

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE  
RECORDS OF CONGRESS  
SUMMARY OF MEETING

December 11, 2023

The Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress convened for its sixty-fifth meeting at 10:15 A.M. on December 11, 2023. The meeting was held virtually on WebEx.

In accordance with the provisions stated in Public Law 92-463, the meeting was open to the public. The meeting was scheduled from 10:15 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

**Members of the Committee present:**

Ann Berry, Secretary of the U.S. Senate and Chair of the Committee

Kevin McCumber, Acting Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives and Co-Chair of the Committee

Colleen Shogan, Archivist of the United States

Katherine Scott, Historian of the U.S. Senate

Matthew Wasniewski, Historian of the U.S. House of Representatives

Danna Bell, Educational Resource Specialist, Library of Congress

Denise Hibay, Director of Collections and Research in the New York Public Library

Tanya Marshall, Vermont State Archivist and Chief Records Officer

Norman Ornstein, Senior Fellow Emeritus at the American Enterprise Institute

Gunter Waibel, Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director, California Digital Library at the University of California

**Others present for all or a portion of the meeting were:**

Karen Paul, Archivist of the U.S. Senate

Heather Bourk, Archivist of the U.S. House of Representatives

Richard Hunt, Director of the Center for Legislative Archives (NARA)

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Ann Berry, Senate Secretary, welcomed attendees to the sixty-fifth meeting of the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress. She welcomed the new co-chair, the Honorable Kevin McCumber, who was appointed Acting Clerk of the House on July 1. She also welcomed new committee member, Senate Historian Dr. Katherine Scott, who replaced Betty Koed, who retired.

Berry also noted that this virtual meeting marks the first since adopting a new schedule in summer 2023. Going forward, the Committee will meet in person every June and virtually every December. In-person meetings will ultimately be held at the Capitol and the National Archives, with the June 2024 meeting scheduled to convene at the Archives.

### **Notable achievements:**

Berry noted the contributions, questions, and guidelines that the Advisory Committee members had provided during the 33 years of the committee's history. She also expressed appreciation for the presenters at today's meeting for their continued advocacy and efforts to preserve the history of Congress and its records. She noted the unique challenges posed by electronic records and the efforts of the Senate, House, and National Archives to meet those challenges.

## **CLERK'S REPORT**

Kevin McCumber, Acting House Clerk, seconded the Secretary's welcome to the committee and offered a special welcome to Archivist of the United States Colleen Shogan. He expressed interest in working with the Archivist on the common goals of preserving and providing access to official House records. He also acknowledged the dedicated staff at the Center for Legislative Archives for their expertise and collaboration with the House Archives staff.

### **Notable achievements:**

McCumber highlighted the achievements of the Office of the Clerk over the past six months. These achievements include the House Archives staff continuing to support the recordkeeping needs of committees and officers by providing consultations on records management and archiving best practices, managing the transfer of new records for archiving, and providing in-person and digital access to previously archived records. He also noted House Archives staff prepared for and coordinated the transfer of all records from the 116th Congress to the Center for Legislative Archives, which amounted to over 930 boxes containing 700,000 pages. Staff also processed and transferred almost 29 terabytes of electronic records during this period.

McCumber noted that House Archives staff spent the past several months working with staff from the Center to refine the data created to describe House records. They also provided records consultations to departing Members' offices who were leaving or retiring from Congress. House Archives staff assisted with coordinating and planning for the long-term preservation of Members' personal records at a research repository as well as preparing the records for transfer. McCumber observed that House curators continued to host the popular lunch-and-learn series, which provides virtual presentations to House staff to highlight objects in the House collection and announced that the Office of the House Historian had published an updated edition of *Black Americans in Congress*.

#### **ARCHIVIST'S REPORT:**

Dr. Colleen Shogan, Archivist of the United States, noted that she had been busy since the last meeting, having visited 21 of the 42 National Archives locations across the country. At each location, she viewed the records held there and met with staff to hear their thoughts, concerns, and challenges they face. Shogan also reported that President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine had visited the Archives for an event in September to give a speech in the Rotunda.

#### **Notable achievements:**

Shogan provided an update on NARA's effort to reduce the backlog of veterans' records requests at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, reporting that the backlog was almost cleared and would be eliminated by the end of January 2024. She noted that the agency was working to improve the in-person experience for researchers visiting the Archives and the online digital experience for virtual visits. National Archives staff have collected feedback from onsite researchers in an effort to improve their experiences. NARA is also working on wholesale changes to the Catalog, which includes 250 million digitized records, the largest digital archive in the world, to improve researchers' online experiences. This work is focused on improving search functionality so researchers can identify and find records responsive to their research needs.

Shogan reported that she is focused on improving relations with Members of Congress and has welcomed over 100 Members to the National Archives. She enjoys showing the treasures in the holdings of the National Archives, including in the records of Congress, and telling Members about the vital work that the agency does.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Secretary called for a motion to approve the minutes of the June meeting. A motion was made, seconded, and the minutes were approved by the committee.

