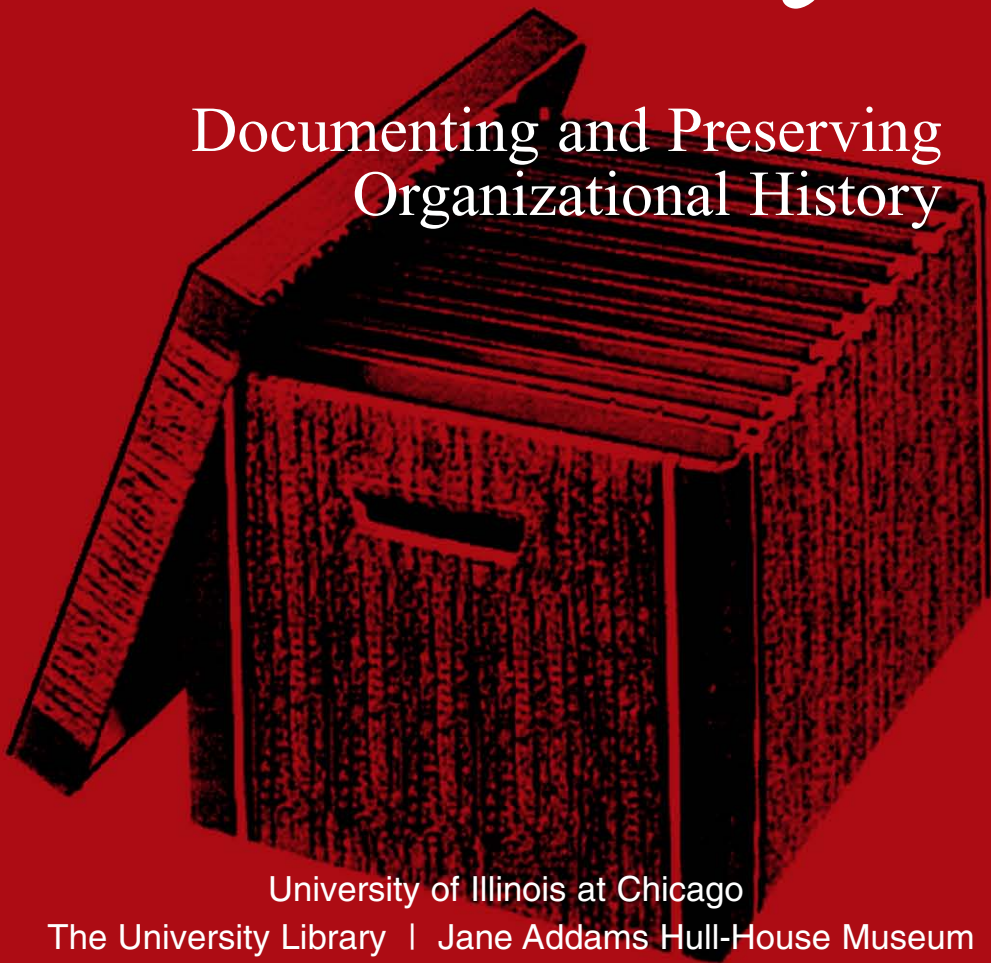


Don't Throw It Away!

Documenting and Preserving
Organizational History



University of Illinois at Chicago

The University Library | Jane Addams Hull-House Museum

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Don't Throw It Away!

Documenting and Preserving Organizational History

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2006



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Chicago Woman's Aid Newsletter, 1940
Chicago Woman's Aid Records (f. 22)
 Special Collections Department
 The University Library, UIC



The Chicago Woman's Aid takes this opportunity of presenting the new president, Mrs. Jesse R. Gerstley. May she find much joy in her new position in which we wish for her the complete realization of the goal she has set for the Club.

To Mrs. Samuel E. Hirsch, who has served the Club with such whole-hearted devotion we wish to tender our very deep appreciation.

Introduction

“Don’t Throw It Away! Documenting and Preserving Organizational History” encourages organizations, both large and small, to save and organize their office and project records. This guide is intended to assist staff members and volunteers to prepare a plan for the organization and maintenance of current records and historically important documents. It offers practical advice on providing security for records and setting up an in-house archives, as well as factors to consider should the organization want to deposit records in an institution. It also discusses the importance of records from the point of views of the organization’s, community’s, and researcher’s needs.

Organizational records not only document the work of an organization, they tell the story of the community and its people, their successes and the issues that they believe to be important. This guide is produced for community organizations to use as a tool in documenting and preserving their historic past.

The “Don’t Throw It Away!” project, of which the guide is an important component, began as a cooperative project of Gretchen Lagana, then Special Collections Librarian and Curator of the Jane Addams Hull-House; Mary Ann Bamberger, then Associate Professor and Assistant Special Collections Librarian; and Margaret (Peg) Strobel, then Professor of Women’s Studies and History. It was funded in 1995 by the Neighborhoods Initiative, Great Cities Institute, and supported by the University Library and Women’s Studies Program of the University of Illinois. The 2006 revision was funded by the Special Collections Department, University Library, and the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum. The title “Don’t Throw It Away!” was shamelessly borrowed from the title of a workshop organized by the Illinois Women’s Agenda and the Midwest Women’s Center [Chicago] for Illinois’s first Women’s History Month in 1980.

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Managing Organizational Records

In offices large and small, private and public, for-profit and not-for-profit, people create and destroy records, file and misfile them, and store them in boxes, desks, and cabinets. Eventually, the records accumulate and are a nuisance as they become more and more difficult to use and store.

Given all the demands on an organization, how can one justify spending scarce resources on managing these troublesome records? There are real advantages to controlling these records, and the expenditure, in terms of time, money, and personnel need not be great.

In fact, most groups are already taking steps to ensure an organized approach to their records. Every organization maintains certain records in an orderly manner—financial records necessary for meeting tax, payroll, or accounting obligations, for instance. In addition, groups maintain files of their important historical documents such as a constitution, bylaws, or articles of incorporation, and those that hold regular meetings generally keep files of the minutes of previous meetings. Furthermore, some organizations maintain scrapbooks, photo albums, and similar mementos of the group's activities and interests. Even if these records are not organized or arranged, their mere existence holds promise for the future success of an organization's records program.

A records maintenance program, usually referred to as a records program, is a systematic plan for dealing efficiently with organizational records. It is an important management tool, giving a group control over its records so that material is useful to the organization and the community. A records program establishes control through a system of Records and Information Management and facilitates the establishment of an organizational archives.

First, some definitions. (See Appendix A for a glossary.)

Organizational Records

Organizational records, the product of an organization's day-to-day activities, include memos and letters, minutes of meetings, newsletters, publicity materials, policy papers, and any type of printed record of the activities of the group and its members. Records may be temporarily useful—a phone message, for instance—or permanently essential for the operation of the organization, as in the case of the bylaws or constitution

governing the group. The latter records are important documents which should be preserved and permanently protected from loss, damage, or destruction. Records useful only for a short time can be discarded almost immediately. Other records are retained and filed for several years and then discarded.

Records and Information Management

Records and Information Management is a tool used by managers to determine which records to retain, and for how long, and which records to discard. It also includes tools to improve access to current records such as document management systems, standardized file plans, indexing, etc. The discipline of Records and Information Management applies tests and standards to an organization's records, determining their value both to the group and to other potential users. Records managers survey and categorize records by type and function. They evaluate each category to schedule records for retention and disposal.

Some records are permanently useful, either to the organization itself or to other interested parties. We say these records have permanent or archival value. If properly retained, organized, and preserved, these noncurrent records become the organization's archives. They reflect the values, activities, and goals of the organization. This body of records tells the story of the organization's past, and hence becomes the basis for understanding its history.

A common confusion stems from the fact that the term “archive” and “archiving” is sometimes used by some vendors and office managers to refer to scanning old files and email and putting them onto removable media or separate servers. While scanning for ease of storage is an important part of a records program, an archives should also ensure that the records will be accessible, authentic, and reliable for decades, or even centuries in the future—a task that requires a more deliberate effort by the organization than simply scanning files.

Backing up data, while critical in protecting an organization's data, is not a records program. Backup programs generally copy all files at a particular moment in time. Generally, backup tapes and disks are stored offsite as well. While this is important if a computer drive fails and needs to be replaced, it is not an efficient way to store and locate older files, especially in the event of a time critical event such as litigation. A records program will ensure that records documenting when and why a decision was made are able to be located in a timely manner, without a person searching through a box of backup DVDs to locate a particular file.

