



The
National Archives
and
Records Service
in 1977

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JAMES B. RHOADS

Archivist of the United States

Calendar year 1977 was an interesting, often challenging period for the National Archives and Records Service (NARS).

New national interest in family history research, triggered by a television series, both strained our resources and gave the Archives expanded national visibility. Problems regarding ownership of the papers of public officials continued to tax the legal, archival, and scholarly communities. Meanwhile, ground was broken for one presidential library and planning and fundraising were well under way for another.

President Carter's concern that United States government regulations should be simplified was an important development during the year, as was the public's clearly mounting concern over the paperwork burden imposed by the federal government and ways to deal with it.

NARS found itself increasingly offering leadership in the attempt to surmount national archival problems, such as the preservation of documents and the use of computers to deal with great masses of papers. This leadership extended to world archival problems as well, as a direct consequence of my having been selected to head the International Council on Archives and my assumption of a significant role in UNESCO archival concerns.

At the National Archives and presidential libraries, there were the usual symposiums and other gatherings, with notably successful conferences held on cartography, agriculture, and the new economics of the sunbelt states. Public programs included a naturalization ceremony on Constitution Day, the most appropriate celebration yet held by the Archives on that symbolically important day. Major publications were issued and major accessions received. There were two disasters—a fire and a flood—and the death of an archives stalwart. An old letter by Fidel Castro discovered by a young archives technician produced a charming footnote to history. Finally, grant support for state and local institutions preserving important historical records grew sharply, as did state-wide awareness of the program.

There was much more, but these were the highlights of a busy year. A step-up in the pace of National Archives and Records Service staff activity across the country was clearly apparent.

RUSH FOR "ROOTS"

As the home of the Declaration of Independence, the document the American Bicentennial was all about, the National Archives reaped national publicity to an extent unique in the institution's history. A return to normal was



Alex Haley ponders the census schedule sheet that verified his family's oral history of its North Carolina heritage.

foreseen for 1977, but a television series running at the start of the year changed all that.

Alex Haley's "Roots," an adaptation of his book, inspired a collective national interest in genealogy that verged on being a mania; for the Archives and its facilities around the nation, the resulting demand for information strained our resources to the utmost.

Holder of many of the country's most basic documents for genealogical research, such as national census schedules, ships' passenger lists, and military service records, the Archives complex felt the effects of the "Roots" phenomenon immediately and on a continuing basis through the year. The Microfilm Reading Room in the central National Archives building in downtown Washington experienced waiting lines for the first time in its history. Inquiries poured in month after month. The high was 7,000 letters in one week, 4,500 of which required specific research and written answers from a harried staff.

It was the same in the eleven regional archives branches where the combined demand for microfilm soared to more than 40,000 rolls a month, well over double the normal. Reference services in the Archives building and in the regions totaled more than 2.3 million dur-

ing the year. These were requests made by people who either came to do research or who wrote or telephoned. The increase was 50 percent over the preceding year. Almost all of this extra burden, on a staff already stretched thin, reflected the public's new interest in family history research.

It was hard work for hundreds of NARS staffers, but there was a distinct benefit: the National Archives became far better known—and valued—as a national resource.

As the year came to a close, Alex Haley arrived back at the National Archives where he had begun the whole "Roots" saga in 1964 by discovering records in the Alamance County, North Carolina, census of 1870 that confirmed family oral history traditions and set him on a thirteen-year hunt for his family's origins in Africa. Haley was on hand with a film crew to make a television documentary called "Roots: One Year After" to be telecast on the first anniversary of the showing of "Roots." He ordered fifteen copies of the census page that got him started to present to friends, and several Archives staff members and amateur researchers in the room ordered their own duplicates of the page, then lined up to have Haley autograph them. Commented a film producer on the scene, "It's strange the genesis of millions of dollars. It's right here on this page."

The human element bears more strongly on federal government bureaucracies than is widely supposed, as a related story suggests. Recently the Archives lifted restrictions on access to records of the 1900 Census. The timing of this decision was prompted in part by a request from a ninety-year-old genealogist, George Roberts, who had asked to be allowed to use 1900 Census microfilms in his local library rather than at a more distant regional archives branch. Deciding that the experience of the Archives staff since 1973 indicated that confidentiality restrictions were no longer necessary, I moved on behalf of the Archives to open the 1900 records fully and made a public proposal to that effect in the *Federal Register*. When at the end of the thirty-day comment period more than 700 letters and postal cards had been received favoring the plan, with no unfavorable mail received, the proposal was adopted without change.

In recognition of his role in the decision, I sent Mr. Roberts the first unrestricted microfilm copy of the census of his home town of Glen-



Daily stacks of mail such as this, requesting genealogical information, greeted the Archives staff after the television triumph of "Roots."

ville, New York, of which he is writing a history. He received the present on his ninety-first birthday and wrote me; "It was the finest birthday gift I could imagine."

The restrictions on the census records had limited access to them to approved historical, legal, or genealogical researchers and required that the research be conducted at a National Archives and Records Service facility. Although copies of individual pages of the census records could be reproduced under certain conditions, the new ruling now permits reproduction of entire rolls of census microfilm for public and research institutions.

Procedures for ordering the 1900 Census have been established to give priority to the processing of large orders in order to provide the greatest public availability of copies. Processing was scheduled to begin March 1, 1978. At \$12 per roll, the entire 1,854 rolls of census schedules cost \$22,248; the 7,855 rolls of the index cost \$94,260.

PAPERS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Several developments during 1977 pointed toward the resolution of long-standing, complex questions concerning the papers of public officials. The events of the year promised to continue the trend toward greater openness and public control of historical evidence created

during the governmental process.

In a decision June 28, the Supreme Court ended a long legal fight by awarding custody of Richard Nixon's 36 million papers and other materials, including 1,144 reels of White House tape recordings, to the federal government. Most of this material will be made available to the public eventually. In its decision, the court upheld the constitutionality of the Presidential Recordings and Materials Act of 1974 (P.L. 526, title 1). The law had been in litigation since it was passed shortly after President Nixon resigned.

The National Archives obtained full custody of the Nixon materials after the court's decision and in August transferred the remaining sensitive materials, including the Watergate tapes, from the Old Executive Office Building to secure storage in the National Archives building. Regulations under which the Nixon materials are to be processed for eventual use by researchers were approved by Congress in December. As the year ended, with no legal challenge forthcoming from the former president, NARS planned to begin processing this vast amount of documents early in 1978. It was expected that it would take at least three years to finish processing the Watergate-related materials, which account for less than 20 percent of all the Nixon papers and tapes. As integral file segments are processed they will be released to the public.