#### **ARCHIVIST OF THE SENATE REPORT**

Karen Paul, Senate Archivist, provided an update on records preservation activities in the Senate. She also noted that the Deputy Archivist for Digital Archives and Deputy Archivist for

Senators' Offices had participated on a panel at the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, entitled Digital Processing Plans and Workflows. The presentation introduced elements of digital forensics as they apply to digital archives, demonstrated a typical born-digital workflow from accessioning to access, and supplied the tools necessary to create a robust digital archives processing plan.

**Notable achievements:**

Paul noted that her office had transferred 74 new textual accessions, totaling 435 cubic feet, from 17 different Senate committees and offices to the Center since June. Her office also transferred 2.21TB of electronic records in 124 accessions from 16 different committees. A significant new accession saw the transfer of the historic records of the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, also known as the Church Committee, transferred by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

Paul also reported that Deputy Archivist for Senators' Offices, Keri Myers, has continued to focus on three themes—outreach, support, and training—to fulfill the goal of providing enhanced support to Senators' offices. Myers advised offices on getting started with archives and records management, set up records storage accounts for offices at National Archives Federal Records Centers, and worked with offices that will be closing at the end of the current Congress. Myers also helped manage the Preservation Partnership Grants Program and contributed to revisions of *Senators' Papers: Management and Preservation Guidelines* brochure and *Preserving Senate History: Closing a Senate Office* handbook.

Paul noted that Deputy Archivist for Archival and Records Management Training and Services, Dina Mazina, continued to produce a "Tip of the Month" for staff and scheduled Capitol Hill Archivists and Records Managers (CHARM) meetings and a quarterly meeting of the Senate Archives and Records Boot Camp. Mazina also helped host an open CHARM meeting on "Preserving a Senator's Legacy: Archiving from Day One to Donation." This meeting attracted representatives from 20 Senators' offices, seven committees, 14 different repositories, and a number of other archivists and library professionals.

Paul reported that Deputy Archivist George Apodaca selected and submitted several digital preservation tools to Cybersecurity Risk Assessment to obtain Senate-approved solutions that will facilitate the preservation of electronic records. One of these tools is DROID (Digital Record Object Identifier), which provides file format identification, checksum generation, technical metadata creation, and report and analysis functions. Apodaca additionally recently won approval for Senate-wide use of Data Accessioner, a tool designed to facilitate the process of transferring digital data into an archival storage and management system.

Paul provided an update on the meetings of the Technical Working Group on Congressional Video Preservation and Access. She observed that there was a growing consensus among working group members of the need to develop a cohesive strategy for preserving and

accessing congressional video recordings that is harmonized across both chambers of Congress, the Library of Congress, and the National Archives.

### **ARCHIVIST OF THE HOUSE REPORT**

Heather Bourk, House Archivist, provided an update on the work of the House Archive staff, who continue to support committees by managing accessions of records, providing loans of archived records to committees, providing records management and archiving guidance, and responding to records-related questions.

Bourk noted that Archives staff attended both in-person and virtual sessions of the Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting in July and the International Conference on Digital Preservation in the fall. Staff also attended the Library of Congress's Teaching with Primary Sources workshop this summer and shared information about education-focused resources with participants.

#### **Notable achievements:**

Bourk noted that her office shifted to more frequent and smaller record transfers and that staff planned and executed six transfers of both textual and electronic records to the Center between June and October. She also reported that House Archives staff spent much of the past 6 months reviewing internal procedures for managing records accessioning, processing, and loans. Staff also focused outreach efforts and assistance to more than 30 Members who are retiring or leaving the House to pursue other elected offices or positions.

Bourk added that Archives staff continued their commitment to connecting teachers and students to primary sources through content created for the Education portion of the History, Art, and Archives website. Staff members from the House Archives and Curatorial teams also hosted teachers participating in the National Archives Civics for All of US Institute for a tour of the Capitol and a discussion of educational resources from the House. Archives staff also collaborated with the House Historian's Office to compile web resources in support of next year's National History Day theme, "Turning Points in History."

### **DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR LEGISLATIVE ARCHIVES REPORT**

Richard Hunt, Director of the Center for Legislative Archives, offered comments on the Center's outreach services. He noted that for more than three decades, the Center had advanced an educational outreach program to highlight the records of Congress as essential classroom resources to teach about the Constitutional basis of Congress's powers and responsibilities, Congress's role as the central institution at the heart of representative government, and how Congress has shaped and influenced American history.

Hunt added that for the last two years, the Center had shifted its focus to support the National Archives civics initiative, Civics for All of US, which brings together educators from across the

National Archives to develop primary source-based educational programs that promote critical thinking, civil discourse, and civic engagement. The objective is to foster the skills, norms, and behaviors in students to become tomorrow's active and engaged citizens.

**Notable achievements:**

Hunt highlighted the Center's contribution in designing and conducting the inaugural Civics for All of US Summer Teacher Institute in July at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. The institute provided 18 K-12 teachers from across the country with a week of immersive learning experiences demonstrating how to use a wide range of our NARA educational resources and active learning methods to empower students to gain insights about civic life through studying primary sources.

