



# Pacific Currents

## A Regional Newsletter

National Archives and Records Administration - Pacific Region  
(Laguna Niguel and San Francisco, California)

May 2002

Volume 2, Number 2

## NARA Conference in San Francisco Examines "Missing in History"

On May 4, 2002 the Pacific Region presented a widely acclaimed conference attended by nearly 400 people.

**Reclaiming the Legacy, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in United States History** commemorated Asian Pacific Heritage Month by promoting the knowledge and teaching of our past inclusive of many groups previously "missing in history."

The conference was held in conjunction with the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) and received support from the University of San Francisco and community organizations including Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, and Chinese American, Japanese American, and Filipino American historical societies.



Taiko drummers open the conference.

Speakers from many disciplines, including academics, archivists and librarians, museum professionals, TV documentary filmmakers, educators, and performing artists were included in the diverse conference program.



NARA staffers Audrey Silifaiva, Del Brantigan, and Cynthia Mitchell enjoy the festivities.

Highlights included a morning keynote speech by Congressman Tom Lantos in which he praised the National Archives and Records Administration and reaffirmed his commitment to "keep" a NARA facility in San Bruno. Helen Zia, author of *Asian-American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People* and *My Country Versus Me* with Wen Ho Lee, gave a well received keynote presentation. At the conference closing reception, John Tsu, Chair of the White House Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islanders, read a Presidential Proclamation on Asian Pacific Heritage Month.

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### *In This Issue:*

- *1930 Census Opening*
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- *And Much More!*

# 1930 Census Opening

## Archives I a Busy Place

By Elisabeth Proffen, NARA Intern

At 8:15 a.m. on April 1, Ronald Keister sat eagerly in front of the microfilm room on the fourth floor of Archives I waiting for the ceremonial opening of the 1930 census. He was well prepared, having arrived almost an hour earlier so he would be sure to obtain a coveted three-hour time block for a microfilm machine. He flipped through his thick notebook full of names, addresses, and reel numbers, almost oblivious to the media setting up their cameras behind him. Keister was there to "fill in some blanks" in his family history.

One of dozens of people to show up early for the first look at the census, Keister was met with bright smiles from a well-prepared NARA staff for the official 8:45 a.m. opening.

While numerous staff members have been preparing for years for this day - duplicating microfilm, creating print and online finding aids, and tending to logistical matters - the last weeks were particularly busy. Saturday evening, March 30, Diane Dimkoff, 1930 census project manager, and several staffers spent hours bringing the reels into the microfilm room. The Archives I halls were unusually busy on Monday morning with last-minute preparations as volunteers and docents turned out to help.

John Bowden, a volunteer directing researcher traffic, came in Monday even though he planned to "wait three weeks" to look at the census, when he expects the lines to go down.

The ceremonies were presided over by Archivist John Carlin and Louis Kincannon, Director of the Census Bureau. Carlin spoke of the census as a "snapshot of our nation," describing briefly its history and significance. Cautioning that "a researcher might need a bit more patience and tenacity" to use this census as it does not have a complete Soundex index, he nevertheless praised the NARA staff who "have spent a lot of time getting ready for today."

Kincannon said that this was a unique event for him, as, in his agency, "we usually like to protect confidentiality." Explaining that 20 million people still alive today were enumerated in the census, he said that when the 72-year restriction was put in place, life expectancy was significantly lower than it is today.

Scarcely had Carlin or Kincannon picked up the scissors, when the researchers in the crowd began gathering their papers in preparation. And just seconds off the 8:45 scheduled opening, the researchers walked in, most directly to their readers to deposit their belongings before heading off to find their needed rolls. Surrounding the room stood staff members with large magenta buttons proclaiming, "Ask me about the 1930 census," but most researchers were well prepared and had few questions.

"This is so exciting!" one lady exclaimed, clutching a rainbow bag in one hand and her reel of microfilm in the next. A few

moments later one woman laughed out loud and gave a clap; her friend in the reader next to her exclaimed, "You found her!" causing a rush of TV cameras to crowd around them, eager to capture this moment of discovery. "It works!" the woman proclaimed to those listening.

While there was plenty of excitement and commotion that morning, NARA staffers were prepared for even worse, having heard tales of researchers lined up around the building at the opening of the 1920 census 10 years earlier. "Most of the regulars are not here," Katherine Vollen, an archives specialist on the reference staff, commented, explaining that they had encouraged regulars to avoid the projected rush and come in the next day.

The research room recorded 183 visitors on April 1, higher than the 147 on the first day of April 2001, when there was no census opening. But the number might be more impressive than it looks because visits to Archives I have been off about 40 percent since the events of September 11, explained Kenneth Heger, Chief, Research Support Branch at Archives I.