Hull-House Boys Club Membership List, 1907
 Juvenile Protective Association (f. 171)
 Special Collections Department
 The University Library, UIC

9 Aug 2-3
 1907

Hull-House Boys Club

Members in joining the club pledge themselves to behave in a quiet and orderly manner, and to take good care of the games and books entrusted to them.

1.	Anaba Ferraro	265 Faguer	-15-	Italian	Newsboy
2.	Jony Marr	94	-14-	"	School
3.	Jas. Petrillo	114 Shotts	-15-	"	Printer
4.	Dominic Di Cosola	116 Ewing	-16-	"	High Sch
5.	Miss Masters	135 Ewing	-16-	"	Clerk
6.	Jony Carbonara	133 Sangamon	-18-	"	Adj. Co
7.	Joe	"	-16-	"	"
8.	Andrew Cavello	339 S. Dupl	-18-	"	Grand Party
9.	Jos Petras	295 W. Taylor	-17-	"	High Sch
10.	Joe Larussi	238 Sangam	-16-	"	Book-binder
11.	Loy Mgralbs	110 DeKoven	-16-	"	Printer
12.	Henry Ferrone	365 W. Taylor	-17-	"	News-boy
13.	Jay Crapple	292 W. Taylor	-17-	"	School
14.	George Lependa	240 Faguer	-18-	"	Plumber
15.	David Siegel	344 S. Halsted	13-	Jewish	School
16.	Jacob Grossman	437 S. Halsted	15	American H	School
17.	Harry Stone	587 Taylor	12	Jewish	School
18.	Charles Stone	587 Taylor	13	Jewish	School
19.	Sam Goldman	306 S. Halsted	15	Jewish	M. Jackson
20.	Frank Di Cosola	116 Ewing	18	Italian	H. School
21.	Joseph Di Cosola	"	19	"	U. M. C. A.
22.	Michael Mese	217 De Koven	15	"	Donalme
23.	Joney Desdemone	78 Ewing	14	"	Acme Box Co
24.	Thomas Dillon	365 S. Centre	18	Irish	Stone repairing

Advantages of a Records Program

Benefits to the Organization

The advantages to setting up a program to deal with past, current, and future records are considerable. They include not only tangible, practical advantages but also intangible, philosophical ones. First, some practical benefits:

Order and efficiency – Having a system in place guarantees that records are filed in a logical, orderly fashion to facilitate retrieval. Whenever records are needed, it is a simple matter to confirm their existence, determine their location, retrieve, and consult them, all with a minimum of labor.

Daily operations – Daily operations frequently require the use of noncurrent records. For example, a report outlining the organization's achievements is significantly easier to produce if an organizational archives exists. Much of the information necessary for this report is readily accessible to produce an accurate account of the group's past activities.

Advertising, promotion, and public relations – Organizational archives are useful in advertising, promotion, and public relations. A group's past successes are a drawing card in attracting interest, commitment, and contributions, whether in the form of civic and political support, volunteers, or even financial donations. Being able to discuss, document, and illustrate past activities lends an organization credibility in its current efforts. An archives puts a group's history to work and translates past glories to current political capital. Successful programs developed and implemented five, ten, or twenty years ago demonstrate the organization's credibility, strength, and longevity.

Strategic planning – Likewise, the existence of an archives gives a real boost to strategic planning. Current members can look back at their group's history to learn which efforts were successful or unsuccessful in the past, and why. Knowledge and understanding of previous errors, as well as previous successes, can determine future strategy. An archives reveals in black and white which activities were advantageous to the organization and its intended beneficiaries. Current areas of interest are compared with past efforts and evaluated in terms of their potential for the future.

Litigation – Finally, archives are useful for legal purposes. Whether defending itself against actual or threatened litigation, or acting as

plaintiff, the organization can rely on the archives. In legal proceedings, information is power, and the archives generally contains accurate, unbiased, and readily available information for a legal strategy that is beneficial to the organization.

Besides all of these practical advantages to maintaining an archives, there are also some intangible benefits:

Organizational pride – An archives contributes to the organization's sense of pride and improves morale among members and beneficiaries. An exhibit of materials culled from the organizational archives illustrates a group's history, stimulates enthusiasm, and may even encourage members to maintain the group's standards and promote its future. Organizational pride is more than empty vanity: it helps motivate the membership and creates a climate of strength and conviction.

Social responsibility – An archives contributes to the organization's overall goal of promoting social responsibility. If the organization exists to provide a benefit to the community, and to improve the moral, political, or social climate, then maintaining an archives is an act of social responsibility in itself. An archives preserves historical information about the organization by documenting its past. This documentation is invaluable to society and is informative and educational to a variety of potential archives' users.

Benefits to the Community

When organizations maintain archival records of their past, the public benefits because the records often have educational or historical value.

The records of all types of organizations are available for public use in archives repositories throughout the country and are in great demand by researchers. Large national groups as diverse as the Sierra Club, National Urban League, YWCA, and Salvation Army make their historical records available through a repository to researchers, including school children, college students, professors, authors, filmmakers, teachers, journalists, artists, and genealogists. Small, local groups likewise find that their records are used by researchers to produce term papers, books and articles, news programs, documentaries, exhibits, and plays.

Researchers investigate the archival records of organizations not only to find out about the group itself, its members, leadership, structure, and activities, but also to discover whatever they can about the topics, issues, and principles of interest to the organizations.

Neighborhood organizations, for example, participate in and promote grass-roots political organizing, citizen participation in government,

voluntarism, and social activism. Students and scholars investigating these topics, as well as related disciplines such as immigration or ethnicity, discover invaluable information in the archival holdings of these groups.

In summary, organizations benefit themselves and the public by directing some of their efforts towards preserving their records, organizing them, and making them available for use to those inside and outside the group. The commitment to responsible record-keeping begins with records maintenance.

*Saul Alinsky at the FIGHT headquarters, undated
Industrial Areas Foundation Records (f. 1742)
Special Collections Department
The University Library, UIC*



Menu, Hull-House Kitchen, undated
Hull-House Collection (f. 691),
Special Collections Department
The University Library, UIC

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	Cream of Celery
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Roast Beef	30 " " "
Mutton Stew,	10 " " "
Beef Stew,	10 " " "
Corned Beef Hash,	15 " " "
Steamed Rice,	10 " " "
Rice Pudding—in Bowls,	10 " each

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Records Maintenance

The functions of records maintenance include the following essential components:

- Organizing and filing records
- Identifying which records to retain, and for how long

Organizing Current Records

Current records should be arranged and filed for efficient retrieval and handling. Deciding how to file records need not be complicated; it begins with a careful look at the records currently in use. Are they already filed in a way that allows for quick access? Is the current system logical, consistent, and reasonably convenient? Could a newcomer interpret and understand it? If so, there is probably no need to change the system. An existing system that works well for the organization should be left in place. On the other hand, if the existing system is cumbersome, idiosyncratic, or even non-existent, then the records require some type of orderly filing system.

The first step in setting up a new arrangement for current office records is to focus on the daily operational needs of the organization. There are three primary methods of filing organizational records:

- Department or function
- Subject or topic
- Chronology

An organization might choose one of these methods of arrangement or, more likely, combine two or all three methods.

Department or function – Filing records by department or function is usually the most successful method of arrangement. It has the advantage of clearly demonstrating the activities, functions, and structure of the organization that created the records and is the preferred arrangement for archival records. This method brings together all records documenting a specific activity within the organization. For example, “Board of Directors,” “Committees,” “Publicity Department,” and “Financial Records” are some of the headings under which records might be filed.

Subject or topic – An organization with a less formal structure might file its records under topic headings which reflect the work of the group. Headings such as “Immigration,” “Voting,” and “Education” are examples. This arrangement poses problems as topics begin to overlap or intersect, or as the list of topics becomes unwieldy. However, if the topics are limited in number,

clearly defined, and distinct from one another, this is a successful system.

Chronology – A small, very narrowly focused organization can file its records in simple chronological order. This method does not work well for a large, diversified, far-reaching organization. It is, however, adequate to meet the needs of a group that deals primarily with a single issue, topic, or project, and whose records are not voluminous.

When developing standardized file plans, it is also important to consider all of the records created daily at the organization and not just those printed on paper. How are important files stored: on individual desktop computers or in shared servers? Are files named in a standardized manner? How is the copy of record identified? Do individuals keep all of their e-mail in the inbox or in separate directories? How is email containing important information separated from transitory messages or spam? A standardized policy across the organization will improve its ability to find important files, including spreadsheets, database files, and email messages. Having a standard policy and format both enhances the organization's ability to meet its business, financial, and legal needs and improves access to its historical records.