Hunt explained that the institute's success could be measured by the meaningful follow-on activities conducted by the teachers in their schools and districts. Conversations with the teachers in the fall revealed that they had incorporated specific content and lessons from the institute into their classes. In addition, several attendees had already presented professional development workshops to local and state-level groups of educators on teaching with National Archives resources.

**NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business reported.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing that there was no new business, the Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved and the committee adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

Richard H. Hunt

DFO

Director, Center for Legislative Archives

National Archives

Ann Berry

Chair

Secretary of the U.S. Senate

These minutes will be formally considered by the committee at the next meeting, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes of that meeting.

Please see full transcript for in-depth information.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE RECORDS OF CONGRESS MEETING MINUTES

December 11, 2023

The Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress convened for its sixty-fifth meeting at 10:15 A.M. on December 11, 2023. The meeting was held virtually on WebEx.

In accordance with the provisions stated in Public Law 92-463, the meeting was open to the public. The meeting was scheduled from 10:15 A.M. to 12:00 PM

### **Members of the committee present:**

Ann Berry, Secretary, U.S. Senate (chair)

Kevin McCumber, Acting Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives (co-chair)

Colleen Shogan, Archivist of the United States

Kate Scott, Historian, U.S. Senate

Matthew Wasniewski, Historian, U.S. House of Representatives

Danna Bell, Educational Resource Specialist at the Library of Congress

Denise Hibay, Director of Collections and Research in the New York Public Library

Tanya Marshall, Vermont State Archivist and Chief Records Officer

Norman Ornstein, Senior Fellow Emeritus at the American Enterprise Institute

Gunter Waibel, Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director, California Digital Library at the University of California

### **Others present for all or a portion of the meeting were:**

Karen Paul, Archivist of the U.S. Senate

Heather Bourk, Archivist of the U.S. House of Representatives

Richard Hunt, Director of the Center for Legislative Archives (NARA)

ANN BERRY: Welcome to this 65th Meeting of the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress, established under the authority of Public Law 101-509 and approved in November 1990, to advise Congress and the Archivist of the United States on the management and preservation of the records of Congress. We value the contributions, questions, and guidelines the Advisory Committee members have provided during the past 33 years. Thank you to our Committee members for joining us today. First, let me welcome my new co-chair, the Honorable Kevin McCumber, appointed Acting Clerk of the House of Representatives on July 1. Kevin has provided strong leadership and support for preserving the records of Congress much like that of his predecessor, the Honorable Cheryl Johnson.

I look forward to our continued partnership, Kevin.

Also, please welcome another new committee member, Senate Historian Dr. Katherine Scott. While Kate is a familiar face to many of you, serving as Associate Historian since 2015, she was recently promoted to her new position in October following Betty Koed's retirement.

Kate will continue the Historical Office's mission of preserving and promoting Senate history. Daniel Holt, former Assistant Historian has been promoted to Associate Historian. Congratulations to you.



Betty Koed was the third Senate Historian and the first woman to hold this position. Upon her retirement, Dr. Koed was recognized with thanks and praise from Senate leadership, the Senate community, and members of her staff. Her contributions in support of the Senate's archives and archivists were exceptional.

Her recently published book, *Scenes: People, Places, and Events that Shaped the United States Senate*, captures the spirit of this unique institution and is, of course, available in our Senate gift shop in time for the holidays.

This virtual meeting marks our first since adopting a new schedule this past summer. Going forward, we will meet in person every June and virtually every December. In-person meetings will ultimately be held at the Capitol and the National Archives, with the June 2024 meeting scheduled to meet at the Archives. We believe this plan strikes a balance between the benefits that in-person meetings provide and respecting the busy schedules of our Advisory Committee members.

I want to thank today's presenters for their continued advocacy and efforts to preserve this history and the records of Congress. I think you will note, in particular, the challenges posed by electronic records that they will describe and the efforts involved in meeting those challenges. I look forward to hearing today's reports.

And now it is my honor to introduce to you my co-chair, the Honorable Kevin McCumber. Kevin.

KEVIN McCUMBER: Thank you, Ann. Good morning, everyone, and thanks to the Senate for hosting today's virtual meeting. I'd like to second the Secretary's welcome to the Advisory Committee members.

As a first-time attendee, I'm looking forward to learning more about the Advisory Committee's work and a discussion of our shared responsibility to manage and preserve the records of Congress.

I'd like to offer a special welcome to the Archivist [of the United States], Colleen Shogan. It's a pleasure to meet you. I'm eager to work with you toward our common goals of preserving and providing access to the House's official records.

I'd also like to acknowledge the dedicated staff at the Center for Legislative Archives, whose expertise and collaborative approach help support the work of the House Archives staff.

In particular, I'd like to thank Martha Grove and Tom Eisinger for providing scans and assembling copies of official House records, often with a tight turnaround to fulfill requests from Members.

Thanks also to Richard Hunt, Jay Wyatt, and Adam Berenbak who arranged and hosted an amazing tour of the Legislative Treasure Vault for Clerk staff last month. It was an incredible opportunity to see some of the House's and the nation's earliest and most historically significant records, and it was fascinating to hear the stories they document.