*Archivist John Carlin and Louis Kincannon, Director of the U.S. Census Bureau, cut the ribbon in Room 400 of Archives I, opening the 1930 census.*

At 11:45 the room was emptied and researchers crowded into the elevator to see if they could obtain another time block to do more research. Bernard Sturtevant, satisfied with his three hours, was very grateful to the NARA staff, exclaiming that, "without them, I would not have found [my relatives] today."

Dimkoff praised the NARA staff for "a wonderful job" of getting out the word about the renovation and space limitations at Archives I and the lack of comprehensive name indexes and digital copies of the 1930 census. "It truly was a success because of the contributions of NARA staff members in the Washington area and nationwide," she said.



# Some Regions Open Census at Midnight

Excitement surrounded not only the April 1 opening of the 1930 census at Archives I, but also at the 13 regional archives around the country, with a few of them opening at midnight for waiting researchers and reporters.

Five regional offices - Northeast in Waltham, Southeast in Atlanta, Central Plains in Kansas City, Southwest in Fort Worth, and Pacific Alaska in Seattle - opened at midnight, some with ceremonial ribbon cuttings.

And most regions reported extensive media coverage leading up to the opening and for the opening itself. The 13 regional facilities recorded 723 researchers on April 1, about a third more than on a typical day. Some regions had regional officials from the Bureau of the Census on hand for the opening.

In most cases, staff worked long hours and volunteers pitched in and came in early or worked late to help researchers who needed assistance with finding aids or the microfilm.

"We had a great experience opening the 1930 census at midnight in Waltham," said Stuart Culy, director of archival operations of the Northeast region in Waltham, MA. "We had a full house as far as researchers were concerned with every microfilm reader in use."

The Northeast region's Pittsfield office reported that about half their researchers came from New York. The New York City office reported a total of 56 researchers for the day, and some additional volunteers came in especially for the opening.

In the Southeast Region in East Point, Georgia, there was a flurry of activity when the doors opened at midnight, then some people left after finding what they wanted.

In the Southwest region in Fort Worth, staffers played CDs with 1930s music, such as big band, jazz, and blues. Customers were well prepared, with most having looked up their enumeration districts before arriving.

In Kansas City, the Central Plains office used some old 35mm microfilm for the ribbon, which was cut by Diana Duff, director of archival operations.

The midnight opening in the Pacific Alaska region office in Seattle saw 13 researchers, with the number up to 16 by 2 a.m. and a reporter on hand for hours interviewing researchers and volunteers. Other regions opened at regular times.

The Mid-Atlantic region in Philadelphia Center City had a full house of researchers by 10 a.m. and was taking reservations for the 11 a.m. shift long before 11. A number of the Philadelphia TV stations were on hand to record the opening there.

At the Pacific Alaska office in Anchorage, long-time researcher Bob King, who was first in line for the opening of the 1920

census 10 years ago, was once again at the head of the line, even with a temperature of 10 degrees.



*Kate Santoro, a regular researcher at the Pacific Region in Laguna Niguel, CA, shows that she found the page she was looking for.*

The Pacific Region in San Bruno had a ribbon-cutting ceremony, after which the first researcher broke through the red, white, and blue door-sized seal to the research room. Staff and patrons also helped themselves to "The 1930 Census Research-Not a Piece of Cake" sheet cake. Buttons with "1930 Census Research Veteran" on them were also available.



*At the Laguna Niguel branch of the Pacific Region, the 1930 census cabinets were unlocked by a researcher who had spent in the night in the area so she could be first in line in the morning. She had been second in line 10 years ago when the 1920 census was opened.*

In Chicago, the Great Lakes Region opened at 6:30 a.m. to six researchers, two volunteers, and various NARA staff. Eventually, Chicago had a full house of 44 researchers, and staff offered coffee and pastries to them after ribbon cuttings, but no speeches, for the microfilm room and drawers.

In the Rocky Mountain region in Denver, some of the first researchers to view the 1930 records had little trouble finding what they were looking for, since they were better prepared than many first-time researchers.

"Our 'rush' hasn't happened yet," said Eileen Bolger, director of archival operations, "but I bet it will in the next few weeks."

## Our Most Valuable Asset... *PACIFIC PROFILES*

*Wayne King, Trust Fund Team Leader  
Laguna Niguel, CA*

Wayne King entered the Air Force a year after high school in 1975. His career in the Air Force has taken him to many countries and on many adventures. Among his various military specialties, he served as a member of a rescue crew, fire inspector, and assistant chief for the fire department. Wayne retired in June 1995, as Base Logistics and Security Officer for the Base Transportation Squadron.