Title 2 of the law which gave custody of the Nixon materials to the administrator of general services established a National Study Commission on Records and Documents of Federal Officials (Public Documents Commission, in shorter form). As the delegate of the administrator, I served on this seventeen-member panel along with other government officials and representatives of the public and the scholarly community.

The commission held hearings, accepted background studies, and deliberated extensively before issuing majority and minority reports to the president and Congress during the spring. The commission, headed by former Attorney General Herbert Brownell, recommended public ownership of the records and other papers produced in the course of performance of official duties by the president, the vice president, members of Congress, and the federal judiciary.

The panel defined three major reasons for the

systematic preservation of government records and documents: 1) to aid the continuing operations of the government; 2) to enable the people to judge the conduct of the government on the basis of maximum information, made publicly available as soon as feasible, consistent with such competing public interests as the preservation of national security and the safeguarding of constitutional rights and privileges; and 3) to assure the people the fullest possible reconstruction of their national history.

In recommending an end to the tradition that materials made or received in the conduct of public business belong to federal officials, the commission recognized the need to give the president, vice president, members of Congress, and federal judges an interval of control over their materials in order to guarantee that they receive full and frank advice and to encourage them to create and preserve an adequate record of their activities and deliberations. Therefore, the group recommended that officials be given the prerogative to control access to the materials for up to fifteen years after the end of their federal service.

The Kennedy family breaks ground for the JFK library on the grounds of the University of Massachusetts in Boston.

The minority report was filed by Mr. Brownell, who argued not only for public ownership of the materials in question, but for the immediate application of the Freedom of Information Act to them. A large majority of the panel, however, was convinced that an extension of this act to the new categories of public papers would inject an element of uncertainty into all confidential communications and result in significant changes in the administrative operations of the White House, Congress, and the federal courts.

During 1977, papers of public officials at other than the presidential level also came under considerable discussion. Part of this centered on the papers of Henry Kissinger. Kissinger in late 1976 had donated to the Library of Congress private papers, copies of his official records from the Department of State, and notes and transcripts of telephone conversations he held while secretary of state and on the White House staff. His claim that the notes and transcripts were his personal property caused me, as archivist of the United States, to request permission to inspect them to determine whether or not they were federal government records. My request was backed by a legal opinion from GSA counsel. Ultimately the issue became moot because of a parallel development.





Former President Gerald R. Ford listens as Assistant Archivist for Presidential Libraries Daniel J. Reed explains a point about displaying presidential materials. University of Michigan president, Robben Fleming, and director of the Ford library project, William J. Stewart, look on.

The notes and transcripts issue was raised in court by a press group and others, and on December 8, 1977, the United States District Court ruled that the telephone conversation material was in fact created under Department of State regulations as part of the secretary of state's official duties and that therefore the notes and transcripts were federal records subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Their return to agency control for proper disposition was ordered.

Expansion of resources available to scholars was assured by events other than those resulting from legal actions. The start of construction of a building for the Kennedy library and the beginning of development of a Gerald R. Ford library promised more opportunities and better facilities for research.

After years of site-selection problems, the Kennedy library, which has been open to researchers in temporary quarters at the Federal Archives and Records Center at Waltham, Massachusetts, held a groundbreaking ceremony in May for a new 96,000-square-foot building at Columbia Point on the campus of the University of Massachusetts at Boston. The dramatic harbor's-edge building was designed by the internationally renowned architect I. M. Pei and

is scheduled for completion during the spring of 1979. Triangular, circular, and square motifs are blended together in the design. The building will be "so geometrically strong it could be a monument to Euclid," commented the *Christian Science Monitor*.

As a result of President Ford's donation of his papers to the federal government in late 1976, a Gerald R. Ford library is presently under development at Ann Arbor, Michigan. On the day before the inauguration of President Carter, the last of thirteen tractor-trailer loads of Ford presidential materials was dispatched from the White House compound to Michigan. There the documents were received by a small staff of archivists in temporary quarters on the campus of the University of Michigan. Processing of the approximately 16 million pages of textual material began almost immediately.

Other Ford presidential materials, such as tapes, films, and still pictures, remain in temporary storage in the National Archives building until permanent facilities are constructed in

Michigan. A site for the Ford library has been selected on the campus of the university. The committee has hired an architect and now looks forward to breaking ground late in 1978. As presently planned, the Ford library will be modest but efficient and useful.

The library will be unique in the presidential libraries system in that it will not have an attached museum. Instead, the Ford Museum for displaying the former president's memorabilia and gifts will be built in Grand Rapids, his home town. To be constructed on the banks of the Grand River, the museum will be a cornerstone of a rehabilitated downtown Grand Rapids and is expected to open for visitors in about three years. Until the structure is completed, many of the hundreds of Bicentennial gifts received by the Ford administration are on loan for exhibit to institutions such as the Kennedy Center, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Independence Hall Association in Philadelphia.

The building committee for both the library and museum has raised more than half of