I'm honored to be serving the House as the Acting Clerk following Cheryl Johnson's departure at the end of June. I've served the House in a variety of roles, most recently as the Deputy Clerk under Cheryl, and immediately before that as the Chief of the Office of the Clerk's Legislative Operations Division.

I'd like to acknowledge Cheryl's leadership during a historic and challenging period and thank her for her dedication to the institution and our ongoing friendship.

I'm pleased to announce that our Office of the Clerk appointee, Danna Bell, has graciously agreed to continue her service on the committee. Danna was reappointed last month, and I'm delighted she'll continue to share her knowledge and expertise with the group.

I'd now like to provide a brief update on the work of the Office of the Clerk over the past six months.

The recent shift in House leadership presented new and historic challenges for the Clerk's Office. Over the three-week transition period, I was encouraged by the professionalism and commitment to excellence exhibited by the highly dedicated staff in the Clerk's Office.

From floor staff to those supporting the House from behind the scenes, I'm proud to lead a service-oriented team that continues to unfailingly support the work of the House.

Archives staff continue to support the recordkeeping needs of committees and officers by providing consultations on records management and archiving best practices, managing the transfer of new records for archiving, and providing in-person and digital access to previously archived records.

Over the past few months, House Archives staff prepared for and coordinated the transfer of all records from the 116th Congress, which amounted to over 930 boxes containing 700,000 pages. Staff also processed and transferred almost 29 terabytes of electronic records during the reporting period.

House Archives staff also managed a 90-box loan—the equivalent of 67,000 pages of records—to a single committee in support of current House business.

Archives staff spent the past several months working with staff from the Center to refine the data created to describe House records. This work involved reviewing and updating description procedures and troubleshooting data export issues. As we have navigated new systems and technology, this work continues to build on the foundation laid by the Next Generation Finding Aid Initiative spearheaded by the Committee over a decade ago, which was intended to improve the description and accessibility of congressional records.

A number of recent Member retirement announcements have prompted focused outreach to these departing offices. Archives staff offer records consultations and advice on considering long-term preservation of records at a research repository and discussed preparing records for transfer.

The House curators continue to host the popular lunch-and-learn series, which is one of my favorite programs. These virtual presentations are designed for House staff to log into over lunch. These short discussions highlight objects in the House collection that are of special interest to congressional staff. The most recent session was Thanksgiving-themed and featured recipes from the House's collection of cookbooks.

An updated edition of *Black Americans in Congress*, researched and written by the Office of the House Historian, was completed this summer and copies were distributed by the office to each Member. An e-

book version is available from the Government Publishing Office and content can also be viewed on the History, Art and Archives website.

The historians are looking ahead to next year and the 20th anniversary of the House's Oral History Program. Since its inception, the program has provided firsthand accounts of Members and staff documenting the people and events that have shaped the history of the House and the nation.

I appreciate the opportunity to update the Advisory Committee on the Office of the Clerk's work over the past six months and look forward to an interesting and productive meeting.

Thank you.

COLLEEN SHOGAN: I didn't hear Ann, but I think you were introducing me. Is that correct?

BERRY: Oh, yes, Doctor Shogan, I'm sorry. I was on mute.

SHOGAN: Okay, no problem. Well, thank you very much. I'm so glad to be here for my second meeting.

Thank you, Ann, for your continued leadership, and also a warm welcome to Kevin. I look forward to working with you as well. I've had a very busy few months since we've last been together. I've certainly been on the road a lot. I have visited 21 Archives locations since I last met with you, out of the 42 Archives locations that are around the country, and I plan to visit the other half of those remaining facilities in 2024. At each of these stops, it's incredibly important for me to view the records of the United States, but most importantly to meet with staff and talk to them about the challenges facing the National Archives as we move forward. I very much value listening to their thoughts and concerns.

This past September, we welcomed President [Volodymyr] Zelensky [of Ukraine] to the National Archives for an event in our Rotunda before he made a speech. We were able to spend a few minutes with him and were able to show him some of our most important records at the National Archives in Washington, D. C., and he even wove one of those records, one of [President Abraham] Lincoln's telegrams, into his remarks a few minutes later in the Rotunda.

Another thing that we've been working on is the reduction of the backlog of veterans' records requests at our National Personnel Record Center in St. Louis. You might remember that at one point in time, due to the pandemic, the veterans' records requests totaled 600,000 in our backlog, and I'm really happy to be able to tell you today that we are down to 50,000 requests in that backlog. So the backlog is almost cleared and we believe that that backlog will be completely eliminated by the end of January. So that's very, very good news.

I've been very focused on outreach and engagement since I've become the Archivist of the United States. We are working on improving both in-person experiences for researchers as well as online digital experiences. For in-person experiences for researchers that visit one of our facilities across the United States, or one of our presidential libraries, we've been talking to researchers that have visited the National Archives in the past year, getting their feedback, and figuring out how we can improve that experience.