After his retirement he worked as a tutor at Allan Hancock Jr. College for a year, then hired on with the Vandenberg Air Force Base Hospital, as Lead and Asbestos Inspector with OSHA for 18 months. In 1998 Wayne returned to school to complete his B.S. degree in Management with Biola University.

Wayne joined NARA's Laguna Niguel facility in August 2001 to serve as the Trust Fund Team Leader overseeing a team of five employees. He has continuously been working with management in order to increase the efficiency of one of the largest Trust Fund units nationwide, which provides an average of 80,000 photocopies per month to customers.

## Records Management

# ***Disasters and Records Management***

By Kathy Arntz, NARA Rocky Mountain Region, Denver

We are all painfully aware of the events of September 11, 2001, and how those events have affected our lives in one way or another. Those of us in the Rocky Mountain Region were in

shock like the rest of the country, and, after the tragedy started to sink in, our thoughts turned to our counterparts working in Washington, D.C, and New York City.

One of NARA's missions is to help Federal agencies with their records management needs. At any given time NARA staff can be out and about at agency offices, including places such as the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. The NARA Northeast Region has an office in downtown Manhattan just one mile north of ground zero. We were relieved to learn that **no** NARA personnel were present at either site during the terrorist attack.

Days after this incredible disaster we were soon snapped back to reality when we began receiving calls from our counterparts in the affected NARA Northeast Region. Our colleagues there were working with agencies that were trying to recover valuable records damaged during the attack. We were asked to provide them with disaster recovery options, restoration vendors, and other emergency response resources. Through our research via the Internet and disaster recovery and contingency planning publications, we became very aware of how some agencies had prepared themselves for potential disaster while others had done little or no planning at all. Those that were prepared had developed usable disaster plans, written documents with agreed upon decisions for response and recovery actions, and these agencies have a good chance for a speedy recovery. Unfortunately, those that lacked plans or who had outdated plans or no plans may not be able to reconstitute their operations any time soon (if at all).

For example, the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) had its New York regional office located in Tower Seven of the World Trade Center. This office disappeared in flames with the collapse of Tower Seven. The SEC relied heavily on paper documents that were lost during the disaster and they now have the task of trying to recreate those documents from other sources. SEC's strategy will be to try to obtain copies from parties that had previously turned information over to them, or try to get documents from other agencies that are conducting parallel investigations, such as the Department of Justice. Either way, the task of trying to recreate lost files could prove to be very costly and time consuming, not to mention the possibility that there may be gaps in important cases due to the inability to recreate lost documents. In the long term, this could jeopardize some of the pending cases that have taken SEC years to investigate.

A more positive story comes from the private sector. The Hartford Financial Service Group (also located in Tower Seven) feared disruptions for its clients and the loss of valuable records after the attack. The Hartford immediately began e-mailing vendors to order cell phones, personal computers, laptops and telephones for its 300 employees who worked in the building. Although some of the commercial insurance company's paperwork was lost, its data was backed up at the Hartford headquarters which enabled access to its insurance policies and customer records immediately. The company bought desks and workstations, and resumed operations in six other offices in the New York area. Within days of the disaster, employees were able to report to work at the temporary offices. Hartford's ability to regroup so quickly after the disaster was especially important, because many of its own insurance customers had

resided in the World Trade Center, with Hartford expecting \$450 million in claims from those customers. Hartford's ability to bounce back after the disaster shows that its investment into disaster recovery planning paid dividends.

Writing a disaster recovery plan is kind of like estate planning; we all know that we need to do it, but the thought of starting from scratch and gathering all of the needed information causes us to put off until tomorrow what we should do today. We should all have a disaster recovery plan but the thought of gathering all of the needed information, getting both staff and management buy-in, and developing and writing a plan seems like a huge undertaking. Not to mention conducting periodic tests of the plan and updating it as needed. Besides, our plates are already full. Who has time to do it? Honestly, are we ever really going to need one?

The answer is yes; all Federal agencies need to have a disaster recovery plan in place. In fact, Executive Order 12656 states that: "Effective national security emergency preparedness planning requires identification of functions that would have to be performed during such an emergency; development of plans for performing these functions; and development of the capability to execute those plans." 36 CFR 1236.12 states that "Heads of agencies are responsible for the vital records program under the following authorities: (a) To make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of the agency's organization, functions, policies, procedures, decisions, and essential transactions, and to furnish information to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by the agency's activities (44 U.S.C. 3101), and (b) To perform national security emergency preparedness functions and activities (Executive Order 12656)."

