The Provenance Special Interest Group (SIG) was established in February 2013 to keep ARLIS/NA members informed of current issues and activities related to provenance research. The group additionally acts as a forum for provenance-related projects and seeks to contribute to ARLIS/NA sessions and workshops. Philip Dombowsky, Archivist, National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives, and Catherine Larkin, Associate Professor, Head, Digital Initiatives, Long Island University, currently serve as co-chairs of the Provenance SIG.

There was no annual meeting for the Provenance SIG at the annual conference held in New Orleans. During the summer, mainly through the encouragement of co-chair Catherine Larkin, the Provenance SIG put together a proposal for a session called “Common Ground: Provenance Research Agendas in Libraries, Archives and Museums” for the upcoming ARLIS/NA annual conference in New York. The proposal was accepted in July. Scheduled for February 27th, 2018, the session will be moderated by Samantha Deutch, Assistant Director, Center for the History of Collecting, The Frick Collection, and feature five speakers: Louis Adrean, Head, Research and Programs, Ingalls Library, The Cleveland Museum of Art; Philip Dombowsky, Archivist, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Rodica Tanjala Krauss, Head, Cataloging Projects, Frick Art Reference Library, Catherine Larkin, Associate Professor, Head, Digital Initiatives, Long Island University, and Lynn Rother, Senior Provenance Specialist, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. In the process of evaluating session proposals, ARLIS/NA CPAC identified the Common Ground” session as covering “a compellingly current topic” and one of four sessions to be recorded for inclusion on ARLIS/NA’s learning portal as part of New York’s Virtual Conference.

Alongside the planning of the “Common Ground” session, the Provenance SIG lined up a guest speaker, Anna Rubin from the Holocaust Claims Processing Office (HCPO), New York, for its annual general meeting to be held at the New York conference on February 28th. Ms. Rubin manages the daily operations of the HCPO program, including public relations, reporting to the New York State Superintendent of Financial Services. She also represents the HCPO at international conferences that focus on matters related to looted assets and...
restitution. In preparing the session, it was agreed that Ms. Rubin’s talk will highlight key aspects of provenance research through three restitution cases in which the HCPO has been involved. Following Ms. Rubin’s presentation, SIG members will have the opportunity to discuss projects for the upcoming year.

Interest in the Provenance SIG over the past year is at an all-time high, with 110 ARLIS/NA members expressing interest in the group through the ARLIS/NA membership form as of January 30, 2018. Given this level of interest, the co-chairs are looking forward to a productive year ahead.