For the online experience, we are initiating wholesale work on our online Catalog. We have 250 million digitized records in our Catalog at the National Archives, which makes us the largest digital archive by far in the world, but we have plans to increase that to 500 million records in the next couple of years. We want to make sure that the search functionality is optimal in the Catalog so when people visit us online, and most of our users do visit us online, we want to make sure that they're able to find the records responsive to their searches.

I've also been focused on improving relations with Members of Congress and, since I've joined the Archives, I have welcomed over 100 Members of Congress to the National Archives. We even had some Members visit this morning, before this meeting, and I have another one later today. I'm very happy to report that the enthusiasm from Members of Congress and their staffs and guests has been overwhelming, and I look forward to welcoming more members of Congress in 2024. I enjoy being able to share with them the records of the United States, and our legislative records that we hold here in trust, and all of the treasures of the National Archives, to highlight the value of our holdings and the work that we do.

We recognize and honor the trust that you bestow on us to provide access to the permanently valuable records of the House and the Senate, and we are proud to be able to provide the full range of record services to your offices and congressional committees through the Center for Legislative Archives. I look forward to your continued updates. I'm happy to answer any questions, and I look forward to Richard's report on the Center.

Thank you.

BERRY: Thank you very much, Dr. Shogan.

Before we hear from our presenters today, I would like to call for a motion to approve our June 5 minutes. Is there a motion to approve the minutes?

NORMAN ORNSTEIN: So moved.

BERRY: I hear a second. The minutes have been approved. And now we will hear from our first presenter.

KAREN PAUL: Thank you for this opportunity to provide an update on records preservation activities in the Senate. No doubt everyone is aware that the past six months have been livelier than usual, but rest assured that we have continued moving ahead with our core mission of preserving Senate and Members' records. One consequence of this unusually busy season, however, is that we were not able to finish a draft of the *Seventh Report* in time for this meeting. We will be sending one to you in the next few weeks in plenty of time for your review by the June meeting.

It pleases me to report that over the last six months, Deputy Archivist for Senators' Offices, Keri Myers, has continued to focus on three themes—outreach, support, and training—and is thus fulfilling our goal of providing enhanced support to Senators' offices. She is advising offices on getting started with archives and records management, is setting up records storage accounts for them at National Archives Federal Records Centers, and is working with offices that will be closing at the end of this Congress.

Deputy Archivist Myers assists the Senate Archivist with managing the Preservation Partnership Grants Program and created a welcome kit for the participating institutions to guide them through the invoicing and reporting process.

Myers contributed to revisions of our *Senators' Papers: Management and Preservation Guidelines* brochure and *Preserving Senate History: Closing a Senate Office* handbook. After Senator Dianne Feinstein's sudden passing in September, she provided critical support to office staff, helping them to navigate the challenges of closing a large office for a long-serving member in a very limited amount of time. Deputy Archivist Myers manages our contract with the National Archives Federal Records Centers and has completed Level One of the U.S. Senate Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) Certification program. She has trained to become an Archives and Records Center Information System (ARCIS) Super Administrator, which allows her to create and track records transfers in the Federal Records Center database system.

As a founding member of the Congressional Papers Section (CPS) of the Society of American Archivists, the Senate Historical Office has participated in its annual meeting since 1986. This year's June meeting featured a panel and webinar by Deputy Archivist for Digital Archives George Apodaca and Deputy Archivist Myers on the topic, *Digital Processing Plans and Workflows*. The presentation introduced elements of digital forensics as they apply to digital archives, demonstrated a typical born-digital workflow from accessioning to access, and supplied the tools necessary to create a robust digital archives processing plan. The congressional repository archivists were most appreciative of this guidance as they are starting to process their digital collections.

Since June we have transferred 74 new textual accessions, totaling 435 cubic feet, from 17 different Senate committees and offices. Loans of records totaled 26 boxes (157 cubic feet). We transferred 2.21TB, in 124 accessions, from 16 different committees. There were two e-record loans totaling 13,334 files or 6.66 GB. A significant new accession was the historic records of the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, also known as the Church Committee, transferred by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. These records are currently being inventoried and cataloged by archivists at the Center for Legislative Archives.

Deputy Archivist for Accessioning and Processing Elisabeth Seelinger is processing, describing, and accessioning the 117th Congress's electronic records for committees that do not have archivists on staff. Deputy Archivist Seelinger also processes collections of textual records upon request, including the records of Larry Janezich, a former Superintendent of the Senate Radio-TV Gallery, marking a first accession from this office.

Electronic records transfers continue to be slower than usual because of ongoing upgrades to the Congressional Records Instance of the Electronic Record Archive and upgrades to Senate systems.

Deputy Archivist for Archival and Records Management Training and Services Dina Mazina continues to produce a "Tip of the Month" and to schedule Capitol Hill Archivists and Records Managers (CHARM) meetings and a Senate Archives and Records Boot Camp quarterly. In July, we hosted an open CHARM meeting on "Preserving a Senator's Legacy: Archiving from Day One to Donation." Senate staff and archivists from congressional repositories around the country who were in town for the Society of

American Archivists annual meeting attended. We were pleased to draw representatives from 20 Senators' offices, seven committees, 14 different repositories, and a number of other archivists and library professionals.