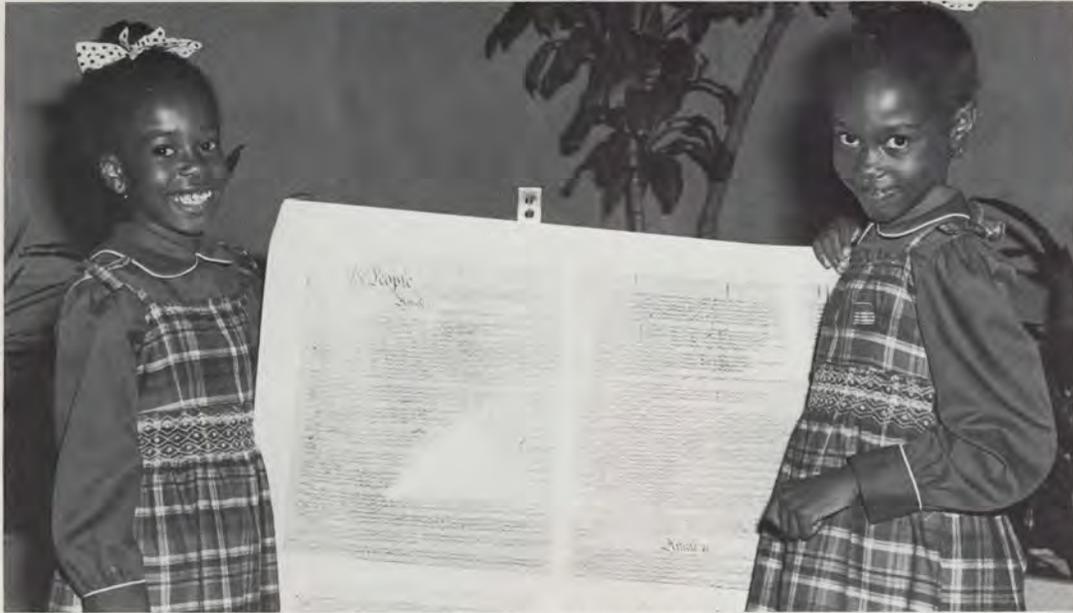
the projected construction costs of \$6 million. Former President Ford is assisting in raising the necessary funds from private sources. The museum received support from the Michigan Legislature in the form of a \$4 million appropriation for use over the next three years in site acquisition and clearing. And Kent County, in which Grand Rapids is located, has indicated a willingness to appropriate \$500,000 toward the museum next year. Land for the Ford library was donated by the University of Michigan.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The National Archives marked Constitution Day, September 17, with an appropriate ceremony. Twenty-nine aliens from twenty-four nations, including nine-year-old twin girls from Guyana, took the oath of American citizenship before the Constitution of the United

Archivist of the United States James B. Rhoads greets Judge Oliver Gasch and Congressman Norman Y. Mineta before the Constitution Day naturalization ceremony. Judge Gasch administered the oath of allegiance and Congressman Mineta welcomed the new citizens.





Andrea and Virginia Sharpless, twin sisters from Guyana, were the youngest persons to become citizens on Constitution Day.

States in the Exhibition Hall. Judge Oliver Gasch of the United States District Court and Congressman Norman Y. Mineta of California presided.

Congressman Mineta, who was one of 110,000 Japanese-Americans placed in American relocation camps during World War II, told the new citizens following their swearing-in, "We must all stand in the place of those who throughout our history have stood up for what is right and just, to ensure that the promise of America is not denied to future Americans." It was a moving ceremony; my personal hope is that such naturalization ceremonies become an annual tradition at the Archives.

Earlier, another important day for the Archives, the Fourth of July, was also celebrated in particularly apt fashion. With color guard mounted to honor the Declaration of Independence and after a dramatic reading of the Declaration by an actor in eighteenth-century garb on the Constitution Avenue steps, the national Bicentennial-Tricentennial time capsule was closed. The capsule contains the signatures of the 25,000 persons who visited the Archives during the previous year's memorable 76-hour Fourth of July weekend vigil when the Declaration of Independence and the nation's other founding charters were on public view around the clock. To be opened in time for the nation's tricentenary, the capsule also contains a flag from Guam that was the first American stand-

ard on United States soil to greet the sun on Bicentennial Day in 1976, as well as other mementoes. The capsule is being stored at the Archives.

Invited guests and staff members watched the Inauguration Day parade from the National Archives building at the start of the year when the new president, Jimmy Carter, made his famous walk down Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the White House. To honor the new president, we displayed in the Pennsylvania Avenue lobby historic inaugural documents and artifacts from NARS collections.

During the year, the Office of Educational Programs premiered a twenty-minute slide show entitled "Inside the National Archives." It gives viewers an idea of the richness and variety of the records maintained by the National Archives. Important too from the public education standpoint was a new eleven-minute animated film *Conquering the Paper Mountain*. This entertaining movie, several years in the making, sets forth how and why the National Archives came to be established and what its main functions are. The film is being shown to civic and school groups, to visitors to the National Archives building, and in the many NARS installations around the country.



The General Services Administration intends to screen it for every one of its 37,000 employees across the country. Prints have been made available for rent or purchase from the NARS Audio-visual Center, and the movie has been entered in a number of national and international film festivals.

Why animation? As Tom Scanlan commented in a review of the film in *Federal Times*, an animated film doesn't go out of date as a normal movie does because of changed clothing styles and other factors; thus it saves money for the maker. Calling it "an artistic instructional film characterized by wit," Scanlan concluded that "*Paper Mountain* should delight—as well as inform—any viewer."

For members of the public with a serious interest in history, the National Archives expanded its Associates program. At year's end, there were more than 6,000 members across the country and the total was climbing impressively. For Washington members and the public at large, there were many special events at

President Carter and family pass before the Archives on their historic Inauguration Day walk to the White House.

the Archives, including lectures by distinguished historians and writers, such as Alex Haley, architecture critic Wolf von Eckhardt, espionage expert Anthony Cave Brown, and British map librarian Helen Wallis.

The volunteer docent program continued to expand. More than fifty volunteers are now providing information to tourists in the Exhibition Hall, conducting behind-the-scenes tours, aiding in research projects, and developing and conducting programs for school classes. The docent program is proving to be an exceptionally helpful way to serve the public.

The continuing Films at the Archives series in the Archives theater attracted substantial crowds. More than 6,000 persons viewed free showings during the year. Themes in the series were our national parks and television news commentaries. Among films shown in a different public program series were three on Nazi

Germany, with expert panels on hand to comment on the movies shown; each of the showings in the series drew a capacity audience.

In addition to the Inauguration Day exhibit, documents and artifacts on loan from the Archives in Washington and from the regional Archives enriched exhibits throughout the country. Special exhibits were mounted by a number of the presidential libraries over the year. Representative showings were a collection of Plains Indian art at the Eisenhower library and a collection of presidential medals and inauguration memorabilia at the Johnson library. The Roosevelt, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson libraries collaborated to lend treasures to an unusual exhibition in Casablanca honoring two centuries of unbroken United States-Moroccan friendship. The loans were made at the request of Robert Anderson, the American ambassador, who felt they "helped us advance important public affairs objectives in an unusually sensitive part of the world." The State Department and United States Information Agency handled logistics. The objects loaned included a dagger with gold hilt encased in gold sheath given to President Roosevelt in 1943 and a lavishly decorated replica of the Moroccan Constitution presented by King Hassan II to President Kennedy.

During the year more than 750,000 people came to view the Declaration of Independence and the nation's other founding charters in their permanent home in Washington. The six presidential libraries reported a combined attendance of more than 1.5 million visitors.