A records program should also have a disaster plan that covers all contingencies, from local failures such as a virus or a broken hard drive making a key business file unreadable through an organization-wide disaster such as a fire or flood that destroys the organization's headquarters. The methodology that goes into prioritizing key records for recovery in a disaster will also help in identifying what records may have long-term historical value as well.

Many organizations combine these methods of file arrangement. A majority of records are filed according to the department that produced them, and subdivided by topic, subject, or chronology.

Identifying Records for Retention

Making decisions about the disposition of file drawers or boxes full of records, however well organized they may be, at first seems like an overwhelming task. It helps to begin by surveying records, using a records survey worksheet (see Appendix B). Fortunately, most records fall into major categories which are consistent from one organization to the next. Standard guidelines, known as record retention schedules, contain recommendations on scheduling many types of records for retention or disposal. Retention schedules generally include a list of record types with a recommendation for how long to retain the record before it is discarded, destroyed, or transferred to the archives. Retention schedules, in varying degrees of thoroughness and detail, are available in a number of Records

and Information Management publications (see Appendix C). Of course, while published schedules are helpful, the guidelines are general and cannot address every organizational need.

Therefore, in addition to using published retention schedules, organizations must evaluate their records and determine retention periods based on the life cycle of the records. The life cycle of a record has three stages:

Stage 1: Active Use – The record is currently in use and/or is referred to frequently.

Stage 2: Semi-Active Use – The record is not in current use but is still referred to on occasion.

Records in Stages 1 and 2 are retained and stored for as long as they are useful to the organization, whether that be for six months or ten years. They are usually readily available in a nearby file cabinet, on desktop computers, or on shared servers available to all staff who need to use the files. In stage 2, records that are rarely used may be copied onto optical disks, magnetic tape, or separate files/servers to ensure the systems can work at full efficiency. Very few records, if any, are actually in active or semi-active use after ten years. Records no longer in use are in the final stage of the life cycle, Stage 3.

Stage 3: Disposition – The record is no longer in current use. It is rarely or never needed for reference. It is no longer needed for legal or financial purposes.

Most records in Stage 3 are destroyed, discarded, or deleted. However, some records have continuing historical value and are retained for the archives.

Deciding which records have historical value is more an art than a science. Standardized lists of archival records, such as the one in Appendix D, while helpful in aiding decision-making, are never the final authority in determining the permanent value of records. Records illustrating the purpose, activities, and core values of an organization are archival records and should be preserved.

Generally, only a fraction of the organization's records have lasting historical value. It is important to avoid preserving merely the organization's highlights and memorabilia, such as awards, plaques, and positive publicity. These mementos do have sentimental value and should be retained in the archives; they are useful in exhibits and publicity efforts, for they illustrate the organization's history.

However, the real substance of the organizational archives is found in those records that demonstrate the goals, decisions, programs, and policies of the organization. Records with archival value answer these important questions:

- Why and how was the organization formed?
- What were the organization's priorities?

- How and why did the group's focus change over time?
- Who provided guidance and leadership within the organization?
- What role did the organization play within the community?
- What impact has the organization made?

Digitization technology can give organizations a powerful tool to improve access to its semi-inactive and historical records. Digitized records take up little physical space and can be easily shared using networked servers, websites, optical disks, etc. However, digitization projects can be very expensive and should only be entered into after conducting a great deal of research and planning. Paper records can easily be put into storage and pulled out as needed for closer examination. Electronic records will require an ongoing commitment from the organization to prevent them from becoming a pile of disks or tapes that cannot be played on any technologies currently being used by the organization. A retrospective digitization project should not simply scan all of an organization's older files, only those that still have ongoing value to the organization. (See the section on preservation, page 20, for some questions to consider before digitizing any older records.)

If an organization does decide to digitize its older records, it may still want to consider depositing the original paper records, as well as the electronic versions, in either an in-house archives or an external repository.

Gray Panthers Newsletter, 1977
Gray Panthers of Chicago Records (f. 453)
Special Collections Department
The University Library, UIC



Organizational Archives: To Keep In-house or Donate?

Once archival records are identified, the question of what to do with them soon becomes urgent. By their very definition, archival records are valuable. Even when they have no monetary worth they are valuable to the organization that created them as well as to scholars and other potential researchers.

Organizations must provide for protection and maintenance of their records. They need protection from inadvertent damage, destruction, or loss, and also from environmental damage caused by dust, light, humidity, and extremes of temperature. The question arises: should the organization administer its own archives, or place them in an archival repository that assumes responsibility for arranging, describing, preserving, and providing access to the records? There are advantages and disadvantages no matter which choice is made. Each organization evaluates its situation and arrives at a decision appropriate to its own needs.

Major considerations in deciding whether to maintain an in-house archives or to place the records with an archival repository include the following:

- Ownership and control
- Access
- Confidentiality
- Cost effectiveness, funding
- Preservation
- Security
- Continuity of care

Ownership and Control

In-house archives – An in-house archives guarantees the organization complete control and ownership of its archival records.

Archives repository – By donating records to a repository, an organization generally forfeits ownership. Some repositories accept records on deposit, meaning that the organization retains ownership and the repository merely provides storage for the records. This is an unusual arrangement, however, and most repositories are reluctant to accept records on deposit, unless there is the likelihood that the records will be donated. When records are accepted on deposit, the repository will

generally not apply its full range of professional services to records which could be withdrawn from the repository at any time. To benefit fully from the archival services available at a repository, the records should be donated outright.

Archival institutions strive to maintain a positive ongoing relationship with donors. The archivist's code of ethics (see Appendix E) requires the repository to handle the records responsibly and uphold the trust of donors. Before any records change hands, it is in the best interest of both donor and recipient to negotiate issues of ownership and control to the satisfaction of both parties.

Access

An organization must consider who will need access to the records, how frequently and for what purpose, and then decide how those requirements for access are best met.

In-house archives – An on-site repository obviously allows for more immediate access by the organization. If the records are kept in the group's own office space, they are readily available for use whenever they are needed. However, if the organization's archives is used by scholars, students, activists, or community people, an in-house archives must establish "use guidelines" to accommodate these clients. If this outside use becomes frequent and regular, demands on the organization become a burden.

Archives repository – When organizations donate their archives, the repository assumes responsibility for providing access to the records. For most repositories, this means more than simply storing the records and throwing open the door to all interested users. The following are the ways in which repositories promote access:

- Provide a reading room and tables for use by researchers, and supply facilities for photocopying and/or photographic reproduction of records. Organize and arrange records in a manner consistent with archival practices and principles (see Appendix F).
- Produce written descriptions of the records, or "finding aids." Finding aids provide information about the organization that created the records, an explanation of how the records are arranged and filed, and guidance about using the records to research various subjects or topics. Creating these finding aids requires a major commitment of time and resources by the repository and benefits both outside researchers and users within the donor organization.

- Provide such reference services as answering questions about the records and offering assistance to researchers. As a courtesy to donors, the repository's staff may search records in response to requests by the donor organization, as well as provide complimentary photocopies, free consultations on Records and Information Management or related topics, and other services as needed.

For an organization, sometimes the services that a repository offers in order to provide access to the records offset the disadvantages of not having the records on-site.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of records is an issue of concern. Some organizations decide that confidential material should not be part of the archives, even if the records in question have archival value. Others decide against donating their records to a repository because they fear exposing confidential information. Any public use of an organization's archives has the potential to expose confidential information. This is true whether the organization maintains its own archives or donates them to a repository.

In-house archives – An in-house archival operation allows the organization direct control of its own confidential records. However, unless the organization takes time to inspect all of its archival records in considerable detail, it may not be aware of sensitive material scattered throughout the records.

Archives repository – In the process of arranging, describing, and creating finding aids for records, the staff at a repository are likely to locate and identify confidential materials. Since some confidential records have significant research value, it is preferable not to remove them from the archives. Archival repositories are accustomed to managing and providing public access to confidential records. There are several ways researchers are allowed limited access to sensitive records without compromising the organization's need to safeguard confidentiality.

Repositories restrict access to confidential records using any or all of the following methods:

- Names and other personally identifiable information, such as social security numbers, may be redacted. This process is labor intensive, but it gives researchers access to sensitive files while protecting the individuals involved.
- Confidential records may be closed to researchers for a specified period of time, i.e., for ten years, twenty years, or even for the lifetime of individuals named in the records, if appropriate.