The first panel explored the role of archivists in Senators' offices, with talks from Senate archivists Sarah Klotz, representing freshman Senator Katie Britt, and Rebekah Valentine, representing then-retiring Senator Dianne Feinstein. A second panel introduced Senate staff to the "afterlife" of senatorial records by showcasing the ongoing work of congressional repositories. Sheryl Vogt, Carly Dearborn, and Danielle Emerling discussed their work preserving congressional collections at the University of Georgia, Ohio State University, and West Virginia University respectively.

We continue working with the Sergeant at Arms (SAA) on archiving data from Microsoft 365 Teams/OneDrive and the chosen vendor AvePoint as it builds out its solution. Deputy Archivists Apodaca and Seelinger reviewed progress in September and are pleased with how it is developing. Formal rollout is planned at the end of this Congress.

Deputy Archivists Apodaca and Seelinger also participated in an SAA-sponsored working group to assess e-discovery solutions for committees, specifically the export and backup capabilities for archiving. This project is now in procurement.

Other new Senate technologies we continue to monitor are ComNom, an official communications and nominations tracking and management tool, and ProForma, an in-house database application developed to manage various committee functions such as hearings, correspondence, and legislation.

The Senate Historical Office has begun looking into replacing Alfresco, its improvised web-based tool for creating and managing accession records, with ArchivesSpace, a dedicated archives information management system. In addition to creating and managing accession records, ArchivesSpace supports the organization of accession records data into a hierarchical structure, helping to maintain the context and relationships within collections, includes fields to document the provenance of materials, and can generate reports and analytics. Once obtained, our office will use the system to streamline our records workflows, improve data consistency and quality, and enhance the ability to search and access records across committees.

In addition, we have future plans to offer the service to Members' offices as a strategic asset that enhances operational efficiency, reduces risks and inadvertent loss, ensures data integrity, and contributes to overall organizational effectiveness. Our thought is that it would prompt an active records management approach in Members' offices that would be especially valuable for Senators serving multiple terms.

Deputy Archivist Apodaca has selected and submitted several digital preservation tools to Cybersecurity Risk Assessment in order to obtain Senate-approved solutions that will facilitate the preservation of electronic records. One of these tools is DROID (Digital Record Object Identifier), a software tool developed by The National Archives of the United Kingdom. It provides file format identification, checksum generation, technical metadata creation, and report and analysis functions. We envision its use by archivists and systems administrators to manage their data and support the cleanup of their shared drives and other digital storage locations by identifying duplicate files and unknown file formats.

By profiling digital files with detailed information such as file sizes and dates created, modified, and last accessed, staff are better able to design preservation strategies that maintain the integrity and efficiency of their office's electronic records.

Deputy Archivist Apodaca additionally recently won approval for Senate-wide use of Data Accessioner, a tool designed to facilitate the process of transferring digital data into an archival storage and management system. Data Accessioner will help migrate non-current and/or departed staff records from an office's active servers to archival storage, generating fixity and file format identification information during transfer. The interface allows a user to enter contextual information in the metadata report about the archival records. For example, records of a departed staffer can be identified with position title, portfolio, or other pertinent information. It also supports the creation of a single accession around an issue area or legislative item by migrating records from different parts of the share drive or staff accounts into a single folder. Data Accessioner is a practical tool for archivists and digital preservation professionals, and we thank Deputy Archivist Apodaca for moving the Senate ahead in this direction.

The Technical Working Group on Congressional Video Preservation and Access continues to meet monthly to advance its goal of developing technical requirements to guide the creation of a memorandum of agreement among stakeholders, develop media workflows to satisfy the requirements, and implement systems to execute them.

There is a growing consensus among working group members to develop a cohesive strategy for preserving and accessing congressional video recordings that is harmonized across both chambers of Congress, the Library of Congress, and the National Archives. The strategy is centered on standardizing the network infrastructure and digital techniques across all institutions. This would involve a coordinated effort to align digital storage, video encoding, and file transfer protocols to create a seamless and consistent process for transferring the recordings to the Library and/or Archives, with a preference for using standardized file- or cloud-based methods. The group has begun to draft a report.

To conclude: This has been a full report, reflecting our new archival team's ability to move "full steam ahead" on both traditional and emerging archival issues in the Senate. I heartily applaud and thank each member of our dedicated team for their impressive efforts.

And we are happy to entertain any questions.

BERRY: Any questions? If not, we'll start with Heather now. Heather.

HEATHER BOURK: I think I just unmuted. Can everybody hear me?

Great. Thank you, Madam Secretary, and good morning, everyone. And thank you to the Advisory Committee for the opportunity to provide an update on the work of the House Archives staff.

Since we last met in June, we continue our work in support of committees by managing accessions of new and orphan records, loans of previously archived records, providing records management and archiving guidance, and responding to records-related questions.

Following a shift to more frequent, smaller record transfers, staff planned and executed six transfers of both textual and electronic records between June and October. An additional transfer is planned for later this month.

The House Archives team worked closely with staff from the Center for Legislative Archives on the logistics of these transfers, as well as preparing and exporting the descriptive data that accompanies the records at the time of transfer.