BREAKING THE MOLD

During the year, NARS sponsored a number of conferences, symposiums, forums, training courses, and workshops to spread knowledge of the agency's broad fields of interest.

In a pleasant surprise, the annual National Archives scholarly conference, seventeenth in the series, drew a far more diverse audience than preceding conferences. Not just historians met to discuss the conference theme "Farmers, Bureaucrats, and Middlemen: Historical Perspectives on American Agriculture," but many who had never been to the Archives. Members of the agribusiness community, political scientists, and an unusual number of economists figured prominently in the audience of about 140—a sample reflecting the diversity of American agriculture today. As conference

director Trudy Peterson put it, "We broke out of the traditional mold of a tightly knit audience from academic history departments by drawing people in a wide variety of fields. The goal of these conferences in interesting people in Archives holdings was thus particularly well-served."

Agricultural leadership, labor, research and development, the role of the federal government in modern agriculture, and resources for the history of agriculture were among the topics presented.

Cartographers, historians, geographers, and antiquarians gathered from around the world for the seventh International Conference on the History of Cartography held in mid-summer in Washington, with the Archives as one of four sponsors. Other sponsors for this biennial meeting, first in the Western Hemisphere, of the International Society for the History of Cartography were the Library of Congress, Smithsonian Institution, and Folger Shakespeare Library. During meetings at the host institutions, papers were presented on such diverse topics as map production and trade from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, royal map collections and royal patronage of mapmakers in the courts of England, Spain, France, and Prussia; sea charts; and the cartography of European exploration in North America and Africa. Ralph Ehrenberg of NARS ably organized this agency's participation in the conference, which included an exhibit of important historic maps selected from the Archives' holdings.

Continuing its tradition of holding major symposiums on topics vital to America, the Lyndon B. Johnson Library in Austin sponsored conferences on "Congress and the Presidency: A Shifting Balance of Power?" and "Alternatives to Confrontation: A National Policy Toward Regional Change," which concerned itself with the new economics of the sunbelt states.

Reflecting the year's increased interest in family history studies, three introductory courses in genealogical research were held by the Archives. The annual Genealogical Forum, eighth in the series, was held on the topic of black family history, a first for this subject matter. The three-week National Institute on Genealogical Research, another annual course, drew experienced researchers from across the country seeking to polish their skills.

Three more of the periodic two-week courses in the administration of modern archives drew a total of 120 archivists, manuscript curators, records managers, and others during 1977.

In the academic field, the popular week-long "Going to the Source" course in which use of records at the National Archives is taught was presented three times. Curators, librarians, historians, archivists, and graduate students attended. For the first time, a workshop for secondary school teachers in using primary sources was conducted. Institutes on archival resources for public librarians and for university and reference librarians rounded out the education effort in this field.

When President Carter, shortly after his inauguration, expressed the determination that government regulations should be written "in plain English for a change," national attention focused on the public's increasing frustration in attempting to comprehend the legal jargon in which most federal regulations are written. Speeding up a campaign it had begun years ago, NARS undertook a key role in implementing President Carter's order that government rules be written more simply. Much of this effort was in the public education field. It followed a briefing on regulatory problems given to President Carter himself by the director of the NARS Office of the Federal Register, Fred Emery.

Fourteen four-day workshops on legal drafting were presented in Washington and elsewhere; one of them drew, to the surprise of the sponsors, of which NARS was one, more than 800 participants. In a third move toward clarification, the NARS *Federal Register*, the government's daily legal newspaper, began printing a summary paragraph for all rulemaking documents, advising the reader in straightforward language what action is being taken and why; in addition, each regulation now carries the name and telephone number of an official who can provide more information on the regulation. This action was mandated by the Administrative Committee of the *Federal Register* of which I serve as chairman. Finally, the public and state and local governments were given help in coping with the tide of federal regulations as NARS greatly expanded its series of workshops on how to use the *Federal Register*. One hundred thirty workshops were held in Washington and across the nation with more than 11,000 attending. It was a necessary effort to make the federal government more responsive to the concerns of the American people in this vital area.

Mary Alexander of the Office of Educational Programs conducts one of many classes held for researchers by the National Archives.





DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE

During the year the National Archives issued its usual range of official, scholarly, and popular publications.

Among them was the two-volume 1975 edition of the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*, covering the first full year of the Ford administration. Transcripts of the president's news conferences as well as texts of public messages, statements, and other papers released by the White House Press Office are

Director of the *Federal Register*, Fred J. Emery, seated next to President Carter, led a presidential task force to simplify the language used in federal government regulations.

contained in the volumes. First copies were presented to the former president in a small ceremony in Ann Arbor, Michigan, when Ford came to the University of Michigan to examine the progress of the Ford presidential library project.

As part of its contribution to the American

Bicentennial, NARS completed a massive computer-generated *Index to the Papers of the Continental Congress: 1774-1789*. Constituting the records of the pre-federal government of the United States, these papers are among the most valuable in the National Archives. Since it provides references to all of the persons and to places and subjects mentioned in the documents, the *Index* will enable scholars and others to study these records in depth. Publication of the four-volume *Index* is expected early in 1978.

Two more volumes in the projected five-volume combination guide and index to Civil War military records held by the National Archives were issued by NARS. The series is titled *Military Operations of the Civil War: A Guide-Index to the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 1861-65*. The volumes are both a general guide to an earlier 127-volume War Department publication of documents about the war and an index to the thousands of military operations described in that publication.

Volume I, published in 1977 in an abridged version by the Government Printing Office (and in full on microfilm by the National Archives), serves as a general guide to the 127 volumes of published battle reports and correspondence. Volume III, also issued during the year, is a supplementary index covering operations in the Lower Seaboard Theater and Gulf Approach of the Main Western Theater. Volume II, covering operations in the Main Eastern Theater, was published in five parts from 1968 to 1972. Volumes IV and V are in preparation.

Records tracing 200 years of American involvement in Africa are described in the new *Guide to Federal Archives Relating to Africa*, sponsored by the Archives and researched and compiled by staff member Aloha South. The 576-page volume documents United States exploratory, missionary, diplomatic, military, commercial, philanthropic, educational, and scientific activities since 1775. The National Archives survey was made with the assistance of a Ford Foundation grant and the volume was issued by the African Studies Association. It was co-sponsored by UNESCO and the International Council on Archives. A companion guide to non-federal archives in the United States relating to Africa is now being prepared by the Archives.