A good plan should do the following:

- Protect employees
- Include a temporary site to continue work
- Protect records before a disaster
- Provide for an inventory of records
- Protect vital information, including storage of computer backups offsite
- Provide for restoration of facilities
- Provide for regular testing

Take heart! It is possible to develop, write, and implement a disaster recovery plan without reinventing the wheel. Some agencies already have excellent plans in place and are willing to share those plans as well as their lessons learned. NARA's Pacific Region is also a good resource if your agency needs information or guidance with vital records and disaster recovery. We offer consultation in disaster planning and vital records as part of our Targeted Assistance program. Periodically we present "Disaster Preparedness and Response for Records Officers" workshops. For more information on training, Targeted Assistance, or any other questions regarding disaster preparedness, contact us at 949-360-2622 (Laguna Niguel) or 650-876-9084 (San Bruno).

For additional guidance on how to develop disaster plans or update existing plans the following suggestions are offered:

- NARA's web link for vital records is <http://www.nara.gov/records/vital.html/>
- The Disaster Resource Guide website is an invaluable catalog of vendors, products, and disaster preparedness services. <http://www.disaster-resource.com/>
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency's website is <http://www.fema.gov/>
- The Disaster Recovery Journal is a free publication filled with important articles on disaster preparedness and contingency planning. <http://www.drj.com/>
- Contingency Planning and Management magazine's website is <http://www.contingencyplanning.com/>
- The foremost professional organization for the disaster preparedness and contingency planning profession is the Association of Contingency Planners (ACP) International. Its website is located at <http://www.acp-international.com/>
- The Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Association (DERA International) is a nonprofit organization that has been dealing with disaster preparedness, education, and response since 1962. Their website provides links to information on current events, resources, and research pages. <http://www.disasters.org/>

**One Final Note:** In October 2001, Archivist John Carlin sent letters to the heads of several agencies possibly affected by the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. NARA has offered to delay destruction of any eligible records housed at the Washington National Records Center, if those records may possibly be needed for reconstruction of records destroyed by the terrorist attacks.

Sources used in this article:

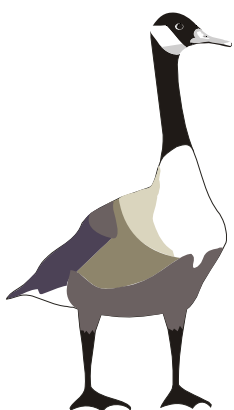
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## ***CD Available!*** **Vital Records Briefings Offered by NARA**

In response to increased interest in vital records after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, NARA presented a series of Vital Records Briefings for Federal records and information managers across the United States. There is a CD available for those who were not able to attend. The CD contains power point presentations, speaker's notes, text of the Executive Orders related to Vital Records, Federal Preparedness Publications and NARA's Vital Records Publication. If you are interested in obtaining a CD, please contact Nina Frederick at 301-713-7110 x268 or e-mail: [nina.frederick@nara.gov](mailto:nina.frederick@nara.gov).



## NARA Working with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Over the past two years, NARA staff has been working with region and field offices within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The major goal is to update the USFWS records disposition schedule. The last update occurred in 1978. Progress has been made primarily through the efforts of Bill Greathouse, from the NARA Pacific Alaska regional facility in Seattle, Washington, with additional assistance from Cathy Westfeldt, from the Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel, California facility. Both are Senior Records Analysts in NARA's Targeted Assistance Program.

Much of the activity has occurred in the USFWS Region 1, which encompasses offices in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Nevada, Hawaii, and the Pacific Islands. Greathouse has completed records inventories and files plans for several locations including External Affairs in Portland, Oregon, Pacific Islands Ecoregion in Honolulu, Hawaii, and the Western Washington Field Office in Lacey, Washington. In addition, Westfeldt is assisting the Carlsbad, California Field Office with a variety of projects, including a records inventory, files plan, staff training, and transfer of inactive records to the Federal Records Center in preparation for their office move in FY2003.

Other USFWS regions have also benefited from NARA's attention. Projects include a files plan for the Region 7 Regional Office in Anchorage, Alaska, and records inventories for Region 3 offices in Minneapolis, Minnesota and Region 9 (USFWS Headquarters) in Arlington, Virginia. Training and assistance have been provided for the Kofa and Imperial National Wildlife Refuges (Region 2) located near Yuma, Arizona. A draft files code list, produced by Bill Greathouse, is available for review. When finalized and approved, the file codes may be used by any USFWS office. Greathouse welcomes suggestions for refining the list.