Archives staff are exploring new ways to connect with committee members and staff. We're currently working on a project to provide sets of digital versions of selected House records of interest to committees, such as significant records related to committee history, or the passage of landmark legislation, for example, to highlight the importance of archiving in documenting the House's institutional history.

House Archives staff also spent much of the past six months reviewing internal procedures for managing record accessioning, processing, and loans. This work included reevaluating and updating loan language, rethinking how we use the descriptive information provided by committees when they transfer records, and updates to the manual used to process and describe textual records in ArchivesSpace, as well as procedure documents for accessioning, processing, and transferring electronic records.

We recently worked with a university special collections department on the return of some official House records that were inadvertently donated with a Member's personal papers. The records document the work of the Homeland Security and Armed Services Committees during the 105th through the 110th Congresses. Staff are currently processing the records before transfer to the Center.

Our efforts to support Members continue to include scheduling consultations to discuss records management primarily at the beginning of their House service, and preservation of records, mainly toward the end of their time in the House.

Staff are currently focusing outreach efforts to more than 30 Members seeking other office or who have announced their retirement from the House. Staff have also started reviewing records management and archiving materials for the 119th Congress transition website hosted by the Chief Administrative Officer to assist departing Members with closing their personal offices.

We've also begun preparing for a virtual session organized by the Chief Administrative Officer's coach team aimed at providing departing Member staff with information about managing and preserving records.

Archives staff continue our commitment to connecting teachers and students to primary sources through content created for the Education portion of the History, Art, and Archives website. A primary source set examining the fight for women's suffrage through the review and analysis of House records is currently in the editing stage. It features a brief contextual essay, discussion questions, links to additional resources, and a PDF download of the complete primary source set for use by teachers and students. The seven House records featured in the primary source set will also be added to Records Search, the searchable database of document descriptions, metadata, and images of official House records on the website.



In July, staff members from the House Archives and Curatorial teams hosted teachers participating in the National Archives Civics for All of US Institute for a tour of the Capitol and a discussion of the House's educational resources, including a request for feedback on existing resources and ideas for new primary source-based educational content. Staff created a brochure highlighting the educational content featured on our website that was distributed to attendees. We appreciate the invitation from the National Archives to participate.

Also on the education front, Archives staff collaborated with the House Historian's Office to compile web resources in support of next year's National History Day theme, "Turning Points in History." The content pulls together a variety of existing resources, House records and objects, oral histories, and historical highlights organized by historical era. These resources have proven to be popular and useful tools for students preparing National History Day projects.

The Archives team also continues to draft House records-focused content for the History, Art, and Archives blog. Recent posts include a roundup of some of the House's earliest records documenting the period from 1754 to the early 1800s, including the first House Journal and the Ordinance of 1784, among other documents.

Another highlights records, collection objects, and oral histories and is designed to help congressional staff, students and teachers, and the general public learn more about the House through primary sources that document its rich history.

Archives staff attended both in-person and virtual sessions of the Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting in July and the International Conference on Digital Preservation in the fall. Staff also attended the Library of Congress's Teaching with Primary Sources workshop this summer and shared information about our education-focused resources with participants.

I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge the dedicated staff and leadership at the Center. The House Archives team certainly wouldn't be able to accomplish our work without such committed partners. Thanks for everything you do to support our work.

I'd also like to acknowledge and thank the House Archives staff, Alicia Coletti, Alison Trulock, and Emily Graves. The projects highlighted in this report reflect their hard work, creative thinking, and commitment to managing archiving and promoting House records.

And on the subject of staff, electronic records archivist Emily Graves has accepted a position in the Foreign Service as a regional public engagement specialist and will be leaving the Office of Art and Archives early in the new year. During her time with the House, Emily has applied her expertise in electronic records to streamline processing of these materials and made a significant dent in our backlog of unprocessed electronic records. Emily is a valued member of the Archives team and while we're sad she's leaving us, we're excited for her as she takes on this new opportunity. Please be sure to wish Emily the best.

I'm happy to answer any questions the Advisory Committee may have, or to provide additional information on anything reported here. Thank you.

BERRY: Thank you, Heather, very much and congratulations to Emily. We'll miss her very much.

And now we will hear from Richard Hunt.

RICHARD HUNT: Thank you very much, Madam Secretary. The committee has the Center's annual report and I am happy to answer any questions on any of the topics covered there at the conclusion of my remarks.

I'd like to offer some comments today on the Center's outreach services.

For more than three decades, the Center has advanced an educational outreach program to highlight the records of Congress as essential classroom resources to teach about the Constitutional basis of Congress's powers and responsibilities, Congress's role as the central institution at the heart of representative government, and how Congress has shaped and influenced American history.

For the last two years, the Center has shifted its focus to support the National Archives civics initiative, Civics for All of US, which brings together educators from across the National Archives to develop primary source-based educational programs that promote critical thinking, civil discourse, and civic engagement. The objective is to foster the skills, norms, and behaviors in students to become tomorrow's active and engaged citizens.