Heeding its mandate to make its archival materials as widely available to the public as pos-

sible, the National Archives published a high-quality, inexpensive portfolio of twelve Mathew Brady photographs of Civil War era personages, including Lincoln, Lee, Grant, Walt Whitman, and Clara Barton. The photographs are from the Brady collection of more than 6,000 glass-plate negatives, a national treasure. On the cover of the portfolio is a photograph of Brady, whose busy Washington studio was located diagonally across from the present National Archives building.

Six handsome, colored drawings of old ships were also placed on sale as a companion poster portfolio. The ships include the *Congress*, a frigate that used its twenty-eight sails to overtake and capture thirteen ships during the War of 1812, and the *Lizzie Davis*, a Confederate blockade-runner.

In a precedent-setting project for the archival world, United States and Russian editorial teams conferred in Moscow in 1977 and prepared for another meeting in Washington in early 1978 concerning a joint documentary publication on early relations between the two countries. The publication will be issued as a two-language volume and will be titled *Development of Russian-American Relations, 1765-1815*. Some 400 documents will be reproduced, among them letters from Benjamin Franklin to Russian scientists and a letter from Czar Alexander to Thomas Jefferson. Publication in 1979 is anticipated.

Making up the American team are staff members of the National Archives as well as representatives of the Department of State, the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and the General Services Administration. Despite strains in other areas of United States-Soviet relations, collaborative efforts in this endeavor continued to proceed smoothly.

During the year, NARS published proceedings of conferences and symposiums at presidential libraries, including the Johnson library's *Toward New Human Rights: The Social Policies of the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations*. A different kind of volume, researched and published by the Hoover library in collaboration with other institutions, was *A Guide to Resources for the Study of the Recent History of the United States in the Libraries of the University of Iowa, the State Historical Society of Iowa and in the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library*. An up-



dated *United States Government Manual*, an updated *Standard and Optional Forms Handbook*, and a revised *Government Correspondence Manual* were issued. To spread the word on technical innovations in the records management field, NARS began publication of a bi-monthly newsletter whose circulation quickly climbed to almost 4,000.

Since the Archives' impressive microfilm publication program began more than thirty-five years ago, more than 2,100 microfilm publications have been issued on a total of 104,000 rolls of microfilm. Some 1.2 million rolls have been sold in that time, with the continuing

Milton O. Gustafson, who headed a group of archives specialists collaborating with Soviet scholars, stands in Red Square before the Kremlin.

best-seller being census schedules covering the years 1790 to 1890. During 1977, twenty more publications totaling 1,401 rolls were issued, including *Case Files of Applications From Confederates for Presidential Pardons, 1865-67*; an *Index to Compiled Service Records of Revolutionary War Soldiers Who Served With the American Army in Connecticut Military Organizations*; and *Records of the United States Nuernberg War Crimes Trials: Interrogations, 1946-49*.

ADVISING THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Offering important policy guidance to NARS is the National Advisory Council of the National Archives, a distinguished body which meets twice a year. Past members have included Arthur Goldberg, Lewis L. Strauss, and historians John Hope Franklin and Louis Morton. To streamline its functions and provide greater representation of women and minorities on the nineteen-member body, this past year the council was restructured. As a result, the first major change is that new members are now selected from slates of three to five candidates that must include minorities and women. The organization whose council seat is vacant will draw up the list and present it to the administrator of general services, who will then make the appointment. The procedure will not apply to public members, who will continue to be selected by the administrator on recommendations from NARS. There are five public member seats. Second, the council will now present suggestions on Archives programs and services directly to the archivist of the United States, instead of to the administrator of general services. Third, to encourage wider participation with the Archives' constituencies, maximum service has been set at two three-year terms for new members.

The council chairman is Clement E. Vose, a professor of government at Wesleyan University, representing the American Political Science Association. He was elected to succeed Rodman Paul, a professor of history at the California Institute of Technology, representing the Western History Association, Paul resigned, after one meeting as chairman, to accept the presidency of that organization. Vose will serve through 1978.

New to the council is Mattie U. Russell, the group's second woman member. Curator of manuscripts at Duke University, Dr. Russell represents the Southern Historical Association, in a term ending in 1979. Other newcomers are the Rev. Francis Paul Prucha, S.J., a professor of history at Marquette University, replacing Paul as the representative of the Western History Association; and Joseph Becker, of the science information consulting firm of Becker & Hayes, Los Angeles, a public member. Both have terms running through 1979. In addition to Vose, Russell, Prucha, and Becker, the other members were James T. Patterson III, Department of His-

tory, Brown University, representing the American Historical Association, in a term ending in December 1977; Donald McCoy, Department of History, University of Kansas, also representing the American Historical Association, 1978; Robert Gallman, Department of Economics, University of North Carolina, representing the American Economic Association, 1978; Vernon Carstensen, Department of History, University of Washington, representing the Organization of American Historians, 1977; W. D. Aeschbacher, Department of History, University of Cincinnati, also representing the Organization of American Historians, 1978; Dorman H. Winfrey, director and librarian, Texas State Library, representing the American Association for State and Local History, 1977; Herbert Finch, assistant director of libraries, Cornell University, representing the Society of American Archivists, 1979; Jerome M. Clubb, member of the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, University of Michigan, representing the Social Science Research Council, 1977; Walter Fisher, Department of History, Morgan State College, representing the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, 1977; and Virginia P. Livingston, retired professor of English, University of Virginia, representing the National Genealogical Society, 1977.

Serving as public members are George Elsey, president of the American Red Cross, 1978; John W. Toland, Pulitzer Prize winner and author of the best-selling biography *Adolph Hitler*, 1979; and Robben W. Fleming, president of the University of Michigan, 1977. The fourth public member seat was vacant at the end of the year. An ex-officio member is Robert H. Bahmer, a former archivist of the United States.

WORLD ARCHIVAL PROBLEMS

Archival interests and problems are expected to receive more attention from UNESCO than before as a consequence of the formation of the General Information Program in the United Nations' educational and cultural organization. The program merges the organization's former Documentation, Libraries, and Archives Program with its Scientific and Technical Information Program. The new General Information Program, with staff of twenty-one professionals and budget of \$2.5 million, is responsible to an Inter-Governmental Council representing

thirty countries; during the year I was elected a vice president of this council. The General Information Program will focus its attention on developing countries. Education, training, and development of infrastructures will be emphasized.

