2020 in Review

2020 was a year like no other. Without a doubt, this is a year that will be covered in the history books of the future.

Despite this unprecedented year, a bright spot was working with our Citizen Archivists and Catalog community members. Together we accomplished a great deal! Looking back on this unique and historic time, we’d like to share some of the highlights from the year.

As always, thank you for your contributions to help unlock history. We wish you a wonderful, restful holiday season, and look forward to working with you in 2021.

We introduced new research tools and shared search strategies

Bureau of Indian Affairs Photographs Finding Aid

Search and explore more than 18,000 digitized historical photographs from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) records with the Bureau of Indian Affairs Photographs Finding Aid.

Learn more.
Treaties Explorer

Hundreds of Native American treaties have been scanned and are freely available online, for the first time, through the National Archives Catalog. Also, in partnership with The Museum of Indian Arts and Culture (MIAC), these treaties and extensive additional historical and contextual information are available through Treaties Explorer. Learn more.

Tips for Successful Catalog Searches

Have you tried your search in the National Archives Catalog? The Catalog is our online portal to the records held at the National Archives and information about those records. With nearly 110 million digitized pages of records available (and thousands more added each week!), you are likely to find something new every time you search.

See the search strategies.

Presidential Library Explorer

We are pleased to share our second next-generation finding aid: the Presidential Library Explorer! This tool
is a new path into the digitized holdings of NARA's Presidential Libraries, providing a browseable experience that complements the deep dive that search in the National Archives Catalog provides. Learn more.

We celebrated Citizen Archivist contributions

Celebrating 1 million pages enhanced

We reached a BIG milestone earlier this year, celebrating 1 million pages of records enhanced. Update! Thanks to your continued work throughout the year, we now have more than 1.4 million pages of records enhanced by citizen archivist contributions to the National Archives Catalog. Read more about this milestone.

Searchable Stock Shots

Now available in the Catalog: Motion Picture Library Stock Shots (306-LSS), a series of gorgeous black and white reels of stock footage compiled by the United States Information Agency (USIA). Staff from the Motion Picture Preservation Lab enhanced these records with tags and transcriptions to
help make them more findable and useful to researchers. Learn more.

We hosted special (virtual) events

19th Amendment Centennial Commemoration

This year, we commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Constitutional amendment that guaranteed that “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” Learn more.

Presidential Library Road Trip

Beginning February 6, 2020, we posted a series of citizen archivist transcription missions featuring records from each of our 14 Presidential Libraries. We want to thank the 151 Citizen Archivists who participated. Together during the Road Trip they transcribed 3,536 pages and tagged 699 photos! Learn more about the mission.

Archives at Home
While our research rooms, museums, and Presidential Libraries remain closed due to the ongoing health crisis, you can always turn to the National Archives for a wide selection of online content and to conduct research in our Catalog. Learn more about our online resources and programs.

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Mission History

Are you nostalgic for the Citizen Archivist Missions you’ve worked on? Curious about the kinds of missions we’ve done in the last few years? Check out our Missions History page. On this page we list our previous missions so that you can review the records from previous projects. In a few cases, we still need some help completing the transcription or tags, so review the list and help us out. Did you have a favorite Mission this year? Let us know!

Photograph of Gordon Cooper during Simulated Mercury Redstone Rocket Flight. National Archives Identifier 17409778
This year a large number of new Citizen Archivists joined our program. No matter how many pages you contributed transcriptions, tags, or comments to - every contribution makes our records more accessible. THANK YOU! And an extra shout-out to our top contributors for 2020:

Aapiaom  
Ackman  
Alebue  
Andersont  
Ashoop  
Awalker  
Ceili  
CharlesMiller  
Cmcutrona  
Dar4cubs  
Ddoerner  
Divine  
GFULLER  
GoreckiC  
Gypsy  
Henritze  
Irakirsh  
Jammon49  
Janh  
Jasonbrandon94  
Jcent54  
Kdawkins  
Lcahalan  
MM2  
Mmaster  
Mtarabulski  
Mvargas  
N0AH  
NEllenL  
ONEILL  
OzarksNative  
Rbass  
Rcooper36  
RCrawford  
Robertkett  
RonnaB  
SAO  
Scludwig  
Smithal  
Soonerfactor2  
SPIetro  
Stquick  
Takeahike5  
Tmccolle  
Trumanvol  
Tschmidt
Happy New Year from all of us at the National Archives. Wishing you all the best in 2021!

History Hub

Have a question? Find your answer on History Hub!

History Hub is our support community for researchers, genealogists, history enthusiasts, and citizen archivists. Ask questions, share information, work together, and find help based on experience and interests. Researchers can ask—or answer—questions on History Hub, or search to see if a question has been asked before.
Citizen Archivists, there's a group just for you! You can share tips and strategies, find new challenges, and get support for your work.

Once you’ve signed up, check out our poll:

What kinds of records do you like to transcribe? ➔

COVID-19 Update

The National Archives is committed to the health and safety of our visitors and staff. We are closely monitoring the situation regarding COVID-19, and we are working with public health officials and our counterpart agencies to monitor and respond to the evolving conditions and following CDC guidelines.

For more information, visit https://www.archives.gov/coronavirus

Questions or comments? Email us at catalog@nara.gov.