- Researchers may be required to describe their research in a formal written request to use confidential records. Access is then granted on a case-by-case basis, as the repository and/or donor determine whether access is justified. In some cases, researchers will be denied access to records, or they will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement as a condition of use.

It is part of the archivist's job to balance the researcher's need for access with the need for confidentiality. The repository and the donor organization, in consultation, determine which restrictive measures provide the best protection for the organization while still permitting access to these records.

Cost Effectiveness/Funding

In-house archives – Although it is not prohibitively costly to operate an in-house archives, there are some expenses. Proper maintenance of an archives requires ample space to store the records, personnel to manage them, and materials to house and protect them. Some of these may be available at little or no cost, but it is unlikely that an archives program could be properly maintained without any expenditure of funds.

Archives repository – Donating records to a repository is usually cheaper than setting up and operating an in-house archives. An archival repository provides the personnel for arranging and describing the records, and purchases any special archival-quality storage materials—for example, folders, boxes, etc.—that are needed for the storage of records.

Preservation

Archival records require protection from a variety of potential perils. Light, moisture, dust, vermin, and extremes of temperature can harm paper records as well as other media, including computer disks, audio and video tapes, and photographs. Any potential long-term home for archival records should be evaluated in terms of its ability to provide protection from these elements.

Electronic records, whether born digital or scanned, present many long-term retention issues. At the present time, there is not a simple way to store electronic records in a way that will ensure they will still be readable decades into the future. Preserving electronic records will require an ongoing program by the organization. In their book *Electronic Records Retention: New Strategies for Data Life Cycle Management*, David O. Stephens and Roderick C. Wallace identify the following issues that should

be carefully considered in both digitization projects and in planning the long-term preservation of born digital files:

- Only select data for preservation based on sound selection methodology.
- Select the appropriate storage media.
- Perform data migration/digitization.
- Standardize file formats being used by the organization.
- Address metadata issues such as: Where did these records come from? How, why and when were they created, updated, or changed? What was the intended purpose or function of the records? How can they be opened and read? Who should have access to read or change these records? How are they related to other software and data being used by the organization?
- Ensure that information is kept that explains what systems and software were used to create and store electronic files. This is especially important for complex databases that may contain all of an organization's ongoing business.
- Store the media properly.
- Perform proper media management tasks.

In-house archives – Organizations operating an in-house archives can purchase archival storage containers, available from a number of mail-order companies (see Appendix C).

These containers provide protection from light, dust, and vermin. Even if temperature and humidity controls are not available in an in-house archives, central heating and air-conditioning provide an environment that protects records from exposure to wide fluctuations or extremes of temperature.

Preservation also entails protecting records from damage during use. Archival records must be handled carefully during administrative or research use to prolong their life and delay deterioration. An in-house archives should also establish guidelines for handling its records. To protect the records from damage, the guidelines must be enforced whether the user is a member of the organization itself or an outside client. Improper handling usually occurs as a result of ignorance rather than malice, and all users should be monitored. Repositories employ personnel trained to supervise the use of records and to instruct users in proper record handling techniques.

Archives repository – Furthermore, many, but not all, archival repositories have storage areas with temperature and humidity controls, and it is standard practice in repositories to house records in archival storage containers.

Security

Adequate security protects records from theft by authorized and unauthorized users from within and outside the organization. Security is an issue for all archives, whether or not their records have any monetary value. The motivation for archival theft may be a desire to own or control the information contained in the records or a desire to bypass regulations or restrictions on their use. Theft occurs at the hands of an organization insider, for example, a staffer who takes archival records home, as well as by outsiders, as in the case of a scholarly researcher who filches documents to avoid photocopy fees, or to prevent others from gaining access to the records.

In-house archives – Providing security for an in-house archives involves storing the records behind locked doors. A responsible person should supervise all archives users.

Archives repository – A repository stores archival records in locked storage areas accessible only to the archives staff and provides continuous staff surveillance of the reading room. Most repositories take security seriously by having a rigorous security program in place, including:

- A requirement that researchers show identification
- A requirement that researchers read and sign a list of the repository's rules and regulations
- Lockers to store researchers' personal belongings
- A strict limit on the amount of archival material researchers can have at their desks at any one time
- Searches of researchers' belongings before they leave
- Security devices such as video cameras, surveillance mirrors, and alarms

Continuity of Care

A successful archives, whether in-house or at an archives repository, requires continuity. If staffing, funding, or operation of the archives is intermittent and unreliable, the basis foundation of the archives program is jeopardized.

In-house archives – Any proposed in-house archives must meet the test for continuity of care: Does the archives have the support of the organization as a whole? Can the organization guarantee continuity of personnel, financial backing, and storage space? What will happen to the archives in the future if the organization faces a financial crisis, a reorganization, a merger, or even a period of dormancy? Contingency plans for the archives should be in effect in case of organizational upheaval.

Archives repository – An established archival repository is likely to provide excellent continuity of care. Even if faced with personnel changes or financial cutbacks, an archival repository is unlikely to relax its professional standards. Its entire existence is devoted to preserving archives. A reputable archival repository guarantees continuity of care regardless of circumstances.

*Correspondence, 1969
Midwest Committee for Military Counseling Records (f. 59)
Special Collections Department
The University Library, UIC*

RECEIVED NOV 24 1969 Santa Ana, Ca, 92703
American Friends Service
Dear Dave Fink,
John Miller a friend of mine wrote me a letter concerning the American Friends Service and his conversation with you about my Selective Service problem. I write to inform you about what information I have on my case.
I am incarcerated in Orange County Jail serving six months. I have been indicted in Illinois for Failure to Report for Induction.

*Broadside, undated
Hull-House Collection (HHA neg # 33)
Special Collections Department
The University Library, UIC*

**ABOLISH THE
SWEATING SYSTEM
MASS MEETING**

FOR THE DISCUSSION OF THE PROBLEM
WILL BE HELD ON

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, MARCH 8
BEGINNING AT 2 O'CLOCK, IN

CENTRAL MUSIC HALL

Under the auspices of the Residents of Hull House.
MISS ADDAMS will preside.

Good Speakers will address the meeting,
among others

JOHN FRANEY
Assistant Chief Factory Inspector of New
York State, who will explain

THE SULZER BILL
Now before Congress and intended to enforce Inter-
state Regulation of Tenement House Manufacture:

REV. THOMAS HALL & MRS. FLORENCE KELLEY
State Inspector of Factories.

COME AND LEARN WHY ILLINOIS CAN NO
LONGER TOLERATE SWEATSHOP TENEMENT
HOUSE MANUFACTURE.
WHY NEW YORK IS COMMITTED TO ITS
ABOLITION.

Eight-Hour Herald Print 148 Monroe St., Chicago.

The In-house Archives

Establishing an in-house archives requires a commitment of time, money, personnel, and facilities. The extent of the commitment depends on many variables, including the size of the organization, the purpose of the archives, and the condition of existing organizational records, to name a few.

The first step in establishing an in-house archives is to ask some basic questions:

- What is the organization's purpose in starting an archives?
- How will the archives fit into the structure of the organization and what will its mandate be?
- Who will use the archives? Will it be open to the public and to researchers from outside the organization?
- Will there be a formal Records and Information Management program?
- How will the organization fund the archives?

The answers to these questions help establish guidelines and set parameters for the project. These are philosophical questions about which the organization's members must reach a consensus. The archives will be more successful if it has the support of the membership as a whole and if there is an absence of controversy.

After determining the philosophical underpinnings of the archives, the organization must grapple with the nuts and bolts of setting up an archival program. The basic requirements for a nascent archival program fall into four broad categories:

- Personnel
- Facilities
- Equipment
- Supplies

Personnel

The minimum staff for a small in-house archives is one part-time archivist. The archivist might be a member of the organization, either a paid employee or volunteer, or even a volunteer or employee recruited from outside the organization. However, an archivist from outside the organization needs a liaison, preferably a person in a leadership position within the organization, as the primary advocate for the archives.