More recently, Greathouse and Westfeldt briefed USFWS staff at four Region 1 Administrative Meetings held throughout the region about the status of NARA's efforts. It is anticipated that Westfeldt will begin working with the Ventura, California Field Office shortly. This summer, Westfeldt and Greathouse are collaborating to revise and update the records disposition schedule. They are working with Johnny Hunt, USFWS Records Officer, to expedite the process and accomplish this goal.

For further information about NARA's progress with the USFWS, please contact Bill Greathouse at (206) 526-6501, or e-mail: [bill.greathouse@nara.gov](mailto:bill.greathouse@nara.gov), or Cathy Westfeldt at (949) 360-2642, or e-mail: [cathy.westfeldt@nara.gov](mailto:cathy.westfeldt@nara.gov).

## Experimenting with Permanent Electronic Records Transfer

In an effort to expand transfer options for electronic records, NARA is eager to work with agencies to transfer permanent records that are in formats such as electronic mail with attachments, Geographic Information System (GIS), web, born-digital, scanned, digital video, and other records that are not in currently accepted formats. NARA would like to begin test transfers of these items in order to learn how NARA, Federal agencies, and eventually the Electronic Records Archives will manage these records. Various types of records are being considered, even those not currently ready for immediate legal transfer. Please contact Michael Miller at 301-713-7110 ext. 229, or e-mail: [michael.miller@nara.gov](mailto:michael.miller@nara.gov) if you are interested in participating in this effort.

### *Free Electronic Records Workshops to be Offered in Las Vegas*

Three workshops and one discussion forum about electronic records will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada on July 9 - 10, 2002. On July 9, guest speaker Mark Giguere, from NARA's Policy, Planning, and Management Branch, Modern Records Program, will present a session on E-Signatures and Public Key Infrastructure (PKI), followed by a session on Managing E-mail presented by staff from NARA's Laguna Niguel facility. On July 10, Giguere will speak about NARA's Guidelines to Managing Web Records (currently under review by the Office of Management and Budget), followed by an afternoon open forum discussion where a variety of electronic records issues will be discussed.

The forum and workshops are free. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. For further information or to register, contact Deborah Wayne at (949) 360-2622, or e-mail [deborah.wayne@nara.gov](mailto:deborah.wayne@nara.gov).

### *Strategic Information Management Month*

In recognition of Strategic Information Management Month (SIMM), April 2002, NARA's Laguna Niguel facility hosted a tour and lunch for a group of 30 from the Orange County ARMA Chapter on April 23. ARMA, now known as the Association for Information Management Professionals, first initiated the observance of National Records and Information Management Day (NRMD) to focus public attention on the importance of records and information management. NRMD became National Records and Information Week in 1997. This year the name changed and 2002 marks the first celebration of Strategic Information Management Month.

## *Disaster Preparedness Workshop in Las Vegas*



NARA staffers Deborah Wayne and Cathy Westfeldt presented a two-day Disaster Preparedness and Response for Records Officers workshop to 18 participants in Las Vegas on April 17-18. Attendees gained experience during the disaster recovery exercise in salvaging water-damaged records in different formats. The strong desert winds were blowing, which added another level to the recovery efforts.



## RECORDS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOPS AT A GLANCE

### San Bruno Workshops

Contact Barbara Bepler  
(650) 876-9006 [barbara.bepler@nara.gov](mailto:barbara.bepler@nara.gov)

#### **Basic Records Operations**

May 29, 2002, Sacramento, CA  
June 27, 2002, Oakland, CA

### Laguna Niguel Workshops

Contact Deborah Wayne  
(949) 360-2622 [deborah.wayne@nara.gov](mailto:deborah.wayne@nara.gov)

#### **Records Transfer Workshop\***

June 4, 2002, Flagstaff, AZ  
July 16, 2002, San Diego, CA  
August 6, 2002, Laguna Niguel, CA

\*This material is covered in the Basic Records Operation workshop.

#### **Basic Records Operations**

June 5-6, 2002, Flagstaff, AZ  
July 17-18, 2002, San Diego, CA  
August 7-8, 2002, Laguna Niguel, CA

#### **Records Management & the Law (Focus Group)**

June 4, 2002, Flagstaff, AZ  
July 16, 2002, San Diego, CA  
August 6, 2002, Laguna Niguel, CA

#### **Preserving Your Records for the Future (Focus Group)**

June 4, 2002, Flagstaff, AZ  
July 16, 2002, San Diego, CA  
August 6, 2002, Laguna Niguel, CA



### **Notice to NARA's Laguna Niguel Customers**

Until further notice, all mail must be sent to the facility's street address. The Post Office box address is no longer valid. Please use the following address:

National Archives and Records Administration  
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