University of South Carolina) piloted-tested the software in their day-to-day operations. This innovative tool provides a better way for libraries to track the shipments of physical items they loan to other libraries. OBILLSK is scheduled for roll-out to libraries across the country in early 2018.
- During 2016-17, members of our Kudzu enhanced service group investigated options for implementing new technologies to streamline day-to-day operations. Due to upcoming changes in the underlying system that manages ILL services at OCLC, the group instead opted to create peer learning sessions focusing on optimizing the use of existing tools. This allows ASERL libraries to implement incremental service improvements at little or no cost in the short term until the future system (“Tipasa”) is ready and its functions and features are well understood.
- While the total number of items shared among ASERL libraries remain impressive, overall volumes for interlibrary loan statistics have seen surprising decreases in the past few years. Among all ASERL libraries, ILL volume via OCLC has decreased 14% since FY15; among Kudzu libraries, volume as reported via OCLC decreased 17% in the same time period. Data from libraries using ASERL’s RAPID-ILL service pod also saw a 13% decrease over the past two years. These declines are counter-intuitive and may reflect changes in data reporting processes that are not yet well known; it is an issue that would benefit from further investigation.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ASERL supports our members' professional development needs in a variety of ways. Our ongoing series of webinars share information about emerging programs, services, and best practices. In FY17 we offered 33 webinars to nearly 1,600 registrants. These sessions are offered at no cost to our members and guests, and recordings are posted on our website under a Creative Commons license to ensure anyone in the world can use the information. More than 2,100 people from 92 countries watched our webinars in FY17; the total viewing time for the recorded sessions exceeded 25 days.

ASERL also hosts twice-yearly membership meetings for our library deans/directors, to foster sharing of information and best practices in a close-knit, collegial setting – a “continuing education” program for deans and directors. In addition, we provide selected in-person conferences on topics suggested by our membership, including a bi-annual Scholarly Communication Unconference (“SCUNC”). We also regularly host professional networking sessions at the annual Charleston

Library conference and the Southeastern Library Assessment Conference. In the coming year we will offer with several new in-person events focusing on new roles for information literacy specialists, scholarly communications librarians, and those serving in faculty liaison roles.

## Top Five Webinars by 'Live' Attendance, 2016-17

1. Ithaka S+R's “Organizing the work of the research library” (136 ppl)
2. “Collaborative Grant-Seeking: A Practical Guide for Librarians” (114 ppl)
3. “Developing a Campus-Wide Research Lifecycle: Perspectives from the University of Central Florida Libraries” (95 ppl)
4. “College Art Association's Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for the Visual Arts” (59 ppl)
5. “Expanding Copyright Knowledge: The P2P Copyright Network at UNC-Chapel Hill” (51 ppl)

## Top Five Archived Webinar Recordings, 2016-17

1. Ithaka S+R's “Organizing the Work of the Research Library”: 128 plays
2. “Overview of Yewno Semantic-Anaysis Engine”: 118 plays
3. “Overview of BitCurator”: 91 plays
4. “What is Good Enough Collection Assessment?”: 66 plays
5. “Overview of HathiTrust's Shared Print Program”: 60 plays

## Top Five ASERL Webinar Users, 2016-17

1. Virginia Commonwealth University: 84 registrants
2. Clemson University: 72 registrants
3. George Mason University: 57 registrants
4. East Carolina University: 56 registrants
5. Georgia State University: 56 registrants

# OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS

ASERL operates 36 listservs to communicate with a wide variety of interest groups, both inside and beyond our membership. Through these channels we reach more than 1,000 subscribers. ASERL's social media presence continue to provide news, announcements, and highly-customized web links for our growing audience of followers.

Interestingly, although our site is designed primarily for use by our membership, ASERL's website continues to serve a large number of users from around the world. We had more than 24,000 views in 2016-17 from people in dozens of countries. Direct-linking session have increased significantly in the past year, indicating more persons are returning to the site via saved browser bookmarks or other ASERL-specific links they have received.



*Map: Users of ASERL webinar content from around the world.*

## Top Five Pages within ASERL's website, 2016-17

1. ASERL home page: 6,984 views
2. “About ASERL” page: 2,861 view
3. ASERL webinar archive home page: 2,257 views
4. ASERL Collaborative Federal Depository program home page: 1,382 views
5. ASERL-WRLC Resource Sharing home page: 1,305 views

## Top 5 Countries using ASERL's Website, 2016-17

1. United States: 10,627 visitors
2. United Kingdom: 181 visitors
3. Canada: 162 visitors
4. Russia: 135 visitors
5. China: 98 visitors

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Association of Southeastern Research Libraries, Inc.  
Balance Sheet for Period Ending June 30, 2017

## ASSETS

SunTrust Checking	7,400.72	
SunTrust Investments	40,418.69	
Commerce Bank Checking	606,256.06	
Accounts Receivable	288,944.01	
Pre-Paid Expenses - Projects	2,500.00	
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>\$945,519.48</b>

## LIABILITIES

CC Payable - Burger	12,818.38	
CC Payable - Cole-Bennett	95.98	
Unearned Income-Kudzu Project	6,338.48	
Unearned Income-Courier Svc	70,651.89	
Unearned Income-Digital Collections	16,000.00	
Unearned Income - Software Maint	23,701.00	
Unearned Income-Joint ILS	12,921.57	
Deferred Income-Courier Service	176,820.00	
Deferred Income-ASERL Dues	323,000.00	
Deferred Income-Project Fees	2,100.00	
Deferred Income-Gold Rush Colxn Analysis	16,400.00	
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>\$660,847.30</b>

## MEMBERS' EQUITY

Reserve Fund	252,461.48	
Net Income	32,210.70	
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS' EQUITY</b>		<b>\$284,672.18</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITY &amp; EQUITY</b>		<b>\$945,519.48</b>



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