The archivist should possess the ability to establish a records program

and communication skills to provide instruction to staff members. The organization, in turn, should provide ongoing support for the archivist. That support may include continuing education about archival techniques and practices including appraisal, arrangement, and description of archival records. (For guidance on arranging and filing archival records see Appendix F: Principles of Archival Arrangement). Information about support and continuing education is available from:

Society of American Archivists

www.archivists.org
600 S. Federal, Suite 504
Chicago, IL 60605
(312) 922-0140
info@archivists.org

ARMA International

www.arma.org
13725 W. 109th Street, Suite 101
Lenexa, KS 66215
(913) 341.3808, (800) 422.2762
hq@arma.org

Assistance is also available on an informal basis from local archives repositories and by networking with area archivists.

Facilities

Space – Most archival facilities include a storage area for records, a work area for organizing and processing the records, and a reading room in which users examine archival records. In a small archives, all of these functions may occur within a single room, but the areas should be distinct from one another to maintain a logical work flow. The archives should have enough space for current needs and future growth.

Environmental controls – The room should have central heat and air conditioning to provide adequate environmental protection for the records. The ideal temperature for archival storage is 67 degrees Fahrenheit, plus or minus 2 degrees Fahrenheit, with relative humidity of 47 percent, plus or minus 2 percent. Fluctuations in temperature and humidity are especially harmful to records, however, so the archives should strive to maintain a consistent environment even if temperature and humidity levels are not ideal.

Security – The entrance to the archives should be equipped with a lock for adequate security and should remain locked when not in use. An interior room, without windows or exterior doors, provides the best security.

Equipment

The facility should contain the following furniture and equipment:

- Tables providing separate workspaces for the archivist and archives patrons
- A networked computer with a suite of office software, including word processing software and a spreadsheet program. The archivist may choose to purchase archival management software such as “Re:Discovery”, or create a custom database using software such as MS Access.
- A scanner
- Steel shelving, sufficient for projected growth, on which to store archival records
- A telephone
- Proximity to a photocopy machine
- Proximity to photoreproduction services

Supplies

The extra expense of purchasing archival-quality storage materials is money well spent. These materials are strong, long-lasting, and will protect archival records from the acid and fumes that leach from standard office supplies. Manila folders, PVC plastics, and ordinary corrugated cardboard all emit harmful chemicals that migrate to archival records, causing them to discolor, weaken, and break down over time. An archives is an investment in the future and archival, quality storage materials protect that investment for years to come.

Even a beginning archives can establish sound preservation practices by using only safe, archival-quality storage materials. All paper and board stock in contact with archival records should be acid-free and buffered with an alkaline reserve and a pH of 8.5 to prevent the rapid deterioration of the records. Materials that meet these requirements are available from numerous archival supply vendors. Some of the more widely used sources are listed in Appendix C. These suppliers offer a wide range of boxes, folders, and papers of all types and sizes to meet virtually any need. Basic supplies required in a beginning archives include the following:

Records storage boxes – These large, corrugated cardboard boxes (approximately 13" x 16" x 10") with removable lids and recessed handles, hold upright legal-size or letter-size folders, depending on which way the folders are oriented within the box. Boxes are shipped flat and assembled at the archives. Because of their bulky size they are cumbersome to handle and, when full, are heavy and difficult to retrieve from high shelving.

Document boxes – These smaller, sturdy boxes are easier to handle and transport. They are available in both legal-size and letter-size lengths. The boxes have an attached flip-top cover, reinforced metal edges, and pull ties for easy retrieval from shelving. The most popular size is about five inches deep, although a slimmer three-inch version is also available.

Flat storage boxes – These boxes allow weak, flimsy, damaged, or oversize archival records to lie flat for storage, rather than upright as in the records storage and document boxes. Flat storage boxes have a removable lid, metal-reinforced corners, and an optional drop-front bottom to allow insertion and removal of records with less chance of bending or damage. These boxes are available in a wide range of sizes, from about 8" x 10" to as large as 20" x 24", in depths from 1 1/2" to 3".

File folders – Archival file folders look like acidic manila folders except for their color, which may be green, tan or white, depending on the maker. They are available with index tabs, or with the more desirable straight-cut reinforced top. They are available with scored bottoms to allow upright storage in the records storage boxes and document boxes.

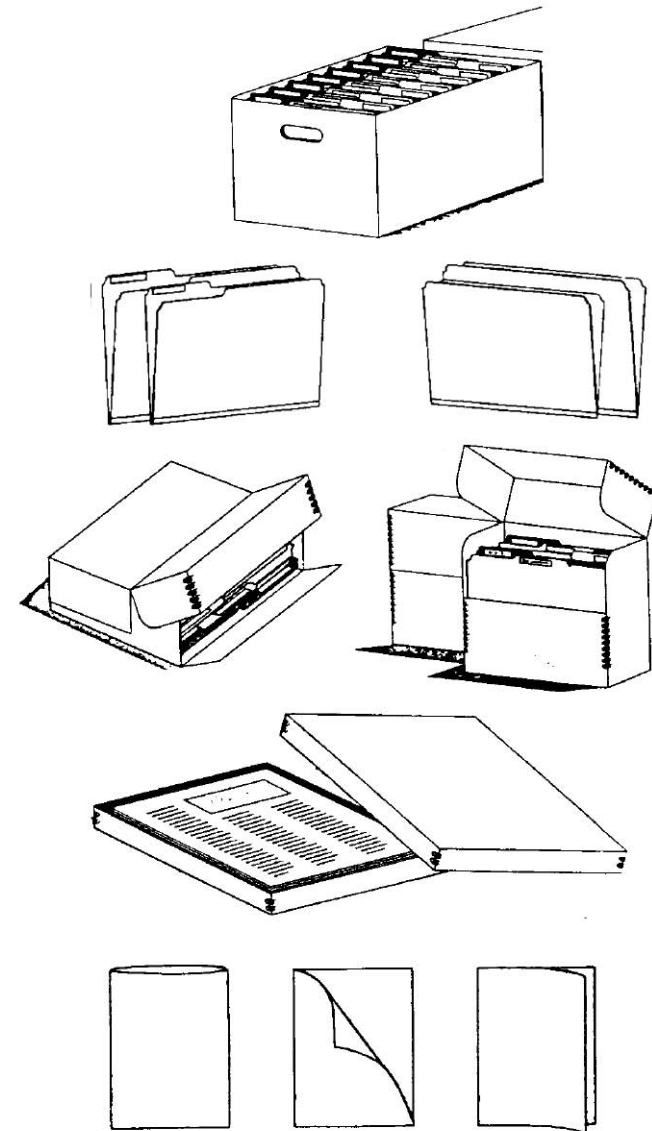
Mylar photo sleeves – These polyester sleeves are transparent. They protect photographs from dust and excessive handling, reducing the chance of photos being bent, torn, or dog-eared from use. Some sleeves are hole-punched for storage in ring binders, or they can be placed in file folders and stored upright or flat. The sleeves are available in a variety of sizes, divided into pockets designed to provide storage for photos, negatives, and transparencies in a multitude of formats, from 8" x 10" prints to 35mm., 4" x 6", and many other sizes.

Permalife paper – This paper, also referred to simply as "acid-free paper," is a white, unlined 20 lb. bond useful for interleaving fragile items, lining boxes, and wrapping acidic items to prevent contact with and damage of other archival materials. The paper can also be used in photocopy machines to produce an acid-free permanent copy of acidic or deteriorating records such as newspaper clippings, old mimeographs, and onion-skin documents. Permalife paper is acid-free, durable, and does not yellow or become brittle with age. It is available in several standard sizes and in large rolls.

These are just some of the most basic and widely used archives storage

materials. Each vendor publishes catalogs of the many specialized storage containers available, including slide boxes, magazine files, CD cases, card boxes, portfolio boxes, page protectors, mounting pages, and hundreds of other arcane but sometimes useful items.

ARCHIVAL SUPPLIES



Donating Archives to a Repository

For organizations unable to devote the resources necessary to establish and operate an in-house archives, an alternative is to donate archival records to a local archives repository. Many institutions operate repositories, including colleges and universities, historical societies, museums, libraries, religious orders, hospitals, businesses, and professional associations. Repositories actively collect the archives of other entities and welcome donations from local organizations.

Organizations interested in donating their records to a repository should take the following steps:

- **Interview** – Contact local repositories and interview archivists from several institutions before selecting a suitable repository.
- **Negotiate** – Meet with archivists from the chosen repository to negotiate and finalize transfer of the records.
- **Follow-up** – Maintain an ongoing relationship with the repository after the transfer is complete.

Interview

The organization should contact several local repositories to request an informational meeting with each to discuss the possible donation of their records. The initial contact can be by letter or by phone.