In 1977, I completed my first year as president of the International Council on Archives. My term runs through 1980, when the ICA will hold its next quadrennial congress.

Among the problems facing the world archival community is the technological explosion. It has been pointed out that the movable-type printing press is some 500 years old, the telegraph 140 years, the typewriter 110, the radio 50, commercial television and the computer 30, and some forms of reprographs even newer. It adds up to a fallout of records that has created an international paperwork burden and revolutionized the work of the archivist.

One result of that revolution has been that archivists have had to shed their traditional cloaks of anonymity as records keepers and step into the public eye as records managers overseeing the entire life cycle of records from their creation to their disposition or destruction.

The sharply increased volume of words and data being generated globally, the generally greater access to records now afforded the public around the world, the introduction of records management in many countries, and the broad program of archival assistance being offered developing organizations by the International Council on Archives and the United Nations are current matters of major concern in the archival field.

ACCESSIONS: "MAGIC" FILE TO TV NEWS

Nearly 21,000 cubic feet of records were added to the collections of the National Archives and its regional branches during the year; this put total holdings at some 1.31 million cubic feet of records.

Accessions included summaries of intercepted and decoded Japanese wartime messages for the period February 10, 1944, to October 2, 1945. These are the so-called "Magic" files, from the code name given them by the army; they were received from the National Security Agency. Some information was deleted from the file by NSA for national security reasons. The accession can be considered a breakthrough for historians since this is the

first important material received by the Archives from the National Security Agency, and its arrival indicates that a flow of NSA files may be forthcoming.

Records of the disbanded Watergate Special Prosecution Force were turned over to the Archives by Charles Ruff, the last special prosecutor. Constituting some 500 cubic feet of records, this file is open to limited research, subject to stringent restrictions placed on the records by the special prosecutor, as well as the results of expected Freedom of Information suits. The mostly paper document file from the Department of Justice includes copies of some Watergate tapes as well as some items of evidence, such as the contents of Howard Hunt's safe.

Eighteen additional boxes of records from the air force's Project Blue Book investigation of unidentified flying objects conducted during the period 1947-69 were located among active military records stored at the NARS record center in St. Louis and were transferred to the Archives building in Washington, D. C. The files are regional reports which essentially duplicate UFO information released to researchers in 1976. In order to make public all existing Project Blue Book material, the air force sent reserve officers to the Archives to screen the documents; the papers were then released for study.

Motion picture film of the Vietnam War was an interesting accession. The 600 reels, which cover the period 1965-76, are compiled excerpts from network news broadcasts copied off the air by the Defense Department for internal study and analysis. Important as a visual, chronological record of United States involvement in Vietnam, this footage, seen by millions of Americans on television in their homes, made the realities of war a daily consideration for them as never before, thus significantly influencing their opinions about United States involvement.

Reports on bombing raids, weekly casualties, the 1968 Tet offensive, defense spending, troop withdrawals, Lt. William Calley's court-martial, and protest marches at home are included among the several hundred hours of reportage by such network spokesmen as Morley Safer of CBS, Frank Reynolds of ABC, and Robert Goralski of NBC. Scattered throughout the films are reports on other foreign and domestic events of interest to the Defense Department,

among them United States involvement in Cambodia, the Pentagon Papers, the move for an all-volunteer army, and acceptance of the first women at United States military academies.

Authorized to accept certain gifts of records not created by the federal government, the Archives during the year received valuable gifts of film and sound records from non-government sources. ABC-Radio gave the Archives 25,000 sixteen-inch transcription disks of network news, public affairs, and special-events programming for the period 1944-67. The material has been opened for research.

In a related action, ABC-TV gave the Archives approval to copy its Reasoner-Walters Evening News Program, through the end of the year. An extension through 1978 was anticipated. Videotape copies were made available for research at the National Archives building, the eleven regional branches, and the six presidential libraries.

ABC's nonexclusive license to copy means that the Archives is now receiving news broadcasts from all three national television networks. Under an agreement between NARS and CBS Inc., videotapes of CBS news programs telecast since February 16, 1975, have been deposited in the National Archives and made available for research. The National Broadcasting Company followed suit in 1976 by permitting the Archives to make 16mm off-the-air preservation copies of the NBC nightly, Saturday, and Sunday news programs, as well as NBC coverage of presidential press conferences, congressional hearings, and political conventions. Videotape copies are available for research.

The National Audiovisual Center, a clearing-house for the sale and rental of more than 9,700 films and units of audiovisual material from 175 federal agencies, acquired more than seventy movies during ' year from the National Park Service on the nation's major national parks. Titles in this series included director John Huston's "Independence," which tells of Philadelphia's role in the American Revolution.

Distribution of four films based on the theme "Equal Justice Under Law" is being handled by the Audiovisual Center. The series studies major decisions of the United States Supreme Court when John Marshall was its distinguished chief justice. The movies were made

under the sponsorship of the United States Judicial Conference, made up of federal circuit and district court judges and chaired by Chief Justice Warren Burger. The series was produced by WQED of Pittsburgh, a public television station.

The Stock Film Library, a little-known and under-exploited resource of the National Archives, significantly increased its holdings by accepting for deposit a half-million feet of Coast Guard motion pictures dating from the 1940s to the present. Although the library has some finished movies, the bulk of its collection is made up of "out-takes"—footage cut from final versions of films or simply record footage. Most of the Stock Film Library footage is in color, and most of it is recent.

Films are acquired for historic value and photographic quality, among other reasons, and are made available to the public for a reasonable reproduction fee. It's a resource that I think could be used more widely.

Among textual records accessioned by the Archives were declassified Central Intelligence Agency studies of captured Nazi records on the "Red Orchestra," Soviet espionage networks using radio to communicate and operating in Europe and the Middle East during World War II. This unusual, highly interesting material, along with other CIA studies of German and Russian intelligence and espionage during the period, has already drawn a substantial amount of attention from researchers. Received too were the records of the National Study Commission on Records and Documents of Federal Officials (the Public Documents Commission) and of the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration. Records of the 1977 Presidential Inaugural Committee were collected for NARS by a staff archivist.

Significant accessions at the presidential libraries included the papers of Stuart Symington, secretary of the air force from 1947-50, by the Truman library; and the papers of William L. Seidman, assistant to the president for economic affairs, by the Ford library. Important accretions to existing collections were the papers of Clark Mollenhoff, Washington bureau chief of the *Des Moines Register* from 1970 to 1977, Hoover library; the papers of Milton S. Eisenhower from 1956 to 1977 and Mamie Doud Eisenhower from 1950 to 1977, Eisenhower library; and a large collection of the papers of Wright Patman, a member of Congress

from Texas from 1928 to 1976, Johnson library.