Center staff has played a leading role in developing directed classroom programs, national webinars, and teacher workshops as part of this national initiative. Our staff has presented virtual programs to classrooms across the country on topics such as the legacy of the Bill of Rights and the history of voting rights.

We have co-hosted many of the national webinars on topics ranging from understanding the Constitution, to teaching about elections with political cartoons.

Today, I would like to highlight the Center's contribution in designing and conducting the inaugural Civics for All of US Summer Teacher Institute in July at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. The institute provided 18 K-12 teachers from across the country with a week of immersive learning experiences demonstrating how to use a wide range of NARA educational resources and active learning methods to empower students to gain insights about civic life through studying primary sources.

The Institute was a resounding success and had a profound impact on the cohort of teachers who attended. As one teacher commented, the Institute was "without question, the most important, meaningful, and enjoyable professional development experience in his career." Another teacher called it "a life-changing experience."

I attended several sessions and witnessed that success firsthand as NARA educators engaged the teachers in active hands-on lessons decoding and analyzing primary documents. Their excitement and enthusiasm were visible as they saw and experienced new ways to engage their students in civics topics. The teachers also benefited from field trips to area museums and cultural institutions, including a tour of the Capitol provided by our colleagues in the House's Office of Art and Archives.

I understand from attendees that the tour included an impromptu meeting with House Majority Leader Steve Scalise, who welcomed the group as VIP guests. Many teachers commented that this was an unforgettable and heartening experience to meet Mr. Scalise.

The institute's success can also be measured by the meaningful follow-on activities conducted by the teachers in their schools and districts. Conversations with the teachers in the fall revealed that they had incorporated specific content and lessons from the institute into their classes. In addition, several attendees had already presented professional development workshops to local and state-level groups of educators on teaching with National Archives resources.

In sum, the summer institute demonstrated that teaching is an intensely social activity and that personal contact and chemistry are important elements of a professional development program. Programs that bring teachers together to explore how to teach with primary sources produce powerful and lasting results. The teachers coalesced into a community of learners during their week in Washington, and they left committed to sharing their lessons and experiences with their colleagues.

It was an auspicious launch for the National Archives initiative and an impressive step forward in building a community of educators who can tout the National Archives as a critical institutional resource for civics education.

That concludes my remarks, but I'm happy to entertain any questions. Thank you.

BERRY: Thank you, Richard. Are there any questions?

PAUL: I don't have a question, but I would just like to comment, Richard, that I really appreciate your report just now because for those of us working at this end of the process, it's just so meaningful for us to hear how these records are being used and what they're really supporting. I think, I know, I'm speaking for all of us. Thank you so much. It gives great meaning to why we're archivists in the first place.

HUNT: Thank you, thank you so much, Karen, for noting that. And I would just remind everyone that the Advisory Committee in its first two meetings provided the impetus for creating the Educational Outreach Program at the Center, and they wanted us to collaborate with the presidential libraries. And this initiative is based upon that concept. So, 33 years later, I'm happy with the results.

PAUL: It's really been a long development in our efforts to raise legislative up to the equivalency of the presidential libraries, and it really has been a long and arduous road. But it's wonderful to see the proliferation and growth of congressional centers around the country with the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress, and the Congressional Papers Section of SAA has grown and yes, it's been a wonderful process.

HUNT: I would like to note that the major success of the Center's educational program resulted from one of the best hires I've made in my career, and that was bringing Charlie Flanagan on board. I know many of you have participated in workshops and presentations with Charlie and know what a master teacher he is. So, his involvement in this initiative really helped ensure its success.

PAUL: I do have one question on another topic entirely and that is in your report about the transfer to NetApp in the electronic records management system. Do you envision that to be the last transfer in the foreseeable future, or is the Center looking forward to another system transfer?

HUNT: We're on the fifth generation of CRI, so it has certainly evolved to meet the electronic records needs of the House and the Senate for long-term storage. So, at this point, Karen, I can state that we have three to five years of storage expansion space within the NetApp system. You will notice that 90-plus percent of the records are preserved in that system, so there's not a lot of data preparation that we need to do. So that's been a material success achieved this year. But the eventual solution will be the migration of congressional records into ERA 2.0. We don't have a schedule for that yet, but I can assure you that we will always have a system, infrastructure, and expertise to preserve and provide access to the electronic records of the House and Senate.

BERRY: Great, and thank you very much for that report, Richard.

Karen, I think you're going to be our last presenter of the day, so I'll let you get started.

PAUL: I think you have an earlier schedule. Because we didn't get the draft seventh report concluded in time, we're going to be sending that in a couple of weeks, so that got scratched from the agenda.

BERRY: Okay, thank you very much.

PAUL: But I will take this opportunity to remind our friends in the House and the Center that we will be sending you a draft pretty soon, so we will be turning our attention to that.

BERRY: Very good. Very good. Now, do we have any new business?

Well, let me just thank everyone for attending today's meeting. I realize that we all have pretty busy schedules, and it is coming up to the holidays. But I want to wish all of you happy holidays and we will see each other again in June.

[end of meeting: 11:12 a.m.]