The organization selects one or more members to serve as its representatives. The meeting should take place at the archives repository so that the organization's representatives can have a tour of the facility. The representatives should be prepared to describe the history of their organization as well as its purpose and current activities. They should also be able to discuss the contents and condition of their records.

Based on information obtained in this meeting, the archivists may conclude that their repository is not an appropriate home for the records; they may suggest other potential repositories. The organization should follow up on any such recommendations, as archivists are often quite knowledgeable about other area repositories. Most repositories have a particular collection focus, and organizational archives not appropriate for a given repository may be welcomed enthusiastically by another.

Since the initial meeting is informational, the organization need not present a detailed explanation of its expectations or requirements for an

eventual donation. However, it is appropriate to inquire about any of the repository's policies, practices, or services of particular concern or interest. Appendix G, *Evaluating a Repository*, suggests detailed questions to ask. A series of follow-up interviews may transpire after the initial meeting, each one exploring issues in greater detail as the parties come closer to an agreement.

Negotiate

After choosing a repository, the organization should come to an agreement with the institution about when, how, and under what conditions the archives will be transferred to their new home.

This meeting is an opportunity to receive definitive answers to any lingering questions about the repository's policies and practices. Any concerns, problems, or potential conflicts should be aired and resolved. Any special requirements for access, confidentiality, etc. should be negotiated and agreements put in writing. The agreement should also discuss how deposits will be made in the future and how regularly they will be made.

The repository will, in all probability, require that the organization make its donation official by signing a deed of gift. This document transfers ownership of the archives to the repository, and also formalizes any special conditions attached to the transfer. (See Appendix H for a sample deed of gift.)

Follow-up

After the transfer of ownership is formalized via the deed of gift, and even after the physical transfer of the records is complete, the transaction between the repository receiving the records and the organization donating them is still not complete. The two parties now establish an ongoing relationship to work together over the coming years to provide for the orderly transfer of additional archival records. It is a symbiotic relationship in which both parties benefit, each in its own way. The success of the partnership will depend on continuing dialogue and consultation.

Conclusion

This handbook is only an introduction to archival principles, practices, and standards, and a basic outline of the issues to consider when establishing a records maintenance program. From evaluating the advantages of such an undertaking, to identifying and organizing archival records, to making them available for use, this handbook provides guidance, instruction, and information.

However, no publication can provide complete and comprehensive guidance for every organization and every individual need. Issues of special concern are bound to arise in any new organizational undertaking. The reader should come away from this publication with an appreciation for the basic concepts of archival practice and an awareness that additional assistance and expert advice are readily obtainable from a number of sources. Further information is available from the publications listed in Appendix C; from the professional staff of local archival repositories and from the Society of American Archives (see page 26 for contact information).

*Button
Committee for Handgun Control Records (f. 169)
Special Collections Department
The University Library, UIC*



Appendix A

Glossary

The following definitions are adapted from: Frank B. Evans, Donald F. Harrison, and Edwin A. Thompson, comps., “A Basic Glossary for Archivists, Manuscript Curators, and Records Managers,” *American Archivist*, 37:415-433 (1974). For the revised glossary compiled by Richard Pearce-Moses in 2005, see: <http://www.archivists.org/glossary/index.asp>

Administrative value – The usefulness of records to the originating or succeeding agency in the conduct of current business.

Appraisal – The process of determining the value and thus the disposition of records based on their current administrative, legal, and fiscal use; their evidential and informational or research use; their arrangement; and their relationship to other records.

Archival integrity – The standard that requires that archival holdings be identified and arranged by provenance, maintained in their original filing order, and preserved in their entirety.

Archives – The noncurrent records of an organization or institution preserved because of their continuing value; also known as archival materials or archival holdings. Also, the agency responsible for the administration of archival materials. In the information technology professions, “archive” is often used in a more general way to describe all files that are stored on a removable medium or to refer to the data backups that the organization maintains for disaster preparedness.

Archivist – A person responsible for or engaged in the management of archives.

Arrangement – The process and result of organizing archives in accordance with accepted archival principles. The process usually includes packing, labeling, and shelving of archives and is intended to achieve physical or administrative control and basic identification of the holdings. Also known as processing.

Correspondence – Letters, postcards, memoranda, notes, and any other form of addressed, written communications sent and received.

Current records – Records necessary for conducting the current business of an office. Also known as active records.

Deed of gift – A signed, written instrument containing a voluntary transfer of ownership of archival records. This frequently takes the form of a contract establishing conditions governing the transfer of ownership and specifying any restrictions on access or use.

Deposit – Archives placed in the physical custody of a repository without transfer of ownership.

Disposition – The actions taken with regard to noncurrent records following their appraisal. This may include transfer to the archives or disposal/destruction.

Document – Recorded information, regardless of medium. Also known as a record.

Evidential value – The value of those records of an agency that are necessary to provide authentic and adequate documentation of its organization and functioning.

File – To place documents in a predetermined location according to an overall plan of classification.

Finding aids – The descriptive guide created by an archival agency to establish physical or administrative and intellectual control over archival records.

Informational value – The value of records that derives from the information they contain about persons, places, and subjects of interest to organizations, rather than about the functioning of the organization itself.

Inventory – In Records and Information Management the term is used to describe a survey of records prior to disposition or the development of records retention schedules.

Noncurrent records – Records that are no longer needed in the conduct of current business and can therefore be transferred to the archives or, if appropriate, destroyed.

Preservation – The provision of adequate facilities for the protection, care, and maintenance of archives. Also, specific measures to repair, maintain, restore, or protect documents.

Provenance – The organization, office, or agency that created the records in the conduct of its business. Also, the principle in archival theory that archives of a given records creator must not be intermingled with those of other records creators. Also referred to by the French term, *respect des fonds*.

Record group – Records maintained as a unit because they were created by a distinct administrative unit and document organizational relationships.

Records – All recorded information made or received and maintained by an organization in the transaction of its business.

Records and Information Management – An area of general administrative management concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, use and maintenance, and disposition of records.

Records retention schedule – A document governing, on a continuing basis, the retention and disposition of the records of an organization. Also known as a retention schedule or records schedule.

Repository – A place where archives are kept. Also known as a depository.

Respect des fonds – See “Provenance.”

Semicurrent records – Records no longer needed on a regular basis, but which are referred to on occasion and are not yet ready for final disposition to the archives or to be destroyed.

Series – Records maintained as a unit because they relate to a particular subject or function, result from the same activity, have a particular form, or because of some other relationship. Also known as a records series.

Weed – To discard records lacking archival value.

Appendix B

Records Survey Worksheet

The records survey worksheet is a useful tool for surveying existing office records. It is instrumental in creating an inventory that reveals which records exist, where they are located, and in what quantity. Having this information at hand is the first step in organizing office records.

A separate worksheet is completed for each “record series.” A record series is a group of records kept together because they form a discrete unit based on their original administrative function and/or their relationship to one another. Some examples of record series are: minutes of meetings, treasurer’s reports, personnel files, and press releases.

The worksheets facilitate efficient record-keeping practices. A mass of overwhelming, disorganized records is reduced to a manageable stack of worksheets, simplifying the task of creating a records retention schedule. Retention schedules specify which records to retain in the office, and for how long, and which to discard or send to the archives.

The worksheets are also useful for determining the overall volume of records on hand, assessing their content and date range, and identifying materials that require special handling, for example, unusual formats or damaged items.

The records survey worksheet at the end of this appendix is an example that can be adapted as needed for any given office. The annotations that follow explain each category on the records survey worksheet:

Creating office/department – Which unit within the organization created these records?

Contact person/phone/email/fax – This person should be familiar with the records in case questions arise.

Title of record series – Create an official title for each group of records and use it consistently. It should be brief and descriptive, for example: treasurer’s account books, board of trustees minutes, publicity committee records.

Inclusive dates – The date range should be noted as precisely as possible. If the records are unevenly distributed across the date range, that should be indicated, for example: “June 1976-May 1985, bulk 1980-1985.”

Volume – This measurement can be in linear (shelf space) or cubic (volume) feet, whichever seems most convenient, but should be consistent across all record series.

Location – Be as specific as possible, for example, “Secretary’s office, gray file cabinet, drawer #3.”

Description/content – Note any significant subjects, events, people, and topics.

Arrangement – Are the records in chronological or alphabetical order? Is there a discernible order or none at all?

Format – The shape, size, and general makeup of material may require specialized storage or handling. List all formats present, for example: letter or legal size paper, photographs, newspaper clippings, videotape.