FOOTNOTE TO HISTORY

From the three billion pages of records in the holdings of the National Archives, a pearl occasionally emerges. One such was the letter found in a volume of old State Department documents being examined by Bryan T. van Sweringen of the Records Declassification Division. The letter was written by a "Fidel Castro" to Franklin D. Roosevelt in November 1940 asking for a \$10 bill and saying he knew of rich iron deposits in Cuba.

Specialists at the Archives became quickly convinced that the writer, then a schoolboy, is the current president of Cuba. The handwriting and signature were similar to relatively recent examples of Castro's handwriting. Castro was a student at the Catholic school, Colegio de Dolores, in Santiago, from which the letter was sent, and the age jibed fairly closely. Furthermore, Castro grew up in Oriente Province where he said the mines were to be found. He did not make payment of the \$10 a condition for supplying the information. The offer was more or less of a postscript.

The writer did not get the \$10 he asked for. The letter was sent to the United States ambassador in Havana for acknowledgement. Castro got this somewhat unresponsive reply: "Dear Fidel: The President has directed the embassy to acknowledge, with an expression of appreciation, your letter of Nov. 6, 1940, written on the occasion of his reelection." The letter was signed by Willard L. Beaulac, embassy counselor, who has told officials he has no recollection of the incident.

The Associated Press story on the find was sent out internationally for Sunday morning release and received the heaviest play of any AP story that weekend. Both the *Miami Herald* and *Los Angeles Times* used it on the front page.

A sequel was not long in happening. An AP reporter in Havana had occasion to meet with Premier Castro and tell him of the story. Castro confirmed that he had written the letter. "You know, I was audacious then," he said. "When the answer came, they put it on the bulletin board at school, then everybody could see it for a week. I was famous in those days because I had an exchange with Roosevelt."

Castro couldn't remember exactly what he

wrote Roosevelt, "But I do remember writing . . . I was studying English then and I wrote the letter and then I sent the letter to Roosevelt."

It adds up to a small but intriguing footnote to history.

COPING WITH THE RECORDS OVERLOAD

Over the years, the Washington National Records Center in Suitland, Maryland, the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, and the thirteen regional centers have become overloaded with federal government files forwarded to them for temporary or permanent storage. This ever-increasing volume now totals 13 million cubic feet. If the boxes holding these records, each containing a cubic foot of paper, were laid end to end, they would stretch from New York to San Francisco.

To curb costs, the NARS Office of Federal Records Centers has turned to a computerized system, designated the NARS-5 system, to control its holdings. During 1977, the remaining nine centers not hooked into the system received terminals, and all of the fifteen centers continued or began working hard on the task of converting their old holdings from the cumbersome manual system to NARS-5; records received during the year were coded directly into the system. By the end of the year, the Washington National Records Center had put all of its records in the system, while 55 percent of the holdings in the regional centers had been recorded electronically, with Dayton leading at 93 percent, followed by Boston at 84 percent and Laguna Niguel at 75 percent. This compares with an 8-percent figure one year ago. All of the regional center records are expected to be under electronic control by the end of 1978.

The NARS-5 system is tied to a computer in the St. Louis center, which has as its major function the control of 68 million civilian personnel records and 50 million military service records. In November, the computer was upgraded from an IBM 360/30 to an IBM 360/50 to increase its capacity and provide faster service.

Computerization of NARS records permits fast sorting, arranging, and selection of information. As an additional benefit, the system generates printed disposal notices for the records centers to mail to agencies, informing them that records are eligible for disposal and requesting their concurrence. More detailed and

quickly available information about growth patterns and storage needs also is afforded.

Although some half-million cubic feet of records up for disposal have had a hold placed on them because of court orders and administrative actions—most important, the long-standing Justice Department antitrust suits against IBM and AT&T—the fifteen records centers, which spend almost half the total NARS budget and have almost half the permanent staff, are carrying on an aggressive campaign to reduce the volume of other old records. Begun in 1975, this drive applies GSA federal property management regulations to obtain prompter and more complete compliance with federal regulations regarding the disposition of temporary records. Thirty-five percent of the federal government agencies have already established records disposition schedules providing for the automatic retention and destruction of given sets of files, 56 percent are in the process of establishing or updating such schedules, and the remaining 9 percent are being pressured to begin the task. As a last resort, NARS is prepared to report to Congress those agencies which refuse to cooperate.

While the incoming records in fiscal year 1978 are expected to total 1.2 million cubic feet as the federal government continues to grow, the disposition program aims at the destruction of 1 million cubic feet of records, to keep the total growth for the period to 200,000 cubic feet of records. Without the three-year-old NARS campaign to dispose of as many old records as possible, the increase in the total holding would be much higher than it is today, and the burden much heavier.

MANAGING FEDERAL RECORDS

As the proliferation of records continues amid increasing public and official protest over the costs of paperwork, records management—another NARS responsibility—became increasingly important and visible. To help curb paperwork, the Archives worked hard during the year to increase the awareness of sound records management principles by program managers of federal government agencies.

NARS gave technical assistance to more than eighty agencies, mostly federal but including some at the state and local level. Correspondence, forms, mail, reports, micrographics, and filing were among the areas covered.

Savings for a work force of fewer than 200 people at one agency, the Civil Service Commission's Bureau of Personnel Management and Evaluation, were estimated at \$30,000 in 1977.

Evaluations for improving records management programs were completed for the General Services Administration, the Federal Power Commission, and the Federal Trade Commission; others are under way.

Word-processing came in for NARS attention. A revised regulation on the use of word-processing equipment was issued for federal agencies in an effort to ensure better use of equipment.

Seeking to reduce government postage fees, NARS, with aid from GSA legal counsel, intervened before the Postal Rate Commission on behalf of all executive branch agencies to seek more equitable postage rates for government mail. NARS contends that under proposed rates federal agencies will be charged almost \$400 million more in fiscal year 1979 than the cost of the service. As the year ended, it was not clear whether the intervention would be effective. Other initiatives on mail management ranged from inspection of operations in agencies to design and testing of a self-mailer for routine correspondence that may save federal agencies millions of dollars in postage, envelope, and preparation costs.

