Fifty Years of Cataloging Artifacts or What the Heck IS That?

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for the Oklahoma Library Association
April, 2010
Revised and expanded from a presentation given in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Southern California Technical Processes Group
April 1, 2009
“The Red Book”

ALA Cataloging Rules for Author and Title Entries.
“The Red Book”

Prepared by the Division of Cataloging and Classification of the American Library Association
A Little Card Catalog
In another incarnation
Adjustable Catalog Card Easel

Note the “Card Temporarily Withdrawn” card on the stand.
Mimeograph Machine

Librarians have long been on the cutting edge of technology – or in this case, the purple smudge.
Three Generations of Catalog Cards

Top: Hand typed
Center: LC Printed MARC card
Bottom: Computer printed from OCLC
Henriette Avram

Mother of MARC
Electric Eraser

With eraser refill by its side

The modern home version
Red Ink Pad

For marking the tops of subject cards in a dictionary catalog.
When the ink was depleted, the ink pad was refreshed by pouring new
ink in – a task avoided as long as possible, since the likelihood of spilling
was high.
Type Font Balls for Selectric Typewriters

Typewriter ribbons

Only the one with the pink box matches a typewriter currently held
Portable Hebrew Typewriter

This Hermes Rocket Typewriter is only eleven inches on a side.
Card Platens

Cards were stabilized by inserting the bottom edge into the metal strip that ran the length of the platen
The Virtual Museum of Cataloging and Acquisitions Artifacts

http://www.heidihoerman.com/museumca/index.html
Card Sorter

Note that this sorter could be used to sort alphabetically, or by Dewey classification range.

Photo from the “Virtual Museum.”
Filing Rules for the Dictionary Catalogs of the Library of Congress

The rules, known familiarly as Rather’s Rules, were 187 pages long.
Two of the four pages illustrating filing under religious orders.

Specifically that entries for religious denominations are arranged in four groups:
- General administrative entries;
- Local administrative entries;
- General subject entries;
- Local subject entries.
Brass Drawer Rods

Beautiful in their way. Note the different designs of the finials.
Card Flags

The red flag is metal. The blue flags are plastic, thus proving that even card flags can be modernized.
McBee Circulation Card

Notice the notch under the “R”

Photo from:  http://valinor.ca/mbee.html
Data Storage – Punched Paper to Magnetic Tape
Data Storage -- Floppy Disks to Flash Drives
IBM’s Antique Attic

• **Antique attic, vol. 3**
  - The nearly 400-year history of mechanized calculation was created by men and women with varying and diverse talents, temperaments, backgrounds and education, working in such fields as mathematics, the sciences, government, business and commerce. It is a history not just of singular inspiration and genius but also the continuing, collective discovery of new materials, skills, technologies and techniques to implement and enhance the plans and dreams of individual inventors and scientists. Down through the years, beginning largely in the 1930s, IBM has helped to chronicle and contribute to this history by collecting a number of significant counting and reckoning tools and devices -- including abacuses, slide rules, calculators, arithmometers and tabulators -- and by preserving some of its own and other pioneering products.

• In 2002, we put on virtual display more than 30 of the artifacts in IBM's historical collection of computing devices in the [Artifacts list for vol. 1](http://www-03.ibm.com/ibm/history/exhibits/attic3/artic3_intro.html) and [Artifacts list for vol. 2](http://www-03.ibm.com/ibm/history/exhibits/attic3/artic3_intro.html). Now, in this third and final exhibit, we're inviting you to see and learn about nearly 100 additional items in that collection by visiting our [Artifacts list for vol. 3](http://www-03.ibm.com/ibm/history/exhibits/attic3/artic3_intro.html).

Purchase Order Cards

Complete with aged brittle rubber band, stuck on the surface
Sortkwik and rubber fingertips

Items still in use
New Uses for Old Rubber Stamps

Mucilage by the Quart

One wonders how many carnivorous plants it might have taken to make this much mucilage.
Red Tape

The red dye is unstable, so many old rolls of red tape are now pale orange
Glue Brush

With Janet doing her Statue of Liberty impersonation at the Huntington Library
ALISE Panel, January, 2010

https://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/libs/ALISE_2010.cfm

L to R:
Elaine Yontz, Barbara Marson, Arlene Taylor, Michael Gorman, Janet Swan Hill

Front: AACR II in 1990 91
Verso: No Superimposition
We are nothing if not flexible