Physical condition – Make a note of any problems, for example: moisture, vermin, brittle paper, rusty paper clips, deteriorating storage boxes.

Period of active use – How long are these records needed in their office of origin? “Active use” generally means the records are used more than once per month. This information is crucial in establishing record retention schedules.

Does the office/department consider these records:

- **Historical** – They reveal important historical information about the organization, its founding, values, activities, and goals.
- **Vital** – The records are crucial to the existence of the organization; their loss would threaten the organization’s ability to function.
- **Permanent** – Records that should be retained even after their period of active use (see above) has ended.

Other comments – Any comments, notes, or important information not revealed elsewhere in the form.

Surveyed by – The person who prepares the inventory of the records survey worksheet should legibly sign and date the worksheet.

Date – The month, day, and year of the records survey.

RECORDS SURVEY WORKSHEET

CREATING OFFICE / DEPARTMENT _____

CONTACT PERSON _____

PHONE _____

FAX _____

EMAIL _____

TITLE OF RECORD SERIES _____

INCLUSIVE DATES _____

VOLUME (linear or cubic feet) _____

LOCATION _____

DESCRIPTION/CONTENT _____

ARRANGEMENT _____

FORMAT _____

PHYSICAL CONDITION _____

PERIOD OF ACTIVE USE (consulted more than once a month) _____

DOES THE OFFICE/DEPARTMENT CONSIDER THESE RECORDS:

- Historical
- Vital
- Permanent

OTHER COMMENTS _____

SURVEYED BY _____ DATE _____

Appendix C

Additional Resources

For a listing of archival repositories in the Chicago area, see the online edition of Archival and Manuscript Repositories in Metropolitan Chicago and the Calumet Region of Northwest Indiana, available through the Chicago Area Archivists webpage at:
<http://www.vandercook.edu/archives/CAA.html>

Further Reading

Archives, General

Archives Association of British Columbia. *Archivist's Toolkit*.
<http://aabc.bc.ca/aabc/toolkit.html>

Hunter, Gregory S. *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives: A How-To-Do-It Manual*. 2nd Ed. New York: Neal-Shuman, 2003.

Kurtz, Michael. *Managing Archival and Manuscript Repositories*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2004.

Pearce-Moses, Richard. *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005. Available online at:
<http://www.archivists.org/glossary/index.asp>

Pugh, Mary Jo. *Providing Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005.

O'Toole, James M. *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005.

Sample Forms for Archival and Records Management Programs. Lenexa, KS: ARMA International, 2002.

Yakel, Elizabeth. *Starting an Archives*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1994.

History

Karen J. Blair. *Joining In: Exploring the History of Voluntary Organizations*. Melbourne, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 2006.

Records and Information Management

Bradley, Alexandra and Denise Dale. *At Your Fingertips in the Office: Information Management for the Small Business*. Richmond, BC: Streamline Information, 2000.

Kahn, Randolph A. and Barclay T. Blair. *Information Nation: Seven Keys to Information Management Compliance*. Silver Spring, MD: AIIM Publications, 2004.

Saffady, William. *Records and Information Management: Fundamentals of Professional Practice*. Lenexa, KS: ARMA International, 2004.

Stephens, David O and Roderick C. Wallace. *Electronic Records Retention: New Strategies for Data Life Cycle Management*. Lenexa, KS: ARMA International, 2003.

Appraisal

Boles, Frank. *Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005.

Arrangement and Description

Carmicheal, David W. *Organizing Archival Records: A Practical Method of Arrangement and Description for Small Archives*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004.

Roe, Kathleen D. *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005.

Preservation

Ritzenthaler, Mary Lynn. *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1993.

Security

Trinkaus-Randall, Gregor. *Protecting Your Collections: A Manual of Archival Security*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1995.

Archives and the Law

Behrnd-Klodt, Menzi and Peter J. Walsh, eds. *Privacy and Confidentiality Perspectives: Archivists and Archival Records*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005.

Lipinski, Thomas A. *Libraries, Museums and Archives: Legal Issues and Ethical Challenges in the New Information Age*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 2002.

Archival Supply Companies

Many companies sell archival supplies. Among the largest are:

Gaylord Bros.

P.O. Box 4901
Syracuse, NY 13221
1-800-448-6160
www.gaylord.com

Hollinger Corporation

9401 Northeast Drive
Fredericksburg, VA 22408
1-800-947-8814
www.hollingercorp.com

Light Impressions

P.O. Box 787
Brea, CA 92822
1-800-828-6216
www.lightimpressionsdirect.com

Metal Edge, Inc

6340 Bandini Ave
Commerce, CA 90040
1-800-862-2228
www.metaledgeinc.com

University Products

P.O. Box 1010
Holyoke, MA 01041
1-800-628-1912
www.universityproducts.com

Appendix D

Examples of Archival Records

Archives maintain records having historical value as well as records which are permanently retained for legal or fiscal reasons. Although no list can be complete, the following are types of records that often merit archival retention.

- announcements
- annual reports
- articles of incorporation
- artifacts and souvenirs
- broadsides
- brochures
- bylaws
- calendars and timelines
- charters
- constitutions
- correspondence (especially issue-related or decision-making)
- directives
- summary financial statements
- fliers
- goals and objectives
- handbooks
- histories
- leaflets
- ledgers
- legal documents
- manuals
- summary membership documents
- minutes of meetings
- organizational charts
- summary personnel documents
- photographs
- planning documents
- policy and procedure manuals
- position papers
- posters
- press releases
- project files
- property documents
- publications
- publicity
- reports
- scrapbooks
- slides
- special event invitations and announcements
- speeches
- testimony
- videotapes

The following types of records do not typically merit permanent retention in the archives.

- routine bills (i.e., utility bills)
- employee timesheets
- payroll records
- duplicate material
- blank forms and unused printed materials

Appendix E

Code of Ethics for Archivists

Preamble

The Code of Ethics for Archivists establishes standards for the archival profession. It introduces new members of the profession to those standards, reminds experienced archivists of their professional responsibilities, and serves as a model for institutional policies. It also is intended to inspire public confidence in the profession.

This code provides an ethical framework to guide members of the profession. It does not provide the solution to specific problems.

The term “archivist” as used in this code encompasses all those concerned with the selection, control, care, preservation, and administration of historical and documentary records of enduring value.

I. Purpose

The Society of American Archivists recognizes the importance of educating the profession and general public about archival ethics by codifying ethical principles to guide the work of archivists. This code provides a set of principles to which archivists aspire.

II. Professional Relationships

Archivists select, preserve, and make available historical and documentary records of enduring value. Archivists cooperate, collaborate, and respect each institution and its mission and collecting policy. Respect and cooperation form the basis of all professional relationships with colleagues and users.

III. Judgment

Archivists should exercise professional judgment in acquiring, appraising, and processing historical materials. They should not allow personal beliefs or perspectives to affect their decisions.

IV. Trust

Archivists should not profit or otherwise benefit from their privileged access to and control of historical records and documentary materials.

V. Authenticity and Integrity

Archivists strive to preserve and protect the authenticity of records in their holdings by documenting their creation and use in hard copy and electronic formats. They have a fundamental obligation to preserve the intellectual and physical integrity of those records.

Archivists may not alter, manipulate, or destroy data or records to conceal facts or distort evidence.

VI. Access

Archivists strive to promote open and equitable access to their services and the records in their care without discrimination or preferential treatment, and in accordance with legal requirements, cultural sensitivities, and institutional policies. Archivists recognize their responsibility to promote the use of records as a fundamental purpose of the keeping of archives. Archivists may place restrictions on access for the protection of privacy or confidentiality of information in the records.

VII. Privacy

Archivists protect the privacy rights of donors and individuals or groups who are the subject of records. They respect all users' right to privacy by maintaining the confidentiality of their research and protecting any personal information collected about them in accordance with the institution's security procedures.

VIII. Security/Protection

Archivists protect all documentary materials for which they are responsible and guard them against defacement, physical damage, deterioration, and theft. Archivists should cooperate with colleagues and law enforcement agencies to apprehend and prosecute thieves and vandals.

IX. Law

Archivists must uphold all federal, state, and local laws.