In addition to workshops and new publications, the NARS records management program included the annual bestowal of awards to those professionals who have done outstanding work in the field of curbing federal paperwork costs. The yearly event is co-sponsored by NARS and the Association of Records Managers and Administrators. Forty-five people were cited, increasing the cumulative total of those honored to 387 professionals. These records managers are credited with having produced first-year paperwork savings totaling \$1.5 billion, with savings accruing in succeeding years as well and estimated to total some \$600 million annually. The figures are impressive. They make the strongest possible point about the importance of the work being done.

BLAZE DESTROYS FILMS, FLOODING HITS LIBRARY

The NARS year was marred by two disasters, a fire and a flood.

The blaze at the NARS Nitrate Film Depository in Suitland, Maryland, destroyed some

800,000 feet of "March of Time" movie outtakes from the period 1937-40 as well as 109 canisters of federal government aerial map photographs. While the World War II aerial photos had been duplicated on safety-base film, the movie footage had not and it is now lost.

The cause of the late afternoon fire was believed to be spontaneous combustion of the highly flammable cellulose nitrate film, produced by a deterioration of the stock. Fire prevention devices successfully blocked the spread of the conflagration to movie films in adjacent vaults.

When ten inches of rain in twenty-four hours hit the Kansas City area over a weekend, it came at an inopportune time for the Truman library: roof repairs were under way. Consequent flooding damaged a number of museum items as well as portions of the building. Restoration of the museum objects was begun immediately and continues. Work has ranged from re-gluing five watersoaked chairs to taking the wrinkles out of a citation that had been presented to Truman by the George Washington Carver Memorial Institute.

PHILIP BROOKS DIES; ARCHIVAL PIONEER

There was one note of great sadness during the year. Philip C. Brooks, Sr., the archivist who organized the Harry S. Truman library and directed it for fourteen years, died July 24 in Phoenix, Arizona. He was seventy-one.

Phil Brooks was among the founding fathers of the National Archives and a pioneer in many of the programs of the Archives. He was a warm personal friend and valued colleague of mine. Brooks joined the National Archives in 1935, a year after it was established by Congress as the nation's recordkeeping agency. The highlight of his career was his work in collaborating with Truman to make available the papers of his administration for scholarly research. Under Brooks's leadership, the library in Independence, Missouri, became a center for study of the Truman administration in particular and the American presidency in general. It also became a major Midwest tourist attraction, receiving more than 350,000 visitors in 1977.

Son of a congressman from Colorado, Brooks was born in Washington, D. C. He received a doctorate in 1933 from the University of California at Berkeley. He was a newspaperman while pursuing his graduate studies.

He began with the National Archives as a special examiner, then became an archivist. He helped organize a system that contributed to the modern discipline of archives administration. In 1953, Brooks was appointed chief of the Federal Records Center in San Francisco. He was sent by the Point Four Program to teach archives administration in the Republic of Panama in 1954-55. When the Truman library was being built in 1957, he was named director and headed the library until his retirement in 1971.

Of this achievement, the *Kansas City Times* said in an editorial: "As the first director of the Harry S. Truman Library, he set the pattern for combined presidential libraries and museums in this nation. His pioneering work in Independence became the model to be drawn on later by others who learned from his experience and who freely copied his example."

Among the many public tributes paid Phil Brooks was this comment by Richard A. Jacobs of the Office of Presidential Libraries in *The American Archivist*: "Personable, exuberant, considerate, tireless, tolerant—the characteristics of his personality were a large part of the reason for his success in life."

PRESERVING STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY

Grants totaling nearly \$3 million were given to organizations across the nation in 1977 by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), an adjunct organization of the National Archives. It is my pleasure to serve as chairman of this able commission. The grants, up \$1 million from the preceding year, went for the preservation, arrangement, description, and publication of significant records.

Although the commission has long sponsored documentary publications, it has only within the last two years begun to support state and local institutions—public and private—seeking to preserve records and make them available for use. The programs evolved from legislation sponsored by Congressman Jack Brooks of Texas. As a consequence of these grants the commission has gained national prominence. Nearly 200 requests for such grants, totaling more than \$4 million, were received in 1977; this compares with 15 requests for a total of \$1.2 million in 1976. Three awards made during the year show the diversity of the program:

- \$24,000 to the Logan County Historical Society, Guthrie, Oklahoma, to microfilm and describe Guthrie city records for the period 1889-1920 and to survey and publish a guide to historical records in Guthrie and Logan County for the same period.

- \$25,000 to the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Salina, Kansas, to hold several week-long regional training workshops for approximately 300 archivists of religious orders.

- \$45,000 to Western Washington State University, Bellingham, Washington, to survey records of rural electric cooperatives in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. This is the second phase of a three-year survey of records relating to public power in the Northwest. The study will develop improved records management programs for public power agencies and identify records of historical significance.

NHPRC also moved to expand a system of governor-appointed state historical records coordinators and advisory boards to set priorities, review local proposals, and make recommendations for awards to the commission. Regional and national records proposals are submitted directly to the commission as are proposals

from Guam, American Samoa, and the trust territories of the Pacific.

With the approval of a board for Missouri, forty-seven states as well as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands now have panels to plan programs and evaluate grant applications in their jurisdictions. At the end of the year, only Maine, Mississippi, Wyoming, and the District of Columbia had not yet established required state records advisory boards.

In one of its most important actions of 1977, the commission, after consulting with historical and archival groups and state historical records coordinators, formally expressed for the first time its views of major needs and preferred approaches for the preservation of historical records in the United States. Not a ranked listing of priorities for the commission's grant program, the document expresses only the commission's general philosophy, particularly regarding basic approaches to widespread problems. The statement is being shared with other federal and private funding agencies that support historical records projects and with historical, archival, and other associations concerned with historical records. The statement will also be part of the commission's planned 1978 report to the president and the Congress.

Categories of need and preferred approaches to them are outlined in the statement. Among the needs are preservation of endangered records, more surveys of records not in archives, publication of guides to historical records in United States repositories, better training of archivists and others in administering historical records programs, and development and improvement of systemwide records programs for state and local governments and for private organizations.

* * *

The foregoing has been a look at some of the interesting developments of 1977 for the National Archives and Records Service as a whole. These highlights, it may be hoped, convey the scope and diversity of a challenging year. □

The late Senator Hubert Humphrey chats with Margaret Truman Daniel at a Truman library ceremony honoring the senator with its public service award.