Approved by the SAA Council, February 5, 2005.

http://www.archivists.org/governance/handbook/app_ethics.asp

Appendix F

Principles of Archival Arrangement

Original Order

Whatever method an organization uses for filing its current records, the arrangement should be preserved in the archives. Aside from correcting obvious filing errors and restoring order to sections of records that have become disorganized over time, any large-scale restructuring of the basic filing system is ill-advised. Archivists prefer that records be maintained in their original order whenever possible and refer to this practice as the “principle of sanctity of the original order.” The original order is an important guide in interpreting and understanding records, revealing administrative process, the sequence of events in an organization, or some other organic activity. It is best to preserve this evidence for future users of the records.

Provenance and Respect des Fonds

Related to the concept of original order is another principle central to archival theory known as “provenance” or “*respect des fonds*.” The principle of provenance requires that the arrangement of archival records reflect the structure of the organization that created them. The records are arranged in a way that reveals the hierarchy of the records creator. Adhering to the principle of provenance preserves the evidential value of the records—evidence of the structure and functioning of the organization. *Respect des fonds* is a French term for the same principle, which also prohibits mingling the records of different creators.

Thus, the principle of provenance discourages the wholesale rearrangement of organizational archives by subject or topic. Archivists have various ways to highlight information on related topics or subjects without obscuring the primary purpose of the archives, which is to document the organization, its structure and activities.

Record Groups

Applying the principle of provenance facilitates the creation of record groups, the basic building blocks of archival arrangement. The record group in archival theory is a group of records related by activity or creator,

for example, board of director’s records, treasurer’s records, etc. In other words, a record group exists for each functional body at the top leadership level of the organization.

Subgroups

Subgroups are the next level of hierarchy. There is a subgroup for each functional subdivision under the record groups. In a board of directors record group, for instance, subgroups exist for any offices or functions overseen by the board, for example, board committees, fundraising, or publicity.

Series and Subseries

Within the record group and subgroup, series are the next subordinate records grouped together based on their creation, activity, use, or form. Series within a board of directors record group could include annual reports, minutes, and correspondence.

Series subdivide even further into subseries when appropriate. For example, a correspondence series might divide into subseries for incoming and outgoing correspondence.

File Unit

The file unit, also called the file, is the unit into which items are grouped for filing. For most paper records, a file unit is a folder containing several documents or items. A file unit could also be a computer disk, a videotape, or a bound volume.

Document

The document is an individual item, whether a single memo, a 30-page annual report, or a photograph. Documents are grouped together into a file unit.

Appendix G

Evaluating a Repository

Before donating records to a repository (e.g., a library's Special Collections Department, an archives, a historical society, or a public library), visit and tour its facilities, and speak with an archivist or a librarian. For security reasons, storage areas are usually closed to visitors, but prospective donors are sometimes allowed limited access. Even a brief tour gives some sense of the conditions under which records are housed. Storage areas should be clean and orderly, well ventilated, and temperature controlled. Records should be in archival-quality containers, stored off the floor on metal shelving. Work areas may be cluttered, but should nevertheless be clean, spacious, and conducive to the type of work done there. Public areas should be well maintained, with a staff member available to assist and supervise patrons.

Meet with the head of the repository to air any concerns regarding the prospective donation and to ask questions. The archivist/librarian should be professional, helpful, and answer questions frankly, without becoming evasive or defensive. No repository is perfect; each one will have some apparent shortcomings. Whether supported by private or public funds, few repositories are funded, staffed, or operated at optimal levels. By asking questions and being informed, you can evaluate a repository's strengths and weaknesses and make a choice that fits your organization's needs.

The following are examples of questions that might be of importance to organizations selecting a repository for their records. Not all of the questions will be relevant to your organization. However, this list suggests issues to explore before making a commitment to a repository. Questions are arranged by topic.

Ownership and Control

- Are donors expected to sign a deed of gift? May I see an example of the document this repository uses?
- Are donors expected to relinquish copyright? If so, why is it important for the repository to own the copyright? What does it mean, in practical terms, for the organization to give up copyright—can we continue to use our old records, photographs, artwork, and writings in our brochures, publicity materials, annual reports, etc.?

Access

- What are the repository's hours of operation?
- After donation, what steps are necessary for us to use our old records? Is an appointment needed?
- If we need information from the records, will the repository staff assist in a search? What are the limits of the assistance? Under what circumstances can copies be made? What are the fees?
- Are donors permitted to borrow their old records? If not, what accommodations are made for such a request? Can photo reproductions/photocopies be substituted?
- Will the records be used in exhibits or publicity?
- What type of access will the public have?
- How will the repository promote use by the public? Will the records' availability be publicized? How? Will the records be listed in national union lists, bibliographies and/or databases?
- What type of researchers does the repository attract?
- Will the records be inventoried and catalogued? When? What type of finding aid will be produced? May I see a sample finding aid?

Confidentiality

- How will confidential materials be handled?
- Do patrons sign a confidentiality agreement form? May I see a copy?
- Who determines which records are confidential? Who is responsible for identifying confidential materials?
- What kind of restrictions does the repository use for confidential records? Can our organization set its own restrictions?
- Will restrictions remain in place permanently? Are they reassessed periodically? Is the donor consulted? Will restrictions be outlined in the deed of gift?

Cost/Funding

- What expenses might be incurred by our organization? Packing and moving? Storage containers for moving? Photocopying/duplication?

Preservation

- Does the repository have a preservation program? What does it entail?
- How will our records be stored?
- What types of environmental controls are in place? Are there temperature and humidity controls in all storage areas?
- Does the repository use archival-quality containers for all of its collections?
- Are there fire and smoke alarms in all storage areas?
- Does the repository have a disaster plan in place to handle damaged records in the aftermath of a catastrophe such as fire or flood?

Security

- What type of security measures are in place?
- Is the reading room continuously monitored?
- What procedures are followed if there is a theft? Who is notified?

Continuity of Care

- How long has the repository been in existence?
- Is the continued operation of the repository certain? Is its funding secure?
- In case the repository's operation were suspended, what would happen to records in its custody?

Appendix H

Deed of Gift

A deed is a written agreement to legally transfer ownership of property from one party to another. A deed of gift means that the property is given freely as a gift and not sold to the recipient. A deed of gift is the usual method to transfer records to a repository. The document is prepared after consultation between the donor and recipient and is signed by both to indicate offer and acceptance.

There are several important and desirable elements to include in a deed of gift:

Donor

The donor might be the creator of the records, a governing board, or an organization's representative vested with the authority to make the donation. The donor's relationship to or authority over the records should be indicated. The donor is identified in the opening paragraph of the deed and again in the signature block at the end.

Recipient

Records donated to a university library might become the property of the university's governing body. The legal recipient of the gift is named in the deed.

Date of transfer of title

The document should be dated by both donor and recipient.

Material covered by the deed

Who created or collected the material? What is the volume of the gift? What are the inclusive dates? This information may be included in a brief paragraph in the deed, or a lengthier description on a separate page may be appended to the deed.

Copyright

The deed can convey property rights only or property and copyright (intellectual property). Most donations of archives include the copyright.

Restrictions

The donor and recipient, in consultation, determine whether any restrictive measures are required to safeguard confidential material in the donated records. Clear, unambiguous statements of any restrictions should be included in the deed of gift, for the protection of both the donor and recipient.

Provisions for subsequent gifts

Donations of records are frequently ongoing; as the donor organization creates new records, supplements to the original gift are periodically delivered to the repository. The deed of gift includes a provision that all subsequent donations will be made in accordance with the original deed. A new deed need not be executed for each additional supplement.

A sample deed of gift is included. It is annotated with numerals to correspond with the elements listed above. This example does not include any restrictions (#6). If restrictions were necessary the document would be modified to include them.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT CHICAGO

University Library (MC 234)
Box 8198, Chicago, Illinois 60680

Deed of Gift

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Herewith acknowledges receipt of a gift from

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

OF THE FOLLOWING COLLECTION MATERIALS _____

Further, THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, through the University Library of the University of Illinois at Chicago, accepts the responsibility for the protection, processing, and servicing of the above listed materials, and further accepts the designation by the Donor as (his, hers, its) depository for further gifts from time to time of similar materials which can properly be considered a part of the same collection.

Date _____ THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

By _____

I hereby give the above described materials to THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS and relinquish whatever copyright(s) I possess to the contents. I also herewith designate said THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AND ITS CHICAGO CAMPUS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY as the official depository for any similar gifts of materials related to this collection which I may elect to make from time to time.

DATE _____ SIGNATURE _____

ADDRESS _____

UIC

UIC UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT CHICAGO LIBRARY

Jane  *Addams*
Hull-House Museum

UIC COLLEGE OF
ARCHITECTURE & THE ARTS